Inclusive HRM and employment security for disabled people

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Foreword to this Special Issue of the E-Journal of International and Comparative Labour Studies

László Andor [1]

Security seems to be in the focus of European politics and policy in 2017, and this very much applies to the world of labour as well. Job security at a time of technological transformation is a challenge that has been explored in the recent years. In 2017 new geopolitical changes and resulting restructuring processes add to security risks in international relations as well as labour markets.

Individuals are interested in job security, while national governments are aiming at high and stable levels of employment for the society as a whole. Europe has indeed produced some remarkable examples of employment boosting reforms, while long periods of high unemployment, especially during the financial and economic crisis, have caused severe setbacks too. The share of people experiencing or concerned about job insecurity has increased in many EU member states (and in countries that belong to the eurozone periphery in particular).

Where progress is made, the challenge is to ensure that it lasts. Security is therefore linked to sustainability what concerns individuals but also societies as a whole. And the sustainability of high employment is affected by the demographic transformation, practically in all European countries. Related considerations have visibly influenced government decisions regarding intra-EU labour mobility and international migration in a large number of EU member states.

Debates about the impact of demographic ageing on labour markets and social security systems were particularly intense a few years ago, and especially in 2012 which the EU designated as an "European Year for Active Ageing and

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Solidarity between the Generations". However, today it seems another concern, namely the one about the impact of digitalisation is eclipsing the demographic problem.

Discussions about the implications of the ICT revolution for economy and labour have made a big journey from europhoria to panic. Just a couple of years ago, estimates were competing about how exactly digitalisation would boost the demand for labour. More recently, fears have grown assuming that the digital age and rapid robotisation would soon crowd out humans from the labour market. Studies by the OECD and the ILO have brought a necessary dose of realism into this discussion what concerns the speed and the width of the transition.

Nevertheless, the complexity of the ongoing transformation should not be underestimated. Sustainability is often reduced to one or another aspect (e.g. financial or ecological). However, sustainability is more useful if it is seen as a multi-dimensional concept with environmental, economic, social as well as institutional aspects.

Studies in this volume, which were presented at the Bergamo conference in November 2016, connect with all four aspects. They explain how efforts to reconcile work and family life can serve sustainability on various accounts (improving demographic outcomes and reducing social exclusion at the same time). Very importantly, they also provide evidence about the need to invest in skills as well as better working conditions. Together with the shift towards flexible work organisation that allows for a better work—life balance they help boosting economic competitiveness but also making labour markets more inclusive. Those working in these fields find good arguments in favour of maintaining a broad employment policy agenda that pursues all these goals simultaneously.

The Europe 2020 Strategy of the EU (adopted in 2010) has been aiming at higher employment levels and reduced levels of poverty and social exclusion in all Member States. These objectives were embedded in a reform program for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The underlying assumption was that these three objectives should be mutually supportive and reinforcing, and the necessary measures can be designed at both EU and national levels.

Thought his strategy has received less attention from the political level in the last two years as compared to the early phase, it is important to remain committed to its overarching philosophy and goals, and measure progress as well as deviation from the targets. Apart from a return to result orientation, EU policy in the current phase can help strengthening employment sustainability by promoting the European Pillar of Social Rights, especially if this initiative can lead to new legislation that would ensure decent working

conditions in all forms of employment, as advocated by the Report adopted in January 2017 by the European Parliament.

Readers of this volume must have been, and should remain convinced about the diversity of labour market practices internationally but also within Europe. However, they should also feel that good international standards and best European practices can be identified and there is potential in mutual learning as well as a transfer of employment policy know-how. Critical analysis and evaluation presented in ADAPT conferences and also in this volume help both.

Inclusive HRM and Employment Security for Disabled People: An Interdisciplinary Approach

Irmgard Borghouts-van de Pas and Charissa Freese[1]

Abstract. Many countries struggle with non-participation of vulnerable groups. Countries give priority to Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) to help unemployed and disabled people get back to work, preferably in regular employment. In recent years, some innovative policies have tried to involve employers. There seems to be a paradox between desired social policy outcomes, such as getting people out of social security into regular jobs, and preferred Strategic HRM outcomes, such as being a highly productive, cost-efficient and flexible organisation. The explanation and solution for this social issue- integration of disabled people – can thus not solely be found in the Social Policy literature, as strategic employer behaviour ultimately decides whether ALMP succeed. In this paper, we combine insights from Social Policy and HRM literature and discuss several factors that play a role in the process of (not) offering jobs to disabled people. We present a conceptual strategic inclusive HR model and conclude that different HR perspectives, focusing on economic rationality, wellbeing, social legitimacy, may lead to different hiring strategies.

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[1] Tilburg University, ReflecT, The Netherlands. Further information is available here: https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/webwijs/show/i.borghoutsvdpas.htm, and here: https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/webwijs/show/c.freese-1.htm.

1. Introduction

Many countries struggle with non-participation of vulnerable groups. They spend significant shares of national resources in active labour market programs (Martin & Grubb, 2001; Martin, 2014)[2]. Countries give priority to ALMP, which are public interventions in the labour market aimed at helping and getting unemployed, inactive and disabled people back to work, preferably in regular employment. The ALMP focus primarily on the supply side including *people with reduced work capacity*[3] (PRWC). The idea is that ALMP, through interventions aimed at increasing the motivation, abilities and job search behaviour of individuals, decrease the reduced work capacity of target groups. In this perspective, the demand side (employers and their motivation and abilities to employ these workers) is not included.

In recent years, some innovative ALMP have shifted the perspective to employers. For example, in the Netherlands, the Participation Act came into force on 1st January 2015. This new law aims to get as many PRWC to work at regular employers. This new employers' perspective reflects a tension that seems to exist between desired social policy outcomes of transitioning people from social security to regular employment and preferred strategic organisational outcomes, such as being a highly productive, cost-efficient and flexible organisation. In this paper, we argue that the solution for the social challenge of integration of disabled people cannot solely be found in Social Labour Market Policies (SLMP), as strategic employer behaviour ultimately determines whether ALMP succeeds. Therefore, we need to gain additional knowledge from employer behaviour, which can be found in strategic HRM literature.

In view of the social and institutional context, the question arises how organisations decide to hire or not to hire PRWC. Opening this black box of the decision-making process may inspire welfare states to adjust ALMP in order to better align with business strategies.

In this paper, we address two research questions:

Does hiring people with reduced work capacity fit within the organisation strategy and HRM policy strategy?

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[2] J.P. Martin. & D. Grubb, *What works and for whom: a review of OECD countries' experiences with active labour market policies*, *Swedish Economic Policy Review*, 2001, Fall, vol. 8., No 2, pp 9-60.

J.P. Martin, *Activation and Active Labour Market Policies in OECD Countries: Stylized Facts and Evidence on their Effectiveness*, 2014, IZA Policy Paper No.84.

3 People who have physically, mentally or other impairments that limit employment activities.

and if so,

How can ALMP be better aligned with employers' motivations to hire people with reduced work capacity?

2. Theory

In this section we combine insights from what is known from the Social Policy and HR literature regarding the (re)entry of vulnerable groups in the labour market.

2.1 Active Labour Market Policies

Scholars in the field of social policy observe a shift from traditional welfare policies in which the key objective is decommodification towards social policies emphasizing (re-) commodification (Dingeldey, 2007)[4]. Dingeldey argues, "Within this paradigm shift in welfare state policies, activating labour market policies (ALMP) is supposed to play a central role (Dingeldey, 2007)[5]." Two policy approaches that are not mutually exclusive can be implemented to promote labour market participation: 'a workfare' approach with stricter conditions on access to benefits and an 'enabling' approach including ALMP and labour market services – training and placement services - that promotes participation in an 'inclusive way' (Dingeldey, 2007; Etherington & Ingold, 2012)[6]. Three broad types of ALMP can be distinguished (European Commission, 2012)[7]:

   1) Services: all activities and services provided by a Public Employment Service and/or other publicly funded services for jobseekers ;

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[4] I. Dingeldey, *Between workfare and enablement – The different paths to transformation of the welfare state: A comparative analysis of activating labour market policies. European Journal of Political Research,* 2007, 46: 823-851.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

D. Etherington & J. Ingold, *Welfare to work and the inclusive labour market: a comparative study of activation policies for disability and long-term sickness benefit claimants in the UK and Denmark. Journal of European Social Policy,* 2012, 22 (I), 30-44.

[7] European Commission, *Labour market policy – expenditure and participants*, 2012, Luxembourg
http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/5749013/KS-DO-12-001-EN.PDF/9611f495-94e0-4be6-9602-f458a023b703?version=1.0

2) Measures: 'activation' interventions that aim to provide jobseekers with new skills or work experiences in order to improve their employability or that encourage employers to create new jobs and hire unemployed people;

3) Supports: financial assistance that aims to compensate individuals for the loss of wage or salary and to support them during their job search. In many cases, supports are in the form of unemployment or social assistance benefits.

2.2 Innovation in ALMP in The Netherlands: A Closer Look at the Dutch Participation Act

In 2013, the Dutch government, employers' organisations and trade unions committed themselves in the "Guaranteed Job Agreement" to create 125,000 jobs for vulnerable (disabled) people. The Participation Act came into force on 1st January 2015. In the future, a quota could be activated if employers do not voluntarily create the agreed upon number of jobs.   In July 2016, the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment presented the first results with regard to the "Guaranteed Job Agreement" and the actual hiring of vulnerable workers in regular jobs. The figures show that in 2015 the number of jobs rose with 21,057 jobs compared to the figures in 2013.[8] The Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs considers this promising and sees no reason to activate a quota at this time. In July 2016, Cedris (National association for social employment and reintegration) and Statistics Netherlands presented a less rosy picture. In more than half of the 21,057 jobs presented by the Ministry, people were involved who already had jobs (e.g. in a sheltered workplace) and who were able to extend the number of their working hours. Furthermore, the Ministry did not count the number of *PRWC* that found a job but counted the *hours* worked by employees with reduced work capacity. Cedris argues that only 1,500 *persons* with reduced work capacity entered the labour market in the last three years. Statistic Netherlands reveals that in 2015 the labour market participation of disabled people was 37.2 percent and participation of non-disabled people 75.3 percent (CBS, 2016). Thus, it remains a major challenge to achieve employment security for disabled people in the Netherlands.

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[8] Parliamentary Papers II, meeting year 2015-2016, 34352, No. 34

2.3 ALMP and Strategic HRM

The (re)entry of vulnerable groups into the labour market is predominantly studied from an ALMP perspective. A strategic HRM approach on how these groups can be integrated into daily business operations is virtually non-existent. This gap in literature is remarkable, given the fact that employers and HR managers play a key role in providing job opportunities. Governmental policy measures promoting labour market participation have clear implications for HR, due to its involvement in the recruitment, selection and onboarding of this target group. There are some studies in the field of social policy and sociology regarding the effects of policy instruments on hiring PRWC (PRWC) (Borghouts et al. 2015; Koen, 2013)[9]. Research shows that the use and effects of wage incentives, such as wage subsidies and wage dispensation, are quite small (Borghouts et al., 2015)[10]. Financial incentives do not play a major role in the decision making process of employers to hire people from the target group. Many factors influence employers' recruitment and retention decisions concerning people with disabilities (Borghouts et al., 2015; Groenewoud, 2013; Rosing et al., 2011)[11]. Much research has been done on the motives of employers to hire PRWC, but how this relates to the actual behaviour of employers and the conditions under which employers hire and retain vulnerable employees remains unknown. Employer involvement is crucial for the successful integration of the target group in regular employment and to meet ALMP objectives. This implies that ALMP and HRM should be considered as two mutually reinforcing processes with respect to achieving governments' objectives. Currently, HR-policies mainly focus on high performance, low absenteeism and flexibility (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2005; Martin, 2004)[12].

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[9] I. Borghouts I., R. Dekker, C. Freese, S. Oomens & T. Wilthagen, *Het werkt niet vanzelf. Over loonprikkels in de Participatiewet,* 2015, Celsus Juridische Uitgevers, Amersfoort.

J. Koen, *Prepare and Pursue; routes to suitable (re) employment,* 2013, Ipskamp Drukkers, Amsterdam.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

M. Groenewoud, *Zijn werkgevers gevoelig voor loonkostensubsidies? Tijdschrift voor Arbeidsvraagstukken,* 2013, (29)2.

F. Rosing, L. Mallee, M. Blommesteijn. *Monitor Loonkostensubsidie UWV*, 2011, meting najaar. 2010, eindrapport, Regioplan.

[12] M. Lengnick-Hall, P. Gaunt, & A. Brooks, *Why employers don't hire people with disabilities (A literature survey).,* 2005, Retrieved from www.cprf.org.

C.J. Martin, *Reinventing welfare regimes: employers and the implementation of active social policy, World Politics*, 2004, 57(1), 39-69.

The HRM perspective in these studies is focused on economic rationality, with organisational outcomes such as productivity, shareholder value and innovation. Boselie et al. (2013)[13] argue that strategic HRM policies should also aim for social legitimacy (such as ethics, integrity, fairness, participation and sustainability), which can be acquired through responding positively to government regulations to hire PRWC (Boxall & Purcell, 2011)[14]. As noted in reviews of 30 years of HRM research, both in scientific HR literature and in practice, the economic rationality HRM perspective prevails (Beer et al., 2015; Kaufman, 2015)[15]. Although different streams of literature, such as sustainable HRM and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) now acknowledge social legitimacy as a desired outcome of strategic HRM activities, empirical studies on this topic are virtually non-existent. This is observed by Beer et al. (2015)[16] who recommend that research needs to be done on how HRM activities affect societal wellbeing. To date, no study has scrutinized the social legitimacy HR perspective with regard to labour market participation of PRWC. This paper fills this gap, by addressing employer engagement in labour market participation of PRWC from a multidisciplinary point of view. A proactive, strategic HRM perspective on how PRWC fit the overall organisational strategy is crucial for the successful and sustainable employment of these workers and increases the chances of beneficial organisational outcomes and hints at how ALMP can become more effective. The existing literature on employer behaviour regarding hiring vulnerable groups is insufficient to develop a sound, multidisciplinary, and integrated conceptual framework with regard to ALMP in combination with the organisation (HRM) strategy.

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[13] P. Boselie, J. Paauwe, & E. Farndale, *The contribution of HRM to fairness, social legitimacy and public value: human resource governance and risk management in seven leading multinational companies*, 2013, in P. Leisink, P. Boselie, M. Van Bottenburg, D.M. Hosking (Eds.). *Managing Social Issues: A public value Perspective*. Cheltenham: Edgar Elgar.

[14] P. Boxall and P. Purcell, *Strategy and Human Resource Management*, 2011, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

[15] M. Beer, P. Boselie & C. Brewster (2015), Back to the future: Implications for the field of HRM of the multistakeholder perspective proposed 30 years ago, *Human Resource Management*, 54, 427-438.

B.E. Kaufman, *Evolution of strategic HRM as seen through two founding books: a 30th anniversary perspective on development of the field. Human Resource Management*, 2015, Vol 54. No 3, Pp 389-407.

[16] Ibid.

3. Method

Based on semi-structured interviews with eleven inclusive employers and two plenary meetings for employers on the participation Act (70 organisations), we developed a theoretical model for strategic inclusive HRM. This model was later tested with 43 employers / HR managers in six focus groups (three focus groups were held in June 2015 and October 2015. In each focus group, the same questions were discussed with the participants.

During each focus group discussion, one researcher chaired the group, while another researcher took notes. The participants filled out a short questionnaire, providing background information on the organisation size, their attitude towards hiring the target group (i.e. positive, we already hire X employees with reduced work capacity, positive, neutral, or negative), the challenges they experience with regard to the Participation Act, and the extent to which organisational climate is suitable for PRWC. Furthermore, we conducted interviews with seven employers in the industrial sector who are currently not willing and/or unable to offer jobs to people with reduced work a capacity in the short term (July, 2015). The interviews were based on the same questions as were used in the focus groups.

All of the interviews, expert meetings and focus groups were audiotaped, transcribed verbatim or pre-structured notes were taken. To analyse the data, the coding process of Dougherty (2004)[17] was used for the exploratory interviews. In the open coding phase, codes were added to the transcripts. In the axial coding phase, the raw data was ordered in a matrix allowing for a systematic analysis of the data, arranged by respondent and theme. In the selective coding phase, a storyline was built by relating all remaining categories to the selected core categories and by systematically validating the suggested relationships. While analysing the answers given in the focus group, the responses were enriched with background information from the questionnaires.

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[17] D. Dougherty, *Organizing practices in services: Capturing practice-based knowledge for innovation. Strategic Organization*, 2004, 2(1), 35-64.

4. Results: factors that play a role in the employers' process of (not) offering jobs to PRWC

From our study, different factors emerged that influence the employers' perspective on the process of hiring and retaining PRWC. Employers make their deliberate choice as to whether or not to hire vulnerable people. The following different factors play a role:

1. *External Context*

Contextual factors, such as legislation, economic and political trends, labour market developments, competition, changes in technology, social, and cultural factors, affect the configuration of the organisation, the organisational strategy and current management issues. In other words, exogenous factors influence the business strategy. Where the Dutch government intends legislation to have a direct effect on the intention to hire PRWC, we did not find a single organisation that did not include other factors in their decision to hire the target group. However, organisations that currently do not employ PRWC have started to look for information on how to hire PRWC. Many employers mention the economic crisis as a reason why they do not hire PRWC. Another contextual factor that influences the probability of hiring PRWC is industry type, which is illustrated by studies from Domzal et al. (2008)[18], Van Horssen et al. (2011)[19] and Martin (2004)[20]. In a sample of British and Danish employers, Martin (2004)[21] found that firms with a blue-collar, low-paid workforce were significantly more likely to hire PRWC, which was also confirmed by employer organisations in our sample.

2. *Organisational Strategy, Mission and Strategic Decision-making*

Organisations develop an organisational strategy, formulate their mission and make strategic decisions in order to show their value to their clients or costumers. Each organisation seeks a form of competitive advantage

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[18] C. Domzal C., A. Houtenville, R. Sharma, *Survey of employer perspectives on the employment of people with disabilities: technical report*, 2008, (prepared under contract to the Office of Disability and Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labour). McLean, VA: CESSI.

[19] C.P. Van Horssen, M, Blommesteijn, F.A.Rosing, *Een Wajonger in mijn bedrijf: Een onderzoek naar de attitude, ervaringen en bereidheid van werkgevers om een Wajonger in dienst te nemen en te houden.*, 2011, Retrieved from www.uwv.nl.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

through a specific business strategy. Competitive advantage can be achieved through cost leadership, product or services differentiation features (niche), or by developing capabilities that are hard to duplicate by competitors (Thompson et al., 2005)[22]. Organisations can differentiate themselves on productivity, quality, innovation and corporate social responsibility. The external context leads to organisational and strategic HR decisions such as restructuring, outsourcing or growth scenarios. Some business strategies are more likely to acquire sustained competitive advantage through hiring PRWC than others, depending on the outcomes the business strives for. Hiring PRWC could be at odds with an organisation's efforts to improve productivity (Martin, 2004)[23]. In our study, economic turbulence is mentioned by many employers as a reason why creating jobs for the target group is not possible. They were either engaged in large restructuring programs in which people were laid off, had vacancy freezes or expected to downsize in the near future. As a consequence of lean management, many low qualified jobs have disappeared, replaced by automation, or outsourced. Organisations do not want to make an exception to hire the target group during periods of economic downturn. Although inclusive employers also struggle with this issue, they are more determined to make it happen. An employer with a positive attitude realized that its business values of societal engagement made it imperative to be a frontrunner in hiring the target group. Although there was a hiring freeze, an exception was made for PRWC using the credibility argument.

3. *Organisational Configuration*

The characteristics of an organisation also play a role in offering jobs to vulnerable people. Larger organisations have more (re)placement opportunities when illness or disability occurs. They also make greater use of instruments such as wage subsidies, and wage dispensation. Analyses conducted on SCP[24] data show that one third of employers with over two hundred employees use these tools, compared to five percent of small employers who employ five to nine employees (Borghouts et al., 2015)[25]. Also an indirect effect of organisation size was found; a larger

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[22] A. Thompson, A. Strickland, & J.E. Gamble, *Crafting and executing strategy: The quest for competitive advantage-concept and cases.*, 2005, (4th.ed.). McGraw-Hill, Irwin.
[23] Ibid.
[24] SCP is a government agency which conducts research into the social aspects of all areas of government policy.
[25] Ibid.

organisation is more likely to have a larger HR-department and a more sophisticated HRM. Smaller organisations that do not have an HR-manager or have mainly operational HRM, experience difficulties in meeting the obligations in the Participation Act (employers meetings). They lack expertise, time, and resources to recruit the target group. Multinationals face the challenge of alignment with head office policies; the "headcount" business principle makes it impossible to hire people for part-time jobs.

The interviews and focus groups show that the job characteristics in the organisation have an impact on the perception of being able to offer jobs to the target group. Organisations with a high skilled workforce in the banking, logistics and technology industries experience difficulties finding suitable candidates. An employer's organisation noticed that organisations with mainly low qualified jobs, experienced fewer problems. Jobs that require good social and communication skills are perceived as not suitable for PRWC. A care organisation that takes care of elderly with severe impairments explained that physically heavy work with clients with severe behavioural problems cannot be done by people who themselves lack social and communication skills or have physical disabilities.

Organisations with HR issues like high absenteeism, low mobility and turnover, high average age of their workforce in combination with physically heavy work, struggle to keep their current workforce vital and employable. They need sheltered workplaces for their employees who are dropping out.[26] Offering jobs to the target group is, in their view, an extra burden.

4. *Dominant Coalition*

A positive attitude of key stakeholders within organisations regarding PWRC can facilitate the process of hiring the social policy target group. Stakeholders are "groups and individuals who can affect the organisation, and is about managerial behaviour taken in response to those groups and individuals" (Freeman, 1984, p. 48)[27]. Organisations can pay attention to only a limited number of stakeholders (Jamali, 2008)[28], making some

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[26] In the Netherlands, employers are obliged to reintegrate sick employees and continue paying the wage for up to two years in the event of employee's illness.

[27] R.E. Freeman, *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, 1984, Pitman: Boston.

[28] D. Jamali, A stakeholder approach to corporate social responsibility: A fresh perspective into theory and practice. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2008, 82, 213-231.

stakeholders highly influential (Davis & Thompson, 1994)[29], whereas others have a limited effect on corporate behaviour (Lee, 2011)[30]. These key stakeholders are called the "Dominant coalition" in Paauwe's (2004)[31] Contextual Based Human Resource Theory (CBHR). While the composition differs within each organisation, examples of actors in this 'dominant coalition' include top and line management, works council or trade union representatives, human resources, shareholders, and governmental actors. Each actor has its own values, beliefs, norms, and attitudes shaped by personal and organisational circumstances. The actor's view may be based on previous experiences or personal affiliation with the target group. Employers who previously hired disabled people and had positive experiences with these individuals in the workplace are more likely to offer jobs to handicapped persons. In addition, employers or managers who knew someone with a disability in their personal life are more likely to offer jobs to the target group (Borghouts & Pennings, 2008: p.73)[32]. Interaction between the actors and a shared view regarding hiring the target group will influence the strategic choice. Our study shows that many inclusive employers have a personal affiliation with the target group, because they know somebody with a disability. Inclusive owners then convince the rest of the organisation and have the power to hire PRWC. Organisations that do not intend to hire indicate an order by top management is the most effective way to encourage the hiring of PRWC. Carrying out the Participation Act is mainly considered to be the responsibility of HR; HR traditionally has a difficult time convincing top and line management, and colleagues without top level support. HR refers to a number of governmental policies that add up to an impossible number of requirements, such as Social Return on Investment (SROI), reintegration and paying salaries of sick employees for two years. The importance of HR's role in convincing top and line management was stressed in the employer meetings. If HR is not an advocate and/or top management feels no affiliation with the target group, it is hard to make it work, which is illustrated in the interviews of the employers who do not intend to hire the target group. There is a large gap between good

[29] G.F. Davis & T.A. Thompson, *A Social Movement Perspective on Corporate Control. Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1994, 39, 141–173.

[30] M.D.P. Lee, *Configuration of External Influences: The Combined Effects of Institutions and Stakeholders on Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies. Journal of Business Ethics*, 2011, 102, 281–298.

[31] J. Paauwe, *HRM and performance*. 2004, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[32] I. Borghouts & F. Pennings, *Arbeidsparticipatie van jonggehandicapten. Een onderzoek naar Europese systemen en praktijken*, 2008, OSA/IVA, Tilburg

intentions and action. A bank with social roots refers to how everyone in the organisation agrees that it is good to employ the target group, but no one takes the first step, because they personally do not want to experience the negative effects; managers fear bad assessments due to lower productivity and turnover. This is confirmed by other organisations. Inclusive organisations that have natural support from top management also have problems with the current law. This law does not cover all PRWC, only the ones currently receiving social benefits. Focusing on this particular group while disregarding the efforts made for other groups raises negative sentiments among the inclusive employers.

5. HRM Perspective; Economic Rationality, Employee Wellbeing and Social Legitimacy

The outcomes of strategic HRM occur at three different levels: the organisation/employer, the employee, and society. The *organisations'* hesitance to offer jobs to the target group may be explained from the predominant focus of HRM on economic rationality (Boxall & Purcell, 2011)[33]. Hiring PRWC may be viewed as not strategic; employers do not associate these workers with outcomes like high performance, low absenteeism and flexibility (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2005)[34]. This belief is also supported by empirical studies that show that employers assume that the skills, productivity, employability and motivation of the target group do not meet the employer's criteria (Martin, 2004)[35]. The impact of HRM on *employee* wellbeing and health, such as engagement, stress, work-life balance and employability is also the subject of research (Van De Voorde et al., 2012)[36]. HRM research on outcomes at the *societal level* (e.g. employment growth, sustainability, inclusion, justice, social trust and reputation of the organisation, and other more indirect effects such as lower crime rates) is however virtually non-existent. These principles provide social legitimacy inside and outside the organisation. Social legitimacy is "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within the socially constructed systems of norms, values, beliefs and definitions" (Suchman,

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[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] K. van de Voorde, J. Paauwe & M. van Veldhoven. *Employee Well-being and the HRM-Organizational Performance Relationship: A review of Quantitative Studies, International Journal of Management Reviews*, 2012, 14, 391-407.

1995, p. 574)[37] and is reflected in values and attitudes like participation, customization, ethics, employee rights and CSR. The idea of sustainable HRM to create social legitimacy is reflected in some SHRM articles (e.g. De Prins et al., 2014)[38]. This literature pays attention to other benefits rather than just economic benefits. It includes sustainable management of staff and "Green HR policies". This HR policy perspective encourages sustainable use of resources within organisations, is respectful of the environment, and/or encourages employee volunteerism. This literature covers the spirit of creating social legitimacy, but is restricted to SHRM for the current workforce. Drawing from theories on labour market economics (Schmid & Gazier, 2002)[39], Flexicurity (Wilthagen & Tros, 2004; Bekker & Wilthagen, 2008)[40], CSR (Porter & Kramer 2011; 2006)[41], business ethics and sustainable HRM (De Prins, 2014)[42], we introduced the concept *'Inclusive HRM'* which refers to HRM activities that aim for social legitimacy through creating smooth transitions from inactivity to work, job-to-job and school-to-work (Freese & Borghouts, 2015)[43]. Inclusive HRM refers to a broad perspective of HRM, extending beyond the boundaries of the organisation and considering people who are not (yet) part of the organisation, as valuable resources whose interests need to be taken into account. If the organisation's mission statement includes explicit core business values

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[37] M.C. Suchman, M.C., *Managing legitimacy: strategic and institutional approaches. Academy of Management Review,* 1995, 20, 571-610.

[38] P. de Prins, L. van Beirendonck, A. de Vos, J. Segers. *Sustainable HRM: Bridging theory and practice through the 'Respect Openness Continuity (ROC)'-model. Management Revue*, 2014, 25, 263-284.

[39] G. Schmid & B. Gazier B. (2002). *The Dynamics of Full Employment: Social Integration Through Transnational Labour Markets.* Cheltenham, UK and Brookfield, US: Edward Elgar.

[40] T. Wilthagen & F. Tros. *The concept of 'flexicurity': A new approach to regulating employment and labour markets. Transfer: European Review of labour and research*, 2004, 10, 166-186.

S. Bekker T. Wilthagen. *Europe's pathways to flexicurity: Lessons presented from and to the Netherlands. Intereconomics*, 2008, 43, 68-73.

[41] M.E. Porter & M.R. Kramer, *Creating Shared Value: How to Reinvent Capitalism – and Unleash a Wave of Innovation and Growth, Harvard Business Review*, 2011, p 63-70.

M.E. Porter & M.R. Kramer, *Strategy & Society, The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility*, 2006, Harvard Business Review.

[42] Ibid.

[43] C. Freese & I. Borghouts, *Offering jobs to workers with reduced work capacity within organizations: An Inclusive HRM model*, 2015, working paper, prepared for the Second HR Division International Conference (HRIC) "Highlighting context and concepts in HRM", February 20-22, 2016 Sydney, Australia.

that refer to societal impact, CSR, sustainability or inclusiveness, it is more likely that the HRM-approach is aimed at social legitimacy. We assume that organisations with a social legitimacy HRM perspective have a more positive attitude towards hiring PRWC than those organisations that do not explicitly mention this in their HR strategy. This social legitimacy perspective is important as it helps to avoid the standard performance measures used to judge whether the employment relationship is beneficial. However, organisations with an economic rationality HR perspective may also decide that hiring PRWC is a strategic choice. Human capital is a source of competitive advantage (Delery & Shaw, 2001)[44]. In the interviews, the inclusive employers indicate social legitimacy motives are dominant in their decision to hire the target group. They want to give PRWC a chance to contribute to society, and this is considered a sufficient outcome of the employment relationship. The majority of organisations with a strong focus on economic rationality sympathize with the good intentions of integrating PRWC into the labour market. However, from a business perspective they believe it is a negative development that increases their costs. Some HR managers argue – with the quota levy in mind - that they are prepared to consider whether the target group can fill future vacancies. Minor adjustments are possible, but the essence is the target group must have the knowledge and skills to fill the vacancy. Inclusive organisations agree that jobs should not be created for vulnerable groups either as this practice runs counter to developments such as downsizing or the introduction of lean management.

6. Business Case

Barney's (1991)[45] Resource-Based Theory of Competitive Advantage states that competitive advantage derives from resources that are rare, valuable, difficult to replicate, and non-substitutable. With regard to the human capital of PRWC, competitive advantage may stem from three sources:

   (1) these workers may have special talents, that enhance person-job fit, such as sustained enthusiasm for repetitive work, eye for detail or loyalty;

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[44] J.E. Delery & J.D. Shaw. *The strategic management of people in work organizations: review, synthesis, and extension.* 2011, Paper presented at the Academy of Management Meetings.
[45] J.B. Barney, *Firm resources and sustainable competitive advantage. Journal of Management*, 1991, 17, 99-120.

(2) cost-effectiveness, through (tax) benefits for employers or reduced sickness risks through special insurances; or

(3) benefits accrued from diversity and CSR (Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012)[46]. CSR may create a competitive advantage through differentiation from competitors by building a better image and reputation (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990)[47], and creating consumer goodwill and positive employee attitudes and behaviour (Brammer et al., 2007; Siperstein et al., 2005)[48].

Recruiting PRWC might serve a low cost strategy, but economic benefit can also be derived, through customer identification with the organisation or because the organisation serves certain customer groups better by designing products or services that better suit the target group (Celik, 2015)[49]. SROI was mentioned as an opportunity to define sustained competitive advantage through hiring the target group by several inclusive organisations and employers with a focus on economic rationality. Organisations dealing with governmental stakeholders are required to adhere to SROI. SROI is a way to convince line management to hire the target group. Several respondents argued that if the organisation did not comply with the SROI requirements, the organisation would lose future business. Another competitive advantage may be acquired from recruiting workers from different labour market segments, in times of labour shortages. Due to the ageing workforce, especially in the industrial sector, several HR-managers expect difficulties to find staff with the right qualifications. However, the HR-managers with a negative attitude towards hiring doubt whether the target group is able to meet the requirements of this future labour demand. Within the Guaranteed Job Agreement, employers who fear financial penalties or a negative employer brand might make a more extrinsic choice as most of their competitors

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[46] A. Houtenville & V. Kalargyrou. *People with Disabilities: Employers' Perspectives on Recruitment Practices, Strategies, and Challenges in Leisure and Hospitality*, *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 2012, 53, 40–52.

[47] C. Fombrun & M. Shanley M., *What's in a name? Reputation building and corporate strategy. Academy of Management Journal*, 1990, 33, 233-258.

[48] S. Brammer, A., Millington, B. Rayton. *The contribution of corporate social responsibility to organisational commitment. International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 2007, 18, 1701–1719.

G. Siperstein, N. Romano, A. Mohler, and R. Parker. *A national survey of consumer attitudes towards companies that hire people with disabilities. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 2005, 24, 3-9.

[49] S. Celik, De business case van diversiteit in de publieke context: de verbindende overheid. *Tijdschrift voor HRM,* 2015.

now employ these workers. This may change hiring PRWC to a strategic choice.

7. *Perceived Obstacles: Stereotypes, Risks, Previous Experiences*

Several barriers to offering jobs to PRWC are found in literature; perceptions of (1) lack of knowledge, social or physical skills, and/or abilities; (2) low productivity and/or higher labour, accommodation, and health costs; (3) safety concerns; (4) the risk of litigation in case of contract termination; (5) negative coworker reactions; and (6) negative customer reactions (Colella, 1997; Martin, 2004; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008), Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012)[50]. In many cases, these negative stereotypes of PRWC are refuted by empirical data (Colella et al., 1997; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008)[51]. Employees with disabilities have comparable or even lower rates of accident, absenteeism and turnover. There are no performance or productivity differences, and no negative customer reactions. Employers who have hired PRWC change their attitudes after hiring, as was demonstrated by Van Horssen et al. (2011)[52]. Overall, employees with disabilities perform equally or better than expected, with regard to productivity, motivation, absenteeism, supervision, employability, and team participation. However, 50% of respondents indicate that employees performed worse on communication skills, flexibility and independence. Hiring the target group is perceived as a cost increase by the majority of employers who have a neutral/negative attitude towards hiring vulnerable people. While financial compensation can be provided through wage subsidies, they take extra costs into consideration such as the additional costs for supervising and extra administration. Furthermore, organisations that have a negative attitude toward hiring PRWC question whether the target group can meet the job requirements. Even with low qualified work, employees need to work accurately, independently, under time pressure and they have to follow

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[50] A. Colella, A.S. DeNisi, & A. Varma. *Appraising the performance of employees with disabilities: A review and model. Human Resource Management Review*, 1997, 7, 27-53.
Ibid.
M.L. Lengnick-Hall, P.M. Gaunt and M. Kulkarni. *Overlooked and underutilized: people with disabilities are an untapped human resource, Human Resource Management*, 2008, Vol 47, No 2 Pp. 255-273
Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

safety regulations. These organisations fear negative reactions of co-workers and customers, especially when people have disabilities that are not visible to the external world. Virtually all employers, except inclusive employers, admit that they lack knowledge of the characteristics, qualifications and limitations of the target group. Inclusive employers come up with several direct and indirect positive contributions of PRWC, such as low absenteeism rates and high involvement. In contrast, previous negative experiences with PRWC may strengthen negative attitudes towards these workers. Although inclusive employers tend to look at the positive contributions, this does not imply that they are able to retain the target group. Inclusive employers indicate that it requires a lot of effort and that guidance of the PRWC and their colleagues is essential. Organisations are not always discouraged by negative experiences, but may also learn from them in order to avoid pitfalls in the future.

8. *External Resources & Policy Instruments*

Governments can introduce several social policy instruments to break down the expected barriers with regard to hiring PRWC. Governments can provide wage subsidies, no risk policies and external support (job coaching and advice). Regarding the financial concerns, Graffam et al. (2002)[53] argue that organisations want the employment outcome to be cost-efficient. Attractive governmental measures and social benefits need to counteract employer costs regarding extra supervision as an example. However, the effect of financial incentives does not meet the policy expectations of an increasing willingness to hire PRWC (Borghouts et al., 2015)[54]. These measures, although necessary, only indirectly support the strategic calculation that the business case of hiring PRWC is not negative. Moreover, for policy instruments to have an impact, knowledge as to where to find the resources and the people is necessary. Financial incentives offered by the government are a prerequisite rather than an effective way to persuade employers to hire the Participation Act target. Our study shows that many employers that do not (yet) employ the target group struggle with obstacles set forth in the new Dutch law. Smaller organisations, in particular, consider it to be an administrative burden and find it hard to find information. These organisations lack knowledge of

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[53] J. Graffam, A. Shinkfield, K. Smith, & U. Polzin, *Factors that influence employer decisions in hiring and retaining a person with a disability. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 2012, 17(3), 175-181.
[54] Ibid.

the target group and do not know where to search. They complain about the lack of external support of employment services of the municipalities. They illustrate how they registered a job vacancy for the target group on special websites, and no candidates were available. These employers feel frustrated that they are not supported and they threaten to give up. In contrast, inclusive employers do not report problems with regard to recruiting the target group. They point at multiple platforms to contact PRWC. Two larger organisations found that because of their size, they automatically attracted people from the target group. Wage subsidies, no risk policies and subsidies for adjustments to the work place are important, in order to compensate for the disadvantages, productivity loss and risks, although this by itself is not sufficient. These measures alone do not convince employers - who do not want to hire the target group - to change their mind.

9. *External Inclusive HRM-activities*

Some HR practices are specifically suitable for PRWC. Larger organisations and organisations with many older workers are more likely to already engage in "inclusive" HRM activities such as job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001)[55], job carving (Condon et al., 2004)[56], or measures to enhance work-life balance or health, and an inclusive talent management approach (Van Woerkom & Meyers, 2015)[57]. These inclusive HRM activities enhance the person-job fit of PRWC and stimulate the chances of successful employment of PRWC. However, in order to create an organisational culture in which PRWC blossom, some additional HR activities need to be developed. Gilbride et al. (2003)[58] identified factors related to building an inclusive organisational culture in which people with disabilities feel respected. These factors include HR policies to ensure a good person-job match, capabilities of the employer to supervise people with disabilities, and company engagement in a community rehabilitation program. The external network may provide external job coaching and

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[55] A. Wrzesniewski & J.E. Dutton, Crafting a job: *Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work. The Academy of Management Review*, 2001, 26, 179-201.

[56] C. Condon, L. Einein-Donovan, M. Gilmore, & M. Jordan, *When existing jobs don't fit. A guide to job creation.* Institute for Community Inclusion, 2004, 17, 1-6.

[57] M. van Woerkom & M.C. Meyers, Effects of a Strengths-Based Psychological Climate on Positive Affect and Job Performance. *Human Resource Management*, 2015, 54, 1, 81-103.

[58] D. Gilbride, R. Stensrud, D. Vandergoot, & K. Golden. Identification of the characteristics of work environments and employers open to hiring and accommodating people with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 2003. 66, 17–23.

advice on recruitment. Houtenville & Kalargyrou (2012)[59] constructed a list of hiring strategies for hiring PRWC, including activities such as flexible work schedules, disability awareness training, training staff, visible top management commitment, mentoring, using a specialized recruiting source, job coaching, assistive technology, development of a targeted recruitment program, on-site consultation or technical assistance, a disability targeted internship program, a centralized accommodation fund and reassignment. In our study inclusive employers mention additional HR activities that contribute to successful and sustained employment of PRWC. These are HR activities related to the *operational level* and include special activities during recruitment and selection, integration, coaching, and job carving. Two large organisations have appointed special inclusive HR-managers. In the recruitment phase, these HR-managers look at regular vacancies to extract some elements that may be obstacles to the target group (e.g. drop requirements like 'fulltime' and 'overtime'). In the selection phase, a good person-job and organisation fit is essential. With regard to integration in the team, it is essential to give honest information about the skills, abilities and knowledge of the candidate. Coaching during integration is of the utmost importance and is stressed by every inclusive employer in our study. The employee needs at least one internal mentor to attend to possible start-up problems. External job coaching is also essential. In inclusive employment relationships a job will be composed of tasks that optimally fit the talents of the employee, and priority is placed on the person instead of the job (job carving). Job carving requires a different approach and view towards job and function design, which runs counter to the regular approach in organisations. Organisations that do not employ PRWC indicate that most managers have a 'function-oriented' perspective. In their view, functions consist of a number of tasks and nothing can be extracted from it. Also objections to this approach may come from HR, as this may run counter to the HRM instruments in use.

Based on literature review and results from the qualitative study we developed a conceptual Inclusive HRM model (see figure 1). It provides an overview of the many factors that are included in the decision making process of employers hiring PRWC, indicating that it is a very complex matter

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[59] Ibid.

Figure 1. Strategic Inclusive HRM model
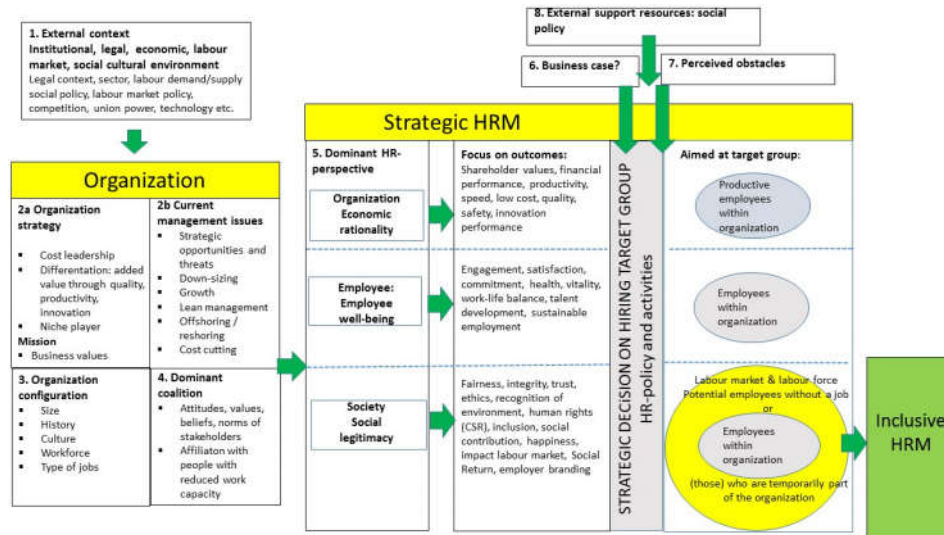
5. Strategic HRM Perspectives and Operational Inclusive Approaches

Organisations with different HR strategies make different decisions with regard to hiring PWRC. From each HR perspective different solutions can be devised which fit the objectives of the Participation Act and the organisational strategy. In this section, we focus on the relationship between the dominant HR strategy (factor 5 in our model) and possible approaches at the operational level. Companies that manage economic rationality are mainly focused on organisational performance and low cost. Possible operational approaches with regard to the objectives of the Participation Act are to invest in strategic Human Capital Management. The wage value of the disabled can be determined based on their labour productivity. Public Employment Services or other governmental bodies can provide financial compensation, such as wage subsidies or wage dispensation. Public organisations increasingly work with SROI obligations in procurement procedures. When companies do not make an effort to hire the Participation Target group and do not meet the requirements of public clients in procurement processes, they might lose business. Companies can also decide to transfer the imposed obligations to their suppliers. After a cost-benefit analysis, a company can conclude that it is not financially attractive to hire the Participation Target group. They intend to pay future fines. While non-participation may not contribute to the objective of the participation Act, this behaviour can be a strategic HR decision from a business perspective. Organisations with an employee wellbeing HR perspective respond to their affinity with the target group. Research shows that employees are very positive when their employer intends to hire people from the target group (Celik, 2015)[1]. Hiring PRWC contributes to the employer brand and engagement in the workplace. Possible operational HR approaches that fit this HR perspective are job carving and extra coaching. The HR perspective of social legitimacy offers multiple potential operational HR approaches regarding the Participation Act target group. These approaches range from self-engaging, collaborating with other companies with the aim of creating work, insourcing or reshoring work. It can also go further, for example, a company may feel responsible for the entire chain and may expect their suppliers and customers to also meet the Participation Act objectives. Other possibilities are to provide jobs in the Participation Act: hiring through temporary employment agencies, group secondment, privatization of Sheltered Work place companies, joint ventures between Sheltered Work place companies and enterprises, or self-initiated social enterprises.

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[1]Ibid.

To look for inclusive HRM strategies that meet the requirements of the Participation Act, different solutions will be chosen by employers who differ in their dominant HR perspective (see figure 2). In an optimal fit between ALMP and Strategic HRM, ALMP differ for the different dominant HRM perspectives.

