

Equal Opportunities International Conference

Stream Summaries Version 6.0

Stream 1

Fear, Shame, Anger and Pride: Emotions, Diversity and In/Equalities in Organisations

Track chairs:

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Dr Shona Hunter, Leeds University, UK

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Track outline:

Whilst there has been a veritable outpouring of academic work on emotions in recent organisational theory, there has been very little explicit theorisation or research on emotions, feelings, affect and in/equalities in organisations. This stream starts to address this relative gap by examining how recent social theory on emotions might help understand many different aspects of the operations of inequalities and equalities work in organisations. Drawing inspiration from the recent work of Sara Ahmed on the cultural politics of emotions, it explores issues such as:

- dominant group's fear of minoritised groups' anger;
- the so called backlash to equal opportunities by dominant groups;
- anxiety, nervousness, confrontation and defensiveness in diversity training;
- organisational diversity pride; leaders' 'passion' for and commitment to diversity; diversity awards and the 'glossification' and 'showcasing' of diversity (Prasad and Mills, 1997,);
- equality and diversity and white shame and guilt (Hunter, 2007)
- equality and diversity fatigue and weariness; the emotional labour of diversity workers
- social, cultural, national and geographic conceptions of emotions and /inequalities

The stream will provide a forum for empirical and theoretical work; work in progress; and social and psychological accounts of emotions but which move away from essentialising or de-politicising emotions.

Track questions:

How might recent work on emotions in organisations illuminate current thinking on inequalities and equalities in organisations?

How might thinking on emotions enhance current ideas about diversity and equality interventions in organisations?

How do emotional concepts and emotional practices vary across different national and cultural boundaries?

How might transnational feminisms and anti-racisms help us understand differing views on emotions and in/equalities and the work of diversity and equality workers?

How might research on emotions develop understanding of how inequalities and equalities work/operate in organisations?

Key words: Emotion; Guilt, Anger; Fear; Pride; Anxiety; Organisational processes; Inequalities; Diversity workers; diversity training

Stream 2

Multiple Discrimination and Mapping Diversity

Stream chairs: Dr Iyiola Solanke, UEA Law School, Norwich, UK – i.solanke@uea.ac.uk;
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Stream outline: Discrimination lawyers are coming to the recognition that whilst the traditional 'single-axis' legal framework for protection provides a remedy in many cases, it is too rigid to recognise complex, or multiple, discrimination. Simultaneously, sociologists concerned with the production and use of data are questioning whether ethnic data should be created in pluralistic societies, and if so why and how? Also, how should sexual orientation or religion be counted and classified? The purpose of this strand is to bring together experts to exchange perspectives on the constraints and contradictions, strategies and practicalities in relation to new challenges faced in both enumerating society and tackling multiple forms of discrimination.

Key words: Multiple, discrimination, intersectionality, ethnicity.

Stream 3

Work and Career Experiences of Ethnic Minority Men and Women

Stream chairs: Dr. Nicolina Kamenou, School of Management and Languages, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK; Dr. Anne Fearfull, University of St Andrews School of Management, The Gateway, North Haugh, UK

Stream outline: Papers welcomed to this stream will address work/career experience and opportunity issues faced by male and female members of ethnic minority groups¹ working within predominantly (but not exclusively) western organisations. We are particularly interested in the intersectionality of factors which might affect the nature of those experiences and opportunities, i.e. race, ethnicity, culture, religion and gender, as well as other factors, such as sexuality, age and disability, which traditionally have been addressed without reference to, or inclusion of, ethnicity or religion. Obstacles faced by ethnic minority men and women, such as problems in: identifying, attaining and sustaining a mentor relationship; gaining access to influential networks, and dealing with stereotypical perceptions of themselves, are relevant to this stream. Work-life balance issues within the context of ethnic minority groups' experiences would also be welcome in this stream.

Stream questions:

1. What are the issues around work and career experiences of ethnic minority men, women and groups? Which key factors can inhibit, or alternatively facilitate, ethnic minority groups' career experiences and career development/progression?
2. Do ethnic minority women and men face specific and/or different issues in organisations with regard both to each other and to the dominant majority groups?
3. What are the effects of intersectionality (i.e. combinations of factors including race, gender, religion, culture, sexuality, disability and age) on ethnic minority individual and/or groups' work and life experiences?
4. Are there any work life balance issues that may be specific to different ethnic groups?

Key words: Race, ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, work-life balance, stereotypes, and discrimination.

