1. Introduction to the *Handbook of Research Methods on the Quality of Working Lives*
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INTRODUCTION

This *Handbook* is an essential resource for researchers who are, or are interested in, studying the quality of working lives. Researching the quality of working lives involves investigating the resources, activities and outcomes of paid and unpaid work. Research into the quality of working lives is multi-disciplinary in nature encompassing a range of sub-disciplines within the social sciences including economics, human resource management, industrial relations, psychology, and social policy. Consistent with the multiple disciplines researching in this field, a variety of methods are employed in the study of the quality of working lives. This *Handbook* provides reflections from researchers on recent research which has contributed to the expanding international evidence base exploring the quality of working lives, collecting together research in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods traditions from key contributors in the field.

DEFINITIONS OF WORK

Definitions of work aim to capture the structural aspects of this activity as well as incorporating understanding of its place in our lives. In the broadest sense, work comprises both paid and unpaid work (Hardill, 2002). Paid work can simply be defined as an activity for which there is remuneration. It can also be defined relative to time spent in this activity. For example, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines part-time work as engaging in paid work for under 30 hours per week, while full-time work involves 30 hours or more spent in paid work per week. Historically, paid work has often been assumed to be a predominantly negative experience, for example within mainstream economics where it is considered as a source of negative utility[1] reflecting the act of work involving the performance of an arduous task (Weiss and Kahn, 1960). However, contrasting these definitions, it has been argued that paid work can involve positive

experiences, acting both as a source of social capital (McDonald and Mair, 2010), and achievement and fulfilment (Spencer, 2009: 105). It plays a central role in the time-use of many individuals, as well as an important role in identity formation and well-being (Krueger and Mueller, 2012). Indeed, experiences of paid work can be meaningful; however, this depends on a number of factors including level of variety, discretion, and whether work tasks are perceived as important or necessary (Bailey and Madden, 2015). Participation, and performance, in paid work may be impacted by a range of socio-economic (e.g. social class, education) and demographic (e.g. disability and gender) factors, while patterns of paid work are also heavily influenced by unpaid work.

Unpaid work refers to varied forms of unpaid activity encapsulated in the term, 'tasks of social reproduction' (Glucksmann, 1995). Many common forms of unpaid work involve acts of care, including childcare, grandparenting, and care for ill/elderly kin and non-kin (Hardill and Baines, 2011). It includes activities which may be undertaken within the home, including housework and care, and extends to activity taking place in the community including formal and informal voluntary work. Individuals engage in voluntary work alongside, or in some cases as an alternative to paid work, where they have left paid work, e.g. following retirement, or paid work is not accessible, for example due to ill health or disability (Hardill and Wheatley, 2017; Van Willigen, 2000). Unpaid work may be undertaken voluntarily by individuals, but equally can be a product of exploitation and oppression associated, for example, with gender-based inequality (Tacoli, 2012; see Chapter 6).

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN WORK

The nature of work is constantly evolving. Drivers of labour market change are both structural and demographic. Structural change has been caused by economic, political and social developments including service sector growth, globalisation, technological advancement, declining worker representation, and the financialisation of the economy (Kalleberg, 2009). The pursuit of neo-liberal employment, welfare, and wider social policy in many economies has altered working practices since the latter half of the twentieth century (Lewis and Campbell, 2008: 535–536). These changes have resulted in what some analysts have described as a polarisation of employment, also referred to as a 'hollowing out of the middle' of the occupational hierarchy. New jobs in the growth area of services have tended to be either highly skilled or relatively unskilled, while traditional 'trades' requiring intermediate manual skills have declined in relative terms

(Wilson et al., 2016). Changes in the demography of work have arisen as the labour force has become more diverse including greater proportions of women engaging in the labour market throughout their lives (Lewis and Campbell, 2008: 535–536; McDowell et al., 2006: 144), those with disabilities more actively engaging in the labour market, and workers remaining in paid work into older age (see for example the European Union's (EU's) 'active old age' programme, which promotes older individuals remaining in paid or voluntary work (European Commission, 2017)). A number of these developments have been, at least in part, driven by policies which have sought to promote engagement in, and improve access to, paid work. Many of these policies have been implemented under the banner of 'family-friendly' or 'work–life balance' (Lewis and Plomien, 2009), with a focus on easing conflicts for individuals who face difficulties in managing paid work alongside other areas of their lives.

