

ENHANCEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE IN SME THROUGH MULTILEVEL MINDFULNESS: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Organizations have confronted any changes or unexpected events from the internal and external environment that pressure and drive them to adapt for survival. Resilience describes the capability of individuals or organizations to bounce back, adapt and recover from unpredictable events. The literature reviews suggest that mindfulness and resilience are inextricably connected. Both resilience and mindfulness have some characteristics about responding to challenging occurrences. The process of resilience and mindfulness can be adapted, changed, developed, encouraged, learned and strengthened. This conceptual paper proposes a relationship between mindfulness and resilience at a cross-level. The major contribution of the paper is the expansion of thought and usage of High Reliability Organizations (HROs) and Psychological Capital (PsyCap) which enhance organizational resilience to understand how business especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) will be able to overcome the difficult situations effectively and doing sustainable business.

Keywords: Organizational Resilience, Mindfulness, Social Regard, Conceptual Model.

INTRODUCTION

It is inevitable for organizations to face the crisis. A considerable number of organizations went out of business within a few years due to inadequate preparation and a poor recovery plan after facing a crisis (Duchek, 2014). To sustain a competitive advantage, organizations need to respond quickly and develop the capacity to be resilient. This will enable them to be prepared for unexpected events and recuperate from situations of crisis (Lengnick, et., 2011; Goble, et al., 2002).

The concept of consciousness such as mindfulness is emerging and has attracted the attention of many businesses. Mindfulness becomes an important factor in environmental change and associated sustainability research. It corresponds with motivation to support adaptation to the environment through cognitive, managerial structural, ontological, epistemological change processes (Wamsler, 2018). There are different levels of mindfulness, individual mindfulness as intrapersonal and collective mindfulness as interpersonal. Individual mindfulness relates to the ability to cope with unexpected circumstances and new situations (Brown, et al., 2007). In another level, collective mindfulness which is defined as the collective capability to recognize discriminatory detail about crisis and act rapidly in response (Sutcliffe, et al., 2016). Collective mindfulness is addressed increasingly at level of an organization such as mindful organizing (Vogus, 2011), resilience performance (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007), and workplace mindfulness (Dane & Brummel, 2014). These research papers illustrate individual and collective mindfulness

in increasing awareness and support organizational learning to adaptability in unexpected events (Chiva & Habib, 2015; Levinthal & Rerup, 2006). Mindfulness may play an important role in business recovery and develop the capacity to be resilient.

Resilience is the ability of an individual or organization to plan and adapt their behaviours to unanticipated events and business environments (Mallak, 1998a). Resilience is a dynamic adaptation procedure that changes over time and can be developed, encouraged (Brewer & Hewstone, 2004), learned (Coutu, 2002) and strengthened (Davda, 2015). Resilience and mindfulness are similar characteristics. Mindfulness, like resilience, can be learned (Epstein, 1999) presented by introducing early in medical education (Shapiro, et al., 1998). Some studies present the role of mindfulness to deal with unexpected events. Mindfulness relates to the analysis of how people respond to the challenge of unpredictable situations (Frigotto & Narduzzo, 2017). Weick & Sutcliffe (2007) suggest that act mindfully achieves success in managing the unexpected event. The integration of mindfulness and resilience positions us to better understand this relationship to recover and develop the organization from unanticipated events.

Sutcliffe et al. (2016) suggest that the most important unanswered questions about the relationship between individual and collective mindfulness. Firstly, this study addresses the gap and attempts to seek the relationship in different levels of analysis between individual mindfulness and collective mindfulness to bridge this gap. Secondly, this research attempts to bridge the gap between a theoretical concept and creating resilience in the organization through empirical study. There is a lack of empirical testing and evidence on the translation from theories on how organizations achieve resilience to real-life practice remains limited. This study is the first attempt to explore the role of mindfulness at the individual level in enhancing organizational resilience in SMEs. This study tries to crate understand the process of organizational resilience that can be developed from individual mindfulness in the workplace. Thirdly, there is limited empirical evidence of collective mindfulness and organizational resilience. Collective mindfulness and five processes have not yet faced empirical validation. Previous studies emphasized qualitative methods as a case study or in-depth interview. Collective mindfulness has been studying in the complex and high-reliability organizations to avoid mistakes. The non-high reliability organization is vulnerable to the dangers and necessary to operate in dynamic environments (Ray et al., 2011).

