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RESILIENCE FACTORS IN SALES WORKERS: SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS, SOCIAL CHANGE, AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Employee of any organization starts his/her recognitions from the society that ultimately reach the organization, where he/she earns the livelihood. So, the resiliency of an employee (sales-force of any commercial organization in this study) should be understood on the touch-points of sales-employee with society. On this context, the main purpose of this study is to explore the strategic relationships of social communication, social change, and social engagement of the sales-employees to build the concerned employees' resiliency. With the descriptive research design, this research-work is intended to study the above said relationship by extensive literature review. Major outcomes of this study refer that social communication in varying level makes the employee of an organization engage with the social activities and simultaneously develop the psychological adjustment of the concerned sales-employee towards social change. Finally, the social engagement and self-accommodation to the social change build the resilient sales-force of the concerned retail organization. A conceptual model is developed that justifies the above outcomes, which is the major contribution or novelty of this study. Thus, the industrial implication of the said outcomes is that any commercial organization should develop the social orientation of their sales-force by developing their social communication continuously, which in turn enables the concerned sales-employees for better adoptability to any social changes, for insulate themselves for adverse social (market) conditions, and for productive social engagement in the marketing orientations. The said causal relationship ultimate give the return to the organization in the form of resilient sales-force.

And, social implication refers that the society will be aware of the truth regarding the functioning of sales-functions of organization in the context of social contribution of those organizations.

Keywords: Social Communication, Social Change, Social Engagement, Resilient, Sales-force
JEL classification: *J08, J53, M12, M54*

Співробітник будь-якої організації досягає свого визнання суспільством, яке зрештою досягає організації, де він/вона заробляє кошти для існування. Тому стійкість працівника (торгівельного персоналу будь-якої комерційної організації, зокрема) проявляється у точках контакту торгового працівника з суспільством. У цьому контексті основною метою нашого дослідження є вивчення стратегічних взаємозв'язків соціальної комунікації, соціальних змін і соціальної залученості торгових працівників для підвищення їх стійкості. Згідно з описовим підходом, який обраний для цієї дослідницької роботи, вона має на меті вивчити вищезазначений зв'язок шляхом широкого огляду літератури. Основні результати цього дослідження свідчать про те, що соціальна комунікація на різному рівні змушує співробітника організації брати участь у соціальній діяльності та одночасно розвиває психологічну адаптацію відповідного торгового працівника до соціальних змін. Нарешті, соціальна залученість і самопристосування до соціальних змін створюють стійку торгову силу відповідної роздрібної організації. Авторами розроблено концептуальну модель, яка обґрунтовує вищезазначені результати, що є основним науковим внеском цього дослідження. Прикладне значення зазначених результатів полягає у тому, що будь-яка комерційна організація повинна розвивати соціальну орієнтацію свого торгового персоналу шляхом постійного розвитку їхньої соціальної комунікації, що, у свою чергу, дозволяє відповідним торговим працівникам краще адаптуватися до будь-яких соціальних змін, ізолювати себе від несприятливих соціальних (ринкових) умов, а також посилює продуктивну соціальну активність у маркетингових орієнтаціях. Згаданий причинно-наслідковий зв'язок у кінцевому підсумку дає віддачу організації у формі стійкого торгового персоналу.

Ключові слова: соціальна комунікація, соціальні зміни, соціальна залученість, стійкість, продажі
JEL classification: *J08, J53, M12, M54*

1. Introduction

The modern economy is extremely volatile. Most often, changes are poorly predictable. This creates additional challenges both for organizations as a whole and for individual employees. Under these conditions, only those enterprises can survive, and even more so, work successfully, which have a sufficient supply of resilience, as the ability to overcome difficulties and obstacles and come out of difficult situations not only not weakened, but sometimes even stronger.

There is every reason to believe that the resilience of the organization largely depends on the resilience of its employees. And although this provision is equally valid for all spheres of activity, it acquires special importance for the sphere of services in general and for trade, in particular. After all, employees here, as a rule, sell services through communication with customers. Insufficient resilience of trade employees will certainly affect the sales volume, which means the resilience of the organization itself. Therefore, the problem of factors affecting the resilience of trade workers deserves special attention.