It remains the case that paid work is predominantly undertaken by an employee for an employer. Relations between employers and employees, working conditions, and workplace policies are therefore highly relevant to the quality of work encountered by most individuals. Careers are increasingly diverse and flexible in structure. Contemporary career strategies no longer focus solely on hierarchical progression. Many careers can be described as multi-directional (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011), patchwork, boundaryless, and frayed (Peel and Inkson, 2004). Career models such as the kaleidoscope (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011) and protean career (Hall, 2004) capture the growing diversity of careers. The kaleidoscope career model acknowledges the role of balance between work and other aspects of life throughout the career (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011), while the protean career is also relevant in understanding work in contemporary societies, as it gives greater credence to the value of psychological success, i.e. happiness or satisfaction, rather than only success measured with salary or position (Hall, 2004).

Since the global economic crisis of 2007–09 growth areas of paid work have centred on highly flexible forms of work. Greater economic uncertainty, which is especially impacting on self-employed workers, is also giving rise to growing numbers of workers (both employed and self-employed) who report second jobs held alongside their main employment (Atherton et al., 2016; Friedman, 2014: 173). While the majority of paid work continues to take place through traditional contractual relationships between employer and employee, often in the physical environment of an employer premises, there has been growth in 'precarious' or 'contingent' work which is more flexible and mobile in nature. This includes zero hours, an 'on-call' non-guaranteed hours form of paid employment (Mandl et al., 2015; Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2014),

temporary, seasonal and part-time jobs, which are characterised by being uncertain, unpredictable and often high risk (Kalleberg, 2009: 2; Raess and Burgoon, 2015: 95–96). Rates of self-employment and freelancing, including work as independent contractors (King, 2014: 152), have grown. In addition, entirely new forms of work have been established through developments in digital technology, such as crowdworking/e-lancing, which are encapsulated in the term 'gig economy' (Friedman, 2014; Green, 2017: 1640–1641; Harvey et al., 2017; Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2018).

Gig work is a form of on-demand labour or 'piecework' (Alkhatib et al., 2017), which comprises work being performed as an independent contractor or consultant with the aim of completing a particular task or working for a defined period of time (Friedman, 2014; Harvey et al., 2017). It usually involves the use of online and smartphone platforms that facilitate flexible work, including 'errands' and task sharing (NESTA, 2014). An alternative and to some extent distinct term, crowdwork, specifically refers to the digital management and mediation of physical and digital work which is performed by an on-demand workforce (Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2018; Howe, 2008). Physical tasks are managed and mediated digitally, in many cases through an 'app' or 'platform', but are performed offline and include, for example, delivery driving. Digital tasks are entirely completed online (Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2018: 3).[2] The gig economy forms part of the wider collaborative economy. There is a good degree of overlap between these new forms of work and more traditional constructs of self-employment and micro-business operation, especially freelancing (The Work Foundation, 2016: 5). These highly flexible forms of work can provide workers with greater choice over the timing and location of work. Workers involved in these forms of work may also be better able to negotiate preferred working conditions (Osnowitz and Henson, 2016: 348), potentially enhancing the quality of work lives. However, this may be more easily realised among more employable workers, such as those who are highly skilled (Green, 2011).

It has been argued that for many workers these contingent forms of work equate to uncertain and insecure highly flexibilised employment. Estimating numbers of workers engaged in these forms of work is problematic, in part, as work may be performed for multiple 'employers' during the same month, week, or even day (De Stefano, 2016: 472). Estimates have suggested, for example, that there may be up to 5 million crowdworkers in the UK. Meanwhile, it has been argued that gig work accounts for around 12 per cent and 18 per cent of the population in Sweden and the Netherlands respectively (Huws and Joyce, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, cited in Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2018). Broader estimates

suggest around 13 per cent of employment in the US is in contingent work (Friedman, 2014: 175). Where forms of contingent and highly flexible work are predominantly used for the benefit of the employer, for example to minimise costs (Findlay et al., 2017: 11), it is argued that this creates difficulties for workers in balancing work with the rest of their lives (Gregory and Milner, 2009: 123), impacting the quality of their working lives.

