

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE: KEYS TO LIFE SATISFACTION IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

By employing the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, this study aims to examine the impact of employees' psychological, adaptive and planned resilience on their life satisfaction. Data were collected from employees in hotels, hospitals, and other service sectors during the COVID-19 crisis. The data were analyzed using SPSS. The findings indicate that employees' adaptive and planned resilience positively correlate with their life satisfaction. In contrast, psychological resilience negatively impacts life satisfaction, which is inconsistent with previous studies. This research provides decision-makers with a clearer understanding of the factors affecting life satisfaction. Additionally, the study offers contextual contributions by uniquely collecting data from Oman during the COVID-19 crisis.

Keywords: Psychological resilience; life satisfaction; conservation of resources theory

Paper Type: Research paper

INTRODUCTION

Life satisfaction measures the quality of life, which can be used to measure mood, relationship objectives accomplished, self-concepts, and life-coping capacity during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic (Schmid, Christmann, Oehrlein, Stein, & Thönnissen, 2024). In Oman, COVID-19 first surfaced on February 24 2020. Its probability of effect is created for the psychological, social, economic and financial impact on the public in Oman (Ministry of Health, 2020; Times of Oman, 2020), including life satisfaction. The economy of Oman is mainly based on oil and gas, and some progress is being made in the services sector. Before the global COVID-19 outbreak, Oman had 3.1% unemployed people out of its 4.8 million population, with a US\$203.959 billion GDP (PPP) and 2.1% annual economic growth (Economic Freedom Index, 2020). The citizens of Oman have a moderate per capita income of US\$18,000, with a tolerated 0.9% inflationary impact. To minimize the health hazards of COVID-19, the government of Oman gradually reduced public activities since January 2020, which led to a complete lockdown in mid-March 2020 and affected life satisfaction for the employees working remotely. Based on complete socioeconomic isolation,

the medical advisors and financial analysts indicate long-term economic and psychological challenges for the community.

This COVID-19 crisis has become visible through their lifestyle and how they deal with others (Torales, et al., 2024). It also indicates how they continue to work, as it has become in all these matters that they are not satisfied with them. This belief is untrue because individuals should not think about it or act in an unhealthy way about how to deal with all the changes that may occur to them. All individuals must be able to adapt to all the changes that occur due to disease. Additionally, it is necessary that they feel satisfied with all the things that happen to them in life and adapt to all these changes to continue their life well and not face many difficulties in life. The post-COVID-19 period has brought various challenges to Oman's government regarding its citizens' sustainable mental and financial health. So, our research addressed a fundamental research question, i.e. What is the effect of psychological and organizational resilience on the life satisfaction of health sector employees? Therefore, it was essential to understand the learning psychological resilience policy and employee resilience and its effect on total resilience. This study focuses on studying the resilience of employees, organizations, and physicians in hospitals, hotels, and other service sectors, as well as assessing the relationship between psychological resilience and resilience among employees and the organizational resilience of small business owners after exposure to any crisis like COVID-19.

Studies investigating how psychological and organizational resilience concerning life satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic have identified many significant areas that need more investigation (Baldwin & Tomiura, 2020; Zakeri et al., 2021). Contextual research is necessary to comprehend the progression of resilience and life satisfaction during various pandemic stages. Furthermore, further investigation is required to study multiple groups, including different cultural settings and demographic variations, e.g. hotels and hospitals, to understand resilience's distinct patterns (Masten, 2002; Torales, et al., 2024). Finally, it is essential to inquire into the particular difficulties and elements contributing to life satisfaction where remote work settings were not possible during the pandemic (Prayag, Spector, Orchiston, & Chowdhury, 2019). By addressing these gaps, we may improve our understanding of resilience and use that knowledge to develop specific therapies.