Figure 2. Strategic HRM perspectives and operational inclusive approaches
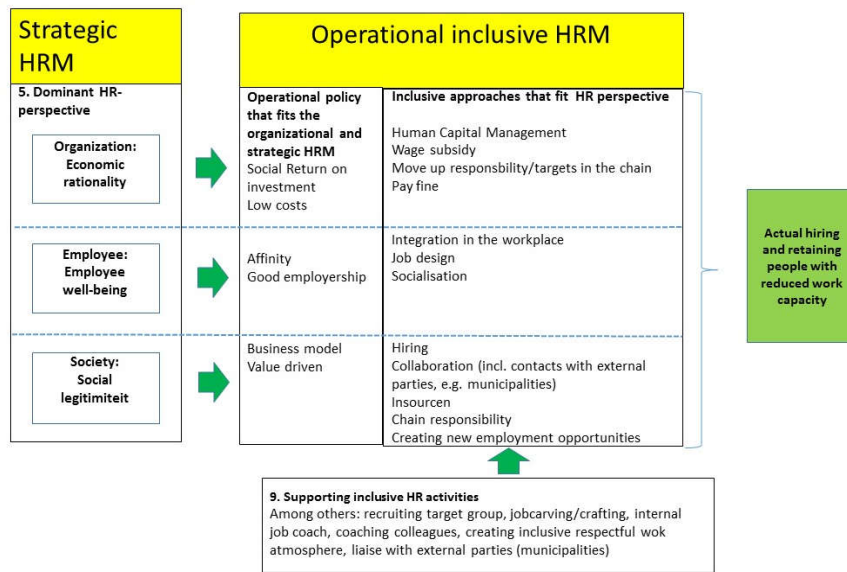
6. Innovative Active Labour Market Policies

In the previous section we argue that ALMP may be innovative if they respond and align to explanations for organisational and strategic HR decisions. Innovation in ALMP may be achieved by broadening the scope of ALMP by involving explicitly the demand side and responding to the organisational external context, strategy and mission, configuration, dominant coalition, strategic HRM perspective, business case and organisations' perceived obstacles. In this section, we address innovative ALMP elements emerging from the qualitative data and literature.

Because of lean management and the crisis (external context), many low qualified jobs have disappeared. Heidenreich argues that during periods of cyclical upswing employers create jobs more easily and the crisis may endanger inclusiveness and strengthening labour market segmentation (Heidenreich,

2015)[2]. Innovative ALMP can respond to organisational and strategic HR decisions and governments may consider supporting employers in reshoring as a potential source of renewed job creation. This may be of interest, particularly in hard hit sectors such as manufacturing. The question arises how ALMP can contribute to inclusive HRM for employers who face difficulties and try to rebuild themselves.

The sustainability, vitality, and employability of organisations' current workforce (organisational configuration) is very important. Organisations need sheltered workplaces, as Dutch employers are obliged to reintegrate (and pay) sick employees for two years (external context). At the same time, the pension age has risen which increases the number of older workers, who sometimes need to be protected from working in shifts. SROI and Participation Act requirements add to this challenge. Smaller organisations, in particular, (organisation configuration) do not have more than one workplace with low qualifications. Organisations experiencing or expecting labour shortages will probably not consider recruiting new employees from the target group. Most employers regard PRWC not suitable for these jobs. Providing them with innovative views on job carving to utilize the potential of current staff to the max is more likely to pay off. Many employers lack knowledge of the characteristics, qualifications and limitations of the target group, and experience a lack of external support in finding the right candidates and need customized advice. Providing information and advice remains an important policy measure. Welfare states may consider to act as a 'Knowledge-partner' for employers and introduce specific programs for employers in their ALMP.

Although none of the employers indicated that they hired PRWC because of the new Act, it does stimulate employers to think about hiring PRWC. Free trial placements are considered an important policy instrument to ensure person–job–organisation fit. Most employers are sceptical about the Participation Act, even most inclusive employers. These employers feel demotivated by the new regulations, as the law only covers PRWC that receive social benefits, and employees employed after 2013. These employers now face financial penalties, because they are forerunners, which raise negative sentiments. The government runs the risk of losing role model organisations. It is important to pay attention to the negative effects of the growing number of different governmental regulations that add up to a combination of requirements that makes it almost impossible to run businesses. Organisations hedge to financial and non-financial risks. Covering risks, such as financial and

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[2] M. Heidenreich, *The end of the honeymoon: The increasing differentiation of (long-term) unemployment risks in Europe. Journal of European Social Policy*, 2015, 25(4) 393-413.

non-financial risks, that employers face when hiring the target group may be a useful strategy for innovative ALMPs.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, we opened the black box of employers' decision-making process in hiring the target group combining it with consequences for innovative ALMP. This may inspire welfare states to adjust ALMP to create a better alignment with business strategies increasing the chances of more sustainable employment relationships. Organisations with different strategic HR perspectives make different decisions with regard to hiring PRWC. In both economic rationality and social legitimacy approaches hiring PRWC may fit the business strategy, however their motives differ. The strongest motivation for the economic rationality approach occurs in industries in which SROI is required, and this argument is used as a lever to introduce PRWC into the organisation. Our strategic inclusive HRM model gives an overview of many factors that are included in the decision making process of employers, indicating that it is a very complex matter. We also related these factors to the different HR approaches and demonstrated how hiring strategies of PRWC fit these approaches. For example, the HR approach that fits with a social legitimacy perspective may result in solutions such as collaboration with other organisations or insourcing options in view of sustainable employment for PRWC. Integration, job carving or coaching could serve as possible routes for HR approaches aimed at creating wellbeing, whereas SROI, financial incentives or the avoidance of paying financial penalties are linked to an economic rationality HR perspective. It is important that the chosen method for integration of PRWC fits within the organisation, both in the production or service process and the structure of the organisation. In order to exploit a broader range of labour market participation effects governments can consider additional interesting, ongoing, and innovative ALMP interventions. Examples of possible ALMP interventions include:

- introducing services developed for employers in reshoring as a potential source of renewed job creation;
- providing information and advice services to employers;
- developing specific structural financial programs that fit employers' needs;
- reducing perceived employers' financial and non-financial risks when hiring the target group.

Acknowledgments

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Mental Health at Work: A Review of Interventions in Organizations

Fabiola Silvaggi and Mariella Miraglia[1]

Abstract. The purpose of the review was to identify and critically analyse the organizational interventions aimed at improving employees' mental health, in order to detect best practices across organizations and to uncover possible gaps. Through electronic and manual searches, 7,995 articles were initially found. Inclusion criteria were set to select those studies describing interventions conducted in the organizational context and focused on employee mental health. By examining titles, abstracts and full texts, 14 papers were included. These studies covered a variety of interventions and approaches, such as group therapy, work-life balance programs, and manager-level interventions. Additionally, three studies assessed the effectiveness of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) aimed at enhancing individuals' mental health via counselling. The interventions are described in details and, drawing upon the realist evaluation approach, the mechanisms responsible for their success (or failure) are also identified.

1. Introduction

The nature of modern work is changing continuously and quickly, mainly due to factors related to globalization of markets and development of information technology (IT), with important implications for employees' wellbeing and health, including mental health conditions[2]. For instance, the new IT systems have favoured more flexible working arrangements, such as telecommuting[3], affecting the traditional relationship between workers and the workplace. If some individuals may enjoy the freedom and higher control associated with working from home, to others the isolation and related loss of social support may cause stress and increase the risk of developing mental health conditions. Epidemiological reviews and clinical studies across Europe indicate that employment and work play a central role in sustaining mental health[4]. Although it is difficult to estimate the exact number of employees struggling with mental health problems in the workplace, their spread seems to be high and sizable. For example, the 18.2% of people employed in the United States experiment mental disorders, which have been reported to decrease their work performance[5]. A German study found that the 5.9% of lost workdays is ascribable to the inability to work due to mental health problems, and it appears to be an increase[6]. The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health documented an even more alarming situation[7], with 1 in 6 of British employees affected by depression, anxiety or other mental health conditions, and about 1 in 5 when dependency on alcohol and drug is included as well.

The workplace can negatively affect workers' mental health by intensifying an existing problem or contributing to the development of mental health issues via the exposure to excessive work stressors. From an individual perspective, the costs of mental health illness are obviously elevated; it can lead to a

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[2] «The term mental health problem is used to describe symptoms associated with a mental disorder, but which are not of sufficient severity to be diagnosed as a mental disorder. For example, stress results in a number of symptoms associated with mental disorders, including distress and feelings of not coping». World Health Organization, *Mental Health Policies and programmes in the workplace*, 2005.

[3] R. S. Grajendan, D. A. Harrison, *The good, the bad, and the unknown about telecommuting: Meta-analysis of psychological mediators and individual consequences*, in Journal of Applied Psychology, 2007, Vol. 92, 1524-1541.

[4] M. Liimatainen, P. Gabriel, *Mental health in the workplace. Situation analysis: United Kingdom*, in International Labour Office, 2000.

[5] R. C. Kessler, R. G. Frank, *The impact of psychiatric disorders on work loss days*, in Psychological medicine, 1997, Vol. 27, n. 4, 861-873.

[6] M. Liimatainen, P. Gabriel, , *op. cit.*, 2000.

[7] Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, *Mental Health at Work: Developing the Business Case*, Sainsbury Institute for Mental Health, London, 2007, Policy Paper 8.

reduced quality of life, have significant economic and social impacts, and expose the employee to stigma and discrimination[8].

However, the pivotal role of workplaces in employees' mental health is not completely understood nor carefully considered to protect and promote positive mental health. As an example, despite the high diffusion of mental illness in UK organizations, nearly half of the employers surveyed by the Sainsbury Centre that their employees do not suffer from a mental health disorder, and nearly 70% estimate that the prevalence ranges between the 0 and 4 per cent[9]. Unfortunately, the organizational costs of such underestimation are higher than expected, since undiagnosed mental illness in the workplace can cause increased absenteeism and turnover, reduced production, and thus decreased profits[10]. For instance, in many developed countries, 35–45% of absenteeism from work is due to mental health problems[11], account for between 5 and 6 million lost working days annually[12]. Moreover, mental illness in the workplace is frequently associated to a quite new-studied phenomenon, continuing to work even when sick[13]. Working while ill has been repeatedly found to account, in the aggregate, more productivity loss than absenteeism. The Sainsbury Centre reports that presenteeism for mental illness cost organization around £605 for every employee in the workforce, or £15.1 billion at the national level per year. Presentees, in fact, are not able perform at the usual standards, can make more numerous and serious errors, and in safety violations and accidents[14]. Moreover, working while ill can aggravate the effects of the initial illness, intensify exhaustion and worsen mental health conditions, especially anxiety and depression[15].

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[8] World Health Organization, *The World Health Report 2001*, Geneva, 2001.

[9] Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, *op. cit.*, 2007.

[10] T. Cox et al., *Work, employment and mental health in Europe*, in Work & Stress, 2004, Vol. 18, n. 2, 1-7.

[11] World Health Organization, *Investing in mental health*, 2003.

[12] M. Liimatainen, P. Gabriel, *op. cit.*, 2000.

[13] G. Johns, *Presenteeism in the workplace: A review and research agenda*, in Journal of Organizational Behavior, 2010, Vol. 31, 519-542.

[14] K. Niven, N. Ciborowska, *The hidden dangers of attending work while unwell: A survey study of presenteeism among pharmacists*, in International Journal of Stress Management, 2015, Vol. 22, 207–221.

[15] E. Demerouti, P.M. Le Blanc, A.B. Bakker, W.B. Schaufeli, J. Hox, *Present but sick: A three-wave study on job demands, presenteeism and burnout,* in Career Development International, 2009, Vol. 14, 50–68.; L. Lu, S. Q. Peng, H. Yen Lin, C. L. Cooper, *Presenteeism and health over time among Chinese employees: The moderating role of self- efficacy*, in Work and Stress, 2014, Vol. 28, 165-178; K. Skagen, A. M. Collins, *The consequences of sickness presenteeism on health and wellbeing over time: A systematic review*, in Social Science & Medicine, 2016, Vol. 161, 169-177.

How to change this negative scenario? Of course, the first step is promoting top management's awareness of the diffusion of mental illness in the workplace and of the benefit of better mental wellbeing. According to the Sainsbury Centre report, simple efforts to improve the management of mental health at work should enable employers to save 30% or more of the costs (at least £300 per employee). In response to this, employers have started to implement various types of actions, by using multiple methods, such as group therapy, work-life balance programs, or manager-level interventions. Some organizations have set up Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) as initiatives to facilitate employee wellbeing in stressful times. EAPs employee counselling to help them to deal with specific difficulties in the work or life domains with the aim to increase positive work adjustment and productivity. Similar interventions that target the individual with the goal of promoting or acting on his/her mental wellbeing include mentoring, coaching, clinical therapy, and clinical screening. As the focus is on single individual, these can be defined as individual-level interventions. Unfortunately, even for experienced researchers and mental health clinicians, individual-level interventions are often difficult to understand and lack direct, clear, easily-made conclusions about recommended best-evidence interventions.

Alternatively, interventions may involve the entire organization. Organizational-level interventions are «planned, behavioural, science-based actions to remove or modify the causes of job stress»[16]; they focus on the sources that may impair individual mental wellbeing rather than on the best "cure" for the single worker[17]. However, also for organizational-level interventions, the evidence of the impact on employee positive mental health is limited[18]. Indeed, recent meta-analyses have failed to demonstrate a significant effect of organizational-level interventions[19] on psychological, physiological and organizational outcomes, when comparing intervention and control

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[16] A. Mikkelsen, *Methodological challenges in the study of organizational interventions in flexible organizations*, in A. M. Fuglseth, I. A. Kleppe (Eds.), *Anthology for Kjell Grønhaug in celebration of his 70th birthday*, Bergen, 2005, 150–178.

[17] A. D. LaMontagne, T. Keegel, A. M. Louie, A. Ostry, A., P. A. Landsbergis, *A systematic review of the jobstress intervention evaluation literature, 1990–2005*, in International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 2007, Vol. 13, 268–280.

[18] M. Richardson, H. R. Rothstein, *Effects of occupational stress management intervention programs: a meta- analysis*, Journal Occupational Health Psychology, 2008, Vol. 13, n.1, 69-93; J. Ruotsalainen, C. Serra, A. Marine, J. Verbeek, *Systematic review of interventions for reducing occupational stress in health care workers*, Scandivian Journal Work Environment Health, 2008, Vol. 34, n. 3, 169–178; J. J. van der Klink, R. W. Blonk, A. H. Schene, F. J. van Dijk, *The benefits of interventions for work-related stress*, American Journal Public Health, 2001, Vol. 91, n. 2, 270-276.

[19] K. M. Richardson, H. R. Rothstein, *op. cit.*, 2008; J. J. van der Klink, R. W. Blonk, A. H. Schene, F. J. van Dijk, *op. cit.*, 2001.

groups. More recently, an increasing interest is moving towards a realist evaluation perspective for the assessment of the effectiveness of organizational interventions[20]. Such approach aims not only to evaluate the final outcomes of the intervention, but also to understand whether and why an intervention worked or failed, and how it brought about certain outcomes. According to realist evaluation, the focus should be on which factors "work for whom in which circumstances", adopting the Context + Mechanism = Outcome (CMO)-configuration. Briefly, the formula states that the intervention outcomes depend on the interplay between the specific organizational context and the mechanisms responsible for such outcomes. Mechanisms refers to the set of perceptions, reactions, interpretations, decisions and behaviours of the individuals involved in the intervention that emerge during the intervention and can be at the individual, group or organizational levels[21]. These mechanisms are essential to understand the features of the context that can enable (or disenable) the expected intervention outcomes.

In summary, an understanding of the interventions that are effective to sustain employee positive mental health is still missing. This makes more difficult to assist organizations by offering guidance on existing interventions, either at the individual level or at organizational level, and providing them with best practices to orientate future actions.

Through a best-evidence synthesis of previous studies, the purpose of our review is to provide an evaluation and summary of evidence of the overall value of workplace interventions targeting mental health. We will present a description of the different types of interventions that can be used when employees experience or develop mental health conditions. Moreover, drawing upon realist evaluation, a narrative analysis of the mechanisms underlying the effectiveness of an intervention will be performed, to uncover the hindering or facilitating factors for its success (or failure). In doing so, we aim at identifying and summarizing some best practices that organization may follow to address employee mental health problems or, in a prevention perspective, to foster mental wellbeing in the workplace. Finally, the limitations of the interventions and the gaps emerged in the literature will be discussed, opening room for future research directions.

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[20] K. Nielsen, J. S. Abildgaard, *Organizational interventions: A research-based framework for the evaluation of both process and effects*, in Work & Stress, 2013, Vol. 27, 278-297.

[21] A. Lacouture, E. Breton, A. Guichard, V. Ridde, *The concept of mechanism from a realist approach: a scoping review to facilitate its operationalization in public health program evaluation*, in Implementation Science, Vol. 10, 153- 163; R. Pawson, Op. Cit., 2013.

2. Materials and Methods

To identify the studies for our review, we searched the following databases: Google Scholar, PsychInfo, MedLine, ProQuest Business, and Business Source Complete. Different combinations of keywords were used, including: mental health, and interventions or programs or HR practices or policy, and job satisfaction or burnout or strain or stress or work engagement or absenteeism or presenteeism. Moreover, a manual search of the reference lists of relevant articles was conducted. In total, 7,995 studies were identified (1,865 duplicates were eliminated) and their appropriateness for the review was assessed by title, abstract, and full text (see Figure 1).

At each stage of the sifting process, studies were retained only if certain inclusion criteria were satisfied. Overall, papers had to report an intervention, a program or HR practices or policies to address mental health problems or to improve employees' mental health conditions in the workplace. More specifically, studies were considered only if the research design included an intervention related to mental health or if they presented a detailed description of organizational programs, practices, and policies to support individual mental wellbeing. Moreover, they were required to target mental health outcomes directly; thus, research focused on broad stress management initiatives was not incorporated. Furthermore, it was a requirement that studies were conducted within an organizational context; therefore, papers regarding other populations (e.g., students) or describing the evaluation of an intervention within a general working population were excluded. A final inclusion criterion was that papers were published in peer-reviewed journals and in English. Although this could foster publication bias[22], it is impractical to obtain unpublished documents or to gain sufficient information from abstracts (e.g., from conference proceedings) to evaluate the complexity of an organizational intervention. Thus, conference proceedings were excluded.

Figure 1 shows the details of the screening process that led to the retention of 14 independent studies. For these studies, the following information coded: sample size, country, type of organization, type of intervention, intervention description (i.e., aims, hypotheses, action plan), outcome measures, intervention results. Moreover, drawing upon Nielsen and Randal[23] model to evaluate organizational intervention, for each study we extracted the

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[22] M. D. Egger, G. Smith, *Principles of and procedures for systematic reviews*, in M. Egger, G. Smith, D. G. Altman (Eds.), *Systematic reviews in health care: Meta-analysis in context*, in BMJ Publishing Group, 2001, 23-42.

[23] K. Nielsen, R. Randall, *Opening the black box: Presenting a model for evaluating organizational-level interventions*, in European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 2013, Vol. 22, n.5, pp. 601-617.

mechanisms responsible for the success or failure of the intervention and the possible hindering or facilitating contextual factors that could have impacted the intervention outcomes. The articles to code were divided between the two authors, but both authors coded sample size, country, and type of intervention, in order to assess inter-coder reliability. Inter-rata reliability was .71 for sample size; Cohen's $\varkappa$ for the inter- rata agreement was 1.00 for country and .72 for type of intervention. Disagreements were resolved through discussion.

Figure 1 Flow chart of the sifting process

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│  Database search: N = 9846      │
│  Manual search: N = 14          │
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                │        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                └────────│  Titles reviewed            │
                         │  Duplicate removed          │
                         │  (N = 1865)                 │
                         │  N = 7995                   │
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        │  Abstracts reviewed         │
        │  N = 1865                   │
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                └────────│  Full papers reviewed       │
                         │  N = 50                     │
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        │  Full papers included       │
        │  N = 14                     │
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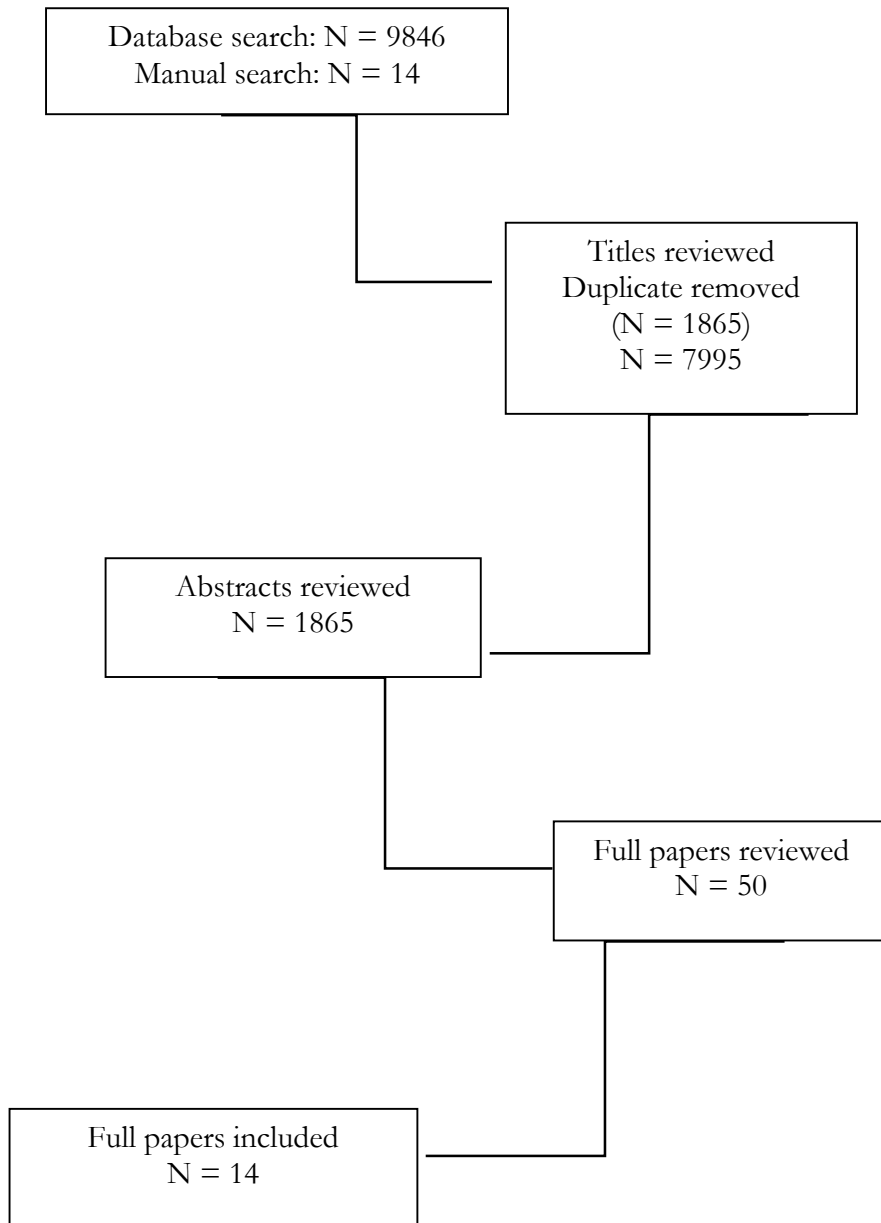
3. Results

The review examined multiple types of interventions that can be used to deal with employees' mental health problems in the workplace. Overall, two different intervention types emerged from the analysis of the 14 retrieved studies, distinguished on the basis of the intervention target: individual interventions, focusing on the single employee or small groups of employees, and organizational interventions, targeting organizational or work conditions. Moreover, Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) were included into the individual category.

3.1 Individual Interventions

Individual interventions refer to those studies conducted at the individual level, focusing on the behaviours of the employee and on his/her personal characteristics, such as the individual skills, abilities, and competencies useful to cope with stress or to manage mental health related issues. Four studies (out of the 14 examined papers) were included into the individual intervention type. Two of these studies describe fitness programs introduced by the organization with the aim to improve the employee's physical health conditions and, in turn, to promote positive mental health. The remaining two studies focus on relaxation and cognitive techniques to increase the individual's ability to manage stressors and, thus, enhance mental wellbeing. The four studies are described below.

Atlantis et al.[24] and De Zeeuw et al.[25] present two interventions oriented at introducing active life styles. The first study investigates the effectiveness of a 24-week aerobic and weight-training exercise program on mental health and perceived quality of life. Three thousand and eight hundred employees participated in the program, following a regime of multi-modal moderate- to high- intensity aerobic exercise such as treadmill, bicycle, stepper, or rowing machines. Moreover, five health education seminars were run to modify employees' perceptions on the costs and benefits of exercise, good nutrition, and ergonomics. Participants were randomized into either treatment or wait-list control groups, and data regarding their mental health and quality of life were collected through the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scales and SF-36

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[24] E. Atlantis E, C. M. Chow, A. Kirby, M. F. Singh, *An effective exercise-based intervention for improving mental health and quality of life measures: a randomized controlled trial*, in Preventive Medicine Journal., 2004, Vol. 39, n.2, 424-434.

[25] E. de Zeeuw, E. Tak, E. Dusseldorp, I. Hendriksen, *Workplace exercise intervention to prevent depression: A pilot randomized controlled trial*, in Mental Health and Physical Activity, 2010, Vol. 3, n. 2, 72-77.

Health Status Survey[26]. The results indicated that the exercise program was effective in the treatment of depressive symptoms as well as in improving stress symptoms and overall quality of life. The success of the intervention was due to the use of combined exercise modalities (versus single modality exercise), which enable individuals to choose the exercise regime that best fit his/her health conditions. Indeed, some individuals may experience limitations to perform physical, work, and social activities due to lack of musculoskeletal fitness (e.g., strength), whereas others may experience these limitations due to low aerobic fitness.

The second study evaluates the feasibility of an exercise program for inactive employees with minimal symptoms of depression, and it tests the size of the effects on participants' mental and physical health. One thousand and seventy-five employees were randomly assigned to a 10-week in- company fitness program with two supervised training sessions per week, or to a control group. Participants' self-reported depression scores, exercise behaviours, and physical health as well as record-based sickness were measured at baseline and 10 weeks after (post-test). The findings indicated that the 86% of participants in the exercise group no longer experienced minimal symptoms of depression, compared to 31% of the participants in the control group. Hence, the intervention was successful in reducing the risk of developing depression in the near future. However, no significant effects on sickness were found.

The study by Krajewski and colleagues[27] provides an example of individual-level interventions that employ relaxation techniques to improve employees' mental health. The paper investigated the impact of diverse forms of spending lunch breaks on the reduction of emotional, mental, motivational, and physical strain. To this purpose, 14 call-center agents were assigned to two types of activities over lunch breaks, specifically to a 20-minute progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) task or to small-talk break groups with colleagues. The PMR technique consisted exercises to tense and release muscle groups, and it was implemented in specific cabins called "silent rooms" in order to maintain participants' intimacy, offer a stressor-free, and protect their privacy. Employees used their allocated break forms during every working day for 6 months. The results showed that PMR during lunch breaks sustainably reduced strain states, and better than should be hyphenated as previously mentioned in this paragraph. The authors explain this finding in the light of the favourable conditions generated by PMR that creates low demand (low emotional, mental, motivational, and physical requirements) and low stressor environment.

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[26] J. E. Ware, K. K. Snow, M. Kosinski, *SF-36 health survey: Manual and interpretation guide*, Quality Metric Incorporated, Lincoln, RI, 2000.

[27] J. Krajewski, R. Wieland, M. Sauerland, *Regulating strain states by using the recovery potential of lunch breaks*, in Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 2010, Vol.15, n. 2, 131-139

Furthermore, physical distance from the workstation (i.e., being in the "silent rooms") guarantees more detachment and distraction from work-related ruminative thoughts, enhancing effective recovery processes. Differently, small talk breaks can still cause some demands and stressors for the employee, due to social pressure from colleagues or the maintenance of ongoing role behaviour, damaging the recovery process.

Finally, the last study demonstrates how individual-level interventions can act on employee skills to cope with the stressors that can create or exacerbate mental illness.

The intervention, conducted by Bond and Bunce[28], randomly allocated 90 volunteers from a media organization to a) an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) group that sought to enhance people's ability to cope with work-related strain through the acceptance of uncomfortable thoughts and emotions; b) an Innovation Promotion Program (IPP) that helped individuals to identify and then innovatively change the causes of occupational strain; or c) a wait-list control group. The results highlighted that both methods (i.e., ACT and IPP) significantly improved general mental health, depression symptoms, and a work-related variable, i.e. propensity to innovate. However, a positive general mental health status was more strongly supported through the ACT, indicating that employees' mental health benefit more from the acceptance of undesirable thoughts and feelings than from a change in the presence of those thoughts or from innovatively modifying work stressors.

3.2 Employee Assistance Programs

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are organizational initiatives to help employees to deal with personal problems, including mental health, substance abuse, various addictions, or family issues. To note EAPs are often contracted out to specialist providers rather than conducted in house by organisations to the employees to create peaceful work environments and enhance the employees' skills in meeting all the challenges that they might face in their personal or professional life. Employee counselling that increase job retention and productivity while reducing turnover, burnout, absenteeism, accident-related disability, and the associated costs. In a special committee appointed by the National Business Group on Health, EAPs were defined as "the human behaviour/psychological experts that provide strategic analysis, guidance, and consultation throughout the organization to [apply] the principles of human

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[28] F. W. Bond e D. Bunce, *Mediators of change in emotion-focused and problem-focused worksite stress management interventions*, in Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 2000, Vol. 5, n.1, 156–163.

behaviour to enhance organizational performance, culture and business success"[29].

The focus is then on the single individual to support. Therefore, they can be considered as a type of individual-level interventions. Below, we describe three studies that address the role of EAPs in promoting mental health at work.

The first study, by Macdonald et al.[30], examines the impact of counselling through EAPs on some work performance indicators, such as absenteeism, worker's compensation claims, and incomplete workdays. The authors analyse the answers to a questionnaire administrated to over 2000 employees of a Canadian company at the end of EAP interventions that provided assistance for a broad range of personal problems, including stress, anxiety, depression, abuse of alcohol and drugs, bereavement, and trauma or critical incident. No significant reductions were found in the records (i.e., absenteeism, incomplete work days, and compensation) of those employees using the EAP counselling program. Moreover, two negative factors related to EAP were highlighted. First, the term "counselling" tended to communicate a negative view, since employees may associate it with a therapy for "mentally sick" individuals. The second aspect was related to the physical setting. In order to not seriously interfere with the counselling process, the physical setting must be carefully arranged. It has to be free from outside disturbances, simple, comfortable, and transmits feeling of warmth and protection.

Kirk and Brown[31] provide a more optimist analysis of EAPs. They examine the history and development of EAPs in Australia and posit that a quantitative demonstration of the effectiveness of such programs cannot be the only criteria to judge the merits of assistance interventions, particularly in the light of the obvious difficulties involved in implementing rigorous evaluations in the workplace. Their analysis suggests that these programs have a positive impact on employees' mental health, and are perceived by them as a desirable workplace resource.

Similarly, the third article by Nair and Xavier[32] sheds positive light of EAPs. The study evaluates a program, entitled "The Employee Assistance Cell", oriented to create awareness about mental health and to provide help to cope

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[29] National Business Group on Health, National Comprehensive Cancer Network, *An Employer's Guide to Cancer Treatment & Prevention*, Supporting Document, 2013.

[30] S. Macdonald, S. Wells, S. Lothian, M. Shain, *Absenteeism and Other Workplace Indicators of Employee Assistance Program Clients and Matched Controls*, in Employee Assistance Quarterly, 2000, Vol. 15, n. 3, 41-57.

[31] A. K. Kirk, D. F. Brown, *Employee Assistance Programs: A Review of the Management of Stress and Wellbeing Through Workplace Counselling and Consulting*, in Australian Psychologist, 2003, Vol. 38, n.2, 138–143.

[32] Nair, M. Xavier, *Initiating Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for a Corporate: An Experiential Learning*, in IUP Journal of Organizational Behavior, 2012, Vol. 11, n. 2, 67-76.

with stressful situations at work. Attitudes towards counselling, mentoring and coaching were assessed via a short semi-structured questionnaire to over 300 employees that participated the launch of the program. The results indicated that participants were positively oriented towards the concept, need, relevance and use of counselling in the workplace, since it helped them to deal with problems at work, as well as personal, interpersonal and family issues. Participants declared that they particularly benefit from the program in relations to work-related concerns, such as interpersonal relations, job design, work pressure and managing their emotions at work.

3.3 Organizational interventions

Organizational-level interventions target the characteristics of the job or the organization that are able to trigger mental health problems or to aggravate existent mental health conditions. They can be defined as proactive interventions in the sense that they are focused on reducing or eliminating the sources of job stress. We selected seven articles that describe organizational interventions for people with mental health conditions.

A first typology of organizational-level interventions focuses on improving the leadership function, aiming at educating senior and middle management in order to enhance the mental wellbeing of their co-workers. Two studies, conducted by Stanfeld et al.[33] and Martin et al.[34], illustrate this typology.

The first investigates the feasibility of recruitment, adherence and likely effectiveness of an e-learning intervention for managers to improve employees' wellbeing and reduce sickness absence. The intervention involved 41 managers coordinating 424 employees within NHS (National Health System) Mental Health Trust in the UK. It used an established e-learning health promotion program for managers, called "Managing Employee Pressure at Work", which focuses on the six management standards domains of change, control, demands, relationship, role and support. The intervention involved further guidance via introductory and follow-up face-to-face sessions with a study facilitator, and support by telephone or email. The managers in the control cluster received no intervention. The study findings indicated that the managerial e-learning intervention carried a small benefit for the mental wellbeing of employees. Indeed, the overall difference in mental health

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[33] S. A. Stansfeld, S. Kerry, T. Chandola, J. Russell, L. Berney, N. Hounsome, D. Lanz, C. Costelloe, M. Smuk, K. Bhui, *Pilot study of a cluster randomised trial of a guided e-learning health promotion intervention for managers based on management standards for the improvement of employee well-being and reduction of sickness absence*, in Occupational and environmental medicine, 2015, Vo.l 5, n. 10.

[34] A. Martin, K. Sanderson, J. Scott, P. Brough, *Promoting mental health in small-medium enterprises: an evaluation of the "Business in Mind" program*, in BMC Public Health, 2009, Vol. 9, 239.

improvement between the intervention and control groups after adjusting for clustering and baseline value was of 0.5 points. The scarce effect of the intervention could be explained in multiple ways. First, there was low participation to the full intervention among managers. More important, the interval between the intervention end and the follow-up of employees was probably too short to allow managers to implement the work and organizational changes necessary to provoke any significant modifications in employee mental health. Finally, the organization in question was undergoing several structural changes during the study that likely interfered with the intervention implementation.

The second study[35] describes the design of a promotional intervention to enhance the mental health of small and medium enterprise (SME) managers. This in turn should positively affects co-workers' mental wellbeing via the creation of a positive workplace psychosocial environment. The intervention consists of a DVD program (called "Business in Mind") and the accompanying guidebook, and it builds on the cognitive behaviour therapy framework to stimulate skills development. Specifically, it contains four modules. The first one intends to develop managers' understanding of stress and coping processes, introducing the relationships among thoughts, feelings and behaviours. The second module is designed to enhance their level of psychological capital. Module three focus on overcoming barriers to living a healthy lifestyle, covering topics such as physical activity, nutrition, substance abuse and effective work-life balance. The final module aims at assisting managers to create a positive work environment and overcome interpersonal stressors by developing their emotional intelligence and communication skills. The intervention has not been tested yet, and it is in the process of being disseminated to reach a large population in the business community. With particular regard to mental health outcomes, the authors anticipate improvements in depression and anxiety scores for both employees and managers.

The study by Oude Hengel et al.[36] illustrates how organizational-level interventions try to change the sources of stress at work, such as elevated physical workload, time pressure, and reduced job control, to support positive mental health. The study presents a prevention program that aimed to improve

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[35] A. Tsutsumi, M. Nagami, T. Yoshikawa, K. Kogi, N. Kawakami, *Participatory intervention for workplace improvements on mental health and job performance among blue-collar workers: a cluster randomized controlled trial*, in Journal Occupational Environment Medicine, 2009, Vol. 51, n. 5, 554-563.

[36] K.M. Oude Hengel, J.E. Bosmans, J.M. Van Dongen, P.M. Bongers, A.J. Van der Beek, B.M. Blatter, *Prevention program at construction worksites aimed at improving health and work ability is cost-saving to the employer: Results from an RCT*, in American Journal of industrial medicine, 2014, Vol. 57, n. 1, 56-68.

mental health and work ability among construction workers. Fifteen departments from six construction companies participated, for a total of 293 individuals that were randomized to the intervention or control clusters. The six-month intervention consisted of two individual training sessions with a physical therapist to identify and reduce physical workload, an instrument to raise awareness of the importance of rest breaks to reduce fatigue, and two empowerment training sessions to improve the range of control on the job. Specifically, these sessions were aimed at extending workers' influence at the worksite by increasing the commitment of responsibility for their own health through discussion and communication with their colleagues and supervisors (e.g., taking rest breaks, asking for assistance). The results of the study did not report significant differences between the intervention and control groups with respect to the individuals' mental health status. However, the analysis of the cost-effectiveness and financial return of the program for the employers highlighted that absenteeism costs after 12 months were significantly lower in the intervention group than in the control group.

Among organizational interventions, we also considered those studies describing organizational policies to sustain employees' mental health. An example is the study conducted by Jang et al.[37], which examines the effect of a work-life balance program on mental wellbeing. More specifically, the study investigates the multi-level relationships among the availability of work–life balance policies, employees' authority to arrange their own work hours (i.e., job control), job satisfaction, and mental health among 1,293 employees of 50 companies in South Korea. The results speak for the positive links between the availability of scheduling control and work–life balance programs on the one hand, and between job satisfaction and mental health, on the other. Indeed, work–life balance policies were positively associated with self-reported job satisfaction and mental health, and job satisfaction played a mediating role between the accessibility to such policies and positive mental wellbeing. Moreover, the effects of job control on job satisfaction and mental health were stronger when organizational work–life balance programs were available. In other words, companies that sponsor work-life balance programs are perceived as more supportive and family friendly; this, in conjunction with other employer practices (e.g., job control), is able to positively affect job satisfaction, which in turn promotes mental wellbeing.

Finally, three articles demonstrate the advantages of participatory approaches in setting organizational interventions. Drawing upon employees' needs in a

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[37] S. J. Jang, R. Park, A. Zippay, *The interaction effects of scheduling control and work–life balance programs on job satisfaction and mental health*, in International Journal of Social Welfare, 2011, Vol. 20, n.2, 135–143.

specific organization, Munn-Giddings et al.[38] develops a collaborative, context-specific strategy to promote mental wellbeing in the workplace. They involved two large British organizations, namely a Healthcare Trust and a Social Services Organization, and employed a participatory action research (PAR) approach, where a university team worked with the organizations to facilitate and coordinate the identification and development of tailor-made mental wellbeing strategies. The university project team was multi- disciplinary, including ten members from various backgrounds such as social work, mental health, health psychology, social policy and business. The team collaborated with frontline practitioners and the middle and senior management of the two organizations to involve staff in five participatory workshops. These workshops were structured around some key exercises, such as vignettes, small group exercises, discussions, presentations and role-plays. The aim was to recognize the core issues causing or aggravating mental distress at work and suggest short, medium and long-term actions to solve these issues. Staff perspectives and suggestions were then formalized in a final strategy document containing the principal action areas and presented to senior managers. The article describes the implementation and results of a pilot project, designed on the basis of one of these action plans. The goal of the pilot project was to facilitate the return to work of employees on sick leave through a returnee support group, accompanied by a self-management pack. More specifically, the main aims were to support returnees in facing the more sensitive issues awaiting them when returned to work (e.g., presenting themselves to new colleagues), to develop effective methods for handling potential stress in the workplace, and to sustain their self-esteem. Only a small group of four people were recruited for the project. The group met six times over a three- month period, and a mixture of short presentations, small group exercises and discussion were used. Of the four people, two fully returned to work, one left the organization, and one decided to retire due to physical ill health. Overall, the four participants viewed the group experience as a positive support towards making their personal decisions.

A further study that investigates the consequences of participatory organizational interventions on employees' mental health and wellbeing by Kobayashi et al.[39]. The researchers recruited 9 departments of a manufacturing enterprise in Japan to participate to a work environment improvement

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[38] C. Munn-Giddings, C. Hart, S. Ramon, *A participatory approach to the promotion of well-being in the workplace: lessons from empirical research*, in International Review of Psychiatry, 2005, Vol. 17, n.5, 409-417.

[39] Y. Kobayashi, A. Kaneyoshi, A. Yokota, N. Kawakami, *Effects of a worker participatory program for improving work environments on job stressors and mental health among workers: A controlled trial*, in Journal Of Occupational Health, 2008, Vol. 50, n. 6, 455–470.

program, using the Mental Health Action Checklist for a better Workplace Environment (MHACL)[40]. The MHACL consists in a list of 30 action items used to improve both the psychological (e.g., support) and non-psychological (e.g., physical environment, ergonomics) work environments. The departments were invited to planning workshops where, with the help of the checklist, employees discussed what actions could have been useful to improve the work environment. The majority of the proposed actions (90%) were then implemented. The study results show that skill underutilization, supervisor and co-worker support, psychological distress (i.e., vigour, anger-irritability, anxiety, depression, fatigue), and job satisfaction changed more favourably in the intervention group, but only among women. Moreover, improvements in the outcomes were more prominent among departments with a 50% or higher rate of worker participation in the planning workshops, stressing the importance of the participatory approach for the success of the intervention.

Finally, Tsutsumi et al.[41] conducted a participatory intervention for workplace improvement with blue-collar workers in manufacturing electronic equipment in a medium-size company. The main goal was to investigate the intervention on employees' job performance and mental health, including anxiety, depression, sleep disturbance, and cognitive function. A randomized control trial was designed, with 11 assembly lines randomly allocated to intervention and control lines. The intervention consisted of team-based, problem-solving sessions requiring the employees' involvement for the identification of possible action plans to improve work conditions. The sessions focused on problems in existing practices and on ways to re-design such practices in a joint work between the session facilitators and participants. At the end of the sessions, each group proposed an action plan to improve the workplace, and its feasibility, effectiveness, costs, and priority were discussed. At the same time, a supervisory education program on stress reduction was provided to inform supervisors of the importance of positive mental health and of its relationship with the work environment, and to give examples of good practices to recognize and address occupational stressors. The proposed action plans were then implemented by workers, with the support of the facilitators. Follow-up meetings were held to discuss any problems related to the implementation and to evaluate both the outcomes and process of the intervention. The results

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[40] N. Kawakami, K. Kogi, T. Yoshikawa, A. Tsutsumu, M. Nagami, M. Shimazu, A. Shimazu, *Mental Health Action Checklist for a Better Workplace Environment*, in T. Yoshikawa et al. (eds.), *The second workshop of occupational safety and health for health care workers in Asia*, in Occupational Health Training Center, The University of Occupational and Environmental Health, Japan, 2006.

[41] A. Tsutsumi, M. Nagami, T. Yoshikawa, K. Kogi, N. Kawakami, *Participatory intervention for workplace improvements on mental health and job performance among blue-collar workers: a cluster randomized controlled trial*, in Journal Occupational Environment Medicine, 2009, Vol. 51, n. 5, 554-563.

from a post- intervention questionnaire, to participants, indicated that the intervention was effective against deterioration in mental health and for improving job performance.

4. Discussion

Study intended to summarize some of the existent workplace interventions to address employee mental health problems. More specifically, it aimed at identifying the most common types of interventions and programs used by organizations, at understanding which mechanisms are responsible for the success (or failure) of such interventions, and at offering best practices for the design of future initiatives.

Two principal categories of interventions, namely individual and organizational, emerged from our review. First, individual interventions focus on single employees, and adopts a wide range of practices, programs and techniques aimed at improving healthy habits, physical capabilities, cognitive processes, and coping abilities to manage mental illness at work. The range of activities varies from in-company fitness exercises and informative sessions on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, including nutrition, ergonomic and fitness advice, to the teaching and application of relaxation and emotional techniques to release tension and manage uncomfortable emotional states, as well as brainstorming and creativity techniques to act on workplace stressors. EAPs can also be included within the individual-level interventions, since they are counselling programs designed by the organization to help the employee to overcome personal difficulties, also related to mental health or addiction problems, in order to support employee retention and performance.

