Abstract
This presentation will offer some reflections on the state of the art of including context in organizational research. I will present some data showing that context has been ignored in much past research. At the same time, evidence will be offered that there is increasing interest in incorporating context in such research, and that this is part of a larger trend in the social, behavioral, and medical sciences. Reasons for the increased interest in context will be explored. The criteria for good theories incorporating context will be presented and illustrated with examples from trait activation theory, event system theory, and a contextual theory of social media. Examples of the impact of context on absenteeism from work and on personality will be offered. I will discuss the fallacy of “controlling away” context, the issue of measuring context, and the use of meta-analysis with macro data to explore context effects. I will conclude by emphasizing the capacity of context to integrate as well as to differentiate organizational phenomena.

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