Linking Personal Resilience, Openness to Change and Readiness to Change with Emotional Distress

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The purpose of this research was to examine the mediating effect of the impact of Openness to Change, for the relationship of Personal Resilience with Emotional Distress. Data were collected from 400 employees of Zong (Pakistan) with the help of Simple Random Sampling Technique. The results confirm that Personal Resilience is negatively related to Emotional Distress, Openness to Change is also negatively related to Emotional Distress. Personal Resilience is positively related to Openness to Change. Openness to Change partly mediate the relationship of Personal Resilience and Emotional Distress. Current study considers only the employees of Zong Pakistan. Demographic variables were treated as control variables and not included in final analysis. Current research is case study on Zong Pakistan, we do not apply these results to other type of industry. Longitudinal researches will be helpful for generalizing the results. In future this type of research will be carried out on same kind of organizations like Ufone, Telenor and Mobilink employees and will compare the results of all the organizations.
Introduction

Change has long been regarded as a crucial component about any company’s growth. It is "a movement from one state to another," according to the definition. The word "change" is used to refer to both the process of improvement and its outcomes (Makhlouf, 2021). Organizations today are dealing with greater changes than ever (Arshad, 2019). They are restructuring, cutting staff, and deploying new technologies as they work to maintain their competitive advantage (Ahmad, 2019). This study examined the predictors and outcomes of employee Openness to Change in call center employees.

Openness to change is termed as "It is involving in (a) readiness to support the change and (b) good affect about the probable implications of the change (e.g., feeling that the changes will be beneficial in some way)" (Men, 2020). Employee readiness for organizational change may depend in large part on how open they are to change (Awang, 2020). In addition, Peng (2020) argued that high rates of openness to an organizational change are indicative of greater collaboration or might prevent change resistance behaviours such as quarrelling and hostility, purposeful restraint of manufacturing, and lack of collaboration with administration. Peng (2020) claimed that openness to changes that are being posited and applied in an organization is a "required, the initial requirement for successful change implementation." It has been witnessed in the studies that the Openness to Change is pre-situation to being ready for the change (Axtell, 2002; Van & Vermeeren, 2017).

According to Kirrane and Fu (2017), when employees do not support the change or even face difficulty for implementation of that particular change while due to fear of new working environment or situation always become a major reason for high cost of organization. Ultimately, it will be the result of decreased organizational level of production (Kim, & Linderman, 2015). As per the conclusion of Edmonstone, (2018) organizations are always focused to remain well prepared for change, to implement the change and respond as per the result of change.

According to Haffar and Gbadamosi (2019) successful implementation of Organizational Change could remain long lasting only in a situation when employees do not change their behavior that they are doing right as per their job description and also organizations are fully ready for any change as per right infrastructure, proper communication, culture, effective leadership and desired system. Due to the non-focus on employees and their role in change implementation, organizations get failure or even face difficulty to implement the change like initiative of total quality management (Al-Maamari, & Abdulrab, 2018). That’s the reason; current studies have focused on the important role of employee readiness for such change initiative (Mearns, & Snyder, 2013) and employee determination to change (Adams, 2017). Employee Readiness for Change is defined as "the cognitive foundation to the behaviours of either opposition to, or acceptance of, a change endeavor." (Brown & Donnell, 2017). Readiness to change is also described as "the extent to which staff holds positive views about the need for organizational change (i.e., change recognition), as well as the degree to which employees perceive that such variations are likely to have beneficial consequences for them and the entire organization" (Kinney, 2017). Different researchers have elaborated the
employee Readiness for Change as “an individual’s attitude toward a particular change” (Hannon, & Harris, 2017). According to Wanberg and Banas (2000) and Duchek and Scheuch (2020), Personal Resilience is good predictor of Openness to Change and Readiness to Change.

Based on Wanberg & Banas (2000) proposed model, current research considers three different variables (Perceived Control, Self-Esteem, and Optimism) under the umbrella of Personal Resilience as predictors of employee Openness to the Change and Readiness to Change. Emotional Distress as consequence of the call center employees comprise of three components as (Work-Related Irritation, Anxiety and Depression). Three components of Personal Resilience are important to display the employee reactions in context of change (Lamont, 2020). These constructs are regarded as fundamental personality traits that help people cope, be generally content, and adjust to difficult life experiences (Taylor & Brown, 1988; Raggiotto & Scarpi, 2020).