The second category of interventions (i.e., organizational interventions) targets the entire organization with the objectives of altering the nature of work, of detecting and decreasing the potential stressors able to create mental health problems, harm mental wellbeing, or exacerbate existent conditions. With the same aim of reducing the sources of mental ill-being at work, these interventions adopt various strategies. Some of them resemble an individual approach, providing training sessions to groups of employees to lower, for example, physical workload for physically active job (e.g., construction sector) or empowering sessions to increase control at work. Others target the management of the organization, with the idea that senior and middle managers are responsible for creating a positive psychological environment that can enhance mental wellbeing. These interventions involve leaders in skill-development sessions, aiming at increasing their "soft" skills, such as communication and relational competencies, and emotional intelligence. Organizational policies, such as work-life balance policies, to enhance the

recovery of the individual and avoid the rise or exacerbation of mental health problems, as well as participatory approach research can also be included within organizational-level interventions. In particular, the latter approach involves employees collectively in a series of workshops to discuss and identify the workplace causes of mental ill-being and develop action plans to address them.

But how do these sets of activities work? Are the mechanisms underlying the operation of an intervention? To answer these questions, we realist evaluation[42] to assess organizational interventions. This kind of assessment is not limited to the evaluation of the results of an intervention or program (i.e., its success or failure), but examines the mechanisms responsible for the intervention's outcomes and the possible contextual characteristics that might have influenced them. The changes in the mental models of the employees involved in the intervention are among such mechanisms[43]. Mental models refer to the schemes used by individuals to make sense of the world, of what happens. They drive the reactions to the situation and to any modifications in the environment, and thus they guide behaviors[44]. Since interventions alter the situation, they act on people' mental models and consequent behaviours; thus, the changes in these models lead the intervention outcomes.

Building on this framework, we identified and systematized the principal mechanisms in the retrieved studies, describing them in terms of changes in employees' mental models.

First, the cognitive models of the person can change through a learning process. Indeed, some studies[45] demonstrated that mental health may benefit from learning to accept undesirable emotions, deal with unpleasant feelings and sensations, detach from work, interrupt work-related ruminative thoughts, and acquire coping strategies against the workplace stressors that can trigger or increment mental illness, at the same time boosting employee resilience. The success of programs targeting individual cognitive models is also supported by meta-analyses and systematic reviews that show that cognitive-behavioural individual intervention are the most effective in reducing work-related stress[46].

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[42] R. Pawson, G. Wong, P*ublic Opinion and Policy-making*, in Social Policy Administration, 2013, Vol. 47, n. 4, pp. 434–450.

[43] K. Nielsen, M. Miraglia, *What works for whom in which circumstances? On the need to move beyond the "what works?" question in organizational intervention research*, in Human Relations, in press; K. Nielsen, R. Randall, op.cit., 2013.

[44] K.E. Weick, K.M. Sufcliffe, D. Obstfeld, D., *Organizing and the process of sensemaking*, in Organization Science, 2005, Vol. 16, 409–421.

[45] F. W. Bond e D. Bunce, op.cit., 2000; J. Krajewski, R. Wieland, M. Sauerland, op.cit., 2010.

[46] Richardson & Rothstein, *op. cit.*, 2008; J. Ruotsalainen, C. Serra, A. Marine, J. Verbeek, *op.cit.*, 2008; J. J. van der Klink, R. W. Blonk, A. H. Schene, F. J. van Dijk, *op.cit.*, 2001.

Furthermore, the individual-level programs aimed at developing healthy lifestyle habits, such us implementing in-company fitness courses, prompt a change in the health and wellbeing schemes of employees[47]. They represent a way to enhance health directly.

Not surprisingly, the pivotal mechanism that sustains mental wellbeing in organizational-level intervention pertains to changes in employees' working conditions, particularly in the demands and resources associated to their job[48]. Specifically, job demands refer to all those physical, social, and organizational features of work requiring some sort of physical or mental effort and provoking physiological or psychological costs. Contrarily, job resources are the aspects of work that support goal achievement, enhance personal and professional growth, and aid coping with job demands. Increasing job resources, through assuring high levels of coworker and supervisory support or job control[49] and diminishing hindering job demands, such as skill underutilization[50], are mechanisms to enhance employee mental health.

This is particularly true when changes in working conditions are detected and implemented through a participatory process, that is involving workers. In fact, participation is a key means to ensure the effectiveness of a program. Three of the analysed studies[51] involved employees in planning workshops with the objective to improve the work environment, by engaging them in all the intervention stages from its organization to the implementation of the identified strategies to sustain mental wellbeing at work. Participation empowers employees, making them more aware of what the problems are and how to solve them. It reinforces individuals' beliefs and ability to proactively improve working conditions, it allows them to gain assets, creating a more supportive and resourceful work environment. Moreover, it increases the sense of ownership of the intervention among participants, assuring their involvement and engagement. As a consequence, changes are more likely perceived as less anxious and more firmly embedded in people actions and behaviours, again securing the intervention success (i.e., positive results on participants' mental health). Supporting evidence have been provided for the

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[47] E. Atlantis E, C. M. Chow, A. Kirby, M. F. Singh, *op.cit.*, 2004; E. de Zeeuw, E. Tak, E. Dusseldorp, I. Hendriksen, *op. cit*, 2005.

[48] A. B. Bakker, E. Demerouti, A.I. Sanz-Vergel, *Burnout and work engagement: The JD-R approach*, in Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 2014, Vol. 1, 389–411.

[49] Y. Kobayashi, A. Kaneyoshi, A. Yokota, N. Kawakami, *op.cit.* 2008; A. Tsutsumi, M. Nagami, T. Yoshikawa, K. Kogi, N. Kawakami, *op. cit.*, 2009.

[50] Y. Kobayashi, A. Kaneyoshi, A. Yokota, N. Kawakami, *op. cit.*, 2007.

[51] Y. Kobayashi, A. Kaneyoshi, A. Yokota, N. Kawakami, *op.cit.* 2007; C. Munn-Giddings, C. Hart, S. Ramon, op. cit. 2005; A. Tsutsumi, M. Nagami, T. Yoshikawa, K. Kogi, N. Kawakami, *op.cit.*, 2009.

negative relationship between participation and resistance to change on the one hand, and the positive association between participation and the achievement of the intervention goals on the other hand[52]. Finally, a participatory process may enhance worker's job crafting, a relatively new concept that defines the self-started proactive behaviours undertaken by employees to alter the level of job demands and job resources in order to adapt them to their needs and skills[53]. Job crafting has been shown to improve mental wellbeing, in the light of its positive association with positive affect, work engagement, job satisfaction, decreased burnout over time, and flourishing, that is an overall positive perception of one's life and functioning[54]. Job crafting, thus, may represent a mechanism activated by participatory approaches to improve mental health conditions in the workplace.

A positive change in employee's attitudes toward the job, such as job satisfaction or organizational commitment, represents a further means to support mental health interventions. Indeed, the study by Jang and colleagues (2011) reported that job satisfaction played a moderating role in the relationship of job control and work-life balance programs with enhanced mental wellbeing. In other words, increased job satisfaction was the mechanism carrying the effect of the organizational policies to balance work and personal (e.g., family, leisure) responsibilities and to increase employees' control over their schedule on mental health.

Finally, the focus of organizational-level interventions could be the management of the organization, the leadership function[55]. This is intended in two ways. First, programs may want to increase leaders' awareness of mental health issues in the workplace. A learning mechanism is operating here, since leaders acquire information on how to recognize the phenomenon, deal with and treat it. Second, programs may aim to act on leaders' mental health[56], in order to increase their mental resources and wellbeing, and help them to overcome personal stressors. In turn, this should foster the creation of a

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[52] R. Lines, *Influence of participation in strategy change: resistance, organizational commitment and change goal achievement*, in Journal of Change Management, 2004, Vol. 4, 193–21.

[53] A. B. Bakker, M. Tims, D. Derks, *Proactive personality and job performance: The role of job crafting and work engagement*, in Human Relations, 2012, Vol. 65, 1359-1378.

[54] E. Demerouti, A. B. Bakker, J. R. B. Halbesleben, *Productive and counterproductive job crafting: A daily diary study*, in Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 2015, Vol. 20, pp. 457 – 469; A. B. Bakker, M. Tims, D. Derks, *op. cit.*, 2012; M. van den Heuvel, E. Demerouti, M. C. W. Peeters, *The job crafting intervention: Effects on job resources, self-efficacy, and affective well-being*, in Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 2015, Vol. 88, 511–532.

[55] A. Martin, K. Sanderson, J. Scott, P. Brough, *op.cit.*, 2009; A. Stansfeld, S. Kerry, T. Chandola, J. Russell, L. Berney, N. Hounsome, D. Lanz, C. Costelloe, M. Smuk, K. Bhui, *op. cit.*, 2015.

[56] A. Martin, K. Sanderson, J. Scott, P. Brough, *op.cit.*, 2009.

positive work environment, consequently boosting coworkers' mental wellbeing in a sort of positive loop. The mechanism appears to be related (again) to a change in the working conditions. Leaders' mental strength could be developed through programs targeting their emotional intelligence skills or their Psychological Capital (PsyCap)[57]. The latter refers to an individual's positive psychological state of development characterized by elevated self-efficacy (i.e., the beliefs to be able to put in the necessary effort to succeed in a task), hope (i.e., persevering toward a goal and redirecting strategies if necessary), optimism (i.e., positive attribution about the future), and resilience (i.e., bouncing back and beyond obstacles or difficulties). As for job crafting, PsyCap interventions are able to improve mental wellbeing, since the group of the four aforementioned dimensions is associated with job satisfaction and psychological wellbeing positively, and with cynicism, job stress and anxiety negatively (see the meta-analysis by Avey, Reichard, Luthans, and Mhatre, 2011)[58].

Our review also shed light on some of the best practices to plan individual and organizational interventions in the workplace in order to enhance employee mental health. First, organizations may want to guide managers to recognize and understand the meaning and nature of mental wellbeing, as well as its link to the elevated costs for employee health and productivity. To this purpose, executive training could be offered, focusing not only on informative sessions on mental health and related costs, but also on information and communication skills to empower managers to discuss health issues in the workplace. In turn, this would discourage the emergence of an organizational culture that stigmatizes mental illness and avoids talking about mental health conditions at work, while promoting a supportive culture that encourages employees to disclose mental illness with colleagues and supervisors and to seek support and help for it.

Furthermore, executive training on mental health should reinforce the introduction and implementation of policies and practices to manage stress and strain in the workplace in a preventive perspective. Line managers are the key actors in the process. In fact, having daily (or frequent) interactions with their co-workers, they play an important role in dealing with employees' possible mental health problems and in managing them on a day-to-day. This would not only assure that employees' conditions are not going overlooked and untreated, but would also help to decrease organizational turnover, preventing the

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[57] F. Luthans, C. M. Youssef, B. J. Avolio, *Psychological capital: Developing the human competitive edge*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 2007.

[58] J. B. Avey, R. J. Reichard, F. Luthans, K. H. Mhatre, *Meta-analysis of the impact of positive psychological capital on employee attitudes, behaviors, and performance*, in Human Resource Development Quarterly, 2011, Vol. 22, n. 2, pp. 127–152.

possibility that people with mental health conditions leave the organization. The active involvement of line managers is essential also throughout organizational interventions, in order to gain the commitment of the employees participating to the intervention. Indeed, line managers can act as role models, who activate and favour the change in the employees' mental models. Moreover, they are responsible for the communication and day-to-day implementation of the intervention activities, such that they can either facilitate or obstruct the change in employees' behaviours, affecting the intervention outcomes. It has been shown that, when line managers are engaged in and supportive of the intervention, more proactive modification in working conditions by employees is registered as well as a higher level of psychological wellbeing[59]. Setting up participatory programs is a further practice to enhance the intervention effectiveness. As discussed, participatory approaches involve employees in the collective identification and proposal of possible solutions to craft the work conditions that are able to trigger or aggravate mental health problems. In addition, it is extremely relevant to gather the engagement and commitment of all the organizational stakeholders, including the top management, implicated in the intervention. Assuring their cooperation and understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the intervention is essential to secure its success. For instance, senior management can delay or facilitate the intervention action plan by choosing who is going to participate or by releasing employees from their tasks to give them the opportunity to participate during working hours, boosting the attendance to the intervention activities. Furthermore, they can overtly oppose the implementation of the intervention. This is well described in the study by Munn-Giddings and colleagues[60] where the chief executive of organizations refused to implement the action strategies collectively identified by workers to address the core issues causing or worsening mental distress at work. The author explained this reluctance through the fear that the organization could be blamed to trigger employees' mental illness. This could be prevented through with the management, to make them aware of the organizational culture, of the values and attitudes behind their perceptions of the intervention, and on how these can affect its success or failure. A positive mutual relationship among the key figures involved in the intervention can also foster this awareness process. As we, these figures are the employees, the middle and senior management, but also external consultants. Are usually responsible bring the external expertise on mental health issues and to offer practical help in recruiting and retaining

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[59] K. Nielsen, J. Yarker, R. Randall, F. Munir, *The mediating effects of team and self-efficacy on the relationship between transformational leadership, and job satisfaction and psychological well-being in healthcare professionals: a cross-sectional questionnaire survey*, in Int J Nurs Stud., 2009, Vol. 46, n.9, pp.1236-44.
[60] C. Munn-Giddings, C. Hart, S. Ramon, *op.cit.*, 2005.

employees with mental health problems. They can also help to develop theory-based intervention protocols tailored to the specific needs of the organization. Thus, a best practice is to look both inside and outside the organization in order to continue to train managers on mental health issues for daily employee management on the one hand, and to develop partnerships with health providers and a range of external professional figures (e.g., work and organizational psychologists, health consultants, physicians) to offer the necessary expertise to develop intervention strategies on the other hand.

Finally, the study by Krajewski and colleagues[61] suggests some best practice recommendations related to the duration, time and place of mental health programs. Not surprisingly, long-term implementation of the intervention, rather than isolated action, is preferable. Assuring adequate and sufficient time within the employees work schedule and space (e.g., private rooms for relaxation exercises) is also fundamental. The physical setting is crucial for EAPs, and it should never be for granted, as it can seriously interfere with the counselling process. Organizations should provide settings that are free from outside "noise" and disturbance, and that convey a feeling of warmth and security.

A few limitations arise from the analysed studies; some of them are peculiar to a certain study, others are more generalizable, opening the way to future research directions. First, the overall focus seems to be only on the results of the intervention, that is whether it worked or not. Careful consideration of the mechanisms underlying such results could help to understand the reason behind the intervention's effectiveness. For the future, the realist evaluation framework could be used[62]. We noticed a prevalence of individualistic approaches, such as one-to-one counselling in the EAPs, over contextual or organizational ones. This could cause the emergence of a culture that isolates and stigmatizes the individual; the problem is the individual and any organizational and work determinants of mental ill-being are denied. Moreover, this discourages group programs to tackle mental health in the workplace, while group processes are desirable to enhance the illness disclosure, support and mutual aid, and the sharing of problems and their solutions. Furthermore, such culture is based on the individuation of a "cure" for the individual; it generates immediate, short-term solutions, rather than planning prevention strategies that are integrated in the human resource management system of the organization. The short-term perspective also denotes the higher attention devoted to stress management interventions and the lack of interventions focusing on more general mental health problems as anxiety, depression or

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[61] J. Krajewski, R. Wieland, M. Sauerland, *op.cit.*, 2009.
[62] R. Pawson, op. cit., 2013; R. Pawson, N. Tilley, *op. cit.*, 1997.

other mental health conditions. With regard to the effectiveness of the intervention, a possible limitation is the lack of long-term follow-ups. Interventions imply changes, which requires time for the individuals to implement. Hence, it can take time to see the effects of interventions on people's mental wellbeing. Finally, the present review is not without limitations. First, not all existing studies might have been included, as we have missed some papers despite the electronic and manual search. Moreover, we did not take into consideration the contextual features of the organization nor the country where the interventions were carried out. Our goals were to summarize what organizations do to address employee mental health, how the intervention can function, and draw best practices to design future mental health programs in the workplace. Future research can explore the contextual characteristics that may hinder or facilitate the mechanisms of an intervention, according to the C-M-O configurations in the realist evaluation model[63].

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[63] K. Nielsen, R. Randall, *The importance of employee participation and perceptions of changes in procedures in a teamworking intervention*, in Work Stress, 2012, Vol. 26, n. 2, 91–111; R. Pawson, *op. cit.*, 2013.

Work-Family Balance: Origins, Practices and Statistical Portrait from Canada and France

Sondes Turki [1]

Abstract. This study examines the concepts contributing to the notion of work-life balance. It first presents "identity at work ", based on social and recognition theories. This concept leads to a more complex factor; namely the boundaries between work and private life. The transition between these two roles is based on flexibility and permeability and leads to the segmentation or integration of roles played by the individual in his or her daily life. Integration leads to spillovers that can be both positive and negative. Work-family conflict represents a negative spillover and it is a source of pressure, tension, and anxiety for the individual. In contrast, a spillover can be positive and results in enrichment. Finding a work-life balance is not only an individual responsibility as even governments and organizations have an important role to play. Work-life balance practices are classified into two categories: working time planning policies and appeasement policies for work-family conflict. The study then uses statistical data from OECD to analyze and compare the effect of public work-family balance policies on maternal employment rates in Canada and France. Results indicate a link between the employment rates and the public appeasement policies in these two countries: appeasement policies help mothers to stay in the labour market.

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1. Introduction

The contemporary evolution of the labour market poses the challenge "work-life balance" for organizations. Indeed, technological changes, the entrance of the women in the labour market, as well as the growth of dual career families, means that workers must rethink the positioning of their private lives regarding their professional lives. These two spheres of life are far from being independent. Indeed, the workers who are satisfied with their professional lives have more of a chance to have better private lives[2].

In 2000, one study suggested that more than half of workers assert that they grant greater importance to their personal lives than to their professional lives[3]. Organizations face the challenge of conciliating work-life, and even more so, the well-being of the individual at work is a priority because, as suggested by Deledeuille (2012:194)[4], this individual constitutes one "*to be complete, to be consisted jointly of his professional life and his personal life*" (free translation).

This paper first presents the origins of work-life balance. It exposes identity at work, explores the boundaries between work and private life before analyzing the effects of the intersection of the borders between these two spheres in terms of conflicts, enrichment, and how these boundaries could be managed. The paper then presents work-life balance practices and, more specifically, how organizations and governments can benefit from and contribute to a better balance between these spheres of their employees. The paper then considers some statistical data from the OECD that illustrates work-family balance in France and in Canada.

2. Origins

2.1. Identity at Work

"*Identity is core to human functioning*"[5] Ashforth & Schinoff (2016: 118). Identity at work or work identity is part of the whole individual identity. Work identity can be defined as the collection of meanings attached to the self in a work

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[2] M. Deledeuille, *Nouveaux défis pour les responsables des RH: les équilibres de vie personnelle et professionnelle*, in F. B., Hassel, *Professionnaliser la fonction ressources humaines: quels enjeux pour quelle utilité?*, Presses de l'Université Laval, 2012, chapitre 7.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., page 194.

[5] B. E. Ashforth, B.S. Schinoff, K.M. Rogers, *"I Identify with Her,""I Identify with Him": Unpacking the Dynamics of Personal Identification in Organizations*, *Academy of Management Review*, 2016, 41(1), 28-60.

domain[6]. This concept comes from two theories: social identity theory and theory of recognition.

In the first place, work identity comes from the social identity theory applied to the field of organizational behaviour. It represents a specific form of social identification. Indeed, work can be considered as a specific social action based on autonomy and resulting from the development of identities through the use of psychological processes[7]. Thus, identity at work is the result of a process of organizational socialization and socio-professional categorization[8].

First, the socialization process allows the individual to learn and adopt standards and values in the work that so accomplished and built his professional identity. Professional identity is a set of elements that allow self-affirmation and recognition by others within the organization and, more specifically, in his area of professional socialization[9]. In general, organizational socialization concerns the new recruits who are often unsure of their status and it can be seen as an attempt to manage them[10]. They must learn the political and logistical organization and be aware of the expectations of their roles and standards of behaviour within the organization. This begins with a construction of the definition of oneself and the development of social identifications. According to the organizational socialization, development is done through symbolic interactions that lead to organizational definitions and self-definitions.

Hence, social categorization's function is twofold[11]: on the one hand, it divides and stabilizes the social environment and on the other, it gives the individual a meaningful definition for other individuals. In particular, the occupational categorization allows the classification of the trades and professions. This categorization is not limited to social division, because it goes beyond that to reflect a psychological division contributing to the enhancement of the individual's life, and a moral division that allows the individual to judge others in the internalization of a social role[12].

Social identification comes from the concept of group identification. It has four characteristics[13]. First, it is a cognitive self-concept as it reflects the past,

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[6] D. Miscenko, D.V. Day, *Identity and identification at work, Organizational Psychology Review*, 2015, 2041386615584009.

[7] E. Renault, Reconnaissance et travail, Travailler, 2007, (2), 119-135.

[8] B.E, Ashforth and F. Mael, *Social identity theory and the organization*, in *Academy of Management Review*, 14, 1989, 20-29.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] E. Renault

[13] E, Ashforth and F. Mael, E. Renault

present, and future of the individual. Also, it is perceived as a personal experience of success and failure of the group. Moreover, it is different from the internalization, because it provides an answer to the question "who am I?" without the incorporation of the individual in the group's values, attitudes and principles. But it may result in internalization and adherence of the individual to the group. Finally, the group identification is similar to the identification with a person; the individual identifies him/herself in relation to a social worker. Social identification has several advantages. Most importantly, it helps the individual to increase their self-esteem[14]. Social identification within the organization comes from three backgrounds: the distinctive character of the group, the prestige of the group, and the relief from outside the group in question[15].

Besides this theory of social identification, the identity at work is based on the theory of recognition[16] [17], which emphasizes the link between the autonomy of an individual and his identity. This connection highlights the fact that work is a form of social recognition as it reflects employment status and a judgment of the hierarchy; therefore, it helps to build the identity of the individual in question[18]. Furthermore, the identification of the individual in relation to his work is the first step of professional recognition[19].

Work identity does not only reflect the individual identity as it can be seen as a collective identity, and especially in jobs that require a strong interaction between employees[20][21]. The example of the engineer's 'software', as described by Perlow (1999)[22] shows that for this type of profession, one cannot speak of individual identity at work. The latter finds its meaning in a more inclusive identity which is the working group identity.

There is also another type of work identity that stems from the identity to the role of the individual within the organization. Each role uses a set of values, beliefs, norms, and behaviours that are clear and precise within the working group.

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[14] B.E, Ashforth and F. Mael

[15] Ibid., page 24.

[16] A. El Akremi, N. Sassi, S. Bouzidi, *Rôle de la reconnaissance dans la construction de l'identité au travail*, *Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations*, 2009, 662-684

[17] E. Renault

[18] E. Renault

[19] A. El Akremi, N. Sassi, S. Bouzidi

[20] L. Perlow, *The Time Famine: Towards a Sociology of Work Time*, in *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1999, vol. 44, n. 1, 57–81

[21] R. Sainsaulieu, *L'identité au travail: les effets culturels de l'organisation*, Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 4e edition, 2014, 604 p.

[22] L. Perlow

The organization is an open system in constant interaction with the environment[23]. It is a social system and can be approximated to a subsystem of society. In fact, the organization is a place of cultural learning. Moreover, it is where the individual confronts the culture he has acquired by such diverse institutions as school, family, and society, with the requirements of the work and those of the organization. It is a place of interaction and human implication beyond its external structure. The individuals can be influenced in work by the circumstances of communication, which are going to shape the way they reason, symbolize, and interpret their experiences and those of the other people[24].

The organization is also seen as an area of professional socialization for the production of professional identities[25]. This confirms the fact that work identity is central to the study of firms as social worlds[26].

Organizational identification is problematic because it can be coupled to a multitude of social identities. It is defined as "*the process by which the goals of the organization and those of the individual become increasingly integrated and congruent*"[27] Hall, Schneider & Nygren (1970: 176-177). This is the most used definition; but not the only one, and does not provide a clear explanation of the concept. Indeed, the organizational identification is often confused with other concepts such as loyalty, commitment, and internalization[28]. Furthermore, an individual who considers that group identity is synonymous with organizational identity has a negative perception towards other groups or identities within this organization. This results in intergroup conflicts within the organization[29].

Therefore, it is the interaction of the company with the environment that defines the boundaries of organizational roles. These roles are called "*transmitted roles*", because the organization transmits formal job requirements to its employees. Then they turn into *"received roles"* once the individual receives them[30].

However, within the society, the roles of each individual are not limited to organizational roles because the individual has several roles to play as the role

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[23] D. Katz, R. Kahn, *The social psychology of organizations* (2ed.). New York, NY: Wiley, 1978

[24] R. Sainsaulieu, page 22.

[25] Ibid.

[26] F. Osty, I. Sainsaulieu, & M. Uhalde, *Les mondes sociaux de l'entreprise : penser le développement des organisations*, Entreprise & société, 2007, 398 p

[27] D. T. Hall, B. Schneider, & H. T. Nygren, *Personal factors in organizational identification*, in *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1970, vol 15, 176-190

[28] B.E, Ashforth, F. Mael

[29] Ibid.

[30] D. Katz, R. Kahn

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of employee, the role of leader, the role of father or mother, and/or the role of the husband or wife.

Indeed, on one hand, a role is the basic entity of the social system[31]. On the other hand, the unity of the human being makes it impossible to separate his professional life from his private life, as they are in constant interaction[32].

However, these roles result in different identities to a single individual as they reflect the values and beliefs that can be very different from one role to another[33]. This leads us to question the existence of borders between the different roles; especially on the boundaries between the roles within the organization, and those played outside of it.

In the next section, we will present in more detail these borders between the working life and the private life of the individual.

2.2. Boundaries between Work and Personal Life Identity at Work

It is often assumed that personal life is linked to work and that each of them can affect the other. For the organization, personal life affects in a direct manner the productivity of the individual at work[34] and therefore proves that "*the ideal employee is someone who has no family*"[35] Supiot (1983: 385). This interaction between the two spheres of life leads us to ask how we can define the boundaries between work and personal life; two spheres of the individual life that involve different values, rules and behaviour[36].

The boundary of one sphere of life is defined as the line between this sphere and another sphere that marks the beginning and completion of behaviours relating thereto[37]. Similarly, the boundary of a role is defined as the set of elements that define the extent and scope of that role[38]. A boundary is created and maintained by the individual in order to simplify and bring order to their environment.

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[31] B. Ashforth, G. Kreiner, M. Fugate, *All in a day's work: boundaries and micro role transitions*, in *Academy of Management Review*, 2000, vol. 25, n. 3, 472-491.

[32] D.C. Tremblay, & É. Genin, *Permeability between work and non-work: the case of self-employed IT workers*, in *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 2009, vol. 33, n. 4

[33] B.E, Ashforth and F. Mael

[34] R. Sainsaulieu

[35] A. Supiot, *Femme et famille en droit du travail*, dans *Le droit non civil de la famille*, PUF, 1983, p. 385

[36] S. Campbell Clark, *Work/Family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance*, in *Human Relations*, 2000, vol. 53, n. 6, 747-770

[37] D.C. Tremblay, É. Genin, *Remodelage des temps et des espaces de travail chez les travailleurs indépendants de l'informatique: l'affrontement des effets de marchés et des préférences personnelles*, Temporalités, dans *Revue de sciences sociales et humaines*, 2009, vol. 10

[38] B. Ashforth, G. Kreiner, M. Fugate, page 472.

Therefore, it differs from one individual to another. Each individual in their daily life makes transitions between roles that cause 'borders' crossing'[39] defining a transition between two roles as a psychological movement between them that allows disengagement of one role and commitment in another. They point out that there are three types of transitions: family-work transition, work-work transition (between two roles as subordination and representation), and finally, work-elsewhere transition. Other authors, like Campbell-Clark (2000)[40], focus only on the study of transitions between the professional role and personal role (interaction work - family).

A border can be presented not only in a spatial or temporal form[41], but also in a psychological form[42]. For example, the spatial boundaries are certain geographic locations such as local businesses or homes where the individual has behaviour consistent with the requirements of the role-played. The temporal boundaries may be presented as certain days of the week (the weekend for the family role and the other days for work) or as certain hours of the day (work hours and non-work hours). Such boundaries specify when the behaviour of each role may start[43]. As for the psychological boundaries, they are reflected by specific rules for each role and determine the emotions, attitudes, and behaviour of the individual[44].

The transition or the interaction between roles involves two key concepts that are the characteristics of the borders of a role: flexibility and permeability[45]. Flexibility is the degree to which the spatial and temporal boundaries can be malleable, while permeability is the degree to which elements of a role can enter another role[46]. This permeability and flexibility may mitigate the inter-role conflict because they can facilitate transition between roles when necessary[47]. Campbell Clark (2000)[48] states that the permeability of borders is central to the process of role transition since it includes flexibility in its definition. In general, the degrees of flexibility as well as permeability of the roles' borders differ from one individual to another[49] [50].

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[39] Ibid, page 472.
[40] S. Campbell Clark
[41] B. Ashforth, G. Kreiner, M. Fugate
[42] S. Campbell Clark
[43] D.C. Tremblay, & É. Genin (1)
[44] Ibid.
[45] B. Ashforth, G. Kreiner, M. Fugate
[46] D.C. Tremblay, É. Genin (1)
[47] B. Ashforth, G. Kreiner, M. Fugate, page 474.
[48] S. Campbell Clark
[49] B. Ashforth, G. Kreiner, M. Fugate
[50] S. Campbell Clark

There are three types of permeability: spatial, temporal and psychological that may be connected[51]. The spatial permeability means that the individual is geographically located in a role but psychologically committed in another, such as work at home. The temporal permeability means that the individual can do his work during his hours of rest or vice versa. Finally, the psychological permeability is "*a form of overflow or spillover*"[52] that means that the satisfaction of an individual in a role impacts his satisfaction in another.

In addition to this concept of permeability, transitions from one role to another are affected by the concept of contrast that comes from role identity and that reflects the number of basic features and devices related to the role in question[53]. The transition or the interaction between two roles is very difficult if they have a strong contrast.

Flexibility, permeability, and contrast use two concepts; namely segmentation and integration of the roles played by the individual in his daily life[54]. These two concepts are part of the same continuum[55].

The segmentation of roles is usually associated with low flexibility, low permeability, and a high contrast between them. This is a voluntary separation of roles at work and those out of work; for either of them affects the other[56]. This segmentation has the advantage of reducing the blurring of roles and clarifies both the roles' boundaries, and the transition's nature. However, it makes the transition between the two spheres hard and especially the psychological side[57]. The transition of segmented roles is done through the process of "Van Gennep's" (1960) which consists of three stages reflecting three groups of rites: rites of separation of the current role (disengagement), rites of transition (psychological and physical if it is necessary), and rites of incorporation in the second role.

On the other side of the continuum, we find integration that represents a strong interaction and interdependence of roles of the sphere of work and those of outside work. Thus, roles are poorly differentiated; borders are poorly defined which facilitates the permeability and the passage from one sphere to another[58]. In general, "*highly integrated roles tend to have similar identities, be embedded in similar contexts, and overlap in the physical location and the membership of the role*

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[51] D.C. Tremblay, & É. Genin (1)

[52] Ibid, page 3.

[53] B. Ashforth, G. Kreiner, M. Fugate

[54] Ibid.

[55] S. Campbell Clark

[56] D.C. Tremblay, & É. Genin (1)

[57] B. Ashforth, G. Kreiner, M. Fugate

[58] Ibid.

sets"[59]. Thus, inter-role transitions are frequent and unpredictable. In addition, the roles are not well defined and they are characterized by a blurring. This can lead to a negative connection between role identities and can negatively impact the double commitment since the integration of roles leads to many contradictions, confusions (what role the individual must reflect?) and unplanned interruptions[60]. However, integration of roles has the advantage of simplifying the transition process since simple rites of passage can facilitate the release of a role and input in another.

It is noteworthy that there is no perfect integration or perfect segmentation of roles because the individual tends to adopt a role more or less integrator or roughly separator[61]. For example, the integration of roles is often associated with porous borders; the degree of force differs from one individual to another. Some authors have treated the temporal permeability and specifically the management of time between professional and personal lives[62] [63] and others have focused on the study of the spatial and temporal permeability[64].

Finally, the psychological permeability was the subject of a lot of research in the form of studies on spillover[65] [66]. The spillover of one of the two spheres (professional and personal) can be negative, in the form of conflict, as it can be positive, in the form of enrichment.

In what follows, we will present the two forms of spillover and the way in which we can handle it.

2.3. Conflicts, Enrichment and Management of Boundaries between Work and Other Spheres of Life

Conflict between work and other spheres of life is a form of role conflict. This is defined as the existence of different expectations of the roles of the individual[67]. Role conflict means that meeting the expectations of a role can negatively influence the expectations of another[68].

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[59] Ibid., page 479.
[60] Ibid., page 481.
[61] D.C. Tremblay, É. Genin, (2)
[62] L. Perlow
[63] D.C. Tremblay, E. Genin, *Money, Work–Life Balance and Autonomy: Why do IT Professionals Choose Self-Employment?*, in *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 2008, vol. 3, n. 3, 161-179.
[64] D.C. Tremblay, & É. Genin (1)
[65] J.H. Greenhaus, N. Beutell, *Sources of Conflict between Work and Family Roles*, in *Academy of Management Review*, 1985, Vol. 10, n. 1, 76-88.
[66] J.H. Greenhaus, G.N. Powell, *When work and family are allies: A theory of work-family enrichment*, in *Academy of Management Review*, 2006, 31: 72-92.
[67] D. Katz, R. Kahn
[68] É. Genin, *La porosité des temps chez les cadres*, Thèse de doctorat, 2007.

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This conflict is characterized by pressures from role played in work and from role played within the family since these two roles are mutually incompatible in some respects[69] [70].

Besides such inconsistency of roles, there are other possible causes such as the incompatibility of a role with the individual's expectations or the divergence of expectations emanating from roles[71].

Greenhaus and Butell (1985)[72] as the majority of other researchers focused on studying the role conflict between work and family roles. They defined this conflict as an inter-role conflict that is caused by an incompatibility of the requirements of these two roles. Work-family conflict is the result of roles received by the individual[73]. The same authors have concluded that there are three types of conflict: conflict based on time, conflict based on tension, and conflict based on behaviour.

The conflict based on time means that time required to respond to a role makes it difficult, if not impossible, to answer the requirements of the other role. The conflict based on tension refers to the fact that the effort as part of a role makes it hard to meet the needs of another. Finally, the conflict based on behaviour means that the specific behaviour as part of a role does not allow responding to the requested behaviour as part of another.

Work-family conflict is a source of pressure, tension and anxiety for the individual. It can be seen not only as a one-way conflict: work negatively impacts the family, but also as a two-ways conflict: work negatively affects family and family negatively influences work[74]. However, it should be specified that professional life has relatively impermeable borders while personal life has borders that are much more permeable to work. This leads to an asymmetry in the permeability strength of these two spheres of life[75].

The sources of conflict are multiple and can be divided into two groups: the sources from work (such as the number of working hours, inflexible work, the ambiguity of the role), and sources from working-out role (as having children or a large family or family conflicts)[76].

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[69] J.H. Greenhaus, N. Beutell

[70] D. Katz, R. Kahn

[71] Ibid.

[72] J.H. Greenhaus, N. Beutell,

[73] D. Katz, R. Kahn

[74] B. A. Gutek, A. Searle, L. Klepa, *Rational versus Gender Role Explanation for Work- Family Conflict*, in *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 1991, Vol. 76, n°4, 560-568

[75] D.C. Tremblay, É. Genin (1)

[76] J.H. Greenhaus, N. Beutell

Previous studies have addressed the issues of work-life conflict, stress and the resulting discomfort, and therefore focused on the negative effects. However, these negative effects are not the only results of the dual role played by most employees today. Indeed, individuals can take advantage of this multiplicity of roles if they manage to strike a balance.

Four concepts result from this positive relationship; namely enrichment, benefits, strengthening, and simplification[77]. The study of these different concepts, which can be summarized under the concept of enrichment, emerged following the growing number of studies in psychology and organizational behavior that focus on strengths rather than weaknesses in understanding individual and social systems[78].

As part of this paper, we present the work-family enrichment. The latter was defined as "*the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role*" (Greenhaus & Powell 2006: 73)[79]. This implies that work and family are allies[80] [81] and not enemies, as in the study of conflict.

This concept of "enrichment" is based on the resource expansion theory, contrary to the theory of scarcity of resources on which the conflict is based[82]. It was introduced and defined for the first time by Kirchmeyer in 1992[83]. Kirchmeyer (1992)[84] was the pioneer of the study of the implications of working life on life outside work. He based his studies about the enrichment on the assumption that resources are abundant and growing. An important result that was stressed by Kirchmeyer is that the participation of the individual in the sphere of life outside work allows him to develop his skills, increase his self-esteem, and acquire positive attitudes to work, which can increase the resources available for the job.

There are two possible ways of enrichment[85] [86]: On one side and from an instrumental way, enrichment comes in the form of improved skills, abilities and values (such as improved interpersonal skills, leadership in work as a result

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[77] J.H. Greenhaus, G.N. Powell

[78] Ibid., page 73.

[79] Ibid., page 73.

[80] M. Dumas, *Conflit et enrichissement travail-famille et implication*, *Revue de gestion des ressources humaines*, 2008, 67

[81] J.H. Greenhaus, G.N. Powell

[82] M. Dumas

[83] C. Kirchmeyer, *Perceptions of nonwork-to-work spillover: Challenging the common view of conflict-ridden domain relationships*, in Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 1992, 13(2), 231-249

[84] Ibid.

[85] D.S. Carlson, K.M. Kacmar, J.H. Wayne, J.G. Grzywacz, *Measuring the positive side of the work-family interface: Development and validation of the wrk-family enrichment scales*, in *Journal of vocational Behaviour*, 2006, Vol. 68, p131- 164.

[86] J.H. Greenhaus, G.N. Powell

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of raising children in the family role). On the other side and from an emotional way, enrichment comes in the form of the transfer of affection and emotion from one role to another as confidence or good humour.

The instrumental way aims the high performance in role B while the emotional way increases positive feelings in the role A that will increase the performance in the role B[87] and then increase the positive feelings in the role B[87]. In sum, the enrichment is reflected by the "quality of life" which is measured by two variables: the high-performance and positive feeling [888990].
Like the work-family conflict, enrichment is bidirectional[91]. These two concepts are independent and unrelated[92]. In fact, conflict can coexist with enrichment. Each individual should find a balance between the two[93]. In addition, studies that have evaluated enrichment and conflict of dual roles (professional and family roles) show that enrichment averaged greater than or equal to the conflict[94].

3. Work-life balance practices

Finding a balance between work and other spheres of life, often called work-life balance, is not only an individual responsibility as even organizations and governments have an important role to play. Work-life balance is a challenge for both HR manager and direction due to the evolution of HR function activities. In fact, policies of work-life balance have been demonstrated as an efficient tool to increase the commitment of employees[95] and to reduce their turnover[96]. Managers contribute to the development of work-life balance policies and have a crucial role in the translation of these policies into

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[87] Ibid.

[88] D.S. Carlson, K.M. Kacmar, J.H. Wayne, J.G. Grzywacz

[89] C. Closon, *Interface travail–hors travail: la satisfaction et la perception des politiques d'aide à la conciliation, des variables déterminantes?*, *Pratiques psychologiques,* 2009, Vol. 15, n.2, 203-212.

[90] J.H. Greenhaus, G.N. Powell

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] M. Dumas

[94] J.H. Greenhaus, G.N. Powell, page 76.

[95] S.L. Grover, K.J. Crooker, *Who appreciates family-responsive human resource policies: the impact of family-friendly policies on the organizational attachment of parents and non-parents, Personnel Psychology,* 1995, 48, 271–288.

[96] D.R. Dalton, D.J. Mesch, *The impact of flexible scheduling on employee attendance and turnover, Administrative Science Quarterly,* 1990, 35, 370–387.

practices[97]. In particular, line managers and supervisors are responsible for the implementation and the management of these policies[98].

Work-life balance practices constitute a form of organizational support[99]. They are defined as *"initiatives voluntarily introduced by firms which facilitate the reconciliation of employees' work and personal lives"* (Mccarthy et al., 2010: 158)[100]. The aim of these practices is to reduce work-life conflict.

They encompass a wide range of programs. Originally, these practices were limited to the shorter working hours, but they have become diversified with the evolution of the context[101]. They include how long, when and where people work and other aspects[102].

Work-life balance practices can be classified into two categories[103]: working-time planning policies and appeasement policies of work-family conflict.

Firstly, working-time planning policies include flexible work hours or flexi-time (when employees choose their own starting and finishing times of work), shorter working hours (e.g. job sharing, part-time job) and tele-working (when employees have the possibility to work outside the office). This category provides effective solutions to the problems of reconciliation[104]. Indeed, the individual has a limited time which led to the introduction of the term "famine of the time" and the appearance of the management of working time as a new concept[105]. Working-time management studies the utilization of time and offers models that differ from one individual to another to help them in finding their own balance.

Secondly, appeasement policies of work-family conflict include facilitating access to child-care, special maternity leave arrangements, family leave, household support services, and employee assistance programs. They aim to improve the quality of life of the employee by making allies in their professional life and their life outside work[106].

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[97] G.A. Maxwell, *Checks and balances: the role of managers in work–life balance policies and practices*, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 2005, vol. 12, no 3, p. 179-189.

[98] A. Mccarthy, C. Darcy, G. Grady, *Work-life balance policy and practice: Understanding line manager attitudes and behaviors*, *Human Resource Management Review*, 2010, vol. 20, no 2, p. 158-167.

[99] F. Chiang, T.A. Birtch, H.K. Kwan, *The moderating roles of job control and work-life balance practices on employee stress in the hotel and catering industry*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 2010, vol. 29, no 1, p. 25-32.

[100] A. Mccarthy, C. Darcy, G. Grady, page 158.

[101] G.A. Maxwell, page 181.

[102] Ibid.

[103] C. Closon

[104] Ibid.,

[105] L. Perlow

[106] C. Closon

These two categories of policies can be presented as one of these three forms: a strategic tool, an obligation, or an act of social responsibility[107]. Policies can be seen as a strategic tool for the organization in the way that they allow, in the first instance, to resolve the conflict between work and other spheres of individual life, and in the second, to increase motivation, involvement, and the retention of current employees in order to attract future employees with high potential.

Moreover, policies can be seen as an obligation as a result of the evolution of the employment relationship and change in the psychological contract of work that includes a new dimension of work-life balance. In this sense, many employees can consider the implementation of reconciliation policies as an organizational requirement.

Finally, reconciliation policies can be seen as an act of responsibility and social commitment through which the organization demonstrates its contribution to the individual welfare.

In his study of the impact of work-life balance practices and policies on women's career advancement, Straub (2007: 295)[108] classified 14 European countries into three groups based on their performance in the field of work-life balance practices. The low performance group was comprised of Italy, Portugal and Belgium. In contrast, the high-performance group was comprised of Denmark, Ireland, the UK, The Netherlands, Spain and Sweden. In the middle, Germany, Finland, Greece, Austria and France constituted the medium-performance group in the field of work-life balance practices. In fact, these practices can be enrolled in a mandatory approach or in an incentive approach, depending on the country in question.

As mentioned above, line managers have an important and crucial role in determining the success and the effectiveness of work-life balance practices[109]. In addition, these practices cannot be efficient without an organizational culture that supports their implementation[110]. Finally, after their implementation, work-life balance practices must be formally evaluated by organizations to ensure that they have beneficial effects on both the individual and the organization itself[111].

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[107] Ibid.

[108] C. Straub, *A comparative analysis of the use of work-life balance practices in Europe: Do practices enhance females' career advancement?.*, in *Women in Management Review*, 2007, vol. 22, no 4, p. 289-304.

[109] A. Mccarthy, C. Darcy, G. Grady

[110] F. Chiang, T.A. Birtch, H.K. Kwan

[111] T.A. Beauregard, L.C. Henry, *Making the link between work-life balance practices and organizational performance*, *Human resource management review*, 2009, vol. 19, no 1, p. 9-22.

The reconciliation that involves management of boundaries between work and other spheres of life is a contemporary and widespread organizational challenge. To be managed, this challenge calls for reflection on the competencies of HR managers and HR practices.

Firstly, we need to rethink the tools HR systems utilize[112]. Among these tools, we find the annual performance objectives interview used to assess the employee's activities, but should not be limited to this single objective, as it should be seen as a positive opportunity for exchange between the HR manager and the employee. Also, conflict prevention is another tool that may be utilized for the prevention of stress, insomnia, and psychosocial problems[113].

