

THE FUTURE OF WORK AND WORK DESIGN

Edited by

ALESSANDRA LAZAZZARA
V. LALE TÜZÜNER



The Future of Work and Work Design

This page intentionally left blank

The Future of Work and Work Design: Research and Practice

EDITED BY

ALESSANDRA LAZAZZARA

University of Milan, Italy

AND

V. LALE TÜZÜNER

Istanbul University, Türkiye



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India – Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Emerald Publishing, Floor 5, Northspring, 21-23 Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 4DL.

First edition 2025

Editorial matter and selection © 2025 Alessandra Lazazzara and V. Lale Tüzüner.
Individual chapters © 2025 The authors.
Published under exclusive licence by Emerald Publishing Limited.

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: www.copyright.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83662-907-8 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-83662-906-1 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-83662-908-5 (Epub)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Contents

About the Editors	vii
About the Contributors	ix
Preface	xiii

Section I Job and Organization Design

Chapter 1 A Historical Perspective on Revolutions in Work and Organization Design, and Expectations for the Future <i>Demet Varoğlu, Ahmet Aziz Akmermer and Mehmet Abdülkadir Varoğlu</i>	3
Chapter 2 An Approach to Job Design for Mitigating the Impact of Negative Ties on Burnout and Job Performance <i>Tolga Özdemirel and H. Cenk Sözen</i>	17
Chapter 3 A Contemporary Approach on How Organizations Distribute Power to Units? <i>Yahya Kemal Ulusoy and H. Cenk Sözen</i>	31

Section II Leadership and Organizational Behavior in the Future of Work

Chapter 4 Rethinking Leadership in Workplaces in the Age of Smart Machines: Exploring Its Future <i>Ayşegül Özbebek Tunç</i>	49
Chapter 5 AI and the Employee: Emerging Organizational Behavior Trends for the Future of Work <i>İlker Çitli</i>	69

Chapter 6 Virtual Teams from Emotion and Behavior Perspective: A Theoretical Review <i>Esra Zeynel</i>	85
Chapter 7 Aligning Talent Management with Projects: Oriented Behavior Approach <i>Emin Ercan Cihan</i>	109
Section III Future Work Sustainability and Inclusion Challenges	
Chapter 8 Future Work Challenges: Exploring Factors Shaping Attitudes Toward Women Managers in Turkey <i>Başak Uçanok Tan</i>	133
Chapter 9 Sustainable Human Resource Management: A Proposal of Comprehensive Model <i>Hazal Yaren Yalirsu and V. Lale Tüzüner</i>	147
Chapter 10 The Effects of Perceived Pay Inequality on Workplace Outcomes: A Qualitative Study <i>Pelin Kanten and Yener Pazarçik</i>	163
Chapter 11 Talent Acquisition in the Age of Artificial Intelligence <i>Gülbeniz Akduman and Zeynep Hatipoğlu</i>	175

About the Editors

Alessandra Lazazzara is an Associate Professor of Organization Theory and Human Resource Management at the University of Milan, Italy, where she serves as the Chair of the Bachelor's Degree Program in Management of Organizations and Work. Her research interests include artificial intelligence (AI) and human resource management (HRM), workplace inclusion, and job crafting. Her research has been published in several international journals, including *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Personnel Review*, and *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, among others. She is an Associate Editor of *Gender, Work and Organization* and serves as Vice President of ItAIS (the Italian Chapter of the Association for Information Systems). She has recently published a book on AI and HRM processes (Franco Angeli, 2025).

V. Lale Tüzüner works as a Professor at Istanbul University, School of Business, at Human Resource (HR) Management Department. She completed her undergraduate studies at Istanbul University, Faculty of Business Administration. Her master's and doctorate degrees are from Istanbul University, Social Sciences Institute, Department of Human Resource Management. Her research areas are mainly related to people management, including sustainability, HR analytics, flexibility, employer branding, and strategic human resource management.

This page intentionally left blank

About the Contributors

Gülbeniz Akduman has worked in various managerial positions at Topkapı Palace, Turkish Airlines, Havaş, Avea, Turkcell Superonline, Doğan Holding, TAV Holding, ATÜ, and DeFacto. She received the title of Associate Professor by completing her master's and doctoral education in the field of business administration. She has Berkeley Institute of wellbeing happiness coach, Pearson-certified experienced trainer-instructor, assessment system assessor, and quality management certifications. She acts as an expert and board member in order to share her knowledge, experience, and gives lectures and training in the fields of management-organization, human resources management, organizational behavior, and aviation management. She is the jury member of PERYÖN (Türkiye İnsan Yönetimi Derneği) and TEGEP (Eğitim ve Gelişim Platformu Derneği) awards. She has national and international articles, papers, book, and book chapters in the fields of human resources management, organizational behavior, management and organization, strategic management, organizational development, training and development, aviation management, institutionalization in family businesses, and employee happiness management.

