

# Revisiting Ontology of Information Technology in Organizations: Theory and Research

*Completed Research Paper*

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## **Abstract**

*Information technology - and its relationship to organizational strategy, structure, and behavior - has been a continuing focus of IS research. In this paper, by investigating the development of approaches explored in relevant literature, we intent to motivate the adoption of critical realism in investigating digital technology in organization. Firstly, with the guide of philosophical ontology, we provide a comparative evaluation of literature survey by the dimensions of ontological hypothesis, sociological views, and research methodologies. Then, the critical realism is introduced with the highlights on structure and mechanism, about which we suggest materiality of technology should be examined. After that, we analyze and present the stratified structure of digital organization. We illustrate the ontology model of structure as a framework to explain the mechanisms or causalities of interactions between the technology and organization. Finally, we conclude the significance of ontology and implications of critical realism for future IS research.*

**Keywords:** Critical Realism, Naïve Realism, Constitutive, Ontology, Stratified Structure, Mechanism, IS Research Methodology, Digital Technology, Digital Organization