



UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

**Positive organisational practices in positively deviant organisations: An
online desk research review**

By

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Research Methodology module of
the Master's Degree

In

Industrial Psychology

At the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences of the Western Cape

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March 2019

NOTE

- This mini-thesis was prepared utilising APA 6th edition referencing guidelines.
- The Department of Industrial Psychology does not require APA style formatting of the headings, paragraphs or tables. Students are encouraged to choose a style of their choice and to use that consistently.
- This thesis constitutes 50% of the structured Master's degree in Industrial Psychology. Therefore, the mini-thesis is only one requirement of the coursework Master's degree.
- According to the University of the Western Cape thesis guide, a mini-thesis is normally between 7 000 – 20 000 words in length and is limited in scope.



KEYWORDS

Positive Psychology

Positive Organisational Psychology

Positive Practices

Virtuous organisation

Positively deviant

Manifest Practices



ABSTRACT

Positive organisational practices are actions performed by employees within the workplace that enhance worker and organisational wellness. In identifying positively deviant organisations, specific positive practices within the organisation were studied as an online desk research. This study is based on a backdrop of a study by Cameron et al. (2011) where the authors theorise about certain positive practices, but do not stipulate actual practices.

In understanding what these positive practices look like, the study used the interpretive paradigm. Through qualitative inquiry, thematic analysis was used to expand the understanding of manifest positive practices in organisations. The researcher used two significant ways of gathering the data, both through the internet; looking up "top" and "happiest" companies to work for as well as looking at the International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA) Network online resources and Michigan Ross School of Business online page. All of the data gathered (150 pieces) was from secondary internet / online sources.

The results generated 13 themes, of which five stood out as most salient: social interactions at work, inclusivity of all differences, mindfulness, transparent/open communication and creativity/innovation. The study concludes by identifying similarities between Cameron et al. (2011) and the study results, and proposes a link between 11 of the themes. Furthermore, the results suggest that seven of the study's practices coincide with one particular practice from Cameron et al. (2011): 'inspiring' others in the workplace.

The significance of the study includes the expanded understanding of positive organisational (manifest) practices that take place in positively deviant organisations. By comparing and contrasting these practices with the Cameron et al. (2011) positive practices, similarities were found. Recommendations for future research are offered.

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

I, Kelly Cecile Hendricks, student number 3278481,

Hereby declare that the research entitled, “Expanding the understanding of positive organisational practices in positively deviant organisations: An online desk research review” is the result of my own investigation and research and that it has not been submitted in part or fully for any other degree or to any other University.

Signature.....

Ms K.C. Hendricks



DEDICATION

With much love and appreciation, I dedicate this study to my dad and mom, Cecil and Catherine Hendricks. You have sacrificed so much for me and I would not have been able to achieve this goal without your support and prayers.

You have supported me in going for my dreams and I will forever be grateful for your encouragement and faith in me to make a success thereof. It has not been easy, but knowing that you were there for me certainly helped me persevere.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Above all, I want to honour my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in whom all things are possible. Without my faith and the love and undeserving grace of God, this momentous achievement would not be possible. He has favoured me in so many supernatural ways, and I can only give Him all the glory and honour.

To my parents who saw me through my entire primary, secondary and tertiary studies, who never gave up on me and who always had the most faith in my ability to succeed, I will always be tremendously grateful to you. You have supported me every step of the way, since day one. This journey has not been an easy one. You have sacrificed a lot for me, but you knew that it would be worth it, and I will make sure that you reap its' benefits.

In addition, to my late brother, Keenan, who passed away this past January, I hope that you are proud of me and what I have worked so hard to achieve. I celebrate it with you in spirit. To my two older brothers, Sergio and Jade, I look up to you as you have always inspired me to reach for my dreams, and I hope that I have made you proud and will continue to do so.

To my supervisor, Dr Marieta Du Plessis, thank you for the faith you had in me to pursue this study. I appreciate it more than you know. Thank you for your continuous support, dedication and motivation during this year, encouraging me to complete my research.

Lastly, a huge thank you to all my lecturers over the past seven years, from Foundation year up to Masters. Each of you played a pivotal role in where I stand today, and I honour each and every one of you for that.

The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.



Table of Contents

Overview of the Research.....	1
1.1 Introduction and rationale	1
1.2 Background of the study	2
1.2.1 A virtuous organisation	2
1.2.3 Positive organisational practices.....	4
1.3 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.4 Research question.....	5
1.5 Significance of this research	5
1.6 Scope of the research	5
1.6.1 Delineation	5
1.6.2 Delimitation	6
1.7 Outline of the Chapters.....	6
1.8 Chapter conclusion	6
Review of the Literature	8
2.1. Introduction.....	8
2.2. The history and development of positive organisational psychology	8
2.2.1. Positive Psychology	8
2.3. Positive Organisational Psychology.....	9
2.3.1. Positive Organisational Scholarship / Behaviour	9
2.4. Virtuous organisations	12
2.5. The taxonomy of positive organisational practices	14
2.5.1 Positive practices criteria	14
2.5.2 Cameron, et al (2011) proposed positive practices	15
2.6. Integrating other positive practices identified by literature with Cameron’s framework...	16
2.6.1 High quality connections	17
2.6.2 Creativity	18
2.6.3 Open lines of communication.....	20
2.6.4 Recognition and rewards.....	22
2.6.5 Metacognitive behaviour	23
2.7 Chapter Conclusion.....	25
Research Plan and Design.....	26
3.1 Introduction	26
3.2 Research Design	26
3.2. Research Methodology	26
3.2.1 Qualitative research method	26

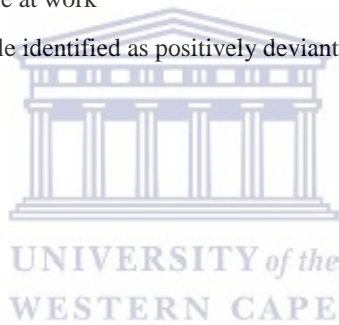
3.2.2 Data collection procedure.....	27
3.3 Population and sample	28
3.3.1 Population	28
3.3.2 Sample.....	28
3.4 Ethical Considerations	32
3.4.1 Ethical Principles	32
3.5 Data Analysis	33
3.5.1 Data Analysis Plan.....	33
3.6 Chapter Conclusion.....	33
Findings	34
4.1. Introduction.....	34
4.2. Themes	39
4.2.1. Social / non-work activities.....	39
4.2.2. Inclusivity	39
4.2.3. Transparent / open communication	40
4.2.4. Creativity and innovation.....	41
4.2.5. Sharing / telling stories.....	41
4.2.6. Mindfulness.....	41
4.2.7. Collaborate.....	42
4.2.8. Work-life integration	42
4.2.9. Friendliness	43
4.2.10. Humour.....	43
4.2.11. Recognition and appreciation	43
4.2.12. Celebrations	44
4.2.13. Positive strategy.....	44
4.3 Chapter Conclusion	45
Discussions, Limitation and Recommendations.....	46
5.1 Introduction.....	46
5.2 Discussions	46
5.2.1 Contrasting results with Cameron’s framework.....	48
5.3 Limitations and recommendations	50
5.4 Conclusion	51
Reference List.....	52
Appendix A: Positive practices in organisations	60
Appendix B: Statistics of Mindfulness in organisations.....	61

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Explaining the effects of positive practices on organizational effectiveness	59
Figure 2.1: Statistics showing the effects of Mindfulness in organisations	60
Figure 2.2: Results of the effects of Mindfulness in The American Marines	60
Figure 5.1 Diagram that shows the thematic schema developed to illustrate the inter-relationships between positive organisational practices and positively deviant organisations.	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 An example creativity questionnaire at work
Table 3.1 Organisations featured in the sample identified as positively deviant
Table 4.1 Manifest positive practices themes



Overview of the Research

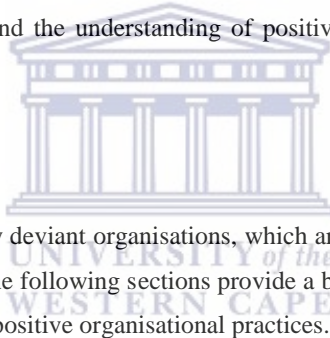
1.1 Introduction and rationale

The world we live in is negatively publicized, and it can inevitably influence the mental condition of a nation (Cameron, Bright & Caza, 2004; Haagerup, 2017). The emphasis on negative phenomena is understandable, from an evolutionary point of view, in that disregarding problems and challenges might threaten the very survival of individuals and organizations (Cameron & Caza, 2004; Cameron et al., 2004). If one is not aware of one's surroundings, these negative influences may start to pervade one's daily life and work. According to Vokić and Hernaus (2015), the surrounding factors can be seen manifesting in the workplace functioning by means of employee morale, employee satisfaction and work engagement, and ultimately productivity levels. As a counter focus to a concentration on what is wrong (i.e. pathology), which is commonly the focus of Psychology, this study presents the opposite, namely Positive Psychology, and its practices within the workplace.

The emphasis on positivity in organisations is increasing from a scholarly and popular point of view. In the past, Psychology mostly focussed on “what was wrong” with a situation or person and then subsequently treated or took preventative measures for that pathology (Cameron et al., 2004; Seligman, 2010). However, Martin Seligman then started challenging the status quo. He went on to investigate and posed the question “what is right?” instead of “what is wrong?”, He started focussing on what is positive instead of negative; wellness instead of illness (Avey, Avolio, Crossley & Luthans, 2009; Cameron et al., 2004; Searle & Barbuto, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This then birthed the phenomenon, Positive Psychology, and in essence “what can human beings do right?” in order to thrive and flourish, instead of concentrating on the dysfunction and spiral into destruction (Searle & Barbuto, 2011). Positive Psychology is thus defined as the study of “strengths and virtues that enable individuals, communities, and organizations to thrive” (Mapa, 2017, p. 1) or perform over and above the norm and to the best of their ability (Seligman, 2010). It entails the study of optimal wellness, flourishing and thriving of an organisation or individual (Magyar-Moe, Owens, & Conoley, 2015; Seligman, 2010).

Originating from the conceptualisation of positive psychology applied in the workplace, Positive Organisational Scholarship (POS) and Positive Organisational Behaviour (POB) was developed. POS and POB, respectively, focus on positive capabilities that lead to flourishing

in organisations (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003) and psychological strengths that lead to improved individual performance (Luthans, 2002). POS and POB have been criticised for being restrictive, over-optimistic and without theoretical grounding (Hackman & Katz 2010). However, positive phenomena in organisations have been shown to explain variance in performance that may otherwise be overlooked (Carson & Barling, 2008; Dutton & Sonenshein, 2007). For instance, positive practices (e.g. respectful treatment, personal development) produce positive effects in employees (such as satisfaction and well-being) which produces positive individual behaviour (for instance, retention and engagement) (Cameron, Mora, Leutscher & Calarco, 2011; Fouché, 2015; Rautenbach, 2015). With regards to social well-being, positive practices among employees may result in improved fondness, commitment, participation, trust and teamwork (Koys, 2001; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Walz & Niehoff, 2000). Thus, positivity is as much *doing* as it is *being*. In line with propositions by Seligman (2011), it is equally important that a focus be given to a positive action/series of actions which become a behavioural practice. Therefore, the current study sought to expand the understanding of positive organisational practices.



1.2 Background of the study

The present study is framed within positively deviant organisations, which are also described in the literature as virtuous organisations. The following sections provide a brief overview of virtuous organisations and what is meant by positive organisational practices.

