



Labor process theory and critical HRM: A systematic review and agenda for future research

Afshin Omid ^a, Cinzia Dal Zotto ^{a,*}, Alessandro Gandini ^b

^a Institute of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Neuchâtel, Neuchâtel, 2000, Switzerland

^b Department of Social and Political Sciences, University of Milan, via Conservatorio 7, 20122, Milan, Italy

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Critical HRM
Critical management studies
Employment relationships
Human resource management
Labor process theory

ABSTRACT

Labor process theory (LPT) is a critical approach to studies on work and employment; it is rooted in the Marxist tradition, which addresses conflictual relations between capital and labor and connects work transformations with broader structural contexts. LPT has been one of the theoretical lenses through which critical human resource management (HRM) scholars have attempted to challenge taken-for-granted concepts and approaches introduced by mainstream, positivist, and functionalist HRM research. Yet, an effort to consolidate its significance in critical HRM is missing in the extant literature. Drawing on a systematic review of 103 research articles published from 2000 to 2021, the present paper identified four key themes in previous LPT-informed HRM research, including institutional forces, control regimes, solidarity and resistance, and the deskilling-upskilling paradox. Based on this review, the article discusses what critical HRM scholars can learn from this collective understanding of LPT and how they could also employ this theory to advance critical HRM research. The main argument brought forward is the idea that LPT is worthwhile to challenge the excessive optimism propagated by the pluralist approaches in HRM.

1. Introduction

Since the early 1980s, critical HRM scholars have been attempting to challenge the dominant mainstream HRM research characterized by positivistic, functionalist, and uncritical approaches (Keegan & Boselie, 2006; Watson, 2004). At the time, HRM research was significantly led by marketization and ideological individualism (Dundon & Rafferty, 2018), and psychological theories were primarily employed (Vincent et al., 2020), issues that seemingly remain prevalent in the current HRM research (Budd, 2020). Mainstream research in HRM has also been criticized for its “simplified, depoliticized, and one-sided” research orientations (Rhodes & Harvey, 2012, p. 49), supporting a specific social order in which capital interests prevail against workers’ interests (Watson, 2004).

However, academic trajectories in the mainstream HRM research have not historically been straightforward, as addressed in previous studies (Gospel, 2019; Kaufman, 2004). Each specific HRM model – defined as “a particular set of investments, policies, and practices that have emerged for a group of workers” (Boxall, 2021, p. 837) – appearing in the scholarly debates must be understood given the underlying employment relationship models. This way, scholars can more

holistically understand and interpret the labor problems concerning each model.

Each type of employment relationship model introduces a particular set of assumptions toward “employees, employers, states, markets, and contracts” characterized as the core elements of any employment relationship model (Budd & Bhawe, 2019, p. 19). Given the different sets of assumptions that may be ascribed to the mentioned elements, Budd and Bhawe (2019) and Budd (2020) explain that four main models in employment relationships can be identified: neoliberal egoist, unitarist, pluralist, and critical. In this regard, the authors distinguish the neoliberal egoist model by its market-based logic that balances transactions among self-interested agents, whereas assuming a long-term partnership among employers and employees in the unitarist model where both parties share a unity of interests. On the other side, both the pluralist and critical employment relationship models acknowledge that the interests among different stakeholders diverge. While the pluralist model emphasizes the role of (unequal) bargaining power through which a balanced level between the interests of the parties involved could be achieved only if no party dominated the other, the critical model does not share optimism about the possibility of having such a balanced level between different interests, as it argues that unequal

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: afshin.omidi@unine.ch (A. Omid), cinzia.dalzotto@unine.ch (C. Dal Zotto), alessandro.gandini@unimi.it (A. Gandini).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2023.05.003>

Received 9 March 2022; Received in revised form 25 March 2023; Accepted 9 May 2023

Available online 10 May 2023

0263-2373/© 2023 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

power is embedded in capitalist societies, which always privilege capital (Budd, 2020; Budd & Bhawe, 2019).

Critical HRM studies include different communities of scholars who agree on the deficits and insufficiency of mainstream HRM research in providing a bigger picture of realities organizations face. Such communities are highly divergent in adopting a unified critical approach by which HRM issues could be studied. We classify critical HRM scholars into three groups without any claim for exhaustivity: subjectivists, pragmatists, and materialist Marxists.

Subjectivist critical scholars in HRM – who belong to a research strand called “critical management studies” (see Fournier & Grey, 2000) – seek to unveil the ways in which managerial discourses and practices shape different sets of identities, norms, and cultures, leading to power imbalances in the workplace (Alvesson, 2009; Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007; Knights & Willmott, 1989; Townley, 1993). While these scholars tend not to care about and strategize for improving organizational performance, an ideal recognized as “anti-performativity” (Alvesson, 2009; Fournier & Grey, 2000), they attempt to raise the powerless’ voice in the workplace to reach what has been called “micro-emancipation” (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992). However, they do so without moving further to scrutinize the structural conditions under which these power imbalances are produced (Thompson, 2011).

Drawing on an “analytic” approach to study HRM and understand the “why” and “how” HR managers adopt specific sets of practices, and identifying the individual, organizational, and societal consequences of such practices (Boxall et al., 2007), pragmatist critical scholars (e.g., Boxall, 2018; P. Boxall & Purcell, 2011; Watson, 2004, 2010) acknowledge the conflictual interests among various stakeholders but argue that the final aim of HRM research should be to explore how each stakeholder in the employment relationship could experience “mutually satisfying” results (Boxall, 2021, p. 837). In line with this group of critical HRM scholars, one might argue that new HRM theoretical frameworks such as socially responsible HRM (e.g., Omid & Dal Zotto, 2022), green HRM (e.g., Paulet et al., 2021), and sustainable HRM (e.g., Aust et al., 2020) could be related to the outcomes of pragmatists’ efforts to reach a mutually satisfying situation among a wide array of stakeholders.

Last but not least, the materialist Marxist scholars in HRM aim to explore those workplace-related issues that are not primarily caused by managerial strategies but emerged as inextricable signs of the structural conditions induced by capitalism, leaving no ultimate solution to balance the divergent interests of different stakeholders (Adler, 2007; Thompson, 2003, 2011; Thompson & Newsome, 2004). This strand of research is primarily influenced by and developed upon labor process theory (LPT), a Marxist approach to the study of labor and workplace transformations under a capitalist mode of production (Braverman, 1998). Although scholars in this group declared no hostility toward having an optimistic mindset in capitalist societies to reach a mutually satisfying situation, they found it “difficult to sustain optimistic HR narratives through periods of downsizing, financial re-engineering, and perpetual restructuring” (Thompson, 2011, p. 359).

LPT and HRM research share fundamental commonalities, for they are concerned with studying dynamics in employment relationships and the organization of work (Thompson & Harley, 2007). LPT research has been growing over the last two decades; however, an effort to consolidate its significance in critical HRM is missing in the extant literature. From the outset, we by no means argue that critical scholars in HRM did not pay enough attention to LPT. On the contrary, a considerable number of previous studies that used LPT belongs to those who have been engaged in critical HRM studies (Geary & Dobbins, 2001; Haynes et al., 2005; McDonald et al., 2021; Smith & Ngai, 2006; Taylor et al., 2013; Thompson & Harley, 2007; Vidal, 2007). Yet, an effort to consolidate the significance of LPT in critical HRM is missing in the extant literature. This article aims at filling this gap, answering the questions: “What can critical HRM scholars learn from the previous LPT-informed studies, and how could they employ this theory to advance

critical studies in HRM?” To do so, we develop a systematic review of past empirical HRM studies informed by LPT, with the goal of assisting critical HRM scholars in attaining a collective understanding of past trajectories, trends, findings, and gaps. According to Vincent et al. (2020) and Richards (2022), a theoretical motivation for paying such attention to LPT in the realm of HRM studies could be explained by its potential for revealing the dark and hidden sides of the new and growing HRM models, such as that of “sustainable HRM,” arising mainly from the pluralistic employment relationship model, which shares the optimism of achieving a balanced approach within capitalism. We thus argue that LPT is worthwhile to challenge the excessive optimism propagated by the pluralist approaches in HRM.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. First, we introduce the LPT, its core ideas, and theoretical developments over time. Second, we explain our methodology and the systematic review protocol by which this research has been conducted. Third, we present a descriptive overview of the past studies that we reviewed, organized by journal titles, publication years, data coverage, methods, research contexts, and other theories used in combination with LPT. Fourth, we classify and report the main findings of past empirical research. Finally, LPT implications for critical HRM scholarship in terms of theory, context, and method are discussed.

2. Labor process theory (LPT)

LPT originates from Harry Braverman’s (1998 [1974]) seminal book *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*, in which he addressed how scientific methods of managing people transformed and degraded the nature of work, separating its conception and execution parts, and handing the former to the managerial departments. Inspired by Marx’s (2004 [1867]) insights on the history of capitalism, Braverman (1998) argued that workplace transformations are historical processes in which capitalism shapes and reshapes the dominating forces but always applies the same logic favoring capitalists’ interests. Drawing on the scientific management methods as starting point for the analysis (Taylor, 1919), Braverman (1998) explored how a capitalist mode of production could fragment workers’ labor to exclude holistic knowledge (i.e., deskilling it) and persistently support managerial prerogatives to lower costs and improve efficiency.

Thompson and Newsome (2004) introduce the idea of “four waves” to classify previous efforts moving LPT forward theoretically. The first wave relates to the ideas developed by Harry Braverman concerning the Taylorization of work processes and the deskilling concept, which represented the manifestations of work transformations in a specific political time.

Studies in the second wave primarily focus on the variations in control mechanisms and skill formation strategies, showing how the capitalist mode of production could reinvent itself in managing labor. For example, Burawoy, (1982) showed how control mechanisms at the point of production are not always based on coercive methods. Employers may create a work atmosphere in which workers view their work as a game. Similarly, workers are voluntarily subordinate to employers, and, thus, control is exercised by what Burawoy called “manufacturing consent.” However, as Thompson and Newsome (2004) contend, the second wave has taken LPT away from focusing on the bigger picture and the causal explanations found in these studies mainly ended at the factory gate.

Starting from the mid-1980s, as Thompson and Newsome (2004) outline, new groundbreaking paradigms such as lean production and flexible specialization emerged. Thus, a third wave of research informed by LPT, the authors continue, has acted as an “antidote” to the “unshakable optimism” promised by those paradigms. Examples in this regard include in-depth studies of lean production, enterprise resource planning (ERP), and high-performance work systems (e.g., Harley et al., 2010; Vidal, 2007). This remains “an indispensable antidote to optimistic claims of workplace transformation, which remain stubbornly

persistent in much of the managerially oriented literature" (Thompson & Newsome, 2004, p. 148).

Yet, a fourth wave of LPT research also developed in recent years, which is concerned with restoring the lost or weakened connections of workplace-related issues to the broader context. This is principled upon Thompson's (2003) "disconnected capitalism thesis" (DCT) (see also Thompson, 2013), which focuses on the structural condition and limitation under which employers fail to provide a context for mutually satisfying bargains (Palladino, 2021; Zeitoun & Pamini, 2021). The DCT argues that there is a twofold disconnection between labor and employer. On the one hand, employees are asked to engage more in work by increasing their commitment, efforts, involvement, and passion. On the other hand, employers continuously retreat from genuinely supporting workers by refusing to provide job security, career ladders, decent salary, and healthcare support, among other things. It is argued that this contradiction "was primarily driven by the pursuit of shareholder value within an increasingly financialized capitalism" (Thompson, 2013, p. 473). To this strand we could also associate emergent LPT research on digital and platform work practices, particularly in the so-called 'gig economy' (Gandini, 2019).

