



Università
della
Svizzera
italiana

Institute of Management and Organization (IMO)
Faculty of Economics
Università della Svizzera Italiana
Via Buffi 13
6900 Lugano

OMTF 2025

Organizations, Management, and Theories of the Firm

1. General Information

- Host: Università della Svizzera Italiana, Chair Nikolaus Beck
- Date: **September 25** (Thu), **8:30h** – **September 26** (Fri), **14:00h**
- Location: Università della Svizzera Italiana, USI, Via G. Buffi 13, 6900 Lugano, Switzerland
Executive Center, Blue Room
- Contact: Benedetta Abagnale: benedetta.abagnale@usi.ch; +41 76 202 38 54
- Fee: Participation fee covers the meals (coffee breaks, lunches, and dinners)
1. Full rate for both dates participation: 250 CHF
 2. Participation on Thursday September 25th, 2025: 200 CHF
 3. Participation on Friday September 26th, 2025: 50 CHF
- Get Together: **September 24** (Wed), **19:00h**, at Ristorante Cantinone.
Optional dinner for early arrivals (at participants' own expense)

2. Presentation Details

- Long slot: 45 min. (15 min. presentation, 5 min. comment, 25 min. discussion)
- Short slot: 30 min. (10 min. presentation, 20 min. discussion)

One long slot and one short slot are dedicated to each research group, doctoral students were favored over post-doctoral researchers. Time will be monitored, and exceedances will not be tolerated for the benefit of all concerned!



3. Participating Chairs

Nikolaus Beck	Università della Svizzera Italiana
Bruno Frey	CREMA
Patrick Haack	University of Lausanne
Raimund Hasse	University of Lucerne
Claus Jacobs	University of Bern
Margit Osterloh	CREMA
Sebastian Raisch	University of Geneva
Katja Rost	University of Zurich
Andreas Scherer	University of Zurich
David Seidl	University of Zurich
Antoinette Weibel	University of St. Gallen

4. Participants

Participant	Chair	University
Benedetta Abagnale	Nikolaus Beck	Università della Svizzera Italiana
Shuang Xie	Nikolaus Beck	Università della Svizzera Italiana
Ilkyaz Incoglu	Nikolaus Beck	Università della Svizzera Italiana
Ekaterina Stepaniak	Patrick Haack	University of Lausanne
Emamdeen Fohim	Claus Jacobs	University of Bern
Silva Laesser	Claus Jacobs	University of Bern
Magdalena Waeber	Claus Jacobs	University of Bern
Raphaelle Delmotte	Sebastian Raisch	University of Geneva
Luis Hillebrand	Sebastian Raisch	University of Geneva
Lukas Roenck	Sebastian Raisch	University of Geneva
Paul Götz	Katja Rost	University of Zurich
Jan Danko	Katja Rost	University of Zurich
Roman Gibel	Andreas Scherer	University of Zurich
Sieber David	Andreas Scherer	University of Zurich
Renate Busstra	Andreas Scherer	University of Zurich
Sadi Kurt	David Seidl	University of Zurich
Robin Engelbach	David Seidl	University of Zurich
Alice Rickert	Antoinette Weibel	University of St. Gallen
Rebecca Tillery	Antoinette Weibel	University of St. Gallen
Pierrette Lamezan	Margit Osterloh	CREMA
Maria Augstburger	Margit Osterloh	CREMA



5. Program

Wednesday, September 24th

19:00	Optional Dinner	<u>Ristorante Cantinone</u> For early arrivals and at participants' own expense
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Thursday, September 25th

08:30	Meeting time	USI Campus, Executive Center, Blue Room
08:45	Welcome	Nikolaus Beck
09:00 (L)	Long slot	Lukas Roenck: "Artificial Intelligence and Competitive Advantage: From Complementary Resources to Frontier Learning" Discussant: Roman Gibel
09:45 (S)	Short slot	Paul Götz: "Networks of Taste: Publishers, Chefs, and the Path-Dependent Geography of Haute Cuisine"
10:15	Coffee break	
10:35 (L)	Long slot	Roman Gibel: "Anti-Corruption Reforms and Retrenchment in International Sport Federations: The Case of FIFA" Discussant: Alice Rickert
11:20 (S)	Short slot	Sadi Kurt: "Strategic persistence: A paradox perspective"
11:50 (S)	Short slot	Silva Laesser: "Research Design: Identity work among volunteers in Swiss CSOs"
12:30	Lunch	<u>Ristorante I Calafatari</u>
14:00	Keynote & Discussion	Prof. Andreas Scherer "AI in research and higher education"
15:00 (S)	Short slot	Jan Danko: "Ascetic Organizations Resisting Social Disruption: Neomonastic Positioning in Late-Modern Digital Markets"
15:30	Coffee break	
15:50 (S)	Short slot	Luis Hillebrand: "Bot or not? How company reactions to online grievance claims depend on whether messages originate from artificial agents"
16:20 (S)	Short slot	Rebecca Tillery: "The Potential Limits of Ethical Theorizing in Critical Accounting Scholarship"
16:50	Break	
17:30	Social Activity	Meet at <u>Funicolare Cassarate</u>
19:00	Dinner	<u>Ristorante Vetta</u>



