THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL ON ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM

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Abstract

The concept of Positive Psychological Capital has started to possess an important role in the literature by the beginning of the 1990s, and many researches regarding this field have been conducted heavily throughout the 2000s. Positive psychological capital focuses on identifying people's strengths and their results personally and on an organizational level, and how it contributes to achieving the desired organizational success. As Individuals and organizations determine success/high performance or revenues as goals to be achieved, a lot of intense effort must be made to prepare a suitable environment in order to overcome challenges and problems. Since the 1980s, an approach called "cynicism" developed among an organization's employees has started to attract attention in the business world. Therefore, the concept of positive psychological capital is thought to be the best alternative to reduce the negative outcomes of cynicism in organizations in order to have a healthier work environment for better positive outcomes. In this respect, the aim of this article is to understand how Positive Psychological Capital impacts organizational cynicism throughout reviewing the literature since the 2000s.

Keywords: *Positive Psychological Capital, Hope, Optimism, Self-efficacy, Resilience, Organizational Cynicism*

1. Introduction

Introduced by the American Psychological Association under the foresight of Martin Seligman, the concept of positive psychology focused on people's positive traits rather than their negative traits. On the organizational level, positive psychology brought together both positive organizational school and positive organizational behavior (Luthans et al., 2006).

Positive organizational scholarship (POS), which was reported by scientists at the University of Michigan, emphasized the improving organizational endurance and effectiveness in crisis and conflicting conditions. Positive organizational behavior, on the other hand, focused on the positive strengths of employees. It focuses on psychological capacities that affect their performance. Psychological capacities such as self-efficacy / trust, hope, optimism and resilience are known as the sub dimensions of positive psychological capital. (Luthans and Youssef, 2004; Luthans et al., 2006; Oruç, 2015).

Positive psychological capital came out from positive psychology and positive organizational behavior approaches. It's defined to be a set of qualities that will positively affect employee's productivity (Shahnawaz, 2015). This type of capital is unique that can be measured and developed and it is also considered to be an effective capital that plays an important role on performance (Luthans and Jensen, 2002; Luthans and Yusuf, 2004) It is also known as a key factor for organizations in achieving competitive advantage (Luthans and Jensen, 2002; Luthans and Yusuf, 2004) and a key factor for organizations in achieving competitive advantage (Hodges ,2010).

Just like investing in human and social capitals, it is necessary for the benefit of the organizations to invest in psychological capital. In contrast to traditional financial capital and physical assets, managing psychological capital is less costly. Since, positive psychological capacities are "states" (rather than fixed traits), always open for developing "(Luthans et al., 2004).

Researches on positive psychological capital proved that this type of capital has many positive impacts on the organization's outcomes. It generates more creativity, less work absence and cynicism behavior; it also increases the organization's performance and commitment among the employees which will lead to more positive behaviors.

Positive psychological capital also carries the realization and the enhancement of employees' talents and potentials (Toor & Ofori, 2010; Luthans et al., 2010; Peterson et al., 2011; Çetin, 2011; Lewis, 2011; Avey et al., 2008; Clapp-Smith et al., 2009) (Luthans et al., 2007).

2. Positive Psychological Capital

Positive psychological capital is "the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace". (Gohel, 2012; Luthans et al., 2005) (Luthans et al., 2007).

In this context, Luthans and Youssef (2004) stated that positive psychological capital is:

i. Measurable
ii. Developed
iii. Effective on performance
iv. original

The four dimensions that make up positive psychological capital have been defined to be: Self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience. These four dimensions are conceptually independent and empirically ones as stated by Bryant & Cyrengro's (2004) and Luthans et al. (2007).

