

**PAST AND PRESENT OF THRIVING AT WORKPLACE:  
A NOMOLOGICAL NETWORK**

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**Abstract:** *Thriving is a positive mental state characterized by a joint state of learning and vitality. Organizations with thriving employees can gain competitive advantage in the industry. This study presents the managers with an amalgamation of all the findings that can be implemented and focused on to ensure thriving employees to benefit the organization in totality such as supervisory support, fairness perception, psychological safety in working environment, civility at workplace etc. A number of favorable factors ensured in organizations can result as positive outcomes of thriving such as increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, better health of employees, increased organizational behavioral and many more. Above 150 papers are reviewed since the socially embedded model on thriving has been framed by Spreitzer (2005). All the tested and validated factors interms of antecedents and consequences have been put together in this study to help organizations take advantage and experience dual growth in terms of employees and organizations success.*

**Keywords:** *Thriving; Vitality; Learning; Antecedents; Consequences*

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## Introduction

“Thriving is a psychological state in which individuals jointly experience a sense of vitality and learning at workplace” (Spreitzer et al., 2005). She has also defined learning as “a sense of acquiring knowledge and vitality is defined as a sense of being alive and a feeling of positive energy”. Thriving is not a superficial goal for organizations. Thriving predicts productivity, creativity, perseverance and better supervisor rating at the workplace. Thus, thriving workforce is important to the bottom line of the organizations. Given the importance of thriving, the organizations should make an effort to provide an environment in which employees can thrive.

Spreitzer (2005) and her colleagues have referred thriving at the workplace as a positive and desirable emotional and mental state in which individuals experience a sense of learning and vitality. Thriving employees sense that their current practice and behaviors at work motivates and supports them which results in personal growth and self development. Spreitzer (2005) has defined vitality, the primary element of thriving as a positive feeling of being energetic and feeling alive. She further defines the second element learning as a feeling that they are able to apply and acquire valuable knowledge and skills. A core assumption of the construct of thriving is the presence of both learning and vitality in employees to thrive.

There are two major reasons for defining thriving as a combination of learning and vitality. Spreitzer (2005) advocates that there are two dimensions of psychological experience: cognitive and affective dimensions which are closely related thus, thriving is no exception. Secondly, as well-being is a multidimensional construct similarly in case of thriving vitality being a pleasurable experience represents hedonic component of well-being (Spreitzer, 2005) and learning represents

eudemonic component of well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

This study aims to explore the antecedents of thriving at personal and professional level. Thriving is an important ingredient for a number of favorable outcomes. Exploration of enabling factors of thriving help expand the existing research in organizational behavior and help in identifying the key aspects as an engine of thriving at work (Niessen et al., 2012).

The research based on nomological network incorporates internal and external evaluation of the variable. The relationships are analyzed among differentiable facets of the constructs which enables the researcher to study its internal construction and the possible dimensions of the construct.

The nomological network was an idea developed by Lee Cronbach and Paul Meehl in 1955 (Cronbach and Meehl, 1995). The term nomological is derived from Greek language and means lawful so the term lawful is referred to as lawful network. This network includes theoretical framework for what you are trying to measure, how you are going to measure it and the specification of the linkages among and between the frameworks.

The workplace dynamics are changing continuously thus organizations also need to keep up to the pace in order to be competitive. Porath et al. (2012) is of the view that thriving employees are more energetic and also experience a high level of psychological functioning. Many researchers found thriving as an important antecedent of a number of favorable outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, decreased absenteeism, high job performance and overall job satisfaction. Thriving has also resulted in reduced burnout, job strains and turnover intention and also actual turnover (Paterson et al., 2013; Abid, 2014; Abid et al., 2015).

In order to build a thriving work force the managers need to dig into its fundamental factors and also evaluate how those factors can be integrated at the workplace. The current study provides empirical confirmation of the factors which lead to thriving at the workplace and an understanding of these fundamentals will assist managers to help employees in adopting the affirmative behaviors collectively.

### **Research Gap**

The construct thriving has been investigated in a number of studies. To the best of our knowledge no study has provided us a detailed overview of all the possible antecedents and consequences of the study investigated so far. This study has aggregated and listed all the tested variables into individual factors, contextual factors and agentive work behaviors as per the socially embedded model proposed by Spreitzer (2005).

### **Contribution of the Study**

There has been considerable research on thriving over the past decade, yet this existing body of knowledge is scattered and there is a call for research on systematic and theory based synthesis. The existing literature lacks extensive information on the nomological network of thriving at workplace in identifying the most elementary antecedents and consequence, it also does not specify any framework for future research and organizational practice (Kleine et al., 2019).

Many studies have exhibited empirical validation of role of thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2012) yet exploration on workplace thriving is meager (Niessen et al., 2012). For example, what are the various individual characteristics (Walumbwa et al., 2017) and contextual factors (Paterson et al., 2014) that predict thriving? Better understandings of such factors which help employers provide an environment to employees to thrive in an organization. It will also help managers to integrate them at

the workplace and reduce unfavorable outcomes

The contribution of the study is to educate firms to devote a greater attention to factors which boost thriving in employees at the workplace in order to achieve beneficial outcomes for the organization. This study stimulates auxiliary research which contributes to attain deeper insight on personal resources and contextual factors that promote a more productive and thriving workforce.