¹ While the term 'ethnic minority' tends to be understood in a sense in which separate groups, for example, South Asian,, African and Caribbean people are combined, taking as given that their experiences will be similar if not the same, we are keen to encourage the examination of the experiences of such groups, as well as those including 'invisible' minority group members (e.g., including those from Eastern Europe), as discrete from each other

Stream 4

Unsettling inequalities in the public sector: managed professionals, consumerism and globalising knowledge economies

Stream chairs: Ellen Kuhlmann, Department of Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath, Bath, UK; Rajani Naidoo, School of Management, University of Bath, Bath, UK

Stream outline: Across countries public sector services face similar pressures for modernisation. New governance practices have been introduced that are expected to improve efficiency of public services and human resource management as well as social inclusion and participation of the citizens. Characteristically, new governance operates through marketisation, performance management and more active forms of user involvement. Markets and managerial regimes together with 'unmarked' consumers are unsettling unequal relationships in public services but the effects are uneven and may be unintended. Furthermore, equal opportunity policies operate on macro-institutional level and may therefore not dismantle new emerging inequalities in human resource management based on an increasingly globalising creation of knowledge. This section seeks to explore whether and how the new public policies further equal opportunities and diversity in the professional workforce and the provision of public services for an increasingly diverse population.

Key words: social inequality, public sector services; consumerism; professionalism; globalisation

Stream 5

Inequalities in Small Business and Enterprise

Stream chairs: Dr Cynthia Forson, Business School, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, UK; Dr Gözde İnal, School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University of London, London, UK

Stream outline: The aim of the Inequalities in Small Business and Enterprise Stream within the EOI 2008 conference is to congregate international scholars with an interest in disadvantage in small businesses and enterprises. Access to and the benefits derived from self-employment and enterprise are unequally distributed within and across countries. Current debates on minority enterprise converge around the embeddedness of enterprise in the wider political and economic environment as well as in the socio-cultural dynamics of minority communities. This stream will seek to explore convergence, divergence, intersectionality of experience culturally and socially constituted and located within specific socio-political and geographic regions. Extant literature demonstrates that many of these inequalities are related to gender, race/ethnicity, social-class, age, disability, migrant status and a range of other factors. These inequalities are generally studied along individual strands and rarely at the intersection of multiple strands. Understanding the dynamics of such intersectionality of experience can assist in business support, research and behaviour that is inclusive. The stream will engage with issues and developments in minority enterprise, diversity, intersectionality and inclusivity in entrepreneurship theory, policy and support.

Key words: small business and self-employment, minority groups in business, inequality, support mechanisms, single strand, multiple strand.

Stream 6

Gender & Diversity in Organizations: Reflecting Theory – Using Methodology - Supporting Change

Stream Chairs: Regine Bendl, Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, Vienna, Austria; Dr. Iris Koall, Technical University of Dortmund, Dortmund, Germany.

Stream outline: Gendered organizational discourse (Martin/Collins 2002, 2006) informs gender and diversity studies. Remarkable, there is an ongoing discussion about the priority of gender as *the* aspect of organisational diversity, since regional and disciplinary contexts, academic heritages and political roots determine its importance differently (Billing/Sundin 2006: 95). Intersectional theory may help to put forward this discussion: the acknowledgment of a continuum in the use of gender by applying intercategorical, intracategorical and anticategorical approaches (McCall 2005) in organizational and research practices could support a move in conceptualizing the importance of organizational diversity, especially of gender differently. By positioning gender in the centre of analysis within intercategorical approaches, feminist theories are employed to analyse the changing configurations of inequality within multiplying and conflicting dimensions. Intracategorical research criticizes homogeneous group constitutions and performs identity crossing against traditional separations of complex diversity dimensions in social entities (groups or organisations), methodological relying the critique of essentialist formations. Anticategorical approaches deconstruct radically gender as social category by relying on the assumption that categorization itself is (re)producing the fiction of social differences and avoiding the burden of multiple identification and disidentification (McCall 2005).

Stream 7

Equal Opportunity legislation: how far have we come and how far do we have to go?

Stream Chair: Dr. Glenice J. Wood, Senior Lecturer, School of Business, University of Ballarat, Australia.

Stream outline: Despite the gains that have been made in "Equal Opportunity" legislation and workplace practices in the US, UK and Australia over the past 20 years, the proportion of women who fill senior management, executive or board positions suggests that there are many areas of "equal opportunity" that still need to improve.

How can we explain the continuing inequities in the numbers of men and women in senior decision making roles in virtually all workplace areas? The recent World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report (2007) ranks the top countries in the world who are believed to be closing the gender gap in the areas of economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment and health and survival. It is of interest to note that the US, UK or Australia are not mentioned in the top ten countries. How far have we come, and how far do we have to go?

Key words: Equal Opportunity, Gains, Changes; real or token?, Continuing areas of inequality, Effective measures for reducing disparities in EO.