The flexibilisation of paid work is creating opportunities for greater diversity in movements associated with work, including reducing the need for a daily commute and some forms of business travel. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are enabling continued growth in the proportions of workers reporting regular and even permanent work at home, and in a range of remote locations, e.g. cafes and coworking spaces (Hislop and Axtell, 2009). These technologies also allow real-time communication between distant geographies, potentially reducing the demand for business travel. Patterns of travel to work, nevertheless, remain dominated by use of the car and other modes of private motor transport. High rates of growth in urbanisation in developing economies are creating particular pressures as a result of the impacts on existing infrastructure, with growing need for development of transport networks to support commuting into urban employment centres (World Bank, 2017). Despite the alternative offered by technological developments (e.g. web-based video calling) business travel forms an important component of work for an increasing portion of workers, especially those in highly skilled occupations (Nicholas and McDowell, 2012). Global expenditure on business travel provides some insight into its role in paid work, with expenditure in 2015 estimated at US$1.25 trillion (Global Business Travel Association (GBTA), 2016).

Notwithstanding policy and societal changes which have increased flexibility and enhanced access to paid work in recent decades, patterns of paid work remain heavily influenced by unpaid work. Creating space and time for unpaid work, including the provision of care within and outside the home for kin and non-kin, creates trade-offs and inequalities (Hughes et al., 2005). Provision of care, especially that which takes up considerable time or extends over long periods, effectively limits time available for paid work. Often those providing care have to work part-time or reduced hours, make use of flexible working arrangements, or remain economically inactive (Carmichael et al., 2008: 25). Reductions in public funding of caring services since the global economic crisis, alongside the ageing demography of many advanced societies, has increased demand for the provision of care. The inequality between men and women which remains present in the distribution of unpaid work leaves women incommensurately burdened by this activity (Atkinson and Hall, 2009). This results in a vertically and horizontally gender segregated labour market,

which reflects, among other drivers, the persistence of social norms which are difficult to change (Teasdale, 2013: 400). These norms may be even more challenging to shift in the context of some developing economies (Eliufoo and Nguluma, 2016). Gendered patterns of unpaid work impact patterns of paid work and economic activity rates, which continue to vary starkly. Economic inactivity rates among women can be more than double those of men. Meanwhile, part-time work also remains much more common among women, accounting for around two-fifths of women in the UK, for example, compared with only around one-eighth of men (Wheatley, 2017a). Existing work–family and flexible working policies have been criticised for perpetuating current social constructs founded on masculinised full-time and often extensive, i.e. long hours, paid work routines (Lewis and Humbert, 2010: 242). Policy limitations and social norms result in distinct patterns of paid and unpaid work among men and women, impacting the quality of work encountered.

Changing structures and forms of work, including highly flexible employment, are constantly rebalancing the role of work in our lives. The result, in many contemporary societies, is a labour market in which levels of flexibility are high, but may be increasingly employer oriented (Gregory and Milner, 2009: 123). The growth in 'precarious' work in some cases results in multiple job holding (Atherton et al., 2016), while it can also result in underemployment (Green and Livanos, 2015: 1226). The rise of the 'gig economy' has been directly linked to reported growth in insecure part-time self-employment, especially among those leaving unemployment (Wales and Amankwah, 2016: 28). For individuals engaged in these forms of work, experiences of paid work differ significantly from typical understanding of traditional permanent employment or a career. Furthermore, paid work remains highly gendered as a result of the continued impact of the household division of labour (Wheatley and Wu, 2014), which could leave women at a disadvantage in their careers (Fagan et al., 2012), and potentially more likely to encounter lower quality work.

THE QUALITY OF WORK

The quality of work has, in recent years, come to the fore in both policy and organisational spheres (Findlay et al., 2017: 4–5). A range of differing definitions and terminology for the quality of work are applied across disciplines and researchers (Green, 2006; Kalleberg, 2012; Martel and Dupuis, 2006). The quality of work life, for example, is a concept which is broader in scope. Seashore (1975) proposed it as being composed of three separate dimensions reflecting the employer, employee, and community.

The employer perspective focuses on organisational performance, measured in terms of productivity, production cost, and the quality of products/services. Employee aspects include income, health and safety, and the intrinsic satisfaction derived from paid work. The community perspective, finally, is associated with the effectiveness of job roles, i.e. if talent is underused this reflects a societal loss. The definition of the quality of working life is itself debated, though, with others offering varying definitions (see Martel and Dupuis, 2006). Job quality differs in its definition although with clear intersection with quality of work life. It refers to the degree to which a job exhibits characteristics which generate benefits for the employee, including to physical and mental well-being (Green, 2006). Central to most definitions of the quality of work are the conditions of work encountered and the impacts (both actual and perceived) that these have on workers. Also emphasised are both the objective, e.g. pay, and subjective, e.g. perceived autonomy, ways in which quality of work can be measured.

