

Adoption of A Paradox Mindset Enhances Thriving at Work: Proactive Behavior Acts as A Mediator

Prof. Luxmi Malodia¹, Deepshikha Sharma^{2,*}

¹Professor, University Business School, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

^{2,*}Research Scholar, University Business School, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

*Corresponding Author email id: deepshikhap@gmail.com

Abstract

Thriving at work is a positive psychological state that makes an individual feel that he is learning and improving every day and fills him with the energy and enthusiasm towards his job. Employees who experience thriving at work are those who work and live happily along with delivering exceptional performance at work. The goal of this study is to analyze and establish that thriving at work can be achieved when employees adopt a paradox mindset for performing their jobs and enhanced when they engage in proactive behavior at work. Data was collected from university teachers working in top six Universities in Punjab and Chandigarh. Out of the 200 questionnaires distributed, 177 questionnaires were filled and returned and used for the purpose of this study. The hypotheses of the study that were derived from the review of extant literature of the variables were strongly supported via the data analysis. Proactive behavior establishes itself as a strong mediator in the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work proving that if one displays and engages in proactive behavior at work it will help the individual, learn more and feel more energetic and vital which are the essential components of the state of thriving at work. This psychological state of thriving at work, boosts the drive in employees to perform better at work and also reassures them to stay at the current organization.

Keywords: Paradox Mindset, Proactive Behavior, Self –Determination Theory, Thriving at work, University Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Organizational sustainability is the new goal nowadays. How to bring about sustainability in products, processes and practices seems to be the overarching aim of every organization. Fostering sustainability will not only lead to a healthier planet but also build organizations which are profitable and at the same time also adhering to their social responsibility. However, achieving sustainability involves effort at all the levels of an organization and needs its employees to be motivated and enthused to participate in the endeavors. Only employees who are empowered and thriving can work as a powerful catalyst for achieving sustainability goals. A thriving workforce drives innovation, creativity and collective action which are needed to drive positive environmental impact.

Thriving is a psychological state of being which an individual experiences when he feels that he is improving and developing everyday and making significant contributions to his life and work. He also feels alive and energetic at work and is motivated to give his best performance. It has been

proved in earlier researches that employees who experience thriving are more creative, conjure up innovative solutions and perform well in work as well as in life.

As it has been well recognized that thriving at work leads to varied positive outcomes in conjunction with displaying innovative work behavior at work, it is essential to recognize what can lead to an employee's thriving. A number of precursors have already been researched and accepted as predecessors of thriving. Social contexts, organizational structures as well as personal dispositions all should be positively present to bring about feeling of thriving in employees. At the organizational level, the organizational culture, supportive climate (Spreitzer et al., 2005) supervisory social capital (Paterson et al., 2013) support and encourage thriving.

Personal characteristics of an individual are also great predictors of their ability to thrive at work (Paterson et al., 2013). Task focus and heedful relating are strong antecedents of thriving at work which also act as mediators between other constructs and thriving (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Paterson et al.,

2013). Thriving at work is a psychological state and the degree of the feeling varies with changes in employee's role, changes in work environment and even fluctuates during the workday (Niessen et al., 2012). Therefore, it is essential to connect this feeling with the mindset and behavior of an individual to see what affects the thriving feeling at the psychological level of individuals and understand the inner underlying mechanism.

In this study we examine the construct of thriving in relation to an employee's mindset and behavior. The aim of the study is to examine the impact of paradox mindset on an employees' thriving at work. Secondly the study also aims to understand the intervening mechanism of proactive behavior between the constructs of paradox mindset and thriving at work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Thriving at Work

Characterized by the dual sense of learning and vitality, thriving at work is a psychological state of mind. An individual who experiences thriving is motivated and feels energized and alive with enthusiasm. This concept was first defined by Spreitzer et al. in a 2005 study, affirming that thriving is a positive psychological state of wellbeing encompassing both the cognitive and affirmative dimensions (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Thriving at work is an important parameter as employees who experience thriving at work are not only able to perform better at their job but are also more creative. It also leads to good physical and mental health in employees which is a growing cause of concern in corporate world.

Organizations can enable thriving in their employees by providing them with a supportive leadership, by building coworker support system and perception of organizational support in their endeavors. Porath et al. (2012) conducted a seminal study studying the concept of thriving in relation to new outcomes. The researchers established that thriving at work varies with context and time and is not a static state of mind. It was proven that the degree of thriving of an individual changes with changes in their work role, work context and social factors (Niessen et al., 2012). A person who is thriving at work may not be experiencing thriving outside of work and vice-a-versa.

