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BOUNCING BACK FROM ADVERSITY TO REMAIN COMMITTED TO THE ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

*T*he purpose of the present investigation was to examine the relationship between resilience and Organizational Commitment among employees. Using psychometrically sound instruments to measure resilience and organizational commitment on a sample of employees the primary data for the study was generated. Data analysis revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between resilience and organizational commitment. The meaning of this result and implications of this finding are discussed in this study.

KEYWORDS: *Positive Psychology, resilience, organizational commitment, work attitudes.*

INTRODUCTION :

Over the years the study of resilience has attracted the attentions of the psychologist and management experts and researchers. The study of resilience has expanded across a range of contexts that include business organizations (Riolli & Savicki, 2003), education (Gu & Day, 2007), military (Palmer, 2008), sport performance (Galli & Vealey, 2008), and communities (Brennan, 2008).

Resilience is the ability of an individual to come back or bounce back to normalcy when faced with a traumatic or adverse condition or situation. Resiliency is described as the psychological strength of the individual. Resilience theory and research has been largely drawn from research done in clinical psychology. Resilience indicates how people cope and adapt in face of adversity and risky situation. Research on resilience gained prominence in the literature with the emergence of positive psychology. From the organizational behaviour perspective, in the context of work situation, Luthans (2002) defined resiliency as the "positive psychological capacity to rebound to 'bounce back' from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or even positive change, progress and increased responsibility (p. 702). Organizational resilience is the ability and capacity of a workplace to withstand potential significant economic times, systemic risk, or systemic disruptions by adapting, recovering, or resisting being affected and resuming core operations or continuing to provide an acceptable level of functioning and structure. Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. Resilience involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone. Resilience is tremendously influenced by a person's environment. Since the introduction of the concept of resilience in the literature by Luthar and colleagues (Luthar, 2006; Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Luthar et al., 2000), the concept of resilience has attracted considerable attention and discussion among management researchers.

A resilient employee is likely to behave as a socially competent person that satisfies optimally the need of affection, respect, and social life; in turn, handles power better, achieves goals, makes better decisions and can easily procure a happy, productive, and healthy life (Salgado, 2005). They are likely to take both proactive and

reactive measures in the face of adversity. Resilient employees are likely to have commitment to their organizations, they are likely to help their colleagues with problems, promote a positive work climate, tolerate inconveniences without complaint, and protect organization resources (Witt, 1991). The present research study is undertaken to examine how the psychological capacities and strengths of the employees in the form of resilience, influence their organizational commitment

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Research on organizational behaviour has mostly focused on work attitudes of employees. Organizational commitment is an attitude that employees have towards their organization, and among the research studies done on work attitudes, the work on organizational commitment of employees has received the greatest attention. Organizational commitment has been one of the most researched work attitude in the organizational behavior literature (Copper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005; Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell, & Allen, 2007) and one of the important constructs in psychology (Morrow, 1993)

Organizational commitment refers to the extent to which an employee is loyal and willing to contribute to the organization. It indicates the attachment an employee has towards his/her organization. If employees are committed to the organization, the organization would reach its goal, thus organizational commitment is the key for organizational effectiveness. The concept of organizational commitment has received increased attention in the literature (Steers, 1977; Bateman and Strasser, 1984; Morrow; 1993).

Research on organizational commitment has been approached from a varied and diversified perspectives leading to a plethora of definitions of the phenomenon (Morrow1993). Though, several conceptualizations of organizational commitment exist in the literature, the three component model of organizational commitment proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997) has been the most popular and predominant conceptualization of organizational commitment used in the literature (Clugston, 2000). Meyer and Allen conceptualized organizational commitment in terms of three components namely affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment (Meyer, & Allen 1991, 1997: Allen & Meyer 1990, 1996). According to Meyer and Allen (1991) "Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so" (p. 67), continuance commitment refers "to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so" (p. 67), normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel, that they ought to remain with the organization" (p. 67).

It is observed from the review of literature that much of the research on organizational commitment has been focused on samples drawn from European and North American samples Markovits, Davis, & Van Dick, 2007). Very few studies have been conducted in other culture (e.g. Luthans, McCaul, & Dodd, 1985). The purpose of the present study gains importance in this context and attempts to investigate the influence of resilience of employees on their organizational commitment.

