Chapter 9
Framing Workplace Innovation Through an Organisational Psychology Perspective: A Review of Current WPI Studies

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9.1 Introduction

The European Workplace Innovation Network (EUWIN) has defined workplace innovation (WPI) as a bundle of practices and programs involving changes in business structure, Human Resources management, the relationships with clients and suppliers, or in the work environment itself. From this perspective, what characterizes WPI are the improvements that it is supposed to engender, such as higher motivation at work, better working conditions for employees, increased labour productivity, innovation capability, market resilience, and overall business competitiveness. That is, according to this perspective, all enterprises, irrespective of their size, can benefit from WPI.

Given these potential benefits of WPI for organisational performance and employee well-being, it is not surprising that WPI has received substantial interest from policy-makers, practitioners and scholars from different fields. Indeed, it has come to be seen as a fundamental factor to rely on in order to successfully face intensifying global competition and technological advancement (Boxall and Purcell 2016). In particular, the multidisciplinary perspective to the study of WPI is evidenced in the simultaneous attention to the effects of introduced innovations on individuals (for example in terms of motivation, attitudes, engagement), and on the organisation as a whole.

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Nevertheless, this multidisciplinary focus on WPI has led to a variety of different conceptualisations based on the framework of study adopted. It seems that WPI has been investigated at different levels of analysis, for example, in terms of national programs and/or of organisational studies, and within different disciplines, i.e. sociology, management, and organisational behaviour. Even though such a heterogeneous body of literature may be considered to be a necessary multidisciplinary aspect in order to increase the understanding of WPI as a whole, it can create misunderstandings for practitioners who want to foster WPI inside organisations and need evidence of policy outcomes to rely on when making implementation decisions (Beauregard and Henry 2009).

In order to deepen our understanding of the effects of innovations in the workplace, a new integration between developments in theoretical and practical knowledge among different disciplines (Dhondt and Van Hootegem 2015) is needed. In this respect, one area of study, that is, work and organisational psychology (WOP), can provide important insights to promote a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the effective implementation of WPI because it focuses on the understanding of employee motivations, attitudes, and cognitions in the workplace.

In other words, integrating findings from research in WOP with findings from research on WPI could help us better define the linkages and mechanisms through which innovations in the workplace affect employees' attitudes and behaviours, as well as organisational performance. In particular, validated theoretical models and evidence from research in the WOP field provide a wide body of knowledge devoted to understanding how individual motivations, attitudes, and behaviours develop and change according to environmental and contextual influences. In turn, this could represent a relevant and valuable contribution to the understanding of WPI. That is, merging findings from studies investigating WPI and research in WOP could significantly advance both the research and the applied agendas regarding the design, implementation and evaluation of WPI inside organisations.

Therefore, this chapter aims to present an overview of studies on WPI with a specific focus on showing how WOP can contribute to this discussion. Such an approach supports the need for unpacking the mechanisms through which innovation impacts individual and organisational outcomes (Takeuchi et al. 2009).

Before exploring the intersections between WPI and WOP that may contribute to the enrichment of our understanding of WPI, we will present an overview of the concept of WPI, in order to clarify how it has been conceptualised, what it constitutes of and what outcomes are expected from it.

9.2 Domain of WPI

The conceptualisation of WPI has been characterised by definitional variety both among academics and practitioners. Nevertheless, one common feature found across these various conceptualisations has been a tendency to define WPI in terms of its outcomes, specifically, quality of working life and organisational performance

(Pot and Koningsveld 2009). This focus on defining WPI by means of its outcomes rather than by its contents (i.e., practices, policies and initiatives per se) appears tautological because it does not question whether and how WPI interventions are indeed effective in fostering better working experiences and higher organisational performance. On the contrary, it merely assumes that innovations have a positive impact on workers and organisations (Boxall and Macky 2007), a tendency referred to as the maximization fallacy about innovations (Ramos et al. 2016), without considering the specific mechanisms involved in the successful implementation of such practices.

