

Article

Contextual Factors and Organizational Commitment: Examining the Mediating Role of Thriving at Work

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Abstract: Thriving at work refers to a psychological experience of learning (cognitive dimension) and vitality (affective dimension) to the workplace. Based on the Social Exchange Theory and the Socially Embedded Model of thriving, the purpose of this research is to observe whether contextual variables such as fairness perception, trust, and managerial coaching are related to affective organizational commitment and to examine if thriving at work plays a mediating role in these proposed relationships. Data was collected in two waves over a one-month time period from 936 employees of diverse public and private sectors. Strong empirical evidence was found for all direct and indirect hypothesized relationships through Smart PLS 3.0 (SmartPLS GmbH, Bönningstedt, Germany, 2015). The implications of the findings are also discussed.

Keywords: managerial coaching; fairness perception; trust; thriving at work; affective organizational commitment

1. Introduction

Thriving at work, as a factor of human sustainability and sustainable performance, is getting increasing attention in the organizational behavior field, especially in the past decade [1–6]. In the broader terms, the concept of sustainability was derived from ecology, referring to the capacity of systems and processes to develop, to grow, to care, and to endure [7]. Pfeffer [8] narrowed down the concept of sustainability to the overarching term ‘social sustainability’, which mirrors the ways in which management practices and organizational activities affect employee well-being, subjective health, and performance in a sustainable way. Based on empirical evidence, several advantages of having a thriving workforce have been suggested [9,10]. Thriving at work is a desirable self-regulatory subjective experience composed of two dimensions: Vitality (affective) and learning, (cognitive) and can be defined as “a psychological state in which individuals experience both a sense of vitality and a sense of learning at work” [2]. The first component is vitality, and denotes the sense of being alive, energized, passionate, and excited at work [11]. Thriving employees have a spark that fuels energy in themselves and other people. Employee vitality can be considered a crucial aspect of the sustainable work performance that is useful for understanding how employee health, well-being, and performance are related to long-term productivity and viability [12]. The second component is learning, which is about growing through new knowledge, skills, and other characteristics [5]. The two components of thriving usually work simultaneously. According to the literature, both dimensions of thriving serve as an adaptive function that helps individuals to develop in a forward direction promoting growth (short-term) and adaptability (long-term) towards the work context [2,3].

Spreitzer and her colleagues [2] explained three reasons for which thriving include two essential dimensions. Firstly, psychological experiences, i.e., the cognitive (learning) and affective (vitality) are covered by the subjective experience related to self-development. Secondly, focus on both dimensions of thriving in one construct is grounded from eudaimonic and hedonic perspectives of psychological development. The eudaimonic (learning) standpoint directs individuals to apprehend their full potential as human beings. However, the hedonic (vitality) view stresses upon that individual to seek out pleasurable experience. Thirdly, both components of a thriving (vitality and learning) are indispensable for forward progress in development. Thriving cannot be claimed to be in existence if any individual feels that he is learning, but depleting at the same time. In the same manner, this phenomenon can be understood from the experience of any employee who is advancing by learning and having the proficient technological know-how, but feels burned out in the learning process. Inversely, if any employee experiences vitality at work, they nonetheless feel no addition to his present knowledge, and then he is not thriving either. For instance, an employee possesses good working relationships and enjoys being at the workplace, but his development process is stationary and then he is not learning.

Thriving employees are usually very energetic and exhibit greater psychological functioning than non-thriving individuals [5]. A thriving workforce can be described as one in which employees are not only satisfied and productive, but are also actively and continuously seeking out opportunities to learn new things. They are not happy with the current status quo, although they are highly engaged in shaping the future of their company and their own. Thriving employees are growing, developing, learning, and highly energized, and at the same time they know how to avoid feeling depleted and eventually burned out [11].

There is an academic consensus about the predictive capacity of thriving at work for positive job outcomes and employees' attitudes and behaviors. For example, thriving employees are less likely to leave their job [13,14], have less absenteeism [15], tend to experience lower levels of burnout [4], are more likely to perform well [1,4,5,16,17], display a higher level of innovative work behavior [9,13,18], are more prone to collaborate [16], are more engaged with their work [15,19,20], are overall more satisfied with their lives [21], are more likely to be mentally and physically healthy and display positive health [4,10], develop and adjust their own career [17,22], foster their self-development [4], are more resilient to a stressful situation [4], are less likely to experience stress [6], and display higher levels of happiness at work [23].

Despite the growing empirical evidence of this topic where the beneficial outcomes of thriving have been found [4,10], thriving literature is still scarce [5,19,24]. For instance, the role of leaders and managers [1] and the effect of individual characteristics in fostering thriving is understudied [6]. This causes a limited understanding of how personal and contextual variables influence or are related to thriving at work [10]. Recent studies point out that thriving employees are more likely to display affective organizational commitment [10] and it was found that some contextual variables such as managerial coaching, trust, and fairness perception also related to affective organizational commitment [25,26]. However, we do not fully understand the mechanism through which these contextual factors are related to affective organizational commitment and which could be the role of thriving in this supposed relationship. Due to thriving at work involving a psychological state that transmits an attitude towards work and exerts a positive impact on individual and organizational outcomes [10], we hypothesized that thriving at work may be an important mediating mechanism that explains how contextual factors influence the affective organizational commitment.