Secondly, we must put in place training for HR managers, management and employees[114]. Such training should aim at raising the awareness of these stakeholders to the problem of conciliation and the way in which they can manage the boundaries of their lives at work and those of their lives outside work. Future HR managers must acquire different training to meet this challenge born after the recent developments in the world of work and the social environment.

This challenge must be an organizational priority since it meets the needs of the individual welfare, and therefore work performance, especially in high performance management models.

Work-life balance practices are important and are getting the attention of all the organizations since these practices influence organizational performance. In fact, there are two explanations of the link between work-life balance practices and organizational performance[115]: individual-level explanations, such as organizational citizenship behaviour, improved work-related attitudes and reduced work-life conflict, and organization level explanations, such as improved productivity, retention, and recruitment.

These positive effects attest that work and family can be allies whereby work-family interface has a positive side; namely work-family enrichment[116] [117]. The organizations have a crucial role in this enrichment since their work-family balance practices are determinant to this aspect.

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[112] M. Deledeuille
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.
[115] T.A. Beauregard, L.C. Henry, page 10.
[116] D.S. Carlson, K.M. Kacmar, J.H. Wayne, J.G. Grzywacz
[117] J.H. Greenhaus, G.N. Powell

4. Work-Family Balance: Statistical Portrait for the French and Canadian Cases

The issue of work-life balance concerns all employees of both genders. We limited ourselves to the case of women.

The aim of this analysis is to explore the effect of public work-family balance policies on maternal employment rates in Canada and France.

We selected France because it is widely cited in the literature with regard to work-life balance. Since Canada, and more specifically Quebec, are inspired by French policies, we have chosen comparison between France and Canada.

In the first part, we will outline the evolution of women's employment rates in France and Canada. Then, we will present some work-balance practices used by these two countries. To start with, we will compare the time dedicated to care work by men and women in both countries. After that, we will present and compare three governmental appeasement policies: public spending on family benefits, parental leave system and childcare support. All data was taken from "OECD Family Database"[118].

4.1 The Evolution of Employment Rates (%) for Women

Table 1 dresses some statistical data of the evolution of employment rates (%) for women (25-54 years old) with dependent children (0-14 years old) by the age of the youngest dependent child from 2005 to 2013.

Based on table 1, in France, employment rate for women with no children aged between 0 and 14 has increased 1.5% from 2005 to 2013. Moreover, the employment rate for those who have dependent child (aged 0-14) has also risen during the same period. This increase is 3.4% and is higher than the growth of the employment rate for women without children under the age of 14.

We can conclude that during the period 2005-2013, in general, employment rate for women has grown in France. This leads us to conclude that there are some work-life balance policies that encouraged women with children under the age of 14 to work and which had contributed to this augmentation.

In Canada, the employment rate for women (25-54 years old) with no children aged between 0-14 has increased from 2005 to 2013 and this rise is equal to 2.1% (table 1). Moreover, the employment rate for those with dependent child (0-14 years old) has also increased during the same period, but this growth was lower than the previous rate 1.3% (see table 1).

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[118] http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm

Table No. 1: The evolution of employment rates (%) for women (25-54 years old) with dependent children (aged 0-14) by age of the youngest dependent child, 2005-2013

Country	Age of youngest child	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
France	No children aged 0-14	77.7	78.2	80	79.9	78.4	79.8	78.6	78.5	79.2
	Youngest child aged 0-14	70.2	70.5	72.1	73.9	73.6	73.5	73.4	72.9	73.6
	- Youngest child aged 0-2	59.6	58.8	60	62.5	62.1	62.2	62.2	61.5	63.6
	- Youngest child aged 3-5	71.3	72,1	73.6	76.3	74,9	74.2	74.3	74.8	74.3
	- Youngest child aged 6-14	76.2	77	78.9	80	80,2	80.1	79,9	79.2	79.3
Canada	No children aged 0-14	79.7	80,6	81.4	81.6	80.7	80.5	81	81.3	81.8
	Youngest child aged 0-14	74	74	75.6	75.1	74.2	74.2	74.1	74.6	75.3
	- Youngest child aged 0-2	67.3	66.6	68.5	67.3	67.2	68.2	67.1	68	69.6
	- Youngest child aged 3-5	71.5	69.8	73.1	70.8	70.4	69.7	71.2	71.5	72.5
	- Youngest child aged 6-14	77.6	78.5	79.6	80.2	78.7	78.9	78.9	79.3	79.5

Source: Data of OECD (maternal employment) adapted from Canadian Labour Force Survey for Canada and from EU-LFS for European countries.

When we compare France and Canada during the period 2005-2013, for women aged between 25 and 54 years old, the employment rate is higher for Canadian women with dependent children, aged from 0 to 14, than for French women (Table 1). Canadian women are more encouraged to work than French women, even when they have children under the age of 14.

Also, in France and Canada, the employment rate for women with no children under the age of 14 remains higher than the employment rate for those who have children younger than 14 years old. This proves that having children aged less than 14 years old contributes to the non-work of some women.

When considering the age of the youngest child, statistics for France and Canada for our period of study show that the employment rate for women with dependent children raises with the increase of children's age. In other words, the age of children is a determining factor for the employment rate of women (25-54 years old) in France and Canada (table 1). In fact, for women with dependent children aged between 0 and 2 the employment rate is the lowest (table1).

Table 2 presents employment rates for partnered mothers and sole mothers in France and Canada. It shows that the employment rate for partnered mothers (25-54 years old) with at least one dependent child aged between 0 and 14 has

increased during the period 2005-2013, valid in France and Canada. This evolution was higher in France than in Canada (5% versus 1.8% respectively). In contrast, employment rate for sole mothers with at least one dependent child (aged 0-14) has slightly decreased during the same period for the two countries.

One may conclude that, both in France and Canada, sole mothers with at least one child were not encouraged to work. Work-life balance practices in both countries were favorable to the work of partnered mothers with at least one dependent child despite the work of sole mothers.

Table No. 2: The evolution of employment rates (%) for partnered mothers and sole mothers (25-54 years old) with at least one dependent child aged 0-14

	Partnered mothers				Sole mothers		
	2005	2009	2013		2005	2009	2013
France	70.6	74.8	75	**France**	68	67.3	66.8
Canada	74.3	74.5	76.1	**Canada**	72.2	72.1	71

Source: Data of OECD (maternal employment) adapted from Canadian Labour Force Survey for Canada and from EU-LFS For European countries.

Concerning France, the increase of employment rate for partnered mothers with at least one dependent child under the age of 14 may be explained by the change in employment patterns in couple households with children (see table 3). In fact, during the period 2003-2013, for the French case, the proportion of couple households with full-time dual earner has increased by 2.59% and those of couple households with one-and-a-half earner has increased by 0.42%. This proves that partnered mothers in France with at least one child under the age of 14 are accepting full-time jobs more than part-time ones despite joblessness.

Table No. 3: Change in the distribution of employment patterns in couple households with at least one child aged 0-14 between 2003 and 2013

	Proportion (%) of couple households with:														
	Full-time dual earner			One-and-a-half earner			Sole earner			Jobless			Other		
	2003	2013	Change	2003	2013	Change	2003	2013	Change	2003	2013	Change	2003	2013	Change
France	38.76	41.35	2.59	25.78	26.2	0.42	27.99	23.15	-4.84	4.37	5.03	0.67	3.09	4.27	1.18

Source: Data of OECD (Changes in patterns of employment in couple households with children, 2003 to 2013) adapted from EU-LFS for France

4.2 Appeasement Policies

In general, the number of children under school age is a determining factor in time dedicated to care work, valid for men and women both in France and Canada (Table 4). The time dedicated to care work includes the time spent to care after household members or to informally help one another. It includes all episodes of care work declared as primary or secondary activity only for the French case. There is a positive relationship between the number of children under school age and the time dedicated to care work (see table 4 for more details).

Table No. 4: Time dedicated to care work, by number of children under school age (7 years)

	Men age 25 to 44				Women age 25 to 44		
	No Child	1 child	2 children or more		No Child	1 child	2 children or more
France (1999)	1.1	3.6	4.5	**France (1999)**	2.2	8.8	12.8
Canada (2005)	2.1	5.6	6.6	**Canada (2005)**	1.9	7.7	8.8

Note: Care work includes here all episodes of care work declared as primary or secondary activity, except for the United States and Canada. It also includes the time spent to care for household members
Source: Data of OECD (time use of work and care) adapted from National Time Use Surveys as reported in the HETUS dataset.

Trying to reduce this time of care work and to help parents find their balance between work and family, many appeasement policies have been put in place in France and Canada. We will present three work-family balance policies introduced by the two governments, which are: public spending on family benefits, parental leave system and childcare support.
Public spending on family benefits can be in cash, in services or in tax breaks. In 2011, statistics show that the French total public spending on family benefits calculated in percent of GDP is higher than the Canadian one (see table 5 for more details). This result is valid for the three forms of public spending: cash, services, and tax breaks towards families. In fact, public spending on family in services is very small in Canada compared to those in France (table 5).

Table No. 5: Public spending on family benefits in cash, services and tax measures, in per cent of GDP, 2011

	Cash	Services	Tax breaks towards families	Total
France	1.57	1.36	0.68	3.61
Canada	1.02	0.22	0.19	1.43

Note: Public support accounted here only concerns public support that is exclusively for families (e.g. child payments and allowances, parental leave benefits and childcare support). Spending recorded in other social policy areas as health and housing support). Spending recorded in other social policy areas as health and housing support also assists families, but not exclusively, and is not included here.
Source: Adapted from Social Expenditure Database preliminary data
(www.oecd.org/social/expenditure.htm), September 2014

When it comes to paid leave available to mothers and fathers, statistics from table 6 show that in 2015 the total paid leave available for both parents in Canada (27.3 weeks) are higher than the total paid leave in France (24.5 weeks). This is a result of the fact that paid parental and home care leave in Canada far exceed those in France.

In contrast, French parents have access to a more generous paid maternity leave than Canadian parents. This generous compensation in France and especially the generous average payment rate for paid maternity leave may result in encouraging French mothers to leave the labor market for a long period. This may make it difficult for French mothers to come back to work, although, the weak average payment rate for paid maternity leave (less than 50%), encourages them to stay at work.

Table No. 6: Paid leave entitlements available to mothers and fathers, in weeks, 2015

		Paid maternity leave			Paid parental and home care leave available			Total paid leave available		
		Length, in weeks	Average payment rate (%)	Full-rate equivalent, in weeks	Length, in weeks	Average payment rate (%)	Full-rate equivalent, in weeks	Length, in weeks	Average payment rate (%)	Full-rate equivalent, in weeks
France	Mothers	16	93.5	15	26	14.6	3.8	42	44.7	18.8
France	Fathers	2	93.5	1.9	26	14.6	3.8	28	20.2	5.7
Canada	Mothers	17	48.3	8.2	35	54.7	19.1	52	52.6	27.3
Canada	Fathers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Sources: Data adapted from OECD (Parental leave systems) that are adapted from OECD Social Expenditure Database

Finally, when comparing Childcare support in 2012 (Table 7), the Canadian case shows that the Gross childcare fees for two children (aged 2 and 3)

represents 39% of the average wage. These fees are lower for the French case since they represent 18.7% of the average wage.

Table No. 7: Gross childcare fees for two children (aged 2 and 3) in % of average wage, 2012

	Gross childcare fees in % of average wage
France	19.7
Canada	39.0

Note: The average wage reflects the earnings of an "average worker"
Source: OECD Tax-Benefit model 2014

4.3 Concluding Remarks about These Statistics

When analyzing the employment rates in Canada and France and the public appeasement policies, we can establish some links between them.

In Canada, it appears that several factors encourage Canadian mothers to work: the public spending on families, especially the low level of spending; childcare support characterized by the high gross childcare fees as a percentage of the average wage, and the low paid maternity leave.

This is not the case for France, where the high level of public spending on families, the extent of childcare support (the moderate gross childcare fees as a percentage of the average wage), and the generous total paid leave, especially the generous paid maternity leave, are all factors that encourage French mothers to stay at home to take care of their children.

Data about organizational work-life balance practices was not available so we were not able to compare Canadian and French organizational practices and to analyze their effects on employment rates for mothers with children under the age of 14. Future research may extend this work by investigating how these organizational practices may influence employment rates.

5. Conclusion

Labour market transformations and specifically the growing number of working-women have led to the increase of families with two breadwinners. Consequently, the issue of balancing work and family has become essential in modern societies.

Nevertheless, work-family balance emanates theoretically from the concept of work identity and therefore the conflict of roles (role at work and family role) to which workers are increasingly subject.

The aim of this paper was to review the literature on concepts such as work identity, work-family conflict and work-family balance policies while emphasizing how they are defined. We underline the importance of these practices for both the individual and the organization.

Finally, we took the example of two countries: France and Canada. France is widely cited in research about work-family balance while Canada is partly inspired by the French policies. Recent statistical data from OECD shows that these two countries are close in terms of work-family balance. In fact, employment rates for women have increased in France and Canada during the last eight years. This may be explained by work-family policies. We limited our analysis to work-family policies developed by these two governments: public spending on family benefits, the parental leave system and childcare support. We conclude that Canadian policies encourage Canadian women to stay in the labour market more than do comparable French policies.

Our study is incomplete since the contribution of organizations (organizational work-family policies) was not taken into account. Future research should investigate this issue by shifting the focus to detailed studies in different institutional contexts such as France and Canada, preferably deploying multiple case studies in order to take account of organizational as well as institutional variations. Actor strategies, notably those of firms and unions, are also to be considered in this equation, if we are to ascertain a clearer picture of which factors are really influencing this crucial issue of work-family balance.

Working and Caring – Polish Regulations in the Context of Demographic Changes

Małgorzata Kurzynoga [1]

Abstract. This paper focuses on the problem of combining employment with care of dependent relatives, either children or the elderly, faced by people of working age. It highlights the importance of providing instruments to support working carers in their efforts to balance their professional and caring roles. This study analyses the Polish legislation regarding the reconciliation of work and family life. A significant part of the paper includes *de lege ferenda* proposals for combining a professional career with care of an elderly family member.

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1. Introduction

In August 2015, the European Commission published a Roadmap for the initiative "A new start to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working families", which will replace the 2008 Commission's proposal to amend the Maternity Leave Directive. The objective for this new initiative is to modernise and update the current European Union's legal and policy framework to allow parents with children and/or those with dependent relatives to balance caring and professional responsibilities better, encourage a more equitable use of work-life balance policies between women and men and strengthen equal treatment on the labour market.[2] By enhancing women's participation in the labour market, this initiative would contribute to implementation of the Commission's priorities on jobs and growth in the context of demographic challenges.[3]

In its 2016 Work Programme, the European Commission also announced a 'new start' initiative on work-life balance covering a package of legislative and non-legislative measures. The intention is to update and adjust the current European Union legal and policy framework with a view to better tackling the challenges of work-life balance faced by parents and carers. One of the proposed measures is to provide the right to 'filial' leave, i.e. a leave to take care of a dependent family member, which seems to be quite significant in the time of ageing societies.

With regard to the above-mentioned initiative, the European Commission carried out a compulsory two-stage consultation procedure, as provided for under Article 154 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The consultations on possible action addressing the challenges of work-life balance faced by working parents and caregivers were carried out between 11 November 2015 and 30 September 2016.

2. Demographic Changes in Poland

The progressive ageing process concerns both Poland and other member states of the European Union. The population ageing is influenced by many factors. The literature mentions among the basic ones: the decreasing number of births

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[2] D. Bouget, S. Spasova, B. Vanhercke, *Work-life balance measures for persons of working age with dependent relatives in Europe. A study of national policies*, 2016, ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15848&langId=en (accessed September 15, 2016).

[3] European Commission, *Consultation document. Second-stage consultation of the social partners at European level under Article 154 TFEU on possible action addressing the challenges of work-life balance faced by working parents and caregivers*, Brussels, 12.7.2016 C(2016), ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15865&langId=en (accessed September 15, 2016).

and lengthening of the average duration of life. The society ageing is a global phenomenon, although its pace is different in different parts of the world, countries and regions.[4] According to Eurostat's projections, the pace of population ageing in Poland will one of the fastest in Europe. As a result, from one of the youngest populations in Europe (measured in terms of the old-age rate and old-age dependency rate), the Polish population will become one of the oldest.[5] According to the data from the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS), the percentage of people aged 65 and more was 15.3% in 2014 and in the year 2035 it will account for 24.5% of the total population. Additionally, in accordance with the GUS forecasts, the population of Poland between 2014 and 2035 will decrease by more than 2 million and reach 35.993 million in 2035. During the same period, the median age will grow by about seven years and in 2035 it will stand at 47.9.[6]

3. Importance of Measures Supporting the Reconciliation of Work and Care Responsibilities

The population ageing will affect many areas of social and political life, and it will influence the labour market as the workforce will not only be ageing, but also shrinking. Furthermore, the growing number of old people in the society, even though enjoying better health, will need care. As a result, more and more employees, especially the middle-aged ones, will be responsible for taking care of a dependent family member, most frequently a parent.

The occurring demographic processes, which entail the society ageing, necessitate legal solutions that would make the reconciliation of work and care easier. The solutions involve creating opportunities for combining work with raising young children and caring of an elderly person. Legal solutions which allow the reconciliation of work and child care have two basic aims. Firstly, they are designed to encourage people to have children and this way increase the birth rate and, secondly, they are to trigger employment by making the career of people raising children possible. Opportunities for combining work with care of an elderly person first and foremost are aimed at enabling the carers to stay on the job market.

Legal solutions which facilitate the reconciliation of a professional career and care of an elderly person play a crucial role, both from the point of view of

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[4] A. Richert-Kaźmierska, *Demographic Changes in Poland – the Regional Dimension*, in Equilibrium. Quarterly in Journal of Economics and Economic Policy, 2015, no. 10 (1), p. 113.

[5] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/People_in_the_EU_%E2%80%93_population_projections (accessed August 25, 2016)

[6] A. Richert-Kaźmierska, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-118.

public interest and the interest of carers themselves. From the viewpoint of public interest, it is important to enable people with caring responsibilities to stay on the job market. Giving up work in view of taking care of a child or an adult family member brings about a decrease in the workforce and an increase in the burden for the state budget. The growing number of pensioners, due to the society ageing, in relation to the number of professionally active population poses a serious risk. In Poland, the pension system is based on pensions financed by a working group of the society, mainly through the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) and other state bodies. The decreasing number of people in employment in relation to old-age pensioners will lead to the collapse of the pension system and the increase in the state expenditure. Legal solutions which would allow combining career with care of an elderly person produce real benefits for the society.

Furthermore, solutions which facilitate the reconciliation of work and both child-rearing and care of an elderly person bring notable effects for carers. A professional career plays a very important role in the life of every adult person, even more so in the life of carers of elderly people. Firstly, work is the source of income, ensuring financial means to support employees and their families. Giving up work so as to take care of an elderly family member results not only in the loss of income for the persons involved but also a lower pension in the future. Firstly, it entails the risk of poverty and inability of covering the carers' future caring needs. Secondly, work makes it possible for employees to meet their very important social needs which are beneficial for the psychophysical condition of the carers. An opportunity of following one's career, a sense of self-fulfilment and being productive, a possibility of interpersonal relations and taking a break from everyday chores, especially if a carer shares accommodation with an elderly family member in his/her care, are listed among aspects of employment which have a positive effect on the psychophysical condition of carers.[7]

Polish solutions for combining career with caregiving focus mainly on facilitating the reconciliation of work and child care. Over the last years, several crucial changes have been introduced in this area. Under the Polish law, there are no particular schemes which would support the reconciliation of work and care of an adult person. All general legal solutions introducing flexible employment and working time schemes are applicable in this area. The introduction of legal solutions which would aim at the reconciliation of a

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[7] Ł. Jurek, *Polityka łączenia pracy zawodowej z opieką nad osobą starszą*, in Acta Universitatis Lodziensis, Folia Oeconomica, 2015, no. 2 (312), p. 104.

[7] Annex to the Resolution of the Council of Ministers no. 238 dated 24 December 2013 – *Guidelines for the Long-term Senior Policy in Poland for the years 2014 and 2020 (ASOS)*, Monitor Polski 2014 (official journal), no. 118.

career and care of an adult person appears to be particularly important in case of women. In Poland, it is usually women aged 50-69 who work as carers. Daughters account for 37% and wives of the dependants for 20% of the above-mentioned group. Approximately one-third of carers combine care with regular employment. Some of the remaining persons are unemployed, and some had to resign from work because of the care responsibilities in the absence of measures which would enable them combining care of their dependants with a professional career.[8]

4. Combining Career with Child Care under Polish law

The Polish system of parental employment entitlements has been modified several times. The last of the changes entered into force on 2 January 2016. Regulations modifying the parental employment entitlements scheme are designed to make it easier for employees to balance their professional careers with raising children. The system of reconciling work and care of children is based on an extensive range of parenthood leaves. The Polish labour law provides for several types of leaves from work to care of children. These include: maternity leave, parental leave, paternity leave and childcare leave.

During the period of maternity leave, parental leave or paternity leave, the person who uses it is entitled to a maternity allowance, i.e. a cash benefit in lieu of the income from work. The maternity allowance in the case of maternity or paternity leave amounts to 100% of the average remuneration earned during the last 12 months preceding the leave. During the period of parental leave, the allowance paid amounts to 100% of the remuneration for the first six or eight weeks of the leave and 60% of the remuneration during the remaining period. The employee starting maternity leave may also request payment of the maternity allowance amounting to 80% of the remuneration for the entire period of maternity and parental leave.[9]

4.1.   Maternity Leave

Maternity leave is a period of statutory leave from work. Its length depends on the number of children born during one childbirth. A female employee is entitled to maternity leave of: 20 weeks when giving birth to one child at one birth, 31 weeks when giving birth to two children at one birth, 33 weeks in case

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[9] M. Włodarczyk, *Protection of parenthood*, in: K.W. Baran (ed.), *Outline of Polish Labour Law System*, Wolters Kluwer, Warsaw 2016, pp. 362-363.

of three children born at one birth, 35 weeks for the birth of four children at one birth, and 37 weeks with respect to five or more children at one birth.

A female employee may take maternity leave also before the expected date of birth, however, not earlier than six weeks prior to that date. The request for maternity leave is binding for an employer. If the female employee has not taken her maternity leave before the childbirth, the date of birth is the first day of the leave. When a newborn child requires hospital treatment, the female employee who has used eight weeks of maternity leave after the childbirth may use the remaining part of that leave on a later date, after the child is discharged from hospital.

In some cases, maternity leave may be taken not only by the child's mother. According to the latest amendment in the Polish law, the mother is allowed to share the maternity-related leaves that she is entitled to not only with the employed father, but in certain cases also with an employed member of her immediate family, or with the child's father or some other family member who is not employed but covered by social insurance on another basis and has interrupted his/her work to care of the child.

After at least 14 weeks of maternity leave, the employed mother of the newborn child may waive the right to the remaining part of the leave and return to work if:

a) the remaining period of maternity leave is used by the employed father taking care of the child,

c) for a period corresponding to the remaining part of maternity leave, personal care of the child is taken by the insured father of the child who, in order to take such care, suspends his gainful activity.

If an insured mother renounces the maternity allowance having benefitted from it for at least 14 weeks after childbirth, the employed father raising the child is entitled to the part of the maternity leave falling immediately after the date on which the insured mother has resigned from the allowance.

After using at least eight weeks of maternity leave after childbirth, a female employee holding a ruling stating her need for long-term care has the right to renounce the remaining part of the leave if:

a) the remaining part of the maternity leave is used by the employed father raising the child or some other employed member of the closest family,

b) for a period corresponding to the remaining part of the maternity leave, personal care of the child is taken by the insured father of the child or some other insured member of the immediate family who, in order to take such care, suspends his/her gainful activity.

If the insured mother of the child, holding a ruling stating her need for long-term care renounces the maternity allowance having benefitted from it for at least eight weeks after childbirth, the employed father raising the child or some other employed member of the immediate family is entitled to the part of the maternity leave falling immediately after the date on which the insured mother has resigned from the allowance.

After using at least eight weeks of maternity leave after childbirth, a female employee staying in hospital or another healthcare establishment providing medical services, such as full-stay and 24-hour-a-day treatment, due to her medical condition which prevents her from personal care of the child, may suspend her maternity leave for the period of stay in hospital or healthcare establishment, if:

a) the part of maternity leave for that period is used by the employed father raising the child or some other employed member of the immediate family,

b) personal care of the child is taken by the insured father of the child or some other insured member of the immediate family who, in order to take such care, suspends his/her gainful activity.

If the insured mother of the child renounces her maternity allowance having benefitted from it for at least eight weeks after childbirth, the employed father raising the child or some other employed member of the immediate family is entitled to the part of maternity leave corresponding to the period of the mother's stay in hospital or another healthcare establishment providing medical services, such as full-stay and 24-hour-a-day treatment, due to her medical condition which prevents her from personal care of the child.

The Polish Labour Code does not specify who the immediate member of the family is. As a result, any member of the family can be recognized as a person authorised to maternity leave and maternity allowance.[10]

Finally, it should be indicated that an employee who decides to adopt a child and applies to a family court in order to initiate the adoption proceedings, or who decides to foster a child, except in a professional foster family, has the right to avail oneself of leave on the terms and conditions of maternity leave. The length of leave on account of adoption depends on the number of children received to be raised at one time. The minimum period is 20 weeks in the case of one child, and the maximum is 37 weeks in the case of five or more children to raise. However, the leave must be taken before the child reaches

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[10] B. Godlewska-Bujok, *Uprawnienia związane z rodzicielstwem – nowa odsłona*, in Praca i Zabezpieczenie Społeczne, 2015, no. 9, p. 18.

the age of seven, or ten in the case of a child whose compulsory full-time schooling has been postponed.

4.2. *Parental Leave*

Parental leave was introduced in the Polish labour law in 2013. This is a voluntary leave from work granted for 32 (in case of one child born during one birth) or 34 (for more than one child during one birth) weeks, directly after maternity leave has been used. Both parents of the child are entitled to parental leave for the mentioned period. Parental leave may be taken by one of the parents or parents may share such leave or take it at the same time. However, the total length of parental leave for both parents cannot exceed the mentioned period (32 or 34 weeks). Parental leave may be taken as a whole in one go or in maximum four separate blocks falling directly one after another. Since January 2016, it has been possible to take 16 weeks of parental leave later, until the end of the calendar year when the child reaches the age of six. The number of blocks used this way reduces the number of those of the available child-raising leave. None of the blocks of parental leave can be shorter than eight weeks, with the exception of:

a) the first block which, in the event of giving birth to one child at one birth, cannot be shorter than six weeks,
b) cases when the block which is left to be used is shorter than eight weeks.

An employee may combine parental leave with work for the employer granting this leave, however, the working time may not exceed half of the full-time job. In such case, parental leave is granted for the remaining working time. The work is commenced upon the employee's written request, submitted at least 21 days before the employee begins to perform work. The employer is obliged to accept the request, unless it is impossible due to the work organisation scheme or type of work performed by the employee. The employer notifies the employee in writing of the reason for rejection of the request.

In the case when the employee combines parental leave with work for the employer granting this leave, the length of parental leave is extended proportionally to the working time of the employee during parental leave or its part, however, no longer than until:

a) 64 weeks – in the event of giving birth to one child at one birth,
b) 68 weeks – in the event of giving birth to two or more children at one birth.

It should also be noted that an employee who decides to adopt a child and applies to a family court for initiating the adoption proceedings, or who decides to foster a child, except in a professional foster family, is entitled to parental leave as well. The length of parental leave in this case depends on the number of children received to be raised and amounts to 32 or 34 weeks.

4.3.   Paternity Leave

Paternity leave was introduced in the Polish labour law in 2010. An employee who is a father taking care of his child is entitled to paternity leave of two weeks, but no longer than:

a) until the child is 24 months old, or

b) until the lapse of 24 months as of the date when the adoption decision became final, and until the child is seven years old or, in the case of a child whose compulsory full-time schooling has been postponed, until the child is ten years old.

Paternity leave may be used all in one go or in not more than two blocks yet none of which may be shorter than one week. Paternity leave is granted at a written request of a male employee raising his child, submitted not later than seven days before commencing that leave. The employer is obliged to accept the request.

4.4.   Child-care Leave

Child-care leave is a leave from work granted to parents or guardians to take personal care of the child during the first years of his/her life. The legislator does not differentiate between men and women and grants equal rights to them in respect of that leave.[11] An employee who has been employed for at least six months has the right to take child-care leave. The six-month employment period includes previous periods of employment. Child-care leave is granted at the employee's request submitted at least 21 days before commencing the leave. The employer is obliged to accept the request. An employee may withdraw his/her request for child-care leave by submitting a written statement yet no later than seven days before commencing the leave. The length of child-care leave must not exceed 36 months and may be used in no more than five blocks. The number of blocs shall be determined on the basis of submitted requests for leave. The leave is granted for a period no longer than until the end of the calendar year when the child reaches the age of

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[11] M. Włodarczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

six. However, if the child requires personal care of the employee due to health reasons confirmed by a certificate of disability or a degree of disability, then the employee may take child-care leave of up to 36 months until the child reaches 18 years of age. If both parents or guardians are employed, child-care leave may be taken by one or both of them at the same time. In the latter case, the overall length of parental leave cannot exceed 36 months.

Personal care of the child as a requirement of granting child-care leave does not mean that such care must be permanent and that the carer cannot be replaced in his/her duties by other household members.[12] The legislator allows that an employee may, during child-care leave, take on paid work for the current or another employer, or any other activity, as well as education or training, as long as it does not interfere with personal care of the child.

The employee may waive childcare leave at any time during the period of such leave, with the employer's consent. The employer may call on the employee to return to work if it is determined that the employee has permanently ceased taking personal care of the child.

It should be emphasized that an employee entitled to child-care leave may request the reduction of his/her working time to not less than half of his/her full working time in the period when the leave could be taken. The employer must accept the request. The request must be filed 21 days before commencing work in the reduced working time scheme.

4.5.   Employment after Leave

After the end of maternity leave, the leave on terms and conditions of maternity leave, parental leave, paternity leave, child-care leave, the employer should readmit the employee to work in the previous job position or, if this is not possible, in a position equivalent to the position held before the leave, or in another position that corresponds to the employee's professional qualifications, for remuneration not lower than the one which the employee would receive if he/she had not been on the leave.

4.6.   Other rights of Employees Raising Children

Polish regulations provide for time off from work to take care of a child. Firstly, according to Art. 188 of the Labour Code, an employee raising at least one child of up to the age of 14 is entitled to taking time off for 16 hours or two days in a calendar year, while retaining the right to remuneration. Secondly, in accordance with the Act of 25 June 1999 on cash benefits from the National

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[12] *Ibidem.*

Insurance, in case of illness and maternity, an insured person is entitled to care leave so as to take care of a child and the right to a care allowance during that period. Both employees and self-employed persons are entitled to the above-mentioned allowance. The allowance amounts to 80% of the average monthly pay. Such time off is provided when caring of: a healthy child under eight years of age in the situations specified in the act, a sick child under 14 and sick child over 14 years of age. The leave and allowance are granted for the period of 60 days in the calendar year in the case when care is provided to a child under 14, and 14 days in a calendar year for an older child. The indicated period is applicable irrespective of the number of family members entitled to the leave and the number of children who require care.

Moreover, employees taking care of a child cannot, without their consent, be employed overtime or at night, under the intermittent working time scheme and outside the permanent place of work until the child reaches the age of four.

5. Combining Career with Care of an Elderly Person

The issue of combining career with care is the subject of interest of the International Labour Organisation. The ILO Convention no. 156 concerns the equal opportunities and treatment of workers of both sexes: employees with family responsibilities. The above convention together with recommendations refer to employees who have responsibilities towards their "dependent children" (Art.1 (1)) and towards "other members of their immediate family who clearly need their care or support" (Art.1 (2)). In accordance with the Preamble, the aim of the Convention is to promote equal opportunities and treatment between both women and men workers with family responsibilities and between employees with family responsibilities and other workers. However, Poland has not ratified the Convention.

In Poland, there are no specific regulations which would provide for combining career with care of an elderly person. Still, the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 24 December 2013 entitled "Guidelines of the Long-term Senior Policy in Poland for the years 2014 and 2020"[13] indicates the need for such legal solutions. Noting that informal carers play a crucial role in providing care to their relatives – elderly family members – the system of support for informal carers was acknowledged. It was stated in the document that "ensuring of the suggested changes must take into account the needs and expectations of informal carers of elderly people, who require systemic solutions that would enable them to take care when they are not employed and

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[13] Monitor Polski of 4 February 2014, no. 118.

devote themselves to such care, but also when they have to reconcile care with their career". No drafts of legal acts with the aim of facilitating such care have been drawn up as yet.

5.1. Legal Solutions in Polish Law Supporting Persons Who Take Care of an Adult Person

Basically, there are no regulations which would aim at supporting people who take care of an elderly person. Some solutions in this area can only be found in the National Insurance law. In accordance with the Act of 25 June 1999 on cash benefits from the National Insurance, in case of illness and maternity, an insured person is entitled to care leave so as to take care of a family member and a care allowance during that period. Both employees and self-employed persons can receive the above-mentioned allowance. The discussed act lists three types of leave:

a) a leave up to 60 days in the calendar year in order to take care of a healthy child up to eight years of age in the situations specified in the act,

b) a leave up to 60 days in the calendar year in order to take care of a sick child of up to 14 years of age,

c) a leave up to 14 days in the calendar year in order to take care of another sick family member. A spouse, parents, a child's parent, a stepfather, a stepmother, parents-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, siblings and children aged over 14 are regarded as family members as long as they share the household with the insured person when the care is required.

A person on leave in order to take care is entitled to 80% of the care allowance. The basis of the allowance for an insured carer is an average monthly pay earned for the period of 12 months prior to the month during which that person becomes incapable of working. The mentioned allowance is not a burden to the employer as it is financed by the National Insurance. A person is entitled to the care allowance during the leave caused by the necessity of taking care for no longer than:

a) 14 days in the calendar year, if the care involves a family member aged over 14, regardless of the number of sick family members who require care,

b) 60 days in the calendar year if the care involves a child up to 14 years of age, regardless of the number of children who require care. Such an allowance combines both care of children and other family members for no longer than 60 days in the calendar year. This means

that a person cannot use 60 days of care in case of children and 14 days for other family members. The sum of such leaves cannot exceed 60 days in the calendar year.

The maximum period of leave as stipulated by the legislator indicates that the care of a child is regarded as a priority, and little attention is paid to the care of other family members, especially elderly ones. There is no justification for such a discrepancy.

Another benefit which can be granted to a person who takes care of a sick family member is a non-cash allowance which involves payment of a national insurance premium to a carer. Such an allowance in the system of social welfare is addressed to:

a) people on unpaid leave taken in order to take care,
b) people abandoning work in order to take care of a sick family member.

In accordance with Art. 42 of the Social Welfare Act, a pension insurance premium is paid by a social welfare centre to a carer who gives up work in order to take personal care of a long-term or seriously ill family member, a mother, a father, siblings, the mother or the father of a spouse who does not share the household. People who are on unpaid leave because of the need to take care of the above-mentioned persons are entitled to this non-cash allowance. It should be mentioned, however, that the employer has no obligation to grant such unpaid leave to an employee. In accordance with Art. 174 of the Labour Code, the employer may grant unpaid leave upon an employee's written request. The decision about granting unpaid leave is taken by the employer. Furthermore, it should be indicated that, due to the fact that it concerns payment specified in the social security system, the entitlement to the payment depends on meeting the income criterion. To be more specific, a social welfare centre pays the carer's pension insurance premium if the income per person in the family does not exceed the amount stipulated by law (it amounts to 150% of the income criterion per person in the family, as specified in another regulation[14]). Apart from that, this regulation is not applicable to carers who are covered by compulsory insurance resulting from a different right or who receive pension. The pension insurance premium, the amount of which is specified in the rules of the social insurance system, is payable for the time when care is provided.

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[14] In accordance with § 1 (1)b of the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 29 July 2009 relating to the verified criteria of income and cash social welfare benefits (Polish Journal of Laws Dz. U. no. 127, item 1055), this amount stands at PLN 351.

5.2.   General Solutions Supporting the Reconciliation of Work and Care

Flexible working schemes may play a crucial role in the reconciliation of work and care. Therefore, Polish solutions in this area are discussed below in order to assess whether they actually meet this objective. The Polish labour law provides for flexible work schemes such as: flexible working hours, part-time work and teleworking.

a) Part-time work
One of the flexible working time models which can substantially help to reconcile work and care is part-time work. The provisions of both Directive 97/8 of 1997 referring to part-time work and the Polish Labour Code do not specify the minimum and maximum limits of employment during part-time employment. This means that the parties in employment are allowed a lot of leeway when deciding about part-time work. It might be both two-day and four-day work per week. Similarly, the working hours scheme and intensity of work in particular weeks may vary, depending on the will of both parties and the flexibility is determined to a large extent by the accounting period. In the process, depending on the needs of an employee who is in educations, the daily or weekly limits might be reduced. It might be work performed for eight hours for three days a week or for four hours every day. Part-time work can take place in any work schemes as long as it is compliant with the labour law regulations.

Part-time employees preserve all employee rights. According to Art. 29^2 § 1 of the Labour Code, the conclusion of a contract of employment for part-time work must not result in conditions of work and pay which are less favourable for the employee compared with other employees who perform the same or similar work based on full-time employment, subject to the provision that remuneration and other work-related benefits must be in proportion to the employee's working time. Moreover, Art. 18^{3a} § 1 of the Labour Code guarantees equal treatment of employees, regardless of employment on the full-time or part-time basis. Equal treatment in employment is defined as the prohibition of any discrimination, direct or indirect (Art. 18^{3a} § 2 of the Labour Code). The principle of equal treatment applies to the termination of an employment relationship, terms and conditions of employment, promotion and access to training for the development of professional qualifications.

The possibility of changing the length of the working time plays a vital role in the protection of an employee. In accordance with Art. 29 § 2 of the Labour Code, as far as possible, an employer should consider requests filed by employees to change the length of their working time defined in their

respective contracts of employment. The quoted rule refers both to reduction or increase of the working time. An employee, whose family member requires care can request the employer to reduce the working time to part-time employment. An employee who has ceased to take care of an elderly person, due to that person's death or placement in the nursing home, may request the employer to change the part-time to full-time work scheme. It is doubtful, however, whether the employee can claim the change in the employment contract. It is rightly indicated in the legal doctrine that an employee may raise such claims if the employer is capable of providing such possibilities.[15]

b) Flexible working hours

The arrangement of working time in which an employee decides on the hours of starting and finishing work, referred to as flexitime, plays a role in the reconciliation of career and care of an elderly person. It has been a relatively new solution, introduced in the amendment to the Labour Code from 2013. The institution of flexitime, regulated in Art. 140 of the Labour Code allows the use of working time more freely by both parties to the employment contract. The regulation provides for two types of flexitime. Under Art. 140 § 1 of the Labour Code, the first type is based on the working time scheme with different hours of starting and finishing work on the days which in that arrangement are the working days for an employee. The other type of flexitime is stipulated in Art. 140 § 2 of the Labour Code, in accordance with which the working time scheme can provide for the period when an employee decides about the time of starting work on his/her working days in that scheme. In the first case, the employer is the beneficiary of the adopted regulation as he/she determines the flexible working hours of starting work on the following days. The other type is, first and foremost, to the benefit of the employee as it is he/she who decides about what time to start work within the previously specified range of time. This type of flexitime is introduced by determining the range of time in the working time scheme during which an employee may start work (e.g. between 8:00 and 11:00 a.m.). Together with the change in the time of starting work, the time of finishing it on a given day changes accordingly. It is the sole right of an employee to specify what time he/she starts work within the set range of time on a given day. The employer cannot decide when an employee is to start work on a given day. He/she has the right, however, to employ such an employee overtime if there are reasons as those stipulated in Art. 151 of the Labour Code. It is worth remembering that the employer arranges the working time scheme, hence it is his/her responsibility to determine the range of time during which an employee will decide about

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[15] M. Gersdorf, *Kodeks Pracy. Komentarz*, LexisNexis, Warsaw 2012, p. 236.

starting work on a given day.[16] Flexitime may be introduced in every working time scheme provided that the daily rest is ensured.[17]

Flexitime can be introduced exclusively if the representatives of employees consent to it or upon a written request of an employee. The Labour Code in Art. 150 § 5 provides for the additional procedure of introducing flexitime upon a written request of an employee. The request for the flexitime work schedule is permissible, regardless of its procedure, in the agreement with trade unions or the representatives of employees. It is possible for an employee to request it even if flexitime has already been introduced in the collective work agreement in case the employee is interested in a different working time arrangement.[18]

c) Teleworking

The employment in the telework model is subject to regulations of the Labour Code. Chapter IIb of the Labour Code entitled "Employment in the form of telework" comprising 13 new articles (Art. 67^5 to 67^{17}) came into force in October 2007. It should be noted that prior to the mentioned amendment of the Labour Code, there were no regulations in Poland dealing specifically with telework. The new legislation focuses on the specificities of telework, both as regards its introduction and the relations between an employer and a teleworker. In matters relating to telework not regulated by the new chapter, the other provisions of the Labour Code apply.

It is worth noting that the Labour Code is not the only act which applies to telework. In 2014, a new regulation aimed at encouraging employment in the form of telework was inserted into the Act of 20 April 2004 on employment promotion and labour market institutions. According to Art. 60a of that statute, an employer may receive a grant for creating telework jobs for an unemployed parent with at least one child under six years of age, returning to the labour market, or an unemployed person taking care of a dependant, who resigned from employment or other paid work to take care of her/his child or dependant, provided that it had happened within three years before they registered as unemployed with the labour office. The grant for creating telework jobs is awarded to an employer on the basis of a contract concluded with the labour office. Such grant cannot be given if the employer wants to

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[16] K. Stefański, in K.W. Baran (ed.) *The Labour Code, Commentary*, Wolters Kluwer, Warsaw 2016, Lex/el.

[17] A. Sobczyk, in A. Sobczyk (ed.) *The Labour Code, Commentary*, C.H. Beck, Warsaw 2014, pp. 578-579.

[18] K. Sakowska, *Elastyczne formy organizacji czasu pracy według ustawy nowelizującej z 23 sierpnia 2013 r.*, in A. Bieliński, A. Giedrewicz-Niewińska, M. Szabłowska-Juckiewicz (eds), *Elastyczne formy zatrudnienia i organizacji czasu pracy*, Difin, Warsaw 2015, p. 280.

employ his/her spouse, parent, sibling, or biological or adopted child either of the employer or of their spouse or sibling. The employer is bound by the contract to maintain employment for the period of 12 months on a full-time basis or for the period of 18 months on a part-time basis. The employer receives a grant in the amount indicated in the contract, however, it cannot exceed sixfold the minimum monthly pay for each unemployed person. If the employer defaults on maintaining the employment for the contractual period or spends money against the contract, he/she will be obliged to return the entire grant together with the statutory interest calculated as of the day of receiving it within 30 days of a notice delivery. It should be noted that the grant for creating telework jobs is not a very popular measure.

According to the GUS, workers employed in the form of telework represent around 2% of the total number of the employed who have the employee status.[19] Since the survey was conducted among companies employing at least nine workers, the actual number of teleworkers can be slightly higher. Moreover, it should be noted that around 9% of working people in Poland perform work under civil-law contracts. Research conducted in 2006, based on the sample of 1,000 companies, indicates that 57% of people who carry out work using information technology outside the employer's premises, do this job under civil-law contracts, i.e. under commission contracts, contracts for a specific task or self-employment contracts.[20] Meanwhile, in the light of Polish law, which came into force in 2007, only those who carry out work under the employment contract are recognized as teleworkers. Finally, it should be added that, according to the employers' organisation, some employers use telework informally.

Based on employers' opinion, it can be argued that the low employment rate in case of telework stems mainly from Polish regulations. A bureaucratic procedure of determining conditions of telework discourage employers from this model of employment. Even a possibility of taking a grant for creating telework jobs is not an incentive for employers to engage in telework. The Polish Ministry of Labour and Social Policy data shows that only two persons in 2014 and six persons in 2015 took on employment under the grant for creating telework jobs.[21] Meanwhile, the results of studies conducted in 2010 by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development indicate that 11.2% of

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[19] Central Statistical Office of Poland, *Yearbook of Labour Statistics*, Statistical Publishing Establishment, Warsaw 2015, p. 121.

