Forging Ahead:
How to Thrive at the Modern Workplace

Maliha Mushtaq, Ghulam Abid∗, Komal Sarwar, Samiah Ahmed

School of Business Administration, National College of Business Administration and Economics, Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract

Thriving at work is an emerging phenomenon in recent times, which is defined as a psychological state in which individuals experience both the senses of vitality and learning. Researchers and practitioners are looking for ways to enhance the employee's thriving at work, because it is associated with behavioral outcomes. The objective of this study is to empirically investigate the impact of contextual factors including organizational support, fairness perception, supervisor support, and civility at workplace on the employee's thriving at work. Furthermore, it also looks upon the impact of individual differences like proactive personality on the employee's thriving. The empirical findings have been drawn through a survey questionnaire using purposive sampling technique from employees of different organizations. The study discusses the results and draws several insights on the employee's thriving at the workplace. The study also provides implication for theory and practice. Limitations and future research directions have also been discussed.

Keywords

∗ **Corresponding Author,** Email: dr.ghulamabid@gmail.com

Introduction

The business environment of today is fast-paced, complex and highly competitive. Survival in such an environment requires a forward-thinking approach and a continual search for competitive advantages. Scholars and practitioners have linked organization's success with human sustainability that is the individual's thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2012). According to them, success and competitive edge over other firms is only possible if organizations look after their human capital, take care of their well-being, development, growth, and extend capabilities. This will lead them to flourish at workplace and thereby contributing to the success of the organization for long term survival and growth.

Thriving is considered as a pivotal construct in analyzing today's workplace. It has gained considerable attention in recent times, because it is detrimental to an employee's behavioral outcomes at the workplace (e.g. innovative work behavior, performance, turnover, and absenteeism). Most of the time, employees are not feeling energized and learned at the workplace simultaneously that results in unfavorable outcomes in the workplace. Although empirical studies demonstrated the role of thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer et al., 2012), research on workplace thriving is sparse (Niessen et al., 2012). For example, how contextual factors (Paterson et al., 2014), and individual characteristics (Walumbwa et al., 2017) promote thriving. Furthermore, little is known about the antecedents of thriving (Niessen et al., 2012; Paterson et al., 2014). Better understanding of how an employee thrives in the organization helps in eliminating the unfavorable outcomes. We argue that proactive personality, workplace civility, fairness perception, organizational support, and supervisor support are considered to influence employees' motivation and may serve as an engine of thriving.

This research empirically demonstrates the association of thriving at work with factors of individual differences and contextual factors at workplace simultaneously. Much work has been done to find out the

beneficial outcomes of thriving. Scholars and practitioners emphasize the need to better understand the factors that boost the employee's thriving at workplace (Abid, 2013; Abid et al., 2016; Paterson et al., 2014). Therefore, the aim of the current study is to explore the factors that enable thriving at workplace and also expand the previous work in organizational behavior by analyzing the factors as an engine of thriving at work (Niessen et al., 2012).

The capability of workers to develop at work is crucial for the overall growth and development of the organization (Abid et al., 2016; Paterson et al., 2014). So, the current study is significant for both the academia as well as for the industry practitioners. The researchers are anxious to probe the employees' thriving at the workplace. They are interested to investigate the antecedents of employee thriving, most specifically individual differences and contextual factors. Likewise, managers and practitioners are keen to understand the pivotal construct, through which companies can attain favorable outcomes from workers.

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in three ways. First, the above mentioned factors that enable thriving at work can provide managers with insights on how to develop an enabling environment at the workplace in which employees are able to utilize their full potential and thereby contributing to organizational success. Secondly, it enables individuals to understand the conditions that can contribute to their own growth which will in turn help them to cultivate the factors that can significantly impact workplace success. Lastly, it also provides insights on how positive work environments can contribute to an individual's health and well being.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

What Is Thriving?

The concept of *Thriving* has received attention from scholars in the field of organizational behavior (Abid, 2016; Paterson et al., 2014). According to *Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary* (2017), the word *thrive* refers to "An individual's capacity to prosper, grow, flourish and develop vigorously". Initially, it was considered as a favorable reaction to a challenge (Carver, 1998). According to him,

psychological thriving may be responsible for acquisition of knowledge and skills, confidence and improved interpersonal relationships. Lerner et al. (2002) interpreted it in terms of growth of attributes which in turn reflects the healthy development like *Five Cs* of PYD (positive youth development including confidence, character, competence, connection and caring). Furthermore, Thomas and Hall (2008) stated thriving as "Individual's experience of growth, development and progression with an upward trajectory, not merely surviving or maintaining the status quo".

It is demonstrated in the thriving literature that it is a psychological state (Spreitzer et al., 2005), and an intra-individual phenomenon where individuals simultaneously sense vitality and learning at work. Thriving at work is joint connection of cognitive and affective dimensions of psychological experiences, where learning is the cognitive dimension and vitality is the affective dimension (Porath et al., 2012). It is important to note that the two elements, vitality and learning have to be present in order for an individual to thrive (Porath et al., 2012; Ren, Yunlu, Shaffer, & Fodchuk, 2015; Spreitzer et al., 2005). If an individual is acquiring a new skill, but experiences low energy levels (feeling of depletion), then he is not thriving. Therefore, acquisition of knowledge which results in burnout cannot be referred to as thriving at work. Conversely, an individual who is experiencing vitality which is not accompanied by the acquisition of knowledge or skills, then again, he is not thriving because there is a lack of momentum with regards to development at work.