Ahmet Aziz Akmermer attended the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Maryland in USA, worked for BOTAŞ Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Crude Oil Pipeline Project Directorate, received his BS and MBA degrees in Business Administration, completed his PhD in Management and Organization at Başkent University. He currently serves as a Full-time Lecturer at Başkent University in Ankara, Türkiye.

Emin Ercan Cihan is a Principal Consultant and Lecturer with over two decades of experience in project and program management. His expertise includes project portfolios, sustainability, and automotive industry dynamics. Holding a PhD in Engineering Management, he earned his BSc and MSc in Mechanical Engineering from Istanbul Technical University. His work spans project complexity, risk management, decision-making, and M&A portfolios.

İlker Çitli has a PhD in Organizational Behavior and his research focuses on the impact of artificial intelligence-driven technological changes on employees.

Zeynep Hatipoğlu is Associate Professor and serves as General Secretary at Istanbul Arel University. She focuses on organizational development, human

resources management, employer branding, talent management, performance management, OKR system, cultural transformation, leadership, and change management. She has worked as a Consultant at Proline Resource and Development, Great Place to Work Turkey, Batu International Logistics, and Minopolis Istanbul. She worked as the Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Istanbul Arel University between 2019 and 2023. After completing her doctorate, she took part as an instructor in the training programs of more than 50 institutions, and still continues her corporate training activities. She organized summits on current human resources practices. She continues to serve as Adjunct Faculty at Bahçeşehir University Graduate Program and Bilgi University Graduate Program. She is a jury member in the Employer Brand for Talent Acquisition category of the PERYÖN (Türkiye İnsan Yönetimi Derneği) and TEGEP (Eğitim ve Gelişim Platformu Derneği) awards. She has ICF coaching, assessment system assessor, and quality management certifications.

Pelin Kanten completed her undergraduate education in the Faculty of Business Administration at Istanbul University and started her professional career at IBM Türk Limited Company in 2001. She worked as a Corporate Communications Specialist and Budget Specialist at the same company between 2001 and 2005. She has started academic career in 2006 as a Lecturer at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, earned her master's degree and her doctorate degree in Business Administration in 2008 and 2012, respectively. She worked as a lecturer during her doctoral education between 2008 and 2012. She received the title of Associate Professor in Management and Strategy in 2015 and the title of Professor in 2020. She has been working in the Faculty of Political Sciences at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University since 2016. She has published various works in the field of management and organization, including 62 conference papers, 45 articles, 14 book chapters, and 2 books.

Aysegül Özbebek Tunç is an Associate Professor at Istanbul University's Faculty of Political Sciences. She earned her BA in Business Administration from Anadolu University (2006), an MA in Management and Organization from Marmara University (2009), and a PhD from Istanbul University (2015). She worked as an export regional coordinator in a jewelry company before becoming a research assistant in 2008. In 2013–2014, as a Visiting Scholar at Bentley University, she collaborated with Professor Manolova. Her research interests include management, leadership, strategy, and Industry 4.0. She has numerous publications, book editorships, SSCI journal reviews, and European Union project partnerships in her field.

Tolga Özdemirel is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Management at Başkent University. He holds a bachelor's degree in Electronics Engineering from Ankara University and an MBA degree from Bahçeşehir University, where he examined the "Impact of Blockchain and Smart Contracts on Financial Services." Beyond his research, he actively participates in the Turkish Academy of Management, reflecting his dedication to the broader academic and local community.

Yener Pazarcik completed his undergraduate education at Uludağ University, Department of Economics and Administrative Sciences. He completed his master's degree at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Institute of Social Sciences, and he completed doctorate degree in Management and Organization from Marmara University Social Sciences Institute in 2010. After his doctorate, he worked at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Biga Applied Department. He works as a Lecturer at the Faculty of Sciences. He has studies on the formation of culture and values, organizational behavior, non-governmental organization management, strategic management, and business history.

H. Cenk Sözen, PhD, is a Professor of Management at Başkent University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Ankara, Turkey. His interests and research areas include organization theory, organizational change, social networks, social capital, complex systems, strategic HRM, and knowledge management. He lectures on organizational behavior, organization theory, human resource management, and strategic management. He has worked as a reviewer and published articles in the journals such as *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *Personnel Review*, *European Management Review*, *Property Management*, and *International Journal of Human Resource Management*. He is a member of European Academy of Management and Academy of Management. He is the Founder and current President of Turkish Academy of Management.

