

Management and Organization Review**Special Issue on ‘Advancing Temporal Research on Chinese Management’****Guest Editors**Weiguo Zhong,¹ Pengxiang Zhang,¹ Sali Li,² Lin Jiang,³ and Christine Chan⁴¹*Peking University, China*, ²*University of South Carolina, US*, ³*University of South Florida, US*, ⁴*University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong***Submission deadline:** August 31, 2023**Special Issue Theme Background**

Time has always been at the foundation of management studies (Ancona, Goodman, Lawrence, & Tushman, 2001). It constitutes a critical dimension to characterize managerial activities and provides a powerful way to view organizational phenomenon. The rise of management research as a scientific discipline indeed starts with Taylor’s (1911) time and motion studies. In past decades, studies on various temporal constructs, metaphors, and practices in management studies (e.g., rhythm, speed, temporal depth, chronos, temporal work, just in time) are emerging at an unprecedented rate. For example, strategic rhythms, the phenomenon of repeated temporal patterns of strategic activities (for a review, please see Zhang, Priem, Wang, & Li, 2022), has received significant scholarly attention as a management tool to sustain competitive advantage in an everchanging business environment. Temporal focus (the degree to which individuals think about the past, present, and/or future) has also received much attention regarding how it could influence individual and organizational decision-making (Chen & Nadkarni, 2017; Gamache & McNamara, 2019). As the pace of temporal research dramatically accelerates, scholars are proposing new initiatives to expand time-related theorizing and explore temporal variables with rich longitudinal datasets at granular levels (Bansal, Crilly, Jansen, Langley, Okhuysen, & Shipp, 2022). In this special issue, we welcome temporal research that focuses on time-related variables important or unique to the context of Chinese management. These time-related variables can either focus on *objective* time (e.g., rhythm, speed, pace, sequence, cycling, timing, duration, deadlines, horizon, synchronization) or *subjective* time (e.g., temporal focus, temporal depth or distance, horizon, polychronicity) (Ancona et al., 2001).

The momentum to advance temporal research has important implications for management studies. Conventional wisdom perceives managers as passive, vigilant agents that respond quickly to external events. Temporal research, however, indicates that many firms instead intentionally arrange activities to reflect a preferred, repeatable pattern. This occurs in part because firms simply cannot keep up with intermittent external changes and, in part, sustain long-term competitive advantage. By selectively setting rhythms to organize activities, firms can create synchronicity between internal organization needs and ongoing changes in the external environment (Perez-Nordtvedt, Payne, Short, & Kedia, 2008). Many firms are found to benefit from doing so when managing acquisition, CSR, diversification, FDI, human resource, and strategic change (e.g., Klarner & Raisch, 2013; Laamanen & Keil, 2008; Vermeulen & Barkema, 2002; Wang & Zatzick, 2019). Temporal research has also provided important implications at the micro-level, such as how employees, managers, or entrepreneurs should manage the temporal dynamics of their emotions to improve well-being and resource acquisition (Houben, Van den Noortgate, & Kuppens, 2015; Jiang, Yin, & Liu,

2019).

While this temporal research momentum has greatly influenced Chinese management studies, most studies are developed based on the same set of temporal assumptions as those originated from Western traditions and phenomena. This is not surprising as some assumptions, such as a linear, clock view of time, have strong generalizability in market-based economies (Reinecke & Ansari, 2015). Applying theories consistent with the Western view of time also indicates relatively fewer challenges when submitting to other top-tier management journals. However, the failure to account for the salient uniqueness in Chinese perception and value of time may prevent us from advancing the understanding of time in the Chinese management context.

Although understudied, China presents an extraordinary opportunity to theorize and analyze time-related management issues from various aspects (e.g., Chan & Du, 2021). On the one hand, Chinese management means being fast. Chinese firms are gaining the reputation of ‘China speed’ due to their extremely fast market entry, technology adoption, business operation, ambitious growth, and work ethic, which are barely observed in firms from any other countries. On the other hand, Chinese management also means learning to slow down. Chinese traditional culture emphasizes a long-term oriented, event view of time (e.g., use of lunar calendar; annual cycle of Spring festival), which runs against the prevalent clock-based view of time in the extant literature. Chinese language also encodes future tense differently than English, which can make Chinese-speaking individuals perceive a shorter temporal distance to the future, leading to decisions that are more future-focused than English-speaking individuals (Chen, 2013). Moreover, Chinese miracle economic development, along with its periodic 5-year plans of policy windows, imbues necessary temporal savvy among practitioners, as marching to the beat of these dominant rhythms is a critical precondition for success in China. Hence, the Chinese view of time management lies in enacting a rhythm that oscillates between fast and slow depending on the internal and external conditions.

