Catch up with Karina Nielsen

Job crafting in Dutch and American Health Care Professionals

Focus on Practice is back

Meet Veronika Jackl

EAOHP2018 IN LISBON!
Welcome to the latest issue of *The Occupational Health Psychologist*, with our new look cover! We begin with the report and evaluation of the 12th EAOHP conference, which was held in Athens earlier this year. We were delighted that so many of you chose to join us from so many countries around the world for such a successful event.

This is followed by news of the 13th EAOHP conference to be held in Lisbon in 2018. We hope that those of you who were not able to make the conference this time around will be able to join us in Lisbon.

This year’s conference provided us with an excellent opportunity to conduct interviews with some of the delegates. We will be publishing these over the next few issues. In this issue, Kevin catches up with one of our keynote speakers, Karina Nielsen, Professor of Work and Organizational Psychology at the University of East Anglia, UK.

In our Focus on Practice interview, Veronika Jakl, tells us how she became an Occupational Health Psychology practitioner, and about her current work at Arbeitspsychologie Jakl, in Austria.

In Research in Brief, Heather Gordon reports on a study that examines the differences and similarities among Dutch and US healthcare professionals’ proactive work behaviour, using the Job Demands-Resources model, with the addition of job crafting.

As always, we are grateful to Birgit Greiner and Peter Kelly, for their updates on the Academy Research Forum and Practice Forum, respectively.

Those of you who read our last issue will know about the launch, in collaboration with EU-OSHA, of an innovation and practice award, in memory of Eusebio (Seb) Rial-Gonzalez. In this issue, we report on the inaugural award, which took place at this year’s EAOHP conference.

Finally, thanks go to Nathalie Saade for reporting on the EAOHP Symposium at the British Psychological Society Division of Occupational Psychology Conference, Nottingham, UK.

Remember, this is your newsletter, and we are happy to receive your suggestions, contributions or feedback!

**Sue Cowan, Editor**

On behalf of the Editorial Team

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Academy News

1. Birgit Greiner has taken over the Education Chair on the EAOHP executive committee. We thank Birgit for her previous role as chair of the Research Forum which she took over in 2012.


3. Save the date: The 13th EAOHP conference will take place in Lisbon, Portugal from 5-7 September 2018. See page 6 for more information. Additional details will be available soon on the conference website: http://www.eaohp.org/conference.html

4. The 6th International Congress of the ICOH Scientific Committee on Work Organization & Psychosocial Factors (ICOH-WOPS) will take place from 29 August - 1 September 2017 in Mexico City, Mexico. More details available at: http://condor.zaragoza.unam.mx/wops/

5. Many colleagues contacted the conference organising committee to see if there was any way to assist the large Syrian refugee population in Greece during the conference. Given the topic of the conference and the aims and scope of the Academy, we felt it appropriate to reach out and see if we could give a hand up to those less fortunate and less safe and secure at this moment in their lives. As such we got in touch with the Red Cross in Greece and were collecting donations at the conference to support the work of Red Cross.

Through your generosity, in total we raised €723.65 that has since been passed on to the Greek Red Cross.

Academy Conference Report

The 12th EAOHP Conference, Athens 2016

By Vlad Dediu

It is eight in the morning. Volunteers and organizers are ready. Everyone knows what they must do, so that everything will go according to plan. Slowly, the delegates start coming into the registration area of the Royal Olympic Hotel. They are greeted with a warm welcome, a smile, and offered information about how the events of the following days will unfold. More and more people start arriving, in total 458, but thanks to the volunteers the whole process runs smoothly. By nine o’clock almost everybody has registered, and is heading to the opening ceremony.

This is how the 12th European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology Conference, that took place in Athens, started. The theme this year was ‘OHP in Times of Change: Society and the Workplace’. There were three keynote addresses given by Joan Benach, Christina Maslach, and Karina Nielsen. In addition, the programme included 183 oral paper presentations, 84 posters, 37 symposia, and 14 special sessions. The book of proceedings is now available in electronic format on the Academy’s website. It includes abstracts of the presentations, posters and keynote speeches, and can be downloaded from the ‘Publications’ section at www.eaohp.org.

Each year the Academy awards a Lifetime Fellowship to an individual who, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, has made an exceptional contribution to the discipline of Occupational Health Psychology. The recipient of this prestigious award was, on this occasion, Maureen Dollard from the University of South Australia. The Andre Bussing Memorial Prize, in recognition of high quality research by an early career
scholar, was presented to Laurenz Meier from the University of Neuchâtel. In addition, best poster awards were conferred to Marianne Agergaard Vammen, Copenhagen University, Cristina Di Tecco, INAIL, Rome, and Nina Olin from The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

Some of you will know that the Academy recently lost one of its founding members, Eusebio (Seb) Rial-González. To commemorate his life and work, the Academy, in collaboration with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, has launched the ‘Eusebio Rial-González Innovation and Practice Award in Occupational Health Psychology’, which is awarded to an individual who has made a considerable contribution to the field of OHP. We are delighted that on the occasion of its first award that Karina Nielsen from the University of East Anglia, was the recipient.

The evening reception took place on the Roof Garden of the Royal Olympic Hotel. The event was a great opportunity for delegates to network, while enjoying a glass of wine and canapés. The conference dinner was held at Orizontes restaurant, situated atop the Lycabettus Mountain, and reached by funicular railway. The evening began with a wine reception, where delegates could enjoy breath-taking views of Athens as the sun sank below the horizon. Sergio Iavicoli, EAOHP President, welcomed delegates on behalf of the Academy.

Conference Evaluation

EAOHP continually strives to improve the quality of our events. Therefore, the organizing teams sent out an evaluation survey to assess delegates’ perceptions of the conference. We received 161 responses, which represents a 34% response rate. Some of the results of the survey are presented below.