Thrived individuals have been found to be very energetic and exhibiting greater psychological functioning (Porath et al., 2012). Given the time spent by adults on work activities, work related factors have a significant impact on employee health (Beehr & Newman, 1978). Thriving at work has also been linked to physical health, employees who feel they have limited growth at the workplace tend to have a higher risk of heart disease (Alfredsson, Spetz, & Theorell, 1985). An individual's health is of importance to the organization and to the society at large. Later on, Abid (2016) conceptualized and validated a more comprehensive multidimensional thriving scale

based on the tripartite attitudinal framework. According to him, thriving can be measured as a joint connection of cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements as defined and conceptualized by O'Leary and Ickovics (1994), that thriving is "A dynamic process of adaptation, influenced by numerous individuals and social factors; whereby it emerges and changes over the life course and may be identified in *behavioral, cognitive, or affective* domains". He stated that the construct would be impoverished by not taking behavioral element under consideration.

Antecedents of Thriving

Research on thriving in the workplace has flourished recently as individuals are spending a growing percentage of their lives at work (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Previous studies have already established a range of factors that lead to workplace thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer et al., 2012). Spreitzer and her colleagues (2012) argued that organizations may promote thriving by sharing information about firms' overall strategy, offering performance feedback and decision making discretion, minimizing incivility and creating a climate that promotes diversity. In a socially embedded model of thriving, scholars stated that exploration, task focus, and heedful interrelating (known as agentic work behavior) are key drivers for promoting workplace thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005). They also demonstrated that individual traits may predispose some individuals to thrive more than the others. Subsequent empirical study of Neissen et al. (2012) and Abid et al. (2015b, 2016b) found that these agentic work behaviors are the predictors of thriving.

Carmeli and Spreitzer (2009) found connectivity stimulates workplace thriving. The connectivity refers to a relationship that are open and thriving is deeply ingrained in a social systems. Spreitzer et al. (2005) present a strong case for thriving, being a mechanism driven by social interactions. Employees experience learning and vitality when they have generative relations with others.

Paterson and colleagues (2014) and Iverson (2017) looked at the role that psychological capital may play in promoting workplace

thriving. Thriving has been viewed and observed as a self-regulatory psychological state. Because it is malleable in nature, hence, it is most probably shaped by stable personal characteristics, such as regulatory focus (promotion focus and prevention focus). Wallace et al. (2016) found that promotion focus stimulates thriving. Walumbwa et al. (2017) found that personality trait of core self-evaluation boosts thriving at work. A core self-evaluation, which is considered as a dispositional trait, serves as an important discretional stimulus that triggers thriving. When an employee feels competent and capable of doing the task, then they are more likely to focus on everyday work, thus enhancing thriving. Abid et al. (2015b; 2016b) found that employees most probably thrive when they perceive that their organizations support and care for their wellbeing. Jiang (2017) found that individuals who possess proactive personality thrive more than those who do not. Proactive individuals are usually purposeful and very active at workplace. He suggested that individuals with higher proactive personality tend to be motivated and energetic (high vitality) and higher learning orientation (cognitive). Moreover, Hennekam (2017) found that extraversion and conscientiousness is positively related to thriving.

When organization members operate in a psychologically safe work environment, it is easier for them to experience a sense of relatedness (Kark & Carmeli, 2009) and thriving. Frazier and Tupper (2016) found that the employee's psychological safety was significantly linked to workplace thriving. Russo et al. (2015) found that work-family enrichment promotes thriving at work. The contention behind is that when employees experience work-family enrichment, they feel that they have energy available to devote to other domains, which is critical to enhance vitality. Learning can also be enhanced together with personal and contextual resources.

Employee motivation could also be increased through empowering leadership, which involves *sharing power* with subordinates (Li, Liu, Han, & Zhang, 2016). Sharing power with the employees expresses confidence in the employees' capabilities, which helps boost employee self-efficacy, self-esteem and stimulate employees'

psychological state. In line with Conservation of Resources (COR) (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001), Hildenbrand, Sacramento, and Binnewies (2016), and Niessen et al. (2017) argued that transformational leadership (perceived), as a contextual resource, influences the pool of resources that individuals have with them, aiding the development of thriving. Mortier, Vlerick, and Clays (2016) also found that authentic leadership promotes workplace thriving.

Proactive Personality and Thriving

Crant (1995) describes individuals with a proactive personality as those displaying a proclivity for initiative, capable of identifying opportunities in their environment and persistently taking action to bring about a change. The proactive approach suggests that individuals have the capability of transforming their environment (Bandura, 1977). Proactive behavior involves actively challenging present conditions to cause a shift in the status quo (Crant, 2000). Research has shown a positive relation between proactive personality and entrepreneurial/leadership skills (Becherer & Maurer, 1999; Crant & Bateman, 2000).

Jackson (1996), Mirvis and Hall (1996), and Campbell (2000) argue that proactive personality is a necessity for career success (i.e. growth and development at workplace) in the twenty first century. Seibert et al. (2001) found that proactive individuals exhibit behaviors that have a positive impact on career success and that such behaviors lead to extrinsic as well as intrinsic positive work outcomes (Seibert et al., 2001; Chan, 2006). Empirical evidence suggests that proactive individuals have a lesser probability of quitting their jobs in the face of adversity as they will first attempt to actively manipulate the circumstances which have led to the desire to quit (Allen et al, 2005). Moreover, proactive personality acts as a buffer in relation to interpersonal conflict at work for young workers (Harvey et al., 2006).