The present research is important for both the academia as well as industry practitioners. The practitioners are apprehensive to explore into individual and contextual factors leading to employees thriving at the workplace. They are eager to comprehend the critical construct through which companies can attain positive results from their employees. This study helps managers provide a deeper insight on how to develop a thriving workforce and utilize them to their full potential. Secondly, it helps employees in their own development which in turn help significantly in workplace success.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Thriving**

Thriving is a psychosomatic state and an intra individual phenomenon where individuals simultaneously sense learning and vitality at work (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Thriving is a combination of cognitive and affective aspect of psychological experiences where vitality is the affective dimension and learning is the cognitive aspect (Porath et al., 2012). Vitality and thriving are two important aspects which enable individuals to thrive (Ren, Yunlu, Shaffer, & Fodchuk, 2015). If either of the elements is missing that is, if individual is learning a new skill but is not energetic then the individual is not thriving. The acquiring of new knowledge if leads to exhaustion for the individual then it cannot be termed as thriving either. On the other hand, an individual who is feeling vital at work but is not learning

anything new, he is also not experiencing thriving.

Spreitzer and her peers (2005) proposed a theoretical model of thriving at work which elaborates how certain “individual characteristics (knowledge, positive effect), interpersonal characteristics, (support, trust) contextual factors (autonomy, climate of trust) and agentic work behaviors (task focus, exploration) lead to thriving at work.”

### **Antecedents of Thriving**

The literature on antecedents of thriving is growing rapidly. Spreitzer and her colleagues (2012) advocated that organizations can promote thriving by sharing organizational policies and strategies with employees and by incorporating them in the decision making process. According to Spreitzer et al.(2005) exploration, heedful relating and task focus are key drivers of thriving at the workplace. Abid et al. (2016) found the agentic work behaviours are the predictors of thriving.

### **Perceived Stress**

Employees experience a number of stress factor at the workplace in the form of work overload and role ambiguity (Cooper, 1983). Coping with such stressful element hampers their level of vitality at work (Latack&Havlovic, 1992). Perceived stress decreases individuals enthusiasm to learn and acquire new skills and knowledge (LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004). Different forms of stress have been found to have a negative relationship with thriving (Helfer, 2017; Cullen, Gerbasi, &Chrobot-Mason, 2015).

### **Work Engagement**

Work engagement is defined as a positive mental state characterized by a feeling of vitality (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Employees engaged at work are more energetic and vital at the workplace (Bakker et al., 2008). Work engagement helps employees to learn new things and explore individuals potential and opportunities at work. Thus, it has a positive relationship with thriving (Billett, 2001).

### **Psychological Capital**

Psychological capital comprises of “hope, resilience, optimism and self efficacy” (Luthans, et al., 2007). When employees feel confident at their work because they have master different task, have a positive approach about the future and have the capability to counter adverse situations they are more expected to experience learning at work. They have the ability to tackle difficult situations and handle complex task, they have the persistence eventually they learn more than those with lower psychological capital. Thus, thriving is directly related to psychological capital (Flinchbaugh et al., 2015).

A number of studies by Paterson and colleagues (2014) and Iverson (2017) advocates that psychological capital of individuals plays a very important role in boosting thriving in employees. It is viewed as a self regulatory mental state. An employee with high level of psychological capital would motivate him to thrive at the workplace.

### **Core Self Evaluation**

According to Walumbwa et al. (2017) individuals who have a personality trait of core self evaluation tend to thrive more at the workplace. It is a stimulus that triggers thriving. Core self evaluation helps employees to do self analysis and identify their capability and competency to do a certain task, this makes them more focused at their work thus triggering their level of thriving at the workplace. Core self evaluation comprises of “self esteem, self efficacy, emotional stability and locus of control” (Judge et al., 2004). Individuals with little self esteem don't take negative feedback as constructive feedback, they consider it as a failure as a result it hinders their learning and vitality at workplace (Kernis, et al., 1989). Locus of control is also a motivating force which makes individuals perceive their actions self determined and autonomous which boost their confidence and make them acquire new skills and

competencies for self development. Individuals with high emotional stability and high core self evaluation tend to acquire new skills faster as compared to individuals with low emotional stability. Thus, high core self evaluation in individuals triggers thriving at work (Bensemmane, et al., 2018).

### **Proactive Personality**

According to a study by Jiang (2017) proactive personality was found to be one of the predictors of thriving. Individuals who are proactive are mostly active at the workplace, are more motivated, have high energy levels (vitality) and have high tendency to learn at the workplace. Another research investigated the impact of personality traits on individuals thriving and found that individuals who are extrovert and conscientious thrive more at the workplace (Hennekam, 2017).

A study by Crant (1995) also concluded that proactive individuals have the drive to identify opportunities and tackle complex job demands and have the ability to overcome stress and anxiety (Parker & Sprigg, 1999; Harvey et al., 2006). “Task and relationship oriented proactivity is found to be positively related to vitality” (Hahn et al., 2012). A number of other studies have also supported the positive and significant relationship between proactive personality and thriving (Mushtaq et al., 2017; Abid et al., 2021).

### **Self- Determination**

Carver (1998) identified self determination as an important component of thriving. Self determination is self motivation based on natural growth tendencies and psychological needs. According to Carver, self determination is fueled by needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy. Thus, as we work with adolescents to increase their motivation, agency and self determination, it is critical that we enhance their opportunities to gain skills, relate to others and be involved in crucial decisions about their growth and development (Morrison et al., 2002). They also find that it

has a positive relationship with thriving at workplace.

### **Autonomy Orientation**

Autonomy orientation in employees helps them to hunt for prospects for self determination and choice. It presents a tendency towards initiative learning which makes employees seek activities and task both challenging and interesting. It also makes employees take accountability for their behaviors and actions (Liu et al., 2011). In totality, autonomy oriented employees tend to have high levels of self leading, self control, initiate learning and autonomy seeking. Thus, autonomy orientation is an important predictor of thriving.