3. The Sub-dimensions of Positive Psychological Capital

The sub-dimensions of positive psychological capital are known as "Self-efficacy, Optimism, Hope and Resilience" and abbreviated as HERO in the literature. Researches have shown that individual's high positive psychological capital offers high self-efficacy, sets more optimistic expectations and higher goals for themselves which help them strive and thrive (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

3.1. Hope

Hope represents the motivational power that helps determining the path to goals, (Luthans et al., 2007). Hope also represents the belief in determining the purpose and process to overcome obstacles (Çetin & Basım, 2011). Individuals with higher hope usually have higher energy in target persuasion, (Snyder et al., 2000). Table 1 shows the characteristic traits of hopeful individual as shown in many researches:

Table 1. Characteristic traits of hopeful individuals

	Characteristics	Previous Studies
1.	Optimistic	Bressler et al., (2010), Erbasi & Ozbek (2017), Dos Santos et al., (2018).
2.	High Academic Performance	Snyder (2000), Snyder et al, (2002), Gallagher et al., (2017) Ben-Naim et al., (2017), Marques & Lopez (2017), Carmona-Halty et al., (2018), Yotsidi et al., (2018)
3.	Wellbeing	Diener (1984), Fritze et al., (2008), Griggs (2017), Vela et al., (2018), Martins et al., (2018).
4.	Resilient	Brooks (1994), Avey et al., (2008), Youssef & Luthans (2007), Kim et al., (2017).
5.	Independent Thinkers	Luthans et al., (2007), Nelissen (2017).
6.	Agentic (goal direction) thinking	Snyder et al., (1998), Gilman et al., (2006), Holder (2007), Tuzun et al., (2018).
7.	Risk Takers	Snyder (2002), Mishra et al., (2017).
8.	Creative Problem Solving	Zhoe & George (2003), Luthans et al., (2007).
9.	High willpower	Larson & Luthans (2006), Muwonge et al., (2017).
10.	Reduced Depression	Snyder et al., (1997), Bjornnes et al., (2018).

Source : Luxmi M, Ashu V.,2019

3.2. Resilience

Technically, resilience means elasticity of the capacity of something to gain the previous shape before an extern forced is applied on it. Psychologically, an individual's resilience is expressed as the capacity to recover from the setbacks by overcoming difficulties and uncertainties to succeed (Gooty et al., 2009; Luthans et al., 2006;2007) Research has shown various characteristics of individuals that possess high resilience; Some of these are listed in Table 2:

Table 2. Characteristic traits of resilient individuals

Characteristics	Previous Studies
1. **Optimistic/Positive attitude**	Klohnen (2009), Fredrickson (2004), Youssef & Luthans (2007), Smith et al., (2008), Souri &Hasanirad (2011), Segovia et al., (2012), Martinez & Ruch (2017), kleiman et al., (2017).
2. **Emotional Intelligence**	McCrimmon et al., (2017), Di Fabio & Saklfske (2008).
3. **Embrace Failure Positively**	Goodman et al., (2017), Khan et al., (2017).
4. **Flexible**	Coutu (2002), DesJardine et al., (2017), Shoss et al., (2017).
5. **Survivors** (bounce back from setbacks)	Coutu (2002), Tengblad & Ouduis., (2018), Akhtar (2018), Siebert (2009), Ogrean (2018).
6. **Energetic towards life**	Klohnen (1996), Gilman et al., (2006), Holder (2007), Tuzun et al., (2018).
7. **Curious/ open-to-new experience**	Klohnen (2002), Siebert (2006), Sonnet (2016), O'Herlihy (2016).
8. **Humorous**	Cohler (1987), Billing (2018), Akhtar (2018).
9. **Creative Explorers**	Cohler (1987), Coutu (2002), Rego et al., (2012), Wu et al., (2018).
10. **Innovative**	Fredrickson (2004), Peterson et al., (2018), Williams & Anyanwu (2017), Hallak et al., (2018).
11. **Adaptive to change**	Luthans et al., (2017), Siebert (2009), Parsons (2010), Bimrose & Hearne (2012).
12. **Risk Takers**	Hagevik (1998), Peterson et al., (2008), Siebert (2009).
13. **Sense of Control**	Masten (2001), Coutu (2002), Akhtar (2018).

Source : Luxmi M, Ashu V.,2019

3.3. Optimism

Optimism defined to be a positive perspective to the future and a mindset to perceive positive events under one's self control (Luthans et al., 2007). According to Snyder et al. (1991), optimistic individuals always expect the best and have persistency in achieving their goals.