To provide the logical grounds to this specific study and to make the rational more comprehensive, we can be facilitated by understanding the socially embedded model of thriving [2]. The model emphasizes the resources and contextual factors as predictors of thriving. The authors suggested the resources that are produced at work (knowledge) and some variables related to the context (fairness and trust) that promotes the experience of vitality and learning, and therefore, the aim of our study is threefold. First, we set out to investigate how three contextual factors (fairness perception, trust,

and managerial coaching) promote thriving at work. According to the best of our knowledge, this is the first attempt to study the impact of these variables on thriving at work. Some authors emphasize on the importance of exploring the factors that are influencing employees to thrive at work for a better understanding of this phenomena in the workplace, our knowledge is currently limited in this regard [4]. Moreover, researchers pointed out that more empirical studies on managerial coaching and its positive effects as research are still in its infancy and are scarce [27–29]. Secondly, we also examined whether thriving at work is directly related to affective organizational commitment. Thirdly, the underlying process of the impact of contextual factors on commitment will be explored by focusing on thriving at the workplace as a mediator.

Empirical evidence has consistently shown that organizational commitment is influenced by a fairness/justice perception [30–34], trust [35], and coaching [36–40]. However, the processes and mechanisms by which thriving at work impacts the employee's commitment has not been addressed in theoretical and empirical research, and furthermore, we do not know how these influences occur. It is suggested that thriving, which refers to the joint connection of vitality and learning [2] serves as a mediating mechanism that transmits the impact of fairness perception, trust, and managerial coaching to the establishment of affective organizational commitment. The supporting motive behind this contention is that the development of affective organizational commitment may be induced through the employees' enduring vitality and continuous learning at work. The feeling of vitality and learning at the workplace are mainly developed from the positive working environment [2]. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether and how fairness treatment, trust, and coaching serve as contextual conditions that may influence commitment through thriving.

Grounded in the Socially Embedded Model of thriving, we explain how the environments works to meet employee and workplace needs. Finally, our research extends the literature on positive organizational behavior by investigating the role that thriving at work serves as a self-regulatory mediating mechanism in predicting affective organizational commitment. Investigating the mediating mechanism is significant because the literature so far on thriving at work has mainly concentrated on the beneficial outcome of thriving [24]. The antecedents of thriving at work and its mediating role is currently not well understood [1,18,24].

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Managerial Coaching

Managerial coaching attained considerable attention in the field of business and management [28,41,42] as a powerful tool for influencing employees' attitudes and behaviors [36,43–45]. Managerial coaching refers to the actions of the manager or leader who acts as a coach and facilitates learning in the workplace environment through specific behaviors that enable the employee to learn and develop [37]. It was found that this management is related to several organizational outcomes such as improving performance [37,43,46–48], self-efficacy [48], innovative work behavior [46], satisfaction [43,44,49], extra-role performance, organizational commitment [39], role clarity [44,46,49,50], goal accomplishment, trustworthiness, learning [3,28,51–53], psychological empowerment [46], proactive career behaviors, well-being, resilience [54], and decreased turnover intention [39].

We have related the logic of the Social Exchange Theory (SET) to develop the hypothesis of direct and indirect relationships among study variables. It is an essential foundational theoretical support used as an explanatory mechanism for understanding exchange relationships among managers and subordinates grounded on the basis of reciprocity norms [55]. The notion behind SET is that the employees do favors and therefore also expect something in return. For example, exchanging favors is usually promoted by managers within a manager–subordinate relation context, and then reciprocated by subordinates in terms of trust, hard work, and commitment to the organization. As a result, this approach has gained substantial attention because it offers the conceptual underpinning for empirical studies on organizational outcomes [56]. Specifically, when a manager serves as a coach

in a coaching situation its behavior can often be perceived with goodwill by their subordinates. The behavior of the manager includes providing supporting instructions and clear goals, instant performance feedback, opportunities for learning and growing, recognition, and rewards and career growth [39,44]. When employees perceive favors during the coaching interaction, then they sense a diffused responsibility to reciprocate by engaging with encouraging behaviors. Based on SET, Kwan et al. [56] postulated that, when employees benefit from managerial coaching, they personify the employer and return the support to the manager in the exchanging relationship by exhibiting an extra-role behavior.

According to the results, managerial coaching is perceived as an important method to lift learning processes [53,57] and as an active process of learning [58]. Individuals take responsibility for shaping their own learning processes and experiences. Thus, it may be expected that coaching may boost thriving at work by offering clear and constructive performance feedback by spreading the knowledge required to improve performance. Moreover, this is to offer suggestions and provide learning opportunities for growth and development of skills, as well as appreciating and facilitating the employee's efforts to solve complicated problems or engage in new challenges. According to what is asserted above, we raise the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *Managerial coaching is positively related to thriving at work.*

2.2. Trust and Fairness Perception

The experience of thriving at work is shaped by contextual factors [2]. Individuals are most probably thriving when they feel a positive work environment and when employees are treated fairly, with dignity, and keep interactions based on trust and respect [59–61]. The literature suggests that employees form global fairness based on previous encounters of fair treatment at work [62] that can help them make quick and fair judgments, thereby guiding them in interpreting the work and work relationships with colleagues and supervisors. For example, individuals with a high fairness perception trust their supervisor and thereby view work assignments from him/her more favorably, which ultimately enhances the sense of vitality. Employees feel autonomous when they are embedded in climates of trust [63], and in such climates, they are more likely to take risks [64]. This facilitates an exploration that ultimately results in learning. Thus, it is expected that fairness perception and trust will be positively related to thriving at work.

