



Workplace Designs, Work Practices Complementarities and the Impact on Key Competencies

Riccardo Leoni

leoni@unibg.it

Department of Economics 'H.P.Minsky'; University of Bergamo

The objective of the study is to test the hypothesis that growth in the worker's key competence level is affected by a number of educational, training and workplace features. The focus is on the expressed competencies. Our findings show the strong statistical significance of five variables concerning organizational nature of the workplaces, whereby employees: (i) have participated in improvement groups; (ii) have submitted improvement suggestions; (iii) have been interviewed for performance evaluation purposes; (iv) receive constant information flows; and (v) are involved and consulted by the organization. The cross-sectional nature of the estimates raises typical questions concerning: (a) the endogeneity of some variables; (b) the problem of selection bias with respect to certain variables and, lastly, (c) the heterogeneity issue. All these problems are addressed in the paper, and the set of tests applied do not alter the main results. The policy recommendations that can be derived include the implementation of employees-management agreements to redesign workplaces in accordance with the findings of the study, and public incentives to encourage the re-engineering of workplaces in line with the HPWO, as both the key variables concerning the expressed competencies and the nature of the five organizational characteristics tested constitute an integral part of that model.

Keywords: Training, Learning, Job Design, Organizational Behaviours

JEL Code: J 24, D83, M51, D23