[20] The survey was conducted by the Partner and Business Strategies (Polish Market Research Company). The results are available in Polish at http://pbs.pl/e4u.php/1,ModPages/ShowPage/337 (accessed August 15, 2016).

[21] https://www.mpips.gov.pl/analizy-i-raporty/raporty-sprawozdania/rynek-pracy/sytuacja-na-rynku-pracy/ (accessed August 20, 2016).

Polish employees declared an interest in telework and 36.6% would like to work in a mixed system, i.e. to carry out work partly at the employer's premises and partly as telework.[22]

5.3. Combining Career with Care of an Elderly Family Member – de lege ferenda Requirements

The policy of combining career with care of an elderly person should be implemented by different bodies, especially by the state, the self-government and a workplace. The state is responsible for the institutional and legal aspects of the system, drawing up of the action plan and financing of basic benefits. The territorial self-government should develop the social infrastructure and provide solid personnel and service solutions. Places of work should aim to create the work environment which would support the reconciliation of work and individual needs of employees.[23]

As it has been indicated above, the Polish law does not provide for sufficient legal solutions which would facilitate the reconciliation of career and care of an elderly person. Nevertheless, due to demographic changes, the approach of the Polish legislator must change. A basic question arises: what solutions should be introduced? Can those developed for employees bringing up young children be applied to the care of elderly people or should they be modified? The latter approach seems appropriate. The care of elderly people differs from the care of children. It is appropriately specified in the literature that there are basic noticeable differences between the care of children and the care of senior citizens. Firstly, in the case of children, the time of care is relatively easy to define, whereas for people who cannot act independently it is difficult (or even impossible) to be foreseen and the intensity of care is subject to continuous change, due to incidental illnesses or alternating improvement and deterioration of the mental and physical condition. Secondly, personal situation of carers is different. A child carer is usually a relatively young person who enters the job market and begins a professional career, whereas a carer of an elderly person is as a rule mature (aged 45+), with some professional experience and a settled position on the job market. Thirdly, there is a reverse degree of dependence on the carer. In the case of children, the dependence

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[22] B. Wyrzykowska, *Telework and Personal Risk*, in Scientific Journal of Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW. Problems of World Agriculture, 2014, vol. 14 (XXIX), no. 4, p. 218.

[23] Ł. Jurek, *The Policy of combining work with care of an elderly person*, in Acta Universitatis Lodziensis, Foilia Oeconomica 2 (312) 2015, pp. 105-106.

diminishes gradually, while with respect to elderly people it is just the opposite and in general it increases with time.[24]

In the Polish law, the legal solutions which facilitate combining work with care of a child are based on a developed system of care leaves. Flexible forms of work organization, however, play a lesser role. As far as the care of elderly persons is concerned, the order of the indicated solutions should be reverse. Due to the specific nature of work involving care of an elderly person and the fact that it is hard to foresee the time of such care, which might take a number of years, the solutions related to the flexible work scheme should be given priority as instruments that are to support combining career with care of an elderly person. Leaves and time off taken due to the need of taking care, the introduction of which in the Polish law is desirable, should have a long-term objective. In other words, due to the possibly long-lasting period of care, the solutions which facilitate the reconciliation of work and care of an elderly person should also be long-lasting. Care leaves which should be financed by the state budget must then be of a specific duration. Meanwhile, flexible working time allows one to freely adjust the time and place of work to the long-standing care responsibilities. The above-mentioned benefits of work depending on the mental and physical condition of a carer weigh in favour of the system of work-care balance based on flexible work arrangement schemes.

Legal solutions related to working time which aim at support for employees who stay on the job market and take care of an elderly person are basically the same as in the case of persons who take care of a child. As it has been indicated above, the Polish labour law provides for the flexible work schemes such as: flexible working time, part-time work and teleworking. The basic instruments involving flexible working time thanks to which an employee can reconcile career and care are present in the Polish legal system. Unfortunately, the particular legal solutions in this area do not guarantee the possibility of using the above-mentioned forms of employment. The flexible employment is dependent to a large extent on the employer's decision. Both in the case of a request to perform work on a part-time basis and for teleworking, the Polish legislator used the expression "the employer should consider, within his/her capabilities, the employee's request". In view of Art. 29 § 2 of the Labour Code, the employer should, within his/her capabilities, consider the employee's request referring to the change in the working time determined in the employment contract. Under Art. 67 § 3 of the Labour Code, a change in the conditions of work during employment in telework may take place upon a mutual agreement of the parties, initiated by an employee or an employer. The employer should, within his/her capabilities, consider the employee's request

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[24] Ł. Jurek, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

which refers to telework. It is indicated in the literature that the wording "the employer, within his/her capabilities, should consider the employee's request", used by the legislator in the quoted regulations indicates an obligation on the part of the employer to consider such a request if the employer has such possibilities.[25] In the case of rejecting the employee's request for the introduction of telework or part-time work when the employer has such possibility, the employee may claim a change of the contract.[26] However, as accurately indicated in the doctrine, it is extremely hard for the employee to prove during the judicial proceedings that the employer has had the possibility of employment in the requested scheme.[27] The situation of the employee who requests flexitime is even worse. In accordance with Art. 150 § 5, flexitime can be introduced upon a written request of an employee. This means that the decision to consider the employee's request on introducing flexitime belongs solely to the employer. The inferior position of a person who requests a flexible work arrangement has been noticed in the Polish doctrine. Strengthening of the position of the employee requesting a change in the work organization or working time scheme to that which is beneficial from the employee's point of view is rightly called for in this context.[28] Firstly, the unification of the legal situation of the employee requesting a flexible work scheme is required. It is indicated in this respect that, similarly to teleworking and part-time work, also in the case of flexitime the wording "the employer should consider, within his/her capabilities, the employee's request" should be used. Secondly, it is recommended that in the case of the specific situation of an employee related to his/her care responsibilities, the employer should be obliged to accept the employee's request as long as it is not in contradiction to the objective circumstances related to the employer's interest, e.g. concerning the type and organization of work. Thirdly, in case the employee's request is rejected, the employer would be obliged to give the reasons for such decision.[29] A similar solution in this respect is applicable in the Polish law in relation to employees entitled to maternity or parental leave. According to Art. 182[1e] of the Labour Code, an employee may combine parental leave with performing work for the employer granting such leave for not longer than a half of full working time. In such case, parental leave is granted for the remaining part of

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[25] Ł. Pisarczyk, *Zmniejszenie wymiaru czasu pracy – odpowiedź na potrzeby pracowników i kryzys przedsiębiorstwa*, in Praca i Zabezpieczenie Społeczne, 2010, no. 6.

[26] M. Gersdorf, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

[27] A. Sobczyk, *Telepraca w prawie polskim*, Wolters Kluwer, Warsaw 2009, p. 81; M. Latos-Milkowska, *Przepisy o czasie pracy wobec prognoz demograficznych*, in Monitor Prawa Pracy, 2014, no. 2.

[28] M. Latos-Milkowska, *op. cit.*

[29] *Ibidem.*

the full working time. The work is commenced upon a written request of the employee submitted within 21 days at the latest before starting work. The employer is obliged to accept the employee's request, unless it is impossible due to the work organisation or type of work performed by the employee. The employer must notify the employee in writing of the reason for the refusal. Also, in line with Art. 186[7] § 1 of the Labour Code, an employee entitled to child-care leave may request the employer in writing for the reduction of his/her working time to no more than 50% of his/her full working time in the period when the leave can be taken. The employer is under the obligation to accept that request.

Another proposed change to support the reconciliation of work and care responsibilities is the extension of the regulation concerning flexitime. At present, Polish legal solutions provide for flexitime in its basic form, which means a possibility to start work at different times in particular 24-hour periods. Considering more developed flexitime schemes in other countries, it is rightly proposed that the possibility of flexitime not only in a 24-hour period but also in a working week or a four-week period should be introduced in the Polish law.[30]

Apart from the discussed legal solutions, it seems also desirable to establish in the Polish law an employee leave in order to take care of an elderly person. The regulations of the countries in which such leaves are available could be a good example to follow. The introduction of special care leaves (short- or long-term), which would allow occasional work leave in critical situations so as to perform more intensive than usual caring duties, should also be advocated.[31] A good solution would be the increase, from 14 to 60 days in the calendar year, of the above described leave with the aim of taking care of a sick family member. As it has been emphasized above, the Polish law differentiates between the situation of people taking care of a sick child and those who look after another family member. People taking care of a sick child up to 14 years of age are entitled to only a 14-day leave in the calendar year. The introduction of an obligation to grant an employee, upon his/her request, unpaid leave in order to take care of a family member should be considered as well. Specific regulations provide for several derogations from the general rule that unpaid leave depends on the employer's decision. For example, unpaid leave granted, among others, to young employees during winter holidays, employees who are MPs or an employee who has been appointed a councilperson for the self-government is obligatory under the Polish law. Imposing the obligation on the

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[30] *Ibidem.*
[31] Ł. Jurek, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

employer to grant unpaid leave would not then be a novelty in the Polish law but only an extension of the employee rights to other situations.

6. Conclusions

1. Polish solutions allowing the reconciliation of career and care focus mainly on facilitating work and child care. The Polish system of parental employment entitlements has been modified several times. The last amendment in this respect entered into force on 2 January 2016. The system of reconciling work and care of children is based on an extensive range of parenthood leaves. The Polish labour law provides for several types of leaves from work to take care of children. These include: maternity leave, parental leave, paternity leave and child-care leave. Moreover, Polish regulations provide for time off from work to take care of a child.

2. In the Polish law, there are no particular solutions which would support the reconciliation of work and care of an adult person. Nevertheless, the approach of the Polish legislator must adapt to demographic changes.

3. The care of elderly people involves different requirements than the care of children. Firstly, in the case of children, the time of care is relatively easy to define, whereas for a person who cannot act independently it is difficult (or even impossible) to be foreseen and the intensity of care is subject to continuous change, due to incidental illnesses or alternating improvement and deterioration of the mental and physical condition. Secondly, personal situation of carers is different. A child carer is usually a relatively young person who enters the job market and begins a professional career, whereas a carer of an elderly person is as a rule mature (aged 45+, with some professional experience and a settled position on the job market). Thirdly, there is a reverse degree of dependence on the carer. In the case of children, the dependence diminishes gradually, while with respect to elderly people it is just the opposite and in general it increases with time.

Due to the specific nature of work involving care of an elderly person and the fact that it is hard to foresee the time of such care, which might take a number of years, the solutions related to the flexible work arrangement should be given priority as the instruments which support combining career with care of an elderly person. Leaves and time off due to the need of taking care, the introduction of which in the Polish law is desirable, should be of secondary importance.

Employment-Lifestyle-Location: Future plans of post-secondary Students in Harstad Norway and Letterkenny Ireland

Gordon B. Cooke [1]

Abstract. This study compares survey results from 330 students from Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) County Donegal, Ireland, and 123 students at Harstad University College (HUC) in Harstad, Troms, Norway, gathered between 2013 and 2015. Both post-secondary institutions are in, or near, relatively small and remote communities and draw in students from the surrounding 'rural' areas, although those labels can be controversial. The purpose of this study is to explore the expectations and preferences that rural post-secondary education (PSE) students, at these two institutions, have in terms of future employment and location plans, as well as the relative importance of the factors affecting those decisions. The reality of contemporary labour markets is that skilled workers have a much smoother transition to good quality employment, on average, than their lesser-skilled counterparts. But, being in a relatively rural and/or remote location adds extra decision-making complexity.

Keywords: *Young workers, Careers, Out-migration, Education/training, Employment, Rural-urban, Quality of Life*

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1. Introduction

Due to a range of influences, labour markets in industrialized nations have become increasingly polarized. Among these forces is globalization, and other political, economic, technological, and competitive factors, but also management responses to these influences. Labour markets have become polarized in terms of job stability, security, work schedules, pay rates, and access to employer-provided benefits. Whether this is referred to as dual labour markets, a core-periphery segmentation of labour, or other terms, the key is that the challenges to acquiring good quality employment have risen, and the majority of workers face employment upheaval and uncertainty, if not an outright deterioration of working conditions. Note that this deterioration is real and tangible for many, while others are affected by a perception of declining quality of work options, or a declining sense of stability and/or security. In both cases, the effects are real. In broad strokes, the remedy for poor employment conditions is to hold labour market power, and in turn, that power is derived by having skills and experience that employers want. Because of their age and career stage, young individuals tend to have, or be perceived to have, lower work experience and/or job skills, and hence, little labour market power. Moreover, individuals in rural locations typically face the *additional* complication of less diverse local economies and the transportation challenge to reach other labour markets. Often, there is also lower access to skills/educational options within one's (rural) home community. Thus, the labour market situation facing rural youth can be especially daunting.

This study compares survey results from 330 students from Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) County Donegal, Ireland, and 123 students at Harstad University College (HUC) in Harstad, Norway, gathered between 2013 and 2015. Both post-secondary institutions are in, or near, relatively small and remote communities and draw in students from the surrounding communities and region, as well as a number from abroad. The definition of what is rural or not, or remote or not, can be controversial and emotional, since it can be inferred to have some negative connotations. In this paper, an expansive definition of rural is used, and without any hint of negativity. Here, it simply refers to regions or communities that are not urban (i.e. highly populated and with high density in a defined area), or that are located within adjacent locations (and hence would be categorized as suburban/commuter). Letterkenny and Harstad each have roughly 20,000 inhabitants, but based on size, amenities, and distance to metropolitan centres, both can be considered to be 'big rural', more than 'small urban', in terms of labour markets and amenities.

The purpose of this study is to explore the expectations and preferences that rural post-secondary education (PSE) students, at these two institutions, have in terms of future employment and location plans, as well as the relative importance of the factors affecting those decisions. The reality of contemporary labour markets is that skilled workers have a much smoother transition to good quality employment, on average, than their lesser-skilled counterparts. By definition, PSE students are in the process of trying to increase their skills levels, and presumably in a way that has direct or indirect benefits in terms of employability. So, on the one hand, these individuals do, or will, have some valued skills, thereby improving their employment prospects. On the other hand, as relatively young workers in rural locations, these individuals are likely to face complicated employment decisions, for the reasons discussed above, notwithstanding their skill levels. Thus, they have advantages and disadvantages as they contemplate a transition from school to work. For this study, younger adults are those 18-30 years of age, while, for the sake of simplicity, all of the over 30 students will be considered to be older. While these older PSE students are also worthy of attention, this working paper focuses on the work expectations and preferences of young local students versus young students with more distant hometown locations.

Before reviewing and comparing the survey results, literature exploring current labour market issues will be reviewed to get a sense of the ongoing changes and challenges that are occurring, followed by methodological details of this study. Finally, at the end of the paper, the survey results will be explored, in terms of future work implications for the students and these rural communities.

2. Literature Review

In the current world of work, broad environmental forces including globalization and technological change are affecting the conditions in which organizations operate. That is, if political, social, or economic systems change, the effects ripple through the industrial relations system and affect outputs like wages, job security, and the distribution of power between employers and employees[2]. While that, in turn, would and could affect individuals, the impact has been accentuated by strategic responses by private sector employers in particular[3,4]. Although short-term, seasonal, and part-time employment has

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[2] E.g. J.T. Dunlop, *Industrial Relations Systems*. Harvard Business School, 1993.
[3] T.A. Kochan, H.C. Katz, and R.B. McKersie, *The transformation of American industrial relations*. Cornell University Press, 1986.

long existed, a feature of modern labour markets is the prevalence of these sorts of non-standard employment arrangements[5,6,7]. Two decades ago, Betcherman and Lowe had predicted this sort of work future in which business risk is shifted from the employer to individuals via casual, on-call, non-permanent, and other variable work arrangements to suit operational requirements[8]. Unfortunately, the feared predictions of these authors have materialized, such that there is a real and/or perceived sense of growing economic insecurity among many individual workers[9]. Simply put, working conditions vary sharply within and across labour markets. Members of a lucky (and powerful) minority have a high quality jobs with good pay, hours, and security while many more less fortunate, and less powerful, workers endure relatively poor working conditions[10]. In terms of theory, the existence of these differences have long been identified as dual labour markets[11], a core-periphery segmentation of labour[12], a high road vs. low road approach to labour[13], or employer-friendly versus employee-friendly work arrangements[14]. The key, though, is not that these differences exist, or what the differences are labelled. Rather, the important thing is the implication for the current and future world of work for workers broadly, or various sub-groups of interest.

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[4] R.P. Chaykowski and M. Gunderson, The implications of globalization for labour and labour markets, in R.P. Chaykowski (Ed.), *Globalization and the Canadian Economy: The Implications for Labour Markets, Society and the State,* Kingston, CAN: Queen's University, 27-60, 2001.

[5] C.P. Green and G.D. Leeves, *Job security, financial security and worker well-being: new evidence on the effects of flexible employment. Scottish Journal of Political Economy,* ^2013, 60(2), 121- 138.

[6] V. Gash, *Bridge or trap? Temporary workers' transitions to unemployment and to the standard employment contract, European Sociological Review,* ^2008, 24(5), 651-668.

[7] I.U. Zeytinoglu, *Introduction and overview,* In I.U. Zeytinoglu (Ed.), *Changing Work Relationships in Industrialized Economies* (pp. ix-xx). Philadelphia, US: John Benjamins Publ, 1999.

[8] G. Betcherman and G.S. Lowe, *The Future of Work in Canada: A Synthesis Report,* Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks, 1997.

[9] See also JY Boulin, M. Lallement, and F. Michon, Decent working time in industrialized countries: Issues, scopes, and paradoxes, in Boulin, J.Y., M. Lallement, J. Messenger, and F. Michon (eds) *Decent Working Time, New Trends New Issues,* Geneva, SUI: ILO, 13-40, 2006; and C.P. Green and G.D. Leeves, *Job security, financial security and worker well-being: new evidence on the effects of flexible employment. Scottish Journal of Political Economy,* ^2013, 60(2), 121- 138.

[10] G. Vallée, *Towards Enhancing the Employment Conditions of Vulnerable Workers: A Public Policy Perspective,* Vulnerable Workers Series, No. 2. Canadian Policy Research Networks, 2005.

[11] P.B. Doeringer and M.J. Piore, *Internal Labor Markets and Manpower Analysis.* Cambridge, US, 1970.

[12] J. Atkinson, *Manpower strategies for flexible organisations, Personnel management,* ^1984. 16(8), 28-31

[13] e.g. A. Verma and R.P. Chaykowski, Employment and employment relations at the crossroads, in A. Verma, and R.P. Chaykowski (Eds.), *Contract and Commitment: Employment Relations in the New Economy,* Kingston, CAN: IRC Press, Queen's University, 1-20, 1999.

[14] e.g. G.B. Cooke, *The Nature and Incidence of Non-Standard Work Arrangements,* PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, Canada, 2005.

Put bluntly, the quality of one's employment is correlated with one's labour market power, and the way to increase that power is to hold skills, experiences, or education that is valued by employers[15,16]. It is unsurprising, then, that acquiring education is a strategy that has long been used by people to try to use to increase their employability and career prospects[17]. One alternative is that one could relocate to a location in which there is a shortage of workers holding the skills that employers are seeking, such as to a location with a booming economy. On the other hand, as will be discussed below, it is inaccurate to conceptualize the work-life decision as being merely an economic one.

While all workers have to deal with the changing nature of work, some face additional hurdles. For this study, the subgroups of interest are young rural adults. Rural individuals tend to have fewer, and potentially poorer, employment options, because local labour markets tend to be narrower, which means fewer industries and fewer occupations[18,19]. While rural economies typically used to be centred around primary industries like farming, fishing, and forestry, technological advancements and the effects of globalizations mean that it is possible- and necessary- for rural communities to undertake more diverse economic activity, and that means developing skill levels and creating the infrastructure to do so[20]. Needless to say, these are easy said that done, and efforts to revitalize rural communities is a work in progress in most areas. In turn, this compels individuals to choose between living with local options, commuting to other communities, or out-migrating[21,22]. But, those employment challenges can be partially, fully, or even more than offset by quality of life

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[15] G. Betcherman and G.S. Lowe, *The Future of Work in Canada: A Synthesis Report,* Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks, 1997.

[16] G.B. Cooke, S.L. Mann, and J.K. Burns, Education and employment choices among young rural workers in Canada and Ireland: A tale of two studies, in Kelly Vodden, Ryan Gibson, & Godfrey Baldacchino (Eds.), Place-Based Development in Rural, Island, and Remote Regions, Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), Newfoundland and Labrador, CAN, 2015.

[17] G.S. Becker, *Investment in human capital: A theoretical analysis, The journal of political economy*, ^1962, 9-49.

[18] E. Vera-Toscano, E. Phimister, and A. Weersink, *Short-term employment transitions of the Canadian labour force: rural-urban differences in underemployment, Agricultural Economics*, ^2004, 30(2), 129-142.

[19] M. De Hoyos and A. Green, *Recruitment and retention issues in rural labour markets, Journal of Rural Studies*, ^2011, 27(2), 171-180.

[20] OECD, *The New Rural Paradigm: Polices and Governance*, OECD Rural Policy Reviews, 2006.

[21] M.D. Partridge, K. Ali, and M. Olfert, *Rural-to-Urban Commuting: Three Degrees of Integration, Growth and Change*, ^2010, 41(2), 303-335.

[22] G.B. Cooke, S.L. Mann, and J.K. Burns, Education and employment choices among young rural workers in Canada and Ireland: A tale of two studies, in Kelly Vodden, Ryan Gibson, & Godfrey Baldacchino (Eds.), Place-Based Development in Rural, Island, and Remote Regions, Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), Newfoundland and Labrador, CAN, 2015.

benefits for those who embrace rural living[23]. "Embracing', again, is critical. If a person has hobbies or pursuits that are more doable in rural areas, and/or craves proximity to friends and family (who are in a given rural area), then the benefits of 'rural living' might be worth enduring some employment complications, if unavoidable[24]. Needless to say, those who do not value 'rural living' are not going to remain, if employment conditions are similarly undesirable.

To entice more young people to stay in a given rural region[25], local employment conditions need to be sufficiently attractive[26]. The problem is that young people generally have trouble gaining foothold in the labour market, through a lack of skill/education, experience, or opportunity[27]. That challenge can be accentuated for rural youth given the realities of rural labour markets, less access to educational programs, and fewer public transportation options[28,29]. From a rural community or regional perspective, population levels are often aging and/or shrinking, which raises the prospect of future economic challenges if youth out-migrate[30,31]. As a result, governments in industrialized nations who are experiencing aging populations and workforces are looking to attract and retain skilled international students[32]. But, local employment opportunities should be viewed as potentially very important, but not the only factor to retain (young) people. The decision as to where to live and/or work is both an analytical and emotional one. It depends upon the strength of one's social and economic ties, and also one's risk tolerance, personal or family

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[23] G.B. Cooke, J. Donaghey, and I.U. Zeytinoglu, *The nuanced nature of work quality: evidence from rural Newfoundland and Ireland, Human Relations,* ^2013, 66(4), 503-527.

[24] X. Tang, *Career Choices for Current Post-secondary Students in Newfoundland and Labrador*, Unpublished report, Memorial University of Newfoundland, MER Program, 2009.

[25] D. Gillies, *Learning and leaving: education and depopulation in an island community, Cambridge Journal of Education*, 2014, 44(1), 19-34.

[26] see also M. Culliney, *The rural pay penalty: youth earnings and social capital in Britain, Journal of Youth Studies*, ^2014b, 17(2), 148-165.; and H. Dickey and I. Theodossiou, *Who has two jobs and why? Evidence from rural coastal communities in west Scotland, Agricultural Economics*, ^2006, 34(3), 291-301.

[27] OECD, *Off to a good start?*, Jobs for youth, 2010.

[28] M. Culliney, *The rural pay penalty: youth earnings and social capital in Britain, Journal of Youth Studies*, ^2014b, 17(2), 148-165.

[29] G.B. Cooke, S.L. Mann, and J.K. Burns, Education and employment choices among young rural workers in Canada and Ireland: A tale of two studies, in Kelly Vodden, Ryan Gibson, & Godfrey Baldacchino (Eds.), Place-Based Development in Rural, Island, and Remote Regions, Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), Newfoundland and Labrador, CAN, 2015.

[30] B. Jentsch, *Youth migration from rural areas: moral principles to support youth and rural communities in policy debates, Sociologia Ruralis*, ^2006, 46(3): 229-240.

[31] OECD, *The New Rural Paradigm: Polices and Governance*, OECD Rural Policy Reviews, 2006.

[32] OECD, *Better skills. Better jobs. Better lives*, The OECD skills strategy executive summary, 2012.

situation, and career aspirations, but also the characteristics-good and bad- of one's home (or host) community[33,34,35,36]. Beyond employment options, there also needs to be sufficient social and leisure activities available locally, even in remote communities, to retain young people[37]. For this study of students in post-secondary education (PSE), it is reasonable to wonder if they have a somewhat higher level of ambition than non-students, and potentially higher level of mobility and employment and lifestyle expectations[38,39].

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This paper is based on the survey responses gathered from 330 Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) students in January 2013, as well as responses from 123 Harstad University College (HUC) students surveyed in April 2015. LYIT's main campus is located in the (small) city of Letterkenny, County Donegal, Ireland, and a second campus is located in the small town of Killybegs, which is a much smaller, more rural, coastal town about one hour southwest. Surveys were gathered from students in various programs within both LYIT campuses. Letterkenny is a community of slightly more than 20,000 inhabitants in the Northwest corner of Ireland. It is the capital of the County Donegal, which is among the most remote jurisdictions on the island, and with among the lowest population density. While it is a within 40 kilometers of

[33] M. Corbett, *Rural education and outmigration: the case of a coastal community, Canadian Journal of Education*, ^2005, 28(1&2), 52-72.

[34] M. Culliney, *Going nowhere? Rural youth labour market opportunities and obstacles, Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*, ^2014a, 22(1), 45-57.

[35] A. Nixon, *Youth Attitudes and Employment: Is the Emerging Workforce Changing?,* Unpublished report, Memorial University of Newfoundland, MER Program, 2010.

[36] A. Locke, *The Social Factors Affecting the Pursuit of Higher Education and Employment for Rural Students,* Unpublished report, Memorial University of Newfoundland, MER Program, 2010.

[37] e.g. F. Thissen, J.D. Fortuijn, D. Strijker, and T. Haartsen, *Migration intentions of rural youth in the Westhoek, Flanders, Belgium and the Veenkoloniën, The Netherlands, Journal of Rural Studies*, ^2010, 26, 428-436; and P. Rerat, *The selective migration of young graduates: which of them return to their rural home region and which do not?, Journal of Rural Studies*, ^2014, 35, 123-132.

[38] G.B. Cooke , High Fliers versus Upstream Swimmers: Young rural workers in Canada and Ireland, in *Youth Unemployment and Joblessness: Causes, Consequences, Responses,* Association for International and Comparative Studies in the field of Labour law and Industrial Relations (ADAPT), Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 151-168, 2012.

[39] G. Paulgaard, Geography of opportunity. Approaching adulthood at the margins of the northern European periphery, in Bæck**,** Unn-Doris Karlsen and Paulgaard, Gry (eds) *Rural Futures? Finding One's Place Within Changing Labour Markets*, Stamsund, NOR: Orkana Akademisk, 189-215, 2012.

London/Derry City (a community of 90,000 in the adjacent county), it is at least a two, or three, hour drive away from the metropolitan cities of Belfast or Dublin, respectively, with public transportation taking even longer.

As was done at LYIT, students were surveyed from several different programs within HUC.

Harstad is also a community with a population of about 20,000, and is located in Troms, which is the second most northerly county within Norway. While considered a city according to Norwegian definitions, Harstad is nonetheless of modest size. It is also remote in the sense that it is north of the Arctic Circle, and is the largest community, by road or ferry, for at least two hours of travel. Moreover, while it serves as a regional centre, its economy consists of public sector (i.e. university/college, hospital, and municipal) and retail organizations, but has fairly small private sector businesses, aside from those in the supply chain for resource development.

As mentioned in the introduction, the definition of what is rural or not can be controversial and emotional, since it can be inferred to have some negative connotations. In this paper, an expansive definition of rural is used, and without any hint of negativity. Here, it simply refers to regions or communities that are not urban (i.e. highly populated), or that are located within adjacent locations (and hence would be categorized as suburban/commuter). Based on their relatively remote locations, amenities, and the local labour market, both can be considered to be 'big rural', more than 'small urban'. While the definition of cities versus towns varies from country to country, the key is that many people surveyed or interviewed in or around these two communities provide employment and lifestyle descriptions that fit as being more rural than urban[40].

For much of the last two centuries, Ireland endured a series of economic, social, and political hardships which led to economic hardships, sustained unemployment and even poverty, declining populations, and regional disparity. That said, Ireland's economic rebound over the past two decades, culminating in its economy being labelled the 'Celtic Tiger'. This rebound was accomplished by labour partnerships, shrew government planning to attract foreign investment in offices, research and manufacturing facilities (and hence, jobs) in Ireland, and an emphasis on having a highly skilled and educated workforce[41]. While Ireland was badly injured by the global financial crisis of 2008-2009, economic activity and employment levels rebounded robustly. That

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[40] Results from those semi-structured interviews are otherwise beyond the scope of this paper.

[41] see P. Teague and J. Donaghey, *The life and death of Irish social partnership: lessons for social pacts, Business History*, ^2015, 57(3), 418-437; and S. Dorgan, *How Ireland became the Celtic tiger,* The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder# 1945, 2006.

said, County Donegal continues to have relatively low per capita incomes and labour market participation rates, and high unemployment within Ireland[42,43]. Moreover, due to its location in the Northwest corner away from major cities as well as major transportation hubs, County Donegal can be considered to be remote, relative to the Eastern and urban part of Ireland.

Prior to the discovery of oil in the 1960s, Norway had been relatively a relative poor country within western (or northern) Europe. However, due to prudent development of its energy discoveries, Norway has transformed itself into an economic powerhouse on a per capita basis[44]. Part of the acclaim that Norway receives is due to its commitment to regional development, including of its northernmost regions and communities, and to economic diversification and inclusion[45]. Thus, even Troms, the second most northerly county and one located north of the Arctic Circle, has had a vibrant economy and has retained its population base. Norway has a well-earned reputation for high prices and high taxes. But, that is coupled with a heavy strategic emphasis on technology investment, infrastructure investment, and education, training and innovation[46]. Thus, Norway has been able to achieve a high level of labour force participation, generous social services, and yet unemployment at or below 5% for the past two decades[47,48,49].

Through investigation, these two communities were chosen to be studied because of their size, relative level of rurality and remoteness, and presence of

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[42] T. Haase and J. Pratschke, *The 2011 Pobal HP Deprivation Index for Small Areas (SA): Introduction and Reference Tables*, 2012.

[43] Donegal County Development Board, *Making the Future Happen: Addressing the unemployment challenge in Donegal*, Research report prepared for Donegal County Council's Research and Policy Division, 2010.

[44] Economist, 2013a. Northern Lights. *The Economist*. 2 Feb 2013. Downloaded 30 August 2016 from http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21570840-nordic-countries-are-reinventing-their-model-capitalism-says-adrian

[45] C. Recknagel, 2014. What Can Norway Teach Other Oil-Rich Countries? RadioFreeEurope Radio Liberty. Downloaded on 31 August 2016 from http://www.rferl.org/a/what-can-norway-teach-other-oil-rich-countries/26713453.html

[46] Economist, 2013b. Norway The Rich Cousin. *The Economist*. 2 Feb 2013. Downloaded 30 August 2016 from http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21570842-oil-makes-norway-different-rest-region-only-up-point-rich

[47] Economist, 2013a. Northern Lights. *The Economist*. 2 Feb 2013. Downloaded 30 August 2016 from http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21570840-nordic-countries-are-reinventing-their-model-capitalism-says-adrian

[48] C. Recknagel, 2014. What Can Norway Teach Other Oil-Rich Countries? RadioFreeEurope Radio Liberty. Downloaded on 31 August 2016 from http://www.rferl.org/a/what-can-norway-teach-other-oil-rich-countries/26713453.html

[49] Statistics Norway, 2016. Downloaded on 31 August 2016 from https://www.ssb.no/en/arbeid-og-lonn/statistikker/akumnd/maaned

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a post-secondary educational institution. The intention was to select multiple communities, and regions, with comparable locations within the North Atlantic region. Other locations, and institutions, have also been selected and studied, but they are beyond the scope of this paper.

Via cold-calling and site visits, permission was received from LYIT and HUC to conduct this survey based research. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted among the student bodies, but that qualitative research component is also beyond the scope of this paper. Once institutional permission to survey was received, then volunteer instructors were sought to be able to attend the start or end of class. Surveys were distributed to all present students within each of these classes. The survey included a cover letter with information, and indicating that partial or full completion of the survey would imply consent. Students were encouraged to retain the cover sheet and to fold the survey in half, before being collected en masse, with folded surveys placed into a large envelope. That way, it was impossible to link any survey to any, and its degree of completeness, to any individual. The surveys were compiled in a Microsoft excel file, and then imported and analyzed in SPSS.

3.2 Variables & Data Analysis

By intention, the surveys were kept short and simple to fit the data collection opportunity, and in an attempt to boost the response rate. Several demographic questions were asked, including details about the location and size of one's hometown, and proximity to the post-secondary educational institution. Students were also asked about the preferred and expected location for their first job after completing their studies. Finally, the third section of the survey asked participants to rate the relative importance of a range of working conditions and location factors regarding future employment.

For this working paper, only descriptive data analyses were included. Nonetheless, this simple approach illustrated the interrelationships between the hometown characteristics of participants with work location expectations and preferences after graduation. In turn, this facilitated comparisons between the participants surveyed at LYIT with those surveyed at HUC. Thus, emphasis was placed on the substantiveness of differences that were found, rather than statistical significance thresholds.

4. Results

4.1 Sample Characteristics

Sample characteristics for Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) are shown in Table 1. To recap, these were LYIT students who volunteered to be surveyed in early 2013. Slightly more than half of the respondents are 18-20 years of age, 1/3 are 21-29, with the remaining 1/3 being at least 30 years of age. Since LYIT is primarily an undergraduate institution, this young average age is expected. That said, the rather sizable mature student cohort (of 30+ years of age) probably reflects an upsurge of adults entering programs at LYIT to seek a career change during Ireland's economic crisis of 2009-2011. Roughly 3/4 of respondents were female, which reflects the reality than females make up the majority of students at post-secondary institutions, as well as the fact that our survey included a number of health care students- a female-dominated course of study. Otherwise, students were fairly evenly split between business, culinary/hotel, and other programs.

In terms of hometown information, only 7% of surveyed students had a hometown outside of Ireland. Among the Irish students, almost 3/4 were from County Donegal, and the vast majority of the rest were from an adjacent county, leaving only 9% from further away in Ireland. Given those statistics and the primarily rural nature of County Donegal and surrounding counties, it is not surprising that half of the respondents are from a hometown with 1,000 or fewer people. Only 22% are from a community with greater than 5,000 people. Thus, only 11% of respondents consider themselves having a city for a hometown. Moreover, almost 2/3 of respondents said that their hometown is at least 20 kilometres from a city. Thus, as expected, many of the students in this survey, at this university, have 'rural' roots.

Table 1: Sample Characteristics for LYIT survey participants

	Mean/Proportion	Std. Dev.
<u>Key Variables</u>		
Completed surveys (full or partial)	330	
Age		
18-20 years	51.4%	
21-24	21.6%	
25-29	11.2%	
30 years or more	15.8%	
Gender		
Female	73.8%	
Male	26.2%	
Hometown location		
Outside of Ireland	7.3%	
Within Ireland	92.7%	
Among those with Irish hometown		
Within County Donegal	71.7%	
In Adjacent County to Donegal	19.3%	
Elsewhere in Ireland	8.9%	
Hometown degree of rurality		
Hometown is a city	10.5%	
Hometown is within 20km of a city	24.0%	
Hometown is 20-50km from a city	40.8%	
Hometown >50km from a city	24.7%	
Academic program		
Business	21.8%	
Culinary or tourism	22.1%	
Health care	37.4%	
Other	18.7%	

* Figures exclude missing data.

Among the 123 students surveyed at Harstad University College (HUC) in spring 2015, very few were 20 years of age or younger, and less than half were under 25, and 29% were at least 30 years of age. In terms of gender, two thirds identified being female, with one third being male. While 85% had a hometown in Norway, 15% were from outside Norway. Among Norwegians, more than half had a hometown within the County of Troms (in which Harstad is located), while almost one quarter are from the adjacent County of Nordland (which has a boundary that is only about 25 kilometres south of

Harstad). The remaining 18% of Norwegians are from a more distant county than Troms and Nordland. Unexpectedly, only about 10% of the HUC students surveyed were from a hometown of at 1000 people or less, while 30% were from a community of 1,000-5,000 people, and a full 60% have a hometown of at least 5,000 people. While it was presumed that HUC would attract lots of local students, it appears that a substantial proportion is either from Harstad itself, or from a neighbouring town, rather than village. While one third of participants are from a city of 20,000 or more, 42% have a hometown that is at least one hour's travelling distance from a community of at least that size, with the remaining quarter have a commute to a city of under one hour. Thus, a sizable majority of Norwegian students attending HUC have a rural hometown, although relatively few are from a village (of under 1,000 people).

Finally, turning to educational details, more than half of those surveyed had attained at least two years of post-secondary education, one fifth had completed one year, and the remaining 28% were first year post-secondary students. Surprisingly, 62% of the students indicated being in a business program, with one fifth being in a nursing or health care program, and 16% having a different academic major.

Table 2: Sample Characteristics for HUC survey participants

Key Variables	Mean/Proportion	Std. Dev.
Completed surveys (full or partial)	123	
Age		
18-20 years	10.6%	
21-24	35.8%	
25-29	25.2%	
30 years or more	28.5%	
Gender		
Female	68.6%	
Male	31.4%	
Hometown location		
Outside of Norway	14.6%	
Within Norway	85.4%	
Among those with Norwegian hometown		
Within Troms	58.1%	
In Adjacent County of Nordland	23.8%	
Elsewhere in Norway	18.1%	
Hometown degree of rurality		
Hometown is a city	33.3%	
Hometown is within 20 minutes of a city	6.7%	
Hometown is 20-60 minutes from a city	18.1%	
Hometown >60 minutes from a city	41.9%	
Academic program		
Business	62.3%	
Culinary or tourism	0.8%	
Nursing/Health care	20.5%	
Other	16.4%	

* Figures exclude missing data.

When comparing sample characteristics, it is noteworthy that the Norwegian sample included double the proportion of mature students (of at least 30 years of age), and double the proportion of international students. The higher proportion of international students was expected, and probably reflects the low, or non-existent, level of tuition charged to outsiders[50]. It should be noted that the mix of students per academic program or major varied sharply between the two locations, but the cause is unknown. It is presumed that there is a labelling issue, with the set of program choices provided to HUC students

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[50] See Study in Norway, 2016. Downloaded on 31 August 2016 from
http://www.studyinnorway.no

(that was used across all surveys and schools) not fitting the local terminology used by students and administrators in Norway.

4.2 Location Expectations and Preferences

In Tables 3 and 4, the expectations versus preferences of work location after finishing education are presented for the female and male respondents, sorted by hometown location. As before, only those under 30 are shown, since older adults are presumed to be less mobile, and thus less likely to face a relocation decision than young adults.

As shown in Table 3, among the young adults from County Donegal attending LYIT, 76% prefer to work within the county after finishing their education, but only 55% expect to do so. Amazingly, none of the local Irish females- or indeed, any of the Irish females regardless of hometown location- prefer to work outside of Ireland, although ¼ expect to do so. Finally, among local females, about ¼ prefer and about ¼ expect to work elsewhere in Ireland. Among those from an Irish county nearby Donegal, 2/3 of the females would prefer to work in a similar location after education, while 1/6 would actually prefer to stay and work in County Donegal, and the remainder prefer to work elsewhere in Ireland. Only 35% actually expect to be able to work nearby to County Donegal, 17% expect to work in County Donegal, a similar proportion expect to be elsewhere in Ireland, and 12% expect to work beyond or possibly beyond Ireland. A similar set of patterns for Irish females with a hometown elsewhere in Ireland. Thus, the pattern among the Irish females at LYIT is that 2/3 or more tend to prefer to work close to their home region (i.e. Donegal, nearby, or elsewhere) after finishing their education, and otherwise prefer to stay in Ireland. However, a sizable proportion of Irish females are expecting to have to relocate to another location in Ireland, or even beyond. From a County Donegal perspective, there are some positive signs. Namely, that most of the educated local females prefer to stay locally, and over half expect t be able to do so, and about 20% of Irish students from other locations are expecting to work within County Donegal after finishing their education.

Among young males from County Donegal, only 43% prefer to work locally whereas slightly more than half expect to do so. One third of these local males prefer to work elsewhere in Ireland, and another 23% wish to work or possibly work beyond Ireland, whereas those expecting to do so are 29% and 20%, respectively. Thus, among the LYIT students from County Donegal, the females *all* prefer to stay close to home or at least in Ireland, but a sizable proportion expect that they might have to go further than they wish for employment, whereas the opposite case exists for young local males at LYIT. Because the counts are small for Irish males with a location outside of County

Donegal, we only look at the overall pattern. These males are unlikely to prefer to stay in County Donegal after education, and do not expect to stay either. Slightly more than half of these males prefer to work elsewhere in Ireland, and about the same percentage expect to do so, but possibly in a different part of the country. Regardless of whether from a county nearby to Donegal or further away, a substantial proportion of these young males expect to work beyond or possibly beyond Ireland after education.

Among students with a hometown outside of Ireland, about 30% of the females prefer to work in Ireland, and about the same percentage expect to do so after finishing their education, although the majority wish to be in another location within Ireland. Among the males, 40% prefer and 40% expect to work in Ireland (and in fact within County Donegal), albeit with very small sample sizes. Nonetheless, from an Irish perspective, it should be viewed as good news that these educated- and mobile- young adults are interested in staying within the country.

Table 3: Location Expectation and Preferences among LYIT Students

Only females under 30	Hometown not in Ireland:		Hometown within County Donegal		Hometown adjacent to County Donegal		Hometown elsewhere in Ireland	
Location EXPECTING to work after education:								
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Within County Donegal	1	8.3 %	70	54.7 %	7	17.5 %	4	22.2 %
In or adjacent to County Donegal	0	0.0 %	7	5.5 %	14	35.0 %	2	11.1 %
Possibly further within Ireland	3	25.0 %	21	16.4 %	14	35.0 %	10	55.6 %
Beyond or possibly beyond Ireland	8	66.7 %	30	23.4 %	5	12.5 %	2	11.1 %
Location PREFERRING to work after education:								
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Within County Donegal	1	7.7 %	82	75.9 %	6	17.6 %	3	20.0 %
In or adjacent to County Donegal	0	0.0 %	5	4.6 %	22	64.7 %	1	6.7 %
Possibly further	3	23.1	21	19.4	6	17.6	11	73.3

	Hometown not in Ireland:		Hometown within County Donegal		Hometown adjacent to County Donegal		Hometown elsewhere in Ireland	
within Ireland		%		%		%		%
Beyond or possibly beyond Ireland	9	69.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Only males under 30	Hometown not in Ireland:		Hometown within County Donegal		Hometown adjacent to County Donegal		Hometown elsewhere in Ireland	
Location EXPECTING to work after education:								
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Within County Donegal	2	40.0%	18	51.4%	0	0.0%	1	12.5%
In or adjacent to County Donegal	0	0.0%	1	2.9%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%
Possibly further within Ireland	0	0.0%	9	25.7%	4	40.0%	5	62.5%
Beyond or possibly beyond Ireland	3	60.0%	7	20.0%	4	40.0%	2	25.0%
Location PREFERRING to work after education:								
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Within County Donegal	2	40.0%	15	42.9%	1	12.5%	1	14.3%
In or adjacent to County Donegal	0	0.0%	2	5.7%	5	62.5%	0	0.0%
Possibly further within Ireland	0	0.0%	10	28.6%	1	12.5%	4	57.1%
Beyond or possibly beyond Ireland	3	60.0%	8	22.9%	1	12.5%	2	28.6%

* Figures exclude missing data

Turning back to HUC students as shown in Table 4, attention is again limited to only those under 30. Among young females with a hometown with Troms, almost three quarters expect to work within the county after graduations, with most of those expecting to be in Harstad in particular. 16% expect to be in Southern Norway, and 12% expect to work beyond, or possibly beyond, Norway. Among these young females, location preferences are very similar to expectations, although slightly fewer prefer to work in Harstad, and a slightly higher proportion prefer to work elsewhere in Troms, elsewhere in Southern

Norway, or beyond. Among young females from the adjacent county of Nordland, almost all prefer to work in Nordland or further south in Norway, but 30% expect to work in Troms. Similarly, among young females from elsewhere in Norway, 83% prefer to work elsewhere in Norway, but a portion of those expect to work in Troms or possibly beyond Norway after graduation. Finally, among young international female students at HUC, while the majority expect and prefer to work outside of Norway, about one third expect or prefer to work within Troms after completing their education.