### **Openness to experience**

Openness to experience (OTE) is one of the important personality traits of Big Five Model. OTE is a trait most relevant to learning (LePine, Colquitt, & Erez, 2000). Individuals who are curious and creative are open to learning. Employees with high openness to experience are naturally driven to enjoy, accept any change and are enthusiastic about learning (Komarraju et al., 2009). Thus, individuals with openness to experience personality trait are more likely to thrive at the workplace.

### **Promotion Focus and Prevention Focus**

Thriving is known as a self regulatory psychosomatic state. Regulatory focus has two distinctive type of motivation: prevention focus and promotion focus (Higgins et al., 2001). A promotion focus is related to “the development and growth needs and involves looking for ideas, aspirations and rewards through accomplishment”. On the other hand, prevention focus is allied with safety and security needs and fulfilling duties and responsibilities. Thus, prevention focus approach instills the elements of learning to grow and attain rewards and it has a positive significant relationship with thriving. Achievement of rewards leads to feeling of

vitality and pleasure also among individuals (Higgins et al., 2001).

Wallace (2016) in his study advocated the employees who are promotion focus and direct all their efforts in attaining a certain designation at the workplace tend to thrive at the workplace. Individuals with a clear focus, aim to achieve greater designation and higher rank as a result they strive and put in a lot of effort. Consequently they learn, master the skill and try to acquire skill to get a higher rank and appreciation at workplace. Hence, individuals with a promotion focus are expected to thrive more at the workplace.

Prevention focus on the contrary has an inverse relationship with thriving. The higher the focus on achieving the basics of safety and security needs the learning orientation of employees gets effected thus hampering the employees from thriving at the workplace.

### **Empathy**

Empathy refers to understanding moods and feelings of individuals (Rego et al., 2010). Empathy is a component of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995) and is strongly associated with effectiveness of leaders (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2004). Empathy is found to be an explanatory variable between authentic leadership and thriving of employees. Empathetic attitude of leaders welcomes feeling of connectivity at work thus, increasing elements of vitality and learning at workplace (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009).

### **Acts of Gratitude**

Gratitude is defined as “a sense of joy and thankfulness in response to receiving a gift” (Emmons, 2004). It exhibits an affirmative response to another person who does an act of kindness (McCullough, et al., 2008). This small act of kindness at workplace contributes to building positive relationships and a sense of warmth. This aptitude among peers paves the way to come closer and enhances opportunities of social integration. Gratitude spawns pro-social helping behavior (Haidt, 2003; Emmons, 2003) and feeling of being

loved which cultivates seeds of vitality and learning at the workplace. Thus, an act of gratitude is an important predictor of thriving.

### **Acts of compassion**

Compassion refers to exhibiting feeling of being loved and cared in a relationship. Compassion goes further than empathy (Waldman, et al., 2011). A compassionate attitude among co-workers in an organizational setting leads to be personally connected and cared for (Kahn, 1993). This feeling develops a stronger sense of belongingness and fosters engagement (Kahn & Heaphy, 2013). Act of compassion makes individuals thrive at the workplace (Elahi et al., 2020).

### **Emotional Expression**

Emotional expression refers to conveying ones feelings and thoughts towards the other individual. This self disclosure indicates opening up to the other person and welcoming him or her in. This attitude removes the possibility of others being judgmental about each other. Emotions when expressed in a constructive way builds a trusting relationship (Stephens & Carmeli, 2016) and it develops a feeling of being valued unconditionally arousing elements of vitality and thriving at the workplace. This reinforces the elements of small acts of kindness that can create a massive impact on an individual's personality.

### **Resilience**

Resilience gives individuals the ability to bounce back in difficult circumstances. It helps the individuals to remain task focus and view problems as an opportunity for growth and development (Luthans et al., 2005). Resilient individuals are able to deal with challenges and counter the hardships through acquiring skills and expertise (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Thus, resilience has also been found to be a positive antecedent of thriving.

### **Fairness Perception**

An organization with a fair and transparent environment, where organizational justice is practiced is another fuel of thriving at workplace. Fairness perception promotes an environment of trust among employees which in turn boost learning and vitality in individuals at the workplace. An environment where an individual's contribution and efforts are not valued on merit and where favoritism and biasness exists, it de-motivates employees and hampers their level of learning and vitality at the workplace (Abid, et al., 2020).

Employees who are treated fairly in the organization they feel like reciprocating in the same manner to the organization. In short, fairness perception arouses reciprocity. Social exchange theory (SET) explains the underpinning mechanism in research on various attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. According to SET, a fair dealing from the management arouses a positive sense in the workforce to respond by demonstrating positive work behavior. A fair and unbiased working environment escalates the level of thriving in individuals (Abid et al., 2019).

### **Connectivity**

According to a study by Carmeli & Spreitzer (2009), connectivity among employees at the workplace boosts thriving in individuals. The connectivity refers to relationship among peers and colleagues at the workplace. The greater the strength of relationship in the social system higher is the level of learning and vitality experienced by employees. High levels of connectivity and social interaction among individuals in an organization gives them an opportunity to share information which multiplies the knowledge and also improves relationship among them and makes them feel energetic and vital at workplace.

### **Perceived Organizational Support**

Perceived organizational support (POS) is also found to be an important predictor of thriving at workplace. Abid et al. (2016) in his study

found that the individuals who recognize that their organization is supportive and care for the well being of the employees they thrive more at the workplace. POS is defined as "the employee's belief that their organization values and cares about their well being" (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Organizations that have a supportive approach towards employees boost them to enjoy at work simultaneously it acts as a driving force to learn, innovate and contribute to the workplace (Imran, et al., 2020).