3. Review methodology

3.1. Research design

The present article employs the systematic literature review (SLR) methodology to comprehensively study, critically evaluate, and integrate previous research in LPT to provide a foundation upon which a novel agenda for future critical HRM research could be introduced. As explained by Paul and Criado (2020) and Paul et al. (2021), SLRs can be categorized into domain-based (e.g., Gupta et al., 2020), theory-based (e.g., Bölen et al., 2021; Gilal et al., 2019), method-based (e.g., Lim, 2018), meta-analytical (e.g., Rana & Paul, 2020), and meta-systematic reviews (e.g., Lim & Weissmann, 2021). Our study falls into the category of theory-based reviews as it seeks to examine the development of LPT and transfer relevant knowledge to the HRM field. We have specifically used *Scientific Procedures and Rationales for Systematic Literature Reviews* (SPAR-4-SLR) as the central guiding protocol to develop our review paper (Paul et al., 2021). The great advantage of this protocol is introducing practical steps—such as assembling, arranging, and assessing—which could provide new insights based on logical, pragmatic, and fully transparent (sub)stages. In what follows, we describe the steps concerning this protocol:

- (a) Assembling: This stage includes two parts, i.e., identification and acquisition. In the identification process, we set up our research domain upon which the systematic review is conducted and determine inclusion criteria (e.g., empirical papers, journal articles, etc.) for considering the research documents in the review process. Regarding the acquisition step, we need to conceive a search strategy (i.e., keywords, research period, and academic databases) to find and obtain relevant documents.
- (b) Arranging: Two steps need to be considered in this stage. The organization step consists of determining the codes (e.g., journal title, publication year, methods, etc.) by which the obtained articles are organized. The purification step seeks to exclude those documents that are not aligned with the review purpose (e.g., non-empirical paper, out of research period, etc.).
- (c) Assessing: This final stage consists of two further steps. The first concerns the evaluation process to determine methods and frameworks for analyzing the articles' main findings and proposing a research agenda. The second step states the reporting conventions (e.g., words, figures, and tables), review limitations (e.g., non-accessible articles, excluding theoretical papers, etc.), and sources of support (e.g., funds, expertise, etc.).

3.2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

This study has employed different criteria for selecting and reviewing articles, thereby covering robust findings in previous studies. First, we searched for articles that used LPT as (one of) their main theoretical framework(s). This criterion has been met by carefully addressing the papers' titles, abstracts, and keywords. Second, from 2000 to October 2021, the research period has been chosen to cover more than two decades of LPT research. Third, we exclusively considered those articles based on empirical studies as our main aim was to establish an evidence-based foundation in the HRM field. Fourth, to ensure the quality and robustness of studies, we selected papers published by Web of Science-indexed journals covering the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) with an impact factor (IF) ≥ 1 and written in the English language.

3.3. Search strategy and protocol

Among all academic databases across disciplines, the Web of Science (WOS) and Scopus are considered the most popular as they cover various quality journals (Paul et al., 2021). Using Scopus as the starting point, we searched for study keywords such as "labor process theory," "labor process perspective," "labor process," "labour process theory," "labour process," and "Harry Braverman." We conducted the exact search across the WOS database to look for non-duplicate articles in the research domain. We obtained 301 articles after the initial search within the databases mentioned above. As explained above, we refined the list and selected 99 papers for our review based on our inclusion and exclusion criteria. We also performed a cross-reference check mechanism while studying the selected articles, which led us to add another four articles. In sum, 103 empirical articles were chosen for the present systematic review. It is worth noting that our search strategy for selecting these specific databases has been congruent with previous systematic reviews in management and marketing (Kumar et al., 2021; Paul & Dhiman, 2021; Tanrikulu, 2021). Fig. 1 illustrates the review protocol elaborated based on SPAR-4-SLR.

3.4. Data analysis method

All the selected articles were studied thoroughly and were coded in different ways in the analysis stage. For example, we coded each article based on its publication year, journal title, research method, research context, geographical coverage, and other theories, if any, used with LPT. We employed the Gioia coding methodology (Gioia et al., 2013), which offers a structured way of data coding in three main steps: (a) first-order coding in which, while engaged in reading the articles, we attempted to code them with what can best characterize their main findings; (b) second-order coding, where we sought to combine the codes obtained from the previous step into more overarching, abstract levels, and (c) we explored the aggregate dimensions of the research phenomenon, the LPT, which were attained from merging the second-order codes.

4. Descriptive review of the articles

This section presents an overview of the articles chosen for this review based on their publication year, journal title, research method, research context, data coverage across continents, and other theories used with LPT in some studies.

4.1. Journals that publish LPT research

Table 1 indicates journals that published LPT research based on empirical studies. Accordingly, *Work, Employment and Society* was the academic outlet that published the highest number of articles in this research domain ($n = 23$). In the second rank, we find *New technology, Work and Employment*, which published ten articles.

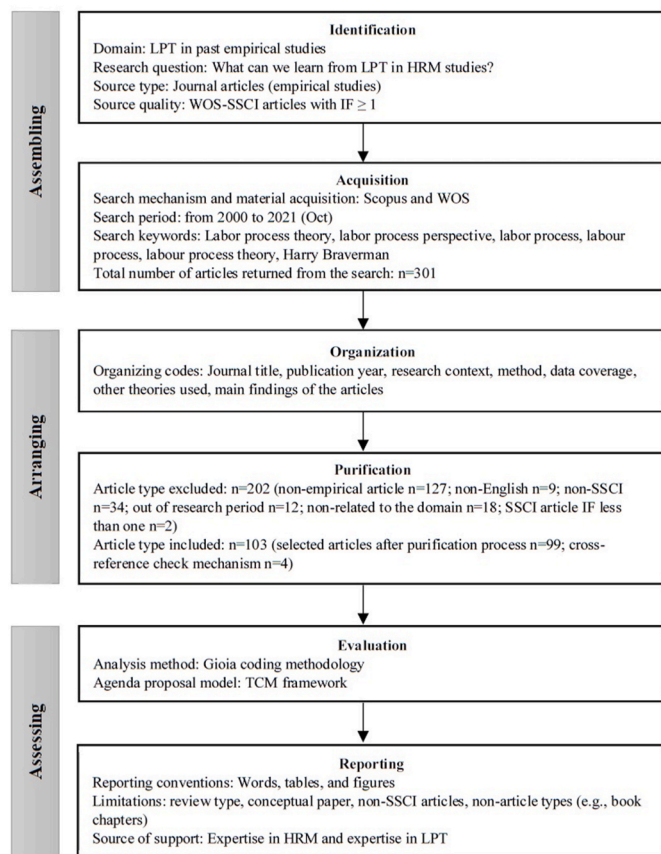


Fig. 1. The review process based on SPAR-4-SLR.

4.2. Publication trends

The current systematic review covers the articles published between 2000 and 2021 (October). Table 2 presents the number of articles published per year during this period, while Fig. 2 depicts the growing interest in LPT within four timeframes. These illustrations show that the interest in the LPT has considerably increased over time, indicating that more researchers have embraced it for addressing workplace-related questions.

4.3. Data coverage across continents

The previous articles in LPT research have been distributed, though not equally, over different continents, including Europe, North America, Asia, Oceania, South America, and Africa, as reported in Table 3. Most of the papers include empirical studies that have been conducted exclusively in European countries ($n = 43$). The second rank is related to the North American continents ($n = 23$). While most papers were empirically set within a particular continent, seven studies engaged in studying LPT within a multi-continental research design, providing a comparative analysis in this area.

4.4. Research methods

Table 4 presents the methodologies and techniques used in the reviewed articles. Most studies employed qualitative research ($n = 85$) as LPT is rooted in a critical background and has been a nascent research area that needed more theoretical exploration and elaboration (see Blaikie & Priest, 2017). Quantitative papers were rare in LPT research as they count for four articles in our review. Mixed methods were also employed in this research area ($n = 14$).

Table 1
Journals that published LPT research.

No.	Journal	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
1	Work, Employment and Society (Sage)	23	22.33	(Alberti, 2014; Carter & Stevenson, 2012; Cini & Goldmann, 2021; Elliott & Long, 2016; Esbenshade et al., 2016; Gale, 2012; Harley et al., 2010; Ikeler, 2016; Laaser, 2016; Mather & Seifert, 2014; McDonald et al., 2021; Ngai & Smith, 2007; Peng, 2011; Price, 2016; Quinlan et al., 2020; Sherman, 2011; Smith et al., 2008; Tassinari & Maccarrone, 2020; Taylor & Moore, 2015; Terry et al., 2021; Wood, 2018; Wood et al., 2019; Zheng & Smith, 2018)
2	New Technology, Work and Employment (Wiley)	10	9.71	(Barrett, 2001; Bepinar et al., 2014; Bilsland & Cumbers, 2018; Carter et al., 2011; Ellway, 2013; Gekara & Fairbrother, 2013; Heiland, 2021a; Lehdonvirta, 2018; Newsome et al., 2013; Shulzhenko & Holmgren, 2020)
3	Economic and Industrial Democracy (Sage)	5	4.85	(Haynes et al., 2005; Hughes et al., 2019; Koski & Järvensivu, 2010; Sharma, 2020; Townsend, 2007)
4	Competition & Change (Sage)	4	3.88	(Gerber, 2021; Kabwe & Tripathi, 2020; Manolchev, 2020; Moth, 2020)
5	Organization Studies (Sage)	4	3.88	(Crowley, 2012; Korczynski, 2011; Siciliano, 2016; Taylor & Bain, 2003)
6	Work and Occupations	4	3.88	(Dörflinger et al., 2021; Misra & Walters, 2016; Sallaz, 2015; Villarreal, 2010)
7	American Sociological Review (Sage)	3	2.91	(Lei, 2021; Mears, 2015; Mizrahi et al., 2007)
8	Organization (Sage)	3	2.91	(Carey, 2009; McCabe, 2007; Schofield, 2001)
9	Sociology (Sage)	3	2.91	(Barrett, 2004; Bolton & Wibberley, 2014; MacKenzie et al., 2017)
10	British Journal of Industrial Relations (Wiley)	2	1.94	(McCann, 2014; McCann et al., 2010)
11	British Journal of Social Work (Oxford University Press)	2	1.94	(Baines, 2010; Baines & van den Broek, 2017)

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (continued)