Reaching people with a personal approach or one-to-one communication is simply not an option but a necessity, which drive the businesses, and non-profit organizations towards social engagement [1] as the global markets and individuals have become increasingly interconnected over the past two decades [2] through various media. Although social development among people with intellectual and developmental disabilities has been the subject of research for the past fifty years, the concept of resilience has traditionally been associated with human psychology. So, it is being examined repeatedly in the context of the workforce and how employees navigate the inherent challenges of the industrial world [3, 4]. As resilience in relation to organisations is a relatively new concept [5] it is essential

to examine the characteristics and abilities that enhance workplace performance [6], where those characteristics can be revealed that can make the employees resilient in the organization. The above line of interpretation can be substantiated by the fact that emotional well-being and life-satisfaction are associated with resilience [7-10], especially in terms of the abilities to restrain the negative impacts of traumatic experiences by fostering positive emotions, which is very much relevant for the sales-force of the commercial organization. The development of sales teams is essential to the structure of a robust sales-force [11, 12]. Although, many businesses rely on distribution network of brokers, agents, wholesalers, and retailers to make their products reach end-users, sales-force has been evolved as more effective and efficient in past four decades as the cost-per-call and number of calls required for successful transactions [13]. The importance of sales-force can be realized even during market-disruptions due to the pandemic, because resilience enables individuals and organisations to make strategic decisions in changing environment [14]; and resilience is the capability of any system to survive a significant disruption and recover within an acceptable time-frame and at acceptable costs & risks [15]. Further, resilience identifies the inherent characteristics of businesses that can respond & recover more quickly, develop more innovatively in stressful situations [16], where the sales-force of the organizations occupies the focal position of such inherent characteristics. In this context, the definition of problem statement is given as follows.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the mechanisms of influence of social communications, social changes and social engagement of employees on the formation of their resilience.

In accordance with this goal, four questions are identified in the study, to which the authors will try to answer:

RQ1: Which factors make the social communication effective for the sales-employees of an organization?

RQ2: Whether social communications do have a fundamental role in developing sales-employee resilience?

RQ3: How the social change and social engagement are related to social communications and sales-employee resilience?

RQ4: What is the relationship between social change and social engagement?

2. Research Design & Methodology

This study followed the descriptive research design as this research design is grounded on the premise of research problem and implication that can be upgraded by description, observation, and analyses [17]. Characteristics and factors of social communication are intended to be identified and then the logical relationship of social communication with social change, social engagement, and employee resilience is tried to be established. Extensive literature review enabled the authors of this research-work to describe characteristics and logical connections along the above said dimensions. This study is intended to reach some proposition to be tried by management practitioners; to provide the paths for future similar researchers along these propositions; and to establish a conceptual model as a contribution to the existing theoretical bases.

3. Literature review and development of proposition

3.1 Social communication and employee resilience

While scientific study of communication is relatively new, there is an increasing recognition of the potentiality for systematic approach to understand the transmission of information and the formation of opinions and attitudes through social communication, because social communication is the creation of a supportive network among individuals based on shared actions, contacts, and influences. This emerging field offers great potentiality to enhance our comprehension of the principles behind effective communication [18]. Communication studies or communication science as an academic discipline examines a wide range of subjects and investigates various types of communication like exchange of ideas, information, signals, or messages through suitable channels to influence, obtain, or express emotions.

Communication studies also examine the dynamics between people at the social level and individual level; and communication studies have developed a vast body of knowledge that spans multiple topics within the social sciences. So, the communication studies are using communication theory, research, and technologies to bring societal transformation that is commonly referred as 'development', where the ultimate goal of development is to promote social and economic progress in a community with increasing equity, autonomy, and greater control over their surroundings [19]. And, decision-makers' social communications or interactions that form the social network enable them to reach a consensus [20] for the workable decision, which can make the employees of an organization resilient as resilient employees are generally keen to apply their personal energy for radical improvements of organization, where the desired solutions and benefits regarding resource are able to compensate the loss of resource made by poor decision-making procedures [21]. If these employees will be treated as sales-employee, then it can be said that quality of social communication among team of sales-employees directly impacts their collective resilience with the teams fostering an atmosphere marked by thoughtful communication, attentive listening, constructive feedback that demonstrate greater proficiency in navigating challenges, and maintaining heightened levels of performance [22]. Thus, a proposition can be developed that ***effective social communication can lead to resilient employees***.