A notable exception to this is the definition of WPI proposed in the report of the third European Company Survey, which focuses on actual practices, as opposed to expected outcomes of WPI. Specifically, it defines WPI as a "developed and implemented practice or combination of practices that either structurally (through division of labour) or culturally (in terms of empowerment of staff) enable employees to participate in organisational change and renewal and hence improve the quality of working life and organisational performance" (Oeij et al. 2015, p. 14). Paying particular attention to the interventions constituting WPI, this conceptualisation identifies two main types of processes pertaining to the introduction of innovations in the workplace: the former concerns structural changes related to production systems and the design of the organisational model; the latter focuses on social aspects fostering positive work behaviours and attitudes, and promoting higher motivation at work.

Even though such a definition is useful to disentangle the different dimensions involved in WPI implementation, it must be noted that the factors constituting both of the proposed dimensions are naturally intertwined, in that institutions are embedded in culture and individuals are embedded in both culture and institutions. That is, the willingness to implement structural changes in the organisation is grounded in values and norms, which are elements of the organisational culture. Likewise, implemented practices aimed at developing and fostering a particular vision of the organisational culture need structural support in order to be implemented. Such an understanding of the interdependent nature of organisational culture and structure is crucial, if WPI implementations are to be effective.[1]

That being said, the clear distinction between processes that are related to structure and processes that are related to culture provides researchers with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the extent to which innovations are associated with positive outcomes for employees and organisations. That is, conceptualising WPI as consisting of these two dimensions, i.e. structure orientation and culture orientation, allows researchers to unpack which specific features of WPI may benefit from being investigated within a specific research field rather than within another. In this context, WOP researchers and practitioners could provide important insights in understanding and supporting the *culture orientation* dimension of WPI, for example, by means of job redesign interventions aimed at fostering

[1]The authors wish to thank Marta Strumińska-Kutra for this precious argumentation.

positive organisational outcomes, such as work engagement and organisational commitment. On the other hand, scholars and practitioners from other research fields, such as management science and sociology, may have more to contribute to our understanding of the *structure orientation* dimension of WPI, providing their knowledge concerning the design of organisational processes and the management of the relationships between the organisation and its stakeholders.

Additionally, in line with the need to clearly focus on the nature of WPI rather than on its outcomes, some authors have suggested that WPI could represent a *special capacity of the organisation* that consists of four sources, namely strategic orientation, smarter organising, flexible working, and product-market improvement (Eeckelaert et al. 2012; Oeij et al. 2014). This perspective, rather than focusing on the nature of the processes constituting WPI (i.e. cultural or structural), highlights the different nature of the sources of WPI strategies. Specifically, it focuses on how external and internal organisational conditions influence the adoption of specific policies and programs. Within this framework, strategic orientation and product-market improvement are policies that focus on conditions external to the organisation that need to be taken into account. Smarter organising and flexible working represent policies that focus on internal organisational issues (Eeckelaert et al. 2012) and are to be considered the main areas in which WOP professionals inside organisations can work on to foster the effectiveness of innovations in the workplace.

In addition, this framing of WPI sources in terms of organisational capacity supports the argument of the bi-dimensional nature of WPI, given that each source may be applied in both a structural and/or a cultural fashion. For example, when the final goal is that of re-organising work in terms of division of labour, a structural orientation will be adopted. However, as previously stated, a structural change in the organisation of work needs to be rooted in a specific cultural dimension. That is, prompting a cultural orientation could represent an alternative or complementary strategy in order to promote the reorganisation of work based on the involvement of employees in the adopted structural changes.

However, although useful for describing and defining WPI, the distinction between these two main dimensions is, in practice, an artifice. Once again, we want to highlight the fact that the factors involved in workplace innovations are interdependent. In other words, the structure and culture orientations are deeply intertwined and result, to different extents, in the aforementioned outcomes: quality of working life (QWL) and organisational performance (OP).