The non-high reliability organization especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) contribute immensely to the rapid development of a country and play an important role in any country's economy (Nelson, 2015). SMEs are a significant part in many countries' economy and contribute to a large portion of the national economy. Therefore, the performance of an individual SMEs is linked to the performance of the nation (Chittithaworn, et al., 2011). In 1997, the serious economic crisis known as Tom Yam Kung crisis occurred in Thailand, impacting enterprises including SMEs and leading to its downfall. The natural disasters as the floods in Thailand in 2011 had an impact on the private sector include ruination of property, loss of revenue and increasing costs of business. However, numbers of SMEs were adaptable to change and grew during the crisis. SMEs are a good example of overcoming the crisis and an important function of a country's survival. The failure rates of the SMEs in developing countries have increased due to changes in the environment which lead to an uncertainty bigger for SMEs than for large companies. SMEs are often linked with supply chains which are essential for the economy. Therefore, the damage and losses are not limited only to single sectors, but also on entire economies. It is thus important to increase their resilience to be able to affect the overall

economic sustainability. Studying organizational resilience in this context is valuable and influential. Therefore, this research addresses the gap and examines the relationship of collective mindfulness and organizational resilience in high reliability and non-high reliability organizations as SMEs for increasing generalization of theory to a different group.

This study will attempt to bridge these gaps with regards to the formation and processing of multilevel mindfulness in the workplace to enhance organizational resilience. Hence, the focus of this study is the understanding of resilience and mindfulness at the level of individuals and organizations. The results of this study provide the results of the advantage of resilience development in organizations. Organizations would have tools to help them to improve the level of resilience in individuals and systems. Adapting individual mindfulness in an organization can result in the development of collective mindfulness, leading to organizational resilience and the survival of businesses and economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mindfulness

There are two focuses of mindfulness at different levels including (1) individual mindfulness as intrapersonal and (2) collective mindfulness as interpersonal (Sutcliffe et al., 2016). Both individual and collective mindfulness enhance positive outcomes (Ndubisi & Al-Shuridah, 2019).

Individual Mindfulness

The concept of individual mindfulness is different in the thought of Eastern and Western. In Eastern concept, mindfulness originates from the Pali language word “sati”. It refers to awareness, attention, and remembering but in a form of consciousness, which indicates the presence of mind (Bodhi, 2000). In Buddhism, mindfulness is the act of seeing things as truly in the present moment (Gunaratana, 2011). Thich Nhat Hanh, a well-known Buddhist monk, defines mindfulness as “keeping one’s consciousness alive to the present reality” (Hanh, 1976). Traditional mindfulness in Buddhism focuses on the present moment and achieving nirvana and spiritual enlightenment. Mindfulness is a derived concept from religious practices and is explained in psychology by Jon Kabat-Zinn. He defines mindfulness as “awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment” (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Brown & Ryan (2003) specify mindfulness as responsive attention and awareness of the present situation. Mindfulness has two characteristics as paying attention to present moment experience and relating this experience with curious, open, and accepting stance (Bishop, et al., 2004). Hyland, et al. (2015) describe mindfulness as the cultivation of attention and awareness in the present moment. Mostly, mindfulness refers to the ability to nonjudgmental awareness and attention in the present moment. From this conceptualization, the three common characteristics of mindfulness are (1) focus in the present or attention, (2) self-awareness, and (3) acceptance by non-judgment.

