Exploring the relationship between workspace density and employee attitudinal reactions: An integrative model

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We have attempted to explore the inconsistent results in the literature concerning employee reactions to workspace density by examining the simultaneous moderating effects of job complexity and organizational tenure on the relationship between workspace density and three attitudinal outcomes: organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and co-worker satisfaction. We found the strongest negative relations between density and reactions when job complexity and organizational tenure were high, simultaneously. Theoretical and practical implications of the study are discussed.

Both researchers and practitioners recognize workspace density as an important environmental factor to take into consideration when trying to understand how employees react to their jobs (Oldham, Cummings, & Zhou, 1995). Workspace density is typically defined as the number of people within a certain distance of a target employee, and represents the potential for employee interactions and/or interferences. From a conceptual standpoint, researchers expected to find that high workspace density would negatively impact employees' behavioural and attitudinal reactions. Higher workspace density would result in more uncontrollable interfering contacts from employees in the setting (e.g. Evans, Johannson, & Carrere, 1994; Ornstein, 1990). This, in turn, would reduce people's experience of personal control at work, and reduce their ability to concentrate and complete their tasks (Oldham et al., 1995). As a result, the argument goes, dense work settings are likely to produce adverse behavioural (e.g. performance) and psychological (e.g. job and social satisfaction, organizational commitment) reactions (Evans et al., 1994; Sundstrom, 1986).

Empirical data from laboratory and field studies provide inconsistent support for the expected adverse effects of density (see review by Oldham et al., 1995). In support of this relationship, Oldham and Rotchford (1983) demonstrated adverse behavioural and psychological effects of workspace density among office
employees. Sundstrom, Town, Brown, Forman, and McGee (1982) found mixed results, in that there was some adverse effect of workspace density among managers, but not among secretaries and bookkeepers. In contrast, Szilagyi and Holland (1980) found positive effects associated with higher workspace density in a field experiment among professional employees. Increased workspace density positively affected employees’ work satisfaction, increased information exchange, facilitated tasks, and reduced role conflict and ambiguity, while decreases in workspace density had negative effects on these outcomes.

In an effort to improve our understanding of workspace density, scholars have begun to investigate contextual and personal variables that may moderate the relationship between workspace density and individual reactions (e.g. Fried, 1990; Oldham, Kulik, & Stepina, 1991). We believe that the inconsistencies in past research may stem from methodological shortcomings and a lack of recognition of factors that cause individuals to vary in their reaction to their work environments. Two potentially important moderators to be considered here are job complexity and organizational tenure, which is an indicator of an individual’s knowledge of their organization.

Job complexity and the work experience

Job complexity refers to the degree to which an employee’s job is demanding, challenging and stimulating (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Hackman & Oldham, 1980). The literature indicates that job complexity is positively related to behavioural and attitudinal outcomes (e.g. Fried & Ferris, 1987). However, this relationship between job complexity and employee reactions may be more complex, depending on the workspace characteristics. Several studies have examined how workspace density and job complexity interact to affect employees, but evidence is mixed (see review by Oldham et al., 1995). Studies by Block and Stokes (1989), Carlopio and Gardner (1992) and Zalesny and Farace (1987) supported the view that workspace density has more negative effects for those working in more complex jobs, but studies by Sundstrom, Burt, and Kamp (1980) and Oldham et al. (1991) did not support that view. In contrast, Oldham et al.’s (1991) results contradicted this prediction, as greater density had positive effects on employees.

It is difficult to interpret the results of these studies because they suffer from an important methodological shortcoming: Almost all previous studies focusing on workspace characteristics and job complexity examined the complexity of different positions (e.g. clerical vs. managerial jobs), or of broad job classifications, not of particular jobs within these categorizations (see Oldham et al., 1995). Using that method, all employees of a particular position associated with a particular job classification were assumed to have the same level of job complexity. As a result, much of the true variance of job complexity within categories was unaccounted for by these studies. In the present study we overcome this problem by assessing the job complexity of every individual employee.

In addition, these conflicting results may be clarified by considering the role of cognitive processes that underlie job complexity and the perception and interpretation of the work environment. It may be that individuals working in complex jobs
in densely populated environments experience negative outcomes because the complex job competes for attention with interferences from the work environment. Researchers agree that an individual’s attention is limited and finite (Eysenck, 1982). Attention is the psychic energy that makes events occur in consciousness; it is conceived of as a limited power supply, or a general purpose, limited capacity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Eysenck, 1982; Kahneman, 1973). Stimuli, including not only environmental stimuli but also job-related stimuli, such as complexity, compete for the finite quantity of attention. Individual differences in ability to concentrate notwithstanding (Stansfeld & Shine, 1993), this perspective suggests that job complexity competes with environmental interferences for attention from the system. The extended effort required to manage this competition leads the employee to experience stress and other negative attitudinal reactions (see Block & Stokes, 1989; Carter & Beh, 1989; Oldham et al., 1995; Tafalla & Evans, 1997). Conversely, the potential interferences presented by high workspace density may have much less effect on employees when their jobs are simple and unchallenging (see, e.g., Carter & Beh, 1989; Oldham et al., 1995; Tafalla & Evans, 1997), because simpler jobs place less of a drain on finite attentional resources.