Richards, et al., (2020), on working the concept of Taylor & Brown, (1988); Raggiotto & Scarpi, (2020), Considered to be highly connected characteristics that together make up a "resilient personality," optimism, perceived self-esteem, and perceived control. Raggiotto and Scarpi (2020) went on to say that change is unpleasant and that openness to change and readiness for change should be correlated with better level of optimism, self-esteem, and perceived control. They reasoned that those with these traits might try to view change in the best possible light. The value of perceived control, self-esteem, and optimism in dealing with changes is backed by evidence in the organizational change research in addition to justifications rooted in cognitive adaptation theory and core self-evaluation theory. Self-Esteem and Perceived Control, for instance, were found to be adversely connected with anxiety, depression, and work-related irritability, according to Ashford (1988); Bayraktar & Jiménez (2020).

Rush and Barnard (1995) discovered that stress, specifically depression, anxiety, and work-related irritability, were linked to change. Additionally, Maes and Hootegem (2019) contend that the two change-related variables, readiness to change and openness to change, have a bad impact on the personal outcomes. Because of this, ongoing study comprises three crucial interpersonal level factors as results of "openness to change and readiness to change: anxiety, depression, and work-related irritation".

Emotional distress, according to Joeng (2017), comprises anxiety, irritation, and depression. In the current study, emotional distress has been considered as a dependent variable. Information on the changes that will be made and how they have affected businesses. Without sufficient knowledge, people could be unsure of specific changes that will take place, how a certain change will affect their organization and career, or how to react to a change (Milliken, 1987; Maes & Hootegem, 2019). Information on organizational change is beneficial for changing attitudes toward a change as well as lowering uncertainty and employee anxiety (Schweiger, & DeNisi, 1991; Miller & Monge, 1985; Gigliotti, 2019; Maes, & Hootegem, 2019).
People who find a change to be stressful, irritating, or unpleasant may also experience a surge in their level of irritation at work (the propensity to feel angry, agitated, or annoyed) (Spector, 1997; Samanta, & Kallou, 2020). The term "personal impact" describes the overall perceived influence that a change will have on a person or how they function. According to research by Ashford (1988) and Joeng (2017), people who believe that a workplace change would directly affect them (i.e., cause more disruption to their occupations) will feel anxiety, depression, and irritability.

In previous research relationships of Personal Resilience with Openness to Change and Emotional Distress estimated by considering the dimensions of Personal Resilience (Self Esteem, Optimism and Perceived Control)) and Emotional Distress (Work-Related, Irritation Anger, Anxiety & Depression) but this research considered these variables as a whole. Current research also adds in the body of literature by considering the Readiness to Change as other mediator for the relationship of Personal Resilience with Emotional Distress. Following is the objective of current study. To identify the mediating role of Openness to Change and Readiness to Change in relationship of Personal Resilience and Emotional Distress in employees of Zong Call Center. From the best of researcher knowledge relationship of variables Personal Resilience, Openness to Change and Emotional Distress was not tested in a single model.

Literature Review

Personal Resilience

Different researchers Chmitorz, and Lieb, (2018) described the term of resilience as the procedure to adopt particular ways of trauma and such as stress. According to Pecitto (2016) research work has been increased on this topic particularly in last 2 decades to measure and analyze the impact of resilience on the health, quality of life and also well-being. It is purely a psychological factor and may have different impact as per the gender and age. It can be expressed in a different way within the male and female but has a same extent within the same sex type. As per the Fan and Lu (2020) a detailed understanding of resilience may be an adequate technique to know its impact on youth. As said by Denovan and Macaskill (2017) the establishment of resilience within the organizations and even in individuals can be accessed through multiple answers to the level of stress as per the workplace environment and lifestyle. The literature does not provide any definite description of resilience, instead it may be described as per its establishment, outcome or even procedure, consideration of wellbeing and deficit and focusing on the benefits to the individuals or even to organizations (Liebenberg, & Foucault, 2017).

