

# Participation in enterprises and in research: The case of innovation work\*

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This article shows new facets of employee participation in the field of innovation work in enterprises, as well as in the research on this field of work. The necessity of employee participation in innovation work is demonstrated against the backdrop of new insights into innovation processes and their making. Moreover, for discovering the employees' specific action patterns in innovation work (which are primarily geared to informal action and experiential knowledge), and for developing adequate work structures for the management of innovations, co-production of knowledge and workplace design between practitioners and researchers is necessary. This participatory research process is demonstrated in its complexity using the example of 'co-operative transfer of experience' as an operational field of action, which was observed and designed in a joint research project with several partners from science and practice. In conclusion, the features and scientific quality of the presented participatory research process are described, and the possibilities and boundaries of a further approximation to principles of action research are discussed.

**Key words:** employee participation, innovation work, participative research design, innovation studies

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