3.2 Social communication, social change and employee resilience

Social communication is vital in the contemporary world, when individuals are more linked via technology and still struggle to form meaningful relationships. It may be due to the ineffective social communication as effective social communication helps individuals to communicate, negotiate complex social systems, and enhance outcomes with quality of life [23]. And, communication creates meaning in

interpretivist and constructionist approaches to involvement, where involvement or engagement as a socially placed process may change individual's involvement traits [24]. On the other hand, psychological well-being is intricately linked to social interaction, where social communication heightens life satisfaction when emotional support is low and diminishes it when emotional support is high [25]. So, it can be interpreted that effective social communications are making the individual ready to consider the social changes positively as it is found by a study [26] that some ethnic minority students improved their peers' complicated thinking and perspective-taking in groups.

If the above discussion will be connected to the resilience, then it can be said that an individual can be resilient in the workplace, when he/she can exhibit the characteristics of simultaneous development and positive change in a stressful event [27], because resilience in the workplace can be defined as the "positive psychological capacity to bounce back from failure, uncertainty, adversity, conflict, or even positive change, progression, and increased responsibility" [28]. In the above situation, a leader (manager) generally prioritizes skilful communication and encourages open dialogues to create an environment that nurtures employees' feelings of value and support, which strengthen their ability to withstand challenges [29] that ultimately enhance individual well-being and overall organizational positive environment as these are influenced by social communication, where the trust and collaboration through open and transparent channels are nurtured for employee-resilience during challenging times [30]. So, the sales-employees can be resilient with social communication as the sales-employees require their personal resources along the mental robustness with organizational involvement to be successful and prosper [31].

Moreover, resilient individuals are not only capable of pursuing new experiences and forming deeper relationships but also tend to maintain positive emotions even in challenging situations, which are linked to

positive workplace outcomes [32-34]. And, highly resilient employees view the arousal of new ideas and the consequent challenges as learning opportunities that enables them to handle potential negative reactions within the organization [28, 35-37] along their motivation for continuous learning. So, sales-employees' resilience can evolve through adoption to the social changes as resilient employees deal with peer resistance in a constructive way that facilitate the personal growth, which in turn stimulates disruptive creative behaviors; and resilience of sales-employees can drive them towards radical new-ideas for firms' development along personal fulfilment from engagement in disruptive activities [38, 39]. The above interpretation regarding sales-employees is substantiated by the fact that psychological resilience can act as a mediator of correlations across variables that significantly nurture psychological adjustment of employees in high-stress situation [40]. So, second proposition can be put forth that *sales-employees' resilience can be built-up by facilitating effective social communication through social changes*.

3.3 Social communication, social engagement and employee resilience

Social interactions and cultural conventions influence individual's communications and their meaning. Employee, customer, stakeholder, community, and civic engagement with connection, participation, and involvement give rise to positive results [41] according to both instrumentals and interpretivist views. On the other hand, greater social support system can enhance person's ability to handle most of the life's obstacles [25]. Hence, it can be said that personality of individual employee is crucial in determining resilience and well-being [42, 43]; and personality traits like extroversion, positive emotions, gregariousness, excitement, and assertiveness have impacts on individual employee's resilience and well-being [44]. And, growth and development of the individuals are contributed by living in a campus, holding positions in organization, embracing diversity, and engaging in group-

work [45, 46]. So, it can be interpreted that person's social communications can put him/her in social engagements that leads to his/her resilience in organization.

Discussing the above facts in the context of selling functions that happens in the team, it can be said that social engagement through team-building, collaboration, networking, and culture of continuous learning within organizations can contribute to the development of a resilient workforce [47, 48]; resilience in the workplace enable the employees to effectively manage obstacles, pressure, and stress by utilizing resilience methods, which can lead to improved employee well-being, work satisfaction, and performance [49, 50]. On the other hand, social interactions with a sense of belongingness within the institution, and social involvement that link both physical and mental well-being [51-53] are emphasized in model of social integration. Even, the elderly individuals participating in resource-sharing and communal activities demonstrate the positive outcomes of social involvement, contributing to individual, environmental, and societal well-being [54], because social engagement go beyond the mere active-participation/interaction, sense of affiliation and unity, it acts as a protective barrier against stress and enhances employee resilience [55]. So, it is wise to have third proposition that resilience of sales-employees can be developed by *social engagement that is ultimately strengthened by social communication*.