Proactive personality contributes to both elements of thriving, vitality and learning. Sprietzer (2005) describes vitality as a sense of well-being and positive energy which manifests itself in various domains like work and family. Employees with proactive personality

are more capable of dealing with high job demands and are less affected by job stress (Parker & Sprigg, 1999, Harvey et al., 2006). There is a higher level of job satisfaction amongst proactive employees because they are likely to overcome challenges and face up to adverse circumstances in order to achieve job satisfaction (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005). This is consistent with the findings of Lim (2010) which indicate a positive relation between proactive personality and a strong relationship with the supervisory support which is one of the contributing factors of job satisfaction. Literature on job satisfaction suggests that job satisfaction is related to hedonic aspects of the cognitive architecture of individual that is known as vitality (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Porath et al., 2012). Cunningham and De La Rosa (2008) demonstrated a significant relationship between proactive personality and work/life balance such that proactive individuals are more capable of coping with stressful situations involving time management between work and family life and thereby enhancing the sense of vitality at workplace. A theoretical model developed by Greguras and Diefendorff (2010) demonstrates that there is an indirect link between proactive personality and psychological well-being and that life satisfaction is strongly influenced by proactive personality. Truxillo et al. (2012) suggest that employees with low proactive personalities are most likely to have lower levels of vitality at workplace. Conversely, employees with high levels of proactive personalities always challenge the status quo, indulge themselves in taking initiatives and searching for new and exciting opportunities (Crant, 2000); in this way they feel active and energized.

Learning is an ongoing process and an active learner invites feedback which is also a proactive behavior (Seibert & Kramer, 2001). Individuals who are motivated to learn, express willingness to actively participate in training and development which is critical to career success in short and long term. Proactive individuals will continually search for new ideas, attempt to understand the governing politics of the organization and pursue advancement in skills and knowledge (Seibert et al., 2001). Moreover, proactive personality is a predictor of innovation (Crant & Bateman, 2000; Seibert & Kramer, 2001;

Carmeli & Sprietzer, 2009), which indicates an active approach to learning and a strong motivation for transformative change. Major et al. (2006) present proactive personality as "A better predictor of motivation to learn than any of the Big Five Factors or facets". This indicates that organizations may want to cater to early identification of proactive personality in workers as this would aid in individual and organizational growth and development. Kim et al. (2009) presents evidence that employee creativity is one of the manifestations of proactive personality in new hires and is a precursor to job satisfaction and perceived belongingness. This was reaffirmed by Kim et al. (2010), in a study which provides evidence for a strong positive relationship between proactive personality and employee creativity with due consideration to supervisor support for creativity and job requirements for creativity. Literature indicates that higher proactive personalities tend to have higher learning orientations (Li et al., 2014; Jiang, 2017).

Thus, individuals with proactive personality display vitality in work/life situations and display a tendency to interact with the environment to bring about their own growth and development. They also actively engage in learning behaviors like encouraging feedback, acquiring new skills, coming up with new ideas and observing the environment. Thus, it is reasonable to predict that proactive personality in individuals will help to facilitate thriving at the workplace.

H1: Proactive personality significantly impacts thriving at work.

Civility and Thriving

Workplace civility refers to interpersonal relationships in which one demonstrates respect for coworkers and feels valued in return (Osatuke et al., 2009). Civility is strongly linked to cultural values (Hartman, 1996) and plays an integral part in the organizational culture. As such, it also impacts organizational outcomes (Laschinger & Read, 2016) and the means through which they are achieved. Specifically, workplace civility defines how coworkers interact with one another and establishes boundaries for work relationships.

Incivility is defined as a "Low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect" (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Pearson et al., 2000; Pearson et al., 2001). Workplace incivility has received attention from scholars in the recent years because of the negative impact it has on individuals and the organization as a whole (Schilpzand et al., 2016; Laschinger & Read, 2016).

Employees who face incivility at the workplace are likely to be less productive and have trouble focusing on tasks (Pearson et al., 2000). Workplace incivility contributes to increased symptoms of depression and anxiety and lowered job satisfaction amongst targeted individuals (Cortina et al., 2001). Incivility impacts the emotions and behaviors of targeted individuals as well as those who encounter it inadvertently like watching team members exchange rude words (Pearson & Porath, 2005). Since workplace incivility is not necessarily intentional (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), organizations tend to ignore most instances, thus, increasing the likelihood of such behavior being carried out overtly and affecting whole groups. Penney and Spector (2005) presented empirical findings linking workplace incivility to counterproductive work behaviors and suggested that workplace incivility is itself a job stressor. Incivility also diminishes creativity in employees (Pearson & Porath, 2005), and so curtails their learning potential.

