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Master thesis

«The Impact of Soft HR Practices on Employee Performance and Employee
Well-Being in Crisis Times»

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ЗАЯВЛЕНИЕ О САМОСТОЯТЕЛЬНОМ ХАРАКТЕРЕ ВЫПОЛНЕНИЯ ВЫПУСКНОЙ КВАЛИФИКАЦИОННОЙ РАБОТЫ

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Название ВКР	Влияние “мягких” практик управления персоналом на производительность сотрудников и благополучие сотрудников в кризисные времена
Описание цели, задач и основных результатов исследования	<p>Цель этого исследования - изучить влияние “мягких” практик управления персоналом на эффективность работы сотрудников во время кризиса и факторы, которые могут усилить это влияние. Цели или задачи представлены в списке ниже:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Определить, какие практики управления персоналом были востребованы для поддержки и улучшения сначала благосостояния сотрудников, а затем и их производительности.• Определить, через какой фактор “мягкие” практики управления персоналом оказывают косвенное влияние на эффективность работы сотрудников в кризисные времена.• Определить, зависит ли влияние благополучия сотрудников на их производительность от уровня стороннего (внешнего) фактора <p>В результате проведенного исследования было выявлено, что “мягкие” практик управления персоналом необходимы для улучшения самочувствия и производительности сотрудников. Также, было выяснено, что лидерские программы, программы коучинга и консультации с психологами были эффективны для поддержания благополучия и производительности сотрудников в рабочих процессах. Кроме того, было доказано косвенное влияние практики управления персоналом на эффективность работы</p>

	<p>сотрудников через посредника благополучия сотрудников.</p> <p>Последний, но не менее важный элемент проведенного анализа показывает, что сила взаимосвязи между благополучием сотрудников и их производительностью варьируется в зависимости от уровня влияния кризиса.</p> <p>Результаты показывают, что у сотрудников, испытывающих слабое влияние кризиса, существует более сильная положительная взаимосвязь между благополучием сотрудников и их производительностью по сравнению с сотрудниками, испытывающими сильное влияние кризиса.</p> <p>Другими словами, можно сказать, что влияние кризиса играет роль модератора взаимосвязи между благополучием сотрудников и их производительностью.</p>
<p>Ключевые слова</p>	<p>“Мягкие” практики управления персоналом, Благополучие сотрудников, Эффективность работы сотрудников, Влияние кризиса</p>

ABSTRACT

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Academic Advisor's Name	Lisovskaya Y. Antonina, Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Personnel Management Department, GSOM SPBU
Master Thesis Title	The Impact of Soft HR Practices on Employee Performance and Employee Well-Being in Crisis Times
Description of the goal, tasks and main results the research	<p>The main goal of this study is to examine the impact of soft HR practices on employee performance during times of crisis and the factors can strengthen this impact. The objectives or tasks are presented in the list below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To define which HR practices were in demand for supporting and improving firstly employee well-being and then employee performance. • To define what mediates the relationship between soft HR practices and employee performance in crisis times. • To define what moderates the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance. <p>Talking about the main results of the conducted study, it was defined that soft HR practices are essential for improving employee well-being and performance. Moreover, it was figured out that leadership programs, coaching programs, and consultations with psychologists were effective in supporting employee well-being and performance. Also, the indirect effect of HR practices on employee performance through the mediator of employee well-being was proved in this study as well. The last, but not least conducted analysis shows that the strength of the relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance varies depending on the level of Crisis Influence. The results indicate that for employees experiencing Low Crisis Influence, there is a stronger positive relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance compared to employees experiencing High Crisis Influence, where the positive relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance is weaker. In other words, it could be said that crisis influence plays a role of</p>

	moderator of employee well-being – employee performance relationship.
Keywords	Soft HR Practices, Employee Well-being, Employee Performance, Crisis Influence

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1. Introduction

During few last years, the world has faced my challenges and crises, which have had negative impact both on employee well-being and employee performance. For overcoming and preventing the destructive consequences, global academic and business societies have tried to find effective solutions, tools. Via various studies and observations, it was founded that HR practices can be considered as a key for tackling this common issue. Based on this finding, this study was conducted mainly in order to figure out once again whether there is the impact of HR practices on employee performance and employee well-being, as well as to define which roles employee well-being and crisis influence could play in relationships HR practices – employee performance and employee well-being – employee performance respectively.

The relevance and importance of this topic can be explained by several reasons. Firstly, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a crisis situation for many organizations and their employees. Due to this crisis situation, the role of HR practices in employee well-being and performance becomes even more critical. Secondly, HR practices have been found to have a significant impact on employee performance and well-being in normal times, and it is likely that this impact is much stronger during crisis situations. Moreover, studies, which were conducted after Covid-19 have proved it already. Thirdly, understanding the mediating role of employee well-being in the relationship between soft HR practices and employee performance is essential to developing effective HR strategies that promote both employee well-being and organizational performance. Fourthly, at this time, the world society and humanity at large has faced at the first time for this century with financial, geopolitical, epidemiological and energy crises at the same time. That is why, the necessity to find supportive tools and to measure the impact of one concept to another becomes even more crucial, relevant and vital. And the last, but not least, there was no study, which has observed the crisis influence as the moderator of the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance.

Motivation to conduct research on the impact of HR practices on employee performance and employee well-being in crisis times is driven by the following reasons, which can be justified both form theoretical and practical perspectives.

This topic is significant from a theoretical perspective as it contributes to the existing body of knowledge on HR practices and employee performance. Firstly, this topic is significant from a theoretical perspective as it contributes to arranged previously studies on HR practices and employee performance. The topic is relevant for both academics and practitioners, as it addresses the gaps in the literature on the impact of HR practices on employee performance and the role of

employee well-being as a mediator in crisis times. The study can provide insights, which could prove that HR practices influence employee performance during times of crisis. Secondly, the study of HR practices and their impact on employee performance is crucial in the context of crisis times because it helps organizations to identify effective HR practices that can improve employee well-being, which in turn can enhance their performance. The study can also help organizations to develop better HR strategies to address the needs of employees during times of crisis. Furthermore, the study of the mediating role of employee well-being in the relationship between HR practices and employee performance can provide significant and valuable insights. This knowledge can help organizations to understand how to design HR practices that promote employee well-being and, consequently, enhance employee performance. Also, it is essential to find a proof that crisis influence has an impact on employee performance, which in turn has an influence on employee performance.

From a practical perspective, the topic of paper is important for several reasons. Firstly, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the global economy, and organizations are facing challenges in maintaining employee well-being and performance during this crisis. This study can provide practical guidance to organizations on which practices should be invested in more and how to manage them effectively during times of crisis to support employee well-being and performance. Secondly, the study can also help organizations to understand the importance of employee well-being and the role it plays in enhancing employee performance. By focusing on employee well-being, organizations can create a positive and supportive work environment that fosters engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. Finally, the study of HR practices and their impact on employee performance and well-being is relevant for organizations of all sizes and industries. This study can provide insights into effective HR practices that can be implemented in organizations to improve employee well-being and performance during crisis times. The knowledge gained from this study can be beneficial for organizations of different sectors, fields of activity and industries.

Looking in advance at the results of the conducted study it should be highlighted that employee well-being plays a role of a mediator between HR practices and employee performance, while crisis influence is a moderator of employee well-being – employee performance relationship. Coming closer to exact results, it was defined that Soft HR practices are essential for improving employee well-being and performance and, as a consequence, organizations need to pay attention to their HR practices and invest in programs and initiatives that support and improve employee well-being. Moreover, it was figured out that leadership programs, coaching programs, and consultations with psychologists were effective in supporting employee well-being and

performance. Also, the indirect effect of HR practices on employee performance through the mediator of employee well-being was proved in this study as well. By improving HR practices that enhance employee well-being, companies can create a more positive work environment that leads to more productive employee performance. The last, but not least conducted analysis shows that the strength of the relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance varies depending on the level of Crisis Influence. The results indicate that for employees experiencing Low Crisis Influence, there is a stronger positive relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance ($b = 0.779$, $p < 0.05$) compared to employees experiencing High Crisis Influence, where the positive relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance is weaker ($b = 0.705$, $p < 0.05$). It can be concluded that the awareness of the level of crisis influence can help companies to choose and then implement appropriate HR practices to support employee well-being and performance during times of crisis.

2. Research goal and tasks

The main goal of the study on the impact of HR practices on employee performance and the mediating role of employee well-being in crisis times is to examine the impact of soft HR practices on employee performance during times of crisis and the factors can strengthen this impact. Specifically, the defined study objectives are presented in the list below.

- To define which HR practices were in demand for supporting and improving firstly employee well-being and then employee performance.
- To define what mediates the relationship between soft HR practices and employee performance in crisis times.
- To define what moderates the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance.

Taken it more generally it can be said that the planned study intends to identify effective HR practices that can enhance employee well-being and performance during crisis times. The study aims to provide valuable insights for organizations to develop better HR strategies that address the needs of employees during times of crisis. By doing so, the study aims to contribute to the existing literature on HR practices and employee performance, while also providing practical implications for organizations to manage their HR practices effectively during times of crisis.

The following steps should be taken to achieve the setting aim:

- Dive in the theoretical background of this topic and prepare a literature review.
- Formulate hypothesis based on literature review.

- Define the research design.
- Formulate in-depth interview questions and survey questions based on proven scales for implementation the mixed study.
- Conducted interviews and launch survey at the same time.
- Analyze and consolidate interview results for figuring out what HR practices were in demand and still are in demand now for supporting and improving firstly employee well-being and then employee performance.
- Test setting hypotheses and build the mode by using structural equation modeling in IBM SPSS AMOS.
- Describe received results and formulate conclusions.

3. Theoretical background

1) Human Recourse Management and HR practices

At the beginning of the literature review it is extremely crucial to provide the definition of Human Resource Management that states that HRM “is about how people are employed, managed and developed in organizations”¹. Then it is important to take into consideration for further research the theoretical background, which specifies the classification of 2 variants of Human Research Management approaches fully described and analyzed in the 5th edition of the book “Human Resource Management. A Contemporary Approach”². According to this classification, the first approach could be defined as a “soft HRM” and indicates taking care of employees by motivation, support, social and psychological rewards, and providing training to promote successful socially responsible organizations. Another approach was defined as a “Hard HRM” and looks at human resources as “other resources”. More often “hard HRM” associated with strategies of cost reduction and lean production, which include pay cuts and pay freezes, minimal training, outsourcing, downsizing, and work intensification³. Later via discussions and debates academic society together with business practitioners the mentioned terms have been modified to “High-Commitment Management (HCM)” instead of “soft HRM” and “Strategic HRM” instead of “hard HRM”⁴.

¹ Armstrong, M., & Taylor, S. (2020). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice*. USA: Kogan Page Publishers.

² Beardwell, J.; Clark, I. *An Introduction to Human Resource Management*. In *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Approach*, 6th ed.; Beardwell, J., Claydon, T., Eds.; Pearson: London, UK, 2010.

³ Edvardsson, I. R., & Durst, S. (2021). *Human Resource Management in Crisis Situations: A Systematic Literature Review*. *Sustainability*, 13(22), 12406.

⁴ Beardwell, J.; Clark, I. *An Introduction to Human Resource Management*. In *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Approach*, 6th ed.; Beardwell, J., Claydon, T., Eds.; Pearson: London, UK, 2010.

Moreover, it is essential to list all existed and commonly used HR practices and then shortly describe them in the theoretical background part of this paper. The following practices and their sub practices will be taken in the scope of analysis and discussion: performance management, compensation and benefits, training and development, internal communications. Recruiting will not be closely considered since during recessions companies quite often have no resources and needs to expand their teams, by attracting new employees. Due to the trend mentioned early this practice is rarely used in crisis times. Nevertheless, this practice will be described as well for covering all existed and commonly used HR practices.

From the other perspective, systematic approach, before starting to describe every practice, it is crucial to present the HR function as a whole flower, a living creature, which consist of petals. Each petal represents HR practice. Each practice by itself can exist, be implemented and bring results, but only by combining into a single flower, the so-called HR daisy, practices form a solid system that helps the company to find the right employees more efficiently and faster, adapt them, develop them, retain them, by meeting their social, professional and financial needs. All these efforts make it possible to cultivate effective, loyal employees, who in turn will support and lead the company to the best results and financial indicators.

First of all, this list should be started with the eliminated practice during the crisis times: recruitment and selection. It is described as an end-to-end process from clear confirmation of a hiring request to interest and verification of the candidate, to a decision and indisputable proof of the presence of the smartest people⁵. In different words, this practice is the process of identifying, attracting, interviewing, selecting, hiring and adaptation via on-boarding and buddy programs of employees on new vacancies or replacement. In this part, it is also essential to notice the importance and key role of hiring. It is well-know that the most essential resource in the company is human resource, the main power for archiving ambitious company goals and results by improving overall performance. From the other side of this cone, personal cost is the one of the most expensive and big part of the budget for every company. As it is shown by lots of cases, the high-qualitive precise recruitment process is long and expensive, so average cost for one single final candidate for one open vacancy could reach enormous amount of money, around \$4000⁶. That it is why, it is extremely crucial to find, choose, hire and on-board (adapt) the right person, the future team member.

⁵ Fong, C.-Y., Ooi, K.-B., Tan, B.-I., Lee, V.-H., & Chong, A. Y.-L. (2011). HRM practices and knowledge sharing: An empirical study. *International Journal of Manpower*, 32(5–6), 704–723.

⁶ Vasconcellos, E. (2022). What Does It Cost to Hire an Employee? News authority “Business News Daily”.

Secondly, training and development as one of the most time and cost-consuming practice should not go unnoticed. This practice was defined as “a key instrument for updating laborers’ activity execution, and affiliations keep growing, preparing spending plan on a yearly preface with believing that it will pick up them an engaged edge”⁷. In other words, training and development initiatives are educational activities within an organization that are designed to improve the job performance of an individual or group. These programs typically involve advancing a worker's knowledge and skill sets and instilling greater motivation to enhance job performance. Also, this crucial to highlight that this practice quite often is focused not only on finding external providers, platforms and trainers, but also on finding and developing of internal coaches and trainers inside the company. This process will create the culture of knowledge share, consequently, it will improve the climate inside the company and performance of every employee, as well as the company at large. Another essential part of the training and development work is a tight connection and collaboration of company with universities and colleges. This activity helps to create a pool of young candidates, who will be full of enthusiasm and loyalty to the firm. A shortening the closing time of a vacancy and facilitating the hiring process can be considered as a positive consequence of this time investments⁸.

Thirdly, another HR practice should be defined in this part of this paper as well. In some companies the further defining practice is familiar under the name of performance management, but in the scope of this study, this phenomenon will be called performance appraisal. Performance appraisal was presented as the strategy through which an affiliation gets information on how well a laborer gets along with his or her action⁹. In other words, it is a regular review of an employee’s job performance and his/her contribution to company’s results at large. Due to this activity employee gets not only feedbacks according his/her work and results, but also an opportunity or justification for promotion, development in the frame of one job role or transfer to another position, role if the previous job duties do not fit employee’s field of interest or level of proficiency anymore. The review and increase of wages are most often the logical conclusion of performance appraisal in some cases.

Fourthly, compensation and benefits (C&B) were described as joined monetary and generally related prizes bound to laborers as a final product of their work¹⁰. In more simple words, C&B

⁷ Falola, H., Osibanjo, A., & Ojo, S. (2014). Effectiveness of Training and Development on Employees’ Performance and Organization Competitiveness in the Nigerian Banking Industry. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov*, 7, 161-172.

⁸ Vasileva, D. (2022). Internship report 2022. St. Petersburg State University.

⁹ Noe, R.A., Hollenbeck, J.R., Gerhart, B. and Wright, P.M. (2003) *Human Resource Management: Gaining a Competitive Advantage*. 4th Edition, McGraw-Hill, Boston.

¹⁰ Lim, L.J.W. and Ling, F.Y.Y. (2012), "Human resource practices of contractors that lead to job satisfaction of professional staff", *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, Vol. 19 No. 1, pp. 101-118.

sub-function can be explained as the compensation/salary and other monetary and non-monetary benefits passed on by a firm to its employees. The main responsibility of the C&B specialist is to take care about remuneration policy of the company, which include fix salaries, variable pay salaries, annual bonuses, and different benefits such as compensation for renting of an apartment, compensation of using car, pension plan/group insurance, extra payment of sick leaves, voluntary medical insurance, accident insurance, life insurance, COVID-19 insurance, travel insurance, meal, 13th month salary, holiday allowance, compensation for remote work, compensation, mobile subscription, mobile phone device, notebook, sport benefits. Also, it is crucial to mention the necessity and utility of this sub-function contribution in KPI and budget formation exercise.

Finally, the last, but not least practice - internal communication as a quite recently appeared but has already justified the attention and investment from the business and academic communities should not go unnoticed as well. Before trying to present the formulated definition, it is worth to notice that communication is an element that maintains relationships within the company. What one person says to another can not only affect those two people, but also it can make a strong influence on the company at large, since the company can be presented as a whole system. Communication between managers and employees, as well as the employees between themselves in an organization, is an important factor in determining the degree of satisfaction of people¹¹. As it was correctly noticed, organizational communication is central to organization success¹². In academic and business societies this studied phenomenon is called as organizational or internal communication. In this paper the term “internal communication” will be used. Nevertheless, before moving to the stage of the definition presenting, it is essential to highlight that it is still an open question for business and academic communities where internal communication should live in the marketing department or the HR department. The truth is always in the middle, as well as the internal communication. Nevertheless, since the most internal information are focused on employees, in this paper there will be assumed that internal communication mostly belongs to HR department. However, indeed, internal communication should have contacts with all organizational departments and cover all happened changes and coming updates and news all over the company. Regarding the definition of this term, internal communication refers to “a group of processes or tools that are responsible for effective information flow and collaboration among top management, middle management, and employees”¹³. The main purpose of this practice is to

¹¹ Jakubiec, M. (2019). The importance of internal communication for management of an organization. *Scientific Papers of Silesian University of Technology. Organization and Management Series*. 2019. 47-62.

¹² FitzPatrick, Liam & Valskov, Klavs & Mounter, Pamela. (2014). *Internal Communications: a manual for practitioners*.

¹³ Jouany, V. (2023), *Internal Communication: Definition, Challenges and Top Reasons Why It's More Important than Ever*. Employee communications, insights, and advocacy platform “Haillo”.

provide internal global communications among company members via monthly regular communication sessions, townhalls, which can be organized four times in a year at the end of every quarter, applications, platforms, and internal company internal portal for publishing and spreading news and announcements. The main aim of this action is to create a common information field that will help each employee to receive a correct idea of the strategy and goals of the company as a whole and feel like an important part of changing and achieving the goals set. It is worth to notice this function and activity help to maintain and develop core values of a company that consequently help to rise employees` perceptions and acceptance of these values on the new level.

2) Employee well-being

The next stage of this study is to cover the following phenomenon: employee well-being. During for more than several decades business and academic societies have been investigating the influence of employee well-being on as an employee performance specifically as on an organizational performance at large. The sharpest necessity to study, invest and, consequently, improve employee well-being is felt in various types of recession times, since mostly in crisis times employees feel themselves extremely unsecured and fragile. The growing individual and common social anxiety demobilized employees and worsen their job performance. Nevertheless, before proceeding to provide more arguments for utility to maintain an employee well-being on the appropriate level and improve it for getting stable and productive performance, it is crucial to define what this term means. Employee well-being is a broad concept that refers to many aspects and thus different researchers from both academic and business communities have converged on a multidimensional conceptualization of this phenomenon¹⁴. Several theoretical models are presented in this part for full disclosure of employee well-being. However, the generally accepted and well-known three-dimensional model that was developed by Grant is taken as one of core concepts and theories of this research in order to strengthen the theoretical background of this study.

Employee well-being is defined as the overall mental, physical, emotional, and economic health of employees. In other words, it is a condition of the employee's physical and mental health, including both life and work experiences¹⁵. It's influenced by various factors such as internal organizational climate, relationships among employees, co-workers, the decisions employees make, and the tools and resources they have access to. It should be notice also that hours, pay,

¹⁴ Ilies, Remus & Pluut, Helen & Aw, Sherry. (2015). Studying employee well-being: Moving forward. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*.

¹⁵ Danna, K., & Griffin, R. W. (1999). Health and well-being in the workplace: A review and synthesis of the literature. *Journal of Management*, 25(3), 357–384

workplace safety and security also have a significant impact on employee well-being¹⁶. Another author has described this term in more precise and shorter way as the overall quality of how an employee experiences and functions at work¹⁷.

According to classification of employee well-being, there were created different models for describing and further investigating this concept. In this study, there are presented just three the most generally accepted and well-known of them. First one, Gallup research, which were conducted in 150 countries, there was defined that employee well-being includes five core components¹⁸. This model can be defined as the most general one since it was developed for investigation of world well-being. In different, more precise way, it can be explained that this model has helped to measure the well-being and satisfaction of life of population of 150 countries. There are core components in the list below:

- Career well-being. It can be described as the satisfaction that people get from work responsibilities and how they spend their time at work every day.
- Social well-being. It can be explained as engaging in healthy, meaningful relationships with friends, family, and colleagues.
- Financial well-being. This type of well-being means an ability to manage personal finances successfully and have a stable source of income and allows to be secured from the financial aspect of life.
- Physical well-being. It can be described as an ability of having health and energy for basic functioning and accomplishing tasks.
- Community well-being. It can be explained an ability of having a connection with others and feeling a sense of belonging in the place where the person lives.