No.	Journal	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
12	Human Relations (Sage)	2	1.94	(Heiland, 2021b; Mezihorak, 2018)
13	Journal of Management Studies	2	1.94	(Bolton, 2004; McCann et al., 2008)
14	Journalism Practice (Routledge)	2	1.94	(Hayes, 2021; Siegelbaum & Thomas, 2016)
15	Personnel Review (Emerald)	2	1.94	(Mather et al., 2007; Townsend et al., 2011)
16	SAGE open (Sage)	2	1.94	(Akella, 2016; Walker, 2016)
17	The International Journal of Human Resource Management (Routledge)	2	1.94	(Smith & Ngai, 2006; Taylor et al., 2013)
18	The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science (Sage)	2	1.94	(Harley et al., 2006; Spivack & Milosevic, 2018)
19	The Journal of Industrial Relations (Wiley)	2	1.94	(Rose, 2002; Russell, 2002)
20	Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal (Emerald)	1	0.97	Yang et al. (2020)
21	Accounting, Organizations and Society (Elsevier)	1	0.97	Uddin and Hopper (2001)
22	American Educational Research Journal (Sage)	1	0.97	Stevenson (2007)
23	British Journal of Sociology of Education (Routledge)	1	0.97	Tsang and Kwong (2017)
24	Contemporary Accounting Research (Wiley)	1	0.97	Parker and Jeacle (2019)
25	Critical Perspectives on Accounting (Elsevier)	1	0.97	Diab (2021)
26	Critical Sociology (Sage)	1	0.97	Pérez and Cifuentes (2020)
27	Development and Change (Wiley)	1	0.97	Fishwick (2019)
28	Digital Journalism (Routledge)	1	0.97	Petre (2018)
29	Employee Relations (Emerald)	1	0.97	Mather et al. (2012)
30	Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space (Sage)	1	0.97	Hastings and MacKinnon (2017)
31	Ethnography (Sage)	1	0.97	Juravich (2017)
32	Human Resource Management Journal (Wiley)	1	0.97	Geary and Dobbins (2001)
33	International Journal of Hospitality Management (Elsevier)	1	0.97	Wang et al. (2021)
34	Journal of International Management (Elsevier)	1	0.97	Sharpe (2006)
35	Journal of Sociology (Sage)	1	0.97	Connell and Crawford (2007)
36	Management & Organizational History (Routledge)	1	0.97	Varje and Turtiainen (2017)
37	Management Learning (Sage)	1	0.97	Hislop (2008)
38	New Perspectives on Turkey (Cambridge University Press)	1	0.97	Erköse (2020)

Table 1 (continued)

No.	Journal	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
39	Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly (Sage)	1	0.97	Taylor et al. (2008)
40	Organization Science (INFORMS)	1	0.97	Huising (2014)
41	Qualitative Sociology (Springer)	1	0.97	Cooper (2000)
42	Social Science & Medicine (Elsevier)	1	0.97	Novek (2000)
43	Socio-Economic Review (Oxford University Press)	1	0.97	Vidal (2007)
Total		103	100	

Table 2

Distribution of studies across years.

Year	Frequency	Percentage (%)
2000	2	1.94
2001	4	3.88
2002	2	1.94
2003	1	0.98
2004	2	1.94
2005	1	0.98
2006	3	2.91
2007	8	7.77
2008	4	3.88
2009	1	0.98
2010	5	4.85
2011	5	4.85
2012	4	3.88
2013	5	4.85
2014	6	5.83
2015	4	3.88
2016	8	7.77
2017	9	8.74
2018	4	3.88
2019	4	3.88
2020	9	8.74
2021	12	11.65
Total	103	100

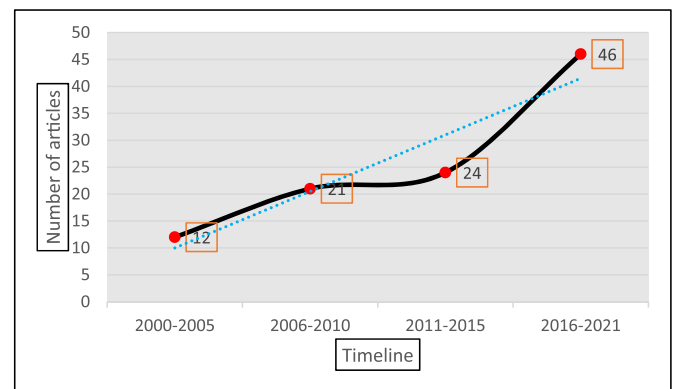


Fig. 2. Publication trends in LPT research.

4.5. Research contexts

Table 5 categorized the reviewed articles based on their research contexts. Previous research in LPT includes a broad range of works across different industries, including service workers, online gig workers, shop-floor workers, educational professionals, healthcare specialists, high-tech workers, state officers, media workers, and scientists. Furthermore, some studies, labeled as miscellaneous ($n = 11$), did not

Table 3

Data coverage across continents.

No.	Continent	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
1	Europe	43	41.75	(Alberti, 2014; Bilsland & Cumbers, 2018; Bolton, 2004; Bolton & Wibberley, 2014; Carey, 2009; Carter et al., 2011; Carter & Stevenson, 2012; Cini & Goldmann, 2021; Dörflinger et al., 2021; Ellway, 2013; Gale, 2012; Geary & Dobbins, 2001; Hastings & MacKinnon, 2017; Hislop, 2008; Hughes et al., 2019; Kabwe & Tripathi, 2020; Korczynski, 2011; Koski & Järvensivu, 2010; Laaser, 2016; MacKenzie et al., 2017; Manolchev, 2020; Mather et al., 2007, 2012; Mather & Seifert, 2014; McCabe, 2007; McCann, 2014; McCann et al., 2008; Mezihorak, 2018; Moth, 2020; Newsome et al., 2013; Rose, 2002; Schofield, 2001; Shulzhenko & Holmgren, 2020; Smith et al., 2008; Stevenson, 2007; Tassinari & Maccarrone, 2020; Taylor & Bain, 2003; Taylor & Moore, 2015; Terry et al., 2021; Varje & Turtiainen, 2017)
2	America	23	22.33	(Akella, 2016; Cooper, 2000; Crowley, 2012; Elliott & Long, 2016; Esbenschade et al., 2016; Huising, 2014; Ikeler, 2016; Juravich, 2017; Mears, 2015; Misra & Walters, 2016; Novek, 2000; Parker & Jeacle, 2019; Petre, 2018; Quinlan et al., 2020; Sallaz, 2015; Sherman, 2011; Siciliano, 2016; Siegelbaum & Thomas, 2016; Spivack & Milosevic, 2018; Taylor et al., 2008; Vidal, 2007; Villarreal, 2010; Walker, 2016)
3	Asia	14	13.59	(Bespinar et al., 2014; Erköse, 2020; Lei, 2021; Mizrachi et al., 2007; Ngai & Smith, 2007; Peng, 2011; Sharma, 2020; Sharpe, 2006; Smith & Ngai, 2006; P. Taylor et al., 2013; Tsang & Kwong, 2017; Uddin & Hopper, 2001; Wang et al., 2021; Zheng & Smith, 2018)
4	Oceania	13	12.62	(Barrett, 2001, 2004; Connell & Crawford, 2007; Gekara & Fairbrother, 2013; Harley et al., 2006, 2010; Haynes et al., 2005; McDonald et al., 2021; Price, 2016; Russell, 2002; Townsend, 2007; Townsend et al., 2011; Yang et al., 2020)
5	Multi-continental	7	7.77	(Baines, 2010; Baines & van den Broek, 2017; Gerber, 2021; Lehdonvirta, 2018; McCann et al., 2010; Wood, 2018; Wood et al., 2019)
6	Latin America	2	1.94	(Fishwick, 2019; Pérez & Cifuentes, 2020)
7	Africa	1	0.97	Diab (2021)
Total		103	100	

Table 4

Research methods used in the reviewed articles.

Research methodology	Techniques used	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
Qualitative	Single case study, Multiple case studies, Longitudinal study, Semi-structured interviews, Focus groups, Biographical interviews, Participant observation, Non-participant observation, Document analysis, Narrative analysis, Ethnography, Online ethnography, Open coding analysis, Thematic analysis, Qualitative comparative analysis, Historical study, Theatre-based intervention, Phenomenological study	85	82.53	(Akella, 2016; Alberti, 2014; Baines, 2010; Baines & van den Broek, 2017; Barrett, 2001, 2004; Bespinar et al., 2014; Bilsland & Cumbers, 2018; Bolton, 2004; Bolton & Wibberley, 2014; Carey, 2009; Carter & Stevenson, 2012; Cini & Goldmann, 2021; Cooper, 2000; Diab, 2021; Dörflinger et al., 2021; Elliott & Long, 2016; Ellway, 2013; Erköse, 2020; Esbenschade et al., 2016; Fishwick, 2019; Gale, 2012; Geary & Dobbins, 2001; Gekara & Fairbrother, 2013; Gerber, 2021; Harley et al., 2006; Hastings & MacKinnon, 2017; Hayes, 2021; Heiland, 2021a, 2021b; Hislop, 2008; Hughes et al., 2019; Huising, 2014; Ikeler, 2016; Juravich, 2017; Kabwe & Tripathi, 2020; Korczynski, 2011; Koski & Järvensivu, 2010; Laaser, 2016; Lehdonvirta, 2018; Lei, 2021; MacKenzie et al., 2017; Manolchev, 2020; Mather & Seifert,

(continued on next page)

Table 4 (continued)

Research methodology	Techniques used	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
				2014; Mather et al., 2012; McCabe, 2007; McCann et al., 2010; McCann et al., 2008; McDonald et al., 2021; Mears, 2015; Mezihorak, 2018; Misra & Walters, 2016; Mizrachi et al., 2007; Moth, 2020; Newsome et al., 2013; Ngai & Smith, 2007; Novek, 2000; Parker & Jeacle, 2019; Peng, 2011; Petre, 2018; Quinlan et al., 2020; Sallaz, 2015; Schofield, 2001; Sharpe, 2006; Sherman, 2011; Shulzhenko & Holmgren, 2020; Siciliano, 2016; Siegelbaum & Thomas, 2016; Smith & Ngai, 2006; Smith et al., 2008; Stevenson, 2007; Tassinari & Maccarrone, 2020; Taylor & Bain, 2003; Taylor & Moore, 2015; Taylor et al., 2008; Terry et al., 2021; Townsend, 2007; Tsang & Kwong, 2017; Uddin & Hopper, 2001; Varje & Turtiainen, 2017; Vidal, 2007; Villarreal, 2010; Walker, 2016; Wood, 2018; Yang et al., 2020)
Quantitative	Survey, Questionnaire, Descriptive	4	3.88	(Connell & Crawford, 2007; Harley

Table 4 (continued)

Research methodology	Techniques used	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
	statistics, Correlation, Path analysis			et al., 2010; Haynes et al., 2005; Spivack & Milosevic, 2018)
Mixed	Qualitative: Multiple case studies, Single case study, Semi-structured interviews, Observation, Focus group, Qualitative comparative analysis, Document analysis Quantitative: Survey, Questionnaire, Descriptive statistics, Correlation, Regression analysis	14	13.59	(Carter et al., 2011; Crowley, 2012; Mather et al., 2007; McCann, 2014; Pérez & Cifuentes, 2020; Price, 2016; Rose, 2002; Russell, 2002; Sharma, 2020; Taylor et al., 2013; Townsend et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2021; Wood et al., 2019; Zheng & Smith, 2018)
Total		103	100	

limit themselves to a specific profession and addressed the LPT in a cross-sectional setting (i.e., including more than one type of profession).

4.6. LPT with other theories

Among the reviewed articles, 14 articles used other theories along with the LPT, mainly taken from the social sciences. This signals that scholarship is looking for more nuanced findings, potentially leading LPT to merge with other theories into new perspectives. Table 6 shows the other theories used in combination with the LPT.

5. Findings in LPT research

This section summarizes the main findings from the reviewed articles based on aggregate dimensions and subthemes as explored by the Gioia coding methodology (see Fig. 3 and Table 7).

5.1. Institutional forces

Competition among firms has highly intensified, and previous research reported how market orientation in different sectors such as education (Mather et al., 2007), healthcare (Bolton & Wibberley, 2014; Moth, 2020), banking (Laaser, 2016), media (Siegelbaum & Thomas, 2016), and state work (Carey, 2009) is steering the way organizations are structured, along with a backdrop of governmental support for these transformations (Baines & van den Broek, 2017; Fishwick, 2019).