Leading up to the conference

The majority of delegates found the experience leading up to the conference a positive one. Both the registration and the abstract submission processes were rated as either good or excellent by over 80% of respondents. One area we will focus on improving for the next conference will be the pre-conference website information. Although 69% of delegates thought it was good or excellent, 26% thought it was only adequate, and 5% rated it as poor or unacceptable.

Figure 1: Delegate feedback on pre-conference experience
Venue and support

The venue and support were rated positively by the majority of respondents. The conference venue quality was rated good or excellent by 90% of delegates. The team worked hard to ensure that their experience was as good as possible. This is reflected in the ratings received on the helpfulness of the reception desk, rated as good or excellent by 88% of respondents, as well as the helpfulness of the organizing team, which 94% of respondents rated as good or excellent.

One area we will work to improve for next time will be the adequacy of the rooms for presentations. Overall, 73% of respondents indicated that they were good or excellent, with a further 20% rating them as adequate, and 6% as poor. While the ratings are better than for the last conference, where in only 53% of the cases were the rooms regarded as good or excellent, we will look at respondents’ comments and suggestions, in order to provide a better experience next time. Several recommendations were made regarding the improving the quality of sound in some rooms, availability of pointers, and general technical issues that we will do our best to address in the future.

What was on offer

The final set of questions evaluated delegates’ perceptions of the content of the conference. Three areas were rated as either good or excellent by more than 80% of respondents: the range of topics addressed, the quality of the keynote presentations, and the opportunities for networking. We are happy to see that the majority of respondents had a pleasant experience and had their expectations met, and we will work to ensure that for the next conference we will provide the same or an improved experience.

The quality of oral and poster presentations were two areas on which we received suggestions for improvement, as 78% of you rated both as being excellent or good, 19% as adequate and 3% as poor.

Looking at the comments we have seen two overall issues: the quality of material presented, and the second the fact that too many presentations were running in parallel sessions, as well as their timing. In response to this feedback, we are improving and further detailing the assessment criteria for our scientific review committee, as well as improving the scheduling of both the oral and poster sessions.

Final comments and the next EAOHP conference

Thank you to those of you who responded to our conference evaluation survey. Overall, we believe that the conference was a success. The feedback we received was very helpful, and we have identified several areas for improvement for next time. We look forward to welcoming even more of you to EAOHP’s 13th Conference, which will take place in Lisbon, between the 5th and 7th of September, 2018.

Figure 2: Delegate feedback on conference venue and support provided

Figure 3: Delegate feedback on conference content
The 13th Academy Conference 2018

Olá Lisbon!

EAOHP delighted to announce its 2018 conference, which will take place in Lisbon, Portugal on 5-7 September. The EAOHP 2018 conference is organized in collaboration with the Organizational Behaviour and Human Resources (OBHR) research group of the Business Research Unit (BRU-IUL) of ISCTE-IUL (Lisbon, Portugal). BRU-IUL is a multidisciplinary research unit that spans the main fields of Business, Economics and Finance. OBRH’s main scientific fields are Work Psychology, Organizational Psychology, Occupational Health Psychology and Human Resource Management. It aims to develop knowledge and know-how, in order to address social problems relating to organizational innovation, competitiveness, performance, quality of working life and wellbeing by focusing on different levels of explanation and contexts. OBRH’s main thematic line is New challenges for individuals and organizations: Wellbeing, innovation and performance at work.

Book Your Dates!

More conference details will be provided in due time. Stay tuned via our website, newsletter and social media channels.
Most of our readers are familiar with your work, but tell us a bit about your background and how you ended up in Occupational Health Psychology.

I’m Danish, even though I am now based in the United Kingdom. I did my psychology Bachelor and Master’s degree at the University of Aarhus and then I went to the University of Nottingham to do my PhD in 1999. Basically, I came to do my PhD in teamwork and wellbeing, but there was a tradition there of doing organizational interventions, and that’s how I got interested.

When I finished my PhD I went back to Denmark and got a job at the National Research Centre for Working Environment (NRCWE). There wasn’t really an intervention climate, but in Denmark the social partners are very strong, and they were really interested in interventions, what we can do for organizations, and how we can develop interventions for work and wellbeing. This is where I got an opportunity to do organizational interventions, and it was possible to get funding, and a lot of support from the social partners. After nine years at the NRCWE I moved back to the UK, and have been at the University of East Anglia for three years now.

So you started with teamwork, is there anything that caught your attention that led you into interventions?

Well actually, I guess my first intervention was team implementation. There was a Danish eldercare organization where they wanted to implement teams to improve employee health and wellbeing, and reduce sickness absence. We thought it was difficult to implement teamwork, so we developed a training programme. At the same time, there was a multinational accountancy firm that used project teams, and they had problems with social support. People were moving around teams, you were two weeks on one team and two weeks on another. There were problems where you didn’t really know your colleagues, where you had difficulty with your workload. The company asked if we could help with that, and so we said we’ll do the training course here as well. It was still the social aspect, but looking at a change in social relations, if you could call it that. It was kind of gradual, and then of course I moved on to do participatory interventions. Again, this is about how we can facilitate people working together, so that the people can come up with solutions to improve work and wellbeing. So teamwork was still there, but it was a gradual transition.

In terms of interventions, you work very much from a wellbeing perspective. But we could argue that what you write and speak about relates to organizational culture and productivity as well.