Başak Uçanok Tan holds a BA in Business Administration from Başkent University. After graduation, she was awarded the prestigious Sunley Management Scholarship for an MSc in International Management at the University of Northampton, UK. She earned a PhD in Organizational Behavior from Marmara University. Her research interests include micro-organizational dynamics such as work values, work centrality, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), organizational commitment, alienation, gender, leadership, and cooperative behavior. She is currently the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Communication at Istanbul Bilgi University.

Yahya Kemal Ulusoy, PhD, Ankara, Turkey, is an independent researcher. His interests and research areas include organization theory, strategic management, social networks, and organizational behavior. He worked as a project manager for more than 25 years. He lectures on project and technology management. He also provides consultancy services to organizations on project management, technology management, organizational change, and digital transformation.

Demet Varoğlu received her BSc and MBA degrees from Middle East Technical University (METU), Department of Business Administration, and completed her PhD at Ankara University. She spent more than two decades of her academic career in METU. Currently, she is a Full Professor at TOBB University of Economics and Technology in Ankara. Her recent publications are on workforce diversity.

Mehmet Abdülkadir Varođlu graduated from the Turkish Military Academy. He received his BSc and MBA degrees from Middle East Technical University, Department of Business Administration, and completed his PhD in Management at Ankara University. Currently, he is a Full Professor and University Academic Affairs Coordinator following his 12-year tenure as Vice Rector at Bařkent University in Ankara.

Hazal Yaren Yalirsu obtained a bachelor's degree in Labor Economics and Industrial Relations and a master's degree in Management and Labor Psychology from Marmara University in 2019 and 2023, respectively. She started working as a Research Assistant at Istanbul Health and Technology University in 2021 in tandem with her master's program. She is currently continuing her work as a Research Assistant while pursuing her PhD in the Business Management program at Istanbul University. Her main research foci are organizational behavior and human resource management.

Esra Zeynel is an Assistant Professor at Isparta University of Applied Sciences since 2018. She is graduated from Labour Economics and Industrial Relations major at Anadolu University. She completed her master's and doctoral degree in Business and Administration in Suleyman Demirel University in 2008.

Preface

From intelligent automation and data-driven decision making to personalized employee experiences and predictive analytics, artificial intelligence (AI) is profoundly transforming how we work, collaborate, and innovate. As we stand at the edge of unprecedented technological change – amid growing volatility and uncertainty affecting both societies and organizations – the very concept of work and work design is undergoing a fundamental redefinition. This raises a timely and essential question: does it still make sense to speak of the future of work and work design? More provocatively, will “work” as we currently understand it even exist in the future?

This book, informed by the contributions of numerous scholars and enriched by a multidisciplinary perspective, invites readers to explore the evolving nature of work and work design in this context of transformation. The concept of work design, understood as the content and structure of tasks, activities, relationships, and responsibilities (Parker, 2014), is not new. Since the emergence of scientific management, work design has played a central role in both research and practice – initially focused on enhancing productivity and efficiency, and later broadening to encompass employee well-being and satisfaction, particularly through motivational and humanistic approaches. Over the past four decades, theories of work design have provided robust frameworks for understanding, influencing, and improving employee experiences and behaviors (e.g., Hackman & Oldham, 1980).

More recently, scholarship has expanded to include relational and proactive perspectives on work design. The former reflects increasing interdependence and interaction with coworkers and clients, while the latter captures the growing significance of employee initiative in shaping their own roles – through behaviors such as job crafting (Grant & Parker, 2009). These evolving perspectives highlight the dynamic and socially embedded nature of work, which is now being reshaped by the accelerating integration of AI technologies. Indeed, the adoption of AI in the workplace demands a fundamental rethinking of work design (Parker & Grote, 2020, 2022), especially concerning how tasks are organized and how relationships between humans and machines develop.

Bankins et al. (2024) identify several key dimensions of work design affected by AI, including job variety, task–technology fit (TTF), autonomy, and human–AI collaboration. When AI is used to complement human labor – automating repetitive or administrative functions – it has the potential to enhance job variety and enable workers to engage in more meaningful, cognitively complex, or interpersonal activities. However, in bureaucratic or hierarchical settings, AI can

create an “algorithmic cage,” characterized by rigid task routinization and diminished variety, often resulting in resistance from employees (Meijer et al., 2021).

The notion of TTF plays a critical role in this context. When employees perceive AI tools as well-matched to the requirements of their tasks, and of sufficient technical quality, they are more likely to view them positively, use them effectively, and experience improved performance (Nguyen & Malik, 2022). Conversely, a misalignment between the technology and the task may lead to underutilization or misuse. Similarly, the effect of AI on autonomy is contingent upon its mode of deployment: AI systems that support human decision making can foster autonomy and skill development, particularly for mid- and high-skilled workers. However, when AI is used to dictate tasks or enforce strict workflows, it can erode autonomy, reduce learning opportunities, and undermine job quality (Holm & Lorenz, 2022).

