

Employee wellbeing, employee performance & positive mindset in a crisis

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Keywords

positive mindset, employees, performance, wellbeing

Abstract

Although there is rich literature in the field of OB & HRM focusing on the importance of psychological contracts, intellectual capital, job satisfaction & performance, however, the role of positive psychology & mindset in an organizational context has been addressed to a very limited extent. In times of crisis, organizations might go beyond survival mode and find ways to improve the psychological resources of employees as a positive mental attitude becomes an alternative perspective that leads to optimal performance outcomes. This paper, through a critical literature review methodological approach, studies the theoretical framework of employee wellbeing, employee performance during a crisis period and explores the role of a positive working mindset. The study concludes that the positivity in the workplace and employee wellbeing in times of crisis are key factors corporate leaders to enhance organizational citizenship behavior, which is a crucial factor in terms of productivity, affective commitment, job satisfaction, and efficiency.

1 Introduction

Theoretical background

During the last decades, humanity has encountered unprecedented global crises such as wars, genocides, terroristic attacks, economic crises, migration crises, political crises, climate changes, humanitarian crises and lately covid-19 pandemic. They may be different in their origins and scale, although they have in common the fact that they lead to catastrophic individual, societal, financial, and natural impacts, such as the massive job losses, social instability, and natural changes beyond control (Wenzel et al., 2021).

Modern globalized entrepreneurial environment constantly changes, and a new culture (Bhaduri, 2019) should be cultivated so as organizations survive and prosper. As organizations function under complicated circumstances (Bundy et al., 2017), crises are hard to be avoided or predicted (Bhaduri, 2019; James et al., 2011). On the contrary, crises might increase and become more intense in the years to come (James et al., 2011). According to Agnes, modern crises are greater and global due to the spread of technology, virality and speed of communications (Faulds & Raju, 2019). They challenge the core values of the existing business culture and introduce different, new ones (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020).

Crisis threatens both the organization and the employees (Dirani et al., 2020). It can cause considerable disruption to the activities of the organization (James et al., 2011) and may destabilize the wellbeing and performance of the employees (Dirani et al., 2020). Employee wellbeing, which includes psychological, physical, and social aspects (Edgar et al., 2017; Grant et al., 2007; Guest, 2017) is a crucial factor (Vakkayil et al., 2017). It clarifies that human resource management and organizational practices have been implied in the right way and caused a positive impact (Vakkayil et al., 2017). It refers to the feelings that the employees have both about themselves and their jobs (Baptiste, 2008). Employee wellbeing is highly linked to people's satisfaction related to parameters such as pay, relationships with coworkers and supervisors, working conditions, job security, opportunities for training, personal advancement and team working (Baptiste, 2008; Edgar et al., 2017). Especially in times of crisis, healthy and happy employees guarantee a sustainable and profitable company (Baptiste, 2008).

Companies, when in crisis, have to adjust and a new human resource management agenda must emerge and be applied immediately (Teague & Roche, 2014). In order to create sustainable growth and development, a new way of thinking is essential for organizations who wish to survive (Luthans,

Norman, et al., 2008). Previous approaches should be abandoned (Geue, 2018) and new optimal human functioning (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013b) must be promoted through the application of recent approaches of the positive psychology movement (Kern et al., 2020). The notion of psychological capital (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007; Luthans & Youssef, 2007; Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013b), which derives from the theory and research of positive psychology (Cheung et al., 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), encapsulates and describes workplace positivity (Ribeiro et al., 2021). Psychological capital keeps employees emotionally committed to the organization and it is associated with individual job performance and psychological well-being (Avey, Reichard, et al., 2011; Luthans et al., 2010; Ribeiro et al., 2021). Positive employee attitude leads to major consequences such as work satisfaction (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007), affective commitment, employee development (Norman et al., 2010), resilience and competence (Shahid & Muchiri, 2019).

According to (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., 2016), it is crucial to prove how positivity influences the human factor in the workplace. Shahid and Muchiri (2019) stress the fact that knowledge on employee positivity is yet to be measured and examined. Cameron et al. (2011) also highlights the need for additional research on positivity. To address this gap, this paper tries to reveal the role of positive mindset in managing balances between employee wellbeing and employee performance in times of crisis. The study presents a critical literature review of the issues of employee performance, employee wellbeing and positive mindset.

Methodology

The study is, secondary research, consists of the first part of an empirical research work; the study through a critical literature review, following a qualitative approach, examines the main parameters of employee wellbeing, employee performance and positive mindset.

2. Literature review

2.1 Employee wellbeing

2.1.1 A critical examination of the context of employee wellbeing

Wellbeing is a complex and multidimensional concept which is hard to define and measure (Rahmani et al., 2018). Even though there is an ongoing global interest in the levels of international and national wellbeing, it is a term which remains vague and needs further explanation. This rising concern on wellbeing also applies on wellbeing at work (Kowalski & Loretto, 2017; Salas-Vallina et al., 2020).