Existing research has attempted to identify the constituents of 'good work' and job quality, including through taxonomies developed by Karasek and Theorell (1990), Bartling (2012), Connell and Burgess (2016), Holman (2013), Overell et al. (2010), Rosso et al. (2010), and Vidal (2013). The constituents of job quality can be broadly categorised into job prospects, and extrinsic and intrinsic characteristics (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), 2012, 2013). Job prospect factors comprise job security, opportunities for training and career development, and recognition. Extrinsic characteristics affecting the relative quality of jobs include pay (including relative income levels), the physical work environment, and health and safety. Intrinsic characteristics, i.e. those that are determined by the nature of the work, include skill, levels of autonomy, variety, work intensity, and involvement in decision-making. Finally, in their research Connell and Burgess (2016; see also Chapter 11) propose a fourth set of constituents focused on the quality of working time and work–life balance, including the length of the working day/week and availability of flexible working arrangements.

Research is indicative of better quality work having a number of important beneficial impacts (Hoque et al., 2017), although it is worth acknowledging that even high-quality jobs can exhibit negative characteristics, e.g. intense working routines and work–family conflict (Kalleberg, 2012: 433). 'Good' work has positive impacts on job satisfaction, but also on overall well-being (Green, 2008, 2009; Wheatley, 2017a, 2017b). It has been found to be associated with better mental health and lower levels of stress (Wood, 2008). In addition, as well as forming a constituent of job quality, improved work–life balance is also an outcome of better

job quality. Research has further indicated that better job quality can lead to higher levels of productivity, increased work effort, better retention levels, lower employee absenteeism, and reductions in workplace conflicts (Hoque et al., 2017; Green, 2009). On a more aggregated scale it has also been suggested that better quality work facilitates labour market transitions and promotes increases in participation rates (Smith et al., 2008: 588), while low-quality work may act to increase retirement intentions (Siegrist et al., 2006: 64). The changes which have occurred in paid work in recent years have driven increases in work intensity, greater uncertainty, and reductions in levels of discretion associated with use of Taylorist work organisation (Houlihan, 2002, 69; Choi et al., 2008), all of which can reduce job quality.[3] It has been argued that the quality of work is in large part the product of managerial choice. Employers can take the 'high road', offering better job quality including training and higher pay, or the 'low road' focused on cost cutting, in their employment strategy (Vidal, 2013). At the same time, prioritisation from the policy perspective has been on job creation and lowering levels of unemployment in fragile economic environments, rather than actively promoting improvements in job quality.

The impact of unpaid work on the quality of working lives is multifaceted. Consistent with some of the benefits of paid work, individuals may be able to derive a number of extrinsic and intrinsic benefits from voluntary work (Folbre, 2012; Meier and Stutzer, 2008). Intrinsic rewards include well-being benefits derived as volunteers: (i) care about the well-being of recipients; (ii) enjoy providing care both within the home and community; and (iii) gain utility from witnessing increases in the utility of others. Extrinsic rewards, meanwhile, include: (i) human capital development; (ii) extending social networks; and (iii) gaining social approval (Meier and Stutzer, 2008). Unpaid care work is often lower quality and associated with the presence of constraint. It can limit the ability of carers (who remain more likely to be women) to participate in paid work, or at least limit it to part-time or reduced hours, during certain parts of their lives (Carmichael et al., 2008; Drinkwater, 2015). It may also impede engagement in some forms of unpaid work, e.g. volunteering, through reducing time available for these activities. Well-being impacts from the provision of unpaid work are, as a result, more mixed, with some individuals recording negative impacts, for example, where unpaid care reduces the time and resources required to engage in other activities (Hardill and Wheatley, 2017).

The observed recent developments in the paid work sphere, alongside both the contemporary economic and policy environment and the relatively slow-changing dynamics of the household, render research into the quality of working lives particularly timely and important. This *Handbook*

provides a critical reflection on the methods employed in recent research which has investigated a number of these themes, providing a comprehensive resource for researchers interested in the field.