Effective human–AI collaboration hinges on a constellation of factors: employees’ understanding and trust in the technology, adequate training, and the perception of AI as a supportive rather than controlling tool. An organizational climate that fosters psychological safety and technological readiness is essential to facilitate such collaboration, allowing AI to function not as a surveillance mechanism but as a genuine “algorithmic colleague” (Bankins et al., 2024).

A similar transformation is observed with the introduction of collaborative robots (cobots) in industrial contexts. Cobots alter traditional job characteristics by influencing autonomy, task variety, cognitive load, and opportunities for skill development – often with paradoxical effects. On the one hand, they reduce physical strain and allow workers to engage in more meaningful activities; on the other hand, they may restrict autonomy through standardization and algorithmic control. While cobots can increase task variety by assuming routine duties, they may also leave workers with residual, fragmented tasks that diminish overall job complexity and satisfaction. Likewise, cognitive demands may shift from task execution to oversight, resulting in either stimulation or overload. Finally, although cobots may stimulate new skill development through programming and supervision, they also pose risks of deskilling when they displace previously human tasks (Shaba et al., 2024).

Moreover, recent developments suggest that generative AI is increasingly being used beyond cognitive support – to structure learning, planning, and decision making – but also to mediate relational functions such as coaching, emotional support, and even companionship (Zao-Sanders, 2025). As generative AI becomes embedded in everyday work routines, it reconfigures not only how tasks are distributed and executed but also how relationships within the workplace are formed and sustained. This evolution blurs the boundary between human and artificial agents, requiring work design frameworks to account for emerging patterns of task interdependence and socio-technical interaction.

Ultimately, the impact of AI on work design is not determined solely by technological capabilities, but by the broader socio-technical systems within which AI is deployed. Alongside concerns related to productivity and efficiency, the digital transformation of work raises urgent challenges around inclusion and sustainability. As recently highlighted, the rapid digitization of work has deepened

pre-existing inequalities while generating new forms of exclusion in digitally mediated workplaces. While digital tools can expand access and flexibility, they also risk marginalizing those with lower digital literacy or those whose identities are less visible or supported in virtual spaces (Georgiadou et al., 2024). Moreover, inclusion is not automatically achieved through AI adoption; rather, it must be intentionally designed across individual, organizational, and technological levels. AI is often assumed to foster greater inclusion because of its potential to reduce human biases and standardize decision making. As Lazazzara et al. (2023) emphasize, AI systems often reflect and even amplify existing biases if implemented without appropriate mitigation strategies, thereby reinforcing structural inequalities and excluding marginalized groups from meaningful participation. Achieving genuine inclusion requires tailored mitigation strategies across data, design, and usage levels – ranging from data debiasing and inclusive algorithm design to transparent usage policies that foster procedural and interactional justice. At the same time, sustainable work design must also account for the uneven environmental and social impacts of digital labor, such as increased energy consumption, data-driven surveillance, and the blurring of work–life boundaries. These intersecting challenges call for a systemic and ethically grounded rethinking of work design – one that aligns technological innovation with principles of equity, accessibility, and long-term social value.

The future of work and work design thus depends on our ability to co-design this transformation – placing human agency, well-being, and ethical foresight at the center of AI-enabled workplaces.

Book Structure

This volume brings together 11 chapters, which are revised and expanded versions of selected contributions presented at the “*The Future of Work and Work Design: Research and Practice – Turkish Academy of Management Annual Meeting*”, held at the University of Istanbul, September 2–5, 2024. Developed through a rigorous double-blind peer review process, these contributions reflect a diverse range of disciplinary perspectives and methodological approaches. The chapters are organized into three interconnected sections – each exploring a critical dimension of work and organizational design in the context of past legacies, present challenges, and future transformations.

The first section, titled “Job and Organization Design”, provides a historical and theoretical foundation, tracing the evolution of work and organizational design from early industrial models to contemporary developments, with a forward-looking orientation. In their chapter “A Historical Perspective on Revolutions in Work and Organization Design, and Expectations for the Future,” Demet Varoğlu, Ahmet Aziz Akmermer, and Mehmet Abdülkadir Varoğlu examine the trajectory of job design and labor through the lens of major theoretical paradigms. They also consider how emerging imperatives – such as adaptability, flexibility, and fluidity – are reshaping work structures. Complementing this perspective, Tolga Özdemirel and H. Cenk Sözen, in “An Approach to Job Design for Mitigating the Impact of Negative Ties on Burnout and Job Performance,”

focus on the role of interpersonal relationships and ergonomic principles in promoting employee well-being and organizational performance. Yahya Kemal Ulusoy and H. Cenk Sözen further contribute to this section with the chapter “A Contemporary Approach on How Organizations Distribute Power to Units?,” which explores how job design influences power dynamics, particularly under conditions of turbulence and organizational change.

