Dewe, Philip J. & Cooper, Cary L.,

Work Stress and Coping: Forces of Change and Challenge

Los Angeles et al.: Sage, 2017, 272 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4739-1569-5, €109,21
(Hardcover)

Work lives have changed dramatically. Throughout the last century, work has become more flexible in terms of time and space, workloads have increased for most employees, and technological progress enabled some occupational groups to steadily access their working e-mail. Simultaneously, mental disorders such as depression and anxiety are often results of work-related stress, caused by these new requirements. Since nearly everyone is potentially affected, work stress has become one of the major topics in public debate and science. 'Work Stress and Coping' aims to give a historical overview of that topic, critically reflect and refine knowledge and give advice for future research, arguing that solid scientific knowledge is the best foundation for successful actions by practitioners.

The book follows a clear structure: After a short introduction, the central forces of change are discussed in the second chapter. According to the authors, these forces are in particular globalization, technology, the changing nature of the workforce, society, and sustainability. Therefore, *Chapter II* sets the book's framework by explaining what has led to societal and economic changes. These changes have not only created new stressors but also represent the context in which theoretical assumptions have developed and are therewith essential for understanding the development of work stress theory. *Chapter III* describes 'the evolution of theory and theories of work stress' by explaining how each particular time has its own theories that are products of the current contextual factors and how stress theory has developed over time. The chapter ends with three possible themes for future research, being relevancy, appraisal, and the exploration of the relation between coping and resources. *Chapter IV* focuses on 'three waves of development' characterizing the new millennium (p. 68). These are the development of the positive psychology, the economic crisis and 'what may be'. The latter explores perspectives for organizational psychology and organizational behaviour theories. *Chapter V* highlights how forces of change have affected organizations and work lives. It also sets the contextual frame for *Chapter VI* that deals with specific work stressors, such as job-insecurity, technostress, and work-life imbalances resulting from the forces of change. *Chapter VII* reflects recent developments in coping research. It is argued that coping research, being full of controversies and discussions, has developed by revealing a growing variety of coping strategies. However, the authors conclude that further research should pay attention to contextual factors and appraisal as well as classification and measurement issues. *Chapter VIII* provides a short historical review of stress inter-

vention research. It is critically discussed that intervention research has shifted to be more evaluative, but the questions of 'how' and 'why' interventions work are being less considered by researchers. *Chapter IX* concludes that the forces of change, as globalization and technology, influence working lives and raise new kinds of stressors. Additionally, stress research could profit from taking meaning in terms of appraisal more into consideration. Furthermore, future research should also lay emphasis on the context. Moreover, the authors call for a refinement of measures. Therefore, researchers should ask themselves 'are our measures measuring what we think they are?' (p. 198).

Guessing from the book title, one would expect that work stress and coping would get the same amount of attention. However, coping rather plays a minor role and is discussed in only one chapter. Nevertheless, coping is a major issue in work stress progress hence it can determine whether someone has an elevated risk of suffering from stress-related diseases or not. Behind the background of challenging demands in the modern workplace, it becomes more important to understand how individuals can cope effectively. Therefore, the chapter 'Coping with Stress, Future Directions and Challenges' shall get some more attention in this review. From the beginning of this chapter, the authors make clear that coping research is limited but promising. Coping research made progress by discovering a broader range of coping varieties that are summarized and presented in the chapter. However, the authors criticize that measurement and classification issues getting insufficient attention by scholars. In order to create valid research findings, measurement has to be refined. The authors argue that future methods for measuring coping need to be more multi-faceted. Due to contextual factors, meaning, and coping flexibility the existing measures—such as coping checklists—hardly cover the real coping behaviours individuals show. Besides measurement, the classification issue still is one of the hardest tasks for coping research. The dilemma of realistic constructs vs. handy categories cannot be solved by the authors, but the reader is sensitized to the relevance of that issue.

One main part of the chapter is the varieties of coping. The authors give a good overview of what has emerged in the last decade. The interested reader will find information about religious coping, meaning-focused coping, proactive coping, culture, collective, collaborate and communal coping, leisure coping, and emotion approach. The paragraph 'coping a postscript' offers a further summary of research on coping in terms of flexibility, gender, ageing, personality, and culture.

