

THEORY OF MIND IN BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT, BUT WHY NOT IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP ?

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Introdução

Theory of Mind (ToM) has been used to explain people's ability to anticipate or predict others' behavioral profiles by considering their thoughts, beliefs, or desires (Premack & Woodruff, 1978; Gallagher & Frith, 2003; Bruguier et al., 2010; Chakrabarty et al., 2014). However, ToM goes beyond being just a predictive model, as it enables individuals to respond adaptively to perceived stimuli, shaping their behavior based on the understanding of others' intentions, desires, and beliefs (Söderlund, 2022a).

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

In the field of business and management, Theory of Mind (ToM) has been primarily applied in the areas of marketing and investor-focused economic behavior. Recently, it has also started to be explored in the tourism sector. However, there is an evident lack of studies that systematize and organize the application of ToM in the field of business and management, providing a comprehensive overview. Furthermore, there is an urgent need for studies that establish connections with the field of entrepreneurship, bringing new contributions, as this application has been completely neglected.

Fundamentação Teórica

ToM is a fundamental concept in the fields of cognitive psychology and neuroscience, referring to the ability of an individual to attribute mental states to others and to themselves in various situations (Premack & Woodruff, 1978). ToM does not have a single originator, but the introduction of the term "Theory of Mind" is attributed to psychologists David Premack and Guy Woodruff, who in 1978 published the article "Does the chimpanzee have a theory of mind?" In this work, the authors infer states that are not directly observable and use them to identify and anticipate the behavior of others.

Discussão

The results show that the publication growth rate is 5.89% per year and that the publications have an average age of 6 years. The most globally cited article was "Marketplace Metacognition and Social Intelligence" by Wright (2002). After this more general analysis of the database, we identified 35 articles relevant to the theme that underwent content analysis and gave rise to four co-citation networks. We identified and discussed four possibilities for the application of ToM in the field of entrepreneurship.

Conclusão

We conclude, in general, that ToM is still underexplored in the fields of business and management. In this sense, our search yielded 83 articles, with only 35 being relevant to the theme. In the field of entrepreneurship, the research opportunities are diverse, among which we identified and discussed: Entrepreneurial Flexibility in Marketing, High-Performance Team Formation and Entrepreneurs, Cultural and Contextual Factors in Emotions, Understanding Stakeholders' Intentions, Desires, and Beliefs, and Decision Making and Performance.

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