Despite definitional agreement in identifying QWL and OP as the two main expected outcomes of WPI, very limited attempts have been made to clearly define indicators for QWL and OP. In particular, although QWL is a rather old concept (Davis and Cherns 1975), there is still debate regarding its nature (Martel and Dupuis 2006) and no commonly accepted definition has emerged. Studies investigating the QWL-WPI relationship have primarily measured it in terms of organisational commitment or job satisfaction (Dhondt et al. 2014; Oeij et al. 2012). We are unaware of studies investigating how work engagement or work-life balance may be affected by the introduction of WPI. In this respect, taking a WOP

perspective on WPI can provide potential advantages because evidence from research in this field offers important explanations of the factors enhancing positive work and organisational attitudes, which are likely to constitute important dimensions of QWL.

Drawing on these premises, the following paragraph will be devoted to explore how the adoption of a WOP framework could contribute to a deeper understanding of factors constituting WPI and its potential effects.

9.3 Intersections Between WOP and WPI

It has been argued that, in order to foster the success of proposed innovation policies in the workplace, it is necessary to consider and imagine how *the pattern of multiple proposed actions* would be linked to the achievement of pursued outcomes (Delery and Doty 1996). That is, given that a policy aimed at fostering innovation in the workplace is introduced within an already established organisation, it is fundamental to consider how the whole range of factors already present in the organisation could impact the effectiveness of the policy, as well as interact with it.

In this regard, WOP research and, in particular, theoretical models developed to investigate how organisational design is related to work attitudes and behaviours, could provide a valuable framework for WPI-policy design. In fact, they would provide not only a strong evidence-based approach to policy design but also the opportunity for being tailored to the unique needs of the organisation. Accordingly, some WPI literature has already adopted a WOP perspective to the study of organisational design aimed at understanding how it can influence employees' health and QWL.

Specifically, current studies have mainly referred to the *Job Demand-Control Model* (JDC) developed by Karasek and Theorell (1992), Karasek (1979). The JDC assumes that work organisation, and, in particular, high control in performing tasks and activities at work, is a key-factor in transforming job demands into opportunities for learning as opposed to risks and stress drivers (Holman et al. 2012). Although the WOP literature has provided considerable support for the hypothesis that the combination of high job demands and low job control is an important predictor of psychological strain and illness (Schnall et al. 1994), support for the hypothesis that control can moderate the negative effects of high demands on well-being is less consistent (de Jonge and Kompier 1997; Van der Doef and Maes 1999). Hence, although the JDC might be useful to gain an understanding of the relevance of organisational design on employee well-being and organisational sustainability, support for the model has been relatively mixed. Moreover, within WOP research more recent organisational models have emerged that factor in a wider range of organisational resources and demands than just job control and work overload (Bakker and Demerouti 2007). However, to our knowledge, it appears that the literature on WPI has never established a connection with these more recent models.

In this regard, the *Job Demands-Resources Model* (JD-R) (Demerouti et al. 2001) could provide an important theoretical basis for the design, implementation and monitoring of WPI practices inside organisations. The JD-R assumes that, whereas every occupation may have its own specific risk factors associated with job stress, these factors can be clustered into two broad categories, i.e. job demands and job resources. Hence, it goes beyond the limits of the JDC, which basically considers only a limited amount of the several factors influencing employees' work outcomes (i.e. work overload, time pressure, and job control) and may be applied to several occupational settings, irrespective of specific professional demands and resources (Bakker and Demerouti 2007). Job demands refer to organisational features requiring employee physical and psychological effort that can result in psychological stress, whilst job resources refer to all those elements in the work environment that help individuals achieve their goals, stimulate personal growth and reduce job demands by facing them. In addition, the JD-R posits that two different underlying psychological processes play a role in the development of negative (job strain) and positive work outcomes. Specifically, it argues that chronic job demands lead to employees' feelings of exhaustion whilst job resources have a motivational potential that foster higher work engagement, individual performance, and work motivation. Research on the JD-R has found strong empirical support for the idea that job demands are predictors of negative work outcomes such as burnout and exhaustion, whilst job resources have been found to predict higher levels of work engagement, extra-role performance, organisational commitment and lower absence duration (Bakker et al. 2003a, b, 2004; Schaufeli and Bakker 2004). Moreover, there is evidence that job resources have positive effects on the relationship between job demands and well-being. Specifically, studies have shown that higher autonomy, feedback, perceived social support and a high-quality relationship with the supervisor can buffer the negative effects of work overload, emotional and physical demands, and work-home interference (Bakker et al. 2005).