Completely, this is one of the things I have started working on now, and that I want to take further. Actually, in the last project that we did, we collected performance data as well, although we haven’t had time to analyze this data yet. But I’m working my way around it saying that you have the happy worker productive thesis. The problem is it’s a hen and the egg situation. Which one comes first? We’ve recently completed a Nordic project looking at which resources in the workplace can be used to ensure productivity, performance and employee wellbeing. Specifically, we are looking at resources at the group, individual and leader level, because that will then give organizations the opportunity to say okay there are some really strong relationships at the organizational level that
we can look at, which includes both HR practices and the working environment. That’s the direction that I have started going in.

*That’s quite interesting. In my experience I come across people who say actually this is like culture change interventions and I think there are a lot of parallels that can be drawn. I think a lot of your frameworks are applicable to other areas as well, and not just constrained to wellbeing.*

I think it’s quite interesting because I’ve been invited to present at events with occupational health practitioners, medics, physiotherapists and ergonomists or similar professions. I walk in thinking they’re not going to like it or find it relevant, but I have so many people coming up to me afterwards who say this is so important, and that they are experiencing exactly the same implementation issues, just that their outcome is a different one. I think that it is applicable is quite interesting, but I’m conscious that I’m not claiming that my models can save the world, and be used in any kind of contexts. And of course, there has to be some translation and consideration to where it is used.

*This ties in with the whole black box approach that you use to capture the how and the why of interventions. So, how do we capture the how and the why of interventions?*

Together with Ray Randall, in 2009 I developed a questionnaire where we say there are five factors that are important. The previous history, so what kind of experiences do they have upfront; employee involvement, are they involved in developing planning and implementing interventions?; line managers, because they are often the drivers of change; employee readiness for change; and, exposure to components of the intended intervention.

One of the things I’m interested in is that we need to find measures that are fairly simple that organizations can use themselves, and that can give them ongoing feedback. Interviews give you rich information on what works for whom under what circumstances, but we need to work towards a more practical and pragmatic way of collecting data. Questionnaires are one of them, but also using ICT so we can provide organizations with ongoing feedback. That is one of the weaknesses I see in my, and everybody else’s research. We tend to collect the process data at the very end of a project, rather than collecting it on a monthly basis, for example, sending out ten questions on line manager support or participation, that we can then feedback to the organization to say ‘okay, it looks like your processes are not where they’re supposed to be, you need to take steps to get them back on track’. That’s where I see the direction that we need to go in, but we are not there yet.

So how then do you convince an organization that actually, not only do they need something more elaborate than they think they need, but they also need to collect all this additional data, and the resources and the time that goes into that?

I spend an awful lot of time setting up realistic expectations up front. For me, it’s very much the argument that it’s not enough to do an intervention and evaluate whether it worked or not. The organization is getting a lot of expertise with this, I’m coming in with my research team, we are collecting data, so the company’s engagement in this is employees’ working time. The way it worked in Denmark is that you could apply for funding for the employees’ working time. But I spend a lot of time explaining to organizations why they need all that data, and what they can get from all that data, and that without all that data we can only say whether it worked or not, which is not really going to inform their future practices.

*You mention Denmark, and that a lot of your work is based in Scandinavia. Have you worked in other countries? Do you think there are big differences in how we approach interventions across countries?*

Certainly, in the Nordic countries you have the social partners. The unions play a huge role, and there is a different tradition of participatory interventions and attention paid to involving employees. I’m not saying it cannot be done in the UK or anywhere else. I mean we have people doing it in Spain. It has been done in the UK starting with the University of Nottingham, and the UK Management Standards are based on participation, so it can be done. And I think the psychological mechanisms are the same. You gain the same from being participative regardless of the country that you are in. But, you have to train people in a different way, provide tools in a different way that facilitate participation, because there isn’t that kind of tradition, or people might not be so used to this participatory approach.

*You’ve done work reviewing the European Framework, legislation and policy. Where do you think we are in terms of that?*

I’m quite impressed with the Management Standards, there has been a lot of work going into it, and I think there are a lot of good ideas in it. But I think we need to get an understanding of what works, for whom, and in what circumstances. What you should be looking at is now that the policies that are in place, how are they being used in organizations? For example, some of the evaluation says that 64% of organizations use direct participation and 34% use indirect participation, but that doesn’t actually tell you anything. What we need to do is go in and evaluate. Okay, so if you use direct participation, how does that work, how can we make it
work, and for whom does that work? Because of course, direct participation is fantastic, but if you have 500,000 people in a company, direct participation will take up a lot of the employees’ time. You can do it if you are an SME, so I think that’s where it comes into understanding what works, for whom, in what circumstances. As organizations are doing the Management Standards in the UK, then we could analyze and collect all that is being done, and obtain valuable information to develop tools that enable more companies to work with the Management Standards.

And beyond the UK, what do you think about the rest of Europe?

It’s interesting because I have reviewed SOBANE in Belgium, INAIL (Italy), Work Positive (Ireland) and Management Standards (UK). I find the SOBANE quite interesting because it’s a completely different approach. They examine 18 general risk factors, not only psychosocial. I don’t think we have enough good data to understand the processes, or at least that I have seen, on how much of it was psychosocial. Because, if for example, it’s changing a handle on a door, it’s not the same as sitting down and talking about being bullied or managing your workload. These kinds of things are difficult to say, because there isn’t enough data out there about what works, for whom, in what circumstances. We also need to look at the outcomes. It’s not enough to just know that organizations are finding it easier or difficult; we need to know if they are finding it difficult to implement, does it actually help improve working conditions and employee wellbeing?

But it’s a huge step that countries are starting to translate the work that is being done in this area into something concrete. And I like the Management Standards because they have all these tools to help organizations. In Denmark, there is a legal requirement to do a risk assessment every three years. What I meet all the time is ‘okay we can do the risk assessment, send out a questionnaire, analyze the data’. That’s fine, but how do you translate that into action plans? I think that is a huge challenge and I think that’s where we can do a lot to develop tools and methods that organizations can use. It’s the next step beyond risk assessment in some countries, and in other countries you need to start with developing tools towards risk assessment.