Friday, September 26th

08:30	Meeting time	USI Campus, Executive Center, Blue Room
08:45 (L)	Long slot	Robin Engelback: "Inclusion-as-Practice: Enacting Inclusion in Open Strategy Processes" Discussant: Lukas Roenck
09:30 (S)	Short slot	Shuang Xie: "The Double-Edged Sword of CSR Distinctiveness: A Socio-Evaluative View of Objectives and Practices"
10:00 (S)	Short slot	Sieber David: "Corporate Legitimacy Behind Front Lines: Comparing Russian, Swiss, American, and British Public Debates on Foreign Business During the War in Ukraine"
10:30	Coffee break	
10:50 (L)	Long slot	Alice Rickert: "It's All About the Mindset: A New Model for Responsible Leadership Emergence" Discussant: Robin Engelback
11:35 (S)	Short slot	Emamdeen Fohim: "AflIDA - Africa's Imagination of Digitalization within Administrative Traditions"
12:05 (S)	Short slot	Ekaterina Stepaniak: "The Role of Stigma in the Implementation of Organizational Menstrual Leave Policies (Research Proposal)"
12:35	Conclusion	
13:00	Lunch	<u>Ristorante Fresco</u>
14:00	End of the seminar	

6. Getting to USI and the Seminar Room

By train: From Lugano railway station, you can reach the Lugano Campus by bus, foot or by bike.

By bus: You can take either **bus TPL line 6** (direction Cornaredo) or **line 5** (direction Viganello) to the stop **Lugano, Università** (approx. 8 minutes). Both buses run frequently during the day.

On foot: USI is about a 15-20 minute walk downhill from Lugano railway station ([see route on map](#)).

By bike: Lugano offers a bicycle path connecting the railway station with the USI campus ([see map](#)). Travel time is approximately 6 minutes.

A **Publibike station** is located directly at *Lugano FFS* and another at *USI*, making bike sharing a convenient option.



We recommend using the **SBB Mobile app** (<https://www.sbb.ch/en>) and the **TPL Lugano app** (<https://www.tpls.ch/>) to plan your train journey to Lugano and for local bus schedules and tickets. Tickets can also be purchased at machines located at the train station and at bus stops.

- By car:** Visitors are strongly encouraged to use public transport when possible.
- From the **A2 highway** take the *Lugano Nord* exit and follow signs towards the city center/USI ([see the route on this map](#)).
 - **Campus Ovest car park** ([access by Viale Cassarate](#) – parking fees: 2.-CHF per hour)
 - **Nearby parking options:** *Ospedale Italiano* car park ([access by Via agli Orti](#)); *Public parking in Via Buffi* (white zone); [Parking spaces with charging stations for electric vehicles](#) (Via Buffi)

The seminar will take place in the **Blue Room** of the **USI Executive Center**, located on the **3rd floor of the main building** (Via G. Buffi 13).

- *By stairs:* When entering through the main entrance, staircases are directly in front of you. Go up to the 3rd floor. Once there, turn left: the Executive Center and the seminar room are just a few meters away.
- *By elevator:* When entering through the main entrance, turn left and you will find the elevators on your right-hand side. Take the elevator to the 3rd floor. When exiting, turn left and follow the corridor to its end, where the Executive Center and the Blue Room are located.