These results suggest that the JD-R could represent an important tool for policy-makers and WOP professionals who want to foster WPI inside organisations, because it provides a clear framework for the implementation of innovations in the workplace. Besides providing an evidence-based account for understanding the relationships between resources, demands and work and organisational outcomes, this model provides a paradigmatic approach to the study of organisational variables that influence employees' attitudes and behaviours when introducing WPI. For example, it can represent a reliable means to identify which organisational resources are in specific need of innovations, or, what job demands need to be rethought in order to render them challenging rather than exhausting.

Further, a focus on the positive outcomes related to high job resources permits to shed light on the nature of QWL, which, as previously mentioned, remains a debated concept in need of further clarification. In this respect, applying the JD-R to the study of several organisations operating in a wide range of sectors provided evidence of effects deriving from the demands-resources relationship that are relevant to both QWL and OP. For what concerns the former, the study of organisations through the lens of the JD-R shows that job resources represent one of the

most important drivers of work engagement (Bakker and Demerouti 2008), which is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al. 2002). Moreover, studies have found that engaged employees have high levels of energy, are enthusiastic about their work and are often fully immersed in it (May et al. 2004). Given that QWL constitutes a relatively vague concept related to the well-being of workers, work engagement seems to be a more concrete concept that could constitute one core-dimension of QWL. In addition, work engagement may also potentially affect OP. For instance, research investigating the link between work-engagement and OP, despite the substantial heterogeneity in the way in which performance was measured and conceptualised, found support for the higher engagement-higher performance link (Demerouti and Bakker 2006; Salanova et al. 2005; Xanthopoulou et al. 2007).

Given the above research evidence from a JD-R perspective and given that QWL and OP are defined as the two major outcomes of WPI, the JD-R framework appears to be an effective approach to promote WPI practices that foster high QWL and subsequently, higher OP. Moreover, since policies aiming to foster work engagement must be well-integrated and connected in order to be effective (Gruman and Saks 2011), investigating ways to promote WPI through the JD-R may be effective in not only designing innovative policies aimed at improving job resources but also at harmonising job demands and resources, thereby, promoting higher QWL and OP.

In an attempt to facilitate the integration of research on WOP and WPI and to disentangle the mechanisms underlying the effective implementation of WPI policies, in the following section we present evidence from research on three main concepts: job autonomy, job flexibility and participation in organisational life.

9.4 Examining Current WPI Studies Assuming a WOP Perspective

In this section, we examine findings from WPI studies focusing on three constructs that represent a set of essential, yet not exhaustive, organisational factors that policy makers mainly rely upon when aiming to foster WPI inside organisations: job autonomy, job flexibility, and participation in organisational life. The rationale for sampling these concepts was inspired by the definition of WPI as consisting of a structure and a culture orientation, which, as stated, although useful from a theoretical point of view, must be seen as artificial when it comes to actual practices in organisations. However, assuming this distinction for research purposes helps us understand how interventions specifically aimed at changing organisational design or organisational climate could have an effect on QWL and/or OP.

