Call for Papers

(Ir)responsible uses of technologies and the future of work: Managerial and organizational dilemmas

Guest editors

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1. Short description

Advances in technologies are reconfiguring practical, analytical, and spatial dimensions of work(places) and the nature of work itself. The long-term impact of these innovations remains unclear, leaving managers and leaders struggling to understand how to capitalize on their potential benefits whilst also avoiding the downsides. We invite submissions from multi-disciplinary practitioners and researchers interested in the practical, theoretical, and ethical implications of "exponential" technologies in organizations, with an emphasis on the dilemmas they present for the future of work. The intention is to inform an agenda for future research and augment existing guidelines and frameworks for the responsible, human-centered design, use, and evaluation of these innovations in the context of work.

2. Purpose and objectives

Advances in technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), intelligent robots, the internet of things, blockchain, and augmented and virtual reality are continuing to have a significant impact on individuals, organizations, and society. Sometimes described as "exponential technologies," referring to their growth along and beyond the lines of Moore's Law, these digital and data-driven approaches are reconfiguring the practical, analytical, and spatial dimensions of organizations and shaping new societal, organizational, and individual futures (Chima & Gutman, 2020). For example, ChatGPT, which was launched only a few months ago, is beginning to transform businesses and work, redefining some existing beliefs about individual skills, productivity, and "traditional" organizational processes (Dasborough, 2023).

In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is not surprising that businesses are embracing new technologies to improve their effectiveness and resilience (Denicolai et al., 2022). However, while this is encouraging, it is important to recognize that such innovations also pose new risks and threats to employees, organizations, and society at large (Tursunbayeva et al., 2022). For employees, the adoption of such technologies can have significant implications for their privacy, autonomy, opportunities, income, behaviors, and overall well-being (Pereira et al., 2023). The potential for bias or discrimination is also a concern, particularly as new flexible and demand-based working arrangements emerge, and the nature of work and its allocation are being transformed (Alfes et al., 2022). For organizations, the adoption of new technologies can have operational, financial, and reputational implications. This is especially true as the European Union and other global regions seek to regulate the use of data and AI more effectively, which can result in reputational damage. At the societal level, the implications include sustainability, the labor market, and legal consequences, among others.

Another obstacle to managing these changes is the difficulty that stakeholders can face in understanding how these technologies actually work, with algorithms and data flows often being opaque. In addition, many individuals often lack the necessary digital skills to fully embrace exponential technologies at/for work. As such, it is unclear what the long-term impacts of such technologies will be, and organizations face managerial and organizational dilemmas as they seek to embrace innovation whilst also avoiding harms and penalties. Much learning has emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic, in parallel with which many governments are investing heavily in the promise of AI for their digital economies.

A key question underlying these technologies is how "human-centered" and responsible they are. On the one hand, they are sometimes portrayed as empowering, enabling, and beneficial to employees, yet on the other hand, they provide more power for management to quantify, track, incentivize, and discipline their staff (among others). More knowledge and understanding of how these technologies are evolving and being used for organizing and managing (Leonardi, 2020), as well as their soft (Tursunbayeva & Renkema, 2022) and hard impacts, are therefore needed if the goal of "human-centeredness" in organizations is to be achieved and to ensure a decent future of work for all (United Nations, 2015).

We invite submissions from multi-disciplinary practitioners and researchers that critically reflect on and analyze ethical and responsible applications of exponential technologies in organizations and their implications for stakeholders, society, and the economy. We welcome conceptual and empirical contributions, reviews, case studies, and experience-in-the-field reports inspired by interdisciplinary, multi-level, multi-stakeholder, multi-method, and culture-sensitive approaches that could address existing and future challenges and uncertainties, define an agenda for future research, and provide good practice recommendations and instruments for designing, using, and evaluating human-centered, trustworthy, and responsible technologies in organizations.

