

Role Stress, Psychological Well Being and Resilience among Working Professionals

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Abstract

External demand on biological, social and psychological equilibrium of individuals, called as stress, has adverse impact on health, performance and wellbeing of an individual. One of the principal sectors of life, job and organization, leads to workplace stress. In both developed and developing nations job stress poses significant health risk to employees leading to anxiety, burnout, cardiovascular disease, depression, and insomnia. Declared as worldwide epidemic by WHO, stress, not only results in large emotional cost to worker's performance and financial burden on organization but also accounts for accidents at workplace.

In the context of this study, the factor of psychological well-being is a state of mind which includes an individual's desire to live life joyfully, and attain equilibrium between activities at work and efforts to build psychological resilience where resilience is the ability to bounce back or rebound from difficulty or misfortune or even increased responsibility.

This analysis which establishes quantitative relationship among organization role stress, psychological well-being and resilience at work can be used by organizations and academia in order to gain insights into organizations role stress, psychological well-being and resilience at workplace.

Keywords : Role Stress, Psychological Well-being, Resilience, Occupational Stress

Introduction

A healthy work place is one where the pressures are in harmony with the capabilities and resources of an employee, with the extent of control employees have over their work, and with the care they receive from those who matter the most in the organization. However, the present human condition prevailing at workplace unfortunately comprises of stress along with other mental health issues. Pressure perceived as tolerable by an employee, may keep him/her attentive, driven, able to work and learn, based on the available resources and individual characteristics. However, when that pressure becomes intolerable or unmanageable it leads to stress.

Stress originating from occupation adversely impacts physical and mental health of employees (Batista & Reio Jr., 2019). Work stress is spread across the globe, and often has adverse effect on health, general well-being, and performance based on diverse organisational and behavioural studies performed in past few decades. (Babatunde, 2013).



Literature Review

Workplace Stress

As per Pestonjee (1992) stress can originate from the following three aspects of one's life:

Organization and Job: This aspect of one's life talks about the work setting and the constituents which comprises of the nature of work, social relationships at workplace, work culture, organization culture, and remuneration offered at workplace.

Social Sector: This represents social environment, and its constituents such as religion, caste, language, attitudes, political inclination of the individuals and people around him.

Intrapsychic Sector: This aspect includes the kind of stress which can originate in the mind of an individual due to their nature or personality, values and beliefs, desires and hopes.

In both developed and developing nations, job stress is a significant health risk for workers, having impact at workplace and beyond "(Rehman et al., 2012). All those who work across organization - employees, labour, contractors, temporary workers, etc. may be impacted by stress, resulting into depression, anxiety, burnout, cardiovascular disease, and insomnia (Lee et al., 2013; Morris et al., 2013; Nakao, 2010). Such stress has further increased due to technology adoption at workplace (Gächter et al., 2011).

Job stress has significantly impacted workplace productivity – from 1996 to 2008, 1 million employees were away from the workplace each day as a result of stress and stress associated ailment – leading United Nations to label job stress as the 20th century disease. Stress has been declared as worldwide epidemic by World Health Organization (Kanji & Chopra, 2009), and thus it has become one of the most serious professional health peril (Adebayo & Ogunsina, 2011; Charu, 2013), resulting in 80% of accidents at workplace (Adaramola (2012). Overall, job stress negatively impacts worker's well-being and puts a considerable financial burden on organizational performance (Bell et al., 2012; Skakon et al., 2010). For this reason, employee health and well-being have gained significance, to drive down the compensation claims and medical costs associated with stress and stress-related illness (Nixon et al., 2011). High stress on the job has become a key issue that organizations are trying to address (Gbadamosi & Ross, 2012).

According to research conducted at The Federal Government's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) up to 40% of U.S. workers feel that their job causes stress (Feizi et al., 2012), opinion of 25% of the researched population was that their work was the prime reason for stress, opinion of 75% of the researched population was that they have increased stress at work as compared to their earlier generation (Bhui et al., 2012). According to both the gender, stress was the primary reason for people to lead an unhinged life and reaching a point of stability was their major apprehension (Matheson & Rosen 2012).