With legislation and risk assessment, is it now a danger that it ends up being a tick-boxing exercise?

In Denmark, we have the Knowledge Centre for the Working Environment. They have a travelling team who go into public organizations, informing them about occupational health. And they had two or three psychosocial campaigns, one called ‘From Stress to Wellbeing’. What they said was that stress might hit individually, but it is the community and the organization’s responsibility to deal with it. That was their slogan, and they were successful in getting that message out, and now the social partners are buying into that. It has very much moved beyond a perception of it being the individual’s problem to it being the organization’s problem. But it was at the individual level, even in a country like Denmark, where things are very different from places beyond Scandinavia. For me, this is a very good example of what countries can do, because it has actually worked.

If someone was interested in the area of interventions, what would you say the next steps are?

I think it is going into realist evaluation, going beyond randomised control trials, and the traditional intervention area where we have the pre- and post-areas, because this doesn’t actually tell us anything.

But you’ve been writing and talking about this for years now!

But I see a difference; there is a group of people who are working in that direction. What pains me so to see is that people are saying we want to do interventions, and they have a theory of what works, but they forget about the process. They think they can change the content without looking at the process. The process is as important as the content of your intervention. So I keep saying it and hopefully people will start listening.

We also have the International Network for Sustainable Organizational Interventions. If anyone is interested in organizational interventions get in touch with me and I’ll include them in our emailing list. It is talking to people who have experience. This is what pains me, its people go out, and they make the same mistakes that I made myself.

Finally, as a discipline, Occupational Health Psychology, where do you think we are going and where do you think we should be going?

What I like that about OHP is that it is possible to challenge existing theories. I’m an Associate Editor at Work and Stress, and if you do rigorous research and the results do not support your theory then you can still get it published. You can then either modify the existing theory or perhaps you have to develop a new theory that may explain your findings. There are some disciplines that are all about confirming or supporting your hypotheses, but I think OHP is quite a good discipline in that we can push the boundaries.

Where I think we could get better is to use theories from other disciplines rather than just use our own psychological theories. There’s a lot also from social psychology for example, that can enrich what we do, and broaden our perspective in terms of theory.
Focus on Practice

Veronika Jakl

In this issue’s interview, Veronika Jakl, from Arbeitspsychologie Jakl in Austria tells us about her work as an occupational health psychology practitioner.

How did you first become interested in Occupational Health Psychology?

Health was always a big topic in my life. The first psychology topic in school that I was interested in was about the social conditions in teams. At university, I specialized in work psychology because every adult is affected by this. So I think, to understand why people get sick due to poor psychosocial working conditions (like no support from managers, poor work organization ...) and how to help is so important.

What is your educational background, and what if any, previous relevant work experience have you had?

I did my MSc in Psychology at the University of Vienna. Other work experiences that left their mark on me include being a judo teacher when I was 15 years old, working in events management, and being a research assistant while studying. After university, I started off being self-employed. My first contracts were about training unemployed teenagers and supporting applied research projects in health and industrial psychology. I tried out lots of industries to see what fitted best. Additionally, I finished a postgraduate programme on HR Psychology, a certification for training in Adult Education and I/O-Psychology.

Could you describe some of the work initiatives/projects in which you have been, or are currently, involved?

A big ongoing project is the evaluation of an Austrian construction company with several thousand employees. The goal is to measure stress factors in all workplaces and to set measures, together with superiors, to reduce stress. For the white-collar workers, we are using an online survey followed by group discussions. In addition, we are visiting blue-collar workers on construction sites to conduct observational interviews.

What always brings joy is supporting a client for a long time. A printing house started to work with us about two years ago with a project to assess work-related stress in their ten departments. Initially, they only wanted to have an online survey. Then I moderated some group discussions with the employees and superiors to understand the background of critical results, and to find improvement measures. The management was then motivated to change things, and show the staff that they care. Now we prepare and moderate their annual leadership meeting and several team trainings. Together with occupational physicians and physiotherapists, we have also organized a health programme for the staff.

What are the biggest challenges for you as an OHP practitioner?

I often do not have a lot of time to raise awareness amongst all managers in a company about the importance of work-related stress and its reduction. Managers have many different experiences with their staff, and some conclude that it is not their responsibility 'to make everyone happy', and that people should quit if they feel stressed. With that mindset, it is hard to suggest changes that these managers will accept. To be open to set changes in psychosocial working conditions, managers need to
imagine the advantages, or to see the threats e.g. increased turnover, or sick days.

**In what direction do you see OHP practice going in the future?**

More and more legislation in European countries is emerging around the assessment of work-related stress in companies. People as well tend to see the importance of psychosocial health, and are open to talk about this topic. The big challenges for OHP professionals will be the ‘new ways of working’ e.g. home office, mobile working, zero hours contracts.

**What advice would you give to someone looking for their first job as an OHP practitioner?**

Be curious and get to know different kinds of workplaces. See the wide field of possibilities - external health institutes, OSH consultancies, I/O Psychology, and in-house occupational health departments.

There are also so many different tasks: coaching managers, leading research projects, running workshops with employees, organizing health programmes, writing contributions, etc. Try things out and find your place.

**What advice would you give to someone considering OHP as a career?**

Network and tell people about your passion. Everybody who works, or has a business needs us, one way or another! Some know that already and some will come back later.

