

Ross Kemble

Employee voices in the UK of changes to work given post global financial crisis – Updated viewing? (conducted together with Diane Keeble-Ramsay)

Abstract

Managers are employees, yet there remains a dearth of the examination of the employees' experiences by way of the employees' voices, by an acceptance of studies of management as a sufficient reflection of organisational actions (see Conway and Monks, 2009; Hale and Tamangani, 1996; Hale, 2005). Following the global financial crisis (GFC), emerging in 2008, and the subsequent precarious nature of the UK economy, we commenced research investigating the evolving nature of UK working practices. Given the limited empirical research prior to GFC of post 2000 changes to the workplace, Hassard, McCann and Morris's publication, *Managing in a Modern Corporation* (Hassard et al, 2009) provided a platform foundation given their post 2000 observations of multinational financial services companies. Hassard et al had undertaken research with middle-managers between 2003 and 2007 (McCann, Hassard and Morris, 2004; Morris, Hassard and McCann, 2006, 2008; McCann, Morris and Hassard, 2008) founding their observations within Braverman's (1974) *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of the Work in the Twentieth Century*.

Our study strived to engage with the subjective employee experience of management, and new managerialism (Klikauer, 2013), and beginning a conversation around the issues of resistance or consent to changing working practice by considering the lived experience of change to inform re-thinking of managerial theory. By trying to gain meanings employees hold and own, the starting point of the research lain with rich empirical accounts of 'managing' provided by employees which provide some insights into their interpretation and of communicated expectations within of daily workplace In so doing, we recognised the constraints of qualitative research bound by constructions of reality from pre-coded themes. In order to establish a dialogue and invite methodological plurality into

research to overcome traditional ways of thinking about working practices, thus counter-balancing concepts (Alvesson and Karreman, 2011) and inviting reflexivity of the 'cultural turns' (Bachmann-Medick, 2009) from employee discourse to develop new understandings is considered. Attempting to reflect from a critical perspective, the paper considers potential sense making to advance understanding of the effects of the GFC upon the nature of work.

References

Alvesson, M and Karreman, D (2011) Decolonializing discourse: Critical reflections on organizational discourse analysis, *Human Relations*, September 2011 vol 64, no 9 p 1121-1146

Bachmann-Medick, D (2009) *Cultural Turns. Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften*, 3rd new rev. Ed. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt

Conway, E. And Monks, K., (2009). 'Unravelling the complexities of high commitment: an employee-level analysis', *Human Resource Management Journal*. Vol. 19, No. 2, pp.140–158

Hales, C., and Tamangani, Z., (1996), An Investigation of the Relationship between Organizational Structure, Managerial Role Expectations and Managers' Work Activities, *Journal of Management Studies*, vol. 33, no. 6

Hales, C., (2005) Rooted in Supervision, Branching into Management: Continuity and Change in the Role of First-Line Manager, *Journal of Management Studies*, vol. 42, no:3 May 2005

Hassard J, ., McCann, L. and Morris, J., (2009). *Managing in Modern Organisation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Klikauer, T., (2013) *Managerialism: A Critique of an Ideology*, Palgrave McMillan: Hampshire and New York

McCann, L., Hassard, J. and Morris, J., (2004). Middle managers, the new organizational ideology and corporate restructuring: comparing Japanese and Anglo-American management systems. *Competition and Change*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp.27–44

McCann, L., Hassard, J., Morris, J', (2010) Restructuring Managerial Labour in the USA, the UK and Japan: Challenging the Salience of 'Varieties of Capitalism', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 48, No. 2, pp. 347–374

Morris, J., Hassard, J. and McCann, L., (2006). New organizational forms, human resource management and structural convergence? A study of Japanese organizations. *Organization studies*, 27(10), pp.1485–1511

Morris, J., Hassard, J. and McCann, L., (2008). The resilience of institutionalized capitalism': Managing managers undershareholder capitalism'andmanagerial capitalism'. *Human Relations*, 61(5), pp.687–710