

Personal and Contextual Enablers: Predictors of Library Personnel's Thriving at Work

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ABSTRACT

Thriving is a great indication that an individual manifests enthusiasm, effective knowledge acquisition, job satisfaction, and commitment. This study was conducted to explore the personal and contextual enablers that serve as predictors of the participants' thriving at work. This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to gather quantifiable information on the relationships between the variables. The participants of this study were the ninety-five (95) DepEd library employees of Agusan del Norte and Butuan City, selected through simple random sampling. The descriptive-correlational design was used in this study, and a researcher-made questionnaire was utilized as the tool for data gathering. The following findings were revealed: personal and contextual enablers were rated at a very high extent by the participants; the participants had a very high extent of vitality to indicate their thriving at work. In terms of the learning dimension of their thriving at work, the participants rated it to a very high extent; and based on the regression analyses, the strong predictor of the participants' thriving at work, specifically on its learning dimension, is the challenging environment. As to the vitality dimension of thriving, the identified strong predictors are piety and religiousness, affection and trust, and a challenging environment. Thus, the enablers predict the participants' thriving at work. It is recommended that their employer provide opportunities that will consistently uphold the enablers that will facilitate their employers' thriving at work.

KEYWORDS

Thriving at work, personal, and contextual enablers of thriving, job satisfaction, work commitment, descriptive-correlational design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Public school library employees in the Philippines have been experiencing various work challenges, as revealed by Batiancila (2007). Despite these setbacks, what secret do they hold that makes them thrive?

Thriving employees have been found to possess a strong motivation and feeling of personal growth and development, high stages of psychological functioning, innovative work attitude, social responsibility, excellent job performance, organizational commitment, and job resiliency. In addition, it is a great advantage to have thriving employees, for they can help avoid undesirable individual consequences like strain, depression, and sicknesses and promote optimistic organizational outcomes, such as higher job contentment, better performance, and organizational engagement (Spreitzer & Porath, 2014). Also, thriving individuals are less possible to show absenteeism, burnout, and stress at the job.

In contrast, some issues hinder public school library employees from working on the optimal level. These professionals are seriously facing concerns like recruitment, education, and retention of librarians, support from administrators and principals, funding or budget allocation, and the impact of information technology on library services.

For this reason, a professional journey of librarians is not a typical experience because they need to explore and understand more the milieu where they are struggling and experiencing so many difficulties. With these various situations, many scholars have acknowledged a multitude of psychosocial variables that may enable thriving. These variables can be generally separated into two clusters: personal enablers and contextual enablers (Brown et al., 2017; Spreitzer et al., 2005).

Furthermore, being a registered librarian, the researcher has observed the plight of the working conditions of DepEd librarians. Therefore, the data collected through this study would augment the deficient literature about librarians' thriving at work. It could also help librarians to function effectively and deliver their services positively. Most importantly, this study provided a deeper understanding of the various enablers that would empower the library employees to cope with these existing setbacks to thrive at work.

Considering that school libraries are imperative in developing information literacy among learners, this study endeavored to prove that there are personal and contextual enablers of thriving that elevate the vitality and learning of public-school libraries' librarians and staff. However, the extent to which personal and contextual enablers and

thriving at work in librarianship in the Philippines have not been studied yet, hence the conduct of the study.

FRAMEWORK

This study assumes that personal and contextual enablers significantly predict the public-school library employee's thriving at work amidst work challenges and adversities. To better explore the personal and contextual enablers as predictors of the participants' thriving at work, the Theory on Thriving at Work was utilized to support the research assumption. The Thriving at Work Theory advanced by Spreitzer et al. (2005) and the concept on Personal and Contextual Enablers as facilitators of thriving at work that was substantiated and conceptualized by Brown and other researchers (2017) helped strengthen the research assumption that amidst adversities and challenges, there are personal and contextual enablers that facilitate employees' thriving at work.

Thriving is a psychological condition where people experience a sense of vitality and learning at work (Porath et al., 2012; Spreitzer et al., 2005). It encompasses both the emotional (vitality) and intellectual (learning) components (Niessen et al., 2012). Vitality is a feeling of being enthusiastic about one's experiences at work (Nix et al., as cited by Abid et al., 2018). Learning, thus far, refers to the capacity to obtain and apply new abilities and knowledge (Abid et al., 2018).

