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Connecting Knowledge to Management:
The Case of Academic Research

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Abstract. Drawing on in-depth interviews with research managers, this paper argues that academic research management is ideologically close to knowledge management. The research followed a grounded theory approach. This method appears particularly suited for this inquiry, due to the absence of a dominant theoretical framework, the consequent need for extra theorizing, and the appeal to develop a theoretical account that relies on the most privileged sources of this knowledge, namely research managers. The data analysis shows that competing conceptualizations of knowledge and associated management models provide the playground for academic research management. Owing to the impact of cultural and behavioural aspects in the dynamics of knowledge creation, shaping collectively crafted courses of action—rather than managing them—aptly represents the essence of academic research management.

Key words.

academic research management; grounded theory approach; knowledge management; organizational knowledge; university research