Research has shown workplace incivility to be a low-key stressor (Cortina, 2008), the cumulative effects of which can be detrimental to mental and physical well-being (Lim et al., 2008). Previous studies found that unfavorable treatment from organization members leads to a toxic work atmosphere and it adversely impacts workplace attitudes and behaviors. A review of mistreatment literature shows that workplace incivility increased absenteeism, turnover intention, actual turnover, counterproductive behavior, depression, anxiety and reduced satisfaction. Moreover, it adversely affects citizenship behavior, in role-job performance, and commitment with the organization (Abid et al., 2015a, 2016). It has been noted that employees usually reduce *their contribution to the employing organization* when they view

workplace incivility as stemming from their organization. Similarly, incivility curtails thriving (Gkorezis, Kalampouka, & Petridou, 2013; Spreitzer et al., 2012); rude and disrespectful behaviors of colleagues/customers who put others down and demeaning attitude towards people for their mistakes, engenders fear and anger and impedes the learning process because negative emotions constrain cognition and behaviors. When individuals are unprotected from the climate of incivility at workplace, they do not believe that they are valued members of the organization. In contrast, trust and connectivity create a nurturing environment that enables thriving (Carmeli & Sprietzer, 2009). The management needs to model that kind of behaviors that are acceptable and decry uncivil behaviors.

Thus, the impacts of incivility are not limited to instigator and target and the outreach has a corroding effect on organizational culture and values. If not controlled, the consequences of uncivil behavior can lead to a distrustful environment in the workplace. Trust between co-workers is an important aspect of the organizational and individual learning. Moreover, relational resources give rise to the feelings of vitality (Spreitzer et al., 2012), and lack of trust is an obstacle to developing healthy work relationships.

Given the negative consequences of incivility at the workplace (Schilpzand et al., 2016), it is reasonable to conclude that curbing uncivil behaviors at the workplace contributes to fostering a work environment that enables employees to thrive.

H2: Workplace civility significantly impacts thriving at work.

Fairness Perception and Thriving

It is stated that the sense of thriving at workplace is shaped by the work environment (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Hence, state of thriving at workplace varies as work environment changes. Specifically, the study indicates that work environments characterized by a "climate of trust and respect" are more likely to promote thriving (Carmeli & Sprietzer, 2009; Spreitzer et al., 2005), and such a climate encourages positive behaviors like knowledge sharing and risk-taking, that are critical for learning and promoting high quality interpersonal

relationships. Shalley and Gilson (2004) also suggested that organizational justice can foster the employee's innovative work behaviors and these types of behaviors can serve as another engine of thriving.

The feelings of trust generated by fairness perception regarding all three types of organizational justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional) contribute to the nature and frequency of the reciprocal behavior of employees (Lewicki et al., 2006); a higher perception of fairness will lead to more frequent positive behavior by the employee. Therefore, an employee's perception of fairness enhances both learning and vitality. A lack of trust in the organization discourages the sharing of information which is an integral part of the learning process. Also, it curbs creativity because employees will be uncertain as to how new ideas will be perceived by the management. Moreover, this will result in the emergence of negative emotions and negative self-image which curtail the feelings of vitality necessary for thriving at the workplace. Effective communication between the manager and employee can build strong interpersonal relationships (feelings of relatedness) and contribute towards the employee's perception of fairness and thriving at work (Abid et al., 2015; Abid et al., 2016).

Perpetuating humanistic values are one of the goals of organizations in order to achieve individual and organizational thriving (Cameron, 2003). Fairness perception boosts sense of psychological safety for employees to exchange and share knowledge courageously and fearlessly with colleagues at workplace (Lind, 2001). Conversely, some studies have shown that unfairness is a workplace stressor and can have a negative impact on an individual's psychological well-being (Vermunt & Steensma, 2001).

This is because employees perceive that their organization treats them fairly, therefore, they are motivated to exhibit good behaviors because they are more confident that good behaviors will be reciprocated with rewards. Also, fair treatment often induces a sense of obligation for employees to reciprocate with good behaviors. Furthermore, fairness perception enhances employee's self-esteem and affirms their belief that the decision makers/authority figure that

have a profound impact on their personal growth within the organization are not acting out of self-interest but are following a set of norms/rules which characterize the work environment and impact all employees equally (Tyler & Blader, 2000). This clearly lays a foundation for the perceived elimination of biased decisions on the part of the decision maker (authority figure). The Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory proposed by Graen and Cashman (1975), also supports the impact of fairness perception on employee performance at the workplace. It is suggested that the interpersonal exchange between employee and supervisor must be perceived as *fair* by both parties in order for the exchange to be productive (Graen & Scandura, 1987).

On the basis of the above discussion, we can conclude that overall fairness perception, comprising all three dimensions of organizational justice, promotes a sense of psychological safety via positive behaviors that encourages knowledge sharing, collaborations and social exchange, which helps employees to experience thriving at work.

H3: Fairness perception significantly impacts thriving at work.

Perceived Organizational Support and Thriving

Employees thrive more when they perceive that their organization supports them (Abid et al., 2015b; 2016). Perceived Organizational Support (POS) is the "Employees' general belief that their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being" (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Exchange theory emphasizes that employees believe that positive behavior will be reciprocated by the organization in terms of recognition and rewards (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). POS invokes social exchange theory (Kurtessis et al., 2015), and exchange norm enhances the sense of obligation to care about the organization's interest because of the rewards or care they receive from the organization. Promising prospects for rewards, incentives, promotions, gain sharing, profit sharing, and career growth exemplify a positive appraisal of the employees' contribution (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001). This type of support from

the organizations in terms of rewards enhances the feeling among employees that they should maintain balance in an exchange relationship with the organization (Park & Kruse, 2014), and this in turn results in greater effort and dedication towards the task and duties.