Among young males from Troms, only slightly more than half expect to work in Troms after graduation, and in fact, more than half would prefer to work in Southern Norway or beyond. Among the few young males from Nordland who were surveyed at HUC, none expect or prefer to work in Troms. That pattern continued among those from elsewhere in Norway or beyond. Among young males from elsewhere in Norway, only one of four expected or preferred to work in Troms after graduation. Finally, among the few young international male students who were surveyed, all expect and prefer to work beyond Norway upon completion of their education.

Table 4: Location Expectation and Preferences among HUC Students

Only females under 30	Hometown not in Norway		Hometown within Troms		Hometown adjacent In Nordland		Hometown elsewhere in Norway	
Location EXPECTING to work after education:								
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Within Harstad	1	12.5%	13	52.0%	2	20.0%	1	10.0%
Elsewhere in Troms	2	25.0%	5	20.0%	1	10.0%	1	10.0%
In Finnmark or Nordland	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%
Elsewhere in (Southern) Norway	0	0.0%	4	16.0%	5	50.0%	7	70.0%
Beyond or possibly beyond Norway	5	62.5%	3	12.0%	0	0.0%	1	10.0%
Location PREFERRING to work after education:								
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Within Harstad	0	0.0%	10	40.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Elsewhere in Troms	3	33.3%	6	24.0%	0	0.0%	1	8.3%
In Finnmark or Nordland	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	44.4%	1	8.3%
Elsewhere in (Southern) Norway	0	0.0%	5	20.0%	4	44.4%	10	83.3%
Beyond or possibly beyond Norway	6	66.7%	4	16.0%	1	11.1%	0	0.0%

Only males under 30	Hometown not in Norway		Hometown within Troms		Hometown adjacent In Nordland		Hometown elsewhere in Norway	
Location EXPECTING to work after education:	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Within Harstad	0	0.0%	5	38.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Elsewhere in Troms	0	0.0%	2	15.4%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%
In Finnmark or Nordland	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	40.0%	0	0.0%
Elsewhere in (Southern) Norway	0	0.0%	5	38.5%	3	60.0%	2	50.0%
Beyond or possibly beyond Norway	4	100.0%	1	7.7%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%
Location PREFERRING to work after education:	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Within Harstad	0	0.0%	4	28.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Elsewhere in Troms	0	0.0%	2	14.3%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%
In Finnmark or Nordland	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	60.0%	0	0.0%
Elsewhere in (Southern) Norway	0	0.0%	4	28.6%	1	20.0%	2	50.0%
Beyond or possibly beyond Norway	4	100.0%	4	28.6%	1	20.0%	1	25.0%

* Figures exclude missing data.

4.3 Work and Life Preferences

Tables 5 and 6 show the preferences of these two groups of students in terms of work and life preferences after completing school. As before, students at LYIT and HUC are sorted according to hometown location. In the interest of brevity, only four of a range of work and life preferences are included. Simple means are shown, showing how important each of these four factors are when looked at in isolation, with scores closer to zero meaning the issue is relatively unimportant, and scores approaching three (the maximum) indicating high importance.

As shown in Table 5, being in a big city is relatively unimportant to those not from Ireland, but still higher than among those with an Irish hometown. This is in line with expectations, since LYIT is not located in a big city, and presumably survey respondents are attending by their own choice. In contrast, chances for advancement is very important to most LYIT students, and is even slightly more important for international students. Strangely, salary is considered to be important to international students at LYIT, but noticeably less so than among those Irish-born. Since wages and salaries in the Northwest corner of the Island of Ireland are considered to be lower than the more urban eastern area, perhaps this is a manifestation of local students being concerned about being offered a low compensation package (in the area) even after completing third level education. If the international students have a higher level of mobility, then they might simply subconsciously expect to search for jobs that meet their financial expectations. Finally, being close to friends and family, after completing school, is somewhat unimportant to international students at LYIT, as well as among Irish students not from Donegal or an adjacent county. That makes sense given that these two groups travelled furthest to attend LYIT. Conversely, those from County Donegal place higher importance on being close to friends and family.

Table 5: Work and Life Preferences after completing school: LYIT students

Importance of:	Among:	All Under 30
A. Being in a big city		
	Hometown not in Ireland:	1.17
	Hometown within Cty Donegal	0.75
	Hometown in adjacent county	0.91
	Hometown elsewhere in Ireland	1.10
B. Chances for advancement		
	Hometown not in Ireland:	2.46
	Hometown within Cty Donegal	2.36
	Hometown in adjacent county	2.40
	Hometown elsewhere in Ireland	2.41
C. Salary		
	Hometown not in Ireland:	2.08
	Hometown within Cty Donegal	2.38
	Hometown in adjacent county	2.30
	Hometown elsewhere in Ireland	2.38
D. Being close to friends & family		
	Hometown not in Ireland:	1.63
	Hometown within Cty Donegal	2.15
	Hometown in adjacent county	2.09
	Hometown elsewhere in Ireland	1.69

* Figures exclude missing data.
Note: All scores are means based on: Unimportant=0, somewhat important=1, Important=2, Very important=3.

Turning to the responses of HUC students in Table 6, being in a big city was, again, unimportant to HUC students, regardless of hometown location. As was the case among the LYIT students, HUC students place relatively high importance on having chances for advancement, but that importance is much lower, on average, among those with a hometown within Troms than all other subgroups. That potentially signals a higher desire to work locally after completing school. Turning to salary preferences, international students at HUC place an equivalent importance on salary as did the international students at LYIT, on average. The Norwegian students at HUC, however, placed less importance on salary than the international students, and much less importance than the Irish students had at LYIT. Presumably, this is due to the lower income inequality within Norway. Finally, as was the case among LYIT students, international students at HUC place less importance on being close to friends and family than Norwegian students at HUC. However, the HUC students placed higher importance on being close to friends and family than the LYIT students had. One possible explanation is that since income inequality is relatively low in Norway, as is unemployment generally, then Norwegian students face less economic uncertainty, and can, instead, place higher emphasis on other aspects of life when considering work after completing school.

Table 6: Work and Life Preferences after completing school: HUC students

Importance of:	Among:	All Under 30
A. Being in a big city		
	Hometown not in Norway:	1.00
	Hometown within Troms	0.79
	Hometown adjacent (i.e. in Nordland)	0.64
	Hometown elsewhere in Norway	0.67
B. Chances for advancement		
	Hometown not in Norway:	2.50
	Hometown within Troms	2.05
	Hometown adjacent (i.e. in Nordland)	2.40
	Hometown elsewhere in Norway	2.33
C. Salary 1		
	Hometown not in Norway:	2.07
	Hometown within Troms	1.95
	Hometown adjacent (i.e. in Nordland)	2.00
	Hometown elsewhere in Norway	1.67
D. Being close to friends & family		
	Hometown not in Norway:	2.00
	Hometown within Troms	2.13
	Hometown adjacent (i.e. in Nordland)	2.29
	Hometown elsewhere in Norway	2.13

* Figures exclude missing data.

5. Discussion

This study was based on surveys of students at Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) in Letterkenny and Killybegs in the northwest corner of

Ireland, and at Harstad University College (HUC) in Harstad, which is north of the Arctic Circle in Norway's second most northerly county. To recap, the purpose of this study was to explore the expectations and preferences that rural post-secondary education (PSE) students, at these two institutions, have in terms of future employment and location plans, as well as the relative importance of the factors affecting those decisions. The rationale was that in addition to the general labour market uncertainty that is occurring throughout the industrialized world, rural youth face incremental complications in terms of deciding what skills to try to acquire, where to acquire it, and where to seek employment afterwards. This study forms a part of a continued effort to deconstruct the employment-education-lifestyle- location dilemma facing young rural adults. While the boundary between what is rural or not is subjective, these two locations are considered to be rural within this paper because they have modest populations, and are beyond daily commuting distance to the closest large urban centre. The focus was placed on younger students (aged 18-30) at LYIT and HUC, since older students potentially have a different set of life expectations and obligations, and might be less able to relocate after completing their education. Younger rural adults, in contrast, are facing several decades of participation in the labour market, and presumably have to consider how to weigh work, life, and location factors as they look to the future.

There are several labour market trends that are pertinent for this study because they can directly or indirectly affect how rural youth view their employment options. First, working conditions are increasingly polarized, with a small number of privileged workers receiving high rewards and security, while the bulk of others have, or perceiving that they have, lower access to good quality employment. As an aside, this polarization is thought to be smaller in Norway, and the broad social safety net means less economic insecurity, and this has potentially played a role when Norwegian, or Norwegian-based, students look to the future. Acquiring education is among the most important factors to acquire more power, and hence privilege, in the labour market, and so it is interesting to look at the opinions of post-secondary education students. Of course, if their power increases, then so too might the employment expectations of these individuals.

The literature also suggests that rural labour markets tend to be narrower and weaker, on average, but that can also vary depending upon the public policies within a particular jurisdiction. Again, Norway is considered to have relatively vibrant rural employment conditions. That said, many rural governments are keen to retain and expand upon current population levels, and that often extends to the challenge of retaining rural youth, especially those educated or having acquired sought after skills. This study sheds some light on this issue,

by looking at the location expectations verses preferences of these young, skilled rural individuals.

Turning to findings, 7% of the students surveyed at LYIT were international (i.e. having a hometown outside of the country), compared to 15% of those surveyed at HUC. These proportions are important, because a sizable minority of international students are now expecting and preferring to stay and work in their host country, although not necessarily in or around Donegal or Troms in particular. Thus, from a rural community perspective, the more international students that can be attracted to attend, the more of this source of skilled workers (and citizens) can be retained. That said, the expectations and preferences of domestic students can be somewhat different. Roughly speaking, about two thirds of local students expect to work locally (i.e. in or around Donegal or Troms) after completing their post-secondary education, but a sizable minority expect and/or prefer to out-migrate. On the other hand, that is offset by the other cohort of domestic students (with a 'non-local' hometown) who are now expecting to stay and work in the vicinity around LYIT or HUC.

The vast majority of individuals surveyed at these two rural PSE institutions view living in a big city as being relatively unimportant. Thus, it can be inferred that many of these would prefer, or at least accept, living in a rural (or commuter) location, if local employment opportunities are acceptable. Both surveys indicated that having the opportunity for advancement, and to a lesser extent, salary, is more important. Hopefully, future studies can try to link students' employment decisions more directly to their perceptions of local employment conditions.

The decision regarding where to work and live after graduation is a complicated one for anyone, and is especially so for young people in a rural location. Young educated workers are an interesting subgroup because their skills provide them with extra power in the labour market, but potentially also higher expectation levels. The main limitation of this study is that it can only capture a fraction of the full set of personal, social, community, economic, and lifestyle factors that can impact the decision-making process facing these individuals. Admittedly, this study can only 'scratch the surface' of that decision, and to raise questions and issues that deserve attention in future research. Another limitation is that only participants from the industrialized world, and from Western/Northern Europe in particular, have been included. Moreover, only descriptive statistics have been used. Finally, some arbitrary definition of rural and remote must be chosen for any particular study. Critics could argue that the chosen locations are 'big rural', or even 'small urban', and do not capture the full extent of remoteness that exists. That is true, but in few of those very small and remote locations is there a post-secondary institution!

Given these limitations, generalizability of results in not claimed or inferred. Rather, the findings and conclusions merely provide insights into the thinking of these students at these institutions in these relatively rural and remote communities. The current nature of work is complicated, and the only thing certain about the future of work is change and uncertainty. Public policy makers must gather analysis from all available sources, academic and otherwise, to develop remedies to sustain rural communities by retaining some 'local youth', to attract at least some 'outsiders', and to facilitate members of both groups to develop and utilize their talents. Studies show that some proportion of rural youth will choose to out-migrate. The challenge is to ensure that those wanting to be in a specific rural and remote area, regardless of hometown origin, have opportunities to stay and thrive.

The Protection and Promotion of the Psychosocial Health of Workers in South Africa and Nigeria: The Potential and Limitations of Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and Corporate Social Responsibility

Meryl du Plessis [1]

Abstract. The International Labour Organization's 2016 Safety and Health at Work Day focused on risks to workers' psychosocial health. The evolving nature of work, increased global economic competition, precarious work, instant communications and technological advancements all impact workers' psychosocial health. It is imperative that management practices, occupational health and safety (OHS) regulation and corporate social responsibility ("CSR") initiatives, which aim to regulate OHS, address psychosocial risks. This paper will explore the OHS regulatory regimes, as well as the CSR frameworks, of South Africa and Nigeria. We will consider how CSR's focus on the business case and ethical case for promoting workers' health can complement the self-regulation and other enforcement mechanisms provided for in occupational health and safety laws.

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1. Introduction

Occupational health and safety (OHS) as a matter of public concern traditionally comes into focus when there are major disasters. This dimension is in tension with some of the central purposes of occupational health and safety regulation, which relate to the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases.[2] Regulatory mechanisms that are in place to achieve these purposes are mostly based on risk assessments and control measures that have to be constantly assessed and re-assessed. It therefore requires a positive health and safety culture and consciousness within organisations. One of the biggest challenges is therefore to mainstream health and safety into micro-processes at the organisational level and to find regulatory measures that best address that challenge.

Another related challenge for occupational health and safety is that the changing nature of work has meant that occupational health and safety concerns have, and are still, undergoing changes. One of these changes is the increased prevalence of, and emphasis on, what we can broadly term psychosocial conditions workers experience. Risk assessments therefore have to be developed to include psychosocial risks that hitherto have not been assessed. That requires the involvement of disciplines and professionals that have not been traditionally associated with OHS regulation.

1.1 Psychosocial Risks and Hazards

In 1984, the International Labour Organization (ILO) defined psychosocial hazards or potential hazards in terms of "interactions between and among work environment, job content, organizational conditions and workers' capacities, needs, culture, personal extra-job considerations that may, through perceptions and experience, influence health, work performance and job satisfaction".[3] That same organisation devoted its 2016 World Day for Safety and Health at Work to workplace stress and emphasised that addressing this challenge will require collective efforts.[4]

The changing nature of work, increased global economic competition, precarious work, instant communications and technological changes all impact

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[2] International Labour Organization (ILO) Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention 187 of 2006

[3] ILO. *Workplace Stress: A Collective Challenge*, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---safework/documents/publication/wcms_466547.pdf, 2016

[4] Ibid.

on workers' psychosocial health.[5] The ILO has focused on three components of psychosocial health, namely stress, psychological and physical violence, and economic stressors.[6] This paper is limited to a discussion of the first of these three aspects, although interrelationships between these aspects ought not to be ignored.

Stress, in its ordinary meaning, can refer to both positive and negative stimuli. However, in the OSH context, it is viewed as the harmful physical and emotional responses people have when work demands exceed a worker's capacity to cope.[7] In many instances, legal and employee wellness perspectives on stress focus on individuals' abilities to manage the stressors they experience. While that is one component of an holistic response, work content and work context also play an important role and must be managed so as not to cause psychosocial harm to workers.[8]

There may be various reasons for the focus on individuals' capacities to withstand work stress. Firstly, in jurisdictions where dispute resolution is largely adversarial, litigation tends to individualise cases, as the issues between litigants are often ventilated at the micro-level. The focus is on the individual litigants' actions and inactions.

Secondly, in political, social and commercial cultures steeped in individualism, the emphasis has often been on workers controlling their bodies and their responses to stimuli of whatever nature. The bedrock of this culture is a conception of the body as a "compliant instrument of the limitless will".[9] As Miceli argues: "[T]he reality is that no human body or mind (regardless of disability) is a 'compliant instrument of the limitless will,' despite the rhetoric of liberal individualism predicating that all citizens are meant to be economically self-sufficient and independent in thought and action. This ideology is premised on the belief that people can do whatever they want to do (such as climbing Mount Everest or being a star basketball player) as long as they put their minds to or will themselves to accomplishing the task at hand. Furthermore, the rhetoric employed by this ideology intentionally renders any

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[5] ILO. *Trainer's Guide: SOLVE: Integrating Health Promotion into Workplace OSH Policies*, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---safework/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_178397.pdf, 2012

[6] Ibid.

[7] European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. *Psychosocial Risks and Stress at Work*, https://osha.europa.eu/en/themes/psychosocial-risks-and-stress, 2016

[8] ILO. *Workplace Stress: A Collective Challenge*, op. cit.

[9] R. Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997. She notes (at 26) that even within emancipatory movements that emphasise other identity categories, for example some feminist movements, assumptions are made based on "the liberal ideology of autonomy and independence", which may undermine some disabled women's struggles.

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disability as a character flaw as espoused by the failure of one's limitless will to make his or her body and/ or mind a compliant instrument."[10]

The third reason why responses to occupational stress may be disjointed is that more work can be done to integrate the management of stressors that impact on workers' stress levels, at both macro and micro levels. Economic policies and choices, the nature of the regulatory regime for occupational health and safety and the implementation of corporate governance principles and practices all play a role in creating labour structures that are or may be hazardous to workers' psychosocial health. This article limits itself to a critique of OHS regulatory regimes, as well as the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in promoting OHS in South Africa and Nigeria.

1.2. Relevant Features of the South African and Nigerian OHS Landscape

South Africa and Nigeria are the two countries on the African continent with the largest economies.[11] While both countries rely heavily on commodity exports, more than 95% of Nigeria's foreign income comes from oil exports, while only 65% of South Africa's foreign income comes from exports across a wider range of commodities.[12] As a result, the South African economy generates more income through manufacturing and service industries.[13]

A different dimension is that the Nigerian economy potentially has a much larger workforce due to the fact that Nigeria's population is estimated to be at approximately 182.2 million people,[14] while the corresponding figure for South Africa is only 55 million.[15] Both countries over the past few years have faced the challenge of jobless growth and high unemployment rates.[16]

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[10] M.G. Miceli, *The Disavowal of the Body as a Source of Inquiry in Critical Disability Studies: The Return of Impairment?*, *Critical Disability Discourse/Discours Critique dans le Champ du Handicap*, 2010, 2-14

[11] J. Rossouw. *South Africa is Africa's Largest Economy (Again). But What Does it Mean?*, http://mg.co.za/article/2016-08-15-south-africa-is-africas-largest-economy-again-but-what-does-it-mean, 2016

[12] Calleo. *Nigeria v South Africa: Africa's Biggest Economies Are Very Different*, http://calleo.co.za/nigeria-vs-south-africa-africas-biggest-economies-are-very-different/, 2016

[13] Ibid.

[14] Trading Economics. *Nigeria Population*, http://www.tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/population, 2016a

[15] Trading Economics. *South Africa Population*, http://www.tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/population, 2016b

[16] I. Onuba. *Nigeria's Unemployment Rate Rises to 13,3% - NBS*, http://punchng.com/nigerias-unemployment-rate-rises-13-3-nbs/, 2016; Statistics South Africa. *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 2*, http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02112ndQuarter2016.pdf, 2016

Nigeria passed a Labour, Safety, Health and Welfare (LSHW) Bill in 2012, but this legislation is still awaiting presidential assent.[17] In the meantime, the Factories Act[18] is still the primary piece of legislation that governs occupational health and safety in the country. In South Africa, on the other hand, the Occupational Health and Safety Act[19] was passed in 1993. At the moment, a new Occupational Health and Safety Bill is going through the legislative process, but has not yet been passed.[20]

When we consider psychosocial conditions in occupational settings, one of the important variables will be the state of development of psychology within a jurisdiction, with particular emphasis on industrial and organisational psychology. The field of psychology in Nigeria is relatively new,[21] and, as will be discussed below, faces various challenges but holds positive prospects too. In South Africa, psychology has developed over a longer period of time, but has been exclusionary.[22] In both Nigeria and South Africa, the application of psychology in relation to local people, cultures and circumstances has been troubled.[23] As a result, capacity development for the undertaking of theoretical and applied research on occupational stress within the specific contexts of these countries is a central challenge.

1.3 Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) can be defined broadly as "a vision of business accountability to a wide range of stakeholders, besides shareholders and investors".[24] It concerns environmental protection, the health and wellbeing of employees and the interests of community and civil society in general.[25] Many commentators have noted that the practice and understanding

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[17] U. Abubakar, *Structural and Implementation Issues around the New Nigerian Labour, Safety, Health and Welfare Bill (2012): Lessons from UK, USA, Australia and China, Transactions of the VSB – Technical University of Ostrava*, 11/1, 2016, 61-71

[18] 1958, 1987 & CAP.126 L.F.N.1990, CAP. F1 L.F.N.2004

[19] Act 85 of 1993

[20] ParlyReportSA. *New Legislation Ahead*, http://parlyreportsa.co.za/tag/nedlac/, 2014

[21] P. Mefoh, *Challenges and Prospects of Psychology in Nigeria, European Journal of Social Sciences*, 42/1, 2014, 57-64

[22] C. De La Rey and J. Ipser, *The Call for Relevance: South African Psychology Ten Years into Democracy, South African Journal of Psychology*, 34/4, 2004, 544-552

[23] Mefoh *op. cit.*; De La Rey and Ipser *op. cit.*

[24] International Institute for Sustainable Development. *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)*, http://www.iisd.org/business/issues/sr.aspx, 2016

[25] Ibid.

of CSR is socio-culturally framed.[26] It is therefore important that we consider the understanding and application of CSR within specified contexts.

In both Nigeria and South Africa, CSR is voluntary. Many of the multinational corporations operating in the oil and gas industries in Nigeria have devised and implemented CSR initiatives to fill major gaps in governmental regulation.[27] However, the emphasis has traditionally been on the effects of these companies' activities on the communities within which they operate. Less emphasis is placed on socially responsible labour relations and even less on socially responsible products and processes.[28]

In South Africa, the King Report on Corporate Governance in 1994 was the first in the world to require companies to consider the impact of their activities on 'stakeholders' beyond shareholders and investors.[29] Currently in its third edition, which was adopted in 2009, it is a voluntary Code that applies to all entities incorporated in and resident in South Africa, whether such entities are public, private or non-profit.[30] Compliance with the Code is mandatory for companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), but other entities are not obligated to comply and face no sanctions for non-compliance.[31] The fourth edition of the Code will be launched on 1 November 2016. In what follows, the focus will be on the latest edition of the King Code (King IV).

1.4 Structure of the Paper

This paper presents a critique of the current frameworks for occupational health and safety in South Africa and Nigeria insofar as these relate to the management of workplace stress. The leitmotif underlying this critique is that an individualised approach to health promotion is inadequate, as it omits attention to the structural features of work itself that impact adversely on workers' psychosocial health.[32] It is then argued that CSR initiatives may be used to shore up some of the shortcomings in monitoring and enforcement that are apparent in both countries' OHS frameworks

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[26] A. Helg. *Corporate Social Responsibility from a Nigerian Perspective*, http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.523.9621&rep=rep1&type=pdf, 2007

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Institute of Directors in Southern Africa. *Executive Summary of the King Report 2002*, http://corporatecompliance.org/Portals/1/PDF/Resources/International/KingCommitteeCorporateGovernanceExecutiveSummary2002.pdf, 2002

[30] R. Cassim, 'Corporate Governance', in Farouk Cassim (ed.), *The Law of Business Structures*; Cape Town: Juta and Co., 2012, 271-282

[31] Ibid.

[32] ILO. *Trainer's Guide: SOLVE: Integrating Health Promotion into Workplace OSH Policies*, op. cit.

The next two sections of the paper engage with the OHS frameworks in South Africa and Nigeria, respectively. Particular emphasis is placed on whether these frameworks deal with psychosocial risks and, if so, how this is done. Part four then considers the challenges faced by both countries in monitoring and enforcing OHS in general, and in managing psychosocial risks and hazards in particular. The fifth section considers the elements of CSR in these jurisdictions, respectively, that may supplement the gaps in OHS governance frameworks, as set out in part four.

2. OHS in South Africa

Occupational health and safety is not very high on the policy agenda in South Africa.[33] Neither is mental health.[34] It is therefore unsurprising that occupational mental health seems to be languishing in the policy backwaters. This lack of status is at odds with statistics on the adverse effects suffered by employers, employees, affected communities and the economy as a result of occupationally acquired mental harm.[35] This is not a South African phenomenon – it is a worldwide trend particularly prevalent in low- and middle-income countries.[36]

There are various factors that may lead to the avoidance of, rather than engagement with, occupational psychosocial health issues by governments, employers and workers: the fear of escalating labour costs, workplace cultures

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[33] A draft National Occupational Health and Safety Policy, http://www.kznhealth.gov.za/occhealth/policy2.pdf, was distributed in 2003 and stated that it was the first time that a policy of this nature for all sectors of the South African economy was developed. To date, this policy has not been finalised.

[34] C. Draper, C. Lund, S. Kleintjes, M. Funk, M. Omar, A.J. Flisher and Mental Health and Poverty Project Research Programme Consortium, *Mental Health Policy in South Africa: Development Process and Content, Health Policy and Planning*, 24, 2009, 342-356

[35] The Draft National Occupational Health and Safety Policy cited a 1997 study conducted for the Department of Labour that estimated the cost of workplace accidents and diseases to be at R17 billion, which was 3.5 % of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It also stated that costs to employers "include property damage, lost production time, lost skills as well as the cost of engaging and retraining replacements".

[36] S. Saxena, G. Thornicroft, M. Knapp and H. Whiteford, *Resources for Mental Health: Scarcity, Inequity, and Inefficiency, Lancet*, 370, 2007, 878-889; O. Gureje and A. Alem, *Mental Health Policy Development in Africa, Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 78/4, 2000, 475-482; M.A. Omar, A.T. Green, P.K. Bird, T. Mirzoev, A.J. Flisher, F. Kigozi, C. Lund, J. Mwanza, A.L. Ofori-Atta and Mental Health and Poverty Research Programme Consortium (MHaPP), *Mental Health Policy Process: A Comparative Study of Ghana, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia, International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, 4, 2010, 24-34

that cause psychosocial harm,[37] ignorance and the daunting prospect of acknowledging our psychological fragility and the impact it has on all our relationships – at work, at home and in our communities. The result has been the stigmatisation and marginalisation of people experiencing psychosocial health concerns at all levels of the employment process – recruitment and selection, work practices, compensation for occupationally-induced mental harm, as well as reintegration into employment after incapacity due to their psychosocial health conditions.[38]

South Africa ratified the ILO's Occupational Safety and Health Convention 155 of 1981 in February 2003. That Convention emphasises prevention as the cornerstone of occupational health and safety.[39] South Africa's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) was enacted approximately ten years before South Africa ratified the Convention and four years before the Constitution came into effect. As a result, some of the Act's provisions are arguably outdated and in need of improvement.

The two primary pieces of framework legislation for OHS are the OHSA and the Mine Health and Safety Act.[40] Other legislation protects workers indirectly against working environments that are detrimental to their health and safety. The Basic Conditions of Employment Act,[41] for example, regulates, inter alia, working hours, leave, meal intervals, night work and overtime. The Employment Equity Act[42] and the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act[43] prohibit unfair discrimination and seek to

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[37] See M.J. Schabracq and C.L. Cooper, *The Changing Nature of Work and Stress*, *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 15/3, 2000, 227-241, who argue that insufficient control over our working lives can result in two ways: Firstly, our everyday working lives can just be underdeveloped, leading to qualitative 'underload' that offers very few challenges, opportunities and rewards, which then makes it difficult for us to summon the mental resources to concentrate on tasks at hand. This situation can give rise to serious stress and health complaints. Secondly, persons or events may interfere with our daily work routines, and even self-image, to varying degrees, for example, changes in our jobs, new educational demands that make our current educational qualifications obsolete, conflict with colleagues and lack of attention and approval from our managers. These events can adversely affect our individual well-being and health, as well as organisational processes.

[38] World Health Organization, *Resource Book on Mental Health, Human Rights and Legislation*, Geneva: World Health Organization, 2005

[39] Article 4(2) of the Convention provides that the aim of the National Occupational Safety and Health Policy "shall be to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, linked with or occurring in the course of work, by minimising, so far as is reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment".

[40] Act 29 of 1996

[41] Act 75 of 1997

[42] Act 55 of 1998

[43] Act 4 of 2000

affirm those who have been disadvantaged. The Labour Relations Act[44] proscribes unfair labour practices and unfair dismissals, including on the basis of disability.

2.1 Application of the OHSA

The OHSA applies to all employment activities and where machinery is used, except when exclusions are specified, such as activities conducted in, and persons present in, mining areas or any works as defined in the Minerals Act 50 of 1991 and specified ships that are regulated by the Merchant Shipping Act 57 of 1951.[45] The aviation industry is covered by OHSA, but aviation accidents are investigated in terms of the Civil Aviation Act 13 of 2009.[46]

2.2 Duties of Employers and Employees in terms of the OHSA

The OHSA contains the rights and duties of employers and employees in respect of health and safety. Employers have the duty to ensure that their employees have, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy working environment.[47] Apart from this general duty, employers also have to comply with specific duties that relate to the creation and maintenance of safe systems and objects of work, as well as risk assessments and precautionary measures that are indicated by such risk assessments. Each of these is discussed in more detail below and the application of these duties to psychosocial risks and hazards is considered.

2.2.1 Safe Systems and Objects of Work

Employers must, as far as is reasonably practicable, create safe systems of work and provide plant and machinery that do not pose undue risks to health.[48] This duty also applies when substances or articles are produced, processed, used, handled, stored or transported.[49] Employers must prevent workers from doing any work, from coming into contact with hazardous substances or articles, or from operating plant or machinery unless the necessary or prescribed precautionary measures have been taken.[50] Similarly, employers must ensure

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[44] Act 66 of 1995
[45] Section 1(3) of the OHSA
[46] See Chapter 4 of the Civil Aviation Act 13 of 2009
[47] Section 8(1)
[48] Section 8(2)(a)
[49] Section 8(2)(c)
[50] Section 8(2)(f)

that work is performed or that plant or machinery is operated under the supervision of someone who is trained to understand the associated risks of the activity concerned and who has the authority to take precautionary measures.[51]

Employees must be equipped with information, instructions and training, and must be informed of what their scope of authority is.[52] Section 13(1) of the Act expands on employers' general duty by requiring that employers ensure that employees are conversant with the risks to their health attached to work that they have to do, articles of substances to which they are exposed or plant and machinery they have to operate.

When reference is made in the Act to safe systems of work, this includes the creation and maintenance of control measures to deal with psychosocial hazards. These hazards may relate to one or a combination of the following: work content; workload and the pace of work; working hours; participation in, and control of, work activities; career development; status and remuneration; organisational roles; organisational cultures; interpersonal relationships and work-life balance.[53]

It is notable that the control measures required to address many of these hazards need to designed and implemented in an integrated fashion and require the cooperative involvement of the operations, human resources and finance components of organisations. It implicates leadership and stakeholder relations within the organisations and requires day-to-day, medium and long-term planning and execution.

2.2.2   Risk Assessments and Precautionary Measures

The OHSA obligates employers to avoid risk. Only if it is not reasonably practicable to avoid risks, must they be mitigated. Employers have to conduct risk assessments and take precautionary measures where necessary.[54] They must eliminate or mitigate hazards or potential hazards before they resort to protective equipment.[55] This section of the Act refers to "protective equipment", which appears to exclude psychosocial hazards from its ambit. It would therefore have been preferable for reference to be made to "protective measures", which is a more inclusive term.

The above scheme requires employers to first identify workplace hazards. They must then assess the risks these hazards pose to health and safety and finally,

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[51] Section 8(2)(i)

[52] Section 8(2)(j)

[53] ILO. *Trainer's Guide: SOLVE: Integrating Health Promotion into Workplace OSH Policies*, *op. cit.*

[54] Section 8(2)(d)

[55] Section 8(2)(b)

they must take steps to either eliminate the hazards altogether, or to at least mitigate the risks posed by these hazards.[56] In addressing psychosocial hazards, the assistance of industrial and organisational psychologists would be helpful. Training of workplace health and safety representatives and members of workplace health and safety committees on psychosocial hazards and risks would also be beneficial. It therefore requires technical capacity and that resources be made available for capacity building in this area.

The OHSA requires employees to take reasonable care for their own health, as well as the health of other persons who may be affected by their conduct.[57] This duty may be in tension with the employee's legal duty to follow lawful and reasonable instructions given by their employers.[58] While there is no obligation to comply with unlawful instructions, employees may be hesitant to refuse to comply with an employer's instructions, especially if it is not clear whether the said instruction is unlawful. This hesitancy may be exacerbated in instances of workplace stress, where stressors often work cumulatively to cause harm. Furthermore, in competitive organisational cultures where empathetic leadership is absent, employees may not feel comfortable to admit that they cannot cope with the demands of their jobs, regardless of how unrealistic and harmful to their health such demands may be.

Employees must comply with health and safety rules and instructions issued by their employers and must also assist their employers to comply with their employer duties.[59] There is therefore a mechanism within the OHSA that provides for mutual accountability between employers and employees. The Act seeks to mediate employees' subordinate relationship to their employers through health and safety representatives and, in larger workplaces, health and safety committees. It is, however, debatable whether those mechanisms are sufficiently representative of workers.

Employees also have a duty to report in two situations. The first is when any unsafe or unhealthy situation comes to their attention.[60] The second duty is imposed on employees who are involved in incidents that have or may have affected their health.[61] For these measures to operate effectively, a few interrelated aspects require attention. Employees will need to have knowledge of psychosocial hazards and their attendant risks. In addition, organisational

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[56] P. Benjamin, *Commentary on the Occupational Health and Safety Act*; Cape Town: Juta and Co., 2009
[57] Section 14(1)(a)
[58] See J. Grogan, *Workplace Law*; Cape Town: Juta and Co., 2014
[59] Section 14(1)(b) and (c)
[60] Section 14(1)(d)
[61] Section 14 (1)(e)

systems, leadership and practices must be receptive and responsive to such reports.

Employers are prohibited from victimising employees who report matters related to the Act to the Minister of Labour or other functionaries, or who comply with the Act, or who give evidence in court on matters related to the Act.[62] Again, knowledge and appreciation of psychosocial hazards and risks by employers, as well as organisational cultures that seek to prevent victimisaton and in which there are adverse consequences for victimising behavior, will be integral to the effective enforcement of this prohibition. Employees may be severely prejudiced if accountability is only ex post facto through adversarial processes, particularly if such employees have to manage their psychosocial conditions while engaging in these processes.

2.3 Standards of Care

The standard required of employers to comply with the general duties in the OHSA is to do what is "reasonably practicable", the lowest standard in a continuum.[63] This phrase appears throughout the Act and in most of the regulations. It is defined to mean "practicable having regard to –

1. the severity and scope of the hazard or risk concerned;
2. the state of knowledge reasonably available concerning the hazard or risk and of any means of removing or mitigating that hazard or risk;
3. the availability and suitability of means to remove or mitigate that hazard or risk; and
4. the cost of removing or mitigating that hazard or risk in relation to the benefits derived therefrom".[64]

Several features of psychosocial hazards and risks cause the likelihood that risks may either not be appreciated at all, or their severity and scope may be underestimated. Workplace stress does not only cause psychosocial harm such as burnout, depression or anxiety, but may also have severe physiological consequences, such as cardiovascular disease. Stress can also precipitate or compound addictions and fuel violence, which may have occupational as well as broader social and economic consequences.

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[62] Section 26(1)

[63] P. Hughes and E. Ferrett, *International Health and Safety at Work*; New York: Routledge, 2013. The most stringent level is an absolute duty, which is often imposed where the risk to health and safety is so high that injury or illness will result unless safety precautions are taken. The intermediate level of duty is to what is 'practicable', in which case the duty bearer must take measures that are technically possible or feasible, regardless of the cost, inconvenience or difficulty.

[64] Section 1(1)

Workplace stress is also qualitatively different from, for example, exposure to dangerous substances. In the latter instance, the control measures may seem to have less of an impact on operations and may be more commonly regarded as necessary. In the case of psychosocial hazards and risks, on the other hand, the often delayed onset of serious harm, the tendency for workers not to disclose psychosocial difficulties, the failure to link 'physiological' ill health to workplace stress, the stigma attached to mental ill health and the prejudice that people who experience psychosocial distress are 'simply lazy' or 'looking for attention', may lead to risk assessments where costs are inflated and benefits are undervalued.

2.4 Enforcement of the OHSA

The OHSA is enforced primarily through 'self-regulation' by organisations to which the legislation applies.[65] This approach is premised on the acknowledgement that employers and workers will have to take primary responsibility for preventing workplace accidents and occupational illness. The main mechanisms through which this must be done are through health and safety representatives and health and safety committees at the workplace level.

In general terms, these representatives' duties include the evaluation of existing health and safety measures,[66] as well as identifying potential hazards and major incidents in the workplace.[67] More specific duties include working with employers to investigate incidents, investigating complaints by employees about the latter's health and safety at work, making representations regarding health and safety to employers or inspectors, inspecting the workplace at such intervals as agreed upon with employers, liaising with inspectors and attending meetings of their workplaces' health and safety committees.[68]

Employers have a duty to inform health and safety representatives in advance of any inspections, investigation or formal inquiries by an inspector.[69] Similarly, they must inform any health and safety representative, as soon as is reasonably practicable, of incidents that happened in the part of the workplace for which such representative is responsible.[70]

Apart from information, employers have to provide facilities, assistance and training that may reasonably be required by health and safety representatives

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[65] Benjamin *op. cit.*
[66] Section 18(1)(a)
[67] Section 18(1)(b)
[68] Section 18(1)(c)-(j)
[69] Section 13(2)(b)
[70] Section 13(2)(c)

and which have been agreed upon.[71] It is not clear who has to be party to this agreement with employers. Such an agreement may not be essential, as a labour inspector may direct employers to provide training that, in the inspector's view, is necessary for the health and safety representatives to function effectively.[72]

If health and safety representatives have extensive duties of investigation and inspection, it follows that they have extensive training needs. This would be so especially in respect of psychosocial hazards and risks, which have not traditionally formed part of the OHS framework. However, the Act is silent on the content of the training to be provided and who would be appropriate training providers.

Furthermore, since a health and safety representative is appointed for a particular workplace or part thereof, it is conceivable that every such person would require a wide array of skills to comply with his or her statutory duties. Not only does this increase the training needs of health and safety representatives, but it also means that the functions are onerous and workers may be reluctant to make themselves available. While no civil liability can be imposed on health and safety representatives who fail to comply with their statutory duties, many employees may still not want to risk taking on difficult and important health and safety functions that could affect the health and safety of their colleagues, as well as their work relationships. The nature of psychosocial hazards and risks, which may require changes to work content and work context, may make it even less attractive for health and safety representatives to risk antagonising management and other colleagues.

Perhaps more thought can be given to the functional division of labour amongst health and safety representatives and to the creation and/or accreditation of specific training programmes all health and safety representatives must complete before assuming their duties in terms of the Act. Representatives who take responsibility for psychosocial hazards and risks, for example, would undergo targeted and specialised training, which could possibly include conflict resolution.

2.5 Health and Safety Committees

Any workplace with two or more health and safety representatives must have at least one health and safety committee.[73] The employer decides on the number of members on a committee or committees, as long as all health and

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[71] Section 18(3)
[72] Benjamin *op. cit*.
[73] Section 19(1)

safety representatives are on at least one committee.[74] Furthermore, employers may designate members to sit on the committee, but such members may not outnumber the health and safety representatives on that committee.[75]

Employers are expected to consult with these committees "with a view to initiating, developing, promoting, maintaining and reviewing" health and safety measures.[76] It therefore seems that these committees are to be involved in shaping workplace policies on health and safety. The health and safety committees could potentially be powerful representative forums in which worker concerns regarding health and safety can be raised. However, if one looks at the OHSA's provisions regarding the composition of these committees, it is arguable that it does not provide adequately for worker representation. It would therefore be incumbent upon employers who want to foster effective relationships with employees in respect of occupational health and safety to create mechanisms that would allow for effective and inclusive communication channels.

2.6 The Inspectorate

In addition to the health and safety representatives and committees at workplace level, the Department of Labour has an inspectorate that is mandated to ensure compliance with the OHSA and its regulations. The inspectorate consists of a Chief Inspector and inspectors who are all appointed by the Minister of Labour.[77]

Inspectors, who must carry certification,[78] inspect workplaces and premises where machinery is operated; prohibit dangerous activities and conditions in workplaces;[79] and conduct investigations[80] or formal inquiries[81] into hazardous or potentially hazardous incidents in workplaces or places where machinery is used.[82] They have wide powers when performing their functions.[83] They may, without notice, and at all reasonable times, enter workplaces or premises where plant or machinery is used, or where they suspect such activities to occur. They may question persons on health and safety matters in the course of their

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[74] Section 19(2)(a) and (b)
[75] Section 19(2)(c)
[76] Section 19(1)
[77] Sections 27 and 28
[78] Section 28(3)
[79] Section 30(1)(a)
[80] Section 31
[81] Section 32
[82] For more extensive discussions of the functions and powers of the inspectorate, see Benjamin *op. cit.*
[83] Section 29(1)

inspections or investigations. Inspectors are also empowered to require persons with custody or control of relevant books, documents or records to make these available to them, and they may examine such books, documents or records and ask custodians to explain any entry therein.

The inspectorate in the Department of Labour is integrated and takes responsibility for the enforcement of a wide range of labour legislation, not just the OHSA. The National Economic and Development Council, in its draft country report to the ILO on South Africa's Decent Work Country Programme, lamented the "acute shortage of qualified labour inspectors" and the high staff turnover in the inspectorate. Apart from these challenges, the inspectorate was also reported to lack "an effective communication system and record keeping system," which severely impacted on the assessment of compliance with labour laws and which inhibited strategic planning and goal setting.

South Africa ratified the ILO Labour Inspection Convention 81 of 1947 on 20 June 2013. That Convention, in articles 6 and 7, requires the appointment of qualified labour inspectors whose conditions of service are such that such persons have stable employment and are independent. Article 9 also requires that signatories ensure technically qualified experts are associated with occupational health and safety inspections. Article 10 requires that a sufficient number of labour inspectors are appointed. South Africa therefore has work to do in increasing its compliance with this Convention.

2.7 Offences in Terms of the OHSA

Non-compliance with the duties in the OHSA may lead to criminal sanctions against offenders. These offences include failure to comply with the OHSA, directions, notices or exemptions granted in terms of the Act, and a wide array of actions that may hinder inspectors in their duties.[84] Conviction of these offences may attract a fine of not more than R50 000, a period of imprisonment not exceeding 12 months, or both.[85] The Act also establishes an offence of causing persons injury or illness through negligent conduct.[86] The possible penalties for this offence are a fine of not more than R100 000, imprisonment for a period not exceeding 24 months, or both.[87]

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[84] Section 38(1)
[85] Section 38(1)
[86] Section 28(2)
[87] Section 28(2)

3   OHS in Nigeria

Nigeria's Factories Act was first passed in 1958 and was last amended in 2004. The Act in its original form was based on the UK Factories Act of 1937 and has not been overhauled to adjust to new socio-economic and other realities.[88] As mentioned above, a new Labour, Safety, Health and Welfare (LSHW) Bill has been passed by Parliament, but still awaits presidential assent. Both pieces of legislation will therefore be considered here.

3.1 Application of OHS legislation

The Factories Act applies to all premises that fall within its definition of 'factories'.[89] Factories are defined as

> "[a]ny premises in which or within which, or within the close or curtilage or precincts of which one person is, or more persons are, employed in any process for or incidental to any of the following purposes, namely-
> (a)   The making of any article or of part of any article; or
> (b)   The altering, repairing, ornamenting, finishing, cleaning, or washing, or the breaking up or demolition of any article; or
> (c)   The adapting for sale of any article, being premises in which, […] the work is carried on by way of trade or for the purposes of gain and to or over which the employer of the person or persons employed herein has the right of access or control; […] and in which ten or more persons are employed".[90]

Hameed argues that s 87(3) of the Factories Act extends the application of that Act to workplaces other than factories. However, other authors disagree and state that the Factories Act does not apply to the construction industry, for example.[91] Section 87(3) reads:

> Any workplace in which, with the permission of or under agreement with the owner or occupier, ten or more persons carry on any work which would constitute the workplace a factory if the persons therein were in the employment of the owner or occupier, shall be deemed to be a factory for the purpose of this Act, and in the case of any such workplace, the provisions of this Act shall apply as if the owner or occupier of the workplace were the occupier of the factory and the persons working therein were persons employed in the factory.