POS makes employees find their job more pleasurable and are more likely to experience less stress, fatigue and burnout at workplace (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Employees who experience support from the organization are motivated to acquire new knowledge and skill to contribute effectively in attainment of organizational objectives. Thus, they feel increased vitality and learning at the workplace. Research proves that perceived organizational support is an important antecedent of thriving (Abid, Zahra, & Ahmed, 2015; Riaz, Xu, & Hussain, 2018)

### **Work Environment (Psychological safety)**

Working environment also affects the vitality and learning of employees at the workplace. A conducive working environment makes employees feel psychologically safe and positively impacts their energy and learning capacity at the workplace. It enables them to have a sense of relatedness and comfort which enables them to thrive and prosper at the workplace (Kark & Carmeli, 2009). Another study by Frazier and Tupper (2016) further empirically verified that psychological safety is extensively related to workplace thriving.

### **Work family Enrichment**

A study by Russo et al. (2015) investigated the influence of work family enrichment on thriving at work. It was found that when individuals feels work family enrichment, i.e. they are able to strike a good balance in work and family life, this enrichment helps them in

devoting their efforts and energies on other fronts and enables them to thrive at the workplace. Learning at workplace can be enhanced through personal and contextual resources.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Individuals' type of relationship with the leader is a huge source of motivation. If the leader empowers employees by sharing powers with subordinates, the employees self efficacy and self esteem gets boosted (Li, Liu, Han, & Zhang, 2016) which in turn helps them to thrive at the workplace. In context with the conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989), Niessen et al. (2017) is of the view that transformational leadership has the power to influence employees potentials by helping them thrive at the workplace. Transformational leaders have the ability to develop the leadership capacity in the followers. Thus, followers develop and the provision of intellectual stimulation by the leaders helps employees to explore their surroundings and increase their learning experience (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership motivates followers with aspiring visions making them feel vital at work. Thus, transformational leadership is an important predictor of thriving at work.

### **Civility**

Workplace civility refers to “the level of respect co workers experience among each other” (Osatuke et al., 2009). In short, it refers to how interpersonal relationships are defined for work relationships as it impacts organizational outcomes and plays an important part in organizational culture (Laschinger & Read, 2016). Workplace civility refers to respect and regard for others (Andersson & Pearson, 1999) and builds an environment where employees share advice, support and information (Porath et al., 2015). Workplace civility provokes positive feeling about others (Dutton, 2003), thus when treated with trust employees sense being valued and

powerful thus, it increases the feeling of vitality. Workplace civility is significantly associated to thriving at work (Mushtaq et al., 2017; Abid et al., 2018).

Penny & Spector (2005) empirically investigated that incivility at workplace leads to counterproductive behavior and increases stress at the workplace and hinders the process of creativity of employees (Pearson & Porath, 2005). Decrease in creativity also hampers individuals learning and vitality at work.

### **Supervisory Support**

Supportive supervisor is a blessing for an employee. Supervisory support gives employees an open field to experiment and explore its potentials and gives the courage to take initiative and risk. It gives the employee a say in the decision making process and psychological and emotional support regarding its role which aids individuals growth and development in the organization. This growth is not only restricted to individuals personal benefit but benefits the organization on a broader scale. On the contrary, an employee who perceives lack of supervisory support, this act limits individuals approach towards work and innovativeness consequently, it is propagated that supervisory support fosters learning and vitality at the workplace.

Supportive environment aids employees to take risk (Kahn, 1990) and contributes in their developmental activities (Maurer & Tarulli, 1994). Supportive management enhances the meaningfulness of an individual's job and work quality relationship (Kahn, 1990) which boosts vitality and learning at workplace (Taneva, 2018; Russo, et al., 2015).

### **Supportive Co-worker**

A healthy working environment with supportive colleagues and peers helps individuals to cope with any type of adverse situation and boost their efforts of development and personal growth (Colbert et al., 2016). Supportive co-workers help in attaining knowledge broadens experience and

skills at the work place. Thus, in a number of studies supportive coworkers are found to have a positive relationship with thriving (Frazier & Tupper, 2016). Sharing ideas and collaborating with peers and co-workers helps the individuals in experiencing high levels of learning and vitality and motivates employees to come up with new ideas (Kaiser et al., 2020).

### **Empowering Leadership**

Empowering leaders focus on giving autonomy to employees and power sharing to intrinsically motivate to employees to grow (Harris et al., 2013). Empowering leaders have the ability to influence the work context of employees which stimulate their motivational behaviors (Harris et al., 2014). They encourage employees to play a part in the decision making process along with all possible resource support which enhances their level of learning and vitality at the workplace. Empowering leaders focus on self directed learning, it gives an opportunity to employees to act autonomously thus, contributing to their feeling of vitality and learning (Ali, et al., 2018).

### **Trust**

Trust is referred to as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectations that the other will perform a particular action important to the trust or, irrespective of the ability to control the other party” (Mayer, et al., 1995). A non threatening environment motivates employees to take risk and think out of the box which reinforces exploratory thinking (Edmondson, 1999; Kostopoulos & Bozionelos, 2011). A trustworthy relationship with work partners boost feeling of aliveness and vitality at the workplace (Kahn, 1990). Thus, trust has a positive relationship with thriving at work.

### **Pro-social Motivation**

Pro-social motivation is a psychosomatic state of mind aimed at the objective to encourage

others and working for their welfare (Batson, 1987). Pro-social motivation is a type of motivation that establishes the manner in which individuals interact with each other and influence other peoples work (Grant, 2008). Individuals experiencing pro-social motivation are found to be more focused on their goals and they help their co-workers in attaining their goals also. Consequently, such workforce experience vitality (Paterson et al., 2014) and learning due to the growth of strong interpersonal relationships (Abid et al., 2018). Learning cannot take place in isolation (Spreitzer et al., 2005), when employees interact and share ideas and views it enhances their exiting knowledge and creativity and it also gives them a chance to increase novel capabilities and skills (Paterson et al., 2014). Thus, pro-social motivation acts as a catalyst for employees to be energized and learning oriented resulting in increasing thriving at workplace (Nawaz et al., 2020).