Research has linked POS with a commitment to work and innovative behavior which is a learning characteristic (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Employees are more likely to engage in learning behaviors like creativity and innovation if they feel that they will be sufficiently rewarded for the effort. The process of formulation of new ideas involves sharing information, acquisition of knowledge, and actively seeking feedback on new ideas. This signifies a positive attitude towards learning and contributes to individual and organizational growth and development. Organizations can contribute to positive POS by actively supporting employee learning either indirectly by fostering a work environment that supports creativity and innovation or directly through human resource programs like giving paid leave for education that can be valuable to the individual and the organization. If employees perceive that their organization supports and cares about their well-being, it might increase their interest in their work (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), and enhance the sense of aliveness at workplace. Task focus is a sign of heightened vitality and employees who are more committed to their work because of the POS will have an increased task focus and therefore, increased vitality.

Supportive organizations increase the employees' feelings of being respected and appreciated which in turn motivates the employees to continue to acquire knowledge and skills and imbibes them with feelings of vitality at the workplace. Hence, we propose that proposed organizational support is a contributor to thriving at the workplace.

H4: Perceived organizational support (POS) significantly impacts thriving at work.

Supervisor Support and Thriving

Employees feel obligated towards enhanced productivity if they feel that their supervisor will provide them with the support required

for them to perform their work duties effectively and efficiently. This support can be emotional or work related, and it engenders in the employee a need to respond in kind (social exchange theory). Supervisor support influences the employee in several ways, such as provision of access to organizational resources, decision making with regards to tangible work outcomes like salary and increments, decision making with regards to training and development, emotional support in the form of advice and information related to the employee's role and sometimes general information about the organization which can help the individual to progress. Therefore, supervisor support has the potential to have a significant impact on the employee's growth and development at the workplace. Aryee et al. (2002) found empirical evidence to support the fact that a strong relationship between employee and supervisor (one that is based on trust) encourages the employee to reciprocate with enhanced productivity and extra role behavior (citizenship behavior).

Further support for the premise that supervisor support enhances thriving comes from Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory which postulates that the relationship between employee and supervisor is based on the strength of the interpersonal relationship that evolves as a result of exchange, which the nature and dimensions of the exchange are dependent on the resources available to them from the organization as a whole. LMX suggests that the employee and supervisor will *exchange commodities* which can be tangible (information, work outcomes/rewards) and intangible (kindness, helpfulness) and the perceived values of the commodities in the eyes of both parties play a major role in the development of a comfortable work environment. Thus, strong supervisor provides a sense of security and well-being of the employee leading to feelings of vitality.

Ashford and Cummings (1983) propose that individuals seek feedback for objectives that fulfill personal ambitions and are of significance to the employee's career. Such goals and objectives are often proposed and monitored by the employee's direct supervisor. The supervisor can thus become the most frequent source of feedback for the employee and such feedback is critical to learning. The extent,

accuracy, and frequency of such feedbacks can have a significant impact on work related outcomes (promotions, continued employment, appreciation for work) and the employee's learning cure. If an employee perceives a lack in supervisory support this may act as a barrier towards presenting new ideas for feedback or suggesting improvements in current work procedures.

Thus, we propose that supervisor support impacts both vitality and learning and therefore, is a key component for thriving at the workplace.

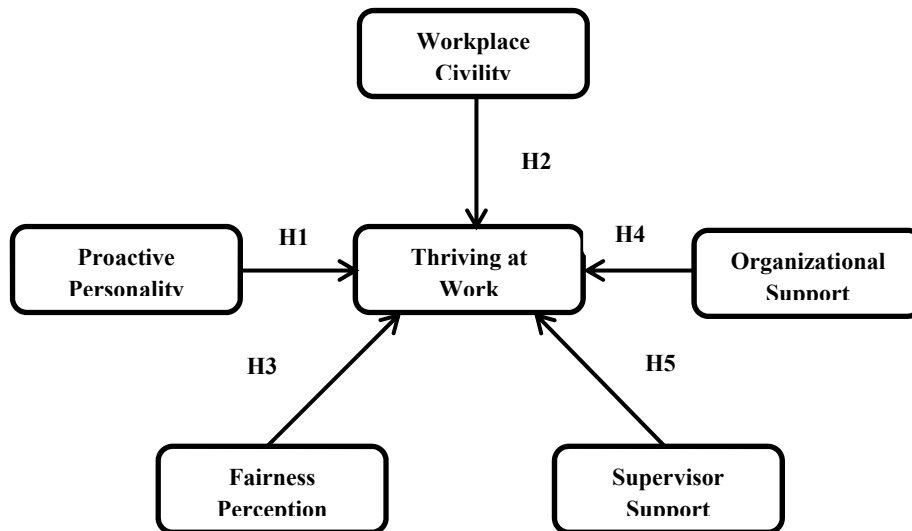H5: Supervisor support significantly impacts thriving at work.