Thriving at work is a complex psychological state which occurs when there is psychological, mental and social wellness of an individual. An individual's inner sense of purpose, motivation towards personal growth and development and feeling of job satisfaction, enthusiasm all contribute towards thriving state. Organizations may make a lot of effort for an individual's thriving but their innate sense towards their learning and energy also impacts it. Paterson et al. (2013) made a noteworthy revelation about the thriving concept that it is also dependent on the personal characteristics of an individual and not only on the social contexts as was believed earlier (Paterson et al., 2013).

Further thriving has been related to a number of positive outcomes by researchers over the years which make it a significant factor for promoting individual and organization's well-being. It is most prominently related to creativity and innovative work behavior in employees (Abid et al., 2015) which is the need of every business. Additionally, it leads to better physical and mental health (Walumbwa et al., 2018) and psychologically healthy workplaces (Spreitzer & Hwang, 2019).

Paradox Mindset

Paradox mindset is fairly new concept but has garnered much attention as it is an excellent methodology for handling the contradictory demands of workplace and life. Paradox theory posits that paradoxes are inherent in an organizational setup and individuals must learn to navigate them successfully to be able to resolve complex demands. (Smith & Lewis, 2011)

Yin (2022) in his study on paradox mindset established that paradoxical leadership behavior is the key factor in cultivating paradox mindset in followers. When leaders deal with paradoxes at work efficiently, they lead by example and teach it to their subordinates. Further, engagement in paradoxical tasks is also vital for development of paradox mindset in individuals (Miron-Spektor et al., 2018). Employees should be involved in tasks demanding contradictory solutions as this leads to paradoxical mindset development in them (Boemelburg et al., 2020; Boemelburg et al., 2023).

Adoption of a paradox mindset has been successfully related to varied positive outcomes, innovative work behavior being the most significant.

Employees with a paradox mindset exhibit innovative work behavior through the mediation of thriving at work (Liu et al., 2020) thus establishing that both the constructs of this study, paradox mindset and thriving at work, are highly advantageous for innovation in corporates. Ella Miron-Spektor (2018, 2023) in her seminal works on investigating the concept of paradox mindset successfully linked it to enhanced cognitive flexibility and ability to tolerate contradictions at work (Miron-Spektor et al., 2018). It has also been concluded that adoption of a paradox mindset by employees at work also helps in achieving sustainability in operations and products. Smith & Lewis (2011) in their dynamic equilibrium model state that when organizations accept contradictions and are able to deal with them they attain dynamic equilibrium and this leads to long term sustainability for the organizations. Sustainability is a big goal for all organizations today and maybe training and adopting a paradoxical approach to problems can help with achieving it (Smith & Lewis, 2011).

Proactive Behavior

Human resources are the only resources that organizations cannot duplicate. The organizations which have a motivated and proactive workforce have competitive advantage and is innovative in product and strategy. Therefore, proactive behavior is a crucial aspect in successful employees and organizations must understand the underlying mechanisms that promote proactive behavior in employees. Personal dispositions as well as organizational aspects both contribute in promoting proactive behavior in employees (Bateman & Crant, 1999). Employees with a proactive personality are bound to display proactive behavior on their jobs. However job autonomy as well as role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) are also essential for this behavior (Parker et al., 2006) alongwith work motivation (Ohly & Fritz, 2007) and job resources (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008). Bateman and Crant (1993) presented this concept and defined it as a dispositional trait in individuals which leads them to take charge of changing things in their environment which need improvement. They also constructed a scale for measuring the construct of proactive behavior in individuals (Bateman & Crant, 1993). They continued their research and also identified the steps that managers in organizations can undertake

to promote proactive behavior of their employees (Bateman & Crant, 1999). Reward and recognition of proactive behavior is one such initiative by an organization that can highly promote display of proactive behavior in employees.

Crant (2000) studied the concept and laid down the characteristics of proactive behavior stating that it is a 1) it is demonstrated by individuals in organizations. 2) transpires in numerous domains 3) is important because it is linked to numerous organizational and personal processes and results, and 4) context management may limit or stimulate it (Crant, 2000). On the other hand, Belchak et al., (2010) identified the different types of proactive behavior as pro-organizational, pro-social and pro-self while Parker et al., (2010) distinguished it on the basis of the target impact.

