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Application of Analytic Tools for Theory Testing in Organizational Behavior Research

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Many management journals insist on having a strong theoretical perspective for empirical studies. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the conditions under which one can claim that a study is theory-driven. The basic premise of our approach is to develop hypotheses that map directly onto the explanatory mechanisms that are employed to explain why a phenomenon would occur. We provide both conceptual and technical tools for evaluating and establishing that a study is theory-grounded. Specifically, we develop standards for evaluating the quality of a hypothesis pertaining to how strongly it relates to a theory. We discuss how different models may be used to demonstrate that a study is theory-driven: single mediator model, multiple mediator model, moderator model, and mediator-moderator model by mapping key explanatory mechanisms of the theory onto the model that is used to test the hypotheses.

Track: Management

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