

# FLOURISHING OF EMPLOYEES IN A FAST MOVING CONSUMABLE GOODS ENVIRONMENT

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## **PREFACE AND DECLARATION**

The article format was chosen for the current study. The researcher, Cindy Rautenbach, conducted the research and wrote the manuscripts. Prof. Sebastiaan Rothmann acted as promoter. Three manuscripts were written and/or submitted for publication.

The references as well as the editorial style as prescribed by the *Publication Manual* (6th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA) were followed in this thesis. This practice is in line with the policy of the Optentia Research Focus Area of the North-West University (Vaal Triangle Campus) to use APA style in all scientific documents. Chapter 1 used the decimal style acceptable in South Africa, while the manuscripts were prepared in line with the APA conventions on the use of decimals. Also, English (USA) was used in some manuscripts, while United Kingdom English was used in some chapters.

I declare that “Flourishing of employees in a fast moving consumable goods environment” is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted are indicated and acknowledged using complete references.

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## SUMMARY

**Subject:** Flourishing of employees in the fast moving consumable goods environment

**Keywords:** Flourishing, work, psychological well-being, emotional well-being, social well-being, workload, job insecurity, salary, advancement, negative work-home interaction, authentic leadership, positive practices, flexitime, flexplace

The Fast Moving Consumable Goods industry is characterized by competitiveness, ongoing change and high turnover. To stay competitive, retain talent and keep up with these fast-paced systems, organisations have to capitalise on the potential of their workforce to outperform the rest. Giving the increasing demand on both employer and employee regarding innovation, creativity and shared knowledge, increased importance of employee well-being being viewed as sources of “prosperity” for organisations, are critical. Organisations must find a way to enable their employees to flourish. Flourishing refers to high levels of well-being in terms of *feeling well* and *functioning well* (Keyes, 2007). Subjective well-being refers to the levels of positive and negative affect and the overall satisfaction with life. Psychological well-being consists of individuals’ positive functioning in life. Social well-being relates to individuals’ evaluation of their functioning on a public and social level.

Individuals spend a large part of their adult life at work in organisational environments that are dynamic and ever-changing. The domain of work is a critical part of existence and plays a dynamic role in the development, expression and maintenance of well-being. Globally the workplace is recognised as a key setting for focusing on improving the well-being of employees due to its compelling impact on a variety of organisational outcomes. Flourishing is thus not only relevant in everyday life, but also occurs in the work and organisational environment. Limited studies regarding flourishing in work and organisational contexts exist and central to studying, understanding, and explaining flourishing at work, are valid and reliable instruments. The aim of this study was to develop and validate a multidimensional scale that measures work flourishing. Furthermore, to investigate the impact of various factors in the work and organisational environment on flourishing in the FMCG industry.

A cross-sectional survey design was used to gather data regarding the flourishing of employees in the FMCG industry in South Africa. A stratified random sample ( $N = 779$ ) was

taken of employees in an alcoholic beverage company in South Africa. The measuring instruments used were the self-developed Flourishing-at-Work Scale, Flourishing-at-Work Scale Short Form, parts of the Job-Demand-Recourse Scale, Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ), and a Biographical Questionnaire. Confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistics, regression analysis and latent class analysis were applied. Structural equation modelling was used to test a structural model of work flourishing and its relation to organisational antecedents and outcomes.

The results of study 1 showed the validity of a multidimensional scale that measures flourishing in work and organisational context. The FAWS (Flourishing-at-Work Scale) includes the three dimensions of emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being, as suggested by Rothmann (2013). This supports the work of Keyes (2005, 2007) regarding integrating the models of hedonic (Diener, 1984), eudaimonic (Ryff, 1989), and social well-being (Keyes, 1998) into a unified structure. The results of the latent class analysis also showed that different classes of well-being were evident due to the interplay between the various dimensions.

Study 2 showed that work-related antecedents impact on work flourishing. A short form of the FAWS (Flourishing-at-Work Scale) was developed and found to be valid. The results confirm that career advancement, authentic leadership and work-life interference predict work flourishing. Advancement and authentic leadership positively relate to flourishing while negative work-life interference impacts flourishing negatively. The Conservation of Resources (COR) framework (Hobfoll, 1989), which suggests that the well-being of an individual is dependent on the maintenance or gain of resources, is therefore supported. The job demands workload and job insecurity did not predict flourishing in the organisational environment.

Study 3 showed that positive organisational practices (positive emotions, support, and inspiration) predict work flourishing. Furthermore, career advancement was a positive predictor of flourishing in the work and organisational context.

Recommendations for future research were made.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Pages</b>
Preface and Declaration	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Summary	iii
List of Figures	vii
List of Tables	viii
<b>Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background and motivation of the research	1
1.2 Problem statement	6
1.3 Research objectives	9
1.3.1 General aim	9
1.3.2 Specific objectives	10
1.4 Research method	10
1.4.1 Research design	10
1.4.2 Participants	11
1.4.3 Measuring instruments	12
1.4.4 Research procedure	15
1.4.5 Statistical analysis	15
1.5 Ethical considerations	15
1.6 Chapter layout	16
References	17
<b>CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH ARTICLE 1</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH ARTICLE 2</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH ARTICLE 3</b>	<b>92</b>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

	<b>Pages</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	122
5.1 Conclusions	122
5.2 Integration and contribution of this study	127
5.3 Limitations	127
5.4 Recommendations	128
5.4.1 Recommendations to solve the research problem	128
5.4.2 Recommendation for future research	130
References	131

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>Research Article 1</b>		
Figure 1	Mean scores on 10 dimensions of flourishing	45
<b>Research Article 2</b>		
Figure 1	Mean frequency of each component of flourishing at work	75
Figure 2	The structural model	79
<b>Research Article 3</b>		
Figure 1	Mean frequency of each component	106
Figure 2	Latent classes based on flourishing subscales	111

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>Research Article 1</b>		
Table 1	Flourishing at Work	29
Table 2	Characteristics of Participants	36
Table 3	Fit Statistics of Competing Measurement Models	39
Table 4	Reliability Coefficients and Correlations of the Scales	41
Table 5	Measurement Invariance of the FAWS	42
Table 6	Standardised Regression Coefficients of the FAWS	43
Table 7	Standardised Regression Coefficients of the FAWS Dimensions	45
<b>Research Article 2</b>		
Table 1	Characteristics of Participants	68
Table 2	Fit Statistics of Competing Measurement Models	73
Table 3	Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Coefficients and Correlations of the Scales	77
Table 4	Standardised Regression Coefficients of Antecedents of Flourishing at Work	78
<b>Research Article 3</b>		
Table 1	Flourishing at Work	96
Table 2	Dimension and Definitions of Positive Practices	99
Table 3	Characteristics of Participants	102
Table 4	Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Coefficients and Correlations of the Scales	108
Table 5	Comparison of LCA models	110
Table 6	Regression Coefficients for the Different Latent Classes	112

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This thesis is about the development of a measurement of flourishing in work and organisational context and the investigation of work and organisational antecedents of work flourishing.

Chapter 1 contains the background to and motivation for the research, the problem statement, aims of the research, research method, and division of chapters.

### **1.1 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION OF THE RESEARCH**

Since the early parts of the 20th Century the role of work in psychological theory, research and practice has been explored quite extensively (Barling & Griffiths, 2002; Blustein, 2006; Richardson, 1993; Zickar, 2004). Being able to work is a critical part of existence and plays a vital role in the development, expression, and maintenance of psychological health and well-being (Blustein, 2008). It also promotes connection to the broader social and economic world, resulting in individual satisfaction and accomplishment (Blustein, 2006; Brown & Lent, 2005; Hall, 1996; Spector, 2005). Nonetheless, the world of work is constantly undergoing tumultuous change which is inevitable and unavoidable. These changes are brought about by a variety of environmental, social and technological developments. Both the globalization of businesses to drive global economic growth and the amplified scarcity of critical skills also contribute to this fast-paced complexity (Truss, Mankin, & Kelliher, 2012). The nature of work has also undergone dramatic changes in the last two decades, mostly driven by forces such as globalization and the information technology revolution. Some jobs have also become obsolete while other jobs that hadn't existed previously are now being created (Malone & Laubacher, 2011).

In the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century, human capability determines the winner and loser in global markets. It is therefore a necessity which companies depend on and compete for (Goffee & Jones, 2007). For a growing number of businesses, competitive advantage lies in the ability to create a profit-driven establishment through acquiring ideas and intellectual know-how. The ideas, knowledge, and skills from appointing this calibre of

individuals, give organisations the potential of producing value for the future. The need to always stay ahead of the curve calls for organisations to attract, develop and retain talented and healthy individuals. By acquiring these individuals, organisations can and should enhance their cultures which will enable them to achieve sustainable business results that will give them a competitive advantage.

Since the 1980s, the movement from traditional human resource management to strategic human resource management gained popularity and interest (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1996). According to Armstrong (2002), strategic human resource management (SHRM) is defined as an approach to the management of human resources that provides a strategic framework to support long-term business goals and outcomes. This approach is concerned with longer-term people issues and macro-concerns about structure, quality, culture, values, commitment and matching resources to future need. A crucial theme associated with SHRM includes the focus on creating and maintaining a healthy workforce. A company's value lies in both the tangible and intangible assets which include the employee's health status.

According to Hirschowitz (2011), an on-going people-centred approach is needed to ensure consistent and sustainable individual and organisational performance. In today's competitive global business climate, those organisations that can best manage their human capital can gain a competitive edge. Most successful organisations can sustain performance over a long period and demonstrate robust associations between talent management and performance (Purcell, Kinnie, Hutchinson, Rayton, & Swart, 2003). Due to the dynamic environment in which most companies function nowadays, it is critical to business success that companies invest in the well-being of their employees. Business objectives cannot be met if employees are not well. It is, therefore, critical to ensure on-going focus on the well-being of employees that contribute to delivering business success, but even more important, to ensure consistent delivery of superior performance. Consistency in superior work performance can only be accomplished by concentrating on and investing in the health and well-being of our workforce. Health has been valued as one of the highest domains in life that allows individuals, organisations, and society to thrive. Keyes and Grzywacz (2005) state that neither wisdom prosperity nor aptitude could be fully realized, applied or appreciated if the health element is absent. Research conducted by occupational health scholars concluded that health, both physical and mental, are considered important forms of "human capital" that are clearly linked to the economic performance of organisations. Health is an important form of

human capital that provides competitive advantage to organisations. It is therefore imperative to ensure that employees within organisations are functioning optimally and are well; thus flourishing.

Keyes (2005) conceptualised flourishing as emotional, psychological and social well-being of individuals. Emotional well-being (EWB) is characterised by the presence of positive emotions and a feeling that one is satisfied with life. Psychological well-being (PWB) entails the positive evaluations of the self that includes a sense of satisfaction with one's achievements, having a purpose in life and developing/growing as an individual. Social well-being (SWB) can be explained as being the quality of the relationships one has with others, including positive appraisals of others and believing that one is making a constructive contribution to the larger equation (Keyes, 2005).

Flourishing is not only relevant in everyday life but also occurs in work and organisational environments. Rothmann (2013) found that flourishing in work and organisational contexts and flourishing in general life share around 54% of variance. Therefore it makes sense to conceptualise and measure flourishing in organisational contexts. According to Keyes (2009) and Seligman (2011), higher levels of life satisfaction, more effective learning, healthier relationships, greater job satisfaction and longevity are evident in individuals who flourish. Individuals who flourish also reported lower absenteeism due to the lower risk of cardiovascular disease and lower health care utilisation. Flourishing employees are less likely to resign from their jobs due to withdrawal behaviour correlating negatively with positive affect (Rothmann, 2013). Higher levels of resilience, organisational commitment and the setting of clear goals are also evident in flourishing individuals (Keyes, 2007). Boehm and Lyubomirsky (2008) confirm that employees experiencing positive affect can achieve high success in the workplace which ultimately results in employee flourishing being related to workplace success.

Previous research found that employee flourishing can be nurtured, developed and facilitated by understanding and supporting individual characteristics as well as work and organisational contexts (Bono, Davies, & Rasch, 2012). Rothmann (2013) reported that flourishing in the organisational context (compared to flourishing in general life) was predicted by job and organisational factors and is also a better predictor of organisational outcomes. Due to work and organisational environments being so dynamic and ever-changing, a variety of factors

play a vital role in flourishing in the work and organisational context. Fit for purpose (role fit of the employee), the availability of physical, emotional and intellectual resources to perform tasks, supporting and trusting relationships with leaders and managers, sound relationships among co-workers, challenging and interesting roles and responsibilities, clearly defined goals and role clarity, fair remuneration, career development opportunities and job security have all been identified as antecedents of flourishing in the work context (Rothmann, 2013).

Leadership is one of the most investigated topics due to its multi-discipline involvement and importance in most aspects of all organisations, also being a dynamic element when it comes to the working environment (Avolio & Bass, 1991). Research indicates that good leadership in organisations has a distinctive impact on profits and success and does make a difference in organisations (Lieberson & O’Conner, 2005). Chen and Silverthorne (2005) found that leadership affects employee and organisational outcomes, such as work engagement and intention to leave the organisation. Although a variety of approaches and perspectives to leadership exists, they all share some commonalities that can be summarised in one single definition.

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2007), leadership can be defined as a process whereby an individual with unique characteristics influences a group of other individuals to accomplish or reach a mutual goal. The behaviour demonstrated by the leader affects individuals. Research indicates that a variety of different approaches to leadership exists. This includes theories such as charismatic leadership theory introduced in the 1920s (Bass & Bass, 2008), transformational leadership theory and neo-charismatic leadership theory. More recently the authentic leadership approach has garnered more attention among scholars and practitioners. According to Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, and Peterson (2008, p. 91), authentic leadership can be defined as “a pattern that draws upon and promotes ... positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development”.

The authentic leadership approach underlines building the leader’s authenticity through developing honest relationships with employees. Leaders also value the employee’s input and a relationship built on an ethical foundation. Authentic leaders are positive people with

truthful self-concepts who promote openness (Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011). By building trust and generating enthusiastic support from their subordinates, authentic leaders can improve individual and team performance. An authentic approach to leading others and organisations alike is desirable and effective for advancing the human enterprise and achieving positive and enduring outcomes in organisations (George, 2003). This approach has been fully embraced by many leaders and leadership coaches who view having authentic leaders as an alternative to having leaders who emphasize profit and share price over people and ethics.

Seeing that employees spend at least 60% of their waking hours in the work environment, the organizational practices, including the climate, behaviours and practices, impact on employees' subjective well-being and behaviours (Cameron, Mora, Leutscher, & Calarco, 2011). The well-being of employees is in the best interest of the employer. Therefore organisations must not only realize the importance of preventing ill-health, but also the key role the workplace plays in promoting health and well-being (Black 2008). A shift towards a more positive paradigm is essential. Positive psychology, positive organisational scholarship and positive organisational practices can be seen as positive paradigms that can be applied to understand and promote the flourishing of individuals in the work context (Youssef-Morgan & Bockorny, 2013). Positive organisational practices refer to “behaviours, techniques and routines that represent positively deviant practices, practices with an affirmative bias, and practices that connote virtuousness and eudemonism in organizations” (Cameron et al., 2011, p. 269).

Positive employee behaviour will result in improved organizational effectiveness. To retain employees who demonstrate this productive behaviour, providing them with tangible benefits alone is no longer good enough (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). For employees to function optimally and to flourish, productive workplaces with positive practices as the norm are critical.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Work is a major factor affecting the quality of individuals' lives (Rothman, 2013). The various systems within which individuals function affect their well-being. Contextual variables within these systems impact on both the conscious and non-conscious psychological experiences of individuals, which in turn plays a vital role in individual behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 2011). Individuals do not function in silos; therefore a strong relationship exists between the quality of mental health experienced in the work domain and general life. Mental health can be described as the absence of psychopathology, but Keyes (2002) explains that it is also the presence of high levels of emotional, psychological and social well-being, which is referred to as flourishing (Keyes, 2005). Flourishing encompasses elements of emotional, psychological and social well-being (Keyes, 2005). Flourishing can be defined as a condition whereby individuals are experiencing high levels of emotional, psychological and social well-being (Keyes & Annas, 2009).

Individuals' flourishing in work contexts strongly predicts individual and organisational outcomes. Rothmann (2013) found that work-related constructs such as job satisfaction, positive affect, vitality, dedication, meaning, purpose, autonomy, competence and relatedness all strongly relate to mental health. Although extensive research has been done on the concept of flourishing in general and found to be highly pertinent for organisational and work contexts, no scientific studies exist regarding the measurement thereof in work and organisational contexts. Huppert and So (2011) state that good quality well-being scales, relevant to the working environment, to measure flourishing are essential and will make a scientific contribution. The development of a scale which measures flourishing and its antecedents in work and organisational contexts (Rothmann, 2013) would be a contribution to this field of study.

The flourishing or languishing of employees in the Fast Moving Consumable Goods (FMCG) environment can be regarded as a significant research theme for several reasons. The South African FMCG industry specifically is characterised as a very aggressive and fast-paced environment in which high performance is the norm. The markets and environments in which these organisations operate as well as the way they function are ever-changing. Further to this, the way work is performed, how the cost of doing business is calculated and, most importantly, the way knowledge is used are some of the critical success factors for

organisations in this industry (Brown & Covey, 1987). These changes create both opportunities and threats for organisations. To survive and to prosper in today's environment, organisations must embrace transformation and be competitive. With competitiveness comes a great demand to not only attract, but also to retain and optimize the talents and outputs of employees (Cummings & Worley, 2005). Employees must be able to consistently uphold high levels of performance on an on-going basis. To ensure sustainability of performance, employees need to be emotionally, psychologically and socially healthy. A study by Diedericks and Rothmann (2014) showed that flourishing affected job satisfaction, organisational commitment, organisational citizenship behaviour and intention to leave. These identified outcomes are critical to organisational success; hence the interest in studying and promoting the flourishing of employees.

Rothmann (2013) reported that flourishing in work and organisational contexts is predicted by individual resources, as well as job and organisational factors. These factors include fit for purpose (role fit of the employee), the availability of resources (physical, cognitive and emotional) to perform tasks supporting and trusting relationships with leaders and managers, good co-worker relationships and interaction, challenging and interesting responsibilities and tasks, clearly defined goals and role clarity, reasonable remuneration, development opportunities and job security have all been identified as antecedents of work flourishing. Research by Rego, Vitória, Magalhães, Ribeiro, and Cunha (2013) has shown that leaders who demonstrate authentic leadership lead teams that outperform those teams with leaders who do not practise authentic leadership. Authentic leadership also promotes team virtuousness which, in turn, encourages team potency and performance. Authentic leadership has also been shown to encourage team performance by promoting trust in teams and in the organisation (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2009). Given the significant impact of the factors mentioned above on employee and organisational performance as well as the limited research on this topic, it is important to investigate employee flourishing in the workplace.

The culture of an organisation also affects the well-being and performance of the employees (Gittell, Cameron, Lim, & Rivas, 2006). Holistically the result also impacts significantly on the effectiveness of the organisation (Cameron et al., 2011). Employers must invest in and focus on embedding positive practices in the organisation. These positive organisational practices should comprise three critical notions, namely positive deviance, virtuous practices and an affirmative bias (Cameron, Bright, & Caza, 2004). *Positively deviant behaviour* refers

to astonishingly positive performance and spectacular results that extend beyond achieving. Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003, p. 209) refers to it as “intentional behaviours that depart from the norm of a reference group in honourable ways”. An *affirmative bias* means that organisations focus on strengths and capabilities instead of weaknesses and threats. Positive behaviour encourages affirmative emotions and behaviour among individuals, resulting in the creation of social wealth (Lewis, 2011). *Virtuous practices* refer to positive human impact, moral goodness and social betterment that all produce benefits to others regardless of the reward.

Cameron et al. (2011) identified six dimensions of positive practices, namely caring, compassionate support, forgiveness, inspiration, meaning and respect, integrity and gratitude. Organisations who value these positive practices benefit from high levels of effectiveness, including improved performance, innovation and retention (Cameron et al., 2004). If organisations benefit from implementing positive practices, surely individual benefits, in terms of their well-being, should also be evident.

### *Specific Research Problems*

Based on the discussion above, the research problems were summarised as follows: A large number of studies on the concept of flourishing in everyday life have been conducted. However, limited evidence is available regarding flourishing in the work and organisational contexts. First, scientific information is needed regarding the psychometric properties (validity and reliability) of a measuring instrument of flourishing, specifically applied in the world of work. Second, it is uncertain what the levels of flourishing are for employees in the FMCG environment due to the competitive nature of this industry. In order for organisations to be highly effective and successful, they are in need of a flourishing workforce. Third, scientific information is needed regarding the impact of various work and organisational factors on employee well-being (subjective, psychological and social). Research has shown that work-related factors such as work role fit, resources, supervisor and co-worker relationships, task characteristics, remuneration, career progression and job security each has a significant impact on flourishing at work. These factors, together with the possible impact of authentic leadership styles on work flourishing have not yet been investigated in the FMCG industry. Fourth, scientific information is needed with regard to the effects of positive practices on the well-being of individuals.

The *main research question* in this study was:

What does flourishing in the work and organisation look like and which work and organisational factors affect the flourishing of employees in organisations?

In light of the foregoing discussions, the following more *specific research questions* were posed:

- What is the validity and reliability of a scale which measures a multidimensional model of flourishing at work?
- What is the relationship between flourishing in life and work?
- Are employees in the FMCG environment flourishing?
- What are the antecedents of work flourishing in the FMCG environment?
- What are the effects of positive organisational practices on flourishing in the FMCG environment?

This study will make the following contributions to the field of Industrial/Organisational Psychology: Firstly, it will result in a reliable and valid measuring instrument of flourishing specific to the work and organisational context, which currently doesn't exist in the flourishing at work literature. Secondly, it will result in validated models of flourishing. More specifically, this study will contribute to the literature by exploring how job resources and demands influence work flourishing. It will contribute to the literature by investigating how the antecedents of workload job insecurity, compensation, advancement, work-life balance and authentic leadership predict work flourishing. Thirdly, it will result in new scientific information on the impact of positive practices on individual flourishing on an organisational level.

## **1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

### **1.3.1 General Aim**

The general aim of this study was to validate an assessment that measures flourishing in work and organisational context and to further investigate the impact of various factors in the

work environment on flourishing and the effect thereof on talent in the FMCG industry. The researcher's main aim of conducting this study was to suggest interventions targeted at organisational levels of functioning.

### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

Following from the general aim, the specific objectives of this study were to:

- Evaluate the psychometric properties (construct validity, reliability, equivalence and bias) of a scale which measures a multidimensional model of flourishing of employees in the FMCG industry.
- Study the levels of flourishing/languishing of employees in the FMCG industry.
- Identify some of the antecedents and outcomes of flourishing of employees in the FMCG industry.
- Investigate the effects of positive organisational practices on flourishing in the work and organisational context?

## **1.4 RESEARCH METHOD**

The research consisted of a literature study and an empirical study.

### **1.4.1 Research Design**

To test the hypotheses, conclusive research involving a large representative sample and a fairly structured data collection procedure, namely a quantitative approach, was followed during this study (Struwig & Stead, 2004). More specifically a cross-sectional design was used. A cross-sectional research design typically consists of different people the researcher examines, using one or more variables (Huysamen, 2004). The researcher drew a sample from the population at a specific point in time (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997). Questionnaires were used to gather information relevant to the constructs being measured. Within the cross-sectional design, three designs were utilized (Byrne, 2012; Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014):

- A multi-group latent variable design was used to assess the psychometric properties and invariance of the measures. The hypothesised measurement model was tested separately on all groups before attempting a multiple group analysis. If the model did not fit for all groups, the researcher would analyse the groups separately. If the fit of the measurement model is acceptable, the researcher would proceed with a multiple group analysis to test measurement invariance.
- Latent variable modelling was used to investigate the fit of the hypothesised models as well as indirect and interaction effects. Latent variable modelling using Mplus version 7.31 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014) was used to test the measurement and structural models. Latent variable modelling was used to investigate the fit of the hypothesised models as well as direct effects. Absolute fit indices were used. Latent variable modelling reduces bias that originates from measurement error and makes it possible to test direct and indirect effects.
- The descriptive statistics were computed utilising SPSS22 (IBM Corp, 2013).
- A latent class analysis (LCA) with Mplus 7.31 (Muthen & Muthen, 2008-2014) was used. A series of models with an increasing number of latent classes were tested. Factor scores for each latent variable used in the latent class analysis were computed with Mplus 7.31.