According to Luthans and Youssef (2004), it refers to a positive way to interpret events: in which individuals' attribution to both positive and negative goes to different causes: while the positive ones is referred to internal, invariable and regular causes, the negative events go to external, momentary and conditional causes. People who adapt this approach have high self-esteem and spirit.

Optimistic individuals characterize positive events as introverted and negative events as extroverted and temporary, especially in relation to situational factors (Seligman, 1998), (Peterson, 2000).

Contradictory to hope, optimism has been applied not only to clinical practice but also to organizational settings (Martin et al., 2003), (Carver & Scheier, 2002). Studies have shown various traits of individuals with high optimism; some of these are listed in Table 3:

Table 3. Characteristic traits of optimistic individuals

Characteristics	Previous Studies
1. **Positive attitude**	Fry (1995) , Avey et al.,(2008) , kim et.,(2017)
2. **Future oriented**	Peterson,C.(2000)
3. **Highly motivated**	Wicker et al.,(2004), Demetriou and Schmitz (2011), Durrah et al.,(2017).
4. **Highly satisfied**	Fry(1995), Chang et al.,(1997) , Puri and robinson,(2007) ,Sahai and Singh(2017)
5. **Creative problem solving**	Lyubomirsky et al., (2005). Peterson ct al., (2008), Medlin & Gr= (2009), Kluernpet et al., (2009), Michad et al., (2011), Sweetman et al.,(201 1), Rego et al., (2012). Rego et al., (2018).
6. **Competent**	Wrosch ct al.. (2003). Petton et el..(2004). Wright (2005). El-Anzi (2005), (Lutbans et al., (2008), Hassan (2010), Saleem ct al., (2012),
7. **High wellbeing**	Strutton & Lumpkin (1992). Seligman (1998).Chang ct al.. (2000), Sahai & Singh (2017).
8. **Self -officious**	Wright (2005), Karademas ei al., (2007), Saleem ct al. (2012).Kim et al.,(2017).
9. **Resilient**	Stein & Book (2003). \Vright (2005), Thompson & Gaudreau (2008), Kim et al., (2017), Muinus & Nekimken (2017).

Source : Luxmi M, Ashu V.,2019

3.4.Self-efficacy:

Self-efficacy can be understood as a person's reliance on his/her own skills by being self-motivated, and using its own emotional /psychological resources in order to fulfill a specific task (Luthans & Youssef, 2004).

According to Keleş (2011), high self-efficacy level encourages individuals to overcome obstacles by choosing challenging tasks and developing sophisticated ways; they become persistent and determined to success during adversity, (Shahnawaz & Jafri, 2009). Studies have shown various characteristics of individuals with high self-efficacy; some of these are listed in the Table4:

Table4. Characteristics traits of self-efficacious individuals

Characteristics	Previous Studies
1. **Preservance**	Bandura & Locke (2003), Markman et al., (2005), Sbahnawaz & Jafii (2009). Laurencelle & Scanlan (20 18).
2. **Self motivated**	Stajkovic & Luthans(1998). Barbaranelli et al., (20 18).
3. **Goal oriented**	Sbahnawaz & Jafii (2009).Vieira et al..(2018).
4. **Self confidence**	Lim & Loo (2003).Bandura & Locke (2003).Oooty et al..(2009).Feltz & Oncu (20 14).Halper et al.. (2017). Laurencelle &

		Scanlan (20 1S).
5.	**High performance**	Stajkovic & Luthans (1998). Bandma (2000). Bauei·et al. (2007).Judge et al. (2007).Stajkovic et al. (2018).
6.	**High commitment**	Harris & Cameron (2005).Lin et al.. (201S).
7.	**Creative**	Tierney & Frumer (2002). Stru'key et al.. (2017). Hallak et al.. (2018).
8.	**Innovative**	Bandura (1986). Orth & Vobner (2017). Klaeijsen et al.. (2017).