Treating employees fairly at work encourages reciprocity [65]. Social exchange offers the theoretical underpinning of research on various attitudinal and behavioral outcomes [35,66]. According to SET [55], a fair treatment from employers develops a positive sense among the workforce to reciprocate by engaging in positive behaviors at work [67]. The benefits exchanged by both employers and employees indicate support for each other. The extent to which the work environment is perceived as supportive is expected to strongly influence the employees' perception of thriving at work [68]. Based on the latter, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *Trust is positively related to thriving at work.*

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *Fairness perception is positively related to thriving at work.*

2.3. Thriving at Work and Commitment

As mentioned before, thriving is conceptually defined as a “psychological state in which individuals experience both the positive energy (the affective dimension) and learning (the cognitive dimension) simultaneously at the workplace” [2]. The experience of thriving is shaped by how employees feel and think about their jobs. Empirical studies found that thriving at work predicts various desirable outcomes at work, such as reduced turnover intention, higher performance, innovative work behavior, engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment [4,13–17,20,59].

Organizational commitment is defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a particular organization [69]. Thriving workforce and their commitment to the organization is vital for sustainable performance. Previous empirical studies suggest that personal, work experience, contextual, and organizational factors serve as predictors for organizational commitment [70–73]. There are various organizational and personal factors that determine the organizational commitment and some of them might be extrinsic and some intrinsic. Thriving at work “factor of human sustainability” is a psychological state that influences the attitudes and behaviors of employees at work. This condition is more likely to happen when employees have the opportunity to learn at work and feel cared for and supported [74]. On the other hand, commitment boosts when employees experience greater energy and feel they are learning and growing at work. The Social Exchange Theory [55] strengthens the idea that greater commitment is exhibited by employees when their expectations of development and career growth are fulfilled by the organization [67,75,76] found that commitment increases according to the perception of organizational support. Due to this we raise the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4 (H4). *Thriving at work is positively related to affective organizational commitment.*

2.4. Thriving at Work as a Mediator

Spreitzer et al. [2] stated the combined experience of vitality and learning as thriving. This psychological state reflects the affective (vitality) and cognitive (learning) elements of individual growth [4]. While thriving at work is an emerging phenomenon in the field of positive organizational scholarship, we are not aware of any empirical studies that examine the mediating relationship of thriving between the three contextual factors studied: (1) Fairness perception, (2) trust, and (3) managerial coaching and commitment. In this study, we hypothesize that these contextual factors may enhance the individual's sense of thriving at work and this sense of thriving subsequently increases the commitment among employees. Our reasoning is built on the assumption that thriving, which is a psychological state, can be influenced by situational mechanisms at work [2].

The contextual resources that employees gain at work enhance learning [2]. This is consistent with the empirical studies in that they show that the work environment characterized by fairness perception [15], managerial support [77], and learning-conducive organizational culture [78] foster workplace learning. Moreover, a positive work environment is seen as a key factor of the employee's feeling of vitality. This exchanging relationship boosts excitement, energy, and enthusiasm. An energetic person feels physically and mentally well.

Based on the above statements, we have discussed that the association between contextual factors and commitment is not one-dimensional according to the previous empirical studies. We will now propose a theoretical model with the aim to better comprehend the fundamental mechanism that drives the different and complementary association between contextual factors and affective organizational commitment. Specifically, our study proposes that thriving at work mediates the association between three contextual factors and affective organizational commitment. The experience of thriving at work is derived from self-guided behaviors that subsequently build an upward spiral of personal resources with the help of a positive meaning at work [2]. The author elaborates the socially embedded model of thriving by providing a mediating role of thriving, in which perception of self-development is shaped with where agentic work behaviors form the experience of thriving [2]. Similarly, Flinchbaugh et al. [21] found that thriving serves as a mediator between the challenge stressors, hindrance stressors, and life satisfaction. In the same manner, the employees feel energetic, valuable, vital, and powerful when they are provided with a respectful workplace. Hence, respectful treatment makes employees think that the working mechanism in the organization is fair. We propose that the contextual factor-commitment relationship through thriving at work will be contingent upon the contextual support within the organization as depicted in Figure 1. Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 5a (H5a). *Thriving at work mediates the relationship between fairness perception and affective organizational commitment.*

Hypothesis 5b (H5b). *Thriving at work mediates the relationship between trust and affective organizational commitment.*

Hypothesis 5c (H5c). *Thriving at work mediates the relationship between managerial coaching and affective organizational commitment.*