#### **1.4.2 Participants**

The study was conducted within an alcoholic beverage company in the FMCG industry in South Africa. Stratified random sampling was used as data collection method (Struwig & Stead, 2004). For this study, a sample of 779 employees was selected randomly for participation, representing various demographic layers (i.e. division, functional area, grade level, race and gender).

The company ( $N = 5539$ ) has three divisions, namely Sales and Distribution ( $n = 2174$ ), Manufacturing ( $n = 2147$ ), and Centres of Excellence ( $n = 1\ 218$ ). The sales and distribution division comprises five regions across South Africa. Each region is divided into districts. Some regions have more districts than others. Each Sales and Distribution region has a similar hierarchical structure with similar positions, job grades and functional areas. The manufacturing division comprises seven breweries/manufacturing plants nationally. Each brewery also has a similar hierarchical structure with similar jobs, grades and functional

areas. The centres of excellence involve ten different departments. Of these ten departments, nine are situated in the same building and one department is situated separately. All these departments have different hierarchical structures. Similar jobs on either same or different grades as well as functional areas are shared among all three the divisions.

Only employees from Grade E to X1 in all three divisions were included in the study due to talent analysis/deployment only applying to these grades. All Sales and Distribution regions, the Breweries and all the departments from the centres of excellence were sampled in this study.

### **1.4.3 Measuring Instruments**

In this research, the following measuring instruments were used:

The *Flourishing-at-Work Scale* (FAWS) was developed for purposes of this study. The FAWS consists of 48 items measuring the three dimensions of flourishing (Emotional, Psychological and Social well-being) in work and organisational context. Emotional well-being consists of three dimensions, namely Positive affect (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel happy?”), Negative affect (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel upset?”), and Job satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you experience satisfaction with your job?”). Psychological well-being consists of six dimensions, namely autonomy satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that you can do your job the way you think it could best be done?”), competence satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel you really master your tasks at your job?”), relatedness satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel really connected with other people at your job?”), learning (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you find yourself learning”), meaningful work (four items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that your work makes a difference to the world?”), engagement (six items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that you get so into your job that you lose track of time?”), and social well-being (five items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that your organisation is becoming a better place for people like you?”). Responses are measured on a six-point scale that ranges from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*every day*).

The *Flourishing-at-Work Scale – Short Form* (FAWS-SF) was administered. The FAWS-SF was derived from the Flourishing-at-Work Scale (FAWS; Rautenbach & Rothmann, in press). The FAWS-SF consists of 17 items that were chosen as the most archetypal items expressive of the construct definition of each of three dimensions of well-being at work, namely emotional, psychological and social well-being. The respondents had to answer questions regarding the frequency with which they experienced specific symptoms during the past month. Emotional well-being was measured by three items indicating two dimensions, namely job satisfaction (“During the past month at work, how often did you experience satisfaction with your job?”) and positive affect (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel happy?”). Psychological well-being was measured by nine items indicating autonomy (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel confident to think or express your own ideas and opinions?”), competence (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel good at managing the responsibilities of your job?”), relatedness (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel really connected with other people at your job?”), meaning (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel your work is meaningful?”), purpose (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that the work you do serves a greater purpose?”), cognitive engagement (“During the past month at work, how often did you focus a great deal of attention on your work?”), emotional engagement (“During the past month at work, how often did you get excited when you perform well on your job?”), physical engagement (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel energised when you work?”), and learning (“During the past month at work, how often did you find yourself learning?”). Social well-being was measured by five items indicating social contribution (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel you had something important to contribute to your organisation?”), social acceptance (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that you really belong to your organisation?”), social growth (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that your organisation is becoming a better place for people like you?”), social integration (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that people in your organisation are basically good?”), and social comprehension (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that the way your organisation works, makes sense to you?”).

Questions from the *Job-Demand-Resources Scale* (JD-RS; Rothmann, Mostert, & Strydom, 2006) were administered. Workload was measured by three items (e.g. “Do you have too much work to do?”). Job insecurity was measured by three items (e.g. “Do you need to be

more secure that you will keep your current job in the next year?”). Compensation was measured by three items (e.g. “Do you think that your company pays good salaries?”). Career advancement was measured by three items (e.g. “Does your company give you opportunities to attend training courses aligned to your job?”). Negative work-home interaction was measured by three items (e.g. “Do you take work home?”). Each item required the respondent to answer on a scale which varies from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). Flexibility in the workplace consists of flexitime and flexplace and was measured by two items (e.g. “Does your company allow for flexitime?”). Each item required the respondent to answer either “yes” or “no”.

To measure employees’ perception of their leaders’ authenticity (authentic leadership), the *Authentic Leadership Questionnaire* (ALQ) was used. The questionnaire’s validity and theoretical and empirical bases have been confirmed (Avolio, 2007; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). The measure, developed specifically with the emerging authentic leadership theory in mind, consists of 16 items grouped into four major subcategories: self-awareness (the understanding of how one makes sense of the world), relational transparency (presenting one’s authentic self to others), internalised moral perspective (internalised and integrated form of self-regulation), and balanced processing (demonstration of objective analysis of all relevant data before making a decision). Representative samples of employees from state-owned and multinational firms in the USA and China confirmed the four-factor structure of the ALQ.

Organisational practices were measured using *The Positive Practices Questionnaire* (PPQ; Cameron et al., 2011). This questionnaire was used to evaluate the positive organisational practices in the organisation. The questionnaire consists of nine, 5-point Likert-type items representing desirable and positively focused behaviours. Three underlying structures of PPQ were measured: a) Positive Emotions (two items, e.g. “We show appreciation for one other”); b) Support (four items, e.g. “We support people who are facing difficulty”); c) Inspiration (three items, e.g. “We are energized by the work we do”).

A *biographical questionnaire* was developed to measure control variables pertaining to participants. Variables to be measured included: division, functional area, position, gender, ethnicity/race, age, tenure in the organisation, and job level in the organisation.

#### **1.4.4 Research Procedure**

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the management of the participating organisation. The questionnaires (in English) were administered in the environment where participants are working. A cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and emphasising the confidentiality of the research project was accompanied by the questionnaire. Participants completed the questionnaires on-line, and responses to items were captured in an Excel sheet, whereafter they were prepared for analysis with the MPlus software program. The data was captured and prepared for data analysis.

#### **1.4.5 Statistical Analysis**

The measurement and structural models in this study were tested by using latent variable modelling through Mplus Version 7.31 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014). The items of all questionnaires were defined to be categorical if the scales had six points or less, and WLSMV will be used as an estimator. To assess model fit, the comparative fit index (CFI;  $> 0.90$ ), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI;  $> 0.90$ ), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA;  $< 0.08$ ) were reported. A multiple group model was used to explore the invariance of measurement and structural models for different groups.

Reliabilities ( $\rho$ ) of scales measured by items rated on a continuous scale were computed using a formula based on the sum of squares of standardised loadings and the sum of standardised variance of error terms (Wang & Wang, 2012). This was done as an alternative to Cronbach's alpha, which does not provide a true estimate of scale reliability when latent modelling is used. Indirect effects and moderation effects were calculated. To determine whether any relationships are indeed indirectly affected by independent variables, the procedure explained by Hayes (2009) was used. Bootstrapping was used to construct two-sided bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals (CIs) so as to evaluate indirect effects. Lower CIs and upper CIs were reported.

### **1.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The objectives of the study as well as voluntary participation were discussed with participating employees. The responsibilities and roles of the various parties involved were

outlined and agreed upon. Confidentiality and anonymity (where applicable) were also assured. Written consent was obtained from each participant before taking part in the study. Upon completion of the study, feedback will be provided if requested by participants. Feedback will also be shared with the management of the participating organisation. All data collection was done in confidentiality.

## **1.6. CHAPTER LAYOUT**

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: The Validation of a Scale which Measures Flourishing at Work

Chapter 3: Antecedents of Flourishing at Work

Chapter 4: Flourishing at Work: The Role of Work and Positive Organisational Practices

Chapter 5: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

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## **CHAPTER 2**

### **ARTICLE 1**

#### **The Validation of a Scale which Measures Flourishing at Work**

## **The Validation of a Scale which Measures Flourishing at Work**

### **Abstract**

The aim of this study was to validate a scale that measures flourishing in a work and organisational context. A cross-sectional survey design was used with a stratified random sample of 779 employees in an alcoholic beverage company in South Africa. The Flourishing-at-Work Scale was administered. The results supported a three-factor model of flourishing in a work and organisational context, consisting of emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Emotional well-being includes job satisfaction, positive affect, and low negative affect. Psychological well-being comprises autonomy, competence, relatedness, engagement, purpose and meaning, and learning. Social well-being includes social acceptance, social growth, social contribution, social coherence, and social integration. The Flourishing-at-Work Scale showed configural, metric, and scalar invariance in a calibration sample. The reliabilities of the 10 subscales were highly acceptable. The highest mean frequencies on flourishing dimensions were obtained for competence and work engagement. The lowest mean frequencies were obtained for job satisfaction and meaningful work.

**Keywords:** Flourishing, work, psychological well-being, emotional well-being, social well-being

Organisations have to go beyond fixing problems into promoting excellence. Therefore, scientists and practitioners need to turn to the branch of psychology that deals with human flourishing, namely positive psychology (Donaldson & Ko, 2010). Flourishing of employees has become an important focus area for research for various reasons (Pink, 2009; Ryde & Sofianos, 2014). First, enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation is becoming more important to people. Second, individuals seek significance and self-actualisation. Third, individuals want work which is enjoyable and self-directed, and allows creativity. Fourth, thought, individuality, creativity, and expertise have become commodities which are valuable to organisations. Research confirms that the well-being of individuals affects the outcomes of people and organisations. A meta-analysis of 58 independent studies showed a strong linkage between employee attitudes and behaviours and customer satisfaction (Hong, Liao, Hu, & Jiang, 2013). However, more than 87% of workers worldwide are emotionally disconnected from their jobs. Moreover, 43% of employees frequently think of quitting their jobs (Morgan, 2014). These findings indicate that many employees do not flourish in their work.

The concept of flourishing has been increasingly used to describe subjective well-being (Seligman, 2011). Individuals' experiences of their lives (and not only the objective facts thereof) are significant. Some people might experience well-being even if their circumstances are harsh, while others might feel empty and stagnant despite favourable circumstances (Huppert & So, 2013). The scientific study of flourishing requires good quality scales to measure it (Huppert & So, 2013; Rothmann, 2013).

Flourishing captures both the hedonic and the eudaimonic perspectives on subjective well-being (Lambert, Passmore, & Holder, 2015; Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008). The hedonic perspective aims at maximising pleasure and avoiding pain, and can include living a life of shallow values, greed, and exploitation of others. The eudaimonic perspective focuses on the content of one's life and the processes in "living well". Flourishing people experience hedonic well-being because they feel satisfied with their lives and experience positive emotions. Furthermore, they function well, both psychologically and socially (Keyes & Annas, 2009). Research showed that more than 80% of people in the general population, and more than 50% of employees in organisations, are not flourishing (Rothmann, 2013). Hence, these facts and statistics indicated above warrant further investigation into why such a high percentage of people are not flourishing.

Flourishing is associated with coping with pressure, good stress management, and improved health (Keyes & Annas, 2009; Keyes et al., 2008). Flourishing individuals (compared to those who are not flourishing) show higher levels of organisational commitment and a decreased turnover intention (Diedericks & Rothmann, 2014). Harter, Schmidt, and Keyes (2002) and Keyes and Grzywacz (2005) found that employees who flourish reported lower absenteeism levels. Boehm and Lyubomirsky (2008) confirmed that flourishing people engage in behaviours that contribute to goal accomplishments, work success and increased productivity. According to Keyes (2007), the languishing-flourishing continuum relates to outcomes in the work and organisational context. He stated: “Adults diagnosed as completely mentally healthy functioned superior to all others in terms of the fewest workdays missed, fewer half-days or less cutbacks of work, lowest level of health limitations of activities of daily living” (p. 100).

Claims about the positive effects of flourishing have been made based on the use of the Mental Health Continuum (Keyes, 2007), which measures flourishing in general rather than in work and organisational contexts. Further criticism include that the concept *flourishing* has been used without proper clarification of the term (e.g. Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012). Moreover, it has also been used as a synonym for “happiness” or the emotional component of subjective well-being (e.g. Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008). The concept *flourishing at work* also appears in the literature. For instance, Bono, Davies, and Rasch (2012) stated that employees that flourish at work are happy, engaged, self-motivated, successful, and also learn in the process. Rothmann (2013) used the theoretical model of Keyes (2002) to identify the dimensions of flourishing in work and organisational contexts. However, no other models provide an integrative perspective on the aspects of flourishing in work and organisational contexts.

Another research gap is that no measure has been developed and validated to measure a model of flourishing versus languishing at work suggested by Rothmann (2013), as well as Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2012). If flourishing can be measured in a valid and reliable manner, it will enable researchers to identify how work can be done in ways that are sufficiently intrinsically motivating not to undermine further interest in work. It might also be possible to study how leaders can lead in a manner that keeps their joy of leading alive. A framework for flourishing at work has potential as an audit and development tool for

identifying employee well-being and for identifying the gaps. Valid and reliable information on the flourishing of workers could be used to build organisations as enabling institutions.

## **Flourishing**

Flourishing refers to high levels of well-being (Diener et al., 2010; Huppert & So, 2013; Keyes, 2002; Seligman, 2011). Over the last decades, various approaches to flourishing have been developed. These approaches are, for example, subjective well-being (Diener, 1984; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999), psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), and social well-being (Keyes, 1998). The term subjective well-being has mainly been used to refer to satisfaction with life (and life domains) and affective experiences (Diener et al., 1999). However, Keyes and Annas (2009) pointed out that the concept of subjective well-being included more than satisfaction and affective experiences (referred to as emotional well-being). It also includes subjective experiences of psychological and social well-being.

Keyes (2007) defined flourishing as a pattern of positive feelings and positive functioning in life (Keyes, 2007). Languishing, which is opposite to flourishing, refers to the absence of mental health. Keyes (2005) distinguished between three types of subjective well-being: emotional, psychological and social well-being. Emotional well-being refers to subjective judgements of how individuals perceive their lives. It includes satisfaction with life (and the domains thereof) and affective experiences. Psychological well-being focuses on the contents of one's life and the processes involved in living well. It consists of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Social well-being relates to the individuals' evaluation of their functioning on a public and social level. It includes social acceptance, social actualisation, social contribution, social coherence and social integration (Keyes, 2007).

Huppert and So (2013) developed a framework of flourishing based on three dimensions, namely positive characteristics, functioning, and appraisal. Positive characteristics refer to emotional stability, vitality, optimism, resilience, and self-esteem. Positive functioning includes engagement, competence, meaning, and positive relationships. Positive appraisal refers to life satisfaction and positive emotion. According to this framework, individuals flourish when they strongly confirm positive emotion, at least four positive characteristics, and three features of positive functioning (Huppert & So, 2013).

Diener, Tay, and Oishi (2013) tested a model of flourishing that complements other dimensions of well-being (e.g. Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989). Dimensions of flourishing include competence, self-acceptance, meaning, relatedness, optimism, giving, and engagement (Brown, Nesse, Vinokur, & Smith, 2003; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Putnam, 1995; Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 2001; Seligman, 2006).

According to Seligman (2011), flourishing consists of five dimensions, namely positive emotions, engagement, meaning, accomplishment, and positive relations. Positive emotions refer to having pleasure through the experience of positive affect. Engagement results when individuals know what their strengths are and recraft their lives to use them at work, in love, leisure, parenting and friendship. Meaning and purpose exist when individuals know what their strengths and talents are and use them in the service of something. Accomplishment refers to pursuing success, winning, achievement, and mastery. Positive relationships are defined as warm, satisfying, and trusting relationships with others. According to Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern, and Seligman (2011), it is impossible for a single indicator to reveal whether a person is flourishing. Therefore, flourishing is experienced through the scoring in the upper range of each dimension.

Noble and McGrath (2015) suggested PROSPER as a new framework for positive education. The PROSPER acronym stands for Positivity (the state of being positive), Relationships (building positive relationships), Outcomes (accomplishments and success), Strengths (focusing on ability and character strengths), Purpose (perceiving that goals are worthwhile), Engagement (engaging behaviourally, cognitively, and emotionally), and Resilience (coping adaptively with difficulties). The frameworks mentioned above provide valuable insights into flourishing in life. Notably, there is also substantial overlap between the dimensions included in the different frameworks. However, the Mental Health Continuum (MHC; Keyes, 2005, 2007) represents a parsimonious model of mental health which integrates most of the dimensions of flourishing. Furthermore, the MHC is supported by a large body of research in different countries (Keyes, 2013; Rothmann, 2013).

### **Flourishing in Work and Organisational Contexts**

The concept of flourishing (Keyes, 2005) was developed to indicate emotional, psychological, and social well-being in life. However, flourishing can also occur in a work

and organisational context. Flourishing refers to the experience that life in work and organisational contexts is going well. It equates with two components of well-being, namely feeling and functioning well (Keyes, 2002; Noble & McGrath, 2015, Rothmann, 2013). Therefore, flourishing is achieved through positive experiences and efficient management of work-related factors.

The work of Bono et al. (2012) conceptualised flourishing in the workplace. Their model identified three key elements of flourishing: employee thriving (learning and vitality), happiness (emotions and positive moods), and engagement (job satisfaction and self-determination motivation). Existing research to support their concept of flourishing is limited.

Researchers (e.g. Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012; Rothmann, 2013; Seligman, 2011) have suggested various criteria for a model of flourishing. 1) A multidimensional model of well-being is necessary. Such a model should contain indicators of feeling and functioning well (Keyes & Annas, 2009; Rothmann, 2013). For example, employee satisfaction (i.e. how a person feels about a job) is a distinct concept from work engagement (i.e. how a person functions in a job). Employees might feel happy about their jobs, but they might not be willing to expend effort on their jobs (ADP Research Institute, 2012). Porath et al. (2012) have developed a multidimensional model of well-being which combines two dimensions, namely vitality and learning to identify *thriving* employees. For example, if employees are learning, but they feel depleted at work, they are not thriving. 2) Flourishing dimensions should have a state-like rather than a dispositional nature. 3) Each element of flourishing should contribute to well-being in work and organisational contexts. 4) Each element of the flourishing model can be defined and measured independently of the others.

Rothmann (2013) argued that a measure of flourishing in work and organisational contexts should be developed. Such a measure is justified given that a context-specific measure (compared to a general measure that covers all life domains) predicted individual and organisational outcomes significantly better. Based on a literature review of well-being, and an empirical study, Rothmann (2013) concluded that flourishing in work and organisational contexts consists of three broad dimensions, namely emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Each dimension consists of some facets (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Flourishing at Work (adapted from Rothmann, 2013)*

Component	Work	Description	
Emotional well-being	Satisfaction with job	Like or dislike the job.	
	Positive affect	Feel happy, regularly cheerful, serene, good-spirited	
	Negative affect	Feel depressed, upset, and bored at work.	
Psychological well-being	Autonomy satisfaction	Satisfaction of the desire to (subjectively) experience freedom and choice when carrying out an activity.	
	Competence satisfaction	Satisfaction of the desire to feel effective in interacting with the environment.	
	Relatedness satisfaction	Satisfaction of individuals' needs to feel connected to others, to love and care for others, and to be loved and cared for.	
	Engagement		Individuals express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performance:
			Absorption: being alert at work and experiencing absorption and involvement.
			Vitality: being physically involved in a task and showing vigour.
			Dedication: being connected to job/others while working and showing dedication and commitment.
Learning	Perceive that one is acquiring and can apply knowledge and skills to one's work.		
Meaning	Experience work as meaningful, understand how work contributes to life's meaning, and sense what makes a job worthwhile.		
Purpose	Feels that the work he or she does makes a difference to the world, that the work he or she does serves a greater purpose, and that the work helps him or her make sense of the world.		
Social well-being	Social acceptance	Positive towards and accepting of diversity in people in the organisation.	
	Social actualisation (growth)	Believes in potential of others (individuals, groups and organisations).	
	Social contribution	Regards own daily activities as adding value to the organisation and others.	
	Social coherence	Finds the organisation and social life meaningful and comprehensible.	
	Social integration	Experiences sense of relatedness, comfort and support from the organisation.	

### *Emotional Well-being*

Emotional well-being is a dimension of subjective well-being that consists of perceptions of satisfaction with life (or domains thereof), and positive and negative affect balance. Satisfaction entails a long-term assessment of one's life or domains thereof. Positive and negative affect entails reflections of pleasant and unpleasant affects in one's immediate experience (Keyes, 2013). The concept of emotional well-being is similar to what Rojas and Veenhoven (2013) describe as overall happiness (i.e. the degree to which individuals judge their overall lives as favourable). Overall happiness consists of an affective component (which reflects the extent to which needs are satisfied) and a cognitive component (which reflects the extent to which individuals perceive their wants to be met). In a work and organisational context emotional well-being (or overall happiness) could refer to three dimensions, namely job satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect balance (Rothmann, 2013).

The concept of satisfaction is based on cognitive theories, which hold that happiness is a product of human thinking (Rojas & Veenhoven, 2013). People make appraisals of how well work life meets up with standards. They might compare the reality of what they experience at work with standards of a good work life. Comparisons can be made based on the lifetime (i.e. doing better or worse than before), social grounds (i.e. doing better or worse than other people), or fairness and equity. The standards used for comparisons are regarded as socially constructed and affected by culture. In other words, such standards come from socialisation, involving the adoption of notions of the good life. Furthermore, the standards are presumed to be variable rather than fixed. Consequently, people might judge their work lives by what they think can realistically be. Therefore, job satisfaction relates to employees' perception of all aspects of their current jobs in terms of what they think can be. The realisation of wants determines job satisfaction. Therefore, it is a critical facet of feeling well at work (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001).

According to affect theory (Schwarz & Strack, 1991), feeling well is a reflection of how people feel generally. In this regard, the evaluation of work life is regulated by the most salient affective experiences (Rojas & Veenhoven, 2013). Positive affect refers to pleasant responses in response to work events, such as joy, gratitude, serenity, hope, pride, and amusement. Negative affect refers to unpleasant emotions because of negative responses to

events such as anger, sadness, anxiety, boredom, frustration, and guilt. Positive and negative affect are linked to need gratification.

Accordingly, feeling well results from the sum of pleasures and pains weighted by duration and intensity. However, Diener, Pavot, and Sandvik (1991) showed that the frequency rather than the intensity of positive versus negative affect has a strong effect on the feeling well dimension. Individuals compute an affect balance, probably automatically, and this balance reflects in mood. According to Rojas and Veenhoven (2013), mood, contrary to emotion, is an affective reaction which is not linked to specific objects. Affective experiences seem to be linked to the gratification of human needs, which is rooted in human nature. Positive and negative affect have behavioural consequences: negative mood might urge cautions while positive mood might broaden the thought-action repertoire (Fredrickson, 2006).

### *Psychological Well-being*

Psychological well-being is a private phenomenon that is focused on the challenges individuals encounter in their lives (Keyes, 2013). The dimensions of psychological well-being indicate challenges that individuals encounter as they strive to function optimally and actualise their potential.

Psychological well-being in work and organisational contexts include autonomy, competence, relatedness, meaning and purpose, engagement (consisting of absorption, vitality, and dedication), and learning (Rothmann, 2013).

Flourishing of individuals at work can be explained by self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985). SDT can be used to explain motivated behaviour at work. Motivation is conceptualised as ranging from autonomous and stemming from within the self (self-concordant), to controlled and stemming from outside pressure (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The satisfaction of three innate psychological needs of people, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness, results in people aligning their behaviour, values, beliefs and interests (Deci & Ryan, 2011). The extent of psychological need satisfaction allows observers to understand whether people will be subjectively well. These psychological needs cover three elements of psychological well-being (i.e. autonomy, environmental mastery, and positive relations), according to the models of Ryff and Singer (1998) and Keyes (2005).