Another research has proposed a two-dimensional model, which includes five factors of affective well-being. Before presenting the mentioned defined factors, it is worth to explain what affective well-being means and what wider concept this term belongs to. Affective well-being “reflects the frequent experience of positive affects and infrequent experience of negative affects”¹⁹. Affective well-being is a part of psychological well-being, which in turn consists of “several components, competence, aspiration, autonomy, integrative functioning and

¹⁶ Waida, M. (2021). What is Employee Wellbeing and Why Does it Matter? Official site “Wrike”

¹⁷ Guest, David. (2017). Human resource management and employee well-being: towards a new analytic framework: HRM and employee well-being: new analytic framework. *Human Resource Management Journal*.

¹⁸ Nial O'Reilly (2013) Wellbeing: The five essential elements, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 8:2, 174-176

¹⁹ Diener, E., & Larsen, R. J. (1993). The experience of emotional well-being. In M. Lewis & J. M. Haviland (Eds.), *Handbook of emotions* (pp. 405–415). The Guilford Press.

satisfaction²⁰. Due to conducted researches it was defined that measures of affective well-being are precepted as one of the most important, if not the most important, indicators of psychological well-being²¹. This conclusion and perception could be explained by the fact that only affective well-being approach was able to cover both cognitive processes that influence well-being²² and job satisfaction together, to observe well-being as a whole system without decomposing it into two elements. Moreover, it should be noticed that affective well-being “is multi-dimensional, and can potentially capture subtleties, complexities and changes in the experience of work that general, uni-dimensional measures may not”²³. Coming back to the model itself, each factor of the mentioned model represents the validated scales that consist of opposite states that an employee may experience in work life context²⁴:

- Anxiety – comfort
- Depression – pleasure
- Bored – enthusiastic
- Tiredness – vigour
- Angry – placid

The last, but not least observed model in this part of the study is three-dimensional model of Grant. This model can be presented as the most holistic one, in which it was claimed that employee well-being can be defined and investigated by three key dimensions, which are listed and described in the list below:

- The psychological well-being. This dimension of well-being in some researches and interpretations is called happiness well-being and can be decomposed into two equal elements, subdimensions: hedonic and eudemonic²⁵. The hedonic subdimension of psychological well-being is happiness oriented and refers to the subjective experiences that employees get during the work life. It is connected to job satisfaction, to the presence of positive emotions at work and the balance between positive and negative attitude to

²⁰ Andrews, F.M., McKennell, A.C. Measures of self-reported well-being: their affective, cognitive, and other components. *Soc Indic Res* 8, 127–155 (1980)

²¹ Warr, P. B. (1994). A Conceptual Framework for the Study of Work and Mental Health. *Work & Stress: An International Journal of Work, Health & Organisations*, 8, 84-97

²² Newton, Tim. (1989). Occupational Stress and Coping with Stress: A Critique. *Human Relations* 42(5):441-461

²³ Briner, Rob & Walshe, Neil. (2015). An evidence-based approach to improving the quality of resource-oriented well-being interventions at work. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*.

²⁴ Daniels, Kevin. (2000). Measures of Five Aspects of Affective Well-Being at Work. *Human Relations - Human Relations* 53(2):279-294

²⁵ Guest, D.E. (2017). Human resource management and employee well-being: towards a new analytic framework. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 27, 22-38

happened work situations²⁶. Moreover, in this part, the importance of getting joy and pleasure from work processes and communication with colleagues should be highlighted as well. The eudemonic subdimension of employee well-being refers to the productivity of employees at work and the realization of their full potential. It is linked with finding meaning and purpose of the work life and includes feelings of engagement and affective commitment to the organization²⁷.

- The physical well-being. This dimension of well-being in some researches and interpretations is called health and focuses both on physical and mental health. Health well-being emphasizes the importance of holding under control the indicators that could notify management about extreme stress like burnout and work intensification, as well as job strains, such as work overload and over commitment²⁸. The physical well-being consists of personalized feelings of health, given as energy levels, stress, and exhaustion²⁹. Quite often in organizations that do not take care and work with employee health well-being, work processes could cause injuries and stresses which can lead to disease and disability in the worst scenarios and cases³⁰. In order to avoid such troubles and tragedies, many companies allocate a budget to monitor working conditions and provide all employees with the poles of voluntary medical insurance and accident insurance, if the employee's work duties involve life-threatening work.
- The social well-being. This dimension of the model is also called relational well-being and is associated with the quality of interpersonal communication to which employees are involved during the work processed on daily basis. This refers to the interaction between employees regardless of their role, status, and actual geographical location of their colleagues. Also, this measurement evaluates the attitude of employees to the organization as a whole³¹. Moreover, it should not be eliminated that employee social well-being measures cooperation and reciprocity among employees as in the frame of one organization as with partners, clients, supplies and providers, along with the levels of organizational trust, integrity, and social support. All of this elements quite often are incorporated into the

²⁶ Grant, Adam & Christianson, Marlys & Price, Richard. (2007). Happiness, Health, Or Relationships? Managerial Practices and Employee Well-Being Tradeoffs. *Academy of Management Perspectives*. 21. 51-63.

²⁷ Marescaux, Elise & Winne, Sophie & Forrier, Anneleen. (2018). Developmental HRM, employee well-being and performance: The moderating role of developing leadership: HRM, well-being and performance. *European Management Review*.

²⁸ Edgar, K.M., Hull, P.M. & Ezard, T.H.G. Evolutionary history biases inferences of ecology and environment from $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ but not $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ values. *Nat Commun* 8, 1106 (2017)

²⁹ Guest, D.E. (2017). Human resource management and employee well-being: towards a new analytic framework. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 27, 22-38

³⁰ Grant, Adam & Christianson, Marlys & Price, Richard. (2007). Happiness, Health, Or Relationships? Managerial Practices and Employee Well-Being Tradeoffs. *Academy of Management Perspectives*. 21. 51-63.

³¹ E. Pagán-Castaño, A. Maseda-Moreno, C. Santos-Rojo. (2020). Wellbeing in work environments, *Journal of Business Research*, 469-474

organizational culture, which is aimed to create and improve the general feeling of being fairly treated and accepted³².

3) Employee Performance

After the disclosure of concepts HRM, HR practice and employee well-being, it is logical to move to the concept of employee performance. The disclosure of this stated concept will consist of the commonly used definitions and the types of performance, which will be taken from well-known and commonly accepted academic theories.

Before providing the definition of employee performance, it is necessary to mention that it is a basic component of organizational success³³. It can be perceived as one component of business success along with productivity, sales, and the achievement of organizational goals³⁴. Companies that have a desire to prosper and develop should think about significant investments on practices that encourage and empower to improve the individual performance. This individual performance growth is achievable via getting the stable and cemented significant level of employees' job satisfaction, internal feelings of security, support, trust, and motivation. It is essential for the organization to provide their employees with infrastructure, environment, well-structured communication, motivation, opportunity to perform and all the needed resources. Enterprises that add value and invest in their employees have a significant probability to achieve the optimal performance.

Moving to the concept definition it should be noticed that there is a significant number of explanations and understanding of what employee performance is. One group of academic researchers figured out that employee performance is “the set of employee’s actions and behaviors consistent to the organizational goals that are under the control of employees”³⁵. In other words, it is a process when employees do their job by full covering their responsibilities, which were agreed in the initial stage of the hiring with their employers and were documented and fixated in the job description for the specific role³⁶.

³² Grant, Adam & Christianson, Marlys & Price, Richard. (2007). Happiness, Health, Or Relationships? Managerial Practices and Employee Well-Being Tradeoffs. *Academy of Management Perspectives*. 21. 51-63.

³³ Joo, Harry & Gottfredson, Ryan. (2011). Why we hate performance management—And why we should love it. *Business Horizons*. 54. 503-507.

³⁴ Charbonnier-Voirin, Audrey & Roussel, Patrice. (2012). Adaptive Performance: A New Scale to Measure Individual Performance in Organizations. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences / Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration*.

³⁵ Jiang, Kaifeng & Lepak, David & Hu, Jia & Baer, Judith. (2012). How Does Human Resource Management Influence Organizational Outcomes? A Meta-Analytic Investigation of Mediating Mechanisms. *The Academy of Management Journal*. 55.

³⁶ Ribeiro, Ícaro & Pereira, Rafael & Vidal Freire, Ivna & Oliveira, Bruno & Casotti, Cezar & Boery, Eduardo. (2017). Stress and Quality of Life Among University Students: A Systematic Literature Review. *Health Professions Education*.

Another group of academic researchers are more inclined to the fact that that employee performance is a multifaceted concept, which consists of different dimensions. They figured out that the task performance and the organizational citizenship behavior are key elements of individual performance³⁷. Looking close at the each of the mentioned, the first dimension - task performance can be defined as the behaviors that are stated in a job description, which support the technical core of the organization³⁸. It is linked to the practical skills and knowledge that are required from employees for completing tasks.

Another dimension - organizational citizenship behavior or contextual performance is under control and influence of psychology and organizational management³⁹. It was defined that organizational citizenship behavior creates, maintains, and strengthens social and psychological environment of each department and organization at large⁴⁰. In different words, if an employee has the traits of organizational citizenship behavior, he or she is more interactive and cooperative with other colleagues, is innovative and creative, or more willing to share knowledge with other members of the team⁴¹. Moreover, it was figured out that organizational citizenship behavior has a significant positive impact on “organizational results such as productivity, competency, customer satisfaction and turnover intention”. Later in the process of the study the concept of organizational citizenship behavior, it was discovered that this dimension of the individual performance is consists of five basic subdimensions, which are listed and described below⁴²:

- Altruism refers to supportive behaviors and actions, which are directed and aimed to take care about other employees, internal and external colleagues in the scope⁴³.
- Conscientiousness is linked to the occasion when employees are used to be always punctual, present at the work place or available for contact, and do perform their tasks beyond normal expectations and prerequisites.

³⁷ Meijerink, Jeroen & Boons, Mark & Keegan, Anne & Marler, Janet. (2021). Algorithmic human resource management: Synthesizing developments and cross-disciplinary insights on digital HRM. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 32. 1-18.

³⁸ Alfes, Kerstin & Shantz, Amanda & Bailey, Catherine & Soane, Emma. (2012). The Link Between Perceived Human Resource Management Practices, Engagement and Employee Behaviour: A Moderated Mediation Model. *International Journal of Human Resource Management - INT J HUM RESOUR MANAG*.

³⁹ Narzary, Genuine & Palo, Sasmita. (2020). Structural empowerment and organisational citizenship behaviour: The mediating-moderating effect of job satisfaction. *Personnel Review*.

⁴⁰ Organ, D.W. (1997) Organizational Citizenships Behavior: It's Construct Cleanup Time. *Human Performance*, 10, 85-97

⁴¹ Meijerink, Jeroen & Boons, Mark & Keegan, Anne & Marler, Janet. (2021). Algorithmic human resource management: Synthesizing developments and cross-disciplinary insights on digital HRM. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 32. 1-18.

⁴² Ocampo, Lanndon & Acedillo, Venus & Bacunador, Alin & Balo, Charity & Lagdameo, Yvonne & Tupa, Nickha. (2018). A historical review of the development of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and its implications for the twenty-first century. *Personnel Review*. 47

⁴³ Foote, David & Li, Thomas & Tang, Thomas. (2008). Job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) Does team commitment make a difference in self-directed teams? *Management Decision*. 46.

- Courtesy refers to the occasion when employees are kind and respectful to other employees because they strive to prevent the cause of the problem or take initiatives to eliminate the consequences of any possible critical issues.
- Sportsmanship refers more of its part to positive aspects rather than on negative ones. It reflects the behavior of an employee who is not used to complaining about small things and does not escalate the atmosphere.
- Civic virtue focuses on voluntary behaviors both in professional and social aspects. Moreover, this subdimension of the organizational citizenship behavior is responsible for the general support of the functions of the organization⁴⁴.

In the modern VUCA world and due to the growth of the working environment volatility, business and academic communities figured out that more often than before employees should have or acquire during the working process a certain level of adaptability in order to cope with required duties. It has become more crucial for them to learn how to adapt efficiently, respond accordingly to urgent situations, to prioritize, when needed and deal with new issues under specific, changeable circumstances⁴⁵. All mentioned new variables have proved the necessity and relevance of appearance of a new concept, type of performance - adaptive performance. This type of performance can be described as the “flexible work behaviors that help employees adapt to change by demonstrating excellence in problem solving, uncertainty/stress/crisis control, new learning, and adaptability related to people culture and environment”⁴⁶.

Another dimension of individual employee performance that should be disclosed is counterproductive behavior. It is one of the key concepts of organizational psychology that influence the growth and prosperity of the organization. Most often, this behavior is voluntary in nature and has the intention to cause significant harm to the company and its members, stakeholders. They can be physical or verbal, such as “sabotage, laziness, vandalism of the organization's property, intentional inadequate work and absenteeism”⁴⁷. Such behavior can have a negative impact on the physical or non-physical assets of the company, daily work processes and employee efficiency. This can lead to situations that can lead to catastrophic and costly

⁴⁴ Indarti, Sri & Solimun, Solimun & Fernandes, Adji & Hakim, Wardhani. (2017). The effect of OCB in relationship between personality, organizational commitment and job satisfaction to performance. *Journal of Management Development*. 36

⁴⁵ Charbonnier-Voirin, Audrey & Roussel, Patrice. (2012). Adaptive Performance: A New Scale to Measure Individual Performance in Organizations. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences / Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration*. 29

⁴⁶ Park, S., & Park, S. (2019). Employee adaptive performance and its antecedents: Review and synthesis. *Human Resource Development Review*, 18(3), 294–324

⁴⁷ Miao, Chao & Humphrey, Ronald & Qian, Shanshan. (2017). A meta-analysis of emotional intelligence and work attitudes. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. 90.

consequences for the organization. It can also cause significant damage to the well-being of employees⁴⁸.

There is existed another theory that should be described along with already mentioned concepts and listed dimensions of the individual performance. For an enterprise in order to maximize its efficiency and profit in existing markets, while maintaining a focus on conquering new markets and creating future innovations, employees are required to fully perform the duties entrusted to them and be effective in their implementation. At the same time, employees need to search, discover, experiment, develop and implement innovations⁴⁹. In order to harmoniously combine these two polar activities of the organization, it is necessary to find the right balance between the use of rules and procedures to make the work of employees standard (in other words, to perform work in accordance with official instructions and the role assigned to this employee), while not forgetting to leave the employees the space, to give them the freedom to spontaneously introduce innovations, to adapt to challenges and atypical situations⁵⁰. Thus, academic researchers have come to the conclusion that it is necessary to study both aspects of the effectiveness of employees in the organization: in-role job performance and innovative job performance.

Starting with the in-role job performance, it can be described as “actions specified and required by an employee’s job description and thus mandated, appraised, and rewarded by the employing organization”⁵¹. In-role job performance guarantees that working behavior becomes predictable, so that the main core tasks can be effectively and efficiently coordinated and controlled in order to reach the company's global goals⁵².

Innovative job performance was disclosed as “the intentional generation, promotion, and realization of new ideas within a work role, work group, or organization in order to benefit role performance, a group, or an organization”. This dimension of performance consists of complex tasks that include a variety of cognitive and social actions, such as generation, promotion, discussion, modification and, subsequently, as the final result, the implementation of creative unique know-hows. This observed type of the employee performance is aimed at developing and

⁴⁸ Chang, Kirk & Smithikrai, Chuchai. (2010). Counterproductive behaviour at work: An investigation into reduction strategies. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 21.

⁴⁹ Patel, Chirag & Rehkopf, David & Leppert, John & Bortz, Walter & Cullen, Mark & Chertow, Glenn & Ioannidis, John. (2013). Systematic evaluation of environmental and behavioural factors associated with all-cause mortality in the United States National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. *International journal of epidemiology*. 42.

⁵⁰ Muñoz-Pascual, Lucía & Galende, Jesús. (2017). The impact of knowledge and motivation management on creativity: Employees of innovative Spanish companies. *Employee Relations*. 39.

⁵¹ Janssen, O. and Van Yperen, N.W. (2004), “Employees’ goal orientations, the quality of leader-member exchange, and the outcomes of job performance and job satisfaction”, *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 47 No. 3, pp. 368-384.

⁵² Fu, N., Flood, P., Bosak, J., Morris, T. and O’Regan, P. (2015), “How do high performance work systems influence organizational innovation in professional service firms?”, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 37 No. 2, pp. 209-231.

using new ideas and practices. However, it should be noticed that innovative job performance involves changes that can lead to resistance due to the high level of insecurity and uncertainty that it can generate among employees.

The last presented model in this part of the first chapter will be the AMO model. It should be highlighted that this model will be one of the key models and the further research will be founded on it. This mentioned model proposes that employee performance is a function that can be decomposed into the following dimensions: ability, motivation, and opportunity⁵³. Regarding the model, HR practices can enhance employee performance through skill-, motivation-, and opportunity-enhancing practices⁵⁴. Skill-enhancing HR practices focus on improving staff hard skills and capabilities, while motivation-enhancing HR practices aim to positively influence on the growth of employee motivation and engagement. Opportunity-enhancing HR practices empower employees to use their abilities and motivation to reach company`s goals, get new knowledge and tools, and diagnose possible shortcomings in work processes⁵⁵.

Skill-enhancing HR practices consist of recruiting, accurate selection, and training that encourage employees to get skills and knowledge to improve efficiency in work processes and to develop an innovative approach to work and tasks.

Motivation-enhancing HR practices boost motivation encompass various measures such as developmental performance management, attractive compensation, comprehensive benefits, promotion opportunities, and job security. These practices aim to furnish employees with the incentives needed to enhance their performance and feel appreciated by their organization for their contributions.

Opportunity-enhancing HR practices include flexible job design, teamwork, employee involvement, and knowledge sharing, which can encourage employees to assume greater responsibility for setting goals, completing tasks, and managing interpersonal dynamics, potentially leading to significantly improved in-role and innovative job performance.⁵⁶

⁵³ Obeidat, S., Mitchell, R. and Bray, M. (2016), "The link between high performance work practices and organizational performance: empirically validating the conceptualization of HPWP according to the AMO model", *Employee Relations*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 578-595.

⁵⁴ Lepak, D.P., Liao, H., Chung, Y. and Harden, E.E. (2006), "A conceptual review of human resource management systems in strategic human resource management research", in Martocchio, J.J. (Ed.), *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management*, Vol. 25, JAI, Greenwich, CT, pp. 217-271.

⁵⁵ Jiang, K., Lepak, D.P., Hu, J. and Baer, J.C. (2012), "How does human resource management influence organizational outcomes? A meta-analytical investigation of mediating mechanisms", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 55 No. 6, pp. 1264-1294.

⁵⁶ Khoreva, Violetta & Wechtler, Heidi. (2018). HR practices and employee performance: the mediating role of well-being. *Employee Relations*. 40.

To sum up, the AMO model provides a useful framework for understanding the different ways in which HR practices can enhance employee performance by addressing different aspects of the employee's ability, motivation, and opportunity to perform. By implementing these practices, management team of an organization can improve employee performance and reach objective in more effective way.

4) Crisis

Now in this part there is presented and covered the core element of this research – crisis. Today, the word crisis is one of the most frequently heard and pronounced words as in the mass media, as in the private conversation. It is applied both to describe personal events and, in most cases, to describe a state in which society as a whole or individual organizations and systems find themselves, with negative outcomes. In other words, the term crisis is applied to situations that are “unwanted, unexpected, unpredictable and almost unthinkable, which cause disbelief and uncertainty”⁵⁷.

Moving to more precise and academic definitions of this concept, the following authors with their conclusion could be presented. Kathleen Fearn-Banks has claimed that crisis is a “larger event with potentially negative consequences affecting an organization, company or industry, as well as its target public, products, services or good name”⁵⁸. For Hamblin, crisis is an “urgent situation in which all the members of a group are faced with a common threat”⁵⁹. Fink has defined the crisis as any event that can escalate in intensity, become the focus of attention of the media and the government, obstruct normal business operations and negatively affect a company’s image and profit⁶⁰. Barton sees crisis as a “larger and unpredictable event with potentially negative consequences. This event and its consequences may cause significant damage to a company, its employees, products, services, financial state and reputation”⁶¹. The last, but not least, Pearson and Clair define crisis as an “event of small probability and great consequences, which imperils the life of an organization, being characterized by unclear causes, effects and means of solution, as well as a conviction that decisions must be made quickly”⁶².

Regarding types of crises, it is crucial to make a little remark that in this paper under crisis will be taking into account and described below all possible types of it. Natural crisis, which includes

⁵⁷ Milašinović, S., & Kešetović, Ž. (2008). Crisis and crisis management: A contribution to a conceptual & terminological delimitation.