OVERVIEW OF THE *HANDBOOK*

This *Handbook* comprises chapters reflecting on research conducted by the authors into the quality of working lives. Chapters are aimed at both new and experienced researchers, providing insight into alternative approaches to researching the quality of working lives. As such the book is a useful source for those embarking on research into this area for the first time, as well as those who have previously conducted research into the quality of working lives and would like to expand their understanding of the range of approaches and techniques available. Each chapter outlines methods employed in researching a specific aspect of the quality of working lives, including reflections on the approach and its strengths and weaknesses. The book provides examples of a diverse range of methods, but is not exhaustive in its coverage. The book begins in Part I with a number of chapters which reflect on philosophical, conceptual, and practical considerations associated with researching the quality of working lives. Part II of the book outlines a series of examples of qualitative methods in Chapters 7 to 12. Chapters 13 to 17, in Part III, report on varied quantitative approaches. Finally, in Part IV, Chapters 18 to 21 provide examples of research employing a mixed method research design.

Philosophical, Conceptual, and Practical Considerations

This part of the *Handbook* begins, in Chapter 2, with a discussion of the ways in which research into the quality of working lives can achieve and measure impact. The chapter, authored by Carol Atkinson, reflects on the mounting efforts to ensure that research has 'impact', i.e. affects, which change or benefit institutions beyond academia. The chapter discusses how to define, generate, and measure impact when researching the quality of working lives, offering essential advice for those researching in this field. In Chapter 3, Irene Hardill and Daniel Wheatley report on the rationale for, and strengths and weaknesses of, the application of a lifecourse approach when researching the quality of working lives. The chapter uses the example of mixed methods research conducted in the UK, focusing on how individuals balance unpaid work, specifically unpaid care (in the home) and voluntary work (helping non-kin by giving time/resources), with paid work and other uses of time at different points in their lives.

Chapter 4 turns to conceptual and practical concerns around the measurement of job insecurity, contextualised in reference to gendered patterns of work. This chapter, by Pinar Bayhan Karapinar, Selin Metin Camgöz and Ozge Tayfur Ekmekci, considers the range of single- and multi-item scales available to the researcher for measuring job insecurity and the ways these can, and have been, employed in research which explores the role and relevance of gender in perceptions of job insecurity. In Chapter 5 Anne Cockayne discusses research into difference in the workplace, using the example of research into the experiences of managing employees with Asperger's Syndrome within the workplace. The chapter reflects on the unique challenges associated with researching this group of workers, including accessing organisations and workers with Asperger's Syndrome. Finally, this part of the *Handbook* ends with Chapter 6, in which Irene Sotiropoulou explores the challenging issue of encountering violence, both systemic and incidental, while doing field research involving unpaid labour in solidarity initiatives in Greece. This chapter centres on the role and stance of the researcher towards the participants who are subject to violence and the communities involved, and the ethics of the researcher in this situation.

Qualitative Methods

The second part of the *Handbook* details examples of qualitative research into the quality of working lives. In Chapter 7 Andrew Smith and Jo McBride, using the example of research exploring the work–life balance and lived realities of low-paid workers in multiple employment in the UK, consider the challenges faced when researching this hard-to-reach group and the role of emotion in data collection, analysis, and communication of their research. Chapter 8 turns to the use of discursive research methods to understand the quality of working lives. In this chapter Cath Sullivan describes micro forms of analysis, such as Discursive Psychology, and also more macro-level approaches, such as Critical Discourse Analysis, and reflects on theoretical and methodological differences between these approaches. A number of examples from published research are used to illustrate discursive methods. Participant observation forms the focus of Chapter 9, in which Geraint Harvey reflects on the strengths as well as challenges associated with the use of this ethnographic method, using the example of a study of non-standard work involving aesthetic and emotional labour among fitness instructors in Wales. Chapter 10 outlines a second ethnographic approach, in this case utilised to research hard-to-reach workers engaged in gig economy employment for a platform company. In the chapter Adam Badger and Jamie Woodcock provide

insights into the ethical dimensions of accessing workers classed as independent contractors, including the potential for a blurring of the role of the researcher in ethnographic research and arising legal concerns associated with researching gig employment. In Chapter 11, John Burgess and Julia Connell report on the use of a qualitative case study approach which was employed to research aspects of job quality in Australia, including the development of a job quality measurement tool. The chapter details this process and how it was used to identify human resource management strategies to improve job quality. Finally, in Chapter 12 Ani Raiden and Christine Räisänen present a discussion of the application of a narrative approach comprising life-story interviews which incorporated use of coaching tools, performed through a gender strategy theoretical lens. They use this approach to explore Swedish academic workers' ambidexterity, i.e. ability to combine creativity and innovation alongside compliance to quality assurance and institutional norms, and its implications on worker well-being.

