

EVENT REVIEW

The National Conference of Industrial and Organizational Psychology “Horia D. Pitariu” 19th Edition, May 9-11, 2019, Iași, Romania

ZSELYKE PAP

West University of Timișoara

In May 2019 the 19th edition of the National Conference of Industrial and Organizational Psychology “Horia D. Pitariu”, reunited researchers and practitioners from all over the country at the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University from Iași. The organizers proposed the *impact of technology on work*, as the central theme of the conference, inviting the scientific community to discuss and analyze the way technological advances generate changes in the way we work, and how these changes affect human resource practices.

The *keynote speaker* was Prof. José M. Peiró from the University of Valencia, who is not only member of the Research Institute of Human Resources Psychology, Organizational Development and Quality of Working life (software), but also a senior researcher of the Economics Research Institute of Valencia (IVIE) and former president of the International Association of Applied Psychology and of the European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology. Moreover, he is a fellow member of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology (EAOHP) and the Spanish Academy of Psychology. He has published about 200 articles and book chapters on entrepreneurship and innovation, team and organizational climate and culture, and on work socialization processes as well as youth labor market entry, unemployment, and

overqualification. He presented an analysis of the main digital transformations and their implications for the jobs, qualifications, and competencies, with special attention to the transformation of the professional jobs and also to changes in working conditions, working arrangements, and employer-employee relations.

Three *state of the art* presentations offered even more insight into the ways that technological advances and modern working practices influence our understanding of vocation, our possibilities to measure relevant organizational phenomena, and our career paths in the context of globalization and accelerated urbanization. Prof. dr. Constantin Ticu, from the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University from Iași, talked about the gap between research and practice, and the ethical and practical implications of being a practitioner without understanding research and being a researcher without knowledge of the practical realities of our field. Lect. Dr. Andrei Rusu, from The Vest University of Timișoara has presented interesting research using modern technology to detect and investigate unconscious biases in the recruitment and selection process. Prof. Dr. Petru Curșeu has talked about career development in the context of digitalized, intelligent cities, and the challenges that are provoked by these new social-cognitive systems.

The 8 *workshops* related to the central theme created the time and space for even more thorough discussions. Dr. Marian Popa offered an applied view over network analysis, its challenges and advantages, and showed the audience software options that can be used for this type of data analysis. Dr. Daniela Victoria Zaharia discussed work-life balance in the context of arising work characteristics driven by technology. A team composed of Dr. Iuliana Zavadovschi, Dr. Camelia Soponaru, and Dr. Cristina Maria Bostan presented individual and organizational level interventions in resolving critical incidents. Further, Dr. Petru Curseu analyzed organizations through the lens of socio-technical designs, and Dr. Lavinia Țânculescu talked about ways to teach and develop digital competencies to employees in order to help them adapt to the accelerated digitalization of the world of work. Dr. Cornel Mincu addressed the issue of increasing stress levels and presented mindfulness-based techniques to prevent and reduce stress in organizations. Cătălin Tașcă and Dr. Cristian Opariuc-Dan took the audience to the East in a workshop about Chinese meditation techniques and functional optimization used to increase efficiency at work and optimize personal performance. Finally, George Gunnesch-Luca has offered an introduction to creating dynamic documents in RMarkdown, papaja, and Knitr.

The “Horia Pitariu” prize is offered annually at this conference for the best research published in the field of occupational and industrial psychology from the previous year. This year, the prize was awarded to Gabriel Fischman for his contribution as first author to the paper entitled „Qualitative job insecurity and in-role performance: a

bidirectional longitudinal relationship?”, published in the *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* in 2018, in collaboration with Hans de Witte, Coralia Sulea and Dragos Iliescu. This study offered a novel approach in integrating diverging theoretical predictions, showing that the causal relationships between qualitative job insecurity and in-role performance differ between lower and higher professional levels.

Since 2014, there are also 2 annual research grants awarded to new projects written by students. This year Diana-Alina Oancea-Matei and Alexandra Maftei from the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University from Iași received one of the grants for their research proposal entitled “Moral licensing and ethical organizational behavior: empirical evidence within the academic field regarding the inclusion of people with physical disabilities”. The other prize has been offered to Elena-Andreea Gheorghe from the Babes-Bolyai University from Cluj-Napoca, for her research project on work-team creativity: „How do we increase creativity at the group level: the importance of task-conflict, cognitive complexity, and collective emotional intelligence”.

To conclude, the 19th edition of this conference opened discussions and debates about relevant issues of modern organizational life. These discussions involved a large variety of participants from well-known professors in this field with vast experience both in research and practice, to Ph.D. students and HR practitioners. Researchers from different universities and backgrounds shared their work and findings, and the newly formed relations opened the door to future national collaborations.