Figure 1 : Theoretical Model

Methods

Sample and Procedure

The objective of the current study was to find out the antecedents of thriving at workplace. Therefore, keeping in view the objective of the study, the data were gathered through purposive sampling technique on a wide variety of occupations (e.g., teachers, administrator, bank officer, data controller, coordinator and government employees in different sectors), in service sector organizations (e.g., banks, education institutions, hospitals, government organizations,

telecommunication, and insurance companies). Purposive sampling technique was adopted because, thriving is not related to a specific profession or job, so selecting specific industry and profession would have limited the scope of this study and would have confined our results to a specific context. Therefore, we have ensured a heterogeneous sample of 221. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to and collected from employees with diverse occupations. It is a well-known and common technique in social sciences and derives popularity from the fact that respondents answer questions with no interference from the researcher. The highest number of respondents was married (134, 60.6 %). The age of the study participants ranges from 21 to 64 years, with an average age of 33.85 years. The majority of the participants were from service industries. The formal education of the participants ranged from 10-20 years with an average of 15 years of education. The average working tenure of the participants was 8 and half year.

Measures

Civility

Workplace civility refers to interpersonal relationships in which one demonstrates respect for coworkers and feels valued in return (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Civility at work was assessed with the help of the scale developed by Porath and Erez (2009). In this scale, civility was captured through 4 items. A sample item from this scale was "Do your co-workers treat you with dignity". A five point Likert scale type was used to measure civility at work (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*).

Proactive personality

A proactive personality refers to an individual who displays a proclivity for initiative, identifies opportunities in their environment, and persistently takes action to bring about change (Crant, 1995). Proactive personality was assessed with the help of the scale developed by Janssen (2016). In this scale, proactive personality was captured through the 5 items. A sample item from this scale was "I am

always looking for better ways to do things". A six point Likert scale type was used to measure proactive personality (1 = *very strongly disagree*, 6 = *very strongly agree*).

Fairness perception

Fairness perception describes the individual's and the group's perception of the fairness of treatment received from an organization and their behavioral reaction to such perceptions (James, 1993). Fairness perception was assessed with the help of the scale developed by Ambrose and Schminke (2009). In this scale, fairness perception was captured through the 6 items. A sample item from this scale was "In general, the treatment I receive around here is fair". A seven point Likert scale type was used to measure the justice at work (1 = *very strongly disagree*, 7 = *very strongly agree*).

Perceived organizational support

Perceived organizational support is the employees' general belief that the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Perceived organizational support at work was assessed with the help of the scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (2001). In this scale, perception of organizational support was captured through the 8 items. A sample item from this scale was "My organization really cares about my well-being". A five point Likert scale type was used to measure the perceived organizational support (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*).

Thriving at work

Thriving at work is defined as a psychological state in which employees experience both senses of vitality and learning (Spreitzer et al., 2005). It was assessed with the help of the scale developed by Porath et al. (2012). In this scale, thriving at work was captured through the 10 items. A sample item from this scale was "I find myself learning often". A five point Likert scale type was used to measure individual's thriving at workplace (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*).

Supervisor support

Managerial support refers to the employee's perceptions regarding how

much the manager values their contributions and is concerned about their well-being (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Managerial support was assessed with the help of the scale developed by Anderson et al. (2002). In this scale, support from managers was captured through the 6 items. A sample item from this scale was "My supervisor accommodates me when I have family or personal business to take care of, for example, medical appointments, meeting with child's teachers, and so on". A five point Likert scale type was used to measure managerial support (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*).

Data Analysis and Interpretations

Table 1 provides bivariate correlations among all study variables. The correlations coefficients are in the anticipated directions and provide initial support for the study hypotheses. Consistent with our hypotheses, the bivariate correlations indicate that thriving at work is positively associated with perceived organizational support ($r = 0.510$, $P < 0.01$), civility ($r = 0.418$, $P < 0.01$), proactive personality ($r = 0.379$, $P < 0.01$), fairness perception ($r = 0.613$, $P < 0.01$) and supervisor support ($r = 0.432$, $P < 0.01$).

Table 1: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	33.85	8.65	1								
2. Education	15.12	2.19	-0.160[*]	1							
3. Tenure	8.58	8.25	0.711[**]	-.298[**]	1						
4. Thriving	3.95	0.51	-0.112	-0.019	-0.035	(0.793)					
5. Perceived Org. Support	3.48	0.55	0.063	-0.042	-0.028	0.510[**]	(0.70)				
6. Civility	4.04	0.67	-0.022	0.186[**]	-0.021	0.418[**]	0.398[**]	(0.80)			
7. Proactive Personality	4.32	0.75	0.175[**]	-0.191[**]	0.190[**]	0.379[**]	0.303[**]	0.163[*]	(0.79)		
8. Fairness Perception	4.75	0.98	0.155[*]	-0.159[*]	0.183[**]	0.613[**]	0.642[**]	0.344[**]	0.365[**]	(0.81)	
9. Managerial Support	3.74	0.67	0.050	-0.010	0.060	0.432[**]	0.440[**]	0.385[**]	0.212[**]	0.492[**]	(0.83)

*95% **99%

We also found that the control variable, age has a positive relationship with proactive personality and fairness perception. Moreover, education also shows a positive relationship with civility, proactive personality and fairness perception. Tenure is shown to have a positive relationship with proactive personality and fairness perception.

Hypotheses Testing

To test the study hypotheses, we have used hierarchical linear modeling (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992). In Model 1, we regressed all control variables (age, education, tenure) with thriving at work in Model 1. We find that only one control variable, age, is significantly and negatively impacting the dependent variable, thriving at work ($\beta = -0.178$, $P < 0.10$).