However, the negative impacts of proactive behavior have also been a field of interest for researchers and it has been identified through investigation that it can produce negative outcomes of tension and stress in employees (Bolino et al., 2010). However, all in all proactive behavior is a positive trait of an individual and can be encouraged by developing the proactive personality of the employee and providing them with leader support.

THEORITICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Paradox Mindset and Thriving at Work

The basis of this relationship is the Self Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan which suggests that when an individual is intrinsically motivated he engages in tasks which led to his growth and development (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Intrinsic motivation is the innate excitement to do a job because it is enjoyable and pleasurable. The Self Determination Theory (SDT) posits that an individual has three basic psychological needs when it comes to work; autonomy, relatedness and competence, which when fulfilled motivate an individual to engage in it. This leads to display of agentic behaviors and helps in growth and development. Secondly, the paradox theory states that individuals who are able to navigate the paradoxes are more likely to thrive. It explains that accepting paradoxes in work and life leads to increased creativity and adaptability eventually leading to employee wellbeing (Smith & Lewis,

2011). Based on this theory and previous research works (Liu et al., 2020) it is well established that adoption of a paradox mindset promotes thriving at work. Contrarily individuals who try to eliminate the paradoxical demands of work feel demotivated and unengaged and do not experience thriving at work. Further, Spektor in the chapter also established that when an individual undertakes a paradoxical approach to creativity, he undergoes complex emotions and also experiences thriving in the process. Thus, based on the above analysis we propose the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: Paradox mindset is positively and significantly related to thriving at work.

Paradox Mindset and Proactive Behavior

An employee with a paradox mindset is able to embrace contradictions easily and hence manage tensions in organizations effectively. This mindset gives an employee a unique perspective on viewing things and situations in organizations and be able to make significant changes. In this study we propose that an individual with a paradox mindset will be able to effortlessly display proactive behavior in an organizational or academic setting as mindset influences the attitude and behavior on an individual. This is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Icaak Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991) which elaborates that an individual's behavior is determined by three factors a) attitude b) norms and c) perceived behavioral control. These three factors influence behavioral intention which then influences the person's behavior. This means that the mindset and thoughts of an individual influence his behavior and adopting a positive and paradox mindset can positively influence individual's behavior.

Yin (2021) did a study in which he studied the impact of paradox mindset on individual and team level proactivity and successfully concluded that adoption of a paradox mindset influences proactive behavior in individuals (Yin, 2021). However, this relationship has not been studied extensively hence an effort is being made through this paper to understand this relationship and to study the impact paradox mindset has on proactive behavior and propose the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Paradox mindset is positively and significantly related to proactive behavior.

Proactive Behavior and Thriving at Work

Proactive behavior is a change oriented and future focused behavior which an individual displays. A proactive person seeks opportunities for improvement, takes initiative and brings about reform and innovation in the organization's working. A proactive workforce leads to significant improvement in organizational performance by driving positive outcomes and developments (Crant, 2000). A lot of research has been done on the antecedents and outcomes of a proactive behavior and types of proactive behaviors (Parker & Collins, 2010). The concept of proactive behavior has now a vast body of knowledge and has been researched extensively as it a significant factor in job performance, organizational success and career growth (Belschak & Hartog, 2010).

Individual as well as organizational factors influence display of proactive behavior by employees and it then leads to job satisfaction, career success and innovative work behavior. But proactive behavior also leads to thriving at work in employees. Proactive behavior encourages employees to take advantage of opportunities and make their environment better which leads them to learn and feel alive and energetic which are the dimensions of thriving at work. Hence some previous research has successfully linked proactive behavior to thriving at work. Jiang (2017) conducted a study where proactive personality was linked to thriving at work and it established that they are positively related to each other and a similar study was done by Nadeem et al. (2022) where again proactive personality was found to be positively related to thriving at work. Kleine (2019) also showed that thriving at work is associated with individual characteristics of a person especially proactive personality.

However, this relationship needs to be further analyzed to understand the underlying mechanisms of how displaying proactive behavior at work can enhance employee thriving. On the basis of the above discussion we propose the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: Proactive behavior is positively and significantly related to thriving at work.