Autonomy is the desire to feel in control, take ownership of individual behaviour, and be able to exercise decisiveness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The need for autonomy refers to a desire to (subjectively) experience freedom and choice when carrying out an activity. Autonomous individuals might experience autonomy satisfaction even when they depend on others or follow others' requests (e.g. when a meaningful rationale for requests is given). The need for competence refers to individuals' inherent desire to feel effective in interacting with the environment (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Competence satisfaction results from mastering a task and allows employees to adapt to complex and changing environments, while competence frustration results in helplessness and a lack of motivation. The need for relatedness refers to the innate need of individuals to feel connected to others, to love and care for others, and to be loved and cared for. This need is satisfied when individuals experience a sense of communion and develop close and intimate relationships with others (Deci & Ryan, 2011).

Learning is an important facet of psychological well-being in work and organisational contexts because it focuses on individual development and continuous improvement (Porath et al., 2012). Learning refers to "the sense that one is acquiring and can apply knowledge and skills to one's work (Spreitzer, Lam, & Fritz, 2010, p. 134). Learning is a significant component of well-being focusing on individual development and improvement (Spreitzer, Porath, & Gibson, 2012). Ongoing personal growth and development of knowledge is critical for positive individual functioning (Ryff & Singer, 2006). Individuals with a high learning orientation believe that they can shape their skills. Furthermore, they focus on developing the ability to achieve future tasks (Porath et al., 2012). People with a learning orientation are likely to pursue self-development because they are interested in increasing competence and are motivated by growth and development needs.

Various models of flourishing highlight the benefits of meaning and purpose to human functioning (Huppert & So, 2013; Kahn & Heaphy, 2014; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004; Ryff & Singer, 1998; Seligman, 2011; Steger, Kashdan, Sullivan, & Lorentz, 2008). Meaning relates to the significance of individuals' experiences, while purpose might be sought under circumstances of adversity (Steger, 2009). According to Steger, Dik, and Duffy (2012), the positive valence of meaningful work has "a eudaimonic (growth- and purpose-oriented) rather than hedonic focus" (p. 2). Steger et al. (2012) conceptualised meaningful work in terms of three dimensions: a) Psychological meaningfulness in work, i.e. the subjective

experience that one's work is significant and matters. b) Meaning-making through work, i.e. the idea that work is a vital source of meaning in one's life. Meaningful work assists people in understanding their selves and the world around them. c) Greater good motivations, i.e. the desire to make a difference and to have a broader impact on others.

The contribution of engagement to flourishing is evident in the models of Seligman (2011), Diener et al. (2013), and Huppert and So (2013). Work engagement is defined as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002, p. 74). Employees engaged in their work demonstrate high levels of energy and strongly identify with their job. Kahn (1990) also refers to work engagement as the connection of employees to their work roles. Rothbard and Patil (2012, p. 59) defined engagement as “... an employee's psychological presence in a role”. The engagement construct has its roots in the concept of authenticity, which results in individuals investing personal energies into role behaviours and expressing their selves in roles. Employee engagement comprises three dimensions, namely a physical component (being physically involved in a task and showing energy), a cognitive component (being alert at work and experiencing absorption and involvement), and an emotional component (being connected to job/others while working and showing dedication and commitment) (Kahn & Heaphy, 2014; Schaufeli, 2014).

### *Social Well-being*

Social well-being is an important component of flourishing in the model of Keyes (2005). Keyes (1998, p. 122) explains that social well-being refers to “the appraisal of one's circumstance and functioning in society”. According to Keyes (2013), social well-being is a public experience that is focused on social tasks that individuals encounter in social structures in which they find themselves (e.g. organisations).

The rationale for including social well-being in a model of flourishing is that individuals are embedded in social structures in organisations and communities, and that they face various social tasks and challenges (Keyes, 1998, pp. 122-123). Social well-being is regarded as significant because of the association between mental health and connectedness. According to Son and Wilson (2012), the concept of social well-being is inspired by Durkheim's (1951) writings about the mental illnesses consequent upon isolation (egoism) and anomie (lack of

regulation). The harm in anomie lies in the way it encourages people to believe they do not matter, no one notices them, they are unimportant to others, and that others cannot be relied on to provide support (Piliavin, 2007). Keyes' (2005) conceptualisation of social well-being in societies includes five elements, namely social integration, social acceptance, social contribution, social actualization, and social coherence.

*Social integration* entails the evaluation of the quality of one's relation to community. Therefore, social integration refers to the extent to which people feel they have something in common with others who constitute their social reality (e.g. other people in their organisation) as well as the degree to which they feel they belong to their community. The roots of *social integration* are in the conceptions of social cohesion (Durkheim, 1951), and cultural estrangement and social isolation (Seeman, 1991). According to Durkheim (1951), social coordination and well-being reflect individuals' connections to others through norms and indicate their fondness for society. Seeman (1991) regards estrangement as the rejection of society while social isolation refers to the breakdown of personal relationships that provide meaning and support. *Social acceptance* entails that individuals trust others, think that others are capable of kindness and believe that people can be hard-working. Individuals who are socially accepting, hold favourable views of human nature and feel comfortable with others. *Social contribution* refers to the evaluation of one's social value. It includes the belief that one is a vital member of a community, with something of value to contribute to the community. *Social actualization* refers to belief in the evolution of society and the sense that society has potential which is being realised through institutions and its citizens. People who are socially well, envision that they, as well as others, are beneficiaries of social growth. *Social coherence* refers to the perception of the quality, organisation, and operation of the social world. Individuals who are well, care about the kind of world they find themselves in, but also feel that they can understand what is happening around them.

Social well-being of employees is also applicable to organisations as communities (Rothmann, 2013). The five dimensions entail the following: a) Social integration indicates whether employees experience a sense of relatedness, comfort and support from the organisation. b) Social acceptance refers to a positive attitude towards and acceptance of diversity in people in the organisation. c) Social contribution refers to whether individuals believe that their daily activities add value to the organisation and others. b) Social actualisation (growth) indicates whether individuals believe in the potential of other

individuals, groups and organisations. d) Social coherence indicates whether employees find their organisations and social lives meaningful and comprehensible.

### **Aim and Hypotheses**

The aim of this study was to develop and evaluate the psychometric properties (construct validity, reliability, and measurement invariance) of a multidimensional scale that measures flourishing in a work and organisational context. Given the analytical strategy and based on the literature review, the following hypotheses were set for this study:

Hypothesis 1: Flourishing at work is a multidimensional construct, consisting of emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

Hypothesis 2: The scales of a measure of flourishing at work are reliable.

Hypothesis 3: A measure of flourishing at work shows configural, metric, and scalar invariance.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

A cross-sectional survey design with questionnaires as a method of data collection was used to obtain information from the target population.

### **Participants**

A total of 779 employees of an alcoholic beverage company in the fast-moving consumable goods environment industry in South Africa participated in the study. Table 2 shows the characteristics of the participants. A total of 59.6% of the sample were males, while 40.4% were females. The ages of the participants varied from 22 years to 59 years, with 44% younger than 35 years. Of the participants, 77.5% had been in the company for longer than three years. The majority of the participants were not given people management responsibilities (58.8%). The distribution of participants across job function was sales and distribution (30%), manufacturing (36.5%) and centre of functioning (33.5%).

Table 2  
*Characteristics of Participants (N=779)*

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	464	59.6
	Female	315	40.4
Age	Below 25	33	4.3
	25 – 34	310	39.8
	35 – 44	255	32.7
	45 – 54	134	17.2
	Over 55	47	6.0
Year in Company	Less than 1 year	52	6.7
	Between 1 and 3 years	123	15.8
	Between 3 and 5 years	132	16.9
	Between 5 and 10 years	198	25.4
	Between 10 and 15 years	99	12.7
	Between 15 and 20 years	80	10.3
	More than 20 years	95	12.2
Manage People	Yes	321	41.2
	No	458	58.8
Job Level	Staff member	145	18.6
	Skilled worker	265	34.0
	Supervisor	105	13.5
	Manager	200	25.7
	Executive	57	7.3
	Senior executive	7	0.9

### **Measuring Instruments**

The *Flourishing-at-Work Scale* (FAWS) was developed based on the literature review (this article and a chapter by Rothmann, 2013) for the purposes of this study. The FAWS consists of 48 items measuring the three dimensions of flourishing (Emotional, Psychological and Social well-being) in work and organisational context. Subject experts were asked to classify

the items according to the dimensions of flourishing. A total of 36 items were correctly classified and were used to assess the validity of the measure. Emotional well-being consists of three dimensions, namely Positive affect (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel happy?”), Negative affect (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel upset?”), and Job satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you experience satisfaction with your job?”). Psychological well-being consists of six dimensions, namely autonomy satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that you can do your job the way you think it could best be done?”), competence satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel you really master your tasks at your job?”), relatedness satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel really connected with other people at your job?”), learning (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you find yourself learning”), meaningful work (four items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that your work makes a difference to the world?”), engagement (six items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that you get so into your job that you lose track of time?”), and social well-being (five items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that your organisation is becoming a better place for people like you?”). Responses are measured on a six-point scale that ranges from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*every day*).

## **Data Analysis**

The data was analysed by using Mplus 7.31 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014). The maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (MLR) was used. To assess model fit, the following fit indices were used: the Chi-square statistic (the test of absolute fit of the model), Standardised Root Mean Residual (SRMR), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) (West, Taylor, & Wu, 2012). For TLI and CFI values to be acceptable, scores higher than 0.90 are required. Both RMSEA and SRMR values lower than 0.08 indicate a close fit between the model and the data. To compare alternative measurement models, the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayes Information Criterion (BIC) were used in addition to other fit indices. The AIC, which is a comparative measure of fit, is meaningful when one estimates different models. The lowest AIC is the best fitting model. The BIC provides an indication of model parsimony (Kline, 2010). Point estimate reliability ( $\rho$ ) was computed for each scale (Raykov,

2009). This form of reliability is superior to Cronbach alpha coefficients when latent variable modelling is employed.

Measurement invariance was tested to compare the test model with the calibration model. Measurement invariance was investigated in three hierarchical steps (Wang & Wang, 2012), namely a) testing for configural invariance; b) testing for metric invariance; and c) testing for scalar invariance. Configural invariance exists when the same number of factors and free or fixed factor loadings (without any other equality constraints on any other model parameters) exist across groups. Metric (weak) invariance exists when factor loadings are equal across groups. Scalar (strong) invariance exists when factor loadings as well as item intercepts are invariant.

## **Research Procedure**

The management of the participating organisation gave permission for the study to be conducted. Ethical clearance for this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee at the university from where the research was undertaken (Ethics number: NWU-00095-14-a8). The researcher administered the questionnaire (in English) electronically (hosted at myresearchsurvey.com) in the environment where the participants were working. The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and emphasising the confidentiality of participation in the research. Participation in the survey was anonymous and voluntary. Respondents gave consent that the researchers could use the information obtained from the survey for research purposes only. Between mid-August 2014 and end-September 2014 the questions were made available electronically. The completed raw data was converted to an SPSS dataset and prepared for analysis with Mplus 7.31.

## **Results**

### **Testing the Measurement Model**

Using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), five measurement models were tested in half of the sample.

Model 1 consisted of three latent variables: emotional well-being (EWB), which consisted of three first-order latent variables: positive affect (measured by three items), negative affect (measured by three items), and job satisfaction (measured by three items); psychological well-being (PWB), which consisted of six first-order latent variables: autonomy satisfaction (measured by three items), relatedness satisfaction (measured by three items), competence satisfaction (measured by three items), learning (measured by three items), meaning and purpose (measured by four items), engagement (measured by six items); and social well-being (SWB; measured by five items). All the latent variables in model 1 were allowed to correlate.

Models 2, 3, 4 and 5 followed the same template, but with differences from model 1. In model 2, affect was specified with six observed variables (rather than three items on positive affect and three items on negative affect). In model 3, emotional well-being was specified with nine observed variables (rather than three items each for positive affect, negative affect and job satisfaction). In model 4, psychological well-being was specified with 22 observed variables (rather than various first-order factors). Model 5 consisted of one latent variable with all the observed variables loading on this variable.

Table 3 shows the fit statistics for the competing measurement models.

Table 3  
*Fit Statistics of Competing Measurement Models*

Model	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC	BIC	
1	1395.57	579	0.88	0.89	0.06*	[0.056, 0.065]	0.06	39139.78	39626.35
2	1436.64	580	0.87	0.88	0.06*	[0.058, 0.066]	0.06	39191.79	39674.41
3	1457.77	582	0.87	0.88	0.06*	[0.058, 0.066]	0.06	39218.96	39693.66
4	2558.81	588	0.71	0.73	0.09*	[0.089, 0.097]	0.08	40701.52	41152.48
5	2936.14	594	0.71	0.72	0.09*	[0.097, 0.105]	0.10	41219.84	41647.07

$\chi^2$ , chi-square statistic; *df*, degrees of freedom; TLI, Tucker-Lewis Index; CFI, Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR; Standardised Root Mean Square Residual; AIC, Akaike Information Criterion; BIC, Bayes Information Criterion

The results in Table 3 showed that a  $\chi^2$  value of 1395.57 ( $df = 579$ ) was obtained for model 1. Model 1 fitted the data the best and was the most parsimonious of the five alternative models (AIC = 39139.78 and BIC = 39626.35). The fit statistics on four fit indices were acceptable: TLI = 0.91, CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.05 and SRMR = 0.06. The hypothesised model had an acceptable fit with the data on all of the fit indices.

## **Model Development**

The analysis continued in an exploratory mode to improve the fit of the selected model. Standardised residuals of the items were inspected to find items which caused misfit in the model. Item 27 (“How often did you find that you are developing a great deal as a person?”) showed high standardised residuals in relation to item 22 (SR = 11.64; “Do you feel that your organisation is becoming a better place for people like you?”) and item 33 (SR = 12.43; “How often did you feel that your work helped you to make sense of the world around you?”). It was therefore decided to re-specify the model without item 27 (model 1b). The fit statistics for model 1b were as follows:  $\chi^2 = 1275.06$ ,  $df = 545$ , AIC = 38091.71, BIC = 38566.41, RMSEA = 0.06 [0.055, 0.063], CFI = 0.89, TLI = 0.89 and SRMR = 0.06.

Although the fit of model 1b improved significantly ( $\Delta AIC = 1048.07$ ,  $\Delta BIC = 1059.64$ ), the fit statistics on three indices were below the recommended guidelines. Item 29 (“How often did you feel that you understand how your work contributes to your life’s meaning?”) showed a high standardised residual (17.27) in relation to item 40 (“How often did you feel passionate about your job?”). The model was re-specified to allow a path from item 40 to Meaning and Purpose. The fit statistics for model 1c were as follows:  $\chi^2 = 1204.09$ ,  $df = 543$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , AIC = 38000.68, BIC = 38483.29, RMSEA = 0.06 [0.052, 0.060], CFI = 0.90, TLI = 0.90 and SRMR = 0.06. The model fit again improved significantly ( $\Delta AIC = 91.03$ ,  $\Delta BIC = 83.42$ ), but the fit statistics on three indices were below the recommended guidelines.

Modification indices (MIs) were studied to identify other reasons for misfit in the model. The MI (for error covariance of items 16 and 17) was 33.34. In model 1d the errors of item 16 and item 17 were allowed to correlate. The fit statistics for model 1d were as follows:  $\chi^2 = 1171.79$ ,  $df = 542$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , AIC = 37960.12, BIC = 38446.69, RMSEA = 0.06 [0.052, 0.060], CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90 and SRMR = 0.06. The model fit again improved significantly

( $\Delta AIC = 40.56$ ,  $\Delta BIC = 36.60$ ). The fit of model 1d was acceptable. Therefore hypothesis 1 is accepted.

The relationship between each observed variable and its respective construct was statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, the posited relationships among indicators and constructs were established (see Hair, Black, Babin, & Andersen, 2010).

### Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of the Scales

Table 4 shows the reliabilities and correlations for the scales.

Table 4

*Reliability Coefficients and Correlations of the Scales (N = 779)*

Variable	$\rho$	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Positive affect	0.76	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Negative affect	0.65	0.56	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Job satisfaction	0.87	0.91	-0.59	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Autonomy	0.76	0.69	-0.45	0.72	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Competence	0.83	0.52	-0.34	0.54	0.85	-	-	-	-	-
6. Relatedness	0.79	0.65	-0.42	0.68	0.89	0.66	-	-	-	-
7. Learning	0.95	0.62	-0.40	0.65	0.60	0.45	0.57	-	-	-
8. Meaningful work	0.93	0.67	-0.44	0.70	0.65	0.49	0.61	0.58	-	-
9. Engagement	0.85	0.76	-0.49	0.79	0.73	0.55	0.69	0.66	0.71	-
10. Social well-being	0.89	0.74	-0.48	0.77	0.76	0.57	0.72	0.69	0.74	0.84

Note: All correlations are statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ )

Table 4 shows scale reliabilities ranging from 0.77 to 0.95, which indicates acceptable internal consistencies of all the scales (Raykov, 2009). Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

### Measurement Invariance of the Test and Calibration Samples

Table 5 displays the results of the measurement invariance testing for the test and calibration samples.

Table 5

*Measurement Invariance of the FAWS*

Models compared	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$	$p$
Metric against configural	29.64	26	0.2830
Scalar against configural	62.01	51	0.1388
Scales against metric	32.95	25	0.1324

Table 5 reveals that configural, metric and scalar invariance exists between the test and calibration samples. Hypothesis 3 is accepted.

Table 6 depicts the standardised regression coefficients of the emotional, psychological and social well-being items and scales of the FAWS.

Table 6  
*Standardised Regression Coefficients of the FAWS*

Item	Test sample			Calibration sample		
	Est	SE	Est/SE	Est	SE	Est/SE
During the past month at work, how often did you ...						
<i>Positive affect</i>						
1. feel happy?	0.81	0.03	31.57	0.74	0.04	19.55
2. feel particularly interested in something?	0.66	0.04	15.61	0.66	0.04	15.61
3. feel grateful?	0.69	0.04	17.83	0.71	0.04	19.22
<i>Negative affect</i>						
4. feel upset?	0.54	0.07	8.12	0.69	0.05	15.07
5. feel depressed?	0.70	0.07	10.33	0.74	0.04	17.26
6. feel bored?	0.54	0.06	8.52	0.43	0.07	6.52
<i>Job satisfaction</i>						
7. experience satisfaction with your job?	0.86	0.03	31.69	0.89	0.02	47.74
8. experience real enjoyment in your work?	0.93	0.02	61.28	0.90	0.02	55.76
9. feel that your job is close to your ideal job?	0.73	0.03	22.28	0.73	0.03	23.42
<i>Autonomy</i>						
10. feel you can be yourself at your job?	0.73	0.04	19.41	0.77	0.04	19.68
11. feel you can do your job the way you think it could best be done?	0.76	0.03	24.96	0.75	0.04	19.43
12. feel confident to think or express your own ideas and opinions?	0.65	0.05	14.44	0.74	0.03	21.66
<i>Competence</i>						
13. feel good at managing the responsibilities of your job?	0.79	0.04	18.50	0.73	0.04	19.42
14. feel that you really master your tasks at your job?	0.84	0.03	29.71	0.76	0.05	16.81
15. feel you can even accomplish the most difficult tasks at work?	0.72	0.04	16.86	0.73	0.04	19.12
<i>Relatedness</i>						
16. feel really connected with other people at your job?	0.80	0.03	30.05	0.75	0.03	22.26
17. feel that you experienced warm and trusting relationships with others at work?	0.83	0.03	30.09	0.82	0.03	29.10
18. feel that people involve you in social activities at work?	0.65	0.04	18.09	0.58	0.04	13.09
<i>Learning</i>						
19. find yourself learning often?	0.94	0.02	52.14	0.95	0.01	67.38
20. find that you continue to learn more as time goes by?	0.97	0.02	60.62	0.97	0.1	85.24
<i>Meaning and purpose</i>						
21. feel that you understand how your work contributes to your life's meaning?	0.82	0.03	30.73	0.80	0.02	30.35

Table 6

*Standardised Regression Coefficients of the FAWS (continued)*

Item	Test sample			Calibration sample		
22. feel that your work makes a difference to the world?	0.91	0.02	47.74	0.92	0.02	55.59
23. feel that the work you do serves a greater purpose?	0.89	0.02	41.58	0.83	0.03	30.01
24. feel your work helps you make sense of the world around you?	0.90	0.02	50.58	0.92	0.01	79.65
<i>Engagement</i>						
25. focus a great deal of attention on your work?	0.46	0.06	8.20	0.60	0.05	12.65
26. get so into your job that you lose track of time?	0.39	0.07	6.05	0.32	0.06	4.98
27. feel passionate about your job?	0.72	0.07	10.95	0.71	0.08	9.48
28. get excited when you performed well on your job?	0.83	0.03	29.70	0.80	0.02	34.32
29. devote a lot of energy to your job?	0.65	0.05	13.45	0.61	0.05	12.86
30. feel energised when you work?	0.81	0.03	28.50	0.81	0.03	29.64
<i>Social well-being</i>						
31. feel you had something important to contribute to this organisation?	0.66	0.04	16.66	0.61	0.04	14.45
32. feel that you really belong to this organisation?	0.86	0.02	52.69	0.86	0.02	47.16
33. feel this organisation is becoming a better place for people like you?	0.84	0.02	43.41	0.87	0.02	42.77
34. feel that people in your organisation are basically good?	0.71	0.04	19.98	0.75	0.03	22.84
35. feel that the way your organisation works, makes sense to you?	0.81	0.03	27.33	0.81	0.03	31.58

All loadings were statistically significant ( $p < 0.000$ )

Figure 1 shows the mean scores of the total sample on the 10 dimensions of flourishing over the last month. The scale was as follows: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once a week, 4 = About two or three times per week, 5 = Almost every day, 6 = Every day.

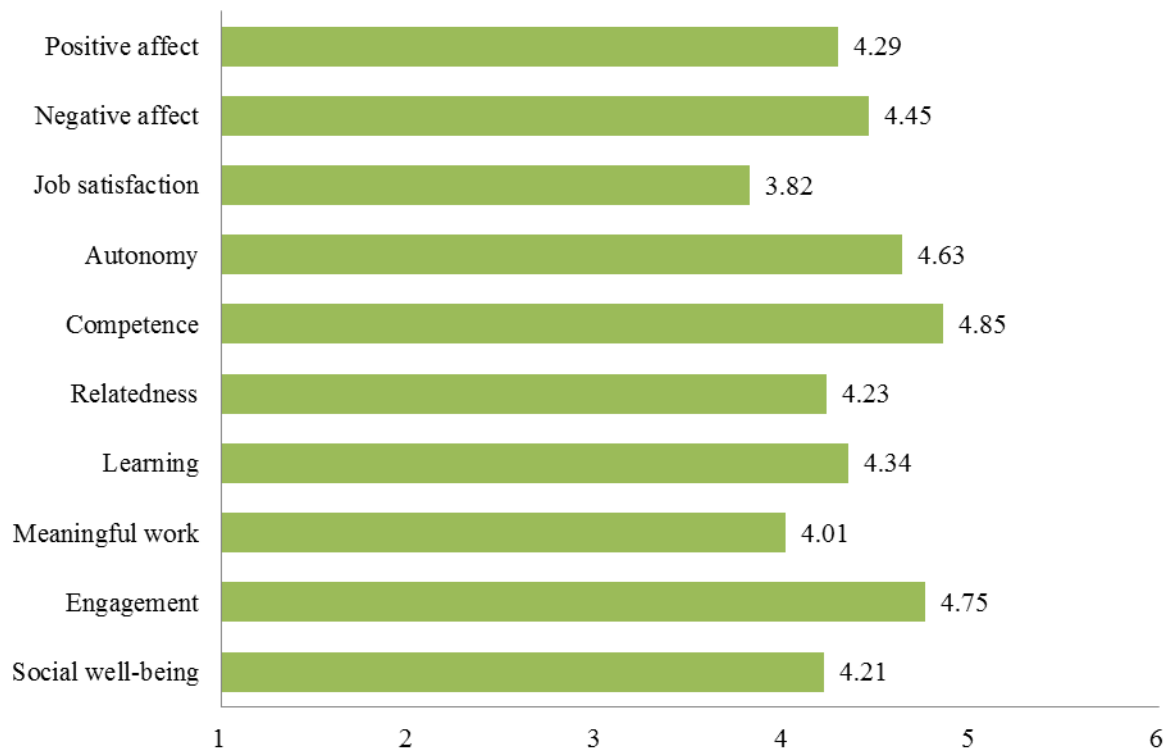


Figure 1. Mean scores on 10 dimensions of flourishing

Figure 1 shows that the lowest scores were obtained on job satisfaction and meaningful work. The highest scores were obtained on competence and work engagement.