The second section, titled “Leadership and Organizational Behavior in the Future of Work,” shifts the focus to the human and behavioral implications of workplace transformation. With the increasing diffusion of AI and intelligent infrastructures, critical psychological aspects of work – such as meaning, identity, and emotion – are often overlooked. This section addresses such gaps by exploring how leadership, behavior, and organizational practices must evolve. In “Rethinking Leadership in Workplaces in the Age of Smart Machines: Exploring Its Future,” Ayşegül Özbebek Tunç reflects on whether AI poses a threat to humanity or offers opportunities for more adaptive, responsive leadership. İlker Çitli, in “AI and the Employee: Emerging Organizational Behavior Trends for the Future of Work,” critically examines the dual impact of AI on employee experiences, highlighting both its potential to enhance work and the risks it introduces. Esra Zeynel offers a theoretical synthesis in “Virtual Teams from Emotion and Behavior Perspective: A Theoretical Review,” exploring how virtual collaboration affects both organizational outcomes and individual well-being. The final chapter in this section, by Emin Ercan Cihan – “Aligning Talent Management with Projects: Oriented Behavior Approach” – discusses the integration of talent and project management as a strategic response to evolving competence requirements in the digital era.

The third and final section, titled “Future Work Sustainability and Inclusion Challenges”, addresses one of the most pressing challenges for future workplaces: the pursuit of inclusion and sustainability in AI-driven organizational environments. As AI becomes increasingly embedded in organizational systems, ensuring fairness and equitable participation becomes both a strategic and ethical imperative. In “Future Work Challenges: Exploring Factors Shaping Attitudes Toward Women Managers in Turkey,” Başak Uçanok Tan investigates the socio-cultural and structural barriers facing women in managerial roles, and advocates for the cultivation of more inclusive organizational climates. Hazal Yaren Yalirsu and V. Lale Tüzüner, in “Sustainable Human Resource Management: A Proposal of Comprehensive Model,” propose a framework for sustainable HRM grounded in ethical, inclusive, and environmentally conscious practices that align with long-term organizational resilience. Pelin Kanten and Yener Pazarçık, in their chapter “The Effects of Perceived Pay Inequality on Workplace Outcomes: A Qualitative Study,” delve into the consequences of pay disparities, underscoring their implications for fairness perceptions and organizational trust. Concluding the section, Gülbeniz Akduman and Zeynep Hatipoğlu, in “Talent Acquisition in the Age of Artificial Intelligence,” examine how digitalization is reshaping recruitment practices and outline the skills and capabilities essential for the workforce of tomorrow.

Together, these chapters offer a comprehensive and critical exploration of how work is – and must be – redesigned in response to technological advancement, human aspirations, and social responsibility.

References

- Bankins, S., Ocampo, A. C., Marrone, M., Restubog, S. L. D., & Woo, S. E. (2024). A multilevel review of artificial intelligence in organizations: Implications for organizational behavior research and practice. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *45*, 159–182. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2735>
- Georgiadou, A., Özbilgin, M., & Ozkazanc-Pan, B. (2024). Working from everywhere: The future of work and inclusive organizational behavior (IOB). *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *45*, 1307–1314.
- Grant, A. M., & Parker, S. K. (2009). Redesigning work design theories: The rise of relational and proactive perspectives. *Academy of Management Annals*, *3*, 317–375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520903047327>
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1980). *Work redesign*. Addison Wesley.
- Holm, J. R., & Lorenz, E. (2022). The impact of artificial intelligence on skills at work in Denmark. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, *37*(1), 79–101. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12215>
- Lazazzara, A., Za, S., & Georgiadou, A. (2023). *Toward inclusive algorithmic decision-making? A taxonomy framework on the effect of AI on workplace diversity and inclusion* [Conference paper]. 39th EGOS colloquium 2023. Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy.
- Meijer, A., Lorenz, L., & Wessels, M. (2021). Algorithmization of bureaucratic organizations: Using a practice lens to study how context shapes predictive policing systems. *Public Administration Review*, *81*(5), 837–846. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13391>
- Nguyen, T., & Malik, A. (2022). Impact of knowledge sharing on employees' service quality: The moderating role of artificial intelligence. *International Marketing Review*, *39*(3), 482–508. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-02-2021-0078>
- Parker, S. K. (2014). Beyond motivation: Job and work design for development, health, ambidexterity, and more. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *65*(1), 661–691.
- Parker, S. K., & Grote, G. (2020). Automation, algorithms, and beyond: Why work design matters more than ever in a digital world. *Applied Psychology*, *71*(4), 1171–1204. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12241>
- Parker, S. K., & Grote, G. (2022). More than 'more than ever': Revisiting a work design and sociotechnical perspective on digital technologies. *Applied Psychology*, *71*, 1215–1223. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12425>
- Shaba, E., Lazazzara, A., Solari, L., & Delle Fave, A. (2024). Empowering or taking over? A job design perspective on the effects of cobots introduction in the manufacturing industry. In T. Bondarouk & J. Meijerink (Eds.), *Research handbook on human resource management and disruptive technologies*. 254–269. Edward Elgar.
- Zao-Sanders, M. (2025, April). How people are really using Gen AI in 2025. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2025/04/how-people-are-really-using-gen-ai-in-2025>