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[88] T. Hameed, *The Factories Act and the Development of Occupational Health and Safety in Nigeria*, *Labour Law Review*, 7/3, 2013, 24-63
[89] Section 83
[90] Section 87(1)
[91] Abubakar *op. cit.*; N. Umeokafor, D. Isaac, K. Jones and B. Umeadi, *Enforcement of Occupational Safety and Health Regulations in Nigeria: An Exploration*, *European Scientific Journal*, 3, 2014 (Special Edition), 93-104

In my view, all s 87(3) does is to provide for those instance where a workplace is housed in premises that belong to an owner or occupier that is not the employees' employer. This subsection is necessary because of the centrality of the premises in the definition of what constitutes a factory. The premises-based scope of application of the Factories Act is clearly outdated and does not take account of modern-day realities such as travel for work, working at clients' premises and working from home. This mode of determining the coverage of the legislation also means that large sections of the informal economy are excluded from the ambit of the Act.

In stark contrast, the LSHW Bill states that it applies to all workplaces, employees and employers except those whose OHS conditions are governed by specific international agreements or diplomatic conventions.[92] It also extends to self-employed persons.[93] However, these extensions of the scope of coverage are not altogether unproblematic. Abubakar points out that because the scope of application of the LSHW Bill is so extensive and not clearly defined, it will require large injections of resources in terms of multidisciplinary workers and increased budgets, which may not be available.[94] In addition, there may be conflicts with other agencies over jurisdiction in respect of OHS.[95]

3.1 Employer's Duties

In keeping with its origins in a craft-based economy,[96] the Factories Act imposes specific duties on employers in respect of the physical environment only. Duties in respect of health relate to, inter alia, cleanliness, ventilation, lighting and ablution facilities. Duties in respect of safety include those dealing with the safe use of prime movers, machinery and steam boilers. This part of the Act also addresses safe means of access to, and a safe, workplace, as well as safety precautions in respect of fires, explosives and other dangerous fumes and substances. Welfare duties imposed on employers include the provision of drinking water, washing facilities, first aid facilities or, alternatively, what is referred to as an ambulance room.

While the Minister is accorded the power to issue a list of occupational diseases, no specific mention is made anywhere of psychosocial hazards. The

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[92] Section 3
[93] Section 30(3)
[94] Abubakar *op. cit.*
[95] Abubakar *op. cit.*
[96] Hameed *op. cit.*

most commonly reported occupational diseases include "conjunctivitis, chronic bronchitis, dermatitis [and] musculoskeletal disorders".[97]

The LSHW Bill is more amenable than the Factories Act to the inclusion of psychosocial hazards and risks within its ambit. Employer duties that may be interpreted in ways that make provision for psychosocial hazards and risks include, among others, ensuring a workplace that is safe and without risks to health,[98] systems of work that are safe and without risk to health[99] and providing training and information to employees and health and safety representatives.[100]

3.2 Enforcement of OHS

The enforcement mechanisms provided for in the Factories Act are factory inspectors and sanctions for contraventions of the Act. These are all external to the organisations to which the Factories Act applies. Inspectors are granted wide powers of inspection, search and seizure. However, consistent criticisms have pointed to the weak monitoring and enforcement of OHS in Nigeria.[101] By 2010, only 60 factory inspectors operated in the whole of Nigeria.[102] Abubakar notes that the Inspectorate Division seems to be grossly underfunded.[103] These criticisms are echoed by the ILO, which attributes this state of affairs to "defective development options, political unwillingness, inadequate funding of factory and labour inspectorates, capacity gaps in training for factory and labour inspectorates [and] inadequate funding for monitoring and evaluation".[104]

The fines that can be imposed for contraventions of the Act are relatively low and employers, especially large companies, may not be deterred by these sanctions. One example is that a contravention of the Act that causes death or

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[97] F. Omokhodion, *Occupational Health in Nigeria, Occupational Medicine*, 59, 2009, 201

[98] Section 29(a)

[99] Section 29(c)

[100] Section 29(h) and s 29(m)

[101] P. Okoye, J. Ezeokonkwo and F. Ezeokoli, *Building Construction Workers' Health and Safety Knowledge and Compliance on Site, Journal of Safety Engineering*, 5/1, 2016, 17-26; Umeokafor *op. cit.*; U Abubakar, *An Overview of the Occupational Safety and Health Systems of Nigeria, UK, USA, Australia and China: Nigeria Being the Reference Case Study, American Journal of Educational Research*, 3/11, 2015, 1350-1358

[102] B. Adeogun and C. Okafor, *Occupational Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Trend in Nigeria, International Journal of Environmental Science, Management and Engineering Research*, 2/1, 2013, 24-29

[103] Abubakar, 2015, *op. cit.*

[104] Government of Nigeria and ILO. *Nigeria Decent Work Country Programme II (2015-2018)*, http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/nigeria2015-18.pdf, no date

injury will be an offence punishable by the imposition of imprisonment of no longer than two years, a fine not exceeding N5000 (14.13 EUR, assuming that 1 NGN equals 0.0028 EUR) or a combination of imprisonment and a fine.[105] Another example is that failure to report an incident attracts a maximum fine of N1000,[106] which equals 2.83 EUR.

The LSHW Bill seeks to rectify at least some of the aforementioned deficiencies in respect of monitoring and enforcement. It provides for workplace health and safety representatives[107] and health and safety committees[108] in similar ways to the South African OHSA. It therefore foresees that employers and employees will take responsibility for health and safety policy, planning, implementation, monitoring and enforcement. The challenge is that psychosocial conditions are not specifically mentioned in the LSHW Bill, so it is only through awareness raising about, and attention to, psychosocial hazards and risks by government and within organisations that these hazards and risks will receive due attention.

In addition to health and safety representatives at workplace level, the LSHW Bill also provides for the establishment of a National Council for Occupational Safety and Health (NCOSH), which will be the primary regulatory body and enforcement agency.[109] The Council will be supervised by a Governing Board that will be constituted of 25 members representing federal ministries, state governments, employers' organisations, professional bodies or civil society organisations for occupational safety and health and the Executive Secretary of the Council.[110] A noticeable omission is representation on the Council for workers.

A National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is provided for in order to conduct OSH research to complement the NCOSH.[111] The NIOSH has to identify and recommend OHS standards, regulations and policies to prevent occupational injuries and diseases.[112] Both organisations are mandated to undertake research and development on OHS, and to arrange for education, training and what are termed 'public enlightenment' programmes.[113] These mandates may be of particular importance in relation to psychosocial hazards and risks, especially in view of the fact that psychology is relatively

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[105] Section 71
[106] Abubakar, 2015, *op. cit.*
[107] Section 27
[108] Section 26
[109] Section 6
[110] Section 7(1)
[111] Section 102
[112] Sections 102-104
[113] Sections 96 and 103

nascent in Nigeria. It is therefore gratifying that s 96 of the Bill makes specific reference to research on psychological factors that may impact on health and safety.

The LSHW Bill also provides for more stringent penalties for non-compliance with its provisions. Employers who contravene the Bill and thereby cause death or injury will be guilty of an offence and, upon conviction, may be liable for a term of imprisonment no shorter than 3 years, a fine of not less than N5 million (14 128.80 EUR), or both such imprisonment and a fine.[114] Failure to report an incident will attract a term of imprisonment of not more than 3 years or a fine of not less than N1 million (2 825.75 EUR), or both such imprisonment and a fine.[115]

The LSHW Bill seems to be predominantly prescriptive in that it includes extensive provisions on what duty holders must do, much in the same way that the Factories Act does.[116] An alternative approach focuses on goal-setting, sets general targets and shifts the onus of proving compliance to duty holders.[117] This feature of the Bill potentially has adverse consequences, including mere box-ticking compliance as opposed to conscious compliance, disincentivising agency and responsibility on the part of organisational actors and stifling innovative inputs from internal role players who may have a better appreciation of the health and safety challenges faced by particular organisations. It further fails to take advantage of the fact that goal-setting approaches tend to place less onerous burdens on regulators in respect of technical proficiency.[118]

4 Challenges to OHS Regulations in Nigeria and South Africa

Now that we have considered the OHS regulatory frameworks in the two respective countries, we can examine the challenges posed by a wide range of factors. All these factors are interdependent and interrelated.

4.1 Political and Economic Factors

Both Nigeria and South Africa have large labour surpluses, which may have negative consequences for working conditions in general because many people are desperate for work and employers are aware of the leverage they hold over workers. In addition, the need to be globally competitive means that employers

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[114] Section 87
[115] Section 86
[116] Abubakar, 2016, *op. cit.*
[117] Abubakar, 2016, *op. cit.*
[118] Abubakar, 2016, *op. cit.*

in developing countries face pressures to increase demands on workers who may often experience high workloads coupled with a lack of control. Pressure to establish or maintain good trade relations with economically powerful countries may have the consequence of decreasing political will to improve workers' working conditions.

Baxi frames the consequences of these concerns in terms of global constitutionalism, of which the rights of workers would be but one component:

> Just when the reversal of European history indicated possibilities of transcendence, "globalization" translates the Cold War motto "Making the world safe for democracy" into "Making the world safe for foreign investors"! It seeks to transform all Third World states into the clones of Late Capitalism. If self-determination was the signature of postcolonial legality, the globalization of law calibrates the postcolonial states and law to the carnival of global capital in its myriad forms. International financial capital, lethal multinationals […], regimes of suprastatal institutions, international and regional, all combine to escalate networks of power constituting the new global ruling class. A paradigm shift is already under way: a transition from the paradigm of universal human rights […] to the paradigm of trade-related, market-friendly human rights. Aggregations of global capital and technology make problematic the future of languages of human rights. This emergence of global economic constitutionalism has numerous impacts on the theory and practice of post-colonial dialectic between rule and resistance.[119]

Given the aforementioned economic and political pressures, it may be a challenge to convince employers and policymakers to plan and take steps to accommodate workers who may be experiencing work stress. The funding of monitoring and enforcement of OHS activities is also problematic in both Nigeria and South Africa. The inspectorates in both countries are underfunded and do not possess the appropriate resources to effectively carry out their mandate. It is therefore incumbent upon regulators to source alternative streams of funding.

4.2 Technical Factors

This category of challenges relates to the nature of psychosocial hazards and risks and how that interacts with the regulatory mechanisms for occupational health and safety in the two relevant jurisdictions. The delayed onset of the

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[119] U. Baxi, 'Postcolonial Legality', in Henry Schwartz and Sangeeta Ray (eds), *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2000, 540-555

effects of workplace stress may make it difficult to prove links between the distress and work content and context.

A related challenge is that psychosocial stressors may work cumulatively and not all stressors may emanate from the workplace. In *McDonald or Cross and Another v Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Another*,[120] a man had committed suicide and a claim was instituted against his former employer on the basis that his suicide had been caused by work-related stress. Lord Macfadyen made the following observations regarding the link between stress and depression:

> [T]he relationship between work conditions and depressive illness is potentially complex. It was not, I think, disputed that stressful working conditions can cause a person to develop a depressive illness. Conversely, I do not consider that it was seriously questioned that depressive illness can affect adversely a person's ability to cope with his work. There can develop what was referred to in evidence as a vicious circle or vicious cycle in which the more depressed a person becomes, the worse he performs at work, and the more he perceives that he is performing badly at work, the worse his depression becomes. When the matter comes to be investigated once the depression is established, it is very difficult to break into the circle and identify where it began. Once circumstance in which it might be possible to do so would be if there were clear evidence that the conditions of work were such as to be objectively likely to precipitate depression.[121]

The control measures required to respond to workplace stress may require input from various disciplines, including occupational health professionals, industrial and organisational psychologists, cardiologists, specialists in ergonomics, information technology experts, human resources professionals, counseling psychologists and communications professionals. Coordination and integrations of these inputs may be challenging, particularly in contexts where intellectual and other resources are stretched. In a country such as South Africa, the fact that there is no research-centred body that coordinates OHS standards makes the task even more difficult. In Nigeria, at least, there is the prospect of the NCOSH and NIOSH fulfilling those functions.

A related dimension is that scarcity of technical skills may cause regulators and the regulated to compete for limited resources. This challenge has to be addressed through education and training and cooperative regulatory practices that may include the sharing of technical expertise. Where certain industries

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[120] Scottish Outer House, *Court of Session: Cross and others v Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Western Isles Local Enterprise Company*, https://business.highbeam.com/437582/article-1G1-201611003/cross-and-others-v-highlands-and-islands-enterprise, 2000
[121] At para 48

have made use of professionals who are not widely used in other sectors yet,[122] it may be useful to have intersectoral collaborations and exchanges of ideas and experiences in respect of the relationships between, for example, psychologists, employers and employees.

The relative newness of psychology, the delayed onset of the psychosocial and physiological effects of workplace stress and the stigma attached to psychosocial health conditions and poor monitoring and enforcement may lead to the underreporting or underappreciation of psychosocial hazards or risks. As a result, statistics on these hazards and risks are not likely to be accurate. The LSHW Bill in Nigeria, as well as the OHSA in South Africa, compels the reporting of incidents, but it is unlikely that these provisions are enforced widely and effectively. The LSHW Bill also seeks to establish an OHS database in the form of the National Information Management System, but the reporting requirements for non-fatal accidents that do not cause permanent disablement allow employers to withhold information on such incidents for up to one year.[123]

5. The Potential for CSR to Complement OHS regulation

There is potential for CSR to close at least some of the gaps that exist in the OHS regulatory frameworks, as enumerated above. This potential arises out of CSR's flexibility and its applicability to internal organisational values and processes.

5.1 Nature of CSR in South Africa and Nigeria

The nature of CSR in South Africa and Nigeria, respectively, is very different. There is no guiding Code on CSR in Nigeria, so CSR efforts are piecemeal and companies choose what aspects of CSR to emphasise. In Nigeria, the tendency has been for employers to focus on external stakeholders through philanthropic projects.[124] However, the legal compliance and ethical leadership aspects of CSR have received less attention.[125] Both these components would be integral to the creation of organisational cultures that are receptive to adjustments that need to be made to respond to workplace stress.

In South Africa, the King IV Code requires integrated reporting by organisations in the interests of achieving five broadly stated governance

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[122] See Mefoh *op. cit.*, who notes that the military has been using the services of psychologists for individual as well as family counselling.

[123] Sections 11(1) and 105, read with s 35(1)

[124] Helg *op. cit.*

[125] Helg *op. cit.*

outcomes. These five outcomes are the creation and maintenance of an ethical culture; the strategy, implementation and performance of the organisation to create value for stakeholders and to report on such activities to stakeholders; the establishment and maintenance of adequate and effective controls by the governing body; and the building of trust, good reputation and legitimacy through managing stakeholder relationships.[126]

Stakeholders are both internal and external to the organisation. The Code defines 'stakeholders' as "those who are connected to the organisation by contract or otherwise and who are affected by the outcomes of business activities".[127] The definition goes on to explain that stakeholders affect organisations in that "governing bodies need to take account of and balance the legitimate and reasonable needs, interests and expectations of an organisation's material stakeholders in its decision-making process".[128]

It is therefore clear that employees are a stakeholder grouping in terms of the Code. This is reinforced by the fact that King IV defines value in relation to the enhancement, diminishment or transformation of six capitals that are used and affected by the organisation in the course of its activities.[129] These capitals are financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and relational, and natural capital.[130] Psychosocial hazards and risks would fall within the ambit of one or more of these capitals.

5.2 Features of CSR that could Help Address OHS Regulatory Challenges

5.2.1 Integrated Reporting

The integrated nature of CSR reporting would mean that organisations would have to consider both financial performance and sustainability.[131] In terms of psychosocial hazards and risks, approaching OHS from a CSR perspective has the advantage of a framework that seeks to balance the interests of various stakeholders. Deeply-entrenched, profits-only approaches to governance can be confronted in relatively transparent ways that may include sound financial reasons for compliance. This is often not possible in regulatory frameworks that are command-and-control in that these impose duties and institute sanctions for non-compliance.

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[126] King IV Draft Code at 25
[127] King IV Draft Code at 81
[128] King IV Draft Code at 81
[129] King IV Draft Code at 81
[130] King IV Draft Code at 77
[131] Cassim *op. cit.*

5.2.2   Flexibility

Since CSR is initiated and implemented by organisations themselves, organisations can be innovative in how they address psychosocial hazards and risks. This may be because employers may take more responsibility for self-initiated projects and because there are no prescriptive legislative frameworks that could inhibit creativity. It also means that organisations can be more responsive to their own peculiarities, which is an important aspect of controlling psychosocial risks.

5.2.3   Financing

In contexts where funding for OHS monitoring and compliance is low, governments could partner with organisations who have funds available to address psychosocial hazards and risks as part of their CSR endeavours. The mechanisms for such cooperation need to be clarified so as to minimise bribery and corruption.

Organisations could also contribute to the education and training of their own employees, health and safety representatives and even health and safety inspectors. It may be worthwhile to incentivise such contributions in order to free up resources. If inspectors, health and safety representatives undergo similar education and training, it may also assist in the fostering of positive relationships between regulators and employers. Research on psychosocial hazards and strength could also be funded by large corporations and could be similarly incentivised.

5.3   Limitations of CSR's Contributions to OHS Monitoring and Regulation

Although CSR could potentially help to address some OHS challenges, it has its limitations. These limitations could originate in the nature of CSR and in spheres beyond the control of those who design, implement and monitor CSR initiatives.

5.3.1   Nature of Risk Assessments

Even though King IV explicitly states that day-to-day, medium- and long-term risks have to be assessed, limitations in risk assessments may discount medium-to long-term risks. This would influence the assessment of psychosocial hazards and risks, which are often medium-to-long term in nature.

In addition, even employers who are willing to make adjustments to combat workplace stress may not be able to do so as a result of economic and political pressures. This would affect small, medium and micro enterprises disproportionately, because these organisations would be more concerned about their short-term survival.

5.3.2   Resource Limitations

Although large corporate organisations may have resources to contribute to education and training on psychosocial hazards and risks, the benefits of these funds may not always have a wide reach. Furthermore, if there is corruption and inefficiencies in the distribution and application of resources, there may not be much that organisations can do. Government is still required to play a coordinating role[132] and in light of the resource constraints in both Nigeria and South Africa, that may not always be possible.

One example of how governmental inefficiencies may affect CSR initiatives is that there are major concerns in Nigeria about the regulation of the psychology profession.[133] If government does not accredit psychologists in order to control the quality of the services provided, organisations may either be dissuaded from using the services of psychologists or they may have negative experiences with people who are offering services beyond what they should be accredited to provide. In either situation, the support to address psychosocial hazards and risks is far from optimal.

5.3.3   Legal Status of CSR

Corporate Social Responsibility in both Nigeria and South Africa is not legally binding. These guidelines may influence the drafting and interpretation of legislation, though.[134] This interrelationship with law may yield benefits for the inclusion of psychosocial hazards and risks within the OHS sphere, but it is likely to take time.

Non-legal means of enforcement could include pressure from one or a combination of trade unions, professional bodies that address psychosocial

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[132] A. Jain, B. Puplampu and K. Amponsah-Tawiah, 'Occupational Safety and Health and Corporate Social Responsibility in Africa: An Introduction', in Aditya Jain, Bill Puplampu, Kwesi Amponsah-Tawiah and Nicholas Andreou (eds), *Occuptional Safety and Health and Corporate Social Responsibility in Africa: Repositioning Corporate Social Responsibility Towards National Development*, Bedfordshire: Cranfield Press, 2012, 1-20. These authors warn that CSR is not a replacement for government responsibility.

[133] Mefoh *op. cit.*

[134] Cassim *op. cit.*

hazards, consumers or shareholders. Such intervention would still, however, require an appreciation of the nature and extent of workplace stress as well as the control measures that they can insist be taken by employers. It also rests on the assumptions that employers are able to make adjustments to reduce workplace stress, which is not always the case.

5.3.4   Reach of CSR

In many parts of Africa the fact that CSR is not formalised leads it to be concentrated among large national and multi-national corporations.[135] Many Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises are therefore not viewed, and indeed do not view themselves, as having to practise CSR.[136] This necessarily means that any contributions made to the management of workplace stress by CSR will similarly be concentrated among big corporations.

6   Concluding Remarks

The nature of psychosocial hazards and risks and resource constraints create challenges for their inclusion into OHS regulatory frameworks and the development of effective control measures in both South Africa and Nigeria. While South Africa currently has more holistic OHS monitoring and enforcement systems in place than Nigeria, the newness and colonial development of psychology in both jurisdictions create challenges for enforcement. Furthermore, the limited resources available for OHS in general, and to address psychosocial hazards and risks in particular, inhibit the development of effective and accurate risk assessments, as well as effective monitoring and compliance with OHS legislation in both jurisdictions.

Corporate Social Responsibility in South Africa is more systematically guided than in Nigeria, which in some respects makes it easier for links to be drawn between workplace stress and CSR. The flexibility of CSR, the possible availability of resources to complement government's monitoring and enforcement efforts and the requirements of integrated reporting could potentially address some of the challenges raised. However, there are limitations on CSR's capacity to close all the gaps discussed above. Ultimately, what is required is an integrated approach that seeks to use limited resources

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[135] K. Datey-Baah and K. Amponsah-Tawiah, 'Government Policy and Institutional Framework for CSR and OSH', in Aditya Jain, Bill Puplampu, Kwesi Amponsah-Tawiah and Nicholas Andreou (eds), *Occupational Safety and Health and Corporate Social Responsibility in Africa: Repositioning Corporate Social Responsibility Towards National Development*, Bedfordshire: Cranfield Press, 2012, 88-99

[136] Ibid.

optimally, raises awareness and appreciation of these risks and facilitates the creation and maintenance of organisational cultures that are willing to adapt work content and work contexts to address workplace stress.

A Curriculum Framework for the Professional Development of Corporate Social Responsibility Practitioners in South Africa

Christopher P.A. McCreanor and Elias M. Bitzer [1]

Abstract. This paper explores the proposed curriculum framework for the professional development of entry to mid-career CSR practitioners in South Africa and discusses the critical competencies required to be a successful CSR practitioner in an emerging market. It claims to be the first validated curriculum and critical competency framework for the professional development of CSR practitioners within South Africa and thus is a valuable resource and guideline for curriculum designers and policy makers when considering the design, development and implementation of a CSR programme or qualification in similar emerging economies.

Keywords: *Curriculum Framework, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Practitioners, Professional Development, Mixed-Method, Competence.*

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1. Introduction

Corporate social responsibility or corporate social investment (otherwise known as CSI in South Africa) encourages a vision of business responsibility and accountability that goes beyond shareholders and investors to include key stakeholders. Corporations in South Africa find themselves in a unique position to contribute to social innovation and transformation through strategic corporate social responsibility strategies. Businesses are seen as catalysts for social transformation, and corporate social practitioners in South Africa are viewed as the change agents responsible for managing the social projects that help advance the communities in which they operate.

This is a responsibility that is taken seriously. However, relevant literature on corporate social responsibility indicates that industry thought leaders have been aware of and acknowledge that there is a critical skills deficit in the corporate social responsibility sector. The corporate social responsibility sector is often criticised as a disordered poverty photography project environment with dismal reporting standards and even lower standards for measuring the longitudinal impact of projects aimed at social change and upliftment. The inquiry explored the identification and validation of core competencies for CSR practitioners. In particular, it aimed to develop a curriculum framework for the professional development of CSR practitioners in South Africa.

1.1 Defining CSR in the South African Context

CSR is a difficult concept to synthesise[2] and may be interpreted in different ways by different people depending on the internal or external scope of CSR, and may even be subject to their personal belief system closest to the cause or organisational context of CSR[3,4,5]. The personal belief system of individuals will in turn be influenced by the belief systems of the society in which they live. The contextualisation of CSR in its broadest sense may be impossible within

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[2] J. Moon, Government as a driver of corporate social responsibility: The UK in comparative perspective, Paper presented at International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility, Nottingham University Business School, Nottingham, United Kingdom, 2004

[3] N. Katabadse, C. Rozuel, L. Lee-Davies, Corporate social responsibility and stakeholder approach: A conceptual review, in International Journal of Business Governance and Ethics, 2005, vol 1, n. 4, 227-302

[4] D. Crowther, L. Rayman-Bacchus, Perspectives in Corporate Social Responsibility, in N. Capaldi (ed.), The Ashgate Research Companion to Corporate Social Responsibility, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001, 140-160

[5] S. Idowu, The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in S. Idowu, W. Filho, (ed.), Global Practices of Corporate Social Responsibility, London, Springer, 2009, 239-254

the South African context without examining a number of definitions within the North American, European and broader African context. South African contextualisation may be unique in itself, but has been influenced by global definitions from a business, academic and practitioner perspective[6]. According to Werther and Chandler[7], CSR practitioners and companies should not look for universal definitions, but should instead build their strategies around the perspectives of their shareholders and key stakeholders[8].

It is clear that defining CSR is critical for the development of the CSR practitioner. For the purpose of this study, the definition of the Institute of Directors in Southern Africa (IoDSA) was used as a guideline to explore the development of context-focused corporate social responsibility. It is a critical component of the broader notion of corporate citizenship:

> One is a good corporate citizen, <u>inter alia</u>, by being socially responsible. Corporate responsibility is the responsibility of the company for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour that: contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society; takes into account the legitimate interests and expectations of stakeholders; is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour; and is integrated throughout the company and practiced in its relationships. Activities include products, services, and processes. Relationships refer to a company's activities within its sphere of influence[9].

CSR practitioners may therefore use this definition published by IoDSA in the King Report on Governance in South Africa as a foundation to define CSR within their specific industries and corporative contexts.

Moving away from a personal belief system, it becomes clear from an institutional perspective that South African definitions, context and dimensions of CSR have been significantly influenced by a legacy of colonialism and apartheid, with big corporates having been drawn into this history in both undesirable and constructive ways. Visser supported this statement, pointing to ample examples over the last millennium of social injustice and political corruption involving corporates. Africa, and South Africa in particular, has

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[6] S. Ponte, S. Roberts, L. van Sittert, Black Economic Empowerment': Business and the State in South Africa, in Development & Change, 2007, vol 38, n.5, 933-955.

[7] W. Werther, D. Chandler, Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility: Stakeholders in a Global Environment, SAGE Publications, 2010

[8] W. Jackson III, T. Alessandri, S.Black, The Price of Corporate Social Responsibility: The Case of Black Economic Empowerment Transactions in South Africa, Paper presented at. Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, Atlanta, United States, 2005

[9] Institute of Directors in Southern Africa (IoDSA), King Report on Governance for South Africa 2009. Cape Town, 2010

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seen some of the worst-case examples of ecological destruction, unfair labour practices and social disruption[10]. Visser further argued that there is abundant evidence of the positive role business has played, not only in bringing capital investment to (South) Africa, but also in facilitating skills transfers, knowledge sharing and "social responsibility programmes"[11].

South Africa's approach to CSR has been influenced and subjugated by business strategies generally referred to as corporate social investment (CSI). This unique South African phenomenon focuses on creating a positive corporate image between stakeholders and business. Fig (2005) added that business in South Africa generally "eschews the notion of corporate social responsibility despite the wide use of this term among practitioners and in the literature" and "favours concepts of 'corporate social investment' and 'corporate citizenship': concepts that ask no questions about legacy, memory, history, justice, or moral and ethical responsibilities"[12]. Fig's observation is key to understanding the concept of CSI in the South African context as key role-players and stakeholders use the term CSI instead of CSR. Babarinde supported Fig's argument and postulated that a healthier business environment and society bodes well for economic action with regard to long-term business interests and that it is therefore not surprising that CSR conventionally means CSI in the South African context[13].

1.2 CSR versus CSI in South Africa

It is clear that CSR is a principled and values-based framework, which integrates all facets of business processes and procedures. CSR thus implies those activities within business operations related to ethical and socially responsible conduct, and includes an organisation's contribution to sustainable development. CSR focuses on how the business or organisation contributes to building human, social and natural capital through its core business activities. CSI, in contrast to CSR, is based on the same principled and values-based framework as CSR but is far more limited than CSR. CSI focuses on charitable giving or philanthropy, which is giving through CSI projects in sustainable

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[10] W. Visser, Revisiting Carroll's CSR Pyramid: An African Perspective, in: E. Pedersen, M. Huniche, (ed.), Corporate Citizenship in Developing Countries; New Partnership Perspectives, Narayana Press, Denmark, 2006

[11] *W. Visser op.cit*

[12] D. Fig, Manufacturing amnesia: Corporate Social Responsibility in South Africa, in International Affairs, 2005, vol. 81, n. 3, 599-617

[13] O. Babarinde, Bridging the economic divide in the Republic of South Africa: A corporate social responsibility perspective, in Thunderbird International Business Review, 2009, vol. 51, 355-368

environments, sports, development, health, education, and other community services while creating a positive corporate image through managed public relations benefits while addressing weak areas in public service delivery normally associated with the responsibilities of government. CSI can consequently be defined as a company's responsibility going beyond paying tax, contributing to various social causes while upholding the social contract between business and government by means of financial and non-cash contributions to society. CSI excludes marketable patronage and employee benefits, and constitutes corporate giving beyond its profitable responsibilities and commercial operations as set out in BBBEE Codes of Good Practice, industry charters, socio-economic development plans (SEDs), local economic development plans (LEDs), enterprise and supplier development plans (ESDs) and social and labour plans (SLPs).

CSI, as a construct, has moved away from charitable giving, as it has now been developed into a formalised practice within the broad principled and values-based CSR framework. CSI has consequently become more inclusive of the broader aspects of CSR, which includes sustainable business development, ethics, good corporate governance, empowerment, transformation and innovative social partnerships[14]. In order to remain relevant, businesses need to build a positive social consciousness, legitimacy, credibility and reputation, and demonstrate commitment to government's social transformation agendas. This study was positioned within the broad principled and values-based CSR framework, which includes CSI as an integrated construct. For May, the difference between CSR and CSI is in practice rather than principle. CSR's broad focus is inclusive of CSI and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL)[15]. Hence, CSR is not driven only by socioeconomic factors, as implied by the narrow transformation and legislative frameworks underpinning CSI. For the CSR practitioner, this would imply a broad understanding of both constructs in order to manage the complexity and interrelatedness of both concepts. Therefore, CSI and CSR should not be used as synonyms as they represent two distinct concepts.

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[14] T. Ndhlovu, Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Social Investment: The South African Case, in Journal of African Business, 2011, vol. 12, n. 1, 72-92.

[15] J. May, An understanding of Corporate Social Investment within the context of the Sappi Forest Products Division in South Africa. MBA research report, 2006, Grahamstown, Rhodes University, http://eprints.ru.ac.za/495/1/May_MBA.pdf (accessed January 24, 2012)

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1.3 International CSR Education

CSR has been an important topic of debate in corporate and academic circles in North America for a very long time[16,17,18]. The debate in Europe has gained extraordinary drive and has surpassed the concept and construct of CSR in practice. CSR is now losing momentum as a concept because of the instrumental ways in which it has been used in business practice[19,20,21,22]. In spite of Martinez's view, the integration of CSR into the curricula of business schools and universities is still current and one of the most significant topics in the global educational world. Orlitzky and Moon noted that CSR has become more ingrained in European institutions of higher education, and argued that this indicates an evolution of CSR as a field of study[23].

Various international and local universities and business schools participate in efforts of the World Business School Council of Sustainable Business (WBSCSB), the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI), and the United Nations (UN) backed Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME), which bring together experts in various fields to determine the role of business in creating a sustainable future. A total of eight South African universities and business schools have signed up for the PRME codes and have to some extent committed to these codes. These principles do not address the development of practitioners, but focus on the CSR responsibilities at an institutional level.

The European Strategy for Sustainable Development also recognises the important role that education and training systems should play in order to achieve the objectives of CSR. Education and training should, according to the

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[16] J. Asongu, The History of Corporate Social Responsibility, in Journal of Business and Public Policy, 2007, vol. 1, n. 2, 1-18

[17] A. Carroll, Corporate Social Responsibility: Evolution of a Definitional Construct, in Business and Society, 1999, vol. 38, n. 3, 268-295

[18] W. Visser, D. Matten, M. Pohl, N. Tolhurst, The A to Z of Corporate Social Responsibility, Wiley, London, 2010

[19] A. Crane, A. McWilliams, D. Matten, J. Moon, D. Siegel, The Corporate Social Responsibility Agenda, in A. Crane, A. McWilliams, D. Matten, J. Moon, D. & Siegel, (ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008

[20] D. Matten, J. Moon, Corporate Social Responsibility Education in Europe, in Journal of Business Ethics, 2004, vol. 54, n. 4, 323-337

[21] J. Moon, *op.cit*

[22] M. Orlitzky, J. Moon, Second European Survey on Corporate Social Responsibility Research, Education and Other Initiatives in Business Schools and Universities, Paper presented at International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility, Nottingham University Business School, Nottingham, United Kingdom, 2008

[23] M. Orlitzky, J. Moon, *op.cit*

final report submitted by GHK Consulting in association with the Danish Technology Institute Technopolis, contribute to all three critical axes: social, economic and environmental dimensions[24]. Likewise, the Lisbon Agenda and the Education and Training 2010 work programme provided a coherent framework for Education for Sustainable Development at European level[25]. However, there is an information gap on how the concept of education for sustainable development has been translated into practices at Member States level.

1.4 The Gap in CSR Education in South Africa

The global interpretation of CSR as a phenomenon and South African legislation have changed the landscape of CSR within its own context[26,27]. This change is evident in business as well as on an academic level. It presents various challenges in terms of implementing CSR strategies effectively and efficiently on an operational level. Ideally, the implementation of CSR strategies has to comply with the spirit as well as the letter of the law. There is, however, very little guidance in the form of learning and development programmes for CSR practitioners focused on bona fide operational practice to ensure effective and efficient CSR strategies across industries. Additionally, sound CSR practices are complicated by a lack of competent CSR practitioners. Njenga and Smit concurred with this argument that there seems to be a lack of competent CSR practitioners in South Africa, and referred to the fact that CSR practitioners often come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and are therefore isolated from power within business[28]. Not only is there a power barrier, but they also find themselves without resources within corporations. Njenga and Smit argued that CSR practitioners should acquire the necessary competence to promote solid organisational, administration and management skills in CSR structures[29].

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[24] GHK Consulting, Inventory of innovative practices in education for sustainable development, Paper presented at the Danish Technology Institute Technopolis, Brussels, Belgium, 2008

[25] H. Ertl, European Union policies in education and training: The Lisbon agenda as a turning point?, in Comparative Education, 2006, vol. 42, n. 1, 5-27.

[26] R. Irwin, Corporate social investment and branding in the new South Africa, in Journal of Brand Management, 2003, vol. 10, n. 4, 303-311.

[27] T. Ndhlovu, Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Social Investment, in: The South African Case, in Journal of African Business, 2011, vol. 12, n. 1, 72-92.

[28] S. Njenga, A. Smit, Leading the way through CSI: A guidebook for corporate social investment practitioners, Randburg, Knowres Publishing (Pty) Ltd, 2007

[29] S. Njenga, A. Smit, *op.cit*

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A CSR conference in 2006 made it clear that there are insufficient skilled and knowledgeable practitioners in the CSR field, not only in South Africa, but globally. This was mainly due to unclear and indefinable curriculum frameworks for the design, development and implementation of CSR practitioner curricula. Njenga and Smit said that, based on one of their surveys, CSI(R) practitioners, who are seen as the stewards of CSI(R) awareness and the promotion of best practice towards social investment, are discouraged and more often than not feel frustrated, cynical and disempowered. It became clear from their survey data that the feeling of disempowerment can be contributed to a scarcity of adequate skills and knowledge in the field of CSI[30].

Njenga and Smit's findings from 2006 and 2007 regarding the lack of CSR knowledge and skills were re-affirmed by findings from an African study on CSR practice in sub-Saharan Africa by the Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusamenheid (GTZ) in South Africa. Zusamenarbeit found that three major drivers contributed to struggling CSR practitioners in the South African context[31]. The first driver was lack of capacity and experience in the field of CSR. This included the lack of standards, curricula and accreditation of CSR practitioners as well as a lack of skills or tools for external stakeholder engagement. Secondly, CSR practitioners were not sufficiently supported by top management and, lastly, the CSR function and CSR projects (project identification, implementation, evaluation and reporting) were not properly managed. The lack of skilled CSR practitioners in South Africa has not improved since 2006. In a critical evaluation and analysis of the 2012 CSI Matters Conference video footage (hosted by CSI Matters – initiated and managed by Trialogue South Africa, it was found that South Africa's CSR practitioners, according to Bridgit Evans, CEO of the GreaterGood Group , are making the same mistakes they made ten years ago. They are also struggling with learning and, more importantly, learning from each other. The following relevant question has therefore been asked: "How do we draw the learnings into a profession where newcomers can learn those lessons quickly and not make the same mistakes?"[32].

The need for CSR education and the role that CSR education plays in the national and global economy is undisputed. CSR skills and competency development for CSR practitioners have grown considerably with a global

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[30] S. Njenga, A. Smit, *op.cit*

[31] Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Corporate Social Responsibility in sub-Saharan Africa, A survey on promoting and hindering factors, Paper presented at. Pretoria, Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Pretoria, South Africa, 2009

[32] Trialogue, 2012, Making CSI Matter 2012, Ongoing Learning - Conclusions from the panel. Video. Available: Youtube.com, TrialogueSA, (accessed, April 4, 2015.

focus on CSR development ranging from the United States to Europe. South Africa has not seen the same investment in skills and competency development as North America and Europe. Local and international researchers have been highlighting the CSR skills shortages in South Africa since 2002 and CSR industry thought leaders have more recently confirmed CSR skills shortages and have described the CSR learning and development field as dysfunctional. Therefore, sufficient evidence exists to support the finding of this inquiry, namely that (i) there is a need for CSR skills and competency development and (ii) that the CSR skills gap in South Africa is mainly due to an unclear and indefinable curriculum framework for the design, development, implementation and evaluation of CSR practitioner curricula.

1.5 The Landscape of CSR Training in South Africa

Public and private training providers play a key role in the professional development of CSR practitioners in South Africa[33]. A critical analysis of the available reports from signatories submitted to PRME demonstrate a commitment to CSR as well as a commitment to what Visser and Hollender referred to as CSR 2.0 or Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility (CSR 2.0). CSR 2.0 is characterised by five key principles: creativity, scalability, responsiveness, glocality [sic] and circularity[34]. It is difficult to find stand-alone CSR training programmes because higher education providers that offer CSR-related development opportunities mostly refer to their programmes in terms of ethics, governance and sustainable or responsible management, and not in terms of CSR or CSI.

1.6 Educational Innovations

Various business schools and academic institutions in South Africa offer stand-alone or integrated modules on sustainability and corporate social responsibility. Programmes and teaching methodologies are built around the development of case studies and teaching methods, such as experiential and action learning with associated teaching materials, simulations and role-plays. Baets argued that an integrated approach is essential for the development of

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[33] J. Ahmad, D. Crowther, Education and Corporate Social Responsibility: International Perspectives in Developments in Corporate Governance and Responsibility, 2013, vol. 4, 267-296

[34] Visser, W. & Hollender, J. 2011. The Age of Responsibility: CSR 2.0 and the New DNA of Business. London: Wiley.

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CSR learning and development opportunities[35]. A cohesive approach therefore leads to content innovation, didactic innovation and universal learning experiences that influence students. The aim of an innovative and integrated didactic approach is to change the mind-sets of students to look beyond attaining a qualification to contributing to business and the communities in which they operate. An integrated didactic approach would imply "that learning experiments should have a focus on: systems thinking, action learning, community involvement, real life deliverables, involvement of real life parties", and should therefore take place "in the field" [36].

University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB), Nelson Mandela University Business School (NMMU), University of Kwazulu (UKZN) Natal School of Management, University of Cape Town Business School (UCT) and University of Pretoria Business School (GIBS) are examples of South African business schools that created educational frameworks in line with the Principles for Responsible Management Education's (PRME) Principle 3, that is, the development of educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership[37,38,39]. In line with leading business schools around the world, South African private and public tertiary providers have adopted a didactic approach that enables social engagement between business, society and the staff and students of academic institutions, allowing these stakeholders to be "socially engaged" in their respective communities. Social engagement within educational frameworks are thus fundamental to creating practical learning and experience to develop competencies associated with CSR and responsible leadership. Tertiary education may be inaccessible to most entry-level and mid-career CSR practitioners as a result of stringent admission requirements and the high costs of attending good business schools and centres of excellence.

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[35] W. Baets, Why it is time for a new business school model, and what it could look like, Paper presented at University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business, Cape Town, South Africa, 2013

[36] W. Baets, *op.cit*

[37] University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB), Academic offering, 2015, http://www.usb.ac.za/Pages/AboutUs/Academic-offering.aspx, (accessed December 14, 2015)

[38] Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), NMMU Business School: Principles of Responsible Management, 2015, http://www.unprme.org/reports/NMMUBusinessSchoolPRMEapplication.pdf (accessed December 15, 2015)

[39] University of KwaZulu-Natal School of Management, IT and Governance (UKZN School of Management), Undergraduate Prospectus 2015, http://applications.ukzn.ac.za/Files/UKZNPostgrad_lowres.pdf. (accessed December 14, 2015)

Hence, short courses presented by less expensive and/or non-accredited training providers could become a viable option for CSR practitioners who seek to develop their CSR-related competencies.

Before presenting the analysis and findings of the study, the approach and methodology is outlined with a focus on the third and final phase.

2. Approach and Methodology

One might assume that there will be knowledge, skills and behavioural gaps in the development of future CSR practitioners if there is no framework for the design and development of a CSR practitioner curriculum. In the absence of a curriculum framework for the development of CSR practitioners, uncertainty will prevail in terms of the skills, knowledge and behavioural components to be included in such a curriculum framework. An equally important hurdle to overcome is to determine who should inform the curriculum framework. In the absence of substantial information to support the design and development of a widely accepted or national curriculum, a CSR practitioner curriculum framework seems to be in urgent need of development.

This is thus an attempt to meet the needs of stakeholders (CSR practitioners, organisations and higher education institutions) if the purpose of the original intentions of Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) in South Africa is to be properly served. All of these questions seemed relevant to the problem at hand. However, for the purpose of the study, one primary research question emerged, constituting the focus of the study:

What constitutes a curriculum framework for the professional development of CSR practitioners in South Africa?

A mix-methods study was undertaken in three distinct phases aimed at the development of a curriculum framework for the professional development of entry-level to mid-career corporate social responsibility practitioners in the South African context. The research involved a multi-phased, sequential explanatory mixed-method study within a pragmatic knowledge paradigm. Multiple data collection methods were used across three distinct phases, and each phase was sub-divided into two strands. Empirical data for the inquiry included qualitative and quantitative data generated via questionnaires, focus groups and interviews directed at CSR practitioners, CSR academics and CSR managers in the field of CSR. It also included a Delphi exercise with a panel of CSR specialists, focus group interviews with CSR representatives across South Africa, and telephone interviews with a group of CSR practitioners, CSR academics and CSR managers across the country.

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The execution of the empirical part of this inquiry was divided in to three phases and each phase had two distinct strands with specific objectives. The objectives for each phase were linked to the research question and each phase was guided by the subsidiary research questions, which aimed at answering the main research question. The research was thus planned to involve at least three phases and the data collection and analysis of each phase involved answering the questions highlighted after a brief discussion of each phase:

2.1 Phase 1

The first phase of the research project comprised quantitative and qualitative data to explore the roles and functions assigned to corporate social responsibility practitioners, and the most effectual and proficient competencies required by corporate social responsibility practitioners. This was achieved by using a questionnaire survey to collect primary data provided by the collective insight of corporate social responsibility experts and then using focus group interviews to review the proposed first draft of the corporate social responsibility competency framework to gain a deeper understanding of the proposed competencies. Qualitative data were thus generated from a group of experts by subjecting them to a series of questionnaires, focus-group interviews and controlled opinion feedback.

Phase 1 questions:
- Strand 1: What are the most common functions attributed to the role of the CSR practitioner?
- Strand 2: Which elements of skills, knowledge and behaviour are required for effectively managing the CSR function within South African organisations and within the parameters of South African legislation, including industry-specific codes and standards?

2.2 Phase 2

The second phase involved ranking and further exploring the competencies identified in the first phase of the study to better inform the competencies and competency definitions. In this exploratory follow-up phase, the competencies were explored with practitioners through an iterative e-mail questionnaire typically associated with the classic Delphi method. The Delphi consensus process was then followed by the formulation and classification of a hierarchical competency framework with the competencies identified in Phases 1 and 2 of the data process. The competency framework identified and

classified competencies into a hierarchical framework with eight high-level factors, 22 dimensions at the competency level and 100 components at the behavioural level. A panel of three academics and 15 experts validated the conceptual competency framework.