Quantitative Methods

In this part of the *Handbook* we turn to the use of quantitative methods. This part begins, in Chapter 13, with a discussion of ways in which descriptive analysis of summary data from secondary data sources can be employed in researching the quality of working lives, provided by Chris Lawton. Using three case studies of policy-oriented research this chapter outlines the value of this form of analysis to policy and practitioner audiences as well as academics, in addition to the risks of misinterpretation of descriptive summary data. Tracey Warren outlines secondary data sources, including panel surveys, and their uses in researching the quality of working lives in Chapter 14. The chapter provides examples of research conducted into part-time work, work–life balance and housework. Specific reflection is given to class and gender with respect to the effectiveness and limitations of secondary data sources in conducting research which considers work beyond the most common constructs. Methods of investigating the relationship between the physical work environment and the quality of work lives forms the focus of Chapter 15. Elizabeth Sander, Alannah Rafferty, and Peter Jordan reflect on the use, in existing research, of objective, subjective and physiological measures of the impacts of the physical work environment. They go on to describe recent research they conducted which involved developing a measurement scale for use in researching the impacts of the physical work environment. In Chapter 16 Michaela Fuchs, Anja Rossen, Antje Weyh, and Gabriele Wydra-Somaggio outline an approach to researching the gender pay gap using the Oaxaca-Blinder

decomposition. The chapter outlines the nature of the approach, including extensions which can be employed. It further reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of the approach, using the example of recent research conducted by the authors using data from the EU Structure of Earnings Survey. The final chapter in this part of the *Handbook*, Chapter 17, by Christian Darko and Kennedy Abrokwa, outlines the use of regression techniques to explore the impact on earnings of over- and under-education among workers in Ghana. The chapter considers the range of methodologies available when researching education mismatch, and discusses the use of the realised matches and objective evaluation methods in their research.

Mixed Methods

The final part of the *Handbook* presents a number of examples of the use of mixed methods research design in researching the quality of working lives. It begins, in Chapter 18, with Anne Green outlining an approach which combined large-scale quantitative data from the UK Labour Force Survey, used to provide observations of the patterns of low-skilled work among migrants in the UK, with qualitative interviews with a range of stakeholders in order to generate insights and understanding of the differential distribution of migrant workers across sectors and occupations. The chapter outlines important methodological issues including definitions used in data collection and analysis, sampling, comparability, and the benefits of triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data. In Chapter 19, Craig Bickerton considers the use of a small-scale mixed methods research design to explore the impacts of work-related travel, including career implications and impacts on worker well-being. Involving collection of data via an online survey and follow-up semi-structured interviews, the chapter outlines the process involved in collecting and analysing the data, and getting the most out of the research in terms of research outputs. Adrian Madden, Catherine Bailey, Luke Fletcher, and Kerstin Alfes discuss the use of evidence-based management in management and organisational research in Chapter 20. Drawing on their own research into employee engagement, which adopted a narrative evidence synthesis design drawing on quantitative and qualitative evidence, they discuss the strengths and challenges faced in combining an expansive range of evidence to generate research findings. In the final chapter of the *Handbook*, Fiona Carmichael, Jo Duberley, and Lorna Porcellato reflect on the use of occupational history calendars to explore life-time careers in a mixed method research design. The occupational history calendars are embedded within semi-structured interviews, providing a novel approach to the use of this traditionally quantitative method. The chapter outlines

the mechanics of the research method as well as providing reflection on the advantages and disadvantages of the approach.

MOVING FORWARD

As the preceding discussion has detailed, this *Handbook* explores a range of different methods and methodological considerations drawing on the knowledge, experiences, and reflections of researchers engaged in studying the quality of working lives. It offers insights into a broad selection of methods, including some of the more commonly used as well as methods and areas of research which are less well known and documented. It is hoped that this *Handbook* will act as an essential resource for new and experienced researchers alike, inspiring research and informing new debates which will add to the growing body of knowledge and understanding in the investigation of the quality of working lives.

NOTES

1. Within the economics discipline 'utility' refers to the ability of an activity or good to satisfy our individual wants/needs.
2. Crowdsourcing is diverse in nature involving crowdfunding, i.e. sourcing of capital, crowdsolving, i.e. ideas generation, and crowdvoting, i.e. polling of public opinion (Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2018).
3. Taylorist work organisation is named after Frederick Taylor, whose Scientific Management concept, put forward at the turn of the twentieth century (see Taylor, 1967), focused on increasing productivity through high levels of task division and prescription, resulting in work involving little, if any, initiative on the part of the worker (Choi et al., 2008).

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