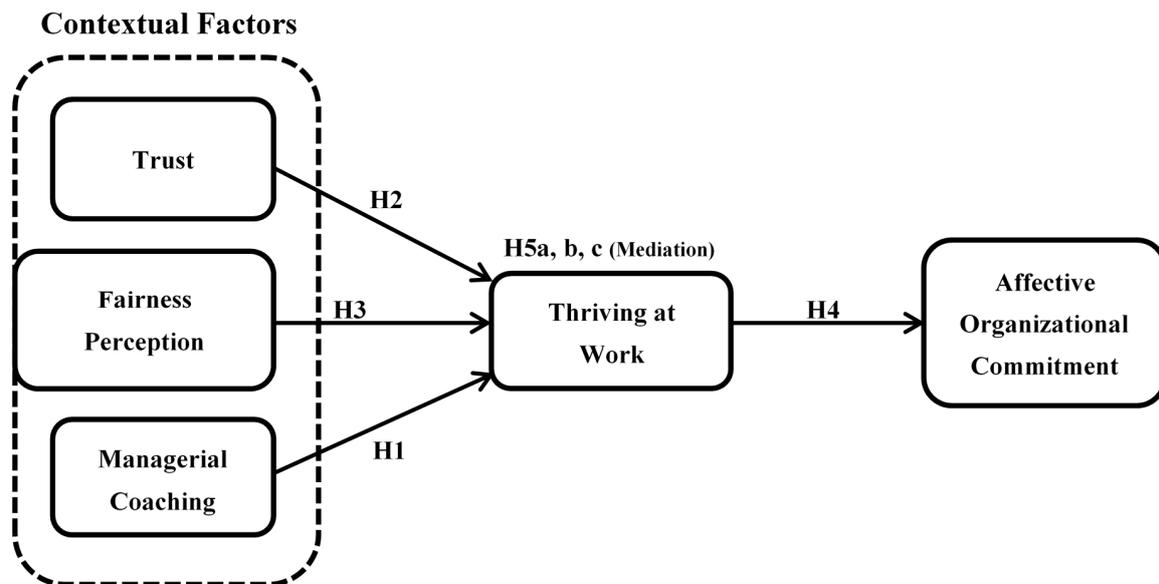


Figure 1. Hypothesized Model.

3. Method

3.1. Sample and Procedure

The first author of this research trained a team of 50 M. Phil scholars as part of their course assignment to collect the data. The team approached and recruited 1200 full-time employees across various job positions (e.g., accountants, administrators, advocates, engineers, architects, human resource managers, marketing managers, auditors, brand managers, business development analysts, customer service officers, teachers, IT officers, import managers, and supply chain managers) in both services and manufacturing organizations located in the Punjab province of Pakistan. The scholars introduced the purpose of the research to the participants and sought their informed consent to participate in this study and a letter from the institution was issued to ensure the confidentiality of the responses. The procedures of data collection were identical for T1 and T2 for every organization. Employees were scheduled for 20 minutes from the organization paid time. The questionnaires were administered in English, given that this language is the means of communication across these organizations. Moreover, employees with at least twelve years of education were approached for this study so that they could easily understand the survey questionnaire.

The data was collected using a two-wave time lagged study design over one-month period to lessen the effect of common method biases in which the data for the independent, mediator, and dependent variable were collected at two different points in time. Participants were asked to fill out the questionnaires about demographics, managerial coaching, fairness perception, and thriving at work at Time 1 (T1). Two weeks later, at Time 2 (T2), participants were asked to complete the questionnaires for trust and affective organizational commitment.

The employees provided a self-report response at both times (T1 and T2). At T1, a total of 1200 questionnaires were distributed. Out of those, 1105 completed questionnaires were received, making it a response rate of 92%. The respondents were requested to write their names or a self-identified code on the questionnaire for matching the data at Time 2. At T2, questionnaires were distributed again to all the 1105 participants who responded at T1 to provide data regarding the remaining study variables. Out of the 1105 who responded at T1, only 963 participants responded at T2. After cross matching the respondent's data at both the times and eliminating the incomplete questionnaires, we had an actual sample of 936, making this a response rate of 78%.

The respondents consisted of 651 males (70%) and 285 females (30%) with an average age of approximately 30 years ($SD = 7.24$). It is pertinent to note that the majority of the participants (i.e., 824) belonged to the service industry and the average tenure period of the participants was 5.07 ($SD = 5.18$) years. Moreover, 501 respondents (53.5%) were single and 427 were married (45.6%). Additionally, of the 936 respondents 528 (56%) had a formal education of 16 years, 221 (24%) had a formal education of 14 years, and 116 (12%) had a formal education of 18 years. In addition, all respondents were highly educated with at least a master's degree (15.70 years of education) or above.

3.2. Measures

All studied variables have been previously validated in empirical studies. Each measure used a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree" except for the fairness perception (a 7-point scale).

3.2.1. Managerial Coaching

Consistent with empirical studies [36,44], five of the seven items from the scale developed and validated by Ellinger et al. [43] were used to measure managerial coaching at T1. The scale consisted of five items (e.g., "My manager solicits feedback from employees to ensure that their interactions are helpful to employees"). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.86.

3.2.2. Fairness Perception

Fairness perception was measured at T1 using the Perceived Overall Justice Scale (POJ) developed by Ambrose and Schminke [30] on the basis of Lind [62]. The scale consists of 6 items: Three of them were used to determine the fairness of the organization in general ("For the most part, this organization treats its employees fairly") and the other three items assessed the employee's own personal experience ("Overall, I am treated fairly by my organization"). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.83.