Proactive Behavior as a Mediator

This study explores the variable of proactive behavior as the mediator in the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work. Adoption of a paradox mindset enhances thriving at work but it is further enhanced when an individual engages in proactive behavior. When an individual uses a paradox lens to look at the contradictions inherent in the goals one is more likely to have creative ideas. With these ideas he can act proactively to solve problems arising in the processes

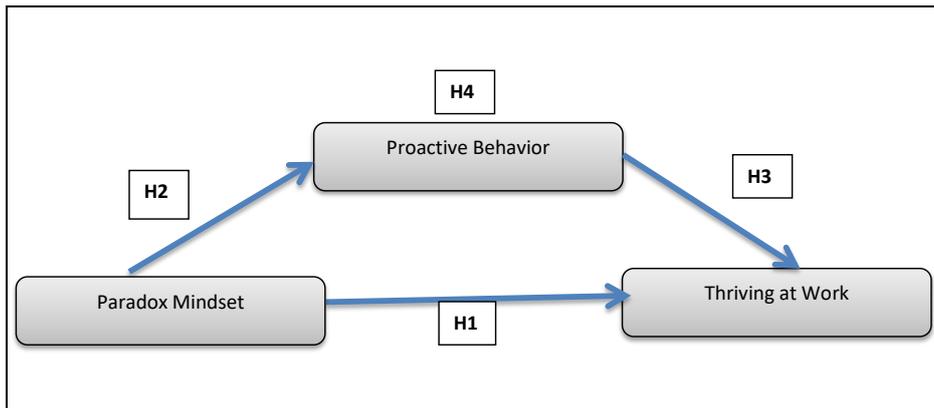
Therefore we propose that paradox mindset affects thriving state of employees at work through the construct of proactive behavior. Adopting a paradox mindset helps employees meet their basic

psychological needs for proficiency and autonomy, which are essential for thriving at the workplace. Through paradox mindset employees are able to navigate the varied demands of the workplace and the contradictions inherent in the processes of goal achievement this then helps them to proactively acts on the ideas generated and take advantage of the opportunities, which then transitions into a state of thriving as they are learning and feeling energetic. Thus, we propose to test the following hypothesis in this study.

Hypothesis 4: Proactive behavior mediates the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study



(Source: Literature Review)

Hypothesis 1: Paradox mindset is positively and significantly related to thriving at work.

Hypothesis 2: Paradox mindset is positively and significantly related to proactive behavior.

Hypothesis 3: Proactive behavior is positively and significantly related to thriving at work.

Hypothesis 4: Proactive behavior mediates the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work

METHOD

Participants

The target population of this study was university teachers, working in top universities in the states of Punjab and Chandigarh in India. Six universities

were selected for the study (on the basis of NIRF data) out of which three are public universities and three are private universities. Structured questionnaire was used for the purpose of data collection from faculty members who responded to the questions on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Out of the 200 questionnaires that were sent out online as well as administered personally, 177 were finally selected for the study as they were complete in all respects.

Measures

Paradox Mindset: It was measured through the PMQ Paradox Mindset Questionnaire developed by Miron-Spektor (2018). It is a 9 item scale where the responses are measured using a five point Likert scale with 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly

Agree). A sample question from the scale is “I am comfortable dealing with conflicting demands at the same time.”

Proactive Behavior: It was measured using a scale suggested by Belschak et al. (2010) in the seminal research paper titled “Pro-self, prosocial, and pro-organizational foci of proactive behaviour: Differential antecedents and consequences”. It is an 11 item scale with three dimensions; pro-organizational, pro-social and pro-self measured using a 5 point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. “I take the initiative to optimize the organization of work to further organizational goal” and “I take the initiative to find new approaches to execute my tasks so that I can be more successful” are sample questions from the proactive behavior scale.

Thriving at work: This variable was measured using a 10 item scale developed by Porath et al. (2011) having two dimensions of learning and vitality. Each dimension has five statements each measured on a 5 point Likert scale. The sample questions are “I continue to learn more and more as time goes by” and “I feel alert and awake”.

