

Metatheory and Knowledge Organization

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Metatheory is meta-analytic work that comes from sociology and its purpose is the analysis of theory. Metatheory is a common form of scholarship in knowledge organization (KO). This paper presents an analysis of five papers that are metatheoretical investigations in KO. The papers were published between 2008 and 2015 in the journal *Knowledge Organization*. The preliminary findings from this paper are that though the authors do metatheoretical work it is not made explicit by the majority of the authors. Of the four types of metatheoretical work, metatheorizing in order to better understand theory (M_u) is most popular. Further, the external/intellectual approach, which imports analytical lenses from other fields, was applied in four of the five papers. And, the use of metatheory as a method of analysis is closely related to these authors' concern about epistemological, theoretical and methodological issues in the knowledge organization domain. Metatheory, while not always explicitly acknowledged as a method, is a valuable tool to better understand the foundations, the development of research, and the influence from other domains on Knowledge Organization.