7. Abstracts

Lukas Roenck – *Artificial Intelligence and Competitive Advantage: From Complementary Resources to Frontier Learning*

Firms increasingly view artificial intelligence (AI) as central to competitive advantage, yet existing strategy perspectives provide only partial accounts of how such advantage can be sustained. Resource-based arguments stress the need for complementary assets, while market-based perspectives emphasize scale and data network effects. We integrate these perspectives by drawing on general-purpose technology theory, which highlights recursive learning cycles that connect complementary resources and market dynamics in ways that continuously reconfigure advantage. Building on this foundation, we introduce the concept of frontier learning – recursive human-AI learning through which organizations co-evolve with AI's capability frontier to sustain competitive advantage. Frontier learning enables firms to extend capabilities across functions, industries, and ecosystems, and to renew them as AI evolves. It is hybrid (involving humans and AI), unbounded (spanning domains), and inherent (driven by AI's continuous improvement). This reconceptualization shifts attention from owning resources or chasing scale toward recursive human-AI learning as the central driver of competitive advantage. In doing so, we move the debate from whether AI merely amplifies existing advantages to how it enables the creation of novel, enduring sources of competitive advantage.

Paul Götz – *Networks of Taste: Publishers, Chefs, and the Path-Dependent Geography of Haute Cuisine?*

This study investigates whether the industrial geography of Europe's haute cuisine from 1500 to 1960 exhibits path dependence. We examine whether early culinary publishing, influential chefs, and institutional advantages have created persistent, self-reinforcing concentrations of elite gastronomy in select cities. We exploit our bibliographical corpus, incorporating variables such as edition counts, publisher networks, genre tags, publication seasonality, reprint diffusion trajectories, and translation flows. This rich data allows us to trace detailed "print-to-plate" channels, measure early diffusion hazards, and assess how knowledge infrastructures translate into modern gastronomic prominence.



Roman Gibel – *Anti-Corruption Reforms and Retrenchment in International Sport Federations: The Case of FIFA*

We theorize retrenchment as an organizational process through which organizations gradually undermine anti-corruption reforms under declining external pressure. Drawing on a longitudinal case study of FIFA (2010-2018), we show how initial compliance with governance norms, triggered by intense external pressure, was later hollowed out as FIFA's entrenched political machine governance reasserted itself. We conceptualize retrenchment as a precursor to decoupling, where formal policies persist symbolically while substantive practices revert. The study advances institutional theory by linking retrenchment to organizational Good Governance reforms and contributes to debates on organizational corruption, and the limits of reform in addressing grand societal challenges.

Sadi Kurt – *Strategic persistence: A paradox perspective*

This paper draws on an interpretive case study to develop a theoretical model of how changing individual strategic actions can stabilize organizational strategies despite actors' awareness of dysfunctional consequences. A paradox perspective on stability and change extends understanding of the dynamics of such strategic persistence. While prior studies often portray strategic persistence as the absence of strategic change, I show that persistence can emerge through change itself. Grounded in a practice-based approach to paradox, my study theorizes how actors' responses to simultaneous demands for stability and change inadvertently reinforce strategic persistence. I identify a mechanism of interlinked action cycles whose relationships constitute a process model of persistent strategizing. The model highlights that unequal exposure to the risk of loss—employees bore higher risk than managers—constrained decisive change. By showing how the distribution of risk shapes subsequent strategizing, this study advances theory on strategic persistence.

Silva Laesser – *Research Design: Identity work among volunteers in Swiss CSOs*

I will present the research design for an article, which examines the micro-level of volunteering in civil society organizations (CSOs) from a Management and Organization Studies (MOS) perspective. While prior research on volunteering has predominantly emphasized individualized motivation models (Studer 2016), this study responds to calls for richer qualitative work that foregrounds identity-related mechanisms and relational dynamics



(Hustinx et al. 2010). It investigates how volunteers in refugee-supporting CSOs construct and negotiate their identities in relation to different target groups.

The study draws on identity work theory (Brown 2022) and adopts a social constructionist paradigm that views meaning as collectively shaped, enacted and narrated (Cornelissen and Werner 2014). It problematizes dominant HR-centered perspectives, which treat volunteers as analogous to paid employees and overlook relational complexities (Eliasoph 2020). By focusing on volunteer-target group relationships, it addresses gaps in understanding how identity tensions and contradictions emerge (Florian et al. 2019). The guiding research question asks how volunteer identities are formed, repaired, or contested in relation to specific target groups.

Methodologically, the study employs a comparative case study design. The two overarching cases - volunteers working with Syrian and Ukrainian refugees - are selected as extreme cases of divergent public framings: culturally distant and threatening (Syrian) versus more proximate and deserving (Ukrainian). Within each case, individual volunteers constitute the primary units of analysis, embedded within the organizational contexts of three Swiss CSOs.