During the last decades employee wellbeing or work-related wellbeing has become a subject of concern in the organizational life (Grant et al., 2007). It is a broad term which integrates cognitive as well as affective elements (Vakkayil et al., 2017). The term of employee wellbeing should not be confused with the concept of general wellbeing, since life conditions differ a lot from working conditions (Zheng et al., 2015). Employee wellbeing could be defined as the condition of the employee's physical and mental health, including both life and work experiences (Danna & Griffin, 1999). A widely accepted definition based on (Warr, 1987) states that work-related wellbeing is the general quality of job that the employee experiences (Grant et al., 2007).

The study of employee wellbeing has concerned various fields of scientific research (Kowalski & Loretto, 2017). Researchers have tried to point out the facets of work-related wellbeing in many ways (Vakkayil et al., 2017). (Daniels, 2000, p. 1) proposes a two-dimensional model, which includes five factors of affective wellbeing. These factors, elaborated as such, are "*anxiety-comfort, depression-pleasure, bored-enthusiastic, tiredness-vigour and angry-placid*". (Fisher, 2010) suggests that being happy at work should not only be related to job satisfaction, but also to job involvement, organizational commitment, thriving, vigor, flow and intrinsic motivation and feelings experienced at work.

(Grant et al., 2007) introduce a more holistic approach, in which they claim that employee wellbeing has three key dimensions: the psychological, the physical and the social one. The psychological wellbeing could be distinguished as hedonic and eudemonic (Guest, 2017). The hedonic part of psychological wellbeing at work has gained the attention of business research (Edgar et al., 2017). It is happiness oriented and refers to the subjective experiences that employees have at work. It is linked to job satisfaction, to the presence of positive feelings at work and the balance between positive and negative thinking (Grant et al., 2007). The eudemonic part of employee wellbeing refers to the positive functioning

of employees at work and the achievement of their full potential. It is associated with finding meaning and purpose when working and includes feelings of engagement and affective commitment to the organization (Grant et al., 2007; Guest, 2017; Marescaux et al., 2019).

The physical part of employee wellbeing focuses both on physical and mental health (Marescaux et al., 2019). Health wellbeing encompasses elements that create extreme stress like burnout and work intensification, as well as job strains, such as work overload and over commitment (Edgar et al., 2017). It incorporates personalized feelings of health, given as energy levels, stress, and exhaustion (Guest, 2017). Work could cause injury and stress which might lead to disease, but also provides access to health services for the employees (Grant et al., 2007).

The social facet of employee wellbeing is relevant to the quality of interpersonal relationships that employees experience inside the organization (Grant et al., 2007). It refers to the interaction among employees, both vertical and horizontal, as well as the way they relate to the organization in general (Pagán-Castaño et al., 2020). Employee wellbeing could be viewed in terms of cooperation and reciprocity, along with the levels of organizational trust and support. It adds to the general feeling of being fairly treated and accepted (Grant et al., 2007; Guest, 2017).

2.1.2 A critical perspective of employee wellbeing

Guest (2017) underlines the ethical obligation of an organization to focus on the employee wellbeing, especially in times of crisis. The rapidly changing working environment as well as the increasing demands of technology could be really challenging for both employees and organizations. The financial crisis of 2008 led to an enormous workload for employees, who have to be more productive with less available resources. Organizations must deal with the outcomes that at times have a destructive result or even jeopardize the work-related wellbeing. Organizations that are willing to adapt and want to prosper, need to provide employee wellbeing in a competitive working environment and review their work-related wellbeing policies. Thus, investing on employee wellbeing could prove to be saving in the long run, even though it is hard to afford at the moment (Guest, 2017; Kowalski & Loretto, 2017).

2.1.3 Facets of employee wellbeing

2.1.3.1 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a key concept in the fields of organizational behavior (Indarti et al., 2017). It is one of the most frequently studied parameters of employee wellbeing (Koopman et al., 2016). Job satisfaction refers to a person's feeling of satisfaction not only with the actual job but with the larger organizational picture in which the work belongs to (Baptiste, 2008). It is outlined as a positive emotional feeling which originates from the work-related experience and the satisfaction the person gains from the specific job (Edgar et al., 2017). Therefore, work satisfaction is linked to the terms and the conditions of employment. For instance, employees should be happy with their earnings along with the physical work environment, the autonomy they are given, the responsibility, the authority, and the general empowerment in their jobs (Baptiste, 2008).

Work satisfaction is a multifaceted concept highly affected by disposition and mood (Hosie et al., 2012). It includes two facets related to the intrinsic and extrinsic features of a job. Extrinsic satisfaction stems from external conditions like remuneration, management policies, physical conditions, or job security. Intrinsic satisfaction refers to the subjective feelings of satisfaction which result from chances for personal accomplishment and personal evolution (Markovits et al., 2014).