⁵⁸ K. Fearn-Banks, *Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers: Mahwah, NJ, 1966, p. 1

⁵⁹ R.L. Hamblin, “Leadership and Crisis”, *Sociometry* 21, 1958, p. 322

⁶⁰ S. Fink, *Crisis Management: Planning for the Inevitable*, Amacom, New York, 1986

⁶¹ L. Barton, *Crisis in Organizations: Managing and Communicating in the Heat of Chaos*, South-Western Publishing Company: Cincinnati, OH, 1993, p. 2

⁶² C.M. Pearson, J.A. Clair, “Reaffirming Crisis Management”, *Academy of Management Review* 23, 1998, p. 60

earthquakes, hurricanes, flooding, and other natural disasters, will be not taken into scope of this research, however, it will be described in the theoretical background for covering all types of crises and providing with the whole picture. In some researches and classification of crisis, pandemic belongs to natural crisis, in other ones it does not. Nevertheless, in this paper pandemic will be considered as a part of epidemiological crisis.

The description part of crisis types can be started from one of the most obvious and easily first figured out and then estimated recession - financial crisis. Financial crisis from the general economic perspective is a situation when financial instruments and assets significantly lose their value. As a rapid consequence, legal entities and physical entities are not able to meet their financial obligations, and financial institutions spend cash or convertible assets to invest in projects and meet immediate and concerned parties` needs. Investors become are less confident in the value of their assets and consumers' incomes and assets, in most cases, are reevaluated in the direction of reducing their value, that then, consequently, creates a situation when consumers and asset holders are not able to pay their debts and obligations. There are a lot of factors that can cause a financial crisis. However, often the financial crisis can be explained by overevaluation of assets, system failures, which in turn can be explained by consumer panic. The majority of clients decide to withdraw funds from the bank when they become aware about the financial problems of the institution. Also, a reason of the asset value decrease can be found in a significant drop in demand for the product or service. There can be taken various steps for business to overcome and survive during the financial crisis:

- First of all, the organization can try to move funds to cover immediate short-term costs.
- Secondly, the top management of the organization can re-analyze sources of profit for finding new ways to get long-term income, as well as increase margin.

Another type of crisis that is revealed in this study is the personnel crisis. A crisis of this type occurs when a community member or employee is involved in unethical or illegal behavior. The reasons for this type of behavior can vary and be depended on both employer, society and employee him/herself. Regardless of where exactly this type of behavior was manifested by a person in the workplace or in the personal life of an employee, this can cause damage to both society and the organization. In particular, the reputation of the company can suffer the most because the organization hired or was responsible for this person. To get out of the crisis situation, it is recommended to take the following steps listed below:

- Determine the scale of the situation and the extent of the damage.
- Determine the appropriate disciplinary measures.

- Provide a written or oral statement.
- Determine the correct response actions.
- Be transparent to these media and inform its representative about the actions in case if this happened situation has attracted the attention of the media.

There is present one more type of crisis in the theoretical part of this paper. Organizational crisis can be defined as “an event that threatens an organization’s reputation or credibility due to actions by employees or leadership of the organization”⁶³. There were defined three possible types of organizational crises:

- First of all, it is essential to mention the crisis of deception. This type of crisis occurs when an organization deliberately lies about publicly available product information or fakes publicly available data.
- Secondly, crisis of management misconduct should be disclosed as well in the paper. This type of crisis is caused by management voluntarily participation in illegal activities. Well - known and frequently encountered examples of misconduct include withholding information, exploiting clients, and lack of managerial authority.
- Thirdly, it is essential to disclose the crisis of skewed management values. A crisis of this type happens when the owners of a company put short-term financial benefits above corporate social responsibility, concern for the environment and neglect the interests of both external and internal stakeholders such as customers and employees.

For overcoming the described crisis situation, the following listed actions can be taken:

- Change organizational culture and attitude to internal and external clients, customers on all levels.
- Embrace an organizational culture that's dedicated to customer success and customer intimacy.
- Reobserve recruitment process on the stage of selecting final candidate in order to hire employees who have the same set of values as the organization.

Another type of crisis that is covered is the technological crisis. Technological crises most often occur due to human use of science and technology. This happens when the technology becomes too complicated, and the system fails. Software failures, industrial accidents can be considered as the most obvious and frequently occurring examples of such crises. E-commerce

⁶³ Brand, J. D. & Pohl, G. M. (2021). Model/Anti-Model Advocacy Responses to Hospitality Industry Sexual Harassment. In M. Khosrow-Pour D.B.A. (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Organizational Knowledge, Administration, and Technology* (pp. 1736-1748). IGI Global.

sites and software development companies could lose millions in revenue and the trust of their current users if servers fail. This is not only a huge loss of income, but also a serious blow to the reputation of a product or service. To overcome the technological crisis, it is recommended to take the listed steps listed:

- Work with the IT department or technical support team of the provider to resolve the issue as soon as possible in order to prevent the issue from affecting employee`s work and, as a consequence, customers and suppliers.
- Discuss the current situation with employees in order to find the cause of problems with the system or platform.
- Establish precautionary measures and develop regulations to prevent similar crisis situations in the future.
- Improve the level of customer service and technical support teams to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of work with the influx of calls from angry or confused customers.

There is described another type of crisis in this study. Natural Crisis can be defined as “catastrophic events with atmospheric, geological, and hydrological origins that can cause fatalities, property damage and social environmental disruption”⁶⁴. Most often, natural disasters are meant by droughts, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, tornadoes, and so on. All of these natural hazardous accidental events bring huge damage to world government and population, global businesses and the environment of the planet at large. Since, quite often it is extremely complicated to predict the time and the location of the catastrophic events, it is crucial for any company to be sure that its employees are ready and trained to promptly and correctly react and act in emergence situations in any time. Especially, if the company`s office physically is located in the risk zone. For overcoming the described crisis situation, the following listed actions can be taken:

- Be proactive.
- Build the office in a structure that's resilient to weather in the dangerous zone.
- Prepare an evacuation plan in the event of an emergency.
- Prepare a contingency plan for business operations in case your offices become unavailable.

⁶⁴ Jiuping Xu, Ziqi Wang, Feng Shen, Chi Ouyang, Yan Tu. (2016). Natural disasters and social conflict: A systematic literature review, *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, Volume 17, Pages 38-48

- Conduct scheduled exercises and trainings on an ongoing basis for all employees in order to be ensure that they are aware of what to do, where to go and where to find everything they need in case of natural disasters.

Another type of crisis that has reminded about its weight since 2022 should not be forgotten as well. A geopolitical crisis can be described as a result arising from a dispute and conflict between states and political actors or political spatial groups that are organized because of territorial control. This dispute over control can be focused on both land and water, on human geographical features, natural exhaustible and inexhaustible resources, renewable fossils, trade zones, etc. In most cases states or groups that represent different interest are involved in active and escalated military activities. There is impossible to provide any workable steps for overcoming the described type of crisis. Only diplomacy, discussions and negotiations in which both sides will not only take part but will also be interested in ending hostilities or open conflict will be able to lead to a successful resolution of the crisis situation.

Epidemiological crisis is presented in this paper along with other types of crises. Epidemiological crisis is a situation in which a large part of the population of a territorial zone or, in a more critical case, the entire planet is infected with a virus or disease. This type of crisis, as well as geopolitical ones, has gained significance and weight among all spheres of life of different groups and strata of the world's population due to the recently appeared Covid-19. A virus or disease can have either a technogenic or natural origin. There were defined 2 possible types of epidemiological crisis based on territorial area of spread:

- A virus or disease becomes an epidemic if a large part of any territory is exposed to infection.
- A virus or disease has a feature of a pandemic if a large part of the entire planet is infected. Covid-19 was called a pandemic due to its general planetary distribution.

The last but not least type of crisis that is disclosed in the study is energy crisis. The energy crisis is a concern that the world's needs for limited natural resources, which are used to feed an industrial society, are decreasing as demand increases. Some researchers define it as any significant bottleneck in the supply of energy resources to the economy. During the last fifty years world society more often than before has been starting to concern about the renewable and non-renewable resources, approaches to provide all the next generations of the planet's population with everything they need. Moreover, academic, and scientific societies have started to study the safety of the energy sources used and the development and improvement of alternative energy sources that will be more eco-friendly in long-term.

5) The role of HRM and HR practices in an organization during crisis

Returning to the main topic specific topic of the future conducted study, it was found that top managers of companies of different size and from different fields of activity choose different HRM approaches, depending on type of crisis and the extent of its influence on economic stability of company and world business at large. Also, they have to take into consideration the size of their company and the current stage of the company development and its circle of life.

It has been discovered that during the financial crisis managers of companies from various fields of activities more likely used “hard HRM” approach via applying job cuts, short-term working, reduction in training and development expenditure, pay cuts and freezes, reduced benefits, and changes in industrial relations. Moreover, they found that HR function has occurred the central key player in delivering responses to the global financial crisis⁶⁵. It can be explained by the fact that HR as well as marketing tightly connects and depends on external a set of relationships, processes, and procedures such as labor and economic markets. Another paper has concluded that large and small British firms respond to the economic crisis of 2008 differently. Small firms or SMEs trended to use hard HRM by cutting pay-related costs, while large enterprises used hard HRM as well, but they implemented it via another tool: downsizing to a large extent.⁶⁶ The reason of different tools could be found in the fact that due to the reduction of volume and, consequently profits big firms have to sacrifice some part of their business, their assets and resources to save the vital part. SMEs contrary to the large companies are limited in resources and cannot lose it. Consequently, they need to save it for continuing operations and procedures, but they have to reduce cost for human resources and assets maintaining.

Covid-19 was the first global epidemiological crisis for the last century since Spanish flu of 1918, which has pushed firms to significantly change not only HRM practices, but also processes, procedures and practices of all companies` functions. It should be noticed that in contrary to approaches and actions, which were preferably taken during economic crises, epidemiological crisis has encouraged managers of different levels to implement tools of “soft HRM” for increasing employee`s satisfaction and feeling of safety and, consequently, his/her performance and development. It was defined by some academic researchers a “soft HRM” as a more humanistic approach to HRM, which can be adopted by treating employees as one of the company`s most important assets. Via their research they found proves of a significant HRM`s contribution to

⁶⁵ Gunnigle, P.; Lavelle, J.; Monaghan, S. Weathering the storm? Multinational companies and human resource management through the global financial crisis. *Int. J. Manpow.* 2013, 34, 214–231.

⁶⁶ Lai, Y.; Saridakis, G.; Blackburn, R.; Johnstone, S. Are the HR responses of small firms different from large firms in times of recession? *J. Bus. Ventur.* 2016, 31, 113–131.

employee performance at the beginning and, consequently, to organizational performance and the critical role of HRM in managing crises. Through the organized surveys and semi-structured in-depth interviews with 26 HR representatives of Sri Lankan companies, researchers discovered that practices of overhead cost saving by closing down office premises (without retrenchments of staff) or shifting to work from home and employee engagement were actively and preferably used for overcoming consequences of Covid-19 crisis⁶⁷. Also, other conducted study, which was focused on battling COVID-19 with human resource management bundling, has found that internal communication, social and psychological rewards, trainings had positive influence on employee satisfaction, loyalty and, consequently, performance⁶⁸. Moreover, another paper, mostly focusing on the effect of sustainable HRM practices on employee fears of the threats of COVID-19, stated that practices of social-responsible HRM reduced employee anxieties and fears about the negative impacts of pandemic and empowered employee to maintain the performance and to proceed sustainable development⁶⁹. The usage of another approach and the mentioned actions, tools above could be explained by the fact that employees of any industries have become the victim of strong physical and emotional exhaustion and pressure, which have led to the increase of burnout and absenteeism. That is why, in this type of crises HR practices, which directed on maintaining of employee well-being and mental health are more suitable and effective in term long, while hard cost reduction approaches will be useful only near future and will solve the consequences, but not the causes of the appeared issues.

Nevertheless, it also should be mentioned that emergent situation that had been created by epidemiological crisis Covid-19 has pushed managers to re-think not only the importance of the HR practices, but also the concept of strategic Human Resource Management. Moreover, this crisis situation prompted the academic and business communities to think about how essential it is to allocate a place for the head of the HR department and provide the representative of this function with the right to vote and make a significant input in the decision-making process in the crisis committee. First of all, it was defined by some researchers that strategic HRM initially refers to the “vertical connection between HRM functions and the organizational strategy as well as the horizontal consistency between HRM functions”⁷⁰. Another group of researchers stated that in

⁶⁷ Adikaram, A.S.; Naotunna, N.; Priyankara, H. Battling COVID-19 with human resource management bundling. *Empl. Relat.* 2021, 43, 1269–1289.

⁶⁸ Abdullah, M.I.; Huang, D.; Sarfraz, M.; Sadiq, M.W. Service Innovation in Human Resource Management During COVID-19: A Study to Enhance Employee Loyalty Using Intrinsic Rewards. *Front. Psychol.* 2021, 12, 627659

⁶⁹ He, J.; Mao, Y.; Morrison, A.M.; Coca-Stefaniak, J.A. On being warm and friendly: The effect of socially responsible human resource management on employee fears of the threats of COVID-19. *Int. J. Contemp. Hosp. Manag.* 2020, 33, 346–366.

⁷⁰ Wright, P. M., & McMahan, G. C. (1992). Theoretical perspectives for strategic human resource management. *Journal of Management*, 18(2), 295–320.

order to ensure the achievement of the organizational goals in a time of crisis, strategic agility is required. Also, through their study they concluded that companies should be able to plan and distribute their resources, coordinate the necessary functionality, and use organizational knowledge and resources in the best possible ways⁷¹. In another research it was stated that organizations' traditional economic models are mostly taught to use data from the perspective of "normal times." That is why, it can be difficult to make forecasts about what would happen during "abnormal periods." This may imply that generating forecasts about the company's operations, such as the planning and allocation of resources, may be a challenging task⁷². COVID-19 has generated the extremely high level of uncertainty. Nobody knew in 2020 when this virus would stop or whether its effects on how work is done in businesses would be short-term or long-term. Therefore, managers and HRM experts and specialists have found it difficult to carry out strategic planning or to implement the initial one. In this instance, the majority of enterprises were unable to timely and accurately notify their staff about their management strategy or how they planned to respond to the pandemic. To respond to this appeared issue it was figured out that "having clear workplace guidelines during hard times helps to reduce employees' stress and to increase their motivation and confidence"⁷³. Moreover, via one research it was concluded "that access to information and the updated news related to the pandemic is associated significantly with employees' retention and the stability of their mental statement and consequently performance"⁷⁴. Nevertheless, due to the novelty and suddenness of this epidemiological crisis, it may be challenging for organizations to obtain this information, especially when they are in a reactive and survival mode. Despite the challenging, enhancing organizational resilience is crucial to ensure the sustainability of the organization in the Covid-19 crisis. The last, but not least common research from this aspect, which was conducted by academic workers from different universities of the East part of the world, showed that despite the uncertainty generated by this pandemic, organizations clearly and undoubtedly understood the need "to develop ingenious practices that could help absorb and face disturbance that threatens their survival"⁷⁵.

However, quite often firms decide to combine both approaches soft and hard HRM for getting better results in the process of overcoming crises. Firstly, it is important to highlight once again

⁷¹ Liu, Y., Lee, J. M., & Lee, C. (2020). The challenges and opportunities of a global health crisis: The management and business implications of COVID-19 from an Asian perspective. *Asian Business & Management*, 19, 277–297

⁷² Baert, S., Lippens, L., Moens, E., Sterkens, P., & Weytjens, J. (2020). How do we think the COVID-19 crisis will affect our careers (if any remain)?, GLO Discussion Paper, No. 520, Global Labor Organization (GLO), Essen.

⁷³ Wong, E., Ho, K., Wong, S., Cheung, A., & Yeoh, E. (2020). Workplace safety and coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic: survey of employees. *Bull World Health Organ*. E-pub, 20.

⁷⁴ Elsafty, A. S., & Ragheb, M. (2020). The role of human resource management towards employees retention during Covid-19 pandemic in medical supplies sector – Egypt. *Business and Management Studies*, 6(2), 5059–5059

⁷⁵ Ngoc Su, D., Luc Tra, D., Thi Huynh, H. M., Nguyen, H. H. T., & O'Mahony, B. (2021). Enhancing resilience in the Covid-19 crisis: Lessons from human resource management practices in Vietnam. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1–17. doi: 10.1080/13683500.2020.1863930

that “hard” HRM strategies in most cases are useful and show positive overall outcomes in financial aspects, while “soft” ones are preferably used for keeping employees' wellbeing. Indeed, at the beginning via cost reduction strategies company has an opportunity to re-evaluate their expenditure items and apply some adjustments for optimization in crisis period. And then, after applying “hard HRM” or “strategic HRM”, companies can strengthen positive effects of implemented changes by using actions aimed at retaining an employee and maintaining his emotional state and working capacity. In one recent research it was defined that combination of two mentioned above approaches positively affects and improves as employee and organizational performance at large through job-related attitudes, which consists of work motivation, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as job performance⁷⁶.

6) The impact of HRM practices on employee well-being

After proving the key role of HRM and HR practices in an organization during crisis, it is essential to move to justifications that HR practices have an impact on employee well-being. In order to prove in, academic researches and business articles of previous years and periods are taken into consideration and analyzed.

Before to move straightforward to studies review, it is crucial to mention that the understanding that HR practices have an impact on employee well-being has developed gradually over time. However, there are some key well-known and generally accepted researches in the history of HR management that have contributed to this understanding, which should be disclosed in this part of the study. One such research was the Hawthorne studies conducted in the 1920s and 1930s, which were a set of experiments to investigate the relationship between workplace lighting and worker productivity. The studies figure out that productivity increased regardless of changes in lighting and concluded that the presence of researchers and the attention given to workers during the experiment had a positive impact on their motivation and productivity⁷⁷. Another important research was the publication of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory in 1943, which proposed that people have a set of basic needs that must be met before they can focus on higher-order needs. This theory helped to shift the focus of HR management from purely task-based approaches to more humanistic approaches that take employee needs and well-being into consideration for further decision-making processes⁷⁸.

⁷⁶ Bieńkowska A, Koszela A, Sałamacha A, Tworek K (2022) COVID-19 oriented HRM strategies influence on job and organizational performance through job-related attitudes. PLoS ONE 17(4): e0266364.

⁷⁷ Mayo, E. (1933). *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization*. Routledge.

⁷⁸ Maslow, A. H. (1943). *A Theory of Human Motivation*.

Moving to academic evidence of this impact, it was proved that HRM practices that support work-life balance, such as flexible work time and paid time off, have been linked to better employee well-being⁷⁹. Later it was defined and proved that when employees are able to balance their work and personal lives, they report lower levels of stress, better mental health, and greater job satisfaction⁸⁰. Also, one more than almost several decades ago conducted but has become more and more relevant nowadays study found that flexible work arrangements, such as remote work and flextime, can lead to increased levels of employee well-being by providing greater control over work schedules and reducing work-family conflict⁸¹.

Other researchers found out that HRM practices that are directed to take care about employee health and safety, such as providing ergonomic workspaces, promoting healthy behaviors, and addressing workplace hazards, have been shown to have a positive influence on employee well-being⁸². Moreover, it was figured out by other⁸² author that when employees feel safe and healthy at work, they are less likely to experience stress-related illnesses and injuries⁸³. Also, there was published a book in one chapter of which there is emphasized the importance of creating a safe and healthy work environment, as well as the provision of health and wellness programs, as key components of HRM practices that promote employee well-being⁸⁴. Regarding the recent recessions in the world economy, which have caused mass staff reduction in all sectors of economy, the importance of job security has become more obvious for everyone without any exceptions. This review of the literature on job insecurity found that it is a significant stressor that can negatively impact employee well-being⁸⁵.

Another group of researchers were focused on the defining the positive impact of HRM practices on employee engagement, that, consequently, will improve the employee well-being. Under employee engagement it was meant an involving employee in decision-making and recognizing their contributions⁸⁶. It was proved that engaged employees report higher levels of job

⁷⁹ Golden, L. (2001). Flexible work schedules: Which workers get them? *American Behavioral Scientist*, 44(7), 1157-1178.

⁸⁰ Kelly, E. L., & Moen, P. (2007). Rethinking the clockwork of work: Why schedule control may pay off at work and at home. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 9(4), 487-506.

⁸¹ Kossek, E. E., Lautsch, B. A., & Eaton, S. C. (2006). Telecommuting, control, and boundary management: Correlates of policy use and practice, job control, and work-family effectiveness. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68(2), 347-367.

⁸² Barling, J., Kelloway, E. K., & Iverson, R. D. (2003). High-quality work, job satisfaction, and occupational injuries. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(2), 276-283.

⁸³ Probst, T. (2005). Countering the Negative Effects of Job Insecurity Through Participative Decision Making: Lessons From the Demand-Control Model. *Journal of occupational health psychology*. 10. 320-9.

⁸⁴ Liu, Ping-Qing & Liu, Fang & Gao, Chun-Jing. (2009). Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs): A Primary Review1 *SANTE ET SECURITE*. 2.