This page intentionally left blank

Section I

Job and Organization Design

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 1

A Historical Perspective on Revolutions in Work and Organization Design, and Expectations for the Future

Demet Varoğlu^a, Ahmet Aziz Akmermer^b and Mehmet Abdülkadir Varoğlu^b

^a*TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Türkiye*

^b*Başkent University, Türkiye*

Abstract

This chapter aims to speculate on the future of work and organization design by reviewing the history of design endeavors in organizations, starting from the scientific management school of thought. The studies on design of work and organizations, following the classical scientific management approach, are chronologically classified into contingency approach and configuration approach. Design studies at both the individual and group levels are highlighted through Job Characteristics Model, job crafting, Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, and team-based structures. The chapter also examines the main forces on design of work and organizations (globalization, sustainability, digitalization, and artificial intelligence (AI)) by analyzing their impacts on certain notions and structures. The future of design is discussed through a study with two scenarios generated by AI, and by pointing out the key themes for future design: adaptability, flexibility, and fluidity.

Keywords: Organization design; configuration; organization structure; globalization; digitalization

The Future of Work and Work Design: Research and Practice, 3–15

Copyright © 2025 by Demet Varoğlu, Ahmet Aziz Akmermer and Mehmet Abdülkadir Varoğlu

Published under exclusive licence by Emerald Publishing Limited

doi:10.1108/978-1-83662-906-120251001

A Brief Historical Background of Organization and Work Design

Organization design can be conceptualized as the mechanism that shapes the organizational space in general, akin to selecting the land on which a building will be built and drawing its architectural plan (Varoğlu & Canbolat, 2017). Specifically, organization design refers to the integration and simultaneous development of interrelated variables, conditions, structures, and processes with appropriate policies, covering both hard and soft elements of the structure, such as tasks, roles, processes, reporting relationships, communication style, and culture (Stanford, 2005; Varoğlu & Canbolat, 2017).

Beginning with the concept of bureaucracy and followed by strategic, contingency, and configuration approaches, the history of organization and work design studies can be chronologically categorized into four phases (Fig. 1.1).

Despite a negative connotation that has been attached to it for more than four decades, *bureaucracy* was proposed by Max Weber (Sager & Rosser, 2021) as an ideal form of organization, characterized by a formal hierarchical structure, clear lines of authority, division of labor (specializations), formal rules and regulations, and impersonality (rules to be applied uniformly to everyone). In fact, designing bureaucratic organizations had met the needs of the Industrial Age, particularly for large industrial organizations. This classical approach to organization design remained the primary approach to organization design well into the 1980s.

Another important contribution to the design of organizations came with the *strategic approach*, which was pioneered by Alfred Chandler. Chandler (1962) defined strategy as the determination of the basic long-term goals of an enterprise along with the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals. This approach to organization design has an understanding that the structure and processes within an organization should follow and support the organizational strategy (Drucker, 1974; Galbraith, 1995, 2002; Sağsan, 2008; Weiss, 2007).

Galbraith (1977) further developed the strategy–structure relationship, and with his Star Model, he made an important contribution to the *contingency approach* of organization design. According to this model, the organization is a complex interrelated system consisting of strategy, structure, process, rewards, and human resources. The model suggests that an organization can be designed by prioritizing the strategy and ensuring the interaction of five design modules with each other. While the *Structure* module consists of configuration, division of labor, and power distribution, the *Information and Decision Processes* module involves decision mechanisms, formalization, and information systems. *Task*



Fig. 1.1. History of Organization Design.

module consists of diversity and differentiation; while *People* module relates to training and development, selection, promotion, and leadership. The last design module for *Reward Systems* includes individual job designs (Galbraith, 1977, p. 31). Later, the Star Model has also been offered as a tool for systematically examining an organization (Galbraith, 1995, 2013). Galbraith (1977) also clarified the general outcomes of the contingency theory with these two key principles of design: “There is no single best form of organization,” and “not all organizational forms and methods are at the same level of effectiveness.” In fact, these principles marked a serious departure from the classical bureaucratic approach. However, the contribution of two lines of study which came before Galbraith’s work are worth mentioning: studies linking environment to organizational structure, and studies connecting technology to structure.

