



## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The fall issue of *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies* comprises four research articles and a book review.

The first article, *Evaluating the Effects of Globalization on Work: Building upon Awareness, Learning, and Knowledge*, by Mika Helander and Oliver Saal, examines how Finnish labor union representatives perceive globalization's effects on working life and labor markets. The authors ground their study in phenomenology, focusing on how awareness, learning, and knowledge shape subjective evaluations of abstract global phenomena. Drawing on Alfred Schütz, pragmatist learning theory, and global education research, they propose a tripartite model: (1) awareness (conceptual-symbolic and social-material), (2) learning (formal and informal), and (3) knowledge (tacit, reflexive, and skills-based). This framework underscores how lived experiences, information sources, and embodied practices influence judgments of globalization. Empirically, the study uses a 2010 electronic survey of 334 Finnish trade union representatives. Respondents assessed globalization's effects on employment, wages, safety, productivity, competence demands, and influence opportunities, while 20 explanatory variables were analyzed through regression models. Findings show that overall evaluations of globalization were slightly negative. Two significant predictors emerged: the perceived effects of foreign branches, strongly linked to negative views, and reliance on employers and supervisors as information sources, also associated with critical attitudes. By contrast, formal learning played only a minor role compared to informal learning, emphasizing the importance of everyday experiences, workplace relations, and tacit knowledge. The model accounted for about 22% of variance in attitudes, suggesting moderate explanatory power. The authors conclude that union representatives' perspectives cannot be explained solely by material interests. Instead, phenomenological processes—how individuals become aware of, learn about, and know globalization—play a central role. This challenges dominant interest-based models of trade union responses, highlighting the significance of subjective experiences and interpretive practices.

The second article, *Stuck at the Bottom? Gender and Immigrants' Entrapment in Low-skilled Work*, by Anne Grönlund and Madelene Nordlund, investigates whether immigrant women in Sweden are more likely than men to be trapped in low-skilled or low-prestige jobs, and to what extent education, family responsibilities, and country-specific human capital influence these trajectories. The study draws on theories of labor market segmentation, human capital, and family investment, contrasting explanations that emphasize care responsibilities with those highlighting structural and educational factors. Methodologically, the authors use Swedish longitudinal register data (2001–2013), following over 64,000 immigrants who entered Sweden between 2001 and 2006, and apply linear probability models to track both entry into low-skilled/low-prestige work and upward mobility. Findings show that immigrant women are more likely than men to start out in low-skilled or low-prestige occupations and less likely to experience upward mobility. However, tertiary education significantly reduces these gender gaps, especially in transitions from low-skilled work. Still, women with secondary education face particularly strong risks of entrapment in low-prestige jobs. Family

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

responsibilities, including parenthood and tied-mover migration status, did not explain these patterns. Instead, the possibility to upgrade or validate education in Sweden was especially important for women's mobility. The authors conclude that education is a critical lever for immigrant women's integration but also that occupational gender segregation contributes to persistent inequalities. They argue for an intersectional approach to immigrant labor market research, stressing the need to examine how gender and education interact in shaping opportunities and constraints.

In *Mental Wellbeing Among Workers Approaching Retirement: a Scoping Review*, Anna Amilon, Anu Siren, Mona Larsen, and Helle Holt address the growing importance of older workers' mental wellbeing in the context of rising retirement ages and policy reforms across OECD countries. Their theoretical framework builds on work and wellbeing research intersecting with welfare state studies, focusing on the interplay between working conditions, individual resources, and statutory frameworks. By conducting a scoping review, the authors aim not only to synthesize current evidence but also to identify knowledge gaps. Following Arksey and O'Malley's five-step approach, they reviewed literature published between 2000 and 2023, drawing on searches across 11 databases as well as manual checks. In total, 23 relevant studies were included, spanning Europe, the US, and Japan, with only one study focusing directly on Nordic contexts. The findings reveal three overarching determinants of older workers' mental wellbeing: (1) working conditions (physical, psychosocial, and discrepancies between demands and resources), (2) socioeconomic and psychological resources (such as financial security, education, health, and self-efficacy), and (3) uncertainties in statutory frameworks (especially reforms that extend retirement ages). Poor job quality, high effort–reward imbalances, and insecure pension frameworks consistently correlated with deteriorated mental wellbeing. Conversely, supportive workplaces, autonomy, and adequate resources promoted positive outcomes. The authors conclude that older workers' mental wellbeing is shaped by complex interactions between workplace factors, individual capacities, and institutional arrangements. The authors stress that significant research gaps remain, particularly regarding Nordic countries and the combined effects of factors across levels. They call for more comparative, age-sensitive, and policy-oriented research to ensure that extended working lives do not compromise mental wellbeing.

The last article, *'What's in it for us?' How Inclusive Behavior Benefits Interpersonal Communication at Work* by Ola Martin Jensen Larsen and Nora Thorsteinsen Toft explores how inclusive behavior in organizations affects interpersonal communication and the extent to which such practices benefit not only employees with diversity characteristics but also their colleagues and leaders. Larsen and Toft draw on work inclusion research, organizational learning theory, and informal learning literature. Inclusive behavior is defined as actions aimed at creating an environment where all individuals feel valued and respected. The authors emphasize that interpersonal communication is shaped through informal learning processes and that inclusion can reshape group norms and communication patterns. Methodologically, the study employs a multiple case study design with qualitative, semi-structured interviews conducted among leaders and co-workers in three Norwegian private-sector companies with formalized inclusion strategies. Respondents included both leaders responsible for employees with diversity characteristics and co-workers working alongside them. The analysis used the framework method, combining inductive and deductive coding. Findings show that inclusive behavior fosters more respectful, empathetic, and transparent communication. Leaders

reported personal growth in communication skills, emphasizing clarity, active listening, and trust-building. Co-workers described greater openness, solution-oriented dialogue, and improved workplace climates. Informal learning emerged as central, as interaction with colleagues with diversity characteristics provided arenas for developing transferable communication skills. The authors conclude that inclusive behavior benefits entire workgroups, not just marginalized employees. By enhancing empathy, openness, and adaptive communication, inclusion fosters both individual development and collective learning. The study highlights informal learning as a key mechanism and identifies leadership as pivotal in realizing communicational benefits.

Finally, the issue includes a review by Jan Ch. Karlsson of Beata Bajcar's new book *Understanding Procrastination at Work. Individual and Workplace Perspectives*. The book takes on the still underexplored subject of procrastination in wage labor, examining its impact on organizations and employees.

Anders Buch  
Editor-in-chief