In identifying relevant literature, we referred to the definitional distinction proposed in the Third European Company Survey and searched for the main

psychological constructs representing the contents of the cultural and structural dimensions among current WPI studies. In order to do so, we identified via computer (i.e. PsycINFO, Web of Science, Google Scholar database, which mainly include peer-reviewed journal articles and therefore were considered relevant to our review) WPI publications of the last two decades. Specifically, we searched for studies focused on the relationship between WPI and the three core constructs mentioned above by using the following keywords in relation to (i.e. using "and" as a search option) job autonomy, job flexibility, and participation in organisational life: workplace innovation, quality of working life, high-involvement work systems, organisational innovation, high performance work systems, strategic human resource management, HPWS (the acronym of high performance work systems), organisational climate.

We decided to include only English language sources in order to focus on a transcultural level of analysis. Moreover, these keywords were supposed to appear in the title and/or in the abstract.

We acknowledge that these inclusion/exclusion criteria have factually excluded a large body of WOP research on the three core-constructs considered here (i.e. job autonomy, job flexibility, and participation in organisational life). However, this contribution aims at moving us further along the path of introducing a link between WPI and WOP by focusing on the current state of the art in WPI research. Such an approach aims at fostering future investigations that focus on understanding how WOP could more exhaustively contribute to, and enrich, WPI.

Regarding the papers eventually considered for the analysis (13), it appears that the majority of the identified studies were published in journals in the fields of economics, management, and sociology, with limited references to journals in the field of applied psychology. This limited amount of identified articles is most likely due to our adoption of the proposed definition of WPI as constituted by two main dimensions and the three specific constructs under investigation, which could also be interpreted as a signal of the need for more definitional clarity in the field of WPI.

Table 9.1 reports an overview of the studies considered, specifying the relationships among the different dimensions of WPI, and QWL and OP.

9.4.1 Job Autonomy

Job autonomy is defined as the amount of discretion employees have to carry out tasks, to establish methods of work and the speed or rate of it (Hackman and Oldham 1976; Oldham et al. 1976). Overall, the positive effects of job autonomy on employee well-being, motivation (Karasek 1979; Parker 2003; Singh 2000), and performance have been found to lead to positive organisational outcomes, especially when combined with other organisational practices (Appelbaum et al. 2000). Below, a selected number of studies will be reported that provide an overview of

Table 9.1 Overview of studies included in the review

References	Methodology		WPI dimensions			Outcomes	
			Structure		Culture		
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Job autonomy	Job flexibility	Participation	QWL	OP
Bond and Flaxman (2006)	X		X				+
Dhondt et al. (2014)	X		X		X	+	
Holman et al. (2009)	X		X				+
Humphrey et al. (2007)	X		X			+	+
Oeij and Vaas (2016)	X			X			+
Oeij et al. (2012)	X		X	X		+	+
Oeij et al. (2014)	X	X	X	X	X	+	+
Oeij et al. (2015)		X	X	X	X	+	+
Parker et al. (1997)	X		X				+
Preenen et al. (2015)	X			X			+
Preenen et al. (2016)	X		X				+
Taris et al. (2003)	X		X				+
Zhou et al. (2011)	X			X			+

Note *QWL* Quality of Working Life; *OP* Organisational Performance; + Positive relationships found

findings regarding the relationship between job autonomy and organisational outcomes in terms of QWL and OP.

The first study we will discuss is one conducted by Preenen et al. (2016), which investigated the relationship between employees' job autonomy, self-reported company performance (in terms of revenue and profit), and the moderating role of company maturity among 3311 companies in the Netherlands. They found a main effect for the job autonomy-company revenue relationship. In addition, they found that company maturity moderated the job autonomy-organisational performance link. Specifically, job autonomy was positively associated with employees' perception of company revenue and profit growth, but only for young companies, aged two to five years. Such a moderating role of company age is of particular interest given that, generally, job autonomy is hypothesised to be positively related to organisational outcomes, regardless of the company's maturity. Overall, these findings support the assumption that job autonomy is a key feature to foster positive perceptions of a company's growth (Preenen et al. 2016).

In another study among 2359 call centres in 16 countries, Holman et al. (2009) explored how decisions about work design affect organisational outcomes. They found empirical evidence that job autonomy was negatively associated with voluntary turnover and labour costs, indicating that higher job autonomy enabled employees to better manage and cope with task demands.