RESULTS

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics is used to describe the characteristics of the sample population. Respondents were asked to share their gender, workplace (name of the University), designation at the University and total work experience in the demographic section of the questionnaire. These characteristics were analyzed for capturing the profile of the sample population.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents of the Study (177 Respondents)

Characteristics	Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Organization Type	Public	83	46.9%
	Private	94	53.1%
Gender	Female	93	52.5%
	Male	84	47.5%
Marital Status	Single	35	19.8%
	Married	142	80.2%
Total Work Experience	0 to 5	51	28.8%
	6 to 10	39	22.0%
	11 and above	87	49.2%
Designation	Assistant Professor	112	63.3%
	Associate Professor	20	11.3%
	Professor	45	25.4%
Name of the University	Punjab University	25	14.1%
	Punjab Agricultural University	23	13.0%
	Guru Nanak Dev University	35	19.8%
	Chandigarh University	40	22.6%
	Lovely Professional University	31	17.5%
	Chitkara University	23	13.0%

From the above table it was found that the respondents were almost half from public (46.9%) and half from private universities (53.1%). Interestingly the male (47.5%) and female (52.5%) ratio in the sample was also almost equal thereby giving a very balanced perspective of the conclusions in terms of type of university and gender. However, the number of married participants (80.2%) in the survey was very high as

compared to the single respondents (19.8%) which was very low suggesting that the opinions expressed were more aligned with the married university teachers. Lastly, the number of Assistant professors (63.3%) was more and the number of Associate Professors (11.3%) were less giving a general view that more teachers are working at the assistant level than associate level in universities.

MEASUREMENT MODEL

Reliability and Validity

After descriptive analysis of the sample data the reliability and validity of the data was checked to ensure that the data is suitable for further analysis. Using PLS-SEM the conceptual model of the study was made in the software and the analysis was done on the same. Reliability of the model ensures that the model is stable and would give the same results over a period of time. Validity of the model posits that the tool is accurate and is correctly measuring what it intends to measure.

For ascertaining the reliability of the data cronbach alpha and composite reliability values were calculated. The threshold limit for both the values is

that the value should be above 0.708 for the measurement model to be reliable. For measuring the construct validity of the measurement tool, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value was calculated which should be above 0.50 for all the constructs of the tool to establish its convergent validity. Discriminant validity of the tool was calculated by checking the cross-loading values, fornell-larcker criterion and heterotrait monotrait ratio and ensuring that the variables loaded on the construct that it was measuring.

Reliability Tests

PLS-SEM was used to test the reliability of the measurement model of this study and cronbach alpha, composite reliability and AVE values were calculated.

Table 2: Reliability Values

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho a)	Composite reliability (rho c)
PB	0.949	0.953	0.950
PM	0.906	0.911	0.900
TAW	0.940	0.956	0.942

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

The cronbach alpha value (PM = 0.906, PB = 0.949, TAW = 0.940) for the constructs, as seen in the above table, are all greater than > 0.90 and similarly composite reliability value and rho_a are also more than 0.90 establishing the construct validity of the model.

Validity Tests

Construct validity of the model shows that the variables that are measuring the construct are closely related to each other. Therefore, achieving construct validity posits that the variables measure the

construct they are associated with and not otherwise. Discriminant validity on the other hand tells that the variables of a particular construct are not related to the other constructs in the model.

First test of construct validity was average variance extracted (AVE), which should have a value above the threshold of 0.50. In the table below it was found that all the constructs; paradox mindset, proactive behavior and thriving at work have an AVE value higher than 0.50 indicating construct validity of the measurement model.

Table 3: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Values

Constructs	Average variance extracted (AVE)
PB	0.635
PM	0.507
TAW	0.629

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

Subsequently the discriminant validity of the measurement model was also calculated. Cross loading values of the variables were estimated from

the PLS-SEM. The cross loading values confirm that the variables are measuring the construct that they

are assigned to thereby establishing discriminant validity.

Table 4: Cross Loading of the Variables on the Constructs

	PB	PM	TAW
P1	0.476	0.775	0.482
P2	0.476	0.763	0.467
P3	0.496	0.825	0.524
P4	0.359	0.556	0.328
P5	0.508	0.766	0.438
P6	0.365	0.596	0.372
P7	0.312	0.484	0.286
P8	0.465	0.711	0.413
P9	0.557	0.840	0.479
PB1	0.696	0.395	0.602
PB10	0.663	0.455	0.515
PB11	0.776	0.456	0.660
PB2	0.772	0.477	0.639
PB3	0.841	0.566	0.662
PB4	0.846	0.509	0.710
PB5	0.729	0.499	0.567
PB6	0.851	0.554	0.683
PB7	0.851	0.586	0.659
PB8	0.762	0.489	0.618
PB9	0.938	0.560	0.791
T1	0.625	0.400	0.753
T10	0.703	0.479	0.853
T2	0.794	0.540	0.964
T3	0.750	0.552	0.921
T4	0.524	0.388	0.643
T5	0.581	0.539	0.739
T6	0.641	0.485	0.789
T7	0.695	0.549	0.861
T8	0.290	0.185	0.349
T9	0.716	0.533	0.880

From the above table 4, it was found that the variables/indicators measuring the constructs; paradox mindset (P1 to P9), proactive behavior (PB1 to PB11) and thriving at work (T1 to T9) accurately load on their respective construct(s) establishing discriminant validity of the measurement model.

