Industrial Relations Research Unit
Warwick Business School
University of Warwick
Seminar Series

Wednesday 11th October 2017 - in collaboration with IKON
2.00-3.30 pm, 1.010, Warwick Business School

‘Determinants of intergenerational knowledge transfer’

Xenia Schmidt, Department of Management, Trier University and
Katrin Muehlfeld, Utrecht University School of Economics, Utrecht University

Abstract

In times of demographic transition, the threat of lost knowledge represents an issue to many organizations. Literature suggests the institutionalization of intergenerational knowledge transfer as a solution, yet, does not provide much detail on potential determinants of intergenerational knowledge transfer. Drawing on social exchange theory and self-categorization theory, this study conceptualizes the organizational and interpersonal challenges of intergenerational knowledge transfer, which derive from the dissimilarity of the employees. In particular, this study hypothesizes that the perception of age discrimination climate increases conflicts among employees. Conflicts, in turn, decrease intergenerational knowledge transfer through trust. To answer these research questions, we collected data from 444 participants, in a traditional setting of intergenerational knowledge transfer. The context was the vocational education training system of Germany. The results largely support our theory. The primary contribution of our analysis is to highlight the organizational and interpersonal determinants, which affect intergenerational knowledge transfer.

Please contact Val Jephcott: val.jephcott@wbs.ac.uk for further information