**Joint moderating effect of job complexity and organizational tenure**

We can further improve our understanding of the mixed results regarding workspace density by considering another cognitively based factor that may affect the workspace density–job complexity relationship: an individual’s knowledge of the organization’s culture, history, and sociopolitical landscape. Knowledge of how to conduct work in an organization is acquired, or learned, over the course of time as an individual gains experience in an organization, and becomes better socialized (Chao, O’Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994; Louis, 1980, 1990). As one gains experience working in a particular organizational culture, specific job-related and organizationally relevant knowledge, scripts, and language are acquired, as is awareness of the organization’s political subsystem, all of which contribute to an improved ability to manage interactions (Chao et al., 1994; Morrison, 1993). Although degree of socialization and learning varies across individuals (see, e.g., Morrison, 1993), organizational tenure can serve as a good objective surrogate for knowledge and experience of an organization’s culture. That is, exposure to an organization’s culture and opportunities for learning should increase as a function of time invested in an organization. Thus, we propose that organizational tenure, specifically the length of time an individual has been employed at a given organization, may help predict when job complexity will generate negative responses to workspace density.

Considering the role that organizational tenure may have as a factor moderating the relationship between workspace density and employee reactions, it is conceivable that greater tenure may have either ameliorating or aggravating effects as it interacts with workspace density and job complexity to affect employee reactions. Research on organizational socialization can lead to conflicting predictions regarding the adverse effects of high density. That is, it may be that either low or high tenure employees can be more negatively affected by high density when job complexity is high. Each of these alternatives is considered here.
Alternative A: Low tenure employees are more disturbed by high density. It may be that
distractions caused by density are particularly disturbing and harmful to employees
when the job is complex and tenure is low simultaneously. Having low tenure in an
organization, and consequently, less experience and skills to be successful on the
demanding job (Chao et al., 1994; Louis, 1980; Morrison, 1993) may mean that low
distractions and interferences are necessary in order to enable concentration. Less
tenure in an organization may also be equated with having less well-established
relationships with other employees, and a less well-developed understanding of the
culture and norms of the organization (Chao et al., 1994; Louis, 1980, 1990). This
lack of social assimilation may lead to more negative consequences caused by
interferences and distractions.

Given these arguments, it follows that for these low-tenured individuals, a work
environment that is characterized by low distractions and interferences is essential
to enable the appropriate mental concentration needed to accomplish the demand-
ing job. In contrast, employees with relatively high tenure may have acquired
sufficient experience, knowledge and skills to accomplish their complex tasks even
under the distractioning conditions caused by high workspace density (Chao et al.,

Less tenure would also be related to having less familiarity and facility with the
political process, and having a less effective social and political network with their
peers and superiors (Chao et al., 1994). Having weaker political skills and less
wide-ranging networks in the organization may mean that lower tenure employees
are less able to enlist assistance to reduce the potential adverse consequences (e.g.
lower merit raises) associated with poor performance stemming from density-
related distractions. In contrast, higher tenure employees, with stronger organiz-
atonal networks, may be better able to influence their performance ratings
(regardless of their performance level) compared to their counterparts with less
established networks. As an additional point, it is likely that, over time, those who
fail to accommodate to a densely populated work environment may leave or be
transferred to other units, consistent with the attraction-selection-attrition process
(Schneider, 1987).

However, when job complexity is high and tenure is high, attitudinal reactions
will be high regardless of the density level. This would be expected because
employees with high tenure are likely to function well under challenging jobs
regardless of the density level, which, in accordance with the job characteristics
model (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), would positively affect their psychological well
being. In light of these points, it can be hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1a: Workspace density is maximally related to adverse attitudinal reactions when job
complexity is high and organizational tenure is low, simultaneously. Moreover, when job
complexity and organizational tenure are both high, no relation between workspace density and
these reactions is expected.