Several studies indicated how cost-cutting strategies within, for example, hospitality firms (Erköse, 2020), airline companies (Taylor & Moore, 2015), and state organizations (Esbenshade et al., 2016) brought negative pressures on workers (e.g., job insecurity, massive layoffs, poor working conditions, and employee well-being). Moreover, McCann et al. (2008) indicated how the focus of HR senior managers' priorities on cost-saving goals resulted in pressures on middle managers, with comparative findings in another study (2010) confirming that these issues are mainly similar across USA, UK, and Japan. With offshoring being a response of some companies to financial pressures, McCann (2014) further reported that such practice was not intended to build a

Table 5
Research contexts in the reviewed articles.

No.	Types of professionals	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
1	Service workers	27	26.21	(Alberti, 2014; Baines & van den Broek, 2017; Bolton & Wibberley, 2014; Cini & Goldmann, 2021; Crowley, 2012; Ellway, 2013; Erköse, 2020; Hastings & MacKinnon, 2017; Ikeler, 2016; Laaser, 2016; Manolchev, 2020; McCann, 2014; Mears, 2015; Newsome et al., 2013; Pérez & Cifuentes, 2020; Rose, 2002; Russell, 2002; Sallaz, 2015; Sherman, 2011; Taylor & Bain, 2003; Taylor et al., 2013; Taylor & Moore, 2015; Terry et al., 2021; Townsend, 2007; Villarreal, 2010; Walker, 2016; Wood, 2018)
2	Shop-floor workers	19	18.45	(Bespinar et al., 2014; Bilsland & Cumbers, 2018; Diab, 2021; Dörflinger et al., 2021; Elliott & Long, 2016; Juravich, 2017; Korczynski, 2011; Koski & Järvensivu, 2010; McCabe, 2007; Misra & Walters, 2016; Mizrachi et al., 2007; Ngai & Smith, 2007; Parker & Jeacle, 2019; Peng, 2011; Sharpe, 2006; Smith & Ngai, 2006; Townsend et al., 2011; Varje & Turtiainen, 2017; Zheng & Smith, 2018)
3	Miscellaneous	11	10.68	(Connell & Crawford, 2007; Gekara & Fairbrother, 2013; Haynes et al., 2005; Hislop, 2008; Hughes et al., 2019; Kabwe & Tripathi, 2020; Price, 2016; Siciliano, 2016; Uddin & Hopper, 2001; Vidal, 2007; Yang et al., 2020)
4	Online gig workers	10	9.71	(Gerber, 2021; Heiland, 2021a, 2021b; Lehdonvirta, 2018; Lei, 2021; McDonald et al., 2021; Sharma, 2020; Tassinari & Maccarrone, 2020; Wang et al., 2021; Wood et al., 2019)
5	Healthcare professionals	8	7.77	(Akella, 2016; Bolton, 2004; Harley et al., 2010; Moth, 2020; Novek, 2000; Quinlan et al., 2020; Shulzhenko & Holmgren, 2020; Smith et al., 2008)
6	NGOs, public and state workers	8	7.77	(Baines, 2010; Carey, 2009; Carter et al., 2011; Esbenschade et al., 2016; Fishwick, 2019; Gale, 2012; Schofield, 2001; Taylor et al., 2008)

Table 5 (continued)

No.	Types of professionals	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Source
7	Educational professionals	7	6.80	(Carter & Stevenson, 2012; Mather et al., 2007, 2012; Mather & Seifert, 2014; Spivack & Milosevic, 2018; Stevenson, 2007; Tsang & Kwong, 2017)
8	Managerial occupations	5	4.85	(Geary & Dobbins, 2001; Harley et al., 2006; McCann et al., 2008, 2010; Mezihorak, 2018)
9	High-tech specialist	4	3.88	(Barrett, 2001, 2004; Cooper, 2000; MacKenzie et al., 2017)
10	Media workers	3	2.91	(Hayes, 2021; Petre, 2018; Siegelbaum & Thomas, 2016)
11	Scientists	1	0.97	Huising (2014)
Total		103	100	

Table 6
LPT with other theories.

No.	Other theories used with LPT	Studies that used the theory
1	Hegemonic masculinity theory	Cooper (2000)
2	The Weberian theory of bureaucracy	Schofield (2001)
3	Workplace humor theory	(Korczynski, 2011; Taylor & Bain, 2003)
4	Practice theory	Mizrachi et al. (2007)
5	Structuration theory (Giddens)	Taylor et al. (2008)
6	Moral economy theory	(Hughes et al., 2019; Laaser, 2016)
7	Social constructionism of emotions	Tsang and Kwong (2017)
8	Occupational identity theory	MacKenzie et al. (2017)
9	Disciplinary power theory (Foucault)	Parker and Jeacle (2019)
10	Sensemaking theory	Manolchev (2020)
11	New mobility paradigm	Wang et al. (2021)
12	Mobilization theory	Cini and Goldmann (2021)

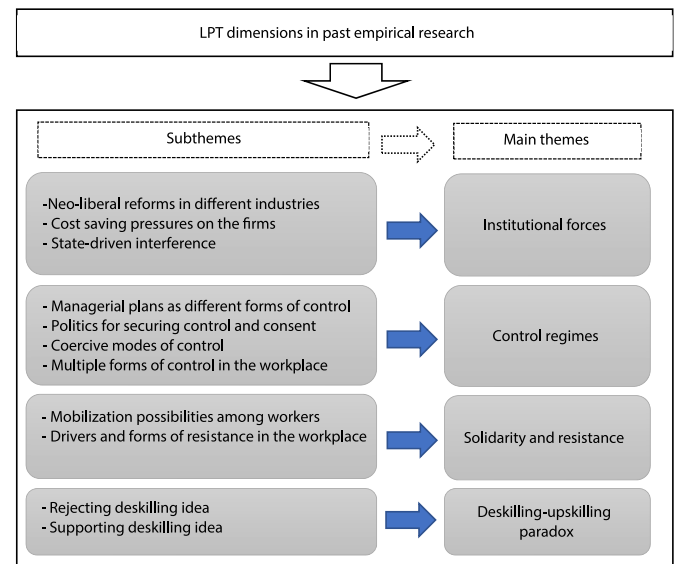


Fig. 3. LPT framework based on the findings of reviewed articles.

Table 7

Data structure based on the GIOIA coding process.

Source	First-order codes	Second-order codes	Aggregate dimensions
Erköse (2020)	Cost-saving strategies in hospitality firms	Cost-saving pressures on the firms	Institutional forces
Taylor and Moore (2015)	Cost-saving strategies in airline industries		
Esbenshade et al. (2016)	Cost-saving strategies in welfare agencies		
McCann et al. (2008); McCann et al. (2010)	Large-scale restructuring		
McCann (2014)	Pressures on financial services for massive offshoring		
Mather et al. (2007)	Marketization of the education sector	Neo-liberal reforms in different industries	
Bolton and Wibberley (2014)	Marketization of the care sector		
Connell and Crawford (2007)	Neoliberal governments' persistent support for managerial prerogative		
Carey (2009)	Privatization of state social work		
Laaser (2016)	Marketized labor process in the banking industry		
Siegelbaum and Thomas (2016)	Neo-liberalization of journalism		Control regimes
Moth (2020)	Market-oriented reconfiguration of national health system		
Parker and Jeacle (2019)	Scientific management evolution during the neoliberal reforms		
Mather and Seifert (2014)	State-driven control regimes in education sector	State-driven interference	
Baines and van den Broek (2017)	State-driven control regimes in care sector		
Fishwick (2019)	State-driven control regimes in Chile and Argentina		
Geary and Dobbins (2001); Townsend (2007)	Teamworking as a managerial control	Managerial plans as different forms of control	
Harley et al. (2006)	Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)		
Harley et al. (2010); Newsome et al. (2013); Laaser (2016)	Performance managements systems		
Huising (2014)	Knowledge management systems		
Wood (2018)	Flexible scheduling		Solidarity and resistance
Vidal (2007); Carter et al. (2011)	Lean production initiatives		
Gekara and Fairbrother (2013); Mezhiorak (2018)	Reconfiguration of work processes		
Tsang and Kwong (2017)	Quantifications of the quality		
Spivack and Milosevic (2018)	Perceived Location Autonomy		
Uddin and Hopper (2001); Sharpe (2006); Koski and	Manufacturing consent and gaming in the workplace	Politics for securing control and consent	

Table 7 (continued)

Source	First-order codes	Second-order codes	Aggregate dimensions
Järvensivu (2010); Peng (2011); Mears (2015); Sallaz (2015); Elliott and Long (2016); Wood (2018); Petre (2018)			
Cooper (2000)	Gender in identity-based forms of control		
	Rose (2002); Russell (2002); Stevenson (2007); McCann et al. (2008); McCann et al. (2010); Townsend et al. (2011); Carter and Stevenson (2012); Newsome et al. (2013); Mather and Seifert (2014); Esbenshade et al. (2016); Kabwe and Tripathi (2020); Hayes (2021);		
	Work intensification		
	Bolton (2004); Mather et al. (2012)		
	Engineering culture change		
	Siciliano (2016)		
	Aesthetic form of control		
	Control through using space		
Bilsland and Cumbers (2018); Heiland (2021a)			
Ellway (2013)	Control through peer surveillance		
Rose (2002); Taylor et al. (2013)	High levels of tight managerial control	Coercive modes of control	
Smith and Ngai (2006); Ngai and Smith (2007)	Dormitory regime		
Erköse (2020)	Exerting simple forms of control		
Akella (2016)	Workplace bullying		
Baines and van den Broek (2017)	compliance, cutbacks, and contextual control		
Barrett (2001)	Mixed modes of direct and responsible control	Multiple forms of control in the workplace	
Barrett (2004); Crowley (2012); Price (2016)	Different control strategies with the type of products and workers		
Mizrachi et al. (2007); Hastings and MacKinnon (2017)	Bilateral control between workers and managers		
Bespinar et al. (2014); Dörflinger et al. (2021)	Different types of control in various local conditions		
Wood et al. (2019); McDonald et al. (2021); Heiland (2021b); Gerber (2021)	Algorithmic modes of control in platform companies		
Uddin and Hopper (2001); Russell (2002); Tsang and Kwong (2017)	Feeling powerlessness to make a change	Mobilization possibilities among workers	

(continued on next page)

Table 7 (continued)

Source	First-order codes	Second-order codes	Aggregate dimensions
Baines (2010)	Endangering the capacity to envision comprehensive changes		
Quinlan et al. (2020)	Solidarity of workers against workplace harassment		
Yang et al. (2020)	Mobilization through new communication technologies		
Gekara and Fairbrother (2013)	Undermining solidarity among workers by managerial strategies		
McCabe (2007)	Individualistic preoccupations in collective resistance		
Tassinari and Maccarrone (2020); Cini and Goldmann (2021); Diab (2021); Lei (2021)	Possibility of solidarity among gig workers		
Novek (2000); Huising (2014); Shulzhenko and Holmgren (2020)	Resistance against technologies and managerial systems	Drivers and forms of resistance in the workplace	
Barrett (2004); Crowley (2012); Alberti (2014); Price (2016)	Mobility power (e.g., job quitting) as a form of resistance		
Smith and Ngai (2006); Taylor and Moore (2015); Walker (2016); Hughes et al. (2019)	Union-organized mobilization against organization		
Manolchev (2020)	Identity-based forms of resistance		
Taylor and Bain (2003); Korczynski (2011)	Conflicting with corporate culture and aims by humor		
McCabe (2007)	Poor job security as a source of resistance		
Villarreal (2010)	Gendered motivations of workers for struggling with managers over profit		
Schofield (2001)	Bureaucracy as an upskilling force	Rejecting deskilling idea	Deskilling-upskilling paradox
Haynes et al. (2005)	Experiencing upskilling through joint consultation		
Hislop (2008)	Developing conceptual skills through informal practice		
Smith et al. (2008); Gale (2012); Juravich (2017); Varje and Turtiainen (2017); Wang et al. (2021); Terry et al. (2021)	Worker agency over the production process		
Sherman (2011); Misra and Walters (2016)	Impossibility of labor routinization due to the customer influence		
Rose (2002); Taylor et al. (2008); Ikeler (2016)	Routinized labor process	Supporting deskilling idea	

Table 7 (continued)

Source	First-order codes	Second-order codes	Aggregate dimensions
Russell (2002); Zheng and Smith (2018); Russell (2002); Mather et al. (2007); Stevenson (2007); Baines (2010); Carter and Stevenson (2012)	Limited training spaces in the workplace		
Mather and Seifert (2014); MacKenzie et al. (2017)	Deskilling through redesigning and fragmenting work practices		
Ikeler (2016)	Removing decisions from individuals		
Siegelbaum and Thomas (2016); Sharma (2020)	Reduction in service workers' complexity and autonomy		
Lehdonvirta (2018); Pérez and Cifuentes (2020)	Break in the unity of conception and execution		
	Constraints on worker control over labor		

network of competencies but merely to keep costs as low as possible.