According to Masten, and Cicchetti, (2016) there is always needed to support your employees while working in tough and stressful environment. To build a solid and effective workforce is really associated with mind relaxation, as the employees are more relaxed the workforce will be more effective and efficient (Thompson et al., 2016; Grégoire & Lachance, 2015). During the life span, employees face different kind of situations and challenges in their life. Pettit, Croxton & Fiksel, (2019) said that many human beings handle those challenges in
an effective way and many even face difficulties to sort out those issues and also unable to perform their routine life activities properly. There are significant differences in how resilience is defined, for instance, resilience has been conceptualized as a trait, i.e., a group of pretty steady traits that allow a person to adapt to the situations, or as a flexible procedure, according to the researchers Chmitorz and Lieb (2018).

The research of psychological resilience seeks to comprehend why some people are more resilient to the stress they experience in their lives. Researchers are not at the same page about the description of adversity. During the current meta-analysis, adults’ level of resilience was also included and other factors like self-efficacy, self-esteem, positive impact, optimism and also the life satisfaction have a solid link with resilience (Annarelli & Nonino, 2016). As per the researcher’s suggestions for a proper understanding of resilience it is required to improve related factors instead of minimizing risk factors. Annarelli and Nonino, (2016); Proverbs and Lamond (2017) socio-demographic variables does show the positive link among the resilience and age but adverse relation. According to the Gloria & Steinhardt, (2016) and Martí & Ruch, (2017) male and female are both more resilient. Emotional attachments and strengths such as love, zest, hope, optimism, humor, bravery and social intelligence does have strong link (Bieda, & Margraf, 2019). All of these strengths are much important as they do provide energy and support to the individuals to even deal with adverse situation. Different other individual’s strengths such as honesty, sincerity, persistence and self-accountability also have strong link with resilience and also play an important role while facing any difficult situation in life. Other intellectual strengths, such as the creativity, learning attitude, curiosity and open mind also have link with resilience and plays an important role to acquire latest knowledge and to provide solution for different organizational issues.

Openness to Change

It is necessary for the organizations to have highly skilled and very much capable human resource to adopt and compete with modern and high market competition among the organizations. According to the Flaxman (2013); Singla et al., 2017) psychological flexibility is being considered one of the important capabilities of the employees to enhance the level of productivity and improve the performance. Other researchers like Beail, (2017); Hashemi et al. (2019) have said that the Openness to Change is actually more impactful in the shape of psychological flexibility when it is done with the ability and real conscious however doing without any pre judgment of change or even consistent valued behaviors. On a consistent base organization always try to keep updating their process to work and to improve outcomes in response to the required changes as per the market demand. It is not matter whether organizations make changes to improve the level of productivity, betterment of the human resource or to compete in the market a real time collective change in the behaviors of the employees must come (Nielsen, et al., 2020). However, employees may not get benefit from the change on consistent bases but they play an important role during the implementation process of the change.
A positive impact may be determined through human resource welcoming behavior towards the change and keeping high trust on the change that is very much beneficial for them. The assured attention about the Openness to Change only come from the human resource attitudes and mental readiness about the change (Augustsson, et al., 2017) instead of the actual behavioral actions to support the change. As per the study of planned actions Augustsson, et al. (2017), a real thought to act as per the behavioural guides by following the behaviour (DiClemente, 2018). It has been witnessed in the studies that the Openness to Change is pre-situation to being ready for the change (Axtell 2002; Vanet al., 2017), a real satisfaction about the job, and decreased intention to exit the job (Vakola, 2013).

**Emotional Distress**

As a condition of emotional suffering characterised by signs of depression (e.g., lost interest, hopelessness, sadness), anxiety (e.g., feeling tense, restlessness), and rage," emotional distress is often defined (Mirowsky and Ross 2002). These problems "may be linked to somatic symptoms, which are likely to differ throughout cultures, such as insomnia, and lack of energy, headaches according to the study (Onyencho, et al., 2020; Kleinman 1991). There are other criteria that have been used to define emotional distress, however there is no agreement on these criteria. The stress-distress model's supporters particularly contend that "the main characteristics of psychological distress are vulnerability to a traumatic event that endangers one's mental or physical health, the incapacity to deal with this stressor successfully, and the emotional stress that outcomes from this ineffectual ability to cope (Horwitz 2007, Liu et al., 2019). Although there is ample evidence to support the relationship between stress and distress, incorporating stress in the definition of distress ignores the possibility of distress in the context of stress.