⁸⁵ De Witte, H. (2005). Job insecurity: Review of the international literature on definitions, prevalence, antecedents and consequences. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 31(4), 1-6.

⁸⁶ Rich, B. L., Lepine, J. A., & Crawford, E. R. (2010). Job engagement: Antecedents and effects on job performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(3), 617-635.

satisfaction, better mental and physical health, and greater commitment to their organizations⁸⁷. E. E. Lawler in his book proposes as well that employee involvement in decision-making and problem-solving leads to increased employee motivation, satisfaction, and well-being⁸⁸.

It was discovered via experiment and observation designed that employee well-being and level of motivation have been increased when HRM practices are used to support employee training and development⁸⁹. When employees have the skills and knowledge, they need to perform their jobs well, they feel more confident and empowered, which can lead to better mental health and job satisfaction⁹⁰.

It should not be forgotten that key purpose of any person to work is to earn money for living. That is why, remuneration policies of an organization and its compensation and benefits practices play one of the most crucial roles in employee job satisfaction and well-being. It was assumed that organizations with comprehensive benefits programs had higher levels of employee engagement and lower levels of turnover. The study also found that employees who were satisfied with their benefits were more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction and overall well-being. Also, this meta-analysis found that recognition and rewards programs that acknowledge employee contributions and provide opportunities for growth and development are associated with increased levels of employee well-being⁹¹.

Moving to another HR practice which is commonly used for measuring the employee performance, it is crucial to mention a study conducted by the University of Warwick. The members of this institution via the designed research have found that when employees received frequent feedback and had clear performance expectations, they reported higher levels of job satisfaction and well-being⁹². Another study also found that employees who felt they had a voice in the performance management process were more likely to be engaged and committed to their organizations⁹³. By another conducted research fairness and justice were defined as other crucial

⁸⁷ Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 268-279.

⁸⁸ Lawler, E. E. (1986). *High involvement management*. Jossey-Bass.

⁸⁹ Salehian, M. (2021). Creating a caring learning environment in nursing education. *Future of Medical Education Journal*, 11(3), 53-54

⁹⁰ Noe, R. A. (1986). Trainees' attributes and attitudes: Neglected influences on training effectiveness. *Academy of Management Review*, 11(4), 736-749.

⁹¹ Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 268.

⁹² Oswald, Andrew J., Proto, Eugenio and Sgroi, Daniel. (2015) Happiness and productivity. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 33 (4). pp. 789-822.

⁹³ Albrecht, S. L., Bakker, A. B., Gruman, J. A., Macey, W. H., & Saks, A. M. (2015). Employee engagement, human resource management practices and competitive advantage: An integrated approach. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 2(1), 7-35.

factors along with proper performance management for employees in order to be satisfied with the chosen working place. The arranged meta-analysis found out that perceptions of fairness and justice in the workplace were positively associated with employee well-being, job satisfaction, and commitment⁹⁴. It is essential to make a logic link of the significant importance of the fairness and justice and job design for personnel of any organization. One study arranged by Hackman and Oldham proposes a model of job design that emphasizes the importance of task variety, autonomy, and feedback in promoting employee well-being and job satisfaction⁹⁵. Talking more specifically about employee autonomy, Baard with his colleagues has found that employees who had more autonomy in their work reported higher levels of job satisfaction and well-being⁹⁶. At the same time, it was figured out that the proper workload management plays a significant role as well. It was proved that workload management practices, such as job resources and social support, can help reduce job demands and contribute to increased levels of employee well-being⁹⁷.

To sum up, it is possible to say that it is proved by huge number of academic studies, researchers and scientists that HR practices that direct to job satisfaction, such as providing opportunities for skill development, offering fair compensation and benefits, and creating a positive work environment, have been shown to increase employee well-being. Studies have found that employees who are satisfied with their jobs report better mental and physical health, higher job performance, and greater commitment to their organizations.

7) The impact of HRM practices on employee performance

Before to start review of the researches mainly focused on the measurement of the HRM practices` influence on employees` performance and firm performance in unstable periods of recessions, it will be useful to observe the studies which define the role of HRM approaches both in organizational performance in general in stable non-crises times.

It will be logical to start from one recent research, which was conducted based on the arranged survey. As the results researchers have got that a significant “contribution of this study lies in the revealing of an impact of the HRMs strength on organizational performance and on its dependency from strategic management orientation”⁹⁸. Other researchers have discovered via regression

⁹⁴ Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, C. O., & Ng, K. Y. (2001). Justice at the millennium: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. *Journal of applied psychology*, 86(3), 425.

⁹⁵ Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1975). Development of the job diagnostic survey. *Journal of applied psychology*, 60(2), 159.

⁹⁶ Baard, P. P., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2004). Intrinsic need satisfaction: A motivational basis of performance and well-being in two work settings. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 34(10), 2045-2068.

⁹⁷ Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Verbeke, W. (2004). Using the job demands-resources model to predict burnout and performance. *Human Resource Management*, 43(1), 83-104.

⁹⁸ Campos, Rita; Pina, Rita Miguel. Impact of strategy, strength of the HRM system and HRM bundles on organizational performance. *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 7(1): - 2009, p. 57-69

analysis that company`s performance is positively related to the following fields of the HRMs such as recruitment, manpower planning, job design, training and development, compensation & benefits⁹⁹. This defined set of curtain HR practices could be useful and applicable during the process of initial suggestions and hypothesis formulation and then the final conclusions, recommendations, and possible managerial implication formulation.

Moreover, it is essential to mention that in one article it have been declared that HRM can be considered as a strategic asset of the company and consequently has a significant impact on the organization`s performance that they are proved by factorial analysis, which was based on the survey¹⁰⁰.

Other researchers have evaluated the impact of HRMs on an organizational performance via multiple regression analysis, which was based on six independent variables. As the main result of their work, they have defined that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between company`s performance and HRMs defined independent variables¹⁰¹.

All provided above researches and studies can be considered as a strong proof of the fact HR practices have a significant impact on an organizational performance. The next aspect of the research is to figure out whether it was proved that HR practices have an impact on individual performance specifically.

There are a growing numbers of researches indicating that HRM practices can have a significant impact on employee performance. A meta-analysis conducted by Combs, Liu, Hall, and Ketchen can be the first study that is provided as a proof it. Researchers have examined the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance. The results showed that HRM practices had a positive and significant effect on employee performance¹⁰². All previously arranging studies and conclusions can be divided into three separate and unique group.

The first group of researches and conclusion can be started by Delaney and Huselid who through their investigation found out that HRM practices such as training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation had a positive impact on employee performance. They also found that the influence was more visible in organizations that had a high-performance work

⁹⁹ Chand, M.; Katou, A.A. The impact of HRM practices on organisational performance in the Indian hotel industry. *Employee Relations*: - 2007, Vol. 29 No. 6, pp. 576-594.

¹⁰⁰ Becker, Brian; Gerhart, Barry. The Impact of Human Resource Management on Organizational Performance: Progress and Prospects. *The Academy of Management Journal*: - 1996, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 779-801 (23 pages)

¹⁰¹ Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Elsayy; Dr. Mohamed Ahmed Elbadawi Ali. Assessing the Impact of E-HRM on Organisational Performance: An Empirical Study. *Indian Journal of Economics and Business*: - December 2021, Vol. 20 No. 3

¹⁰² Combs, J. G., Liu, Y., Hall, A. T., & Ketchen, D. J. (2006). How much do high-performance work practices matter? A meta-analysis of their effects on organizational performance. *Personnel Psychology*, 59(3), 501-528.

system¹⁰³. Almost the same was defined by Guest in 1997. Furthermore, he figured out that this impact was stronger when the HRM practices were integrated and aligned with the business strategy¹⁰⁴. Jiang, Lepak, Hu, and Baer later in 2012 via their meta-analysis have come up with the same conclusions as their colleagues mentioned above. However, their study has enriched and supplemented the list of proofs of positive effects of HR practices on employee productivity. They have proved that the impact had a positive nature and was stronger when the HR practices were aligned with the organizational culture¹⁰⁵. Two years after it, in 2020, Yang Chen together with his colleague has published the study by which he proved and then claimed that the impact on employee performance was stronger in the case when organizations had a high level of organizational trust¹⁰⁶.

Other group of conclusions was initially presented to academic, business and world societies by Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg, and Kalleberg in 2000. They claimed that HR practices such as training and development, performance management, and employee involvement had a positive impact on employee performance. Also, via their study they concluded that the influence on individual performance was stronger in organizations that had a high level of employee involvement and a decentralized organizational structure¹⁰⁷. Guest and King in 2004 figured out that the impact was stronger in organizations that had a high level of HRM sophistication¹⁰⁸. A bit later Boselie, Dietz, and Boon decided to check whether a high level of organizational commitment could positively influence on individual performance¹⁰⁹. Boxall and Macky in their reached defined a high level of strategic integration or, in other words an alignment with the organization's strategy as a one important driver for improving employee performance¹¹⁰. Another study found out that, along with mentioned HR practices, career development had a positive impact on

¹⁰³ Delaney, J. T., & Huselid, M. A. (1996). The impact of human resource management practices on perceptions of organizational performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39(4), 949-969.

¹⁰⁴ Guest, D. (1997). Human resource management and performance: A review and research agenda. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 8(3), 263-276.

¹⁰⁵ Jiang, K., Lepak, D. P., Hu, J., & Baer, J. C. (2012). How does human resource management influence organizational outcomes? A meta-analytic investigation of mediating mechanisms. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(6), 1264-1294.

¹⁰⁶ Yang, Chen & Yang, Fu. (2020). Guanxi HRM practices and employee creative performance. *Personnel Review*. ahead-of-print. 10.1108/PR-11-2018-0466.

¹⁰⁷ Appelbaum, E., Bailey, T., Berg, P., & Kalleberg, A. L. (2000). *Manufacturing advantage: Why high-performance work systems pay off*. Cornell University Press.

¹⁰⁸ Guest, D. E., & King, Z. (2004). Power, innovation, and problem-solving: The personnel managers' three steps to heaven? *Journal of Management Studies*, 41(3), 401-423.

¹⁰⁹ Boselie, P., Dietz, G., & Boon, C. (2005). Commonalities and contradictions in HRM and performance research. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 15(3), 67-94.

¹¹⁰ Boxall, P., & Macky, K. (2009). Research and theory on high-performance work systems: Progressing the high-involvement stream. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 19(1), 3-23.

employee performance. They also figured out that the impact was stronger in organizations that had a high level of HRM sophistication¹¹¹.

Another group of researchers in different years have come out to one common a bit different from the first two groups conclusion. All of them was agreed that HR practices such as selective staffing, high levels of training, and incentive compensation had a positive impact on employee performance. However, every of them has come up with new conclusions that were unsimilar and unique in comparison with others` ones. Huselid, Jackson, and Schuler found that the impact was stronger in organizations that had a high level of strategic orientation¹¹². Becker and Huselid in 1998 have discovered that there was a significant impact on individual performance if an organization had a strong focus on customer service¹¹³. Lepak and Snell in their study of 1999 have come up with conclusion that found that a high level of internal fit played an essential role in strengthen the impact of HR practices on performance of an employee¹¹⁴. Both Peccei in 2004¹¹⁵ and Kehoe and Wright in 2013 found out that the impact was stronger in organizations that had not only a high level of internal fit, but also a high level of external fit. Under external fit authors have meant an alignment between HRM practices and the external environment¹¹⁶. A study by Wright, Gardner, Moynihan, and Allen found that there was a strong impact on individual performance in organizations that had a strong focus on innovation and encouraging employees to use innovative mindset in the work processes¹¹⁷. Along with the previously mentioned study Bhatnagar in his paper defined that a high level of quality orientation played a significant role in the impact as well ¹¹⁸. A study by Takeuchi, Chen, and Lepak, which was published in 2009, declared that the impact was stronger in organizations that had a high level of absorptive capacity that was defined by authors as an ability to acquire, assimilate, and apply new knowledge¹¹⁹.

¹¹¹ Aburumman, O., Salleh, A., Omar, K & Abadi, M. (2020). The impact of human resource management practices and career satisfaction on employee's turnover intention. *Management Science Letters* , 10(3), 641-652.

¹¹² Huselid, M. A., Jackson, S. E., & Schuler, R. S. (1997). Technical and strategic human resource management effectiveness as determinants of firm performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40(1), 171-188.

¹¹³ Becker, B. E., & Huselid, M. A. (1998). High performance work systems and firm performance: A synthesis of research and managerial implications. *Research in personnel and human resources management*, 16, 53-101.

¹¹⁴ Lepak, D. P., & Snell, S. A. (1999). The human resource architecture: Toward a theory of human capital allocation and development. *Academy of Management Review*, 24(1), 31-48.

¹¹⁵ Peccei, R. (2004). Human resource management and the search for the happy workplace. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15(6), 1018-1034.

¹¹⁶ Kehoe, R. R., & Wright, P. M. (2013). The impact of high-performance human resource practices on employees' attitudes and behaviors. *Journal of Management*, 39(2), 366-391.

¹¹⁷ Wright, P. M., Gardner, T. M., Moynihan, L. M., & Allen, M. R. (2005). The relationship between HR practices and firm performance: Examining causal order. *Personnel Psychology*, 58(2), 409-446.

¹¹⁸ Bhatnagar, J. (2007). Talent management strategy of employee engagement in Indian ITES employees: Key to retention. *Employee Relations*, 29(6), 640-663.

¹¹⁹ Takeuchi, R., Chen, G., & Lepak, D. P. (2009). Through the looking glass of a social system: Cross-level effects of high-performance work systems on employees' attitudes. *Personnel Psychology*, 62(1), 1-29.

Based on all similar conclusions, which were made by different academic researchers from different fields of activity via their studies, it is possible to declare that indeed HRM practices and approaches play a significant role not only in maintenance of every employee`s performance in particular and the enterprise performance at large, but also in improvements of overall organization performance.

8) The impact of employee well-being on employee performance

In this theoretical part of the study some reliable researchers of previous years are presented for proving the phenomenon that employee well-being has a significant impact on employee performance. This correlation can be described as a direct dependence. In other words, when an employee is satisfied, and the level of his/her well-being is high – his/her performance will be significantly improved and high as well. In contrary, when employee`s well-being is discriminated and low – his/her work performance will be significantly decreased as well. The general proof part of this effect can be started with a study conducted by Fried and his colleagues. This research helped to define a significant positive correlation between employee well-being and job performance. The authors concluded that indeed "enhancing employee well-being is likely to enhance job performance"¹²⁰.

As it was defined in the second part of the first chapter of this study, well-being as a phenomenon is consists of several elements and dimensions. Through big number of studies, scientists have formulated several models, some of them have become well-known and generally accepted. In some works, employee well-being was measured by affective commitment. The first mention and usage of affective commitment as a measurement of employee well-being was in a study of Wright and Bonett, which was published more than two decades ago in 2007. The authors have found that affective commitment was positively related to job performance. In conclusions of the study, it was suggested that "employees who are emotionally attached to their organizations may be more willing to work hard and contribute to the organization's success"¹²¹. Kristof-Brown in his study found the same dependence. Also, he suggested that "employees who are emotionally attached to their organizations may be more willing to put forth extra effort and to be more productive"¹²².

¹²⁰ Fried, Y., Shirom, A., Gilboa, S., & Cooper, C. L. (2015). The mediating effects of job satisfaction and propensity to leave on the relationship between job demands and employee well-being: Combining Meta-Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling. *Human Relations*, 68(2), 267-293.

¹²¹ Wright, T. A., & Bonnet, D. G. (2007). Job Satisfaction and Psychological Well-Being as Nonadditive Predictors of Workplace Turnover. *Journal of Management*, 33, 141-160.

¹²² Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: A meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-group, and person-supervisor fit. *Personnel Psychology*, 58(2), 281-342.

Some researchers under a term of employee well-being have considered a job satisfaction. Judge with colleagues in 2001 figured out that employee well-being, as measured by job satisfaction, was positively related to job performance. They claimed that "employees who are more satisfied with their jobs are likely to be more committed to their organizations, less likely to quit, and more likely to perform better"¹²³. A longitudinal study, which was conducted by Wright and Cropanzano declared that job satisfaction, a key component of employee well-being, had a positive impact on job performance over time. The authors concluded that "employees who are more satisfied with their jobs are likely to perform better over time than those who are less satisfied"¹²⁴. Also, a study by Bowling and Hammond should be mentioned as well. These scientists came up with conclusions that job satisfaction was positively related to job performance. The authors suggested that "job satisfaction is an important predictor of employee performance, and that organizations should focus on improving job satisfaction to increase employee performance"¹²⁵.

Another group of researchers measured employee well-being via both job satisfaction and affective commitment and defined that it was positively related to job performance. Wright and Cropanzano in 1998 in their work stated that "employees who are satisfied with their jobs and emotionally attached to their organizations are likely to perform better on the job"¹²⁶. Also, there was a study by Llorens et al. in which it was concluded that "organizations should promote employee well-being to increase job performance and reduce turnover intentions"¹²⁷.

There was defined another dimension of employee well-being, which was defined as job resources (e.g., autonomy, social support) and job demands (e.g., workload, emotional demands). A study by Demerouti et al. found that the mentioned dimension was positively and negatively related to job performance, respectively. The authors suggested that "organizations should focus on increasing job resources and reducing job demands to enhance employee well-being and job performance"¹²⁸.

¹²³ Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E., & Patton, G. K. (2001). The job satisfaction-job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127(3), 376-407.

¹²⁴ Wright, T. A., & Cropanzano, R. (2004). The role of psychological well-being in job performance: A fresh look at an age-old quest. *Organizational Dynamics*, 33(4), 338-351.

¹²⁵ Bowling, N. A., & Hammond, G. D. (2008). A meta-analytic examination of the construct validity of the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire job satisfaction subscale. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 73(1), 63-77.

¹²⁶ Wright, T. A., & Cropanzano, R. (1998). Emotional exhaustion as a predictor of job performance and voluntary turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83(3), 486-493.

¹²⁷ Llorens, S., Bakker, A. B., Schaufeli, W. B., & Salanova, M. (2007). Testing the robustness of the job demands-resources model. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 14(2), 139-155.

¹²⁸ Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499-512.

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes in 2002 were the first who considered the engagement as an element of employee well-being and measured the impact of it on job performance. The authors suggested that "employees who are engaged in their work are more likely to have higher levels of job performance because they are more focused, energized, and committed to their work"¹²⁹. Yongxing et al. in 2017 conducted a study on this topic as well and came up with the similar results. They suggested that "engaged employees are more likely to feel energized and motivated to perform well on the job"¹³⁰.

Rioli et al. in 2012 considered the term of employee well-being a bit broader and discovered its impact on individual performance through found work-life balance and job satisfaction. The authors suggested that "students who have high levels of work-life balance and job satisfaction are likely to be more motivated, committed, and productive"¹³¹. A study by Saks and Gruman in, which was published in 2012, found that employee well-being, as measured by engagement and work-life balance, was positively related to job performance. They made a conclusion that "engaged employees who are able to balance their work and non-work roles effectively may be more productive and effective in their work"¹³².

Sonnentag and Frese in 2003 were the first who looked at employee well-being from another perspective. They measured its positive influence on individual performance by affective well-being and psychological well-being. In their conducted study they suggested that "organizations should foster employee well-being to promote job performance and reduce stress and strain"¹³³. Wright and Bonett decided to narrow down and measured the impact on job performance by only psychological well-being. The authors came up with results that "employees who experience positive emotions and are satisfied with their work may be more likely to experience greater psychological well-being, which in turn, may lead to better job performance"¹³⁴.

Langelaan et al. due to their work published in 2006 found that employee well-being, which was measured by emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, was negatively related to job

¹²⁹ Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 268-279.

¹³⁰ Yongxing, Guo & Du, Hongfei & Xie, Baoguo & Lei, Mo. (2017). Work engagement and job performance: The moderating role of perceived organizational support. *Anales de Psicología*. 33. 708. 10.6018/analesps.33.3.238571.

¹³¹ Rioli, L., Savicki, V., & Richards, J. (2012). Psychological capital as a buffer to student stress. *Psychology*, 3, 1202-1207.

¹³² Saks, A. M., & Gruman, J. A. (2014). What do we really know about employee engagement? *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 25(2), 155-182.

¹³³ Sonnentag, S., & Frese, M. (2003). Stress in organizations. In W. C. Borman, D. R. Ilgen, & R. J. Klimoski (Eds.), *Handbook of psychology: Industrial and organizational psychology* (Vol. 12, pp. 453-491). John Wiley & Sons.

¹³⁴ Wright, T. A., & Bonett, D. G. (2007). Job satisfaction and psychological well-being as nonadditive predictors of workplace turnover. *Journal of Management*, 33(2), 141-160.

performance. It was concluded that "organizations should prevent and manage burnout to maintain and enhance job performance"¹³⁵. Karatepe and Olugbade in 2015 decided to observe the employee well-being declared that job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion were positively and negatively related to job performance, respectively. They assumed that "organizations should focus on improving job satisfaction and reducing emotional exhaustion to enhance job performance".

