

# TG78 - Deconstructing organisational paradoxes in construction

## TIME & PLACE:

Monday 20 June 14:00 - 17:30h – Assay Hall (Keurzaal)

## COORDINATORS:

Dr. Paul W Chan (University of Manchester, UK), Professor Andrew Dainty (Loughborough University, UK), Professor Christine Räisänen (Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden) and Dr. Leentje Volker (Delft University of Technology, NL)

## GENERAL THEME DESCRIPTION:

Paradoxes are part and parcel of organisational life, and these manifest in a variety of ways (see Chan and Cooper, 2010). Tensions arise between the desire to take a longer-term view and the demands of satisfying short-term goals when shaping a strategic response to organisational change. Furthermore, in the globalised world we operate in today, there is the conflict between thinking in global terms whilst maintaining a sense of localism. There are also ambiguities of control emerging from the need to balance top-down authority with bottom-up participation, and a need to reconcile individual perspectives with collective consensus. Managers and workers in contemporary organisations are often confronted by these contradictions as they make sense of everyday dealings at the workplace.

Unsurprisingly, much attention has been centred on how tensions, ambiguities and paradoxes are being resolved in an organisational context. For example, Clegg et al. (2002) noted the importance of improvisation tactics to address organisational paradoxes when putting plans into action. Smith and Tushman (2005) called for the need to explore and exploit binaries at the extreme ends when tackling paradoxes.

The systematic study of organisational paradoxes has however been given scant attention in the field of construction management research (see Price and Newson, 2003). Therefore, this workshop seeks to bring together paper contributions from researchers that will facilitate the deconstruction of organisational paradoxes in construction. A number of critical questions were raised in the call for contributions. How do researchers and practitioners explore, and deploy efforts to deal with, organisational paradoxes in the field? In deconstructing organisational paradoxes, there is the tendency for researchers to set boundaries on, and simplify messy realities into, discrete categories. What happens when multiple paradoxes clash with one another? How do researchers trace the changing nature of organisational paradoxes, and how practitioners deal with these, over time and across the space between organisations? What is the purpose of studying organisational paradoxes in construction? How do research methods facilitate this process?

Eight articles have been accepted for discussion at the workshop. These cover a range of research topics including organisational ambidexterity in construction, knowledge generation and use, collaboration, innovation and empowerment, and methods for studying informality in construction. The program (see below) is intended encourage researchers to engage in intense conversations about their work, in order to identify possibilities of future (collaborative) work on deconstructing organisational paradoxes in construction. Please email [paul.chan@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:paul.chan@manchester.ac.uk) to participate in this workshop.

#### PROGRAM:

Time	Description	Contributor
14:10	Introduction	Coordinators
Parallel Discussions (14:10 – 15:45)	Round table discussion – Group A	STANDARDIZING KNOWLEDGE: A DIALECTIC VIEW ON ARCHITECTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND ITS MANAGERS - <i>Pernilla Gluch</i> PARADOXES OF INNOVATION AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN: A MODEL OF DESIGN KNOWLEDGE GENERATION IN ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICES. - <i>Peter Raisbeck</i> A NEW PROFESSIONAL IN NEIGHBORHOOD APPROACH - <i>Ton van der Pennen</i> DEVELOPING INTERACTIONS, DISENTANGLING CONTRADICTIONS: EXAMINING PARADOXES OF INTER-ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONS IN CONSTRUCTING COLLABORATIONS - <i>Paul Chan, Eric Johansen, Rachel Moor</i>
Parallel Discussions (14:10 – 15:45)	Round table discussion – Group B	NEGOTIATING STRATEGIC-MANAGEMENT CONTRADICTIONS IN PRACTICE: AN ACTIVITY-BASED APPROACH - <i>Christine Räisänen, Ann-Charlotte Stenberg, Martin Lowstedt</i> A SPATIOTEMPORAL PERSPECTIVE ON EMPOWERMENT IN PROJECTS - <i>Enoch Sackey, Martin Tuuli, Andrew Dainty</i> RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES FOR STUDYING THE INFORMAL ASPECTS IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECT ORGANIZATIONS - <i>Thayaparan Gajendran, Graham Brewer, Goran Runeson, Andrew Dainty</i> ORGANIZATIONAL AMBIDEXTERITY IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY - <i>Per Erik Eriksson</i>
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee and tea break	
16:00 – 17:15	Plenary discussion and CIB TG78 Meeting	The way forward and update on CIB TG78 (All)
17:30	Closing and Drinks	

#### References

Chan, P. and Cooper, R. (2010) *Constructing Futures: Industry Leaders and Futures Thinking in Construction*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

Clegg, S., Cunha, J. V. and Cunha, M. P. (2002) Management paradoxes: a relational view. *Human Relations*, 483 – 503.

Price, A. D. F. and Newson, E. (2003) Strategic management: consideration of paradoxes, processes, and associated concepts as applied to construction. *Journal of Management in Engineering*, 19(4), 183 – 192.

Smith, W. K. and Tushman, M. L. (2005) Managing strategic contradictions: a top management model for managing innovation streams. *Organization Science*, 16(5), 522 – 536.