1.2.1 A virtuous organisation

A study done by Cameron, Bright & Caza (2004) showed that “organizations scoring higher on virtuousness performed significantly better than other organizations on desirable performance outcomes such as profitability, quality, and customer retention.” (Cameron et al., 2003, p. 7). Virtuousness is related to what individuals and organizations desire to be when they are functioning optimally (Cameron et al., 2004; Searle & Barbuto, 2011). A state of virtuousness characterizes conditions of flourishing and thriving, leading to the well-being, happiness, deeper meaning, and resilience of one’s existence (Cameron et al., 2004). Therefore, when employees internalize this concept of being, they start to perform its practices.

Virtues are generally ignored when it comes to business and organisational performance (Cameron, et al., 2004). Instead of using terms such as virtue, caring, and compassion, these concepts have been replaced with more morally impartial terms like corporate social responsibility, citizenship behaviour, and employee morale. Combining or attaching the quality of virtuousness with an organization now means that the organization allows and supports the virtuous deeds through its members. Therefore, when the concept of virtuousness is brought into the organizational setting, it then refers to the superior, enriching behaviour of the organization's members; behaviours that are positively deviant (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007; Searle & Barbuto, 2011).

Organisational virtuousness includes individuals' actions, group activities, organisational and individual cultural elements, and/or practices that permit these positively deviant practices (Luthans et al., 2007; Searle & Barbuto, 2011). Positive practices possess an amplifying effect and a buffering effect, which can be referred to in appendix A (figure 1.1). The buffer effect protects against negative violations thereby protecting the organization from any undesirable effects of disturbance by improving its resiliency, unity, and efficiency. Things that may prevent any trauma, addiction, and corrupt behaviour are being kind, courageous, forgiving, honest, and hopeful. Thriving thus also acts as a buffer to negative psychological outcomes, such as burnout, and is critical for sustaining performance, health and well-being (Van der Walt, 2018).

The amplifying effect relates to positive emotions, social capital, and prosocial behaviours and fosters an increase in positive consequences (Cameron et al., 2011). Therefore, when employees observe kindness, consideration, experience appreciation, or observe forgiveness, a mutually reinforcing succession occurs. This effect is similar to the heliotropic effect presented by Cameron et al., (2011). This effect suggests that positive practices yield positive energy and henceforth produce higher levels of performance.

Employees who experience more of these positive feelings tend to be more helpful to their clientele, for instance, as well as more creative, more compassionate as well as more courteous and have an overall better work and personal life (Cameron, et al., 2004; Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007; Searle & Barbuto, 2011), and therefore perform as a positively deviant organisation.

1.2.3 Positive organisational practices

Positive organisational practices refer to collective behaviours or activities which are promoted by and characteristic of an organisation (Cameron, et al. 2011; Redelinguys, Rothmann & Botha, 2018). These practices are focussed on behaviours, rather than emotions or climate of the organisation (Cameron et al., 2011). Such positive practices include, amongst others, caring, compassionate support, forgiveness, inspiration, meaning, respect (Cameron et al., 2011), and positive emotion (Rautenbach, 2015).

In a first attempt to compile a list of positive practices, Cameron et al. (2011) utilised prior research, observations and a nomination process. The list of positive practices was therefore not derived from an overarching theory. Rather, they met the inclusion criteria of having an affirmative bias, indicated positive deviance, or representing virtuous practices (Cameron et al., 2011). Hence, Cameron et al. (2011) acknowledge that the resulting list of six positive practices was not comprehensive, but presume that it represents an extensive inventory of the behaviours and attributes that represent positivity in organisations.

Theories of positive practices have not been fully developed and hence, using an instrument to assess positive practices may be perceived as 'blunt' (Cameron et al., 2011, p. 292). Furthermore, the self-report nature of the instrument may negatively influence the ability to generalise the findings. Hence, multiple assessment methods are encouraged when it comes to measuring psychological constructs (Smith & Harris, 2006). It is in this light that the present study utilised a desk research method to scrutinise online, freely available, video cases for examples of positive practices in organisations. This approach was chosen as a first step in confirming, and possibly expanding the list of positive practices in organisations.

1.3 Statement of the problem

In order for an organisation to be positively deviant, it needs amongst other things, a good moral standing and values, good staff, a productive culture, constructive leadership, retention of quality employees, as well as a competitive edge or industry advantage (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Thus it is necessary to understand what positive organisational practices are being exercised in positively deviant organisations. In addition, there are empirical studies indicating the relationships between positive variables, such as work engagement and high productivity levels (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Joo & Lee, 2017). However, the manifest positive practices exercised in these organisations have not been studied from a qualitative

point of view. Moreover, Cameron et al., (2011) present their conceptualisation of positive practices, however, they do not establish actual (manifest) positive practices. Therefore, the aim of the study is to bridge the gap by establishing actual positive practices that form part of, or are in addition to, the practices presented by Cameron et al., (2011).

1.4 Research question

The following research question was formulated:

“What are the manifest positive practices found in flourishing organisations?”

1.5 Significance of this research

This research sought to understand what the manifest positive practices are that are exercised in positively deviant organisations internationally and to close the gap between Cameron’s positive general practices and actual, manifest, positive practices. It was also to add to the research and body of knowledge regarding Positive Organisational Psychology. Moreover, the purpose was to grow awareness about positive practices, both from an individual and organisational point of view. This research also sought to impart knowledge to practitioners in the workplace when it comes to understanding what positively deviant organisational practices look like, hence building positive organisations.

1.6 Scope of the research

1.6.1 Delineation

By performing this investigation, the researcher focussed on secondary sources only, and the positive practices that could be observed/heard. This study was directed at case studies and video material on purposively sampled video clips. Data sources were downloaded and evaluated until data saturation was achieved. However, this approach, coupled with the search strategy, may have excluded other possible data sources.

1.6.2 Delimitation

The data sources consist of freely available video clips and case studies online, including Google searches and information on the International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA) network and the Ross School of Business website.

1.7 Outline of the Chapters

Chapter two provides a discussion regarding the positive psychology framework, which includes positive organisational behaviour and positive deviance. In conjunction with this, it discusses the background of positive organisational practices and virtuousness and the role of positive practices in individual and organisational effectiveness. Furthermore, the research climaxes and ends off with the Cameron et al.'s (2011) framework and taxonomy of positive organisational practices, which is the basis for this study.

Chapter three presents an overview of the employed research methodology, to carry out the research study. This includes the research approach/design, the research methodology, the data collection procedure, the population and sample. Furthermore, one will encounter the ethical considerations as well as the data analysis plan used.

Chapter four discusses the results arising from the empirical analysis of the data gathered.

Chapter five addresses the most significant results inferred from the findings obtained in the study. The conclusions drawn are based on the data collected and compared to existing literature available. Furthermore, the recommendations are substantiated by the research findings gathered in this study. Additionally, recommendations are made for future research.

1.8 Chapter conclusion

Instead of focussing on “what is wrong” with a situation or person and then subsequently treating it and taking preventative measures for its malfunction, Martin Seligman, the father of Positive Psychology introduced what is called Positive Psychology, by asking “what is right?”, thus focussing on what is positive instead of what is negative. When carrying this over to the working environment, Positive Psychology places emphasis and its efforts on the flourishing of organisations through its employees and organisational functions (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003) via positive organisational practices, leading to improved individual and organisational performance, which will be discussed in the subsequent chapter. These

positive organisational practices refer to collective behaviours or activities which are promoted by and characteristic of an organisation.

The purpose of this study proposes to close the gap between Cameron's positive general practices and manifested positive practices that the current study researched. The investigation focussed only on secondary sources, and the positive practices that could be observed/heard. The sources used were freely available video clips and case studies found online.

Chapter two outlines and discusses in greater depth what is presented in the literature, substantiating this research endeavour.



Review of the Literature

2.1. Introduction

The information in this chapter will be organised from the perspective of positive organisational psychology, and will navigate its way through to positive organisational practices. First, a discussion of the broad framework of positive organisational psychology, including POS and POB will be presented. Second, the background of positive organisational practices will be discussed. Third, the role of positive practices in individual and organisational effectiveness will be unpacked. To form the basis of this study, the framework and taxonomy of positive organisational practices will be discussed. Lastly, the conclusion will be presented.

2.2. The history and development of positive organisational psychology

2.2.1. Positive Psychology

At the turn of the twenty-first century, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) pointed out that since the end of World War II, psychology has focused just about exclusively on “fixing” mental illness and abnormal behaviour, rather than on the opposite, understanding and facilitating that which was normal functioning and good, and the growth and development in those individuals who were healthy (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017; Seligman, 2010). Seligman, in his American Psychological Association presidential address in 1998 made the call for a “positive psychology” to openly focus on researching and understanding “normal behaving” people's well-being, productivity, optimum functioning, and realizing their full potential. Positive Psychology is therefore termed as “the science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions” (Donaldson & Ko, 2010, p. 180). The phenomenon of Positive Psychology has taken off so significantly that there has even been a journal dedicated to it; the Journal of Positive Psychology. Several streams of research and practice emerged, applying positive psychology to the workplace, including concepts such as positive workplace, positive organization (Martin, 2005; Turner, Barling, & Zacharatos, 2002; Wiegand & Geller, 2005), positive organizational scholarship (POS), positive organisational behaviour (POB), (Luthans & Youssef, 2007), and psychological capital (PsyCap), (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017; Levene, 2015).

2.3. Positive Organisational Psychology

Positive Organisational Psychology (POP) refers to “the scientific study of positive subjective experiences and traits in the workplace and... its application to improve the effectiveness and quality of life in organizations” (Donaldson & Ko, 2010, p. 178). For instance, a study done by Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007) suggested that there are significant benefits to having social interactions and “friends” at work. The authors go on to say that it results in and is related to positive social results, including improved public health, a decrease in crime rates, as well as a more efficient financial market (Ellison et al., 2007). An assumption can then be drawn from this to say that when an organisation has a well-engaged staff network, it lifts the morale of the organisation.

POP can also be identified under many other labels and definitions, for example positive psychology at work, positive workplace, and positive organization (Martin, 2005, cited in Donaldson & Ko, 2010). The role of positive organisational psychology is focussed on the workplace, and thus is there to improve workplace satisfaction, workplace stimulation and inspiration, as well as workplace productivity (Donaldson & Ko, 2010).

In other words, POP is a science that seeks to answer the question of what is it that fosters flourishing and thriving at work. It thus aims to find answers to everyday work encounters like employee absenteeism, lack of motivation, increase in turnover, and sub-par performance (Mapa, 2017; Martin 2005c). Seeing that most of an individual’s time is spent at their workplace, employers need to understand what they can do to enhance a positive and flourishing environment for their employees to foster the desired performance and attitude at work. This may include looking at the physical environment, emotional support and recognition, mental help in the form of having access to needed information and constructive feedback, or having a spiritual sense of meaning, purpose and ownership of one’s work (Mapa, 2017; Martin, 2005c). When analysing POP in the workplace, it is important to distinguish between Positive Organisational Scholarship and Positive Organisational Behaviour.

2.3.1. Positive Organisational Scholarship / Behaviour

POS is the study of that which is positive, flourishing, and life-giving in organizations (Cameron & Caza 2004; Donaldson & Ko, 2010). POS is a “movement in organizational

science that focuses on the dynamics leading to exceptional individual and organizational performance such as developing human strength, producing resilience and restoration and fostering vitality" (Cameron & Caza, 2004, p. 731). Cameron and Caza (2004) divide the concept into three segments, explaining each as follows: *Positive* refers to a favourable bias focusing on the uplifting process and the dynamics in organizations. *Organizational* refers to the practices and conditions that transpire in and throughout the organizations, taking into account the context in which these positive phenomena occur. *Scholarship* refers to the scientific, theoretically based, and rigorous examination of positive phenomena.