3.4 Employee resilience on the context of social communication, social change, and social engagement

In the context of employee resilience within the framework of social communication, social change, and social engagement, the evolving landscape of globalization and digitalization presents both opportunities and challenges for employees, fostering adaptability and problem-solving skills with continuous up-skilling caused by technological advancements [56]. On the other hand, effective and skilful communication regarding the organizational changes makes the employees find direction

and purpose in uncertainty and resistance to increase their willingness to embrace changes [57]. Thereby, employee learn agility and resilience for better adaptability in workplaces that give rise to the employees' ability to prosper even in challenging circumstances [58]; because resilient individuals exhibit internal control focus, self-efficacy, equates with ego strength, and the capability to bounce back from hardship, where lower resilience correspond to decreased adaptability and emotional stability [59-61]. So, the sales-employee can be resilient by continuous learning to cope with the social (market) changes that arouse from effective social communication, where managers should play a role in cultivating employee resilience by preparing them for undesirable reactions to disruptive work activities, encouraging innovative thinking, and by producing employee well-being and productivity [62-64]; and by making adoptive organizational structure with openness that generate positive relationship between resilience and outcomes [65] during rapid changes.

Continuing the above discussion, it can be said that extensive and meaningful social interaction or communication is pivotal for employees' resilience as this type of communication develops psychological health by reducing stress, loneliness, and depression [25]; and by creating an environment of continuous learning and skill development that contributes to employee resilience with the opportunities for learning and progression to foster workforce adaptability [66]. Further, resilient employees not only adeptly manage adversities but also embrace peer resistance as an opportunity for personal growth that drive to generate creativity ideas for organizational betterment by engaging in disruptive activities [38, 39] through positive innovations. If the importance of resilience will be discussed in competitive sales contexts, then the ability to adapt without concurrent growth or constructive change will fail to empower sales team to reach the targets and effectively handle challenges from refusals and competitors [50, 67]. For the above purpose, organizations should embrace diversity

and amplify employee engagement and resilience along social change that embarks upon diverse teams' perspectives, innovative solutions [68], and technological utilization to enhance communication and teamwork that aid in building a connected and resilient workforce, particularly in changing social landscapes [69]. So, the interconnectedness of social communication, social change, and social engagement significantly influence employee resilience as social change is a complex and dynamic process touching various aspects of individuals' life that influence the workplace and prompt significantly the employee resilience, which is true for the varying age groups, increased diversity with valuable coping strategies and adaptability [70]. So, the fourth proposition can be set for industrial implications and for future researchers that *sales-employees' resilience is a product of structural relationship of social communication with social change, and adoptability to the social changes*.

4. Discussion of logical outcomes and implications

Effective social communication improves mental health, job productivity, relationships, skills, and well-being. Employees of any organization must be good communicators, even with the individuals of the society as well as with employees of own organization as the interacting social elements are most important stake holders of the organization. Continuous and compatible communications of most of the employees of the organization with society can make the entire organization ready for the social changes with the better adoptability of the employees to the desirable changes. As a result, the business functions of the organization can formulate the strategic plans with respect to the social changes (Fig.1).