Meyer and Allen (1991), proposed a model of organizational commitment, in this model organizational commitment is explained in terms of three components, affective component, continuance component and normative component. Allen and Meyer (1991) in their model proposed antecedents, correlates and consequences for the three different components of the organizational commitment. In this model only the personal characteristics of the employees were shown to influence affective organizational commitment. As the present study attempts to investigate the influence of resilience of employees on their organizational commitment, Organizational commitment in the present study refers only to the affective commitment component of Mayer and Allen (1991) conceptualization.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research on positive organizational behaviour has documented that employees psychological strengths and capacities play a significant role in successfully completion of work and also to attachment and commitment

they have towards their organizations(Luthans, 2002a; Nelson and Cooper, 2007; Wright, 2003; Wright and Cropanzano, 2007; Luthans and Youssef , 2004; Luthans and Jensen, 2002).   In the contemporary world of work, to compete effectively, companies not only must recruit the top talent, but must also inspire and enable employees to apply their full capabilities to their work (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2011). Contemporary organizations need employees who are psychologically connected to their work; who are willing and able to invest themselves fully in their roles; who are proactive and are willing to work beyond their job description (Podsakoff & Mackenzie, 1994). They need employees who feel energetic, and are committed to high quality performance standards (Bakker & Leiter, 2010). Much of the research on resilience among the employees has been carried out in the North American and European context. Very little research has been carried out in the Indian context. Resilience is the capacity in the personnel to withstand traumatic and stressful experiences. Resilience is the ability to thrive in the face of adversity; this is identified by a number of personal characteristics such as a meaningful belief system, a clear understanding of reality, good cognitive and problem solving skills, and high self-esteem (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Coutu, 2002; Dumont &Provost, 1999; Masten, 1999). resilience is included as one the core components in the psychological capital construct created by Luthans and his team, in their studies resilience was found to have a significant relationship with job and work attitudes (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007; Luthans and Youssef, 2004; Youssef & Luthans, 2007; Luthans and Jensen, 2002; Peterson and Luthans, 2003;Adams, Snyder, Rand, King, Sigmon, and Pulvers, 2003; Luthans, Zhu, & Avolio, 2006; Luthans, Avolio, Walumba and Li, 2005).   The present study attempts to investigate the relationship between resilience and organizational commitment of executives working in Indian organizations. Thus it can be hypothesized that there will be positive relationship between resilience and organizational commitment of executives.

METHOD
Research Design
The present research study is designed on a quantitative research framework which utilized a descriptive research perspective. This study was a non experimental research study. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research method in which psychometrically sound instruments-namely, Connor Davidson resilience scale and affective organizational commitment scale were administered on the executives to generate the primary data for the study.

Sample
The sample for the present study comprised of 320 executives drawn from five organizations. Their age range was from 32 to 49 years. Most of the executives were holding middle level managerial position.

Measures
Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale(CD-RISC): The Connor -Davidson   Resilience   Scale   (CD -RISC) (Connor & Davidson, 2006) was used to measure resilience. This scale contains 25 items and has a five point Likert type response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). High scores on this scale indicate higher resilience among the employees. The cronbach's alpha for this scale in the present study was found to be 0.79.   This scale has demonstrated adequate internal consistency and construct validity in the literature

Affective Organizational Commitment Scale: Affective commitment scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) was used. This scale consists of eight items, having a five point Likert type response format ranging from 1=Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree. The possible scores on this scale range from 8 to 40. High scores on this scale indicate high affective commitment. The reliability of this scale in the present study is found to be 0.76.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
To examine the relationship between resilience and organizational commitment of the employees, the product moment correlation coefficients were computed and are presented in table 1.

Table 1
Correlation Coefficients between Resilience and Organizational commitment

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Sig.
Resilience	0.79	0.000
Organizational commitment		

From table 1 it can be observed that the correlation coefficient computed between resilience and organizational commitment is high, positive and found to be significant (p<0.001). This indicates that there is significant positive relationship between resilience and organizational commitment.

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study suggest that resilience is positively related with organizational commitment of executives. This demonstrates the importance of Resilience for enhancing organizational commitment among the executives. This suggests the need for resilience training of executives. Basic training in resilience would enable employees to develop their psychological capacities and result in increased organizational commitment. Luthans and his team have found that resilience can be developed in employees with a two to three hour intervention (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). The development of Resilience in employees may develop sufficient competence in them to take up the challenges of globalization and enhance their organizational commitment resulting in increased human resource development for the organization, resulting in organizational effectiveness. Human resource managers may also assess the resilience and may include it as one of the criterion during the selection process of the personnel. In future, studies may be carried out by conducting an intervention, to enhance the resilience of executives,

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