Source : Luxmi M, Ashu V.,2019

According to Luthans and Youssef (2004), each one of these four dimensions of positive psychological capital meets the rule of positive organizational behavior as they are all positive, unique, quantifiable, open for development and related to performance.

Culbertson et al. (2010) has stated that the variance between each dimension consists of the high-level factor, positive psychological capital. Individuals with high positive psychological capital exhibit the following characteristics (Avey et al., 2008; Luthans et al., 2007):
   a) They are able to create new paths (hope) to achieve their dreams
   b) They have high self-confidence (self-efficacy) necessary to achieve desired goals.
   c) They have positive perspectives for the future (optimism).
   d) They tend to overcome setbacks (resilience) in difficult times.

In everyday terms, there is a fine line of difference between the 4 structures of HERO. Yet, in both of the psychological capital (Snyder & Lopez, 2002) and positive organizational behavior literature (Luthans & Youssef, 2007), authors made a clear differentiation between hope, efficiency, resilience and optimism. Also, they experimentally analyzed and proved the specificity of each one of the capacities mentioned (Bryant and Cvengros, 2004; Luthans, 2007; Youssef & Luthans, 2007), (Snyder & Lopez, 2002), (Luthans & Youssef, 2007), (Bryant & Cvengros, 2004), (Luthans, 2007), (Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

4. Organizational Cynicism

Dean et al. (1998) has pointed out different types of cynicism such as "social cynicism, employee cynicism, civil servant cynicism, work cynicism, and organizational cynicism."

Generally, cynicism is a self-manner that expresses negative impressions about human behavior (Abraham, 2000). Cynicism may rise from employment experiences (Andersson, 1996), (Bruch & Vogel, 2006). Individuals who show cynic behavior exhibit negative emotions such as hatred, anger, hopelessness and disappointment towards the staff and the organization (Lewis 1985), (Andersson, 1996), (Reicher et al., 1997), (Özler et al., 2010 ;2011)

Dean et al. (1998) classified cynicism behavior as follows:
   i.   Overt cynicism: It involves the expression of negative emotions using direct comments or statements that question the integrity of the organization.
   ii.   Covert cynicism: It involves the expression of negative emotions using sarcastic and non-verbal behavior.

Individuals suffering from cynicism have a hostile attitude and express a feel of disappointment towards their organization as they perceive their organization lacking authenticity, morality and justice (Andersson &Bateman, 1997), (Brockway et al., 2002), (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). (Kutanis, 2009), (Nair & Kamalanabhan, 2010). Such employees resist the development and the change in their organizations and thus damage their status (Abraham, 2000), (Arabacı, 2010). Organizational cynicism is a reaction gained by experiences rather than a personality-based tendency (Wanous et al., 2000).

In 1998, Dean et al., stated that organizational cynicism has three dimensions as follows:

4.1. Cognitive Dimension

This dimension indicates to employee's position in which he/she disbelieves the honesty of the organization and how it lacks justice, authenticity and sincerity in its practices (Urbany, 2005). Therefore, it risen the employee's feeling of being deceived, (Dean et al., 1998).

4.2. Emotional Dimension

The sensitive or emotional dimension indicates employee's arduous responses towards the organization. Pessimist employees may possess feelings such as disrespectfulness and outrage against their organization; Or they may feel displeasure, enmity, or even shame (Dean et al., 1998), or suffering from other sensitive reactions like "anxiety, shame, anger or disappointment "(O'Leary, 2002) or irritation/negativity (Brandes, 1999) or lack of respect, anger, lack of concern and dishonor (Abraham,2000); whenever their organization is mentioned.

4.3. Behavioral Dimension

The third dimension points out the negative attitudes and utterances carried on by pessimist employees towards their organization through criticizing or even disgracing it. This dimension shows the level of ferocity in the criticizing behavior of these employees and how they express clearly that their organization lacks honesty and truthfulness (Dean et al., 1998), (Turner & Valentine, 2001). As a result, criticizing employees find themselves excluded from their organization at this stage (O'Brien et al., 2004).

