

Job Quality in Supply Chains: the case of Scottish Spirits Industry

Overview

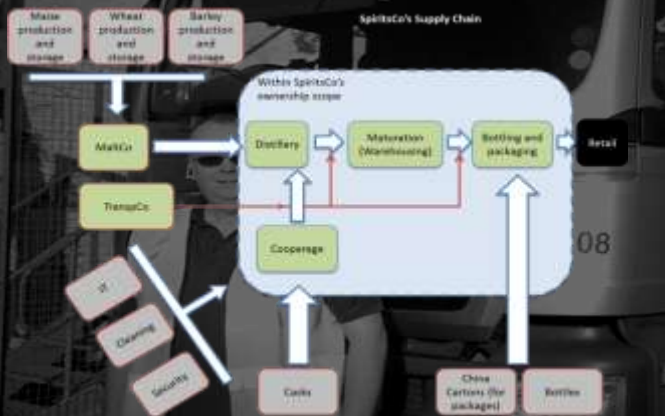
Job quality research has flourished in the last decades. Its importance have drowned attention from academics and policy makers due to its relevancy not only for the wider society but also due to the potential impact that it has on organisational functioning and individual well-being (Munoz de Bustillo et al 2009).

This research project looks at job quality from the perspective of supply chains and production networks. Within supply chains, firms are being increasingly pressured to become more flexible and cost-effective, leading to lean practices within firms and across production networks (Raworth and Kidder 2009). Arguably such practices have detrimental impacts on the quality of jobs.

Research Objectives

- To understand the nature of production networks in the Scottish Spirits Industry.
- To understand how 'lean' production networks influences job quality.
- To understand if the networked forms of production represent a new concentration of power among employers better able to avoid or oppose the collective demands of labour.

Fieldwork



The research project draws its data from fieldwork undertaken in three firms involved in the production of spirits in Scotland that belong to the same production network.

Initial Findings

- Firms and workspaces across the production network are required to adopt concerted managerial practices to increase flexibility, predictability and cost-efficiency in response to supply chain pressures, impacting working conditions at workplace level;
- Lean production across networks impact job quality in working time (shifts), pressures (tighter performance and absence management), and the usage of skills; further segmentation of the workforce; also potential (new) patterns of gendered division of labour;