Introduction to the *Handbook on the Temporal Dynamics of Organizational Behavior*

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For over a decade, organizational behavior scholars have highlighted the importance of studying phenomena through a “temporal lens” by focusing on the role of time and its various implications for research (e.g., Ancona, Goodman, Lawrence, & Tushman, 2001; Bluedorn, 2002; George & Jones, 2000; Mitchell & James, 2001; Ployhart, Holtz, & Bliese, 2002; Roe, 2008). These scholars, among others, argue that time is essential to the study of organizational behavior because it allows us to better explain “when” a phenomenon occurs, “what” aspects of the phenomena are being influenced, “how” these aspects are being influenced, and “why” this influence occurs. As such, time is of the utmost importance when trying to understand the full essence of organizational behavior.

Despite the obvious role of time, it bears little acknowledgement in the organizational behavior literature. In fact, in most published articles, the findings and conclusions make no reference to time (for a critical review see Roe, 2008). The consequence is that we know and understand little about the factors related to the emergence or decline of the phenomena under study, their stability or dynamism, the sequence of their occurrence, and their rate of change. This presents a major barrier to advancing the literature, as the role of time is essential to comprehend fully the processes underlying the development and impact of emotions, attitudes, and behaviors in the workplace. As a result, we agree that “advancing theories that address the dynamics of how important phenomena emerge, evolve, and change over time is the next frontier” (Kozlowski, 2009; p. 3) and that that frontier is now upon us.

Despite calls to incorporate time and temporal dynamics in the study of organizational phenomena, most researchers continue to develop theory or study emotions, attitudes, and behaviors without attending to time. To address this issue, scholars must change how they conceptualize emotions, attitudes, and behaviors and must adopt their research designs and methodologies such that they reflect the time dependency among phenomena. For example, although longitudinal designs are often believed to reflect the nature of time, most longitudinal studies merely demonstrate a particular sequence of events by predicting future employee emotions, attitudes, or behaviors based on previous emotions, attitudes, or behaviors without accounting for issues such as timing (e.g., early and delayed recovery or decline), time lags (e.g., minutes, hours, days, or weeks), and duration of the effects (immediate, postponed, or lingering influences) (Roe, 2008). As argued by Solinger, van Olffen, Roe, and Hofmans (2013), choosing a limited number of measurement points with large time intervals cannot adequately advance our understanding of how phenomena and relationships evolve and change over time, how employees react to these changes, or how the trajectories evolve over time. Moreover, studying how emotions, attitudes, and behaviors unfold over time implies an analytical shift because it requires specific—often complicated—methods

of temporal analysis, such as the methodological and analytical techniques discussed in this book.

Shifting our focus from a differential (e.g., study of how individuals differ from one another; between-person approach) to a temporal and process-oriented lens will enhance understanding of “how” things happen (e.g., interrelationships among temporal aspects of phenomena), as well as of “why” things happen (e.g., looking at determinants of these temporal aspects) (Roe, 2008). Therefore, temporal and process-oriented theory and research has the potential to provide a realistic representation of what actually happens at work.

We designed this book to help scholars begin to address the temporal shortcomings in the extant organizational behavior literature. For Part I of this volume (“The need to look at organizational behavior from a dynamic perspective”), we invited authors to: 1) give the reader an overview of the role of time and timing in organizational behavior research; 2) demonstrate how a dynamic way of thinking (i.e., dynamics, process-orientation, person-centered perspectives) challenges the traditional way of thinking (i.e., antecedent-consequence, variable-centered); and 3) discuss how the introduction of new methodologies and analytical techniques allow us to raise and answer questions we were not able to explore with more traditional methodologies and analytical techniques.

We designed Part II of this volume (“A dynamic look at organizational behavior topics”) to speak specifically to areas of organizational behavior research that are thriving, yet poised for an explicit temporal update. We invited scholars from a wide array of research streams (based on the most well-cited areas of organizational behavior research) to: 1) provide an overview of how their field has evolved towards a more dynamic, process-oriented, person-centered approach; 2) describe how this evolution has moved the field forward from a theoretical, methodological and/or practical point of view; and 3) identify what they believe to be the next big dynamic research challenge.