Further, discriminant validity of the model was also confirmed by using the fornell larcker criterion (FLC) and the heterotrait monotrait ratio (HTMT). Fornell larcker criterion (FLC) compares the

construct square root with its correlation with the other constructs in the model. It is used for assessing discriminant validity and posits that the construct is different from all the other constructs in the model and are not redundant. The statistical test of heterotrait monotrait ratio (HTMT) was also calculated to further strengthen the claim of achieving discriminant validity of the model. The ratio determines whether the constructs are distinct from each other by evaluating and comparing the correlations between constructs (heterotrait) with correlations within constructs (monotrait).

Table 5: Fornell Larcker Criterion (FLC)

	PB	PM	TAW
PB	0.797		
PM	0.635	0.712	
TAW	0.715	0.600	0.793

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

The above table 5, elucidates the fornell larcker criterion values and found that the diagonal values of the constructs are higher than the values in the corresponding rows and columns thereby

establishing that the particular constructs AVE is higher than its correlation with other construct, indicating that the criteria is met and discriminant validity is there.

Table 6: Heterotrait Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	PB	PM	TAW
PB			
PM	0.621		
TAW	0.809	0.580	

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

Table 6 shows the HTMT ratio and values of all the constructs are less than the threshold value of 0.85 thereby positing that the measurement model is valid.

confidence intervals are analyzed to estimate the strength and direction of the relationships between the constructs. Path coefficients are the regression values of the independent construct on the endogenous construct.

With the establishment of the reliability and validity of the measurement model the structural model was thereafter assessed. In the structural model the relationships between the constructs are evaluated to find if the relationships between the constructs are relevant and significant. Using PLS-SEM the model was tested and the following results were found.

Path Coefficients

Path coefficients are the regression values between the constructs indicating the strength and direction (positive or negative) of their relationship. It is a statistical test that measures the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable and the value ranges from -1 to +1.

STRUCTURAL MODEL

Assessment of structural model is done using PLS-SEM tool. Path coefficients and bias corrected

Table 7: Path Coefficient Values of the Constructs

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ((O/STDEV)	P values
PB -> TAW	0.687	0.686	0.060	11.441	0.000
PM -> PB	0.592	0.594	0.077	7.698	0.000
PM -> TAW	0.153	0.153	0.064	2.396	0.017

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

From the above table it is found that the path coefficient values between the latent constructs are

+ which indicates that there was a positive relationship between all the constructs. Moreover, all the path coefficients have a p value of less than

0.05 (Significance level is 5%) which further suggests that all the relationships in the model are significant. Thus, it can be concluded that all the construct relationships are positive and significant in the model and the structural model is accurate.

Bias corrected confidence (Bca) intervals were also calculated to further project path coefficient stability. If the confidence intervals do not contain zero the path coefficients are said to be significant.

Table 8: Bias Corrected Confidence Intervals of the Constructs

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Bias	2.5%	97.5%
PB -> TAW	0.687	0.686	-0.001	0.560	0.794
PM -> PB	0.592	0.594	0.002	0.418	0.720
PM -> TAW	0.153	0.153	0.000	0.036	0.282

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

Table above displays the bias corrected (Bca) confidence intervals (C.I.) for the path coefficients. The range from the lower confidence interval to the higher confidence interval should not contain zero for the path coefficient to be significant. None of the constructs C.I. had a zero in the range hence all the path coefficients are significant.

Hence it is concluded that the structural model of the study is accurate and had significant relationships amongst the constructs. This conclusion posits that paradox mindset had a positive and significant relationship with proactive behavior ($\beta = 0.592$, $p = 0.000$) and it also had a positive and significant relationship with thriving at work ($\beta = 0.153$, $p = 0.017$). The mediator proactive behavior also had a positive and significant relationship with the dependent variable thriving at work ($\beta = 0.687$, $p = 0.000$).

Subsequently the mediation effect of the construct proactive behavior was analyzed using PLS-SEM and the results are discussed in the following section.