Regarding the relationship between job autonomy and indicators of QWL, such as active learning behaviours and higher involvement within the work environment, a longitudinal study conducted within the JDC framework among 876 teachers found a positive effect of job autonomy in promoting high levels of learning (Taris et al. 2003). This finding is in line with arguments made by Parker et al. (1997) whereby job autonomy seems to be a mechanism allowing hands-on learning which gives employees the opportunity to interact with their environment and, at the same time, become more involved in and more knowledgeable about it. Moreover, as noted by the authors, such an experience might then potentially lead to a broader ownership of problems and a more proactive view of performance, interpreted, for example, in terms of the learning process itself (Parker et al. 1997).

In another longitudinal study among call centre workers in the UK, job control, along with individual psychological flexibility and the interaction between these two factors, was shown to predict people's ability to learn a new ITC application, employees' mental health and job performance (Bond and Flaxman 2006).

Overall, research evidence suggests that autonomy, beyond fostering job satisfaction and well-being, could also enhance performance, for example, by enabling quicker responses to problems, due to a more developed understanding of roles (Parker et al. 1997). Finally, job autonomy appears to be an essential element in allowing workers to establish how to pursue their goals and to redefine or optimise paths toward goal accomplishment (Humphrey et al. 2007).

9.4.2 Job Flexibility

Defining flexible work as a dimension of WPI directed at optimising personnel availability, Oeij and Vaas (2016) investigated the role of WPI on perceived organisational performance and on sickness absence. In this study, WPI was conceptualised as a special capacity of the organisation consisting of four sources, as previously described (i.e. strategic orientation, smarter organising, flexible working, and product market improvement). Using data collected from a sample of Dutch for profit and non-profit organisations, they found that, among all sources considered, flexible work and organising smarter were those that contributed the least to perceived organisational performance. As an explanation for this surprising finding, the authors suggest that externally oriented resources, such as strategic-orientation and product-market improvement, might be more visible to employees than their counterparts, i.e. flexible work and organising smarter. This, availability bias, in turn could lead to an overestimation of the effects of the externally oriented sources and an underestimation of the effects of the internal sources on performance. Overall, even though reporting a weak effect of flexible work on OP, this study represents an important contribution to the understanding of WPI due to its focus on the differential effects of various sources. Such an approach permits to investigate how different dimensions of WPI do or do not contribute to expected organisational outcomes, i.e. QWL and OP. Moreover, this study found that organisations more active with WPI reported higher perceived organisational performance than organisations less active with WPI. In addition, this relationship was strongest for organisations that were active on more than one of the cited resources simultaneously, confirming the importance of taking a systemic approach to the introduction of WPI.

In another study, using longitudinal firm-level data, Zhou et al. (2011) investigated the role of flexibility on innovation. Specifically, they found that functional flexibility (i.e. the ability of firms to reallocate labour in their internal labour markets, by relying on training that allows personnel to carry out a wider range of tasks) was positively associated with innovation by reducing barriers to knowledge sharing and allowing the building of multiple competencies among employees (Zhou et al. 2011), which may represent elements for improving QWL.

Focusing on internal labour flexibility practices (ILFPs), which reflect the measures that companies take to help their employees in flexibly performing different tasks and roles in their organisation, Preenen et al. (2015) investigated the relationships between these and labour productivity and innovation performance at the company level, in two studies conducted among 4648 companies in the Netherlands. Results showed that ILFPs stimulate labour productivity and company innovation as reported by directors or HR managers.

Taken together, these findings support the value of a deeper investigation of how flexible policies may represent a resource for companies in adjusting to constant dynamic circumstances, by stimulating innovative and creative behaviour along with other positive organisational outcomes such as commitment, learning and

knowledge sharing (Preenen et al. 2015), which may constitute dimensions of QWL.

