

Call for papers for a special issue of the IJTD on workers' participation in continuing training decision-making

Submission of papers

Papers should be attached to an e-mail and submitted to the Editor in chief at IJTDpl@btinternet.com no later than 30 June 2019. Please use this same e-mail address for any enquiries. The editors for this special issue of the IJTD are Benedicte Zimmermann (EHES, Paris and Wissenschaftskolleg, Berlin) and Jane Bryson (Victoria University of Wellington) and the intended publication date is September 2020. Please see the IJTD website at www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/IJTD for further information about the journal.

Workers' participation in continuing training decision-making

There is a plurality of goals and values associated with training – to enhance performance, increase employees' motivation, commit employees to the corporate culture – by not only companies (Fearfull, 1997; Felstead *et al.*, 2010) but workers as well – professionalization, career development, wage increases, personal development, improvement of work conditions, work-life balance (Kim, 2005). From an employer's perspective, firm-based vocational training tends to be viewed instrumentally (Neirotti & Paolucci, 2013; Percival *et al.*, 2013), whereas from an employee's perspective it is mainly perceived as an opportunity – e.g. who gets training and who does not – or is regarded as a matter of outcomes – e.g. what kind of training and for what kind of achievement (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009; Albert *et al.*, 2010).

These sometimes conflicting goals draw attention to the competing values in concrete corporate configurations as well as to the channels that may allow people to express these values, make them count and transform them or not into valuable training achievements. The aim of this special issue is to study the impact of voice on vocational training opportunities, choices and outcomes. Three issues need to be addressed: *What* can be discussed with regard to continuing vocational training, *who* can and does actually participate in the discussion and just *how* do they participate?

In order to answer these questions, one needs to study how continuing training is enacted at the company level and to investigate the processes that govern training information, access, choice, implementation and outcomes. Such processes involve HR, communication tools and participation schemes, as well as institutional arrangements. The processes that lead from opportunities to achievements have in large part remained under-investigated (Subramanian & Zimmermann, 2017), the focus of employee-oriented training studies being more on training outcomes and opportunities (scope, access, distribution). The aim of this special issue is to fill this gap by using a notion of process that is not limited to managerial devices but includes more broadly the social mechanisms involved in going from training offers and opportunities to

achievements. Emphasizing the bridging role of processes requires us to integrate both opportunities and outcomes into the study.

The papers should place a special accent on employees' voice as regarded from an individual or collective angle, extending from voice mediated by HR and management devices to industrial relations and trade union activities. An elementary set of questions would be as follows: What kind of voice exists in matters of training? Does it include workers' voices? How does it operate? What kind of tools and devices govern the expression of different training goals and values? Do they deal with conflicting values, and if so then how? How do they influence access to opportunities and outcomes? Is it possible to identify corporate features that have an impact upon an employee's voice? And finally, beyond the firm, what role do national institutions play?

Taking vocational training as a case in point, the 'varieties of capitalism' approach (Hall & Soskice, 2001) has shown the impact of institutional frameworks on shaping the differences and similarities between capitalist economies. However, the aim of this issue is not to focus on the interplay between different types of skills (namely specific versus general skills) in relation to institutional settings, but to explore to what extent, and how, national institutions contribute to shape individuals' voice in firm-based training decision-making. This requires addressing the voice issue from three different but interdependent perspectives: institutional, organizational and individual.

Using a multilevel approach, authors are invited to compare the institutional frameworks defining the rules of the game in specific national settings with the kind of corporate practices and arrangements that exist at the company level. Each paper should address and crosscut at least two of the following three scales – national institutional settings, organizational corporate practices and employees' individual experiences. Papers developing comparative perspectives between different countries are particularly appreciated. Quantitative as well as qualitative methodologies are welcome.

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