Resourcing routine change: how resources contribute to routine dynamics

Katharina Dittrich, David Seidl
University of Zurich

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People use resources to enact organizational routines.
Role of resources in routine dynamics?

- **Resources** are central to organizations, but their role in shaping the routine dynamics (Feldman & Pentland, 2003) has not been theorized.

- Taking action presupposes resources; patterns of actions can hardly be described without referring to the *means by which actions are taken*.

- To enact routines, **actors use a wide range of resources**, from material (D’Adderio, 2003; Cacciatori, 2012) to immaterial resources (e.g., relations (Turner & Rindova, 2012) or specific practices).

How do resources contribute to routine dynamics?
Practice-based approach to routine change (Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Dionysious & Tsoukas, 2013)

- **Ostensive Aspect**
  - Shared schemas

- **Performative Aspect**
  - Specific actions

**Structure**

**Agency**

on-going opportunity for variation, selection & retention
Practice-based approach to resources

- **Theory of resourcing** (Feldman, 2004 building on Giddens, 1984 and Sewell, 1992)

![Diagram](image)

- **Resources** as assets that enable actors to enact schemas
- **Resourcing** refers to creating new resources, changing resources-in-use or drawing on potential resources to enact schemas in a particular situation

Figure adapted from Feldman & Quick, 2009
Vignette of resourcing in the assembling-of-plates routine

**Ostensive 1**

*Established schema:* “Available lab employees assemble”

*Resources-in-use:* lab employees Susan and Laura

*Potential resources:* student assistants

**Ostensive 2**

*Established schema:* “Low-skilled employees assemble”

*Resources-in-use:* student assistants, checklist

**Resourcing**

- **Alternative schema:** “low-skilled employees assemble”
  - Triggers variation in performing
  - *Resourcing:* pay student assistants separately, design a checklist for assembling

- **Resourcing:** student assistants assemble, lab employees supervise
  - *New resources:* student assistants for assembling, checklist

Structural realm

Realm of action
1. Type of Resourcing: variation in schemas selected by resources
2. Type of Resourcing: variation in resources selected by schemas
Contributions

- Extend the evolutionary model of routine change
  - Schemas and resources as sources of variation
  - Resourcing as a mechanism of selection: (1) variation in schemas selected by resources and (2) variations in resources selected by schemas
  - Greater range of variations: some variations are selected out before they are enacted
  - Failures in resourcing result in routine inertia or unintended changes
  - Several continuous resourcing cycles enable routine change that was not conceivable before

- Implications for the understanding of agency and the embeddedness of routines