On the other hand, the more effective the social communication of employees, the more employees will be encouraged to involve in most of the relevant activities of the interactive society of the concerned organization. This social engagement of the employees can drive the positive reciprocation of the society towards the
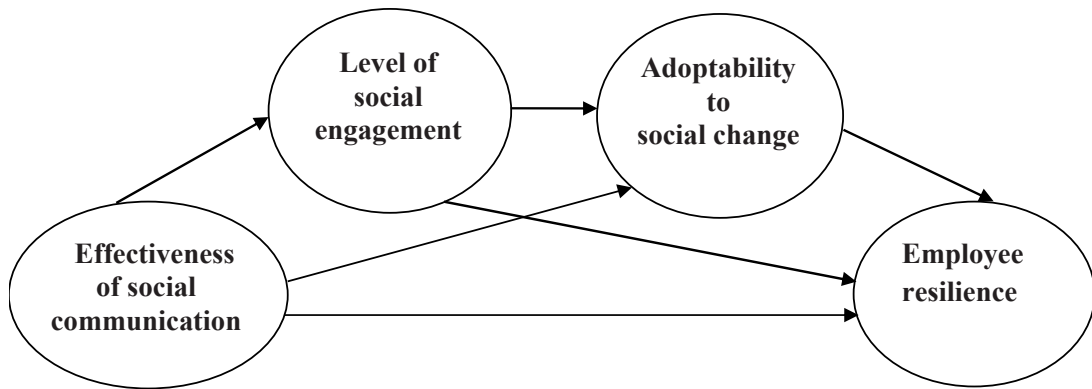
Fig.1: Employee-resilience upon social communication

organizational involvement. By this way, the organization will gain the ability to cope with or adapt to the social changes that can have positive influence on the business functions of the concerned organization. Over time, the above-mentioned positive influence will continue to strengthen the organization in the changing market situation; therefore, it will become a sustainable organization. Employees' adoptability to the social changes and employees' social engagement can make the organization resilient, because the social engagement can enable the employees to aware regarding the dynamics of the business environment and accordingly the employees are becoming psychologically ready to face the changing business environment. Along with the said psychological readiness, the social engagement can also put the causal effect on employees-resilience through the mediating effect of 'adoptability to the social changes' as the said adoptability has its direct effect on the 'employee-resilience'. Thus, the sales-planners or strategists of the organizations can have the insight from this study that strategizing the social communications for better adoptability of the sales-employees to the social changes and for the productive social engagement, can make the sales-employees resilient and build the organizational resilience.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the transformational process model developed in this research sheds light on how to address the challenges of social changes and social engagement for the employee resilience in heterogeneous communities or market conditions of the concerned organisations. By focusing on four key actions, namely social communication, social change, social engagement, and employee resilience, this model offers valuable insights into tackling issues such as systemic injustices and inequalities related to social communications of the employees. It highlights the importance of recognising the misrecognition process of sales-teams and provides a foundation for further exploration of this concept in the context of any commercial organisations. Ultimately, this research-work have the goal to contribute to a better understanding of how to navigate the societal challenges faced by concerned organisations and promote both employee resilience and societal development.

6. Limitations & Future Research Avenues

More diversified filed of literature would lead to more beneficial findings. The conceptual framework presented in this study is based on a careful examination of the literature, but it may not adequately reflect the complicated nature of social communication, social change, social engagement, and employee resilience. In addition to the paper's core emphasis on individual-level variables that impact employee engagement, future studies should also look at the effect of organisational-level elements and how they interact with one another. Further, the empirical testing of the proposed model can provide more industrial implications of this study.

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RESILIENCE FACTORS IN SALES WORKERS: SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS, SOCIAL CHANGE, AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

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Employee of any organization starts his/her recognitions from the society that ultimately reach the organization, where he/she earns the livelihood. So, the resiliency of an employee (sales-force of any commercial organization in this study) should be understood on the touch-points of sales-employee with society. On this context, the main purpose of this study is to explore the strategic relationships of social communication, social change, and social engagement of the sales-employees to build the concerned employees' resiliency. With the descriptive research design, this research-work is intended to study the above said relationship by extensive literature review. Major outcomes of this study refer that social communication in varying level makes the employee of an organization engage with the social activities and simultaneously develop the psychological adjustment of the concerned sales-employee towards social change. Finally, the social engagement and self-accommodation to the social change build the resilient sales-force of the concerned retail organization. A conceptual model is developed that justifies the above outcomes, which is the major contribution or novelty of this study. Thus, the industrial implication of the said outcomes is that any commercial organization should develop the social orientation of their sales-force by developing their social communication continuously, which in turn enables the concerned sales-employees for better adoptability to any social changes, for insulate themselves for adverse social (market) conditions, and for productive social engagement in the marketing orientations. The said causal relationship ultimate give the return to the organization in the form of resilient sales-force. And, social implication refers that the society will be aware of the truth regarding the functioning of sales-functions of organization in the context of social contribution of those organizations.