

Guest editorial: The world of contemporary work and the digital economy

One of the most striking traits of modernity, or even post-modernity – regardless of how we call or where we place the present time – is a higher degree of transience, even ephemerality, a certain impermanence of things. And this is reflected in the business environment.

One of the drivers of this increasingly significant transformation is the technological change, which also largely affects the organizational setting, creating different production relations, significant changes in labor relations and, why not mentioning?, new social relations. The Fourth Industrial Revolution has been shaping the new digital economy, platform economy or shared economy (Gandini, 2018; Fleming, 2017), starting with the rise and interconnection among innovations, technologies and devices, like IoT (Internet of Things), artificial intelligence (AI), as digital clouds, additive manufacturing (3D printing), cyber-physical systems, autonomous robotization, etc., which connect people, objects and systems, in an intense data exchange through digital media, at ever-growing speed.

Therefore, a vast reflection and research field emerges, aiming at understanding the new impact of this configuration onto the organizational and work world, as means to identify what is permanent and what is variant, critical issues and potentialities, compromises and contradictions influencing the work processes, work organization, subjectivity construction per se, groups interaction and society cohesion.

With these concerns in mind, this *special issue*, named “*Organizations and digital work in contemporariness*”, aimed at bringing articles which unravel the tangle of experiences lived and produced in the world of contemporary work, intertwined by digital technology, despite the hardship that lays on building deep reflections while still in the heat of such recent events.

To this aim, the proposed themes and sub-themes seek to connect current technological development to both the symbolic-organizational aspects and the dimension individual-work-career, as so authors could navigate countless aspects and perspectives of an overly complex endeavor.

With the sentiment of having fulfilled, to some extent, academic community’s expectations – the internal dimension – as well as organizations’ – the external dimension – the hope is that this issue contributes to, on one side, shed light on the importance of digital technology in the management field, and on the other side, become a document for future analyses on what we experience nowadays.

This Special Issue has received 42 articles in total, coming from different countries, including Europe and Middle East, as well as from Brazilian States throughout the Country’s vast territory. There is a tendency toward bibliographical reviews and theoretical articles, maybe influenced by the novelty of the theme and by the COVID-19 pandemic situation, which unveiled urgency concurrent with the difficulty of conducting field research.



The pandemic and its reflexes on management, on labor relations, and on daily jobs, on top of the research context, was a consistent presence in the submitted articles.

Out of the 42 received articles, six were approved for this Special Issue. The first one, by Paulo Henrique Bertucci Ramos and Marcelo Pedroso, presents a model on how key elements contribute to AgTechs (agriculture start-ups) scalability process, and which are the indicators for those key elements, building on an exploratory research.

The second work deals with the sue of an artificial intelligence chatbot with the goal of enhancing the efficiency of a bank's customer service. Written by Ivan Andrade and Cleonir Tumelero, the piece raises critical issues on the conception of analytical intelligence units to coordinate projects in that area.

Adrian Cernev, Vanessa dos Santos, Guilherme Saraiva and Adriano Bidá researched changes in the educational sector under the perspective of teachers who are also digital platforms content creators. The article presents practical implications starting from the positive and negative raised by teachers and proposes a model to analyze the ecosystem.

The fourth article, on its turn, by Jeová Silva Júnior, Jailson Carneiro, Patrick Lessa and Carlos Vieira, reveals the results of a three-stage research on the perception that application drivers have on work relations and conditions. There are urgent challenges inherent to shared economy growth affecting lives and finances of those drivers.

The fifth article analyses the influence of tele-commuting and management control systems on objective congruence, building on a survey conducted among employees of the Brazilian Federal Public Ministry. The article, written by Edicreia dos Santos, Jonatas Sallaberry and Alcindo Cipriano Mendes, discloses the need to understand and identify opportunities for improvement in the management of remote work by the public administration, building on the experiences triggered by COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, we close this issue with a systematic bibliographic review article that aims at analyzing studies connecting Circular Economy and Industry 4.0, in the current worrisome scenario. Tiago H. Hilario da Silva and Simone Sehnem present possible avenues and organizational challenges for implementing those concepts in manufacturing and supply chain.

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