The paper will contribute to ongoing academic discourse by theorizing volunteer identities as relational and dynamic, extending identity work scholarship to voluntary contexts, and offering practical insights into how CSOs can sustain engagement under shifting socio-political conditions.

Jan Danko – *Ascetic Organizations Resisting Social Disruption: Neomonastic Positioning in Late-Modern Digital Markets*

This paper theorizes about emerging organizational forms that counterbalance the dominant societal logics of social acceleration and digital disruption by examining ascetic organizations. We propose that ascetic organizations rely on historical blueprints of religious markets: the radical withdrawal of early coenobitism of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, the communal monastic life of early monastic orders, the institutionalized charity of mendicant orders, and the inclusive communities of more recent neomonastic orders. These blueprints resisted the historically dominant zeitgeist by balancing limited environmental exposure, whether through the self-sufficient hermit model or the mission-driven engagement model, with effective leadership structures exerting either moral-charismatic or rational-legal authority. From these blueprints, we propose that in contemporary societies, four ideal types of ascetic organizations emerge in spiritual markets: retreat organizations, resonance organizations, purpose



organizations, and grounded organizations. We show how they deal with digitalization both inside and outside their boundaries by either rejecting it, pragmatically integrating it, or leveraging it. Notably, charismatic-moral authority reemerges as an organizational mechanism for balancing competing societal norms, particularly the normative tensions intrinsic to these organizations. By conceptualizing these new emerging types of ascetic organizations, we offer a framework for understanding how organizations navigate tensions between resistance and adaptation in a digital era of social disruption.

Luis Hillebrand – *Bot or not? How company reactions to online grievance claims depend on whether messages originate from artificial agents*

Organizations must decide how to respond to grievance claims brought to them not only by directly affected individuals, but also by actors that are only distantly related to the harm being claimed. Bots, automated social media accounts, exemplify an extreme case: they express grievances but cannot directly experience them. Social activism research has rarely considered how such actor-identity aspects of activism matter. We argue that organizations are less likely to act on claims generated by bots, but we also identify conditions under which this effect weakens. We test our framework on a dataset of interactions between U.S. utility companies and social media accounts on Twitter between 2011 and 2021. Identifying grievance claims using large language models and detecting bot accounts using an established algorithm, we find that external factors, such as the potential audience of a claim, moderate the negative effect of artificially generated claims on organizational activity, but internal factors, such as the formalization of organizations' social media departments do not. Our study contributes to the literature on social activism by clarifying the role of actor-level variation in claims makers' success, a necessary emphasis for understanding contemporary phenomena related to activism and technology. We also contribute to emerging organizational research on artificial intelligence and to empirical debates on the role of bots in societal discourse.

Rebecca Tillery – *The Potential Limits of Ethical Theorizing in Critical Accounting Scholarship*

Following Harris and Freeman's (2008) argument that separating business "facts" from ethical "values" is conceptually impossible, the need for integrated theorizing—especially in response to Grand Challenges—is increasingly urgent. Critical accounting, with its engagement in both



empirical and normative concerns, appears well-positioned to support such integration. But does it?

We conduct a problematizing review (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2020) of three influential streams in critical accounting—True Cost Accounting, simulacrum critiques, and audit-culture studies—to examine whether their normative critiques support action-guiding theorizing. Specifically, we compare (a) the ethical assumptions used to problematize accounting with (b) the normative reasoning used to justify what should be done. We find a recurring disjuncture: while these critiques invoke concerns rooted in domination, alienation, or symbolic violence, the ethical framing remains largely consequentialist—focused on harms and outcomes—rather than articulating the underlying normative commitments. This suggests that the integration of normative and descriptive inquiry remains incomplete.

We argue that the barrier to such integration is not merely ethical but conceptual. Much of the literature critiques how users fail to use accounting ethically. But what if it is accounting that fails its users—not as a misapplied technique, but as a particular mode of reasoning? Drawing on Holbraad and Pedersen's (2017) ontological turn, we shift focus from what accounting is used for to what it is used as—a form of practical reasoning that frames and constrains ethical deliberation.