**Contact details**

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### Safety Science Special Issue

**Call for papers for the special issue:**

**Promoting a Healthy Psychosocial Work Environment in Times of Change**

A call for papers for a 2017 Special Issue in Safety Science on the promotion of a healthy psychosocial work environment in times of change is open. The Special Issue will focus on ways to develop a healthy psychosocial work environment in times of change at national or organizational level. These may relate to policy, research or practice. Original papers on topics that provide scientific understanding in this area are invited. Review articles relevant to these fields are also welcome.

Potential topics include but are not limited to:

- The effect of unemployment and job insecurity on the psychosocial work environment
- Health, safety and well-being in times of organizational change and restructuring
- Health, safety and well-being in times of societal change
- Interventions to promote a healthy psychosocial work environment in times of organizational change and restructuring
- Policy-level interventions to promote a healthy psychosocial work environment in times of change
- At risk groups during organizational change and restructuring
- Precarious work and its effect on health, safety and well-being
- Evaluation of flexicurity and other policies in relation to health, safety and well-being in times of change

All papers should be submitted via the Safety Science submission system. [Details available here](#)

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### The Academy and Social Media

The Academy is looking to better engage with our members and the wider public by improving our social media presence.

You can find us on the following social media platforms:

- Via our Twitter handle: [@ea_ohp](#)
- Our Facebook Page: [EAOHP](#)
- Our LinkedIn Group: [European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology - EAOHP](#)

Don’t just follow us; Instead, engage with us by tweeting, starting discussions, asking questions, sharing articles and posting links.

If it’s related to Occupational Health Psychology, then we’re interested. Keep us in the loop by using the hashtag #EAOHP
Job crafting and performance of Dutch and American Health Care Professionals

By Heather J. Gordon

Heather J. Gordon is a behaviour change consultant and a visiting researcher in work & organizational psychology at Eindhoven’s University of Technology IE&IS: HPM Group in the Netherlands. Her interests include exploring innovative strategies employees use on the job to help them enjoy their work while also performing well. Additionally, she has expertise in designing behaviour change interventions and insights-based research.

Background

This research was motivated by the increasing work demands in healthcare and how they are negatively impacting on employees (e.g., performance, patient satisfaction, burnout; Balch & Shanafelt, 2011; Schaufeli, Bakker, & Van Rhenen, 2009). We examined the cultural differences and similarities among Dutch (NL; N = 144) and American (US; N = 70) healthcare professionals’ (HCPs) proactive work behaviour by using Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner & Schaufeli’s (2000) Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, with the addition of job crafting. ‘Job crafting’ is a proactive strategy where employees make changes to balance their job demands and resources to ‘fit’ better with their personal abilities and needs, which can enhance their work meaning and significance and their performance (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting entails (at least) three work strategies: (1) seeking challenges, (2) seeking resources, and (3) reducing (hindering) demands (Petrou et al., 2012). Specifically, we examined how work characteristics (i.e., job demands and resources) are related to specific types of job crafting (i.e., seeking challenges, seeking resources, or reducing demands), and how those in turn are related to positive performance outcomes (i.e., task, creative, and contextual performance) and whether these relationships differ per culture.

Past research revealed that different cultural motivations can influence work behaviours and outcomes (Hofstede, 2001). To date, there is not much cross-cultural research conducted in organizational psychology, or models that hold across different cultures. Differences were expected among HCPs from the US, since they are working in a masculine-dominated culture, and the Netherlands HCPs, since they are working in a feminine-dominated culture. The masculine vs. feminine dimension relates to human motivation, and may influence individuals’ work behaviours, so we wanted to examine if it also influenced their job crafting and performance (Schwartz, 1999). We proposed that ‘job crafting’ is a non-traditional, proactive employee strategy, that helps employees to remain healthy, motivated and performing well at work because they enjoy what they do. This is because individuals adjust their job characteristics (job demands and resources) to match their working preferences or needs, which may result in positive organizational behaviour.

Figure 1. Overall results for the significant relationships of Health Care Professionals in the United States and Netherlands.
We proposed that HCPs craft their jobs by seeking challenges and resources to positively regulate their (cognitive) demands, and conserve, or build their resources, which in turn can enhance their performance outcomes. Seeking resources was expected to be higher in feminine cultures (NL) because they place more stock on building resources, relationships and solidarity, while masculine cultures (US) are expected to seek challenges since they are more result-oriented, and focus on working hard, completing work duties and competition (Hofstede, 2001). HCPs may also reduce their demands when they become overwhelming (hindering) to avoid burnout, but since patient-lives are at-stake, this may be viewed unfavorably by colleagues and could result in negative work outcomes. Since masculine cultures are viewed as competitive and female as supportive, we expected this to occur more in female cultures (NL).

Within a cross-sectional, cross-cultural design, we tested and found support for a structural model, where all paths between the variables were the same for the two cultures (Figure 1). We also examined cultural (mean-level) differences and similarities on variables of interest. Differences were present on the job demands (cognitive demands and work pressure) and on a job resource (social support), as well as on all job crafting dimensions (seeking challenges and resources, reducing demands).

**Important findings**

The most notable findings from this study were that we established a model that represented samples from the US and NL (see Figure 1). Supporting our hypothesis we found that job demands had a positive relationship with seeking resources, and that job resources had a positive relationship with seeking challenges and resources. Additionally, reducing demands had a negative relationship with task and contextual performance, while seeking resources had a positive relationship with task and creative performance. However, unexpectedly, job demands did not significantly relate to seeking challenges and seeking resources, while job resources had a negative relationship with reducing demands. The high level of job demands may explain these results, along with the view that high demands are normal and unchangeable.