MEDIATION ANALYSIS

Table 9: Specific Indirect Effect between Constructs

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
PM -> PB -> TAW	0.407	0.409	0.072	5.630	0.000

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

The table above shows the specific indirect effect of the independent construct paradox mindset on the dependent construct thriving at work through the

Mediation is a technique which is used to understand the relationship between the independent and dependent variable in more depth. A mediator is a construct which lies between the independent and the dependent construct and helps in understanding the mechanisms of their relationship.

Baron and Kenny (1986) suggested that: (i) the independent variable must predict the mediating variable (path-a) (ii) mediating variable must be related to dependent variable (path-b) and (iii) the independent variable must predict the dependent variable (path-c) (iv) independent variable has a decreased ability to predict dependent variable (partial mediation) or no longer predicts dependent variable (full mediation) when both mediating and independent variables are present (path-c') (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Specific Indirect Effect

Specific indirect effect is the effect of the mediating variable on the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable that is the effect of the independent variable only through the mediation route. The specific indirect effect was calculated using the PLS-SEM tool.

mediating construct, proactive behavior. The mediating effect of proactive behavior ($\beta = 0.407$, $p = 0.000$) is positive and significant on the



relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work.

The significance of the relationship is further proved through bias corrected confidence interval of the specific indirect effect.

Table 10: Bias Corrected Confidence Intervals of Specific Indirect Effect between Constructs

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Bias	2.5%	97.5%
PM -> PB -> TAW	0.407	0.409	0.002	0.257	0.540

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

The confidence interval of the specific indirect effect between the construct does not contain zero and therefore implied that the effect was significant. From this it was concluded that proactive behavior had a significant impact on the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work. Further as there is a significant direct effect of the construct of paradox mindset on thriving at work ($\beta = 0.153$, $p = 0.017$) and also a significant indirect effect ($\beta =$

0.407, $p = 0.000$) therefore it is posited that proactive behavior **partially mediates** the relationship.

Total Effect

Total effect is the direct and the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. That is the effect it has directly as well as through the mediators on the dependent variable.

Total Effect = Direct Effect + Indirect Effect

Table 11: Total Effect between Constructs

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ((O/STDEV))	P values
PM -> TAW	0.560	0.562	0.078	7.222	0.000

(PM = Paradox Mindset, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

All the total effects between the constructs are significant thereby suggesting that all the

relationships are important and the structural model is accurate

Table 12: Bias Corrected Confidence Interval of Total Effect between Constructs

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Bias	2.5%	97.5%
PM -> TAW	0.560	0.562	0.002	0.380	0.690

(PM = Paradox Mindset, PB = Proactive Behavior, TAW = Thriving at Work)

(Source: PLS-SEM)

It was found that the total effect of paradox mindset on thriving at work was ($\beta = 0.560$, $p < 0.001$) which is significant and hence the model is relevant.

paradox mindset directly impacts the thriving of employees.

Mediation Analysis

- Direct Effect: The impact of independent variable on the dependent variable in the presence of a mediator is called the direct effect [path c']. It was examined that the direct effect of paradox mindset on thriving at work in the presence of the mediator proactive behavior was found to be significant ($\beta = 0.153$, $t = 2.396$, $p = 0.017$). From this it was concluded that

Indirect Effect: The impact of independent variable on the dependent variable through the mediator is called the indirect effect [path a*b] that is the combined effect of independent variable on the mediator [path a] and the mediator on the dependent variable [path b]. It was examined that the indirect effect of paradox mindset on thriving at work through proactive behavior was significant ($\beta = 0.407$, $t = 5.630$, $p = 0.000$). From this it was concluded that paradox mindset also indirectly

impacts the thriving of employees through proactive behavior

DISCUSSION

The study was undertaken with a goal to examine the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work in a particular case of university teachers in northern India. It was a unique study as it was the first study to explore the effect of paradox mindset on thriving at work. To the best of our knowledge no study has so far explored this relationship especially in case of university teachers in India. A number of meaningful results were derived from this study.

Firstly, we established that paradox mindset is positively related to thriving at work which empirically supports the paradox theory. Paradox theory suggests that individuals with a paradox mindset are able to navigate the contradictory situations and decisions and are able to thrive at work as they are more creative, innovative and adaptable which leads to mental wellbeing and feeling of learning and vitality.