Job stress can also emanate from the role that an employee plays in an organization (Pareek, 1983). The term role was defined as a set of functions, which an employee executes in an organization based organizational and personal expectations of their role. Two role systems have been identified as part of the study which can lead to role stress.

A conflict in the role space states that there could be struggles between the employee's role in the organization and the other roles played by them as member of a family or social structure.

A conflict in the role set states that there could be inconsistency between the roles played by an employee in the organization and their central nature. Role set conflicts can also result from the



incompatibilities within the different expectations that the roles played by other employees in the organization with the role of the individual.

With role stress impacting employees, it is imperative that a conducive environment, one which improves mental health of employees, is created at work place. Pestonjee & Pandey (2013) give introduction to the new world of work with respect to stress by highlighting issues such as:

Necessary social structure and support system to reduce the probability of break downs in organization

Mental health of employees at large as a result of changing social environment, technology environment, and organizational environment

Psychological Well-Being

Huppert (2009) described psychological well-being (PWB) as living with a good feeling and functioning efficiently to cope with the negative life experiences. Employee well being is a broad construct comprising of physical, psychological, and mental, health. According to Ryan & Deci (2001), some people evaluate well-being based on the nature of experiences they have in their everyday life also known as subjective well-being (SWB). While others evaluate well-being based on the existence of having significance in life and understanding its nucleus. This viewpoint of well-being which suggests how people take account of their lives is termed as psychological well-being (Waterman, 1993). The school of thought which follows subjective well-being, articulates well-being in terms of gratification in life and contentment (Diener & Suh 1997), while the school of thought which follows psychological well-being, articulates on expressions of advancement in life and existential questions of life (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989, 1995).

PWB is about self-esteem, environmental mastery, autonomy, and having positive relationships resulting in purposefulness in life and getting a feeling of continued growth and development (Ryff, 1995). PWB can be defined as a mental state with a lack of a psychological condition. It can comprise of a person's aptitude to appreciate life, and ensure an equilibrium in daily happenings and to attain psychological resilience. People regularly experience moods and emotions, which have a positive effect or an adverse effect. Thus, people have a level of well-being even if they do not often perceptively think about it, and the psychological system offers a continual valuation of what is happening to the person.

Psychological well-being is tied to an individual's mindfulness that he or she has, or will have, a meaningful and self-fulfilling life (Keyes et al., 2002). PWB states in what way individuals appraise their life.

Studies show that psychological well-being can boost resilience, endurance, and optimism (Salsman et al., 2014). Psychological well-being is necessary to manage day to day life chores effectively. People find inner peace and inner gratification, which often results in reduction of stress while facing their daily life challenges.

Resilience

It refers to the psychological capacity to bounce back from misfortune, ambiguity, conflict, disaster, or any change, and increased responsibility (Luthans, 2002). According to Gu & Day (2007), resilience enables us to understand ways in which people stay motivated in times of change. Thus, resilience enables one to move on from failure and stay strong after failure.

Sirois et al., (2015) suggested that aspects such as resilience, self-compassion and mindfulness may play a part in a person's strength to sustain a constructive sense of well-being even through stressful periods. Resilience is positively associated with numerous behavioral and psychological outcomes such as



positive attitude, lower suffering, and hopefulness in thinking (Kumpfer, 1999; Utsey et al., 2008). Stress resilience has been defined as the ability to rebound from stress (Smith et al., 2008), and high levels of stress resilience improves well-being at workplace (Avey et al., 2010).

The well-being of a person can be significantly affected by their resilience (Aspinwall, 2004; Cohn et al., 2009; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Based on the research by Wagnild & Young (1993), an individual's resilience can overpower the negative consequences of stress. Dyrbye et al., (2010) state that individuals with resilience experience lesser stress and depression.

While existing research backs the influence of resilience on stress, it is important to understand the relationship between resilience and role stress, further it is essential to understand whether the relationship between resilience and role stress is influenced through the mediating variable Psychological Well-being at work (PWBW). PWBW would clarify the nature of relationship between resilience and role stress.

PWBW as a mediating variable between resilience and role stress may further help organisations to reduce the role stress experienced by employees.

