



The Influence of a Changed Organisational Culture on Employee Well-being at an NGO Shifting to a Hybrid Working Model

By

Palesa Makhubu

(Student number 2008025770)

A field study submitted to the UFS Business School in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Magister in Business Administration

at the

UFS Business School

University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.

Supervisor: Professor Rita (S.M.) Niemann

20 November 2024

DECLARATION:

I declare that the field study hereby handed in for the qualification Master's in Business Administration at the UFS Business School at the University of the Free State, is my own independent work and that I have not previously submitted the same work, either as a whole or in part, for a qualification at/in another university/faculty. I also hereby cede copyright of this work to the University of the Free State, South Africa.

Name: Palesa Makhubu


Student number: 2008025770

Date: 20 November 2024

Signature:



I, **Professor Rita (SM) Niemann**, hereby declare that **Palesa Makhubu** completed this MBA fieldstudy under my supervision at the Business School of the University of the Free State and that I approve that this fieldstudy is being submitted for examination:

Signature: 

Date: 17 November 2024

Note: The participating organisation used in this study is an NGO playing a prominent role in the provision of health care, which didn't agree to publishing its name. Within this context, this NGO will be referred to as ORG A.

ABSTRACT

This study explores how the changes in the organisational culture at the participating NGO influenced the employees' well-being when implementing a hybrid working model post-COVID-19. In addressing the aim, the following objectives were formulated: to identify and explore the fundamental constructs that underlie organisational culture; to provide an overview of how organisational culture can influence employee well-being, to explore the experiences of the NGO employees on the effect of the changes in the organisational culture on their well-being when shifting to a hybrid working model post-COVID-19; and to gain insight into the implications that the changes in the organisational culture may hold for management in ensuring the well-being of their employees resulting from the implementation of a hybrid working model at the NGO. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, organisations adopted hybrid working strategies, which arguably made it necessary to explore the organisational culture change and its effects on employee mental health. This study was intended to explore employees' well-being when an NGO shifted to a hybrid working model due to a changed organisational culture.

This study used a qualitative case study approach to examine the effect of the hybrid model on organisational culture changes and how such changes impact employee well-being. Purposive sampling identified ten managerial employees from ORG A in the Free State who were subjected to the changes. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews on Zoom, allowing participants to share in-depth experiences, and were transcribed via TranscribeMe. Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to analyse the data, enabling the researcher to identify and interpret themes from participants' responses, providing a nuanced understanding of the topic. Ethical considerations, including privacy, confidentiality, and informed consent, were upheld throughout the study, in compliance with POPIA.

The findings of the study showed the importance of an enabling organisational culture for the employee's well-being, especially when the employees are transitioning to hybrid work after the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees shared that feeling part of a positive, engaged culture gave them a sense of belonging that boosted their mental and physical health. While many enjoyed the flexibility of working remotely, they also spoke about challenges like loneliness and the struggle to keep work and home life separate -showing a need for balance. A vital takeaway was the importance of clear communication and digital tools in smoothing the hybrid shift. Employees felt more at ease and capable when they had the skills and tech needed to work well remotely. For organisations, this means that investing in both resources and training helps employees feel confident and supported. Organisations can cultivate a culture that supports their employees by building routines, encouraging healthy work-life boundaries, and creating spaces for genuine connections. In a world where hybrid work is here to stay, prioritising these aspects will keep employees engaged, resilient, and ready for the future. This study highlights how influential a supportive organisational culture is for maintaining employee well-being as organisations move to hybrid work setups. For NGOs to make the most

of this new way of working, they should focus on clear communication, supportive leadership, and initiatives that prioritise mental health and inclusivity. This balanced approach helps create a positive work environment where employees feel valued, which, in turn, strengthens the organisation as a whole. Future research could further explore how different cultural factors influence how teams adapt to hybrid work across various sectors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am profoundly grateful to God for His strength and guidance, renewing me daily and giving me the resilience to complete this journey. My heartfelt thanks go to my family for their unyielding support, especially to my mother, who always reminded me that I was "almost there" when the road seemed too long. To my son, who missed out on time with me as I worked to make this a reality, I hope this achievement inspires him to know that even the sky is not the limit.

I am also indebted to my supervisor, whose support, guidance, and gentle push not to give up were invaluable throughout this process. To my classmates, thank you for making this journey bearable with your friendship and encouragement. My gratitude extends to the organisation that allowed me to use them as my case study, whose openness provided vital insights for this study. Each of you played a pivotal role in this accomplishment, and I am deeply appreciative.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH PROPOSAL	10
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.....	10
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND QUESTIONS.....	14
1.2.1 Problem Statement.....	15
1.2.2 Primary Research Question.....	15
1.2.3 Secondary Research Questions.....	16
1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES.....	16
1.3.1 Objectives.....	16
1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	17
1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	17
1.5.1 Design.....	18
1.5.2 Data Collection.....	18
1.5.3 Justification for Collecting Sensitive Data under POPIA	19
1.5.4 Selection of Participants	21
1.5.5 Data Analysis.....	22
1.5.6. Ethical Considerations.....	24
1.6 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS	24
1.7 CONCLUSION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	25
CHAPTER 2: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND RELATED THEORETICAL.....	26
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	26
2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	27
2.2.1 Overview of the Transition to Hybrid Working Models.....	27
2.2.2 Organisational Culture and its Significance	30
2.2.3 The Impact of Hybrid Work on Employee Well-Being	35
2.2.4 The Influence of Organisational Culture on Employee Well-Being	36
2.2.5 Overcoming Obstacles in Fostering a Healthy Organisational Culture.....	39
2.2.6 Best Practices in Promoting Well-being under Hybrid Work Arrangements.....	40
2.2.7 Positive Culture Change	43

2.2.8 Analysing a Successful Organisation Culture Change	44
2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	45
2.3.1 Social Exchange Theory.....	45
2.3.2 Self-determination Theory.....	46
2.4 CONCLUSION.....	49
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	51
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	51
3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN	51
3.3 SAMPLING.....	53
3.4 Data Collection Method.....	55
3.5 DATA ANALYSIS.....	57
3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND RIGOUR.....	59
3.6.1 Trustworthiness	60
3.6.2 Rigour.....	60
3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	61
3.7.1 Permission Obtained.....	61
3.7.2 Informed Consent	61
3.7.3 Voluntary Participation	62
3.7.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity	63
3.7.5 Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Mitigation	64
3.7.6 Data Collection and Handling	65
3.7.7 Benefits and Potential Harm.....	65
3.7.8 Ethical Review	66
3.7.9 Reporting.....	66
3.8 CONCLUSION.....	67
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	68
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	68
4.2 THEME: EXPERIENCES OF CHANGES IN THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SINCE THE SHIFT TO A HYBRID WORKING MODEL IN ORG A.....	70
4.2.1 Transition to Virtual Work	71

4.2.2	Adaptation to the Hybrid Model.....	73
4.2.3	Technological Integration	74
4.2.4	Flexibility in Work Expectations.....	75
4.3.	THEME: PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES OF CHANGED ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SINCE ADOPTING A HYBRID WORK MODEL.....	77
4.3.1	Health and Well-being	77
4.3.2	Challenges	84
4.4	THEME: THE INFLUENCE OF THE HYBRID WORKING MODEL ON ORGANISATIONAL OPERATIONS	95
4.4.1	Changed Communication.....	95
4.4.2	Virtual Work.....	97
4.5	THEME: COPING WITH THE CHANGES IN ORG A BROUGHT BY ADOPTING A HYBRID WORK MODEL	98
4.5.1	Work Routine	98
4.5.2	Adaptation to the Hybrid Model.....	100
4.5.3	Resilience	101
4.6	THEME: RECOMMENDATIONS ON ENHANCING THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AMIDST HYBRID WORKING AT ORG A	103
4.6.1	Organisational Support and Resources.....	103
4.6.2	Supply of Resources	105
4.6.3	Enhancing Communication	108
4.6.5	Team Building and Engagement Activities.....	114
4.6.6	Assistance for Financial and Emotional Well-being	114
4.6.7	Communication and Collaboration: Technological Review	116
4.6.8	Policy Development	117
4.6.9	Proactive Wellness Initiative.....	119
4.6	CONCLUSION.....	122
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		124
5.1	INTRODUCTION.....	124
5.2	DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS.....	125
5.2.1	Identify and Explore the Fundamental Constructs that underlie Organisational Culture .	125
5.2.2	The Influence of Organisational Culture on Employee Well-Being	127

5.2.3 The Experiences of NGO Employees on the Effect of Changes in Organisational Culture on Their Well-being when shifting to a Hybrid Working Model post-COVID-19	131
5.2.4 The Management Implications for Ensuring Employee Well-being by Implementing a Hybrid Working Model.....	134
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	136
5.3.1 Strengthen Organisational Culture to boost Well-being	136
5.3.2 Create Clear Boundaries to Protect Work-Life Balance	136
5.3.3 Improve Communication and Transparency across All Levels.....	136
5.3.4 Invest in Technology and Digital Skills Training	137
5.3.5 Prioritise Mental Health and Well-Being Programmes.....	137
5.3.6 Recognise and Reward Employee Efforts	137
5.3.7 Balance Autonomy with clear Expectations	138
5.3.8 Offer Tailored Support for Hybrid Work Challenges.....	138
5.3.9 Encourage Continuous Learning and Adaptation	138
5.3.10 Foster a Culture of Belonging and Connection	139
5.3.11 Strengthen Leadership Development	139
5.3.12 Monitor and Adjust Hybrid Work Policies	139
5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	139
5.5 CONCLUSION.....	140
5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY	141
REFERENCES.....	144

TABLE OF FIGURES

LIST OF FIGURES:

1. Figure 1: The Relationship between Organisational Culture and Employee Well-being
P. 40
2. Figure 2: Application of Theoretical Framework to Employee Well-being
P. 44

LIST OF TABLES:

1. Table 1: Elements of Organisational Culture (Hofstede's Culture Dimensions Theory)
P. 31
2. Table 2: Themes
P. 63

LIST OF APPENDICES:

1. Research Ethics Approval
P.152
2. ORG A Approval Letter
P.153
3. Research Study Information and Leaflet
P.157
4. Questionnaire
P.159

CHAPTER 1:RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as organisations embraced hybrid working models, this new approach highlighted a need to delve into the crucial realm of organisational culture change and its profound implications on employee well-being. This research aimed to investigate the influence of a changed organisational culture on employee well-being at an NGO shifting to a hybrid working model. This NGO is a significant healthcare organisation located in the Free State Province of South Africa. The participating organisation requested to remain anonymous; therefore, it will be referred to as Organisation A (ORG A) throughout the study.

The study focused on the implementation of hybrid working arrangements in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. ORG A was established in 2001 to address the pressing public health emergency of HIV and AIDS in South Africa, with the primary objective of providing essential drugs and care to HIV/AIDS patients in the public sector. Over the years, the organisation has emerged as a major healthcare organisation in South Africa, recognised for its pioneering role in offering HIV treatment to the general population and its commitment to service delivery, patient care, and innovative practices. The organisation has garnered considerable attention from international funders and partners, who have acknowledged its robust foundation in healthcare service delivery, patient care, and innovation within the South African context.

The effects of COVID-19 have impacted the world across nations, societies, and organisations. The great social and economic shock the pandemic caused substantially altered the way things were done worldwide, drove significant changes in human interactions at all levels and affected the well-being of people in general. Organisations needed to readjust and adapt to the environmental jolt to remain competitive and responsive to the changing needs of their employees and clients, as they were also forced to adapt to the new environment. Nurunnabi et al. (2020) asserted that COVID-19 created difficulties for businesses, consumers, employees, the community, and other types of stakeholders to manage, and that pushed organisations to develop unique and novel solutions to some of the biggest problems confronting the globe today. Organisations introduced COVID-19-related safety measures, including social distancing within the work environment, Perspex screens, personal protective equipment, shifts, and remote work, which were also influenced by the fourth industrial revolution. While all these changes were necessary to reduce the risk of transmission, organisational cultures were greatly affected. Spicer (2020) noticed that many organisations' basic principles and beliefs changed from exploration and creativity to safety and resilience.

Organisational culture is a phenomenon broadly defined in the literature across different disciplines, including anthropology, psychology, economics, sociology, and general management. Muscalu (2014, p. 394) defined organisational culture as “a dominant and coherent set of shared values transmitted in ways more or less symbolic, such as stories, myths, legends, slogans, anecdotes”. He further stated that organisational culture comprises all the values, beliefs, goals, expectations, and behaviours developed over time in each organisation, as well as the circumstances that directly and indirectly affect its functionality and

performance. Chartered Management Institute, n.d. (2015, p. 1) “Organisational culture is the way that things are done in an organisation, the unwritten rules that influence individual and group behaviour and attitudes”. Factors which can influence organisational culture include the organisation's structure, the system and processes by which work is carried out, the behaviour and attitudes of employees, the organisation’s values and traditions, and the management and leadership styles adopted. Hofstede (1998), the primary thought leader on organisational culture theory, maintained that organisational culture is how things are done as a collective response. From these definitions, it is evident that organisational culture embeds shared values within an organisation that directly or indirectly affects the functionality and performance of the organisation, as well as employee well-being.

One of the major cultural changes observed in workplaces during the COVID-19 era was the introduction and growth of flexible work arrangements (FWA). “Flexible work arrangements have been described as self-management practices that allow employees to control how they manage and allocate their resources in terms of time, attention, and energy” (Weideman & Hofmey, 2020). Flexitime and flexplace are the two most common types of FWAs, allowing workers to choose when they start and finish their shifts at work and, respectively, allowing them to work remotely. Weideman and Hofmey (2020) highlighted that physical interactions such as meetings and friendly coffee machine chats were replaced by virtual calls and employees working from anywhere. Employees, as social beings by nature, might have needed serious mind shifts and culture change management to adapt to the new ‘virtual’ work environment. Managers faced the challenge of figuring out how to maintain

valued company cultures when dealing with staff members who rarely meet and engage with one another.

Spicer (2020) noted that although environmental jolts, such as COVID-19, create pressure for cultural change, they also prompt various reactions. He added that jolts can cause organisations to become defensive when organisational members find necessary changes extremely unsettling and frightening and choose to refuse or avoid them. Organisations might become hypocritical because of shocks when they modify superficial components of their culture while leaving more significant ones unaltered. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, organisations worldwide have undergone substantial changes in their working arrangements, leading to hybrid working models combining remote and on-site work. By nature of being donor-funded, NGOs needed to implement strategies forcefully during the pandemic to survive. Despite the disruptions in operations, financial challenges, and health and safety concerns, the pandemic increased demand for a range of services offered by NGOs sponsored by USAID. These NGOs then increased their digital transformation activities for communication, distance work, and service delivery. This transition prompted a significant shift in organisational culture, with potential implications for employee well-being. To employees, the new environment increased work pressure, working extended hours and affected their general work-life balance, which might have affected overall employee well-being. Given ORG A's prominent role in healthcare provision and its recent adoption of hybrid working practices, it served as an ideal case study to explore the impact of organisational culture change on employee well-being in a critical supporting healthcare setting, post-COVID-19.

The effective culture of an organisation, which influences how emotions are felt and expressed, is especially crucial when the culture and other parts of organisational culture are changing (Smollan & Sayers, 2009). Smollan and Sayers (2009) found that emotional responses to cultural change were typically very strong. People are more receptive to change when emotions are acknowledged and respected. Attitudes toward the current society also influence emotional reactions to factors of transition. This indicates that when values are congruent with those of the organisation, people tend to react to change more positively. For example, the employees most aligned with the organisation's basic values showed a remarkable degree of adaptation and positivity towards the changes. They enthusiastically accepted the new challenges and actively contributed to the transformation, indicating that a strong alignment of values with the organisation's goal and vision is essential for encouraging a positive response to change (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2002).

This study provided insight into how employees in the participating NGO experienced the influence of a changed organisational culture on employee well-being, shifting to a hybrid working model at the specific NGO.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND QUESTIONS

The dynamic landscape of organisational work models has undergone a transformative shift, notably witnessed in the move towards hybrid working arrangements. Within the context of NGOs, this transition brought forth a pressing concern. This section covers the problem statement and research question used to understand how a changed organisational culture influences employee well-being at an NGO shifting to a hybrid working model.

1.2.1 Problem Statement

The culture to which people are exposed to at work has a significant impact on their well-being. An organisation's culture determines its values, customs, communication styles, and management procedures, among other aspects of the workplace. The COVID-19 pandemic brought about unprecedented changes in the workplace, which may have had a significant impact on the well-being of employees.

Literature shows that employee well-being is heavily influenced by organisational culture. Organisational culture is an important determinant of behaviour in organisations. In this regard, Coldwell (2019) and Ficarra et al. (2020) found that changes in the organisational culture impacted the well-being of employees. Thus, this could imply that a strong organisational culture can help to foster a feeling of community and promote employee engagement and satisfaction, leading to improved well-being. The problem was that ORG A encountered numerous difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a changed organisational culture that may have changed to accommodate the “new normal”. The problem is that the NGO needed insight into how the changing organisational culture affected employee well-being after transitioning to a hybrid working mode.

1.2.2 Primary Research Question

How did the changes in the organisational culture affect employee well-being in the participating NGO post-COVID-19?

