

Cultural shaping of scholarly communication in research institutes

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Cultural shaping of scholarly communication

- Different fields have developed their own cultures with distinct reading and publishing practices.
- Scientific cultures, organizational structures and funding have an impact on scholarly communication.
- Changes in reseach policy
 - From Mode 1 to Mode 2



Research cultures in research institutions

- “Applied research”
 - Goal of the research in applications
- Collaboration with companies and other practitioners
 - Contract studies
 - Confidentiality
- Funding from variety of sources
 - Companies
 - European Union
 - Government
 - Foundations
- Reading and publishing practices
 - Scientific articles and monographs
 - Conference proceedings
 - Technical reports
 - Professional publications

Research questions

1. How are research institutions shaped as "academic" institutions?
2. How scientific cultures appear in research institutes?
3. What is the effect of scientific cultures and work environment on scholarly communication?
4. How can we measure the effect of scientific cultures and work environment on scholarly communication?

Agrifood research Finland

(MTT) is the leading Finnish research institute in the agriculture and food sector. MTT employs approximately 300 researchers in the fields of agriculture, biotechnology and economics.

Focus fields:

- Biotechnology in food processes
- Plant protection
- Milk and Beef Production





Technical Research Centre of Finland (VTT) is the biggest contract research organization in Northern Europe. VTT employs approximately 1700 researchers in different fields of engineering and natural sciences.



Focus fields:

- Biotechnology
- Information and communication technology
- Material technology



Theoretical background

Becher (1989)

Covergent / Divergent

→ extent of uniform standards and procedures and the existence of 'intellectual control'

Urban / Rural

→ extent of people-to-problem ratio, scatter of research problems and nature of outcomes

Whitley (2000)

Mutual dependence

→ extent of scientists' dependence upon particular colleagues to make competent contributions

Task uncertainty

→ extent to which work procedures, problem definitions and theoretical goals are shared between researchers

→ Are these theories valid in research institute setting?

Methods

Theme interviews

Aim; to understand research institutions as a work environment and identify differences in publishing and reading practices.

Approximately 5-7 interviews from each field

→ maximum diversity of sampling in selection of research fields

Survey

Aim; to work further on to operationalize Becher's and Whitley's basic concepts

→ measure the effect of scientific cultures and work environment on publishing, and reading practices and work productivity

Expected outcomes

To increase our understanding of:

- whether research policy and funding arrangements have an impact on scholarly communication in research institutions.
- formative aspects of scholarly communication in research institutes.
- differences in scientific cultures within and between different fields and their relationship with reading and publishing practices.

Thank you for your attention!

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