Theoretical Framework

From this literature review, a theoretical framework is proposed which will form basis for empirical examination of the various links. The study will extend and contribute to the existing body of knowledge by proposing the following hypothesis

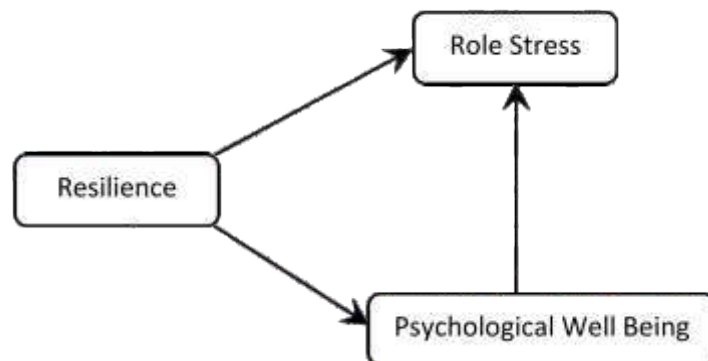
H1: People's resilience at work has an association with their psychological well-being at work

H2: People's role stress has an association with their resilience at work

H3: People's role stress has an association with their psychological well-being at work

H4: Psychological well-being at work mediates the negative effect of resilience on organizational role stress

Figure 1: Proposed model



The current study aims to quantify how enhanced resilience could lead to affirmative outcomes for the individual in terms of improved psychological well-being and reduced stress.

Sample

A quantitative study on a sample of 201 employees from multiple organizations was conducted. The sample includes responses from both the genders with 150 males and 51 females. The respondents were between the age group of 21 to 60 years with 40 percent respondents between the age group 21 to 30 and 35 percent respondents between the age group 31 to 40.

Measures

Rizzo et al., (1970) developed a scale which could measure role ambiguity and role conflict in complex organizations, however, the scale developed by Pareek (1983) called Organizational Role Stress (ORS) explores 10 dimensions of role stress which also includes role ambiguity and role conflict.

For the purpose of this study to measure role stress, Organizational Role Stress (ORS) scale (Pareek, 1983) was used. Based on the nature of the conflict (role set and role space), Organizational Role Stress was further divided into 10 types by Pareek (1983).

A struggle between the role in the professional set up and the role in a non-professional set up i.e., with friends and family is termed as Inter-role Distance (IRD).

When an employee feels 'stuck' in the role at the organization, they are said to have stress termed as Role Stagnation (RS).

When a conflict arises from unwanted expectations and demands from other roles in the organization, the employee experience stress called Role Expectation Conflict (REC).

When an employee feels the functions which their role should be performing are given to other roles, they experience stress due to Role Erosion (RE).

When an employee feels burdened by the work assigned to their role, they experience stress due to Role Overload (RO).

When the associations between an employee's role and the other roles in the organization are sparse/absent, they experience stress due to Role Isolation (RI).

Personal inadequacy (PI) showcases inadequacy of skills, preparation, knowledge, of a respondent to be effective.

When an employee is faced by conflict resulting out of their values and their role in the organization, they experience stress called Self-role distance (SRD).

When an employee faces with lack of clarity in what other roles in the organization expect from them, they experience stress called Role Ambiguity (RA).

When an employee has insufficient resources to perform the given task at hand, they experience stress called Resource Inadequacy (RIn).

ORS is a 50-item scale measured on five-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Of the 50 items in the scale, each of the 10 categories are measured with five items each. For the purpose of this study, the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.92.

While studying psychological well-being of employees in organizational set up, it is important to use contextualized measures because organizations have their specific concerns and practises for the employees working in it. (Dagenais-Desmarais & Savoie, 2012) introduced five dimensions of psychological well-being at work (PWBW) that designates an employee's positive experiences at work.

The perception of an employee experiencing positive associations while networking with other employees in an organization is termed as Interpersonal fit at work (IFW).

The perception of achieving a noteworthy and stimulating job that allows an employee to have a fulfilling experience is termed as Thriving at work (TW).



The awareness an employee has, of possessing the essential aptitude to do their tasks efficiently is termed as Feeling of competency (FC).

An employee's perception that they are being appreciated in the organization is termed as Perceived recognition (PR).

Desire for involvement at work (DIW) is a desire of an employee to get involved in the functioning of an organization and contribute towards its success.