We conceptualize this logic as Tautotitarianism: a reasoning mode that simulates ethical deliberation while insulating itself from critique through self-referential metrics. Addressing it requires an ethical framework that evaluates reasoning itself—both normatively and empirically

Robin Engelback – *Inclusion-as-Practice: Enacting Inclusion in Open Strategy Processes*

In the evolving landscape of management studies, openness marks a paradigm shift from traditional exclusivity towards greater inclusivity and transparency. This paper delves into the practicalities of this shift, examining how inclusion is enacted within an Open Strategy process. Drawing on an in-depth, longitudinal case study of a Swiss machine manufacturer, we address a central question: How do actors co-construct inclusion and exclusion through their micro-interactions over the course of an Open Strategy process?

Our findings reveal three novel insights that extend current understandings of inclusion: (1) inclusion is enacted through “practice constellations”—recurring combinations of sayings and doings by including and included actors – that unfold via recursive feedback loops, producing upward spirals of broadening engagement or downward spirals into marginalization; (2)



inclusion is not a single linear state but a set of parallel, situationally salient aspects – presence, recognition, voice, consideration, incorporation, belonging, empowerment, and autonomy – each independently and jointly shaping whether actors feel and are included at any given moment; and (3) creating and sustaining an inclusive setting requires all actors to actively navigate entrenched hierarchies and learn new interactional repertoires, while recognizing that inclusion and exclusion are co-produced through four families of micro-practices – including oneself and others, and excluding oneself and others – each of which can be enacted in stronger/weaker and active/passive forms. Taken together, these insights advance Open Strategy by theorizing Inclusion-as-Practice (IAP), a practice-based framework that explains how inclusion is dynamically enacted, sustained, and eroded across an Open Strategy process, and by identifying concrete levers for leaders and facilitators to diagnose inclusion dynamics and intervene to stabilize upward inclusion trajectories.

Shuang Xie – *The Double-Edged Sword of CSR Distinctiveness: A Socio-Evaluative View of Objectives and Practices*

Firms pursuing corporate sustainability must balance conformity with industry norms and differentiation that yields advantage, yet research often simplifies the evaluation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) distinctiveness—either by treating different dimensions of CSR as equivalent across audiences or by overlooking audience heterogeneity across different CSR dimensions. Drawing on an audience-cue matching perspective and the ends-versus-means lens from social evaluation literature, we disaggregate CSR distinctiveness into objectives (“ends”) and practices (“means”) and theorize that heterogeneous external audiences attend to and assess these facets differently. We posit a double-edged evaluative effect of CSR distinctiveness, contingent on the audience–cue pairing: financial analysts, operating from an instrumental logic, focus on CSR objectives and reward greater objective-based distinctiveness; media actors, guided by a normative logic, attend to CSR practices and show a U-shaped response to practice-based distinctiveness, penalizing moderately distinctive firms but favoring either conformity or bold distinctiveness. Using divergence-based metrics derived from an NLP-processed database of over 12,000 sustainability reports from approximately 4,000 publicly listed firms (2015–2020), we construct objective- and practice-based distinctiveness scores and link them to analyst recommendations (I/B/E/S) and media sentiment (FactSet TruValue). Empirical results from within- and between-firm regression models support our hypotheses. The study refines optimal distinctiveness theory by clarifying

its dual ends-and-means facets and reveals stakeholder-specific evaluative patterns in CSR strategy.

Sieber David – *Corporate Legitimacy Behind Front Lines: Comparing Russian, Swiss, American, and British Public Debates on Foreign Business During the War in Ukraine*

Following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Western media, civil society, and governments urged companies to cut ties with Russia, framing continued business as support for an unjust war and threatening boycotts and sanctions. Companies' exit decisions, however, varied and recent studies try to explain this variation with variation in the legitimacy of foreign businesses in Russia. These studies usually work with established yet simple measures to capture developments relevant to companies' legitimacy, such as the number of google searches on the topic and latent sentiment analysis of media articles. These measures can yield interesting empirical correlations, but we argue that these approaches fail to account for how legitimacy materialises depending on the context. Thus, we propose a new method to identify and operationalize context-specific legitimacy elements combining human qualitative coding with large language models (LLMs).

Our study compares public debates in Russia, Switzerland, the United States, and the United Kingdom on foreign businesses operating in Russia to answer the following research question: How do different national discourses affect companies' exit decisions in the Russia-Ukraine war? We conduct a longitudinal mixed-method study in three steps. The first step consists of a qualitative and inductive study of media articles. By coding a subsample, we identify elements relevant to the discursive legitimization of companies operating in Russia. Next, we use our qualitative findings to iteratively fine-tune four LLMs to identify the same elements across the entire data set. Last, we correlate the resulting frequencies (i.e., independent variable) with the exit decisions of companies (i.e., dependent variable) using the Kyiv School of Economics exit database. We thereby hope to show how well the identified legitimacy-related elements explain companies' exit decisions.