Furthermore, Spreitzer et al. (2005) theorized that vitality and learning are vital for thriving. When one does not exist, then thriving is not going to work. In such a context, when workers have the chance to learn and discover new things but do not have enough drive for such opportunities, then they cannot successfully thrive (Spreitzer et al., 2012). The notion of thriving at work has achieved an extreme deal of consideration in positive organizational studies and learning (Paterson et al., 2014; Spreitzer & Porath, 2012).

The research on thriving can be drawn from the study of Maslow, Alderfer, and other scholars in the middle of the 20th Century. However, Spreitzer et al. (2005) first applied and propagated this theory, which has an excellent research impact in positive psychology and organizational behavior. According to the proponents, thriving at work is a psychological condition, a personal feeling, and people's experience, with both vitality and learning extents. These two extents fundamentally reflect the emotional and cognitive psychological experience of an individual's development. They also espoused that thriving at work is a positive psychological condition where employees experience learning and vivacity. This entails that thriving employee have a strong motivation and feeling of personal growth and development amidst heavy workloads.

Porath et al. (2012) surmised that when people thrive, they have a habit of being more enthusiastic and likely to experience high stages of psychological functioning. Workers thriving has been found to effectuate lower level of absenteeism, innovative work attitude, social responsibility behavior at work, excellent job performance, organizational loyalty, commitment, progress, and job contentment, lower rate of

exhaustion, job pressures, resignations, and turnovers (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009, Paterson et al., 2014; Porath et al. 2012; Abid et al., 2015; Abid et al., 2016; Abid et al., 2018).

Further, Brown & et al. (2017) conceptualized thriving at work by discussing the critical issues in understanding human thriving, identifying influential psychosocial variables for human thriving, and formulating a more effective way of assessment through predicting the significant personal and contextual enablers that augment the vitality and learning dimensions of human thriving.

Personal enablers help a person to thrive. These are the behaviors, attitudes, and cognitions that enable him or her to excel. Examples of these are acknowledged in a positive viewpoint, piety and religiousness, proactive character, drive or motivation, literacy and learning, psychological flexibility, and social capabilities.

To provide comprehensive details or concepts on the role of a positive viewpoint as a personal enabler, thriving researchers firstly suggested that being positive, having a high level of self-efficacy, and being truthful to one's principles could empower individuals to thrive on task commitment while others considered piety, religiousness, and faith as personal enablers for thriving. With this, religious dealing may empower thriving and stress-related development through a person's connection with God and a religious, social support organization (Brown et al., 2017).

On the other hand, proactive character as a personal enabler is defined and approved by various researchers as a person's positive and proactive character. According to the results of the study of Sarkar & Fletcher (2014), high thriving achievers manifest a drive to face challenges to unravel opportunities actively. On the one hand, excellent forms of motivation such as intrinsic motivation, just like involving in an activity because the behavior is worthwhile, may also result in excellent performance and welfare when a duty is viewed as significant or purposeful (Brown et al., 2017).

In various studies and literature, it was found that a person's drive is vital for establishing his or her obligation to learning, and this motivation to learn is significant to thriving in all groups or levels. On the other side, having flexible qualities such as adaptability and resilience has often been advocated for thriving after experiencing stress. Another personal enabler for an individual may thrive existing social agents such as family, friends, co-workers, and the perceived support available in that setting.

Contextual enablers are the features of a situation that can nurture a task commitment and successive thriving. Some of these enablers are applied in various contexts (e.g., the prospect for a challenge), whereas others are context-specific (e.g., support from employers). Examples of contextual enablers acknowledged in the concept of thriving are challenging environment, affection and trust, support from family, and support from co-workers and employers.

Many researchers deduced that environments that offer a proper balance of challenge and adversity educe task commitment and enable thriving. Examples of applicable

situations include providing learning and job opportunities, a high advancement focus, and set limitations and anticipations.

Affection and trust can also serve as a contextual enabler because social relationships can act as capital to allow the investigation of a challenging situation and the initiation of agentic actions, which, in either case, can escalate the possibility of a person thriving. More so, significant others like partners were suggested to relieve stress caused by time-related work burdens (Sarkar & Fletcher, 2014). Their support served as a relational facilitator for thriving through the support of goal strivings (Tomlinson et al., 2016). Finally, current research about this matter has recommended that socially significant connections among employees can promote resilience when there are adversities. Hence, when there is resilience because of the dyadic relationship, it will probably promote thriving.

In this study, all personal and contextual enablers were used as psychosocial variables to predict if the participants are thriving at work. Figure 1 shows the interplay of variables in the study.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study explored the personal and contextual enablers that serve as predictors of the participants' thriving at work.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed the descriptive-correlational research design to gather quantifiable information on the personal and contextual enablers as predictors of public-school librarians and staffs thriving in the workplace. This design helped the researcher define and measure the significance of these enablers on the participants' extent of thriving at work.