### **Employee Involvement Climate**

An employee involvement climate refers to where workforce in an organization mutually enjoy the power to make decisions, share resources to undertake actions, have the opportunity to update their knowledge and skills and are rewarded for improving work processes (Lawler, 1996; Richardson, & Vandenberg, 2005; Riordan, Vandenberg, & Ricardson, 2005). This approach benefits employee by facilitating them in a deeper cognitive understanding than being constrained (Fuller, et al., 2006). This autonomy and freedom motivates employees to take risk, do better and utilize the existing resources in the best possible manner thus, they feel energized and learning oriented at work. Employee involvement climate is an important predictor of thriving at work.

### **Authentic Leadership**

Authentic leadership refers to a supportive and fair leadership style (Avolio & Gardner 2005). Authentic leadership has four

dimensions namely an “internal moral perspective, self awareness, balanced processing and relational transparency”. Self awareness refers to understanding your strengths and weaknesses, internal moral perspective refers to self regulation, balanced processing refers to making sound decision according to all the relevant data available and relational transparency refers to how explicitly the leader presents himself to others (Avolio et al., 2004). Authentic leaders exhibiting such traits gives employees an opportunity to learn and grow. They give employees an open field to grow and explore their potentials. Thus, when investigated in the nursing field, it was found to have a positive relationship with thriving (Wong & Laschinger, 2012).

### **Family Supportive Supervisor Behavior**

#### **(FSSB)**

FSSB refers to “discretionary supportive behaviors exhibited by supervisors towards employees family roles” (Hammer et al., 2013). Family supportive supervisor behavior has four dimensions: “instrumental support, role modeling, emotional support and creative work family management decisions. Emotional support refers to supervisor’s emotional expression of concern to employees’ family and personal commitments. Instrumental support refers to daily guidance and support provided to manage work family demands in the best possible manner. Role modeling refers to exemplary behaviors which act as a source of inspiration to attain desirable work family outcomes. Finally, creative work family management refers to ways of restructuring work demands to reduce work family conflict” (Hammer et al., 2009). Thus, studies have empirically validated that family supportive supervisor behaviors boost vitality and learning at workplace.

### **Hindrance stressors and challenge stressors**

Hindrance stressors are negative forces in an organizational setting that de-motivates employees to learn (Le Pine et al., 2004). This

is a negative type of stress that decreases perceptions of learning and vitality. Challenge stressors on the other hand help employees to learn and grow, as they perceive the situation to be positive and changeable by assigning more resources and efforts towards exploration and learning (LePine et al., 2004). The element of vitality and thriving then promotes thriving at work place. Thus in a nutshell, hindrance stressors are inversely related to thriving and challenge stressors are directly related to thriving.

### **Leader-Member Exchange**

Leader- member exchange quality boosts thriving of individuals at the workplace. Higher the quality of the relationship higher will be the level of trust, respect and obligation (Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995). Employees in high LMX dyads obtain more challenging task from the leaders which builds their learning opportunities and vitality increases with positive social interactions (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Thus, vitality is found to be an important antecedent of thriving at work (Li, 2015).

### **Relationship Building**

Thriving is built through building relations at the workplace (Morrison, 2002). Improving relations can be achieved only through the increased engagement with employees and students, through reaffirming, reconnecting and reconstructing relationships. Through these enhance relations, educators can help individual students learn problem solving and also help them improve their ability to handle the challenges in their lives. Thus, positive relation building in the academia can boost vitality and learning among students in educational institutions.

### **Managerial Coaching**

The organization that is supportive recognizes the involvement of their workers toward accomplishment of executive goals which result in amplified passion, creativity and innovation, and adoption of most up-to-date

knowledge (Abid et al., 2020) This supportive environment boosts the employees' altitude of thriving at work (Xu et al., 2016; Wiesenfeld et al., 2001). In this supportive environment the most crucial role is of the manager, the supervisor. Moreover, as an instructor, supervisor gives the appropriate feedback to the assistants, provide logical and clear expectations regarding objective accomplishment, act as a role model for the employees, build learning environment, to develop the workforce in the role as well as extra role performance to develop the organizational effectiveness (Colquitt et al., 2007).

### **Positive Affect**

Positive affect motivates individuals to indulge in activities that lead to self development. Employees having a positive affect tend to have an exploring approach. They are keen to explore new objects, situations and people (Fredrickson, 2001); this aptitude enhances their learning at work. Positive affect is very much distinct from thriving but is highly related to it. In a number of studies positive affect is established to be directly related to vitality (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). Some empirical studies also advocate positive affect to be an important predictor of thriving (Novaes et al., 2017; Taneva, 2018).

### **Negative Affect**

The opposite of positive affect is negative affect. The individuals with negative affect are less probable to experience excitement and enthusiasm thus, it hampers their experience of vitality (Porath et al., 2012). Individuals who experience negative affect tend to live in a life of despair, self blame and an unfavorable approach towards life (Wood, et al., 1990). Such individuals focus on avoiding negative outcomes which makes it difficult to interact with others, explore opportunities available and utilize their potential for self growth and development (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). Thus, negative affect is found to have an inverse

relationship with thriving (Marchiondo et al., 2018)

### **Heedful Relation**

"Heedful interactions are attentive, purposeful, conscientious and considerate" (Weick & Roberts, 1993). Heedful relations help employees to work together in harmonious cooperation (Cohen, 1993). The greater the healthy interaction among the team members, the greater is the possibility of employees to improve skills and knowledge (Paterson et al., 2014). The heedful relating increases the likelihood of learning at the workplace thus; it is empirically investigated to have a positive relationship with thriving (Abid et al., 2016).