2.1.3.2 Affective organizational commitment

Affective commitment is a key element of organizational commitment (Ribeiro et al., 2020). It is outlined as the positive emotional bond that employees have with their organization. It is viewed as a defining factor of employees' dedication and loyalty (Rhoades et al., 2001). Affective commitment refers to the "*emotional attraction of employees, identification and involvement in the organization*" (Indarti et al., 2017, p. 1285). It is a vital work-related attitude highly connected with job outcomes like performance, turnover, and organizational citizenship behavior (Qian et al., 2019). Employees who are affectively committed to their organization embrace the organizational goals and values. They are willing to make the effort and keep alive the bonding. Employees commit to the organization to gain extrinsic rewards such as a bonus or intrinsic ones such as a feeling of belonging (Baptiste, 2008).

2.2 Employee performance

2.2.1 A critical examination of the context of employee performance

Employee performance is a basic component of organizational success (Aguinis et al., 2011). It is a notion which has gained the attention of work and organizational psychologists, who try to understand it and analyze it (Meijerink et al., 2021). It is viewed under certain criteria relevant to business success such as productivity and sales or as the achievement of set goals (Charbonnier-Voirin & Roussel, 2012). Employee performance is the set of employee's actions and behaviors consistent to the organizational goals that are under the control of employees (Jiang et al., 2012). They successfully do their job, by adequately fulfilling their duties as expected by their employers and their specific job description (Ribeiro et al., 2018).

Employee performance is a multifaceted concept, which incorporates different dimensions. (Meijerink et al., 2021) provide the task performance and the organizational citizenship behavior as key dimensions of individual performance. The dimension of task performance is linked to the behaviors that are stated in a job description, which support the technical core of the organization (Alfes et al., 2012). It refers to the practical skills that employees should have and the required knowledge to successfully complete their tasks (Bish & Kabanoff, 2014). These behaviors are role-prescribed, depend on the job description, and can have a quantitative or numerical value (Edgar et al., 2017).

Organizational citizenship behavior or contextual performance is of utmost importance regarding the sectors of psychology and management (Narzary & Palo, 2020). It is a multidimensional concept that includes behaviors which are voluntary and beneficial to the organization (Ribeiro et al., 2018). (Organ, 1997) claims that organizational citizenship behavior supports and fortifies the social and psychological environment in which tasks are being conducted. It consists of the extra-role behaviors, which are not formally or directly recognized but contribute to the proper function of the organization (Edgar et al., 2017; Ribeiro et al., 2018). Some of these behaviors are being interactive and cooperative with other colleagues, being innovative and creative, or sharing knowledge as member of a team (Meijerink et al., 2021). Organizational citizenship behavior is highly linked to several organizational results such as productivity, competency, customer satisfaction and turnover intention (Ocampo et al., 2018).

The volatile working environment and the alteration of the traditional pattern of work performance make the existing working models incomplete. The multidimensional and demanding circumstances that employees must deal with, impose they acquire a certain level of adaptability. It is crucial they adapt efficiently and respond accordingly to urgent situations. It is important to prioritize, when needed and deal successfully with new problems (Charbonnier-Voirin & Roussel, 2012). Adaptive performance could be defined as the *"flexible work behaviors that help employees adapt to change by demonstrating excellence in problem solving, uncertainty/stress/crisis control, new learning, and adaptability related to people culture and environment"* (Park & Park, 2019, p. 298). It is an extension of the traditional employee performance, which reflects the changing working trends and is critical for the survival of the modern organization (Marques-Quinteiro et al., 2019; Park & Park, 2019).

Counterproductive work behavior is another dimension of individual work performance that should be considered. It is one of the major concepts of organizational psychology, with great impact on the survival of the organization. They are behaviors which are voluntary and have the intention to cause damage to the organization and its members. They can be physical or verbal such as sabotage, laziness, vandalizing the organization's property, performing inadequately on purpose, and absenteeism (Dischner, 2015; Miao et al., 2017). These behaviors could affect the property, the regular operation and the employee's effectiveness. This might lead to situations which could be disastrous and costly to the organization and to the employee wellbeing (Chang & Smithikrai, 2010).

2.2.2. A critical perspective of employee performance

Employee performance is critical to the survival of any organization and could be the foundation of its success (Aguinis et al., 2011; Baptiste, 2008). Organizations that wish to prosper have to invest on practices that boost individual performance. That could be achieved when employees experience high levels of job satisfaction, feel supported and motivated. It is crucial to provide them with valuable

infrastructure, motivation, opportunity to perform and all the needed resources. Organizations that add value to their employees manage to obtain the optimal performance (Meijerink et al., 2021).