Research Respondents

The participants of the study are the DepEd library employees of Agusan del Norte and Butuan City. In determining the respondents, the researcher used the simple random sampling method. Out of one hundred twenty-five (125) library employees, the ninety-five (95) participants were chosen using the Taro Yamane formula.

Research Instruments

To determine how the participants are characterized when it comes to the enablers of thriving at work (personal enablers and contextual enablers), a researcher-made questionnaire (online and printed), drawn from the conceptualization of Brown and

colleagues (2017) and the available literature about the personal enablers and contextual enablers of thriving at work were used. Moreover, the researcher utilized a modified survey questionnaire about thriving at work and its two dimensions (vitality and learning), drawn from Porath et al. (2011) instrument to assess employees' thriving at work.

Data Gathering Procedure and Ethical Considerations

Before the data gathering, the researcher secured a formal endorsement letter from Lourdes College Graduate Studies and the Office of Research, Planning, and Development (RPDO) to conduct this study. The researcher then sent a letter of permission to the Regional Director of DepEd Caraga. The approved letter was presented to the library employees of the said areas. In the collection of the data of the study, the researcher observed the following processes: a survey about how the participants is characterized in terms of the personal and contextual enablers of thriving at work, and a survey on the participants' extent of thriving at work when it comes to vitality and learning dimensions. A letter stating the intent of the researcher in conducting the study was attached to the questionnaire. Informed consent was also requested from the participants, and they were also assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaires were administered online through Google Forms and personal meetups with the library employees. The participants' answers were checked, tallied, presented in tables, analyzed, and interpreted by the researcher.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

In the data analysis, problems 1 and 2 used the frequency, percentage, and means to determine how the librarians are characterized regarding personal and contextual enablers and the dimensions of thriving at work. For problem number 3, Regression Analysis was used to determine the relationship between the personal and contextual enablers and the dimensions of thriving at participants' work. Furthermore, the researcher asked for help from independent and institutional analysts.

These people helped the researcher analyze the data from the survey questionnaires. After coming up with the findings, the researcher employed the expertise of a professional data analyst for data analysis and interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Contextual and Personal Enablers

Contextual Enablers	Mean	Interpretation	SD
1. Challenging Environment	4.28	Very High	0.59
2. Affection and Trust	4.27	Very High	0.67
3. Support from Family	4.50	Very High	0.69
4. Support from Co-workers and Employer	3.92	High	0.82
5. Literacy and Learning	4.31	Very High	0.54
PERSONAL ENABLERS	Mean	Interpretation	SD
1. Positive Viewpoint	4.46	Very High	0.48
2. Piety and Religiousness	4.41	Very High	0.61
3. Proactive Character	4.36	Very High	0.53
4. Motivation	4.42	Very High	0.53
5. Literacy and Learning	4.31	Very High	0.54
6. Psychological Flexibility	4.13	Very High	4.13
7. Social Capabilities	4.34	Very High	0.57

Table 1 shows that among the personal enablers, only psychological flexibility was rated by the participants at a high extent, while others were rated at a very high extent. For contextual enablers, the support from co-workers and employer was rated at a high extent, while the challenging environment, affection and trust, and support from family were rated at a very high extent. This implies that there are existing personal and contextual enablers as characterized by the participants. Indeed, there are influential psychosocial variables or personal and contextual enablers that augment the vitality and learning dimensions of human thriving, according to Brown et al. (2017).

Table 2. Dimensions of Thriving at work

Dimensions of Thriving at Work	Mean	Interpretation	SD
1. Vitality	4.23	Very High Extent	0.62
2. Learning	4.36	Very High Extent	0.59

The participants rated the two dimensions of thriving at work at a very high extent. This signifies that they efficiently learn and acquire knowledge and skills and effectively experience enthusiasm, vivacity, and satisfaction at work. It also affirms the theory of Spreitzer et al. (2005) that vitality and learning are both essential dimensions for human thriving. Thus, most of the participants are thriving at work at a very high extent.