Another salient issue is the complexity in defining the effectiveness of coping. Two general approaches are the outcome orientated approach and the fit between coping and demands of an event. The authors argue that the outcome approach might reach to short. Hence, for instance, short vs. long-term outcomes or interdependencies between different outcomes are left out. In their view, a 'goodness of fit' approach has its advantages but knowledge, especially in terms of appraisal, must be

refined. A promising issue for future research is the idea of coping flexibility. According to its definition, individuals possess different coping strategies they can access. Therefore, individuals with a broader repertoire can switch between their coping strategies and might choose the most appropriate strategy for a certain situation. Flexible coping might be a way to handle changing demands in a modern world of work.

The chapter profits from the authors' critical attitude towards how coping research has developed and which issues should get more attention. Overall, the chapter offers not only a good review about what has been achieved in terms of coping variety and other important issues as the role of personality or coping flexibility but reminds researchers to be more sensitive to the complexity of coping. The authors convincingly illustrate that coping research has missed covering important issues such as conceptual and measurement issues in the past. Further, the context in that an individual copes and the meaning given to a stressor should be taken more into account in future research. Otherwise, researchers run the risk not to measure what they intend to measure. In a nutshell, it becomes clear that coping research still has a lot of open questions to answer.

All in all, I would recommend 'Work Stress and Coping' to advanced readers and scholars in the fields of work stress and coping. Undergraduates and beginners should be aware that a certain amount of knowledge is necessary to follow the content, as definitions and explanations can hardly be found. Practitioners might profit from the integrated perspective of work stress, its forces and its consequences, but will rather find a theoretical discussion than practical recommendations. The book does not claim to give a complete picture of knowledge on work stress and coping but brings certain aspects into focus and shows them from another perspective. The authors remind readers to be more critical in the use of existing instruments and to be more creative in developing measures. Even experienced scientists may profit from the inspiring nature of the book as it might motivate them to become more reflected on themselves and their work. The coherent structure, the summarizing nature, the critical attitude of the authors, and the traceable future directions for research make 'Work Stress and Coping' a good landmark for scientists in the respective fields.

October 2017   Ingo Klingenberg[1]

---

1 Ingo Klingenberg is research and teaching assistant at the Chair of Business Administration, in particular Organization Studies and Human Resource Management at the Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, Germany. E-mail: ingo.klingenberg@hhu.de

Korunka, Christian & Kubicek, Bettina (Eds.)

Job Demands in a Changing World of Work: Impact on Workers' Health and Performance and Implications for Research and Practice

Cham: Springer International Publishing AG, 2017, 162 pp., ISBN 978-3-319-54677-3 (hbk)

Today's working life has changed due to societal, economic and technological developments. For example, improvements in information and communication technology influence communication in organizations, raising the importance of email and the use of mobile devices and facilitating new ways of flexible work designs (Demerouti, Derks, Brummelhuis, & Bakker, 2014). Global networks in combination with new technologies enable organizations to speed up their work processes or relocate business functions, increasing job insecurity and work intensity (Kubicek, Korunka, Paškvan, Prem, & Gerdenitsch, 2014). Thus, employees are confronted with new work and employment conditions, offering more flexibility and autonomy, but bringing along new demands, which might affect individuals' health and work performance. Christian Korunka and Bettina Kubicek provide an overview in their book of how the world of work has changed and what those changes imply for employees. They thereby cover a wide range of topics.

After a brief preview of the book Jörg Flecker, Theresa Fibich and Klaus Kraemer (Chapter 2) present socio-economic and socio-technological background drivers behind changes in work and employment. They identify three major drivers, namely *financialization, network economy, and digitalization*, which directly trigger central changes of work and employment: precarization, boundaryless work, and subjectification or standardization. The authors explain convincingly that socio-economic developments might lead to opposite trends in the organization of work. On the one hand, financialization, the global network economy, and digitalization lead to increasing subjectified work. Organizations pass on shareholders' expectations of short-term profits to their employees through adapted target values, providing them with more autonomy and responsibility, but also expecting more intrinsic motivation and effort. On the other hand, these developments 'have also been used to standardize and deregulate work, leading to a rise in precarious employment and blurring the boundaries between work and non-work activities on various dimensions' (p. 20).

The following Chapters 3 to 7 provide concrete and detailed descriptions of demands and resources initiated by those socio-economic developments. Matea Paškvan and Bettina Kubicek (Chapter 3) focus on *work intensification*, a multi-faceted construct consisting of 'the need to work at increasing speed, perform differ-

ent tasks simultaneously, or reduce idle time' (Kubicek, Paškvan, & Korunka, 2014). They explain the influence of work intensification on work-related strain, well-being and work satisfaction relying on the job demands-resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), challenge-hindrance framework (Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000) and the cognitive appraisal theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), identifying work intensification rather as a hindrance demand. They complete their chapter by highlighting possible job resources, which might buffer the negative effects of work intensification on employees' well-being.