### **Consequences of Thriving**

Thriving at an individual level is a growing phenomenon and a number of researches have investigated a number of positive outcomes of thriving at an individual and organizational level. Thriving has been found to be a key determinant of performance, innovative work behavior, absenteeism, commitment, well-being, turnover intention, positive health, voice behavior and engagement. Employees conduct pioneering actions when they thrive at their place of work as a result of rapid feedback, comprehensible paths of goals, get knowledge gaining prospects in their work environment and can reap positive results for the organization as a whole.

### **Life Satisfaction**

According to a study by Flinchbaugh et al. (2015) life satisfaction has been found to be an important consequence of thriving. The findings of the study support that challenge stressors are related with perception of thriving which enhances life satisfaction. Moreover, resilience was also found to reduce the inverse impact of hindrance stressors on life satisfaction through thriving. Thus, individuals who thrive at the workplace tend to be contented with their lives. Life satisfaction is one of the important consequence of thriving.

### **Self-Adaptation**

Thriving is an important aspect from various reasons. First, thriving poses new avenues for self-adaptation theories (Tsui & Ashford, 1994). Self-adaptation is defined as “a process which directs employees towards goal directed activities over a period of time and among changing situations” (Kanfer, 1990). Different self adaptation models consider employees as isolated and rational entities who are directed on goal setting, self reward, self observation and self punishment as a way to regulate their actions (Porath & Bateman in press). Thriving helps individuals in developing a positive direction which leads to improvement in individuals over short term period and long term adaptability to the working environment (Hall & Fukami, 1979; Kolb, 1984). Thus, thriving helps individuals in navigating and changing their work contexts to support their own growth and development.

### **Health Outcomes**

Thriving can effectively contribute to positive health. In the domain of science “failure to thrive” is a construct used to signify bad health (Bergland & Kirkevold, 2001), thus it can be drawn that thriving is positively related to positive health. When folks feel vitality at workplace they are more likely to feel less depressed and anxious and thus will be mentally healthy (Keyes, 2002). Similarly individuals who experience learning at workplace tend to have good physical and mental health. The work nature and its circumstances have lethal effects on individual’s health and vitality (Vigoda, 2002). Thriving employees are very energetic at work and have efficient psychological functioning (Porath et al., 2012). Beehr and Newman (1978) has found that thriving has a positive impact on the health of employees and employees who experience little growth in career are at a greater risk of heart attack (Alfredsson, Spetz, & Theorell, 1985). Thus, it is very important for organization to strive at

the workplace as employees health is an asset for the organizations and it effects their productivity.

### **In-role performance**

The existing literature has found that in-role performance of employees is directly related to thriving (Porath et al., 2012). According to a research in public sector university, employees with high level of thriving exhibit an elevated level of task performance (Porath et al., 2012). Another study also demonstrates that 125 % of employees have less burnout, 32% had high commitment towards the organization and 6 % were satisfied. Employees with high levels of thriving have more prospects for growth, development and learning within the organization (Porath et al., 2012). Thus, in role performance is an imperative outcome of thriving.

### **Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)**

A relative study of managers found that thriving employees are more efficient as compared to non thrived leaders. Thrived leaders tend to become role model for subordinates and care take for their employees well being. They also act as a motivating source for the subordinates to thrive. Thriving acts as a catalyst for mounting good working liaison with other managerial members and promotes the well being of the employees (Abid et al., 2015) as a consequence it addresses their problems at the place of work and give confidence to conduct acts of OCB. A study has found OCB to be an important outcome of thriving. OCB is defined as “a discretionary behavior, not recognized by a formal reward and results in effective functioning of the organization” (Organ, 1988). When employees have acquired knowledge through learning, they are in a better position to help colleagues by engaging in citizenship behavior. Employees who feel vitality at work also tend to reciprocate through OCB (Kabat-Farr & Cortina, 2017). Thus, current literature advocates positive

relationship between thriving and OCB (Marchiondo et al., 2008).

### **Self development**

Today's competitive world requires employees who not only fulfill current job requirements but also prepare themselves for future challenges. Ameen (2011) in his study discussed that recognized education is not adequate to stay in the market for long rather the employee's need to continuously upgrade and renew their knowledge and skills to accomplish the potential dynamic demands.

Self development refers to "activities of seeking and using feedback from supervisors and peers, engaging in developmental activities, setting development goals, and tracking the progress of their own development" (London & Smither, 1999). Spreitzer et al. (2005) has strongly supported the direct association between self development and thriving and this relationship is based on the theory of self determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It is also strongly based on the cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001). Learning at workplace increases enthusiasm of individuals on continuous pace and enhances their learning, vitality and advance their self development (Paterson, et al., 2014).

Thriving is a powerful gauge to extend employees in positive direction "it is an individual's short term individual functioning and long term adaptability to the work environment" (Kolb, 1984). Employees can trail the extent and changes how to take action in the context of current action or refurbish their thriving. Thriving acts as an adaptive proposition that help employees plot a course and promote their development. Individuals should continuously attain information to identify what they lack in skills and what needs to be done to improve their performance and engage in self development behavior. Self development of employees is an imperative consequence of thriving at workplace. When employees know that their ladder of success depends on the knowledge they acquire, they

are expected to go an extra mile to develop their skills and knowledge for their career development (Porath et al., 2012). Thus, thriving is significantly associated to self development (Paterson et al., 2014).