It is a 25 item scale measured on seven-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Of the 25 items in the scale, each of the five categories are measured with five items each. For the purpose of this study, the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.948.

The Resilience at Work scale (Stephens et al., 2013) has been designed to assess the ability to bounce back at work. It was measured using five items (e.g., "I bounce back when I confront setbacks at work.") Items are scored on five-point rating scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). This scale has good internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha = 0.83.

Result and Analysis

Study is based on correlational research design. To examine the hypotheses, descriptive and inferential statistical methods including mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient analysis, regression analysis, structural equation modeling through AMOS, and mediation effect with the help of bootstrapping technique.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	RSC	PWBW
ORS	57.428	28.157	-.259**	-.475**
RSC	5.673	1.295		.715**
PWBW	19.848	4.119		

****Significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

Where ORS = Organizational Role Stress, PWBW = Psychological Well Being at work, RSC = Resilience



Table 2: Correlations among constructs

	RSC	IRD	RS	REC	RE	RO	RI	PI	SRD	RA	RIN	IFW	TW	FC	PRW	DIW
Mean	5.673	6.910	6.537	5.065	6.726	5.866	5.861	4.925	6.174	4.214	5.149	20.229	18.891	20.592	18.761	20.766
Std. Dev.	1.295	4.026	3.869	3.548	3.571	3.788	3.613	3.656	3.688	3.662	3.442	4.299	5.177	4.173	4.794	4.105
RSC	1															
IRD	-.143 [*]	1														
RS	-.243 ^{**}	.487 ^{**}	1													
REC	-.297 ^{**}	.594 ^{**}	.569 ^{**}	1												
RE	-0.051	.296 ^{**}	.587 ^{**}	.389 ^{**}	1											
RO	-.226 ^{**}	.694 ^{**}	.493 ^{**}	.651 ^{**}	.220 ^{**}	1										
RI	-.197 ^{**}	.491 ^{**}	.666 ^{**}	.596 ^{**}	.462 ^{**}	.400 ^{**}	1									
PI	-0.136	.364 ^{**}	.388 ^{**}	.493 ^{**}	.312 ^{**}	.407 ^{**}	.400 ^{**}	1								
SRD	-.141 [*]	.461 ^{**}	.644 ^{**}	.615 ^{**}	.633 ^{**}	.426 ^{**}	.690 ^{**}	.564 ^{**}	1							
RA	-.302 ^{**}	.480 ^{**}	.594 ^{**}	.716 ^{**}	.471 ^{**}	.524 ^{**}	.636 ^{**}	.595 ^{**}	.676 ^{**}	1						
RIN	-.246 ^{**}	.577 ^{**}	.514 ^{**}	.715 ^{**}	.416 ^{**}	.613 ^{**}	.672 ^{**}	.532 ^{**}	.652 ^{**}	.707 ^{**}	1					
IFW	.719 ^{**}	-.202 ^{**}	-.421 ^{**}	-.414 ^{**}	-.236 ^{**}	-.268 ^{**}	-.362 ^{**}	-.211 ^{**}	-.357 ^{**}	-.443 ^{**}	-.337 ^{**}	1				
TW	.567 ^{**}	-.244 ^{**}	-.563 ^{**}	-.429 ^{**}	-.338 ^{**}	-.294 ^{**}	-.461 ^{**}	-.225 ^{**}	-.469 ^{**}	-.483 ^{**}	-.390 ^{**}	.800 ^{**}	1			
FC	.729 ^{**}	-.209 ^{**}	-.353 ^{**}	-.436 ^{**}	-.145 ^{**}	-.291 ^{**}	-.286 ^{**}	-.350 ^{**}	-.299 ^{**}	-.499 ^{**}	-.386 ^{**}	.788 ^{**}	.772 ^{**}	1		
PRW	.549 ^{**}	-.210 ^{**}	-.496 ^{**}	-.431 ^{**}	-.315 ^{**}	-.262 ^{**}	-.423 ^{**}	-.266 ^{**}	-.442 ^{**}	-.522 ^{**}	-.420 ^{**}	.812 ^{**}	.841 ^{**}	.778 ^{**}	1	
DIW	.735 ^{**}	-.150 [*]	-.262 ^{**}	-.368 ^{**}	-0.040	-.262 ^{**}	-.161 [*]	-.177 [*]	-.184 ^{**}	-.354 ^{**}	-.262 ^{**}	.815 ^{**}	.718 ^{**}	.848 ^{**}	.754 ^{**}	1

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

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



AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) was used to test the proposed relationship and to conduct data analysis among the variables. The structural equation model postulates the theorized relationship among constructs. Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation method was used to approximate the path coefficients between the constructs.