Alternative B: High tenure employees are more disturbed by high density. Considering again
the role of organizational knowledge, it is possible that high tenure employees are
more adversely affected by a high-density environment. An examination of how
cognitive processes and justice issues differ for low vs. high tenure employees
suggests that the distractions associated with high workspace density have adverse effects on employees’ reactions primarily when the job is complex and tenure is high, simultaneously.

Considering the greater experience of individuals with more tenure at an organization can be extended beyond quantity to another dimension of quality. From a quantitative perspective, having more experience in an organization can be expected to mean an individual has, for example, more information, and more people in their network. From a qualitative perspective, the important distinction for those with greater tenure in an organization is that this information is better organized in memory, more accessible, and generally is better understood in the greater scheme of the organization’s goals and individual’s roles in pursuing those goals. Likewise, a longer standing political network may be more effective and efficient for reasons relating to the long-term nature of the relationships, not just their quantity. Thus, we expect that there are significant qualitative differences between those with high versus low tenure in an organization.

By extension, this line of reasoning suggests that the experienced difficulty of challenging, complex work for low vs. high tenure employees is also different. Having greater knowledge and familiarity with the job reduces the experienced difficulty of jobs for those with high tenure, in essence making them easier to complete successfully (Katz, 1978b). Thus, the amount of attention and cognitive effort required to perform successfully would also be reduced. Although the completion of challenging assignments with social distractions demands a constant investment of mental energy, the nature of the application of attention may change as employees gain organizational tenure. This highlights the idea that a high tenure employee’s cognitive experience of a complex job might be different than that of a low tenure employee. The reduced attentional requirements may, in fact, reduce the interest level of the job (see Katz, 1978b), and therefore increase sensitivity to distractions. Under this combination of high tenure and high interferences, employees may be more disturbed, annoyed and distracted by high social interruptions associated with high-density work environments.

High tenure employees also differ from their low tenure counterparts in their perception of a high-density work environment because of the issues of justice and fairness (Greenberg, 1986). Specifically, high tenure employees who have shown dedication by providing the organization with loyalty over the years, and who now work in complex and challenging jobs, may expect the organization to provide them, as a matter of fairness, with a more private and less distracting work environment (Greenberg, 1986). On the basis of these two explanations, we can hypothesize that high tenure employees will be more adversely affected by the distracting environment associated with high density.

However, when job complexity is high and tenure is low, employee attitudinal reactions will be high regardless of the social distractions associated with workspace density. This would be expected because employees who are both relatively new to the organization and who are working in demanding jobs will be more engrossed in their work because of their lack of experience and challenging work. This involvement in challenging work would in turn contribute
to positive psychological and attitudinal reactions (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Therefore:

Hypothesis 1b: Workspace density is maximally related to adverse attitudinal reactions when job complexity and organizational tenure are high, simultaneously. Moreover, when job complexity is high and organizational tenure is low, no relation between workspace density and the focal reactions is expected.

Method

Sample and procedure

The study was based on 93 white-collar employees employed in a variety of jobs in a large university in the USA. All participants worked full-time, had been in the organization an average of 7.8 years, and in their present job 5.1 years. The group consisted of 22 men and 71 women, with 67% of participants indicating they were Caucasian and 33% black. The average age of the group was 40 years.

Measures

Workspace density was measured by the researchers as the total number of employees who worked within a radius of 15 feet of the target employee. The literature does not provide a clear indication how many feet should be used to assess density (Oldham et al., 1995). The appropriate measure to be used may be a function of the specific physical layout of each building. Here, drawings of the arrangements of work areas in the various offices facilitated the selection of an appropriate radius. We determined that a radius of 15 feet encompassed all surrounding employees in any given room or section of a room, while a radius of 20 feet (or more) extended into other rooms for many participants, which did not seem to address the specific work area of interest here. Thus, we selected 15 feet as the most appropriate measure.

Job complexity was assessed by a self-report survey using the average score of 10 items from the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS; Hackman & Oldham, 1980). These items cover five core job dimensions skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job feedback. Job satisfaction and co-worker satisfaction were also measured, using the original scales from the JDS, and contained five items and three items, respectively. The α coefficients for these and other scales are included in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Workspace density</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2. Job complexity</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>−.27*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Organizational tenure</td>
<td>7.95</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td></td>
<td>−.21*</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organizational rank</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>−.28*</td>
<td>.51*</td>
<td>.37*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Organizational commitment</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>−.28*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>−.08</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Co-worker satisfaction</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>−.06</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>−.03</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Job satisfaction</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>−.17*</td>
<td>.53*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>.57*</td>
<td>.59*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 93, *p ≤ .05, one-tailed.
Organizational commitment was assessed by averaging scores on the original nine items developed by Cook and Wall (1980). Organizational tenure was provided by the participants’ report of the number of years and months they had been employed by that organization.