Table 3. Regression Analysis for Vitality Dimension of Thriving at Work

Model	B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.235	.451		.522	.603
	Positive Viewpoint	.307	.158	.238	1.943	.055
	Piety and Religiousness	-.222	.119	-.217	-1.865	.066
	Proactive Character	.031	.165	.026	.187	.852
	Motivation	.057	.186	.049	.309	.758
	Literacy and Learning	-.073	.129	-.063	-.566	.573
	Psychological Flexibility	.207	.124	.211	1.673	.098
	Social Capabilities	.029	.130	.026	.222	.825
	Challenging Environment	.364	.108	.345	3.371**	.001
	Affection and Trust	.168	.119	.181	1.421	.159
	Support from Family	.018	.095	.019	.186	.853
	Support from Coworkers and Employer	.048	.083	.063	.578	.565
Model Summary						
R = .770		Adjusted R2 = .538		F = 10.956**		p = .000

**Significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)

Regression Analysis for Learning Dimension of Thriving at Work						
Model	B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.872	.400		2.179	.032
	Positive Viewpoint	.127	.140	.105	.909	.366
	Piety and Religiousness	-.319	.105	-.331	-3.025**	.003
	Proactive Character	.173	.147	.156	1.182	.241
	Motivation	.134	.165	.121	.810	.420
	Literacy and Learning	-.008	.114	-.007	-.072	.943
	Psychological Flexibility	.124	.110	.133	1.124	.264
	Social Capabilities	.014	.116	.014	.124	.902
	Challenging Environment	.250	.096	.250	2.607*	.011
	Affection and Trust	.319	.105	.362	3.030**	.003
	Support from Family	-.119	.084	-.140	-1.420	.159
	Support from Coworkers and Employer	.140	.073	.195	1.903	.061
Model Summary						
R = .800		Adjusted R2 = .593		F = 13.439**		p = .000

*Significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)

**Significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)

Based on the regression analyses, the strong predictor of the participants' thriving at work, specifically on its vitality dimension, is the challenging environment (contextual enabler). This finding can be approved by the contention of Brown et al. (2017) that environments that offer a proper balance of challenge and adversity educe task

commitment and enable thriving. Moreover, this finding is relevant to the verification and conceptualization of DeRue & Wellman (2009), which state that a challenging environment stimulates leadership skill development.

As to the learning dimension of thriving, the identified strong predictors are piety and religiousness (personal enabler), which indicates that the religiosity of the participants influences their learning dimension of thriving at work and that their belief that there is always a divine intervention or blessing; affection and trust (contextual enabler) which implies that interpersonal relationships based on secure affection, acceptance, and trust can serve as contextual enablers for thriving through the whole human life span (Brown et al., 2017; Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009); and challenging environment (contextual enabler) which denotes that an individual may experience thriving if there are appropriate scenarios in a challenging environment that offer learning and career opportunities (Bakker et al., 2010). Thus, the enablers predict the participants' thriving at work.

CONCLUSION

In this study, personal and contextual enablers are identified as predictors of the participants' thriving at work amidst various adversities such as lack of support from administrators and lack of funds to procure needed resources that public school libraries are experiencing. This study confirms the Theory of Thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005) and the concept of personal and contextual enablers as predictors of thriving at work (Brown et al., 2017). Specifically, the coping mechanisms of the participants in their adversities stimulate the participants' enthusiasm and commitment at work. Thus, a challenging environment kindles the development of an individual's leadership skills and energizes them at work.

Moreover, piety and religiousness, challenging environment, and affection and trust were effectively revealed as the enablers that relevantly facilitate the participants thriving at work. Hence, their extent of religiosity can influence how they thrive at work because of the belief that there is always a divine intervention and spiritual guidance; their coping mechanisms in the challenging environment where they belong can stimulate their thriving at work because adversities have been seen as enablers so that individuals can utilize their full potentials at work. Their emotional approaches towards other people enable them to effectively learn and hone their skills at work when they acquire positive motivation from their significant others and by the persons that they trust the most. Still, all the enablers can be accounted to the participants' thriving at work.

Even if there are concerns that hinder public school librarians from working on the optimal level, just like recruitment, education, and retention of librarians, support from administrators and principals, funding or budget allocation, and the impact of information technology on library services, the DepEd library employees of Agusan del Norte and Butuan City are still thriving at work because of the existing personal and contextual enablers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the division librarians to regularly monitor the level of thriving at work of their library employees to fully understand what influences their job satisfaction and commitment and find ways to minimize the level of adversities and challenges because too much of these can reduce their energy and optimism at work.
2. For library employees to consistently focus on the significant enablers (such as piety and religiousness, challenging environment, and affection and trust) will facilitate their thriving at work.
3. For researchers will conduct an in-depth study (such as qualitative research) that will focus on the reliability of the challenging environment, affection and trust, and piety and religiousness as enablers of thriving at work and conduct a similar study but prefer other scope and coverage.

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