



Call for papers: New perspectives on workplace interventions

In this special issue we aim to promote and foster development, debate and knowledge of workplace interventions.

We see a clear relevance for this in SJWOP as Scandinavia has since the late 1990's been at the forefront of the development of research into organizational interventions, for example promoting a focus on not only effect, but also process evaluation (Mikkelsen et al., 2000; Mikkelsen & Saksvik, 1998; Saksvik et al., 2002). In recent years there has been substantial focus on evaluating the context and working mechanisms of interventions, often from a realist evaluation perspective (Abildgaard et al., 2020; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017; von Thiele Schwarz et al., 2020).

Other interesting developments in workplace intervention research, are the use of theoretically founded evaluation methods and advanced methods of analysis. One line of research is looking into further developing evaluation methodology inspired by realist evaluation (Pawson, 2013; Pawson & Tilley, 1997), providing new perspectives on concepts such as "context" and "mechanism" (Abildgaard et al., 2020; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017), and shedding light on "what works for whom under which circumstances" (Pawson & Tilley, 1997). Others draw inspiration from organization theory to strengthen the qualitative analyses of intervention (Abildgaard & Nielsen, 2018; Ala-Laurinaho et al., 2017; Engeström, 2011). Developments in our field have also led to the use of new tools, for instance new methodologies such as regression discontinuity design (Sørensen, 2016), conversation analysis (Wåhlin-Jacobsen, 2020), and perceptual distance analyses (Hasson et al., 2016).

Similarly, in Scandinavia there has been a long-standing tradition of employee participation and likewise participation is a core aspect of many work environment initiatives. Some studies have shed light on the importance of participation as an important process factor in explaining intervention success (Christensen et al., 2020; Nielsen, 2013; Nielsen & Randall, 2012; Tafvelin et al., 2019), while others focus on the working mechanism of employee participation as the focus in itself (Olsen et al., 2020; Wåhlin-Jacobsen, 2019). The body of knowledge on the topic of participation suggest that it is indeed a key component in interventions but even though much research has been conducted questions are still unanswered, for instance about the nuances of "how to" and "when to" of participation, and how to avoid instrumentalizing participation.

Though considerable amount of research has been conducted there is still a need to refine our methods to better understand *how* interventions work and why interventions fare better in some contexts than others. The purpose of this special issue is to publish theoretical, methodological, and empirical research to (1) develop our understanding of the role of intervention context, process and mechanisms and (2) develop novel perspectives and methods to aid the development implementation and evaluation of interventions (Abildgaard et al., 2016; von Thiele Schwarz et al., 2020) (3) expand on the Scandinavian perspective of using employee participation and employee-management collaboration to create successful work environment initiatives.

Topics that might be addressed by papers in this special issue may include, but are not limited to:

- Empirical papers that study topics such as:
 - How interventions interact with the organizational context
 - Intervention mechanism and how they lead to different outcomes
 - Participatory perspective on interventions (for instance the role of leaders (line managers and top management), employees, union and safety representatives).
 - How leaders are affected by interventions. Here you can focus on particular aspects. The paper does not need to include both qualitative and quantitative data, or both process and effect data
 - Challenges for interventions and work environment initiatives during the Covid-19 pandemic
 - The role of digitalization on the process and outcomes of interventions
 - Intervention processes and learning organizations

- Conceptual papers:
 - Debate papers that address core intervention topics and the future of intervention research
 - Theoretical papers on intervention practice and evaluation (think pieces)
 - Discussions of key topics such as: employee participation, the role of leaders, learning organizations, intervention fit, and communication

- Review articles

The submission process will consist of an initial proposal submission between 500 and 1000 words (not including references) and address the following:

- Theoretical background, research objectives and contribution to the field
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion and conclusion

Submission Details

Prospective authors should send a proposal to edteam.sjwop@gmail.com with “Special Issue Article Proposal” as the topic by September 30, 2021 (authors can submit proposals before the due date and the editorial team will aim to provide feedback as soon as possible).

Decisions on proposals and invitations to submit full manuscripts will be sent to potential authors by October 30, 2021.

Full manuscripts must be prepared according to the manuscript submission guidelines on the Scandinavian Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology homepage.

Manuscript submissions for approved proposals will be due by April 30, 2022.

Submissions will undergo an initial editorial review by the editorial team; those meeting criteria for further consideration will be peer reviewed by masked review.

The invitation of a full paper (following proposal submission) does not guarantee publication.

Important Dates

- Submit 1,000-word proposal: September 30, 2021 (Authors can submit proposals before the due date and the editorial team will aim to provide feedback as soon as possible)
- Review of Proposals and Invitations to Authors: October 31, 2021
- Full manuscript deadline: April 30, 2022

Special Issue Editors

- Johan Simonsen Abildgaard, PhD, *National Research Centre for the Working Environment, Denmark*, jss@nfa.dk
- Susanne Tafvelin, PhD, *Umeå University, Sweden*, susanne.tafvelin@umu.se
- Marit Christensen, PhD, *Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway*, marit.christensen@ntnu.no

References

Abildgaard, J. S., & Nielsen, K. (2018). The Interplay of Sensemaking and Material Artefacts during

Interventions: A Case Study. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*, 8(3).

