

Special Issue for Small Business Economics

Smaller firms in a modern working life: How do we make entrepreneurship healthy?

Deadline for Submission: September 1, 2019
Please see instructions below for submission guidelines.

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New and small firms in the modern working life - how do work environment, health and entrepreneurship interact?

The conditions for managing small and entrepreneurial enterprises in today's working life are being influenced by several developments. Digitalization of the economy concerns a majority of all small enterprises and allows enterprises to stay small while operating on an international arena. An increasing number of small organizations are virtual and global. This may improve their entrepreneurial and innovative capabilities (Audretsch, 2002), but may also have consequences for management of the firm as well as for working conditions (MacEachen et al. 2010). Ample research describes how small enterprises have the potential to function as engines for economic growth and labour market expansion, e.g. for young people and immigrants (Eurofound, 2015). New and small enterprises should not be seen as a scaled-down version of larger organizations, but rather as an entity, or even multiple and diversified entities of their own (Josefy et al. 2015).

However, there are important challenges. Employment relations have changed over time and new types of precarious employment arrangements, e.g. temporary work agencies and subcontracting (including self-employment) increase the risk for job insecurity for workers in enterprises of all sizes (Kalleberg, 2009; Heyes et al. 2018). This will challenge the inclusion of people with disabilities or limited resources in the labour market and may also have health implications (Bajwa et al. 2018; Tompa et al. 2007). Other important aspects such as gender and ethnicity need to be addressed both with regard to how combinations of disadvantages may multiply discriminatory effects (Brown & Moloney, 2018), and for analysing the specific conditions for growth and development among specific groups (Reichborn-Kjennerud & Svare, 2014). As well, studies of small enterprises often overlook the issue of "standpoint", that is, that workers and employers have different stakes in this business and this will shape interactions, for instance, around work disability (Eakin. 2010).

With new and small enterprises, we refer to small private ventures but also small organizations of hybrid forms as we today can observe a large variation between different types of small enterprises with respect to ownership, distribution over sectors, relations to

larger organizations, work characteristics (Davidson & Klofsten, 2003). This variation is important to take into consideration in this realm of research (Josefy et al. 2015).

In new firms, organizational structures and processes are not yet developed in order to identify and manage occupational risks and hazards (Wiklund, Baker & Shepherd, 2010; Qin, Wright & Gao, 2017). Such issues may not be a primary concern in start-ups and developing process of a firm, but as an organization starts to grow, they will need to adhere to regulations and establish such structures (McKelvie, Wiklund & Brattström, 2018). Firms at this point have generally not adapted to the legal arrangements a larger organization needs to face, e.g. consortia agreements, employment agreements, work environment and social insurance legislation, or procedures for collective bargaining. Another key issue is the high failure or “churn” rate of new small enterprises, where this precariousness of enterprise will affect their behaviour, especially around occupational health and safety. New and small firms are also vulnerable to personnel changes or illness among the staff, where a small work group will need to compensate for absence in various ways (Hansen & Andersen, 2008).

The aim of this special issue is to develop new knowledge of the role of new and small enterprises (also including older small firms) as agents for the development of sustainable workplaces, and to develop policy recommendations. The theme also focuses on the interaction between small enterprises and public authorities (such as social insurance and the educational system).

Potential topics of interest include but are not limited to the following:

- How do traditional (and non-traditional) small enterprises relate to changing conditions, such as digitalization, globalization, new employment arrangements, and user-driven innovations?
- How could recruitment and selection processes of employees effect the working environment?
- What specialist or generalist competencies are needed in new and small firms to manage issues related to the working environment?
- How do small enterprises develop leadership that promotes an attractive workplace with a diverse set of people who are included in the development of the organization?
- How do small businesses increase their organizational learning capacity, that supports a balance between personal development of employees and organizational performance?
- How do small enterprises promote health and manage work disability?
- How do small enterprises interact with welfare systems, e.g., in cases of sickness absence and rehabilitation?
- How do new firms develop organizational structures and processes to identify and manage occupational risks and hazards?
- How are employment standards and health and safety issues managed in virtual workplaces?
- In which ways do gender, ethnicity, age, and other socio-cultural aspects interact in how work conditions play out in small enterprises?
- How do small (new and established) firms develop adherence to regulations related to employment agreements, work environment and social insurance legislation?
- How do new firms manage formal (e.g. collective bargaining) and informal participation in work environment development?

- How do small firms manage the liability of smallness, and the vulnerability this implies for unexpected events, e.g. illness among the staff?

We welcome papers using a range of perspectives and methodological approaches. Both empirical and theoretical/conceptual papers are welcome.

Submission guidelines

Submissions are to be made according to the regular guidelines of the journal, but will not be submitted through the regular submission system. Submissions should be sent directly to submitted to Magnus Klofsten (magnus.klofsten@liu.se).

Submissions should adhere to the following standards:

a) formatting should be according to the SBEJ style guide -- see instructions for authors here: <http://www.springer.com/business+%26+management/journal/11187>

b) In the references section, authors should include DOIs for each cite where a DOI is available.

c) Make sure each article has both keywords and JEL Classifications. At a minimum, each paper should have L26 as a JEL Classification: <https://www.aeaweb.org/econlit/jelCodes.php>.

d) Figures can be in the document, but it is better if they are not. Please make sure that the figures are of excellent quality. It is strongly recommended that all figures be black and white/grey-scale only.

Publication timeline

Submissions due:	September 1st, 2019
Double-blind reviews complete (1st Round):	December 20th, 2019
Double-blind reviews complete (2nd Round):	March 15th, 2020
Double-blind reviews complete (3rd Round):	May 15th, 2020
Final manuscripts due:	May 30, 2020
Submission to and approval of submissions by EiC:	June 30, 2020

In print:	Fall/winter 2020
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