2.2.3 Facet of employee performance that is used in this study

2.2.3.1 Organizational citizenship behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior is a key factor in both the areas of psychology and management and has been analyzed widely in the literature (Foote & Li-Ping, 2008). Organizations perform better when positive and supportive behavior is achieved (K. Lee & Allen, 2002). Researchers believe that organizations base their success on employees who not only accomplish their normal duties proficiently, but also help their colleagues spontaneously. Social exchange theory is frequently applied to reveal why employees engage in such behaviors (Harvey et al., 2018). The theory proposes that reciprocity is a basic component of social interactions. Employees who feel valued and respected will probably respond with emotional engagement (Ng & Feldman, 2011). When organizations provide employees with satisfying jobs, support, and fairly treatment, employees are willing to perform beyond their call of duty. In accordance with this theory, research indicates that high levels of job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment are positively linked with organizational citizenship behavior (Baptiste, 2008; Harvey et al., 2018).

Organizational citizenship behavior consists of five basic dimensions (Ocampo et al., 2018). Altruism refers to supportive behaviors and actions to other persons (Foote & Li-Ping, 2008). Conscientiousness refers to employees that tend to be always punctual, are always present, and do perform their tasks beyond normal expectations and prerequisites. Courtesy refers to employees, who are always good and respectful to others because they always help to prevent a problem or take measures to reduce the aftermaths of any critical issues. Sportsmanship focuses on the positive aspects rather than the negative ones and reveals the behavior of an employee who is not complaining on trivial matters and does not make any fuss on minor situations. Civic virtue refers to voluntary behaviors both professionally and socially and the general support of the functions of the organization (Indarti et al., 2017; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993).

2.3 Employee wellbeing and employee performance

2.3.1 A critical examination of the relationship of employee wellbeing and employee performance

A variety of organizational studies highlight the link between wellbeing and job performance (Wright & Huang, 2012). It has been proved that work-related wellbeing has a great effect on both the performance and the survival of the organization (Grant et al., 2007). It is of critical importance as it contributes to the improvement of individual performance (Edgar et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2016). Healthier and happier employees are those who manage to combine greater performance and productivity outcomes. Thus, organizations that invest on employee wellbeing will have multiple gains and prosper in the long run (Baptiste, 2008). Due to its multidimensionality wellbeing appears in different modifications when it comes to individual performance. It can present both positive indicators such as job satisfaction, along with negative ones, such as work intensification (Edgar et al., 2017).

2.3.2 Job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior

According to (Podsakoff et al., 2014) job satisfaction is considered a substantial predictor of employees' organizational citizenship behavior. Extensive research shows a positive correlation between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. This relationship is based on the social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity. Job satisfaction encourages positive behaviors among employees to the degree they consider their work contribution as part of a general exchange. Employees with higher levels of job satisfaction are more likely to reciprocate by engaging in citizenship behaviors (Gyekye & Haybatollahi, 2015; Ocampo et al., 2018). This study attempts to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis. Figure 2.1 shows the correlation between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis:

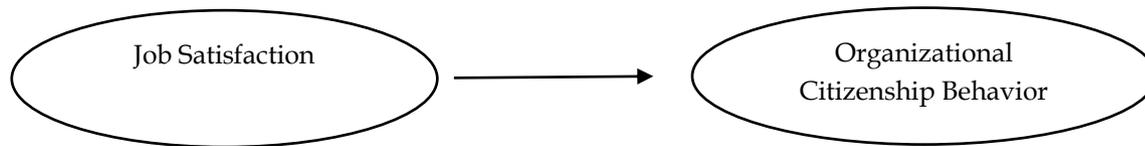


Figure 2.1 Correlation between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

2.3.3 Affective organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior

The relationship of affective organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior could be explained by the social exchange theory and the inducements-contributions model. Employees who feel valued and respected are expected to reciprocate with trust and emotional engagement. The model indicates that organizations offer inducements for employees to join and stay with the business, while employees contribute through high levels of performance (Ng & Feldman, 2011). According to (Cropanzano et al., 2003) the above theories clarify that employees with high levels of affective organizational commitment are about to reciprocate to the organization through organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, affective organizational commitment is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior (Lepine et al., 2002). This study attempts to examine the relationship between affective organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis. Figure 2.2 shows the correlation between affective organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis:

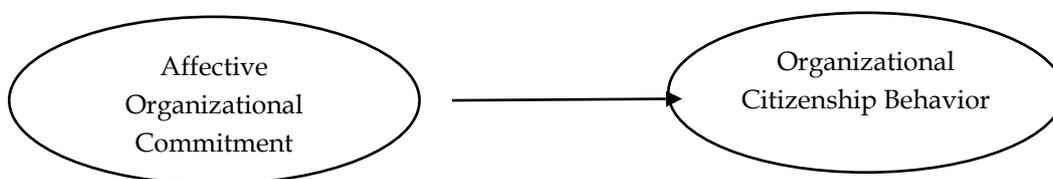


Figure 2.2 Correlation between Affective Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Lepine, et.al. 2002).