3.2.3. Thriving at Work

Thriving at work was measured at T1 using a scale developed by Reference [4]. In this scale, both learning and vitality dimensions of thriving were measured by 10 items: Five items were used to measure learning experience ("I find myself often learning") and five items measured the vitality experience ("I feel alive and vital"). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.85.

3.2.4. Affective Organizational Commitment

The meta-analysis of Solinger et al. [79] found that affective commitment to the organization is a strong predictor of performance ($r = 16$), organizational citizenship behaviors ($r = 32$), and absence ($r = -15$), as compared to continuance and normative commitment. Therefore, for more conclusive empirical evidence, they suggested a singular approach for better understanding organizational commitment for future studies. Moreover, Mercurio [80], in his review paper, also recommended the use of an affective commitment scale. Hence, consistent with the recent past studies [81,82], organizational commitment was measured at T2 using an affective commitment scale developed

by Mowday et al. [69]. The scale consists of 3 items (“I am proud to tell people who I work for”). The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient was 0.74.

3.2.5. Trust

A scale developed and validated by Robinson [83] was used to measure trust with an employer at T2. The scale consists of four items (“In general, I believe my employer’s motives and intentions are good”). The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient was 0.70.

3.2.6. Control Variables

The study controls four of the demographic variables obtained from the survey instrument that might have an effect on the outcome: Age, gender, marital status, and tenure.

4. Results

We followed previous approaches of researchers to conduct data analysis [84] and tested the proposed hypotheses. Specifically, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using the AMOS (IBM, Armonk, USA, 2014) (maximum likelihood) software version 24 to test the factorial structure and the adequacy of our hypothesized five-factor measurement model. Subsequent to the CFA, hypotheses were tested using a variance-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or Partial Least Square SEM (i.e., Smart PLS version 3.0). Moreover, supplementary analysis was performed for the direct and indirect effects of the three contextual factors on affective organizational commitment using a covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) using AMOS and also the PROCESS macro analysis [85]. The PROCESS macro analysis was selected because, based on bootstrap sampling, it has been recognized as a solid and rigorous approach for detecting the significance of conditional indirect effects [86].

A total of six models were tested: A five-factor model (i.e., thriving at work, managerial coaching, trust, fairness perception, and affective organizational commitment) was compared with the other five alternate models. The CFA results advocate that our five-factor model (full measurement model) is proved better fit ($\chi^2 = 1142.55$, $\chi^2/df = 3.52$, GFI = 0.92, NFI = 0.91, IFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.92, CFI = 0.93, SRMR = 0.06, and RMSEA = 0.05) [87–89] as statistics are provided in Table 1. Furthermore, it is considered better as compared to the other five alternative models (i.e., a–e).

Table 1. Fit Statistics from Measurement Model Comparison.

Models	χ^2	Df	χ^2/df	GFI	NFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA
5 Factor (Full Measurement Model)	1142.55	325	3.52	0.92	0.91	0.93	0.92	0.93	0.06	0.05
4 Factor Model a	2805.69	344	8.16	0.81	0.77	0.79	0.77	0.79	0.09	0.08
4 Factor Model b	2980.88	344	8.67	0.80	0.76	0.78	0.76	0.78	0.09	0.09
3 Factor Model c	3402.98	347	9.81	0.77	0.72	0.74	0.72	0.74	0.10	0.10
2 Factor Model d	4348.97	349	12.46	0.71	0.64	0.66	0.63	0.66	0.10	0.11
1 Factor Model e	5011.37	350	14.32	0.68	0.59	0.61	0.58	0.61	0.11	0.12

Notes: n = 936, All models are compared with the full measurement model. a. Trust and affective organizational commitment combined into one factor. b. Trust and fairness perception combined into one factor. c. Trust, fairness perception, and affective organizational commitment combined into one factor. d. Trust, fairness perception, and affective organizational commitment combined into one factor; managerial coaching and thriving at work combined into another factor. e. All constructs combined into one factor. χ^2 = chi-square; df = degrees of freedom; GFI = Goodness of Fit Index; NFI = Normed Fit Index; IFI = Incremental Fit Index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis Index; CFI = Comparative Fit Index, RMR = Root Mean Square Residual; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

Furthermore, Table 2 shows a bivariate correlation among commitment, fairness perception, managerial coaching, thriving, and trust using Smart PLS 3.0. According to the results, the correlations among variables were as we anticipated. We have found that thriving at work is significantly related to affective organizational commitment ($r = 0.483$), fairness perception ($r = 0.504$), managerial coaching

($r = 0.523$), and trust ($r = 0.320$). None of them exceeded 0.70, hence, it confirms the absence of multicollinearity [6].