1.2.3 Secondary Research Questions

The primary research question led to the following secondary research:

- What constructs underlie organisational culture?
- How can organisational culture influence employee well-being?
- How did the employees of the participating NGO experience the effect of changes in the organisational culture on their well-being when shifting to a hybrid working model post-COVID-19?
- What implications did the changed organisational culture resulting from the hybrid working model hold for the NGO in managing the well-being of their employees?

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to explore how the changes in the organisational culture at the participating NGO influenced the employees' well-being when implementing a hybrid working model post-COVID-19. In addressing the above aim, the following objectives were formulated:

1.3.1 Objectives

- To identify and explore the fundamental constructs that underlie organisational culture.
- To provide an overview of how organisational culture can influence employee well-being.
- To explore the experiences of the NGO employees on the effect of the changes in the organisational culture on their well-being when shifting to a hybrid working model post-COVID-19.

- To gain insight into the implications that the changes in the organisational culture may hold for management in ensuring the well-being of their employees resulting from the implementation of a hybrid working model at the NGO.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework underpinning the research draws upon two key perspectives: Social Exchange Theory and Self-Determination Theory. Social Exchange Theory, rooted in sociology and economics, posits that human interactions are governed by the principle of reciprocity, where individuals engage in relationships and transactions to maximise their benefits while minimising costs. This theory provides a lens through which to examine the give-and-take dynamics in various social contexts, such as organisational environments. On the other hand, Self-Determination Theory, stemming from psychology, emphasises the importance of intrinsic motivation and autonomy in human behaviour. Chapter 2 explains the theoretical framework in more detail.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section explores the methods used to gather and analyse information for the study, explaining the overall research approach, how participants were chosen, and the ways data was collected and interpreted. The goal is to explain how the research was conducted, ensuring the process was clear and trustworthy.

1.5.1 Design

This study used a case study design. Bryman et al. (2021) defined a case study as a design that involves an intense analysis of one or more cases that the researcher can study comprehensively. Case studies contribute to learning in businesses by providing insights into challenging issues. A case study design was appropriate for this study because it allowed a detailed contextual understanding of the participating NGO. The case study provided detailed insights into the contextual factors that influenced employee well-being in the participating NGO, including the specific challenges and opportunities faced by the organisation in the post-pandemic environment. The case study enabled qualitative data collection to capture the complexities of organisational culture change and its effect on employee well-being. The case study provided an understanding of the relationship between organisational culture change and employee well-being.

1.5.2 Data Collection

Data collection was completed in 2024 using a qualitative investigation. The qualitative investigation was conducted as an inductive method that emphasises words and how people interpret their social world and view their social reality as being constantly “shifting and emergent” (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 58). A qualitative investigation was appropriate for this study as it enabled the researcher to collect rich, in-depth insights into employees’ experiences, perceptions, and emotions.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews and an open-ended questionnaire with a smaller sample of employees in ORG A. Interviews helped capture insights into organisational culture change and its impact on employee well-being, providing a deeper understanding of the research topic. Bryman et al. (2021) indicated that qualitative research involves collecting a rich database through methods such as interviews and transcripts.

The interviews were conducted on Zoom. The interviews were recorded to enable transcriptions and analyses. The participants received the interview schedules in advance to familiarise themselves with what was expected from them and to contemplate their contributions to ensure that the 40 minutes and more for the interviews were used optimally. The participants consented to participate in the research, the recording of the interviews, and using the data emerging from the interviews. At the start of the interviews, the researcher introduced herself and explained the purpose of the study. The questions were posed to the participants, who were allowed to relate their experiences and views. The interviews were conversational, and probing questions were asked when more information was needed. By the end of the interviews, the participants were debriefed by allowing them to ask questions about the interviews.

1.5.3 Justification for Collecting Sensitive Data under POPIA

This research project recognised the importance of safeguarding participants' privacy and personal data and committed to upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct. The main goal of the study was to obtain insight into people's thoughts and opinions about a particular organisational culture change. Understanding the opinions, preferences, and attitudes

is essential for improving services and products and guiding decision-making. Before gathering research participants' thoughts and email addresses, prior informed consent was sought from each of them. Consent was freely given, explicit, and clear to ensure participants understood why their data was being gathered and how it would be used.

In terms of relevance, the researcher obtained the email addresses of possible research participants from the organisation. Email correspondence guaranteed that participants could freely offer their ideas and were suitably informed about the study.

Proportionality collecting only the necessary information required to fulfil the study's objectives. By doing this, the amount of data collected was proportionate to the objectives of the study, minimising the invasion of participants' privacy.

Data protection measures to prevent unauthorised access, disclosure, alteration, or destruction of the gathered data require researchers to implement strict security measures. These measures entailed implementing encryption, access controls, and routine data audits.

Transparency was ensured by providing participants with clear and understandable information about the goals of the study, the uses of their data, the individuals who will have access to it, and their rights regarding the personal data they submit. Being transparent promotes trust and guarantees adherence to POPIA guidelines.

The research adhered to the POPIA's guidelines for legitimacy, relevance, proportionality, consent, data protection, and transparency. This research aimed to produce insightful data that advances knowledge and aids in decision-making while upholding

participant trust and confidence through the responsible and courteous management of sensitive personal information.

1.5.4 Selection of Participants

The study utilised non-probability purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is used when the researcher does not seek to sample research participants on a random basis; instead, it is a strategic way of selecting participants (Bryman et al., 2021). The study aimed to deliberately select participants who had experienced the organisational culture change, who had possibly been affected by the change as a result of COVID-19, and who had to shift to a hybrid working model in ORG A. This sampling method was useful for obtaining in-depth and rich information from key informants who could provide valuable insights and perspectives.

The sample population comprised permanent employees of ORG A in management positions who had been employed before COVID-19 and were still part of the organisation. There are 23 employees in management positions in the Free State. From this population, the study sampled 10 participants. An email was sent to all 23 employees, and the first ten to consent were conveniently selected as part of the study sample. The rationale for choosing this population was to gain insight into the impact of organisational culture change post-COVID-19 while shifting to a hybrid model.

The participants were interviewed using a virtual platform called Zoom, and interviews were recorded. Permission to record the interviews was included in the consent letter given to the participants. The data was transcribed using an online transcription service called TranscribeMe. TranscribeMe combines advanced speech technologies with human quality

assurance to achieve unparalleled levels of accuracy and confidence in transcription services. The interview audios were uploaded and received back as transcripts. This service was selected because it often combines automated tools with human editors for improved accuracy.

1.5.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis strategy utilised in this study was Thematic Analysis (TA). TA is a simple, adaptable, and widely used technique for analysing qualitative data. TA is a popular qualitative analysis method that entails locating, examining, and interpreting patterns or themes within the data. It gives the qualitative researcher a foundation in the fundamental skills required to interact with other approaches to qualitative data analysis. (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Braun and Clarke (2012) highlighted that TA aims to identify, analyse, and describe patterns across all data sets. This model was chosen because of its adaptability and iterative approach, which enabled inductive coding and allowed themes to arise directly from the data without the imposition of predefined categories. It was pertinent to this topic because it called for examining various viewpoints and experiences of workers in ORG A.

TA is particularly well suited for study topics that aim to investigate intricate phenomena in depth and from various angles, such as organisational culture transformation and employee well-being. Due to the open-ended nature of the research and the complexity and variety of the subject matter, which may not be well represented by predetermined categories, TA enabled the formation of themes directly from the data, allowing a more nuanced knowledge of the subject.

A thorough investigation of employee well-being, potentially impacted by different corporate culture change factors, required the use of TA as it can capture the richness of employee well-being experiences, which might not have been quantified.

Bryman et al. (2021) provided an exposition of the critical steps when conducting TA:

- Familiarisation of the data by carefully reviewing and getting acquainted with the qualitative information gathered from interview transcripts.
- Assigning codes to emerging themes by examining and categorising the codes into prospective themes.
- Considering the codes for similarities, recurrent patterns, or significant connections.
- Defining and naming themes: evaluate and arrange the coded data inside each theme after finding the themes to further analyse and refine them. Clearly define and describe each topic, and then support interpretations with examples from the data.
- Reviewing and validating themes: after outlining and labelling the topics, verify that the themes appropriately represent the data and align with the study question and aims by seeking consistency and coherence throughout the data.
- Reporting the findings: Finally, provide the results of the theme analysis in an understandable and structured way. Quotes or examples taken from the data might be used to demonstrate and support the conclusion.

This section discussed the methods used for the research, including the case study approach and how data was collected and analysed. A case study design was selected to gain a deep understanding of how changes in the organisation's culture impacted employee well-

being. Using semi-structured interviews helped gather detailed insights from participants, and thematic analysis allowed key patterns to emerge naturally. The study also followed ethical guidelines, especially concerning privacy, ensuring the research was conducted carefully while respecting participants' confidentiality.

1.5.6. Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations regarding this study are thoroughly discussed in Chapter 3 by referring to ethical issues, such as voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, and safekeeping of the data. The researcher strove for academic integrity throughout the study.

No vulnerable participants were used in this research. The study can be regarded as low-risk as the issues addressed were not serious enough to cause significant harm. However, it is acknowledged that the full extent of this investigation was unknown during the study's planning phase.

1.6 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

- Chapter 1: Research Proposal
- Chapter 2: Literature Review
- Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Ethical Considerations
- Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Interpretation
- Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

1.7 CONCLUSION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented changes in the workplace, and businesses have had to adjust swiftly to meet the changing needs of their staff and customers. This study shed light on the impact of organisational culture change on employee well-being throughout this period, particularly in non-governmental organisation sectors, which are known for their emphasis on social impact and employee well-being.

Organisations can establish focused interventions and tactics to improve work satisfaction, productivity, and overall organisational performance by studying the effects of cultural change on member and employee well-being. The interplay between organisational culture and employee well-being is crucial for achieving organisational success and creating a healthy and productive work environment.

In conclusion, the objectives, significance, and methodology for studying the impact of organisational culture change on employee well-being in ORG A post-COVID-19, specifically in the context of hybrid working, have been outlined.

The potential benefits of hybrid working were explored, such as increased flexibility and improved work-life balance, while also acknowledging the challenges that may arise, including the blurring of boundaries and communication difficulties. By investigating the role of organisational culture, the research aimed to provide insights into how ORG A could foster a supportive and conducive work environment that promotes employee well-being in the hybrid work context. The next chapter presents the literature review and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND RELATED THEORETICAL

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The global outbreak of COVID-19 prompted organisations worldwide to implement significant changes in their business operations, including adopting alternative work arrangements such as hybrid working models. Hybrid working offers employees the flexibility to work both on-site and remotely. This transition has captured the attention of academic scholars and those in management positions, particularly in the context of its impact on employee well-being as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) expand their operations into new regions.

With a specific focus on the post-COVID-19 scenario, this literature review aims to analyse the intricate interplay between hybrid working and organisational culture within the framework of ORG A. As employees navigate the complexities of remote work and the gradual return to conventional office settings, examining how organisational culture has adapted becomes imperative. Understanding the repercussions of these cultural shifts on employee well-being is crucial for maintaining a healthy, engaged, and productive workforce over the long term.

This literature review will systematically assess existing research, summarising key findings from numerous studies, academic publications, and relevant reports. By delving into the experiences and perspectives of employees, this review seeks to illuminate the nuances of hybrid working practices and their direct impact on employee well-being. Additionally, it will

explore organisational culture as a mediating factor in this dynamic relationship, demonstrating how changes in cultural values, norms, and practices influence employee well-being.

This study seeks to provide valuable insights for ORG A and other businesses striving to refine their workforce strategies in the post-pandemic era. Furthermore, it contributes to the body of knowledge on hybrid work and its implications for employee well-being. The research aims to identify best practices and potential challenges, offering evidence-based guidance to inform the development and implementation of strategies aimed at enhancing employee well-being and overall organisational performance.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section introduces the overarching theme of an overview of the transition to hybrid working models, contextualises organisational culture and its significance in NGOs, the impact of hybrid work on employee well-being, overcoming obstacles in fostering a healthy organisational culture, positive culture change, and analyses successful culture change.

2.2.1 Overview of the Transition to Hybrid Working Models

COVID-19 brought forth changes that have had either a direct or an indirect effect on business operations, overall organisational performance, and, ultimately, the well-being of people. COVID-19 changed the methods and cultures of work in many organisations. Mustajab et al. (2020) maintained that the working from home (WFH) phenomenon to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in many countries around the world had a far-reaching impact on employee productivity. Employees interpreted such developments in various ways. While remote work seemed liberating and motivating for some, it was petrifying and frustrating for others, leading

to despair and lower performance. COVID-19 thus affected the well-being of members and employees in the work environment, either positively or negatively. Rudnicka, et al. (2020) added that governments encouraged people to take “social distancing” actions, like working from home, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In a very short timeframe, many employees had to figure out how to work efficiently remotely. As a result, it is not exactly known how this shift influenced people’s working lives because the transition to remote working occurred rapidly.

Working from home (WFH) is a subset of flexible working styles that allows workers to work remotely. According to Sulaiman and Effendi (2022), it is a method of working that allows staff members to fulfil their responsibilities to their organisations while off-site to accomplish the organisational goal without obstacles caused by being physically absent. Millions of workers implemented WFH because the COVID-19 realities resulted in intensified remote work habits, contributing to organisations’ development of communication technologies and connectivity (Baragar, 2021).

The development of technology and remote, internet-based connectivity, which enabled productivity at the office and elsewhere, impacted operations in organisations during and after the COVID-19 outbreak and led to hybrid work becoming more commonplace. The fourth industrial revolution, sometimes known as the “second coming of the digital era”, has had both beneficial and negative consequences on the workplace (Coldwell, 2019, p.1). Digitalisation and automation may have liberated some workers from drudgery and allowed them to enjoy qualitative improvements at work and higher compensation, while others have been forced into low-wage jobs and unemployment, which has negatively impacted their well-being and mental

health (Coldwell, 2019). The fourth industrial revolution decreased the spread of COVID-19 by allowing remote work for those with the necessary skills and equipment; however, it could have also affected the well-being of others without the necessary skills and equipment.

Numerous factors that affect both businesses and people may have influenced the adoption of hybrid work arrangements after COVID-19 due to the lessons learned from the pandemic and the shifting demands of the workforce. After witnessing the advantages of remote work, such as flexibility, increased performance and productivity, lower costs for office space, utilities, and other overhead costs, health and safety benefits, and the pandemic's requirement for quicker use of technology, it is possible to incorporate employees' preferences in future.

Among the factors that influencing hybrid working arrangements is virtual interaction. Hang and Minsook (2023) reported that virtual interactive platforms enable remote users to speak with one another via various gadgets, including computers, tablets, and mobile phones. With advancements in technology, these platforms have expanded to include features such as high quality graphics, audio, and eye contact, to match user needs in a virtual conference setup. These services include Office, Cisco Webex, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. The use of virtual interactive technologies has begun and is essential for business managers in organisations adopting hybrid work models to promote collaboration, increase productivity, and reduce environmental impact.

However, while hybrid working may be the way of the future, cultural considerations should be made because it takes an intentional effort to preserve a strong organisational culture

and a sense of belonging in such a setting. Companies may need to develop strategies to strengthen team ties and cohesion.

2.2.2 Organisational Culture and its Significance

Understanding organisational culture within NGOs is an essential endeavour, as it forms the cornerstone upon which their success, effectiveness, and ability to effect meaningful change rest. This literature review explores the multifaceted dimensions of organisational culture.

2.2.2.1 Organisational Culture

A dominant and cohesive set of shared values communicated through more or less symbolic means, such as stories, myths, legends, slogans, and anecdotes, which Muscalu (2014) referred to as an organisation's culture. He added that an organisation's culture includes the values, beliefs, goals, expectations, and behaviours that have grown over time and the external factors that directly or indirectly impact its operation and performance. Hofstede (1998), the primary thought leader on organisational culture theory, constituted that organisational culture is how things are done as a collective response. From these definitions, it is evident that organisational culture embeds shared values within an organisation that directly or indirectly affects the functionality and performance of the organisation, as well as employee well-being.

The Elements of Organisational Culture: Hofstede (2011) identified the five dimensions of organisational culture. In the 2000s, research by Bulgarian scholar Michael Minkov using

data from the World Values Survey (2007) allowed a new calculation of the fifth and the addition of a sixth dimension. The six dimensions are labelled as follows:

(a) Power Distance

Power distance refers to the acceptance and expectation of unequal power distribution within organisations and institutions, illustrating inequality from below rather than above. It suggests that both leaders and followers support a society's level of inequality, with some cultures being more unequal (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018; Hofstede, 2011). There is a significant gap between leaders and subordinates in companies with a wide power distance. Power distance could impact employee well-being positively or negatively. If effectively managed, high-power distance may offer clearly defined structures and tasks that reduce uncertainty for employees. On the other hand, abuse of power can lead to stress, a lack of autonomy, and a toxic work environment.

(b) Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance measures a society's tolerance for uncertainty, revealing how it teaches citizens to feel either at ease or uneasy in unstructured situations. Cultures that avoid uncertainty reduce stress by enforcing rigid moral standards, passing laws, and embracing the belief in one truth (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018; Hofstede, 2011). Thus, the degree to which ambiguity and uncertainty are accepted in a culture is determined by this factor. There may be rigorous regulations and an emphasis on risk avoidance in organisations with high uncertainty avoidance. While uncertainty avoidance might provide stability, it also risks stifling innovation

and creativity, negatively impacting workers' well-being, particularly for individuals who work best in a lively and open environment.