The study is a work in progress, and preliminary findings from the Russian and Swiss context will be presented at the OMTF.



Alice Rickert – *It's All About the Mindset: A New Model for Responsible Leadership Emergence*

Leaders interpret their responsibilities differently, which complicates the management of their behavior. Responsible leadership theory explains these differences with variations in leaders' mindsets (Waldman et al., 2020). However, despite its widespread use, the concept of mindset lacks a theoretical foundation, which impedes theory development and causes theoretical tensions and inconsistencies (Miska & Mendenhall, 2018). To address this issue, I blend responsible leadership (Javed et al., 2024; Maak & Pless, 2006) and the implicit theories literature (Chiu et al., 1997; Plaks, 2017). I extend the literature on responsible leadership theory and leadership mindsets in following ways: 1) I conceptualize and theoretically ground the concept of leadership mindsets; 2) elucidate how mindsets precede and cause manifestation of responsible leadership behavior and 3) outline the generative mechanisms through which responsible leadership mindsets vary and develop over time.

Emamdeen Fohim – *AfIDA - Africa's Imagination of Digitalization within Administrative Traditions*

Which factors shape how civil servants imagine digitalisation in public organisations in Africa? Many scholars argue that public organisations in Western countries evolve and digitalise in accordance with the administrative traditions in which they are embedded, such as Anglo-American, Germanic, Napoleonic, or Scandinavian. These traditions have shaped the public sector since the formation of the modern state, leading to path-dependent organisational change. However, how does this process of change unfold in postcolonial contexts, where European traditions introduced from colonial times co-exist with pre-colonial, non-Western forms of governance? I seek to address these questions through four objectives:

- Understanding how particular European administrative traditions are manifested in 12 comparable public organisations in six African democracies
- Defining the degree of manifest institutional hybridity within each organisation
- Examining how civil servants in these organisations imagine the digitalisation of their public services
- Identifying the organisational factors that shape these future-making processes and their outcomes in hybrid institutional contexts



To achieve these objectives, I will employ a mixed-method, interdisciplinary approach that combines methodologies and theoretical concepts from political science and organisation studies. The research will be structured across four work packages, which will integrate ethnomethodological approaches, questionnaire development and validation, and multiple case study analyses. Through this approach, the project aims to develop a theory explaining how organisational factors shape future-making processes in hybrid institutional contexts.

This theory contributes new insights to the literature on administrative traditions and future-making. Practically, the findings have important implications for African governance by informing the African Union's Agenda 2063 as well as the Swiss Foreign Policy Strategy 2024 – 2027.

Ekaterina Stepaniak – *The Role of Stigma in the Implementation of Organizational Menstrual Leave Policies (Research Proposal)*

Recently, a policy allowing employees to take one or more days off while experiencing menstrual-related symptoms (MRSs) — menstrual leave — has gained growing attention in practice and research. This policy, with its potential to reduce presenteeism, is an important area of study due to its low uptake (Chang et al., 2011; Kassam, 2024), indicating a need for further research and potential for impact on employees' well-being and workplace relationships. In fact, researchers express concern that this policy might reinforce menstrual stigma and ambivalent sexism by representing menstruation as an illness and menstruating people as fragile and weak (King, 2021). Research in human resource (HR) management points to the importance of line managers in HR practice implementation (Kehoe & Han, 2020; Sikora & Ferris, 2014), therefore, we will study middle managers' representations of menstruation and their role in the menstrual policies implementation process.

We will conduct a qualitative multiple case study to answer the following research question: What are line managers' social representations of menstruation, and how do the latter shape the implementation process of menstrual leave? We will study this process in two Swiss public organizations, which are early adopters, by interviewing members of top management, middle managers, and their employees to triangulate the information and investigate the real impact of managers' actions on employees.

Our study will contribute to the literature on menstrual stigma (Johnston-Robledo & Chrisler, 2020; Mondragon & Txertudi, 2019) and research on the role of line managers in HR practice implementation (Kehoe & Han, 2020; Sikora & Ferris, 2014) by clarifying the implications of



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line managers' social representations in the enactment of stigmatized HR practices. Moreover, we will provide practical recommendations to organizations on how they should (not) implement menstrual policies for them to have the desired effects on employees and work processes.