<https://doi.org/10.18291/njwls.v8i3.109538>

Abildgaard, J. S., Nielsen, K., Wåhlin-Jacobsen, C. D., Maltesen, T., Christensen, K. B., & Holtermann,

A. (2020). 'Same, but different': A mixed-methods realist evaluation of a cluster-randomized controlled participatory organizational intervention. *Human Relations*, 73(10), 1339–1365.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726719866896>

Abildgaard, J. S., Saksvik, P. Ø., & Nielsen, K. (2016). How to Measure the Intervention Process? An

Assessment of Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Data Collection in the Process

Evaluation of Organizational Interventions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7, 1380.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01380>

Ala-Laurinaho, A., Kurki, A.-L., & Abildgaard, J. S. (2017). Supporting Sensemaking to Promote a Systemic View of Organizational Change – Contributions from Activity Theory. *Journal of Change Management*, 17(4), 367–387. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2017.1309566>

Christensen, M., Innstrand, S. T., & Saksvik, P. Ø. (2020). Healthy workplaces: Designing and implementing health-promoting organizational interventions in healthcare. In L. T. Løvseth & A. DeLange (Eds.), *Integrating Organisation of Health Services, Worker Wellbeing and Quality of Care: Towards Healthy Healthcare*. Springer.

Engeström, Y. (2011). From design experiments to formative interventions. *Theory & Psychology*, 21(5), 598–628.

Hasson, H., von Thiele Schwarz, U., Nielsen, K., & Tafvelin, S. (2016). Are We All in the Same Boat? The Role of Perceptual Distance in Organizational Health Interventions. *Stress and Health*, 32(4), 294–303. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2703>

Mikkelsen, A., & Saksvik, P. Ø. (1998). Learning from parallel organizational development efforts in two public sector settings findings from personnel research in norway. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 18(2), 5–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X9801800202>

Mikkelsen, A., Saksvik, P. Ø., & Landsbergis, P. (2000). The impact of a participatory organizational intervention on job stress in community health care institutions. *Work & Stress*, 14(2), 156–170. <https://doi.org/10.1080/026783700750051667>

Nielsen, K. (2013). Review article: How can we make organizational interventions work? Employees and line managers as actively crafting interventions. *Human Relations*, 66(8), 1029–1050. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726713477164>

Nielsen, K., & Miraglia, M. (2017). What works for whom in which circumstances? On the need to move beyond the ‘what works?’ question in organizational intervention research. *Human Relations*, 70(1), 40–62. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726716670226>

- Nielsen, K., & Randall, R. (2012). The importance of employee participation and perceptions of changes in procedures in a teamworking intervention. *Work & Stress, 26*(2), 91–111.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2012.682721>
- Olsen, E. L., Wåhlin-Jacobsen, C. D., & Abildgaard, J. S. (2020). Reconceptualizing Job Control in Participatory Interventions – Collective Sensemaking as a Missing Link. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.18291/njwls.122137>
- Pawson, R. (2013). *The Science of Evaluation: A Realist Manifesto*. SAGE.
- Pawson, R., & Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic Evaluation*. Sage.
- Saksvik, P. Ø., Nytrø, K., Dahl-Jorgensen, C., & Mikkelsen, A. (2002). A process evaluation of individual and organizational occupational stress and health interventions. *Work & Stress, 16*(1), 37–57.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02678370110118744>
- Sørensen, B. O. H. (2016). Evaluating an Organizational-Level Occupational Health Intervention in a Combined Regression Discontinuity and Randomized Control Design. *Stress and Health, 32*(4), 270–274. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2699>
- Tafvelin, S., Schwarz, U. von T., Nielsen, K., & Hasson, H. (2019). Employees' and line managers' active involvement in participatory organizational interventions: Examining direct, reversed, and reciprocal effects on well-being. *Stress and Health, 35*(1), 69–80.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2841>
- von Thiele Schwarz, U., Nielsen, K., Edwards, K., Hasson, H., Ipsen, C., Savage, C., Abildgaard, J. S., Richter, A., Lornudd, C., Mazzocato, P., & Reed, J. E. (2020). How to design, implement and evaluate organizational interventions for maximum impact: the Sigtuna Principles. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 0*(0), 1–13.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2020.1803960>
- Wåhlin-Jacobsen, C. D. (2019). The terms of “becoming empowered”: How ascriptions and negotiations of employee identities shape the outcomes of workplace voice activities. *Scandinavian Journal of Management, 35*(3), 101059.

Wåhlin-Jacobsen, C. D. (2020). Open or Closed? A Social Interaction Perspective on Line Managers'

Reactions to Employee Voice. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 34(1), 32–57.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318919879901>