Table 7 gives an account of the standardised regression coefficients of the FAWS in the total sample.

Table 7

*Standardised Regression Coefficients of the FAWS Dimensions*

Scale	Est	SE	Est/SE	<i>p</i>
1. Positive affect	0.85	0.03	29.79	0.000
2. Negative affect	0.59	0.06	10.22	0.000
3. Job satisfaction	0.89	0.02	57.64	0.000
4. Autonomy	0.86	0.02	37.63	0.000
5. Competence	0.63	0.04	17.43	0.000
6. Relatedness	0.81	0.02	33.35	0.000
7. Learning	0.73	0.02	33.16	0.000
8. Meaning and purpose	0.78	0.02	35.62	0.000
9. Work engagement	0.89	0.02	59.79	0.000
10. Social well-being	0.91	0.01	68.00	0.000

Note: Dimension 1-3 loaded on Emotional well-being; Dimensions 4-9 loaded on Psychological well-being

The standardised regression coefficients were all statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). The results in Table 7 confirm that flourishing can be modelled in terms of three factors, namely Emotional, Psychological and Social well-being. Emotional well-being consists of Positive affect, Negative affect and Job satisfaction. Psychological well-being comprises autonomy, competence, relatedness, learning, meaningful work, and work engagement.

## **Discussion**

The aim of this study was to validate a measure of flourishing in a work and organisational context. This research contributes to the relatively thin, but emergent, literature on the measuring of flourishing at work. The results showed that flourishing or languishing can be classified by three dimensions, namely Emotional, Psychological, and Social well-being. This aligns with the theoretical model of Keyes's three dimensions of the Mental Health Continuum (MHC) (Keyes, 2002) as well as the suggested work flourishing model by Rothmann (2013). A test sample was used to conduct the first set of analyses, and the results supported the structure of a scale that measures flourishing at work (FAWS). Furthermore, the factor structure was confirmed in a calibration sample. These results support the initial construct validity of FAWS. Measurement invariance testing between the test and calibration samples showed that configural, metric and scalar invariance were supported. The reliabilities of the scales were acceptable ( $\rho > 0.70$ ), except for the subscale that measures negative affect. The FAWS provided a useful assessment of self-reported flourishing in work and organisational contexts.

Research by Keyes (2005) and Keyes and Annas (2009) showed the value of a mental health continuum for promoting mental health in society. These authors found that the absence of flourishing is associated with impairment and burden to the self and society and that only a small proportion of mentally healthy people are flourishing. Studies in various countries around the world have shown that the mental health continuum, which classifies behaviour from flourishing to languishing, is justifiable. Keyes (2005) conceptualisation of flourishing makes it possible to integrate various well-being theories, including positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2006), psychological well-being (Ryff & Singer, 1998), and satisfaction with life and domain satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999), but also includes social well-being.

The results showed that a multidimensional perspective of the flourishing of people within a work and organisational context should include the dimensions of feeling good (emotional well-being) and functioning well (psychological and social well-being). However, the three-factor model of subjective well-being was superior to one- and two-factor models. This supports the work of Keyes (2005, 2007) regarding one dimension of feeling well (i.e. emotional well-being), and two dimensions of functioning well (psychological and social well-being). Furthermore, it was possible to integrate hedonic (Diener, 1984), eudaimonic (Ryff, 1989), and social well-being (Keyes, 1998) into a unified structure.

Concerning emotional well-being, individuals that flourish at work are satisfied with their jobs and experience positive affect and low negative affect at work. Regarding the psychological dimension, flourishing employees experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness satisfaction (self-determination); learning, meaningful work, and are engaged. Concerning social well-being, they experience social acceptance, social growth, social contribution, social coherence, and social integration. The measurement of both feeling and functioning well facets is necessary to assess good mental health. Studying mental health at work cannot focus only on symptoms of feeling well or functioning well – it should focus on both dimensions. Mental health constitutes both positive feeling and positive functioning.

The findings of this study confirmed the configural, metric, and scalar invariance of the FAWS in a calibration sample. Configural invariance means that the same number of factors existed across two samples. The FAWS also showed metric invariance, which means that factor loadings on the 10 scales were equal across the two samples. Finally, the FAWS showed scalar invariance, which means that factor loadings, as well as item intercepts, were invariant across the two samples. These findings provide support for the construct validity of the FAWS.

This study shows encouraging results, but with any new measurement, various limitations do exist. First, the study was done in a single organisation, and therefore the results cannot be generalised to the entire working population. The validity, reliability and invariance of the measure of flourishing at work should aim to include different types of organisations and industries to ensure generalisability. Second, the study did not evaluate the psychometric properties of the measure of work flourishing among different language, age and gender groups. Third, convergent and divergent validity were not investigated in this study. Future

studies should relate the FAWS to other reliable and valid measures of flourishing, meaningful work, work engagement, psychological need satisfaction and thriving. Fourth, given the cross-sectional design of this study, it was not possible to study the stability of flourishing over time. Further research is critical in refining the construct and investigating the reliability and validity of the FAWS over time. Fifth, self-acceptance, a dimension included in the conceptualisation of psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989) was not included in this study. Future studies should test this dimension as part of psychological well-being at work. Last, only one item was used to measure each facet of social well-being in this study. Future studies should include at least three items per facet (Kline, 2010).

### **Recommendations**

This study showed that it is possible to broaden the perspective on the conceptualisation and measurement of well-being in work and organisational contexts to include emotional, psychological and social well-being dimensions thereof simultaneously. In fact, subjective judgements of different dimensions provide valuable information about the feeling and functioning of people in work and organisational contexts. Therefore, it is recommended that work and organisational psychologists broaden their focus to measure and promote flourishing in work and organisational contexts. Investigating well-being from a holistic perspective is crucial. It is probably not very informative if the focus is exclusively on aspects of employee well-being (e.g. burnout and work engagement). This study showed that emotional, psychological and social dimensions of well-being can be assessed in a valid and reliable way. Human resource practitioners and industrial psychologists in practice should consider the findings of this study in measuring and promoting the flourishing of people in organisations.

Although the findings were encouraging and an important step in understanding the nature of flourishing at work, more research is needed to investigate the psychometric properties of the FAWS in other work industries. Studies regarding the convergent, discriminant and criterion-related validity of the FAWS are necessary. More specifically, research is needed to link flourishing to causes and effects thereof in a nomological network. Research is also needed to name and refine latent classes of well-being identified in this study, and to assess whether latent classes relate differently to antecedents and outcomes of flourishing at work.

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**CHAPTER 3**

**ARTICLE 2**

**Antecedents of Flourishing at Work**

## **Antecedents of Flourishing at Work**

### **Abstract**

The aims of this study were to evaluate the psychometric properties of a short scale which measures flourishing at work and to investigate antecedents of flourishing in the work context. A cross-sectional survey design was used with a stratified random sample of 779 employees in an alcoholic beverage company in South Africa. The Flourishing-at-Work Scale (Short Form), Job Demands-Resources Scale, and Authentic Leadership Questionnaire were administered. The results showed that the psychometric properties (reliability and validity) of the Flourishing-at-Work Scale (Short Form) were acceptable. Flourishing at work was best predicted by advancement, negative work-home interaction (inverse) and authentic leadership. Workload, job insecurity, and compensation did not impact flourishing or languishing statistically significantly in this study.

**Keywords:** Flourishing, work, well-being, workload, job insecurity, salary, advancement, negative work-home interaction, authentic leadership

Work plays a fundamental role in the development, expression, and maintenance of the well-being of employees. According to Keyes and Grzywacz (2005), employee well-being is a form of “human capital” that can provide a competitive edge for organisations. Flourishing individuals feel and function well at work. In contrast, languishing individuals do not feel and function well (Diener et al., 2010; Huppert & So, 2013; Keyes, 2002; Seligman, 2011). Flourishing refers to the subjective well-being of people, regarding emotional, psychological and social dimensions (Keyes & Annas, 2009). The environments within which people are rooted affect their well-being. Hence, it is necessary to study flourishing and languishing in the workplace (Deci & Ryan, 2011).

Studying flourishing versus languishing at work is relevant because mental health affects individual and organisational outcomes. Concerning individual outcomes, flourishing affects individuals’ experiences of enjoyment, significance, and optimal functioning (Pink, 2009). For example, Rothmann (2015) found that individuals who flourish (compared to those who languish) are seven times more inclined to be engaged in their work. Furthermore, research has shown that subjective well-being contributes positively to the functioning and outcomes of organisations (Ryde & Sofianos, 2014). Concerning organisational outcomes, Diedericks and Rothmann (2014) found that flourishing predicted organisational citizenship behaviour, organisational commitment, and intentions to leave.

Flourishing at work is defined as an employee’s desirable condition or state of well-being, achieved through positive experiences and effective management of work-related factors (Rautenbach & Rothmann, in press). Flourishing consists of three dimensions, namely emotional well-being (job satisfaction and positive affect), psychological well-being (autonomy, competence, relatedness, meaning and purpose, work engagement, and learning), and social well-being. Rothmann (2013) reported that flourishing in the work context (compared to flourishing in general life) was predicted by job and organisational factors and was also a better predictor of organisational outcomes.

Research on flourishing in work and organisational contexts is vital, not only due to the happy-productive worker thesis (Zelenski, Murphy, & Jenkins, 2008), but also because research has shown that many people are not flourishing (Keyes, 2013). Research in South Africa has shown that 48.5% of managers in the agricultural sector were flourishing, 48.5% were moderately mentally healthy, while 3% were languishing (Swart & Rothmann, 2012).

Research in a sample of information technology specialists in South Africa showed that 37.6% of the participants were flourishing, 58.5% were moderately mentally healthy, while 3.9% were languishing (Diedericks & Rothmann, 2014). However, previous research regarding flourishing has been conducted with an instrument which was not tailored to work and organisational contexts. Rothmann (2013) found that although work and life flourishing share a relatively large percentage of the variance (50%), it will still be beneficial to study flourishing and antecedents thereof in the work context. An increase from 39% to 72% in the percentage of variance explained was recorded when flourishing was measured as a work-related rather than a general state of well-being.

While antecedents of flourishing in life have been studied (Keyes, 2013), scientific information is needed regarding the factors that contribute to flourishing in work and organisational contexts. It is vital to investigate how work can be done in ways that are sufficiently intrinsically motivating not to undermine further interest in work. Individuals and organisations will benefit if people were equipped to avoid the effects of exhausting their personal resources. Knowing the keys to lasting flourishing, and preventing detrimental habits from forming are crucial in promoting the well-being of individuals as well as the outcomes for organisations. The positive consequences of flourishing (Bono, Davies, & Rasch, 2012; Diedericks & Rothmann, 2014; Keyes, 2002) provide a compelling argument for investigating the work factors relating to flourishing.

### **Flourishing at Work**

Subjectively, individuals evaluate their lives, also in work and organisational contexts. People who flourish experience a high level of mental health characterised by a pattern of positive feelings and positive functioning in life (Keyes, 2007). Flourishing people feel satisfied with their lives and experience positive emotions. Also, they function well, both psychologically and socially (Keyes & Annas, 2009). According to Youssef and Luthans (2012), human flourishing can be defined as functioning within the optimal range, characterised by growth and generativity. Flourishing can be distinguished from mental illness, which represents the negative end of the mental health continuum, and languishing, a neutral state characterised by the absence of mental illness. However, languishing people experience hollowness and emptiness (Keyes, 2002).

Keyes (2013) identified two streams of research regarding subjective well-being. One stream of research equates well-being with feeling good (e.g. being happy). The other stream equates well-being with pursuing and developing human potential (i.e. positive functioning). These approaches grew from two philosophical traditions on happiness, namely *hedonia* and *eudaimonia*. Hedonia embodies human concerns with maximising the amount and duration of positive and pleasant feelings. Eudaimonia concerns purpose, contribution, integration, acceptance, mastery, and intimacy. A multidimensional perspective of the flourishing of people should include the dimensions of feeling good (emotional well-being) and functioning well (psychological and social well-being) (Keyes & Annas, 2009). Flourishing, as a model of positive mental health, was derived from theory, factor analysis and rational criteria (Keyes, 2013; Rothmann, 2014).

In a work and organisational context, flourishing refers to the experience that one's life at work is going well and that one is functioning well (Rautenbach & Rothmann, in press). Flourishing encompasses individuals who thrive at work, as well as those who are happy, engaged, intrinsically motivated, successful and enjoy learning (Bono et al., 2012), and are functioning well in life in general (Keyes, 2005). According to Keyes (2005), the presence of feeling well and functioning well results in flourishing of individuals, meaning that positive mental health is present.

Flourishing in work and organisational contexts consists of three broad dimensions, namely emotional, psychological, and social well-being (Rothmann, 2013). Concerning emotional well-being, individuals who flourish at work are satisfied with their jobs and experience a positive affect balance. Regarding the psychological dimension, individuals who flourish at work experience autonomy, competence and relatedness satisfaction, have a purpose and meaning at work, are engaged, and learn. Rautenbach and Rothmann (in press) conducted confirmatory factor analyses on subjective well-being items to test the latent structure of a well-being measure. The well-being model that fitted the data best consisted of three factors, namely emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Their findings are in line with findings reported by Keyes (2013) on flourishing.

Emotional well-being refers to how people feel. It consists of satisfaction with one's job and positive-negative affect balance. Job satisfaction entails a more enduring assessment of one's job. Rojas and Veenhoven (2013) pointed out that the concept of satisfaction is based on

cognitive theories which hold that happiness is a product of human thinking. Satisfaction is influenced by people's appraisals of how well work life meets up with standards. Job satisfaction relates to employees' perceptions of all aspects of their current jobs in terms of the realisation of their wants. Affect theory (Schwarz & Strack, 1991) claims that feeling well is a reflection of how people feel generally. In this regard, the evaluation of work life is regulated by the most salient affective experiences. Positive-negative affect balance reflects pleasant and unpleasant affects in one's immediate experiences at work. Positive affect refers to pleasant responses to work events, such as joy, gratitude, pride, and amusement. Negative affect refers to unpleasant emotions, such as anger, sadness, anxiety, boredom, frustration, and guilt. Positive and negative affect are linked to need gratification (Rautenbach & Rothmann, in press; Rojas & Veenhoven, 2013).

Psychological well-being in work and organisational contexts comprises autonomy, competence, relatedness, meaningful work, work engagement (consisting of absorption, vitality, and dedication), and learning (Rothmann, 2013). The psychological need for autonomy, competence and relatedness relates to the subjective experience of flourishing. Deci and Ryan (2011) define the need for autonomy as the personal experience of having choices and freedom when activities are carried out. The need for competence raises awareness around the individual's inherent desire to feel effective in interacting with the environment. An individual's need to experience a sense of belonging, connectedness, caring and love and being loved refers to the need for relatedness and is satisfied when a sense of closeness and intimate relationships with others exist.

Meaningful work refers to the significance of work to people where they experience the job as valuable and worthwhile (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010; Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012). Meaningful work is conceptualised in terms of three dimensions: psychological meaningfulness in work (i.e. the subjective experience of the value of one's work judged in relation to one's own standards); meaning-making through work (i.e. the idea that work is a critical basis of meaning in one's life), and greater good motivations (i.e. the desire to make a difference and to have a broader impact on others).

Engagement is rooted in the concept of authenticity and is defined as "... an employee's psychological presence in a role" (Rothbard & Patil, 2012, p. 59). Engaged individuals invest their energies into role behaviours and express themselves in their roles. Employee

engagement comprises physical, cognitive and emotional components. The physical component relates to vigour (being physically involved in a task and investing energy); whereas the cognitive component refers to being alert at work and experiencing involvement and a sense of significance. Dedication constitutes the emotional component of work engagement, and is often characterised by being connected and committed to the job and others and putting one's heart into the job.

Learning refers to “the sense that one is acquiring and can apply knowledge and skills to one's work” (Spreitzer, Lam, & Fritz, 2010, p. 139). Learning is an integral part of the search for meaning (Carneiro, 2013). Spreitzer et al. (2010) combined learning with vitality (a sub-dimension of work engagement) to explain thriving of people.

Social well-being in organisations is defined as the evaluation of one's circumstance and functioning in an organisation (Keyes, 1998). It involves five features entailing the following: 1) Social acceptance refers to a positive attitude towards and acceptance of diversity in the organisation. 2) Social growth indicates whether individuals believe in the potential of development of fellow employees, groups and organisations. 3) Social contribution refers to whether individuals believe that their daily actions add value to the organisation and others. 4) Social coherence indicates whether employees find their organisations and social lives meaningful and understandable. 5) Social integration indicates whether employees experience a sense of relatedness, comfort and support from the organisation. These facets are based on Keyes's (2005) conceptualisation of social well-being in civilisations (i.e. social acceptance, social growth, social contribution, social coherence, and social integration).

### **Antecedents of Flourishing at Work: Job Demands and Resources**

Experiences in work and organisational contexts play a significant role in the flourishing or languishing of individuals. Deci and Ryan (2011) stated that individuals' well-being is affected by the systems in which they are embedded. One model that can be used to understand the effects of social-contextual variables on employees is the Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001).

The JD-R model assumes that occupations may have specific work characteristics associated with well-being. Job demands require emotional, physical and cognitive input or skills to

perform a specific job and are associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs or strains (Demerouti et al., 2001). Job resources, on the other hand, refer to the emotional, physical and cognitive resources that reduce job demands and enable personal growth and development, ultimately resulting in greater performance and success (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 1998) is relevant for understanding the important impact of job resources on people. According to the COR model, individuals seek to acquire and maintain resources to ensure high levels of performance. Resources can be described as any object, circumstance, characteristic or energy (Hobfoll, 1989). Studies showed that job resources are critical factors associated with employee well-being (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008; Hakanen, Schaufeli, & Ahola, 2008; Rothmann & Joubert, 2007).

This study focuses on three demands (workload, job insecurity, and negative work-home interaction) and three resources (compensation, advancement, and authentic leadership) that might affect the flourishing or languishing of individuals. These demands and resources were found to be both critical and relevant to the FMCG industry.

Workload refers to a judgement of one's perceived work demands (Ganster, Fox, & Dwyer, 2001) in terms of the amount (quantity) and/or difficulty (quality) of work (Bowling & Kirkendall, 2012). Quantitative workload refers to the increased amount of hours worked while qualitative workload refers to the nature of the demands. *The Effort-Recovery (E-R) Model* (Demerouti, Taris, & Bakker, 2009; Meijman & Mulder, 1998) underpins the rationale of workload reactions resulting due to effort expenditure at work. Work recovery is necessary and can only occur when an employee is no longer confronted with work demands. Should complete recovery not take place after exposure to excessive workload, accumulation of the load reaction can result in impaired well-being. Work overload leads to excessive negative psychological strain, including job dissatisfaction (Britt, Stetz, & Bliese, 2004; Bowling, Alarcon, Bragg, & Hartman, 2015) and the feeling of being incompetent to cope with demands (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). This will result in impaired psychological well-being, lack of feelings of competence, and consequently employees will not flourish (Rothmann, 2013). Indeed Basson and Rothmann (in press) found that work overload as experienced statistically significantly predicted non-flourishing of pharmacy students over four year groups in South Africa ( $\beta = 0.32, p < 0.001$ ).

With increased competitiveness and globalisation of organisations, there is a growing tendency for employees to be expected to manage greater workloads. This ultimately results in employees spending more time in the domain of work. Individual functioning does not occur in isolation. Rather, individuals function in a variety of domains, including the main spheres of work and personal life, where the majority of time is spent. Responsibilities from work and home domains occasionally spill over from one domain to the other (Halford, Savage, & Witz, 1997). Although positive and negative forms of work-home/home-work interactions are distinguished in the literature (e.g. Geurts, Taris, Kompier, Dijkers, & Van Hoof, 2005), this study focused on the effects of one type of interaction between work and home, namely negative work-home interaction. Negative work-home interaction is defined as a time-based and/or strain-based form of conflict characterised by the interference of the demands of a work role with demands of home roles, e.g. home demands, family time, and family events (Geurts et al., 2005; Rothmann & Baumann, 2014).

Negative work-home interaction is significant for an individual's psychological well-being (Clark, 2000; Clarke, Koch, & Hill, 2004; Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002). It is inversely related to experiences of job satisfaction (Hyman, Baldry, Scholarios, & Bunzel, 2003), psychological meaningfulness at work (Rothmann & Baumann, 2014), work engagement (Shankar & Bhatnagar, 2010), and relatedness satisfaction.

According to De Witte (1999) and Fernandez-Ballesteros (2002), job insecurity is one of the predominant work stressors that employees have to deal with. Job insecurity involves the ambiguity and uncertainty related to one's job in the future (Van der Elst, De Cuyper, & De Witte, 2011). Sverke, Hellgren, and Näswall (2002) define job insecurity as the "subjectively experienced anticipation of a fundamental and involuntary event related to job loss" (p. 243). Job insecurity is thus a multidimensional construct consisting of both emotional strain (experience of negative affect) and cognitive burden (perception of losing your job) for employees (Cheng & Chan, 2008). According to the transactional stress theory, job insecurity can be perceived as a stressor and threat to the emotional well-being of individuals, seeing as it is associated with various negative emotions (Cudré-Mauroux, 2010). Various studies regarding job insecurity continuously resulted in adverse effects of this job demand on employees' subjective well-being (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989; Mohr, 2000; Roskies & Louis-Guerin, 1990). Cheng and Chan (2008) indicated that job insecurity negatively correlates with psychological well-being ( $r = -0.28$ ) and is negatively associated with health

and well-being. Rothmann (2013) furthermore found that job insecurity is negatively associated with flourishing of individuals ( $r = -0.44$ ).

Compensation refers to the rewards, monetary and nonmonetary, that employees receive as part of the employment relationship (Martocchio, 2001). Compensation is a critical lever, and an important factor in today's society due to the competitiveness in the global marketplace (Gagne & Forest, 2008). In light of compensation, the *Self-determination theory* (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000) can be applied, and distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation involves engaging in activities for their own sake. Intrinsic motivation is related to numerous positive outcomes, including increased performance and well-being (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004). According to Deci and Ryan (2011), intrinsic motivation can be promoted by satisfying the needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. By satisfying these needs, increased well-being can be stimulated. Compensation also impacts positively on work engagement, which is a critical element in the psychological well-being of individuals (Gill, Dugger, & Norton, 2014).

Extrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity for instrumental reasons. This particular study focuses on extrinsic reward in the form of monetary value. Monetary compensation refers to tangible items, including pay and bonuses, and can be considered extrinsic rewards (Gagné & Forest, 2008). Although intrinsic motivation leads to more positive outcomes compared to extrinsic motivation, research has linked positive perception of fair payment to numerous encouraging outcomes, including motivation, job satisfaction and high levels of performance and organisational effectiveness (Bratton & Gold, 2007). The conceptual framework of the expectancy theory underpins this form of compensation. Individuals make choices based on estimates of how well the anticipated results of a given behavior are going to match up with or eventually lead to the desired results. Kuvaas (2006) found that fair pay contributes to employees' emotional commitment. Although fair remuneration plays a significant role in both feeling well (Swart, 2012) and functioning well (Robitschek & Keyes, 2009), monetary reward could also have a negative impact on employees' engagement and well-being if not perceived to be equitable (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999).

Advancement refers to the means of moving forward and being able to grow within an organisation (Rothmann, Mostert, & Strydom, 2006). This includes learning, through training and development opportunities, as well as potential future career progression (Rothmann,

2014). Through training and development, employees are given the opportunity to expand their physical, emotional and cognitive skills, contributing to a sense of personal achievement and increased self-worth, ultimately resulting in improved performance (Hill & Lent, 2006; Satterfield & Hughes, 2007). Advancement can serve as a key motivator for employees, leading to a feeling of equality and fairness. The equity theory focuses on how an employee's motivation is affected by his or her perception of the fairness of the balance between work inputs and outcomes (Adams, 1965). Advancement as an outcome of an employee's hard work and dedication towards his/her job is seen as fair and can lead to additional individual and organisational benefits.