(c) Individualism versus Collectivism

Collectivism refers to the degree of community integration into primary groups, contrasting with individualism. In individualist societies, people are expected to care for themselves and their families, while collectivist societies have strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families, who support and oppose each other (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018; Hofstede, 2011). Individual success and freedom are highly valued in individualistic cultures, whereas group cohesion is valued in collectivist cultures. These aspects may have an impact on employee well-being. While those who operate in collectivist environments may favour strong teamwork, those who work in individualistic societies may prefer autonomy.

(d) Masculinity versus Femininity

This aspect is related to the division of emotional roles between women and men. Masculinity and its antithesis Femininity, once more understood as a social rather than an individual trait, refers to the division of values between the sexes, which is a basic problem for all societies and has many potential solutions. The IBM studies (2011) showed that (a) women's values vary across societies less than men's values do, and (b) men's values vary from country to country, ranging from very assertive and competitive and most dissimilar to women's values, to modest and caring and most like women's values. The modest, compassionate pole has been labelled "feminine", whereas the forceful pole has been termed "masculine". In feminine nations, women share the same modest, compassionate values as

men; in patriarchal nations, women are somewhat assertive and competitive but not as much as men, demonstrating a difference between men's and women's values. This aspect is frequently forbidden in macho societies (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018; Hofstede, 2011).

The degree to which a culture distinguishes between gender roles is the emphasis of this dimension. While assertiveness and achievement are promoted in both feminine and masculine cultures, caring and quality of life are regarded more strongly in the former. The impact on employee well-being and the organisation's strategy are intricately linked. It could suggest that a well-rounded approach prioritising achievement and work-life balance can enhance well-being.

(e) Short-Term Orientation versus Long-Term Orientation

The time horizon for planning and decision-making in a society is related to this dimension. Organisations with a long-term focus invest in future outcomes, whereas organisations with a short-term focus are more concerned with the present (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018; Hofstede, 2011). A long-term perspective can promote job security and advancement, which is good for employee well-being; however, focusing too much on the future without considering immediate needs may cause stress.

(f) Indulgence versus Restraint

This component reveals how a society views taking pleasure in life. While self-control and restraint are valued in restrained societies, leisure and pleasure are prioritised more in indulgent cultures (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018; Hofstede, 2011). The organisation's policies

and practices impact employee well-being. Positive results may stem from a balanced strategy that values well-being and work-life harmony.

Table 1: Elements of Organisational Culture (Hofstede’s Culture Dimensions Theory)

Hofstede’s Culture Dimensions Theory	Power Distance	High power distance	Employees may be more accepting of significant changes in organisational culture without questioning them.
		Low power distance	Employees may expect to be more involved in decision-making.
Individualism vs Collectivism		Individualistic cultures	Employees may prioritise personal well-being over the organisation’s well-being.
		Collectivistic cultures	Employees may feel a stronger sense of duty to the organisation and their team.
Uncertainty Avoidance Index		High Uncertainty Avoidance	Cultures with high uncertainty avoidance may be more resistant to change.
		Low Uncertainty Avoidance	Cultures with low uncertainty avoidance may be more adaptable to change.
Masculinity vs Femininity		Masculine culture	There may be a greater focus on achievement and performance.
		Feminine culture	There may be more emphasis on work-life balance and employee well-being.
Long-term Orientation vs Short-term Orientation		Long-Term Orientation	Employees may be more willing to adapt to changes seen as beneficial in the long run.
		Short-term Orientation	Focus on immediate or short-term goals, results, and gratification.
Indulgence vs Restraint		Indulgent Cultures	There may be a greater emphasis on leisure and enjoying life.
		Restrained Cultures	There may be more emphasis on self-discipline and work ethic.

Hofstede’s Culture Dimensions Theory identified six basic dimensions, which were substantiated by recent research: Power Distance, Individualism vs Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance Index, Masculinity vs Femininity, Long-term Orientation vs Short-term Orientation, Indulgence vs Restraint, and Indulgence vs Restraint. High power distance

cultures vs individualistic cultures and all the above can affect organisational culture and employee well-being.

2.2.3 The Impact of Hybrid Work on Employee Well-Being

The pandemic made remote work an external environmental aspect, changing how people work (Molino et al., 2020). Employees can now conduct their work activities in various settings due to the change in working conditions (Kniffin, 2021). As a result, more companies are utilising and implementing the hybrid way of working. An assessment of the impact of hybrid work on employee well-being is discussed next.

Wels et al. (2023) found evidence that working from home increased the risk of loneliness and psychosocial distress when lockdown measures were re-introduced during parts of 2020 and 2021. However, the study showed that apart from a higher risk of psychological discomfort during the second lockdown, there was no conclusive evidence of links between home-based working and mental health, although differences across subgroups (e.g., by sex or educational attainment) may exist. In the absence of pandemic constraints, longer-term transitions to home-based working might not have a negative influence on public well-being, although continued monitoring of health inequities is necessary. It might be possible that the loneliness and psychosocial distress reported were a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and not necessarily a result of working from home.

On the other hand, Demirhan and Bulgur (2023) indicated financial and psychosocial benefits for staff members who work from home. Employees benefit from having more time because they can use it more efficiently, engage in more company operations, and pay attention

to their tasks more intently. As a result, it has been discovered that working remotely enhances the 'flow' experience as they less interrupted ; However, there is also a detrimental impact on employees' psychological health because of the lack of social interactions, the distance in communication networks, the inability to always be actively engaged with others, and the change from a social environment to an isolated life because of COVID-19. Currently, there is a possibility of employees choosing to voluntarily work-from-home, but if working from home without any other option, there could be negative effects on the employees' well-being. Demirhan and Bulgur (2023) demonstrated that having a remote job often contributes to loneliness harming employees' psychological well-being. After long periods of secluded working from home may also affect employees' interaction and well-being when working with others again at a later stage

2.2.4 The Influence of Organisational Culture on Employee Well-Being

Numerous studies have established a clear relationship between organisational culture and various organisational factors, such as performance and employee well-being. Replace this paragraph by: Employee well-being is profoundly influenced by the culture within an organisation. Experts argue that organisational culture is a crucial determinant of behaviour within organisations. Studies, such as those by Coldwell (2019) and Ficarra et al. (2020), support this view, demonstrating that changes in organisational culture can directly affect employees' well-being. A strong organisational culture can foster a sense of community, promote employee engagement, and enhance satisfaction, all of which contribute to improved well-being.

Well-being is generally defined as the state of having good health and functioning well in both personal and professional spheres (Taylor et al., 2023). It may also be viewed as the sensation that a person feels when they are experiencing positive emotions like contentment and enjoyment, as well as when their potential is being realised when they oversee their lives, they have a sense of purpose, and they are surrounded by supportive people (Sulaiman & Effendi, 2022). Success has been correlated with employee well-being on an individual, collective, and professional level. Happier employees are more productive, providing the company with impactful knowledge, higher creativity, more prosocial behaviour, and positive socialisation (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018).

According to Zhou et al. (2019), everyone strives towards well-being because it is essential to realise their potential and achieve overall life pleasure. Zhou et al. (2019) asserted that improving employees' subjective well-being (SWB) is crucial for promoting organisational survival, productivity, profitability, and sustainable development in a complex, changing business market. At the micro level, researchers have acknowledged the advantages of higher SWB on physical health, cognitive performance, work engagement, knowledge sharing, and other work-related behaviours. Although well-being is subjective, it is strongly influenced by organisational culture. Due to its multidimensional nature, it must be accommodated in the details of all workplace policies at all levels.

Fadipe (2019) stated that there are ever-changing economic and social settings that bring about enormous changes in the world of labour, and those changes have resulted in a rising realisation that, to be sustainable, organisations must provide a pleasant psychosocial work environment. The success of institutions, whether public or private, depends to a large

extent on the efforts of the employees. Institutions seeking competitive advantage must satisfy and look after the well-being of their first customers (the employees) (Afonja, 2020). Thus, the well-being of employees and members cannot be disregarded for the success of cooperatives and NGOs.

Controversially, though, according to Akanksha and Arun (2020), employee well-being has emerged as a crucial emphasis in positive psychology, but it is important to emphasise that despite these developments, employees continue to report high levels of stress and disengagement at work. As a result, it is crucial for research to evaluate and contextualise employees' opinions of their well-being to identify the primary causes of suffering.

While working from home has many advantages for the company, it also has drawbacks for the employees who must bring work home with them or work after hours at the expense of fulfilling their family obligations (Nakrošienė et al., 2019). Working from home typically has a detrimental impact on other family obligations, including time spent with the family, the quality of relationships, the home environment, and other family tasks (Abdullah et al., 2020).

Clearly, the intricate relationship between organisational culture, employee well-being, and other corporate settings is undeniable. As has been explored through the lens of extensive research and expert insights, a strong and positive organisational culture can significantly enhance the well-being of employees. It fosters a sense of belonging, promotes engagement, and ultimately contributes to individual and collective success. Well-being, encompassing physical health, emotional satisfaction, and overall life contentment, is both a fundamental human aspiration and a critical component of thriving within the workplace.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the ongoing challenges employees face in maintaining their well-being. Despite the growing emphasis on well-being in positive psychology, factors such as stress and disengagement continue to affect the workforce. Understanding these challenges and their root causes is pivotal in crafting effective strategies to support employee well-being.

In the grand tapestry of organisational life, the culture that an NGO or any institution nurtures is the foundation upon which well-being, productivity, and, ultimately, success are woven. As organisations continue to evolve and adapt to the ever-shifting landscape of work, acknowledging the importance of employee well-being and its symbiotic relationship with organisational culture remains paramount for sustainable growth and prosperity.

2.2.5 Overcoming Obstacles in Fostering a Healthy Organisational Culture

In NGOs with hybrid working arrangements, promoting employee well-being might necessitate a diversified strategy that considers the special difficulties brought on by the coexistence of remote and on-site work settings. Mer and Srivastava (2023) state that organisations are investing in artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance employee engagement in remote work post-pandemic. AI facilitates factors like quality of work life, diversity, inclusion, and communication. It improves compensation, working conditions, and growth opportunities, increasing productivity and employee well-being and reducing attrition rates. This could promote open lines of communication so that workers can readily connect with their co-workers and superiors, no matter where they are physically located.

Hybrid working arrangements must have a flexible work schedule that supports a positive work-life balance and considers individual demands. Access to mental health resources and support services is also crucial because the demands of remote work and the frequently emotionally taxing nature of NGO work might negatively impact staff. The NGOs might need to create a workplace where employees feel appreciated and supported; this can be very helpful in promoting a culture of trust and inclusion inside the company. This might ultimately improve the employees' overall well-being. Managers need to commit to making the hybrid situation work for everyone in the team because people want to feel safe and cared for (Knight, 2020).

2.2.6 Best Practices in Promoting Well-being under Hybrid Work Arrangements

Hybrid work requires the implementation of best practices that foster a supportive and inclusive culture, which in turn enhances employee welfare. Knight (2020) highlighted that a manager needs to support their team, have social distance-compliant conversations at the office, and have one-on-one video calls with their remote workers.

Open and inclusive communication is crucial for creating a positive culture. Knight (2020) indicated the importance of creating new protocols that affirm the aspects of the organisation's culture, like having ongoing communication on who has access to what information, who needs to attend which meetings, and creating agreements on norms for communication. Regular team meetings, one-on-one check-ins, and forums for staff members to express their problems or suggestions are all included in this. Virtual communication technologies are essential in hybrid configurations to guarantee that physically distant workers feel equally engaged in discussions.

Organisational psychology research emphasises the importance of well-being initiatives in the context of flexible work schedules. The relationship between good work habits and organisational advancements is suggested to be both direct and indirect. Work-life balance, employee growth and development, health and safety, recognition, and employee involvement are five broad categories of healthy workplace practices that have been recognised in the literature. According to earlier studies, the relationship between these practices and outcomes for both employees and organisations depends on how well communications inside the company operate and how well workplace procedures fit into the overall organisational structure (Grawitch et al., 2006). In this regard, Chandrasekar (2011, p.1) stated, “It is the quality of the employee’s workplace environment that most impacts on their level of motivation and subsequent performance.”

The literature emphasises how organisations must customise their benefits for employee well-being to the difficulties of hybrid work, emphasising both physical and mental health care, including mindfulness exercises and online counselling. Organisations should create a culture of well-being that meets workers’ different needs.

Contributing to the above context, Knight (2020) stated that the challenge with hybrid work is to maintain a positive culture, offering opportunities for strong relations, including outdoor team-building. Connections and team development in hybrid work situations are important; a sense of community and trust among team members can be facilitated via virtual team-building activities, regular video meetings, and hybrid-friendly team outings. Even when team members are separated across several places, cohesive teams can collaborate successfully. Organisations should use cutting-edge tactics to bridge the physical and digital divides, creating

an environment where staff members can connect and communicate easily, no matter how they are organised for work. In hybrid work models, organisations need to deliberate about creating practices that foster a strong workplace culture. Using technology to keep teams connected is key. It also highlighted the importance of showing empathy, being flexible, and using tools that promote collaboration to keep employees engaged, even when they are working from different locations (Mooney, 2016).

Leaders must support their teams, create and set expectations, emphasise inclusion and equality, watch for burnout, and make work fun (Knight, 2020). Managers who value flexibility, empathy, and open communication foster a work environment that increases employee satisfaction and engagement. It is important to support leaders who are aware of and respond to the difficulties presented by hybrid work, such as the possibility of feelings of isolation among physically distant workers. Organisations should establish a work environment where employees will still feel appreciated and empowered. Traditional management tools are reaching their limits, whereas independent, flexible, and creative employees become essential for business success (Zettl et al., 2021).

Strong leadership, including role modelling, is essential for fostering an inclusive culture. Leaders who actively support diversity, inclusivity, and work-life balance create a good example for their teams by being empathetic towards the difficulties confronting physically distant workers and developing regulations dealing with them.

2.2.7 Positive Culture Change

A positive shift in organisational culture can lead to increased employee engagement. Employees who feel that their organisation's values and mission align with their own are more likely to be motivated and satisfied with their work. Ficarra et al. (2020) identify components of employee well-being, including stability, coping skills, happiness, confidence, and empathy, all of which underscore the importance of fostering a sense of community.

Organisations that place a high priority on work-life balance can lessen employee stress and burnout. A healthier work-life balance can be achieved with the help of flexible work schedules and policies that promote well-being. Kossek et al. (2014) found that support for employee health and work-life balance is frequently not connected to organisational business strategy and performance in the workplace. They suggested that organisations must promote workplace cultures and structures that not only encourage diversity in values that harmonise work and personal lives but also allow employees to manage their time and boundaries to balance the demands of work and personal lives according to their requirements and preferences.

A work environment that values open communication, appreciation, and career prospects can increase employee happiness. Employees are more likely to be happy in their jobs if they feel respected and supported. Organisations can benefit from happier workers since they are more productive; thus, organisations should work to make their workplaces happier and help disgruntled workers become happier (Ficarra et al., 2020). Positive changes in the workplace culture may result in less stress at the office. In a collaborative and supportive work

environment, employees are less likely to suffer from stress-related health problems. The relationship between organisational culture and employee well-being is illustrated in Figure 1.

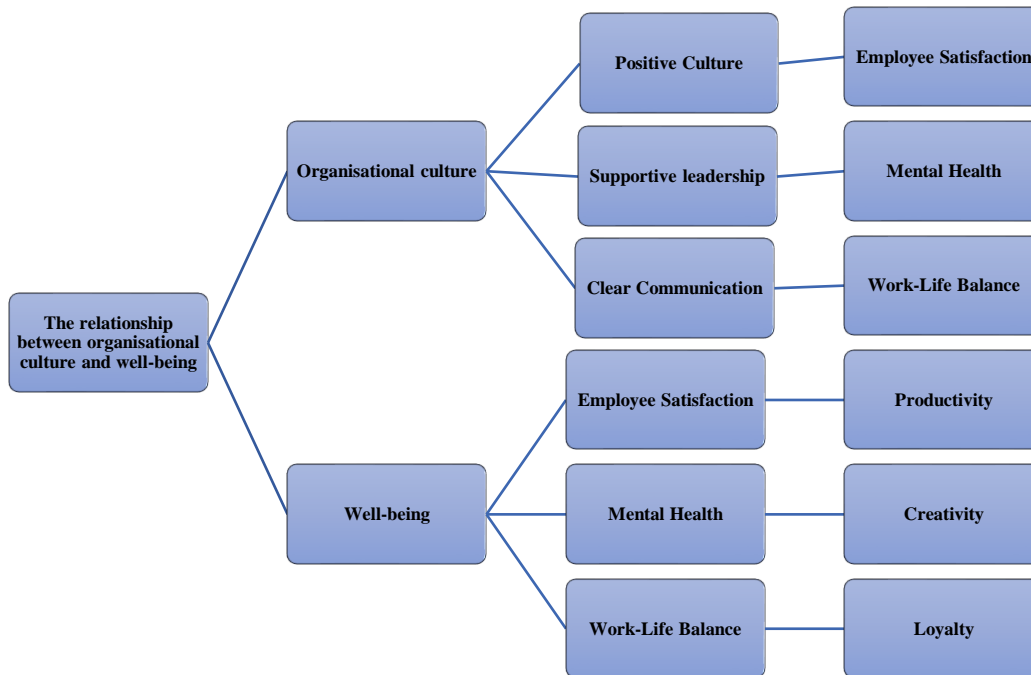


Figure 1: The Relationship between Organisational Culture and Employee Well-being

2.2.8 Analysing a Successful Organisation Culture Change

A successful culture in the organisation could lead to employees who are likely to enjoy greater job satisfaction when the organisation’s values and their values are brought into alignment and a more supportive and inclusive work environment is created. Coldwell (2019) and Ficarra et al. (2020) asserted that organisational culture changes impact employees’ well-being.