After examining the established cross-cultural model we explored the mean similarities or differences that existed between the two cultures. Results revealed that US HCPs had higher job demands (work pressure and cognitive demands) and reduced their demands more than NL HCPs. Moreover, NL HCPs had higher job resources (social support) and sought more resources than US HCPs. The results based on masculine and feminine cultures were almost all in line with our expectations, except that the US HCPs reduced their demands more than NL HCPs, and US HCPs did not significantly seek challenges more than NL HCPs.

By developing a cross-cultural model of how HCPs’ work environments influence their proactive behaviour (job crafting) and performance, this research aimed to expand scientific and practical knowledge on employee proactive organizational behaviour. Further research testing this model in other cultures and disciplines is needed.

**References**


**EAOHP Article Summary based on:**


**Upcoming Conference & Events**

- **Challenging Times: Developing Workplaces for Sustainable Work and Retaining an Ageing Workforce**
  - September 13th, 2016
  - London, United Kingdom

- **Changing working conditions in Europe:**
  - Moving towards better work: Overview report of Eurofound’s sixth European Working Conditions Survey
  - November 17th, 2016
  - Brussels, Belgium

- **Work, Stress, and Health 2017:**
  - Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities
  - June 7-10th, 2017
  - Minneapolis, USA

- **European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology**
  - Enabling Change through Work and Organizational Psychology
  - May 17-20th, 2017
  - Dublin, Ireland
During the last EAOHP conference in Athens we invited presentations for the Early Career Researcher Forum. The purpose of this forum was to provide a platform for PhD students and recent PhD graduates to showcase their research to a larger international audience. The idea was to break the format of a conventional presentation, and to provide a flexible and snappy format, as some researchers may not have a full paper yet.

We also invited two academics, Norbert Semmer from the University of Bern, and Maria Karanika-Murray from Nottingham Trent University, to share their personal experiences, and provide advice to Early Career Researchers and the audience.

Five researchers presented in two general categories:

- **The Grand Doctoral Plan** - A three minute presentation with the use of two slides to explain the research plan and initial ideas, and the (potential) expected added value to knowledge and practice
- **Just After Completion**: A five minute presentation on the added value to knowledge and practice of the research, with the use of five slides followed by some personal reflection.

This format worked very well! The topics spread across very different areas of Occupational Health Psychology, and the research was done in various industries. For two presenters it was the first time that they spoke at a scientific conference, an encouraging outcome of this forum!

The discussion and reflection points addressed in detail:

A PhD can lead to many different careers, not just to an academic career, but there are many other opportunities in industry, in public services, or as a self-employed psychologist.

‘Do not necessarily focus on an academic career. There are many atrocities in the academic world. However, in other contexts there are also atrocities. But they will be different from the ones you have in the academic world’ (citation Norbert Semmer).

It is essential to have passion for the topic of the research, not just to choose a topic that is easy to complete, or easy to publish. Also a passion for learning, and keeping an open mind when progressing with research makes a difference. OHP is an exciting field and constantly changing.

It is not advisable to choose a topic that is too narrow. Although this may lead to highly specialized expertise, career opportunities may be limited. Modern OHP research and practice span

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**Crossword Puzzle**

*Answers on page 18*

**Down**

1. Job strain has been linked with ______ disease
2. Incongruent effort and reward
3. Parametric test comparing two independent means
4. Factors of personality
5. Vigour, dedication, absorption
6. The JD-R Model contains two pathways: The health impairment process and the ______ process
7. Austrian psychologist
8. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi introduced the psychological concept of __________
9. The series of studies following British civil servants
10. Changing meaning or identities of one’s work

**Across**

3. NIOSH ______ Worker Health
9. Exhaustion
10. Argued conceptually similar to autonomy
13. Desk based workers may be at risk for a ______ lifestyle
14. European student exchange programme
15. 2018 Academy Conference
16. Involving employees is crucial in any intervention
17. Research over time
18. Disorders including depression and bipolar
several topic areas, and require the ability to work more and more in multidisciplinary contexts, and to have an openness to different perspectives. Sometimes a PhD topic develops in different ways than were planned at the start. Staying flexible and having a potential plan B, when things do not work out, may make a difference.

Networking and building relationships with peers were considered as crucial, not just for collaboration in the research, but also for emotional support during times of difficulties. To stay in close contact with supervisor, the university and relevant research networks was considered as important, as is easy to lose the connection.

It is advisable to consider the potential knowledge transfer of the research into practice from the start of the research. This may help to shape the research in a way that the added value becomes explicit. It may also help to build career opportunities.

Research in OHP is often guided by moral values, which are sometimes more or less explicit. It was suggested that the recognition of one’s own values (‘where am I coming from’) can be relevant to clearly shape the research, but also to master controversies with other researchers, and to stay on track. Values may include, for example, health equity, fairness and decent work for everybody, or thriving towards diversity and empowerment of individuals. An interesting article about values in occupational health and safety practice is by Zwetsloot GJLM et al. The core values that support health, safety and well-being at work. Safety and Health at Work, 4,4.2013.

We will build on this initiative to further build a Young Researcher Network within EAOHP.

**Practice Forum**

*By Peter Kelly*

The Practice Forum met at the EAOHP conference in Athens in April. This year the topic was police and wellbeing, in particular innovative interventions for enhancing police wellbeing at work. It was an opportunity for researchers to come together and share best practice.

It was also an opportunity to remember my mate Seb Gonzales, and his important work for EU-OSHA in Bilbao on psychosocial risk interventions. Seb was a force of nature in our field of work, and we must continue to use his passion and drive to take us forward. So long Seb. You were my mate, but more than anything, you are my motivation to carry on your work in improving workers’ lives.