2.3 Crisis

2.3.1 A critical examination of the context of crisis

Crisis has been in the center of organizational research for a long time because it changes the core values of an organization (Bundy et al., 2017; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020). It is defined as the chain of unexpected events which could have a negative impact on the organization, if not handled accurately and in time (Coombs, 2007; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020). A crisis could even put at stake the organization's existence by threatening its goals and leading to destructive impacts among its stakeholders (Bundy et al., 2017).

Crises are sudden, usually unpredictable events which find the organization unprepared to confront. Crisis itself could be either external like environmental disasters, pandemics, financial crises, technological changes etc. or internal like leadership failures or unexpected change in leadership, mergers, or acquisitions, moral or ethical corruption, product flaws etc. (Bhaduri, 2019; Bowers et al., 2017).

According to (Coombs, 2007) the threats that will arise from crisis might concern public safety, financial loss and reputational damage. He claims that the organization has the responsibility to put public safety first and protect it. If that cannot be achieved, the damage from a crisis will be more severe and difficult to handle. He suggests that reputation and economic loss should be considered afterwards, only if public safety has been improved.

During the writing of this study, humanity is facing a severe sanitary crisis of global effect. The pandemic SARS COVID-19 has caused millions of confirmed cases and mortalities around the world. Apart from the above-mentioned consequences, the aftermath of this crisis on a social and financial level as well as the psychological and cultural one remains to be evaluated (Rudolph et al., 2020).

(Coombs, 2007) holds that crisis management is of utmost importance to the function of any organization. It is a process which aims to prevent crisis or minimize the potential aftermaths. It refers to the measures that leadership must apply in order to diminish the likelihood or the side-effects of a crisis. Crisis management includes all the efforts that are necessary to restore order after the end of a crisis (Bundy et al., 2017).

Bundy et al. (2017) propose two perspectives regarding crisis and crisis management: the internal and the external one. The internal one refers to the infrastructure and the internal dynamics which help the organization to overcome the crisis, while the external one, refers to the connections and interactions of the organization with external stakeholders towards this direction. Even though both perspectives have developed separately, they share common features that allow leaders to approach them altogether (Fragouli, 2020).

(Coombs & Laufer, 2018) claim that crisis management has three basic phases that should be considered. The pre-crisis phase, which is the stage of prevention of the crisis and the preparation required to lessen the organizational damage. The crisis phase, where the basic reaction must take place and the post-crisis phase, where the organization should apply all the changes and alterations deriving from the crisis. (Coombs, 2007; Coombs & Laufer, 2018).

2.3.2 A critical perspective of crisis

As modern working communities' function under demanding, variable, and complicated circumstances, crises are hard to be avoided (Bundy et al., 2017). According to James (2011) it is highly possible that crises might increase and become more intense in the years to come. Agnes highlights in her interview that crises nowadays are greater and global due to the spread of technology, virality and speed of communications (Faulds & Raju, 2019). Nowadays crisis, challenge the core values of the existing business culture and introduce different, new ones, which include updated principles (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020).

Crises should not only be considered as threats, but also as opportunities for transformation and source of motivation. The organizations that will manage to learn from a crisis and adapt accordingly, will gain a competitive asset compared to those that will not succeed to learn from it (James et al., 2011). Leaders that encourage a proactive and crisis prepared organizational culture are those who manage to address crisis successfully (Bhaduri, 2019).

2.3.3 Leadership and crisis

Leadership is an integral and essential part of crisis management that plays a crucial role in its implementation (Bundy et al., 2017). Leadership in times of crisis requires a set of competencies that will enable the leader to perform successfully and effectively in crisis situations as well as learn from them (Dirani et al., 2020). Some of these qualities could be integrity, empathy, communication, the share of a vision as well as the talent to manage relationships in times of crisis (Bhaduri, 2019; Haddon et al., 2015). Not all leaders are suitable to navigate the organization through periods of crisis. Thus, it is crucial to choose the leader that can fit in, otherwise the outcome of the crisis could be devastating (Bowers et al., 2017). Leaders who manage to overcome both internal and external threats effectively are considered an asset for the organization (Bhaduri, 2019). By acting swiftly and successfully, they can define how soon the organization will recover from the crisis (Bowers et al., 2017). Those who will not be able to take the right decisions at the right time, could probably prove to be more perilous than the crisis itself (James et al., 2011).