### **Job satisfaction**

Organizational goals are better achieved when each employee of the organization is making an effort to achieve it by acquiring new knowledge and skills, by participating in the decision making process and growing their work responsibilities (Fiol & Lyles, 1985). Organizations try to build a learning oriented culture, regular education and development opportunities are made available to the employees which positively influences their performance and job satisfaction (Chang & Lee, 2007). Employees who feel vital and vigorous at work are more expected to be satisfied with their jobs thus; thriving is proven to be positively associated to job satisfaction (Milosevec, et al., 2014).

### **Organizational Commitment**

A study by Walumbwa, et al., (2010) found learning at work leads to growth and personal development accordingly leading to elevated identification and increased commitment towards the organization. When workforce feel energetic and vital at workplace, they demonstrate greater levels of organizational commitment (Walumbwa et al., 2010). On the other hand, employees who do not feel vitality at work are unlikely to display higher levels of organizational commitment. Thus, various studies demonstrate direct significant relationship between thriving and commitment (Thakur, et al., 2016).

Individuals thriving at the workplace are more devoted to the organization because they are constantly flourishing and learning at work. Exchange theory supports reciprocity norm among the personnel and organization (Wayne et al., 1997). Thus, when an organization offer learning prospects to its workforce, this in turn boost individual's obligation to show

commitment towards the organization. They keep on learning new things and contribute to organizations long term growth and success.

### **Turnover Intention**

Employees when given an opportunity to learn and acquire new knowledge, lead to development of human capital. Learning at a continuous pace and personal development is imperative for individuals to continue in the organization. Individuals who experience vitality and learning at the workplace recognize their work environment as supportive and develop their intention to remain in the organization (Cho et al., 2009). Another study has also proved that thriving at work is found to be inversely associated to turnover intention (Anjum et al., 2016). According to a study by Abid et al. (2015) thriving is an important determinant of turnover intention. Thriving promotes intrinsic motivation and reduces turnover intention by giving employees a psychologically rewarding experience (Paterson et al. 2013) as a result, they are more attached to the organization.

### **Task Performance / Individual Performance/ Employee Performance**

Task performance is also known as an important outcome of thriving according to a number of studies (Beal, Weiss, Barros, & MacDermid, 2005; Federick, 2001). Vitality and learning both increases the intellectual capability of individuals which eventually boosts them to work better at their workplace (Rose, Kumar, & Pak, 2009). Empirical researches have validated positive relationship between work associated learning and performance (Skerlavaj et al., 2007). Furthermore, a number of studies have also endorsed that task performance is an important outcome experienced due to thriving at work (Shan, 2016; Taneva, 2018; Walumbwa et al., 2018).

Learning is important tool to achieve competitive advantage in the industry. Employees are human capital to

sustain competitive advantage. Individual performance is “effectiveness of employees in meeting the expectation of work” (Porath et al., 2012). Individuals learning at the workplace increase their performance at the job. Thriving helps employees to conduct themselves agentially at workplace that additionally develops sturdy relationship learning at workplace. Vitality another major dimension of thriving is an important psychological, social and physical aspect that also increases performance (Fredrickson, 2001). A number of studies has validated that thriving is directly significantly related to employees’ performance (Abid 2014).

### **Innovative work behavior**

“Thriving is also an important stimulant of innovative work behavior” (Abid et al., 2015). Learning at workplace enhances individual’s capability of exploring and implementing new innovative ideas (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). Empirical studies validate that vitality boost energy and motivation in employees to contribute in innovative work task (Kark & Carmeli, 2009), It is found to be an important consequence of thriving at workplace. According to Sonenshein et al. (2006), “thriving is different from intrinsic motivation as it is a desire to perform better based on personal behavior of enjoyment (vitality) and in some studies it is based on personal achievement and recognition (learning)”.

### **Creative Behavior**

Creativity is referred as “the generation of novel and useful ideas concerning products, procedures and processes at work” (Runco & Jaeger, 2012). Individuals who are learning at workplace tend to recognize and avail opportunities for change which inturn influence their creative behavior (Amabile, 1998).” Learning at work gives employees the confidence to take initiative and move beyond the status quo, try new creative ideas at work. Increasing levels of vitality aids in cognitive thinking and creative problem solving for

employees at the workplace” (Bledow et al., 2013; Hirt et al., 1997). A number of empirical studies validate thriving and creative performance to be related positively (Wallace et al., 2016).

Carmeli & Spreitzer (2009) have proposed three underlying mechanisms through which thriving promotes creativity and innovation. First, learning leads to skills and expertise which further drives creative behavior (Amabile, 1998). Second, individuals who are thriving at work tend to explore and investigate new work processes. Third, thriving encapsulates positive moods and emotions, which further boost cognitive thinking and problem solving (Hirt et al., 1997; Ahmed et al., 2020). Thus, many researchers have proved that creative behavior is an important outcome of thriving at workplace.

### **Career Development Initiatives**

Career development initiative refers to “setting career goals and objectives, acquiring relevant skills and continuously seeking career development plans” (Porath et al., 2012). In this new era, employment settings offer many platforms for training and development for employees, thus the individuals need to pick and avail the opportunities available to take accountability of their own career growth. Workforce who is motivated towards career growth, they tend to make effort towards acquiring relevant knowledge and skills relevant to the field. On this path, learning is when accompanied by vitality, it helps employees set exciting goals and adopt innovative ways to accomplish those (Porath et al. 2012). Career development initiative is an important outcome of thriving at workplace.