Individuals engaging in training and development activities are also more likely to report gains in self-efficacy and sense of autonomy (Dench & Regan, 1998; Hammond & Feinstein, 2006). Training further improves an individual's motivation for self-actualisation and empowerment (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002). A career represents the collective effects of a person's experiences over the span of his or her working life. During a person's career, he or she will transition through some upward moves (promotions), resulting in a linear career pattern called career advancement (Driver, 1979). Having sufficient opportunity to advance in one's career, either through training and development or career progression, is critical to employee flourishing. De Villiers (2009) found that employees' perceptions of a lack of opportunity for further career advancement are a major source of emotional distress, particularly in today's uncertain and unstable workplace, and subsequently influence the general well-being and job satisfaction of employees.

Rothmann (2014) found that work role fit, job characteristics, co-worker relations and remuneration predicted flourishing of managers. Workload, advancement, and supervisor relations did not predict flourishing statistically significantly in his study.

### **Authentic Leadership**

Authenticity is rooted in the Greek philosophy and can be seen as a broad psychological construct reflecting the degree to which an individual is true to his or her core self and spirit of character despite external pressures (Harter, 2002; Kernis, 2003). In the workplace, authenticity manifests in facets of behaviour, especially relating to the leading of others. Humanistic psychology underlies this thinking of authentic leadership (e.g. Rogers, 1959;

Maslow, 1968). Authentic leadership is rooted in the positive aspects of spiritual, charismatic, transformational, and ethical leadership theories (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005).

Authentic leadership is defined as “a pattern of leader behaviour that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalised moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development” (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008, p. 94). Authentic leadership is multidimensional, conceptualised as four components. 1) Self-awareness refers to the awareness of, and trust in, one’s own personal characteristics, morals, motives, feelings and thoughts. 2) Self-regulation is the process through which there is alignment between the leader’s intentions and actions. 3) Relational transparency is the openness and self-disclosure of the leader. 4) Balanced processing is the paying of attention to both positive and negative feedback about the leader and his or her leadership style (Walumbwa, Peterson, Avolio, & Hartnell, 2010; Zamahani, Ghorbani, & Rezaei, 2011).

Work engagement (Carsten, Crossley, Avolio, Palmer, & Eggers, 2008; Walumbwa et al., 2010), organisational commitment (Peus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun, & Frey, 2012) and improved work performance (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004) have been found to be associated with authentic leadership. Due to the increased focus on well-being and the competitive advantage that this holds for organisations, researchers must take note of the significant impact that leaders have on employee well-being. Ilies et al. (2005) state that the authenticity of leaders impacts substantially on the eudaimonic well-being of followers. Benefits of authentic behaviour include learning through a search for meaning and high levels of engagement. Authentic leaders experience more positive emotions (compared to inauthentic leaders). These emotions are contagious and spill over to the followers (Kernis, 2003). In turn, positive affect at work leads to flourishing and improved physical health (Fredrickson, 2003; Salovey, Rothman, Detweiler, & Steward, 2000). The positive emotional atmosphere created as a result of authentic leadership will be sustained by a reciprocal affective exchange that enhances employee hedonic well-being.

## **Aim and Hypotheses**

The aim of this study was to validate a short scale that measures flourishing in the work context and that assesses the work-related factors that contribute to flourishing in the workplace. The research question for this study is as follows: Do work-related demands (work overload, negative work-home interaction, and job insecurity) and resources (compensation, advancement, and leadership) impact on flourishing at work? Given the analytical strategy and based on the literature review, the following hypotheses were developed for this study:

Hypothesis 1: The dimensions of a short form of the scale that measures flourishing in work and organisational contexts are reliable.

Hypothesis 2: A short form of the scale that measures flourishing at work consists of three separate but related factors, namely emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

Hypothesis 3: Job resources (advancement, compensation, and authentic leadership) predict flourishing at work.

Hypothesis 4: Job demands (workload, negative work-home interaction, and job insecurity) are negatively associated with flourishing at work.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

A cross-sectional survey design with questionnaires as method of data collection was used to obtain information from the target population.

### **Participants**

An alcoholic beverage company in the FMCG industry in South Africa participated in the study. Stratified random sampling was used to collect data and a total of 779 participants took part in the study. The company consisted of three divisions: Sales and Distribution (S&D), Manufacturing, and Centres of Functioning (COF). The S&D division comprised five regions across South Africa. The manufacturing division consisted of seven breweries/ manufacturing plants nationally. The COF consisted of 10 different departments.

A total of 59.6% of the sample were males, while 40.4% were females. The ages of the participants varied from 22 years to 59 years, with 44% younger than 35 years. A total of 53.4% of the participations had been in their current role for less than three years. Of the participants, 77.5% had been in the company for more than three years. The majority of the participants did not have people management responsibilities (58.8%). The distribution of participants across job function was sales and distribution (36.5%), manufacturing (33.5%) and centre of functioning (30.0%).

Table 1  
*Characteristics of Participants (N=779)*

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	464	59.6
	Female	315	40.4
Age	Below 25	33	4.2
	25 – 34	310	39.8
	35 – 44	255	32.7
	45 – 54	134	17.2
	Over 55	47	6.0
Years in Role	Less than 6 months	101	13.0
	Between 6 and 12 months	99	12.7
	Between 13 and 24 months	155	19.9
	Between 25 and 36 months	61	7.8
	Between 3 and 5 years	160	20.5
	Between 5 and 10 years	108	13.9
	Between 10 and 15 years	50	6.4
	Between 15 and 20 years	28	3.6
Years in Company	More than 20 years	17	2.2
	Less than 1 year	52	6.7
	Between 1 and 3 years	123	15.8
	Between 3 and 5 years	132	16.9
	Between 5 and 10 years	198	25.4
	Between 10 and 15 years	99	12.7
	Between 15 and 20 years	80	10.3
Manage People	More than 20 years	95	12.2
	Yes	321	51.2
	No	458	58.8
Job Level	Staff member	145	18.6
	Skilled worker	265	34.0
	Supervisor	105	13.5
	Manager	200	25.7
	Executive	57	7.3
	Senior Executive	7	0.9
Division	SAB Central Office (COF)	234	30.0
	Sales and Distribution (S&D)	284	36.5
	Manufacturing	261	33.5

## Measuring Instruments

The *Flourishing-at-Work Scale – Short Form* (FAWS-SF) was administered. The FAWS-SF was derived from the Flourishing-at-Work Scale (FAWS; Rautenbach & Rothmann, in press). The FAWS-SF consists of 17 items that were chosen as the most archetypal items expressive of the construct definition of each of three dimensions of well-being at work, namely emotional, psychological and social well-being. The respondents had to answer questions regarding the frequency with which they experienced specific symptoms during the past month.

- Emotional well-being was measured by three items indicating two dimensions, namely job satisfaction (“During the past month at work, how often did you experience satisfaction with your job?”) and positive affect (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel happy?”).
- Psychological well-being was measured by nine items indicating autonomy (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel confident to think or express your own ideas and opinions?”), competence (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel good at managing the responsibilities of your job?”), relatedness (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel really connected with other people at your job?”), meaning (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel your work is meaningful?”), purpose (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that the work you do serves a greater purpose?”), cognitive engagement (“During the past month at work, how often did you focus a great deal of attention on your work?”), emotional engagement (“During the past month at work, how often did you get excited when you perform well on your job?”), physical engagement (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel energised when you work?”), and learning (“During the past month at work, how often did you find yourself learning?”).
- Social well-being was measured by five items indicating social contribution (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel you had something important to contribute to your organisation?”), social acceptance (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that you really belong to your organisation?”), social growth (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that your organisation is becoming a better place for people like you?”), social integration (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that people in your organisation are basically good?”), and social comprehension

("During the past month at work, how often did you feel that the way your organisation works, makes sense to you?").

Responses were measured on a six-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*every day*), indicating the frequency with which respondents experienced each identified symptom of well-being. This response option allows for the categorisation of levels of well-being similar to the three classes used to assess positive mental health (Keyes, 2002, 2005, 2007). To be classified as *flourishing*, individuals must "every day" or "almost every day" experience at least one of the three symptoms of emotional well-being and at least eight of the 14 signs of positive functioning (psychological well-being and social well-being). To be classified as *languishing*, individuals must "never" or "once or twice" during the last month experience at least one of the symptoms of emotional well-being and at least eight of the signs of positive functioning (psychological well-being and social well-being). Individuals who are neither flourishing nor languishing are classified with moderate well-being. The internal consistencies range from 0.82 to 0.90, indicating acceptable reliabilities.

Questions from the *Job-Demand-Resources Scale* (JD-RS; Rothmann, Mostert, & Strydom, 2006) were administered. Workload was measured by three items (e.g. "Do you have too much work to do?"). Job insecurity was measured by three items (e.g. "Do you need to be more secure that you will keep your current job in the next year?"). Compensation was measured by three items (e.g. "Do you think that your company pays good salaries?"). Career advancement was measured by three items (e.g. "Does your company give you opportunities to attend training courses aligned to your job?"). Negative work-home interaction was measured by three items (e.g. "Do you take work home?"). Each item required the respondent to answer on a scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). The internal consistencies range from 0.76 to 0.92, indicating acceptable reliability.

To measure employees' perception of their leaders' authenticity (authentic leadership), the *Authentic Leadership Questionnaire* (ALQ; Avolio, 2007) was used. The questionnaire's validity and theoretical and empirical basis have been extensively analysed and confirmed (Avolio, 2007; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, & Walumbwa, 2005). The measure, developed specifically with the emerging authentic leadership theory in mind, consisted of 16 items grouped into four major subcategories: self-awareness (the understanding of how one makes sense of the world), relational transparency (presenting

one's authentic self to others), internalised moral perspective (internalised and integrated form of self-regulation), and balanced processing (demonstration of objective analysis of all relevant data before making a decision). Representative samples of employees from state-owned and multinational firms in the USA and China confirmed the four-factor structure of the ALQ. The internal consistency of each of the measures was also good: self-awareness ( $\alpha = 0.79$ ), relational transparency ( $\alpha = 0.72$ ), internalised moral perspective ( $\alpha = 0.73$ ) and balanced processing ( $\alpha = 0.76$ ) (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

### **Data Analysis**

The data was analysed using Mplus 7.31 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014) and SPSS (IBM Corp., 2013). The maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (MLR) was used. To assess model fit, the chi-square statistic (the test of absolute fit of the model), the Standardised Root Mean Residual (SRMR), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) were used (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). For TLI and CFI values to be acceptable, scores higher than 0.90 are required. Both RMSEA and SRMR values lower than 0.08 indicate a close fit between the model and the data. Two fit statistics, namely the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayes Information Criterion (BIC), were used in addition to other fit indices to compare alternative measurement models. The AIC, which is a comparative measure of fit, is meaningful when one estimates different models. The lowest AIC is the best fitting model. The BIC provides an indication of model parsimony (Kline, 2010).

Analyses of descriptive statistics were carried out with the SPSS22 program (IBM Corp, 2013). Raykov's (2009) confirmatory factor analysis-based estimate of scale reliability ( $\rho$ ) was computed for each scale using Mplus 7.31. Pearson correlations were computed to assess the relations between the latent variables. A correlation of 0.5 is large, 0.3 is moderate, and 0.1 is small (Cohen, 1988).

### **Research Procedure**

Permission was obtained from the management of the participating organisation. Ethical clearance for this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee at the university from where

the research was undertaken (Ethics number: NWU-00095-14-a8). The researcher administered the questionnaire (in English) electronically (hosted at myresearchsurvey.com) in the environment where the participants were working. The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and emphasising the confidentiality of participation in the research. Participation in the survey was anonymous and voluntary. Respondents gave consent that the researchers could use the information obtained from the survey for research purposes only. Between mid-August 2014 and end-September 2014 the questions were made available electronically. The completed raw data was converted to Excel and then an SPSS dataset was developed after it had been prepared for analysis with the Mplus software program.

## **Results**

### **Testing Measurement Models**

Five competing measurement models were tested by using confirmatory factor analysis with Mplus 7.31. This was done to evaluate the distinctness of the measured variables.

Model 1 consisted of six latent variables, namely flourishing, workload, job insecurity, advancement, negative work-home interaction, and authentic leadership. These variables were allowed to correlate. Flourishing consisted of three latent variables, namely emotional well-being (measured by three observed variables), psychological well-being (measured by nine observed variables), and social well-being (measured by five observed variables). The other five latent variables were workload (measured by three observed variables), job insecurity (measured by two observed variables), advancement (measured by three observed variables), negative work-home interaction (measured by three observed variables), and authentic leadership. Authentic leadership consisted of four latent variables, namely relational transparency (measured by five observed variables), internalised moral perspective (measured by three observed variables), balanced processing (measured by three observed variables), and self-awareness (measured by four observed variables).

The other models followed the same template as Model 1. However, in Model 2 flourishing was specified with two latent variables, namely feeling well (measured by three variables), and functioning well (measured by 14 variables). In Model 3, flourishing was specified with

17 observed variables. Model 4 differed from Model 1 in the sense that authentic leadership (as a latent variable) was measured by 15 items. In Model 5, workload, job insecurity, advancement, negative work-home interaction, and authentic leadership were specified as two latent variables (rather than five), namely job demands (measured by three observed variables), and job resources, consisting of four latent variables, namely job insecurity (measured by two observed variables), advancement (measured by three observed variables), negative work-home interaction (measured by three observed variables), and authentic leadership (measured by 15 observed variables). Model 6 consisted of one latent variable measured by 44 observed variables.

Table 2 presents the fit statistics for the competing measurement models.

Table 2  
*Fit Statistics of Competing Measurement Models*

Model	$\chi^2$	df	TLI	CFI	RMSEA		SRMR	AIC	BIC
					Est	90% CI			
1	2716.91*	1006	0.91	0.91	0.05	[0.045, 0.049]	0.05	98602.17	99389.38
2	2912.28*	1009	0.90	0.90	0.05	[0.047, 0.051]	0.05	98833.28	99606.51
3	2825.59*	1002	0.90	0.91	0.05	[0.046, 0.050]	0.05	98743.23	99549.06
4	3062.98*	1010	0.89	0.90	0.05	[0.049, 0.053]	0.05	99012.81	99781.38
5	4675.75*	1021	0.80	0.81	0.07*	[0.066, 0.070]	0.08	100886.93	101604.26

$\chi^2$ , chi-square statistic; *df*, degrees of freedom; TLI, Tucker-Lewis Index; CFI, Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation; SRMR, standardised root mean square residual; AIC, Akaike Information Criterion; BIC, Bayes Information Criterion, \*,  $p < 0.01$

Two fit statistics, namely the AIC and BIC, were used (in addition to other fit indices in this study) to compare alternative measurement models. The AIC, which is a comparative measure of fit, is useful when different models are estimated. The lowest AIC is the best fitting model. The BIC provides an indication of model parsimony (Kline, 2010). Comparison of the fit indices indicates that model 1 best fitted the data and was the most parsimonious.

The results in Table 2 showed that a  $\chi^2$  value of 2716.91 ( $df = 1006$ ,  $p < 0001$ ) was obtained for Model 1. Model 1 fitted the data the best and was the most parsimonious of all the

models. The fit statistics on all the fit indices (except  $\chi^2$ ) were acceptable: TLI = 0.91, CFI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.05,  $p < 0.01$ , and SRMR = 0.05.

### **Model Development**

Analyses continued in an exploratory mode to improve the fit of the selected model. The modification index (MI = 59.29) for item 14 (“Does your job keep you from spending as much time with your family as you would like?”) and item 15 (“Do you miss out on important family events because of your work?”) of the JDRS indicated that the model fit could be improved by correlating the errors of the items. Correlated errors may represent respondent characteristics that reflect bias, social desirability, as well as a high degree of overlap in item content (Byrne, 2012).

The fit statistics for the revised model (model 6) showed that the model fit improved significantly when the errors of the items were allowed to correlate. A  $\chi^2$  value of 2649.15 ( $df = 1005$ ) was obtained for the hypothesised measurement model. The fit statistics on the four fit indices were acceptable: TLI = 0.91, CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.05,  $p = 0.99$  [0.046, 0.048], SRMR = 0.05, AIC = 98523.12 and BIC = 99314.98. All the standardised loadings of the items on the latent variables were higher than 0.60, except for two items that had standardised loadings higher than 0.52. Based on this analysis, hypotheses 1 and 2 can be accepted.

### **Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities and Correlations**

The mean of all components, dimensions and antecedents of flourishing in work and organisational context are reported in Figure 1.

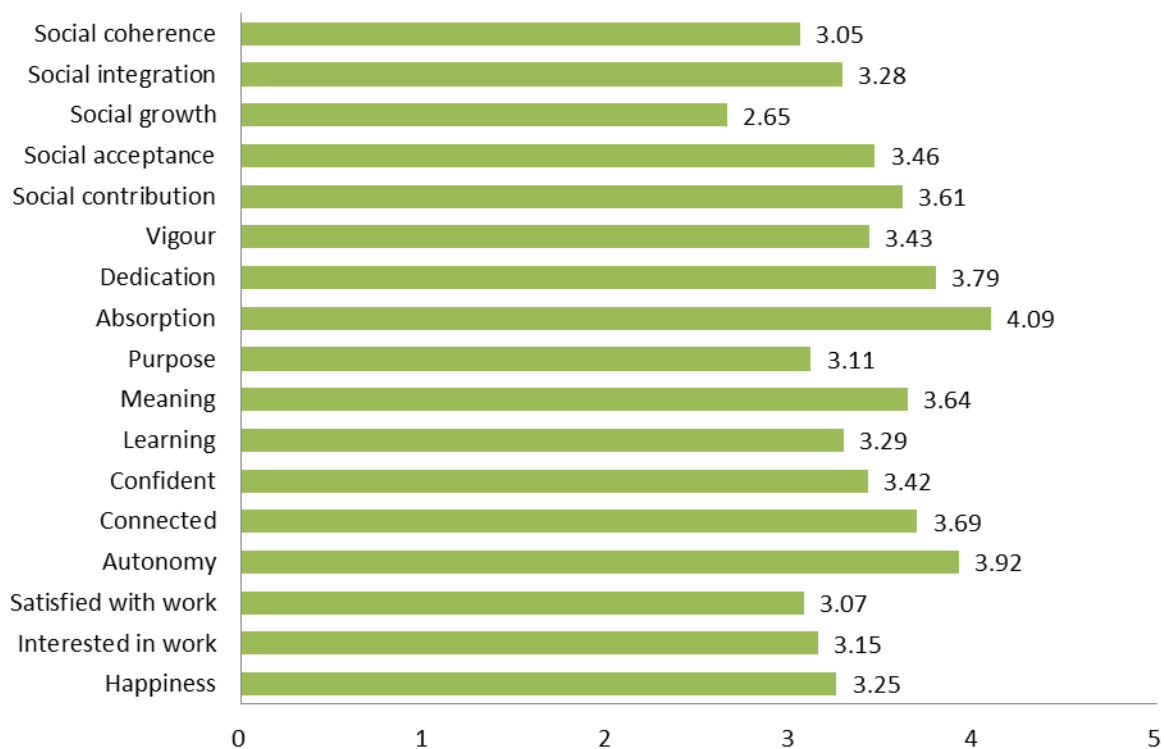


Figure 1. Mean frequency of each component of flourishing at work in the past month.

Figure 1 provides insights into the specific items and dimensions regarding where the sample group was doing well or falling short. All components of flourishing, excluding one, social growth (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel your organisation is becoming a better place for people like you?”) were experienced at least once a week in the past month. Three other items showed somewhat lower mean scores, namely social coherence (“During the past month at work, how often did you feel that the way your organisation works, makes sense to you?”) and job satisfaction (“During the past month at work, how often did you experience satisfaction with your job?”).

A three-category diagnosis of positive mental health was investigated. To be diagnosed with *flourishing* at work, individuals must ‘every day’ or ‘almost every day’ experience at least one of the three signs of hedonic well-being and at least eight of the 14 signs of positive functioning during the past month. Individuals who exhibit low levels (i.e. ‘never’ or ‘once or twice’ during the past month) on at least one measure of hedonic well-being and low levels on at least eight measures of positive functioning are diagnosed with *languishing* mental

health. Individuals who are neither flourishing nor languishing are diagnosed with *moderate* mental health.

Using this categorisation, 8% (62) of the participants were languishing, 56.1% (437) were moderately healthy, and 35.9% (280) were flourishing. Frequency analysis revealed that 36% of females were flourishing and 10.8% were languishing, compared to 35.2% males flourishing and 6% languishing. A total of 36% of employees under the age of 34 were flourishing and 7% were languishing. A total of 45% of employees with long company tenure (more than 15 years) were flourishing and 4.5% were languishing, compared to 34% of employees with a tenure lower than 15 years that were flourishing and 7.8% that were languishing. Tenure in role reveals that 41% of employees less than two years in their role were flourishing, and 5.3% were languishing, compared to 30.2% of employees with a tenure between two and 15 years flourishing, and 8.8% languishing. A total of 53% of employees with a role tenure of more than 20 years were flourishing, and 6% were languishing. Of those employees who manage others, 10% were languishing, and 33% were flourishing. Of all non-managers who participated in the study, 5% were languishing and 40% were flourishing.

The descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations), reliability and correlation coefficients of the scales are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Coefficients and Correlations of the Scales (N = 779)*

Variable	Mean	SD	$\rho$	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Emotional well-being	4.16	1.03	0.77	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Psychological well-being	4.58	0.94	0.89	0.88**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Social well-being	4.21	1.21	0.89	0.84**	0.90**	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Workload	3.29	0.91	0.84	-0.13*	-0.14*	-0.13*	-	-	-	-	-
5. Job insecurity	3.16	1.29	0.91	-0.02	-0.02	-0.02	0.17**	-	-	-	-
6. Compensation	3.10	1.04	0.84	0.29**	0.30**	0.30**	-0.19**	-0.04	-	-	-
7. Advancement	3.03	1.06	0.80	0.50**	0.53**	0.51**	0.02	-0.05	0.52**	-	-
8. Negative work-home interaction	2.85	1.04	0.75	-0.14*	-0.15*	-0.14*	0.77**	0.11*	-0.12*	0.10	-
9. Authentic leadership	2.63	1.11	0.95	0.45**	0.48**	0.46**	-0.12*	-0.03	0.32**	0.46**	-0.08

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 shows that the reliability coefficients of all the scales were acceptable ( $\rho \geq 0.70$ ). Scale reliabilities were ranging from 0.75 to 0.95, which indicates acceptable internal consistency of all the scales (Raykov, 2009).

Correlations between the flourishing subscales (i.e. EWB, PWB and SWB) ranged from 0.84 to 0.88. Emotional well-being (i.e. job satisfaction and positive affect) was statistically significantly and positively related to advancement (practically significant, large effect), authentic leadership (practically significant, medium effect), and compensation (practically significant, medium effect). Furthermore, Emotional, Social and Psychological well-being were statistically significantly and negatively related to work-life imbalance and workload. However, the latter effects were of small practical significance ( $r < 0.30$ ; Cohen, 1988).

### Testing the Structural Models

The structural model was tested based on the measurement model 1 (see Table 2) by using latent variable modelling as implemented by Mplus, version 7.31 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014). The results indicated an acceptable fit of the structural model to the data:  $\chi^2 = 2649.15$ ,  $df = 1005$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , TLI = 0.91, CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.05 [90% C.I 0.04-0.05] and SRMR = 0.05. Figure 1 and Table 4 show the standardised path coefficients estimated by Mplus 7.31 for the proposed theoretical model.

Table 4

#### *Standardised Regression Coefficients of Antecedents of Flourishing at Work*

<i>Variable</i>	Est	SE	Est/SE	<i>p</i>
Work overload	0.01	0.08	0.13	0.90
Job insecurity	0.03	0.05	0.55	0.58
Compensation	-0.03	0.05	-0.66	0.51
Advancement	0.46	0.05	8.73	0.00**
Work-life balance	-0.19	0.09	-2.15	0.03*
Authentic leadership	0.28	0.05	6.26	0.00**

The path coefficients of advancement ( $\beta = 0.46$ ,  $p < .01$ ), work-life balance ( $\beta = -0.19$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and authentic leadership ( $\beta = 0.28$ ,  $p < .01$ ) were statistically significant and had the

expected signs. The explained variances in the observed variables measuring job resources ranged from -0.03 to 0.46, indicating that they could be improved. Advancement and authentic leadership have a positive effect while work-life balance has a negative effect on flourishing. Hypothesis 3, which stated that positive correlations exist between job resources and flourishing, is partially accepted. Table 4 shows that the path coefficients of workload ( $\beta = 0.01, p = 0.90$ ), job insecurity ( $\beta = 0.03, p = 0.58$ ), and compensation ( $\beta = -0.03, p = 0.51$ ) were not statistically significant. Workload, job insecurity, and compensation did not contribute statistically significantly to flourishing at work. Hypothesis 4 is therefore rejected. The MLR-estimated equation accounted for a large proportion of the variance in flourishing ( $R^2 = 0.41$ ).

