RESEARCH NOTE

Pierre Bourdieu in management and organization studies—A citation context analysis and discussion of contributions

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Summary   The work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has received increased attention in management and organization studies (MOS). However, the full potential of his work has so far rarely been exploited. This paper aims to pinpoint the contributions of Bourdieu's work to research in MOS. I conducted a citation context analysis of nine leading journals to investigate how citations to Bourdieu's work have developed over time, which contents from Bourdieu's work are cited and how comprehensively researchers have so far engaged with Bourdieu. Based on these findings, I discuss how Bourdieu's work may contribute to research in MOS, particularly to a micro-foundation of new institutional theory and to the reflection of academic practice in MOS.

Introduction

The work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has recently received increased attention in management and organization studies (MOS): First, popular concepts in MOS such as organizational field have been influenced by Bourdieu (Greenwood & Meyer, 2008). Second, an increasing number of researchers apply concepts such as habitus, field or capital to investigate phenomena in MOS (see, e.g., Battilana, 2006; Lounsbury & Ventresca, 2003; Mutch, 2003). Third, in the course of the so-called 'practice turn' (Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina, & Savigny, 2001) in the social sciences, management and organizational researchers began to view organizations through a 'practice lens' and applied Bourdieu's work for this

purpose. Some examples include the strategy-as-practice community (see, e.g., Splitter & Seidl, 2011; Statler, Jacobs, & Roos, 2008), research on (organizational) learning (see, e.g., Nicolini, Gherardi, & Yanow, 2003; Slutskaya & De Cock, 2008) and the new institutional theory (NIT) community (see, e.g., Battilana, 2006; Oakes, Townley, & Cooper, 1998), particularly research on institutional work (see, e.g., Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Voronov & Vince, 2012).

Although these developments have led to an increased interest in Bourdieu's work among management and organization scholars, some researchers criticized that Bourdieu's ideas were decontextualized from the inner logic of his work and that some key concepts have been misrecognized (Mutch, Delbridge, & Ventresca, 2006). For instance, Emirbayer and Johnson (2008) argued that scholars tend to separate Bourdieu's theoretical triad (field, capital and habitus), thereby ignoring their inner logic (see also Golsorkhi, Leca, Lounsbury, & Ramirez, 2009). Likewise, Dobbin (2008, p. 53) stressed that "[t]he whole of this theory [Bourdieu's

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theory] is more than the sum of its parts and so the potential of the theory has not been realized in American practice even if some of the parts have been embraced''.

To overcome the limited applications of Bourdieu's work in MOS, researchers presented comprehensive and well-crafted introductions to his work (see, e.g., Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Everett, 2002; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). Although these works contributed significantly to a better understanding of Bourdieu's work among MOS scholars, I can identify some gaps: First, while these prior studies provided in-depth introductions into Bourdieu's work, the discussion mainly centered on Bourdieu's three theoretical core concepts, i.e., habitus, capital and field (see, e.g., Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Everett, 2002; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). Thereby, they left aside other important parts of Bourdieu's work (e.g., the cognitive concept of Bourdieu's theory) that have received increased attention outside MOS (e.g., in sociology, see Lizardo, 2012), but are mostly unknown to MOS researchers. Second, previous studies particularly focused on the question how Bourdieu's theory of practice can be put into empirical research in MOS (see Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Everett, 2002). While these discussions have helped to advance empirical research using Bourdieu's theory of practice, I argue that they might be complemented with a discussion of the contributions of Bourdieu's work to conversations in the field of MOS (see also Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2011). Based on this discussion and the prior empirically focused articles, management and organization researchers might start to exploit the full potential of Bourdieu's work for MOS.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to pinpoint the contributions of Bourdieu's work to further develop research in MOS. I conducted a citation context analysis to analyze current applications of Bourdieu's work in MOS. Although such an analysis has already been conducted for Bourdieu's work in the field of sociology (see Sallaz & Zavisca, 2007), I argue that the growing interest in practice theories, particularly in Bourdieu's work, among management and organizational researchers justifies a detailed investigation. Moreover, the citation context analysis is important, because it enables me to better pinpoint those concepts and ideas of Bourdieu which have received little attention in MOS so far. Particularly, I focus on three research questions:

1. How have citations to Bourdieu in management and organization journals developed over time?
2. What contents from Bourdieu's work are cited by management and organization scholars?
3. How comprehensive are citations to Bourdieu's work?

The first research question investigates how citations to Bourdieu's work developed over time. Although it is frequently argued that there is an increased interest in Bourdieu's work in the field of MOS (e.g., Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Golsorkhi et al., 2009), there is so far no systematic analysis of this claim. Such an analysis is important for the field of MOS in that it provides evidence for the proclaimed turn toward practice (Schatzki et al., 2001; Whittington, 2006). Furthermore, the citation analysis indicates Bourdieu's position in the field of MOS, i.e., his influence in the field, developed over time, since citation counts represent a good proxy for a theorist's influence (e.g., Anderson, 2006; Greenwood & Meyer, 2008; Macdonald & Kam, 2010).

The second research question aims to analyze which parts of Bourdieu's work are applied in MOS. Some researchers (e.g., Anderson, 2006; Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008) argued that scholars often do not apply all parts of a theory but refer to a few concepts, i.e., subcategories of theories (Bort & Kieser, 2011). For instance, researchers citing Giddens (1984) often refer to his idea of 'structuration' (see, e.g., Barley & Tolbert, 1997) without applying all knowledge claims and assumptions of structuration theory. Therefore, the analysis of the applied concepts helps to understand which parts of Bourdieu's work are (un)known to management and organization scholars.

The third research question takes into account that not all citations are of equal importance for an article's rationale. For instance, Moravcsik and Murugesan (1975) found that some citations are not truly needed but have the function of acknowledging previous work. Similarly, Lounsbury and Carberry (2005) distinguished between ceremonious and substantive citations of Max Weber's work and identified a high ratio of ceremonious citations, which indicates that scholars do not substantially engage in his work but merely acknowledge its impact. Hence, this analysis is important to assess management and organization scholars' depth of discussion of Bourdieu's work.

Based on the citation context analysis, I discuss potential contributions of Bourdieu's work to conversations in MOS. Particularly, I aim to answer my fourth research question:

4. In which ways does Bourdieu's work provide new insights to theories and conversations in MOS?

This research question focuses on the potential contributions of so far rather neglected aspects of Bourdieu's work to MOS. I draw on the findings of the citation context analysis to identify concepts that have so far received little attention or whose full potential has so far not been released. The discussion focuses on two conversations in MOS: Micro-foundation of NIT and reflection of academic practice. The discussions have been chosen, because of management and organization researchers' long-standing interest in the topics and because I argue that these conversations might benefit significantly from a comprehensive engagement with Bourdieu's work.

The paper is structured as follows: In the first part, I describe the methodology of the citation analysis with regard to the data collection and analysis. The second part presents the results of the citation context analysis. In the third part, I discuss the findings of the citation context analysis. Finally, in the fourth part, I outline in which ways so far neglected aspects of Bourdieu's work might contribute to research in the field of MOS. It should be noted that the paper does not include an introduction to Bourdieu's work, because there are already some excellent reviews of his work available in MOS (see, e.g., Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005).

Methods

To analyze the application of Bourdieu's work in MOS, I conducted a content analysis of articles including references to Bourdieu's work. However, because I am only interested in