Table 2. Correlation Matrix.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	29.68	7.24	1								
2. Gender			−0.214 **	1							
3. Marital Status			0.592 **	−0.161 **	1						
4. Education	15.67	1.507	0.118 **	0.065 *	0.082 *	1					
5. Tenure	5.066	5.177	0.739 **	−0.153 **	0.428 **	−0.046	1				
6. Affective Organizational Commitment	4.133	0.679	0.018	−0.008	0.005	0.063	0.014	1			
7. Thriving at Work	4.117	0.547	−0.047	−0.030	−0.019	−0.015	−0.094 **	0.483 **	1		
8. Fairness Perception	4.962	0.989	0.010	0.012	−0.011	−0.082 *	−0.041	0.397 **	0.504 **	1	
9. Managerial Coaching	3.849	0.704	0.006	−0.023	0.003	−0.102 **	−0.028	0.434 **	0.523 **	0.573 **	1
10. Trust	3.817	0.939	−0.031	−0.005	−0.059	−0.058	−0.029	0.344 **	0.320 **	0.424 **	0.413 **

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.1. Internal Consistency

The internal consistency was examined to evaluate the measurement model [87] in terms of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. The values of both reliability tests should be 0.70 and higher. Additionally, the values of composite reliabilities of all studied variables should be higher than the values of Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficient of affective organizational commitment is 0.85, fairness perception 0.88, managerial coaching 0.90, thriving 0.89, and trust 0.85, and all reliabilities are higher than Cronbach's reliability coefficients.

4.2. Convergent and Discriminant Validity

Convergent validity is the extent to which a measurement positively relates to other alternate measurements of the same constructs [87]. To establish the convergent validity, an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and outer loadings of indicators are investigated [90]. It is suggested that the outer loadings must be higher than 0.7 and the majority of the indicators met this criterion. The outer loadings of a few items were less than the cut-off points. We retained the items even though it had a weaker outer loading to establish the content validity and because we adopted validated measures. Moreover, the value of AVE should be 0.50 or higher.

Discriminant validity is known as a divergent validity: To what extent a construct is different from the others? It can usually be assessed with the cross loadings of items and the Fornell–Larcker criterion. It is suggested that the outer loading of the items of the construct should be higher than the cross-loading of other items [87]. Moreover, the square root of the AVE of the constructs being used is higher than the correlations among constructs [90]. The Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations also helps us determine the discriminant validity. The value of the HTMT should be less than 0.90.

The result shows that the outer loading of the related constructs is higher than the cross-loadings (its correlation) of other constructs. Hence, cross-loadings fulfill criteria of discriminant validity. Table 3 shows the acceptable values of the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The values in the off-diagonal elements exceeded the respective diagonal elements, hence they fulfill the discriminant validity. Moreover, all the values of the studied variables in the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test are less than 0.90, and therefore, the discriminant validity was attained.

Table 3. Fornell–Larcker Criterion.

Study Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Affective Organizational Commitment	0.812				
2. Fairness Perception	0.424	0.75			
3. Managerial Coaching	0.438	0.596	0.798		
4. Trust	0.401	0.475	0.442	0.772	
5. Thriving at Work	0.498	0.484	0.543	0.34	0.709

4.3. Multicollinearity Statistics

Multicollinearity between independent studied variables was tested through tolerance and the variance inflation factor (VIF). The tolerance value should not be <0.1 and the VIF (opposite of tolerance) should not be >10 [91]. In this study, tolerance values of all the studied variables such as fairness perception (0.58), managerial coaching (0.57), thriving at work (0.66), and trust (0.77) were greater than 0.10, which suggests that there was no multicollinearity in our data [92]. Correspondingly, the VIF (opposite of tolerance) value of all the studied variables, i.e., fairness perception (1.71), managerial coaching (1.74), thriving at work (1.51), and trust (1.30) were less than 10, which also suggests that there was no issue of multicollinearity.

4.4. Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1 predicted that managerial coaching is positively related with thriving at work. In support of hypothesis 1–3, there was a significant effect of coaching on thriving at work ($\beta = 0.379$, $p < 0.01$), trust on thriving at work ($\beta = 0.064$, $p < 0.10$), and fairness perception on thriving at work ($\beta = 0.228$, $p < 0.01$). In support of hypothesis 4, there was a significant main effect of thriving at work on affective organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.498$, $p < 0.01$) (see Figure 2).

Hypothesis 5a predicted that thriving at work mediates the relationship between managerial coaching and affective organizational commitment. In support of hypothesis 5a, there was a significant indirect effect of managerial coaching on affective organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.188$, $p < 0.01$). Hypothesis 5b predicted that thriving at work mediates the relationship between trust and affective organizational commitment. In support of hypothesis 5b, there was a significant indirect effect of trust on affective organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.032$, $p < 0.10$). Hypothesis 5c predicted that thriving at work mediates the relationship between fairness perception and affective organizational commitment. In support of hypothesis 5c, there was a significant indirect effect of fairness perception on affective organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.114$, $p < 0.01$).

Consistent with our study hypotheses and results obtained from Smart PLS, CB-SEM also shows that there was a significant main effect of coaching ($\beta = 0.329$, $p < 0.01$), trust ($\beta = 0.036$, $p < 0.10$), and fairness perception ($\beta = 0.159$, $p < 0.01$) on thriving at work, hence supporting our hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, respectively. It was also found that there was a significant main effect of thriving at work on affective organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.354$, $p < 0.01$), supporting hypothesis 4. Moreover, there was a significant indirect effect of managerial coaching ($\beta = 0.188$, $p < 0.01$), trust ($\beta = 0.032$, $p < 0.10$), and fairness perception ($\beta = 0.114$, $p < 0.01$) on affective organizational commitment. These results support our hypotheses 5a, 5b, and 5c, respectively. It is pertinent to note here that the controls, i.e., gender ($\beta = 0.014$, $p > 0.10$), age ($\beta = 0.044$, $p > 0.10$), and marital status ($\beta = 0.006$, $p > 0.10$) do not significantly impact affective organizational commitment.