In Chapter 4 Bettina Kubicek, Matea Paškvan and Johanna Brunner explore *the bright and the dark side of job autonomy*, as it plays an enormous role in altered working conditions. They summarize research literature showing support for the traditional view of job autonomy as a job resource, underpinned theoretically by the job demand-control model (Karasek, 1979) and the job demands-resources model. However, they further present results of research studies indicating that too much job autonomy may have detrimental effects on employees. They base their assumptions on the vitamin model (Warr, 1994), arguing that 'high levels of autonomy may no longer be considered a nicety but more a workplace necessity' (p. 50) and are accompanied by certain job characteristics, while other beneficial characteristics are missing. As a conclusion, the authors point out that the direction of the effect of job autonomy is 'contingent on the form of autonomy that is employed (method and scheduling versus worktime and workplace autonomy) as well as on constellation of job characteristics and individual characteristics' (p. 58).

While Chapter 4 shows that especially new forms of job autonomy – worktime and workplace autonomy – are associated with detrimental effects on employees' wellbeing, Cornelia Gerdenitsch (Chapter 6) presents in detail the *potential of different flexible working arrangements to satisfy psychological needs* and derives implications for leadership behavior, helping practitioners to use flexible working arrangements with maximized benefits. She focuses on flextime, flexplace and nomadic work as three forms of flexible working arrangements and provides an extensive overview over how these different forms potentially satisfy the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness based on the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and the need for structure.

Chapters 5 and 7 shift the perspectives. Roman Prem (Chapter 7) presents a framework integrating action regulation, cognitive appraisal, and motivational processes, which helps to explain the effects of *changing working conditions on daily within-person processes.* He concludes that changing work conditions show ambivalent consequences for daily work life, having the potential to increase opportunities for learning and growth, but also requiring additional self-control and depleting employees' limited resources. Irina Nalis (Chapter 5) summarizes new demands and resources on the career level. She illustrates that socio-economic developments have changed traditional career paths. She further highlights *agency and meaning as potential re-*

sources to overcome breaches in the career paths and underlines its significance in consideration of chance events and reference groups by presenting three career narratives.

Finally, the editors complete their book with two last chapters, where they discuss the *challenges for job design,* the application of traditional job design measures and *upcoming trends in the future.* They conclude that classic job design measures are still appropriate instruments to capture the current world of work. However, motivational aspects of work design such as skill variety or autonomy should not be maximized, but rather optimized, taking into consideration individual differences. Furthermore, they assume that upcoming trends 'such as the implementation of cyber-physical systems in manufacturing or crowdsourcing in service work are likely to prolong and intensify the trends toward intensification, deregulation and subjectification' (p. 160), as well as expanding the gap between highly skilled and low skilled employees.

Overall, the editors and contributors successfully reach the goal of the book by providing an 'overview of changes and developments in the world of work over the last few decades' (p.1). Each chapter summarizes the state of research closely linked with descriptions of the main theoretical models suitable to explain the described phenomena. The individual chapters are comprehensible and self-contained, enabling readers to focus on chapters they are most interested in. However, this stand-alone character leads to some repetitions in the overall book. Furthermore, the authors provide practical implications on how to implement those research results in organizations, making the book not only useful for researchers but also particularly suitable for practitioners.

References

Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *22*(3), 309–328. DOI: 10.1108/02683940710733115

Cavanaugh, M. A., Boswell, W. R., Roehling, M. V., & Boudreau, J. W. (2000). An empirical examination of self-reported work stress among U.S. managers. *The Journal of applied psychology*, *85*(1), 65–74. DOI: 10.1037/0021-9010.85.1.65

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "What" and "Why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, *11*(4), 227–268. DOI: 10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Demerouti, E., Derks, D., Brummelhuis, L. L. ten, & Bakker, A. B. (2014). New ways of working: Impact on working conditions, work-family balance, and well-being. In C. Korunka & P. Hoonakker (Eds.), *The Impact of ICT on Quality of Working Life* (pp. 123–141). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. DOI: 10.1007/978-94-017-8854-0_8

Karasek, R. A. (1979). Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *24*(2), 285-308. DOI: 10.2307/2392498

Kubicek, B., Korunka, C., Paškvan, M., Prem, R., & Gerdenitsch, C. (2014). Changing working conditions at the onset of the twenty-first century: Facts from international datasets. In C. Korunka & P. Hoonakker (Eds.), *The Impact of ICT on Quality of Working Life* (pp. 25–41). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. DOI: 10.1007/978-94-017-8854-0_3

Kubicek, B., Paškvan, M., & Korunka, C. (2014). Development and validation of an instrument for assessing job demands arising from accelerated change: The intensification of job demands scale (IDS). *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *24*(6), 898–913. DOI: 10.1080/1359432X.2014.979160

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. New York: Springer.