### **Helping behavior**

Interdependency of task at workplaces has increased the importance of helping behavior in organizations. Harmonious co-operation among employees at the workplace is the need of the hour to achieve organizational goals. Helping behavior is defined as “Volunteering

to do things that aid work group or assisting co-workers with their task” (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Thriving increases the sense of growth in individual and develops the ability to build high quality relationship with their co-workers (Spreitzer, et al., 2012). It also boosts a sense of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) to maintain positive work relationship with peers through sharing knowledge and helping co-workers. Thus, helping behavior in employees is an important positive consequence of thriving.

### **Absenteeism**

Lack of thriving at workplace can also provoke employee absenteeism. Absenteeism is “the failure to report to planned work” (Johns, 2002). Employees who are not thriving at workplace tend to be absent and try to avoid from work stress and gives them relief from physical and psychological illness (Darr & Johns, 2008) or give them an opportunity to withdraw from uncomfortable work situations (Sliter et al. 2012). Employees who do not feel vital at workplace consequently stay absent and keep away from work (Abid, 2014). Similarly, employees whose learning is stationary at workplace can disturb interpersonal relationship among colleagues and lower their performance rating.

### **Well being**

Well being refers “to the extent to which individuals perceive and judge their lives positively” (Diener et al. 1999). Thriving is a psychological state. It entails satisfaction among employees and leads to positive evaluation of life. “Thriving is imperative in current challenging and complex working environment as workforce must learn to sustain their psychological and physical health and well being” (Pfeffer 2010). A number of researchers have investigated that energy is associated to significant organizational aspects such as individual’s well being (Collins, 2014).

### **Voice behavior**

“Thriving at work is a vital catalyst of constructive voice behavior. When employees

are learning at workplace, they are able to think of new creative ideas” (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009) which are a foundation for constructive voice behavior. Learning increases capabilities and competencies which further increases their competency to go beyond status quo (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009) and raise constructive voice. Workforces, who are thriving at workplace, have the ability to raise their voice for the betterment of an organization. “Workers who are engaged in learning and feel vital at workplace see opportunities for change and improvement in work processes” (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). An employee thriving at workplace make them valuable assets for their organization arouses their intrinsic level of motivation which is a prerequisite for constructive voice behavior. Thus, voice behavior is an important consequence of thriving (Yousaf et al., 2019).

### **Employee engagement**

Employee engagement refers to “attitude towards work, job and organization which can result in certain positive organizational outcomes” (Macey & Schneider, 2008). When workforce is occupied with job, they comprehend the job and know organizations prospects, have a certain level of vitality and required resources to meet the management’s expectations. Individuals who feel vitality and learning at workplace are more likely to be engaged in their work, thriving has the capability to lessen pessimism encountered at workplace as employees see themselves on positive trajectory (Gerbası et al. 2015). Hence, thriving amplify employee engagement at the workplace.

### **Burnout**

“Burnout refers to prolonged stress on the job. It includes elements like feeling of cynicism, exhaustion and reduces self efficacy” (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Feeling of vitality and learning gives individuals the courage to deal with burnout (Spreitzer, Porath, & Gibson, 2012). “Vitality gives individuals the

energy to deal with challenges and learning helps to cope with work demands and helps in reducing emotional exhaustion in them” (Stewart & Ruckdeschel, 1998). Thus, thriving is found to have a negative relationship with burnout (Hildenbrand et al., 2018).

Thriving in short is contagious to others. It is a positive psychological state. It can spread from one person to another. Emotional contagion refers to “a process in which a person or group influences the emotion or behavior of another person or group through the conscious or unconscious induction of affect states and behavioral attitudes” (Schoenewolf, 1990). Thriving has a number of positive affects and it is contagious in nature. If one person gets energized, others are likely to catch energy, leading to a more energized group, unit or organization.

### **Discussion**

This study is significant for the practitioners and the academia in many ways. Thriving has emerged as an important construct which can lead to numerous positive favorable outcomes for the employees and organizations both. Thus, this study is a comprehensive overview of all the factors identified and empirically validated so far.

The organizations are continuously changing in this dynamic world. The amalgamation of all the antecedents and consequences of thriving in this study will give managers and employees a detailed and comprehensive knowledge on the factors that need to be taken care of to enhance their level of learning and vitality at the workplace. It provides a roadmap to employees to develop positive behaviors and shape positive status at work.

A long list of positive outcomes has also been identified. Thriving employees will engage in organizational citizenship behavior, good mental health condition and reduced burnout and absenteeism. It will not only benefit employees but also the organization by increasing their well being and organizational commitment by increasing their performance

and engagement at the workplace. Future research should focus more on conducting a longitudinal study i.e. across different time intervals, also investigations should be held how the element of thriving varies among different types of individuals.

### Conclusion

Thriving construct has gained a lot of attention in the research of organizational behavior since the socially embedded model was proposed by Spreitzer (2005). Employees thriving at workplace can be achieved by focusing on certain individual, contextual and agentic work behaviors. This gives a detailed insight on the various factors that should be worked upon in organizations to develop an enabling environment that boost learning and vitality and enable them to utilize their full potential to positively contribute to the organizational success. The factors enable employees to identify their personal factors that can contribute to their growth also gives the managers how positive work environment can be build to achieve positive outcomes.

Developing countries which face a lot of challenges in terms of limited resources and skills in individuals, building thrived workforce can help increase knowledge and information sharing in the organization. This gives organizations a competitive advantage without investing a lot of monetary funds. When a healthy environment conducive for acquiring skills is provided, genius and hardworking minds gather all possible sources of information to increase productivity at workplace and are self determined to achieve personal growth and development.

Future studies should identify more factors that can boost thriving at workplace. Longitudinal studies in different sectors and different times of the day should be conducted to have a more detailed overview of the underlying mechanism related to this phenomenon.

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