

Welcome to the latest issue of the *Journal of Work-Applied Management (JWAM)*. In 9.1, our first paper is titled as “Exploring a New Division 1 football program on a university campus: an application of collaborative action research in higher education” by Greene, O’Neill and Lhotksy. This work focusses on collaborative action-based research, centred on a university-based football programme, and showcases the positive impact that the collaboration had on its various stakeholders: the university’s sport management faculty, the athletic department and the sport management students.

During the action research process, these stakeholders moved through a cyclical process of reflection, planning, action and evaluation. Through the action-based process that was utilised, all stakeholders were able to learn, adapt, participate and make positive changes. The athletic department made positive changes within their marketing strategy, their game-day operations, the opportunities available for sport management students to participate and learn and the development of their relationship with the sports management faculty.

The study initially aimed to capture fan information surrounding a new football programme, however, the stakeholders quickly realised that the action-based research study had more to offer than simply producing marketing reports for the university athletic department. Inclusion of the students as equal stakeholders in the project has proved vital to student learning and involvement. The students play an important role within each cycle of the project and the consequence of this is that additional networking outside the classroom with potential employers occurs, as well as in-depth discussions and involvement in the classroom when synthesising and disseminating the gathered marketing information.

The collaboration between two separate departments within a higher education institution proved vital to the overall success of this research project and this paper aims to provide a practical approach to collaboration among individuals working in different departments of an organisation, as the findings from this research reveal that the overall success of the project was only possible through collaborating and joining up resources, abilities, areas of expertise and capabilities.

The issue’s second paper, “Organizational commitment: an empirical analysis of personality traits” by Farrukh, Ying and Mansori, investigates the impact of the five-factor model of personality on the organisational commitment of higher educational institutions in Pakistan and adopts quantitative methodologies to measure this impact. The tools used include a structured questionnaire, e-mailed to the faculty members of the social science department of higher education institutes, with software used to interrogate the resultant data.

The findings include indications that extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness are positively linked to affective commitment. The research results have implications for the personality and commitment literature, for example, they provide comprehensive empirical evidence about the dispositional basis of organisational commitment, notably, that the “Big Five” personality traits, as a whole, are significantly associated with organisational commitment.

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The editor hopes you enjoy and are inspired by this issue; please do get in touch if you have original work of our own that you think may be suitable for publication within *JWAM*, very best wishes.



The findings particularly emphasise the key role of agreeableness in shaping organisational commitment, indeed agreeableness, in the research, is the strongest predictor of both affective commitment and continuance commitment. The authors suggest that agreeableness may be especially relevant for predicting employee outcomes that are reliant on strong interpersonal or social exchange relationships, outcomes which are increasingly critical in employee, group and organisational effectiveness.

The paper concludes that the “Big Five” traits play an important role in understanding employee commitment to an organisation and, consistent with previous studies on personality traits in the workplace, suggests that practitioners will benefit from considering all of the “Big Five” traits in their selection systems.

Continuing with employability issues the next paper, Graham’s “Embedding employability behaviours”, looks at the way in which employability is currently embedded within HE courses to prepare students for their transition into the world of work, and furthermore identifies the teaching and learning strategies employed. A UK university is used here as an example of practice.

The paper includes a useful literature review and analyses experiential data from reports of student work placements over a period of five years. This data are used to determine the relationship of the placements to both academic results and long-term employability. The research reflects on placements from the viewpoints of the university, students and employers, as well as considering the embedding of employability within the teaching curriculum and within teaching and learning strategies for personal professional development courses and the employability passport. The role of “work placement tutor” is also examined.

The paper’s main findings centre on the skills that employers value, which, from this research, seem to be mostly “soft” skills, linked to behaviours, rather than the “hard”, more teachable, skills. According to the author this has implications for the introduction of the UK Teaching Excellence Framework and the provision of suitable metrics. The analysis of findings concludes in the identification of the 4SITE (student, institution, tutor, employer) quartet of actors for employability.

Jayakumar and Joshi’s paper “Rethinking the role of management education in developing a ‘new’ locus of CSR responsibility: an Indian case study” uses a case study to build upon theoretical frameworks and qualitative methods to explore an Indian business school’s management education programme, with regards to corporate social responsibility (CSR).

India is the first country to have mandated compulsory CSR spends through changes in its legislative framework; this paper studies the role of management education in developing individual competencies among the implementers, and impacting effective CSR implementation. The paper demonstrates that the programme in question has impacted outcomes at three levels, by, developing key individual CSR-related competencies, impacting upon participants’ professional performance and influencing effective CSR implementation within organisations. The case study provides a roadmap for other business schools when designing and implementing programmes for CSR professionals.

Baker, Peach and Cathcart investigate “Work-based learning: a learning strategy in support of the Australian Qualifications Framework” and examine the extent to which work-based learning (WBL) could potentially improve education and training pathways in Australia, and ultimately improve outcomes, including career expectations, for learners. The paper reviews education and training provision in Australia by contextualising the Australian Qualification Framework with WBL pedagogy.

An initial action research study, examining the role that WBL can provide for life-long learning, is used. What is revealed is that the application of effective WBL approaches has the potential to create a much larger flow of learners from experiential and vocational

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backgrounds into higher education programmes, using a consistent and effective pedagogy. By actively considering the opportunities for learning at work, and through work, learners, educators and business managers will see the demand for WBL. The paper concludes that there is a need for further longitudinal studies to be undertaken around the outcomes of WBL for organisations, individual learners and education and training institutions.

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The issue closes with two reviews, first a “Review of the 9th International Conference on Researching Work and Learning” by Garnett; as well as personal reflections on this event the author also usefully includes links which will allow readers to explore the conference papers. The final review is Shepherd’s book review of *Facilitating Work-Based Learning: A Handbook for Tutors* (Helyer, 2016).

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