Our profile as practitioners continues to grow and it’s likely to continue in this vein. It is a very changing landscape in Europe with the recent referendum result in the UK. We, as an academy of practitioners, will remain focused on delivering cross-European interventions, and continue to promote OHP practice at business and government levels. Now, more than ever, we need to show unity in our work and interventions.

### Call for Book Reviewers

EAOHP is looking to expand our team of book reviewers. There are a number of benefits to becoming a book reviewer, including:

- access to the latest books, allowing you to keep up to date with your areas of practice, education and/or research, or simply those that interest you most;
- getting your name known in relevant circles;
- expanding your CV;
- and you get to keep any book that you review!

Book reviews should be approximately 500 to 700 words in length. Books for review will be sent to you, so you will not incur any costs. If English is not your first language, don’t let this put you off – if you need it, you will be provided with help to prepare your review. If you would like to join our team of book reviewers, please email the Newsletter’s Book Reviews Editor, Gail Kinman (Gail.Kinman@beds.ac.uk) with details of your interests.
Inaugural Award

EAOHP & EU-OSHA ‘Eusebio Rial-González Innovation & Practice Award in Occupational Health Psychology’ Awarded to Karina Nielsen

To honour the life and work of Dr Eusebio Rial-González, EAOHP in collaboration with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work launched the ‘Eusebio Rial-González Innovation & Practice Award in OHP’ at the recent Academy Conference in Athens. This biennial Award is open to any OHP researcher or practitioner whose work has made a considerable contribution to the field of occupational health psychology. The candidate would either have contributed to the promotion of OHP through their innovative research or innovative practice. This could mean that their research has contributed to the development of innovative guidelines or the implementation of international, national or organizational OHP programmes that have made a difference in this area through their impact, or that they have played a key role in implementing such programmes.

The first award was given to Professor Karina Nielsen, from the University of East Anglia, UK. According to the Award Panel, Karina Nielsen has undoubtedly contributed to the development of OHP and in particular in relation to the evaluation of organizational interventions, leadership, and teamwork. She has been a pioneer in the area of organizational interventions to promote a healthy psychosocial work environment, especially her work on process evaluation of such interventions.

There is a great need for efficient, evidence-based interventions in the psychosocial risk management area and Karina Nielsen’s work provides a valuable contribution to this OHP area. The focus on how workers interact with interventions and process evaluation research are aspects of particular value in OHP research and practice.

Karina Nielsen’s work has been of exceptional quality in terms of research and has been translated into practice in several organizational contexts. She contributed with her knowledge to projects having a practical impact on workplaces in different European countries. There is further evidence of the impact of her work on workplaces, especially in Denmark.

Through a high number of peer reviewed publications and citations, invited conference keynotes, involvement in research networks, and practical activities in the Danish workplace amongst others, there is clear evidence that her work is of exceptional value. Her work clearly has great potential for the future as it is based on robust research and practice efforts conducted over about two decades.

Karina Nielsen’s work clearly seeks to promote a participatory approach especially in relation to organizational level interventions to promote a healthy psychosocial work environment. There is clearly excellent support for her work as evidenced both by OHP scholars and practitioners. The reported references have high quality and demonstrate an innovative approach in OHP research and practice.

Overall, there is very strong evidence that Karina Nielsen’s work has been pioneering in the area of organizational interventions to promote a healthy psychosocial work environment and is being used internationally. Its value for research and practice is clear through the excellent supporting evidence received. The supporting material provides evidence that her work is both innovative and exceptional quality, as specified in the Award criteria.

Karina Nielsen delivering her acceptance speech

The late Dr Eusebio Rial-González
The Academy, as part of the British Psychological Society’s annual Division of Occupational Psychology Conference, held a symposium entitled ‘Emerging Challenges and Priority Areas in Occupational Health Psychology: Future Directions in Research, Policy and Practice’. The symposium, held at the University of Nottingham on the 7th of January, brought together six papers that aimed to inspire interest and involvement in the question of sustainability in the health and safety context. More specifically, it drew attention to pertinent issues, challenges and advancements facing the sustainability of worker health and wellbeing across the research, policy and practice domains.

The symposium opened with an introduction by the discussant, Tom Cox (Birkbeck, University of London), to the Academy’s commitment to developing and protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of working people, and the healthiness of their organizations in the face of continuous change. He discussed the concept of sustainable working life, which is of growing interest and discussion at scientific, professional and governmental levels. Sustainability forms the heart and future of the field of OHP, dealing with issues of wellbeing and working life, and was the common thread across the presentations.

The first presentation by Juliet Hassard (Birkbeck, University of London) discussed the emerging concept of sustainable worker health with the aim of showing how OHP can inform the growing domain of enquiry. A reflection on current societal changes and emerging policy publications examining the concept of sustainable work (e.g., EUROFOUND, 2015a; EUROFOUND, 2015b) illustrates key challenges and priorities of bringing people into the labour market, and keeping them in employment until a later age. This highlights an important task for researchers and practitioners, to understand the drivers to, and barriers preventing individuals from participating in the workplace. As such, OHP can bring value to rethinking new solutions for working conditions and career paths, which can help workers retain their physical and mental health, productivity, and motivation over an extended working life. Peter Kelly (Health and Safety Executive) introduced EU-OSHA’s Healthy Workplaces Policy Campaign and the associated Healthy Workplace Good Practice Awards. He presented examples of winning and commended companies, which showed strong commitment and a participatory approach to risk management, and had successfully assessed, eliminated or reduced psychosocial risk and stress at work. Examples of innovative interventions across large multinationals and SMEs included senior management engagement, workforce diversity being taken into account, and participation of front-line, and other staff, in risk assessment and decision-making. Some outcomes reported included reduced sickness and absenteeism, increased quality of happiness with work, and reduced accident rates.