5. Literature Review of the Studies Regarding Positive Psychological Capital and Organizational Cynicism

Cynicism; is addressed to be a position characterized by despair, annoyance and disappointment and associated with humiliation, disgust and insecurity. Therefore, when employees' level of hope is high, optimistic, with high levels of psychological resilience and self-efficacy, they tend to tolerate more easily, and show less cynical behaviors. (Çalışkan, 2014).

In the studies analyzing the relationship between the positive psychological capital and organizational cynicism both in the national and international literature, conclusions have been reached to support the negative relationship between those two concepts. (Çalışkan, 2014; Karacaoğlu and Ince, 2013; Avey et al., 2010; Avey et al, 2009; Avey et al., 2013).

Avey, Wernsing, and Luthans (2008) investigated whether high psychological capital levels of employees result in positive outcomes through various attitudes and organizational behaviors. 132 employees from different sectors have participated in this study. Participant ages varied between 18-65 and the average age was 30.4. As a result of the study, it has been found that positive emotions play a mediating role between psychological capital and organizational participation. However, a significant negative relationship has been found between positive emotions, psychological capital and cynicism.

In a study by Avey, Luthans and Youssef (2010) namely "The Additive Value of Positive Psychological Capital in Predicting Work Attitudes and Behaviors", on an employee sample (N = 336) from a wide cross-section of organizations, psychological capital and organizational cynicism's negative relationship has once again been demonstrated.

Karacaoğlu and Ince (2013) carried out a study that investigates the effects of positive organizational behavior on organizational cynicism in the organizations of manufacturing industry of Kayseri. Research findings revealed that there is a negative relationship between organizational cynicism and positive organizational behavior. When these findings are evaluated in connection with the sub-dimensions of positive organizational behavior (self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism), it can be seen that there is a negative relationship between positive psychological capital and organizational cynicism. Additionally, positive organizational behavior has been observed to have a negative impact on organizational cynicism. Similarly, the sub-dimensions of positive organizational behavior; self-efficacy and optimism has been found to possess a negative impact on organizational cynicism.

In 2014, Çalışkan conducted a research about positive organizational behavior variables and their effects on devotion, exhaustion and cynicism and organizational justice. The study aimed to reveal the effects of the positive organizational behavior variables; hope, emphasizing the importance of optimism, resilience and self-efficacy for businesses and employee behavior. Research was conducted in Göztepe hospital, which has the largest patient

capacity in the Anatolian side. Hospital's employees were selected as a sample study. In the framework of the research model, two negative employee behaviors were associated with organizational behavior variables ("Cynicism" and "exhaustion") and opposite to that, "commitment", were chosen as dependent variables. It is revealed that positive organizational behavior variables have a negative but very low explanatory effect on cynicism. All positive organizational behavior variables inserted into the regression equation; to find out that only "optimism "variable affects cynicism negatively. According to research results, positive organizational behavior variables possess a positive effect on commitment, whereas on burnout and cynicism they have a negative one. (Çalışkan, 2014).

6. Conclusion

Psychological capital is drawn from Positive Organizational Behavior (POB) and has undergone much research in the field of positive psychology (Mohanty & Kolhe, 2016). It is "an individual's positive psychological state of development characterized by hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism "(Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017; Nwanzu & Babalola, 2019). Reviewing the literature helped in understanding that this trend can improve the performance of the organizations by positively/ negatively affecting the desired outcomes (e.g., performance, commitment, organizational cynicism, burnout etc...). However, advanced reviews showed that the four psychological resources of psychological capital together may not necessarily relate the same way with an employee's cynicism behavior. Each of the four positive psychological resources is conceptually distinct and may not measure work outcomes the same in desired positive outcomes. Indeed, further research is required as many studies didn't show the same result of this negatively oriented relationship between psychological capital and organizational cynicism. A deep study on each of the psychological capital components' impact on organizational cynicism is recommended. Moreover, future studies on the predictive relationship between psychological capital and organizational cynicism may provide a clear understanding about if, and to what extent this relationship is valid. Hence, researchers should consider also conducting more studies in varied organizational and cultural settings.

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