

Welcome to Volume 8, Issue 1, of the *Journal of Work-Applied Management (JWAM)*, a refereed journal that provides an authoritative, yet accessible, source of up-to-the-minute information for scholars, practitioners, academics and professionals covering all levels of management.

I am excited to introduce you to some new and thought-provoking research from across the global HE sector. *JWAM* is a young journal with a particular focus on publishing work from academics and practitioners which is of practical and theoretical benefit to organisations but also to their peers; this might include experiential learning, the application of theory to practice and the emergence of new theories via practice.

Covering most areas of business and management, *JWAM* has a special interest in the application of innovation and emergent theory. Work-based learning (WBL) and work-applied learning (WAL) are interrogated and promoted within this journal as are theories of change management, action research and action learning. The Editorial Team are always keen to discover and publish more cutting edge work; alongside original research we also publish case studies of real-life practice and innovation, opinion pieces, editorials and commentaries.

The journal aims to provide a forum for debate and discussion of new developments in the use of action research, case research and reflective practice in the context of WAL in business and management, and an opportunity to share common developments, issues and ideas across the WAL community. The contents span all industrial sectors and academic subject disciplines and this issue is no exception.

As well as having the rewarding job of welcoming Dr Tony Wall, University of Chester, UK as Deputy Editor I am also thrilled to introduce his provocative research paper, “Žižekian ideas in critical reflection: the tricks and traps of mobilising radical management insight” as the opening paper in this issue. This paper is unique in utilising the extensive and challenging work of Slavoj Žižek as a lens through which to scrutinise WBL. The paper examines the way in which deep psychosocial structures can be drawn upon by calling into play contemporary provocative theory within workplace reflection, in order to generate radical insights and innovation. The paper outlines and explains one such provocative theory and goes on to present examples, via cases, of how deeper structures can be examined at the micro, meso and macro levels. The author argues that deeper psychosocial structures are the forces that keep the status quo firmly in place, but more probing examinations of these structures enables radical insights to take place, and hopefully lead to innovation.

The paper offers ways in which processes for examining deeper structures might be integrated into daily reflective practices by individuals, within organisational processes, and wider system processes; but reiterates that because deeper structures can appear in

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different forms, it is sometimes difficult to know for sure that practice is being changed. However, it is crucial to at least examine these deeper structures, as this process in itself increases potential for enhanced radical insights into workplace structures, and furthermore, how to potentially mobilise innovations which may better serve all aspects of said organisations, including their employees and their surrounding environment.

Next, Professor David Major's conceptual paper, "Models of work-based learning, examples and reflections" offers us a number of different models of WBL in operation; continuing the theme of real-life workplace activity initiated in such a stimulating and challenging manner in our first paper. The author shares real-life examples, from his former UK University. of university-employer partnership, where models of WBL and WAL are used as the principal means for bringing about significant change in the workplace and in the larger organisation itself to meet the specific needs of employers and individual students.

The paper reflects on the distinctive contribution of WBL in UK higher education to bring about change both to the culture and to working practices, exemplified in two public sector organisations, where it improved performance and assisted in the development of new ways of working. The paper furthermore considers the impact of WBL on learners themselves and shares findings such as learners claiming a greater sense of their own identity and professionalism. Conclusions include the ways in which WBL challenges university, learner and employer partner; whilst the benefits include widening access to, and increasing participation in, higher education.

Our next paper, "Investigating telemonitoring practice: a proposed work-applied methodology" by Shafei and Jurman takes us directly within a sector and professional workplace in Australia. The authors hope to use their research to address the low utilisation of telemonitoring within "Monash Health" as a whole, and more specifically within the diabetes unit. The main aim of the research is to showcase the benefits of telemonitoring, as a method which can improve clinical outcomes for patients via increased insulin stabilisation. The authors state that one of the outcomes of this should be increased efficiency, as time spent by the clinical workforce managing patient insulin data should be decreased.