On the one side, emotional distress is thought of as an emotional disturbance that may affect how people behave in social situations and go about their daily lives (Wheaton & Kaiser, 2021). Numerous research has been conducted in an effort to determine the protective and risk factors related to it as a result. Contrarily, distress is a diagnostic requirement for some mental diseases (such as obsessive-compulsive disorders and posttraumatic stress disorder), and it serves as a marker for a variety of signs in other disorders (such as major depressive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder) (Phillips 2009, Davison, et al., 2020). So, if psychological distress was evident together with other indications that combined met the diagnosis requirements for a mental condition, it would mainly be a serious disease. Otherwise, it is seen as a temporary phenomenon associated with a "natural" emotional response to a stressor, in keeping with the stress-distress concept. Work-Related Irritation (Anger), Anxiety, and Depression are all examples of emotional distress.
Conceptual Framework

Figure No1: Hypothesized Research Model

Hypotheses

Current research proposes the following hypotheses:

- **H1**: Personal Resilience is negatively related with Emotional Distress.

- **H2**: Personal Resilience is positively related to Openness to Change.

- **H3**: Openness to Change is negatively related with Emotional Distress.

- **H4**: Openness to Change is mediating the relationship of Personal Resilience and Emotional Distress.

Methodology

Research Approach

The information from the participants for this cross-sectional research project was only gathered once. Relationships are founded on cause and effect, hence this study is explanatory. Just like the previous researches (For e.g., Jia et al., 2022; Wang, et al., 2022).

Target Population

The target market is the Zong (Pakistan) employees.

Sample Size

Data is gathered from 400 Zong employees (Pakistan).

Sampling Technique and Process

Using a straightforward random sample technique, information is gathered from four Zong offices in Pakistan. The researcher first acquired a list of the employees before using a straightforward random sample procedure.
Sampling Procedure

Simple random sampling is used to gather data from Zong (Pakistan).

Data Gathering

With the help of a standardized questionnaire, data is gathered.

Data Analysis

SPSS 24 is used to assist with data analysis.

Research Instruments

Openness to Change is measured with the help of 8 items scale which was adopted by Miller, Johnson and Grau (1994). Response will report on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree to 5 (strongly agree). Personal resilience is consisted of optimism, self Esteem and perceived control. Detail of these scales are given below. Perceived control is measured using a 4 item scale of Pearlin’s Mastery scale (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978) (1 strongly disagree, to 5 strongly agree).

Optimism is measured using a 4 item scale of Scheier, et al., (1994) scale (1 strongly disagree, to 5 strongly agree). Self esteem is measured with using a 4 item scale of Tambs, & Røysamb, (2014) (1 strongly disagree, to 5 strongly agree). Emotional distress is consisted of work related irritation, anxiety and depression. Work related Irritation is measured 3 item scale developed by Mohr (1986) on 5-pointLikeet type scale that ranged from 1=not at all correct to 5= mostly correct. Anxiety is measured with the help of 4 items scale of Löwe, et al., (2010) (1 agree, to 5 strongly disagree). Depression is measured with item scale developed by Mohr (1986) on 5-pointLikeet type scale that ranged from 1=not at all correct to 5= mostly correct

Reliability Analysis

Value of alpha of reliability of Openness to Change is 0.77. Value of alpha of reliability of Personal Resilience is 0.82. Value of alpha of reliability of Emotional Distress is 0.85. All values are greater that acceptance range i.e., more than 0.70.

Correlation Analysis

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<th>PR</th>
<th>OC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC</td>
<td>0.463∗∗</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>-0.603∗∗</td>
<td>-0.680∗∗</td>
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Table No1 explain about the relationship of all the variables. Openness to Change is positively associated with Personal Resilience, “r” of this association is 0.463. Emotional Distress is negatively associated with Personal Resilience, “r” of this association is -0.60. Emotional Distress is negatively associated with Openness to Change, “r” of this association
is -0.68. Emotional Distress is negatively associated with Openness to Change, “r” of this association is -0.68.

