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Editorial by the Editor; Ann Brown

Invitation to our readers to send in their opinions and views by letter to the editor

We want to hear from you. We are always interested in well-argued points of view. All your letters will be read by the Associate Editors and selected ones will be published in a later issue.

The research papers in this issue address diverse issues:

- Case based research
A case study (in Sweden) that identifies methodological obstacles that can impede research into the success of major complex projects at national and international level (Große, Olausson and Wallman-Lundásen)
- Introduction to The Learning History Method (LHM)
A fascinating case example of applying LHM to support organizational change (Julie Béliveau and Anne-Marie Corriveau)
- Theoretical - Deductive Qualitative Research Methods
The case for using Deductive Qualitative Research methods in theory development (Pearse)
- Teaching Research Methods
Two empirical papers on: undergraduate business student perceptions of value of research methods modules (Mitchell and Rich), and an innovative example of 'learning by doing' for the students on a South African taught Masters programme (Turpin and Van Bell)

The papers

Case based - researching national level critical infrastructure protection (CIP) systems

The critical infrastructure protection (CIP) planning system for power provision in Sweden (STYREL) involves a number of actors from several levels of the state's governance structure at national and local level and other institutions. Große, Olausson and Wallman-Lundásen aim to assess the effectiveness of the system for creating a plan to deal with a crisis involving national power shortage. This case study establishes the complexity of the planning operation and the methodological obstacles to researching national level critical infrastructure protection (CIP) systems.

Introduction to The Learning History Research Method

The Learning History Method (an application of action research history) is a powerful tool for fostering collective organizational reflection – an important ingredient of successful organizational change. It is as yet a little used method according to the authors - Béliveau and Corriveau. Their case study on the change programme inspired by the Planetree approach which was carried out in five healthcare institutions in Quebec makes extraordinary reading. This paper is an excellent introduction to the method and its potential value to any organization in the throes of a major change programme.

Theoretical - Deductive Qualitative Research Methods

Pearse claims that researchers have not made full use of the potential of deductive qualitative research methods for developing a distinctive and cumulative body of knowledge. He argues that for topics such as 'servant leadership' which have reached a mature stage, deductive qualitative methods are appropriate. The paper offers a guide to identifying such topics and applying deductive qualitative methods to enhance existing theory.

Teaching Research Methods

Mitchell and Rich carried out a survey of undergraduate business student within one business school to establish their views on the value of including research methods on their course. While largely positive responses were obtained, the paper identifies some of the more intractable issues involved in teaching this subject. Turpin and Van Bell describe the success of an innovative student-based group research project, in driving home the precepts of a standard lecture research methods. The publically available research methodology for the Fairwork

project (assessing gig platforms for their conformance to fair principles of work) formed the basis of the student project. The authors suggest that this could be of value to many other modules on research methods.

The papers

1. Left in the Dark: Obstacles to Studying and Performing Critical Infrastructure Protection by Große, Olausson and Wallman-Lundásen
2. The Learning History Methodology: An Infrastructure for Collective Reflection to Support Organizational Change and Learning by Julie Béliveau and Anne-Marie Corriveau
3. Guidelines for Theory Development using Qualitative Research Approaches by Noel Pearse
4. Teaching research methods and the supervision of undergraduate projects - seeking practical improvements to a complex process by Mitchell and Rich
5. Fast-tracking Research Methodology Immersion for Students: Experiences from a Project on Fairwork in the Gig Economy by Marita Turpin and Jean-Paul Van Belle