Kossek et al. (2014) suggested that support for employee health and work-life balance should be connected to organisational business strategy and performance in the workplace.

This could imply that organisations that place a high priority on employee welfare frequently provide flexible work schedules and other measures that promote a better work-life balance. This approach can result in reduced stress levels and enhanced overall well-being.

Success in changing the organisational culture can result in increased levels of employee engagement. Employee motivation and engagement are more likely to increase when they feel part of the organisation's mission and goals.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework underpinning the study drew from the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This theory provides a comprehensive lens through which the researcher could explore the intricate dynamics of human behaviour, motivation, and decision-making within the context of the influence of organisational culture on employees. The theory will be explained and operationalised in the study.

2.3.1 Social Exchange Theory

The Social Exchange Theory holds that social behaviour results from an exchange process focused on maximising personal benefits and reducing personal disadvantages. According to this theory, when choosing which social interactions to participate in, people weigh the advantages against the disadvantages. This theory has been widely applied in the field of family science to assess issues like marital stability and violence among family members. Applications in anthropology, psychology, business, and political science are also significant (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

The Social Exchange Theory was developed to relate economic concepts to interpersonal relationships in the early 1960s. People can assess the gains and losses associated with social interactions by creating a fictitious balance sheet and choosing the events and relationships that would maximise their gains. The theory assumes that individuals regularly carry out these balance sheet calculations before choosing which social ties best serve their requirements (Kirpik, 2020).

In the context of organisational culture change, employees may feel that their contributions are not being reciprocated, which can lead to negative emotions and a decline in well-being. Social Exchange Theory offers valuable insights into how organisational changes affect employees' perceptions of their relationships with the organisation and their overall well-being. It helps explain the cost-benefit analysis and reciprocity involved in the exchanges between employees and the organisation. Social exchange theory helped understand the cost-benefit analysis and reciprocity involved in the exchange between individuals and the organisation.

2.3.2 Self-determination Theory

According to Deci and Ryan (2012), the Self-determination Theory (SDT) distinguishes between autonomous and controlled motivation. It is an empirically derived explanation of human motivation and personality in social circumstances.. Thus, SDT is a theory of human motivation and well-being that emphasises the importance of psychological needs and intrinsic motivation.

According to the SDT, all employees have three basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci et al., 2017). Competence means the need to feel effective, capable, and successful in performing tasks and achieving desired outcomes. Autonomy refers to the need to experience a sense of choice, control, and self-direction in one's actions and decisions. Relatedness encompasses forming meaningful connections, establishing positive relationships, and experiencing a sense of belonging.

During organisational culture changes, the organisation has to assess how the change influenced the satisfaction or frustration of the basic psychological needs in terms of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. SDT is the best theory to consider for a study that assesses well-being related to organisational change.

SDT can also be used to investigate how employees' total job satisfaction is influenced by the psychological needs that are might not be met, it SDT reflects on an employee's ability to successfully balance work and personal life and the related psychological demands regarding an employees' intrinsic motivation, engagement, and dedication to their work as influenced by their satisfaction with the changed organisational culture.

The SDT can be a useful as lens for reflecting on how the organisational culture transformation affected the employees in the NGO sector, because t emphasises how crucial it is to design workplaces that value individuals' autonomy, competence, and relatedness irrespective of the work model being used. The figure below shows the application of SDT and SET on the employee well-being:

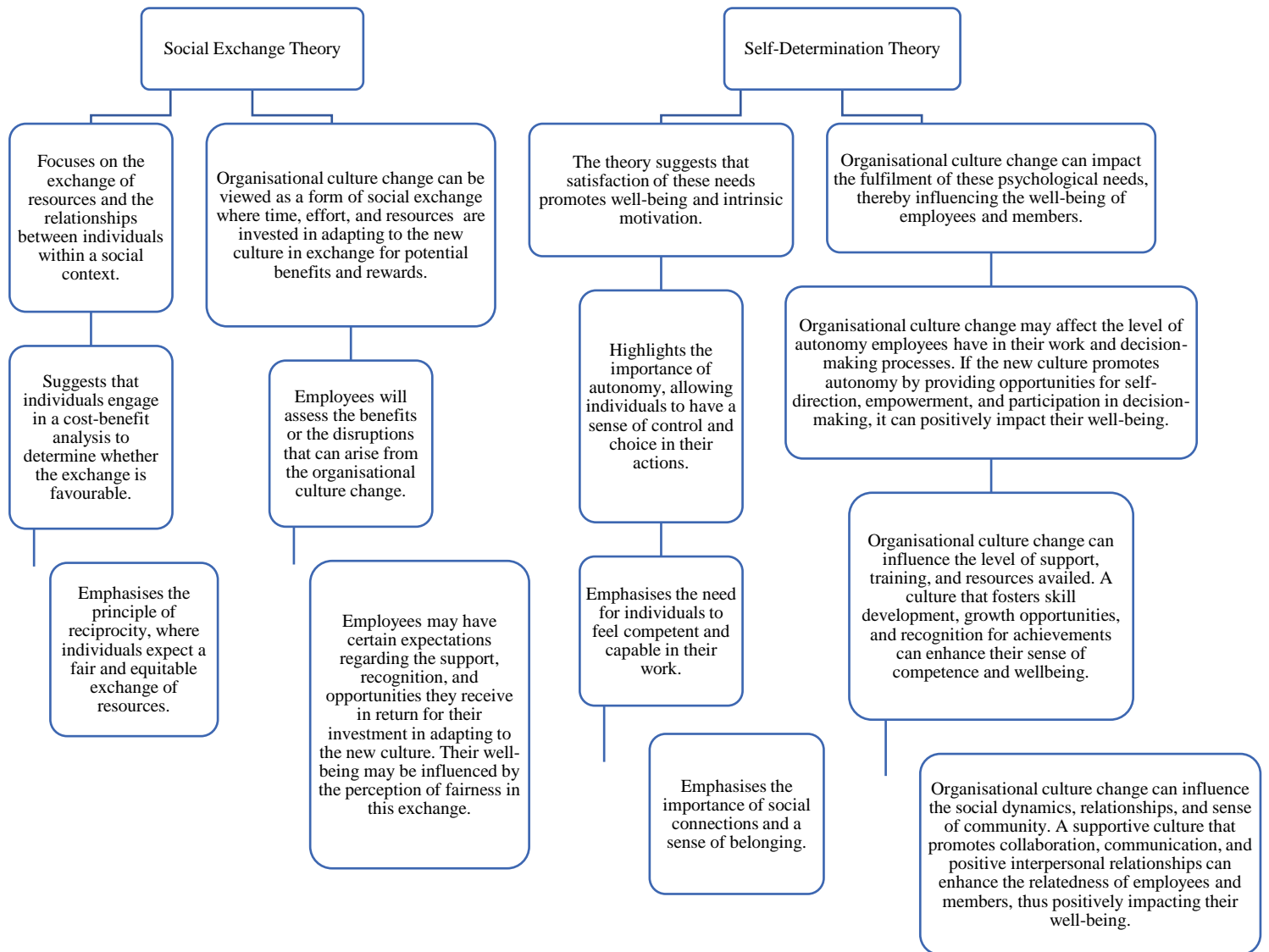


Figure 2: Application of Theoretical Framework to Employee Well-being

2.4 CONCLUSION

The intricate interactions between hybrid working patterns, organisational culture, and their effects on employee well-being in the post-COVID-19 period have been explored. It has become clear that hybrid working arrangements represent a fundamental change in how work is planned and carried out as organisations adjust to the changing environment. This review has highlighted several significant discoveries and implications from previous research and publications, which are discussed below.

While hybrid working allows staff members to work both on-site and remotely, it also poses issues for upholding a feeling of connection and order in their lives, employee well-being, finding the correct balance is crucial for their well-being. The success of hybrid work arrangements is influenced by organisational culture., it affects trust, the acceptance of remote work, and communication ways. In the hybrid contexts, cultures that place a higher value on outcomes and trust than on mere presence frequently succeed. Studies on hybrid models show a strong relationship between employee well-being and productivity. A more engaged and motivated workforce benefits companies that prioritise employee well-being through strategies including clear expectations, support, and work-life balance. Hybrid working has many benefits, but it also has disadvantages, such as the potential for isolation, collaboration issues with others, and the requirement for a strong technological foundation. This could mean that for hybrid models to succeed, these issues must be resolved. As businesses move towards hybrid work models, they must modify their organisational cultures to meet a modern workforce's changing demands and standards. This change necessitates carefully considering cultural values, norms, and practices.

The results of this study of the literature highlighted the necessity for organisations, including NGOs and others, to carefully consider the design and implementation of hybrid working models. The success of this endeavour rests not only on the structural elements of on-site and remote work but also on creating a culture that encourages employee participation and well-being.

Chapter 3 will detail the research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques that will enable one to examine how organisational culture shapes the experiences of employees in hybrid working environments.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the research was to find out and understand how changes in the corporate culture affect the well-being of employees in the case of the NGO in transition towards a hybrid organisational culture. The main focus was to understand how the changes in the organisation's culture were implemented through the combination of both hybrid working methods and self-organisation of the employees and also their impact on the employees' well-being. To answer the research question, this study investigated the complex relationships between a modified organisational culture and employee well-being in an NGO transitioning to a hybrid working paradigm. The robust research methodology explained in this chapter discusses the research design, sampling of the participants, data collection methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

A case study was used as this study's research design. Bryman et al. (2021) defined a case study as a design that involves an intense analysis of one or more cases that the researcher can study comprehensively. Due to the detailed specificity of the ORG A context, a case study design fitted best. The case study aided in delving deep into the specific contextual factors that impacted the employees' well-being including the dynamics of the opportunities and challenges the organisation undertook in the post-pandemic setting. The case study allowed qualitative data collection to capture the complexities of organisational culture change and its

impact on employee well-being by providing insight into the relationship between these two factors.

The study was conducted as a qualitative study using the inductive approach. A qualitative study is research that emphasises words and how people interpret their social world and views social reality as constantly shifting and emergent as people interpret it (Bryman et al., 2021). For this study, qualitative research collected rich, in-depth insights into employees' experiences, perceptions, and emotions related to organisational culture change and well-being. The epistemological consideration for this study was post-positivism. Post-positivism is a pluralism that balances both positivist and interleaved approaches, as it aims to emphasise the directions and perspectives of any research study from different angles (Panhwar et al., 2017). A post-positivist approach was useful for this study as it allowed exploration of the complexities of how changes in organisational culture impacted employee well-being in the context of hybrid working models. This approach enabled recognition of the subjectivity, multiple interpretations, and contextual factors involved, leading to a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon.

The study involved semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires with a small sample of ORG A employees. Both structured and unstructured interviewing techniques are used in semi-structured interviews. A predetermined sequence of questions serves as the interview's direction, but further inquiries can be included to encourage a deeper investigation of themes raised by the interviewee, nearly taking the shape of a managed conversation (Cachia & Millward, 2011). The interviews helped capture insight into the hybrid working model's influence on organisational culture change and its impact on employee well-being, providing a

deeper understanding of the research topic. Bryman et al. (2021) maintained that qualitative research can collect a rich database using field notes, interviews, and transcripts.

3.3 SAMPLING

The study utilised purposive non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling is a strategic way of selecting participants when the researcher does not seek to randomly sample research participants (Bryman et al., 2021). The researcher deliberately selected participants who had experienced the organisational culture change in ORG A due to the influence of hybrid working and possibly also because of COVID-19, as this sampling method contributed to rendering valuable insights and perspectives.

The sample population comprised permanent employees in management positions at ORG A who were employed before COVID-19 and who were still part of the organisation; in other words, those who experienced the transition from traditional work to the hybrid environment. The ORG A has 23 management-level employees in the Free State, 12 of whom were sampled. The participants were invited by sending out an email to the organisational mailing list, provided by the organisation when they agreed for the study to be conducted within the organisation. The first 10 that showed interest by mailing back to the researcher were selected. The rationale for choosing this population was to gain insight into the impact of hybrid working's influence on organisational culture change post-COVID-19 and its impact on employee well-being. The number of interviews with participants was sufficient to reach data saturation. The researcher sought indicators of data saturation, such as when no new themes or information arose from additional interviews. Once the researchers noticed that the same themes and patterns were recurring consistently across participants or data sources, that

indicated data saturation. Theoretical saturation happens when the researcher continues sampling until categories have been saturated with data, such as when no new ideas arise (Bryman et al. 2021). Fusch and Ness (2015) highlighted that failure to reach data saturation can negatively impact the validity of one's research. However, the limited nature of this study made it impossible to continue sampling and interviewing until data saturation was reached in all categories. To mitigate this shortcoming, the researcher constantly searched for similarities and differences to establish conceptual similarities and discover thematic patterns (Humble & Mozellus, 2022).

The inclusion criteria for the sample in this study comprised individuals who were part of the management team within the organisation, specifically including those who held managerial positions before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, those who continued to serve in managerial roles during the pandemic, and those who retained their managerial positions post the pandemic period. Participants should have had direct experience with the organisation's management practices and operations across these three distinct timeframes. For the purposes of this study, management positions were defined as those in which one individual supervises the work activities of another individual or group of individuals.

The exclusion criteria for the sample in this study were employees in non-management roles who did not hold a managerial position at any point during the specified timeframes (pre-COVID-19, during COVID-19, or post-COVID-19), new appointments who joined the management team after the COVID-19 pandemic or during the post-pandemic period without prior experience in a management role before COVID-19, and participants with insufficient

data related to their management roles during the specified timeframes. These criteria were implemented to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the study's findings.

As a result of the inclusion and exclusion criteria, those who met these conditions were included in the sample for this research study, as they had the needed experience and were first-hand witnesses of the management practises of the organisation during the important periods of pre-pandemic, pandemic and post-pandemic, enhancing the credibility and relevance of the findings of the study.

3.4 Data Collection Method

The principles of legitimate processing, transparency, and purpose limitation were upheld in all data-gathering procedures in compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA). The following actions were taken to guarantee adherence to POPIA: All participants were asked for their informed consent before any sensitive data was collected by completing an informed consent. The consent included a clear explanation of the nature, purpose, and scope of the data collection, as well as their rights regarding the use and storage of their personal data. All sensitive data collected was treated with the utmost confidentiality, and strict anonymisation protocols were applied to protect the identities of participants and third parties providing opinions about the participants. Data minimisation, which is only the minimum necessary data required to achieve the research objectives, was collected, reducing the risk of unauthorised access or disclosure of sensitive information. The research proposal and application did not include the use of third-party details. Feedback from others regarding the research participants was obtained through the responding participants themselves which was direct data collection and transparent in nature, not involving proxies.

For this particular research, semi-structured interviews were most appropriate for data collection due to the nature of the study and research questions. This method has some positive aspects that correspond to the complexity and depth of the research subject matter. Through the interviews, there was an opportunity to consider the participants' experiences, feelings and perceptions related to the new organisational culture and how it affected their well-being.

All these questions about the in-depth investigation are very important in terms of soliciting the deeper understanding of the cultural changes and their effects on the employees. While there was an interview guide containing questions and topics, the format allowed probing deeper into responses and follow-up on unexpected insights, enabling a richer understanding of the subject.

Semi-structured interviews enabled the context to be considered during the data collection process. Bryman et al. (2021) stated that semi-structured interviews cover a wide range of contexts.

The interviews took place in a setting that ensured participants' comfort, virtual meetings via video conferencing on Zoom.

The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions and prompts designed to explore various facets of the research topic. The questions also included demographic questions such as the participants' roles within the NGO, years of experience, and specific departments or teams where they have been working. Numerous questions were asked. For the questions about organisational culture, participants were asked about their perceptions of the organisation's culture before and after transitioning to a hybrid working model. Regarding

questions about employee well-being, participants were probed regarding their well-being and that of their colleagues. Still, other questions were asked about adaptation and challenges; participants were asked about their experiences in adapting to the hybrid working model and any challenges they may have encountered. In addition, participants were asked to give thoughts on how to enhance people's health in the context of an already changed organisational culture as well as the established hybrid working model.

The interview schedule was constructed in a stepwise fashion to enable ease of incorporation of lessons learnt during the pilot study and previous interviews. It sought to achieve such a focus that it would allow for an in-depth qualitative approach towards its respondents.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis strategy used was TA, TA was able to capture the level and detail of the employee well-being experience which often does not get measured immediately. TA is a popular qualitative research method that entails locating, examining, and interpreting patterns or themes within the data. It gives the qualitative researcher a foundation in the fundamental skills required to interact with other approaches to qualitative data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Braun and Clarke (2012) reported that TA aims to identify, analyse, and describe patterns across all data sets. This model was chosen because of its adaptability and iterative approach. It enabled inductive coding and allowed themes to arise directly from the data

without imposing predefined categories. It was pertinent to this topic because it called for examining various viewpoints and experiences of workers in ORG A.

TA is particularly well suited for study topics that investigate intricate phenomena in-depth and from various angles, such as organisational culture transformation and employee well-being. Due to the open-ended nature of the research and the complexity and variety of the subject matter, which predetermined categories may not represent well, TA enabled the formation of themes directly from the data, allowing a more nuanced knowledge of the subject.