POS studies organizations considered as ones associated with gratitude, collaboration, integrity, vigour, and meaningfulness, where generating abundance and human well-being are vital indicators of success (Donaldson & Ko, 2010; Bernstein, 2003). POS thus puts emphasis on positive dynamics that convey positive effects, such as excellent individual and organizational performance.

Positive Organisational Scholarship is an inclusive term which comprises a diverse range of positive scientific perspectives, such as positive traits, states, procedures, dynamics, and outcomes, all of which are relevant to the organizations (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). According to the above-mentioned authors, there are four characteristics of positive approaches that fit the POS framework. Number one, a positive approach should embrace a unique or alternative lens that changes the interpretation of phenomena, which by themselves may or may not be positive. This means that perceiving a problem or an obstacle should be interpreted as an opportunity for learning and growing. Number two, this approach is framed in terms of positive deviance, instead of negative deviance or even the norm or common results. Thirdly, there should be an affirmative bias, which emphasizes and focuses on positive instead of negative ideas, dynamics, and outcomes. Lastly, the fourth characteristic of the POS framework is, understanding the best of the human condition, such as flourishing or thriving, ideal functioning, excellence, virtuousness, forgiveness, compassion, goodness, and other life-giving dynamics (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). This, however, does not mean that the negatives are discounted or overlooked (Luthans, et al, 2004; Cameron & Caza, 2004; Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017), instead these behaviours are looked at from a different perspective to increase their positively deviant processes and practices to realize a thriving organisation.

A few studies investigated the link between positive phenomena and positive outcomes (Aspinwall & Tedeschi, 2010; Losada & Heaphy, 2004). In a study done by Losada and Heaphy (2004) using a non-linear dynamics model to examine the effectiveness of top management teams, they analysed and coded communication patterns and the kinds of statements exchanged in 60 top management teams. The study found that the Positive communication teams significantly out-performed those who were communicating less positively. Here one can see that positive thoughts result in thriving performance or outcomes. Another study conducted by Cameron and Caza (2004), where surveying organizations across industry types uncovered the concepts of virtuousness, compassion, integrity, forgiveness, trust and optimism revealed similar results. It showed that “organizations scoring higher on virtuousness performed significantly better than other organizations on desirable performance outcomes such as profitability, quality, and customer retention.” (Cameron & Caza, 2004, p. 7).

Cameron and Caza (2004), compares the study of positive organisational scholarship to the commonly debated concepts in organizational research and literature such as organisational citizenship behaviour, corporate social responsibility, as well as creativity. This includes organizational connectivity, virtuousness, commitment, and a humanistic work ideology. Cameron and Caza (2004) thus go on to explain how compassion can produce and foster healing, restoration, and vitality within various organizations and their employees by the values, practices, and routines carried out by the organisation.

POB and POS differ slightly in that POB focuses primarily on individual psychological qualities and their influence on performance improvement. The question that Seligman (2002) poses then, in one of his pieces “Authentic Happiness” in 2002, is that when one is engaged, or absorbed in flow, and investing in these relationships and one’s job, if one is building psychological capital for one’s future. Although social capital is a good area to invest in, the time has come to take it a step further, into positive psychological capital. This consists of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism (Avey, Luthans, Smith & Palmer, 2010; Levene, 2015; Luthans, et al, 2004). It is measurable, can be developed and is manageable to foster more effective work performance, productivity, customer service and retention (Donaldson & Ko, 2010; Lorenz, Beer, Pütz, & Heinitz, 2016; Ramlall, 2008).

In 2002 positive organisational behaviour was originally 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, p. 59). In contrast, POS is generally concerned with the positive traits of the organizational context (Luthans & Avolio, 2009; Luthans & Youssef, 2007; Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). They both focus on positive approaches, but their audience differs slightly. However, this does not mean that they only focus on individual and organisational levels, respectively. However, their individual approaches differ. POB typically tends to develop in an inductive way (from individual to group then to organizational level of analysis), whereas POS develops in the opposite way (Luthans & Avolio, 2009; Donaldson & Ko, 2010). Considering that the organisation is a focus of POS, the following section will focus on positive, virtuous organisations.

2.4. Virtuous organisations

POS is based on a eudemonic hypothesis (Cameron, et al., 2004). This means that human beings innately have an inclination toward goodness for their intrinsic value. Virtuousness is related to what individuals and organizations desire to be when they are functioning at their optimal level (Cameron et al., 2004; Searle & Barbuto, 2011). A state of virtuousness is characterized by conditions of flourishing and thriving, which leads to the well-being, happiness, deeper meaning, and resilience of one's existence (Cameron, et al., 2004). It is also the basis upon which all societies and economies function because virtuousness is in essence the internalization of ethical guidelines which produces social accord (Cameron et al., 2004; Searle & Barbuto, 2011). Having said that, virtuousness has for a long time been a phenomenon that was not associated with business.

Organisational virtuousness was one of the first positive macro-level variables anticipated in the positive organizational scholarship works (Searle & Barbuto, 2011). It includes individuals' actions, group activities, organisational and individual cultural elements, and/or practices that permit these positively deviant practices (Luthans, et al., 2007; Searle & Barbuto, 2011), and its' positive behaviours have been associated with an increase in the performance of individuals, groups/teams, and the organization as a whole (Luthans, et al., 2007; Searle & Barbuto, 2011). However, there is no single indicator which measures the multiple indicators of virtuousness. There are three key definitive elements that are associated with virtuousness that may help to explain the relevance of the concept within organizations: moral goodness, human impact, and social betterment (Cameron, et al., 2004).

Moral goodness refers to what is good, right, and worth nurturing. This can be closely associated with what Aristotle labelled “goods of first intent” or “that which is good in itself and is to be chosen for its own sake” and the second intent, “that which is good for the sake of obtaining something else” (Cameron, et al., 2004, p.769). The former refers to love, wisdom, and fulfilment, whereas the latter intent refers to things such as profit, prestige, or power (Cameron, et al., 2004, p.769). These intents can be typical of organizations as well as individuals.

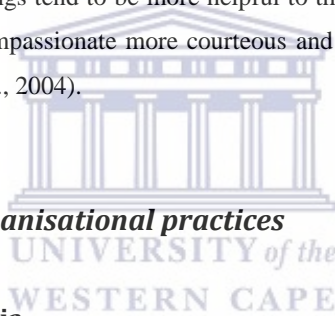
Secondly, virtuousness relates to the human beings’ individual thriving and ethical character, the human strength, it willpower and discipline, resilience and its deeper sense of meaningful purpose and principles (Cameron, et al., 2004). Thus, because being virtuous or not being virtuous hinges on the human quality/being, some organizations have allowed virtuousness in their business through the influence of their people thereby creating structures to maintain the employees’ flourishing through interpersonal relationships, meaningful work, enriched learning, and individual development.

Social betterment is more than only being to the advantage of self and self-interest (Cameron, et al., 2004). In fact, it yields a great benefit to others, whether it is of mutual benefit or just reward. In reality, the reason behind being positive or positively deviant or what gets a company from “good” to “great,” is because of prosocial deeds and the social responsibility of the organization as a whole, thus virtuousness, and looking at the bigger picture more than itself. What distinguishes “good” companies from the “great”, in terms of their performance is their wealth generation, competitive approach or strategy, and/or their leadership strength (Cameron, et al., 2004; Collins, 2001).

There are two key concepts of virtuousness that explain the mutual reinforcement and positive relationship it has with performance. The first is amplifying qualities, which may foster increasing positive consequences, and the second, its buffering qualities which may protect against negative violations (Cameron, et al., 2004). Virtuousness can have an amplifying effect as it relates to positive emotions, social capital, and prosocial behaviours (Cameron, et al., 2011). Being part of an environment of positive practices produces positive emotions and results in better individual performance, as cited by Fineman (1996), Fredrickson (1998), Seligman (2002), Staw, Sutton, & Pelled (1994) and Tutu (1999) in Cameron, et al., (2011). Hence, when employees observe kindness, consideration, experience appreciation, or observe forgiveness, a mutually reinforcing succession occurs. Thus, virtuous

or ethical behaviour stimulates and encourages positive emotions like love, compassion, admiration, enthusiasm, trust, collaboration and organisational citizenship behaviour.

Positive practices can also possess a buffering effect. Positive practices can buffer the organization from any undesirable effects of disturbance by improving its resiliency, unity, and efficiency. Things that may prevent any trauma, addiction and corrupt behaviour are being kind, courageous, forgiving, honest and hopeful. These practices act as a basis of resilience (Cameron, et al., 2004; Van der Walt, 2018). Another effect of positive practices that Cameron et al., (2011) adds is that of the Heliotropic effect. This refers to the attraction that all incarnate organisms have to positive energy and anti-attraction from negative energy. Thus positive practices positively yield positive energy. All these feelings produce an enhanced cognitive functioning, improved decision making skills as well as more successful interpersonal relationships amongst employees (Cameron, et al., 2004). This positive effect escalates individual performance (Luthans, et al., 2007; Searle & Barbuto, 2011). Employees who experience more of these positive feelings tend to be more helpful to their clientele, for instance, as well as more creative, more compassionate more courteous and have an overall better work and personal life (Cameron, et al., 2004).



2.5. The taxonomy of positive organisational practices

2.5.1 Positive practices criteria

In order to know what positive practices look like, literature suggests that there are three meanings of the notion of positive in organizational scholarship (Cameron et al., 2011; Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2004). It places emphasis on positively deviant outcomes or performance, which refers to company performance that significantly surpasses norm performance.

A second part of the criteria places emphasis on a favourable bias, like strengths, abilities, and opportunities rather than on weaknesses, difficulties, and threats (Cameron et al., 2011). The positives include vitality, a positive environment, positive relationships, constructive communication, and organisational meaning.

A third part of convergence refers to virtuousness and eudemonism. This means that every human being has the inclination to be good and act in a constructive pleasing manner

(Cameron et al., 2011). Therefore, organizational practices refer to behaviours, procedures, or customs that characterize positively deviant (i.e. uncommon) practices, with a favourable bias, and practices that suggest virtuousness and eudemonism within organizations.

2.5.2 Cameron, et al (2011) proposed positive practices

When investigating the relationship between positive practices and indicators of organizational effectiveness or outcomes on the organizational level, Cameron, et al., (2011) found that there are six significant positive organisational practices. These are caring; compassionate support; forgiveness; inspiration; meaning; and respect, integrity, and gratitude. Caring refers to people being concerned for, interested in, and maintaining responsibility for one another as friends. Compassionate support refers to people providing support for one another, including kindness and compassion when others are struggling. Forgiveness refers to people avoiding blame and forgiving others' mistakes. Inspiration refers to people motivating one another at work. Meaning refers to the meaningfulness of work that is emphasized, and people being elevated and renewed by their work. Respect, integrity, and gratitude refer to people treating one another with respect and expressing appreciation for one another. They trust one another and maintain integrity.