5.2. Control regimes

The reconfiguration and redesign of work processes are tools through which senior managers seek to exert a great deal of control over workers (e.g., [Mezihorak, 2018](#)), which could be implemented in various forms and by adopting different managerial discourses. Previous research investigated how mechanisms such as enterprise resource planning ([Harley et al., 2006](#)), knowledge management systems ([Huising, 2014](#)), performance management systems (e.g., [Laaser, 2016](#)), lean production initiatives (e.g., [Carter et al., 2011](#)), teamworking organization (e.g., [Townsend, 2007](#)), flexible scheduling ([Wood, 2018](#)), and workers' quantified assessments ([Tsang & Kwong, 2017](#)) were devised to principally serve employers' interests. According to further previous studies (e.g., [Akella, 2016](#); [Ngai & Smith, 2007](#)), coercive control embedded in different practices such as workplace bullying, or simple and tight control mechanisms, still exists inside organizations. To deal with the related adverse effects, as emphasized by LPT, [Spivack and Milosevic \(2018\)](#) revealed how an alternative mode of control, namely Perceive Location Autonomy (PLA), could be able to offer a meaningful workplace by granting workers a significant amount of autonomy over their tasks.

Some studies (e.g., [Elliott & Long, 2016](#); [Wood, 2018](#)) indicated how and to what extent working in production sites is associated with playing a game, revealing the degree to which engagements and relational aspects in such contexts could serve the employers' interests. In addition, earlier research addressed how gender ([Cooper, 2000](#)), aesthetic dimensions of technologies ([Siciliano, 2016](#)), control through space (e.g., [Bilsland & Cumbers, 2018](#)), cultural engineering ([Bolton, 2004](#); [Mather et al., 2012](#)), work intensification (e.g., [Hayes, 2021](#)), and peer surveillance ([Ellway, 2013](#)) can be harnessed as organizational policies to secure managers' power and profitability of organizations.

[Barrett \(2001\)](#) showed how two types of control, including direct (i.e., giving less autonomy to workers) and responsible (giving more autonomy to workers) modes, are collectively employed. Adopting specific ways of control depends on factors such as product type, employees' characteristics (e.g., [Price, 2016](#)), and local organizational conditions (e.g., [Dörflinger et al., 2021](#)). Recent studies have further investigated how platform companies employ various control strategies using algorithms (e.g., [Gerber, 2021](#); [Wood et al., 2019](#)). Some studies revealed how workers and managers could collectively shape control practices inside

organizations (e.g., [Hastings & MacKinnon, 2017](#)), thereby looking at control as a socially constructed phenomenon by different actors.

5.3. Solidarity and resistance

Some studies showed the degree to which solidarity among workers is possible. For instance, workers often feel powerless regarding making changes in their working conditions (e.g., [Russell, 2002](#); [Tsang & Kwong, 2017](#)). [Baines \(2010\)](#) found little imagination capacity among workers to enact meaningful changes for transforming unfavorable conditions. [Yang et al. \(2020\)](#) explored how new communication technologies such as social media platforms could successfully increase possibilities for workers' solidarity.

[Quinlan et al. \(2020\)](#) suggested a novel way to increase the potential actions workers could take against workplace harassment using a theatre-based intervention. Recent studies further addressed that gig workers' solidarity on platforms is conditional on factors such as worker dependencies (i.e., the degree to which workers are economically dependent on their earnings from platforms) and platforms' policies impacting it (e.g., [Lei, 2021](#); [Tassinari & Maccarrone, 2020](#)). However, [McCabe \(2007\)](#) showed how individualistic preoccupations are embedded into the nature of collective actions in organizations and raised the critical question, though not answered, whether the latter could finally result in higher inequality across societies over the long run.

Previous research exemplified some cases where resistance practices were targeted at organizational initiatives and technological changes in workplaces ([Huising, 2014](#); e.g., [Shulzhenko & Holmgren, 2020](#)). [McCabe \(2007\)](#) reported that poor job security has also been explored as a source of resistance among workers. Solidarity and resistance could take different forms, such as quitting the job (e.g., [Price, 2016](#)), union-organized protests (e.g., [Hughes et al., 2019](#)), workplace humor (e.g., [Korczynski, 2011](#)), and identity-based resistance through the construction of meaningful "Selves" in a sensemaking process ([Manolchev, 2020](#)). [Villarreal \(2010\)](#) also found that gender issues should not be overlooked as a neutral variable and must be considered while addressing how workers struggle against organizational systems.

5.4. Deskillng-upskilling paradox

Concerning refuting or challenging the deskilling idea, some studies empirically showed how workers feel a great deal of autonomy and responsibility for their work tasks (e.g., [Juravich, 2017](#); [Terry et al., 2021](#)). [Schofield \(2001\)](#) revealed how bureaucracy acted even as an upskilling force in the public sector, opening spaces for interpreting documents from governmental organizations. [Haynes et al. \(2005\)](#) indicated how an initiative in the workplace, namely joint consultation, could have brought significant upskilling experiences among workers. [Hislop \(2008\)](#) also showed how workers improve their conceptual and knowledge skills through informal workplace practices. [Sherman \(2011\)](#) and [Misra and Walters \(2016\)](#) showed that a comprehensive labor routinization could be impossible given the consumer's influences and the relational aspects embedded in the service jobs.

While studies showed how the deskilling thesis is no longer relevant, other findings proved the opposite. Some studies found workers experiencing highly routinized labor processes (e.g., [Ikeler, 2016](#); [Rose, 2002](#)), leaving limited workplace training space (e.g., [Zheng & Smith, 2018](#)). Previous research indicated how employers redesigned work processes, offering fragmented tasks to workers (e.g., [Carter & Stevenson, 2012](#)) and constraining workers' control over their labor (e.g., [Lehdonvirta, 2018](#)). This resulted in breaking down the unity between conception and execution in the labor process (e.g., [Sharma, 2020](#)) and removing decision responsibilities from individuals (e.g., [MacKenzie et al., 2017](#)). [Ikeler \(2016\)](#) also found an exacerbating rate of reducing complexity and autonomy in the service labor design.

6. Agenda for critical HRM research

In this section, using the TCM (theory, context, and method) framework ([Paul et al., 2017](#)), we set an LPT-inspired agenda for future studies in the critical HRM research field.

6.1. Implications for theory

LPT has arguably been and will seemingly remain one of the dominant approaches employed by critical HRM scholars to find an "antidote" against various forms of optimism brought about by HRM scholars seeking to introduce an integrated HRM perspective (see [Kaufman, 2004](#)). Such expression might seem antagonistic toward recent constructive calls that suggested to join forces for reaching an "integrated social science perspective" ([Brewster, 2022](#), p. 4). It could also be interpreted as a "kind of pessimism that sees history 'rolling over' and crushing human choice and innovation" ([Watson, 2010](#), p. 928). Yet, it is worth noting that LPT has not only been employed by materialist Marxist research in HRM studies marked by antagonism toward capitalism. On the contrary, LPT might also be helpful for pluralists and other HR research traditions to develop a more refined HRM theoretical debate ([Boxall, 2021](#); [Boxall & Purcell, 2011](#); [Haynes et al., 2005](#); [Nechanska et al., 2020](#); [Richards, 2022](#)). It does so by, for instance, encouraging HRM scholars to take a critical look at various HR plans, strategies, and policies (e.g., in the context of 'new work' flexibilization) in theory aimed at empowering workers while, in practice, they may be rather removing obstacles for capital to expand.

Anyhow, regardless of its theoretical trajectories (see [Knights & Willmott, 1990](#); [Thompson, 1989](#); [1990](#)), LPT is indeed deeply rooted in a Marxist perspective. By focusing on the "point of production," LPT shows how a capitalist mode of production degrades the nature of work, and that this effect is embedded within the broader social, economic, and political context. Capital cannot expand without labor, and there exists no limit to this expansion. While this law is an internal feature of capitalism, the ways labor power is converted into actual labor depend on many variables, including national context, industry specifications, industrial relations agents (e.g., trade unions), and the nature of jobs, among others. Critical HRM scholars can add value to research by connecting these variables with the way work is organized within the workplace. Such contextualization must remain a central aim for critical HRM studies and "Without that, the research program can disappear into microlevel case studies of control and skill strategies whose causal chain ends at the factory gate" ([Thompson & Newsome, 2004](#), p. 143).

This research program, aiming to connect the workplace with the wider context, can be sustained only if critical HRM scholars accept that the LPT has still a relevant core proposition (see [Jaros, 2005](#)), the so-called "indeterminacy of labor," of which HRM is a part. More specifically, HRM is here "understood as a discourse and set of practices that attempt to reduce the indeterminacy involved in the employment contract" ([Townley, 1993](#), p. 518). Against this background, revealing a deep-seated "structured antagonism" between capital and labor will remain a matter of focus for critical HRM researchers interested in LPT ([Edwards & Hodder, 2022](#)). In a profound sense, workers are systematically exploited within the employment relationship as they do not own all the value created from their labor. Critical HRM scholars could not only reveal the ways HRM policies may contribute to extending such exploitation (e.g., diminishing workers' capacities for collective organization), but they can also show how workers are aware of, and respond to, such exploitation in different ways (e.g., resistance to work intensifications). On the contrary, if we are to admit that a "structured antagonism" does not necessarily exist between capital and labor, the only research issues left for LPT scholars are "consent and accommodation, and not control and resistance" ([Thompson & Harley, 2007](#), p. 152). We, therefore, recommend that researchers do not solely strive toward reaching a unified theory, as many pluralists suggest. Instead, they could attempt to depict and understand what has been called "a

complex and uneven larger picture” by including the different aspects and facets that constitute employment relationships in reality (Thompson, 2013, p. 484).

Based on the systematic review of past empirical HRM research informed by LPT, we can see that a significant theoretical gap remains in the HRM debate. Such gap concerns, on one hand, the relationship between the issues happening at, and the outcomes arising from, the workplace or “point of production” – such as control mechanisms, empowerment programs, high-involvement models, skill formations, resistance, accommodation, compliance, and consent – and, on the other hand, the “disconnected capitalism thesis” (DCT) (Thompson, 2003, 2013). The DCT, as said, focuses on how the structural conditions imposed by financialized capitalism hinder the possibility to achieve a mutually satisfactory bargain among different stakeholders in pluralistic employment relationships. It is worth mentioning that a considerable number of studies within the critical HRM research field have previously addressed the DCT (e.g., Brown et al., 2019; Palladino, 2021; Zeitoun & Pamini, 2021). However, these studies have not been reviewed in the present paper as they did not focus on the labor process theory. Indeed, they address the DCT from policy-level viewpoints, without connecting their findings to the organization of work.

