TWR CONFERENCE

Transdisciplinary Workplace Research

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Edinburgh Napier University

Andrew Smith, Alasdair Reid, Mina Jowkar, Suha Jaradat (eds.)

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School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

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PREFACE

Welcome to the proceedings of the Fourth Transdisciplinary Research Network Conference (TWR 2024). This year's conference marks another milestone in our ongoing journey to foster collaboration and innovation to achieve our goal of contributing to the design and management of workplaces where people can work to their full potential and experience high levels of mental and physical wellbeing.

These proceedings present the latest findings of researchers, practitioners, and thought leaders from around the world who came together in Scotland's historic and vibrant capital city of Edinburgh to share their insights, discoveries, and visions for better workplaces from the 4th to the 7th of September 2024.

The Transdisciplinary Workplace Research (TWR) Network (www.twrnetwork.org) is a collaborative group of scholars and practitioners dedicated to enhancing workplace environments. Since its establishment in 2017, it has carried out its mission to disseminate groundbreaking workplace knowledge that enables organisations and individuals to reach their full potential, while maintaining high levels of mental and physical wellbeing. The network focuses on integrating various aspects of the workplace, including social, physical, technological, and managerial elements. This holistic approach ensures that workplaces support employee performance, satisfaction, health, and wellbeing. By bringing together experts from diverse fields, the TWR Network fosters interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration. This approach helps translate academic research into practical solutions that can be implemented in real-world workplace settings.

The papers and presentations included in these proceedings represent the cutting edge of transdisciplinary workplace research. They span a rich range of topics including belonging, architecture and interior design, digitalisation and tools, wellbeing, educational and research workspaces, activity-based working, inclusion and diversity, engagement and culture, indoor environmental quality, workplace preferences, the evolving workplace, learning and education, corporate real estate, hybrid working, workplace experience and the human centred workplace. Each contribution underscores the importance of embracing a holistic perspective when it comes to workplace research and practice.

We would like to extend our thanks to all the authors and to the scientific committee, whose participation has made this publication possible. We must also thank the TWR Network and Board, in particular the Network Chair, Rianne Appel-Meulenbroek as well as the 2022 host, Chiara Tagliaro for the support that we have benefited from. We are also grateful to the School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment for making it possible to host the conference at Edinburgh Napier University. Thanks also to the university staff and volunteers who gave their energy to making the event a success, ultimately leading to these proceedings.

As you delve into these proceedings, we hope you find the research presented here as inspiring and enlightening as we do. Thank you for being a part of TWR 2024.

Andrew Smith, Alasdair Reid, Mina Jowkar, Suha Jaradat (eds.)
Edinburgh, September 2024

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When your office fits your activity: office-activity (mis)fit, culture strength and job satisfaction

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Abstract

Many workers lament that their workspaces are unsuitable for their work tasks (i.e., office-activity misfit). Office-activity misfit happens when the physical layout or design of an office does not match the activities being carried out within it. This mismatch between the workspace and the nature of the tasks can lead to reduced job satisfaction. The recent increase in remote work has made this problem even worse for workers who experience office-activity misfit when working from their company's office. Organizational values and the consensus on those values (i.e., cultural strength) may reduce the alleged negative relationship between office-activity misfit and job satisfaction. However, there is not enough scientific evidence to prove whether office-activity misfit affects job satisfaction and whether cultural strength moderates this relationship. To fill this gap this study is based on data from a single organization located in Italy. Through a cluster analysis, two groups of workers have been recognized: (i) those who benefit from a workspace that fits their tasks (i.e., fit group); (ii) those who lack a workspace that fits their tasks (i.e., misfit group). The paper compares the two groups through a mixed-method approach including (i) econometric analysis of survey data and secondary data; (ii) qualitative analysis of data from semi-structured interviews and focus groups with employees; and (iii) observations. The preliminary analysis found that organizational culture strength has a positive effect on job satisfaction only in the fit group while not in the misfit group.

Keywords:

Office Type, Work Activity, Office-Activity misfit, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Culture