Table 2: Regression Table for Thriving at Work

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Controls							
Age	-0.178*	-0.205**	-0.124	-0.207***	-0.246***	-0.177*	-0.200***
Education	-0.054	0.034	-0.150**	0.061	-0.004	-0.041	0.035
Tenure	0.073	0.040	0.030	0.009	0.154*	0.051	0.012
Study Variables							
Proactive Personality		0.434***					0.209***
Civility			0.455***				0.166***
Fairness Perception				0.660***			0.403***
Perceived Org. Support					0.540***		0.093
Supervisor Support						0.454***	0.102*
R²	0.019	0.194	0.216	0.428	0.307	0.225	0.521
Δ R²	----	0.175	0.197	0.409	0.288	0.206	0.502
Durbin-Watson	1.462	1.497	1.561	1.844	1.427	1.614	1.773

99 ***; 95 **; 90 *

In Model 2, we regressed the independent variable, proactive

personality along with control variables on thriving at work. We found that proactive personality has a significant and positive impact on thriving at the workplace ($\beta = 0.434$, $P < 0.01$; $R^2 = 0.194$). Moreover, age is also significant and negatively impacting proactive personality ($\beta = -0.205$, $P < 0.05$). The change in R^2 with the help of proactive personality is 0.175. It means the variance explained by proactive personality is 17.5%. Thus, H1 is strongly supported.

In Model 3, we regressed the independent variable, civility along with control variables on thriving at work. We found that civility has a significant and positive impact on thriving at the workplace ($\beta = 0.455$, $P < 0.01$; $R^2 = 0.216$). The results also indicate that education is significantly and negatively impacting civility ($\beta = -0.150$, $P < 0.05$). The change in R^2 with the help of proactive personality is 0.197. It means the variance explained by proactive personality is 19.7%. Thus, H2 is also strongly supported.

In Model 4, we regressed the independent variable, fairness perception along with control variables on thriving at work. We found that fairness perception has a significant and positive impact on thriving at the workplace ($\beta = 0.660$, $P < 0.01$; $R^2 = 0.428$). The results also indicate that age is significantly and negatively impacting fairness perception ($\beta = -0.207$, $P < 0.01$). The change in R^2 with the help of fairness perception is 0.409. It means the variance explained by proactive personality is 40.9%. Thus, H4 is also strongly supported.

In Model 5, we regressed the independent variable POS along with control variables on thriving at work. We found that POS has a significant and positive impact on thriving at the workplace ($\beta = 0.540$, $P < 0.01$; $R^2 = 0.307$). The results also indicate that age is significantly and negatively impacting POS ($\beta = -0.246$, $P < 0.01$). Furthermore, tenure is significantly and positively impacting POS ($\beta = 0.154$, $P < 0.10$). The change in R^2 with the help of POS is 0.288. It means the variance explained by proactive personality is 28.8%. Thus, H5 is also strongly supported.

In Model 6, we regressed the independent variable, supervisor

support along with control variables on thriving at work. We found that supervisor support has a significant and positive impact on thriving at the workplace ($\beta = 0.454$, $P < 0.01$; $R^2 = 0.225$). The results also indicate that age is significantly and negatively impacting supervisor support ($\beta = -0.177$, $P < 0.01$). The change in R^2 with the help of POS is 0.206. It means the variance explained by supervisor support is 28.8%. Thus, H8 is also strongly supported.

In Model 7, we regressed five study variables along with all the controls on thriving at work. We found that all the study variables significantly and positively impact thriving at work (proactive personality, $\beta = 0.209$, $P < 0.01$; Civility, $\beta = 0.166$, $P < 0.01$; fairness perception, $\beta = 0.403$, $P < 0.01$; and supervisor support, $\beta = 0.102$, $P < 0.10$), except perceived organizational support. The change in R^2 with the help of the study variables is 0.502. It means that these study variables explain 50.2% variance in thriving at work.

Discussion and Conclusion
Discussion of Results

Thriving has become a well-known construct to both scholars and practitioners because it is related to many positive outcomes at workplace (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Porath, 2012; Abid, 2016). Previous theoretical studies have identified several contextual and personal factors that enable thriving at workplace (Paterson et al., 2014; Niessen et al., 2012; Abid et al.,2015b). The current study proposed and explored other factors that are considered as antecedents of thriving at work. In particular, we have identified that proactive personality, civility, fairness perception, organizational support, and supervisor support that together act as engine for thriving at the workplace. The study contributes to the literature on thriving by providing empirical data on the antecedents of thriving.

We find that proactive personality is strongly and positively associated with thriving at work. Individuals with proactive personality are highly suited to dealing with stressful situations, unusual circumstances at the workplace and it is a facilitator of success from the career point of view

(Zhao et al., 2016). They are capable of identifying opportunities in their environment and can modify their behavior to take advantage of opportunities for favorable work outcomes Moreover, they are capable of reacting positively to adversity and manipulating circumstances to dig themselves out of negative work situations. This leads to a higher level of job satisfaction and thus contributes to their sense of well-being that is enhanced vitality. Individuals with a proactive personality also engaged in learning behaviors like seeking feedback. Thus, they contribute to their own growth and development at the workplace and are more likely to thrive. The findings of the current study are consistent with the results of Porath et al. (2012), which also demonstrate that proactive personality is a predictor of thriving at the workplace, as it is related to both of the dimensions of vitality and learning.

