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Novel Approaches to Organizational Project Management Research. Translational and Transformational

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Project management, traditionally employed to implement projects, has developed into Organizational Project Management as organizations are increasingly using projects to deliver strategies. The emergence of program and portfolio management has also contributed to this move.

PM researchers need to become more innovative in their research approaches. They need to connect with the broader currents of social science in relevant fields such as organization theory. Outside the specific field there is a great deal that can usefully be imported, transformed and translated so that it is fit for project management research purposes.

More trans-disciplinary, translational and transformational approaches for conducting project related research are required and this book goes a long way to providing foundations for them. It encompasses reflections on fundamental questions underlying any research, such as the type of knowledge sought, its epistemological and ontological assumptions as well as those questions and issues not raised.

The book broadens research methods and theory perspectives, drawing on contemporary approaches such as action research, soft systems methodology, activity theory, actor-network theory and other approaches adopted in related scientific and technological areas that are only recently being adopted. To achieve this, the editors have necessarily been eclectically interdisciplinary in their contributor list. They have included contemporary research methods and designs from areas allied to project research, such as organization science, organizational studies, sociology, behavioral science and biology, providing innovative invitations to research design and methodological choice.

Overall, this book makes a significant contribution to the maturation and development of project management research as a specialism in the broader social sciences, one that is a less reliant handmaiden or under-laborer to purely technical issues but which appreciates that any material construction is always a social construction as well, one that implies episteme and phronesis, knowledge and wisdom, as well as technique or techné.

Project managers may not realize it but the most important aspects of what they manage are the meanings, interpretations and politics of projects and not merely the technical aspects.

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