Other researchers under a term of employee well-being have considered positive emotions. A study by Lyubomirsky and his colleagues figured out that positive emotions positively related to job performance. For supporting this conclusion, they came up with conclusion that "positive emotions may enhance job performance by increasing cognitive resources, broadening the range of thoughts and actions that come to mind, and facilitating problem-solving and decision-making"¹³⁶.

Clays in 2014 together with colleagues conducted a study, by which he proved that self-reported health and job satisfaction had a strong positive impact on job performance. The authors concluded that "promoting employee well-being may lead to better job performance and, in turn, to better organizational outcomes"¹³⁷.

The last, but not least research, which was arranged by Parker, Morgeson and Johns in 2017 claimed psychological safety, as one of dimensions of employee well-being, was positively related to job performance. The authors came up with the conclusion that "employees who feel psychologically safe are more likely to take risks, share knowledge, and engage in other behaviors that can enhance performance"¹³⁸.

To sum up, these studies, along with the ones mentioned earlier, provide a strong case for the link between employee well-being and performance. By investing in employee well-being, organizations can create a more productive and effective workforce, which can ultimately lead to better outcomes for the organization as a whole.

¹³⁵ Langelan, S., Bakker, A. B., Schaufeli, W. B., van Rhenen, W., & van Doornen, L. J. (2006). Do burned-out and work-engaged employees differ in the functioning of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis?. *Scandinavian journal of work, environment & health*, 32(5), 339–348.

¹³⁶ Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin*, 131(6), 803-855.

¹³⁷ Clays, E., De Bacquer, D., Leynen, F., Kornitzer, M., Kittel, F., & De Backer, G. (2014). Job stress and depression symptoms in middle-aged workers - prospective results from the Belstress study. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*, 40(3), 305-314.

¹³⁸ Parker, S. K., Morgeson, F. P., & Johns, G. (2017). One hundred years of work design research: Looking back and looking forward. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), 403-420

9) Employee well-being mediates the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance

After considering the impact of HR practices on employee performance and on employee well-being, employee well-being on employee performance separately, it is time to examine whether employee well-being mediates the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance and provide academic proofs of this mediation effect. The academic studies and researches will be presented in chronological order.

The presentation theoretical background can be started by a study of Bakker and colleagues. Due to this paper, they proved that HRM practices were positively related to employee engagement, which in turn was positively related to employee well-being and employee performance. The study suggested that engagement, well-being, and performance were interrelated constructs, and that HRM practices played a crucial role in facilitating this relationship¹³⁹. Wright and with his colleagues came up the similar conclusion HRM practices were indirectly related to employee performance through the mediating role of employee well-being¹⁴⁰. A meta-analysis by Boselie and colleagues, which was published in 2005, suggested that HRM practices had a direct effect on employee performance, but that this effect was partially mediated by employee well-being¹⁴¹.

A study Silla was the first one that examined the relationship between HRM practices, well-being, and job performance in a specific sample of workers of the specific country. The main goal of this specification is to figure out the results and conclusions that will be in one hundred percent reliable, appropriate, and applicable for business of the examined country. Silla and colleagues decided to examine the same relationship as well, but the main difference was in the sample that they took. They decided to take a sample of Spanish workers for checking the relationship for their native country. Their study came up with the same conclusion that HR practices were positively related to employee well-being, which in turn was positively related to job performance. Additionally, employee well-being fully mediated the relationship between HRM practices and job performance. It should be highlighted that this study was the first one that defined the full mediation¹⁴².

¹³⁹ Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Verbeke, W. (2004). Using the job demands-resources model to predict burnout and performance. *Human Resource Management*, 43(1), 83-104.

¹⁴⁰ Wright P. M., Dunford B. B., Snell S. A. 2001. Human resources and the resource-based view of the firm. *Journal of Management*, 27: 701-721.

¹⁴¹ Boselie, P., Dietz, G., & Boon, C. (2005). Commonalities and contradictions in HRM and performance research. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 15(3), 67-94.

¹⁴² Silla, I., Gracia, F. J., & Peiró, J. M. (2005). Job Insecurity and Health-Related Outcomes among Different Types of Temporary Workers. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 26(1), 89–117.

Several years later Bakker and colleagues checked the relationship between HRM practices, employee well-being, and individual performance in a sample of Dutch workers. The study proved the positive relationship and the fact that employee well-being partially mediated the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance. However, it should be noticed once again that this mediation had a partial nature.¹⁴³ The type of study was conducted by Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli in 2007. In this time Greek workers were taken as the key sample for this research. The study came up with the same conclusion that HRM practices were positively related to employee well-being, which in turn was positively related to job performance. Furthermore, employee well-being partially mediated the relationship between HRM practices and job performance¹⁴⁴.

Hakanen and Schaufeli in 2006 decided to decompose well-being into several components and check only one component of it. They investigated the relationship between HRM practices, work engagement, and job performance in a sample of Finnish teachers. The study found that, indeed, the relationship was positive. Furthermore, it was proved that work engagement partially mediated the relationship between HRM practices and job performance¹⁴⁵.

Previously, all studies were arranged only for European countries. However, a study by Meyer and Maltin in 2010 was the first one that examined the relationship between HRM practices, well-being, and job performance in a sample of South African workers. For this region it was proved as well that HRM practices were positively related to well-being, which in turn was positively related to job performance. Furthermore, the study found that well-being mediated the relationship between HRM practices and job performance. However, it should be noticed that the mediation was a partial one¹⁴⁶.

After series of recessions in 2008 and 2012, De Spiegelaere together with the colleagues decided to examine once again the relationship between HRM practices, employee well-being, and job performance. However, in this turn, they decided to broaden the results and conclusions and take employees of all European countries as the sample. Their study once again proved that HRM practices were positively related to employee well-being, which in turn was positively related to job performance. In addition, employee well-being partially mediated the relationship between

¹⁴³ Bakker, A. B., Albrecht, S. L., & Leiter, M. P. (2011). Key questions regarding work engagement. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 20(1), 4-28.

¹⁴⁴ Xanthopoulou, D., Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2007). The role of personal resources in the job demands-resources model. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 20(2), 121-141.

¹⁴⁵ Hakanen, Jari & Schaufeli, Wilmar. (2006). Burnout and Work Engagement Among Teachers. *Journal of School Psychology*. 43. 495-513.

¹⁴⁶ Meyer, John & Maltin, Elyse. (2010). Employee Commitment and Well-Being: a Critical Review, Theoretical Framework and Research Agenda. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 77. 323-337.

HRM practices and job performance¹⁴⁷. Later in 2015 Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti and Derks were interested to the relationship between HRM practices, employee well-being, and job performance in a sample of Dutch workers once more time. The study found that the relationship had a positive nature. In addition, employee well-being partially mediated the relationship between HRM practices and job performance¹⁴⁸.

Overall, these studies suggest that HRM practices can have a positive effect on employee well-being, which in turn can positively impact employee performance. Employee well-being appears to be an important mediating variable that explains the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance. Taken together, these studies provide further evidence for the proposition that employee well-being in some case partially, in other cases fully mediates the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance. Moreover, it can be concluded that recessions and different types of crises didn't change the nature of the relationship between HRM practices, employee well-being, and job performance.

10) Crisis influence partially moderates the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance

The last, but not least stage of the theoretical background of this study will an evidence that suggests and proves that crisis situations can moderate the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance. First of all, it is essential to provide a definition of crisis. Crisis can be defined as unexpected events or circumstances that disrupt normal business operations and may have a significant impact on the well-being of employees. The impact of crises on employee well-being and performance may depend on various factors, such as the severity and duration of the crisis, the level of support provided by the organization, and individual differences in coping strategies.

The literature review of this topic can be started by a presentation of the study arranged by Grzywacz and Marks more than two decades ago. These researchers decided to examine the effects of work-family conflict on the relationship between job demands, job resources, and employee well-being and performance, in a sample of American workers. They found that work-family conflict was associated with decreased employee well-being and performance, and that the negative effects of work-family conflict were stronger during periods of high job demands, and

¹⁴⁷ De Spiegelaere, S., Van Gyes, G., De Witte, H., Niesen, W., & Van Hootegem, G. (2014). On the relation of job insecurity, job autonomy, innovative work behaviour and the mediating effect of work engagement. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 23(3), 318-330.

¹⁴⁸ Breevaart, K., Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Derks, D. (2015). Who takes the lead? A multi-source diary study on leadership, work engagement, and job performance. *Journal Organizational Behavior*, 37.

when job resources were scarce¹⁴⁹. Another study by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli was arranged in order to examine the effects of job demands and job resources on employee burnout and performance. They found that job resources, such as autonomy and social support, moderated the relationship between job demands and employee burnout and performance. Specifically, the negative effect of job demands on employee burnout and performance were weaker for workers who had access to job resources¹⁵⁰. Hakanen, Bakker, and Schaufeli in their study, which was published in 2006, were interested in investigation of the role of job resources in mitigating the negative effects of job demands on employee well-being and performance, in a sample of Finnish teachers. They came up with conclusion that job resources, such as autonomy and social support, were more effective in buffering the negative effects of job demands on employee well-being and performance during periods of high job demands, compared to periods of low job demands¹⁵¹. Nielsen, Yarker, Brenner, Randall, and Borg were as well interested to examine the effects of job demands, job resources, and stress on employee well-being and performance. For their study, they took Danish healthcare workers as a key sample for their study. They found that job resources, such as social support and feedback, moderated the relationship between job demands and employee well-being and performance¹⁵². As a preliminary conclusion, it can be sum up the presented above studies provide further evidence to support the claim that crisis situations, including high job demands, work-family conflict and pandemics, can partially moderate the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance, potentially by reducing the availability or effectiveness of job resources in supporting employee well-being and performance and increasing job demands. Moreover, the availability of job resources, such as social support and feedback, has played a crucial role in mitigating the negative effects of job demands on employee well-being and performance.

Another set of studies on this topic should be disclosed as well in this final part of the theoretical background of this study. Pelled, Xin, and Eisenhardt in 1999 investigated the effects of environmental uncertainty on teamwork and performance, in a sample of high-tech firms during the 1990-1991 recession. They found that environmental uncertainty moderated the relationship between teamwork and performance. Specifically, the positive effects of teamwork on

¹⁴⁹ Grzywacz, J. G., & Marks, N. F. (2000). Reconceptualizing the work-family interface: An ecological perspective on the correlates of positive and negative spillover between work and family. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 5*(1), 111-126.

¹⁵⁰ Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(3), 499-512.

¹⁵¹ Hakanen, J. J., Bakker, A. B., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2006). Burnout and work engagement among teachers. *Journal of School Psychology, 43*(6), 495-513.

¹⁵² Nielsen, K., Yarker, J., Brenner, S. O., Randall, R., & Borg, V. (2008). The effects of transformational leadership on followers' perceived work characteristics and psychological well-being: A longitudinal study. *Work & Stress, 22*(1), 16-32.

performance were stronger in firms with high levels of environmental uncertainty¹⁵³. Ten years later Schaufeli, Bakker, and Van Rhenen decided to examine the effects of job demands, job resources, and personal resources on burnout and engagement, in a sample of Dutch healthcare workers during an economic recession. They found that personal resources, such as self-efficacy and optimism, moderated the relationship between job demands and burnout. It should be highlighted separately that the negative effects of job demands on burnout were weaker for workers with higher levels of personal resources¹⁵⁴. These mentioned studies suggest that crisis situations, such as financial crises or economic recessions can partially moderate the relationship between employee well-being and performance. The availability of personal resources, such as self-efficacy and optimism, and the presence of environmental uncertainty or other factors, may play an important role in overcoming the negative effects of stressors on employee performance.

Another study that provides support for the claim that crisis situations can moderate the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance is the research conducted by Mucci, Giorgi, Roncaioli, Fiz Perez, and Arcangeli in 2016. In their study, the researchers examined the relationship between job-related stressors, job resources, work engagement, and job performance among employees working in an Italian healthcare organization during a period of significant organizational crisis. They conducted their analysis on “the PubMed database, and a total of 19 articles were selected for review. All studies showed that the economic crisis was an important stressor that had a negative impact on workers’ mental health”. Their findings showed that job-related stressors were negatively related to employee well-being and employee performance, whereas job resources were positively related to both employee well-being and performance. Furthermore, work engagement partially mediated the relationship between job resources and employee performance. However, the researchers also found that crisis situations moderated the relationship between job resources and employee well-being, as well as the relationship between job resources and employee performance. It should be disclosed as well that during periods of crisis, the positive effects of job resources on employee well-being and performance were weaker than during non-crisis periods. This suggests that crisis situations may influence the relationship between employee well-being and performance, potentially by reducing the availability or effectiveness of job resources in supporting employee well-being and performance¹⁵⁵.

¹⁵³ Pelled, L. H., Xin, K. R., & Eisenhardt, K. M. (1999). Exploring the black box: An analysis of work group diversity, conflict, and performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(1), 1-28.

¹⁵⁴ Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Van Rhenen, W. (2009). How changes in job demands and resources predict burnout, work engagement, and sickness absenteeism. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 30(7), 893-917.

¹⁵⁵ Mucci, N., Giorgi, G., Roncaioli, M., Fiz Perez, J., & Arcangeli, G. (2016). The correlation between stress and economic crisis: A systematic review. *Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment*, 12, 983-993.

In more general conclusion of all provided studies it can be said that, indeed, crises can partially moderate the relationship between employee well-being and job performance. While employee well-being is generally positively related to job performance, the impact of well-being on performance may be stronger or weaker during times of crisis, depending on various factors. These findings highlight the importance of considering the impact of crises on employee well-being and performance in organizational research and real business processes and practices.

4. Research questions and hypotheses

Based on conducted literature review the following research questions are presented in the list below:

- RQ1: Which HRM practices were in demand in crisis times and still are in demand now for supporting and improving employee well-being and performance?
- RQ2: How does employee well-being mediate the relationship between soft HRM practices and employee performance in crisis times?
- RQ3: How does crisis influence on employee well-being moderates the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance?

It should be highlighted that the first research question will be answers by in-depth interviews, while the answers on the other two questions (RQ2-RQ3) will be found by conducted survey which will be created based on scales, which were created and proved by previously arranged researches and studies.

Based on the research questions and the theoretical justifications provided earlier, the following hypotheses for the quantitative part of this mixed study can be formulated for the study:

- 1) H1: There is a positive relationship between HR practices and employee performance.
- 2) H2: There is a positive relationship between HR practices and employee well-being.
- 3) H3: There is a positive relationship between employee well-being and employee performance.
- 4) H4: Employee well-being mediates the relationship between HR practices and employee performance.
- 5) H5: Crisis influence moderates the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance.

The above hypotheses are based on the assumption that effective HR practices will have a positive impact on employee performance, and that employee well-being plays a mediating role in this relationship, while crisis influence moderates the relationship between employee well-being

and employee performance. It is expected that the study will provide empirical evidence to support these hypotheses and contribute to the existing literature on HR practices, employee well-being, and employee performance during crisis times.

5. Methodology

After observed previous studies and conducting literature review, mixed study was chosen as the main method of this research.

The qualitative part of this study will be implemented through arranging in-depth interviews with four Belgian companies from different industries: logistics, manufacturing of food, beverage and tobacco, marketing and advertising, general manufacturing. The common things that unite the chosen companies with another are their origin and the type of the ownership. All companies have a Flemish origin and all of them are family businesses. HR directors or managers were chosen as the main target interviewees. The interview questions were created based on the already proved and conducted studies and on done literature review of this paper. The formulated interview questions are presented in Appendix I.

The mentioned companies prefer to stay anonymous in this research. That is why in the rest part of this paper the interviewed companies will be presented by using numbers from one to four. Nevertheless, it is necessary shortly to describe companies, their main characteristics, and activities below:

Company №1 belongs to logistics industry. It is a fully family-owned business (all shares belong to one family), which specializes in international logistics services on three continents. The main competence is to work with specific goods, such as chemical production, tobacco, goods with special safety and security requirements and, of course, ordinary consumer goods. In addition, own logistics centers have been built in Russia and Belgium. At this stage of development, the company is focused on solving the problems of optimizing logistics networks and analyzing big data within logistics. The company provides services in 5 main areas: international transportation, marine services, project logistics, agency work, warehouse logistics and additional value-adding warehouse services (VAS). The company can provide highly qualified service worldwide with 35 offices on three continents. The company employs more than 950 people, the company also owns 350 long-distance ferries and has an annual turnover of \$205 million. And to sum up, this company is an international logistics company with headquarters in Antwerp, Belgium. The company has offices in 20 countries in Europe, Asia, the CIS and the Baltic States.

Company №2 belongs to manufacturing industry. This company is mostly focused on producing the chilled packaged convenience categories of spreads and dips, bites and tapas, and

meal solutions. The company produce goods both for local retailers and for exporting to European market. The production lines are located in the Flemish part of Belgium. The company employs more than 600 people and has an annual turnover of \$126 million.

Company №3 belongs to general manufacturing industry. This company is mostly focused on designing and producing tailor-made roller shutters, sunscreens, awnings or a ventilation system for European market. Their market share includes consumers from home country and closely located ones: Belgium, France, Netherlands, German. The production lines are located in the Flemish part of Belgium as well as the previous company. The company employs more than 200 people and has an annual turnover of \$10.3 million.

Company №4 belongs to marketing and advertising industry. This company is mostly focused on creating marketing campaigns for their clients in B2B sector. The company now operates only for Flemish clients, but there is a plan to expand its service for clients from other closely located regions of European Union. The main office of the company is located in Flanders, in Antwerp. The company employs almost 70 people and has an annual turnover of \$400 thousand.

The quantitative part of this study will be implemented through conducting a survey. To ensure measurement reliability and validity, all measures for the variables in the study were taken from existing and conducted studies, all references to the mentioned studies will be presented both in Appendix I and References. The pilot study was conducted on 10 participants and was not included in the final sample. To ensure comprehension of the questionnaire items, the pilot respondents were asked to give detailed feedback, as well as a short explanation on the question that raised doubts or created double understanding. Due to feedbacks of the pilot respondents, one statement of the survey from first block - HR practices (Training and Development: Participants evaluate the training, which is provided by firm, after the completion (feedback collection)) was reformulated to provide further respondents with clarity and comprehension of survey items. All constructs were measured reflectively, and responses were reduced to a 5-point Likert scale for convenience and consistency. The points of the scale were the following: “Strongly disagree”, “Disagree”, “Neither agree nor disagree”, “Agree” and “Strongly agree”. All questioned measured only one item at a time and no reverse coded questioned were used to avoid misunderstandings and biases in answers. Participants were required to answer all questions in the online survey to prevent missing data. Appendix I includes a list of all questionnaire items, as well as the in-depth interview questions. Employee of four mentioned companies were chosen as the main sample of this survey. There are approximately overall 123 respondents on this survey. The interviewees were asked to provide at least 30 respondents from every company to reduce the Common Method bias. There are no specific requirements for respondents, any employee of the mentioned

companies, who has will and time, has an opportunity to respond to this survey. All respondents of the survey were ensured that aa responses will be anonymous and will be used only in academic purpose.

Many researches were arranged in order to access HR Practices. However, this study used 20-item scale, developed by Mahfouz, Bahkia and Alias in 2021¹⁵⁶. The construct includes four main dimensions of HR Practices: Training and Development (measured by 6 items), Performance appraisal (measured by 4 items), Compensation and Benefits (measured by 5 items), Internal Communication (measured by 5 items). Another 13-item scale for accessing Employee Performance was taken from study of Mahfouz, Bahkia and Alias in 2021 as well. The construct Employee Performance consists of only one dimension, which includes 13 items. For accessing Employee Well-being, 25-item scale developed by professor at Warwick University Dr. Janmohamed K. was used. The construct includes three main dimensions of Employee Well-being: Health well-being (physical and mental health) (measured by 5 items), Happiness well-being (measured by 11 items), Social well-being (measured by 9 items). The last, but not least variable is Crisis Influence. The 4-item scale was developed by Bieńkowska, Koszela, Sałamacha and Tworek in 2022. The construct consists of only one dimension, which includes 4 items.

Regarding the gender ratio of respondents, 66 out of 123 responses were received from women, while 57 men went through the survey. This distribution of responses once again has proved the finding of Smith in this study that female higher willingness in participation in survey¹⁵⁷.

According to the order of the parts, it this study there is will be a sequential order: qualitative is the first and after it quantitative part will be realized. The main reason to follow this order is an assumption that in-depth interviews can provide some essential insights that can have a significant impact on the structure and logic of survey. Looking ahead, it is possible to say that this assumption has indeed been confirmed.

In order to test the hypothesis, the research will utilize structural equation modeling in AMOS. To investigate the moderation effect of crisis influence, both the interaction and the multi-group analyses will be employed. Prior to this, Reliability and Validity (CFA) analysis will be conducted using SPSS and AMOS.

¹⁵⁶ Mahfouz, Shatha & Bahkia, Ayu Suriawaty & Alias, Noryati. (2021). The impact of human resource management practices on employee performance and the mediating role of employee commitment. *Journal of Governance and Regulation*. 10. 222–234.

¹⁵⁷ Smith, W., G. (2008). Does Gender Influence Online Survey Participation? A Record – linkage Analysis of University Faculty Online Survey Response Behavior. San José State University.