To further test mediation, we used Hayes' PROCESS [85], which is "by far the best way to tackle mediation" [93]. We used Hayes' process model 4 to test our theory with parameter estimates based on a 5000-bootstrap sample. The bias corrected and accelerated to 95% and the confidence intervals were then examined. Output is very important because it displays the indirect effect of managerial coaching, trust, and fairness perception on affective organizational commitment (i.e., the effect via thriving) (Table 4). The results show the indirect effect of a) managerial coaching $\beta = 0.178$, b) trust $\beta = 0.096$,

and c) fairness perception $\beta = 0.131$, as well as bootstrapped standard errors and confidence intervals. The Boot CI [LLCI, ULCI] does not contain zero, which indicates the presence of an indirect effect.

Put together, the findings of this study suggest that employee thriving, as conceptualized by the joint experience of learning and vitality, explains the positive influence of managerial coaching, trust, and fairness perception on employee commitment to the organization. It also suggests that thriving at work mediates the relationship between three contextual factors: Fairness perception, trust, and managerial coaching and affective organizational commitment.

Contextual Factors

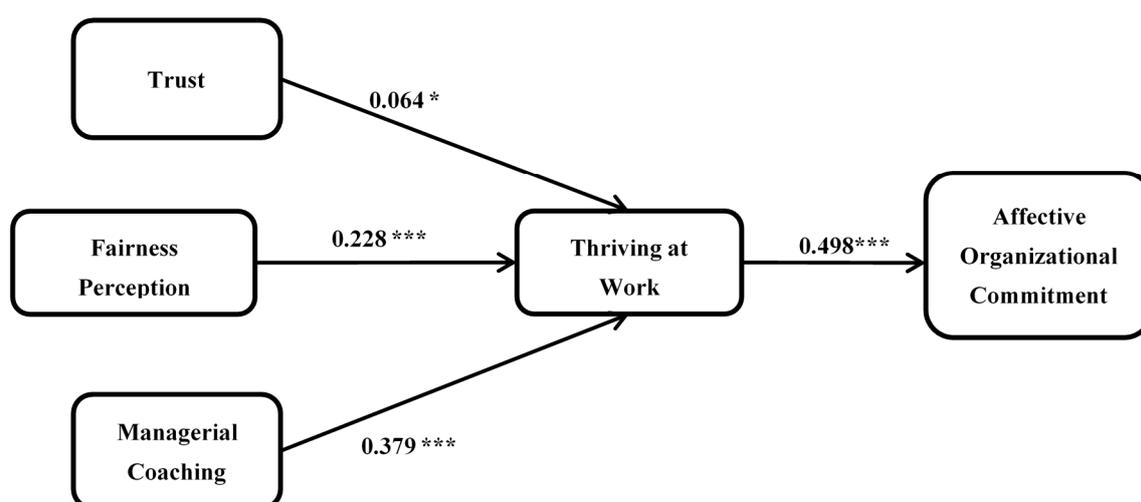


Figure 2. The results of structural equation modeling. ***, $p < 0.01$, **, $p < 0.05$, *, $p < 0.10$.

Table 4. Indirect Effects of Thriving at Work.

Paths	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
FP -> Thriving -> AOC	0.131	0.0159	0.1015	0.1643
MC -> Thriving -> AOC	0.178	0.0203	0.1391	0.2189
Trust -> Thriving -> AOC	0.096	0.0196	0.0616	0.1363

5. Discussion

One of the most recent phenomena to receive attention in positive organizational scholarship [1] is human sustainability, and sustainable performance is “thriving at work” [11]. This growing interest is not only because of its relationship to learning at work [5] and the organizational outcomes, but also because of its effect on the employees’ psychological functioning [6], which influences the well-being of employees which is currently one of the most important issues for companies. The concept of thriving is useful for understanding how employee health, well-being, and performance are related to long-term productivity. Despite this interest in the concept and the empirical studies that emphasized on the beneficial outcomes of thriving for organizations [3,10]. The literature of this topic is quite scarce [24]. Likewise, the role of contextual variables in promoting thriving at work. The limited knowledge regarding how personal and contextual variables, either independent or joined, influence thriving at work highlights the need of our study [5,6]. We sought to address this gap by testing our model that articulates the contextual factors that enable thriving. The theoretical model provides an explanation of how contextual factors such as managerial coaching, trust, and fairness perception may influence commitment through thriving at work. Based on the socially embedded model of thriving [2], this study investigated whether and how managerial coaching, trust, and fairness

perception could feed the employees' experience of thriving, which ultimately leads to greater affective organizational commitment.

According to our results, the Socially Embedded Model of thriving in the workplace [2] is useful to explain the contextual factors that encourage thriving. Our results provide strong support for our theoretical proposition that contextual factors and thriving are important for commitment. Coaching is found to be related with numerous attitudinal and behavioral work outcomes [50,94] and it has been frequently recognized as an important motive that affects the individual's psychological state [46]. As suggested by Spreitzer and her colleagues [2], we empirically found that managerial coaching is an important resource that contributes to the experience of thriving at work [95]. Those individuals who achieve the psychological state of thriving are more curious to have mentoring relationships with the aim to further build and sustain this experience. This result indicates that the Theory of Social Exchange [55] constitutes an adequate theoretical framework to explain the mechanism of how the relationship between managers and subordinates can be a source of affective organizational commitment.