This study aims to integrate the psychological and social science domains to illuminate the repercussions of a pandemic beyond its toll on the health and economic lives of Omani citizens. This study has extended the research on COVID-19 beyond its medical impacts on patients to a psychological trauma that the masses face immediately after the lockdown period. Finally, the government of Oman can educate the business community on continuing their business through safe ways, i.e. shifting to online delivery to save their weakly diversified economy.

In line with a contemporary global health crisis and the Omani vision of 2040, this research contributes to strategic goals related to the Omani economy. This study aims to test the effect of psychological and organizational resilience on life satisfaction. The explicit research question is how psychological, organizational and employee resilience impacts the life satisfaction of employees after the COVID-19 crisis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

By employing the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989), this study has linked psychological and organizational resilience and life satisfaction. Many effects resulted from COVID-19, and the effects were not limited to the physical aspect but extended to include the psychological side of individuals (Hellewell et al., 2020). Many individuals have been greatly disturbed by the conditions that the world has been subjected to, which caused the spread of coronavirus, as we find that many of them no longer consider that there is value in life. Many of them have become exaggeratedly afraid. Some have become uninterested in all the advice and instructions on adhering to the guidelines for preventing this disease, as they are no longer satisfied with life. If a person cannot adapt to all the changes, he may become dissatisfied with life (Torales, et al., 2024). If the person becomes dissatisfied with life, he faces many problems and becomes vulnerable to many diseases associated with depression and anxiety. Therefore, the most successful method to continue living well is the ability to adapt and cope well with the disease. So that one can become satisfied with life. As is inevitable, many individuals still fear this disease even if it is eliminated. It is known that the psychological effects last for more extended periods than the physical effects. The body can recover quickly from disease if treatment is available, but what happens if a person is exposed to a mental illness?

One of the distinguishing features of COVID-19 is its highly contagious nature and fast transmission through human contact. That makes social isolation and economic lockdown its first line of prevention measures (Hellewell et al., 2020), which may reduce the spread of infection but have significant psychological and financial outcomes (Hellewell et al., 2020). This social isolation aspect of COVID-19 may result in the deteriorated psychological state of Omani citizens when confined in their houses and unable to maintain regular contact with their family, acquaintances, employers or business stakeholders. Humans have an innate need to belong, and a social cut-off leads to adverse psychological impacts (Momtaz, Hamid, Ibrahim, Yahaya, & Chai, 2011). Behavioural science literature advocates that Pandemic related isolation can have far-reaching implications for the psychological well-being of individuals (Van Bavel et al., 2020). Well-being includes positive emotions, happiness, and life satisfaction that can be lowered due to social detachment due to a pandemic (Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi, & Cummins, 2008). Positive emotions and life satisfaction are how an individual evaluates his life in terms of satisfaction and happiness (Carruthers & Hood, 2004).

The second isolation aspect is the economic lockdown and a significant decline in business operations. Apart from being psychologically stressful, this has important implications for the financial well-being of a business's owners and employees (Baldwin & Tomiura, 2020). COVID-19 has been deemed a significant source of the global financial crisis because it has halted all trade movements and business operations (McKibbin & Fernando, 2020). The loss of profits for business owners and income for part-time workers may impact their purchasing power, financial stress, and ability to afford living expenses, which are reflected in downhill economic well-being (Prawitz et al., 2006).

Resilience refers to a class of phenomena characterized by good outcomes despite serious threats to adaptation or development. The research on resilience aims to understand and evaluate the

processes that account for these positive outcomes. Resilience is a contextual and inferential concept that necessitates two types of judgments. (Masten., 2002). The first judgment addresses the threat side of the inference. Individuals are not considered resilient if there has never been a significant threat to their development; there must be current or past hazards judged to have the potential to derail normative development. In other words, there must be a demonstrable risk. In many cases, risks are actuarially based predictors of undesirable outcomes drawn from evidence that this status or condition is statistically associated with a higher probability of a "bad" outcome in the future (Kraemer et al., 1997). Many risk factors, ranging from status variables such as a biological child of a parent with schizophrenia or low socioeconomic status to direct measures of exposure to maltreatment or violence, are well-established statistical predictors of subsequent developmental problems, either specific problems or a broad spectrum of difficulties (Torales, et al., 2024).