A classical model highlighting the environment of organizations comes from Emery and Trist (1965). They categorized organizational environments into four, varying in terms of organizations’ adaptability and coping ability, with *placid, randomized environment* being the simplest form and *turbulent field environment* being the most complex. Based on their studies with coal miners in England in the World War II era, later, the term *socio-technical system* was coined by Trist and Bamforth (1951). Clearly implied by the term, this approach to design states that any organizational system can only be understood and improved if both “social” and “technical” aspects are brought together and treated as interdependent parts of a complex system.

Three theorists stand out among the early studies on how technology influences organizational structure: Woodward, Perrow, and Thompson. Woodward (1965) claimed that technological complexity determines structure, and that a mechanistic structure is suitable for organizations that use mass production technology, whereas an organic structure is more appropriate for organizations with small-batch technology. Perrow (1967) used *task variability* (the number of new or unexpected situations encountered while performing a task) and *task analyzability* (the degree to which search and information-gathering activity are required to solve a problem) to differentiate among four types of technology – routine, craft, engineering, and nonroutine – and argued that organizations should move from a mechanistic to an organic structure when tasks become more complex and less routine. Thompson (1967) focused on task interdependence and related it to three types of technology (mediating, long-linked, and intensive) he identified. For instance, long-linked technology is based on sequential task interdependence, whereas intensive technology relies on reciprocal task interdependence.

The work that Galbraith (1977) attributes to James D. Thompson (1967) includes innovative design dimensions and approaches that continue to inform today’s studies. Thompson’s approach treats the organization as an “information processing model” and links it to task uncertainty. It focuses on the types of lateral roles in the organizational structure that evolve into matrix design, determining the context in which, and the extent to which, environmental conditions affect design, motivation, and options for transforming processes such as leadership and rewards into an impact model in organization design. Different debates continue today about the relationship between environment and design, for example, about “how strategic partnership structures should be considered in terms of

organization design and how they will be reflected not only in strategy but also in the structure” (Alber et al., 2016).

Through the studies of researchers such as Scott, Miller, and Mintzberg, research on organization design evolved into studies using *configuration approach*. According to Miller (1983), this perspective emerged as a reaction to the contingency theory’s implicit view of organizations as a set of loosely coupled elements. While sharing the contingency approach’s functionalist point of view, by emphasizing the notion of “fit,” configurational approach became a significant break with the past. Benchmarking from the foundations of quantum physics, configurational approach is characterized by a “holistic” view of organizations, in which the strategy, structure, and environmental conditions are in harmony with the organization and the organization adapts or becomes suitable to these conditions (Ketchen et al., 1993; Miller, 1986).

In the configuration approach, it is argued that the causal relationships between the factors affecting the organization are not linear and that environmental and structural conditions interact in a dynamic process (Miller & Friesen, 1978). In other words, it is claimed that the whole cannot be understood by examining the elements that make up the whole in isolation from each other (Meyer et al., 1993). Miller (1986) addressed the question of how organizational elements within a whole evolve into configurations by referring to organizational ecology, institutional theory, and other relevant sociological approaches. Briefly, he examined and classified each component of the configuration model in a holistic framework by relating them to each other.

Miller (1986) describes the forces that may cause configurational clusters, highlighting several key factors. These include the environment, which determines the continuity of the appropriate organizational structure by sorting in ecological niches; the spread of strategies and structures that emerge from the demands of powerful institutional actors; internal pressures such as functional relationships between organizational components; the repetition of traditional organizational practices; and the turnover of organizational actors. These forces reflect the need for cognitive consistency and mainly point to organizational ecology theory, which claims that diversity and change in organizations should be viewed from the perspective of environmental selection through limited information processing capacities of organizations and/or restrictive legal regulations (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). According to this viewpoint, changes occurring in the environment will have similar effects on organizations with similar forms (isomorphism) and constitute similar organizational communities (e.g., labor unions).

Formation of configurations is predicted to result from tight clusters of mutually supportive elements and is considered to benefit from these clusters in a convenient way (Miller, 1986). The configuration theory can also be described as an approach that examines the transition from one design to another due to radical changes in organizations (Varoğlu & Canbolat, 2017), which seems to reflect parallel studies on organizational change (Demers, 2008). This approach has three main arguments that are related to each other (Miller, 1986): (1) As organizational ecology argues that the population’s environment determines various forms of common organization, there is a limited number of strategies and structures

that are appropriate in any given environmental setting. (2) Organizational characteristics have complex relationships, and organization's strategy can be directed toward a common configuration to ensure internal harmony between structure and contextual elements. (3) An organization tends to shift its parts rapidly to expand a certain configuration or form a new configuration that is maintained for a very long time (Miller, 1986).

