

NIJMEGEN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

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Workplace Innovation in the Netherlands: history and evidence

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Workplace Innovation in the Netherlands

- Tradition of socio-technical work organisation design, 1980-
- Working Smarter (not harder), 1995 – 2005
- Social innovation of work and employment, 2006-
- Dutch National Centre for Social Innovation (NCSI) 2006 – 2012, established by trade unions, employers' associations, TNO and universities
- Supported by ministries of economic affairs, employment and science. And the National Innovation Platform
- ESF support for SME's
- Workshops, awards, tools, knowledge bank, networks etc.
- Some shift of attention towards 'sustainable employability'



Working Smarter and Performance (NL)

Performance criterion	% change in performance last 2 years	
	SMEs without working smarter	SMEs with working smarter
Company results	2	18
Company turnover	7	15
Productivity	5	14
Employment	6	11

Economic Institute for SMEs. Source: Hauw et al., 2009; n = 650



Social innovation and performance (NL)

Performance criterion	Performance social innovative versus not social innovative organisations
Increase in turnover	16% higher
Increase in profits	13% higher
Innovation	31% higher
Productivity	21% higher
New clients	17% higher
Reputation	12% higher
Contented employees	12% higher

Erasmus Competition and Innovation Monitor (n = 932). Source: Volberda et al., 2010



Characteristic	Number organisations	Not social innovative	Social innovative	Total	Sign.
Labour productivity average or lower	2936	62%	33%	59%	
(much) above average	2045	38%	67%	41%	**
No, little autonomy	3632	79%	49%	76%	
Much autonomy	1167	21%	51%	24%	**
Talents not used	1212	27%	4%	24%	
Optimal use of talents	3777	73%	96%	76%	**
Time pressure	2756	56%	53%	55%	
No time pressure	2230	44%	47%	45%	

Source: Netherlands Employers Work Survey 2010 in Oeij et al. 2012; ** = $p \leq 0,01$; n = 4989



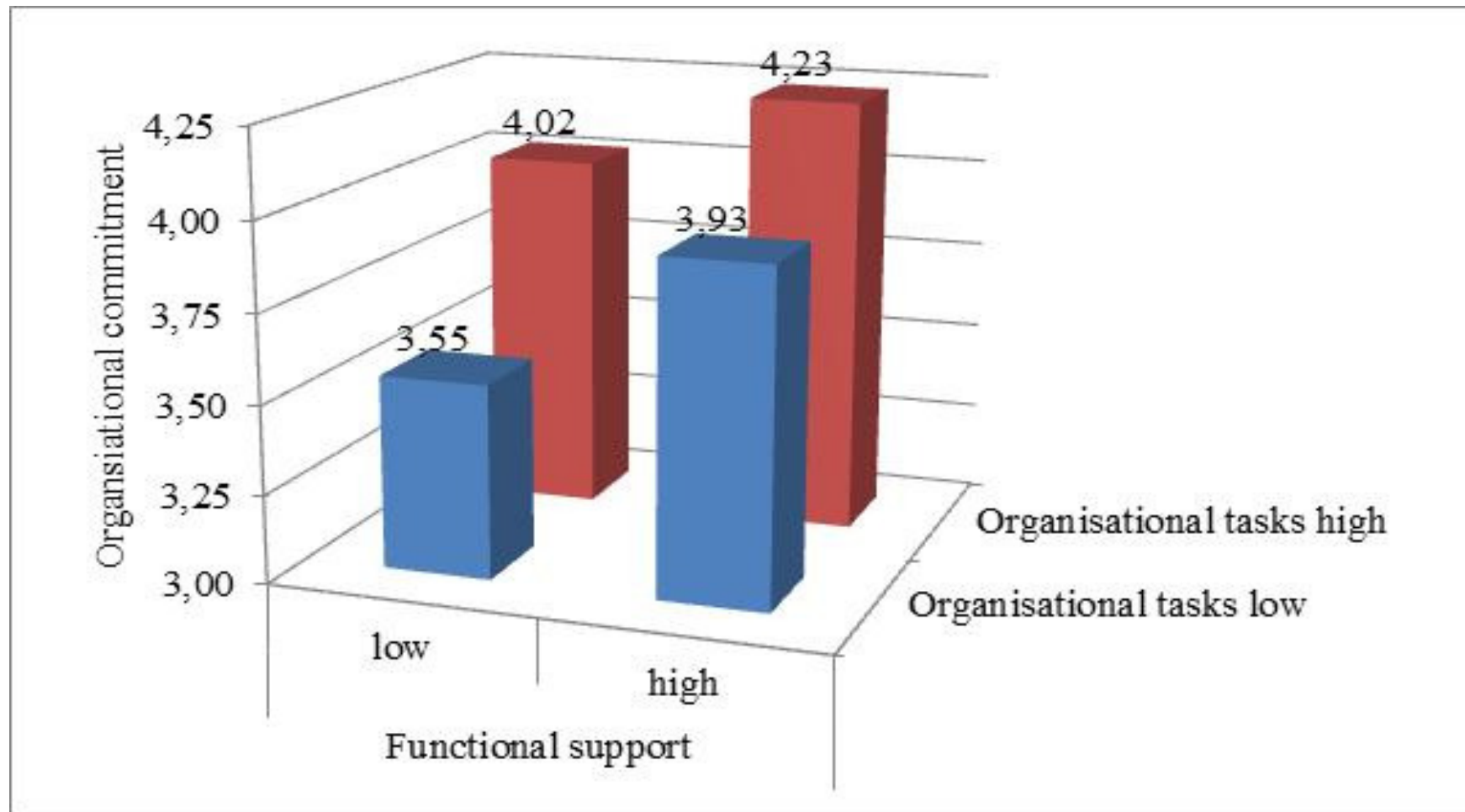
European Working Conditions Survey 2010, 1

- N = 2,048 (DK, IE, NL, FI, SE, UK). Source: Dhondt, Pot, Kraan 2013 (submitted)
- 3 categories job control: job autonomy (within a given job), functional support (supervisor, colleagues), organisational tasks (consultancy work organisation, targets etc.)
- Support and org tasks stronger effects on subj wellbeing and org commitment than autonomy
- Interaction autonomy and org tasks on wellbeing
- Interaction support and org tasks on org commitment
- Three-way interaction on org commitment, not on wellbeing
- Shopfloor consultation evidently is important. It is at the heart of workplace innovation.



European Working Conditions Survey 2010, 2

N = 2,048 (DK, IE, NL, FI, SE, UK). Source: Dhondt, Pot, Kraan 2013





Conclusions

- Urgency to increase labour productivity by working smarter; in the economic crisis even more
- All research shows wide variety of better performance
- Job control probably core element of workplace innovation
- Research focusses more on performance than on QWL
- Causal connection not always clear
- Social innovation in the workplace still popular concept