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

As per Prayag et al. (2019), flexibility is one of the essential positive resources that employees can use to solve many problems. Employee resilience is an emerging field in psychology and organizational behaviour. If you can use it well, you will find many positive results where psychological and employee resilience must facilitate the use of resources and better adapt to life satisfaction (Hobfoll, 1989). At the same time, it is known that employees' resilience at work can help them to respond in the face of all tasks and prosper in the future. Life satisfaction can be enhanced by providing better social support and focusing on better human resource development (Zakeri et al., 2021). This result can be accomplished by focusing on the behaviour of the participants' managers. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Employee resilience positively affects employees' life satisfaction

Prayag et al. (2019) claim that the psychological resilience of human beings is required for life satisfaction. For instance, we can assume that if, during the pressure of job losses during COVID-19, the employee demonstrates more psychological resilience, s/he will be more satisfied with life and perform in the future workplace. There are two schools of thought related to psychological resilience. The first clarifies that psychological flexibility is the ability that allows individuals to deal with various difficulties and adapt to them. The second means that flexibility is a dynamic process that results from the disorders that must be performed in reintegrating it again, as both showed that flexibility could be developed and managed (Torales, et al., 2024). Yuko Neboda, a psychotherapist and spokesperson for the UK Psychotherapy Council, added that many people who suffer from fear and anxiety are less satisfied with life; in contrast, psychologically strong people are more satisfied with life (Maddy, 2020; Saleem et al., 2023). Thus, the following hypothesis is postulated.

H2: Psychological resilience positively affects employees' life satisfaction

Prayag et al. (2019) indicate that the organization's resilience is the ability to respond to all the changes and developments that may occur and benefit from them so that the organization continues to survive better. According to Hobfoll (1989), a firm that allocates more resources enhances the life satisfaction of its employees. This organizational resilience was developed among those firms during a crisis like COVID 19 when the firms adopted technology to allow employees to work remotely to enhance their life satisfaction (Beuren, dos Santos, & Theiss, 2022). Thus, we proposed the following hypothesis.

H3: Organizational resilience positively affects employees' life satisfaction

Figure 1 indicates the linkage between the independent and the dependent variables:

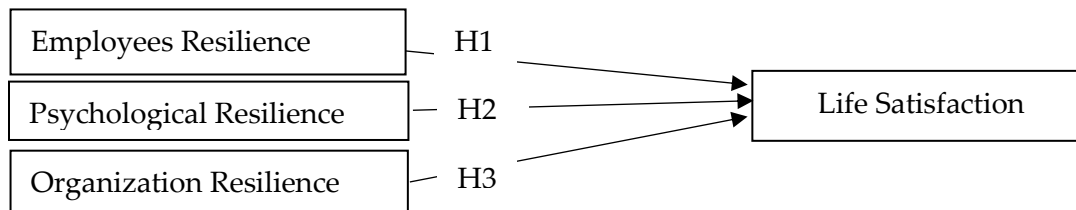


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

METHODS

This study has used a quantitative method to collect and analyze data. This approach uses a simple random sampling method, where 250 employees are targeted with the customized and Arabic-translated questionnaire. For this purpose, the scales for the study variables are to be adapted to match the COVID-19 theme. The sample is proportionally drawn from all the service sector cities of Sohar to ensure an accurate representation of the population in Sohar. A total of 128 samples were used for the final data analysis. The study uses the SPSS- Process macro to test direct and moderating hypotheses.