A thorough investigation of employee well-being and organisational culture change factors emerged during the TA. The TA managed to gain the depth and richness of employee well-being experiences, which may be difficult to put a figure on straight away.

The analysis was conducted in the following order:

Listening to the interviews and thoroughly studying the transcripts, as an approach to familiarising oneself with the material, these steps can be seen as reviewing qualitative data collected at an earlier stage of research from the transcription of recordings. Bryman et al. (2021) stated that familiarising oneself with the data includes transcribing, reading, and re-reading the data.

The study was flexible in altering codes as it went along and was open to new ideas. This step generated the initial codes (Bryman et al., 2021).

Grouping codes into themes requires the researcher to examine and categorise the codes into prospective themes and then search the codes for similarities, recurrent patterns, or

significant connections. Bryman et al. (2021) referred to this step as searching for themes, thus collating codes into potential themes.

Defining and naming themes, The researcher evaluated and arranged the coded data inside each theme after finding the themes to further analyse and refine them. She clearly defined and described each topic and then backed interpretations with examples from the data.

Reviewing and validating themes, after outlining and labelling the topics, the researcher had to verify that the themes appropriately represented the data and aligned with the study question and aims by seeking consistency and coherence throughout the data. Bryman et al. (2021) referred to this step as defining and naming the theme.

Reporting the findings, during this step the findings of the theme analysis were presented in a clear and logical format. Such an approach was used in order to prove and substantiate the arguments put forward in paragraphs. The paragraphs and the explanations were presented in an ordered manner and were coherent. Further, the paragraphs related to the study objectives and the relevant literature. Bryman et al, (2021) commented on the last stage which basically entails writing up the report.

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND RIGOUR

Ensuring the trustworthiness and rigour of the study's findings is crucial. "Trustworthiness is described in different ways by researchers. Trustworthiness refers to the quality, authenticity, and truthfulness of the findings of qualitative research. It relates to the degree of trust, or confidence, readers have in results" (Cypress, 2017, p, 254).

3.6.1 Trustworthiness

To ensure credibility the study included member checking by sharing preliminary findings with participants to verify interpretations and ensure they accurately reflect employees' experiences. Detailed contextual descriptions of the NGO's culture, work environment, and hybrid model specifics enhanced transferability. This allows other NGOs or organisations in similar transitions to assess whether the findings might apply to their settings. To ensure dependability the researcher documented each step in the research process, including decision-making points and any adjustments made to methodologies in response to challenges and used a consistent interview protocol and analysis using thematic analysis to support a stable, dependable approach to data collection and interpretation.

3.6.2 Rigour

“Rigor is defined as the strength of the research design and the appropriateness of the method to answer the questions.” (Cypress, 2017).

In this study, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis, possibly using the software TranscribeMe for qualitative analysis, which enhanced rigour. Established frameworks, such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions, provided a systematic basis for analysing cultural influences on well-being in the hybrid work context. There was consistency in the data collection method through using the same questions across all participants and that supported reliability. The findings of the study were shared with organisational stakeholders and colleagues which increased transparency. Ensuring ethical conduct is critical, particularly as this study deals with employee well-being and organisational change. The researcher obtained informed consent, maintained confidentiality, and was

sensitive to any impacts that this research might have on employees' perceptions of their workplace are all key to maintaining the study's integrity.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section introduced new perspectives on ethical issues pertinent to the research work. Ethical concerns were the guidelines which were followed in the conduct of the study, so as to achieve the desired respect for morals and honor all parties. The next section presents how the ethical dimension of the study was given thorough coverage.

3.7.1 Permission Obtained

Creswell (2021) emphasises that permission must be sought. This way, research participants are guaranteed privacy and ethical protection and the credibility of the methodology is maintained.

Approvals were implemented as an essential precaution to perform the research ethically and responsibly. The key contacts in ORG A were identified as the research participants are in management positions. A formal request for research was made to the HR office, and permission was granted. The research proposal and supporting documents were submitted to the ethical committee, and ethical clearance was given.

3.7.2 Informed Consent

Informed consent is a principle that requires that participants should be fully informed about the research process; their rights to refuse to participate or to withdraw must be respected (Bryman et al., 2021). The study obtained informed permission from participants

by fully educating them about the study's goals, procedures, risks, advantages, and confidentiality before asking them to give their willing, informed consent to participate.

Each participant received a consent letter (cf. Addendum 1) to sign, giving consent to participate voluntarily. The consent letter was written in clear and comprehensible language to ensure they were informed of their rights and expectations.

This ensured that participants could ask questions or withdraw from the study at any moment. Should a participant decide to withdraw from the study, it would not have any repercussions for the participant and all the data obtained up to that point would be destroyed.

3.7.3 Voluntary Participation

In the case of this study, voluntary participation was the most important ethical principle which stressed that subjects should not be engaged in a study except at their own free will. Individual's will was honored by voluntary participation which translated to their decision on whether to be part of the study or not. Participants were briefed by the researchers on the purpose of the study, procedures, potential risks, and benefit. In this case, they were able to make informed decisions.

To ensure voluntary participation, the researcher communicated the optional nature of the study to potential participants, avoided any form of coercion or manipulation, and provided a mechanism for participants to ask questions and/or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Should the participant decide to withdraw, there would be no repercussions, and the data gathered would be destroyed and not used in the study.

3.7.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Protecting participant confidentiality and anonymity was essential for the success of the study. Bryman et al. (2021) indicated that a signed confidentiality agreement was required to clarify the type of sensitive information the researcher can access and what may or may not be disclosed about the members, employees, and organisations in the final research report. All information gathered from this study was kept private and securely stored on-cloud to avoid unauthorised access. The participants were not to be identifiable in the research findings' reporting.

All data from this study was kept confidential and securely stored in an encrypted file on Google Cloud to avoid unauthorised access. The participants' identities were not revealed and it was protected during the writing of the research report.

To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms unrelated to participants' real names or identifying characteristics were used. All identifying information was removed from research materials, and pseudonym-linkage documents were securely stored and destroyed after the study's completion. A secure record was maintained by creating a secure and separate document to link the real identities of participants with their pseudonyms, and this information was stored securely in a password-protected link. In research materials such as transcripts, reports or publications, participants were always called by pseudonyms. These pseudonyms were introduced at the stage of providing informed consent to research participants. All material was reviewed, including transcripts and audio recordings, to remove any identifying information, such as names, locations, or specific details. After the research project was completed, there

was no longer a need to maintain the link between pseudonyms and real identities and any linkage data was destroyed to further protect participant anonymity.

3.7.5 Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Mitigation

3.6.5.1 Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest: There might have been a possible conflict of interest in this case as the researcher is an insider in the organisation; therefore, and to reduce potential conflict of interest, the researcher observed high levels of transparency and disclosure regarding their role, and ensured that all potential conflicts were reported and acted on promptly. Likewise, the researcher complied with a specific ethical orientation as well as organisational policies that determine how decisions are made and which underline the mission of the NGO and the best interests of its beneficiaries

The researcher's employment at the organisation conducting the research and the alignment of research goals with organisational aims were acknowledged as potential sources of conflict of interest. The company showed serious interest in the research's conclusions because the findings could impact organisational procedures and worker well-being.

To handle conflicts of interest that might arise, the following methods were used:

- An external reviewer was engaged to gain independent oversight of the research processes, the methodology and the conclusions so as to provide an unbiased account of the findings.
- Participants, research application documentation, research publications, presentations, and all communications that pertain to the study contained all necessary disclosures about conflicts of interest for information, this was achieved through increased

transparency. This worked to allow the readers as well as stakeholders to put the research conclusions into the correct context.

- The strict confidentiality clauses that were implemented ensured that the data that was gathered was not only treated with respect but also utilised for research purposes alone with no external interference.

3.7.6 Data Collection and Handling

Data collection was done responsibly and ethically. To ensure that any sensitive or personal information was acquired and stored safely, the study adhered to the best data collection and handling practices. Any potential biases were addressed and minimised, and data was assessed and reported objectively and properly. The data was collected using virtual Zoom interviews and uploaded to an online platform called TranscribeMe for transcription. The data was stored safely in an encrypted file on Google Cloud.

3.7.7 Benefits and Potential Harm

The study's potential advantages and disadvantages were considered. Any potential harm to participants, such as emotional anguish or confidentiality breaches, was minimised. The advantages of the study were carefully studied and explained to participants as well as to the larger field of research. A social worker was referred participants who suffered from the distress resulting from their involvement in the study to counselling services. The researcher paid for the expense. All participants were treated fairly and without any bias.

The risks and benefits were addressed. According to the National Ethics Advisory Committee, researchers are expected to mitigate participant risks and their threats (NEAC,

2021). Reduction of risk means identifying the safest approaches to meeting research needs and weighing their importance. Any form of inconvenience that could be caused to participants, for instance, psychogenic pain or loss of confidentiality, had been minimised. The advantages of the study were carefully studied and explained to participants. Participants who experienced harm or distress due to their participation in the study could contact the researcher to refer them for counselling services by a social worker. The researcher was prepared to cover the cost.

The researcher sought to ensure fair treatment and even treatment of the participants, and to be free from any form of bias and discrimination. Upholding the ethical principle of ‘no harm’ was essential in ensuring that the integrity of the research project is maintained in that the research participants are placed in a safe and respectful environment while knowledge is pursued and the well-being of everyone in the research is viewed as paramount.

3.7.8 Ethical Review

The study received ethical clearance from the relevant institutional review boards and ethics committees prior to implementation of the study.

3.7.9 Reporting

The study maintained and presented results in a truthful and objective manner and made no efforts to fabricate, falsify or plagiarise information. Any limitations of the study were openly presented and an objective defence of the results was provided.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the context within which this study is located. In order to evaluate the impact of a transformed culture on the well-being of employees in an NGO transitioning to a hybrid work model, appropriate research philosophy, sampling and data collection techniques were identified. Data was collected in the form of semi-structured interviews in order to capture the participant's lived experience and understanding of the research topic and to explore this complex research problem.

The sample selection has been described in detail and justifies the participation of persons possessing experience and knowledge about the changes in the culture of the organisations in the periods before the pandemic, during the pandemic, and after the pandemic. The principles of the voluntary character of participation, anonymity, and confidentiality were also strictly observed.

The chosen research method also served as a good foundation for data collection and analysis, pertaining to the areas of concern of the study. In every methodological procedure that was applied in this study, there was an attempt to remain consistent with the goals of the study which enhanced transparency, ethical conduct and search for valid and useful results. As a result of following these methodological frameworks, the study contributed much in understanding the interactions between the organisational culture and the well-being of employees in the context of shifting hybrid work model.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 details the employees' stories and experiences at ORG A with a particular focus on the impact of the moving shift in the culture of the organisation towards the hybrid model on the employee's wellbeing. The goal was to take the insights gathered from the interviews and weave them into a coherent narrative that helps answer the key question: How did the changes in the organisational culture impact employee well-being in the participating NGO after COVID-19?

This chapter aimed to make sense of the data collected by organising it into themes that emerged during discussions with the employees. This enabled the researcher to highlight the core issues and concerns arising from the changes and contextualise them within the workplace of ORG A. Chapter 4 uses the key findings emanating from the data and discusses them in the context of the literature and the theoretical framework (Chapter 2).

The chapter focuses on uncovering the building blocks of organisational culture by breaking down the key elements that define the organisational culture at ORG A. This provided a better understanding, helping understand the context in which these employees are working and linking culture to well-being by exploring how this culture influences the well-being of the employees, looking at both positive and negative effects. Also, sharing employee experiences with the hybrid work shift by exploring the employees' own words to determine how they feel about the changes in the organisational culture, particularly about the new hybrid working model introduced after COVID-19. Finally, how management should understand the role of

supporting well-being by considering what these cultural changes mean for management and how they can better support their teams to ensure everyone remains healthy and productive in this new work environment.

Based on what the researcher learned from the interviews, the researcher identified several key themes that will guide the discussion on adaptability and resilience, communication and collaboration, work-life balance, anxiety and overload, policy development, and proactive wellness initiatives.

The overarching research question encompassed the following: How did the changes in the organisational culture affect employee well-being in the participating NGO when shifting to a hybrid working model post-COVID-19? Employing a thematic analysis the following themes emerged from the interview data.

Table 2: Themes

THEMES	SUBTHEMES
EXPERIENCES OF CHANGES IN THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SINCE THE SHIFT TO A HYBRID WORKING MODEL IN ORG A.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transition to Virtual Work</i> • <i>Adaptation to the Hybrid Model</i> • <i>Technological Integration</i> • <i>Flexibility in Work Expectations</i>
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES OF CHANGED ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SINCE ADOPTING A HYBRID WORK MODEL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Health and Well-being</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The Influence of Transition on Health and Well-Being</i> ○ <i>Anxiety and Overload</i> ○ <i>Desire for In-person Contact</i> ○ <i>Effect of Hybrid Work on Work-Life Balance</i> • <i>Challenges</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Changed Work Environment</i> ○ <i>Changed Communication</i> ○ <i>Changed Technological Systems</i> ○ <i>Changed Management Approach</i>

THE INFLUENCE OF THE HYBRID WORKING MODEL ON ORGANISATIONAL OPERATIONS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Changed Communication</i> • <i>Virtual Work</i>
COPING WITH THE CHANGES IN ORG A BROUGHT BY ADOPTING A HYBRID WORK MODEL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work Routine</i> • <i>Adaptation to the Hybrid Model</i> • <i>Resilience</i>
RECOMMENDATIONS ON ENHANCING THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AMIDST HYBRID WORKING AT ORG A.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organisational Support and Resources</i> • <i>Supply of Resources</i> • <i>Enhancing Communication</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Communication and Support Network</i> ○ <i>Leadership Communication</i> • <i>Team Building and Engagement Activities</i> • <i>Assistance for Financial and Emotional Well-being</i> • <i>Communication and Collaboration: Technological Review</i> • <i>Policy Development</i> • <i>Proactive Wellness Initiative</i>

4.2 THEME: EXPERIENCES OF CHANGES IN THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SINCE THE SHIFT TO A HYBRID WORKING MODEL IN ORG A

Valuable data was rendered on whether the participants had experienced any changes in their organisation since the shift to a different working model. In analysing the data, the following sub-themes were identified: transition to virtual work, adaptation to the hybrid model, technological integration, and flexibility in work experiences. These identified themes served as points of departure for the reporting and interpreting of the data on the changes in their organisation and their well-being.

4.2.1 Transition to Virtual Work

All the participants indicated that they experienced a major transition to virtual working, explaining how this shift from physical to virtual interactions impacted them. Participants elaborated their experiences, highlighting the benefits and disadvantages as follows:

Participant 1: “The shift from face-to-face meetings and the increase in remote meetings (Zoom, Teams) became more prevalent than before.”

Participant 3: “We started using virtual meetings, saving on transport costs and time.”

Participant 4: “There was a shift from physical to virtual meetings and training, saving resources.”

Participant 9: “One of the most significant changes was the biometric clock-in system, which was replaced by remote log-ins.”

In contrast with the above benefits, the following disadvantages emerged:

Participant 6: “There were some challenges with connectivity and adapting to this new form of remote working.”

The shift to virtual meetings impacted operations. Participants also reported on its efficiency:

Participant 3: “The virtual meetings saved costs and time and reduced travel risks.”

Participant 4: “For me, it was a case of efficiency increasing due to the reduced travelling, but I missed the social interaction.”

Participant 6: “There were a number of operational challenges due to the connectivity issues, but also because of our adaptation to the new systems implemented.”

Participant 10: “Though remote work could be effective, the in-office debriefing and interaction were missed, which affected our teamwork and team spirit.”

The Social Exchange Theory as discussed in Chapter 2, suggests that workplace relationships and interactions are built on a balance of give-and-take, where one naturally weighs the benefits against the disadvantages. When exploring the shift to virtual work, it was clear that employees experienced positive and negative changes. However, it became evident that there were benefits such as cost and time-saving elements, which freed up some time for other tasks and made virtual work feel more rewarding. There was also an increased feeling of efficiency as they could finish more in less time, which was a definite plus for them. Unfortunately, hampering issues like connectivity and adaptation to the new systems became frustrating. The participants missed social interaction, which led to feelings of disconnection from colleagues and might have reduced teamwork efficiency and spirit. There was also reduced personal interaction, such as informal chats and debriefs, which happened naturally in an office setting, highlighting that virtual work can cause feelings of isolation.

Feeling competent and effective at work is crucial. The difficulties with connectivity and new systems mentioned by Participant 6 could undermine this, causing stress and reducing confidence. In contrast, the sustained productivity that Participant 4 enjoys is likely to increase their self-worth as they perceive a certain level of achievement. With the transition to remote work, the requirement to bond with other employees was absent. Though

Participants 4 and 10 were not in favour of remote work and missed real-life interactions, it is interactions that create a bond and provide emotional nourishment in the work environment. This kind of disconnection may lead to detrimental consequences on employee well-being due to feelings of alienation.

The shift to digital work enhances freedom and productivity and has the potential to make work more enjoyable and increase general well-being. On a negative note, there was a challenge with the new systems implemented. Missing the camaraderie of in-person work can lead to frustration and feelings of isolation, harming well-being.