According to Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (2005), positive practices such as treating others with respect and personal growth yield positivity in employees in terms of employee satisfaction and their welfare. This consequently results in positive individual behaviour such as employee retention and employee engagement, which leads to organizational success including organisational profitability and productivity. The study confirms that when positive practices are exercised in organisations, employees are inclined to remain with the organisation, thus increasing retention. In addition, the study also proposes a statistically significant relationship between positive organisational practices and organisational climate (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

Together with this, the study shows that there were higher levels of positive practices in companies that had organisational missions, employees' personal influence, work-life balance, ethics, a reward system, or employee organisational citizenship behaviour. Positive practices were also found to be a precursor of a company's financial bottom-line, and not the other way around. Additionally, the positive practices in financial service companies had a significant correlation to the business' financial performance, work climate, turnover, and senior executive performance evaluations (Cameron, et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the results indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between positive practices and overall employee satisfaction. The outcomes suggest that because the turnover rate is affected by many factors, such as the economic climate and geographic area, amongst others, the likelihood that positive practices would be dominant enough to overcome these macroeconomic factors is very small. Subsequently, the positive practices that appeared to be the most predictive were those associated with the growth and support of human capital. This includes people respecting each other, having integrity, being grateful, having compassion, extending forgiveness, providing encouragement, as well as doing meaningful work. However, this does not provide the full picture of positive organisational behaviour and practices (Cameron, et al., 2011).

Additional positive practices were identified and support the relationship with the different factors of organizational performance. This includes compassion, forgiveness, honesty, trust, and optimism (Cameron et al., 2004), all of which has a significant relationship with organisational climate and economic outcomes. Mutuality, organisational solidity, strong ties, openness, relationships, and positive communication were found to have a significant relationship with some characteristics of an organization's outcomes (Dutton et al., 2007). Other positive practices also include group dynamics and energy, fluid proficiency, and unit influence (Baker et al., 2003) as well as behaviours that transcend self-interest (prosocial) and behaviours of a caring and giving nature that foster commitment to the organization. Additionally, factors such as thankfulness, hope, understanding, and love were found to significantly yield signs of commitment, fulfilment, motivation, and revenue (Andersson, Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2007; Cameron, 2011; Fry, Vitucci & Cedillo, 2005; Gittell, Cameron, Lim & Rivas, 2006; Henle, Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2005; Kellett, Humphrey & Sleeth, 2006; Luthans et al., 2007;).

2.6. Integrating other positive practices identified by literature with Cameron's framework.

Positive organizations highlight that which is prosperous, thriving and life-giving (Geue, 2018). The reason for this is to identify and encourage the best out of not only staff members but also of the human condition. This is illustrated by the positive practices and behaviours within the organisation such as caring, supporting, forgiving, motivation, meaningfulness, and respect, as explained in the Cameron Framework. Cameron and colleagues illustrate a very good overview of positive practices in an organisation. However, they do not

demonstrate exactly how those practices are manifested. Some of the actions on an organisational level include high quality connections and constructive communication, innovation and employee recognition which will be discussed below.

2.6.1 High quality connections

According to Ragins and Dutton (2007, p. 3), in their book, *Positive relationships at work: An introduction*, they pose the following question: "What makes life worth living?". For most people, the answer is relationships: friends, family, and loved ones. Too often, work relationships are not included in this list. "Yet people spend most of their time at work, and work relationships are central not only for how work gets done but also for the quality of our lives." (Ragins & Dutton, 2007, p. 3). Positive work relationships refer to "the states or processes in the relationship, the experienced quality of the relationship, or the outcomes of the relationship" (Ragins & Dutton, 2007, p. 8). These high quality connections help individuals, groups and organizations develop, thrive and flourish (Ragins & Dutton, 2007; Turner, Hershcovis, Reich & Totterdell, 2014). When it comes to these types of relationships in organisations, it signifies not only the essence of meaning in people's lives, but it also exists in the core of the organization's functional life, like a culture. This means that they are the means by which work is done and significance is established in organizations.

When one thinks of social / non-work activities within the workplace, one could associate that with social supportive relationships or networks (Ragins & Dutton, 2007). It could also relate to teams, organizations and communities. These positive relationships can be defined as a pattern of interconnecting that creates an overall generative pattern of healthy functioning. This can be realized in many ways. Some of these can include outdoor or indoor activities or games, sharing stories or even just doing fun things such as decorating one's desk or office, dressing up at work or reading a book in the designated 'reading room' (Müceldili & Erdil, 2016; Wright, Pincus, Conroy & Elliot, 2009; Oowler, Morrison & Plester, 2010; Ollikainen, 2013).

Games have become a popular way to spend one's free time, or even just to unwind (Ollikainen, 2013), and it has made its way even into the workplace. Some companies that have employed these 'gaming movements' include Microsoft and Google. Games also include interactive sports such as football, basketball or board games such as chess or monopoly. According to Ollikainen (2013), an important aspect of game design is the

experience, whether by visuals, audio or story-telling. The phenomenon, gamification, can be used to encourage personal social relationships and engagement at work.

2.6.2 Creativity

Another positive practice that literature provides is creativity and innovation. According to Laruccia (2009), creativity and innovation can be used interchangeably. Job and Bhattacharya (2007) state that creativity refers to the production of ideas whereas innovation refers to the implementation thereof (Legrenzi, 2005). There are key factors that need to be considered for the survival, success, and excellence of organizations (Job & Bhattacharya, 2007; Serrat, 2009). These three types comprise of individual creativity, group/team creativity as well as organizational creativity. These creative practices can be identified by freedom of expression, open flow of communication, proactive teamwork, trusting and respecting each other. Here, one may identify that the success of an organisation's creativity depends on the willingness of the leaders to permit the employees to explore their creativity by the atmosphere and resources made available by the organisation. According to Job and Bhattacharya (2007) creativity and innovation, as a collective, will improve the competitive excellence of the organization.

The continual challenging of creative organizations happens through adventuring and opportuning. According to Job and Bhattacharya (2007), opportuning refers to the process whereby creative employees identify and join in projects considered to be commercially and creatively interesting. The author goes on to say that resourceful organizations need to be "skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge and modifying behaviors..." (Job & Bhattacharya, 2007, p 54).

One of the outcome determinants of creativity and innovation is employee and customer satisfaction (Job & Bhattacharya, 2007). Thus, Larucia (2009) supports this by explaining that it helps with problem-solving, occasional difficulties as well as enabling people to find new ways of dealing with unexpected situations. Therefore, it makes it easier on the organisation – aiding in keeping the environment friendly, exciting and free of individual restriction. It is thus vital to obtain employees' proposals for improving the organisation, as this influences people's behaviour in the short-term, medium-term and long-term, consequently increasing satisfaction levels.

Furthermore, a study done by Serrat (2009) on harnessing creativity and innovation in the workplace, states that there are three dominant elements of creativity. More than individual

creative-thinking skills, expertise and motivation are extremely important in the execution of creativity and innovation. This is agreed upon by Job and Bhattacharya (2007) and Larucia (2009). Serrat (2009) then develops a questionnaire incorporating these vital elements, where one of the tables of questions include ‘Assessing a Workplace’s Friendliness to Creativity and Innovation’. Some of the dimensions and items (only one example) measured in the questionnaire include the following:

Table 2.1: An example creativity questionnaire at work

Dimension	Item
Leadership Style	When communicating with others, I take into consideration their preferred thinking style.
Diversity of Styles	Awareness of the creative value of diverse thinking styles, and try to incorporate this diversity in teams.
The Psychological Environment	Supporting people taking intelligent risks, and do not penalize them when they fail.
The Physical Workspace	The workspace includes stimulating objects I provide group members with a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional communication tools (e-mail, whiteboards, crayons, and paper, etc.).
Bringing in Outsiders or Alternative Perspectives	Our group makes visits to people outside the division or organization in order to find different perspectives and ideas.
Promoting Group Convergence	At the end of a project, I provide a way for my group to celebrate and rejuvenate.

Source: Serrat (2009, p. 7-8)

Another very important component of creativity is the diversity not only of thinking and innovation, but also the people who identify and cultivate the innovation. Although it is not easy establishing a multicultural organisation, it is important to raise awareness of the value of cultural differences and to treat everyone with respect and dignity (Dike, 2013). In this global market it is imperative to have a heterogeneous team of workers to enhance creativity, which includes new and fresh ideas on products and services to the world at large (Bodla,

Tang, Jiang, & Tian, 2016). In doing so, one immediately has a competitive edge over the competition within the industry. Therefore, when an organisation provides equal opportunities to all employees irrespective of their differences, such as ability, age, ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation, the employees are able to reach and foster their maximum potential at work (Dike, 2013; Sawyer & Thoroughgood, 2017; Webster, Adams, Maranto, Sawyer, & Thoroughgood, 2018).

Creativity has always been at the heart of human endeavour and is recognized as central to organizational performance (Serrat, 2009). Similarly, Job and Bhattacharya (2007) argue that a company that establishes an effective creativity and innovation culture is likely to realize social benefits that arise from team working and employee motivation, thus increasing organisational effectiveness. Job and Bhattacharya (2007) add that organisational culture should be established to encourage open communication, risk-taking, proactive activity and teamwork. Furthermore, management should trust and respect its employees, allowing them to do so. This would include allowing employees to start new projects, implement new activities for the groups or organisation, implement new and simplified company systems or processes and procedures, develop a new “week-day ritual of celebrating success” for instance, or even finding new ways to be more eco-friendly by eating their lunches out of biodegradable plates for example.

Additionally, Garcia (2018) suggests that it is quite difficult to establish an environment that is tolerant of mistakes, especially when employees fail to produce successful results. However, the author goes on to say that it must be made clear that mistakes are acceptable if they are based on solid thinking, enhance the learning of what will not work, and are caught early before the damage is severe. It is essential that there is support for new idea generation and implementation, despite some failures. The author goes on to say that the organization’s role is to provide an environment where employees can dare to be creative, and know that it is acceptable to explore their creativity. Such an environment could be created and supported through positive practices.

2.6.3 Open lines of communication

As already mentioned, creativity is also fostered when one is allowed the freedom to practice it. Therefore, leadership plays a big role in exercising one’s creativity (Serrat, 2009; Wright, 2017; Morganson, Litano & O’Neill, 2014; Reich & Hershcovis, 2011; Ireffin & Mechanic,

2014; University of Florida, n.d). Thus, having a leader that allows their employees the freedom to take ownership of their work and to have an open mind as well as open lines of communication is crucial. This includes sharing relevant and important information needed to make decisions, accepting others' inputs, and disclosing personal values, motives and thoughts enabling employees to feel a sense of trust (Norman, Avolio & Luthans, 2010, p352). Hence, when a leader shows this behaviour, it stimulates their "followers" to feel the freedom to be more open and transparent. Having such a relationship between employer and employee, and between fellow employees means that the various parties share mutual trust and respect (Norman, et al., 2010).

Traditionally, open communication or transparent communication is seen to be crucial for organisational success. When translated into the organisational context it is the overt behaviours of seniors and their subordinates together with their peers, whether concerning task, private, and innovative matters (Norman et al., 2010). This type of communication enhances the quality of organisational stakeholder relationships, and avoids or reduces the unexpected organizational crises (Norman et al., 2010; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014; Conrad, 2014). These practices demonstrate specific behaviours and actions that are consistent with high moral standards, such as trustworthiness and dependability (Norman et al., 2010; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

These types of practices may include using mutually understood office jargon, or the simple layout of the office space being open plan or glass windowed, for visibility, accessibility and observability (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014) or even having an open door policy or management by walking around (MBWA) (Conrad, 2014). MBWA is a phenomenon where managers or leaders interact and talk to their subordinates without smothering them or making it seem as if the employees are being micromanaged. By performing MBWA, it gives the employees an opportunity to ask the burning questions or just to have an informal laid-back conversation, without any expectations or pressure. This shows the employee that the leader is open, humble and cares about them beyond the scope of organisational results, and therefore can be trusted (Conrad, 2014).