The current paper’s findings indicate that a considerable number of studies in critical HRM research focused on control mechanisms, resistance and consent, skill formation, and division of labor. These issues represent by far the most critical areas of research in LPT research and, we contend, will remain central in all future studies on work and employment. However, critical HRM researchers are recommended to interpret results by taking into greater consideration the structural contexts in which these results arise, and how these might have been highly influenced by a ‘disconnected’ capitalist mode of production. For example, concerning the deskilling-upskilling contradiction, Thompson (2013) asserts that “trends in work regimes represent neither up-skilling nor deskilling”. As such, deskilling or upskilling should not be a central focus per se. Instead, future scholars could explore “a broader and shallower palette of skills, with intensive utilization by a capital of a greater variety of sources of labor power” (Thompson, 2013, p. 479). Capital has been able to revolutionize its approaches to work organization along the way. Therefore, an antagonistic behavior between capital and labor exists but should not necessarily be considered as obvious, and a certain level of creativity and cooperation in the workplace does not necessarily mean that LPT is outmoded or old-fashioned (Thompson & Harley, 2007).

Another likely contribution that remains absent in previous research efforts is a critical dialogue with the most current theoretical frameworks proposed by pluralist researchers in HRM studies. These theoretical frameworks include but are not limited to socially responsible HRM, green HRM, and sustainable HRM (e.g., Aust et al., 2020; Lopez-Cabrales & Valle-Cabrera, 2020; Omid et al., 2022; Paulet et al., 2021).

We take here the sustainable HRM framework as an example. Aust et al. (2020) propose a paradigm shift in sustainable HRM and argue that, by applying ideas from a common good economy perspective, HRM could contribute to solving “grand challenges”. The authors further insist that this new type of sustainable HRM, the so-called “Common Good HRM”, could help to better understand the purpose of business as if the organizational competitiveness and “extraction” of value at work were not a primary point of focus for HRM research anymore. Aust et al. (2020) refer to new managerial and corporate discourses such as “business human rights,” “workplace democracy,” and “employment creation” for tackling global challenges including in-work poverty, lack of labor voice, youth unemployment, and job insecurity. However, they do not provide an explanatory context, within which the roots of the above-mentioned global challenges could be found and which could be embedded in “disconnected capitalism”. According to Richards, 2020, sustainable HRM is still an employer-driven process focused on employers’ and governmental interests, rather than on employees’

interests. A very recent study conducted by Macini et al. (2022) within Brazilian banks shows that, despite the simultaneous employers’ engagement in justice and equality, transparent HR practices, profitability as well as employee well-being, current HRM practices fall largely behind sustainable standards. Thus, the key appeals towards new (sustainable) HRM theoretical frameworks introduced by pluralist researchers seem to be placed in their “optimism about the capacity of capitalism to spontaneously become more humanistic” (Thompson & Harley, 2007, p. 162). Investigations concerning such theoretical optimism and its manifestations in the context of work organization could be highly promising subjects for critical HRM scholars in the future.

6.2. Implications for context

Unexpectedly, only one study among the reviewed articles employed LPT to conduct critical HRM research in an African country (Diab, 2021), even though it can partly be understood given the difficulties in accessing research archives and funds to conduct empirical research in Africa. Despite such difficulties, HR researchers would need to address how the key concepts discussed in the LPT could find different meanings once addressed in developing and underrepresented countries.

Besides, we encourage HR researchers in future to expand their investigations into a broad range of professions by addressing the peculiarities embedded in them and thereby adding context. Specifically, we call for more attention to the platform economy (see Gandini, 2019), which brings about new jobs and entirely different forms of employment relationships as highlighted by recent HRM literature (see for instance Scully-Russ & Torraco, 2020). Furthermore, HR scholars may consider delving more into algorithm-based HR decisions to find out how, in what forms, and to what extent algorithmic management and forms of control might impact employees’ working conditions and power structures in organizations (Cheng & Hackett, 2021; Jarrahi et al., 2021).

6.3. Implications for the method

As a critical research program shaped by an anti-positivist spirit, it is not surprising that LPT was mostly employed within qualitative studies. A partial justification can be found in a statement by Thompson who argues that quantitative methodologies “cannot compensate for the absence of any serious account of the structural constraints of changing forms of capitalist political economies operating on HR practices in the workplace” (Thompson, 2011, p. 360). We thus believe that qualitative methods will remain the prevalent approach critical HRM scholars will take. However, we by no means recommend that future scholars ignore quantitative methods as, in line with the LPT’s research program, a range of different methodologies could be possibly applied in critical HRM research (Harley, 2015; Thompson & Harley, 2007). With Vincent et al. (2020), for example, we recommend that future scholars consider employing quantitative methods once they address the moderating effects of contextual and political factors on workplace outcomes achieved through qualitative methods. Moreover, comparative analysis among different institutional contexts could be valuable to show how financialized capitalism operates and manifests across different work settings, organizations, industries, and nations.

7. Conclusion

The present paper has reviewed and consolidated past empirical, critical HRM research informed by LPT from 2000 to 2021, thus aiming at helping scholars to gain a collective understanding of its previous results and gaps. By setting an agenda for critical HRM scholars, it argues why and how it is useful and important to employ LPT as an “antidote” to challenge and counteract the optimism predominantly propagated by pluralist scholars in HRM, who still believe that capitalism can become humanistic and balance the fundamentally divergent interests of employees and employers. The present article further

highlights the need for (a) adding context to the application of LPT by addressing developing and underrepresented countries as well as the peculiarities embedded in a broader range of professions, and (b) applying quantitative methods as well as comparative analyses to more deeply understand different institutional and organizational contexts.

Declaration of conflicts

None.

References

- Adler, P. S. (2007). The future of critical management studies: A Paleo-Marxist critique of labour process theory. *Organization Studies*, 28(9), 1313–1345. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840607080743>
- Akella, D. (2016). Workplace bullying: Not a manager's right? *Sage Open*, 6(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244016629394>
- Alberti, G. (2014). Mobility strategies, 'mobility differentials' and 'transnational exit': The experiences of precarious migrants in London's hospitality jobs. *Work, Employment & Society*, 28(6), 865–881. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017014528403>
- Alvesson, M. (2009). Critical perspectives on strategic HRM. In J. Storey, P. M. Wright, & D. Ulrich (Eds.), *The routledge companion to strategic human resource management* (pp. 52–67). Routledge.
- Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. (2007). Unraveling HRM: Identity, ceremony, and control in a management consulting firm. *Organization Science*, 18(4), 711–723. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1070.0267>
- Alvesson, M., & Willmott, H. (1992). On the idea of emancipation in management and organization studies. *Academy of Management Review*, 17(3), 432–464. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1992.4281977>
- Aust, I., Matthews, B., & Muller-Camen, M. (2020). Common good HRM: A paradigm shift in sustainable HRM? *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(3), Article 100705. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.100705>
- Baines, D. (2010). "If we don't get back to where we were before": Working in the restructured non-profit social services. *British Journal of Social Work*, 40(3), 928–945. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcn176>
- Baines, D., & van den Broek, D. (2017). Coercive care: Control and coercion in the restructured care workplace. *British Journal of Social Work*, 47(1), 125–142. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcw013>
- Barrett, R. (2001). Labouring under an illusion? The labour process of software development in the Australian information industry. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 16(1), 18–34. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-005X.00074>
- Barrett, R. (2004). Working at webboyz: An analysis of control over the software development labour process. *Sociology*, 38(4), 777–794. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038504045864>
- Bespinar, F. U., Topal, C., & Kalaycioglu, S. (2014). Consensual control through the articulation of technology and local culture: Evidence from a textile factory in Turkey. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 29(3), 224–236. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12035>
- Bilsland, K., & Cumbers, A. (2018). Managerial control and the limits to employee participation in retail work spaces: Evidence from a UK IKEA store. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 33(2), 130–148. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12110>
- Blaikie, N., & Priest, J. (2017). *Social research: Paradigms in action*. Polity Press.
- Bölen, M. C., Calisir, H., & Özen, Ü. (2021). Flow theory in the information systems life cycle: The state of the art and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 546–580. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12641>
- Bolton, S. C. (2004). A simple matter of control? NHS hospital nurses and new management. *Journal of Management Studies*, 41(2), 317–333. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2004.00434.x>
- Bolton, S. C., & Wiberley, G. (2014). Domiciliary care: The formal and informal labour process. *Sociology*, 48(4), 682–697. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038513500098>
- Boxall, P. (2018). The development of strategic HRM: Reflections on a 30-year journey. *Labour & Industry: A Journal of the Social and Economic Relations of Work*, 28(1), 21–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10301763.2018.1427423>
- Boxall, P. (2021). Studying mutuality and perversity in the impacts of human resource management on societal well-being: Advancing a pluralist agenda. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 31(4), 834–846. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12341>
- Boxall, P., & Purcell, J. (2011). *Strategy and human resource management*. Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Boxall, P., Purcell, J., & Wright, P. (2007). Human resource management: Scope, analysis, and significance. In P. Boxall, J. Purcell, & P. Wright (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of human resource management* (pp. 1–16). Oxford University Press.
- Braverman, H. (1998). *Labor and monopoly capital: The degradation of work in the twentieth century*. NYU Press.
- Brewster, C. (2022). On criticism, human resource management and civility. *Human Resource Management Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12448>
- Brown, R., McQuaid, R., Raeside, R., Dutton, M., Egdell, V., & Canduela, J. (2019). Buying into capitalism? Employee ownership in a disconnected era. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 57(1), 62–85. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjir.12309>
- Budd, J. W. (2020). The psychologisation of employment relations, alternative models of the employment relationship, and the OB turn. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 30(1), 73–83. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12274>
- Budd, J. W., & Bhawe, D. P. (2019). The employment relationship: Key elements, alternative frames of reference, and implications for HRM. In A. Wilkinson, N. Bacon, S. Snell, & D. Lepak (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of human resource management* (pp. 41–64). SAGE.
- Burawoy, M. (1982). *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process Under Monopoly Capitalism*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Carey, M. (2009). It's a bit like being a robot or working in a factory': Does braverman help explain the experiences of state social workers in Britain since 1971? *Organization*, 16(4), 505–527. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508409104506>
- Carter, B., Danford, A., Howcroft, D., Richardson, H., Smith, A., & Taylor, P. (2011). 'All they lack is a chain': Lean and the new performance management in the British civil service. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 26(2), 83–97. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-005X.2011.00261.x>
- Carter, B., & Stevenson, H. (2012). Teachers, workforce remodelling and the challenge to labour process analysis. *Work, Employment & Society*, 26(3), 481–496. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017012438579>
- Cheng, M. M., & Hackett, R. D. (2021). A critical review of algorithms in HRM: Definition, theory, and practice. *Human Resource Management Review*, 31(1), Article 100698. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.100698>
- Cini, L., & Goldmann, B. (2021). The worker capabilities approach: Insights from worker mobilizations in Italian logistics and food delivery. *Work, Employment & Society*, 35(5), 948–967. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017020952670>
- Connell, R., & Crawford, J. (2007). Mapping the intellectual labour process. *Journal of Sociology*, 43(2), 187–205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/144078330706895>
- Cooper, M. (2000). Being the "go-to guy": Fatherhood, masculinity, and the organization of work in silicon valley. *Qualitative Sociology*, 23(4), 379–405. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005522707921>
- Crowley, M. (2012). Control and dignity in professional, manual and service-sector employment. *Organization Studies*, 33(10), 1383–1406. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612453529>
- Diab, A. A. (2021). The appearance of community logics in management accounting and control: Evidence from an Egyptian sugar beet village. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 79. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2019.04.005>
- Dörflinger, N., Pulignano, V., & Vallas, S. P. (2021). Production regimes and class compromise among European warehouse workers. *Work and Occupations*, 48(2), 111–145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888420941556>
- Dundon, T., & Rafferty, A. (2018). The (potential) demise of HRM? *Human Resource Management Journal*, 28(3), 377–391. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12195>
- Edwards, P., & Hodder, A. (2022). Conflict and control in the contemporary workplace: Structured antagonism revisited. *Industrial Relations Journal*, 53(3), 220–240. <https://doi.org/10.1111/irj.12363>
- Elliott, C. S., & Long, G. (2016). Manufacturing rate busters: Computer control and social relations in the labour process. *Work, Employment & Society*, 30(1), 135–151. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017014564601>
- Ellway, B. P. W. (2013). Making it personal in a call centre: Electronic peer surveillance. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 28(1), 37–50. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12002>
- Erköse, H. Y. (2020). The battlefields of leisure: Simple forms of labor control in the Turkish hospitality sector. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 63, 4–31. <https://doi.org/10.1017/npt.2020.19>
- Esbenshade, J., Vidal, M., Fascilla, G., & Ono, M. (2016). Customer-driven management models for choicelose clientele? Business process reengineering in a California welfare agency. *Work, Employment & Society*, 30(1), 77–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017015604109>
- Fishwick, A. (2019). Labour control and developmental state theory: A new perspective on import-substitution industrialization in Latin America. *Development and Change*, 50(3), 655–678. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12407>
- Fournier, V., & Grey, C. (2000). At the critical moment: Conditions and prospects for critical management studies. *Human Relations*, 53(1), 7–32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700531002>
- Gale, J. (2012). Government reforms, performance management and the labour process: The case of officers in the UK probation service. *Work, Employment & Society*, 26(5), 822–838. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017012451646>
- Gandini, A. (2019). Labour process theory and the gig economy. *Human Relations*, 72(6), 1039–1056. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726718790002>
- Geary, J. F., & Dobbins, A. (2001). Teamworking: A new dynamic in the pursuit of management control. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 11(1), 3–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2001.tb00029.x>
- Gekara, V. O., & Fairbrother, P. (2013). Managerial technologies and power relations: A study of the Australian waterfront. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 28(1), 51–65. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12003>
- Gerber, C. (2021). Community building on crowdwork platforms: Autonomy and control of online workers? *Competition & Change*, 25(2), 190–211. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024529420914472>
- Gilal, F. G., Zhang, J., Paul, J., & Gilal, N. G. (2019). The role of self-determination theory in marketing science: An integrative review and agenda for research. *European Management Journal*, 37(1), 29–44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2018.10.004>
- Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), 15–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428112452151>
- Gospel, H. (2019). Human Resource Management: A historical perspective. In A. Wilkinson, N. Bacon, S. Snell, & D. Lepak (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Human Resource Management*. SAGE Publications Ltd.