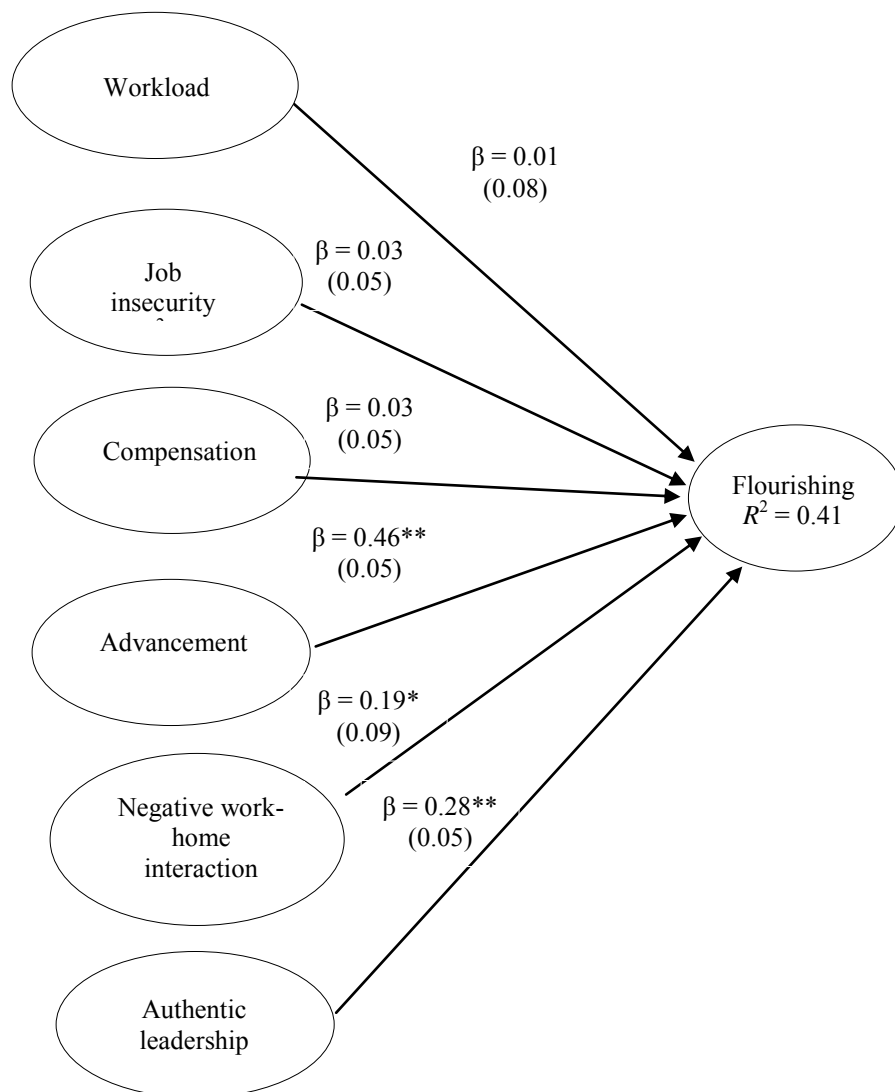


Figure 2. The structural model (standardised solution with standard errors in parentheses).

## Discussion

The aims of this study were to evaluate the psychometric properties of a short scale which measures flourishing at work and to investigate antecedents of flourishing in the work context. The analysis conducted supported a three-factor structure of flourishing at work. The three dimensions were emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being. The reliability of the three scales of a short measure of flourishing was highly acceptable. This aligns to Keyes's theoretical model of well-being (Keyes, 2002) and confirms the flourishing model suggested by Rothmann (2013).

The Short Form of Flourishing-at-work Scale (FAWS) performed well in terms of reliability. The correlation between the three flourishing dimensions ranges from 0.84 to 0.90. These high reliabilities are convergent with similar flourishing scales from Keyes (2009). All the antecedents had significant correlations with all three the flourishing dimensions. According to the JD-R model, workload and negative work-home interaction, and job insecurity are seen as demands that lead to impairment of well-being (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Due to the competitiveness in the fast moving consumable goods sector, production is a 24-hour necessity. Employees tend to either work overtime or take work home. The spillover of work to home creates an imbalance in the work-life continuum, impacting negatively on the flourishing of employees. Concerning demands, negative work-home interaction had a negative impact on flourishing. This confirms the findings regarding demands as important causes of well-being at work (Demerouti et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

The results showed that two job resources, i.e advancement and authentic leadership explains the variance in flourishing at work. Compensation (as a job resource) as well as the two job demands (workload and job insecurity) did not predict the flourishing or languishing of the participants. Although remuneration, as a form of compensation, is seen as a critical lever vital to social well-being of individuals, financial reward can also negatively impact on a person's well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2011). According to the SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000), extrinsic motivation does not modify the emotional or cognitive desires that underlie behaviour in a desirable direction. Findings on the consequences of job insecurity have continuously pointed to the negative effects of the demand on the subjective well-being of individuals (e.g. Mohr, 2000; for meta-analysis results, see Cheng & Chan, 2008). Bowling et

al. (2015) found that workload negatively relates to psychological and physical well-being. This confirms that both these demands are deemed stressors that impair well-being.

This model explained 41% of variance in flourishing. Employees who reported having sufficient opportunities to advance in their careers, having the option of exercising work-life balance and experiencing their leaders as authentic were flourishing. Advancement and authentic leadership refer to resources in the workplace. These findings support the Conservation of Resources (COR) framework (Hobfoll, 1989), which suggests that the well-being of an individual is dependent on the maintenance or gain of resources. Resources in the workplace further result in employee growth (Keyes, 2002).

The study showed that 8% of the sample was languishing (i.e. experiencing low levels of mental health). A total of 65.15% demonstrated moderate levels of flourishing, while the remaining 34.9% were flourishing. When comparing these results to other studies of flourishing of the general population in South Africa (Rothmann, 2013), fewer individuals are languishing and more are flourishing. When comparing different gender groups, very similar levels of flourishing were reported between males (35.2%) and females (36%). However, more females were languishing (10.8%) compared to males (6%). This is evident from a male-dominant environment and the lack of equal opportunities and representation of females in the workplace. Results also show that a higher percentage of employees with a longer tenure in both role and organisation are flourishing and a smaller percentage is languishing. This is evident of long tenure employees being more competent. Difference in job level yielded interesting findings. Lower level employees (staff members) reported more languishing and less flourishing than any of the other levels (e.g. 12.4% languishing and 31% flourishing). As the job level increased, the percentage of flourishing employees increased and the percentage of languishing employees decreased: none of the executive level employees was languishing and 50.5% were flourishing. Senior employees are usually in a position to act autonomously, have the relevant competencies to do their job, understand how the organisation operates and feel that they contribute to the bigger picture.

Social growth, social coherence and job satisfaction was the least experienced components of flourishing. Social growth refers to the individual's belief in the potential of the organisation; whereas social coherence indicates whether employees find their organisation meaningful and understandable. The organisation has been through numerous restructurings during the past

few years. This could potentially result in lower levels of social well-being. All the dimensions of flourishing were also experienced about two to three times a week. When looking at the antecedents, both negative work-home interaction and authentic leadership were only seldom experienced, compared to the rest of the antecedents being experienced sometimes. Seeing that both negative work-home interaction and antecedents contribute to flourishing, interventions directed at improving on the experience of these work factors must be considered.

This study had various limitations. First, the short version of the FAWS which measured flourishing at work is a newly developed questionnaire. More research is needed regarding the reliability and validity of this measurement. Second, this study only included the one organisation in the fast moving consumable goods environment. Future studies, especially in other industries, should be conducted. Third, only a small number of resources and demands were measured in this study. It is recommended for future studies to research numerous resources and demands that exist in the workplace.

### **Recommendations**

Relatively little is known about the features of work impacting on work flourishing (Kidd, 2008). It is, however, evident that work demands and resources differ in their impact on flourishing. Maintaining and monitoring current career development processes and practices can ensure that employees have the opportunities to advance in their careers while flexible work arrangement policies could contribute toward employees experiencing a sense of work-life balance. The development and promotion of authenticity among leadership teams in the organisation will furthermore stimulate a flourishing workforce.

A shift in attitudes is necessary to ensure that employers and employees recognise not only the importance of preventing ill-health, but also the key role the workplace can play in promoting employee flourishing. The effects of the workplace on employee flourishing are, therefore, a critical focus area that could result in benefits for the employee, the organisation, and the country (Russell, 2007). It is of great importance to investigate the factors associated with the flourishing of employees and to implement interventions to promote flourishing in the workplace.

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**CHAPTER 4**

**ARTICLE 3**

**Flourishing at Work: The Role of Work and Positive Organisational Practices**

## **Flourishing at Work: The Role of Work and Positive Organisational Practices**

### **Abstract**

The aim of this study was to investigate the associations among specific work factors, positive organisational practices, and flourishing in the workplace. A stratified random sample ( $N = 779$ ) was taken from employees in the Fast Moving Consumable Goods Sector in South Africa. A biographical questionnaire, the Flourishing-at-Work Scale, Positive Practices Scale and a Job Demands-Resources Scale were administered. The results showed that the measurement model fitted the data. The reliabilities of all scales were acceptable. Latent class analyses revealed five classes of well-being, varying from flourishing to languishing. Positive organisational practices, namely promoting positive emotions, organisational support, and inspiration were consistently associated with flourishing at work. Furthermore, career advancement was also related to flourishing employees. Flexible work practices (i.e. flexitime and flexplace) were not associated with flourishing at work.

**Keywords:** Flourishing, work, psychological well-being, emotional well-being, social well-being, advancement, workload, positive practices, flexitime, flexplace and job level

Work is becoming increasingly more attractive relative to home life and the increase in the amount of time being dedicated to work has led to an amplified focus on flourishing in this specific domain (Hochschild, 1997; Schor, 1993; Rothmann, 2013). Deci and Ryan (2011) reported that the spheres within which individuals are rooted, affect their well-being. Employees who flourish at work engage in successful behaviour which leads to great value for both the employee, his or her colleague as well as the organisations (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008). Flourishing employees are less likely to resign from their jobs, resulting in lower turnover for the organisation (Swart, 2012). Furthermore, employees who flourish experience high levels of positive emotions that support organisational citizenship behaviour. These employees are willing and able to assist their co-workers and customers over and above what is required of them in their job (Diedericks & Rothmann, 2014).

Rothmann (2013) found that at least half of all employees in organisations in South Africa are not flourishing. This state of dysfunctional well-being of workers has major social and economic cost implications (Quick, Wright, Adkins, Nelson, & Quick, 2012). This is a great distress for organisations that compete in the global arena, seeing that healthy employees are seen to be significant sources of “prosperity” for organisations.

The fast moving consumable goods (FMCG) industry is one of the largest industries in the world and comprises consumer non-durable goods that cater for everyday needs (Confederation of Indian Industry, 2005). In South Africa, this environment is characterised by fast-paced and continuous change, competitiveness, and swift responsiveness (Fisher, Obermeyer, Hammond, & Raman, 1994). This highly demanding milieu creates anxiety, strain and tension, which negatively impact on employee wellness. However, available resources in the workplace and the organisation can ensure the optimum functioning and utilization of workers’ abilities, which can result in employees flourishing. It is critical for organisations to understand the impacting factors that predict flourishing in the work and organisational environment to develop interventions that will result in creating a flourishing workforce.

### **Flourishing at Work**

The measuring of flourishing in the work domain compared to general life is a good indicator of positive work-related outcomes. Flourishing refers to high levels of well-being and

encompasses both a 'feeling well' and 'functioning well' component (Keyes, 2002). Work flourishing refers to an employee's desirable condition or state of well-being, achieved through positive experiences and effective management and controlling of work-related factors (Rautenbach & Rothman, in press). Although this concept consists of constructs similar to flourishing in general life according to Keyes' model, namely emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being, the dimensions of each construct are more relevant to the workplace (Keyes, 2002). Table 1 shows the various dimensions and some scale descriptions of flourishing at work.

The experience of flourishing in work and organisational context is subjective in nature (Seligman, 2011). Flourishing is not a fixed state, and due to the demanding and ever-changing nature of the work environment, various elements impact on employee flourishing.

Table 1

*Flourishing at Work*

Component	Work factor	Description		
Emotional well-being	Job satisfaction	Enjoy or dislike the job.		
	Positive affect	Feel pleased, regularly cheerful, serene, good-spirited		
	Negative affect	Feel depressed, upset, and bored at work.		
Psychological well-being	Autonomy	Satisfaction of the desire to (subjectively) experience freedom and choice when carrying out tasks.		
	Competence	Satisfaction of the desire to feel effective in interacting with the environment.		
	Relatedness	Satisfaction of individuals' needs to feel connected to others, to love and care for others, and to be loved and cared for.		
	Engagement		Individuals express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during their job: Absorption: being alert at work and experiencing absorption and involvement. Vitality: being physically involved in a task and showing vigour. Dedication: being connected to job/others while working and showing dedication and commitment.	
			Learning	Perceives that one is acquiring and can apply knowledge and skills to one's work.
			Meaningful work	Experiences work as meaningful, understands how work contributes to life's meaning, and senses what makes a job worthwhile. Feels that the work makes a difference in the world and serves a greater purpose
Social well-being	Social acceptance	Positive attitude towards others and acceptance of diversity in organisation.		
	Social actualization (growth)	Believes in potential of others (individuals, groups and organisations).		
	Social contribution	Regards own daily activities as adding value to the organisation and to others.		
	Social coherence	Finds the organisation and social life meaningful and comprehensible.		
	Social integration	Experiences sense of relatedness, comfort and support from the organisation.		

## **Predictors of Flourishing**

### *Demands and Resources*

The work environment is burdened with numerous variables that can impact the well-being of employees. The Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001) describes several characteristics relevant to the workplace that can be associated with the well-being of employees. The JD-R model describes job demands as the mental, emotional and physical effort of an individual to perform a task. Demands are seen as functional and/or mental strains (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Job demands, if not managed correctly, can turn into job stressors and are usually associated with negative outcomes such as burnout and disengagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). This could ultimately lead to an ill-health employee.

Job resources can be understood based on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 1998) by which resources are seen to be the emotional, physical and/or cognitive means or energy that reduce job demands, enable individual progress and development and ensure optimum levels of performance (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Job resources are seen to be imperative to the well-being of individuals (Rothmann & Joubert, 2007; Hakanen, Schaufeli, & Ahola, 2008). This study investigated the impact of workload as demand, and career advancement as job resource.

Worldwide organisations are faced with numerous challenges such as globalisation and transformation (Botha & Claassens, 2010). Globalisation has increased the workforce's mobility and employees are now expecting more from their employers than previously (Burke & Cooper, 2009). Specifically the FMCG environment is faced with unique challenges regarding optimization techniques and machine and technology efficiency that impact on the supply chain efficiencies (Bala, Prakash, & Kumar, 2011). These challenges have increased the workforce's flexibility, which resulted in a rise in the number of hours worked as well as a change in the nature of the job performed, bringing about a feeling of increased workload on the employee. Ganster, Fox, and Dwyer (2001) define workload as a judgement of one's perceived work demands. The workload experienced can be seen as the utilization of and employees' efforts to meet the rising demand of the job. The *Effort-Recovery (E-R) Model* (Demerouti, Taris, & Bakker, 2009; Meijman & Mulder, 1998)

underpins the rationale of workload. Workload is associated with numerous negative outcomes.

Demands such as workload have led to a necessity to investigate the option of flexibility related to work arrangements. Flexible work arrangements (FWA) are defined as ‘... any policies, practices, formal or informal, which permit people to vary when and where work is carried out’ (Maxwell, Rankine, Bell, & MacVicar, 2007, p. 141). FWA is a broad concept and encompasses any work arrangement that deviates from the standard employment agreement related to daily hours of work on a particular premise (Gardiner & Tomlinson, 2009). FWA mainly refer to two concepts known as flexitime and flexplace. Flexitime permits employees to vary their start and finish times, provided a certain number of hours are worked or a compressed work week, in which employees work a full week’s worth of hours in fewer days. Flexplace refers to the premises the employee is working from or the place in which the work is conducted (Shockley & Allen, 2007). Since the 1980s, FWA have been a critical organisational lever to obtain a competitive advantage (Lewis, 2001). FWA have been found to improve organisational commitment, motivation, job satisfaction, work productivity and employee motivation and morale (Melbourne, 2008; Nadeem & Henry, 2003).

A common resource found in any organisation is advancement. Advancement is defined as progressing and developing within an organisation (Rothmann, Mostert, & Strydom, 2006). Improving the skills of employees through engaging them in training and development activities, can fast-track the progress in their career. This career “movement” can be upwards or lateral and can serve as a driver and motivation for employee performance (Driver, 1979; Satterfield & Hughes, 2007). Equal and fair opportunity to advance in one’s career, either through training or career progression, is critical to employee flourishing. The equity theory underlies the theme of advancement relating to how an employee’s motivation is affected by his or her perception of the fairness of the balance between work inputs and outcomes (Adams, 1965). In a study done by Rautenbach and Rothmann (in press), it was found that career advancement does predict flourishing at work. This finding is imbedded in the Conservation of Resources (COR) framework (Hobfoll, 1989), which suggests that resources affect the positive side of human functioning. This supports the finding by Keyes that resources in the workplace result in employee growth (Keyes, 2002).

## Positive Organisational Practices

Positive practices are collective, constructive behaviours and/or activities demonstrated by the organisation. Positive organisational practices are interlinked around three factors. Firstly, *positive practices* focus on activities and practices that result in positive deviance outcomes. Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003, p. 209) refer to these practices as “intentional behaviours that depart from the norm of a reference group in honourable ways”. Secondly, *positive practices* involve practices that follow a strength based approach focusing on positive energy, positive environment and positive interactions (Baker, 2000; Cameron, 2008). Thirdly, *positive practices* refer to practices that stimulate virtuousness and eudemonic well-being in organisations (Cameron, Mora, Leutscher, & Calarco, 2011).

The term *positive practices* is seen to have six dimensions. Although these dimensions are not underpinned by any specific theory, previous research indicated a relationship to certain behavioural practices or activities characterised by at least one of the three connotations (positive deviance, virtuous practices and/or affirmative bias) of positive practices (Cameron et al., 2011). The dimensions with descriptions are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2

### *Dimensions and Definitions of Positive Practices*

Dimension	Definitions
Caring	People care for, are interested in, and accept responsibility for one another as friends.
Positive affect	Feel pleased, regularly cheerful, serene, good-spirited.
Compassionate support	People provide support for one another, including kindness and compassion when others are struggling.
Forgiveness	People avoid blame and forgive mistakes.
Inspiration	People inspire one another at work.
Meaning	The meaningfulness of the work is emphasized, and people are elevated and renewed by the work.
Respect, integrity and gratitude	People treat one another with respect and express appreciation for one another. They trust one another and maintain integrity

Positive practices promote positive emotions within employees, which yield effective employee behaviour (i.e. improved decision-making and interpersonal relationships). When these positive practices are experienced among fellow colleagues, a stronger sense of unity, trust, commitment and engagement among employees is established (Gittell et al., 2006). These positive actions, in turn, lead to increased organisational effectiveness and improvement in the form of reduced turnover, increased profitability and productivity (Cameron & Wooten, 2009; Cameron et al., 2011). The approach to positive practices aligns with the “abundance model” of which the focus is on organisational dynamics and aspects that include purpose and meaning, good behaviours, positive emotions and high levels of energy and vitality (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003).

Due to employees spending more time at work, their personal identities get infused with certain aspects of their working environment (Dutton, Roberts, & Bednar, 2010). According to Geca and Burke (1995), individuals will always strive to develop a positive identity. As identities become more virtuous, employees experience more positive emotions, and function better, both psychologically and socially. Harter, Schmidt, and Keyes (2003) found that identities that are virtue-based are related to work engagement. Furthermore, positive identities contribute to cooperative behaviour and social cohesion (Dukerich, Golden, & Shortell, 2002; Reed & Aquino, 2003). Practices in the workplace thus cultivate positive employee identities. The work environment must therefore be favourable and supportive.

A positive work climate is an essential pre-requisite for workplace flourishing (Cameron, 2008; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). By implementing positive practices in organisations, it creates a work environment that allows employees to experience positive emotions (Cameron et al., 2011) and can shape the identity of employees in such a way that flourishing can be enhanced (Dutton et al., 2010). Furthermore, these positive organisational practices (which reflect the climate of the organisation) impact not only on employee well-being, but also on the performance of the organisation (Gittell, Cameron, Lim, & Rivas, 2006).

### **Aim and Hypotheses**

Based on the literature review, it can be said that the benefits of a flourishing workforce are non-debatable. Simultaneously, the challenging and ever-changing nature of work makes it difficult for employees to flourish. This study investigates the role of work factors and

organisational practices that support work flourishing. Given the literature review, the following hypotheses were developed:

Hypothesis 1: Positive organisational practices, namely promoting positive emotions, organisational support, and inspiration were consistently associated with flourishing at work.

Hypothesis 2: Career advancement relates to flourishing employees.

Hypothesis 3: Workload relates negatively to work flourishing.

Hypothesis 4: Latent Classes for flourishing can be determined

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

A cross-sectional survey design with questionnaires as a method of data collection was used to obtain information from the identified target audience.

### **Participants**

The focus for this study was on the fast moving consumable goods environment (FMCG) in South Africa. This work environment is seen as one of the largest industries in the world, known for its fast-paced surroundings (Fisher, Obermeyer, Hammond, & Raman, 1994). An alcoholic beverage company in the FMCG industry in South Africa participated in the study. Stratified random sampling was used to collect data and a total of 779 participants partook in the study. The company comprises three divisions: Sales and Distribution (S&D) Manufacturing and Centres of Functioning (COF). The S&D division comprises five regions across South Africa. The manufacturing division encompasses seven breweries/manufacturing plants nationally. The COF consists of 10 diverse departments focusing on various functions. Table 1 illustrates a description of the characteristics of the participants.

A total of 59.6% of the sample consisted of males while 40.4% were females. The ages of the participants varied from 22 years to 59 years, with 44% younger than 35 years. When exploring the tenure in role, the majority (53.4%) of the participants have been in their current role for less than 3 years. When referring to tenure in the organisations, 77.5% of the participants have been employed in the company for longer than three years. The company

further has a good representation of numerous job levels. The distribution of participants across job function was respectively sales and distribution (36.5%), manufacturing (33.5%) and centre of functioning (30.0%).

Table 3

*Characteristics of Participants (N=779)*

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	464	59.6
	Female	315	40.4
Age	Below 25	33	4.2
	25 – 34	310	39.8
	35 – 44	255	32.7
	45 – 54	134	17.2
	Over 55	47	6.0
Years in Role	Less than 6 months	101	13.0
	Between 6 and 12 months	99	12.7
	Between 13 and 24 months	155	19.9
	Between 25 and 36 months	61	7.8
	Between 3 and 5 years	160	20.5
	Between 5 and 10 years	108	13.9
	Between 10 and 15 years	50	6.4
	Between 15 and 20 years	28	3.6
Years in Company	More than 20 years	17	2.2
	Less than 1 year	52	6.7
	Between 1 and 3 years	123	15.8
	Between 3 and 5 years	132	16.9
	Between 5 and 10 years	198	25.4
	Between 10 and 15 years	99	12.7
	Between 15 and 20 years	80	10.3
Manage People	More than 20 years	95	12.2
	Yes	321	51.2
Job Level	No	458	58.8
	Staff member	145	18.6
	Skilled worker	265	34.0
	Supervisor	105	13.5
	Manager	200	25.7
	Executive	57	7.3
	Senior Executive	7	0.9
	Division	SAB Central Office (COF)	234
Sales and Distribution (S&D)		284	36.5
Manufacturing		261	33.5

## Measuring Instruments

The *Flourishing-at-Work Scale* (FAWS) was administered for purposes of this study (Rautenbach & Rothmann, in press). The FAWS consists of 35 items measuring the three dimensions of work flourishing (Emotional, Psychological and Social well-being). Emotional well-being consists of three dimensions, namely Positive affect (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel happy?”), Negative affect (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel upset?”), and Job satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you experience satisfaction with your job?”). Psychological well-being consists of six dimensions, namely autonomy satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that you can do your job the way you think it could best be done?”), competence satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel you really master your tasks at your job?”), relatedness satisfaction (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel really connected with other people at your job?”), learning (three items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you find yourself learning?”), meaningful work (four items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that your work makes a difference to the world?”), engagement (six items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that you get so into your job that you lose track of time?”), and social well-being (five items, e.g. “During the past month at work, how often did you feel that your organisation is becoming a better place for people like you?”). Responses are measured on a six-point scale that ranges from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*every day*). The reliability of the questionnaire ranges from 0.77 to 0.95.