Scope of the Special Research Forum

Against this backdrop, the mission of this special issue is to promote and publish research that seeks not only to expand theorizing about time, but also to respond to contemporary developments in organizational and societal contexts in China. We call for contributions that advance our understanding of time-related concepts (e.g., objective time like rhythm, speed, pace, sequence, cycling, timing, duration, deadlines, horizon, and synchronization, as well as subjective time like temporal focus, temporal depth or distance, horizon, polychronicity, and many more) with specific Chinese management or organizational content domains serving as the context. We welcome both macro-level and micro-level management research and both qualitative and quantitative studies methods for this special issue. Below are a few examples of research topics that could fit the scope of the call for papers, but this list is by no means exhaustive.

- What constitutes the most important temporal constructs in the Chinese management context? What formal categorization schemes bridge the various constructs? What novel temporal patterns are important but have received relatively less attention in literature? What novel empirical techniques can be used to measure these constructs?
- In China’s unique cultural and political context, are there any dark sides of the seemingly positive temporal constructs? For example, although ‘China speed’ has generated substantial benefits for China, are there any costs of achieving it? What are the important contingencies that alter this tradeoff? How about relatively long-term implications of keeping fast? What are the necessary and sufficient conditions to make it happen?
- Similarly, in China’s unique cultural and political context, are there any positive sides of the seemingly negative temporal construct? For example, if moving forward with a high speed is important for China, would an orientation or temporal focus towards the past always be necessarily bad?
- How does a fast work pace (as a result of keeping up with China’s high-speed growth) shape managers’ or entrepreneurs’ temporal orientation? How does the ‘five-year cycle’ in China shape

managers' or entrepreneurs' perceived temporal distance of opportunities/threats that they face, or resources/outcomes that they desire to have?

- How do rhythms become locked-in and entrenched in organizations? For example, why are exhaustive working hours like '996' pervasive in Chinese firms? How can Chinese firms fundamentally change this entrenched temporal paradigm? What are the consequences of not changing it?
- What are the agentic roles of managers in allocating time? What is the influence of unique Chinese leadership styles (e.g., paternalistic leadership) on time management? What is the influence of top managers' individual temporal orientations (e.g., temporal depth)? What about team-level temporal orientations (e.g., temporal complexity)? What is the role of managerial capabilities in influencing the speed or rhythm of firms?
- In China's demanding work environments due to the China-speed context, how could employees, entrepreneurs, or managers allocate their time toward growth, maintenance, and generativity to maintain health without subverting growth? How is the allocation shaped by the uncertainty or dynamism of the external environments, or the demand from stakeholders? What are the short-term and long-term impacts of time allocation?
- When should a firm entrain its rhythm or speed with environmental changes or the rhythms of other stakeholders, and when should a firm intentionally seek to be out of sync? Particularly, for Chinese firms that emphasized the wisdom to follow policy windows and comply with stakeholders, how should firms make decisions about their strategic rhythms? How can they shape the environmental rhythms?
- In response to the Belt and Road Initiative, how should Chinese firms arrange their time to synchronize with the development of local infrastructure? Which countries should Chinese firms invest in first? What are the contingencies that deserve particular attention?
- Why do Chinese digital firms exhibit superior speed when innovating digital product or service offerings? What is the influence of the timing of technology adoption? Do first movers always benefit the most? What is the role of organizational structures, resources and capabilities, leadership in these relationships?

Proposal Submission Requirements

1. Research proposals should not exceed 5,000 words and should include the research questions, a brief and relevant literature review, disciplinary perspectives for the study, hypotheses or research questions, the sample, measures used, data, and the analytical plan.
2. Proposals should include a short version of all authors' academic vitae, which should be fewer than five pages long and highlight the author's educational background, professional experience, and academic achievements.
3. Proposals should include a timeline to complete the project from the date when it is approved.

