Using Multilevel Methods for Studying Group Processes over Time

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The talk presents a multilevel framework for research on group processes—the multilevel group-process framework (MGPF; Lang, Bliese, & Adler, 2019 also see Lang & Bliese, 2018; Lang, Bliese, & de Voogt, 2018). The MGPF builds on a statistical approach developed to capture the emergence of a shared climate over time, but we extend the core ideas in two important ways. First, we describe how researchers can gain insights into group phenomena such as group leniency, group learning, groupthink, group extremity, group forming, group freezing, and group adjourning through modeling change in latent mean levels and consensus. Second, we present a sequence of model-testing steps that enable researchers to systematically contrast different group processes and introduce predictors to explain them. We describe how the MGPF can lead to novel research questions in both field and laboratory research and illustrate its use with several longitudinal datasets on groups including (1) a dataset on decision making in mock juries, (2) a dataset on company cohesion in US Army platoons in basic training, and (3) Sherif's classic study on the autokinetic effect.

Representative publications