Finally, we included job ranking as a covariate because of its potential to act as a confound. Employees in higher job ranks may have more complex jobs and more private working conditions. To measure job rank, two key individuals from the university’s human resource department ranked the position power of the jobs included in the sample. They showed a high level of agreement (r_{xy} = .75), so we standardized and averaged their rankings to compute the job ranking scores used as covariates here.

Results

Table 1 provides the means, standard deviations, reliability estimates (where appropriate) and intercorrelations among all variables of the study. The table indicates a negative correlation of workspace density with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. However, no relation was found between workspace density and co-worker satisfaction.

To assess the hypothesized interactive effects among workspace density, job complexity and organizational tenure on each of the three dependent variables, we hierarchically regressed each dependent variable on sets of predictors that were entered into the regression equation in the following order: (1) the main effect of the covariate rank followed by (2) a block entry of workspace density, job complexity and organizational tenure; (3) a block entry of three two-way cross-products (a) workspace density and job complexity, (b) workspace density and organizational tenure, and (c) job complexity and organizational tenure; (4) the three-way cross-product of workspace density, job complexity, and organizational tenure (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Table 2 presents the results for the regressions for organizational commitment, co-worker satisfaction, and job satisfaction, respectively. For both organizational commitment and co-worker satisfaction, the two-way interaction term of workspace density and job complexity made statistically significant contributions to the explained variance. In addition, the cross-product of workspace density and organizational tenure made a statistically significant contribution to the explained variance of organizational commitment. However, none of the two-way interaction terms accounted for a significant amount of variance in job satisfaction. The three-way interaction of workspace density, job complexity and organizational tenure made a statistically significant contribution to the variance of all three dependent variables.

More specifically, the set of main effect terms entered at step 1 accounted for (adjusted $R^2$) 20, 14 and 25% of the variance in organizational commitment, co-worker satisfaction and job satisfaction, respectively. In addition, the entry of the workspace density $\times$ job complexity interactive term increased $R^2$ in organizational commitment and co-worker satisfaction by 5 and 6%, respectively. The three-way interaction terms of workspace density $\times$ job complexity $\times$ organizational tenure accounted for 4, 4 and 3% of the variance of organizational commitment, co-worker satisfaction and job satisfaction, respectively.

To graphically illustrate the nature of the interactions, we used a procedure outlined by Cohen and Cohen (1983). This procedure uses the estimated regression
Table 2. Hierarchical multiple regressions evaluating the moderating effects of job complexity and organizational tenure on the relationship between workspace density and organizational commitment, co-worker satisfaction, and job satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Predictors entered</th>
<th>Organizational commitment</th>
<th>Co-worker satisfaction</th>
<th>Job satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ΔR²</td>
<td>Cumulative R²</td>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Organizational rank</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workspace density</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job complexity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational tenure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Workspace density × Job complexity</td>
<td>.05*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Workspace density × Organizational tenure</td>
<td>.05*</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Job complexity × Organizational tenure</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td>.27*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Workspace density × Job complexity × Organizational tenure</td>
<td>.04*</td>
<td>.37*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 93, *p ≤ .05.
coefficients and constant of each full moderated regression equation to plot the regression of a focal dependent variable on workspace density at two representative levels of a focal moderator variable: low (−1 SD below the sample mean), and high (+1 SD above the sample mean).

The resulting regression lines for the three-way interactions are presented in Figs 1–3. These figures are supportive of hypothesis 1b by indicating a clear negative association between workspace density and each of the attitudinal dependent variables when both job complexity and organizational tenure are high at the same time. The relation between workspace density and each of the outcome variables for the other combinations of job complexity and tenure were non-existent, negligible or relatively low. Figures 1–3 further indicate that, as predicted by hypothesis 1b, when job complexity is high and organizational tenure is low at the same time, the level of these attitudinal reactions is high regardless of the level of workspace density.

**Discussion**

The present study provides evidence to suggest that the relationship between workspace density and employee reactions is more complex than previously believed. In short, the findings of this study suggest that the effects of workspace density on employee reactions cannot be fully understood unless one also accounts for additional organizational variables, namely job characteristics and tenure. The exploration of the joint effects of density, job complexity and organizational tenure can explain otherwise inconsistent findings in the literature. Thus, we found that, as many researchers have argued (e.g. Block & Stokes, 1989; Carlopio & Gardner, 1992; Zalesny & Farace, 1987), people may react negatively to higher workspace density.