6. Received final results

1) Results of qualitative study

For qualitative part of this study, all planned four in-depth-interviews with representatives of companies were conducted. For convenient comprehension and visualization there are consolidated tables with summarized responses and interview results below.

Table 1. Consolidated information of results based on 1st block of the in-depth interviews

1. Historical information	Company №1	Company №2	Company №3	Company №4
Could you talk about HR-department before crises: its size, the role of it in the company, attitude of employees?	Size: 7 employees Role: HR as a shared function Attitude: linear and neutral	Size: 4 employees Role: HR as business support Attitude: positive	Size: 3 employees Role: HR as business support Attitude: highly positive	Size: 2 employees Role: HR as a shared function Attitude: positive
Which practices were used?	C&B, HR Records, T&D, Internal Communication, Recruiting, Performance Review, Adaptation, Rotation	C&B, HR Records, T&D, Internal Communication, Performance Review	C&B, HR Records, T&D, Recruiting, Performance Review, Adaptation, Internal Mobility, Common sessions	C&B, HR Records, Internal Communication, T&D, Performance Review
Which HR practices were in demand among management and employees?	T&D, C&B, Recruiting, Performance Review	T&D, C&B, Recruiting, Performance Review	T&D, C&B, Recruiting, Performance Review	T&D, C&B, Recruiting, Performance Review
In which HR practices has management invested more?	T&D, Recruiting, Internal Communication	T&D, Recruiting	T&D, Recruiting, Adaptation, Internal Mobility	T&D, Internal Communication

Table 2. Consolidated information of results based on 2nd block of the in-depth interviews

2. Changes during crises	Company №1	Company №2	Company №3	Company №4
What is the crisis for you?	Event that has negative consequences	Instability and uncertainty	Situation that occurs problematic consequences	Difficult and/or hazardous time
What crises has the company faced over the past decade: economic, political, financial, personnel, organizational one (ownership, remote work etc.).	Economic crisis of 2008, financial problems in 2012 after economic crisis, company reorganization in 2018, Covid-19, geopolitical and economic crisis of 2022	Economic crisis of 2008, organization crisis (change of the board of directors), Covid-19, geopolitical and economic crisis of 2022	Economic crisis of 2008, financial problems in 2012 after economic crisis, Covid-19, geopolitical and economic crisis of 2022	Covid-19, geopolitical and economic crisis of 2022

Which actions in HRM aspect were taken by management for overcoming the crisis?	Internal Communication (launch of regular communication sessions on the global and local levels), T&D (launch trainings and courses), C&B (revision of the remuneration scheme), Cost Saving (reduction)	Internal Communication, T&D (24/7 personal aid of external consultants), Cost Saving (reduction)	Internal Communication, T&D (couching program by internal and external resources)	Internal Communication (launch of regular communication sessions and active development and usage of internal portal)
Which HR practices were in demand, and which were deactivated?	Were in demand: T&D, Internal Communication, Recruiting Were deactivated: Recruiting	Were in demand: T&D, Recruiting, C&B (free food) Were deactivated: Recruiting	Were in demand: T&D, Recruiting Were deactivated: Recruiting	Were in demand: T&D, Internal Communication, Recruiting Were deactivated: Recruiting
Did you notice any differences, changes in used practices?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Have new practices been formed? Or were some used practices modified according to the company specificity and needs?	T&D and Internal Communication were modified significantly. There were more notifications, courses, team building activities. Improvement of internal portal and development of new sources to create one informational environment	There was a signed contract with external company which provide first aid, first support to the employee. It's a kind of external psychologist who helps employees with any questions. Also, T&D was improved as well via new courses, platforms.	Launch new T&D project: Project talent: searching talent – external consultant helps internal couches to become a professional, to develop. DNA of the shuttle master. Leadership program. From job description to job suitness. Recruiting: The time for closing vacancy was increased threefold.	Internal HR portal with instructions, all useful information, and contacts, service for requesting technical support was developed.
Has the role of HR been changed and how?	Yes, from just a business support function to employee and individuality support function.	Almost no, HR has been perceived as a first aid at the company, friendly and supportive function.	Almost no, the common attitude of the employees and managers to HRM practices was before highly positive. Everyone saw and felt usefulness and necessity of them not only in crisis times, but also in stable times and daily routines	Yes, before crisis employees and managers didn't understand the full utility of HRM practices. But after it, it was reevaluated since thanks to HR support employee didn't feel themselves frustrated.

Table 3. Consolidated information of results based on 3rd block of the in-depth interviews

3. Well-being and employee performance	Company №1	Company №2	Company №3	Company №4
Does your company take care about employee well-being?	Yes, our people are the core element of success	Yes	Yes, definitely	Yes, human is the key organizational resource
Which practices or activities were used in non-crisis times?	Delighted anonymous survey	Satisfaction survey	Satisfaction survey as a part of the feedback in one stage of the performance review	Satisfactions survey, team building activities, expanded internal communication
Did or does employee well-being influence on employee performance and how?	It does, there is a strong direct correlation	It did and does, it has a strong impact on individual performance	It does, it has an impact on employee performance	It did. There is a significant direct correlation
Did you notice changes/influence of crisis on employee well-being and, consequently, employee performance?	Yes, employees become frustrated, lost, anxious	Yes, employees become frustrated, lost, anxious	Yes, employees become frustrated, lost, anxious	Yes, employees become frustrated, lost, anxious
What has been done to support and improve an employee well-being and, as a consequence, employee performance?	Regular local and global communication sessions on monthly basis have become a standard activity, as well as T&D.	There was a signed contract with external company which provide first aid, first support to the employee. It's a kind of external psychologist who helps employees with any questions. Also, T&D was improved as well via new courses, platforms.	Launch new T&D projects: 1) Project talent: searching talent – external consultant helps internal couches to become a professional, to develop. 2) Couching program by internal and external resources	The expanded internal communication via internal HR portal has been done as well as organization of team building activities, T&D, small gifts for supporting and cheering up employees
Are HR-practices considered as an important element of supporting and improving employee well-being and employee performance?	Yes, after crisis it is more than obvious thing	Yes, without any doubt	Yes, indeed	Yes

Table 4. Consolidated information of results based on 4th block of the in-depth interviews

4. Current situation and observed results	Company №1	Company №2	Company №3	Company №4
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of taken actions and their influence on employee well-being				
What practices have taken root and have retained their relevance to this day?	T&D, Internal Communication, Performance Review, Adaptation, Rotation	T&D, Recruiting, Performance Review, C&B	Performance Appraisal, T&D, Adaptation, Internal Mobility, Common sessions	Internal communication, satisfaction survey, T&D
How has well-being of employees and employee performance changed after applying these practices?	It significantly increased and improved since employee felt support, useful and important. A part of the big, united family	It significantly increased and improved since employee felt support, useful and important, has a feeling that company care about him/her and help to support and to maintain his/her well-being and their mental health. A part of the big, united family	It significantly increased and improved since employee felt support, useful and important. A part of one common system	It significantly increased and improved since employee felt support, useful and important. A part of one common system

To sum up the in-depth interview results, it could be said that, indeed, the employee well-being and, as a consequence, employee performance has been harmed significantly during the crisis time. Via arranged interviews it was figured out that Recruiting was the least in demand practice, since all companies were focused on support the performance of the current employees and cost reduction. In most cases, it was crystal clear for management that only soft HR practices such as T&D, Internal Communication, Adaptation, Internal Mobility, Performance Appraisal, psychological rewards (gifts, team building events) give an opportunity to improve the employee well-being and performance as well as organizational performance.

2) Results of quantitative study

For quantitative part of the study, the survey was launched among employees of four selected Flemish companies. 123 responses were collected, and the received data was analyzed through IBM SPSS AMOS. To be sure in the quality and the reliability of the achieved results the following methods, tests and approaches were conducted and analyzed: descriptive statistics, Harman's single factor test, reliability tests, CFA, 4-step analysis of mediation effect, both interaction and multi-group analyses for measuring the moderation effect. The results of the conducted analysis via SPSS AMOS have proved all hypotheses, which were stated in this study:

- 1) H1: There is a positive relationship between HR practices and employee performance.
- 2) H2: There is a positive relationship between HR practices and employee well-being.

- 3) H3: There is a positive relationship between employee well-being and employee performance.
- 4) H4: Employee well-being mediates the relationship between HR practices and employee performance.
- 5) H5: Crisis influence moderates the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance.

1) *Descriptive statistics*

The result analysis is started with descriptive statistics of all collected data. Based on descriptive statistics for the chosen variables, it can conclude that all considered items are quite far from normal distribution. Distributions of some items have a negative skewness as they have flatter tails, which go to the left of histograms to higher values and have a pick on higher values. Other items have a positive skewness since they have flatter tails, which go to the right of histograms to higher values and have a pick on lower values. These items have a positive kurtosis. Nevertheless, the further analysis can be proceeded due to the Central Limit Theory, which allows to consider that our data is normally distributed as there are more than 30 observations. There are all outputs with histograms for every item and frequency tables for every variable and its dimension in Appendix II.

2) *Common method bias*

In order to check whether the majority of the variance can be explained by a single factor the Harman's single factor test was conducted. Principal one Component Analysis showed that 29,191 % of variance could be explained by a single factor, which is less than 50%. Based on this check, it could be concluded that Common method bias does not affect the collected data, as well as it does not affect on results of the analysis.

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	18,099	29,191	29,191	18,099	29,191	29,191
2	4,096	6,606	35,797			
3	2,894	4,668	40,466			
4	2,522	4,067	44,533			
5	2,362	3,810	48,343			
6	2,148	3,465	51,808			
7	1,991	3,211	55,019			
8	1,744	2,813	57,832			
9	1,566	2,525	60,357			
10	1,503	2,424	62,781			

Pic. 1. Total Variance Explained

3) *CFA*

Before going straightforward to the measurement of mediation effect of employee well-being on relationship between HR practices and employee performance, as well as the

measurement of moderation effect of crisis influence on relationship between employee well-being and employee performance, it is essential to check the reliability of every observed variable and to observe whether each of element of a future proposed model is a of a good fit or not and will be modified where it will be required in order to build reliable and worked model.

I. Measurement model of independent variable HR practices

Before providing the results of reliability check it is essential to highlight that independent latent variable HR practices consists of following four items: Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Compensation and Benefits, Internal Communication. For ensuring that the collected data is reliable, each item was checked, and results of this check will be presented below.

Reliability check of independent variable HR practices:

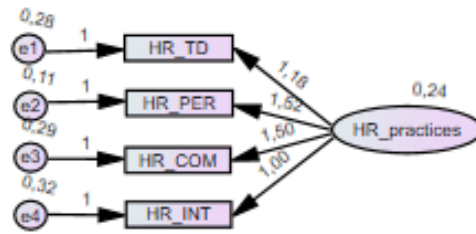
The Cronbach's Alphas of four items of the big latent independent variable HR practices are more than 0.8. It means that Cronbach's Alphas are good. Based on Item-total- statistics (Corrected item-total correlation), it is concluded that all correlations are more than 0.3. The deletion of one of selected items will not positively affect the Cronbach's Alpha of any observed item. Moreover, it will be reduced insignificantly in the case of deletion of any items. Based on this check, it can be concluded that the collected data are reliable that further analysis can be proceeded. There are reliability tests for all part of the big latent independent variable HR practices in Appendix II.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.912	20

Pic 2. Reliability Statistics

Initial model for independent variable HR practices

For constructing an initial model for independent variable HR practices, following four aggregated items were computed in SPSS: HR_TD, HR_PER, HR_COM, HR_INT, which represent Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Compensation and Benefits, Internal Communication respectively. After this, computed items were downloaded to IBM SPSS AMOS Graphics and Initial model for independent variable HR practices was constructed.



Pic 3. CFA of HR_practices

The AMOS calculator has presented the following results:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 0.865 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.993 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 1.004 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 1.000 (norm is more than .95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.000 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.523 (norm is more than 0.05)

Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. are more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

II. Measurement model of dependent variable Employee Performance

Reliability test: Employee Performance:

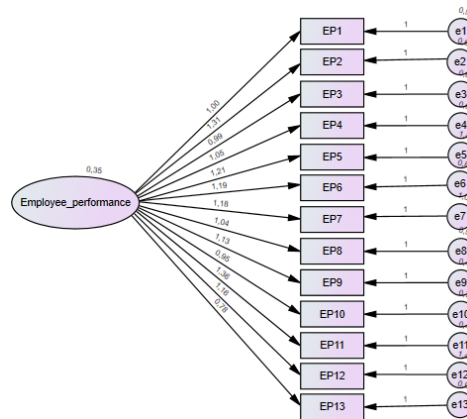
The Cronbach's Alpha of the dependent variable Employee Performance is 0.872 that is more than 0.8. It means that Cronbach's Alpha is good. Based on Item-total- statistics (Corrected item-total correlation), it is concluded that all correlations are more than 0.3. The deletion of one of selected items will not positively affect the Cronbach's Alpha. Moreover, it will be reduced insignificantly in the case of deletion of any items.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.872	13

Pic 4. Reliability Statistics

Initial model for dependent variable Employee Performance

For constructing the initial model for the dependent variable Employee Performance, the thirteen items were downloaded to IBM SPSS AMOS.



Pic 5. CFA of Employee_performance (1)

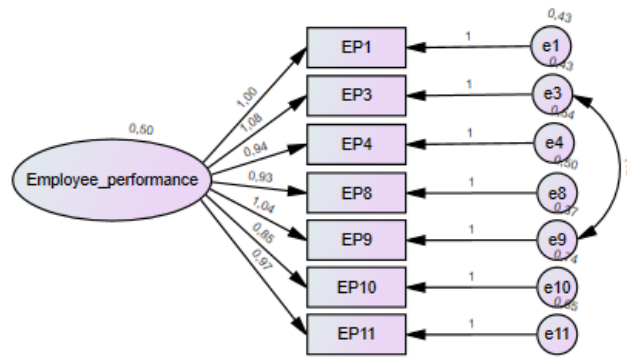
The AMOS calculator has presented the following results:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 3.571 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.718 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.682 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.731 (norm is more than 0.95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.145 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.000 (norm is more than 0.05)

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is not of a good fit. That is why, the further work cannot be proceeded, and the model should be modified.

While C.R. are more than 1.96, model is not of a good fit, since standardized regression weights of two items (EP12 and EP13) are below 0.5. Based on this it was decided to delete them for improving the model. Also, after deletion, other 3 items (EP2, EP5, EP6, EP7) have had standardized regression weights below 0.5. Moreover, it was decided to create a covariance between item EP3 and item EP9 (based on MI).

Based on the no goodness of fit of the initial model, below there is constructed modified model for dependent variable employee performance.



Pic 6. CFA of Employee_perfromance (2)

The AMOS calculator has presented the following results:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 1.583 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.957 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.961 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.976 (norm is more than 0.95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.069 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.260 (norm is more than 0.05)

Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

III. Measurement model of mediation variable Employee well-being

Before providing the results of reliability check it is essential to highlight that mediation variable Employee well-being consists of following four items: Health well-being, Happiness well-being, Social well-being. For ensuring that the collected data is reliable, each item was checked, and results of this check will be presented below.

Reliability test: Mediation variable (Employee well-being):

The Cronbach's Alphas of three items of big latent mediation variable Employee well-being are more than 0.7. It means that Cronbach's Alphas are good. Based on Item-total- statistics (Corrected item-total correlation), it is concluded that all correlations are more than 0.3. Based on

this check, it can be concluded that the collected data are reliable that further analysis can be proceeded.

For constructing an initial model for mediation variable Employee well-being, following three aggregated items were computed in SPSS: WB_HEL, WB_HAP, WB_SOC, which represent three items: Health well-being, Happiness well-being, Social well-being respectively. After this, computed items were downloaded to IBM SPSS AMOS Graphics. However, it should be noted that IBM SPSS AMOS allows to estimate the model that consists of more than three items, constructs. That is why, there is no possibility to estimate the model and define whether this model is of a good fit or not. Due to this fact, relying on Harman's single factor test and reliability tests results, the further work for constructing and estimating the mediation effect will be conducted.

Table 5. Measurement items overview, standardized factor loadings, reliability, and validity.

Construct/items	Standardized factor loading 0.5, $p < 0.05$	Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7	CR > 0.7	AVE > 0.5
HR Practices				
HR_TD	0,742	0,912	0,86	0,62
HR_PER	0,912			
HR_COM	0,808			
HR_INT	0,655			
Employee Performance				
EP1	0,735	0,872	0,87	0,52
EP3	0,757			
EP4	0,671			
EP8	0,682			
EP9	0,771			
EP10	0,573			
EP11	0,647			

Table 6. Descriptive statistics, correlations, and average variance extracted.

Constructs	Mean	Standard deviation	HR Practices	Employee Performance
HR Practices	3,73	0,69	0,62	0,32
Employee Performance	3,89	0,74	0,57	0,52

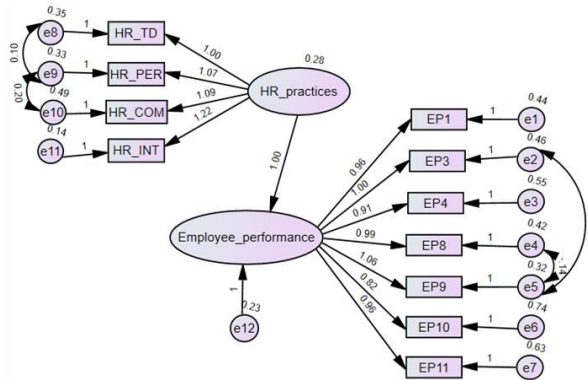
Notes: a) Below the diagonal – correlations between the constructs. b) Above the diagonal – squared correlations. c) Diagonal – AVEs.

4) Mediation effect

After check of data reliability and the goodness of fit of every element of the future proposed and estimated model, it is possible and right time to proceed with the measurement of mediation effect, which consist of 4 basic steps.

1st step Direct effect_ HR practices on Employee Performance

First of all, it is essential to define whether the effect of HR practices on Employee Performance is significant and whether the model is of a good fit. For constructing the initial model for checking this effect and the proposed relationship, the observed items were downloaded to IBM SPSS AMOS.



Pic 7. CFA of HR_practices and Employee_perfrmance

The AMOS calculator has presented the following estimates:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 1.699 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.909 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.939 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.956 (norm is more than .95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.076 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.09 (norm is more than 0.05)

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

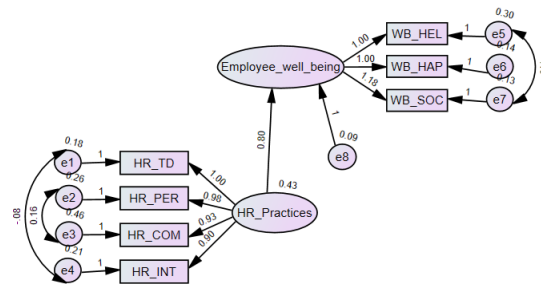
Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

Based on this IBM SPSS AMOS outputs and their interpretation, it is possible to move to another step of mediation effect measuring.

2nd step Independent (HR practices) on mediation (Employee well-being)

Secondly, it is crucial to define whether the effect of HR practices on Employee Well-being is significant and whether the model is of a good fit. For constructing the second step for checking the mediation effect and the proposed relationship, the observed items were downloaded to IBM SPSS AMOS.



Pic 8. CFA of HR_practices and Employee_well-being

The AMOS calculator has presented the following estimates:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 1.889 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.954 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.954 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.978 (norm is more than .95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.077 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.085 (norm is more than 0.05)

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

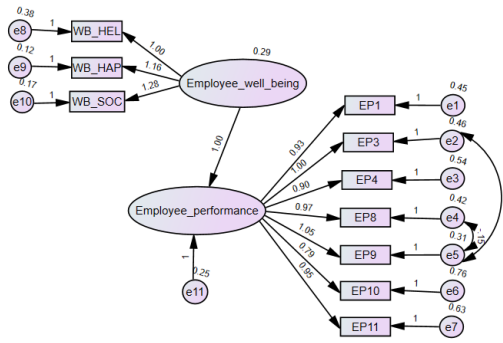
Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

Based on this IBM SPSS AMOS outputs and their interpretation, it is possible to move to another step of mediation effect measuring.

3rd step Mediation (Employee well-being) on dependent (Employee Performance)

Thirdly, it is crucial to define whether the effect of Employee Well-being on Employee Performance is significant and whether the model is of a good fit. For constructing the third step for checking the mediation effect and the proposed relationship, the observed items were downloaded to IBM SPSS AMOS.