Stream 8

Gender Equality in Medicine: Issues of professionalism and exclusion

Stream chairs: Dr Maria Tsouroufli, Lecturer in Medical Education, School of Medicine, Health Policy and Practice, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK; Ms Merryn Smith, Lecturer in Gender, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK.

Stream outline: The popular discourse of feminized medicine predominates in current debates about the future status of the medical profession and the quality of care in the UK. The high intake of women in UK Medical Schools and the high proportion of women in some specialties have been used to signify equality and to prove that women have come a long way. Gender equality has been de-contextualized and become synonymous to gender sameness in achievement, as little attention is given to historically constructed, tacit or implicit masculine discourses (i.e. full-time availability, physical strength), which underpin the foundations of the ideal professional identity, despite revised guidelines and reports on medical professionalism (GMC, 2006)

Track questions:

- How can masculine discourses of 'performativity' (Knights and Kerfoot, 2004) and 'presenteeism' (Simpson, 1998) authenticate what a good doctor is and exclude women from certain medical specialities?
- What are the implications of the eradication of gender difference as a way of gender equality in a wider context of neo-liberalism and a post-feminist era?

Key words: Gender, Medicine, Equality, Professionalism, Masculine Discourses, Exclusion.

Stream 9

Gender equality and career progression within Science, Engineering and Technology professions

Stream chairs:

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Stream outline:

The proportion of women in Science, Engineering or Technology (SET) remains at 18.5% (LFS, 2006) despite numerous initiatives aimed at tackling women's under-representation within these professions. This attrition starts early with less than a third of female SET students employed in those sectors after they graduate. This situation is bad for the UK's productivity and competitiveness, and it undermines the UK's aspirations for fairness and gender equality. In addition, evidence suggests that simply increasing the numbers of women in SET professions is an inadequate strategy for improving women's experiences and career opportunities. Instead, low participation of women in SET and the problems women face in the sector are part of wider societal perceptions that identify SET occupations as male domains (Bagilhole, et al, 2007). We invite presentations from researchers who investigate emerging issues around female under-representation in SET, and identify innovative interventions to address this problem.

Stream questions:

What are the reasons behind early attrition of SET female graduates? The key factors of interest include gender in the relationship between SET students' experiences and their career choices.

- What are the cultures within SET employment and educational environments? What impact do these have on the exclusion and underachievement of women, including women in top management tiers? What are the measures needed to bring about sustainable change?
- What are the issues around the representation of women scientists in the mass media? Key factors of interest include scientists' (and potential scientists') views and experiences of the media, female representations in different types of media, role and attitudes of people who contribute to the media production process, including writers, producers, and science communicators.

- Many initiatives have been introduced to address the problem of under-representation of women in SET over the last 30 years. What can we learn from their effectiveness and limitations that will assist real change in the future?
- Many European countries, including most 2004 EU accession countries, have higher proportions of women employed in SET. What can we learn from these countries and from cross cultural comparisons?

Key words: Gender, Science, Engineering, Technology, equality, employment, career progression, SET cultures, culture change, female media representations, positive action initiatives, international comparisons.

Stream 10

MOTHERHOOD & EO at WORK and the PUBLIC DOMAIN: A cross-disciplinary examination into the polemic of parenthood

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Rationale

The growing visibility and prominence of women leaders in all public spheres, business and organizations included; and the wider societal opening-up of family contexts: non-married parents, single parents, gay/lesbian parents, draws our attention to the insufficient attention that has been accorded to the centrality of motherhood as a complex repository of roles/relationship dynamics/situational and attitudinal postulates. Whilst paternalism and 'father figure' are a common reference point in leadership, organizational dynamics and structure, this is not the case with maternal aspects of the work place or public life.

Objective

In this stream we wish to 'open the doors' to explore any and all aspects of motherhood within the wider context of 'parenthood' as pertaining to the world of work in particular and the public sphere in general and in reference to the ongoing discourse of equal opportunities.

Topics

The following are (non-exclusive) suggestions for topics that would fit this stream:

1. types and archetypes of motherhood models, from primordial times to nowadays: in legend, myth, history, literature & the arts and their prevalence in current work and related environments.
2. motherhood leadership: world-view, attributes, styles & role models in leadership and management.
3. spiritual motherhood: Mother Theresa and other motherly saints and their teachings' relevance to contemporary society
4. whatever happened to 'mommy track'? working mothers: careers, concerns, EO policies & strategies.
5. attachment styles and adult work environments
6. the prototype motherhood organization: basic assumptions, key features, similarities & differences to normative organizations, matrilineal lineage, the place of men.
7. other types of non-traditional parenthood/ caring figures and their interaction in organizational milieus: gay/lesbian, transvestite, siblings, etc.
8. issues of identity and identity formation: individual, group, organizational, sectorial – pertaining to the above.