There is another different concept of individual mindfulness in Western by Ellen Langer who describes mindfulness as “active information processing” mode (Langer, 1989). She suggests that mindfulness is the process of drawing novel distinctions which require the attention to the content and context of information in the present moment. From Langer concept, mindfulness is defined as “a rich awareness of discriminatory detail generated by organizational

processes" (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2006). Mindfulness is different from mindlessness behaviour, mindfulness is a state of being in the present and wakefulness which can lead to better sensitivity to the environment, more openness to new information, creation of new categories for perception, and enhanced awareness of perspective in problem solving (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). Langer's definition is characteristic of mindfulness in Western thought and adopted by many organizational researchers (Weick & Putnam, 2006).

The concept of individual mindfulness in the East and the West is different. The Eastern thought focuses on inner experiences and nonjudgmental observation (Baer, 2003), and the internal processes of mind and body (Didonna, 2009). The West emphasizes the awareness of external events and goal-oriented cognitive (Baer, 2003), creativity, goal orientation, and problem solving (Pirson, et al., 2015). Weick & Putnam (2006) argue that the wisdom of Eastern and the knowledge of Western can support each other in the development process of high-reliability organizing. This leads to the concept of mindfulness as infrastructure in the theory of High Reliability Organizations (HROs).

Buranapin, et al. (2016) merge the two perspectives and create the mindfulness spectrum from the process of constructing with experience in the Eastern to the construction to novel distinctions in the Western. They suggest that the two perspectives support each other in every dimension of the mindfulness spectrum. Mindfulness spectrum explains the process of the quality state of mind from passive to active states which leading mindfulness accessible in the organization. This spectrum is separated into three categories. The focus and detachment categories in the passive state consist of consciousness, concentration, equanimity, emotion regulation, and non-judgement. The main functions of the mind in this state is to observe the experience both internal and external and detach from past experiences and expectations of the future. In an active state, the categories of understanding comprise of insight and self-regulation which allowing the individual seeing the problem from a new perspective and adapting to novel changes in the environment. This study focuses on mindfulness in the active state of mind which appropriate and relates to resilience in accommodating continuous and novel changes with adaptability and flexibility in organization. Hence, individual mindfulness in this study is described as a quality state of mind that drawing novel distinctions that require to be fully aware of the current situation and adapting to novel changes in the environment with stability and flexibility needed.

Collective Mindfulness

In recent years, researchers have started to explore mindfulness at a level of organization which is called collective mindfulness or organizational mindfulness, or mindful organizing. These three terms can be substituted and exchangeable in this study. Collective mindfulness was founded by Weick and his colleague from the concept of Langer's Western perspective of mindfulness. It consists of environmental sensitivity, openness to experience, new categories creation, and awareness of problem solving (Langer, 1989). Weick & Sutcliffe (2001) define collective mindfulness as the infrastructure of high reliability organizations that continually implement five principles including (1) preoccupation with failure, (2) reluctance to simplify, (3) sensitivity to operations, (4) commitment to resilience, and (5) deference to expertise. Collective mindfulness is developed to demonstrate how high reliability organizations avoid disaster and achieve nearly error-free under challenging situations (Sutcliffe, et al., 2016). Most of the previous studies emphasize collective mindfulness relate to maintaining the five characteristics of HROs. Some scholars try to combine the awareness and attention of individuals with

collective mindfulness of organization and indicate that it can be connected. Studying collective mindfulness is still in a relatively nascent stage of development. The definition is limited and scholars are still working through the theory of HROs to identify the definition of collective mindfulness.

Resilience

Individual resilience

At the individual, resilience theory has its roots in the study of adversity and an interest in how adverse life experiences impact harmfully on people (Van-Breda, 2018). Individual resilience is adapting to challenging situations, not only recover, but also emerging stronger than before. Resilience at the individual level is referred in two ways, its process and ability of an individual. It means the process of adapting and bouncing back of an individual in the face of adversity and stress such as health, relationship, and financial problems. It is normal behaviours and activities that can be learned and developed. In the field of psychology, the strategy of enhancing individual resilience consists of building the connection, fostering wellness in body and mind as practising mindfulness, and finding the purpose (American Psychological Association, 2018). Resilience is a dynamic process of individuals that present positive behavioural adaptation when they are faced with unexpected events (Seville, 2008). Luthar (2006) defined resilience as a construct with two dimensions of significant adversity and positive adaptation.