Finally, we designed Part III of this volume (“A method toolbox”) to provide scholars with the tools and resources needed to set up and conduct their own dynamic organizational behavior studies. Specifically, we asked the authors to: 1) describe a focal dynamic methodological or analytical technique in relation to the field of organizational behavior; 2) explain which types of research questions the focal technique can best answer; 3) describe the type of research design and data collection method needed to align these research questions with the focal technique; 4) explain to readers how to use the focal technique by means of a step-by-step approach; and 5) provide the necessary code and syntax to use the focal technique.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS BOOK

As noted previously, this book is organized in three parts. Part I provides conceptual and methodological reasons to study organizational behavior from a dynamic perspective. Part II offers new conceptual and theoretical insights on some of the most popular organizational behavior topics. Part III offers methodological and analytical tools, including syntax and example data files, to help researchers tackle dynamic research questions.

Part I

In Chapter 1, Hannes Zacher and Cort Rudolph take stock of the organizational behavior literature and shed light on how a dynamic way of thinking can challenge existing knowledge and traditional ways of conducting empirical research in the field of organizational behavior. This chapter illustrates the importance of dynamic approaches for advancing the field of organizational behavior. They end the chapter with a list of important avenues for future theory development and research, cutting across specific organizational behavior domains.

In Chapter 2, Christopher R. Dishop, Jeffrey Olenick, and Richard DeShon provide a host of dynamic principles to build consensus on what it means to take a dynamic perspective in organizational behavior. Moreover, this chapter discusses a variety of dynamic principles that are often overlooked by scholars new to the study of dynamic phenomena.

Part II

In Chapter 3, Irina Nikolova and Jeroen de Jong highlight the role of time in understanding the effects of organizational change. Specifically, they discuss organizational change events from an employee perspective, and stipulate that the duration and sequence of these events account for a range of different learning and well-being outcomes. They conclude the chapter by elaborating on the challenges that lie ahead for scholars studying organizational change.

In Chapter 4, Marijke Verbruggen, Elisabeth Abraham, and Lynn Germeys offer an overview of trends in research on dynamics in the domain of work–family experiences (i.e., work–family conflict, enrichment, and balance). They demonstrate that empirical results vary depending on the time span (i.e., days versus months versus years) that was chosen for use in the research design. In doing so, they hope to inspire researchers to explore, among other things, the role of time duration.

In Chapter 5, Reeshad Dalal and Linden Hughes provide a temporal perspective on two of the most frequently studied work behaviors: organizational citizenship behavior and counterproductive work behavior. Specifically, they review the existing empirical within-person literature with a specific focus on dynamic predictors. They conclude their chapter with an agenda for future dynamic research.

In Chapter 6, Katharina Klug, Claudia Bernhard-Oettel, Eva Selenko, and Magnus Sverke scrutinize existing theory and research concerning temporal dynamics underlying the relationship between antecedents and job insecurity, as well as the relationship between job insecurity and outcomes. They conclude their chapter with a research agenda to advance the field towards a dynamic perspective on job insecurity.

In Chapter 7, Lotta Harju and Maria Tims review the literature on work design and job crafting, and address their dynamic interplay and potential varying temporal patterns among job crafting behaviors. This chapter ultimately integrates both streams of literature when outlining challenges and suggestions for future research.

In Chapter 8, Tim Vantilborgh, Yang Yang, and Jiahong Du discuss the relevance of time to psychological contracts, review and expand on existing psychological contract literature, and underscore the importance of time-sensitive theory and methodology in future research.

In Chapter 9, Camille Desjardins and Marion Fortin present a brief historical review of how the organizational justice literature evolved across five different justice “waves” with respect to the integration and treatment of time and temporal dynamics. This overview culminates in the development of a sixth wave of justice: the “temporal wave”.

In Chapter 10, David Finch and Nadege Levallet offer a dynamic view on talent acquisition. Specifically, their chapter leverages the dynamic capabilities perspective applied to individual employability. In doing so, they propose three clusters of resources that are systematically and mutually reinforcing when it comes to talent acquisition practices.

In Chapter 11, Jason Harman, Justin Weinhardt, and John-Luke McCord focus on dynamics in organizational decision making. Through the use of newer analytic and computational methodologies, along with new experimental paradigms, they challenge the static view on decision making and demonstrate that decisions are made over time and are influenced by, and subsequently influence, other decisions.

In Chapter 12, Omar Solinger and Jesse Vullings, by means of meta-analysis of longitudinal studies, evaluate the temporal development of organizational commitment during socialization. Their chapter underscores the precariousness and dynamism of the person–organization relationship during socialization.