4.2.2 Adaptation to the Hybrid Model

The participants faced the initial difficulties and the adjustments which included among others, overcoming the inconveniences of numerous distractions in order to establish conducive home offices in the course of the hybrid model. This is noted in the following:

Participant 1: “It was hard adapting to the work from home because of the absence of an office setting”.

Participant 2: “The process was hard at first, but with time improvement came along.”

Though the mentioned challenges were faced, employees were able to make this new hybrid model work thereby showing their resilience and the capability of the organisation to manage this change. On the other hand, when ORG A adopted a hybrid more than work approach, employees experienced different pressures quite the same time. These included a need to adjust to working from home, particularly as this presented several challenges to the absence of any kind of office environment and working discipline. Transition at the start was hard as well as

most of the early transition challenges might have determined their level of contentment. There was also adaptation and support, which improved over time. Despite the initial difficulties, these improved as employees adjusted, showing both the resilience of the employees and the support from the organisation. Overcoming these challenges can be seen as a positive outcome, leading to a more balanced and flexible work environment, which likely improves well-being.

4.2.3 Technological Integration

When culture changed, there was an increase in adapting to new technology, which required adapting to the new technologies. The transition to remote work necessitated significant technological adaptation within ORG A. Participants highlighted the swift shift to virtual meetings and the increased reliance on digital tools. The participants stated the following:

Participant 2: “As employees, we needed to adapt to new technologies for mentoring and monitoring remotely.”

Participant 3: “Training was provided to employees to enhance technological skills needed.”

Participant 4: “Technological adaptation accelerated due to virtual work.”

Participant 6: “There were new systems and templates introduced to improve data management.”

Remote work was enabled due to the technological shift and this also proved the capability of the organisation to quickly absorb new systems which is one of the attributes of the culture of the organisation. There was an improvement in communication through technology. Technology also plays a role in how connected employees feel to their colleagues.

While digital tools can make communication easier, they can also create barriers, especially when not everyone has the same access or skill level. In the case of such connectivity issues, it can also be viewed how it may have caused disconnection and made it difficult to feel like being part of the team. This may also be detrimental to well-being as people rely on social ties at work as a source of motivation and satisfaction. The transition to a remote workplace along with the accelerated pace of change in technology at ORG A had its advantages and disadvantages in relation to employees' well-being. However, the fast working context helped the organisation's quick integration and training to assist certain employees to feel effective and empowered over their jobs which is a part of job satisfaction. But on the flip side, new system's connectivity and related issues gave more responsibilities, particularly for people from remote regions or people who are not very comfortable with technology. Such frustrations pose possibilities of having emotional strain, reduced output and lead to feelings of isolation.

4.2.4 Flexibility in Work Expectations

The participants indicated that the work expectations were flexible. Participants need flexibility as there is pressure to be available after working hours. They reported as follows:

Participant 4: "It's important to have flexible work hours because they cater to both company objectives and individual preferences."

Participant 8: "There were some issues regarding the pressure to be accessible outside work hours, and the necessity for guidelines on flexibility is needed."

Participant 9: “For me, being flexible and open-minded makes it easier to cope with change. It is not a big problem for me not going to the office, but for some people, it can be major due to no relationships with people as well as no help in person.”

Participant 7: “I had to adapt. Luckily, I do have the ability to adjust to particular things. It was not really that difficult, though the problem was the power cuts and the resources available.”

Flexibility is one of the virtues of contemporary organisational culture in the hybrid work model in particular. Integration of personal goals and organisational goals reflects the necessity of having an organisational culture which promotes work-life balance and respect for individual limits.

Employees who can adapt to changes, such as moving to a hybrid model, are better equipped to handle the evolving work environment and its challenges. Regarding flexibility in work expectations, employees at ORG A attempted to find a balance between meeting company goals and taking care of their own needs. The advantage is the flexibility of working hours, they allow one to take care of their personal issues and still achieve their working goals which eases stress and promotes a better balance between work and leisure. Flexibility makes it less difficult to adjust. It is however not easy for those who are quite social and are used to being in physical office spaces.

The shift however also came with stress in the form of being expected to be available at all times; it is not that flexibility is a bad thing, the concern is too much flexibility, where one is always ‘on’, can create tense situations and problems in separating one’s work and home

life. Resource challenges while working from home are real challenges that come with flexible work arrangements and can add extra pressure. Flexibility in work hours and expectations supports employees' sense of autonomy, allowing them to manage their time and work environment to suit their needs. The overwhelming autonomy which Participant 9 possesses implies that this participant enjoys changes with the outlining of more job satisfaction. It also means that employees must be confident in their capabilities to time and disentangle their obligations. Such participants as Participant 7 who are able to adjust themselves to these changes demonstrate persistence and flexibility. As mentioned by Participant 8, the demands of being 'on-tap' all the time can, however, weaken this sense of competence through stress and overworking. The offer of flexibility has its advantages, but it also has repercussions on the communication aspects of the employees. Also, Participant 9 shared that the absence of personal interaction in a flexible hybrid work model has significant disparities for some people. This therefore calls for the need to strike a proper balance between flexibility and personal interaction so that all the relationships at work are intact.

4.3. THEME: PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES OF CHANGED ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SINCE ADOPTING A HYBRID WORK MODEL

4.3.1 Health and Well-being

Valuable data was rendered on the personal experiences and challenges of changed organisational culture since adopting to a hybrid model. In analysing the data, the following

sub-themes were identified: the influence of transition on health and well-being, anxiety and overload, desire for in-person contact, autonomy and influence on work-life balance. These identified themes served as points of departure for the reporting and interpreting of the data on personal experiences and challenges.

4.3.1.1 The Influence of Transition on Health and Well-Being

The transmission to a hybrid working model affected health and well-being. Participants expressed the following:

Participant 1: “I experienced health issues when returning to the office but mitigated them by working from home more frequently. This helped maintain my health.”

Participant 7: “I enrolled in studies and used the time saved from not commuting for self-reflection and personal development.”

The impact of hybrid work on health and well-being is significant. The flexibility to work from home can help employees manage health issues better. However, this change also places responsibility upon employees for self-care while being mentally grounded through suitable assistance and resources.

The introduction of a hybrid working model has influenced well-being and health in general. There are employees who managed to turn the flexibility to their benefit, but there are also employees who encountered problems that had to be solved. Let’s take one case when a participant reported health problems after coming back to the office but relief came when she started working from home more. This change allowed them to improve their health. It has also become possible for them to pursue personal development as one of the participants revealed

that they took up studies in the time not spent travelling to the workplace and from it. Such experiences highlight the two-fold impact of hybrid working on wellbeing. On the one hand, flexibility provides an opportunity to manage health better. However, there is also a need to address the other side of the coin which is the need to provide sufficient support for the physical and mental health of the employees in this form of work.

4.2.2.2 Anxiety and Overload

With the surge in communication, many employees felt more anxious and overwhelmed. This was notable in the following:

Participant 1: “There was a constant flow of messages from different channels; it only added to anxiety.”

Participant 2: “I felt emotionally drained by the pressure to always be available and keep up with the barrage of messages.”

The experiences highlight the importance of finding a balance between keeping everyone informed and protecting employees’ mental health. Participant 1 expressed the feeling that they were becoming more anxious due to the ongoing flow of messages. Participant 2 on the other hand said they felt emotionally depleted due to the expectation of being accessible all the time. These feelings point towards the fact that the demands made on them were greater than the gains accrued from the demands thus resulting in tension and affecting the general well-being. It is affecting their sense of autonomy. Moreover, the need or ability to stay in touch and manage this amount of communication makes them feel quite grossly incompetent. This interplay may bear some adverse effects on their well-being

So to conclude, in order to avoid sacrificing the health of an employee, the communicational needs must be balanced out. There will always be a situation whereby the employees need to be kept in the loop, equally, there is a need case to be made in order management so that people are not too bombarded. It is important in this regard to draw up limits and to look for ways to protect mental well-being whilst how to promote favorable and healthy working conditions.

4.3.1.3 Desire for In-person Contact

There is a great desire for in-person contact during the transition to a hybrid working model. Participants reported as follows:

Participant 1: “There was a strong preference for returning to the office to work in person; the need is for face-to-face interactions that help in understanding colleagues’ personal issues and improving market performance management.”

Participant 6: “There is a need for more personal, informal interactions during physical meetings to address personal well-being beyond work performance.”

This theme highlighted the fundamental construct of interpersonal relationships within organisational culture. Even though hybrid working has its perks, the appetite for in-person interactions remains high, which is crucial where details about people’s personalities and their preferences are concerned. Increased satisfaction among employees was attributed to the benefit of being face-to-face. This is clearly illustrated by Participant 1’s emotional appeal to physically return to the workplace. Employees benefit from face-to-face, being present to enable them to appreciate and manage their colleagues' work performance and personal

concerns. There was always that discussion which is outside of work things, such as casual chats. Participant 6 also stated that in this type of environment, the workplace atmosphere and relationships are not only key to getting the work done but also greatly enhance one's well-being. Therefore, the drawbacks included the lack of real presence, an aspect that emerged strongly for people who wanted more physical contact. Without regular in-person interactions, employees might feel a sense of isolation or a lack of belonging, which can impact their overall morale and well-being.

The hybrid model does allow employees to make decisions on their workspace, which is good in terms of conformity. Although it is evident as in Participant 1's opinion, autonomy indeed is one of the most core values. Commander in whom gives the order. But it can't be the means to the end. Meeting people directly makes individuals feel more effective and engaged in the work setting. Hybrid work, in contrast, can create a sense of mastery through technological means and appropriate interactions. Still, the responses of Participant 1 and Participant 6 indicate that personal contact is necessary for the proper management and comprehension of work performance. Interacting in person facilitates the evaluation of problems and their solutions, all of which contribute to a greater feeling of competence. The need for in-person contact highlights the importance of relatedness or forming meaningful connections. This sense of connectedness is crucial for feeling truly integrated into the team and supported. The strong preference for in-person contacts reveals that while the hybrid model offers flexibility, it does not fully meet everyone's personal interaction and connection needs. Face-to-face time is key for building strong relationships and supporting overall well-being.

4.3.1.4 Effect of Hybrid Work on Work-Life Balance

The hybrid workplace model seems to have altered how work-life balance is perceived. Respondents reported having difficulty struggling to set boundaries explaining that the hybrid structure resulted in turning their work into a lifestyle. Some of the more notable observations were the following:

Participant 1: “We find it hard to maintain set timings for work, which leads to working hours getting very prolonged including weekends as well.”

Participant 4: “Even though we did experience the challenges, we did appreciate the ability to have disruptions during routines when attending to work.”

Most participants stressed about having these effects on their physical and mental health, including Participant 1 who wore in increasing stress, stress, and additional weight to the body regularly over months:

Participant 1: “I started working from home which was a happy factor for me, but also helped me in gaining extra weight.”

Participant 6: “I was under stress and even felt exhausted as working hours and home hours were not well defined.”

The adjustment towards a hybrid working structure has impacted the work-life balance in terms of work-life boundaries. Some employees were satisfied with the flexibility, but for some, it was a struggle as the boundaries were not well defined affecting their overall well-being.

In the case of hybrid work, the employees had a view towards the positive side of things and the negative side. One employee was observed having trouble defining work hours and on some occasions was working over weekends. The fusion of the work and personal life facets points out that the equity in contribution does not always have to come in the shape of personal time which may lead to work overload. Hybrid working has its disadvantages, but one employee was happy with the hybrid working as they could balance work with personal tasks. Such a form of flexibility is rather based on positive trade-offs and makes employees feel valued enhancing employee satisfaction and loyalty to the company.

Working in a way where you can take care of personal issues during work time satisfies the feelings of autonomy. That same autonomy can, however, dissolve boundaries and lead to work creeping into personal time. This lack of clear separation can cause stress and exhaustion, negatively affecting well-being. The transition to hybrid work had also impacted physical and mental health, with some participants reporting weight gain and increased stress. This suggests that while hybrid work offers more autonomy, it can also undermine well-being if employees struggle to manage the demands of both work and personal life. One of the advantages of the hybrid model is its flexibility, while its disadvantage is that the absence of structure may cause work-life to blend with home life. The employees have to repeatedly juggle between work hours and personal time which can be both encouraging and overbearing.

The impact on physical and mental well-being highlights the need for the organisation to support employees in managing this balance. Offering clear guidelines, encouraging breaks, and promoting wellness initiatives can help ease the challenges of hybrid work. The hybrid work model at ORG A introduced new dynamics that affected work-life balance and overall

well-being. To maintain a healthy work culture, ORG A should focus on helping employees establish boundaries and support their well-being in a more structured way.

4.3.2 Challenges

Valuable data was rendered challenges of changed organisational culture since adopting a hybrid model. In analysing the data, the following sub-themes were identified: changed work environment, changed communication patterns, changed technological systems and changed management approach. These identified themes served as points of departure for the reporting and interpreting of the data on the challenges faced.

4.3.2.1 Changed Work Environment

The participants indicated that the work environment changed and work expectations were flexible. Participants need flexibility as there is pressure to be available after working hours. Participants reported the following:

Participant 4: “It’s important to have flexible work hours because they cater to both company objectives and individual preferences.”

Participant 8: “There were some issues regarding the pressure to be accessible outside work hours, and the necessity for guidelines on flexibility is needed.”

Participant 9: “For me, being flexible and open-minded makes it easier to cope with change. Honestly, I do not find it as a problem when employees do not come to the office, but for some, the absence of social interaction and help can be disabling.”

Participant 7: “It was a requirement for me to adjust. Luckily, there are some things I modify myself to readily,’ adding, ‘it was not overly that hard but the only thing was managing power outages and availability of the resources.”

In regard to flexibility, this is one of the most important dimensions in present-day organisational culture particularly in a hybrid working arrangement. The interplay of organisational objectives and individual requirements denotes the existence of a culture conducive to work-life integration without infringing on personal space. Employees who can adapt to changes, such as moving to a hybrid model, are better equipped to handle the evolving work environment and its challenges. Regarding flexibility in work expectations, employees at ORG A attempted to find a balance between meeting company goals and taking care of their own needs. Advantageously, hours of work are flexible; this enables people to take care of their personal external obligations while still fulfilling job requirements to the expected level, thus minimising stress and promoting work-life balance. This somewhat flexibility allows people like Participant 9 to more easily cope with undergoing changes. However, many employees who thrive on the personal interaction offered by the office struggle with the concept of being able to not go to the office.

The shift presented the pressure to always be available; while flexibility is a positive, the expectation to be constantly available can blur the lines between work and personal life, leading to stress and potential burnout. Resource challenges while working from home are real challenges that come with flexible work arrangements and can add extra pressure. Flexibility in work hours and expectations supports employees’ sense of autonomy, allowing them to

manage their time and work environment to suit their needs. Participant 9's ability to easily adapt to changes reflects a strong sense of autonomy, often leading to higher job satisfaction.

Employees must be competent in their management of time and responsibilities if they are to work in a flexible work culture. An example can be found in Participant 7, who can adjust to the changes in the environment and demonstrate flexibility. However, the constant necessity to be present, on the other hand, as stated by Participant 8, can create stress and work overload, thus lowering this competence feeling and empowerment, for example, Participant 9 observed that many employees are restrained by the inability to interact face to face in a flexible hybrid working style. The issue here is how to introduce appropriate levels of social presence to support personal interactions and strong relationships without compromising flexibility.

For employees, high levels of flexibility in work expectations is a two-edged sword. It encourages autonomy and work-life balance, both of which are important for wellbeing. It goes without saying, that an always available expectation and remote work dynamics are pressure points and can contribute to employee strain and even exhaustion.

Prior to the hybrid model, the culture exhibited clear order and order through structure. The participant responses demonstrated an appreciation for a clear schedule:

Participant 5: "In the beginning, I worked from my bed. But, it is no longer the case. Now, I get up, shower, and prepare as if I am going to the office. I then sit in a comfortable position and get back to work,"

Participant 10: "I enjoyed social contact as well as the operation model that included commuting to the office, but I learned how to appreciate hybrid work and utilise the time for self-improvement,"

The emergence of fixed orientation in a hybrid model is viewed to be an integration or evolution of the typical office-centred culture into one where work can be done anywhere. This transition also illustrates how there is a relevant need to be able to uphold a sense of order in the new work culture. Whenever people discuss having to adapt to an environment that integrates a hybrid way of working, the mixed model and the terms of routines of some sort are the commonly mentioned topics. This is not surprising because, for many, a structured routine provides a sense of stability, even when everything else is changing. For employees adapting to hybrid work, finding a routine seems to be a way to balance the old and the new. Participant 5, for example, started off working from bed but soon realised that there is a solid benefit to having a fixed morning regime where one gets out of bed and dresses up as if going to an office. This routine also ensured an effective segmentation of family and work spheres and made it easy to transition into the 'work mode'. Such certainty is important as it changes the perception of the work day to the normal. On the contrary, Participant 10 commented about not being able to cope with the monotony of the office environment and interactions on a daily basis. However, they were able to appreciate the advantages of the hybrid model such as the time spent in traffic which now they utilise for self-development. This emphasises how people can adjust to the shifts by using new possibilities to the fullest. Creating a daily routine gives a person control over their day. Even though the work environment has changed, they can still dictate how they approach their workday. This sense of control is crucial because it supports

their ability to stay focused and productive, boosting their confidence in handling the hybrid model. Establishing and keeping to a routine also helps employees feel competent. When Participant 5 switched from working in bed to having a more structured start to the day, they were not just changing a habit but reinforcing their ability to manage the demands of remote work effectively. However, it is not just about productivity. Participant 10's experience highlighted a different challenge: the lack of daily human interaction. While routines help maintain work discipline, they can also underscore what is missing: those spontaneous chats and social connections that used to be part of the office routine. Without routine, people can feel rather disconnected and unsupported in the scope of their work.