Demographic Information

We conducted descriptive analysis, including Demographic Information concerning Nationality, Gender, Age, Qualification, Years of experience, Monthly Salary and the Service Sector of the 128 respondents (see Figure 2). Around 80% were Omani employees, and 20% were non-Omani employees. 58% of the participants were male, and 42% were female employees. The range of age of the participants was 26% their age was between 20 – 30 years old, 44% their age was between 30 – 40 years old, 23% their age was between 40 – 50 years old, and 7% their age was between 50 – 60 years old. The qualification of education of the participants was 20% with a diploma, or 49%-degree holder, 22% with a master's degree and 9% having other qualifications. The participants' years of experience represent 23% having experience between 1 – 5 years, 16% having experience

between 6 – 10 years, and 61% having experience of more than ten years. In addition, 16% of the participants had a monthly salary of less than 500 OMR, 14% had a salary range between 501 900 OMR, and 70 % had a monthly salary of more than 901 OMR. 19% represent the hospital sector, 13% represent the hotel sector, and 68% represent another services sector. Table 1, they were having the details of this Demographic Information.

Table 1: Demographics (N = 128)

Description	Details	Number of Participants
Nationality (الجنسية)	Omani (عماني)	102
	Non-Omani (غير عماني)	26
Gender (الجنس)	Male (ذكر)	74
	Female (أنثى)	54
Age (العمر)	20-30	34
	30-40	56
	40-50	29
	50-60	9
	Diploma (دبلوم)	25
Qualification (المؤهل العلمي)	Degree (بكالوريوس)	63
	Master (ماجستير)	29
	Others (أخرى)	11
	1-5 years	29
Years of experiences سنوات الخبرة	6-10 years	21
	more than ten years	78
	Less than 500 OMR أقل من	20
Monthly Salary الراتب الشهري	501 – 900 OMR	18
	Above 901 OMR أكثر من	90
	Hospital المستشفيات	24
Service Sector (select one) القطاع الخدمي	Hotel الفنادق	17
	Other Service Sector قطاعات أخرى	87

Measurement of Constructs

Psychological Resilience: This construct was measured using a four-item scale. The measure was adopted from the Study by Prayag et al. (2019). The sample items include "I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times" and "It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens".

Organizational Resilience: This construct was measured using a ten (10) items scale. This scale consists of two sub-scales of five items, each, i.e. planned resilience and adopted resilience. The study of Prayag et al. (2019) also adopted the measure. The sample items include "Given how others depend on us, the way we plan for the unexpected is appropriate" and "If key people were unavailable, there are always others who could fill their role".

Employees' Resilience: This construct was measured using seven seven-item scale. The measure was adopted from the Study by Prayag et al. (2019). The sample items include "I successfully manage a high workload for long periods " and "I re-evaluate my performance and continually improve how I do my work".

Life Satisfaction: This construct was measured using an items scale. The measure was adopted from the Study by Prayag et al. (2019). The sample items include "In most ways, my life is close to my ideal" and "So far, I have gotten the important things I want ".

Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis used Cronbach's Alpha to calculate each item's reliability. The 0.70 (70%) was selected as the minimum reliable value. Table 2 below shows the details of the constructs with Cronbach's Alpha values.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Constructs	Number of Items	Number of deleted items	Cronbach's Alpha
Life Satisfaction	5	0	0.892
Employees Resilience	6	0	0.876
Psychological resilience	4	1	0.909
Adaptive Resilience	5	0	0.866
Planned Resilience	5	0	0.929