Workplace incivility leads to counterproductive behavior at the workplace and affects not only the individual who is the target of the uncivil behavior but also the observers. It contributes to creating a work atmosphere that limits creativity, inhibits the sharing of information, prevents individuals from achieving goals efficiently and effectively, and more importantly, it has a detrimental effect on the psychological well-being of employees (Cortina et al., 2001). An individual who is the target of or has observed incivility in the workplace is likely to dread going to his workplace, and once there will have trouble focusing on the job functions (Pearson et al., 2000). Such an environment discourages feelings of vitality and also prohibits learning, thus, an employee cannot thrive. These findings are verified by the earlier researches conducted by Gkorezis, Kalampouka, and Petridou (2013), and Spreitzer et al. (2012) who also presented evidence which supports the hypothesis that workplace incivility is an obstacle to thriving.

According to Spreitzer et al. (2005), work environment forms the basis for thriving at work. Since work environments are likely to change, an organization needs to promote organizational characteristics which are relatively constant and become a part of the culture. Specifically, an organizational culture characterized by a *climate of trust and respect*, promotes thriving at the workplace

(Spreitzer et al., 2005). Fairness perception provides employees with a mental compass with which they measure trust at the workplace. An employee who believes he will be fairly treated and fairly rewarded for positive behavior at the workplace is more likely to repeat those positive behaviors and therefore improve productivity. Moreover, fairness perception leads to higher job satisfaction and job security. An individual with high levels of fairness perception will feel safe and protected at the workplace which means a higher sense of well-being (feelings of vitality). Furthermore, the feelings of trust encourage sharing of information and learning behaviors enabling both individual and organizational growth and development.

As an employee's relationship with an organization is based on exchange which consists of inputs from the employee in terms of performance, productivity and positive work behavior, and is rewarded by the organization through positive work outcomes. An employee who feels valued by the organization for his contributions is likely to work harder. Similarly, an employee who feels that the organization cares about his well-being will reciprocate (Wayne et al., 1997) and care about the success of the organization. Thus, an employee with a high level of POS will contribute more to his own and the organization's growth and development. The resulting organizational culture will foster better interpersonal relationships at work, a sense of security for the employees, more information sharing and exchange of ideas which leads to workplace learning. Reciprocity plays a strong role. Employees feel that they have an obligation to perform better if their manager is providing them with the support they need for performing their job effectively and efficiently. This support may be in the form of emotional guidance/advice, work related rewards, information related to the employee's work activities, or facilitated access to organizational resources. Strong supervisor support provides a sense of well-being to the employee and encourages the employee to engage in learning behavior like seeking feedback in order to improve. A strong interpersonal relationship between the supervisor and the employee means that the manager will be the most frequent source of feedback for the employee, and thus a

strong component in the employee's learning environment.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The modern workplace is continually changing and organizations need to keep up in order to stay competitive. The results of the present study provide managers and employees with a mechanism/engine to enable thriving at the workplace. Moreover, the study validates the previous literature on thriving at work and its antecedents. The knowledge of the antecedents of thriving at work can empower employees by showing them how they themselves can enhance their productivity and improve their personalities in order to forge ahead in today's competitive and challenging work environment. It provides a roadmap that employees can follow to develop in themselves positive behaviors which will positively influence their position/status at work.

There are numerous positive organizational benefits of thriving employees. Employees who are thriving at the workplace have lesser probability of succumbing to burnout (Porath et al., 2012), which has a diminishing impact on absenteeism and improves employee performance. The synergistic effect of thriving employees has a profound and significant effect on the overall organization's performance.

In order to take advantage of thriving employees, managers need to understand its underlying factors, and how they can integrate them into the work place. The present study provides empirical evidence of the factors which enable thriving at the workplace and a comprehension of these factors will enable managers to influence employees into adopting positive behaviors.

Moreover, human resource is receiving more and more attention as the single most important factor which can provide sustainable competitive advantage to the modern day organization. Companies want people who will be loyal, dedicated, creative, innovative, and contribute to the organization's objectives to their maximum potential. In other words, they want people to thrive at the workplace so that the organization can also thrive in tough competitive environments. An understanding of the antecedents of thriving will provide organizations with a basis through which they can filter candidates

during the selection process, so they have a higher probability of ending up with a team that possesses the characteristics needed for thriving at the workplace.

Limitations and Future Directions

The current study has a few limitations. First, most of the respondents are from the service sector. We recommended that the construct will be applied to other industries such as. manufacturing, so that it can be verified whether the antecedents of thriving identified in this study are related to other industries as well and more studies are required to identify the potential antecedents of the important construct of thriving. For instance, future studies can focus on taking task significance, work engagement and a lot more similar variables as an engine of thriving at the workplace.

Secondly, the study contains cross-sectional data which makes it difficult to build a foundation for causal relations. We recommend that a longitudinal study will be beneficial in drawing forward other avenues of research that can contribute to the literature of thriving at work. Thirdly, data collected through self-report questionnaires expose the research to the possibility of same source bias. Fourthly, the responding sample is situated in Lahore and may not be representative of other areas of the Pakistan or other countries. Finally, current study used heterogeneous sample. As such, the findings may not be generalized with confidence. Future studies should target specific industry for comprehensive understanding of the phenomena understudied and to bolster the confidence in findings.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates the importance of workplace civility, proactive personality, fairness perception, perceived organizational support, and supervisor support on thriving at work. The empirical finding confirms significant relationship between all the above mentioned predictors and thriving at work. Organizations should provide employees with an environment in which the above characteristics are fostered and developed so that employees are able to reach their maximum potential.

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