DGfE Deutsche Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft

Kommission **Organisationspädagogik** der DGfE

and WERA International Research Network

10. annual conference

Organization and Networks

In cooperation with the University of Hildesheim
February 23 – 24, 2017

3rd Pre-Conference for junior scientists:
Forum Educational Organization Research

February, 22 - 23, 2017

CALL FOR PAPERS

The discussion around networks has become increasingly relevant for social and educational sciences over the last 20 years. The shift towards networks is regarded as paradigmatic for our present age. Networks become increasingly important in many thematic fields such as interorganizational cooperation, multi-stakeholder processes and multi-layered governance of schools, universities and the region as well as regarding the relationship between life world and network. The term „network" seems to become a byword for political, economic and social innovation strategies.

In organizational education research and practice a network is not only considered as social entity but also as organizing process. Both perspectives focus on the communication and the coordination between individuals, divisions, teams, groups or whole organizations. Besides, the term "network" is used as an analytical tool in organizational education. Especially, the relational perspective of social network analysis rises interesting questions for theory, research, pedagogical practice and intervention in organizations.

The annual conference opens up the possibility to discuss theoretical concepts and empirical research on the topic of organization and networks. The following topics can be raised and discussed in several theoretical, empirical, methodological and conceptual fora:

Organization and network theory

Organization as well as networks can be understood as relational entities and as a consequence, they have several theoretical approaches in common. However, these approaches have different anchors. In organizational theory the term network is used to draw a dividing line between a bureaucratical, a vertical and a horizontal model of organization. Other approaches aim at dissolving conventional distinction (e.g. between actor and organization) and develop a relational approach of organizing and yet others use heuristics to analyze structural process.
The annual congress invites to discuss different approaches of organization theory and network theory against the backdrop of organizational education.

Methodology of organizational education and network research

Organizational education and network research have a partly different theoretical foundation. There is a different usage of the concepts "organization" and "network" within empirical studies. However, studies with a focus on the relationship between organization and network can often not explicitly be assigned to either organizational or social network research. Similar methods of data collection are used in both research fields. Many studies rely on standardized methods. However, in organizational sciences as well as more recently in social network analysis, qualitative approaches have been established (e.g. interviews, ethnographical approaches or document analysis). Besides, empirical studies develop mixed method research designs for organizational education research. Methodologically relevant questions are: What can be understood by an educational network research and how can we further develop this approach within organizational education?

Organizational learning and forms of network governance

The relationship between organization and network has gained relevance within the research fields of interorganizational learning, management and governance. The following questions can be relevant in the perspective of organizational education research: How and where does interorganizational learning take place? What are the possibilities and limitations of interorganizational learning? How is control within networks possible? What is the role of relational control mechanisms regarding the composition of learning processes of and within organizations? How should/ can the process of organizing both become effective and humane within networks?

Network-like forms of work and organization

Flexibility and freedom in decision making and acting within organizations have become an important factor for the structural renovation in and of companies or public institutions. Against the backdrop of the need of organization to adjust to rapid technological and social change, to the shortening half-life of knowledge and to the developments of information and communication technologies in the network society, it becomes more attractive for organizations to experiment with network-like forms of organizing beyond the model of the bureaucratic organization. The other way around, we see initiatives and social movements transforming into formal organizations to gain influence by participating in power structures. Both transformations of collective actions into more formal or network-like organizations are in the focus of organisational education. Especially the concept "learning organization" is discussed to express the institutionalization of constant organizational change by reflection and annulment of decisions taken. Questions for organizational education might focus on the transition from bureaucratic to network-like

organizations and vice versa, the alternative forms of organizing and working in such network-like or partial organizations and the effect of those new forms of organization for individual lives.

Inter- and transnational perspectives on organizational education and networks

Inter- and transnational perspectives on organization are becoming more relevant as organizations are increasingly globalised and networked. Network research within organizational education opens up inter- and transnational perspectives to research on the virtualization of organizations as well as the support and cooperation across countries. Neoinstitutionalism, multi-sided ethnography, discourse analysis and other research approaches are further developed to investigate the fabrication of „globally travelling ideas".

The conference invites researchers across disciplines to discuss the national and international theoretical, empirical, methodical and practice-related approaches to analyze the relationship between organization, network and learning. The main conference language is German. However, there will be international fora in English.

Preliminary outline of the conference:

- **Forum 1: Organization and network theory**
- **Forum 2: Methodology of organizational education and network research**
- **Forum 3: Organizational learning and forms of network governance**
- **Forum 4: Network-like forms of work and organization**
- **Forum 5: Inter- and transnational Perspectives on Organizational Education and Networks**

All interested authors and presenters are invited to send an abstract in English or German language to the thematic fields outlined here – and of course there may be other topics to be addressed. Contributions to the suggested fora will be 25 Minutes each (+ 25 Minutes discussion).

Please submit your proposal (1.000-1.500 characters) relating to the above outlined themes of the conferences. Your proposal should explain the theoretical, methodological and empirical background of your research. Moreover, you can assign your contribution to one of the five fora. The organizing committee might also adjust the outline of the conference after reviewing the submissions by thematic modifications or adding of an extra forum.

Please **submit your proposal until 10.07.2016** to **organisation-netzwerk@uni-hildesheim.de**

The third pre-conference for junior scientists „Forum Educational Organization Research" will be held as a research workshop that opens up the space for general and specific questions on theoretical concepts, methodological designs or empirical analysis of on-going research projects of young researchers. A call for paper will soon be sent out (Those who are interested in participating are invited to send a message to Nicolas Engel: nicolas.engel@fau.de.

Susanne M Weber, Nicolas Engel, Claudia Fahrenwald, Christian Schröder, Andreas Schröer	Inga Truschkat, Luisa Peters, Andreas Herz
(co-chairing members of the executive board)	(Local organization team)