2.3.4 Crisis and job satisfaction

In times of crisis, employees feel high levels of anxiety and experience a decline in the general feeling of control over the environment. This could have a negative impact on their job satisfaction (Marques-Quinteiro et al., 2019). When a financial crisis occurs, normal working conditions are threatened, leading to an adverse working environment. Employees are willing to compromise with a poorer working status to maintain their current job. These changes will have a negative effect on employees' job satisfaction regarding both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects (Markovits et al., 2014). Studies conducted before and throughout major crisis such as the Great Depression, have indicated that job satisfaction was generally

reduced. This effect lasted for a prolonged period of time after the recession had ended (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2020).

2.3.5 Crisis and affective organizational commitment

According to (Markovits et al., 2014) crisis has a negative effect on affective organizational commitment. In times of crisis, employees' affective commitment was heavily reduced compared to employees before crisis. A financial crisis could have a damaging impact on affections and moods, leading to a decline in employees' feelings of affective commitment towards the organization. (Brockner et al., 1987) suggest that employees who managed to keep their jobs reduced the level of organizational commitment, especially when they identified with redundant who were poorly compensated and unjustly fired from their jobs. (J. Lee & Corbett, 2006) indicate that the more severe the organizational downsizing the lower the employees' affective organizational commitment.

2.3.6 Crisis and organizational citizenship behavior

In times of crisis, working conditions deteriorate and organizational citizenship behavior is negatively affected. Organizations have no choice but to apply tough measures that affect employees' engagement in organizational citizenship behavior (Psychogios et al., 2019). Under circumstances of turbulence employees might be reluctant to engage in actions that are not directly related to their job description. Employees mainly focus on tasks and activities that help them maintain their positions rather than on extra-role performance. When the worsened working conditions prolong after a crisis, employees tend to feel less committed to any organizational citizenship behavior (Nyfoudi et al., 2020).

2.4 Positive mindset

2.4.1 A critical examination of the context of positive mindset

During the last century, psychologists started focusing on the aftermaths of two world wars, on the lives of people and the traumas that they caused. In 1998 Seligman introduced a new era regarding the fields of psychology. He highlighted the need to abandon the previous negative approach and start emphasizing on positive aspects. His main concern was to deepen on peoples' strengths and eliminate peoples' weaknesses by cultivating the positive elements (Meyers et al., 2013; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000)

The field of positive psychology focuses on positive personal traits and features which lead to positive subjective experiences, that make life worth living. Its main goal is to ameliorate life quality by identifying and nurturing the positive qualities that make individuals and societies prosper (Meyers et al., 2013; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positivity could be outlined as a person's "*observable acts or verbal statements that express or imply optimism, enthusiasm, or effervescence, and that are constructive, supportive, and affirmative in intention and attitude*" (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., 2017, p. 42).

Positivity is a biological disposition that describes the tendency of individuals to appraise themselves, their lives, their experiences, and even their future in a positive way. Its main manifestations are optimism, life satisfaction and self-esteem. It is a valuable quality that helps people to confront all the misfortunes of life. It could influence various sectors such as physical and mental health, social adjustment, wellbeing, and job performance (Barbaranelli et al., 2019; Caprara et al., 2017)

Fredrickson 2(001 broaden-and-build theory underlines the significance of positive emotions in optimal human functioning. She argues that positive emotions such as interest, joy, contentment, love, or pride might not last long but invoke enduring impacts. They widen people's "*momentary thought-action repertoire*" making them more flexible and build their physical, intellectual, social, and psychological resources (Siu et al., 2015, p. 368). Positive emotions result to a broadened mindset that inspires them to think creatively and out of the box. Individuals that experience positive emotions at a regular basis can use various coping strategies when dealing with stressful situations and are expected to thrive in their lives (Gloria & Steinhardt, 2016; Siu et al., 2015).

Positive psychology emerged lately and strongly affected the fields of organizational and occupational psychology. Simultaneously two broader empirical research streams emerged parallel to positive psychology (Meyers et al., 2013). "*Positive organizational behavior, which is a form of workplace positivity exhibited primarily by individuals, and which can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance improvement*" (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013, p. 200). The movement of positive

organizational scholarship used the results of scholar's research as the basis framework to be integrated in positive organizations. It refers to "the study of what is positive, flourishing, and life-giving in organizations" (Luthans & Youssef, 2007, p. 337).

Drawing on the theory and research of positive psychology, the construct of psychological capital focuses on peoples' strengths, growth and thriving at the workplace (Cheung et al., 2011). It is defined as:

An individual's positive psychological state of development and is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success. (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007, p. 3)

Psychological capital is of critical importance organizationally wise. It leads to high levels of performance, satisfaction, commitment, wellbeing, and organizational citizenship behavior. It also moderates the negative impacts of stress, anxiety, turnover intentions, and counterproductive behavior (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013). Psychological capital pushes people to try hard for their tasks, motivates them to anticipate positive outcomes and helps them to be creative when coping with problems (Meyers et al., 2013).