Figure 2: Path Diagram

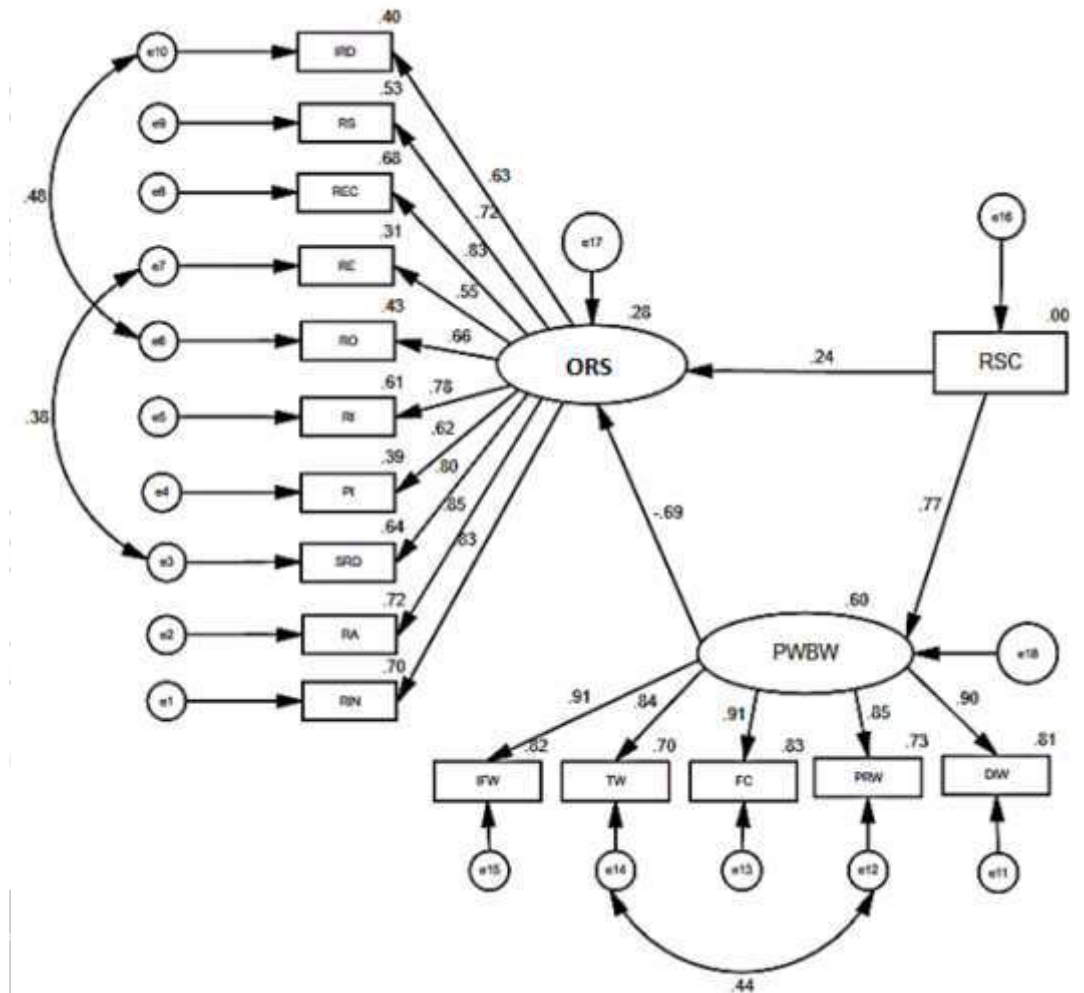


Table 3: Hypothesis testing using path coefficient

Model	Path coefficient	Remarks
H1: RSC → PWBW	0.774***	hypothesis supported
H2: RSC → ORS	0.24*	hypothesis not supported
H3: PWBW → ORS	-0.691***	hypothesis supported