According to Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, (1995) cited in Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) the trust theory suggests that trust is the willingness of interested parties to be vulnerable to the organisation's actions. Trust has three dimensions, namely: ability, benevolence and integrity (Norman, et al., 2010; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014). In

order to be a competent and trustworthy leader, one must demonstrate high levels of positivity, which is indicated by psychological capacities such as hope, efficacy, optimism, and resilience. These capabilities in a leader typically lead to high levels of performance. In addition to this, transparent communication has also been positively related to higher levels of organizational effectiveness, motivation (Berggren & Bernshteyn, 2007), job satisfaction, role clarity, positive peer relationships and organizational citizenship behaviour (Norman et al., 2010; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014; University of Florida, n.d). Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) also argue that leaders and organisations can either decrease or increase disclosure toward their stakeholders by keeping secrets or through by utilising open information systems (e.g. honest, open, transparent lines of communication).

2.6.4 Recognition and rewards

Recognition plays a key role in a successful organisation (Abdullah, Shonubi, Hashim, & Hamid, 2016; Luthans, 2000). Similarly, one of the laws of psychology suggests that if one desires a behaviour to be repeated, that one should positively recognize and appreciate that specific behaviour directly and at that moment of action, rolling the classic behavioural management approach based on the positive reinforcement theory (Abdullah, et al., 2016; Luthans, 2000). When employees recognise or sense appreciation from their employers for the work that they do or their commitment, they tend to do more and better (Luthans & Stajkovic, 2019). Thus by having a culture of recognition and appreciation, it gives birth to employee inner and intrinsic motivation, wanting to do over and above one's scope (organisational citizenship behaviour) (Abdullah, et al., 2016; Luthans & Stajkovic, 2019; Alam, Saeed, Sahabuddin & Akter, 2013). This could include acts of service to their stakeholders (Luthans, 2000), such as making customers aware of the deal of the day or month, going out of their way to help a fellow colleague during work hours or even helping them with their work when your own is completed.

Recognition and appreciation can happen in many ways. The two main ways are in an extrinsic manner and an intrinsic manner (Luthans & Stajkovic, 2019; Alam, et al., 2013). Extrinsic recognition refers to an employer rewarding and appreciating an employee or group of employees by means of monetary gifts and physical gifts, such as a raise, a promotion, paid vacations, dinners or even a new car for instance (Luthans & Stajkovic, 2019; Alam, et al., 2013). Intrinsic on the other hand is when an employer appreciates his/her employee non-

financially, by words of thanks and praise (Luthans & Stajkovic, 2019; Alam, et al., 2013). This includes saying “Thank you, I really appreciated your great effort” or “What you did gives the company a great advantage over the competitor”, for instance. By having this type of relationship, trust, openness and a calm environment is established. This will ultimately result in an increase in worker commitment and engagement, a lower staff turnover, increase in customer loyalty reviews and an increase in organisational motivation.

2.6.5 Metacognitive behaviour

Another positive practice identified within the workplace is that of metacognition or cognition. Metacognition refers to the “awareness of one’s own thinking and its role in the results. This level is based on self-knowledge. It includes the ability to recognise and correct one’s own errors” (Henning, Hagedorn-Hansen, & Von Leipzig, 2017, p. 108) or ‘thinking about thinking’ (Lai, 2011); while cognition refers to the process of thinking, of which being mindful is an element. Mindfulness is a practice about accepting and learning to deal with life, others, as well as ourselves, in all their forms (Bitesized Learning, 2015; Hunter & McCormick, 2008; Vanderhoof, 2015). It is about experiencing and fully living in the present moment. According to Bitesized Learning (2015), mindfulness, unlike popular speculation, is not living in a perfect world where everyone floats about being peaceful and spends hours in a zoned-out state. Neither is it constantly being annoyingly positive, or a tree-hugger or a cult. The article goes on to say that it is rather about nurturing an understanding and attitude of awareness (Vanderhoof, 2015), performing mindful practices such as formal and informal focussed exercises, and developing the ability to deliberately pay attention in the present moment (Carter, Tobias & Spiegelhalter, 2016).

Mindfulness is derived from Eastern meditation practices and initially devised by Jon Kabat Zin (Case Western Reserve University, 2016; Vanderhoof, 2015). He produced "mindfulness-based stress reduction" (MBSR) in the 1970s, and practices continued to be developed such as mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), a combination of mindfulness and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). This acts now as the intervention of choice for depression and anxiety within the National Health Service of the USA and sees a greater victory over antidepressants (Case Western Reserve University, 2016; Vanderhoof, 2015). In organisations the benefits of mindfulness are internationally recognised; large organisations such as Google, eBay, Virgin, Apple, IKEA, Sony as well as Transport for London make use

of it with their employees (Case Western Reserve University, 2016; Vanderhoof, 2015; Carter et al., 2016).

Activities of mindfulness can include on-site yoga, reading a book to relax (which is also part of non-work activities), breathing exercises, taking a time-out and listening to classical music or even just journaling about one's best self or goals. It is proved to increase one's feel-good hormones, enable one to cope with life's challenges, increase resilience, stability, balance, contentment, peace, and emotional intelligence (Hunter & McCormick, 2008; Carter et al., 2016). It can also help to improve interpersonal relationships, creativity, self- and other-awareness, clarity of thought, memory, focus, concentration and control, amongst other things (Carter et al., 2016). Additionally, the Case Western Reserve University (2016), states that introducing a shared culture of mindfulness not only improves focus, but it also provides the ability to manage stress effectively and how employees collaborate. Some evidence and statistics on the above-mentioned declarations can be referred to in appendices B and C.

Mindfulness is linked to better workplace functioning (Case Western Reserve University, 2016; Vanderhoof, 2015; Carter et al., 2016). According to the findings, *Contemplating Mindfulness at Work (An Integrative Review)*, mindfulness tends to impact human functioning positively (Good, Lyddy, Glomb, Bono, Brown, Duffy, Baer, Brewer, Lazar, 2016). It improves one's attention, reasoning, behaviour as well as bodily processes. It also results in self consistency, self-control and efficiency as well as providing us with evidence that it impacts interpersonal behaviours and workgroup dynamics, although it is an individual quality (Case Western Reserve University, 2016).

Good et al. (2016) also mentions that the British Parliament of late launched a mindfulness initiative that is called "Mindful Nation UK" (Case Western Reserve University, 2016). The authors suggest that this initiative influences mindfulness to be of assistance to diverse sectors as well as improve nation-wide health, productivity and flourishing. With this pivotal understanding and awareness, one has critical everyday life choices and is able to proactively respond rather than react as situations arise. Thus, one can see here that this concept of mindfulness can be applied in the Positive Organisational Scholarship phenomenon as an individual cognition practice.

2.7 Chapter Conclusion

Positive Organisational Psychology refers to the positive subjective experiences and traits practiced in the workplace and their application to improve the effectiveness and quality of life within organizations. POP includes what is called Positive Organisational Scholarship and Positive Organisational Behaviour. POS focuses on the dynamics leading to exceptional individual and organizational performance such as developing human strength, producing resilience and restoration and fostering vitality. POS is examining and understanding the best of the human condition, such as flourishing or thriving, ideal functioning, excellence, virtuousness, forgiveness, compassion, goodness, and other life-giving dynamics. POB on the other hand focuses on individual psychological qualities and their influence on performance improvement. This consists of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism (Psychological Capital). It refers to 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. It proposes the link from individual to group, then to the organizational level of analysis.

When an organisation is in a state of flourishing, and thriving, it leads to organisational well-being and happiness, and establishes a deeper meaning and purpose within the organisation. What distinguishes “good” companies from the “great”, in terms of their performance, is their wealth generation, competitive approach or strategy, and/or their leadership strength. Being part of an environment of positive practices produces positive emotions which result in better individual and company performance. According to Cameron, et al., (2011), six significant positive organisational practices were found: caring; compassionate support; forgiveness; inspiration; meaning; and respect, integrity, and gratitude. Additional literature was discussed to include other positive practices, such as high quality connections within the workplace, creativity and innovation within the workplace, open lines of communication and transparency, recognition and rewards, and metacognitive behaviour.

Research Plan and Design

3.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter deals with the research design and how the research problem was explored. The chapter discusses the sampling methods used in this investigation, how data was gathered and the techniques employed. The criteria for sampling for the current study were drawn from an online source, where 13 companies were analysed for positive organisational practices.

3.2 Research Design

The study was conducted in the interpretivist paradigm, and it was qualitative in nature, utilising content analysis. Qualitative research is used to gain an understanding of the underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations of an individual regarding a certain topic (Barkhuizen, Jorgensen & Brink, 2014; Bernard, 2000). It provides insights into the problem and helps to develop ideas or hypotheses surrounding it. Thus the main focus of qualitative researchers is exploring, evaluating and describing phenomena relating to people, according to Orb, Eisenhauer, and Wynaden (2001, as cited in Barkhuizen et al., 2014). This is to get a clearer perspective of the answers regarding the topic at hand.

When performing qualitative data analysis, the collected information must be ordered and interpreted correctly in order to extract the key findings for one's research. The thematic content analysis methodology provides one with a detailed and organised investigation of the contents of particular material when identifying patterns or themes (Perumal, 2014). It is usually performed on various types of human communication such as journals, books, case studies, videos and recorded human interactions. Thematic content analysis also seems crucial especially when dealing with emails, online discussions and forums (Perumal, 2014). For the present study, the content analysed was from case studies and videos regarding Positive Organisational Psychology / Scholarship and positive organisational practices within positively deviant and unusually successful companies.

3.2. Research Methodology

3.2.1 Qualitative research method

The qualitative research method has ensured the individuality of each of the case studies and videos in the secondary data collected, whereby similarities or differences can be deduced

(Perumal, 2014). The cases and videos have been identified from secondary online sources in conjunction with the framework at hand. The researcher has done a comprehensive review of each source that was assessed using the criteria for qualitative research reporting, which includes having an affirmative bias, indicated positive deviance, or representing virtuous practices. This thorough analysis allows readers to assess the trustworthiness and generalisability of the study findings according to their own research and context.

3.2.2 Data collection procedure

From the outset of investigating positive practices in positively deviant organisations, the researcher consulted two significant ways of gathering the data; both through the internet. One of these ways was that the researcher tried to ascertain which companies are regarded as the top and happiest companies to work for. The researcher then investigated which type of culture the identified companies portray and if the exhibited behaviours fit the purpose for the current study, according to the criteria mentioned above.

Together with the above method, a second method of gathering data was looking through the International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA) Network online resources for relevant case studies and videos. In conjunction with reviewing the IPPA online sources, the researcher also consulted the Michigan Ross School of Business online page for relevant case studies and videos that exhibited positive practices that fostered a positively deviant organisation.

The researcher used thematic synthesis to analyse the data and thus findings. Thus the valid and significant case studies and videos were drawn from these forums, compiled as evidence cases and stored in a unique folder on the researcher's computer. Thereafter, the researcher started capturing positive practices from these sources, transcribing snippets (data) and recording into Microsoft Word. The translation of the various concepts of the data gathering was done by grouping similar concepts together and creating new ones where necessary. The researcher did this until data saturation was reached and appropriately integrated into preliminary themes and subthemes. After capturing the data (150 sources of data), the researcher then used the chart method (hereby manually grouping the raw data) to extract and group all the themes together by pooling similar words and phrases, and categorized it into themes in order to do a write up of the data collected.