A structured routine is a source of comfort and a source of hardship to adhere to a set schedule while working in a mixed model. It helps them keep order and be efficient and effective. It also promotes recollection of what was lost; socialising flew out the window.

4.3.2.2 Changed Communication

The change in communication started during COVID-19 and with the change to a hybrid working model, the teams used to communicate on a face-to-face basis, when Covid-19 started communication moved virtually and thereafter with a move to hybrid, the standard to virtual and constant communication remained.

The change to a hybrid working model increased communication efficiency, significantly increasing communication through various platforms, including WhatsApp, emails, and virtual meetings. This shift enhanced the flow of information and allowed for more frequent updates. This was notable in the following statements shared by the participants:

Participant 1: “There was increased use of WhatsApp groups for work-related communication.”

Participant 2: “We utilised multiple communication tools such as WhatsApp and Zoom, which improved timely information sharing.”

This enhancement in communication channels reflects a fundamental shift in the organisational culture towards a more digitally connected and responsive environment.

There was improved communication efficiency with the shift to platforms like WhatsApp, emails, and virtual meetings, and employees could share updates more frequently and stay better connected. These changes were definite benefits, as they helped everyone stay informed and updated, which is crucial for successful teamwork. The transformation to online communication, however, also had disadvantages. It seemed that the overflow of information across several platforms reached the borderline for some users. There could also have been a time pressure associated with just having to be in the online world all the time which is generally blurring the boundaries of professional and personal life. This situation applies in the case of networks which are primarily used for personal messaging such as WhatsApp.

Employees in a hybrid model also had more choices about the nature of their communication. With the use of WhatsApp, Zoom, email and other tools, employees could be able to select which one is applicable to them, which probably increased their degree of independence. On the contrary, there are times when the nature of work especially with modern technology is debilitating due to the unscheduled timing of communication as one is never out of contact.

Balancing the use of multiple communication tools likely boosted employees' confidence in their abilities. Participant 2's experience with using WhatsApp and Zoom to share information efficiently suggests that employees became more skilled at managing digital communication, naturally making them feel more competent and satisfied in their roles. The use of WhatsApp groups for work purposes was beneficial to employees as the strengthened communication channels enabled them to interact with each other. These interactions on a regular basis facilitate a feeling of ownership and teamwork which in turn is essential for their overall health. On the one hand, the transition to more online communication tools in the hybrid work model had a positive effect on employee wellbeing and, on the other hand, it also had a negative impact.

4.3.2.3 Changed Technological Systems

Technology and skills came into play leading to changed technological systems used by the organisation, and this was shown by the following:

Participant 2: "We had to adapt to new technologies for remote mentoring and monitoring."

Participant 3: "There was training provided to improve technological skills required for remote work."

Participant 4: "The technological adaptation sped up due to virtual work."

Participant 6: "There were new systems and templates introduced to improve data management."

The feedback highlighted the noticeable move towards working remotely and holding virtual meetings, alterations in leadership and performance evaluation influence balancing work and personal life as well as adjusting to technology changes, the absence of social connections, and the organisation's ability to adjust and bounce back. These topics highlight some of the transitions experienced by employees and the organisation as a whole including challenges and opportunities that arose due to the transition to a hybrid working model post-COVID-19. Adopting a hybrid form of work further expedited the integration of technology. On the one hand, this has increased effectiveness and the amount of communication. On the other hand, it has forced workers to adopt new systems and tools in a timely manner.

4.3.2.4 Changed Management Approach

When the transition to a hybrid model occurred, there was a transition in management changes. The response from participants showed a shift in the management style:

Participant 1: “There was a shift from micromanagement to trust-based management; more work from home but also more flexibility.”

Participant 4: “The organisation's management adapted to virtual oversight and simplified work with technology.”

Participant 10: “The need to manage employees remotely without physical oversight posed challenges.”

The management adaptations also impacted performance and accountability. The participants shared as follows:

Participant 1: “Trust became significant and the people that do not perform have additional meetings for them to aid performance.”

Participant 4: “Working from home improved tracking performance but there was a need for sound technology.”

Participant 10: “In order to manage performance at a distance. ORG A needed different tactics.”

In this context of transition in the structures of management, as the organisation became remote and hybrid, employees’ attitude toward work and employment well-being was seemingly affected in a positive manner. Moving away from micromanagement to a more trust-based approach and relying on technology for performance tracking introduced new dynamics into the workplace. There was trust-based management; in the previous setup, managers often closely supervised employees to ensure work got done. However, as all activities started transitioning to work from home, employers had to believe that employees would remain productive without needing constant supervision. This disruption can be interpreted as a win-win; employees were granted more autonomy, and in return, productivity levels were supposed to stay high. Employees trust what management trusts, and that is inured to their greater good. However, that trust brought the responsibility as well. If a person’s performance was below the acceptable level, it was dealt with by the managers. This principle follows the Self-Determination Theory which was introduced in Chapter 2. Managers tried to maintain both independence and accountability on the sides of the employees. This type of approach enables

a balanced work culture where there is no ambiguity regarding expectations from each as well as grievance resolution.

Even though there was a decline in interpersonal contact due to the remote working structure, understanding between superiors and subordinates was gaining even more importance. Trust leadership is an effective way to accelerate the sense of ownership hence allowing the managers to worry about their staff. But as Participant 10 pointed out, managing remote workers with no face-to-face interactions can on certain occasions make staff feel disconnected if not managed properly.

According to some participants, some limitations were due to technological barriers. The participants included but were not limited to, a lack of knowledge in communicating over the internet, difficulties in using systems, as well as problems in connectivity, especially in some of the rural parts of the regions. Participants stated the following:

Participant 1: “We experienced difficulties with operating systems and technology.”

Participant 2: “There were connectivity issues in rural areas impacting effective communication.”

The limitations mentioned above emphasised that it was important to deal with technological inequalities within the organisation's communication, all employees were able to communicate without any barriers. When ORG A moved to remote work, employees had to quickly get used to new technologies, and this shift brought both positives and negatives. The benefits included learning new skills and flexibility. The training made it easier for them to work remotely and added value to their roles. Better data management such as new systems

and templates, were introduced to make data management easier. This can be seen as a positive change, as having better tools usually makes work more efficient and less stressful. Although some negatives were identified as technological challenges and digital literacy, not everyone found the technological transition smooth, resulting in frustration and making the workday harder. When employees struggle with new technology, it can lead to stress and a feeling of being left out. Connectivity issues in rural areas made communication difficult. This is a significant disadvantage because a poor internet connection can slow down work, cause misunderstandings, and add extra stress to the day. The ability to tackle unfamiliar tools almost goes hand in hand with the sense of feeling competent when performing at work. It is possible that Participant 3's experience with the training offered to them enhanced their self-perception and made them feel competent. On the contrary, problems associated with the active use of technologies, as experienced by Participant 1, and, connectivity concerns, as noted by Participant 2, may also have weakened their self-coherence, which eventually led to stressful conditions and feelings of inferiority

Some employees might experience loneliness when working from their homes as they miss social interactions which are commonplace in an office. Nevertheless, as employees adjusted, such individuals came up with other means of staying in contact with their fellow employees through virtual meetings or the few days they spent in the office. With these changes at the workplace, employees most likely received reassurance from the organisation, which assisted with the retention of the connection that is crucial to the well-being of employees.

At first, a predicament for many employees might have been the creation of an effective home office and working within a new environment. This notwithstanding, as employees

settled in, they displayed adaptability, and the provision of assistance from the organisation's management was also important in relation to these changes.

4.4 THEME: THE INFLUENCE OF THE HYBRID WORKING MODEL ON ORGANISATIONAL OPERATIONS

Valuable data was rendered on the influence of the hybrid working model on organisational operations. In analysing the data, the following sub-themes were identified: changed communication and virtual work. These identified themes served as points of departure for the reporting and interpreting of the data on organisational operations.

4.4.1 Changed Communication

The change to a hybrid working model increased communication efficiency, significantly increasing communication through various platforms, including WhatsApp, emails, and virtual meetings. This shift enhanced the flow of information and allowed for more frequent updates. This was notable in the following statements shared by the participants:

Participant 1: “There was increased use of WhatsApp groups for work-related communication.”

Participant 2: “We utilised multiple communication tools such as WhatsApp and Zoom, which improved timely information sharing.”

This enhancement in communication channels reflects a fundamental shift in the organisational culture towards a more digitally connected and responsive environment.

There was improved communication efficiency with the shift to platforms like WhatsApp, emails, and virtual meetings, and employees could share updates more frequently

and stay better connected. These changes were definite benefits, as they helped everyone stay informed and updated, which is crucial for successful teamwork.

However, the proliferation of the digital medium for communication has challenges as well. These days, the number of notifications that intrude on one's peace can also be so many that it could qualify as information or notification overload. Quite possibly, there was also the background noise or a shadow of expectation that one must reply soon. This is certainly a cause for confusion when work-oriented messages get sent to people over WhatsApp, a platform usually meant for casual conversations. Employees in the hybrid model had greater power over how they communicate. They were free to use WhatsApp, Zoom or email, whichever they found more appropriate, and in this way, their autonomy was probably increased. Nonetheless, the concept of being always "switched on" which the digital tools of communication encourage sometimes makes life miserable.

Balancing the use of multiple communication tools likely boosted employees' confidence in their abilities. Participant 2's experience with using WhatsApp and Zoom to share information efficiently suggests that employees became more skilled at managing digital communication, naturally making them feel more competent and satisfied in their roles. Employees in the hybrid model had greater power over how they communicate. They were free to use WhatsApp, Zoom or email, whichever they found more appropriate, and in this way, their autonomy was probably increased. Nonetheless, the concept of being always "switched on" which the digital tools of communication encourage sometimes affects life negatively and affects their well-being.

4.4.2 Virtual Work

The transition towards the hybrid working model fostered communication within the organisation through WhatsApp, emails and virtual meetings. According to the participants, the number of communications increased considerably, and this enhanced the information flow and increased the frequency of feedback. This was notable in the following:

Participant 4: “Communication has actually increased. I mean, if you look at just the amount of WhatsApp groups - work-related ones, for instance - we have a lot. And there's never a day in any of those WhatsApp groups where there's no communication. I only saw benefits because previously you would just rely on emails. However, we also made use of WhatsApp and obviously the Zooms or via the internet. So, that particular shift assisted in informing people on time.”

Employees have experienced a shift towards virtual work, impacting how they communicate and collaborate. Although this transformation has enhanced interactions and cut down on the amount of movement, it has equally come with concerns in the area of technology and connection. As the organisation moved to this hybrid working model, the interactions across different levels of the company within the boundaries increased significantly. Now employees use various channels which include WhatsApp, emails, virtual meetings among others to communicate. Participant 4 observed that there are too many WhatsApp groups that are created for the purpose of work, all with frequent messages and updates. They emphasised that this rise in communication has been a positive thing; it enabled faster and better exchange of information than seeking to send emails only.

While the move to virtual work improved how information flows and reduced travel, it also brought its own challenges. Employees have had to navigate issues with technology and connectivity, which can sometimes complicate the seamless exchange of information. This highlighted the need to balance the advantages of enhanced communication and the practical difficulties of working in a digital space.

4.5 THEME: COPING WITH THE CHANGES IN ORG A BROUGHT BY ADOPTING A HYBRID WORK MODEL

Valuable data was rendered on how the employees coped with the changes brought by adopting a hybrid working model. In analysing the data, the following sub-themes were identified: work routine, adaptability and resilience. These identified themes served as points of departure for the reporting and interpreting of the data on coping with the changes brought forth by adopting a new working model.

4.5.1 Work Routine

Before the hybrid model, there were structural norms, and the need to maintain a routine came to arise. The participants indicated the following:

Participant 5: “At the beginning, I used to work from bed, but it changed. Now, I wake up, take a bath as if going to the office, sit comfortably, and continue with my work.”

Participant 10: “I missed human interaction and the routine of going to the office, but I adapted by recognising the benefits of hybrid work and using the time saved for personal development.”

The recognition of a structured routine in a hybrid model reflects the evolving nature of office culture within a more dynamic workspace. This transition reinforces the importance of normalcy and order even when there is a shift in the particular work environment. The conversations that revolve around people shifting to the hybrid model as a new way of working and the words adjusting to it always include the mention of ‘this routine’. This is not surprising because, for many, a structured routine provides a sense of stability, even when everything else is changing. For employees adapting to hybrid work, finding a routine seems to be a way to balance the old and the new. For instance, Participant 5 worked in bed at first but later combinations of practices such as getting up and getting dressed for work as if he were going to the office were quite useful. This combination of practices created a strong separation between his personal life and working life, making it very easy to switch on the “work mode”. It is such routine that is important because it enhances the feeling of the working day being under oppression. With regard to this, Participant 10, for instance, spoke about losing the day-to-day operational operations and the physical presence of people in the office. But they also understood the pluses of the hybrid model i.e. the time wasted on travelling which presently is being used for self-development. This speaks volumes about how people can be versatile to thrive even when some changes occur in the environment. Creating a daily routine gives a person control over their day. Even though the work environment has changed, they can still dictate how they approach their workday. This sense of control is crucial because it supports their ability to stay focused and productive, boosting their confidence in handling the hybrid model. Developing and adhering to a normal routine makes employees feel competent too. When Participant 5 decided to stop working from bed and instead commence the day more

formally, they weren't only trying to change a behavior but rather, they were enhancing their capacity to meet remote work demands. However, it is not just about productivity. Participant 10's experience highlighted a different challenge: the lack of daily human interaction. While routines help maintain work discipline, they can also underscore what is missing: those spontaneous chats and social connections that used to be part of the office routine. Such a lack of presence can hinder the level of connection and support that individuals feel in their workplace.

Working in a hybrid model within a rigid schedule is a reassuring yet challenging experience. It provides some relief and assists in growing and becoming productive. But on the flip side, it also brings back memories of what they once cherished, being social interactions that were quite commonplace in their routine.

4.5.2 Adaptation to the Hybrid Model

During interviews, the problem of the existence of documented policies and support within the organisation remained unsolved. In particular, participants emphasised the importance of employees having a good grasp of what they are supposed to do as well as what the leadership will provide. Otherwise, peering into the organisation may feel clumsy. The requirement of having documented policies as well as having support was however witnessed as follows:

Participant 4: "There is a need for clear guidelines on hybrid work for fairness."

Participant 10: "Through the transition, there were inconsistencies in support across departments."

The shift to a hybrid working model has highlighted the importance of clear policies and reliable support from the organisation. Employees have advocated for clarity around their job expectations and the necessity to receive assistance from the management when trying to effect such changes. Otherwise, the process of adjusting to the new working arrangement can be ambiguous and cumbersome. There are many factors, for instance, one participant claimed there were gaps in the hybrid work instructions to promote equity and another said it depended if there was any support at all from various departments. These observations stressed the critical role that leaders have in directing their followers' behavior and determining the pace of adaptation to the hybrid model.

4.5.3 Resilience

The switch to a hybrid working approach which entails working both from the office and home, proved that in ORG A, there was flexibility and perseverance. Participants had the following inputs:

Participant 2: “Due to the change, our organisation adjusted rapidly to outside forces.”

Participant 6: “In the organisation, we had to adjust to new verification processes and new data management systems.”

Participant 9: “The organisation did not lower its delivery expectations, even though it was forced to operate from home.”

The ability to learn quickly and be flexible under tough situations is quite important in the normal work of an organisation. This adaptability plays an important role in employees' feelings about their work and overall well-being. This rapid response can be seen as a positive

exchange; employees benefited from the organisation's ability to navigate challenges, strengthening their trust and sense of security. Employees' well-being is particularly important in stressful circumstances since it can be enhanced through secure practices. Knowing the organisation can deal with and respond to changes quickly gives employees comfort and security. Participant 6 stated that they should be able to get used to the new processes and systems. In this case, the organisation invested in these new tools, and employees, in turn, studied and adapted. This mutual effort benefited both sides; the organisation remained efficient, and employees gained new skills, boosting their confidence and well-being.

The organisation kept meeting its goals. This showed a strong commitment from employees, which is met with the organisation's support to ensure they can work effectively from home. Such mutual relationships contributed to the creation of a reliable and trusting climate that is essential for the well-being of the employees. Adaptation to such consequences of new systems as Participant 6 explained, involved employees acquiring new knowledge. Adding successfully tackling these hurdles serves to enhance employees' sense of self-efficacy which directly relates to their motivation and well-being. Participant 9's comments about meeting goals while working from home suggest that employees were trusted to manage their tasks independently. This autonomy, a feeling of having control of one's work, is a core component of *SDT* and can lead to overall well-being.

As a final point, the individual's focus on resiliency and adaptability may shift to their colleagues as these competencies enhance community within the organisation as well. Such employees, if provided with an opportunity to witness resiliency in their teammates or leaders,

may find it easier to integrate with their team which is crucial for a sense of wellbeing and morale.