Gail Kinman (University of Bedfordshire) and Nathalie Saade (University of Nottingham) discussed in their presentations the implications of contemporary workplace changes to individuals, and the importance of this for sustainable wellbeing of employees. Gail Kinman focused on the important topic of work-life balance and sustainable working life, and highlighted some future directions and implications for practice. She discussed the benefits and risks of e-working, and alternative forms of working, with the growing use of information communication technology, in relation to worker wellbeing. Workers also may be prepared to trade work-life balance for organizational success and continued employment over the short term, without acknowledging serious implications for wellbeing over the longer term. Nathalie Saade followed by highlighting critical issues in presenteeism, tracing the origins of the concept, its definitions, and the antecedents and consequences. Her qualitative study demonstrated the complexity in the experience of presenteeism by working people across the UK, and its important interdependence with the psychosocial working environment. She furthermore illustrated the long-term consequences of mental illness, and more generally workers’ life satisfaction. Both presentations highlighted the importance of crafting creative, multi-level interventions, and the need for further...
development of models and measures towards the protection of sustainable worker wellbeing.

The presentation by Luis Torres (University of Nottingham) explored the role of Corporate Social Responsibility in the human development agenda, considering the case of gender equality in Latin America, following the discussion of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs; UN, 2013, 2014). From a public policy level and capabilities approach, he reported the results of a qualitative study implemented in Spanish speaking countries in the region. It highlighted the importance of moving from a legal framework to more voluntary initiatives, to increase the participation of the private sector in this agenda. As such, the link between corporate responsibility and gender equality, from a public policy view, illustrates a strong case of the important role the private sector plays in improving this, following the global agenda for SDGs.

The symposium closed with John Hamilton (Leeds Beckett University) illustrating the crucial link between theory and practice. Hamilton advocated that the rationale for employer interest in the wellbeing of employees not only ensured the health and wellbeing of people in terms of long-term illnesses, but to the organization’s bottom line as well. He discussed the importance of organizational work activity and individual wellbeing factors for employers to consider, and creatively illustrated the value of a theoretical framework in helping map out the drivers of engagement and wellbeing in a case of a UK higher education institution.

These presentations overall illustrated the crucial role psychologists play in the development of sustainability from a multi-level and multi-perspective lens in the health and safety context, while tracing important areas for further research and application. This symposium drew attention to important contemporary issues in times of change, and called upon the expertise of researchers and practitioners towards ensuring a healthy future, not only important for our discipline, but also for our way of life, our work, and working lives.

References


Contribute to the Newsletter!

This is your newsletter! We do our best to cover what interests you, but we need your input. We welcome contributions of all kinds – for instance, news of people in practice, education and/or research, including new professional appointments and contracts, conference announcements, reports of symposia, accounts of work in progress, and letters to the Editor.

We are keen to include content from any contributory discipline, in order that we can encourage discussion and debate around Occupational Health Psychology in its fullest possible sense. You don’t have to be an EAOHP member to contribute, nor do you have to be based in Europe. We welcome contributions from all parts of the globe. We will publish any item that is of interest to Newsletter readers (who number some 1,000 individuals worldwide).

If English is not your first language, don’t let this put you off – if you need it, you will be provided with help to prepare your item.

If you have a contribution for the Newsletter then just send it to a member of the Newsletter Team or, if you are undecided, get in touch with Sue Cowan or Kevin Teoh to discuss your ideas. See the back page of this Newsletter for our contact details.

Crossword Answers

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Academy Publications

The Occupational Health Psychologist: Published two times per annum. ISSN 1743-16737 (Online). Back copies can be downloaded at www.eaohp.org/newsletter.html

Work & Stress: A journal of work, health and organizations. Published by Taylor & Francis in association with the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology. ISSN 0267-8373


EAOHP — About Us

The European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology: the European representative body for the discipline. The Academy is a registered charity under English law (registered charity number 1115640) that exists to support research, education, and professional practice across Europe. This is achieved through a biennial conference, academic and practitioner-oriented publications, and the provision of small grants to individuals and groups.

Individuals with an interest in the application of scientific psychological principles and practices to occupational health issues are invited to join the Academy. Membership attracts a host of benefits including a free personal subscription to the Academy's affiliated journal, Work & Stress, as well as discounts on attendance at events.
GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

We are keen to publish many different kinds of articles, and we hope this will encourage a broad range of submissions. We welcome articles from people involved in practice, education and/or research in OHP and across the full range of contributory disciplines, and with a variety of levels of experience. If English is not your first language, don’t let this put you off – if you need it, you will be provided with help to prepare your item. We aim to publish three issues per year.

OHP research/practice

We welcome short reports (of no more than about 1000 words) of research findings, practice issues, case studies, brief literature reviews, and theoretical articles. This could be a valuable opportunity for you to disseminate information on your work both to academics and practitioners. When writing these reports please make them as accessible as possible to the broad readership of the Newsletter.

OHP briefings

We also welcome overviews of your OHP-related activities, or those of your research group, consultancy or organization. This type of article provides a useful insight into the sort of work that is being undertaken across the OHP world community. Additionally, this section enables the communication of policy developments that may have implications for OHP research, practice and education in your country. We ask that such articles are no longer than 1,200 words long.

Opportunities

We would be pleased to receive advertisements for job opportunities, internships or PhD studentships. If you have an opportunity that you would like to make our community aware of, please send a short description to the Editors.

Other articles

We welcome news, conference announcements, open letters regarding any OHP-related topics, responses to published articles and brief summaries (in English) of OHP issues that have been reported by your national news media.

We would be pleased to receive appropriate photographs to accompany your contributions.

Please email your questions, announcements or contributions to the Editors:

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