3.3 Population and sample

3.3.1 Population

The resources used for this study were case studies and videos regarding Positive Organisational practices that date from 2008 to 2018. It is in the English language and consists of material in the international context as well as the national context.

All of the data gathered was from secondary internet / online sources gathered from general “top companies to work for” and “happiest companies to work for”, selected subjectively, to specific forums such as the IPPA network and the Michigan Ross School of Business, and other relevant bodies of work/companies.

3.3.2 Sample

The organisations used for this study were identified using online search engines (such as Google) to research the most "successful" and “top” companies that have made a positive name for themselves in the modern world. The researcher identified these companies to be positively deviant and who yielded the best in their employees and at the same time could show their success in their bottom line and future prospects (according to Cameron et al.’s (2009) guidelines for positive practices). The organisations are identified below.

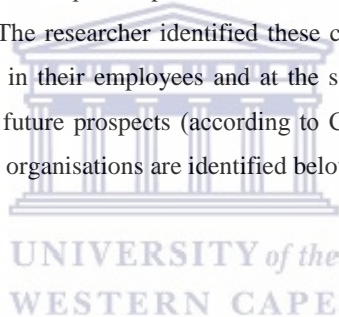


Table 3.1: Organisations featured in the sample identified as positively deviant

ORGANISATION	COUNTRY	DESCRIPTION	YEAR FOUNDED	SNIPPET NUMBER	WEB ADDRESS	
GOOGLE	USA	A multinational technology company that specializes in Internet-related services and products, which include online advertising technologies, search engine, cloud computing, software, and hardware.	1998	S1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1jImdkApTQ&index=46&list=PLBUj7GEZMUZPTNagUmgjtjAH11_NX4jX3p&t=0s	
				S2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_R3XG7s2hw&index=46&list=PLBUj7GEZMUZPTNagUmgjtjAH11_NX4jX3p	
				S3	https://www.successagency.com/growth/2017/01/19/google-company-culture/	
WEST AIRLINES	JET	Canada	A local airline	1996	S4	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcxmVZKXwCQ&index=48&list=PLBUj7GEZMUZPTNagUmgjtjAH11_NX4jX3p

ZAPPOS	Las Vegas, Nevada, USA	Online retail company	1999	S7	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axlWBn7YQA4
				S8	http://vnmanpower.com/en/what-you-can-learn-from-10-best-organizational-culture-examples-part-1-b1172.html
SAS	USA	A leading business analytics software vendor	1976	S11	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvsIcwHavOs
SOUTH WEST AIRLINES	USA	A major United States airline	1966	S12	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_CeFiUkV7s
				S13	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O24ZD9WluW8
ULTIMATE SOFTWARE	USA	An American technology company that develops and sells a cloud-based human capital management solution for businesses	1990	S14	https://www.indeed.com/cmp/Ultimate-Software/about

ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL	USA	A pediatric treatment and research facility focused on children's catastrophic diseases	1962	S15 S16	https://www.memphisdailynews.com/news/2016/may/23/st-jude-ceo-talks-hospital-culture/ Hospitalhttps://www.indeed.com/cmp/St.-Jude-Children's-Research-Hospital/about
CREDIT KARMA	USA	Personal finance company	2007	S17	https://www.facebook.com/NasdaqCulturalCapital/videos/169883196904190/
WALMART	USA	A multinational retail corporation	1962	S18	https://corporate.walmart.com/our-story/working-at-walmart
ADOBE	USA	A multinational computer software company	1982	S19 S20	https://www.indeed.com/cmp/Adobe/reviews?ftopic=culture http://blogs.adobe.com/adobelife/2017/03/09/celebrating-17-years-on-fortunes-list-of-best-companies-to-work-for/
ROSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS – MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY	USA	A business focussed University	1924	S21 S22	http://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/blog/two-easy-systems-for-positivity/ http://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/news/to-do-business-you-better-get-positive/

INTERNATIONAL POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATION (IPPA)	USA	A global community for positive psychology researchers and practitioners	2007	S23	https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/super/schools/stivo/ConferenceposterCRELLINAmanda.pdf
STARBUCKS	USA	Coffee company and coffeehouse chain	1972	S24	https://research-methodology.net/starbucks-organizational-culture-focus-on-employees-as-the-source-of-core-competency/
				S25	https://www.starbucks.com/responsibility/community/diversity-and-inclusion
				S26	https://starbuckswebsite.wordpress.com/organizational-culture-3/



3.4 Ethical Considerations

3.4.1 Ethical Principles

In terms of ethics, permission for this research was obtained from the Department of Industrial Psychology. As only secondary data was utilised for the analysis, ethical clearance from the Human and Social Sciences Ethical Committee of the University of the Western Cape was not needed.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Data Analysis Plan

When performing qualitative thematic content analysis, there were certain steps that were to be followed; firstly, the specific body of material needed was to be explored. Secondly, the characteristics of the body of work were defined. Thirdly, the researcher identified specific practices that were similar to others, and grouped them into themes. Fourthly, it was broken into small and manageable segments of materials. Fifthly, the researcher scrutinised and sorted the materials based on the defined characteristics.

All the data collected has been transcribed into Microsoft Word from the gathered case studies and videos. In total, the number of snippets of data gathered was 150 pieces. The researcher then cleaned the data; removing unnecessary and irrelevant information. Furthermore, themes have been extracted by using the chart method, hereby manually grouping the raw data. Thus by looking at similar words and phrases used, it was categorized into various different groups which were then translated into themes. The similar keywords and phrases were coded so they could easily be identified and put into groups.

3.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presented the research design the study employed to explore the research problem. It also presented the data collection and gathering techniques. Lastly, it explained the various international companies that were examined to find the data (positive organisational practices).

The next chapter focuses on the results obtained in the investigation, specifically referencing the themes of the data gathered, as well as linking them with Cameron and colleagues (2011) study.

Findings

4.1. Introduction

After analysing the data of positive manifest practices performed by these various companies, the thematic content analysis generated 13 clustered themes consisting of the 150 pieces of data found. The findings and descriptions of the data and themes can be identified below and will be discussed in the themes.

The thematic content analysis generated 13 themes which are highlighted and described in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Manifest positive practices themes



NUMBER	THEME	DESCRIPTION	MANIFEST POSITIVE PRACTICES	SOURCE
1	Social (non-work) relationships / activities	Experiencing quality relationships and social activities	Playing sports together	S10, S16
			Sharing meals together	S3, S7, S10, S11, S12, S16
			spending social time together at work	S5, S17
			Going on trips/adventures together (hikes) outside of the office	S3, S12
			Doing extracurricular activities together	S3, S16
			Playing games with colleagues	S3, S7, S10, S12, S13, S16, S17
			Building a positive team and family spirit	S7, S17
			Forgiving mistakes	S6
2	Inclusivity	Embracing all, irrespective of differences, such as ability, age, ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation, to attain their maximum potential at work	Seeking and embracing differences in people, ideas and experiences	S15
			Encouraging the formation of close bonds between employees	S17, S19
			Making employees feel important and valuable	S14
			Respecting each other	S12
			Reliving positive experiences	S9
3	Mindfulness	Accepting and learning to deal with life, others and self, in all forms		

			Listening to music	S10, S17
			Practising gratitude	S9
			Meditating	S17
4	Transparent / open communication	Being open about decision making, strategies, feedback and procedures	A culture of open and honest communication – Transparency Telling the truth, keeping promises and being trustworthy	S3 S15
			Feeling free to vocalize one's points of view	S3
			Not being afraid to disagree and challenge each other	S13
5	Creativity / Innovation	The production of ideas and the implementation thereof	Sharing ideas with one another	S7
			Providing staff with endless opportunities to be innovative	S16
			Decorating workstations	S7
6	Recognition and appreciation	Extending or receiving gratitude to/from others	Writing little notes of gratitude, appreciation or encouragement	S21
			Pointing out team member strengths and accomplishments	S6
			Praising someone for what they have done well	S9
7	Friendliness	Being kind and	Smiling at each other	S5, S11,

		accommodating to others		S13
8	Work-life integration	Balancing ones professional and personal life duties and pleasures	A friendly and fun work environment	S3, S17
			Holding the door open for a stranger	S5
			Acts of kindness... Emailing someone a kind message in the morning	S9
			Workers embracing their lifestyle, hobbies and personality at work	S7
			Juggling family and work	S10
			Calm and relaxed environment	S16, S17
			Allowing employees the autonomy to determine their own scheduling and job tasks	S17
			Sharing / telling stories	Providing others with own personal insight and experiences
10	Celebrations	Celebrating special occasions	Discussing shows/books	S3
			Recalling happy days	S5
			Celebrating successes	S15

11	Collaborate	Working together with others for a common purpose	Celebrating the holidays together	S12, S15, S19, S7
			Celebrating each other's birthdays and holidays	S7
			Working as a team	S16, S17
12	Positive strategy	Having a constructive mission and goal	Sitting in a place other than your desk and work	S2, S17
			Having operational meetings twice a week	S19
			Positive future thinking	S8
13	Humour	Acting in a comical manner to bring joy to others	Holding monthly office competitions	S3
			Applying humour in your interaction with others	S11



4.2. Themes

4.2.1. Social / non-work activities

Performing social or non-work activities at work with one's co-workers was the most prominent theme identified and recognized when investigating positive practices in positively deviant companies across the globe. Many data sources displayed sharing lunch with colleagues (S3, S7, S10, S11, S12, S16). Several others said that they work out or exercise together, and play sport (S9, S10, S3, S13; and S10, S16). One case study in particular, S5, stated "by spending time together with colleagues and one's immediate supervisor (e.g. by socializing during work breaks instead of isolating themselves)" is one way that they socialise at work. Taking a break outside together (S12), relaxing (S18) as well as doing other outdoor activities together (S7 and S16) and just having fun (S11) was also grouped as part of this theme.

Another interesting element to this theme was that of playing games together. This was supported by many case studies and identified in many videos (S3, S7, S10, S12, S13, S16, S17). Bethy Hardeman, the Chief Consumer Advocate at Credit Karma says "Just creating spaces like this where we can spend time together. Really just encourages us to like get away and get to know each other a little bit better" (S17). Furthermore, the director of one of the most successful privately owned organisations in the USA stated that "sometimes it feels a bit like Disney World... but everyone likes Disney World" (S10). Another activity that was identified under the social activities theme was that of going on trips and hikes together, creating a bond with your peers, as stated by the following sources: "Go on trips or adventures together, like hikes – bonding outside of the offices", "go on a hike mid-week" (S3) and "Taking trips with each other"(S12). Finally, S19 supports this by maintaining that they "Encourage social activities amongst employees".

4.2.2. Inclusivity

The second most prevalent practice that was identified is having a culture of inclusivity. S16 states that "We are inclusive, open and actively engaged with our customers, partners, employees and the communities we serve". S19 also goes on to say that they encourage the formation of close bonds between employees. Another form of inclusivity and bonding between employees is to respect each other and forgive mistakes (S6, S12, S17).

The element of building a positive team and family spirit (S7 and S11) and accepting all is also one of the most important practices in inclusivity. S1 describes their environment to be: “Working at Google is great, and it’s not just about the environment or the colours and the games and the messages, it’s really for me about the people. I’m working with a group of people who I consider to be my family.” Similarly, S15, S10, and S19 describe their experiences – “Seek and embrace differences in people, ideas and experiences”, “The culture is very accepting”, “Inclusion of diverse individuals”, respectively. S14 states further that their culture “Makes you feel important and valuable”. The employee in a video (S3) in particular stated the following: “It’s important that the company be a family that people feel that they’re part of the company, and that the company is like a family to them. When you treat people that way, you get better productivity.” (S3). S4 describes a non-judgemental, open and accepting culture in the following manner “...there is no seniority ... everyone is easy to talk to so questions or problems, they don’t hold it against you.”

