Preface

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This volume contains selected papers presented at STPIS'20: 6th International Workshop on Socio-Technical Perspective in IS Development which was held on June 8-9, 2020, in the form of a virtual conference in Grenoble in France. The local organizing chair was Federico Pigni, Grenoble Ecole de Management, France.

Importance of socio-technical perspective in research and practice

A socio-technical perspective sees an organization as a combination of two components – a social one and a technical one. The real pattern of behavior in the organization is determined by how well these parts fit together. While analyzing system problems related to getting things done, adequate consideration should be given both to technology as well as to informal and formal interactions of people.

Despite the fact that a socio-technical perspective has been around for over a half century, it is often forgotten in the IS discourse today. Consequently, many "new approaches" appear to reflect on IS systems problems, such as modern IT systems which are poorly adjusted to the external or/and internal environment (e.g. market, organizational culture) of organizations in which they are (to be) deployed. We strongly believe that it is high time that the socio-technical perspective took its proper place in IS research, practice and teaching. It is now more important than ever to fully engage with a socio-technical understanding, in the wake of the pandemic of COVID-19, a change that has altered various socio-technical structures.

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The sixth STPIS workshop

The main purpose of the workshop is to arrange discussions on using a socio-technical perspective in IS development, with the long-term goal of making this workshop a meeting place for the community of IS researchers and practitioners interested in the socio-technical approach.

Due to the present situation with the pandemic COVID-19, the conference was organized virtually, in Grenoble in France with Federico Pigni, Grenoble Ecole de Management, France as the local organizing chair. The workshops were organized in three parallel sessions during the two days. An additional US session, co-chaired by Eleanor Wynn, PhD, Ronin Institute, was arranged in a different time zone as the workshop also attracted researchers outside of Europe interested in socio-technical approaches. These workshop proceedings are a continuation from previous year's attempt to set up a broad platform for discussion and debate on the benefits and problems of viewing information systems as socio-technical artefacts. In all, 49 papers were presented at the conference with approximately 100 participants.

The participants were invited to further develop the submissions as short or long papers for inclusion in the STPIS 2020 proceedings. There were 64 papers submitted by 98 different authors in total. The submissions were of various kinds – idea and research papers, experience reports, position papers, posters and multimedia presentations. Of these, 28 papers extended and revised were accepted for publication after double blind review. Each submission was reviewed by at least two program committee members. Some papers were reclassified, e.g. from a research paper to a position paper. Two of the papers are research essays.

We have gone through all 28 papers and put them in groups, not always perfect, but reasonably related. We also tried to get some spread or more than half of the papers would be in the same group. So we looked at not only the main subject, but also what it could be related to. The topics cover various application domains where a socio-technical perspective can be used, such as work system, organizational change, education, industry 4.0, systemic sustainability, sociotechnical security, all related to individual and organizational issues, production, storage, healthcare, etc.

The program also included one invited talk, which has also been included in the proceedings. This year the invited talk was by Dr. Amany Elbanna and it was devoted to Sociotechnical Approaches in the era of data science and AI.

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