

EXAMINING AND EXPLORING THE SHIFTING NATURE OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND WELL-BEING

Edited by Peter D. Harms, Pamela L. Perrewé
and Chu-Hsiang (Daisy) Chang

RESEARCH IN OCCUPATIONAL
STRESS AND WELL-BEING

VOLUME 19

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RESEARCH IN OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND WELL-BEING

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

OVERVIEW

Volume 19 of *Research in Occupational Stress and Well-Being* is focused on the issue of time and changes in stress and well-being at work. Although almost all organizational scholars who are engaged in the study of occupation health and well-being will acknowledge that the psychological experience of stress and feelings of well-being are dynamic and constantly changing, all too often our models rely on studies that fail to account for this. Rather, there is a tendency to rely on relatively simple models where a set of predictors (usually personality or contextual factors) lead to increases or decreases in stress and/or well-being. In this issue, we wanted to break with that tradition and really demonstrate the many different ways that time and change could be conceptualized and measured and how this could enrich our understanding of stress and well-being in the workplace.

Given the complexity of this topic, it is no surprise that each of the nine chapters in this volume had unique perspectives and insights into the issue of how to meaningfully integrate time and change in the occupational stress and well-being literature. Broadly, the first three chapters focused on the consequences of stressful events in the workplace for personal development. The fourth and fifth chapters took a much longer timeframe to look at occupational stress and well-being over the life course. Finally, each of the final four chapters reviews and illustrates different advances and novel approaches for conceptualizing, assessing, and analyzing occupational stress and well-being.

Our lead chapter by Patrick L. Hill, Rachel D. Best, and M. Teresa Cardador examines how job stress and how a sense of purpose, quite often used as a predictor of how resilient individuals are in the face of stressful events, can be developed as individuals appraise and cope with the hardships and stressors they face. The model developed in this chapter shows how the stress and feedback relationship does not necessarily have to be negative, but rather can be associated with positive outcomes as well. In a similar vein, the second chapter by Clodagh Butler, Deirdre O'Shea, and Donald M. Truxillo centers on resilience and present a dual-pathway model showing how adaptive and proactive coping processes can facilitate not just recovery from stressor events, but positive developments in resilience levels over time. They then lay out possible paths for developmental interventions that could be used by organizations to promote resilience. In the third chapter, drawing on both personal experience and military research, Paul B. Lester provides insights into crucible experiences, highly stressful events that do not simply change levels of stress, well-being, and associated factors, but which fundamentally change the nature of the person experiencing them. Lester examines the potential positive and negative consequences of exposing individuals to such experiences, evaluates the moral implications of developmental interventions based on crucible experiences, and lays out best practices for implementing them.

Using self-regulation feedback loop models, the fourth chapter by Jenna A. Van Fossen, Chu-Hsiang Chang, and Russell E. Johnson bridges the goal setting and careers literatures with the occupational stress literature by demonstrating how the distance from one's goals and the speed at which one is moving to achieve them can impact well-being as well as how these processes may play out over the career cycle. The fifth chapter by Youjeong Huh and Michael T. Ford takes a step back and investigates how occupational stress processes not only change over the life course, but how they may also shift across generations. Their chapter provides unique insights into generational differences in expectations of work and adaptation to workplace stressors.

Leading off the section on methodological best practices and innovations in the assessment of occupational stress and well-being, the sixth chapter by Rachel S. Rauvola, Cort W. Rudolph, and Hannes Zacher provides a review of temporal issues in the study of occupational stress and well-being as well as covering the time-based assumptions surrounding time lags in research. They also helpfully provide guidance on best practices for longitudinal study design and provide a tutorial with both data and code for individuals interested in implementing robust approaches to analyzing longitudinal models. In the seventh chapter, Stuti Thapa, Louis Tay, and Daphne Hou examine phenomena and models on a shorter time frame by reviewing and presenting best practices for designing, implementing, and analyzing experience sampling studies. Such models allow researchers to investigate not just general trends in how occupational stress and well-being can change over time, but also accounts for, and can help provide meaning to, variability in such experiences on a shorter timeframe. The eighth chapter by Kristin Lee Sotak and Barry A. Friedman expands on this issue of variability in occupational stress and well-being to investigate specific patterns in levels over different time frames, to enhance our understanding of both regular and aberrant shifts in affective experiences, and how such patterns can be used to provide nuance to phenomena that is often lost when aggregating data across time. The final chapter by Rachel M. Saef, Emorie Beck, and Joshua J. Jackson builds on the insights presented throughout these other chapters by using multi-wave idiographic techniques to move beyond trends for single variables to consider the relationships between variables themselves as indicators and predictors of occupational stress and well-being.

Our goal for this issue was to challenge our field to think about occupational stress and well-being as it is experienced, as a dynamic process unfolding over time. We could not be happier with our author teams and how they rose to the challenge of reflecting so many novel and important ideas, not just in terms of theory and methods, but also in terms of implementation in both research and practice. This volume represents the very best of the insightful and cutting-edge work going on in our field and we are thrilled to be able to assemble it here together in the present volume of *Research in Occupational Stress and Well-Being*.

**Peter D. Harms, Pamela L. Perrewé, and
Chu-Hsiang (Daisy) Chang**

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His work addresses three broad and overlapping questions: (1) How do life experiences impact personality? (2) What are the processes by which personality impacts important life outcomes? and (3) What is the optimal way to assess personality?

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