Organizational resilience

At the organizational level, resilience refers to the characteristics of organizations that can handle challenging situations by responding and recovering rapidly or developing more than others (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003; Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). Resilience is different from recovery. It does not only return to the pre-disaster situation but adapt to a new set of condition and more develop than before. Most of the studies specified organizational resilience as the ability of the organization. Staw, et al. (1981) referred resilience as the tendency toward well-learned or effective responses under threat. Meyer (1982) extended this concept in an empirical study of hospitals. He specified resilience as an ability to absorb environmental jolt and restore previous situations. Resilience is referred to at the multilevel of individuals, groups, organizations, and systems. It is a fundamental quality that responds to significant change without regression (Horne & Orr, 1998). Organizational resilience is the ability of an individual or organization to plan and apply adaptive positive behaviours to unanticipated events (Mallak, 1998) and adapting the organization to business environments (Mallak, 1998). Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld (1999) studied how people organize around failure and the process of collective mindfulness in high-risk and complex system organizations. Organizational resilience is the ability to cope with unexpected situations and learning to bounce back. It is an ability and speed that an organization can return to normal situations following a disruption (Sheffi, 2005). Organizational resilience has been defined as the capability to handle challenging conditions for the existence and prosperity of the organization (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007).

Some researchers referred to resilience as characteristics or functions of the organization. Gittell, et al. (2006) explain organizational resilience as the maintenance of positive adaptation, ability to bounce back, capacity to maintain functions and develop over time under challenging

situations. McManus (2008) proposed a definition of organizational resilience as “a function of an organization’s overall situation awareness, management of keystone vulnerabilities and adaptive capacity in a complex, dynamic and interconnected environment”. Seville, Brunsdon, Dantas, et al. (2008) emphasize work of McManus (2008) and define resilience as the accomplishing the goal and seek new opportunities of an organization when face adversity by (1) managing keystone vulnerabilities to reducing the size and frequency of crisis, (2) adaptive capacity for improving the ability and speed effectively, and (3) situation awareness to recognize to the complex environment. Resilience is an important key in preparing and developing an organization to respond quickly to unexpected events for survival (Sullivan- Taler & Wilson, 2009).

Theory of High Reliability Organizations (HROs)

The concept of High Reliability Organizations (HROs) originated from a team of researchers at the University of California, Berkley in 1984. They argued that the error-free performance is brought about by active search for reliability and suggested High Reliability Organizing theory (Linnenluecke, 2017). Weick & Roberts (1993) suggested that high-reliability organizations have accomplished collective mental processes including information processes, heedful action, and mindful attention. They proposed the concept of the collective mind and argued that the increase in attentiveness and mindful comprehension decreases the chance of errors in the organization. Theory of high reliability organizations (HROs) has moved into organizational theory in the work of Weick et al. (1999). Weick and colleagues create a mindfulness infrastructure at the level of collective or organizational mindfulness. Collective mindfulness is characterized as an ability to determine threats and capture such detail to respond quickly and reliably to prevent incidents effectively (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015). They identified the five characteristics that employ collective mindfulness of high reliability organizations as (1) Preoccupation with failures, (2) Reluctance to simplify, (3) Sensitivity to operations, (4) Commitment to resilience, and (5) Deference to expertise.

Theory of Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

The term "positive psychology" was introduced by research psychologist Martin Seligman and his colleagues in 1999 who discussed this concept that led to the "Positive Organizational Behavior" by focusing on people's strengths such as traits, virtues, talents rather their weakness such as mental illness and pathology (Cavus & Gokcen, 2015; Nolzen, 2018; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive Organizational Behavior (POB) is defined as "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" (Luthans, 2002). This concept has subsequently developed to "Psychological Capital or PsyCap" by Luthans and his colleagues. Luthans et al. (2006) define Psychological Capital as an individual's positive psychological state that characterized by

- (1) self-efficacy - belief in oneself to accept and apply the effort to succeed in challenging tasks,
- (2) hope - personal goals and alternative ways to succeed, (3) optimism – positive attribution about succeeding now and in the future, and (4) resiliency – tendency to sustain, bounce back, and beyond from adversity.

