

Editorial

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The European Journal of Workplace Innovation has achieved new maturity and sustainability since it was founded in 2015. There is a new agreement with the European Workplace Innovation Network (EUWIN). The journal website at ejwi.eu has been updated. The blind peer review process has been improved. The journal is now supported by two new editorial assistants, based at the University of Agder. Preparations have been made for an ongoing programme of General Issues, complemented by Special Issues, with international guest editors.

Workplace Innovation has gained in prominence in recent debates, with the realisation that it can take many different forms across developed and developing countries. A new vocabulary and literature have developed to help us to learn from the increased range of differences.

All of the papers in this issue address challenges related to methodology, some at a conceptual level, and some specifically addressing how to research and measure the output of workplace innovation initiatives.

- Dessers et. al (Belgium) argue for a multidisciplinary and multimethodological approach.
- Pomares (Spain) presents a framework to integrate a system level and an actor level approach to innovation.
- Korhonen et.al (Finland) present a framework for evaluating learning.
- Kibowski et. al (UK) present arguments for new measures of workplace innovation.
- Köksal (Turkey) presents a framework for identifying workplace innovation at academic staff level in universities.
- Sousa et. al (Portugal) present a framework for organisational mindfulness as part of problem solving in organisations.
- Parker and Davis (UK) use literature review in order to identify key dimensions for explaining innovation outcomes of merger and acquisitions.

This issue includes a short and highly topical discussion paper from Richard Ennals (UK), "Coping with the Future: The Brexit Kodak Moment". The Brexit saga continues!

In addition, Ennals has reviewed "Quality Beyond Borders", by David Hutchins (UK). Dhondt and von Hootegem (Belgium) have provided a news update on the work of EUWIN, which is active in 30 countries. Baburoglu (Turkey) introduces a new Industrial PhD programme at Sabanci University in Turkey, based on Action Research, which will start in autumn 2020.

All in all, these papers give a fascinating view of the spectrum of challenges facing social science research related to investigating real time factors for explaining innovation.

Our editorial reflection is that

A) These discussions are important. We need a constant debate on research design, and also better methodologies to investigate real time issues. The field of innovation is often characterised by either overall data-based arguments with few references to real life, conceptual discussion without an empirical base, or case studies that lack reference to more general themes. Good and solid empirical research is needed.

B) Part of the problem of making solid and relevant empirical research is to refer to some of the fundamental epistemological issues raised by social sciences on real life social events. Thus, over time, this journal should also address this aspect of the discussion.

Dessers et al argue for a multimethod research programme, related to identifying the impact on work organisation of new technology. The paper gives a good overview of the technologies that will come as a consequence of Industry 4.0. Seven research questions are identified, and the argument is that multidisciplinary, multimethod and multi stakeholder perspectives are needed. The argument is transparent and clearly stated.

Pomares addresses the relation between regional innovation policy and workplace innovation. The paper has two parts, one a general review of the literature on Regional Innovation Systems and Workplace Innovation, and one part presenting innovation programmes in the Basque country.

Korhonen et al present results from a study of how vocational student teachers develop a transparent portfolio of competence development such as an e-portfolio, within a concept called personal learning environment. A framework for research based on five dimensions and three levels of environments is presented. Findings related to the challenges of implementing these new technologies are discussed. The paper gives interesting insights into the implementation of IT technology, as well as learning processes.

Kibowski et al discuss the challenges of measuring workplace innovation. The paper briefly outlines key elements of workplace innovation. These are identified as organisation, structure, learning and partners. Following that, the paper presents results from a statistical analysis of a survey of 855 people in three organisations. The analysis confirms that the four factors are positively related to Workplace Innovation. However, the paper acknowledges the shortcoming of these kinds of surveys, which are important for further research.

Köksal argues for the need for Workplace Innovation among administrative staff at universities. The data comes from Turkey, and the study goes deep into identifying what kind of issues are important for enhanced Workplace Innovation in the organisation. The method is qualitative, and the finding is highly contextual. However, there are insights about the need to take seriously useful local discussions of participation.

Soares et al present findings from a single case of decision-making processes. The issue is access to knowledge and tools as enablers in problem solving and decision making. A key concept is organisational mindfulness. The argument in the paper emphasises the need for reflection at both an individual and collective level in problem-solving and decision making.

Parker and Davis present a literature review of research into challenges related to utilising competences in merger and acquisition processes. A model for dynamic capabilities is presented, and the literature and theory review are organised along the dimensions of the model. Based on this, the paper presents a four-dimensional structure of clustering insights from studies of merger and acquisitions. The purpose of the review is to identify areas for further research.

The purpose of the European Journal of Workplace Innovation is to support further research, dissemination and debate, providing a forum for dialogue involving researchers and practitioners. EJWI is published in Europe but welcomes papers from around the world.