Pic 9. CFA of Employee_well-being and Employee_perfomanc

The AMOS calculator has presented the following estimates:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 1.225 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.934 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.982 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.987 (norm is more than .95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.043 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.572 (norm is more than 0.05)

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

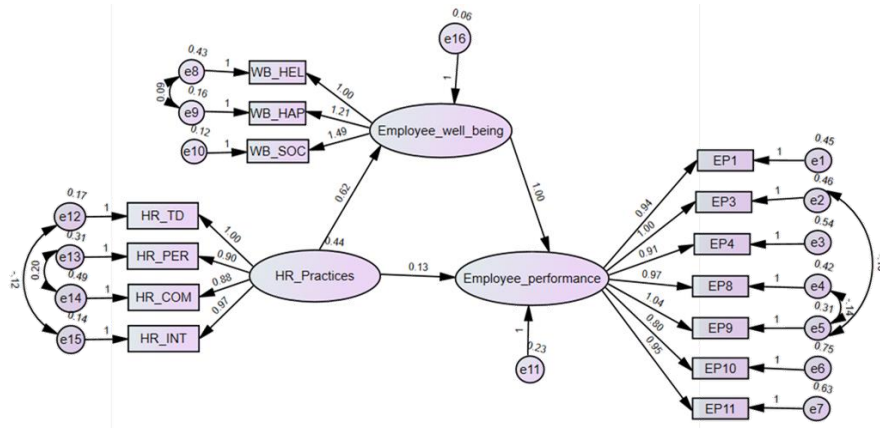
Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

Based on this IBM SPSS AMOS outputs and their interpretation, it is possible to move to the final step of mediation effect measuring.

4th step Independent (HR practices) on dependent (Employee performance). Independent (HR practices) on Mediation (Employee well-being), Mediation (Employee well-being) on dependent (Employee performance).

Finally, it is possible now to whether Employee Well-being mediates the relationship between HR Practice and Employee Performance and whether the constructed model is of a good fit. For constructing the final step for checking the mediation effect and the proposed relationship, the observed items were downloaded to IBM SPSS AMOS.



Pic 10. CFA of HR_practices – Employee_well-being – Employee_perfomance

The AMOS calculator has presented the following estimates:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 1.485 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.889 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.953 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.964 (norm is more than .95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.063 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.196 (norm is more than 0.05)

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

There are consolidated tables, which contain the results of

Table 7. Results of Mediation effect 4 steps

	*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001			
	Step_1	Step_2	Step_3	Step_4
Path coefficients				
HR Practices → Employee Performance	0.745, p = -			0.119, p = 0.277
HR Practices → Employee Well-being		0.865, p = ***		0.851, p = ***
Employee Well-being → Employee Performance			0.731, p = -	0.659, p = -

Squared multiple correlation				
Employee Well-being	72.4%			
Employee Performance	58.2%			

The results suggest that there is a significant mediation effect of Employee Well-being on the relationship between HR Practices and Employee Performance. This can be inferred from the significant positive path coefficient of HR Practices on Employee Well-being (0.851, $p < 0.001$) and the significant positive path coefficient of Employee Well-being on Employee Performance (0.659, $p = *$).

Specifically, the path coefficient of 0.851 indicates that HR Practices has a strong positive effect on Employee Well-being, while the path coefficient of 0.659 indicates that Employee Well-being has a strong positive effect on Employee Performance. However, the path coefficient for the direct effect of HR Practices on Employee Performance (0.119, $p = 0.277$) is not statistically significant, suggesting that the relationship between these two variables is not significant after accounting for the mediation effect of Employee Well-being.

Moreover, the squared multiple correlation is a measure of the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent and mediator variables in the model. In this case, the squared multiple correlation for Employee Well-being as the mediator and Employee Performance as the dependent variable is 58.2%, which means that 58.2% of the variance in Employee Performance can be explained by both HR practice and Employee Well-being. Similarly, the squared multiple correlation for HR practice as the independent variable and Employee Well-being as the mediator is 72.4%, which means that 72.4% of the variance in Employee Well-being can be explained by HR practice. Based on these results, it can be concluded that HR practice has a relatively strong relationship with Employee Well-being, and that both HR practice and Employee Well-being together have a relatively strong relationship with Employee Performance.

Overall, these results suggest that HR Practices have an indirect effect on Employee Performance through the mediator of Employee Well-being. Therefore, improving HR Practices may lead to increased Employee Well-being, which in turn can lead to improved Employee Performance.

Table 8. Direct and indirect effects decomposition

*** $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$**

Effect of	Effect on					
	Employee Well-being			Employee Performance		
	Direct	Indirect	Total Effect	Direct	Indirect	Total Effect
HR Practices	0.619, $p = 0,010$	0.000, $p = -$	0.619, $p = 0,010$	0.131, $p = 0,341$	0.619, $p = 0,010$	0.750, $p = 0,010$

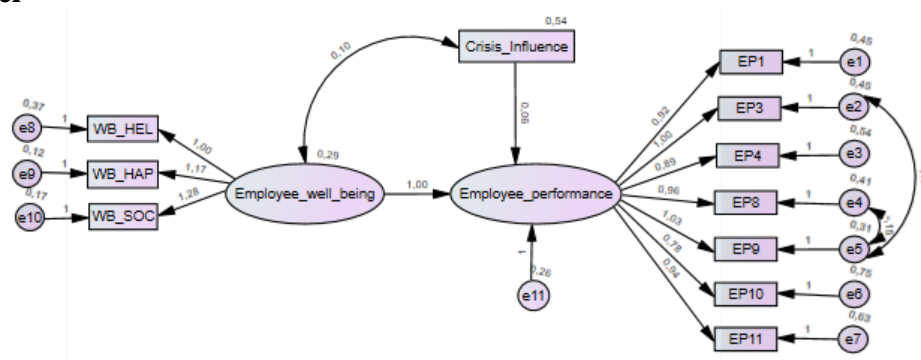
5) Moderation effect

In this study for conducting the moderation effect of Crisis Influence between Employee well-being and Employee Performance, two different approaches will be applied: interaction analysis and multi-group analysis.

1st approach - Interaction analysis

Before to go straightforward to construction of the model with moderation, it is essential to have a look at the initial model estimations.

Initial model



Pic 11. Interaction analysis: Employee_well-being – Crisis_Influence – Employee_performance

The AMOS calculator has presented the following estimates:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 1.243 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.927 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.976 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.982 (norm is more than .95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.045 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.562 (norm is more than 0.05)

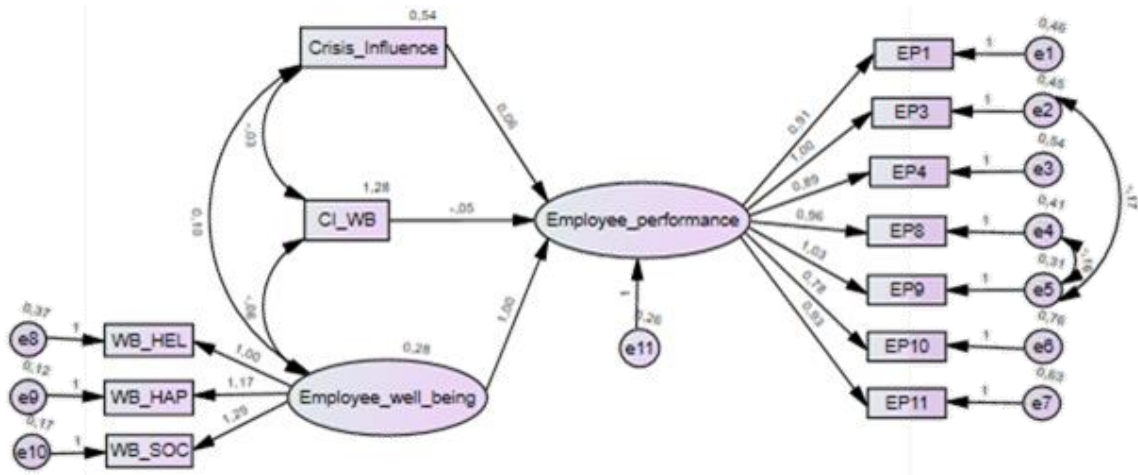
Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

The effect of Employee Well-being on Employee Performance is significant, while Crisis Influence on Employee Performance is not significant.

Model with Moderator



Pic 12. Interaction analysis: Employee_well-being – Crisis_Influence – Employee_performance

The AMOS calculator has presented the following estimates:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 1.182 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.925 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.979 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.984 (norm is more than .95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.039 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.667 (norm is more than 0.05)

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	PLabel
Employee_performance <--- CI	,060	,074	,811	,418
Employee_performance <--- CI_WB	-,050	,047	-1,061	,289

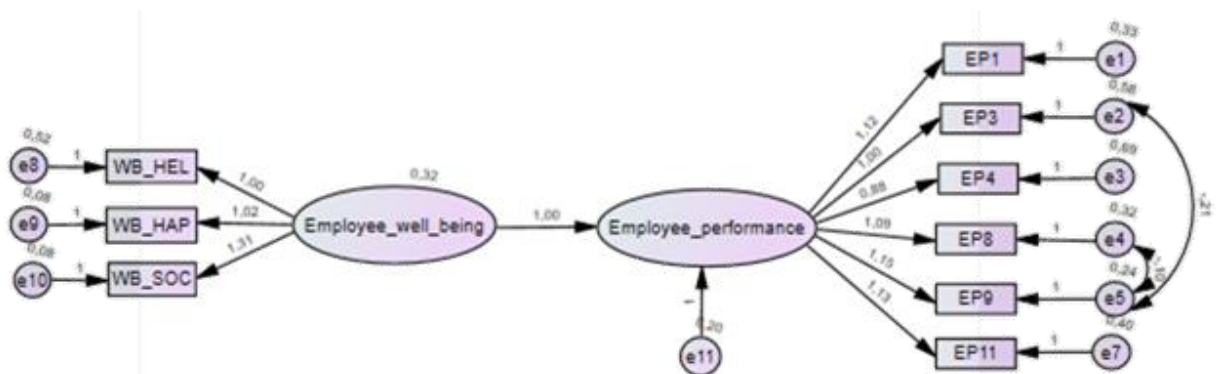
Pic 13. Regression Weights

Based on the exported outputs of the constructed model with the moderator, the effect of Employee Well-being on Employee Performance is significant, while Crisis Influence on Employee Performance is not significant. The effect of Interaction term on Employee Performance is also not significant. Therefore, our model is of a good fit, however the effect of Interaction term is not significant. That it is why, it could be concluded that interaction analysis has shown that Crisis Influence doesn't moderate the relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance.

2nd approach – Multi - group analysis

Since the interaction analysis has shown that Crisis Influence doesn't moderate the relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance, another approach can be used for checking this effect. The multi-group analysis will be conducted. For this purpose, it is essential to define the median of the moderating variable Crisis Influence in order to split the sample into two group: data, which is lower than the median will be called “Low Crisis Influence”, and data, which is higher than the median will be presented in the analysis as “High Crisis Influence”. Based on descriptive analysis, it was defined that the median of moderator Crisis Influence is equal to 3,75.

After arranging all manipulations and settings in SPSS and AMOS, the model was constructed and the model together with its main estimates are presented below.



Pic 14. Multi-group analysis: Employee_well-being – Crisis_Influence – Employee_performace

The AMOS calculator has presented the following estimates:

- 1) Ratio of Chi square and the degrees of freedom is 1.473 (norm is less than 2)
- 2) GFI (Goodness of fit index) is 0.907 (norm is extremely close to 0.9)
- 3) TLI (Tucker-Lewes index) is 0.936 (norm is more than 0.9)
- 4) CFI (Comparative fit index) is 0.955 (norm is more than .95)
- 5) RMSEA (Root Mean Square of approx.) is 0.062 (norm is less than 0.08) with P Close at 0.240 (norm is more than 0.05)

Based on the exported statistical estimation of the model, it can be concluded that the model is of a good fit. That is why, the further work can be proceeded.

After that, it is essential to have a look at the AMOS outputs for every defined group: Low and High Crisis Influence.

Low Crisis Influence

Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

High Crisis Influence

Also, the following observations and arranged calculations support the fact that this model could be used for further analysis, since it fits to following criteria:

- 1) C.R. is more than 1.96
- 2) Standardized regression weights all are above 0.5
- 3) CFR is more than 0.7
- 4) AVE is more than 0.5

Moreover, for making conclusion on this model, the consolidated table with direct and indirect effects decomposition was created and presented below.

Table 5. Direct and indirect effects decomposition

***p<0.05, **p<0.01, *** p<0.001**

Effect of	Effect on					
	Employee performance (Low Crisis Influence)			Employee performance (High Crisis Influence)		
	Direct	Indirect	Total Effect	Direct	Indirect	Total Effect
Employee well-being	0,779, p = ---	0,000, p = ---	0, 779, p = ---	0,705, p = ---	0,000, p = ---	0,705, p = ---

To sum up, in the conducted analysis, there has been examined the moderating effect of Crisis Influence on the relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance by conducting a multi-group analysis. The results of this analysis show that the strength of the relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance varies depending on the level of Crisis Influence.

The results indicate that for employees experiencing Low Crisis Influence, there is a stronger positive relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance ($b = 0.779$, $p < 0.05$) compared to employees experiencing High Crisis Influence, where the positive relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance is weaker ($b = 0.705$, $p < 0.05$).

The p-values in your results suggest that both of these relationships are statistically significant, indicating that the results are unlikely to have occurred by chance. This means that Crisis Influence moderates the relationship between Employee Well-being and Employee Performance, and that the effect of Employee Well-being on Employee Performance is stronger when Crisis Influence is low.

However, it is crucial to conduct independent-samples t-test for confirming that indeed there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the Low Crisis Influence and High Crisis Influence being compared.

The t-value of -14.140 indicates a large difference between the means of the two groups, relative to the variation within each group. The degrees of freedom of 121 were used to calculate the p-value, which is less than 0.001. This indicates that the probability of getting a t-value as extreme as -14.140, assuming there is no difference between the means of the two groups, is very low. The confidence interval of -1.34521 to -1.01479 does not include zero, which further supports the conclusion that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. This means that the true difference between the means of the two groups is likely to fall within the confidence interval, and that the difference is unlikely to be due to chance. Therefore, based on the results of the conducted independent t-test, there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups being compared.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		Independent Samples Test							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
CI	Equal variances assumed	,099	,753	-14,140	121	<,001	<,001	-1,18000	,08345	-1,34521	-1,01479
	Equal variances not assumed			-13,819	96,704	<,001	<,001	-1,18000	,08539	-1,34948	-1,01052

Pic 15. Independent Samples Test

Overall, coming back to direct and indirect effects decomposition, the findings suggest that organizations should pay attention to the level of Crisis Influence when considering strategies to improve employee well-being and performance. In times of low crisis influence, organizations may benefit from implementing well-being initiatives to support employee performance, whereas in times of high crisis influence, additional efforts may be needed to mitigate the negative impact of crises on employee performance.

7. Conclusion

Discussion

Moving to one of the last stages of this paper, it is essential to correspond findings of this study with previously conducted researches and studies and to find a research gap for future investigation.

First of all, the results of this paper define that soft HR practices are essential for improving employee well-being and performance. This is consistent with previous studies of Judge et al. (2001) and Jiang et al (2012) that have shown that a positive work environment, as well as supportive HR practices, lead to improved employee well-being and performance¹⁵⁸¹⁵⁹. These findings suggest that organizations need to pay attention to their HR practices and invest in programs and initiatives that support and improve employee well-being.

Secondly, the arranged study also figured out that leadership programs, coaching programs, and consultations with psychologists were effective in supporting employee well-being and performance. These results are matched with previous researches of Avolio et al. (2009) and Grant et al. (2011) that have shown that effective leadership is vital for employee well-being and performance¹⁶⁰¹⁶¹.

Thirdly, the indirect effect of HR practices on employee performance through the mediator of employee well-being was proved in this study as well. This finding is corresponded with other researches of Wright et al. (2000) and Bakker et al. (2007) that have demonstrated the positive relationship between employee well-being and performance¹⁶²¹⁶³. By improving HR practices that enhance employee well-being, companies can create a more positive work environment that leads to more productive employee performance.

Finally, the study found that organizations need to consider the level of crisis influence when implementing HR practices to improve employee well-being and performance. At this point, there are no previous studies and observations that have proved this phenomenon as well. This part

¹⁵⁸ Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E., & Patton, G. K. (2001). The job satisfaction–job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127(3), 376–407

¹⁵⁹ Jiang, Kaifeng & Lepak, David & Hu, Jia & Baer, Judith. (2012). How Does Human Resource Management Influence Organizational Outcomes? A Meta-Analytic Investigation of Mediating Mechanisms. *The Academy of Management Journal*. 55. 1264-1294.

¹⁶⁰ Avolio, Bruce & Walumbwa, Fred & Weber, Todd. (2009). Leadership: Current Theories, Research, and Future Directions. *Annual review of psychology*. 60. 421-49.

¹⁶¹ Grant, Anthony & Cavanagh, Michael. (2011). Coaching and Positive Psychology. *Designing Positive Psychology: Taking Stock and Moving Forward*.

¹⁶² Wright, Thomas & Cropanzano, Russell. (2000). Psychological well-being and job satisfaction as predictors of job performance. *Journal of occupational health psychology*. 5. 84-94.

¹⁶³ Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328.

can be considered as the extremely new finding, which should be observed and investigated more precisely in the future studies. Nevertheless, it can be concluded based on the conducted study, that the awareness of the level of crisis influence can help companies to choose and then implement appropriate HR practices to support employee well-being and performance during times of crisis.

In conclusion, this study once again along with previous studies provides valuable insights according to the importance of soft HR practices and their impact on employee well-being and performance. The findings are consistent with previous research and highlight the need for firms to invest in HR practices that support employee well-being. Also, the study emphasizes the importance of considering the level of crisis influence when implementing HR practices to improve employee well-being and performance. This study in big extent contributes to the existing researches focused on HR practices. Finally, findings of this paper have defined a research gap, which could be taken as a basis for further investigation on the topic of determining the level of crisis influence and the strength of its impact on both employee well-being and employee performance.

Managerial implications

To sum up, this study shows that companies should prioritize and start to invest more in soft HR practices, such as training and development, internal communication, adaptation, internal mobility, performance appraisal, and psychological rewards to enhance employee well-being and performance. These practices have a positive impact on employee well-being, which in turn has a positive impact on employee performance. Therefore, companies should incorporate these practices in their HR policies and procedures.

Furthermore, it is encouraging to note that the interviewed companies have already included leadership programs, coaching programs, and consultations with psychologists in their work processes. This shows that managers of the companies understand the importance of employee well-being and are taking proactive steps to support their employees via different tools and approaches.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of considering the level of crisis influence when implementing HR practices. In times of low crisis influence, companies may benefit from focusing on well-being initiatives to support employee performance. In contrast, in times of high crisis influence, additional efforts may be necessary to mitigate the negative impact of crises on employee performance. Therefore, it is crucial for firms to assess the level of crisis influence and adapt their HR practices accordingly by providing additional support to employees during times of crisis. The tools and approaches for assessment can vary depend on the specificity of the

company and budget allocation. However, internal communication, internal support, caring and non – indifferent attitude to the emotional state of the employee are mostly used for reducing the perceived level of the crisis on employees by creating supportive environment.

In conclusion, organizations should prioritize soft HR practices to improve employee well-being and performance, while also considering the level of crisis influence when implementing these practices. By doing so, companies can create a supportive environment work via internal communication and internal support that promotes employee well-being and enhances overall organizational performance.

Limitations of the study

It is crucial to highlight the limitations of this study.

First of all, the specificity of the sample and the applicability of the results. As it was mentioned earlier, four out of ten invited Belgian family businesses from Flemish part of the country were taken into the study as the core sample and all conclusion and results were based on their responses, as well as the managerial implication.

Secondly, the size of the sample. At the beginning of the study, 10 Belgian companies were invited to participate in this study. However, only four of them agreed to take an active part in this research. Based on this, results and conclusions were limited by the responses only of these firms.

Thirdly, understanding of the survey and interview questions in English by non-native speaking English respondents. For all respondent, Dutch is a native language and English was the second one, that is why, the interpretations and, consequently, could vary depending on how respondents understand the question.

Fourthly, high level of subjectivity of the performance and crisis influence perception. All conclusions and recommendation will be based totally on the managers and employees' subjective perception of company, practices, personal performance, crisis and its influence on well-being and performance.

Contribution of the study

To sum up, the study on the impact of soft HR practices on employee performance and employee well-being in the crisis times contributes and expand the existing studies by the following findings.

The study advances the understanding of the relationship between HR practices, employee well-being, and employee performance during crisis times. Specifically, the study provides empirical evidence on how HR practices influence employee well-being, and how employee well-

being, in turn, mediates the relationship between HR practices and employee performance during crisis times. This contributes to the existing literature on HR practices, employee well-being, and employee performance by providing new insights and proves into the mechanisms that underlie the relationship between these variables during times of crisis. All references to the existing studies, researches and articles are presented and give in the discussion part of the conclusion of this paper.

Moreover, the study provides the empirical evidence on how crisis influence moderates the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance. Also, it is essential to add that due to conducted study it was figured out that the definition of awareness of crisis influence level helps to choose businesses appropriate employee well-being initiatives for supporting employee performance.

Furthermore, the study provides valuable insights for organizations on which HR practices should be invested in and how to manage their HR practices effectively during times of crisis. By identifying effective HR practices that enhance employee well-being and performance during crisis times, the study provides managerial implications for organizations to develop better HR strategies that address the needs of employees during times of crisis. This leads to improved employee well-being and performance, which have positive impacts on organizational outcomes such as productivity, employee retention, and organizational resilience.