In this study, the importance of resiliency at the individual level is a core factor in psychological capital. Resilience has unique characteristics that are discriminated from other positive capacities. In the face of crisis, resilience recognizes not only the ability to recover, rebound, and return to an equilibrium point, but also using this opportunity for growth beyond that point. Luthans (2002) defines resilience as the developable capacity to rebound from adversity or even positive events. Resilience is recovery, learning, and growth through challenging situations. There is a linkage of resilience at the level of individuals and organizations. Luthans & Youssef (2004) suggest that when faced adversity, resilient persons can change for a better situation. Psychological resilience is the ability of individuals to bounce back and focus on their goals (Richardson, 2002). Luthans et al. (2006) have defined resiliency as management skills in case of uncertainty. Resilient organizations have consisted of resilient individuals who can absorb change and recognize it as an opportunity for future development (Doe, 1994).

CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

In summary, this paper develops conceptual models and hypotheses by drawing on the theoretical of high reliability organizations (Weick, 1999; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001) and psychological capital theory (Luthans, 2002; Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Figure 1. Presents the conceptual model of this study.

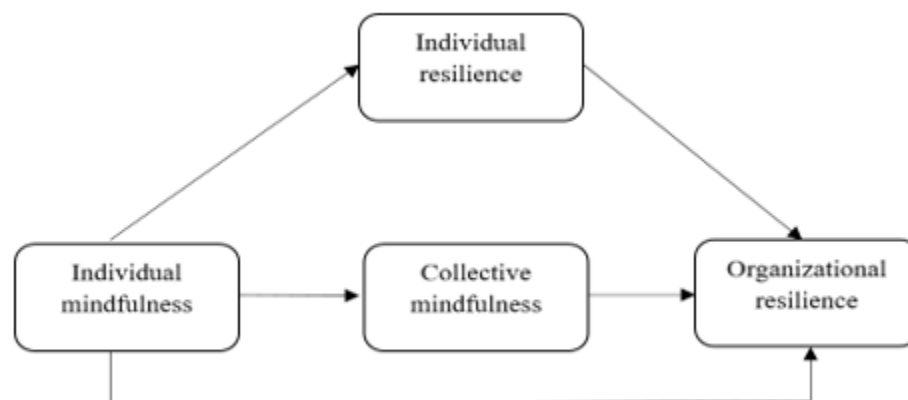


FIGURE 1
CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Individual mindfulness and collective mindfulness

In the field of organizational behaviour, there is a relationship between a cross-level of individual and organization. The culture of an organization is developed by interacting and determining members in the organization to achieve goals (Tompkins, 2005). As individual behaviour shapes organizational behaviour, it was also believed that individual mindfulness would lead to greater collective mindfulness. Mindfulness in the organization is a multi-level concept which benefits employees and organization (Sutcliffe et al., 2016). Organizational mindfulness, like individual mindfulness, focuses on the ability to notice signals, interpret it, and respond appropriately (Butler & Gray, 2006). Mindfulness at the level of individual and

organization can be characterized correspondingly (Langer, 1989a). Collective mindfulness and individual mindfulness share an emphasis on increased attention to the present moment situation, and act on what they notice (Weick et al., 1999; Diernynk, et al. 2016). Collective mindfulness as a theory of HROs is collections of individuals and groups that act collectively. It is different from each other in what they attend, assume, process information, create knowledge, and learn (Ray, et al., 2011). To confirm theoretically and operationalization of variables and linkage of individual and collective mindfulness to answer the research questions of this study, the first hypothesis is.