9.4.3 Participation in Organisational Life

Workplace participation, usually defined as the degree to which employees influence decision-making in organisations, is recognized as one of the major drivers of positive outcomes for organisations, such as generic organisational efficiency and workers' well-being and health (Knudsen et al. 2011).

Studies carried out to investigate the role of participation in the workplace identified different ways in which it can be exercised, such as by individual employees, teams and by employee representatives (Hagen and Trygstad 2009; Walters and Nichols 2007). Nowadays, organisations need to find a more dynamic way of conceptualising workplace participation in terms of new job configurations, so as to be able to face the needs and challenges posed by new work and career patterns. That is, more recent HRM practices developed on the basis of the current trends in WOP research tend to promote organisational innovations fostering bottom-up approaches to deal with the needs of the current workforce (Demerouti 2015), which, in turn, improve working conditions by means of higher job control. This type of approach is necessarily based on higher employee participation in organisational life, since individuals are encouraged to adjust their work environment in order to promote and achieve higher QWL and OP.

Knudsen et al. (2011) explored whether employee participation influenced the quality of the work environment and worker well-being at 11 Danish workplaces. Findings from interviews with employees and managers and from questionnaires administered to employees revealed that only democratically governed workplaces led to the experience of a high quality of the psychosocial work environment among employees. Nevertheless, this study also suggests that, when control systems in the workplace systematically demand more from employees than what they can deliver, participation cannot buffer the negative effects of the control system on employees' psychosocial well-being (Busck et al. 2010). These findings suggest that there is a need to take into account the level of job control to allow for the positive effects of participation to emerge.

In addition, the role of organisational level decision latitude on organisational commitment, which may represent a facet of QWL, has been investigated in a study among 2048 employees from six different European countries. Using data from the European Working Condition Survey of 2010, Dhondt et al. (2014) found empirical evidence that among the three different dimensions of job control, i.e. job autonomy, functional support and organisational level decision latitude (OLDL), job autonomy is related to subjective well-being only in combination with OLDL. This suggests that organisations would need to consider all the three dimensions in order to foster QWL. Moreover, they also found that functional support and OLDL are related to organisational commitment more strongly than job autonomy, and that

organisational commitment was highest when all the three dimensions were present at the same time (Dhondt et al. 2014). That is, to enhance organisational commitment and well-being, which represent two dimensions of QWL, the different dimensions of job control should be aligned and promoted congruently.

9.5 Conclusions

This contribution aimed at proposing a conceptual integration of the domains of WPI and WOP, in order to deepen our understanding of the potential advantages offered by such an integrative perspective to innovation in organisations. Drawing on the conceptualisation of WPI as composed of two dimensions, i.e. a structural and a cultural orientation, we identified three main constructs that represent organisational practices at the basis of WPI interventions: job autonomy and job flexibility (i.e., the structural orientation of WPI), and participation in organisational life (i.e., the cultural dimension of WPI).

According to Klein et al. (2001), a strong climate for innovation implementation, created by the support of management through a clear and strategic vision for it, represents a fundamental factor in order to create an institutional context informing employees that implementation of innovation is important and even rewarded (Choi and Chang 2009). This reasoning is aligned with the vision of an innovation environment where institutions, organisational cultures and individuals are intertwined and reciprocally influence each other. That is, it suggests that higher QWL and OP are simultaneously achievable when all these different levels of analysis are taken into account as potential factors influencing the introduced innovations. Based on these premises, the first practical issue to be addressed when designing WPI refers to the creation of a supportive implementation context in which management support and encouragement toward innovation can foster employees' positive beliefs in this regard (Purvis et al. 2001; Russell and Hoag 2004). In achieving this, the contribution of WOP research is particularly relevant.

To conclude, evidence from research reported in the cited studies shows the intertwined nature of organisational factors in promoting higher QWL and OP. Indeed, it supports the need to simultaneously consider a multitude of features affecting WPI processes aimed at improving QWL and OP, which, in turn, implies taking a systemic perspective on WPI implementation.

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