***Significant at 0.001 level (2-tailed), *Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Where PWBW = Psychological Well Being at work, ORS = Organizational Role Stress, RSC = Resilience



Except for one path (resilience → organizational role stress), two paths were significant at 0.001 level. Data from table 1,2, and 3 show that the model provides good understanding of the aspects that impact the role stress

Table 4:
Standardized Regression Weights

		Estimate
PWBW	← RSC	0.774***
ORS	← RSC	0.24*
ORS	← PWBW	-0.691***
DIW	← PWBW	0.902***
FC	← PWBW	0.913***
TW	← PWBW	0.838***
IFW	← PWBW	0.905***
PRW	← PWBW	0.852***
RIN	← ORS	0.834***
RA	← ORS	0.848***
SRD	← ORS	0.8***
PI	← ORS	0.623***
RI	← ORS	0.781***
RO	← ORS	0.658***
RE	← ORS	0.553***
REC	← ORS	0.826***
IRD	← ORS	0.631***
RS	← Stress	0.725***

***Significant at 0.001 level (2-tailed),

*Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5:
Squared Multiple Correlation(R²)

	Estimate
RSC	0
PWBW	0.599
ORS	0.279
RI	0.61
RE	0.306
PI	0.388
IFW	0.819
TW	0.702
FC	0.834
PRW	0.725
DIW	0.813
IRD	0.398
RS	0.526
REC	0.683
RO	0.433
SRD	0.64
RA	0.719
RIN	0.696



An examination of standardized regression coefficient between the indicator and their constructs was studied to assess the convergent validity of the measurement models of the constructs. The loadings estimate varied between 0.55 and 0.85 for organizational role stress, and 0.84 and 0.91 for psychological well-being at work.

The model was verified for the likelihood of the association among the constructs. The value of χ^2 was enhanced by adding covariance among the error terms of IRD & RO and RE & SRD along with a covariance between error terms of TW & PRW. The values of fit indices were acceptable for the proposed model with GFI (goodness of fit index) = 0.790 and CFI (confirmatory fit index) = 0.895. The ratio of chi-square statistic to the degree of freedom (3.845) was less than 5.

It is estimated that resilience, as the predictor of psychological well-being, explains 60 percent of its variance. Similarly, it is estimated that psychological well-being and resilience, as the predictor of role stress explain 28 percent of its variance.

Table 6: Regression Analysis with ORS as Dependant Variable

Predictors of ORS	Zero order correlation	Standardized beta	Significance F change
Thriving at work	-0.509	-0.329	0.005
Feeling of Competency at work	-0.424	-0.288	0.023
Perceived Recognition at work	-0.494	-0.316	0.009
Desire for Involvement at work	-0.290	0.428	0.000

Total R square = 0.307, therefore, variance explained = 30.7%

The model summary indicates that there are four determinants of ORS i.e. TW, FC, PRW, and DIW. This can be expressed in the following equation where only standardized beta coefficients have been used: $y = a + bx_1 + bx_2 + bx_3 + bx_4$

y (dependent variable) = $\alpha + \beta_1$ of predictor 1 + β_2 of predictor 2... + β_4 of predictor 4.

Based on the above equation, various contributors of ORS can be placed in the following equations:

ORS = $\alpha +$ Thriving at work (-0.329) + Feeling of Competency at work (-0.288) + Perceived Recognition at work (-0.316) + Desire for involvement at work (0.428)

The table 6 reveals that desire for involvement at work is the most important predictor of ORS which explains 42.8 percent of the variance. The other predictors of ORS are thriving at work which explains 32.9 percent of the variance followed by perceived recognition at work which explains 31.6 percent variance. Feeling of competency at work explains 28.8 percent variance.

Bootstrapping method was used to understand the mediating effect of psychological well-being as bootstrapping is a preferred method to study mediation (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) given the sample size of the research is 201.

It is shown in the table 3 that the path coefficient value (for path RSC \rightarrow ORS) becomes insignificant in the free model, which previously was significant ($\beta = 0.259, p < 0.001$) for constrain model.