Phase 2: questions
- Strand 1: What is the hierarchy of significance of the above elements for the CSR practitioner?
- Strand 2: Which functions can possibly be grouped together in the CSR practitioner's portfolio as functional building blocks

2.3 Phase 3

The third and final phase of the research aimed at validating the proposed conceptual competency framework through a self-administered online questionnaire. The quantitative strand of the questionnaire aimed to validate the conceptual framework. This was followed up with telephonic interviews. The aim of the final empirical phase of the study was not only to generate expert agreement, but also to fill in the gaps and to identify expert opinion on the most critical competencies required to be a successful corporate social practitioner.

Phase 3 questions:
- Strand 1: What is the hierarchy of significance of the competencies for the CSR practitioner?
- Strand 2: Which validated competencies should be included in a proposed competency framework?

2.4 Reaching agreement on Tier 3 CSR- competency definition validity

In order to reach agreement on the validity of the eight Tier-3 CSR competency descriptors, the total weighted average score had to be higher than 80%. The total weighted average score calculation keys – strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree – were assigned nominal values of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively. The sum of the number of responses, multiplied by their nominal value, was divided by the maximum score obtainable. Any top-tier competency descriptors meeting the validation criteria were thus included in the final draft competency framework.

2.5 Testing Tier-3 CSR competency validity: hypothesis

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As with the Delphi in Strand 1 of Phase 2, statistical hypothesis testing, which is usually done at a 5% significance level and confidence intervals computed with 95% confidence was done. This inquiry, however, included agreement at 99.9% confidence intervals for a sample of size n=40. Statistical hypothesis testing was utilised to either reject or accept the critical competencies identified, which means the Tier-3 CSR competency descriptor is valid and should or should not be included in the final CSR competency framework.

The study culminated in the development of a validated curriculum framework for the professional development of corporate social responsibility practitioners in South Africa which is compatible with the requirements of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework, the Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework and the South African Qualifications Authority. For the first time in corporate social responsibility literature in South Africa, as far as can be determined, this research presents findings reported in the form of a curriculum framework, which may serve as a guideline for curriculum designers and policy makers

3. CSR Curriculum Framework

Curriculum construction is highly contextualised in response to the complex needs of society, resulting in a range of definitions, philosophical underpinnings, theories, design and development approaches. In order to bring all of latter together in a fundamental document that presents the elements of a proposed curriculum system, it is important to provide a structure for designing interdependent themes, a values rationale, principles, and goals within the context and field of CSR and CSI for subsequent curriculum development. A curriculum framework (both as a concept and as a tool for broadly organising curriculum elements) would for this reason serve as a guide to aid educationalists in their curriculum decision making for the design and development of learning and development programmes, in particular for CSR practitioners in South Africa. Bevis argued that a curriculum framework should be viewed as a dynamic document and that formulating or suggesting a curriculum framework serves as nothing more than an "intellectual exercise" if it cannot be used as a source for (i) deriving criteria for content, (ii) teaching methods, (iii) evaluation methods and (iv) human relationships[40].

As an open-ended guide and less prescriptive document, a curriculum framework, according to Marsh, typically includes: a clear statement of results,

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[40] E. Bevis, Curriculum Building in Nursing: A Process, Burlington, Jones & Bartlett Learning, 1989

scope and parameters, which should be consistent with the learning outcomes, broad goals, objectives and purpose for themes within the curriculum areas[41]. The framework offers broad outlines for curriculum outcomes and places emphasis on the desired outcomes offering sufficient flexibility to curriculum makers to develop additional learning and teaching outcomes according to their circumstances, philosophy and the needs of their students as well as setting out what skills, knowledge and behaviour (competencies) should be developed, namely what learners should know, understand and value and be able to do as a result of undertaking a learning and development programme. And finally it should ideally have very clear guiding principles on teaching, learning, and assessment for students to achieve the outcomes articulated in the framework, linked to guidelines for the evaluation and assessment of themes should be unambiguous as these form the basis for and define the quality of evaluation and assessment[42].

The purpose of a curriculum framework would be to allow educational institutions responsible for curriculum development and CSR practitioners and managers in organisations to understand the critical components required to develop the competences of CSR practitioners in South Africa. The framework further aims to provide a common framework or mainstay that articulates the skills, knowledge and attitudes (behaviours) relevant for successful CSR practice. A graphic representation of a preliminary theoretical framework is presented in Figure 1.

The CSR framework is based on possible competences identified through the empirical inquiry of the study, literature and theoretical review as discussed in this study. The starting point is identifying and understanding the CSR competences required to become successful CSR practitioners. These competences comprise three separate but interrelated elements (which are entirely in line with SAQA's definitions of applied competence): (1) Foundational competence, (2) Practical competence and (3) Reflexive competence[43].

These three components are inter-related and they complement each other. It is the combination of these competencies that gives rise to key behaviours demonstrated by people. The interconnectivity and relationship among the three elements are critical to understand and describe CSR activities and functions. The framework is envisaged to be a flexible tool, meeting the needs of industry and those involved in curriculum development. The proposed

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[41] C. Marsh, Key Concepts for Understanding Curriculum, Routledge, London, 2009

[42] C. Marsh, *op.cit*

[43] South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), The South African Qualifications Authority, Level Descriptors for the South African National Qualifications Framework, 2012, http://www.saqa.co.za (accessed September 5, 2014)

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framework consists of seven dimensions that describe a range of competences required to integrate CSR in business. It further takes into consideration the application across a range of business functions such as: (1) Marketing, (2) Human resources, (3) Finance, (5) Supply chain management, (6) Planning and (7) Operations.

Figure 1: Proposed CSR Curriculum Framework
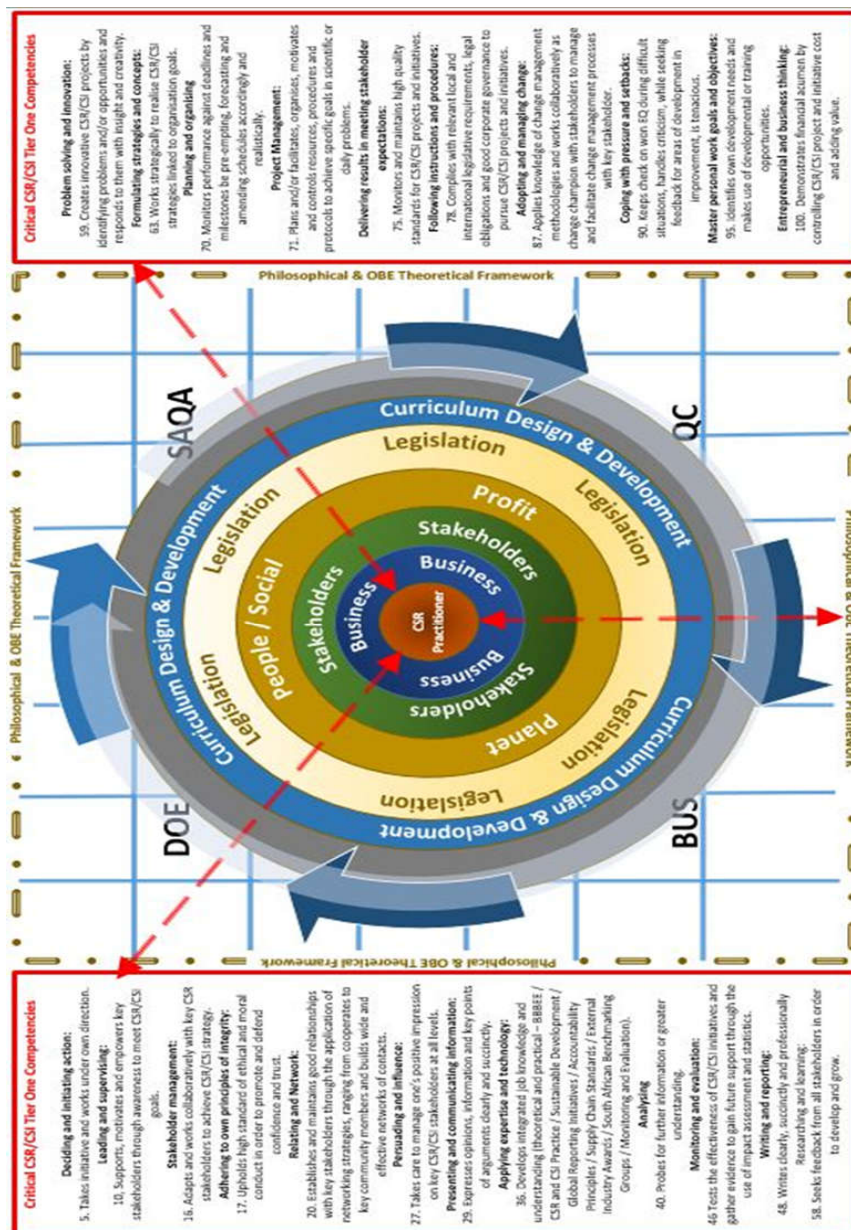
The need for a flexible framework that takes into consideration a range of business functions is evident in the literature because the "CSR practitioner" role is not exclusive to CSR as it may require individuals to operate within a range of other specialist fields in business. Focusing on the individual CSR practitioner's role may be important. Hence, the next section will review the competences, and areas of competence, which may be required to be a potentially successful practitioner. The proposed CSR practitioner curriculum framework is flanked on the left and right by 22 Tier-1 CSR competencies, as illustrated in Table 1.

The competencies have been identify as priority competencies required to be a successful CSR practitioners. The Tier-1 competencies should be broken down in to their component parts: skills, knowledge and behaviours. The component parts would need to be identified and described in relation to the CSR framework, the CSR dimensions and within the context and application of the curriculum framework. The complete competency framework could be used to identify and combine two or more priority competencies in order to address specific learning areas or CSR dimensions. The objective of the CSR framework is not to be prescriptive, but to offer flexible solutions to curriculum developers and policy makers who are tasked with the development of specific CSR curricula.

3.1 Dimension 1: CSR Practitioner

At the centre of the framework is a set of core CSR competences with a strong focus on the CSR practitioner, bringing together the personal qualities, attitudes and mind-sets which CSR practitioners may need to learn and which in turn may drive improvements in CSR management practice. These competences could be linked to the personal belief system closest to the cause or organisational context of CSR and the alignment of social, environment and economic performance to long-term business strategy and performance. Focusing on the development of personal or value-driven competences at the core of the framework may enable the development of a CSR and business knowledge base, the skills, knowledge and the right attitudes and reflexes to be an effective and efficient practitioner who will ultimately influence CSR business practice in all outward dimensions and contextual roles.

The CSR practitioner, as illustrated in Figure 1, is thus placed (and remains) at the centre of the curriculum framework. One of the most significant conclusions to be drawn from this investigation is the ability of the CSR practitioner to demonstrate four interconnected competencies: self-awareness, emotional intelligence, self-management and self-assessment. These competencies form the very core of successful CSR practitioners and may thus

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be viewed as the core building blocks for personal and professional development and mastery. The professional development journey of the CSR practitioners must start with the ability of CSR practitioners to recognise their own emotions and the impact of this on the self, the business and stakeholders.

Table 1: Tier-1 CSR critical competencies
Competency
10. Supports, motivates and empowers key stakeholders through awareness to meet CSR/CSI goals
16. Adapts and works collaboratively with key stakeholders to achieve CSR/CSI strategy
17. Upholds high standards of ethical and moral conduct in order to promote and defend confidence and trust
20. Establishes and maintains good relationships with key stakeholders through the application of networking strategies, ranging from corporates to key community members and builds wide and effective networks of contacts
27. Takes care to manage one's positive impression on key stakeholders at all levels
29. Expresses opinions, information and key points of arguments clearly and succinctly
36. Develops integrated job knowledge and understanding (theoretical and practical - BBBEE / CSR and CSI Practice / Sustainable Development / Global Reporting Initiative / Accountability Principles / Supply Chain Standard / External Industry Awards / South African Benchmarking Groups / Monitoring and Evaluation)
40. Probes for further information or higher understanding of a problem
46. Tests the effectiveness of CSR/CSI initiatives and gather evidence to gain future support through the use of impact assessments and statistics
48. Writes clearly, succinctly, correctly and professionally
58. Seeks feedback from all stakeholders in order to develop and grow
59. Creates innovative CSR/CSI projects and initiatives by identifying problems and/or opportunities and responds to them with insight and creativity
63. Works strategically to realise CSR/CSI strategies linked to organisational goals
70. Monitors performance against deadlines and milestones by pre-empting, forecasting and amending schedules accordingly and realistically
71. Plans and/or facilitates, organises, motivates and controls resources, procedures and protocols to achieve specific goals in scientific or daily problems
75. Monitors and maintains high quality standards for CSR/CSI projects and initiatives

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78. Complies with relevant local and international legislative requirement, legal obligations and good corporate governance to pursue CSR/CSI projects and initiatives;
87. Applies knowledge of change management methodologies and works collaboratively as change champion with stakeholders to manage and facilitate change management processes with key stakeholders
90. Keeps check on own EQ during difficult situation; handles criticism well, while seeking feedback for areas of development in improvement; is tenacious;
95. Identifies own development needs and makes use of developmental or training opportunities
100. Demonstrates financial acumen by controlling CSR/CSI project and initiative costs and adding value.

The CSR environment is described as complex, stressful and very often emotionally charged. Self-awareness, self-management and self-assessment are viewed to represent the foundation of emotional intelligence because without being aware of and having an understanding of their own emotions, CSR practitioners will find it virtually impossible to move into other emotional competencies like self-management and social awareness, which form the foundation of CSR practice.

Self-awareness, self-assessment and the ability to be vocally self-critical involve honesty, integrity, resilience and, more importantly, the ability to investigate and acknowledge personal emotional strengths and weaknesses. Those practitioners who are unable to, or fail to, reflect on experiences and who are unable to articulate key actions required to address their own development gaps may struggle in CSR practice. Being vocally self-critical and developing a capability for self-assessment are essential in an environment with very little professional guidance and support for personal and work-related skills development. CSR practitioners must demonstrate the willingness to learn from new experiences and more importantly demonstrate an ability to learn skills to master personal effectiveness competencies. CSR practitioners should be able to work as change agents, demonstrating drive, adaptability, flexibility, tenacity and emotional intelligence. Always working with unknown variables, CSR practitioners should be able to demonstrate emotional intelligence first in order to learn from successes and mistakes.

The ability of CSR practitioners to create alignment between their personal belief systems and economic, environmental and social demands may impact their performance and the business's strategic intent towards social responsibility and transformation in the long run.

The first dimension is underpinned by four critical competencies, which attained a 100% validation agreement score, which is 19.1% higher than the critical limit of 80.9%; (1) Identifies own development needs and makes use of developmental or training opportunities, (2) Seeks feedback from all stakeholders in order to develop and grow, (3) Upholds high standards of ethical and moral conduct in order to promote and defend confidence and trust, and (4) Keeps check on own EQ during difficult situation; handles criticism well, while seeking feedback for areas of development in improvement; is tenacious.

2.2 Dimension 2: CSR and business

Successful CSR practitioners demonstrate a level of understanding of the business, markets, stakeholders, competitors and the business model to make CSR-related decisions while building a business case with the aim to be relevant in the boardroom. In addition to the ability to remain relevant in the boardroom, practitioners may also need to demonstrate the ability to develop and maintain strategic CSR business networks, which will provide business and CSR information and intelligence in order to assimilate advanced CSR concepts and constructs within the business strategy. The focus group participants linked budgets and reporting, business acumen, financial accounting and reporting and organisational and environmental awareness to enterprising and performing, and argued that mastering personal work goals and objectives is best represented by budgets and reporting, business acumen, financial accounting and reporting and organisational and environmental awareness.

Critical to the success of CSR practitioners is their ability to link CSR strategy with the business strategy. CSR strategic intent, plans, vision and mission are often viewed as problematic because they are not aligned with the business strategy. It is thus critical for CSR practitioners to develop CSR strategies as well as to take the initiative to influence the integration of business and CSR strategies. The questionnaire respondents made a clear distinction between a CSR/CSI manager and a CSR/CSI practitioner. Indications were also that a CSI practitioner should have a solid grounding in the principles of strategic leadership and strategy formulation. However, in most corporate structures, senior leadership executives (CSI Director/Trustees), and not the CSI practitioner, will take responsibility and ownership of strategic CSR leadership and CSR strategy formulation. Based on the latter, it would appear vital for a CSR practitioner to provide direction and leadership for a company's CSI programme and for it to be developed in line with business objectives. The majority of the respondents made specific reference to the alignment between

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the business and its CSR strategy. Here they argued that the CSR practitioner must be able to make the connections between the strategic business objectives and strategic CSR intent to build a strong business case for CSR.

Financial acumen is the last competency in the CSR competency framework, and the telephone interview participants deliberated on several critical behaviours CSR practitioners need to demonstrate to effectively understand and use CSR-related financial reports. The first behaviour identified by the interviewees is the ability to read financial statement with insight. The second is the ability to use financial terms in reporting on CSR projects or programmes. One of the most common terms identified by the participants is return on investment (ROI) and more importantly, social return on investment. CSR practitioners are often required to draft budgets for projects and should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the business financial statements and standard budgeting processes and procedures to effectively draft project budgets. The last behaviour is to accurately track and report on expenditure.

The second dimension is underpinned by seven critical competencies, which attained a 100% validation agreement score, which is 19.1% higher than the critical limit of 80.9%; (1) Takes initiative and works under own direction, (2) Creates innovative CSR/CSI projects and initiatives by identifying problems and/or opportunities and responds to them with insight and creativity, (3) Works strategically to realise CSR/CSI strategies linked to organisational goals, (4) Monitors performance against deadlines and milestones by pre-empting, forecasting and amending schedules accordingly and realistically, (5) Plans and/or facilitates, organises, motivates and controls resources, procedures and protocols to achieve specific goals in scientific or daily problems, (6) Demonstrates financial acumen by controlling CSR/CSI project and initiative costs and adding value and (7) Expresses opinions, information and key points of arguments clearly and succinctly.

3.3 Dimension 3: Stakeholder management

The next dimension is the stakeholder dimension which represents stakeholders and key stakeholders across all triple bottom line (TBL) focus areas. Relevant literature suggests that stakeholders form an integral part of the most critical dimensions of CSR and refers to the ability of the practitioner and organisation to interact with employees, suppliers, customers and communities. CSR practitioners may need to demonstrate applied competence in the design, development and implementation of integrated strategic shared value creation (CSV) practice in business, but the scope of the strategy development may be influenced by the introduction of the stakeholder theory and specific CSR

models. Demonstrating competence in strategic thinking and management would imply that the CSR practitioner is able to create socially conscious investments linked to shared value for key stakeholders. Demonstrating the former and the latter may require a foundational knowledge of stakeholder theory and the ability to apply a stakeholder management framework and philosophy in order to be responsive to the legitimate needs of stakeholders.

It became evident from analysing and interpreting the qualitative data from the telephone interviews that CSR may be part of complex systems. CSR practitioners need to demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain good relationships and networking frameworks with key stakeholders. Networking is viewed by interview participants as a tactical and deliberate activity for CSR practitioners. Without the networks and relationships, CSR practitioners run the danger of becoming isolated from the CSR community and, as a consequence, do not develop CSR best practice. There is also a real danger of duplicating efforts if the CSR practitioner is not a member of a wider CSR network. The telephone interviewees identified various benefits of strategic networking, such as building long-term relationships, learning and sharing best practice, benchmarking best practice, and collaboration and building a strategic network for addressing far higher socio-economic issues to help transform communities.

Identifying, understanding and managing the perceptions that key stakeholders have of the CSR practitioner may help the CSR practitioner to build trust between all actors in the stakeholder management relationship. This perception may influence the quality of long-term stakeholder relationships. One of the stronger themes identified after analysis of the qualitative data from the telephone interviews is that CSR practitioners may need to develop stakeholder mapping as a tool to determine the levels of influence stakeholders may have on CSR initiatives. Building relationships of trust and positive influence by engaging with stakeholders at all levels may be viewed as a proactive approach to stakeholder management. This could be used by CSR practitioners as relationship capital during challenging times.

Five themes linked to change and change management were identified during the qualitative data analysis of the telephone interviews. The first theme raised by the interviewees refers to skills and knowledge linked to change and change management principles. As one interviewee noted, the CSR practitioner operates in an environment filled with "… unknown variables or things that you cannot control". The CSR practitioner must therefore recognise and apply change principles suited to the specific context. The second theme identified through the analysis is an acute awareness of the change environment, linked to specific change strategies, especially those linked to cultural, political, socio-economic, legislative and individual change. The third theme relates to the

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ability of the CSR practitioner to identify the sources of change while remaining open to ideas with the intent to solve problems without losing site of the needs of the business and the key stakeholders.

The fourth theme is summarised by the following extract from one of the interview participants: "… *some do it [manage change] naturally, for example, tolerating ambiguity. Tolerating ambiguity is a very unusual skill because one would think, no, no, no, we always have to be clear and yet a lot of messy problems aren't clear and one needs patience and tenacity sometimes, and the capacity to sit with a situation which is not always clear. Now that for me is maturity and emotional intelligence.*" The CSR practitioner must tolerate ambiguity, but must also minimise complexities and reduce uncertainty by implementing clear communication plans. The last theme hinges on cultural diversity. CSR practitioners must understand the cultural nuances and direct actions, taking into consideration the culture of the business in which they work and the culture of the communities in which they work.

The analysis of the telephone interview data implies that the interviewees are of the opinion that the starting point for CSR practitioners to present and communicate information would be to demonstrate their aptitude for developing and implementing clear and concise communication plans (strategies). The interview participants noted that CSR practitioners need to be aware of and adhere to all relevant internal and external policies, processes and procedures (including legislative guidelines, where applicable) before engaging in communication with stakeholders. CSR practitioners need to understand the impact of expressing opinions, information and key points clearly and succinctly through a range of communication channels, including corporate branding, online platforms (the internet, e-mail) and social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). It is expected of CSR practitioners to communicate with diverse stakeholders. Therefore, CSR practitioners need to be astute in managing and presenting professionally to diverse audiences.

The third dimension is underpinned by four critical competencies, which attained a 100% validation agreement score, which is 19.1% higher than the critical limit of 80.9%; (1) Adapts and works collaboratively with key stakeholders to achieve CSR/CSI strategy, (2) Establishes and maintains good relationships with key stakeholders through the application of networking strategies, ranging from corporates to key community members and builds wide and effective networks of contacts, (3) Takes care to manage one's positive impression on key stakeholders at all levels, and (4) Applies knowledge of change management methodologies and works collaboratively as change champion with stakeholders to manage and facilitate change management processes with key stakeholders.

3.4 Dimension 4: People, profit and planet

In Figure 1, the three red dotted arrows moving outwards and inwards across all dimensions intentionally link all dimensions within the framework with the CSR philosophical framework and clearly divides the framework into three focus areas of business, which is generally referred to as the TBL: people, profit and planet. The King Report underscores the importance of the TBL and literature suggests that the TBL forms a fundamental part of CSR and that the CSR practitioner participates within a complete open system. It is thus not surprising that the King Report underscores the importance of TBL and encourages business to adopt the TBL model in an effort to stimulate sustainable development in South Africa[44,45]. A company, albeit a legal economic institution, remains a corporate citizen and is therefore responsible for creating shared value by creating a balance between economic, social and environmental value[46].

The introduction of the TBL by Elkington forced businesses to focus on the financial bottom line as well as their social and environmental impact[47,48,49]. TBL is therefore an accounting framework that integrates the three dimensions generally referred to as the 3Ps: people, profit and planet. Fisk expanded on Elkington's model to illustrate the connection and influence between the individual pillars[50]. He perceived the concept to demonstrate economic growth as only being successful when environmental and social requirements are decisively integrated in all business activities as part of business strategic priorities[51]. He also argued that people, planet and profit is an advanced and connected approach to business, but warned that TBL will need far more

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[44] Institute of Directors in Southern Africa (IoDSA), King Report on Governance for South Africa 2009, *cit.*

[45] Institute of Directors in Southern Africa (IoDSA), Draft Report on Governance for South Africa and the Draft Code of Governance Principles, Report presented to the Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, Parklands, South Africa, 2009

[46] Institute of Directors in Southern Africa (IoDSA), *op.cit.*

[47] S. Kaushik, Corporate conceptions of triple bottom line reporting, An empirical analysis into the signs and symbols driving this fashionable framework, in Social Responsibility Journal, 2012, vol. 8, n. 3, 312-326

[48] W. Norman, C. MacDonald, Getting to the bottom line of "Triple Bottom Line", in Business Ethics Quarterly, 2004, vol. 14, n.2, 243-262

[49] J. Stoddard, C. Pollard, M. Evans, The Triple Bottom Line, A Framework for Sustainable Tourism Development, in. International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration, 2012, vol. 13, n. 3, 233-258

[50] P. Fisk, People, Planet, Profit, London, Kogan Page Limited, 2010

[51] P. Fisk, *op. cit.*

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progressive systems thinking and that CSR practitioners will have to be innovative and creative.

An important factor is the emphasis on the value add (or detraction), not only on return on investment ROI (economic), but also on a social and environmental level. The three areas of knowledge and practice form part of the business's strategic priorities and also require an ability for progressive systems thinking, which is the ability to be innovative and creative to address social, environmental and economic challenges. Understanding the interrelated and interconnected TBL concepts is as important as the aptitude to clearly communicate the importance of the concepts in relation to CSR projects and activities. The theoretical and empirical data, when analysed and interpreted, highlighted that successful practitioners make links between people, profit and planet, or the financial and social performance of business. This demonstrates a focus on financial literacy and financial acumen. CSR practitioners understand how business makes money versus social investment and responsibility, and what is required to optimise the social ROI in order to increase the value, drive and impact of social responsiveness, responsibility and sustainability.

The three dotted red arrows intentionally move outwards from the practitioner across all dimensions to link the CSR practitioner with every dimension, from a TBL perspective to the philosophical and ultimately the critical Tier-1 CSR competencies on the outer wings of the CSR curriculum framework. The TBL focus areas are viewed as complex, and the CSR practitioner would need to demonstrate the ability to implement progressive systems thinking, also known as innovative and creative response strategies, to deal with the interconnected complex systems from a futures thinking perspective.

The fourth dimension is underpinned by five critical competencies, which attained a 100% validation agreement score, which is 19.1% higher than the critical limit of 80.9%; (1) Develops integrated job knowledge and understanding (theoretical and practical - BBBEE / CSR and CSI Practice / Sustainable Development / Global Reporting Initiative / Accountability Principles / Supply Chain Standard / External Industry Awards / South African Benchmarking Groups / Monitoring and Evaluation), (2) Probes for further information or higher understanding of a problem, (3) Tests the effectiveness of CSR/CSI initiatives and gather evidence to gain future support through the use of impact assessments and statistics, (4) Writes clearly, succinctly, correctly and professionally, and (5) Monitors and maintains high quality standards for CSR/CSI projects and initiatives.

3.5 Dimension 5: Legislation

The literature suggests that respect for applicable legislation and for collective agreements between social partners is a prerequisite for successful CSR practice. Legislation influences CSR practice and may in some instances dictate the nature and scope of acceptable CSR projects and initiatives in line with the constitutional requirements for social justice and addressing socio-economic inequalities in South Africa. CSR in South Africa is influenced by corporate rationality as well as by broader legislative requirements and more specifically industry and sector codes of good practice. The South African legislative framework shapes the definition, dimensions, scope and understanding of CSR within the operational context of business and communities. It implies that the CSR practitioner may need to demonstrate foundational and practical competence to manage the drivers influencing their CSR strategic intent in relation to internal and external drivers of CSR strategy.

Factors influencing the skill(s) of CSR practitioners to navigate complex legislative frameworks and industry charters may thus be linked to legislative acumen, which is about the ability to interpret, define and work within and between legislative frameworks such as BBBEE and good corporate governance. The EC further stated that respect for applicable legislation and for collective agreements between social partners is a prerequisite for meeting that responsibility.

The fifth dimension is underpinned by one critical competence, which attained a 100% validation agreement score, which is 19.1% higher than the critical limit of 80.9%; (1) Complies with relevant local and international legislative requirement, legal obligations and good corporate governance to pursue CSR/CSI projects and initiatives.

3.6 Dimension 6: Curriculum design and development

The curriculum design and development dimension is intentionally placed on the outer peripheral of all the dimensions (closest to the QC, philosophical framework and SAQA) because the curriculum is contextually shaped, influenced and understood by all the role players within the context of CSR and business in society. CSR practitioners immersed in praxis would bring their theoretical thoughts to every decision, adapting their actions in the field of CSR practice to ensure that they continue to encourage learning and sustainable change for social good.

The design and development elements, as determined from the literature, may have to take into account the needs of all the contextual role players, starting at the core of the framework: the CSR practitioner, business, stakeholders,

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industry bodies, legislative frameworks, SAQA and other formal and informal educational role players such as society at large.

3.7 Dimension 7: Business, DOE, SAQA and Quality Councils

The needs of all contextual role players are of equal importance as the framework may not be accepted unless it adheres to the requirements of all statutory bodies and legislative structures, which include South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Department of Education (DOE) and Quality Councils (QC). Additional factors taken into consideration within the seventh dimension is an awareness of both national and international trends in terms of CSR education and the high demand for technology-based and lifelong learning (professional development planning).

3.8 Philosophical grounding

The study confirmed that any CSR curriculum must be grounded in a philosophical framework. CSR practitioners are seen as change agents and change managers. Hence, CSR practitioners cannot be passive participants in the learning process; they have to critically engage with key stakeholders. A Freirean approach to education may provide CSR scholars with an opportunity to genuinely participate in learning and create knowledge through praxis in directing their own professional learning while articulating their own moral purpose. For this to happen, an equilibrium between theoretical frameworks, knowledge, knowledge creation and experience in any curriculum framework seems important. CSR practitioners cannot be passive participants in the learning process because they are not empty vessels who seek to be filled with the gift of knowledge by those who consider themselves knowledgeable[52,53]. They have to be given the opportunity to critically engage in didactic dialogue and should be given the opportunity to reflect, become self-aware through a shift in consciousness, and then act in the best interest of their stakeholders – the societies in which they work and business in society[54,55]. CSR, as defined in this study, is understood as businesses' responsibility in social and environmental contexts over and above legally mandated minimum standards.

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[52] P. Freire, M. Shaughnessy, E. Galligan, R. De Vivas, Pioneers in Education, Essays in Honor of Paulo Freire. New York, Nova Science Publishers, Incorporated, 2008

[53] A. Pollard, Readings for Reflective Teaching. London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2002

[54] M. Gadotti, Reading Paulo Freire, His Life and Work. Albany,: State University of New York Press, 1994

[55] G. Gutek, Philosophical and Ideological Voices in Education, Toronto, Pearson/A & B, 2004.

CSR is an integral part of the socio-economic (development) culture in South Africa. The development of a CSR curriculum framework could therefore be strengthened by two closely related ideologies: Liberation Pedagogy and Critical Theory. This claim is based on the premise that most philosophical viewpoints are not appropriate in neo-liberal emerging markets such as South Africa with an opaque and inflexible regulatory framework[56]. This legal framework, created by a socialist and populist government, aims to promote BBBEE through imposing stringent corporate governance and BBBEE legislative guidelines in support of social transformation, vested in the transfer of ownership and control of the means of production and distribution of capital and land to previously disadvantaged South Africans [57].

The purists of both Liberation Pedagogy and Critical Theory would argue that they are cynical about the motives of CSR and business in society[58]. Critical Theory is therefore proposed as a means to investigate the unarticulated logic of CSR in an effort to identify which competences CSR practitioners require to connect CSR activities with communities and business strategy[59]. The expectation is that both Critical Theory and Liberation Pedagogy could offer a philosophical foundation to create competency and curriculum connections among CSR practitioners, society, academic institutions, academics and business in society[60]. If the objective of CSR is to make a justifiable difference in the lives of the people and communities on which corporates depend for profitability by reaching out to them, then it makes sense for CSR practitioners to engage in more than the simple act of corporate giving only. CSR practitioners should also engage with communities on a level that would see their emancipation from poverty through various initiatives leading to sustainable growth, development and independence from the "corporate givers". The corporates would almost mandate that the starting point of true transformation becomes the development of a CSR curriculum framework and the education of CSR practitioners to bring about a new social and social-economic awareness.

This would necessitate a move away from the "banking concept" of education which sees the CSR practitioner as an empty vessel to be filled with knowledge

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[56] A. Harley, "We are Poor, not Stupid, Learning from Autonomous, in B. Hall, D. Clover, J. Crowther, E. Scandrett, E. (ed.), Learning and Education for a Better World, The Role of Social Movements, Rotterdam, Sense Publishers, 2013

[57] W. Visser, 2015. RE: PhD Curriculum Studies - University of Stellenbosch. E-mail communication

[58] G. Gutek, *op.cit.*

[59] A. Crane, The Oxford Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008

[60] A. Crane, *op. cit.*

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and theory. The latter may put CSR practitioners at risk of accepting the CSR space and the role of business in society as it is, without developing critical consciousness to become influential change agents within the CSR domain[61,62,]. A Freirean approach to education may provide CSR scholars with an opportunity to genuinely participate in learning and to create knowledge through praxis in order to control their own education while articulating their own moral purpose. For this to happen, there needs to be equilibrium between theoretical frameworks, knowledge, knowledge creation and experience. These constructs cannot function autonomously from each other. However, in unity these constructs form the praxis.

Here, praxis is understood as "informed action"[63]. It is the process of taking action in practice while acting within a theoretical framework of thought to identify the critical competencies required to be successful in practice and informing the curriculum framework representative of professional development. In this concept, theory and practice are as one because Freire's ground-breaking politics did not distinguish between the importance of thinking differently and the importance of making a concrete change in the world. In praxis, abstract theorising is only useful as long as it informs concrete action. Likewise, deep thinking and justification must inform action[64]. Only in this way did Freire see "the oppressed" finding their own, new way to intellectual and social freedom, rather than simply repeating the mistakes of their "oppressors". This is not a case of "doing" and then "reflecting" on it later. Instead, it is about making sure that every action has an informed basis while every valuable thought is put into action. CSR practitioners responsible for bringing any form of CSR theory into practice could consider their actions when planning, and then again when reflecting or evaluating[65].

CSR practitioners immersed in praxis would bring their theoretical thoughts to every decision as they make these decisions, adapting their actions in the field of CSR practice to ensure they continue to encourage learning and sustainable change for social good. Social and socio-economic change affects CSR practitioners as well as the communities in which they are working and also business in society. It situates the learning as a conversation between the

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[61] P.Schreiner, E. Banev, S. Oxley, Holistic Education Resource Book, New York, Waxmann, 2009

[62] A. Bhattacharya, Paulo Freire: Rousseau of the Twentieth Century, Rotterdam, Sense Publishers, 2011

[63] A. Harley, *op. cit.*

[64] A. Harley, "We are Poor, not Stupid, Learning from Autonomous, in B. Hall, D. Clover, J. Crowther, E. Scandrett, E. (ed.), Learning and Education for a Better World, The Role of Social Movements, Rotterdam, Sense Publishers, 2013

[65] G. Gutek, *Philosophical and Ideological Voices in Education, Toronto, Pearson/A & B, 2004.*

practitioner and key stakeholders, instead of practitioners carrying out their (business) plans, which were crafted in the hypothetical world of being "good in theory" and which makes "good business sense". When designing and developing the CSR practitioner curriculum, these principles should be applied to produce a curriculum that enables critical dialogue, critical thinking, action and reflection.

The learning process should begin with helping the CSR or CSI practitioner to understand the concrete conditions of the communities in which they work[66]. Reflection is a necessary agent, enabling these practitioners to assimilate knowledge in accordance with the needs of business in society and society itself, without becoming an object of the CSR business or stakeholder agenda, but rather a subject of their own learning, experience in society and business in community[67].

4. Conclusion

The main findings of the inquiry, which was based on the findings from the literature and the collection of data through questionnaires, telephone interviews, focus groups and the Delphi exercise, informed the factual findings of this inquiry from which a number of conclusions could be drawn. It appears that CSR and CSI practitioners have different functional titles, which may be limiting the specific job function and professional recognition of CSR practitioners. CSR in South Africa is aptly titled corporate social investment (CSI) because of the historical backdrop of social and political development in South Africa. In surveys and interviews, respondents and practitioners interchangeably referred to CSR and CSI, but the majority of study participants referred to CSI, which, by definition, is exclusive to social investment and unique to South Africa, thus limiting in terms of all the other dimensions and core drivers of CSR, such as sustainable development.

An additional conclusion, drawn from the expressed need for professional development, is that there appears to be no clearly defined roles or job descriptions for CSR practitioners. This impedes CSR practitioners' ability to identify development areas within their CSR role. This was confirmed by the lack of clearly defined continuous professional development requirements aligned with CSR best practice.

The study has identified clear gaps between the sole CSR practitioner and those who work for corporates as part of a CSR or CSI team. In this context,

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[66] A. Harley, *op. cit.*

[67] P. Leonard, P. McLaren, Paulo Freire, A Critical Encounter, New York, Taylor & Francis, 2002

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sole refers to a practitioner who is the only employee in an organisation responsible for the CSR function. This inquiry has shown that there may be a need for two sets of competencies for the professional development of CSR practitioners. The first is to address the needs of the sole CSR practitioner and the second is to address the needs of those CSR practitioners who form part of a bigger CSR team. The CSR practitioner who is required to work as a single person in an organisation is also required to think and act on a strategic level, which may involve different cognitive processes than a CSR practitioner who is part of a bigger CSR unit or team and who has to follow instructions. The study has thus shown that there may be a need for a differentiated approach to CSR curriculum design and development to address the needs of the singular CSR practitioner.

What has also emerged from the study is that any proposed CSR curriculum framework is to be underpinned by a competency framework which illustrates interconnectivity between skills, knowledge, behaviours and the concept of applied competencies[68,69,70,71,72]. These are to be linked to the work of the NQF and the ten NQF level descriptor categories. It has further transpired, from a theoretical perspective, that the concept of applied competence, by definition, may be a necessary option to ensure that any CSR competency framework remains future-focused and that the attainment of the CSR competencies is not based on foundational knowledge only. Instead, the CSR competency framework must be sufficiently robust to be used in real-world, complex and transdisciplinary CSR situations.

From the empirical data generated from different stakeholders, the need for a best practice CSR framework became evident. It has emerged that CSR practitioners (CSR practitioners, CSR managers and CSR academics) refer to two concepts: benchmarking to assess and measure performance against

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[68] D. Bartram, The great eight competencies, A criterion-centric approach to validation, in Journal of Applied Psychology, 2005, vol. 90, n. 6, 1185-1203.

[69] R. Kurz, D. Bartram, Competency and individual performance, Modeling the world of work, in I. T. Robertson, M. Callinan, D. Bartram (ed.), Organizational effectiveness, The role of psychology, Chichester, Wiley, 2002, 227-225

[70] South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Perform support functions for corporate social investment programmes, 2010, http://www.saqa.co.za (accessed March 10, 2013)
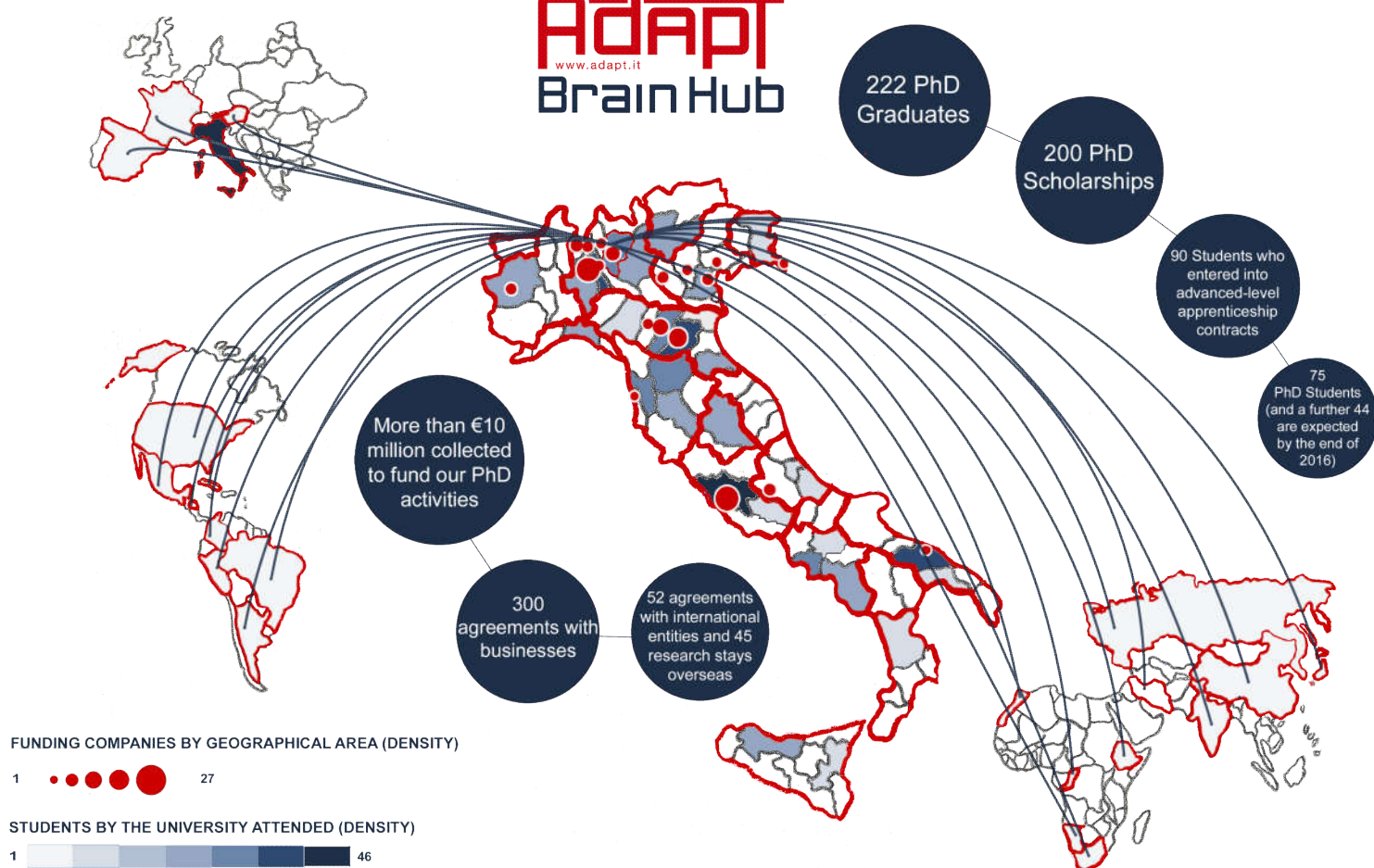
[71] South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Publication of the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework and Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework of the National Qualifications Framework, in SAQA, 2013, vol. 549, Pretoria, Government Printing Works

[72] South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Nation Qualifications Framework: Sub-Frameworks and Qualification Types, 2014, http://www.saqa.org.za/docs/brochures/2014/NQF%20Level%20Desciptors.jpg.pdf (accessed November 17, 2014

industry standards, and CSR best practice frameworks to help guide entry-level to mid-career CSR practitioners to learn and develop skills that comply with set industry standards. It has also become clear that there is no agreement on what constitutes a CSR best practice framework for inclusion in the CSR curriculum framework. Further analysis and interpretation of qualitative data showed that a CSR best practice framework might consist of a series of complex and interconnected frameworks to guide and inform actions and decisions related to CSR best practice.

These frameworks may include sensitivity to communication requirements, national and international legislation, monitoring and evaluation, reporting, stakeholder management, community engagement, employee voluntary situations, strategic business management, strategic networking, socio-economic transformation and CSR project or programme management. Of the range of available "frameworks" or international standards, the ISO 26000 is the only framework recognised as a global standard that could be contextualised from a South African perspective and operationalised at an organisational level.

This presents the findings of a journey to produce new insights into the development of a CSR curriculum framework that may be utilised as a tool to guide curriculum designers, developers and policy makers to address the professional development needs of CSR practitioners. This study has developed and validated a well-informed conceptual CSR curriculum framework, not only defining the skills, knowledge and behavioural components for successful CSR practitioners, but also identifying the priority competencies to inform the development of a CSR curriculum for the professional development of CSR practitioners. The researcher anticipates, based on provisional feedback from CSR thought leaders, that the CSR curriculum framework may pave the way for engagement that is more meaningful and for debate on the development of a national qualification for CSR practitioners

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