- Gupta, P., Chauhan, S., Paul, J., & Jaiswal, M. P. (2020). Social entrepreneurship research: A review and future research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 113, 209–229. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.03.032>
- Harley, B. (2015). The one best way? 'Scientific' research on HRM and the threat to critical scholarship. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 25(4), 399–407. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12082>
- Harley, B., Sargent, L., & Allen, B. (2010). Employee responses to 'high performance work system' practices: An empirical test of the disciplined worker thesis. *Work, Employment & Society*, 24(4), 740–760. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017010380638>
- Harley, B., Wright, C., Hall, R., & Dery, K. (2006). Management reactions to technological change. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 42(1), 58–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886305284857>
- Hastings, T., & MacKinnon, D. (2017). Re-embedding agency at the workplace scale: Workers and labour control in Glasgow call centres. *Environment & Planning A: Economy and Space*, 49(1), 104–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X16663206>
- Hayes, K. (2021). The networked newsroom: Navigating new boundaries of work. *Journalism Practice*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1949627>
- Haynes, P., Boxall, P., & Macky, K. (2005). Non-union voice and the effectiveness of joint consultation in New Zealand. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 26(2), 229–256. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X05051517>
- Heiland, H. (2021a). Controlling space, controlling labour? Contested space in food delivery gig work. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 36(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12183>
- Heiland, H. (2021b). Neither timeless, nor placeless: Control of food delivery gig work via place-based working time regimes. *Human Relations*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267211025283>
- Hislop, D. (2008). Conceptualizing knowledge work utilizing skill and knowledge-based concepts. *Management Learning*, 39(5), 579–596. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507608098116>
- Hughes, E., Dobbins, T., & Merkl-Davies, D. (2019). Moral economy, solidarity and labour process struggle in Irish public transport. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X19891235>
- Huising, R. (2014). The erosion of expert control through censure episodes. *Organization Science*, 25(6), 1633–1661. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2014.0902>
- Ikeler, P. (2016). Deskilling emotional labour: Evidence from department store retail. *Work, Employment & Society*, 30(6), 966–983. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017015609031>
- Jaros, S. J. (2005). Marxian critiques of Thompson's (1990)'core'labour process theory: An evaluation and extension. *Ephemera*, 5(1), 5–25.
- Jarrah, M. H., Newlands, G., Lee, M. K., Wolf, C. T., Kinder, E., & Sutherland, W. (2021). Algorithmic management in a work context. *Big Data & Society*, 8(2), Article 20539517211020332.
- Juravich, T. (2017). Artifacts of workers' knowledge: Finding worker skill in the closing and restructuring of a furniture manufacturer. *Ethnography*, 18(4), 493–514. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138116687590>
- Kabwe, C., & Tripathi, S. (2020). My talent or yours? A labour process analysis of talent management in practice. *Competition & Change*, 24(2), 178–199. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024529419848647>
- Kaufman, B. E. (2004). Toward an integrative theory of human resource management. In B. E. Kaufman (Ed.), *Theoretical perspectives on work and the employment relationship* (pp. 321–366). INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS RESEARCH ASSOCIATION.
- Keegan, A., & Boselie, P. (2006). The lack of impact of dissensus inspired analysis on developments in the field of human resource management. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(7), 1491–1511. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2006.00638.x>
- Knights, D., & Willmott, H. (1989). Power and subjectivity at work: From degradation to subjugation in social relations. *Sociology*, 23(4), 535–558. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038589023004003>
- Knights, D., & Willmott, H. (1990). *Labour process theory*. Macmillan.
- Korczynski, M. (2011). The dialectical sense of humour: Routine joking in a Taylorized factory. *Organization Studies*, 32(10), 1421–1439. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840611421256>
- Koski, P., & Järvenpää, A. (2010). The innovation diffusion paradox in the light of 'shop-floor games' and micro-politics. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 31(3), 345–363. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X09351216>
- Kumar, M., Paul, J., Misra, M., & Romanello, R. (2021). The creation and development of learning organizations: A review. *Journal of Knowledge Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-10-2020-0795>. ahead-of-p (ahead-of-print).
- Laaser, K. (2016). 'If you are having a go at me, I am going to have a go at you': The changing nature of social relationships of bank work under performance management. *Work, Employment & Society*, 30(6), 1000–1016. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017015617686>
- Lehdonvirta, V. (2018). Flexibility in the gig economy: Managing time on three online piecework platforms. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 33(1), 13–29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12102>
- Lei, Y.-W. (2021). Delivering solidarity: Platform architecture and collective contention in China's platform economy. *American Sociological Review*, 86(2), 279–309. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122420979980>
- Lim, W. M. (2018). Demystifying neuromarketing. *Journal of Business Research*, 91, 205–220. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.05.036>
- Lim, W. M., & Weissmann, M. A. (2021). Toward a theory of behavioral control. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2021.1890190>
- Lopez-Cabrales, A., & Valle-Cabrera, R. (2020). Sustainable HRM strategies and employment relationships as drivers of the triple bottom line. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(3), Article 100689. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.100689>
- Macini, N., Fernandes Rodrigues Alves, M., Oranges Cezarino, L., Bartocci Liboni, L., & Cristina Ferreira Caldana, A. (2022). Beyond money and reputation: Sustainable HRM in Brazilian banks. *Employee Relations: The International Journal*, 44(3), 702–728. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-12-2018-0331>
- MacKenzie, R., Marks, A., & Morgan, K. (2017). Technology, affordances and occupational identity amongst older telecommunications engineers: From living machines to black-boxes. *Sociology*, 51(4), 732–748. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038515616352>
- Manolchev, C. (2020). Sensemaking as 'Self'-defence: Investigating spaces of resistance in precarious work. *Competition & Change*, 24(2), 154–177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024529418822920>
- Marx, K. (2004). *Capital* (Vol. I). Penguin UK.
- Mather, K., & Seifert, R. (2014). The close supervision of further education lecturers: 'You have been weighed, measured and found wanting'. *Work, Employment & Society*, 28(1), 95–111. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017013490332>
- Mather, K., Worrall, L., & Mather, G. (2012). Engineering compliance and worker resistance in UK further education. *Employee Relations*, 34(5), 534–554. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01425451211248541>
- Mather, K., Worrall, L., & Seifert, R. (2007). Reforming further education: The changing labour process for college lecturers. *Personnel Review*, 36(1), 109–127. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00483480710716740>
- McCabe, D. (2007). Individualization at work?: Subjectivity, teamworking and anti-unionism. *Organization*, 14(2), 243–266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508407074227>
- McCann, L. (2014). Disconnected amid the networks and chains: Employee detachment from company and union after offshoring. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 52(2), 237–260. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjir.12014>
- 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*, 48(2), 347–374. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8543.2010.00794.x>
- McCann, L., Morris, J., & Hassard, J. (2008). Normalized intensity: The new labour process of middle management. *Journal of Management Studies*, 45(2), 343–371. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2007.00762.x>
- McDonald, P., Williams, P., & Mayes, R. (2021). Means of control in the organization of digitally intermediated care work. *Work, Employment & Society*, 35(5), 872–890. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017020969107>
- Mears, A. (2015). Working for free in the VIP. *American Sociological Review*, 80(6), 1099–1122. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122415609730>
- Mezihorak, P. (2018). Competition for control over the labour process as a driver of relocation of activities to a shared services centre. *Human Relations*, 71(6), 822–844. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726717727047>
- Misra, J., & Walters, K. (2016). All fun and cool clothes? Youth workers' consumer identity in clothing retail. *Work and Occupations*, 43(3), 294–325. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888416644949>
- Mizrachi, N., Drori, I., & Anspach, R. R. (2007). Repertoires of trust: The practice of trust in a multinational organization amid political conflict. *American Sociological Review*, 72(1), 143–165. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240707200107>
- Moth, R. (2020). 'The business end': Neoliberal policy reforms and biomedical residualism in frontline community mental health practice in England. *Competition & Change*, 24(2), 133–153. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024529418813833>
- Nechanska, E., Hughes, E., & Dundon, T. (2020). Towards an integration of employee voice and silence. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2018.11.002>
- Newsome, K., Thompson, P., & Commander, J. (2013). 'You monitor performance at every hour': Labour and the management of performance in the supermarket supply chain. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 28(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12000>
- Ngai, P., & Smith, C. (2007). Putting transnational labour process in its place. *Work, Employment & Society*, 21(1), 27–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017007073611>
- Novak, J. (2000). Hospital pharmacy automation: Collective mobility or collective control? *Social Science & Medicine*, 51(4), 491–503. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0277-9536\(99\)00488-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0277-9536(99)00488-8)
- Omid, A., & Dal Zotto, C. (2022). Socially responsible human resource management: A systematic literature review and research agenda. *Sustainability*, 14(4), 2116. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14042116>
- Palladino, L. (2021). Financialization at work: Shareholder primacy and stagnant wages in the United States. *Competition & Change*, 25(3–4), 382–400. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024529420934641>
- Parker, L. D., & Jeacle, I. (2019). The construction of the efficient office: Scientific management, accountability, and the neo-liberal state. *Contemporary Accounting Research*, 36(3), 1883–1926. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1911-3846.12478>
- Paul, J., & Criado, A. R. (2020). The art of writing literature review: What do we know and what do we need to know? *International Business Review*, 29(4), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2020.101717>
- Paul, J., & Dhiman, R. (2021). Three decades of export competitiveness literature: Systematic review, synthesis and future research agenda. *International Marketing Review*, 38(5), 1082–1111. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-12-2020-0295>
- Paulet, R., Holland, P., & Morgan, D. (2021). A meta-review of 10 years of green human resource management: Is green HRM headed towards a roadblock or a revitalisation? *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 59(2), 159–183. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12285>
- Paul, J., Lim, W. M., O'Casey, A., Hao, A. W., & Bresciani, S. (2021). Scientific procedures and rationales for systematic literature reviews (SPAR-4-SLR). *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4). <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12695>