Special Issue Timeline

1. **Proposal Submission** (deadline August 31, 2023): The preliminary proposal should specify the targeted data source, format, develop intended research questions, and justify the motivation. Please submit proposals to Weiguo Zhong (zwg@gsm.pku.edu.cn) with the subject line: 'Advancing Temporal Research on Chinese Management Proposal'.

2. **Paper Development Workshop for Accepted Proposals** (October 31, 2023, Guanghua School of Management, Peking University): Accepted proposals will be invited to a developmental workshop to further refine the focused research questions. At the end of the workshop, we will extend invitations to some promising proposals to submit a revised version of the proposal.

3. **Paper Submission Deadline** (April 30, 2024): Please submit full paper via the MOR submission website: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mor>

4. **Paper Development Workshop for R&R Papers** (October 31, 2024, Guanghua School of Management, Peking University): Further revise the paper with known results and findings.

5. **Publication of the Special Issue (TBD)**

Special Issue Guest Editors

To obtain additional information, please contact the guest editors:

Weiguo Zhong (zwg@gsm.pku.edu.cn) is an Associate Professor of Strategy at Guanghua School of Management, Peking University, China. He received his PhD from City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR, China. His research interests include firm innovation, non-market strategy, and internationalization strategy of multinational companies from emerging markets. He is interested in the temporal dynamics of search behaviors, extending a demand-side explanation of how managers regulate their attention over time. His work has been published in the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Journal of Management*, and *Management and Organization Review*. He is currently serving as Senior Editor for *Management and Organization Review*.

Pengxiang Zhang (zhangpx@gsm.pku.edu.cn) is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Organization and Strategic Management, Guanghua School of Management, Peking University. His research has a strong focus on the role of time in strategy, innovation, and international business. Specifically, he investigates how digital firms schedule the timing of key activities such as innovation and internationalization. His work has been published in the *Strategic Management Journal*, *Journal of Management*, and *Journal of Management Studies*. He has also received nominations for several awards, including the AIB Alan M. Rugman Young Scholar Award and Best Paper in Emerging Economies Award. Pengxiang serves as a member of Editorial Board for the *Journal of Management*.

Sali Li (sali.li@moore.sc.edu) is a Professor and Distinguished Research Fellow at the Sonoco International Business Department at the Darla Moore School of Business. His current work explores how digital platform ecosystems innovate, iterate, and internationalize. Professor Li teaches Global Strategy and Negotiation courses in the MBA, PhD, and Executive Education programs and has received several teaching awards. His work has been published or is forthcoming in the *Academy of Management Review*, *Harvard Business Review*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *Organization Science*, *Strategic Management Journal*, etc. His research on the internationalization of digital innovation was awarded the Rugman Prize by the Academy of International Business, and he is a Rugman Fellow at University of Reading. Professor Li's research has also won the Lazardis Award for Journal of Business Venturing's Best Paper of the Year in 2020, Temple/AIB Best Paper Award at Academy of International Business, and the GWU-CIBER Best Paper Award on Emerging Markets at Academy of Management. In addition, he also serves as Associate Editor of *Journal of Management* and *Journal of World Business*.

Lin Jiang (linjiang@usf.edu) is an Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship at the Muma College of Business, University of South Florida. Her research interests lie in the intersection of entrepreneurship, communication, and emotions. Her expertise allows us to expand our focus on temporal issues to micro-level topics, such as the temporal dynamics of employees, managers, and entrepreneurs' emotions. Her research has been published in journals such as the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, and *Research Policy*. Her work has received the William A. Owens Scholarly Achievement from the Society for Industrial and Organizational

Psychology. Lin serves as ad-hoc reviewer for several journals such as the *Academy of Management Journal* and *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.

Christine M. Chan (cmkchan@hku.hk) is a Professor of Management and Strategy and Associate Dean (Outreach and Global Engagement) at the University of Hong Kong. She was the Senior Editor of the *Asia Pacific Journal of Management* from 2012 to 2019 and serves on the Editorial Review Board of the *Global Strategy Journal*. She has published in the *Strategic Management Journal*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, and *Journal of Business Research*. She has presented her papers at the Academy of Management Meeting, Academy of International Business Meeting, and Asia Academy of Management Meeting. She received three Best Paper Awards at the Asia Academy of Management Meetings. She also received Best Paper Award and Barry M. Richman Best Dissertation Award and was the finalist of Douglas Nigh Best Paper Award at the Academy of Management Meeting.

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