Note: range of reliability is between 0.866 and 0.929

The life satisfaction scale consists of 5 items. The scale was adapted from the Study of Prayag et al. (2019). The Cronbach's Alpha of the scale is 0.892, which is above 0.7, so this scale is reliable for further analysis. Employee's resilience scale consists of 6 items. The scale was adapted from the Study of Prayag et al. (2019). The Cronbach's Alpha of the scale is 0.876, which is above 0.7, so this scale is reliable for further analysis. The psychological resilience scale consists of 5 items. The scale was adapted from the Study of Prayag et al. (2019). The Cronbach's Alpha of the scale is 0.556, which is less than 0.7, so in this case, we checked and removed the unreliable item (one item), and the Cronbach's Alpha is now 0.909, so this scale is reliable for further analysis. The adaptive resilience scale consists of 5 items. The scale was adapted from the Study of Prayag et al. (2019). The Cronbach's Alpha of the scale is 0.866, which is above 0.7, so this scale is reliable for further analysis. Finally, the planned resilience scale consists of 5 items. The scale was adapted from the Study of Prayag et al. (2019). The Cronbach's Alpha of the scale is 0.929, which is above 0.7, so this scale is reliable for further analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this part, we analyzed the data gathered using the questionnaire and responses from 128 participants. Then, we evaluated the responses and analyzed the findings and the results. It is

also worth mentioning that this questionnaire has been translated into Arabic, mainly to gain the respect of participants who do not speak or read English.

The questionnaire has five (5) sections besides the Demographic Information. The first section has taken the feedback and responses about Life Satisfaction. The second section talks about employee resilience. The third one has taken the participant's views about Psychological Resilience. The fourth section discusses Adaptive Resilience, and the fifth section discusses Planned Resilience.

Correlations and Regression Analysis

Table 3 below indicates the correlation analysis and describes the relationship between each independent variable with the dependent variable:

Table 3: Correlations Analysis

Constructs	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Life Satisfaction	3.26	0.9	1				
2. Employee Resilience	3.96	0.7	0.585**	1			
3. Psychological Resilience	3.17	1	-0.26**	-0.28**	1		
4. Adaptive Resilience	3.26	0.9	0.60**	0.72**	-0.19*	1	
5. Planned Resilience	3.52	0.9	0.55**	0.64**	-0.04	0.84**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 – tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 – tailed).

Correlation Analysis demonstrates that the relationship between employee resilience and life satisfaction ($r=0.585$; $p<0.01$), the relationship between psychological resilience and life satisfaction ($r= -0.261$; $p<0.01$), the relationship between adaptive resilience and life satisfaction ($r= 0.604$; $p<0.01$) and the relationship between planned resilience and life satisfaction ($r= 0.552$; $p<0.01$).

Results show that 43.2% variation is explained in life satisfaction by four independent variables (Employee Resilience, Psychological Resilience, Adaptive Resilience and Planned Resilience). Based on table 4 below which indicate the direct and indirect effects of life satisfaction. We accept our first hypothesis, "employee resilience" impacts "life Satisfaction" during COVID-19 in hotels and hospitals sectors ($\beta=0.258$; $p <0.05$; $t= 2.556$, $\text{sig} = 0.012$). There is evidence of a linear relationship between employee resilience and life satisfaction. Based on the analysis and the results from this research, employee resilience positively affects life satisfaction. The second hypothesis is rejected, "psychological resilience" impacts "life Satisfaction" during COVID-19 at hotels and hospitals sectors ($\beta= -0.138$; $p <0.05$; $t= -1.881$, $\text{sig} = 0.62$). There is no evidence of a linear relationship between psychological resilience and life satisfaction. Unfortunately, based on the analysis and the results from this research, psychological resilience has negatively affected life satisfaction. We also reject the third hypothesis, "adaptive resilience" impacts "life Satisfaction" during COVID-19 at hotels and hospitals sectors ($\beta=0.239$; $p <0.05$; $t= 1.707$, $\text{sig} = 0.09$). There is no evidence of a linear relationship between adaptive resilience and life satisfaction. Based on the

analysis and the results from this research, adaptive resilience negatively affects life satisfaction. The fourth and last hypothesis was rejected, "planned resilience" impacts "life Satisfaction" during COVID-19 at hotels and hospitals sectors ($\beta=0.182$; $p < 0.05$; $t = 1.413$, $\text{sig} = 0.16$). There is no evidence of a linear relationship between planned resilience and life satisfaction. However, the outcomes of this research and the results show that planned resilience also positively affects life satisfaction.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1. Employee Resilience	0.135	0.258	2.556	0.012
2. Psychological Resilience	0.067	-0.138	-1.881	0.062
3. Adaptive Resilience	0.139	0.239	1.707	0.090
4. Planned Resilience	0.135	0.182	1.413	0.160

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (significance levels). The number of cases is 128. Employees Resilience (ER); Psychological Resilience (PR); Adaptive Resilience (AR); Planned Resilience (PLR).