Secondly, we found that proactive behavior positively and significantly mediates the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work. This result supports the conceptual model of the study and posits that an employee with a paradox mindset, that is one who uses his creative mind to drive solutions to contradictory problems, when engages in proactive behavior he will feel more vital at his workplace as he is contributing his skills to solve complicated contradictory organizational problems. This will also help in improving his learning and knowledge which together with sense of vitality led to feelings of thriving at work in an employee.

Theoretical Contribution

This study makes a significant contribution to the domain knowledge of the construct thriving at work. Every organization as well as the individual aims to thrive at the workplace. This research study throws light on the factors that can contribute to an employees' thriving at work in a university.

The study also makes contribution to the extant literature of organizational behavior. Adopting/developing a paradox mindset is becoming crucial for success in organizational

settings as well as in life therefore the current study empirically proves that adoption of a paradox mindset can lead an individual to experience thriving at work. Everyone wants to feel vital and enhance their knowledge at work and this research study delivers a new perspective on how changing mindset can enhance employee wellbeing at the workplace.

Furthermore, the study also analyzes the mediated mechanism of proactive behavior in the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work which illustrates that being proactive at work can further enhance an individual's thriving. Proactive behavior establishes itself as a significant antecedent of thriving state of mind and also as an important enabler in the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work.

The study focuses on psychological processes at the individual level that influence workplace thriving by spreading from adoption of a paradox mindset at work. To the best of our knowledge, no research has been done specifically to look at the mediating role of proactive behavior in connections between paradox mindset and thriving at work. Our research offers knowledge and empirical backing for the idea that thriving and learning at work is crucial that begins as an internal tool for personal growth and development.

Practical Implications

Consistent with the theoretical contribution, our research offers managers and practitioners useful takeaways. The study lays down strong understanding that thriving at work can be boosted not only through social contexts and organizational support, as suggested by previous models, but also through mindset and behavioral changes. Individuals should understand that their way of thinking and taking charge plays a crucial role in their psychological state at the workplace. By working on their mindset and behavior they can support themselves and thrive at their jobs. The employees should make efforts to train their mind in paradoxical thinking. This will help them in conceiving creative and practical solutions to problems, which should be shared with others and subsequently take initiative to implement. This way of working will eventually lead to their thriving at

work and will be beneficial for their personal wellbeing as well as organizational performance.

Nonetheless the managers and leaders at the workplace should also understand that they can enhance thriving at work in their employees by training them in navigating paradoxical demands of a job and supporting them in their proactive approaches and endeavors.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study has its limitations which can guide future research directions. Only top universities from the Punjab and Chandigarh region were selected for the study and 177 questionnaires were finally used for the purpose of data analysis. Hence the scope of the study is limited and results cannot be generalized for the university teachers of the entire country.

Cross sectional study design was used for the study that is data was collected at a particular point of time. It is recommended that future studies used longitudinal research design for these variables and then study the impact and the relationships as it has been found that thriving at work tends to vary for the same individual over a period of time and even during a workday (Niessen et al., 2012).

Additionally, only one mediator was used to assess its effect in the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable while a number of other variables may have a significant mediating or moderating role in the said relationship. Hence future research studies should incorporate more mediators and moderators and assess their individual or collective influence in the relationship between paradox mindset and thriving at work.

Lastly, the data was collected using self-reported scores on a structured questionnaire which can lead to defective or neutral responses.

CONCLUSION

Feeling of thriving is a great state to be in. As when you feel thrived you are collectively feeling vital as well as you are developing every day. It is a good state to be in. This study was done to understand how, even if to some extent, we can make employees feel thrived at work. As when an employee feels thrived, he feels content at what he is doing and where he is. There is a sense of belongingness, a sense of enthusiasm towards one's job and a sense

of doing better everytime. Organizations today spend millions to be able to arouse these feelings in their employees. If we can understand even a little bit about how we can make our employees feel thrived at work it would be a huge accomplishment and will have many positive repercussions for the individual as well as the organization as a whole.

The findings imply that the universities shouldn't only concentrate on innovation and performance but also on the welfare of its workers and give them a space where they can thrive and feel alive and vibrant. As they thrive, they work creatively and are more likely to direct their energies in giving their best performance. This can be achieved by providing social and organizational resources but as this study suggests, can also be achieved via mindset shifts and behavioral betterment. Thus, to conclude it can be said that thriving is important for survival, sustainability and high performance hence organizations should do their best to make their employees feel thrived.

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