**Figure 1.** Three-way interactive effects of workspace density, job complexity and tenure on organizational commitment.
density. However, this is true primarily for people with high job complexity and high organizational tenure. We also found that, as Oldham et al. (1991) suggested, some people may react well at work regardless of the level of density. We found this to be true primarily for those with high job complexity and low tenure. Our confidence in the validity of the results is bolstered by the fact that they were found

**Figure 2.** Three-way interactive effects of workspace density, job complexity, and tenure on co-worker satisfaction.

**Figure 3.** Three-way interactive effects of workspace density, job complexity, and tenure on job satisfaction.
despite our reliance on a relatively small sample size and distributions that were sample-determined, as opposed to experimenter-determined (see, e.g., McClelland & Judd, 1993).

**Interpretation and perception of high-density workspaces**

An interesting question concerning high workspace density is why attitudinal outcomes for employees working in high complexity jobs differ so remarkably depending on their tenure. That is, we found that when job complexity is high, low tenure individuals tend to respond more positively to high workspace density than do high tenure employees. It may be that the low tenure employees interpret social interactions arising from the dense workspace as helpful interactions rather than as disturbing interferences. The less experienced (i.e. low tenure) employees can use the surrounding social environment to pose questions and gain information about how to successfully accomplish their complex jobs.

Moreover, these results can be viewed as supporting the idea first suggested by Oldham et al. (1991) that working in complex jobs may be sufficiently interesting that it leads to experiencing work as highly absorbing, thus allowing the employee to block out unwanted stimuli, regardless of the level of potential environmental disturbances present in the workspace. As Figs 1–3 show, we found that low tenure employees working in complex jobs had high levels of organizational commitment, co-worker satisfaction, and job satisfaction regardless of whether workspace density was low or high. Such employees may have positive work experiences because of their interesting work, and be able to do this work regardless of the density to their workspace, because they are interested in, and involved with, their tasks. Researchers are beginning to investigate the possibility that working in a complex, novel, job contributes to experiencing work as a flow state (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Lefevre, 1988). A flow state is the enjoyable, high quality, optimal experience of being totally involved in a task that absorbs all available attention and excludes other preoccupations of life from conscious awareness. The idea is that experiencing a flow state reduces employees’ attention to intrusive distractions that arise from being in a densely populated office environment (Lefevre, 1988).

Moreover, the idea of flow states is also useful in understanding the difference between those with high vs. low tenure working in complex jobs. That is, as tenure increases, an individual may find a complex job to be less novel and interesting (Katz, 1978a,b), thus reducing the frequency and/or duration of flow state experiences.

**Practical considerations**

In light of these results, some practical implications can be inferred. First, organizational planners working on office layouts should not consider either low- or high-density offices to be universally better. Rather, they should first assess the complexity of the work that will be conducted in the office. For work that is
relatively low in complexity, our results suggest that density is not an important factor influencing employees’ work experiences. Thus, higher density offices may be acceptable to such employees, as well as being cost-effective. If planners know the work is complex, or anticipate an increase in job complexity (e.g. as a result of organizational development efforts or other such changes), then they should consider the tenure employees will have, and plan to have less densely populated offices for higher tenure individuals.

In general, this study can help managers more fully understand the attitudinal reactions of employees, by highlighting the idea that workspace density may affect employees’ reactions. Although our methodology precludes a causal interpretation, the results suggest that certain employees experience negative reactions at work despite having interesting and challenging jobs. Specifically, these managers should be aware that high tenure employees working in complex jobs might react negatively to the densely populated workspace. However, the physical environment seems to be of less consequence to low tenure employees working in complex jobs, or employees working in less complex jobs, regardless of tenure.

Directions for future research

To enhance confidence in the generalizability of the findings, we believe this research should be extended to include other organizations and industries. Studies should also examine the hypotheses of this study using relevant stress-related behavioural outcomes, such as performance or absenteeism. In addition, the inclusion of additional measures of organizational knowledge and the experience of flow states will improve our understanding of when employees will experience the work environment as providing social facilitation and/or interferences.

Future research should also consider that other factors may affect people’s experiences of social interferences at work. Such factors may include differences across individuals, jobs, and/or workgroups. For example, the potential for facilitation may be reduced for individuals with a strong desire for autonomy, or a low need for affiliation. Likewise, jobs that are more individualistic in nature may offer less potential for social facilitation. Moreover, work groups may sometimes include people who have a poor understanding of the culture, are not inclined to be helpful, or who lack civility. In general, future studies would benefit from empirically exploring how cognitive processes differ for people working under various conditions of workspace density, job complexity and organizational tenure. Such research will be beneficial in order to enhance understanding of how these cognitive processes mediate the relationships between work conditions and attitudinal and behavioural work-related outcomes.

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