Nowadays, organizations that want to be competitive should go beyond survival mode and find new ways to achieve outstanding performance. That could be achieved not by emphasizing on what is negative but more on what is positive and provides potentials (Geue, 2018). Positivity at work is outlined with regards to the feelings of optimism, confidence and hope that are associated with valuable outcomes for individuals, teams, and organizations. It broadens employees' awareness and helps them become more resilient and competent (Shahid & Muchiri, 2019). It has been proved that positive emotions are beneficial and organizationally wise have a great impact on individual growth, job satisfaction and organizational resilience (Wall et al., 2017).

The role of positive thinking for promoting resilience and wellbeing is an issue of increasing interest (Arampatzi et al., 2020). According to (Geue, 2018) a positive workplace attitude promotes employee wellbeing and human thriving. Studies indicate that focusing on peoples' strengths and encouraging a positive mindset is the key to improve workplace performance. The broaden and build theory suggests that positive emotions can widen both affective and cognitive procedures in individuals and enhance their behavior and performance (Lyngdoh et al., 2018). This broadening effect of positive emotions expands and improves the way people face crises (Fredrickson et al., 2003).

In times of crisis, positivity offers an alternative perspective. It converts challenges and obstacles into opportunities and strengths (Geue, 2018). Positive emotions modify the way people think and make them resilient in order to overcome negative experiences. They adopt a more optimistic attitude towards life, and they apply a more positive way of thinking as a way of coping (Fredrickson et al., 2003).

Optimists have the propensity to reevaluate frustrating and stressful circumstances. Thus, they are able to accept the core of a situation which is beyond their control. They show an adaptive behavior and apply a more proactive approach in order to control the changing situations that threaten their wellbeing. Positive individuals view life in a more resilient way, when a crisis occurs and therefore experience fewer negative consequences of setbacks (Arampatzi et al., 2020). Although crises usually deplete people's psychological resources, resilient people come out stronger than before (Fredrickson et al., 2003).

Researchers also highlight the fact that positivity can also be a valuable leadership trait. It has been stressed that a "happier-and-smarter" leadership is more efficient than a "sadder-but-wiser" leadership (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013, p. 199). Positive leaders perform better in decision making situations and social connections (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013). Leaders with positive qualities have a positive impact on the way their employees perform. Their positive emotions can be contagious and generate a positive spirit to the organization (Shahid & Muchiri, 2019). This kind of leaders act as role models as they set the tone for a positive mindset across the organization (Gielan, 2020).

2.4.2 The role of psychological capital

The significance of positivity in human resource management has been widely recognized lately. Specific focus has been placed upon the way employees' psychological resources are strengthened and their performance improved. Positivity in the workplace in general and more specifically in human

resource management is demonstrated through the construct of psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2008).

This higher order positive construct comprises hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism (Avey et al., 2011). Investing, evaluating, and managing psychological capital has a greater effect on performance and attitudinal outcomes than the specific positive psychological qualities that compose it. In other words, psychological capital as a whole might be more advanced than the sum of its components (Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007).

This multidimensional structure has been used to enhance the psychological wellbeing and the positive work attitudes and behaviors of the organizational members (Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007; Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007; Siu et al., 2015). The psychological capital is positively related to desirable employee attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment as well as with the desirable organizational citizenship behaviors (Avey et al., 2011).

Positive psychological resources work together leading to higher performance, satisfaction, and employee wellbeing (Baluku et al., 2018; Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007). According to the conservation of resources model, these personal qualities allow employees to cope better at the workplace (Cheung et al., 2011). Employees with higher levels of psychological capital are expected to be more satisfied and committed to their job than those with lower ones. Employees with higher psychological capital are prone to be more motivated and put extra effort leading to higher performance (Avey et al., 2011). This study attempts to examine the effect of psychological capital in the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis. Figure 2.3 shows the effect of psychological capital in the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis:

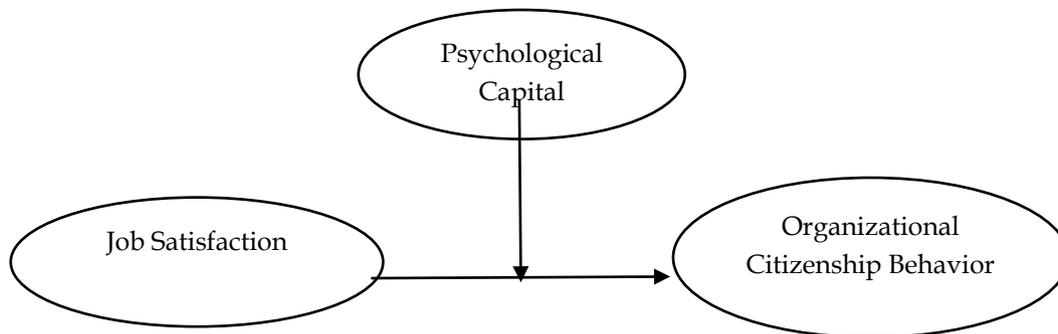


Figure 2.3 A model of psychological capital as a moderator of the job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior relationship in times of crisis (Avey, et.al. 2011)