Richard Scott (1981) discusses organizations as configurations through his rational, natural, and open system perspectives. Morgan (1986) defines organizations as machines, organisms, brains (self-organization), cultures (social reality), political structures (interest, conflict, and power), psychic prisons, transformational structures, and hegemonic structures.

In the resource dependency theory, which is based on the open system perspective, it is emphasized that organizations cannot generate resources on their own, that there are resources organizations constantly need, and that these must be obtained from external sources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Organizations must manage their capital, workforce, and organizational resources to achieve their goals and ensure their survival. In the related literature, resource dependence theory, inter-organizational relations, environmental strategies, intra-organizational relations, power, and dependency are central to understanding the entrepreneurial and structural dynamics of organizations. In other words, the contingency approach sees the organizational structure as shaped by the relationships between various internal and external conditions (Sargut, 2010).

In his book *Structure in Fives*, Mintzberg (1983) breaks down the organization into five generic components (strategic apex, middle line, operating core, techno-structure, and support staff), considering the role of each in coordinating activities. Mintzberg (1983) discusses how to operationalize the typical configuration along with the design of individual positions. While the first step of this functionalization is the design of the superstructure, the second step involves fleshing out the superstructure. This is achieved through practices such as management and control systems and liaison roles (Mintzberg, 1983). One of the most important discussion areas of structural design is decentralization and configurational variations. From this stage of development, the aim is to maximize organizational effectiveness by adapting the design to the conditions (Mintzberg, 1983). In this harmonization process, designs are made with considerations for variables such as the size and age of the organization. Mintzberg (2014) discusses in-depth configurational structures such as simple structure, machine bureaucracy, professional bureaucracy, divisionalized form, and flexible structure (adhocracy). Depending upon the differentiation of variables, new organizational forms, such as missionary organizational structures, political organizational structures, and network structures, emerge (Mintzberg, 1989).

In a comprehensive study linking configurational structures to strategy, Mintzberg and Lampel (2003) discuss entrepreneurial organizations, bureaucratic structures, professional organizations, innovative organizations, diversified structures, and then offer suggestions beyond these configurations. With the aim of checking the validity of Mintzberg's configuration theory, a meta-analysis was performed on 89 articles and 12 books addressing configurational structures

(Krabberød, 2015). The lack of any critical evaluation in this study can be interpreted as evidence of support for the theory.

Additionally, it should be noted that in a recent book he published, Mintzberg (2023) focuses on seven basic forces for organizing: consolidation in the personal organization, collaboration in the project organization, efficiency in the machine organization, proficiency in the professional organization, the infusion of culture, the overlay of separation, and the intrusion of conflict.

Design of Work at Individual and Group Levels: Highlights

Design attempts at the individual level started in the second half of the 1970s and continued with configurational experiments at the group and socio-technical structure levels in the 1980s. Design models introduced at the work level were also eye-catching and attracted remarkable attention in the 1990s. They were useful in overcoming the challenges of traditional assembly line job designs as they addressed the requirements that emerged with the Industrial Revolution at the organizational level. Studies on “job enlargement” and “job enrichment” can be considered within this scope.

In parallel with these developments, the “Job Characteristics Model” was discussed as an attempt to move toward designing work at the individual level, and even at the group level (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Specifically, the model posits that through the mediation of three critical psychological states, five job dimensions (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) are crucial for reaching positive organizational outcomes.

In early 2000s, job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) came out and has drawn much attention by shifting design responsibility and/or discretion to the position/job holder. Job crafting is defined as self-initiated, proactive strategies to change the characteristics of one’s job to better align it with personal needs, goals, and skills (Tims et al., 2012). Wrzesniewski and Dutton’s (2001) initial definition limited job crafting to three forms: Changes made by employees in their job tasks (i.e., task crafting), job relationships (i.e., relational crafting), and meaning of the job (i.e., cognitive crafting). Later, two higher-order constructs – approach crafting and avoidance crafting – were added to the theory (Zhang & Parker, 2018).

Job crafting led to the development of JD-R Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). This model suggests that jobholders actively seek to balance the demands of their jobs with the resources they have. Job demands are cognitive, physical, psychological, emotional, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained effort or skills. Job resources are physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are functional in achieving work goals, reducing job demands, and/or stimulating personal growth and development.

The design of work at the group level has been addressed with an emphasis on autonomous teams by several studies (Ingvaldsen & Rolfsen, 2012; McIntyre & Foti, 2013) since then. This emphasis has paved the way for discussion on team-based organization structures (Harris & Beyerlein, 2005; Mohrman et al., 1995). In such a structure, organizational systems and processes as well as management roles and structures are designed to ensure that teams – especially, cross-functional teams – serve as the primary units of performance.