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Appendix I

Interview questions:

Block 1 - Historical information:

- 1) Could you talk about HR-department before crises: its size, the role of it in the company, attitude of employees?
- 2) Which practices were used?
- 3) Which HR practices were in demand among management and employees?
- 4) In which HR practices has management invested more?

Block 2 – Changes during crises:

- 1) What is the crisis for you?

- 2) What crises has the company faced over the past decade: economic, political, financial, personnel, organizational one (ownership, remote work etc.).
- 3) Which actions in HRM aspect were taken by management for overcoming the crisis?
- 4) Which HR practices were in demand, and which were deactivated?
- 5) Did you notice any differences, changes in used practices?
- 6) Have new practices been formed? Or were some used practices modified according to the company specificity and needs?
- 7) Has the role of HR been changed and how?

Block 3 – Well-being and employee performance:

- 1) Does your company take care about employee well-being?
- 2) Which practices or activities were used in non-crisis times?
- 3) Did or does employee well-being influence on employee performance and how?
- 4) Did you notice changes/influence of crisis on employee well-being and, consequently, employee performance?
- 5) What has been done to support and improve an employee well-being and, as a consequence, employee performance?
- 6) Are HR-practices considered as an important element of supporting and improving employee well-being and employee performance?

Block 4 – Current situation and observed results of taken actions and their influence on employee well-being:

- 1) What practices have taken root and have retained their relevance to this day?
- 2) How has well-being of employees and employee performance changed after applying these practices?

Survey questionnaire:

HRM practices in crisis time¹⁶⁴:

- 1) Training and development
 - Initially: The firm training is assessed by participants.
Final version after adjustment: Participants evaluate the training, which is provided by firm, after the completion (feedback collection).
 - The firm repays costs for external training.
 - The firm stimulates learning and the application of knowledge.

¹⁶⁴ Mahfouz, Shatha & Bahkia, Ayu Suriawaty & Alias, Noryati. (2021). The impact of human resource management practices on employee performance and the mediating role of employee commitment. *Journal of Governance and Regulation*. 10. 222–234.

- Employees receive training during the work process.
- The firm has good training programs.
- Employee training covers all the individuals in the firm.
- 2) Performance management
- The firm arranges regular performance management.
- An employee development plan is formed after regular performance management meeting with a manager.
- Performance management is the basis for decisions about a job promotion.
- Performance management frameworks foster the competencies of employees' ability.
- 3) Compensation and benefits
- I get incentives like bonuses, benefits, promotions, etc.
- My salary is appropriate with my education, skills, and training.
- The firm rewards me according to the market remuneration levels.
- Employee benefits and penalties are clear.
- Salary increase encourages employees to participate in quality improvement.
- 4) Internal communication
- Company has a habit to notify employees about results, structural results in the company, new goals and plans for development.
- Company highlights that every employee makes a significant contribution to overall company results.
- Company considers internal communication as an essential part of a company culture.
- I feel respected and satisfied when company notifies about results and structural results.
- I am satisfied with the quality and the frequency of internal communication.

Employee well-being¹⁶⁵ in crisis time:

- 1) Health well-being (physical and mental health)
- I feel good about myself.
- I am energetic.
- I feel calm and relaxed.
- I have energy to spare.
- I wake up feeling fresh and rested.
- I feel active and vigorous.

¹⁶⁵ Janmohamed K., Core questionnaire for wellbeing: Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS). Warwick University.

2) Happiness well-being

- I am optimistic about the future.
- I deal with problems and task well.
- I think clearly.
- I feel confident.
- I am able to make up my own mind about things.
- I am interested in new thing.
- I feel cheerful and in good spirits.
- My daily life has been filled with things that interest me.
- I am satisfied with my work and results.
- I maintain a positive outlook in the face of difficulty.
- I feel joyful at work.

3) Social well-being

- I feel close to other people.
- I feel useful.
- I feel interested in other people.
- I feel loved and respected.
- My relationships colleagues are good.
- My colleagues understand me.
- I get pleasure and energy from communication with my colleagues.
- My colleagues help and support me.
- I am treated fairly at my workplace.

Employee performance in crisis time¹⁶⁶:

1. I carry out my work according to the policies of the firm.
2. I feel satisfied to perform my duty for this firm.
3. I manage to achieve the target set for me by the firm.
4. I manage to plan and execute my work well in this firm.
5. I am motivated to work extra hours to finish my task.
6. The firm give recognition to employees who perform well.
7. The firm provides incentives for good performance.
8. I can complete a given task before the stipulated time.

¹⁶⁶ Mahfouz, Shatha & Bahkia, Ayu Suriawaty & Alias, Noryati. (2021). The impact of human resource management practices on employee performance and the mediating role of employee commitment. *Journal of Governance and Regulation*. 10. 222–234.

9. I can get along and work well with other employees.
10. I am always busy with my tasks in this firm.
11. I consider the job scope given to me is interesting.
12. My working hours are adequate to complete my job properly.
13. I am able to obtain solutions for all jobs assigned to me.

Crisis influence on employee well-being¹⁶⁷:

1. Crisis has a negative impact on my well-being.
2. I am anxious in crisis times (Covid-19, financial, economic, political, energy crisis etc.).
3. The firm developed new training topics included COVID-19 safety training, coping with stress and anxiety, and lifestyle-based training.
4. The firm had formally appointed a counselor to help people cope with mental health issues.

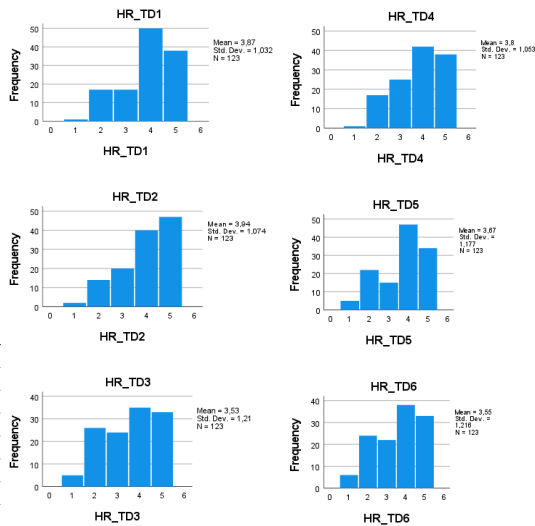
Appendix II

1) Descriptive statistics

I. HR practices:

- Training and Development:

		Statistics					
		HR_TD1	HR_TD2	HR_TD3	HR_TD4	HR_TD5	HR_TD6
N	Valid	123	123	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,87	3,94	3,53	3,80	3,67	3,55
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Skewness		-,690	-,774	-,322	-,498	-,628	-,417
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		-,438	-,326	-,1049	-,763	-,663	-,938
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433



- Performance Appraisal:

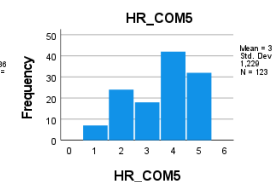
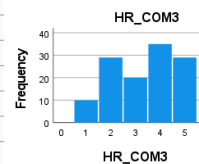
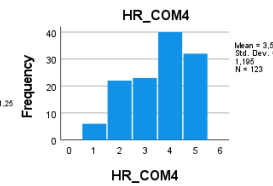
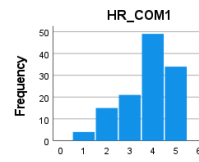
¹⁶⁷ Bieńkowska, Agnieszka & Koszela, Anna & Sałamacha, Anna & Tworek, Katarzyna. (2022). COVID-19 oriented HRM strategies influence on job and organizational performance through job-related attitudes. PloS one. 17. e0266364. 10.1371/journal.pone.0266364.

		Statistics			
		HR_PER1	HR_PER2	HR_PER3	HR_PER4
N	Valid	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,85	3,87	3,37	3,51
Median		4,00	4,00	3,00	4,00
Skewness		-,857	-,913	-,217	-,348
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		,066	-,001	-,981	-,995
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433



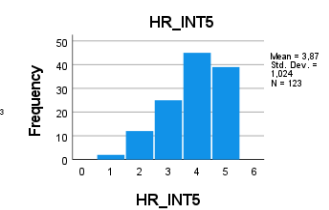
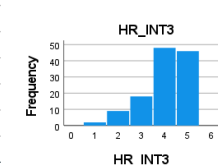
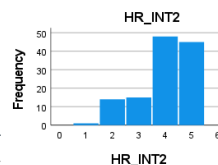
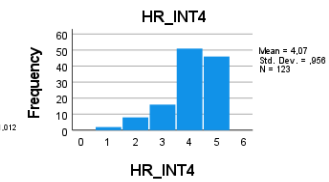
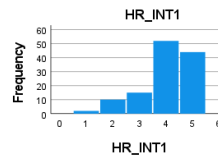
- Compensation and Benefits

		Statistics				
		HR_COM1	HR_COM2	HR_COM3	HR_COM4	HR_COM5
N	Valid	123	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,76	3,46	3,36	3,57	3,55
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Skewness		-,723	-,358	-,257	-,459	-,487
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		-,205	-,103	-,156	-,825	-,887
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433	,433



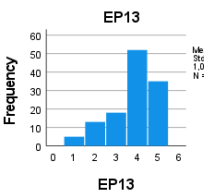
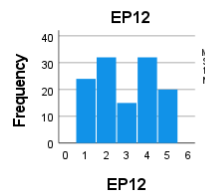
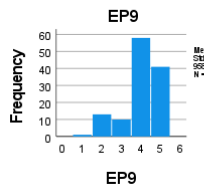
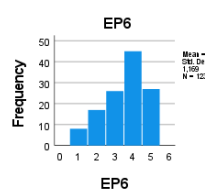
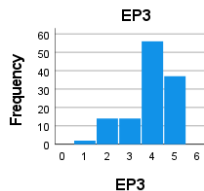
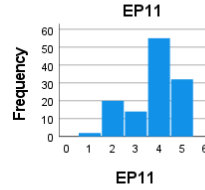
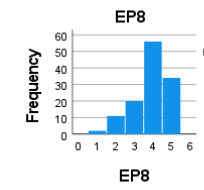
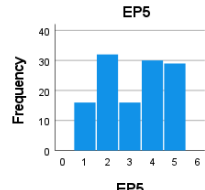
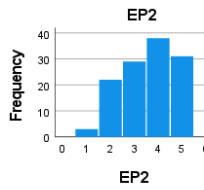
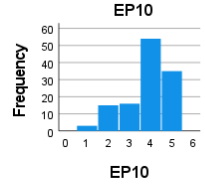
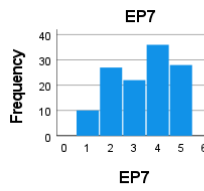
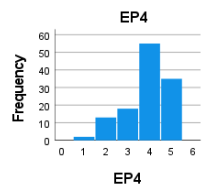
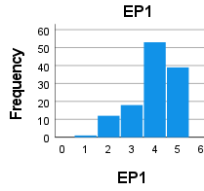
- Internal Communication:

		Statistics				
		HR_INT1	HR_INT2	HR_INT3	HR_INT4	HR_INT5
N	Valid	123	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4,02	3,99	4,03	4,07	3,87
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Skewness		-,1008	-,851	-,961	-,1047	-,666
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		,596	-,110	,462	,820	-,253
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433	,433



II. Employee performance:

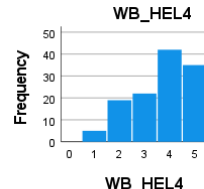
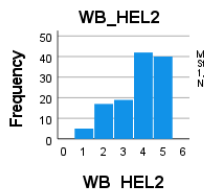
		EP1	EP2	EP3	EP4	EP5	EP6	EP7	EP8	EP9	EP10	EP11	EP12	EP13
N	Valid	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,95	3,59	3,91	3,88	3,20	3,54	3,37	3,89	4,02	3,84	3,77	2,93	3,80
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	3,00	4,00
Skewness		-,790	-,323	-,891	-,812	-,116	-,560	-,285	-,814	-,999	-,831	-,699	,045	-,872
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		,014	-,901	,190	,112	-,1352	-,517	-,1082	,280	,469	,011	-,414	-,1364	,120
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433



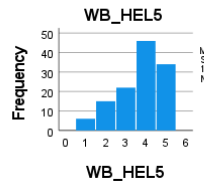
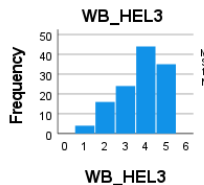
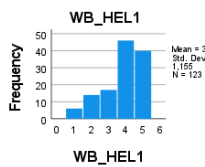
III. Employee well-being:

- Health Well-being:

		WB_HEL1	WB_HEL2	WB_HEL3	WB_HEL4	WB_HEL5
N	Valid	123	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,81	3,77	3,73	3,67	3,71
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Skewness		-,860	-,713	-,621	-,576	-,708
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		-,103	-,455	-,436	-,635	-,301
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433	,433



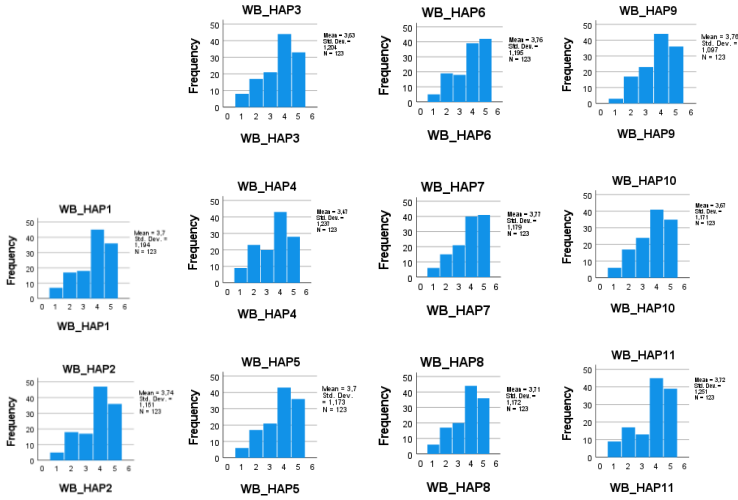
Histogram



- Happiness Well-being:

Statistics

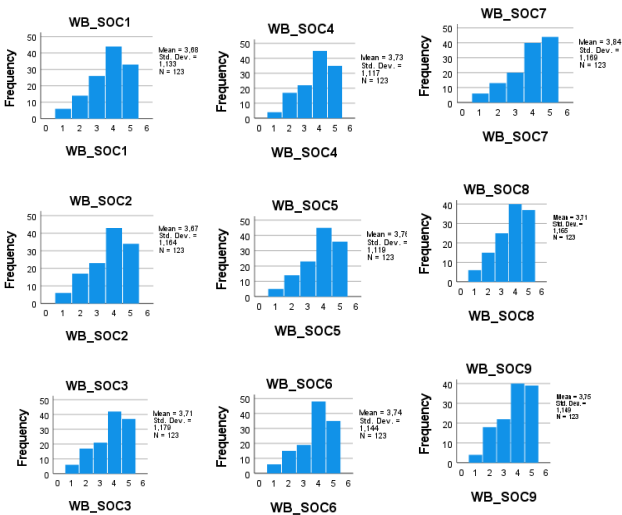
		WB_HAP1	WB_HAP2	WB_HAP3	WB_HAP4	WB_HAP5	WB_HAP6	WB_HAP7	WB_HAP8	WB_HAP9	WB_HAP10	WB_HAP11
N	Valid	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,70	3,74	3,63	3,47	3,70	3,76	3,77	3,71	3,76	3,67	3,72
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Skewness		-,719	-,719	-,646	-,462	-,662	-,675	-,735	-,683	-,600	-,597	-,796
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		-,443	-,414	-,529	-,865	-,489	-,624	-,389	-,458	-,522	-,556	-,454
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433



- Social Well-being:

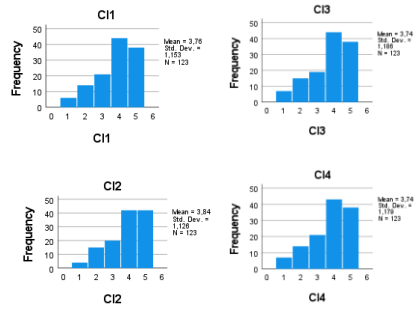
Statistics

		WB_SOC1	WB_SOC2	WB_SOC3	WB_SOC4	WB_SOC5	WB_SOC6	WB_SOC7	WB_SOC8	WB_SOC9
N	Valid	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,68	3,67	3,71	3,73	3,76	3,74	3,84	3,71	3,75
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Skewness		-,653	-,619	-,662	-,635	-,717	-,775	-,835	-,642	-,610
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		-,314	-,510	-,506	-,458	-,241	-,212	-,184	-,456	-,614
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433	,433



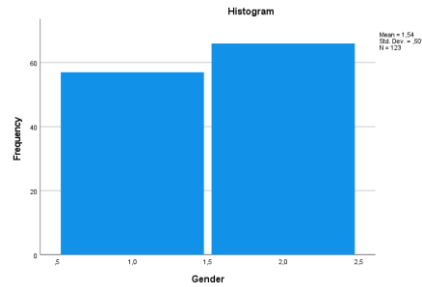
IV. Crisis influence:

		Statistics			
		CI1	CI2	CI3	CI4
N	Valid	123	123	123	123
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,76	3,84	3,74	3,74
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Skewness		-,765	-,758	-,768	-,759
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	,218	,218	,218
Kurtosis		-,240	-,309	-,320	-,293
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	,433	,433	,433



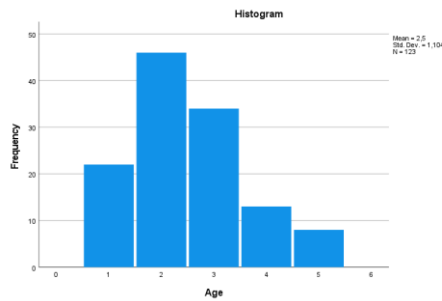
V. Gender:

		Statistics	
		Gender	
N	Valid	123	
	Missing	0	
Mean		1,54	
Median		2,00	
Skewness		-,149	
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	
Kurtosis		-2,011	
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	



VI. Age:

		Statistics	
		Age	
N	Valid	123	
	Missing	0	
Mean		2,50	
Median		2,00	
Skewness		,565	
Std. Error of Skewness		,218	
Kurtosis		-,219	
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,433	



2) Reliability tests

- Training and Development

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	123	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	123	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,787	6

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
HR_TD1	18,50	17,613	,411	,782
HR_TD2	18,43	16,624	,509	,761
HR_TD3	18,85	15,214	,589	,741
HR_TD4	18,57	16,411	,553	,751
HR_TD5	18,70	15,605	,564	,748
HR_TD6	18,82	15,132	,595	,740

- Performance Appraisal

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	123	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	123	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,686	4

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
HR_PER1	10,75	7,485	,386	,670
HR_PER2	10,72	6,857	,468	,623
HR_PER3	11,23	6,276	,516	,590
HR_PER4	11,08	6,223	,510	,594

- Compensation and Benefits

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	123	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	123	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,810	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
HR_COM1	13,93	15,488	,496	,802
HR_COM2	14,24	13,202	,678	,748
HR_COM3	14,34	12,882	,685	,745
HR_COM4	14,13	13,786	,643	,760
HR_COM5	14,15	14,749	,493	,805

- Internal Communication

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	123	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	123	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,817	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
HR_INT1	15,96	9,925	,532	,802
HR_INT2	15,99	9,516	,580	,789
HR_INT3	15,95	9,162	,678	,759
HR_INT4	15,92	9,846	,567	,792
HR_INT5	16,11	8,954	,679	,758

- Health well-being

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	123	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	123	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,756	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
WB_HEL1	14,89	13,167	,257	,802
WB_HEL2	14,93	10,773	,591	,687
WB_HEL3	14,97	10,819	,631	,674
WB_HEL4	15,02	10,958	,564	,697
WB_HEL5	14,99	10,828	,601	,684

- Happiness well-being

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	123	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	123	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,825	11

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
WB_HAP1	36,92	53,124	,411	,818
WB_HAP2	36,88	50,682	,591	,802
WB_HAP3	36,99	50,861	,547	,806
WB_HAP4	37,15	50,978	,520	,808
WB_HAP5	36,92	52,649	,451	,814
WB_HAP6	36,85	51,487	,512	,809
WB_HAP7	36,85	52,427	,461	,813
WB_HAP8	36,91	50,476	,592	,802
WB_HAP9	36,86	49,432	,718	,791
WB_HAP10	36,95	55,260	,291	,828
WB_HAP11	36,90	53,335	,372	,822

- Social well-being

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	123	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	123	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,869	9

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
WB_SOC1	29,89	42,620	,562	,859
WB_SOC2	29,91	41,721	,608	,855
WB_SOC3	29,87	41,114	,642	,851
WB_SOC4	29,85	42,935	,549	,860
WB_SOC5	29,82	41,705	,641	,852
WB_SOC6	29,84	41,400	,646	,851
WB_SOC7	29,74	41,981	,585	,857
WB_SOC8	29,87	42,835	,526	,862
WB_SOC9	29,83	41,061	,667	,849