



Introduction¹

This issue of *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies* compiles six original research articles from the Nordic countries.

The first article brings us to Finland. In *The Experience Qualities Approach to Leadership and Employee Well-being*, Ilkka Salmi and her co-authors present a study that illustrates how a new research approach enables researchers on leadership and employee well-being to conceptualize and study ‘experience’ in new ways. Based on semi-structured interviews with 23 leaders and employees in an international mining organization located in Finland, the article illustrates how the approach helps to identify the relationship between leaders’ and employees’ experiences and well-being by nuancing ‘general experiences’ to not only include emotions but also experience qualities such as knowledge and assumptions.

In *Youth Health and Safety Groups: Process Evaluation from an Intervention in Danish Supermarkets*, Karen Albertsen and colleagues study health and safety organization of young workers employed in temporary positions in the Danish retail industry. The study describes and evaluate the effects of an intervention that aimed to establish health and safety groups for young workers in Danish supermarkets. Based on qualitative data sources, the intervention process and its organizational and personal effects were researched. The study finds that the organizational framework in the supermarkets and the young workers prerequisites and motivation to join the health and safety groups were interlinked and decisive for a positive implementation of the intervention. Workplace practices and culture are thus decisive for integrating young employees in health and safety promoting initiatives.

Career Stability in 14 Finnish Industrial Employee Cohorts in 1988–2015, by Satu Ojala and colleagues, investigate the career stability of Finnish employees in the forest, metal and chemical industries. Focusing on employees born in 1958–1971, the authors analyze data from Statistics Finland to examine the annual main labor market status of the individuals. Economic crises and the associated rises in unemployment are found to be the dominant driver of career instability. Technological change does primarily translate into changes in individuals’ work tasks as firms and employees adjust to new skill requirements. The authors explain the overall stability of industrial employees’ careers over time by pointing to the accumulated knowhow, high skilled staff and long experience of high-standard product development in the Finnish industrial firms.

Laura Seppänen and colleagues investigate professionals’ job quality and learning opportunities in *Co-creation in Macrotask Work on Online Labor Platforms*. Based on 15 qualitative interviews with 15 Finnish freelance professionals who work on projects mediated via global online labor platforms, the authors analyze how professionals in the Nordics co-create appropriate solutions with others. The analysis is informed by a

¹ You can find this text and its DOI at <https://tidsskrift.dk/njwls/index>.



practice-based activity-theoretical perspective on co-creation that focus on the open-ended and ambiguous nature of the objects of the projects. The online flatform's features underpin and restrict co-creation in various ways. Whereas other research has stressed the degradable aspects of freelancers' everyday work, Seppänen and co-authors point out that platform work also have positive potentials for learning, competence development and collaboration.

In 'Crowded out'? *Immigration Surge and Residents' Employment Outcomes in Norway*, Jon Ivar Elstad and Kristian Heggebø use Norwegian register data to analyze and discuss the thesis that large immigration from low- and middle-income countries to advanced economies tend to have negative consequences in relation to wages and job opportunities for low-educated natives and earlier immigrant residents. Elstad and Heggebø's study of a cohort of adults over a 12-year period show that residents' employment outcomes were only moderately affected by the proportion of immigrants in the population. Where rapid growth in the immigrant share of regional population occurred, on the contrary, it was associated with better employment outcomes for all groups in the community – presumably due to regional booms in the economy that led to rising demands for labor. The authors explain the limited effect of 'crowding out' in the study by reference to institutional restraints such as labor laws, trade union power and collective bargaining.

The last article of this issue is authored by Ylva Ulfssdotter Eriksson and colleagues: *Employees of Greatness: Signifying Values in Performance Appraisal Criteria*. It sets out to study how employees are prized and (ap)praised in performance-based pay systems in four organizations in the Swedish public and private sector. Taking their point of departure in document analysis of the performance criteria employed by the organizations, the authors demonstrate how the criteria reflect the six worlds of worth identified by Boltanski and Thévenot: industrial, market, domestic, inspired, fame and civic worth. The analysis shows how the organizations construct 'employees of greatness' by employing performance appraisal criteria, and it explores the changes that have occurred in capitalist organizations over the last decades: organizational values tend to converge as public sector organizations mimic the capitalist organization of private firms.

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