- Paul, J., Parthasarathy, S., & Gupta, P. (2017). Exporting challenges of SMEs: A review and future research agenda. *Journal of World Business*, 52(3), 327–342. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2017.01.003>
- Peng, T. (2011). The impact of citizenship on labour process: State, capital and labour control in South China. *Work, Employment & Society*, 25(4), 726–741. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017011419721>
- Pérez, P., & Cifuentes, L. (2020). The service industry, private-sector employment and social class in Chile: New developments from labour process theory. *Critical Sociology*, 46(3), 443–461. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920519842372>
- Petre, C. (2018). Engineering consent: How the design and marketing of newsroom analytics tools rationalize journalists' labor. *Digital Journalism*, 6(4), 509–527. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2018.1444998>
- Price, R. (2016). Controlling routine front line service workers: An Australian retail supermarket case. *Work, Employment & Society*, 30(6), 915–931. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017015601778>
- Quinlan, E., Robertson, S., Urban, A.-M., Findlay, I. M., & Bilson, B. (2020). Ameliorating workplace harassment among direct caregivers in Canada's healthcare system: A theatre-based intervention. *Work, Employment & Society*, 34(4), 626–643. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017019867279>
- Rana, J., & Paul, J. (2020). Health motive and the purchase of organic food: A meta-analytic review. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 44(2), 162–171. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12556>
- Rhodes, C., & Harvey, G. (2012). Agonism and the possibilities of ethics for HRM. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 111(1), 49–59. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1441-0>
- Richards, J. (2020). Putting employees at the centre of sustainable HRM: A review, map and research agenda. *Employee Relations*.
- Richards, J. (2022). Putting employees at the centre of sustainable HRM: A review, map and research agenda. *Employee Relations: The International Journal*, 44(3), 533–554. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-01-2019-0037>
- Rose, E. (2002). The labour process and union commitment within a banking services call centre. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 44(1), 40–61. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1472-9296.00036>
- Russell, B. (2002). The talk shop and shop talk: Employment and work in a call centre. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 44(4), 467–490. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1472-9296.00060>
- Sallaz, J. J. (2015). Permanent pedagogy. *Work and Occupations* (Vol. 42(1)), 3–34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888414551207>
- Schofield, J. (2001). The old ways are the best? The durability and usefulness of bureaucracy in public sector management. *Organization*, 8(1), 77–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135050840181005>
- Scully-Russ, E., & Torraco, R. (2020). The changing nature and organization of work: An integrative review of the literature. *Human Resource Development Review*, 19(1), 66–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484319886394>
- Sharma, P. (2020). Digitalisation and precarious work practices in alternative economies: Work organisation and work relations in e-cab services. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X20924461>
- Sharpe, D. R. (2006). Shop floor practices under changing forms of managerial control: A comparative ethnographic study of micro-politics, control and resistance within a Japanese multinational. *Journal of International Management*, 12(3), 318–339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intman.2006.06.003>
- Sherman, R. (2011). Beyond interaction: Customer influence on housekeeping and room service work in hotels. *Work, Employment & Society*, 25(1), 19–33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017010389240>
- Shulzhenko, E., & Holmgren, J. (2020). Gains from resistance: Rejection of a new digital technology in a healthcare sector workplace. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 35(3), 276–296. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12172>
- Siciliano, M. (2016). Disappearing into the object: Aesthetic subjectivities and organizational control in routine cultural work. *Organization Studies*, 37(5), 687–708. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840615626464>
- Siegelbaum, S., & Thomas, R. J. (2016). Putting the work (back) into newswork. *Journalism Practice*, 10(3), 387–404. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2015.1025415>
- Smith, C., & Ngai, P. (2006). The dormitory labour regime in China as a site for control and resistance. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17(8), 1456–1470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190600804762>
- Smith, C., Valsecchi, R., Mueller, F., & Gabe, J. (2008). Knowledge and the discourse of labour process transformation: Nurses and the case of NHS direct for England. *Work, Employment & Society*, 22(4), 581–599. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017008096737>
- Spivack, A. J., & Milosevic, I. (2018). Perceived location autonomy and work environment choice: The mediating influence of intrinsic motivation. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 54(3), 325–348. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886318764353>
- Stevenson, H. (2007). Restructuring teachers' work and trade union responses in England: Bargaining for change? *American Educational Research Journal*, 44(2), 224–251. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831207302194>
- Tanrikulu, C. (2021). Theory of consumption values in consumer behaviour research: A review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(6), 1176–1197. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12687>
- Tassinari, A., & Maccarrone, V. (2020). Riders on the storm: Workplace solidarity among gig economy couriers in Italy and the UK. *Work, Employment & Society*, 34(1), 35–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017019862954>
- Taylor, F. W. (1919). *The principles of scientific management*. Harper & brothers.
- Taylor, P., & Bain, P. (2003). 'Subterranean worksick blues': Humour as subversion in two call centres. *Organization Studies*, 24(9), 1487–1509. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840603249008>
- Taylor, P., D'Cruz, P., Noronha, E., & Scholarios, D. (2013). The experience of work in India's domestic call centre industry. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(2), 436–452. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2011.561216>
- Taylor, T., Mallinson, C., & Bloch, K. (2008). "Looking for a few good women": Volunteerism as an interaction in two organizations. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 37(3), 389–410. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764007310420>
- Taylor, P., & Moore, S. (2015). Cabin crew collectivism: Labour process and the roots of mobilization. *Work, Employment & Society*, 29(1), 79–98. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017014538336>
- Terry, E., Marks, A., Dakessian, A., & Christopoulos, D. (2021). *Emotional labour and the autonomy of dependent self-employed workers: The limitations of digital managerial control in the home credit sector*. *Work, Employment and Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017020979504>
- Thompson, P. (1989). *The nature of work: An introduction to debates on the labour process*. Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Thompson, P. (1990). Crawling from the Wreckage: The Labour Process and the Politics of Production. In D. Knights, & H. Willmott (Eds.), *Labour Process Theory. Studies in the Labour Process*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-20466-3.3>
- Thompson, P. (2003). Disconnected capitalism: Or why employers can't keep their side of the bargain. *Work, Employment & Society*, 17(2), 359–378. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017003017002007>
- Thompson, P. (2011). The trouble with HRM. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 21(4), 355–367. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2011.00180.x>
- Thompson, P. (2013). Financialization and the workplace: Extending and applying the disconnected capitalism thesis. *Work, Employment & Society*, 27(3), 472–488. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017013479827>
- Thompson, P., & Harley, B. (2007). HRM and the worker: Labor process perspectives. In P. F. Boxall, J. Purcell, & P. M. Wright (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of human resource management* (pp. 147–165). Oxford University Press.
- Thompson, P., & Newsome, K. (2004). Labor process theory, work, and the employment relation. In B. E. Kaufman (Ed.), *Theoretical perspectives on work and the employment relationship* (pp. 133–162). INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS RESEARCH ASSOCIATION.
- Townley, B. (1993). Foucault, power/knowledge, and its relevance for human resource management. *Academy of Management Review*, 18(3), 518. <https://doi.org/10.2307/258907>
- Townsend, K. (2007). Who has control in teams without teamworking? *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 28(4), 622–649. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X07082214>
- Townsend, K., Lingard, H., Bradley, L., & Brown, K. (2011). Working time alterations within the Australian construction industry. *Personnel Review*, 40(1), 70–86. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00483481111095528>
- Tsang, K. K., & Kwong, T. L. (2017). Teachers' emotions in the context of education reform: Labor process theory and social constructionism. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 38(6), 841–855. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2016.1182007>
- Uddin, S., & Hopper, T. (2001). A Bangladesh soap opera: Privatisation, accounting, and regimes of control in a less developed country. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 26(7–8), 643–672. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682\(01\)00019-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682(01)00019-8)
- Varje, P., & Turtiainen, J. (2017). More than just hands: Workers' experiences of industrial work in Finland during the fordist period. *Management & Organizational History*, 12(4), 357–373. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449359.2017.1403930>
- Vidal, M. (2007). Manufacturing empowerment? 'Employee involvement' in the labour process after fordism. *Socio-Economic Review*, 5(2), 197–232. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ser/mwl005>
- Villareal, A. T. (2010). The bus owner, the bus driver, and his lover. *Work and Occupations*, 37(3), 272–294. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888410373350>
- Vincent, S., Bamber, G. J., Delbridge, R., Doellgast, V., Grady, J., & Grugulis, I. (2020). Situating human resource management in the political economy: Multilevel theorising and opportunities for kaleidoscopic imagination. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 30(4), 461–477. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12328>
- Walker, M. (2016). Hospitality in jeopardy. *Safe Open*, 6(3), Article 215824401666174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244016661749>
- Wang, Y., Wang, H., & Xu, H. (2021). Understanding the experience and meaning of app-based food delivery from a mobility perspective. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 99, Article 103070. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.103070>
- Watson, T. J. (2004). HRM and critical social science analysis. *Journal of Management Studies*, 41(3), 447–467. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2004.00440.x>
- Watson, T. J. (2010). Critical social science, pragmatism and the realities of HRM. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(6), 915–931. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585191003729374>
- Wood, A. J. (2018). Powerful times: Flexible discipline and schedule gifts at work. *Work, Employment & Society*, 32(6), 1061–1077. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017017719839>
- Wood, A. J., Graham, M., Lehdonvirta, V., & Hjorth, I. (2019). Good gig, bad gig: Autonomy and algorithmic control in the global gig economy. *Work, Employment & Society*, 33(1), 56–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017018785616>
- Yang, D., Dumay, J., & Tweedie, D. (2020). Accounting's role in resisting wage theft: A labour process theory analysis. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 34(1), 85–110. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AAAJ-11-2019-4268>
- Zeitoun, H., & Pamini, P. (2021). A promise made is a promise kept: Union voice, HRM practices, implicit contracts and workplace performance in times of crisis. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 31(1), 277–292. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12308>
- Zheng, Y., & Smith, C. (2018). 'Chicken and duck talk': Life and death of language training at a Japanese multinational in China. *Work, Employment & Society*, 32(5), 887–905. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017017719008>