Warr, P. (1994). A conceptual framework for the study of work and mental health. *Work & Stress*, *8*(2), 84–97. DOI: 10.1080/02678379408259982

Cologne, October 2017   Corinna Steidelmüller[*]

---

[*] Corinna Steidelmüller is research and teaching assistant at the Chair of Human Resource Management and Organisation at the University of Wuppertal, Germany. E-mail: steidel mueller@wiwi.uni-wuppertal.de

Cooper, Cary L. & Quick, James Campbell (Eds.):

The Handbook of Stress and Health: A Guide to Research and Practice

Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 2017, 728 pages, ISBN: 978-1-118-99377-4, € 202

Increasing stress experiences among employees can be observed in almost all western societies. Often resulting in impaired well-being and health, stress is one of the most challenging consequences of the various and ever-changing demands of the modern workplace. Causes of stress can lie in a variety of circumstances and developments, like information overload, blurring boundaries between work and private life, or frequent interruptions at work. And although stress is on everyone's lips, there is hardly any agreement on a common definition, the most suitable theories, or the most urgent questions to be answered. Stress, its antecedents, consequences, and prevention make up a very complex and broad field which the interested reader may find hard to access.

'The Handbook of Stress and Health: A Guide to Research and Practice' offers a comfortable entry to the field – not only for novices but also for experts. The six parts, in which it is divided, let the reader understand stress as, as the editors put it, 'both the spice of life and the kiss of death' (p. 1). Starting out with different stress theories, followed by empirical evidence on selected negative consequences of stress, as well as several chapters on intervention and prevention, this book provides the reader with a comprehensive overview of the research on the complex link between stress and health. What is noteworthy is that the numerous authors acknowledge very different perspectives on the topic which are rooted in heterogeneous disciplines such as business administration, industrial and organizational psychology, work sociology, and occupational medicine, making this book relevant and interesting for a broad audience. In the following, I will give a short description of each of the parts with a focus on one exemplary chapter for each part.

In part I, different authors introduce some of the most influential theoretical frameworks in stress research such as the vitamin model (Warr, 2007) and the classic burnout model (Maslach, 1976). In Chapter 3 *'The Effort-Reward Imbalance Model'*, for example, Siegrist points out the necessity to develop and test theoretical models in order to advance the vast field of stress and health. He then introduces the model of effort-reward imbalance which focuses the adverse health effects of stressful social environments, acknowledging the important role of social reciprocity. Practical implications for improvements of employees' working conditions on an organizational as well as on a government level are being derived from the extensive empirical research that has been undertaken.

Part II presents empirical evidence for stress being a major risk factor for morbidity and mortality, pointing out the effect of stress on, for example, heart disease, cancer, mental health, and eating disorders. Contributing to the role of leadership in the occurrence of stress and its negative outcomes, Chapter 14 *'Crossover of Burnout and Engagement from Managers to Followers: The Role of Social Support'* examines how supervisors can enhance as well as prevent subordinates' stress and subsequent health impairments. Drawing from theories and research findings, especially the spillover-crossover model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2013), Westman and Chen argue that – through crossover effects – supervisors' stress, as well as resources, may affect subordinates' health and well-being, in particular, burnout.

In part III various boundary conditions which further shape the relationship between stress and health are being revealed, such as locus of control, gender, personality, and socioeconomic status. For example, in Chapter 19 *'Gender, Workplace Stress, and Coping'* Cocchiara illustrates that women face unique workplace stressors which, together with multiple, conflicting roles, lead to detrimental effects, particularly on women's health.

Part IV takes an individual-level perspective on how to deal with stress, once it has occurred. In this context, the coping process, as well as intervention research and practice, are taken into account. For example, in Chapter 25 *'Seligman's Positive Psychology: Past, Present and Future Connections with Organizational Research'*, Wright makes a case for incorporating the thoughts and tenets of the positive psychology concept into coping and intervention research. He, therefore, links positive psychology (Seligman, 2002), the broaden-and-build model (Fredickson, 2001, 2003), and the concept of psychological capital (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007; Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007) with organizational research.