**Regression Analysis**

Simple linear regression and multiple linear regression is the method which is used for the analysis. This method is the same like the researchers (i.e., Malik et al., 2015; Shah et al., 2020; Jamil et al., 2014; Ullah et al., 2021; Alvi et al., 2014; Alvi, et al., 2017). Table No2 explain the influence of Personal Resilience on Emotional Distress. Value of $R^2$ has a value of 36%, which is higher than 9%. When it is less than 0.09 or 9%, this figure is allowed (Dwyer, Gill & Seetaram, 2012). F has a value of 227.3. This is also a good value. F's p value is equal to 0.000. 0.01 is the value here. This result is within acceptable bounds as well. "p" is equal to 0.000 for the impact of personal resilience on emotional distress. 0.01 is the value here. This indicates that the effect of this relationship is acknowledged as a hypothesis. The value of is -0.868 in this connection. This demonstrates that an alteration in personal resilience results in a fluctuation in emotional distress that is 86.8% negative. This result is comparable to earlier research's findings (For e.g., Otto et al.,2011).

Table No2 also explain the influence of Personal Resilience on Organizational Change. Value of $R^2$ is 22% which is greater than 9%. When it is less than 0.09 or 9%, this figure is allowed (Dwyer, Gill & Seetaram, 2012). F has a value of 108.7. This is also a decent value. F's p value is equal to 0.000. 0.01 is the value here. This figure is within acceptable bounds as well. "p" is 0.000 for the relationship between Personal Resilience and Openness to Change. 0.01 is the value here. This indicates that the effect of this association is acknowledged as a hypothesis. For this connection, the value is 0.777. This demonstrates that a change of one unit in personal resilience leads to an increase of 77.7% in openness to change. The above result is comparable to earlier research's findings (For e.g. Wanberg, & Banas, 2000: Otto et al.,2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Path c (Step 1)”</th>
<th>“β”</th>
<th>“S.E”</th>
<th>“F”</th>
<th>“R^2”</th>
<th>“Decision”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome: Emotional Distress</td>
<td>-0.868</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>227.3</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>0.000&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictor: Personal Resilience</td>
<td>0.777</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>108.71</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>0.000&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No 2: Regression Analysis
Table No2 explain the influence of Openness to Change on Emotional Distress. Value of $R^2$ is 46% which is greater than 9%. This value is accepted when it is < 0.09 or 9% (Dwyer, Gill & Seetaram, 2012). F has a value of 342.12. This is also a decent value. F's p-value is equal to 0.000. 0.01 is the value here. This figure is within acceptable bounds as well.

"p" is 0.000 for the impact of Openness to Change on Emotional Distress. 0.01 is the value here. This indicates that the impact of this association is acknowledged as a hypothesis. For this connection, the value is -0.584. This demonstrates that an increase in openness to change by one unit causes an increase in emotional distress by 58.4%. This result is similar with result of old research (For e.g., Wanberg, & Banas, 2000).
Personal Resilience with Emotional Distress, Personal Resilience with Openness to Change and Openness to Change with Emotional Distress respectively. These all three results are significant. For checking the mediation effect, current research regresses the Personal Resilience with Openness to change on Emotional Distress. It is seen that Value of $\beta$ is reduces from -0.868 to -0.528. This value describes that partial mediation is existed.

**Conclusion**

Current study examines the relationship of Personal Resilience, Openness to Change, Readiness to Change and Emotional Distress. All the hypothesis of direct relationships i.e., Personal Resilience with Openness to Change, Readiness to Change and Emotional Distress respectively are accepted. Results indicate that Personal Resilience has positive significant influence on Openness to Change and Readiness to Change. And it has negative impact on Emotional Distress. Both Openness to Change and Readiness to Change have negative influence on Emotional Distress. Moreover, Openness to Change and Readiness to Change are partially intervening the relation of Personal Resilience with Emotional Distress.

**Implications for Management, Theory and Practices**

Change process is very important for the organizations. Organizations focus on this process for gaining success in all spheres of the organizations. The aim of modern organizations to develop an environment in which employees always welcome the positive change. For this purpose, these organizations endorse the concepts of Openness to Change and Readiness to Change in their organizations at grass root level. Current research incorporates both variables in detail along with other variables. This research adds in the body of literature by considering another variable of change i.e., Readiness to Change along with other variables on basis of systems theory. Current study is carried out on employees of Zong and this can act as guideline research for other Telecom companies like Ufone, Telenor, Mobilink and Warid. Current study also incorporates the following rationales. Firstly, this research proposed the entire variables i.e., Personal Resilience, Openness to Change, Readiness to Change and Emotional Distress in a single model. Secondly checked the mediating impact of Openness to Change and Readiness to Change between the relationship of Personal Resilience and Emotional Distress.

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