In Chapter 13, Nadin Beckmann and Robert Wood provide a definition and discussion of dynamic personality at work and how dynamic personality is both related to, and differentiated from, the trait approach in measurement and modelling. They focus on the cognitive-affective personality systems (CAPS) model to provide a framework for modelling the underlying structure of dynamic personality responses as an integration of both the stable and dynamic approaches to personality.

In Chapter 14, Annika Nübold, Peter Kuppens, and Philippe Verduyn seek to link the organizational literature with fundamental emotion research in an attempt to guide scholarly efforts that aim to better acknowledge the temporal characteristics of emotions in organizations.

In Chapter 15, James Beck and Anna Gödöllei review the work motivation literature and highlight the ways current motivation theories speak to the role of time. Moreover, they discuss the methodologies and statistical approaches appropriate for studying the role of time in motivation, as well as providing an overview of the ways process-oriented theories of motivation have been applied to practical issues in the workplace.

In Chapter 16, Jesse Vullings and Edina Dóci advocate for a temporal approach to studying organizational leadership. They take a critical view of current organizational leadership theories and studies for their lack of practical utility. As a corollary, they propose a meta-theory to advance an integrative and dynamic leadership theory that is of both theoretical and practical relevance.

In Chapter 17, Antonio Cunha Meneses Abrantes, Thomas O’ Neill, and Ana Margarida Passos investigate the role of temporality in team research. More specifically, they examine the different ways in which temporal issues—such as time-sensitive processes and the emergence of team processes over time, and how said processes evolve over time—can be integrated into the team literature.

In Chapter 18, Despoina Xanthopoulou, Kevin Daniels, and Ana Isabel Sanz-Vergel highlight the importance of taking a temporal perspective in the study of employee well-being for theory development and organizational practice. Moreover, they discuss novel methodological approaches to better incorporate temporality in the study of well-being.

In Chapter 19, Jeremy Beus provides a review of workplace safety literature to identify research trends as well as contributions to our understanding of the dynamic nature of workplace safety. Because little research explicitly takes a temporal perspective regarding workplace safety, the chapter advocates for a research agenda that incorporates an increasingly time-oriented and dynamic view of workplace safety.

Part III

In Chapter 20, Paul Bliese, Jason Kautz, and Jonas W. B. Lang describe the discontinuous growth model—a variant of a mixed-effects growth model that provides considerable opportunity for researchers to propose and test hypotheses involving change associated with a discrete event or multiple events—and provide examples of research questions that can be tested using this model. Moreover, they provide detailed code in R to help scholars estimate the models.

In Chapter 21, Alexandre Morin, Matthew McLarnon, and David Litalien introduce mixture modeling—a model-based approach to classifying units of analysis (individuals, teams, organizations) based on the assumption that an observed sample of data includes a mixture of subpopulations characterized by distinct distributions or configurations—with a specific focus on the analytical possibilities provided by this methodological framework for longitudinal organizational behavior research. For each model discussed in this chapter the authors provide a description and recommendations for its implementation, followed by detailed Mplus code.

In Chapter 22, Jeffrey Vancouver and Cassandra E. Colton build on the premise that understanding the true dynamic properties of a theory can prove difficult. Hence, they describe a support tool—the computational model—that can be used to represent the properties of a dynamic theory. They provide a tutorial for building a simple computational model to introduce readers to the Vensim software and the model-building process.

In Chapter 23, Christopher R. Dishop, Michael Braun, Goran Kuljanin, and Richard DeShon provide a framework for scholars to think about patterns contained in longitudinal or panel data structures. Specifically, the authors detail the variety of inferences that can be made from longitudinal data.

In Chapter 24, Harris Rubin provides a step-by-step demonstration of how intensive longitudinal designs can be used to study within-person and cross-level processes. The chapter provides a step-by-step description of how to prepare and format longitudinal data, run multi-level mixed models, and interpret the results using SPSS.

CONCLUSIONS

The contributing authors of this work demonstrate how a dynamic perspective challenges traditional ways of thinking about organizational behavior phenomena. They offer domain-specific research agendas and detail guiding approaches to studying dynamics across a range of research domains. We believe that these contributions will both inspire and help direct future research on dynamic processes in organizational behavior. By providing scholars with the methodological and analytical tools needed to translate their “dynamic ideas” into “dynamic reality”, we envision that this book will become a

“guiding light” for scholars who wish to tackle the challenges of dynamic organizational behavior research.

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