Part V starts at the stage before stress has even occurred. It thus focuses the prevention of stress, positive stress management, and the question of how to enhance well-being. For example, Carleton and Barling, the authors of Chapter 30 *'Sleep, Work, and Well-Being',* highlight the reciprocal relationship between work and sleep and how both affect psychological as well as physiological well-being. It is shown how work affects sleep, with a special focus on shift work, and how (poor) sleep affects work. Practical implications are drawn from the current state of research.

Finally, part VI also focuses on stress prevention, however, rather from an organizational and community perspective. Chapter 37 *'Social Class, Health, Stress, and Heart Disease: Applying a Prevention Model'* introduces the concept of Preventive Stress Management[TM] which promotes not only the prevention of distress but also the generation of eustress, the positive, challenging form of stress. Henderson, Nelson, and Quick enrich this concept by integrating a macro perspective, acknowledging society as a key actor and challenges of social class as a key stressor. Drawing from extant research, they develop an intervention plan, taking into account prima-

ry, secondary, and tertiary intervention on an individual, an organizational, as well as on a societal level.

Overall, this book has significant strengths as well as some weaknesses which I will comment on shortly in the following. One of its main strengths is the broadness of the topics covered in the nexus of stress and health; from theories over physical and psychological health outcomes through to thoughts on the prevention and intervention research related to stress. As a reader, one notices immediately that all of the contributors picked the research topics they are very passionate about, becoming somewhat enthusiastic narrating about their own or related research on the topic. This leads to interesting, sometimes unusual and remarkably detailed summaries of very different topics, all related to stress and health.

Despite this special charm, the book also has some weaknesses. Naturally, it cannot and doesn't cover all there is to say about stress and health. For example, there is no explicit coverage of the seminal demand-control theory (Karasek & Theorell, 1992) which is only briefly touched in a different context. A weakness of this book is its inconsistent structure: For example, in Part I *'Theories'* there are chapters which only touch different theories but actually tell a story around them and rather present the current state of research. Also, between Part IV *'Coping with Stress'* and Part V *'Enhancing Individual Well-Being'* there is no clear line. The inconsistent use of the terms 'intervention' and 'prevention', for example, further contributes to this problem. Some of these problems may be the downside of one of the book's major strengths – that is, each author's focus is on the topic he or she is very passionate about, encouraging the authors to start enthusing about it and not strictly sticking to the overarching topic of the chapter.

Against this background, I can recommend this book to a wide range of readers: Young scholars, as well as more senior scholars, will find interesting insights into some of the history of stress and health research as well as into the latest findings in the field. Also, some important and instructive connections to practice are drawn. Readers, though, who are looking for a quick overview of the basic theories or for research on stress and health, in a nutshell, might be somewhat disappointed, as might be practitioners seeking concrete, easy-to-implement solutions. Nevertheless, this book comprises a collection of numerous and thought-provoking articles on stress and health issues, addressed from a range of different perspectives by renowned scholars. Thus, 'The Handbook of Stress and Health: A Guide to Research and Practice' makes a recommendable, interesting and inspiring read for those interested in the broad field of stress and health.

References

Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2013). The spillover-crossover model. In J. G. Grzywacz & E. Demerouti (Eds.), *New frontiers in work and family research* (pp. 57-70). Hove, UK: Psychology Press.

Fredickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology. *American Psychologist, 56*(3), 218-226.

Fredickson, B. L. (2003). Positive emotions and upward spirals in organizations. In K. Cameron & J. Dutton (Eds.), *Positive organizational scholarship: Foundations of a new discipline* (163-175). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Karasek, R. A., & Theorell, T. (1992). *Healthy work: Stress, productivity, and the reconstruction of working life*. New York, NY: Basic books.

Luthans, F., Avolio, B. J., Avey, J. B., & Norman, S. M. (2007). Positive psychological capital: Measurement and relationship with performance and satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology, 60*(3), 541-572.

Luthans, F., Youssef, C. M., & Avolio, B. J. (2007). *Psychological capital: Developing the human competitive edge*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Maslach, C. (1976). Burned-out. *Human Behavior, 5*(1), 16-22.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). *Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Warr, P. (2007). *Work, happiness, and unhappiness*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

October 2017   Eva-Ellen Weiß[1]

---

1   Dr. Eva-Ellen Weiß is the coordinator of the Manchot Graduate School 'Competitiveness of Young Enterprises' at Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, Germany. E-mail: eva-ellen.weiss@hhu.de