3. Topics of interest, including but not limited to:

- Conceptualizing responsible development, implementation, and utilization of exponential technologies for employees, groups, and organizations
- Identifying and addressing organizational and managerial dilemmas associated with developing, implementing, and using human-centered and responsible exponential technologies at/for work
- Revealing employee dilemmas connected with recognizing/using exponential technologies at/for work, as well as the potential workarounds they can adopt
- Demystifying the potential and perils of exponential technologies for diversity and inclusion, including the potential for discrimination, bias, or inequalities in organizations
- Developing quantitative and qualitative approaches to understanding, measuring, and managing the impact of implementing or using exponential technologies on individuals, organizations, and society
- Identifying and managing the potential "dark-sides" of exponential technologies, including issues related to privacy or surveillance
- Examining spatial, temporal, and behavioral work boundaries affected by exponential technologies
- Comparing human versus algorithmic decision-making and management
- Exploring existing and imagining the future "new" ways of working that are facilitated by exponential technologies such as gig work or hybrid work
- Identifying how exponential technologies adjust and re-organize professions, job categories, organizational roles, processes, and competencies, and approaches for ameliorating these
- Analyzing trust issues associated with exponential technologies
- Managing human–computer interaction in the workplace
- Reviewing the latest insights into state-of-the-art and responsible, explainable, and human-centered exponential technologies
- Studying cases on (ir)responsible uses of AI at/for work in various organizations (e.g., SMEs or multinationals) and sectors (e.g., healthcare, public or private sector companies)
- Identifying critical stakeholders in the responsible and human-centered application of exponential technologies at/for work
- Developing and evaluating new and existing theories, models, and frameworks for studying exponential technologies
- Applying critical approaches, methodologies, and tools to understand, design, and evaluate responsible and human-centered exponential technologies for/in organizations
- Examining the sustainability of exponential technologies for organizations and societies that adopt them with respect to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals
- Developing guidelines and approaches for the responsible, ethical, and human-centered development, implementation, and utilization of exponential technologies in organizations

4. Submission instructions

This call is open and competitive. All submitted papers will be subject to double-blind peer review, must be based on original material not under consideration by any other journal, should adhere to the journal's publication guidelines (available on the website), and must be submitted electronically to https://www.editorialmanager.com/eumj/default.aspx. For empirical papers based on data sets from which multiple papers have been generated, the guest editors must be provided with copies of all other papers based on the same data. The deadline for submissions is **between 3rd February and 21st March 2025**. To ensure that all papers are correctly identified for consideration for this special issue, it is important that authors select "**(Ir)responsible uses of technologies**"as the paper type.

Questions about this special issue can be directed to the Lead Editor, Dr Aizhan Tursunbayeva (a.tursunbayeva@uniparthenope.it), for consideration by the editorial team.

EMJ is a flagship scholarly journal, publishing internationally leading research across all areas of management. EMJ articles challenge the status quo through critically informed empirical and theoretical investigations and present the latest thinking and innovative research on major management topics, while still being accessible and interesting to non-specialists. EMJ articles are characterized by their intellectual curiosity and diverse methodological approaches, which lead to contributions that impact profoundly on management theory and practice. We welcome interdisciplinary research that synthesizes distinct research traditions to shed new light on contemporary challenges in the broad domain of European business and management. Cross-cultural investigations addressing the challenges for European management scholarship and practice in dealing with global issues and contexts are strongly encouraged.

5. Brief CVs of guest editors

Dr **Aizhan Tursunbayeva** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Naples "Parthenope". Her previous professional roles include Assistant Professor at the University of Twente (Netherlands), Management Consultant at KPMG Advisory (Italy), and Manager at HSBC Bank (Canada, UK, Poland, and Kazakhstan). In 2015 she was visiting doctoral researcher at the University of Edinburgh. She teaches Organizational Design, Human Resource Management (HRM), and People Analytics. Her research lies at the intersection of HRM, technology, innovation, and healthcare. The results of her research were published in *Personnel Review*, *Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association*, *Information Technology & People*, *Management Learning*, and *International Journal of Information Management*. She co-convened a number of sub-tracks at EGOS and EURAM conferences on exponential technologies and the future of work between 2022 and 2024.

Professor **Luigi Moschera** is a Full Professor of Organization Studies at the University of Naples "Parthenope". He teaches Organization Theory, Inter-firm Network Design, and Human Resource Management. His most recent research focuses on technology, contingent/alternative employment arrangements and their implications for employees' attitudes, well-being, and behavior. He has authored several international publications on organizational change in the temporary work agency sector in Italy and Europe. He (co)chaired different international conferences and co-convened a number of sub-tracks on the use of new technologies and the future of work at EGOS and EURAM conferences between 2022 and 2024.

Dr **Claudia Pagliari** is an Associate Professor at the University of Edinburgh (UK). Her interdisciplinary research involves the study and evaluation of emerging innovations and their ethical, design, and policy implications. Alongside her primary areas of digital health and data science, she has a special interest in workforce informatics and digital ethics. She is a co-founder of the NHS Digital Academy—a leadership program for C-suite professionals in the UK's National Health Service——and has held various expert advisory roles for bodies such as the Scottish Government, the World Health Organization, the Global Health Workforce Council, and international research agencies.

Dr **Vicenc Fernandez** is Director of the UNESCO Chair of Higher Education Management at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya - BarcelonaTech (Spain) and an Associate Professor in the Department of Management. He received a PhD in innovation management, but recently he has focused on talent management and workforce analytics. His teaching responsibilities are Tools for Decision Making (MSc), Entrepreneurship (MSc), and Business Analytics (MSc), together with the supervision of PhD students. He has been a Visiting Fellow at Beijing Jiaotong University (China).

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