Organisational practices were measured using *The Positive Practices Questionnaire* (PPQ; Cameron et al., 2011). This questionnaire was used to evaluate the positive organisational practices in the organisation. The questionnaire consists of nine 5-point Likert-type items representing desirable and positively focused behaviours. Three underlying structures of PPQ were measured: a) Positive Emotions (two items, e.g. “We show appreciation for one another”); b) Support (four items, e.g. “We support people who are facing difficulty”); c) Inspiration (three items, e.g. “We are energized by the work we do”).

Work factors were measured by using a *selection of items* that consisted of questions from the *Job-Demand-Resources Scale* (JDRS; Rothmann, Mostert, & Strydom, 2006). Workload was

measured by three items (e.g. “Do you have too much work to do?”). Career advancement was measured by three items (e.g. “Does your company give you opportunities to attend training courses aligned to your job?”). Each item required the respondent to answer on a scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). Flexibility in the workplace consists of flexitime and flexplace and was measured by two items (e.g. “Does your company allow for flexitime?”). Each item required the respondent to answer either “yes” or “no”.

*A biographical questionnaire* was administered.

### **Data Analysis**

The data was analysed using Mplus 7.31 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014). The measurement model was tested by using latent variable modelling methods. The maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (MLR) (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014) was used. To assess model fit, the chi-square statistic (the test of absolute fit of the model), the Standardised Root Mean Residual (SRMR), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) were used (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). For TLI and CFI values to be acceptable, scores higher than 0.90 are required. Both RMSEA and SRMR values lower than 0.08 indicate a close fit between the model and the data. In addition, two fit statistics, namely the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayes Information Criterion (BIC) were used. The AIC, which is a comparative measure of fit, is meaningful when one estimates different models. The lowest AIC is the best fitting model. The BIC provides an indication of model parsimony (Kline, 2010).

Analyses of descriptive statistics and reliabilities were carried out with the SPSS22 program (IBM Corp, 2013). Raykov’s (2009) confirmatory factor analysis-based estimate of scale reliability ( $\rho$ ) was computed for each scale using Mplus 7.31. Pearson correlations were computed to assess the relations between the latent variables. A correlation of 0.5 is large, 0.3 is moderate, and 0.1 is small (Cohen, 1988).

Latent class analyses (LCA) with Mplus 7.31 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2014) were used to group participants based on their levels of emotional, social and psychological well-being (as

measured by the FAWS). To determine the optimal number of classes, a series of LCA models were tested with increasing numbers of latent classes; a significant improvement from the reference model to the model with more classes means the latter model is retained. To determine model fit, the following indices are used: The Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), the Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio (LMR LR) test, Adjusted LMR LR test, and the bootstrapped likelihood ratio test (BLRT) (Wang & Wang, 2012). Second, the quality of the class membership was analysed by studying posterior class membership probabilities and entropy values. An entropy value closer to 1 is recommended, while values lower than 0.60 were not acceptable.

## **Research Procedure**

Permission was obtained from the management of the participating organisation. Ethical clearance for this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee at the university from where the research was undertaken (Ethics number: NWU-00095-14-a8). The researcher administered the questionnaire (in English) electronically (hosted at myresearchsurvey.com) in the environment where the participants were working. The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and emphasising the confidentiality of participation in the research. Participation in the survey was anonymous and voluntary. Between mid-August 2014 and end-September 2014 the questionnaires were made available electronically. The completed raw data were converted to Excel, and then an SPSS dataset was developed after it had been prepared for analysis with the Mplus software program.

## **Results**

### **Testing the Measurement Model**

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to confirm the measurement model. The model consisted of four latent variables, namely a) Flourishing: consisting of three latent variables, namely emotional well-being (EWB), which consisted of three first-order latent variables: positive affect (measured by three items), negative affect (measured by three items), and job satisfaction (measured by three items); psychological well-being (PWB), which consisted of six first-order latent variables: autonomy satisfaction (measured by three items), relatedness satisfaction (measured by three items), competence satisfaction (measured by three items),

learning (measured by two items), meaning and purpose (measured by four items), engagement (measured by six items); and social well-being (SWB; measured by five items); b) Workload (measured by three observed variables); c) Advancement (measured by three observed variables); d) Positive Practices: consisting of three latent variables, namely positive emotions (measured by two observed variables), support (measured by four observed variables) and inspiration (measured by three observed variables). All the latent variables were allowed to correlate.

The measurement model showed that a  $\chi^2 = 22664.82$ ,  $df = 1225$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , was obtained. All the other fit indices showed acceptable fit of the data to the model: CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.05 (90% CI [.045, .049],  $p = 1.00$ ), SRMR = 0.06. This indicates a good fit of the model to the data and therefore no further exploration was needed to improve the model.

### Descriptive Statistics

The mean of all work and organisational factors is reported in Figure 1.

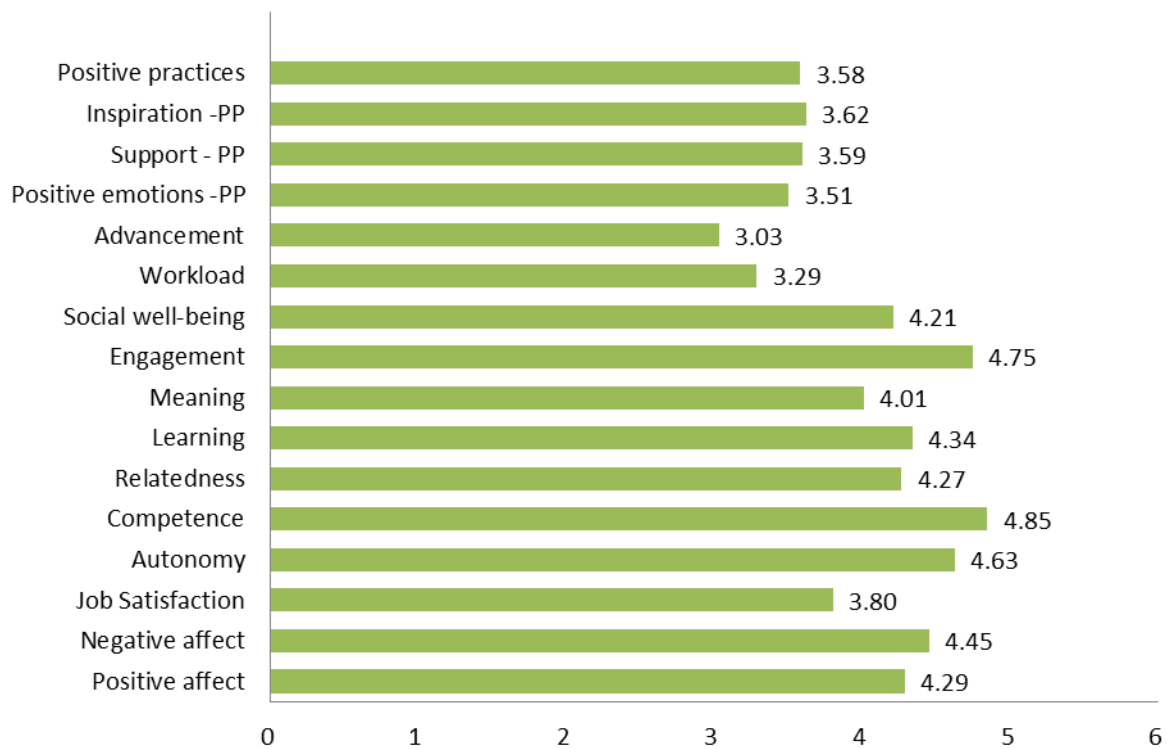


Figure 1. Mean frequency of each component of the model.

Figure 1 provides an understanding of each component of flourishing, work factor and positive organisational practice regarding how often the sample group experienced each feature. All components of flourishing, except job satisfaction (i.e. “How often do you experience real enjoyment in your work?”) were experienced at about 2 to 3 times a week in the past month. Job satisfaction was experienced at least once a week. Both work factors (workload and advancement) as well as the positive organisation practises (positive emotions, support and inspiration) are experienced sometimes.

Table 4 reflects the descriptive statistics, reliabilities and correlations of the latent variables.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Coefficients and Correlations of the Scales (N =779)*

VARIABLE	$\rho$	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Positive affect	0.76	4.29	1.03	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Negative affect	0.65	4.46	0.99	0.57**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Job Satisfaction	0.87	3.80	1.32	0.86**	0.61**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Autonomy	0.76	4.63	1.11	0.64**	0.50**	0.71**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Competence	0.83	4.85	0.90	0.48**	0.35**	0.53**	0.83**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Relatedness	0.79	4.27	1.13	0.62**	0.44**	0.67**	0.86**	0.70**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Learning	0.95	4.34	1.43	0.60**	0.43**	0.66**	0.69**	0.45**	0.57**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. Meaningful work	0.93	4.01	1.48	0.65**	0.43**	0.70**	0.65**	0.48**	0.61**	0.60**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Engagement	0.85	4.75	0.93	0.73**	0.52**	0.79**	0.73**	0.54**	0.69**	0.67**	0.72**	-	-	-	-	-	-
10. Social well-being	0.89	4.21	1.21	0.72**	0.51**	0.78**	0.75**	0.55**	0.77**	0.69**	0.74**	0.83**	-	-	-	-	-
11. Workload	0.80	3.29	0.91	-0.19**	-0.13**	-0.21*	-0.08*	-0.06*	-0.08*	-0.08*	-0.08*	-0.09*	-0.16*	-	-	-	-
12. Advancement	0.80	3.03	1.06	0.45**	0.33**	0.50**	0.42**	0.31**	0.40**	0.40**	0.42**	0.47**	0.54**	0.02	-	-	-
13. Positive emotions	0.85	3.51	0.92	0.55**	0.40**	0.60**	0.52**	0.40**	0.50**	0.49**	0.53**	0.59**	0.66**	-0.13**	0.53**	-	-
14. Support	0.88	3.60	0.85	0.51**	0.36**	0.56**	0.49**	0.36**	0.47**	0.46**	0.49**	0.55**	0.61**	-0.12**	0.49**	0.63**	-
15. Inspiration	0.84	3.62	0.80	0.64**	0.46**	0.70**	0.62**	0.46**	0.59**	0.57**	0.62**	0.69**	0.77**	-0.15**	0.62**	0.80**	0.74**

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 reflects scale reliabilities ranging from 0.65 to 0.95, which indicates acceptable internal consistency of all the scales (Raykov, 2009; Wang & Wang, 2012). The results of all scales could therefore be interpreted. All the dimensions of flourishing at work (positive affect, negative affect, job satisfaction, autonomy, competence, relatedness, learning, meaningful work, engagement and social well-being) and positive organisational practices (positive emotions, support and inspiration) were statistically significantly and positively related. Hypothesis 1 can be accepted. Furthermore, Table 4 shows that career advancement had a strong relationship with all dimensions of flourishing; therefore hypothesis 2 can be accepted. Workload had a moderate to strong relationship with all the flourishing dimensions, however, the correlation was negative. Hypothesis 3 can be accepted. The correlation between advancement and flourishing was also significant and positive. The correlation between workload and advancement was not significant.

### **Latent Class Analysis**

In article one of this thesis, various steps were followed to estimate the LCA model for flourishing. First, the optimal number of latent classes was determined. Second, the latent class classification was examined. Third, the latent classes were labelled. Fourth, latent class membership was predicted. To determine the number of latent classes, four models with different numbers of latent classes were estimated and compared, starting with a single class model and increasing the number of classes with one each time. Table 2 shows the fit indices. The AIC (20065.01), BIC (20158.17) and ABIC (20094.66) values of the model with one latent class were the largest, indicating that this model has the worst fit.

Three steps were followed to test the hypothesised model of three classes. The first step was to find the best log-likelihood values for the models. The three-class solution replicated the best log-likelihood value (-1810.06) several times using the default number of starting values. To verify that a better log-likelihood cannot be obtained, a second run increased the number of random starting values five times and found the same best-replicated log-likelihood value. With five classes, the default start setting was sufficient to obtain replication of the best log-likelihood 40 times when the start values were ten times higher. The second step was to conduct a six-class analysis to make sure the  $k - 1$  class model (five classes) shows the best log-likelihood value found in Step I. The OPTSEED value 722748 from the previous run was used in the five-class run. The Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin LR test for five

versus six classes had a log-likelihood value of -6165.657 (two times the log-likelihood difference = 379.55, difference in the number of parameters = 11, Mean = 227.51,  $SD = 324.74$ ,  $p = 0.203$ ). The Lo-Mendell-Rubin Adjusted LR test (Value = 374.43) was also not statistically significant ( $p = 0.2063$ ). In the third step, a five-class analysis was done using the same OPTSEED value as in step with LRT starting values = 0 0 100 20. The Parametric Bootstrapped LR test for four versus five classes was statistically significant ( $p < 0.0001$ ), rejecting the four-class model in favour of the five-class model (Wang & Wang, 2012). The  $p$ -values of the LMR LR test and ALMR LR test of the five-class model were smaller than 0.05. The five-class model also had the smallest AIC, BIC and ABIC values; thus fitted the data best.

Table 5  
*Comparison of LCA models (N=779)*

Model	AIC	BIC	ABIC	LMR LR test $p$ -value	ALMR LR test $p$ -value	BLRT $p$ -value
1-class LCA	20065.01	20158.17	20094.66	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
2-class LCA	15345.68	15490.08	15391.643	< 0.0000	< 0.0000	< 0.0000
3-class LCA	13614.27	13809.91	13676.53	< 0.0001	< 0.0001	< 0.0001
4-class LCA	12978.31	13225.18	13056.88	< 0.0852	< 0.0905	< 0.0001
5-class LCA	12459.31	12757.43	12554.20	< 0.0007	< 0.0007	< 0.0000

Next the quality of the latent class membership was examined. The entropy values for the two-class and three-class LCA were 0.93 and 0.93 respectively, which indicates a good classification (Wang & Wang, 2012). Furthermore, the posterior class membership probabilities for the five-class LCA model were all larger than 0.94, which is acceptable, compared to the recommended cut-off value of 0.70 or higher (Nagin, 2005). Hence the latent class membership classification was adequate. Hypothesis 4 is accepted. Figure 2 illustrates the five latent classes.

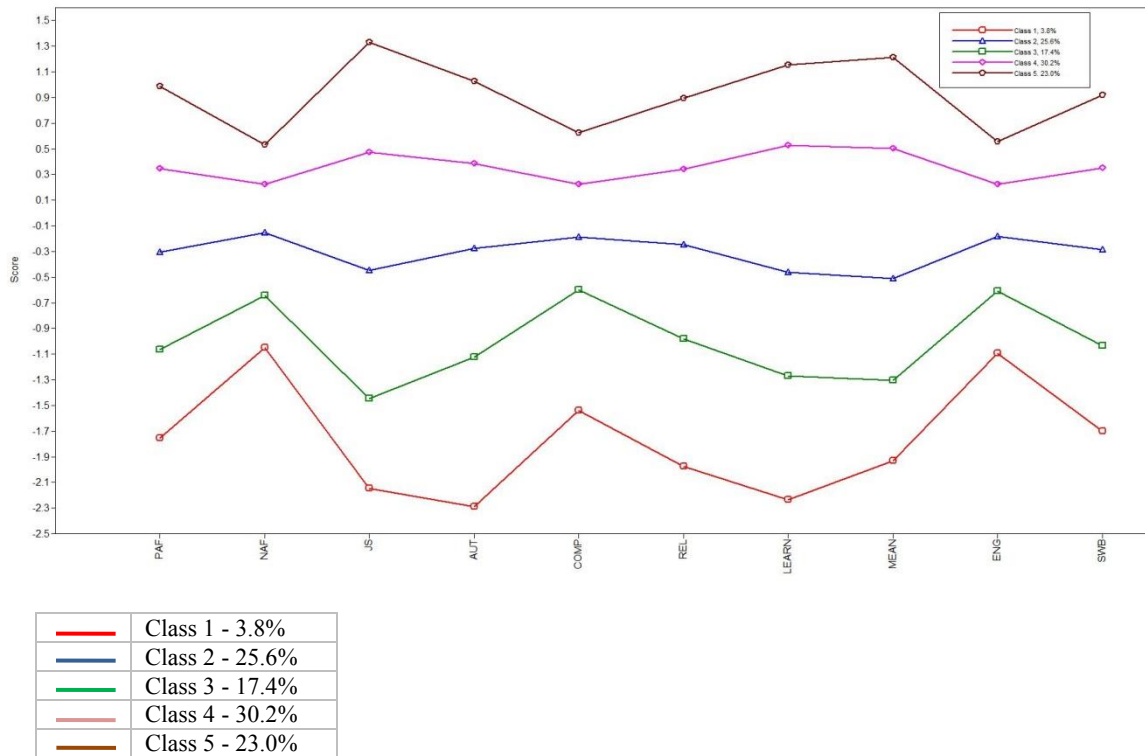


Figure 2. Latent classes based on flourishing subscales

Figure 2 indicates that individuals in class 1 (3.8% of the total sample) had the lowest mean scores on all the elements. Low scores are evident on Job satisfaction, Autonomy, Relatedness, Learning, and Meaningful work. Notably, the average score on Negative affect was higher than the average score on Positive affect. Individuals in class 5 (23%) had the highest scores on Job satisfaction, Learning, Meaningful work, and Social well-being. People in class 3 (17.33% of the sample) obtained the second lowest mean scores. In class 3, low mean scores are also evident on Job satisfaction, Learning and Meaning, although Competence and Work Engagement were somewhat higher.

### Prediction of Latent Class Membership

The various identified latent classes are compared regarding the job level, flexitime, flexplace, workload, advancement, and positive organisational practices that predict class membership.

Table 6

*Regression Coefficients for the Different Latent Classes*

<b>Class 2 compared with Class 1</b>					<b>Class 3 compared with Class 1</b>				
Element	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>	Practice	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>
Job level	0.216	0.198	1.094	0.274	Job level	0.166	0.225	0.741	0.459
Flexitime	0.205	0.595	0.345	0.730	Flexitime	0.389	0.686	0.566	0.571
Flexplace	0.267	0.690	0.386	0.699	Flexplace	0.319	0.783	0.407	0.684
Workload	0.225	0.400	0.563	0.574	Workload	0.021	0.490	0.043	0.966
Advancement	-0.693	0.472	-1.468	0.142	Advancement	-1.388	0.534	-2.600	0.009**
Positive Practices	1.646	0.448	3.670	0.000**	Positive Practices	7.247	0.732	9.894	0.000**
<b>Class 4 compared with Class 1</b>					<b>Class 5 compared with Class 1</b>				
Element	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>	Practice	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>
Job level	0.153	0.209	0.731	0.465	Job level	0.166	0.250	0.662	0.508
Flexitime	0.202	0.646	0.312	0.755	Flexitime	-0.340	0.803	-0.424	0.672
Flexplace	0.275	0.748	0.368	0.713	Flexplace	0.735	0.863	0.851	0.395
Workload	0.149	0.452	0.329	0.742	Workload	0.377	0.565	-0.668	0.504
Advancement	-1.226	0.497	-2.467	0.014*	Advancement	-2.065	0.601	-3.435	0.001**
Positive Practices	4.153	0.553	7.514	0.000**	Positive Practices	12.673	1.262	10.041	0.000**
<b>Class 3 compared with Class 2</b>					<b>Class 4 compared with Class 2</b>				
Element	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>	Element	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>
Job level	-0.050	0.157	-0.317	0.751	Job level	-0.064	0.137	-0.462	0.644
Flexitime	0.183	0.415	0.441	0.659	Flexitime	-0.004	0.354	-0.011	0.992
Flexplace	0.052	0.417	0.125	0.901	Flexplace	0.009	0.366	0.024	0.981
Workload	-0.204	0.339	-0.603	0.547	Workload	-0.076	0.302	-0.253	0.801
Advancement	-0.696	0.327	-2.125	0.034*	Advancement	-0.533	0.304	-1.754	0.080
Positive Practices	5.602	0.583	9.605	0.000**	Positive Practices	2.508	0.304	7.080	0.000**
<b>Class 5 compared with Class 2</b>									
Element	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>					
Job level	-0.051	0.191	-0.264	0.792					
Flexitime	-0.546	0.587	-0.929	0.353					
Flexplace	0.468	0.548	0.854	0.393					
Workload	-0.603	0.434	-1.390	0.165					
Advancement	-1.372	0.431	-3.181	0.001**					
Positive Practices	11.028	1.184	9.315	0.000**					

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 6

*Regression Coefficients for the Different Latent Classes (continued)*

Class 4 compared with Class 3					Class 5 compared with Class 3				
Element	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>	Element	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>
Job level	-0.014	0.101	-0.136	0.892	Job level	-0.001	0.124	-0.006	0.996
Flexitime	-0.187	0.318	-0.589	0.556	Flexitime	-0.729	0.471	1.549	0.121
Flexplace	-0.043	0.307	-0.141	0.888	Flexplace	0.416	0.385	1.081	0.280
Workload	0.128	0.229	0.559	0.576	Workload	-0.398	0.302	-1.320	0.187
Advancement	0.163	0.240	0.678	0.498	Advancement	-0.677	0.314	-2.152	0.031*
Positive Practices	-3.094	0.439	-7.054	0.000**	Positive Practices	5.426	0.972	5.582	0.000**
Class 4 compared with Class 5									
Element	Estimate	SE	Est. / S.E.	<i>p</i>					
Job level	0.013	0.148	0.008	0.930					
Flexitime	-0.542	0.510	-1.061	0.288					
Flexplace	0.459	0.453	1.013	0.311					
Workload	-0.526	0.364	-1.446	0.148					
Advancement	-0.839	0.360	-2.332	0.020*					
Positive Practices	8.520	1.110	7.676	0.000**					

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 6 depicts how the different classes and their levels of flourishing relate with the flexitime, flexplace, workload and advancement and positive organisational practices. Positive organisational practices were associated with work flourishing employees. The higher the level of flourishing, the higher the probability will be that positive organisational practices would play a statistically significant role. Flourishing employees, compared to those who show moderate health or are languishing, are more likely to experience positive emotions and find the organisation supportive and inspiring.

Advancement in the workplace was also associated with flourishing of employees. Class 5, which attained a high level of work flourishing, measured statistically significantly higher regarding career advancement. Employees who flourish values advancement opportunities and are motivated by such opportunities.

## Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between identified work factors, positive practices, and work flourishing of employees. A measurement model fitted the data well, resulting in a four-factor model consisting of work flourishing, advancement (as resource), workload (as demand) and positive organisational practices. The reliability of the scales was acceptable for all. Flourishing at work, advancement and the positive organisational practices were statistically significant and correlated positively. Workload had moderate to strong significance in relation to all other dimensions, but in a negative direction. This is expected as workload is seen as a job demand that impacts negatively and can result in impaired psychological well-being, (Rothmann, 2013). The correlation between workload and advancement was, however, not significant.

Job satisfaction as component of flourishing was the least experienced by all participants and was experienced at least once a week. Job satisfaction refers to an employee's perception of all aspects of the jobs. The realisation of wants determines job satisfaction and is a critical element of emotional well-being at work (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001). This study was conducted during the period of the organisation's performance evaluation. This process could have impacted on the experience of job satisfaction. Workload, advancement and the positive organisation practices (positive emotions, support and inspiration) were sometimes experienced. This is typical of any employee and organisation, seeing that different phases are evident in this environmental setting.