H1: Individual mindfulness has a positive effect on collective mindfulness

Collective Mindfulness and Organizational Resilience

Collective mindfulness, as the infrastructure of HROs, is a characteristic of an organization that evaluate threats to respond quickly and accurately to prevent unexpected events (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015). Oliver, Senturk, et al. (2017) present a significant positive correlation between collective mindfulness, resilience, and performance. Most of the research studied the linkage of collective mindfulness and organizational resilience emphasizing on high reliability organizations with limited empirical evidence. In the present, organizations are unavoidably able to deal with unexpected events in complex environments. Therefore, it should be expanded to outside high reliability organizations as SMEs which is valuable and influential. To contribute to the theory of high reliability organizations (HROs), this study tries to explore the relationship between collective mindfulness and organizational in high reliability organizations and non-high reliability organizations, so the next hypothesis is.

H2: Collective mindfulness has a positive effect on organizational resilience in high reliability organization and non-high reliability organizations

Individual Mindfulness and Organizational Resilience

There is no empirical evidence of the relationship between individual mindfulness and organizational resilience. However, there are some arguments about the positive impact of mindfulness in the workplace such as organizational change, sustainability, outcomes, performance, decision making of leaders, and the success of an organization. Mindfulness supports employees' management organizational change. Mindful persons may be open to new ideas of doing things and more attentive while learning new behaviours (Hyland et al., 2015). Mindfulness practice improves the ability to perceive circumstances objectively (Shapiro, Carlson, et al., 2006). Wamsler (2018) suggests that mindfulness is a core concept in sustainability. Mindfulness is a positive association with workplace outcomes as creativity, innovation, individual resilience, work engagement, productivity, communication skills, safety climates, learning, adaptation, performance and reduces conflict, absenteeism, turnover (Chaskalson, 2011; Pirson et al., 2015). Fiol & O'Connor (2003) argue that mindfulness relates to better decision making. Practice mindfulness will be more to understand the value of information and interpret unexpected results rather than dismiss them. To create a new finding, this study aims to explore the relationship between individual mindfulness and organizational resilience. The next hypothesis is.

H3: There is a positive correlation between individual mindfulness and organizational resilience

Individual Resilience and Organizational Resilience

Mindfulness and resilience are connected and positively associated (Kemper, et al., 2015; Montero-Marin, et al., 2015). Individuals have varying degrees of psychological awareness or the ability to be mindful. The person who has low on mindfulness will be less likely to be able to reflect on a situation when faced with adversity (Rees, et al., 2015). This presents the linkage between mindfulness and resilience at the level of an individual. Mindfulness and accepting may promote psychological resilience of individuals following trauma (Thompson et al., 2011). Slatyer, et al. (2017) argue that mindfulness may play an important role in resilience. Mindfulness relates to decreased burnout and increased resilience (Olsen, et al., 2015). These studies showed the association between mindfulness and resilience. To confirm this relationship, the last hypothesis is

H5: Individual mindfulness has a positive effect on individual resilience

CONCLUSION

Few research papers have examined the link between mindfulness and resilience. The integration of resilience and mindfulness positions to better understand the various relationship between individual and organizational resilience and individual and collective mindfulness. This conceptual model of mindfulness for organizational resilience attempts to bridge these gaps with regards to the formation and processing of mindfulness in the workplace from an individual to the collective level to enhance organizational resilience in the context of SMEs. Firstly, this proposes the linkage of individual and collective mindfulness which if the result is positive, mindfulness practice for individuals may build survival and sustainability for the organization. Secondly, this suggests the effect of collective mindfulness on organizational resilience and presents its effect in a group of different types of business, SMEs and high reliability organizations. Building resilience in business as SMEs is necessary for dynamic environments. Thirdly, it is the first study to introduce both the direct effect of individual mindfulness on organizational resilience. Finally, understanding the connection of resilience at individual and organizational levels will benefit both individual and organizational success. This conceptual paper will make better understand relationships between a multilevel of mindfulness and resilience in organization sciences and management for the survival and doing sustainable business.

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