4.2.3. Transparent / open communication

Several of the sources identified open and transparent communication to be one of their most valued practices at their place of employment. S13, S3 and S6 support this by stating “don’t be afraid to disagree and challenge each other” and employees should be sure to “vocalize their points of view” as well as “asking for ideas and opinions by listening”. Similarly, S3 and S15 state “don’t be afraid to ask questions” and “ask for help” and “give honest and direct feedback”, respectively. Here one can see the importance and encouragement of open communication and trusting relationships, as S15 describes: “teach and trust others to do their jobs”. In other case studies, such as those from S3 and S15, it was explicitly stated that a culture of open and honest communication that displays transparency is one that they live by.

One organisation in particular states that transparency forms part of their ethics; “Adobe are sincere about the products they create and the staff they support. Adobe takes time to listen and care for their staff, aiming to be ethical in all that they do.” (S16). Similarly, S15 states that it is important that a company be portrayed as one which will “tell the truth, keep your promises and be trustworthy”. In S2, one of the managers states that “we are constantly looking to figure out, you know, any type of programme that will make Googlers happier, healthier and more productive”. This is supported by S10 who states “think of the long term taking burdens off your employees”.

4.2.4. Creativity and innovation

Many of the sources acknowledged this theme as a prominent one which they made use of. S7 says that their organisation's self-governing operating system gives their employees "more free range to expand on their own ideas". Similarly, S3 says "We encourage Googlers to innovate and pursue their own research" corresponding with S16 saying that their organisation provides their staff with endless opportunities to be innovative. S16 goes further to state that "Adobe gives a staff member who requests it, a red cardboard box filled with stationery, snacks, and \$1000 prepaid credit card to explore their ideas. No questions asked."

S10 indicates that "creativity is extremely important and anything I can do to get those creative juices flowing among the people here, I want to do it". S10 goes on to say that "you got to dare to be different." Another way to be creative is to innovate on new ideas together away from your work desks (S12) and share your ideas with one another (S7). Another way is to decorate your workstations, be creative and adventurous, with an open mind (S7).

4.2.5. Sharing / telling stories

Sharing stories can be a way of bonding with those around you and this came out as a theme when analysing the data. S6 shares that one of these kinds of stories to share is to "share success stories". S3 approaches this practice differently by stating that they "share funny stories or pictures with one another". Additionally, S5, S15 and S3 also state that another behavioural or nurturing social practise in sharing stories is "by talking not only about work but also about personal matters and listening" or "discuss each other's favourite show or book", respectively. An alternative way of representing this practice is by "recalling happy days" and "reminiscing together with colleagues" (S5). Lastly, S3 states that "sharing something new learned with the group", is also another positive practice.

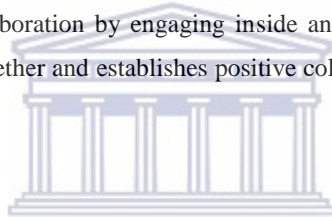
4.2.6. Mindfulness

Many of the sources acknowledged this theme as a prominent one which they made use of. Source 9 (S9) and S8 mentioned that one of these ways is to allow your brain to relive positive experiences and think about positive life experiences. S10 said that another way is to play and listen to music during lunch time, while S17 suggests "jam sessions" after work on a

Friday, and provides a meditation room. Additionally, S8 says that a different practice of mindfulness will be to write about positive experiences. Similarly, S9, S8, S18, and S5 suggest writing gratitude letters; things that one is grateful for. Lastly, S8 and S5 state that one of these practices is writing and visualizing about one's future and best possible self.

4.2.7. Collaborate

Working together for project success and idea generation was one of the positive practices identified in a few successful international companies. An example of collaboration was to “ask each other’s input on your work ideas” (S16, S20). Similarly, S16 goes on to say that it is important to “work as a team”, which S17 also displays and mentions by CEO, Kenneth Lin. S15 mentions that collaborating with each other is important. S12 takes this further to explain that they sit and gather at one another’s desks. S2 and S17 also exhibits the practice of collaboration when their employees tend to sit in places other than their desks when they work. S3 brings a different nuance to collaboration by engaging inside and outside of the office as a practice that brings their staff together and establishes positive collaboration and a spirit of togetherness.



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4.2.8. Work-life integration

In a video case, S10 expresses that “having the children here helps to ease the stress of juggling everything”. Likewise, S3 shows that their employees enjoy their families at work, bringing a positive feeling to their environment. This is a practice that clearly makes the workers feel important to their company and helps them feel that they can balance their life responsibilities while working. Source 7 goes on to experience the same from their company by saying that “workers can embrace their lifestyle, hobbies and personality” whilst being dedicated to their individual roles and responsibilities. Similarly, when creating a culture where work-life balance is a priority, it is important to note that giving your employees the freedom to choose their work schedule within reasonable parameters, like S10 (“Working flexible work hours”) and S22 (“allowing employees the autonomy to determine their own scheduling and job tasks”) allows employees to experience work satisfaction. Another example of a work-life balance in successful companies is to create an environment that is calm and relaxed (S16, S17). This brings a different but necessary aspect to a working environment that is traditionally seen as a mechanical, output-driven environment.

4.2.9. Friendliness

In many videos that were watched when gathering data, a theme that stood out in these “successful” organisations was the element of appearing friendly to those around you. In particular, S5, S11, S13 and S17 explicitly demonstrate these behaviours in their day-to-day interactions with their co-workers. S3 along with S11 share the sentiment of being a friendly organisation. S5 also demonstrates this kind of friendliness and kindness by “holding the door open for a stranger”.

4.2.10. Humour

Another theme found was the importance of humour. In a video that was watched, S4 gives a good example of this element in their daily working environment that demonstrates this theme as a key in their business delivery.

Interviewer: Would you fly West Jet again?

Passenger: Absolutely!

Interviewer: Did you find West Jet to be a unique airline company?

Passenger: Every once in a while... This time we actually had a guy who was funny, you know just when he was doing the safety procedure and stuff like that, so he...

Interviewer: So he was the flight attendant?

Passenger: Yeah! You know and it's just little things like that that West Jet does unlike other airlines.

S7 and S12 also show that laughing with one's co-workers is something that is enjoyed by them in the workplace. S9 and S11 give this a differentiation by implying that one makes people laugh, and “apply humour in your interaction with others”, respectively.

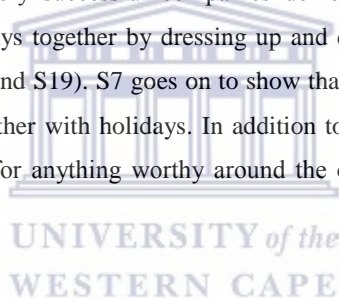
4.2.11. Recognition and appreciation

Recognition and appreciation is one of the biggest themes that stood out when researching positive practices demonstrated at successful companies around the world. One of the biggest

and most well-known organisations states that they use “Thank you cards” for employees, giving them a chance to use this card to present their gratitude to their fellow co-workers (S19), similar to S5. S21 likewise states that they write “a little note or two of gratitude, appreciation or encouragement” to their co-workers. S6 also goes on to state that positive practices also include that workers “uplift and boost others” and “encourage and inspire others”. Another way of performing this act is by “pointing out team members’ strengths” (S6) and “praising someone for what they have done well” (S9). This also expresses a sense of optimism by “expressing gratitude” (S8).

4.2.12. Celebrations

Celebrating with others is a theme that was identified when gathering data on positive practices in positively deviant organisations. Sources 6 and 15 show that this is an important practice to them by stating that their culture is one that enjoys “celebrating wins” and “celebrating success”, respectively. Two very successful companies demonstrate in their culture videos that they celebrate the holidays together by dressing up and decorating their offices when it comes to the holidays (S12 and S19). S7 goes on to show that their company celebrates birthdays and special events together with holidays. In addition to this, S21 goes on to state that “one minute celebrations” for anything worthy around the office is just as important.



4.2.13. Positive strategy

Having a positive strategy for a successful business is very important, as it is one of the themes identified when researching successful business cultures. One of the most popular company’s world-wide says that they “have operational meetings twice a week” (S19). Another well-known global company says that they “hold monthly office competitions” (S3). Another source goes on to say that “shared interaction geared towards accomplishing objectives or goals” is another positive practice strategy for thriving businesses (S6). When practicing positive strategy for one’s business, it is also vital that employees exercise “positive future thinking” and “hopeful goal-directed thinking” (S8).

4.3 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the findings obtained relating to the research question of the present study and based on thematic content analysis of the data gathered on an online basis. The data gathered from the thematic content analysis generated 13 clustered themes which were outlined and discussed. Chapter 5 will provide context and explanation to the research findings.



Discussions, Limitation and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the major findings of the research study and makes reference to relevant research to substantiate the findings for the current study. Moreover, the discussion details demographic information regarding the sample and results obtained from the “top” and “happiest” companies to work for via the desk research and interpretivist method. It discusses the most salient practices of the current study as well as how they coincide with Cameron’s practices.

5.2 Discussions

The research objective of the study was to understand the positive organisational practices in unusually positive companies. The findings indicate that there are 13 themes that stood out, with five being most salient. These can be seen in Table 4.1. The most prominent theme identified is that of social interaction between work employees. This would indicate that positively deviant organisations place a high value on social and interpersonal relationships. This theme includes employees sharing their lunch hours together, playing games together, and doing outdoor activities together. This correlates with evidence that stipulates that these high quality connections help individuals, groups and organizations develop, thrive and flourish (Ragins & Dutton, 2007; Reich & Hershcovis, 2011; Müceldili & Erdil, 2016; Wright et al., 2009; Owler et al., 2010; Ollikainen, 2013).

The second most salient theme extracted from the data is that of inclusivity. This would indicate that positively deviant organisations place a high value on making their staff feel like a family unit and providing them with an embracing environment. This theme includes employees feeling as if they are a family at work. They seek and embrace differences in each other, they respect each other, and make everyone feel as if they belong and that they are valuable to the company. This correlates with evidence that stipulates that when organisations achieve greater diversity in their workforce, it can result in a more culturally competent workforce, and thus a more competent organisation, and this will establish a competitive edge (Deamant, Liao, Harris, Soriano, Marr, Brown, & Ferguson, 2018; Cameron, et al., 2011).

The third most salient theme identified is that of Mindfulness. This would indicate that positively deviant organisations place a high value on providing their staff with the opportunities to experience mindfulness at work, whether it is a designated space or just time out. This theme includes employees thinking and writing about positive life experiences and

goals, writing and expressing what they are grateful for, or just journaling or taking a relaxing / yoga period. This correlates with evidence that suggests that participating in these practices proves to increase one's positive hormones, enables one to cope with life's challenges, increases resilience, balance, and emotional intelligence. It also helps improve interpersonal relationships, creativity, clarity of thought, and memory and concentration, amongst other things (Vanderhoof, 2015; Carter, 2016).