This study attempts to examine the effect of psychological capital in the relationship between affective organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis. Figure 2.4 shows the effect of psychological capital in the relationship between affective organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis:

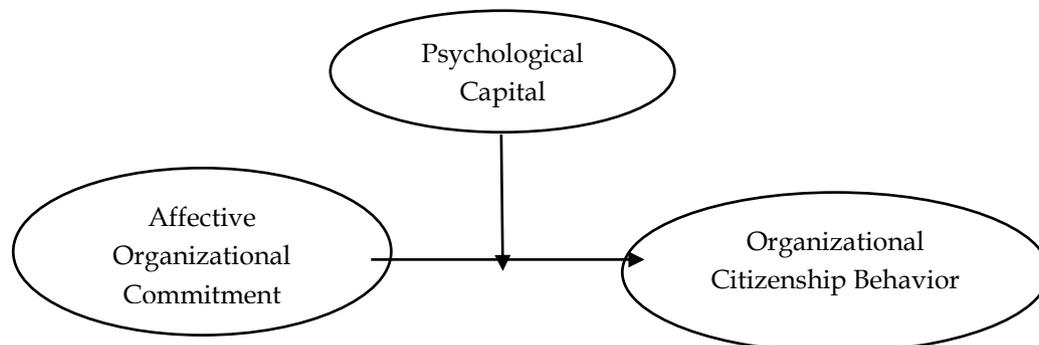


Figure 2.4 A model of psychological capital as a moderator of the affective organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in times of crisis

2.4.3 A critical perspective of positive mindset

There is significant scientific proof that a positive working mindset is of utmost importance regarding relationships, wellbeing, and work (Avey et al., 2011). Researchers suggest that organizations need to embrace a positive approach towards selection, development, and human resource management. It has been found that positive work practices like recruitment, training, motivation and compensation lead to organizational performance and competitiveness. "Effective selection and placement practices that capitalize on employees' talents, clear and aligned goals and expectations, social support and recognition, and opportunities for growth, development, and self-actualization" eventually lead to employee engagement, organizational profitability, and growth (Luthans & Youssef, 2007, p. 336).

Especially in times of crisis, positivity is the key to manage challenges successfully (Gielan, 2020). Therefore, it is crucial that managers and leaders encourage a positive and healthy work culture, which results to multiple benefits for companies and employees and enhances their wellbeing (Seppala & Cameron, 2015). Organizational cultures and behaviors that nurture participation and involvement, creativity and a spirit of free thinking could promote hope and resilience (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

3. Conclusion

The new workplace conditions of general uncertainty that workers have to face and the nature of work which constantly changes due to covid-19 affect the general feeling of the workforce during this new and challenging era (OECD, 2021).

Job satisfaction and affective commitment have a positive and strong effect on organizational citizenship behavior during a crisis period. This is consistent with the social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity (Gyekye & Haybatollahi, 2015; Ng & Feldman, 2011; Ocampo et al., 2018). The findings imply that promoting employee wellbeing especially in times of crisis is the key to enhance organizational citizenship behavior, which is a crucial factor in terms of productivity and efficiency (Yu et al., 2021). Thus, fostering employee wellbeing and ensuring that workers feel safe and supported should be part of the human resource agenda in order to survive through crisis.

Also important is the positivity at the workplace in times of crisis which confirms prior research about the value of a positive working mindset (Avey, Avolio, et al., 2011; Avey et al., 2009; Baluku et al., 2018; Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007). As stated in the conservation of resources theory, positivity is a personal resource which leads to greater wellbeing (Orkibi & Brandt, 2015). Individuals with a positive mindset tend to feel more satisfied by their work, are more committed and more easily engage in supportive behaviors. Organizations which invest, develop, and manage psychological capital could gain a competitive advantage (Fang et al., 2020). Thus, cultivating a positive working mindset and encouraging employees to prioritize their wellbeing is the key to manage balances during a period of crisis.

Limitations

The first limitation concerns time constraints for the completion of the study. Another limitation is relevant to the design of this study, which was a literature one than an empirical study.

Recommendations

Future studies could explore possible mediating and moderating effects when considering the above-mentioned relationships. They could also incorporate parameters of physical and social wellbeing such as stress, exhaustion, trust, or support and explore how they relate with organizational citizenship behavior. An interesting fact is to empirically study the result of psychological capital on the above parameters under a crisis perspective. Another recommendation might be to organize a longitudinal research and collect data over an extended period of time during covid-19.

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