Here we have discussed the data gathered using the questionnaire and responses received from 128 participants. The data has been analyzed and evaluated using the SPSS tool. This part goes through the findings of the research study, the study's implications for both management and the employees, the research limitations, the future research, and the conclusion.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

At this stage, there are insufficient studies on the relationship and linkage between the different types of resilience (employee resilience, psychological resilience, adaptive resilience and planned resilience) with life satisfaction. Yet, these linkages and relationships are essential and critical to recovering social activities after any disturbance (Hall et al., 2018; Prayag et al., 2019). Regarding the first hypothesis, the findings and results are consistent with the previous study (Prayag et al., 2019), while the findings and results of psychological resilience and organization resilience (both adaptive and planned resilience) are unrelated to life satisfaction or inconsistent with the previous studies (Prayag, et al., 2019; Tamarit, et al., 2023). The reason for this inconsistency of organizational resilience (adaptive and planned resilience) could be that the organizational culture in the Middle East could be different from that of Western countries. Another reason could also be religion, where the Middle East needs to follow certain rules and regulations which may differ from Western countries. Finally, the third reason could be the collective nature of society.

Implications

The findings of this research study indicate that employee resilience, adaptive resilience, and planned resilience have a positive impact life satisfaction among hotels, hospitals, and other service sector employees. Psychological resilience, however, has shown unexpected results, showing a negative impact on employees' life satisfaction.

This research benefits the Ministry of Health and hospital staff by providing a clear plan for health facilities post-crisis, preparing them for future challenges of similar epidemics like COVID-19. It also offers decision-makers a better understanding of the factors affecting life satisfaction, enabling them to improve and develop a well-structured approach for handling unexpected crises and emergencies. The results directly impact employees in hotels, hospitals, and other service sectors by ensuring their motivation remains positive and their performance sustainable.

CONCLUSION

This research study has clarified the relationship and role of different types of resilience (employee, psychological, adaptive, and planned resilience) with life satisfaction. The finding indicates that the organization has to invest in organizational resilience, adaptive resilience, and planned resilience to enhance the employees' overall resilience and life satisfaction. An organization that supports preparing plans and processes to deal with any unexpected emergencies and crises and clear priorities on their employees' needs during these challenging times can be more resilient and survive any problematic situations. Finally, the Ministry of Health and the government of Oman can share the results and enhance the business community's improvement to continue their business through better and safer ways, i.e. shifting from normal and traditional modes to innovative and online services to save their growing diversified economy.

Limitations and future research

This research study has a few limitations. Geographical location is considered to be the most important limitation of this study. The sample taken to participate in this research study was mainly from Suhar city in Al-Batinah North. Hence, this research study might not be similar and linked to employees outside Suhar City. Another limitation could be that the factors used in this research study (employee, psychological, adaptive, and planned resilience) were selected based on previous studies related to different sectors like tourism. We may consider some other factors as well in future research.

Additionally, this research study depended only on one method to gather the information and data required to link life satisfaction and other resiliencies (employee resilience, psychological resilience, adaptive resilience, and planned resilience), which is the questionnaire. In future research, we may consider having mixed-method or multiple-method cases. Having mixed methods can enable the researcher to validate each factor's effect on life satisfaction deeply. Finally, as the Pandemic of COVID 19 is still new to the world, research and studies on the same topic are rare and limited in Oman and globally. These study limitations can offer opportunities for future research on the same issues and factors.

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