With 382 million people globally suffering from diabetes, it is considered an epidemic with major implications on patients' lives. Healthcare providers evidence the high cost of treatment associated with diabetes and as such telemonitoring could represent a first-rate opportunity for redefining healthcare delivery. Adopting technological methods for home-based care could well prove more cost effective, whilst also enhancing the quality of care and patient satisfaction.

This research contributes to this agenda using action research projects and has sought to create a model which can be used to demonstrate the efficacy of the action research method as a viable alternative to the traditional randomised control trials, currently widely used in healthcare research.

Following this, Garnett's paper, "Using work-based and work-applied learning to enhance the intellectual capital of organisations" evidences the ways in which WBL and WAL can enhance the intellectual capital of organisations. The paper draws on and interrogates organisational learning and WBL literature and case study illustrations. The author claims that to achieve major strategic change within organisations senior staff within the organisation must develop the learning capability of the organisation, and furthermore, the ability to apply that learning strategically.

This paper shows how WAL brings about change and enhances the learning capability within an organisation and suggests that further longitudinal studies of organisations that have used the WBL and WAL approaches are needed in order to capture and share

innovative practice. The alignment of individual learning with organisational objectives positions learning as a co-operative part of working life rather than just individual preparation for employment. This paper makes a strong case for positioning WBL and WAL as appropriate responses to the learning needs of organisations as well as individuals.

Next we have Critten's conceptual paper, "A radical agenda for enabling organisation transformation through work-applied learning" which challenges the traditional linear and "normative" approach to bringing about organisational learning and change, by suggesting different ways to view organisations. The paper uses complexity theory and proposes viewing organisations as "complex adaptive systems" whilst illustrating how WAL can play a key role in bringing about change. The author also provides practical ideas that decision makers could put into action.

The paper discusses the nature of WAL, and the ways in which it occurs in organisations. It furthermore compares a number of theories and introduces two models, one of which follows a linear and largely normative approach to using WAL as a way of bringing about organisation change, while the second is an original model that seeks to show how organisations comprise both a "legitimate" and a "shadow" side. The paper is based upon original work with an international mobile phone company and demonstrates how the conceptual models could be used in practice. Conclusions include the suggestion that in order to instigate true transformation within an organisation both the "normative" and the "transformative" must come into play.

Khan's paper continues this practical and real-workplace slant with, "Future proofing of tourism entrepreneurship in Oman: challenges and prospects". The paper analyses the factors that inhibit tourism students' inclination towards tourism-related entrepreneurial activities, within Oman. The research is based upon the responses of 223 students of tourism studies, who were selected on a random sampling basis to answer a questionnaire. The findings are shared here, with the issues revealed to include such factors as non-discrimination of gender, promotion opportunities and physical working conditions all playing a key role in the motivation of students to undertake a tourism-related career. The empirical results also disclose that the high risk of accidents, non-tourism spouse preferences, and Omani traditional values actively discourage students from choosing a career in tourism.

The study demonstrates that there is a strong association between the motivating factors and the various reasons that encourage students to choose tourism as their focus of study. The main factors impeding entrepreneurship are the insufficiency of capital, lack of awareness about the ongoing programmes and lack of entrepreneurial skills. The authors conclude that the Government and related sponsoring institutions should provide the necessary field skills training and create financial supporting schemes which encourage participants and help the process of diversifying Oman's future economy towards tourism.

Next, is a special "Viewpoint" piece, "Reviving the Ubuntu spirit in landscapes of practice: evidence from deep within the forest" Tony Wall shares with us some contemporary ideas around this fascinating area. Jonathan Garnett closes the issue with a similarly short and interesting review of "The 9th international conference on Researching Work and Learning" held in Singapore last year.

I hope you agree that such varied and diverse material makes for a stimulating read, if you have work of your own for publication, that falls within our areas of interest, or ideas towards such work, please do feel free to contact me for any pre-submission discussions.

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