Table 7: Mediation test of Psychological Wellbeing

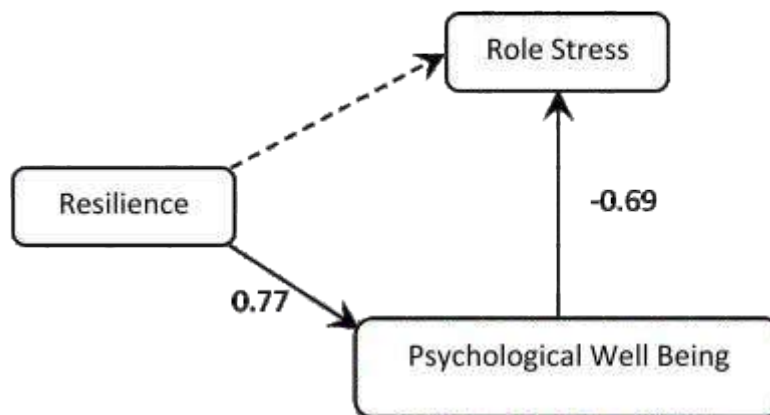
Causal Path: PWBW as a Mediator	Path coefficient
RSC → ORS when PWBW → ORS is constrained	-0.294***
RSC → ORS when PWBW → ORS is opened	0.24

*** Significant at $p < 0.001$

With the help of bootstrapping technique using AMOS, the standardized indirect (mediated) effect of PWBW on RSC Stress is -.535. The bias corrected 99% confidence interval (-.771, -.333) excludes zero and therefore also supports the conclusion that the indirect effect of resilience on organizational role stress through the mediators thriving at work, feeling of competency, perceived recognition at work and desire of psychological well-being at work are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (AMOS reports the corresponding $p = .004$ for the bias-corrected bootstrap method). Thus, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of PWBW on RSC Stress, when RSC goes up by 1 standard deviation, Stress goes down by 0.535 standard deviations.

The discoveries from the quantitative examination helped in preparing a modified model for the study. This model redirects the association between resilience and organizational role stress and depicts psychological well-being at work as mediator. A graphic depiction of the concluding structural model, which comprises the standardized path coefficients, is demonstrated below.

Figure 3: Derived model



Discussions

From the path diagram and table 3, it is clear that organizational role stress has a negative relationship with an individual's psychological well-being at work. Also, resilience at work has a positive association with psychological well-being at work. These findings indicate that when an individual finds meaning and purpose in life as a result of the work, they tend to experience lower stress at workplace. Individuals who evaluate their lives positively, who are mindful that they have or will have a meaningful and a self-fulfilling work life tend to be less stressed.

Those employees who perceive that they possess necessary aptitude to do their jobs efficiently, find their job stimulating and are appreciated within the organization, and experience positive association with other employees in the organization, will be able to find a meaningful and self-fulfilling work life, consequently, reducing their stress.

Organizations can play a major role in helping their employees find meaning and purpose in life and help them bounce back from work related failure which will reduce the effect of stress on the employees.

Conclusion

The concluding research model with the satisfactory model fit was established after studying the path coefficients and mediating effect of psychological well-being at work.

The acceptance of the initial hypothesis of the study specifies that resilience has a significant positive bearing on the psychological well-being at work of an employee. This finding was persistent with other studies like that of Aspinwall (2004), Cohn et al., (2009), Tugade & Fredrickson (2004). The significant result suggests that as the resilience of an employee increases, the psychological well-being at work also increases leading to more positive experiences at work. The rejection of the second hypothesis of the study indicates that the resilience of an employee does not help in reducing the role stress of the employees.

Third hypothesis supports the relationship between psychological well-being at work and organizational role stress. This suggests that when employees have positive experiences at work and find meaning and purpose in life through their work in the organization, it results in reduced role stress.

Similar study can be undertaken for the employees working in an organization to understand their psychological well-being at work and their resilience which can in turn help predict their role stress. Organizations can make a conscious effort in providing positive experiences at work, appreciate their employees more frequently, align the work done by the employees so that they find meaning and purpose in life. Such efforts will not only help in reducing the stress of the employees but also help in optimal functioning of the employees while achieving their highest potential (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989, 1995).

In addition to psychological well-being and resilience other factors such as the spiritual climate of the organization can also help predict the role stress of an individual.

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