



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI BERGAMO

Seminario interdipartimentale

Dip. di ECONOMIA AZIENDALE e Dip. di SCIENZE ECONOMICHE

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Via dei Caniana, 2 – Aula 15

On the Contrasting Forces Influencing Sociomaterial Assemblages in Organizations

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ABSTRACT. This paper builds on the concept of sociomateriality to investigate the different ways in which information technology (IT) may scaffold work practices. Taking into account both the social and material, we present a theoretical model that shows different combinations of prescribed/unprescribed practices and prescribed/unprescribed technology use. The model maps four types of work practices and technology use in 10 companies deploying mobile IT: (1) The use of prescribed mobile technology to enact prescribed work practices when completing everyday work tasks; (2) the use of prescribed mobile technology to enact unprescribed practices which allows people to take advantage of situated opportunities; (3) the use of unprescribed mobile technology to enact prescribed work practices when prescribed technology is inadequate; and (4) the use of unprescribed mobile technology to scaffold unprescribed work practice and limiting the use of prescribed IT as much as possible. Our findings show that these practices are instances of a broader model of interaction between managers and employees embodied in forces pulling towards prescribed practices and technology use and pushing towards different combinations of unprescribed practices and technology use. We discuss the reasons behind the intensity of these forces and their practical and theoretical implications

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