The multidimensional nature of flourishing makes it possible to study the interplay between the various dimensions. The results of the latent class analysis showed that different classes of well-being can be distinguished. Although three elements, i.e. negative affect, competence, and work engagement differed between the five latent classes, these dimensions probably distinguished less between different latent classes. Elements such as positive affect, job satisfaction, autonomy, learning and meaningful work showed more variation among different classes. It is possible that an individual might be engaged, but still experience job dissatisfaction, and not find work meaningful. Not considering the multidimensional nature of well-being, might result in behaviour that is detrimental to the long-term well-being of individuals (Porath et al., 2012).

Five classes of flourishing were distinguished by conducting a latent class analysis. These classes differ regarding the combination of each component of work flourishing, namely: positive affect, negative affect, job satisfaction, autonomy, competence, relatedness, learning, work engagement, meaningful work and social well-being. Class 1 reflects employees who measure the lowest on all dimensions of flourishing. This indicates employees who languish. Class 2, 3 and 4 reflect employees demonstrating moderate levels of flourishing. Class 5 comprised the employees measuring the highest on all dimensions of psychological well-being, indicating employees who flourish. The results indicate the multidimensional nature of well-being and re-affirms that employee behaviour can be either beneficial or detrimental to the long-term well-being of individuals (Porath et al., 2012).

The main finding from the data was that positive organisational practices and advancement showed higher levels of feeling well and functioning well. Employees who experience the organisation to be supportive, who are regularly cheerful, and are inspired by their organisation tend to experience higher levels of flourishing. The organisational practices (reflecting virtuousness) affect the well-being and performance of people and the performance of organisations (Cameron et al., 2011). Interventions on organisational level focusing on positive practices should be considered. Furthermore, career advancement, either through career progression or training, and development affect employee well-being.

This study had several limitations. Firstly, due to taking on a cross-sectional design, more longitudinal studies would be beneficial to provide more insight into the direction of the relations between work factors, positive practices and flourishing in work and organisational context. Second, the full spectrum of positive organisational practices should be investigated to determine which specific dimensions are more crucial to employee well-being. Third, this study was conducted in a single organisation. Future research should focus on different types of organisations and industries to gather information.

### **Recommendations**

It is evident that an organisation that implements positive practices contributes to employee flourishing. An increased focus on building more positive practices on organisational level should be beneficial to any organisation. The focus should be on the welfare of the employees by promoting a positive climate, encouraging employee participation and a sense of

belonging, ensure meaningful work is being done and that respect and integrity is an integrated pillar of the organisation.

Career development processes and practices should be developed, or if they already exist, be re-evaluated to ensure that all employees are afforded the opportunity of growing and developing in their careers. These programs should also be integrated with the overall business strategy of the organisation focusing on developing the competence to provide employees with sufficient and equal opportunities. Organisational commitment towards individual development that is seen as fair should be reinforced.

Programmes and systems that supports and encourage a positive balance between work and personal life should be reinforced. This will allow employees more autonomy to manage their responsibilities which will result in a deduction in stress and work pressure (Nadeem & Henry, 2003).

Longitudinal studies are needed regarding the role of work factors and positive organisational practices on flourishing at work. Future studies should include numerous industries to allow for generalisation of results and for stronger evidence of relationships.

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## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to draw conclusions from the study. Conclusions are drawn in accordance with the research objectives. Furthermore, limitations of this study are discussed and recommendations are made for the organisation. Finally, research opportunities emanating from this study, are presented.

#### 5.1 Conclusions

The conclusions that can be drawn from the empirical studies are documented in relation to the three research articles.

##### *The Validation of a Scale which Measures Flourishing at Work*

The first objective of this study was to validate a questionnaire that measures flourishing in the work and organisational context. Flourishing has become an increasingly important concept as the focus on employee health and well-being has progressed over time due to its numerous positive individual and organisational outcomes (Keyes & Grzywacz, 2005; Keyes, 2007). The value of focusing on the positive far exceeds the focusing on the adverse. To promote flourishing, this concept must first be understood in the relevant context. Furthermore, scientific studies of measuring flourishing require good quality scales to measure it (Huppert & So, 2013; Rothmann, 2013). By measuring flourishing in a valid and reliable manner, organisations will be able to ensure employee motivation resulting in lasting successful organisations.

Flourishing describes the subjective well-being of individuals and refers to both feeling well and functioning well (Keyes & Annas, 2009; Seligman, 2011). Flourishing as a concept was developed to indicate emotional, psychological and social well-being in life (Keyes, 2005). However, individuals function in different spheres of life and the context within which they operate affects their well-being. Research on flourishing in the workplace done by Rothmann (2013) supports the three dimensions of flourishing as indicated by Keyes' model of

flourishing. Bono, Davies, and Rasch (2012) conceptualized flourishing in work and organisational context as thriving (learning and vitality), happiness (emotions and positive moods), and engagement (job satisfaction and self-determination motivation).

In this study the results showed that work flourishing can be explained in terms of three dimensions, namely emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being. Emotional well-being consists of positive affect, negative affect and job satisfaction. Psychological well-being comprises autonomy, competence, relatedness, learning, meaningful work, and work engagement. Social well-being includes social acceptance, social growth, social contribution, social coherence and social integration. This supports the work of Keyes (2005, 2007) regarding flourishing in life. The conclusion of this study is that flourishing at work is a multi-dimensional construct that constitutes both positive feeling and positive functioning.

#### *Antecedents of Flourishing at Work*

The aim of the second study was to evaluate the psychometric properties of a short scale which measures flourishing at work and to investigate work-related antecedents (advancement, negative work-home interference, authentic leadership, compensation, workload and job insecurity) of flourishing in the work and organisational context (emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being).

Similar to the previous finding in study 1, the short scale supported a three-factor structure of flourishing at work. The three dimensions, namely emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being, held up the findings of similar dimensions on the long questionnaire of work flourishing. Once more this aligns to Keyes' theoretical model of well-being (Keyes, 2002) and confirms the flourishing model suggested by Rothmann (2013).

Both job demands and job resources are evident and unavoidable in the workplace. Whilst job demands have been found to coincide with reduced well-being, recourse on the other hand has a positive effect on well-being (Bakker, 2001; Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001). The results confirmed these findings.

The results showed that career advancement as resource predicts work flourishing. Employees, who testified having sufficient opportunities to advance in their careers, demonstrate higher levels of learning, autonomy and self-actualization (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002; Hammond & Feinstein, 2006). Resources in the workplace result in employee growth (Keyes, 2002).

Authentic leadership predicted flourishing at work. Authentic leaders experience more positive emotions (compared to inauthentic leaders). These emotions are contagious and spill over to the followers (Kernis, 2003). In turn, positive affect at work leads to flourishing and improved physical health (Fredrickson, 2003; Salovey, Rothman, Detweiler, & Steward, 2000). The positive emotional atmosphere created as a result of authentic leadership will be sustained by a reciprocal affective exchange that enhances employee hedonic well-being.

Another interesting finding was that compensation (as a job resource) did not predict flourishing. This can be explained by the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000), according to which extrinsic motivation does not modify the emotional or cognitive desires that underlie behaviour in a desirable direction. Compensation is usually seen as an extrinsic source of motivation. Furthermore, the organisation that participated in this study is well-known for its fair and good levels of remuneration. This confirms the theory of equity where employees' motivation is affected by their perception of the fairness of the balance between work inputs and outcomes (Adams, 1965).

Workload and job insecurity (as job demands) did not predict the flourishing or languishing of the participants. Findings on the consequences of job insecurity have continuously pointed to the negative effects of the demand on the subjective well-being of individuals (e.g. Mohr, 2000; for meta-analysis results, see Cheng & Chan, 2008). Bowling, Alarcon, Bragg and Hartman (2015) found that workload negatively relates to psychological and physical well-being. This confirms that both these demands are deemed stressors that impair well-being.

The study revealed that 8% of the sample was languishing (i.e. experiencing low levels of mental health), 65.15% demonstrated moderate levels of flourishing, while the remaining 34.9% was flourishing. Compared to other studies done on flourishing of the general population (Rothmann, 2013), this sample had more individuals who flourish and fewer who

languish. A difference in level of flourishing was observed regarding gender and tenure in job level. More males than females are languishing. This can be explained by looking at the working environment: the fast moving consumable goods environment is a hard, tough and demanding environment to operate in and is still mainly male dominated. This is evident from a male-dominant environment where the lack of equal opportunities and representation of females in the workplace exists. This creates an enormous amount of distress for females in this type of environment. Longer tenure employees also seem to flourish more than newly appointed employees. This is evident of long tenure employees being more competent. An interesting finding is a difference in work flourishing compared to different job levels. Lower level employees (staff members) reported more languishing and less flourishing than any of the other levels (e.g. 12.4% languishing and 31% flourishing). With an increase in job level, there also was an increased number of flourishing employees and a lower percentage of employees who languish. At an executive level more than 50% of employees were flourishing and one was languishing. Senior employees are usually in a position to act autonomously, have the relevant competencies to do their job, understand how the organisation operates and feel that they contribute to the bigger picture. The mentioned elements constitute flourishing at work.

The conclusion of this study is that work flourishing consists of emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being that can be measured with reliable and valid assessments. Due to the working environment being very dynamic, the availability of numerous work resources serves as enablers for employees to flourish. Knowing where you are going with your career, having leaders that are true and authentic, and being able to effectively manage your work-life with personal life will contribute to flourishing. Understanding the well-being of employees specifically, allows the observers of such behaviour to predict work outcomes more favourably (Deci & Ryan, 2011).

### *Flourishing at Work: The Role of Work and Positive Organisational Factors*

The aim of the third study was to investigate the relationship between flourishing in the workplace, work factors and positive organisational practices. A positive working environment is a critical requirement for workplace flourishing (Cameron, 2008; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Gagne and Deci (2005) reported that well-being at work will improve when the work environment satisfies employees' needs (Gagne & Deci, 2005).

The first finding in this study confirms previous suggestions that flourishing in the workplace is a multidimensional construct (Rothmann, 2013). Various levels of flourishing depend on the combination of each component of work flourishing, namely positive affect, negative affect, job satisfaction, autonomy, competence, relatedness, learning, work engagement, meaningful work and social well-being. The interplay between the various components is critical for one to understand work flourishing.

The second finding in this study was that positive organisational practices, consisting of positive emotions, support and inspiration, relates to flourishing in the work and organisational context. Employees who experience positive emotions, who find the organisation to be supportive and who are inspired by their organisation tend to experience higher levels of flourishing. The organisational practices (reflecting virtuousness) affect the well-being and performance of people and thus the performance of organisations (Cameron et al., 2011; Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). Due to the highly demanding and competitive nature of the fast moving consumable goods industry, it is critical for the organisation to create a positive and supportive working environment that will contribute to a flourishing workforce. Diedericks and Rothmann (2014), Rothmann (2013) and Swart (2012) found that the well-being of individuals has numerous positive impacts on both individual (e.g. job satisfaction) and organisational level outcomes (e.g. performance and intention to leave).

A further finding was that employees who flourish reflected higher satisfaction levels with regard to career advancement. Employees who are given the opportunity to learn and grow through various interventions (i.e. training opportunities) experience a sense of personal achievement which increases their self-worth (Hill & Lent, 2006). Career advancement also provides a sense of autonomy, allowing employees to feel engaged in and satisfied with their work, ultimately resulting in improved performance (Dench & Regan, 1998; Hammond & Feinstein, 2006).

The conclusion of this study is that employees cannot feel well and function well if the work environment does not support this. If organisations are serious about building lasting legacies, they need to ensure that they invest in creating a conducive environment that promotes a healthy workforce (i.e. emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-

being). Actions need to speak louder than words and the willingness to invest in creating positive organisational practices is vital.

## **5.2 Integration and Contribution of this Study**

This study made the following *contributions* to the field of positive psychology, known as the science of happiness, a concept that focuses on more positive aspects such as positive organisations and individual characteristics which improve well-being (Seligman, 2002).

*First*, it resulted in reliable and valid, useful measuring instruments of flourishing and its antecedents in work and organisational context.

*Second*, it resulted in validated models of flourishing for employees.

*Third*, it resulted in new scientific information regarding the relationships between work flourishing and antecedents (demand and resources) in the workplace.

*Fourth*, new information was created regarding the relationship between work flourishing, work factors and organisational positive practices.

## **5.3 Limitations**

*Firstly*, this study was conducted on a single organisation in a particular work sector in South Africa. The results therefore cannot be generalized to the entire working population in South Africa. The validity, reliability and invariance of the measure of flourishing in organisational contexts should aim at including numerous types of organisations and industries to ensure generalizability.

*Secondly*, with any newly developed questionnaire, on-going research is needed regarding the validity and reliability of the tool, to refine the construct. Furthermore, this study did not investigate the psychometric properties of the measure of work flourishing among different language, age and gender groups.

*Third*, the present study relied on self-reporting to measure the intended variables. Due to the subjective nature and both dependent and independent variables being based on one source of information, self-reported data might be contaminated by common method variance (Spector & Jex, 1991).

*Fourthly*, as a result of the research design having been cross-sectional, the causality of relationships cannot be assumed or determined. More in-depth, longitudinal and qualitative research is needed to better understand the interplay and dynamics among the different constructs in this study.

*Finally*, only a limited number of resources and demands as well as positive practices that exist in the workplace were measured. Other potential factors and practices that exist should be investigated in future studies.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

### **5.4.1 Recommendations to Solve the Research Problems**

Based on the outcomes of this study, numerous aspects should be addressed to ensure the promotion of flourishing among employees in the workplace. The well-being of individuals is an essential ingredient for ensuring optimal individual and organisational effectiveness and success (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). It is therefore necessary to be able to determine who is flourishing and which are the work-related factors and practices that can promote and improve flourishing. Measurements of work flourishing should be utilized and interventions on how to improve this should be developed and implemented. The well-being of employees is in the best interest of the employer (Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 1999). When employees are well, organisations will also be well. The ultimate result of individual and organisational flourishing will lead to vital individual happiness and organizational success.

*Firstly*, although this research revealed satisfying results regarding a valid and reliable measurement of work flourishing, on-going research on the psychometric properties of the FAWS is needed. Studies regarding the convergent, discriminant and criterion-related validity of the FAWS are also essential. Research is also needed to name and refine latent classes of well-being that were notorious in this study, and to assess whether latent classes

relate differently to antecedents and outcomes of flourishing at work.

*Secondly*, to stimulate flourishing, the focus should be on interventions that will create a work environment that is favourable towards promoting career advancement, work-life balance and the ability for leadership to be authentic.

- Clear career development programs and systems that are integrated with the overall business strategy should be considered. These programs should promote career growth and advancement through providing competence building and training, coaching, and sufficient and equal opportunities for career movement. When employees are equipped with the knowledge and skills to perform their jobs and cope with various work demands, they are more engaged (Kahn, 1990). The major component in achieving this is by ensuring that all employees have Individual Development Plans (IDP) in place, which empowers them to participate actively in and provide input into their career development. Tools such as career mapping and identifying strengths and development areas can be used (Cao & Thomas, 2013).
- A positive balance between work and life can be promoted through the implementation of flexible work arrangement policies. Flexible work arrangements can refer to either flexitime or flexplace, allowing employees some freedom to manage their various accountabilities. Employees will have more autonomy to manage their responsibilities which will result in a deduction in stress and work pressure (Nadeem & Henry, 2003).
- Flexible work arrangements have also become a critical organisational lever to attract and retain top talent (Lewis, 2001). Improving employees' level of competence and conscientiousness could also lead to the experience of better work-life balance (Lyness & Judiesch, 2008). The lack of the mentioned resources will negatively impact on the well-being of employees, leading to devastating consequences for both the individual and the organization.

*Thirdly*, authenticity should be core to the behaviour of all leaders and should underpin the values of the organisation. To support authenticity, the organisation should focus on adopting the following principles (Ryde & Sofianos, 2014):

- Publicly declare what they stand and not stand for, in a genuine manner.
- Proactively engage in honest, “on-the-level” and adult-to-adult discussions with employees.
- Be transparent and admit to mistakes.
- Make shared learning a standard practice.

*Fourthly*, interventions should be directed towards understanding the effects of positive practices on the well-being and performance of individuals and organisations. Flourishing at work will improve when work environments satisfy employees’ needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). This study found that positive organizational practices (positive emotions, support and inspiration) contribute to both the feeling well and functioning well of employees. The organisational culture and climate should consider adopting the positive practices as everyday principles.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations for Future Research**

The following recommendations are made for future research:

- The continuous studying of the psychometric properties of the Flourishing at Work Scale (FAWS) and the Short form of the FAWS is imperative for refining purposes.
- The on-going research of the psychometric properties of the FAWS should further be studied within the multicultural context and work environments to assess the applicability and generalization thereof.
- Flourishing in the workplace should also be studied within the multicultural context of gender, race and language in the world of work.
- Future studies should investigate the relationship between more work antecedents and work flourishing.
- Positive organisational practices should be further investigated regarding their impact on and contribution to flourishing.
- Work-related outcomes as a result of flourishing should be further investigated.
- Future studies should focus on the design of interventions specifically tailored for promoting flourishing in the workplace.

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**ADDENDUM A**  
**DECLARATION FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR**



18 November 2015

I, Ms Cecilia van der Walt, hereby confirm that I took care of the editing of the thesis of Ms Cindy Rautenbach titled *Flourishing of Employees in a Fast Moving Consumable Goods Environment*.

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Fax: 086 578 1425

REVISION OF ARTICLES

I, WH Cloete, SATI-accredited translator and text editor, hereby declare that I have edited the following 2 articles by C Rautenbach and S Rothmann:

*Validation of a scale which measures flourishing at work.*

and

*Antecedents of flourishing at work.*

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'WH Cloete', with a stylized flourish at the end.

WH CLOETE

BBibl, MA, APSTrans & APed (SATI)

## ADDENDUM B: ETHICAL APPROVAL CERTIFICATE



PO Box 1174, [Vanderbijlpark](#)  
South Africa, 1900

**Optentia Research Committee**  
Tel: +27(16) 910-3140  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>  
Email: [marinda.malan@nwu.ac.za](mailto:marinda.malan@nwu.ac.za)

18 June 2014

Dear [Prof. S. Rothmann](#)

**ETHICS APPLICATION: RAUTENBACH [NWU-00095-14-A8]**

**"WORK AND TALENT: FLOURISHING OF EMPLOYEES IN A FAST-MOVING  
CONSUMABLE GOODS ENVIRONMENT"**

Ethical clearance has been awarded.

Best regards,

[Prof. L.C. Theron](#)  
CHAIR: OPTENTIA ETHICS COMMITTEE

## **ADDENDUM C: COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRES**

9 June 2014

### **LETTER OF INFORMATION**

#### **Title of Research**

Work and Talent: The role of Flourishing in the FMCG Environment

#### **Name of Researcher**

Cindy Rautenbach

It is important to note that, before agreeing to participate in this research study, you need to read the following explanation of the study. This statement describes the purpose, benefits, risks, discomforts, and precautions of the study.

#### **Description of the research**

This study is designed to explore the role of Flourishing in the FMCG environment. Cindy Rautenbach, a PhD's student at the North-West University, Vaal Triangle Campus, is conducting this study in order to develop a scale that measures flourishing relevant to the working environment, determining the levels of flourishing of employee as well as investigating the work environmental factors that impacts on flourishing. An investigating regarding the direct and indirect impact of employee flourishing on talent deployment and analysis will also be conducted. Flourishing can be explained as emotional, psychological and social well-being of individuals. Emotional well-being (EWB) is characterised by the presence of positive emotions and a feeling that one is satisfied with life. Psychological well-being (PWB) entails the positive evaluations of the self that includes a sense of satisfaction with one's achievements, having a purpose in life and developing/growing as an individual. Social well-being (SWB) can be explained as the quality of the relationships one has with others, including positive appraisals of others and believing that one is making a constructive contribution to the larger equation.

Thus far, no studies have been conducted regarding Flourishing in the working environment, especially in the FMCG industry; an industry that has been severely plagued by an exodus of skilled people.

### **Explanation of Procedures**

A quantitative approach will be followed during this study, more specifically a cross-sectional design. A cross-sectional research design typically consists of different people that the researcher examines using one or more variable. For purposes of this study, a questionnaire will be sent out to all SAB employees to complete.

### **Risks and Discomforts**

No intentional risks or harm are anticipated as a result of participation. It will take  $\pm 30$  minutes (during work hours) to complete the questionnaires. Questionnaires can be completed either electronically on-line or in hard copy format. The researcher will personally distribute the questionnaires (electronically via a link and hard copy) and will collect hard copies on a bi-weekly basis from all participating sites. If the questionnaire is completed on line, the will be done via an online program. Each completed hard copy will be separately sealed in an envelope. The questionnaires will be accompanied by a covering letter in which the researcher addresses confidentiality, anonymity of results along with ethical considerations.

### **Benefits**

This study will potentially hold many benefits, not only to the participating organization, but also to the FMCG industry in general, as no research has yet been done on Flourishing in the working context and specifically in industry. The retention of highly skilled and high performing professionals is a big challenge given the global shortage of qualified candidates. It is therefore empirical to understand how and employee's mental health contributed to him/her being able to perform to the optimum as well as identify those elements that might impact on the level of wellbeing.

This study aims to benefit the FMCG environment, in this case SAB, through promoting efforts and interventions to retain and motivate good performing employees, which in turn will affect organizational outcomes, performance, job satisfaction and intention to stay.

### **Confidentiality and anonymous nature of the data**

The information gathered during this research project will at all times remain confidential. This will be ensured via a unique identification number process. A random unique identifier will be generated and each employee will then be mapped to this number based on their

exclusive employee number. The data will then be mapped to the unique identifier and the exclusive employee number will be removed. No individual scores will be used. Data will only be reported in aggregated form to protect the identity of all participants.

### **Outcomes**

Information obtained via the research would be used for research purposes only. Feedback on the results of the study will be given to the management of the participating organisation through a write-up and presentation. The research results will be presented in the format of a dissertation including four articles that will be submitted to the North-West University, Vaal Triangle Campus, for examination. Individual feedback can also be requested by indicated this option on the consent form.

### **Withdrawal from Research**

When conducting specific research, this process only concludes over a period of 4 years. It is therefore in good faith that both parties agree and commit to see this research process through until the final stage of publishing. This should be contracted due to cost implications, intense involvement and time commitments from the researcher, the University supervisor and University resources.

### **Costs or Payments**

There will be no costs involved for taking part in this research study. No participant will receive any payment to participate in this research project.

### **Questions**

Any questions concerning this research can be addressed to Prof. S. (Ian) Rothmann (e-mail: [ian@ianrothmann.com](mailto:ian@ianrothmann.com), work phone: (016) 9103410.

### **Agreement**

This agreement states that you have read and received a copy of this informed consent. Your signature below indicates that you understand the parameters of participation and agree to take part in this research study by providing access to relevant information required.

Regards



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Cindy Rautenbach

**Researcher**

## ADDENDUM D: PERMISSION FOR THE STUDY



**SAB Central Office**  
**The South African Breweries (Pty) Ltd**  
65 Park Lane Sandton, Jhb  
Tel (011) 881 8157

24 February 2014

Dear Cindy Rautenbach

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THIS ORGANISATION

It gives us pleasure to inform you that you have been granted permission to conduct your research at this organisation. This research entails:

- **Development of a Flourishing scale for the working environment;**
- **Determining the levels of flourishing of employee;**
- **Determining which working environmental factors impacts on Flourishing;**
- **Investigating the direct and indirect impact of employee flourishing on talent deployment and analysis.**

We acknowledge your assurance to adhere to ethical research as set out in the letter of information.

Regards

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elsabe Botha  
Talent Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'E. Botha', written over a horizontal line.

#### **Directors**

N J Adami (Chairman), Y Z Cuba, N P Dongwana#; M J Dunn (British), I V Everitt-Penhale (British), M P Fandesio, M Leyva (Colombian), S Maar (Slovakian), Y Maharaj, T V Maphai, W J McCauley, K D Moroka#, M M Ngoasheng#, C D Raphiri, J S Ustas (USA), A C Wolff  
**Company Secretary** M C B Saxby

#Independent Non Executive  
Reg. No. 1998/006375/07



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