The fourth most salient theme extracted from the data is open communication. This suggests that positively deviant organisations place a high value on transparency between the different levels of the organisation. This theme includes employees building open and honest relationships with one another, giving and receiving honest and direct feedback, listening, being dependable and not being afraid to disagree or challenge others in a respectful manner. This correlates with evidence that suggests that transparent communication and these specific behaviours and practices are consistent with high moral standards, such as trustworthiness (Norman, Avolio & Luthans, 2010; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014). Along with trustworthiness come high levels of positivity and related to that is employee motivation, job satisfaction, role clarity, positive peer relationships and organizational citizenship behaviour, and hence, organizational effectiveness (Berggren & Bernshteyn, 2007; Norman, et al., 2010; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

The fifth most salient theme identified is that of creativity and innovation. This suggests that positively deviant organisations place a high value on creativity and innovation. This theme includes sharing ideas with one another, employers providing staff with endless opportunities to be innovative and explore their creativity, employees daring to be different or even decorating the office to inspire one's creative side. This correlates with evidence that suggests that creativity which comes from employee empowerment and a diversification of knowledge and skills (amongst other things), leads to competitive excellence (Job and Bhattacharya, 2007; Sawyer & Thoroughgood, 2017).

There were less salient themes, but still pivotal in the success of these companies. Recognizing and appreciating fellow colleagues and employees, whether by deed or other means, meant that employees were most likely to increase their organisational citizenship behaviour (Abdullah, et al., 2016; Luthans, 2000; Alam et al., 2013). Humour and being friendly towards each other, which includes smiling and helping others, also elicited an atmosphere of kindness and one that brought people together (Ellison, et al., 2007; Larucia,

2009). Work-life integration meant having a balance of work and home and having the freedom to own that responsibility (Norman et al., 2010; Carter, 2016). Sharing stories, collaborating and celebrating suggest a sense of togetherness, and of inclusion (Cameron et al., 2004; Cameron et al., 2010; Ragins & Dutton, 2007; Donaldson & Ko, 2010; Bernstein, 2003). Lastly, Positive strategy included setting constructive goals in the workplace (Job and Bhattacharya, 2007; Sawyer & Thoroughgood, 2017).

Because these organisations perform these positive practices, thus internalizing the art of positivity in the workplace, they perform in a state of flourishing, thriving, well-being, happiness, deeper meaning, and resilience, which characterizes a virtuous organisation (Cameron et al., 2004; Searle & Barbuto, 2011).

5.2.1 Contrasting results with Cameron's framework

Against the backdrop of the theoretical positive organisational practices study done by Cameron et al. (2011), the current study has identified seven more themes. When comparing the current study's findings to Cameron et al.'s framework, I found that many of them were corroborated by his framework. The surplus themes from the current study are considered as differences.

The themes that best fit the concept of caring are those of inclusivity and friendliness, being that caring requires embracing others and acting in a kind manner, thus expressing inclusion of them and being friendly. The themes that best suit the concept of compassionate support are those of sharing stories and inclusivity. When Cameron et al. speak of compassionate support, the authors refer to providing support for one another, being considerate towards those around you and embracing others. This speaks directly to interacting with others in a personal way (sharing intimate story time), as well as being inclusive of others who may be different to you. The theme that best fits the concept of forgiveness is inclusivity. This concept includes employees experiencing the freedom to make mistakes and know that no matter what, they will be embraced, supported and encouraged.

The concept of inspiration is included in a number of themes. It includes sharing / telling stories (inspiring others with your stories), mindfulness (experiencing cognitive inspiration), creativity and innovation (establishing inspiration for yourself and others through novelty), recognition and inspiration (employees experiencing inspiration by intrinsic or extrinsic

rewards), positive strategy (individual, group or organisational inspiration by means of goal setting), collaboration (employees inspiring each other when working on different ideas together) and celebrations (feeling inspired because of the camaraderie of celebrating important occasions).

The concept of meaning is closely aligned with positive strategy and recognition and appreciation. The reason this is coupled together under meaning is that if one wants to establish meaningful work, one must have a positive, meaningful and clear strategy. In addition, when pursuing this goal or strategy, the recognition and appreciation along the way enhances that meaning. Furthermore, having high quality connections or positive social interactions can also be associated with meaning (Sarangi, 2005; Asiwe, Rothmann, Jorgensen & Hill, 2017). This is because when one experiences these positive interpersonal relationships and interactions with those around you, one starts to make positive personal meaningful relationships with one's work and work environment.

The last concept of respect, integrity and gratitude, is closely related to recognition and appreciation, transparent communication and inclusivity. The reason for this is that when employees are appreciated and recognised for their work or behaviour, they tend to want to do more, and mutual respect and trustworthiness is established. Moreover, when the lines of communication are open, trust and dependability is created. In addition to that, when employees are accepted and valued for who and what they are, it coincides with high levels of respect and integrity. All of these drive the competitive edge and enhance the chances of an organisation experiencing a positively deviant work life / environment.

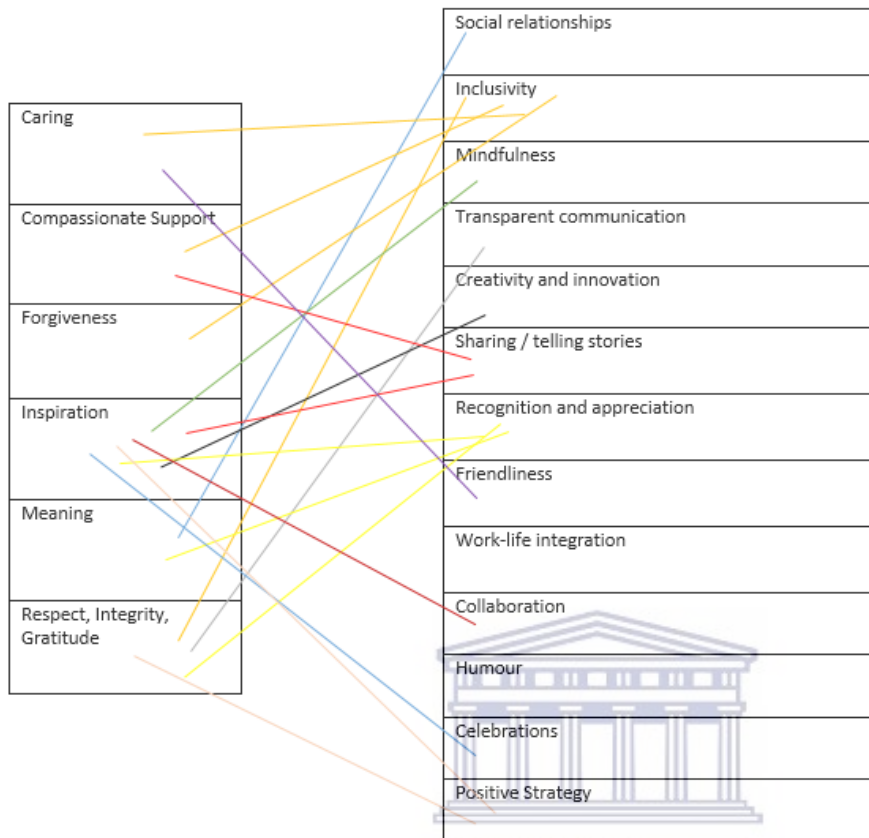


Figure 5.1.

Diagram that shows the thematic schema developed to illustrate the inter-relationships between positive organisational practices and positively deviant organisations.

5.3 Limitations and recommendations

The study has a number of limitations that need to be noted. Firstly, a secondary study has been performed, thus the data that was collected was not from first-hand experience. It was also performed as an online desk research approach, and thus no face to face interactions or real-life observations were made for validity purposes. Thirdly, when investigating the companies online, all of them appear to be internationally based and founded in the USA and UK (all westernized contexts). Thus, the data gathered was by means of the internet, which yielded sources from westernized and developed countries only. Therefore when generalising the findings, it should be considered only for the westernized population. Fourthly, when

selecting the companies for extracting data, the researcher was subjective in the selection, and thus researcher bias is prevalent. Lastly, the cases and video material that was extracted for the study could have been a result of impression management, thus could have been edited to present only the favourable aspects of the organisation.

A recommendation for further research would be to perform a primary qualitative study. This way, the prospective research can back up the current study results by means of interviews, focus groups and observations. An alternative to this would be to use these results and compare them to South African based companies that fit the scope of the study. This way, a comparison can be drawn between developed and developing countries.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the major findings of the research study obtained from what was interpreted as thriving companies. It also discussed the most salient practices of the current study as well as how it coincides with Cameron's practices. The study contributes to the limited body of knowledge regarding positive organisational practices, and understanding what that looks like in positively deviant organisations. The study used the Cameron et al. (2011) positive practices concept only as a basis. However, it did not use the same scope and research methodology. The reason for the study was to understand the actual positive practices beyond the scope of the only theorising concepts posed by Cameron et al. (2011). The study found that 11 out of the 13 themes identified coincided with the six Cameron et al. (2011) concepts, five of which were the most salient. The study found that positively deviant companies' practices include social interactions at work, acting in an inclusive manner with others, engaging in mindful activities, having open lines of communication and providing workers with an environment to enhance and make creativity and innovation possible. Areas for further research would include investigating the relationship between these positive organisational practices and organisational success.

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Appendix A: Positive practices in organisations

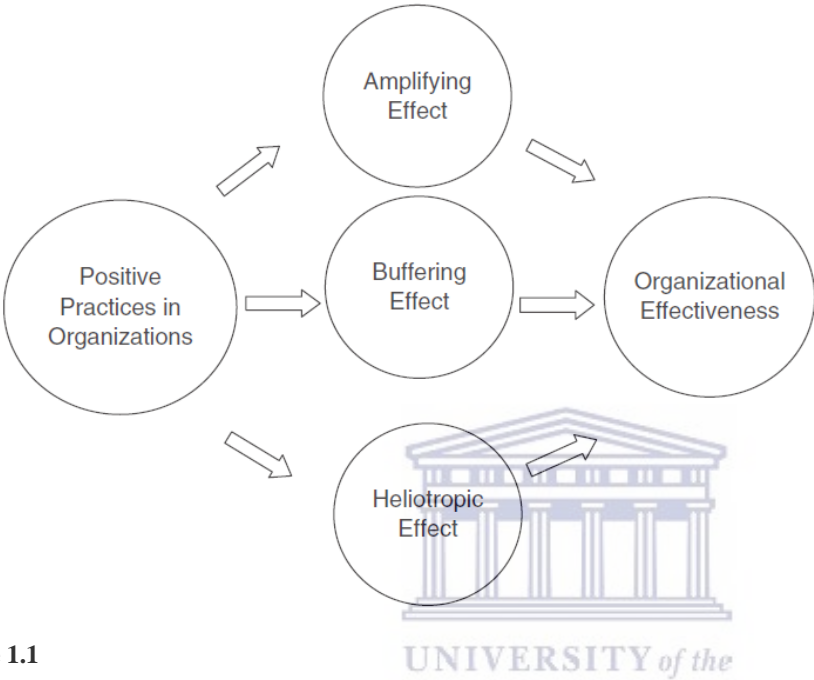


Figure 1.1
Explaining the effects of positive practices on organizational effectiveness

Appendix B: Statistics of Mindfulness in organisations

<i>Transport for London implemented mindfulness training with the following results:</i>
• Days off for stress/anxiety/depression fell by 70% over 3 years
• 80% reported relationships improved
• 79% reported being more able to relax
• 53% reported being happier in job

Figure 2.1

Statistics showing the effects of Mindfulness in the Transport for London organisation

<i>The American Marines implemented mindfulness training with the following results:</i> A clinical trial with American Marines being deployed to Iraq found that after just eight weeks of mindfulness training, which they called Stress Inoculation Training:
• Working memory under stress improved
• Focus/clarity of thinking improved
• Emotional reactivity decreased – clever decisions under pressure made
• Post-traumatic stress reduced

Figure 2.2

Results of the effects of Mindfulness in The American Marines