Consistent with our expectations and in line with previous studies [59,60] is that fairness perception and trust had a positive relationship with thriving at work. It appears that the degree to which the employee's fairness perception and trust influence their work attitudes depends to what extent they experience vigor and learning at work. Our results provide empirical support to the socially embedded model of thriving proposed by Spreitzer et al. [2], that is, that contextual factors shape thriving at work.

Thriving at work has been validated as a mediator between contextual factors and affective organizational commitment. Consistent with previous findings, our study discovered that managerial coaching [39], trust [96], and fairness perception [97] is positively related to affective organizational commitment. We also found that the effect of coaching, trust, and fairness perception on affective organizational commitment is mediated through thriving at work. Our study indicates that thriving at work is an important predictor of an employee's attitudinal outcomes. That is, the employee's trust and fairness perception may influence their psychological experience of learning and vigor and consequently shapes their commitment to the organization. From the results of the time-lagged data analysis on Smart PLS, several insights with both theoretical and practical implications were manifested.

5.1. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Thriving at work has been associated with the employees' performance, well-being, mental health [2,4,5], and other behavioral outcomes. The true benefits of a thriving workforce are only extracted if we know the predictors of thriving at work. The findings of this study increase our understanding of the factors that foster thriving and sustainable performance. Our study seeks to draw the attention of managers regarding the importance of managerial coaching, fairness, and trust in promoting thriving among employees, which in turn enhances the employee's commitment to the organization.

This study contributes to this body of knowledge by empirically testing the contextual factors that are most likely to be in managerial control. The proposed model studied offers useful insights to managers consistently looking to foster employee's thriving at work.

The study also highlights the practical implications of thriving by identifying its intervening role in the relationship between the three contextual factors studied. Employees under the supervision of trusted managers who treat them fairly and continuously coach them build a positive sense of cognitive and affective development therefore enhancing thriving. Employees with a greater sense of thriving and working under trusted and supportive managers are likely to more frequently interact with their leader, which in turn enhances the positive energy and learning experience.

Given the positive consequences of managerial coaching, trust, and fairness treatment, managers need to be very sensitive in transforming the employee's psychological states such as thriving at work. This is possible through healthy interactions among leaders and their subordinates. Such interaction creates a source of positive energy that leads the achievement of high levels of behavioral outcomes [4].

5.2. Strengths, Limitations and Future Directions

There are several steps that we have taken to bolster confidence in the results of this research. Firstly, data was collected using a two-wave survey study in which data was collected at two different points in time to minimize the common method bias. Secondly, we applied Hayes' process (additional analysis) based on 5000 bootstrap samples to test mediation of thriving at work and found strong support for our theory driven by hypothesized mediation relationships.

Despite these strengths, there are also important limitations mentioned. First, we tested our hypothesized model in the South Asian context. For better understanding and to be able to generalize our findings, further research is required in other cultures; in fact, the mediating role of the culture in the proposed relationships should be tested. Likewise, the proposed model can be further investigated in different working environments and sectors, including other contextual variables in order to ensure the effects of this kind of variables on thriving at work. This last aspect involves using a more homogeneous sample than the one we had. Secondly, even though data for this study was gathered at different points in time (two waves), the cross-sectional design of this study does not answer all questions about causality. Future studies might consider longitudinal, experimental, or quasi-experimental studies to validate the finding of the study and give more generalizable results. Moreover, it also lacks to account for the non-linear fluctuations that may have arisen. While the findings of this study support the proposed intervening effects of thriving at work between contextual factors and affective organizational commitment. Elahi et al. [5] stated that the relationships among the studied variables do not allow for establishing causality. Thirdly, we have employed quantitative data to investigate the relationships between study variables, but this type of data cannot describe why the relationships exist or do not exist. The qualitative data or mixed method can be utilized for more comprehensive investigation. Moreover, like most studies on thriving in the workplace, our reliability was based on questionnaire responses that reduce the internal validity of our constructs. However, the studied variables in the proposed causal chain were separated by time (T1 and T2) and we statistically checked the reliability and validity which restrains the presence of priming or consistency artifacts reducing the likelihood of the inflated observed relationships among variables. In the present study, commitment to the organization was measured using an affective commitment scale. In future studies, the other two types, i.e., continuous and normative commitment, should also be considered.

6. Conclusions

This study contributes to the domains of positive organizational scholarship and positive organizational behavior by showing an integrated model that examines the association between three contextual variables (i.e., fairness perception, trust, and managerial coaching) and affective organizational commitment via the mediating impact of thriving at work, which refers to the joint experience of learning and vitality. Our empirical findings provide support for SET and the Socially Embedded Model of thriving and indicate that contextual factors boost commitment to the organization and that the employee's thriving serves as the linking mechanism that impacts the association between contextual factors and affective organizational commitment. Our research contributes to the literature of thriving at work by bringing attention to the direct and indirect mechanisms that influence the relationship between contextual correlations and commitment. We believe that further research in this area will be done to better allow managers to comprehend how to promote employee thriving and affective organizational commitment.

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