THE ENGINEERING PROJECT ORGANIZATION JOURNAL, 2016
VOL. 6, NOS. 2–4, 62–63
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21573727.2016.1271493

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Special Issue Editorial Volume 6, Issue 2

Welcome to a special issue presenting the guest editors' picks of the excellent work submitted and presented at the 2016 Engineering Project Organization Conference (EPOC) in Cle Elem, Washington, USA. The theme of EPOC 2016 was Building Resilience, building upon the traditional all-encompassing mix of themes representing scholarship on engineering project organizations: *infrastructure development and governance, project- and program-based enterprises, inter- and intra-firm coordination, international project organizations and enterprises.* In addition to these themes, EPOC 2016 also included an engaged scholarship methods plenary session that sought to engender new conversations regarding novel methods for understanding the multifaceted phenomena of engineering projects.

In line with the mission of EPOC – to encourage and support disruptive ideas cutting across a variety of traditional academic disciplines, project-based and policy-making practices - we are delighted to co-edit this special issue of EPOJ to showcase the most promising pieces of work presented at EPOC 2016. The special issue presents four contributions, which were pre-selected on the basis of reviewers' comments and the papers' fit with EPOJ scholarship. After submitting their work and presenting it at the conference, we then asked the authors to continue working on their papers in order to strengthen the contributions and bring them up to standard that is expected for EPOJ publication. We should also mention that as special issue co-editors we - quite ruthlessly - requested authors to work very intensely and on a very short timeline to enable the inclusion of the papers in this special issue – for which we gratefully acknowledge their willingness to persevere.

As well as making individually valuable contributions, the four papers published here exemplify the broad range of scholarship in the project organization research community. We believe that the contributions presented in this issue represent the true EPOC mindset: combining the excitement of theoretical eclecticism with ambition to generate groundbreaking ideas that make a difference to the practice and policy of engineering project organization worldwide.

The first paper, by Kanjanabootra, was a result of the methods plenary. In this paper, Kanjanabootra describes the theory and method of design science, as applied to engineering project research. The paper approaches this innovative method as a tool to enable researchers to better serve practice through a collaborative process. This is an important contribution to the EPOJ knowledge trajectory, which acknowledges the active role of the practitioner in the knowledge co-production process. This work calls for further studies drawing upon design science as a valuable research method. For the EPOS research community, a key aspect of this method is actively engaging and supporting the practitioners who design and deliver engineering projects as well as those who create policies about such projects, rather than treating such individuals as research subjects.

The second paper, by Sakhrani, tackles the largely neglected role of designers' subjective experience in generating value through infrastructure public-private partnerships. By focusing on decision-making and negotiation in early stage conception of a P3 project, this work explores the importance of designer experience and psychosocial dynamics for outcomes of early stage design and project negotiation processes. Addressing the objective value of subjective value is an important contribution to EPOJ, strengthening the argument that projects are not merely designed, built, operated, used and maintained by faceless entities, but that the experience of all those activities is just as important for the value generation in projects and that these factors are no less unique than individuals who are participating in these activities. Addressing the lived experience of actors associated with engineering projects acknowledges the importance and need for a strong stream of phenomenological inquiry into engineering project organization to complement the more established traditions of positivist quantitative enquiry, grounded theory, case studies, and ethnographic work that are better established within the EPOJ community. Alongside other previously published EPOJ contributions, Sakhrani's paper is an important step in this conceptual mainstreaming.

The third paper, by Walters, studies the exit strategies used by a non-governmental organization (NGO) that delivers water and sanitation projects in rural Nicaragua. Using social network analysis methods, this research created sociograms representing project communication between various stakeholders, and used them to produce guidance for NGOs that are exiting communities after project delivery. The temporary nature of engineering projects is well established in the EPOJ literature. However, this is a particular issue for humanitarian engineering projects due to unusually complex relationships and power dynamics between technical project staff, funders, and the ultimate users of the new assets. In particular, the exit of the project team is seen as a challenge for the continued operation and maintenance of the constructed infrastructure. In this context, Walters' paper is an important contribution to the

EPOJ sustainability literature that seeks to link engineering project activities with constructed assets' ongoing performance and their related potential for positive social impact.

The fourth paper, by Inkoom and Leiringer, tackles another key issue in engineering project organization inquiry – the development and implementation of Building Environmental Assessment Methods (BEAMs). It does so by arguing for a sociology of BEAMs as it elucidates how the emergence of different systems is the result of the coming together of various groups of stakeholders and actors. Drawing upon the theory of Strategic Action Fields, the paper critically elaborates the historical development of different BEAMs in light of the power, interests, and ideologies of the promoting groups. Inkoom and Leiringer therefore make an important contribution to the EPOJ by offering a critical perspective on the production of new institutional logics in the built environment industries, using the setting of the application of environmental standards. This study can also be seen as a call for future empirical work into the genesis of institutions, which shape the world of the engineering project organization. We see the EPOS community as exceptionally well placed to generate the evidence base and inform future policies that help shape, design and deliver projects, which maximize value for their user communities, the environment and businesses.

We thank the Editors and Editorial board for the opportunity to bring the EPOJ readers this special issue. A special thanks goes to authors and reviewers for their hard work and enthusiastic cooperation to bring the research presented here up to standard and on time to be included in this 2016 special issue. In addition, many thanks are due to all the EPOC 2016 attendees; the conference chair, Dr. Carrie Sturts-Dossick; and Dr. Paul Chan of the University of Manchester for leading the greatly insightful plenary session on novel methods for engaged scholarship.

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