Preface

This volume contains selected papers presented at STPIS'21: The 7th International Workshop on Socio-Technical Perspective in IS development (STPIS'21) took place in connection with the 18th conference of the Italian Chapter of the Association for Information Systems (ItAIS'21), in Trento in Italy. STPIS'21 was held virtually. The local organizing chairs were Aurelio Ravarini, LIUC Business School, Italy and Alessio Maria Braccini, Università degli Studi della Tuscia, Italy.

Importance of socio-technical perspective in research and practice

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

Despite 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 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 the social-technical perspective took its rightful place in IS research, practice and teaching.

The seventh 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, with Aurelio Ravarini, LIUC Business School and Alessio Maria Braccini, Università degli Studi della Tuscia, as the local organizing chair. The workshops were organized in sessions during the two days. 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, 23 papers were presented at the conference with approximately 50 participants.

The participants were invited to further develop the submissions as short or long papers for inclusion in the STPIS'21 proceedings. There were 31 draft papers submitted by 56 different authors in total. The submissions were of various kinds – idea and research papers, experience reports, position papers, posters and multimedia presentations. Of these, 23 papers were further reviewed, revised and accepted for presentation 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 invited research essays.

We have gone through all 23 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 and industry 5.0, systemic sustainability, sociotechnical security, all related to individual and organizational issues, production, storage, healthcare, etc.

The program included two invited papers, which have also been reviewed, revised

and included in the proceedings. This year the invited papers were by Professor Per Flensburg with the title 'Scandinavian approaches in systems development' and Professor Robert Winter with the title 'Beyond Incentives and Sanctions – Extending the Portfolio of IS Coordination by Systematic Design of Informal Interventions'. These were devoted to the spread and relevance of Sociotechnical Approaches in contemporary society.

Acknowledgements

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