4.6 THEME: RECOMMENDATIONS ON ENHANCING THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AMIDST HYBRID WORKING AT ORG A

Valuable data was rendered on the recommendations for enhancing the organisational culture amidst hybrid working. In analysing the data, the following sub-themes were identified: organisational support and resources, supply of resources, enhancing communication, leadership communication, team building and engagement activities, assistance for financial and emotional well-being, communication and collaboration- technological review, policy development, proactive wellness initiative, These identified themes served as points of departure for the reporting and interpreting of the data on the personal experiences and challenges.

4.6.1 Organisational Support and Resources

The shift towards a hybrid working model yielded the supply of tools and infrastructure for ORG A which readily became useful or appropriate for off-site work, though some other respondents noted that they required more help:

Participant 4: “There was a provision for computers and printers but something like a monetary provision for room modification was necessary.”

Participant 5: “There has to be a better hybrid working policy and an explicit framework as well.”

Participants appreciated the support but reported deficiencies in it:

Participant 2: “I found value in counselling and psychosocial support but these services seemed really poorly pushed for by the agencies.”

Participant 4: “I will suggest regular commissioning of the veterans and primary emotional health managers to conduct debriefs and examine the veterans’ cognitive health.”

In the case of ORG A, employees were given both the tools and the emotional resources necessary to help them adapt in the course of the transition to the new way of working. Employees in particular experienced how these resources were not only available but also employed, exposing both the strengths of the organisation and its weaknesses. With regard to the basic tools to work from home, ORG A supplied devices such as computers and printers. Some employees, however, were still under the impression that the support was inadequate and fell short of addressing all their requirements. Even though ORG A provided the basic equipment, one of the participants triggered the issue of providing more support - including the funds for setting up the workplace at home.

This statement stressed that although the focus was on the core part of the organisation, there were people who thought that more efforts could have been put into nurturing the hybrid setup completely.

The psycho-emotional and psychosocial assistance was indeed provided by the organisation and was mentioned by one of the participants as something they appreciated. Nevertheless, they also emphasised that such resources were not well advertised and thus were not available to the would be beneficiaries. Another participant expressed that periodic mental health assessments and debriefs should have been implemented, signifying that yes there was

support, but it did not get to the appropriate people. ORG A allowed employees the freedom to control how they managed their tasks by providing remote work technologies. Nonetheless, because of factors such as not having financial support to establish a proper home office, some employees found it difficult to create an environment where they could feel independent. The instruments that were furnished to the employees were quite utmost necessary in ensuring that employees felt effective in their positions. However as pointed out by one participant, the definition of what hybrid working looks like was never made clear and this left some employees confused on how to adapt to the new arrangement which was likely to bring their self-efficacy down.

Emotional and psychosocial support plays an important role in creating feelings of belonging in the organisation. Even though some support was provided, the responses show that there was a challenge in accessing it or maximum effectiveness from it. By not satisfying this need, the organisation may have potentially lost ways to bring its workers and the organisation closer. The support and resources ORG A received are in line with the general company culture, especially on employee welfare. The efforts made by ORG A to provide employees with the relevant tools and support were remarkable. Yet, the identified gaps point out that there was even more room for improvement in employees' overall well-being.

4.6.2 Supply of Resources

Moving to a hybrid response suggests that resource allocation is quite critical. The participants's views are expressed below:

Participant 5: “The company made sure that the resources were available for use at the same time, giving out laptops and phones.”

Participant 7: “One had to devise ways of overcoming and maintaining access.”

Resource allocation is critical for employees who wish to work in a hybrid setup. Providing the necessary tools and equipment helps maintain productivity and address any challenges related to remote work setups.

Participants highlighted a need for access to support and resources with the hybrid working model. They stated as follows:

Participants 1 and 3 “Having Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) should be more accessible and frequent, rather than just an annual visit.”

Participant 7: “There is a call for regular communication and easier access to wellness resources.”

This highlights that access to support and resources is crucial for employee well-being. Helping employees with their different needs in a timely and continuous manner promotes their psychological and emotional well-being in a great way. As indicated by participants in this research, the support as well as the access to the resources under hybrid working arrangements require significant improvement. They emphasised the need for more active promotion and provision of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) and wellness resources. Employees of the organisation shouldn't underestimate the importance of the service offered to them in this case the company should underline employee's health status as a priority. Such a relationship

opens possibilities of a deeper connection where employees feel appreciated and cared for. Employees 1 and 3 said that EAP should not be offered on an annual basis only.

Making it easy for employees to access these programmes reflects the organisation's concern for their well-being. This type of consistent support ensures the employees feel more secure and appreciated and also heightens their engagement levels and their commitment. Participant 7 was however less pleased and mentioned that there was a need for easier access to the resources and better communication about the wellness program. When these materials are easily accessible and there is always proper communication, the organisation helps the employees to address their problems in the most effective way. This step approach towards support ensures that issues do not arise in the first place and if they do there is timely intervention which improves mental and emotional health.

Access to support and resources is very important for the fulfilment of these needs. Employees' well-being is managed by employees themselves the way they wish with the help of easy access to support services. Such self-sufficiency also aids in the maintenance of a healthy work-life balance while allowing them to feel in control of their health. Continuous exposure to and participation in wellness activities makes employees feel much more efficient about their management of a range of mental and emotional health issues. With ongoing support, they can effectively handle stress and other challenges, which boosts their confidence and overall performance.

Management should focus on enhancing access to support and resources to support employee well-being in a hybrid working model. Providing continuous and easily accessible

support services is essential for addressing employees' needs effectively and promoting better mental and emotional health. By prioritising these areas, management can create a more supportive and responsive work environment, ultimately contributing to better employee well-being.

4.6.3 Enhancing Communication

An important aspect that was raised several times was that of communication as there was an absence of timely and clear contact from leaders about change in the organisation or what the future held. Participants were annoyed by the lack of information regarding important choices. Participants recounted as follows:

Participant 1: "I found the communication issues and poor communication regarding funding and organisational strategies to be extremely disappointing."

Participant 2: "I was worried that I was being kept in the dark regarding the functions and participation in the changes occurring within the organisation."

Such gaps in communication have had an effect on the well-being of employees, causing uncertainty and resentment. A recurring issue among ORG A's employees was the lack of clear and frequent communication from leadership, particularly around important organisational changes and future plans. This communication gap has significantly impacted employee well-being, as expressed by several participants.

When employees invest their time and effort into their work, they naturally expect transparency and support from their leaders. In ORG A, however, these expectations were not always met, leading to disruptions in the trust between employees and management. One

participant shared their frustration with the lack of communication, especially concerning crucial issues like funding and the organisation's future direction. This lack of information likely caused anxiety and uncertainty, making employees feel unsure about their job security and the organisation's stability. Another participant mentioned concerns about not being kept in the loop regarding their role in organisational development. Employees not included in key conversations may feel disconnected from the organisation, weakening their commitment and well-being. In the absence of specific guidance, subordinates may lose sight of their contribution to the whole organisation, which inevitably diminishes the confidence of such employees in their jobs. This doubt might trigger, for some, feelings of incompetence or a sense of frustration, where employees are simply not sure about their various duties and obligations.

Consistent, two-way communication is all important in ensuring that a sense of belonging is maintained within the organisation. It is possible that the communication factors mentioned by participants also contributed to the feeling of separation from the leaders and the other members of the team. So far, many employees are still wondering what will happen beyond now due to ambiguity in communication with the employees. This doubt affects their health, such as anxiety and loss of engagement. To create such a culture that could advocate for employee wellbeing within the organisation, high levels of openness and transparency must be displayed. The existing communication barriers lend support to the fact that ORG A needs to rectify this aspect for better performance in future. Improving communication can help restore trust, boost morale, and create a more supportive work environment. To enhance employee well-being and strengthen organisational culture, ORG A's leadership needs to focus on improving communication. By sharing more information and being more transparent about

changes and future plans, the organisation can rebuild trust, improve morale, and foster a stronger sense of connection among employees. These steps will help ensure that employees feel informed, valued, and part of a cohesive team, which is essential for maintaining a positive and productive work environment.

4.6.4.1. Communication and Support Network

This shows communication and backup from the network support is effective. Participants reported:

Participant 10: “I understood that keeping in touch with colleagues helps in the building of the support network to the purpose of network support management.”

Participant 2: “Frequent virtual meetings and measuring of the staff will help them efficiently manage.”

Effective communication and support networks are important for the health of employees in a hybrid mode of operation. Regular interactions and maintaining connections help prevent feelings of isolation and ensure ongoing support. The need for effective communication and strong support networks became increasingly clear as the organisation adapted to a hybrid working model. Participants underscored the importance of maintaining regular interactions and building supportive connections to ensure employees feel connected and valued.

In a well-managed organisation that nurtures adequate communication and networks, employees feel appreciated and their trust is earned encouraging them to be further committed. In this regard, it becomes necessary to get the employee’s voice and understanding. Participant

10 noted that it's essential to stay in touch with the peers to establish effective and strong networks. Constant contact and resources for continual assistance provide the best means to counteract employee loneliness. There is an organisation where employees understand that the management of the company values their team cohesion, and therefore, they are more engaged in the activities. Participating in a virtual meeting or a check-in on a regular basis is beneficial, according to Participant 2. Participants' frequency of such contact enhances the feeling of status and support within the context of role participation. More regular touch points support employees in addressing issues before they impact employee satisfaction and sense of community, which are essential for retention. Such communications also reduce anxiety about ongoing projects. Once updated, employees are able to perform better by making informed decisions and managing their activities and duties with ease. Employees are assured of their roles and responsibilities through support networks and regular interactions.

The support in the form of guidance and feedback enhances their performance and feelings of competence, while proper communication and support networks make employees feel a part of a community. This feeling of being part of a community plays a significant role in bettering the psychological state of the employees and averting feelings of loneliness while working from home.

Management needs to prioritise communication and provide appropriate support networks in order to promote employee well-being in a hybrid work model. Regular contact and interaction with people is important in avoiding publicly an outstanding feeling of loneliness and lack of support. These factors can enable management to help promote a

comfortable and connected workplace thereby leading to the enhancement of employee well-being and a better hybrid work experience.

4.6.4.2 Leadership Communication

In order to mitigate those communication gaps, it has been suggested that leadership communication can be improved in both frequency and clarity and made more active. This is also evident in the following:

Participant 1: “I think they are supposed to give an update and explain the reasons behind the changes in an effective way which is unfortunately not being done.”

As the strategy of the organisation evolves, this hybrid working environment places a greater need for purposeful communication from leadership. Regular communications and transparent information as to why things are done within the organisation will help in making the employees feel attached to the organisation. When leadership takes the initiative to communicate, it can be reassuring for employees because the leadership is willing to share information and is concerned about the employees. This builds trust and loyalty, which naturally leads to employees feeling more engaged and positive about their work—key elements of their well-being.

Regular updates and clear communication are important. When leadership keeps everyone informed, it strengthens the relationship between employees and the organisation. The feeling of being in the loop enhances the level of trust possessed by employees and motivates them which is very important for sustainability purposes. Receiving communication concerning the company’s objectives provides employees with a clear understanding of their

role and the importance of the role in relation to the overall objectives. For instance, when their work is appreciated and understood, it becomes easier for them to manage their tasks and resources making them less anxious. When employees receive regular updates, they have the information they need to do their jobs well. This makes them feel more capable and increases their confidence and well-being. Consistent and clear communication helps employees feel connected to the organisation and their colleagues. Keeping employees informed enhances their feelings of participation and appreciation, which improves their sense of belonging and overall well-being.

It is necessary to make management communication a key element in the architecture of the employee's life of the company within its hybrid working model. If the expectations are managed so that team members understand through clear and consistent communications what is expected of them, it will serve to enhance overall employee wellbeing. As a more specific example, it could be useful to start issuing a weekly or monthly 'what's new' bulletin as part of the communication package. Develop feedback mechanisms and encourage employees to share their views. This ensures the presence of two-way communication and enhances the leadership-employee interaction. There should be efforts to provide unambiguous instructions or disseminate difficult and confusing information in an easy-to-understand manner so that employees can be more assured and confident in their jobs. Through these efforts, management will be able to foster a workplace culture where employees get to feel appreciated and valued which in turn increases their engagement levels and ensures a more robust workforce.

4.6.5 Team Building and Engagement Activities

Due to the shift to a hybrid working model and the changes it caused, the participants required engagements, activities and team building. The participants observed the need for engagement in team-building activities or even debriefing sessions in order to strengthen their unity and team spirit.

Participant 2: “The absence of such activities as team building and debriefing is a void in the existing cultural context and organisational culture.”

Team cohesion and morale may be impacted by the absence of team building and engagement activities within a hybrid model. Regular team-building activities will help maintain strong interpersonal relationships and improve overall employee well-being. As ORG A transitioned to a hybrid working model, the importance of team building and engagement activities became clearer. Many participants noted that the shift left a noticeable gap in team cohesion and morale. For instance, Participant 2 stated that the insufficient amount of collectivism in the form of team building activities can be perceived as a serious deficiency of the present organisational culture. It is possible that they are not able to get to the social recognition that they require which adversely affects their motivation and feeling of being part of the organisation.

4.6.6 Assistance for Financial and Emotional Well-being

There are also suggestions by the participants that there is a need to support both financial and emotional well-being. For instance, the participants monitored the need to

cultivate health, finance, and emotional well-being through targeted initiatives and support mechanisms.

Participant 6: “The issues surrounding financial education and attendance regularity warrant financial education programmes and assistance.”

While it is important to consider these aspects of an individual’s life, i.e. financial and emotional in terms of fully supporting employees, Exclusive and specific long-term management and education programs and policies might enhance employee wellbeing in all dimensions. When the working model of ORG A changed to a hybrid model, it was evident that there was a gap in financial as well as emotional support for the employees. It was expressed by quite a number of participants that the organisation should provide holistic support in areas related to the tools of work and financial as well as emotional welfare issues. For example, Participant 6 called attention to the financial education that these programmes should comprise and further explained. This is a wider picture of employees of the company wishing that company assistance should not only focus on employee costs. Considering these developments, ORG A is in a position to offer a more secure environment for employees which invariably increases job satisfaction, loyalty and all round satisfaction. When employees see that their company is invested in their well-being, they are more likely to reciprocate with increased commitment and engagement.

In essence, providing well-rounded support helps create a more positive work environment and supports employees’ overall well-being, making them feel more appreciated and motivated in their roles.

4.6.7 Communication and Collaboration: Technological Review

Addressing technological challenges to ensure effective communication and collaboration is crucial. Participants reported as follows:

Participant 1: “There was a need to provide support for digital literacy and system operations.”

Participant 2: “With the technological integration, there is a need to improve connectivity infrastructure in rural areas.”

As the organisation transitions to a hybrid working model, managing technological challenges has become crucial for maintaining effective communication and collaboration. Participants highlighted the importance of providing support in areas like digital literacy and connectivity, particularly in rural settings, as these factors significantly impact their well-being. When the organisation invests in helping employees adapt to new technologies, whether by offering digital literacy training or improving connectivity, employees will likely respond with greater loyalty, engagement, and overall well-being. Supporting digital literacy helps employees gain the confidence to work independently. When employees are comfortable with the technology they use, they feel more in control of their work, which enhances their sense of autonomy and reduces stress. Providing training and improving infrastructure directly contributes to employees’ sense of competence. Being more adept with technology also boosts their confidence, which further enhances their well-being.

Maintaining good connectivity, primarily in rural regions, helps employees remain in contact with their coworkers and feel integrated within the team. This feeling of collaboration

is central to enhancing the feeling of sharing and well-being even in remote working circumstances. In order to maintain the good well-being of employees in a hybrid work model, there is a need to consider appropriate support for technology. These issues are essential because the company meets the practical issues but strengthens the positive relations and psychological well-being of the employees.

4.6.8 Policy Development

With the response from participants, it seems that in the transmission to the hybrid model, there was a need for policy development for guidance. This is notable in the following responses:

Participant 4: “We need clear policies and guidelines for managing remote employees, including performance metrics and accountability measures.”

Participant 8: “There has to be something that governs this whole hybrid working situation.”

The development of clear policies and guidelines is crucial for managing the hybrid work model. This includes, but is not limited to, developing performance measures, designing supervisory processes, and devising data security mechanisms to guarantee uniformity and fairness. Considering the organisation’s transition to a hybrid mode of working, it was imperative that there were policies and guidelines in place. This is why participants have noted that, given the new setup, it is possible to maintain consistency and fairness in regard to remote employees if, there exist definite policies. There is a gap in the clear articulation of policies and guidelines and, consequently, people perceive an equivocal, fair and just environment when

these policies are operational. The said clarity enhances their sense of security and appreciation leading to a quite positive sense of satisfaction. Governing hybrid work situations reduces uncertainty and stress, making employees feel more supported and connected to the organisation.

Good policies can support these needs by providing clear direction and structure. With clear policies, employees know the boundaries and expectations, which allows them to manage their work more independently. This overview brings about a sense of independence which makes them more relaxed. Organisational policies and procedures provide employees with information on their roles and the parameters that will be utilized for assessing their output. The clarity of this information increases their self-efficacy and self-sufficiency as there is no ambiguity concerning the required tasks for successful performance.

Remote work management systems encourage employees to emphasise equity and connection. When employees notice that everyone is enjoying equity and there are set standards, this reinforces their sense of attachment to the groups.

Management is obliged to set and communicate explicit policies and guidelines in order to promote employee well-being in the context of a hybrid working model. This consists of defining and communicating targets, establishing a remote supervision strategy, and maintaining confidentiality. Concentrating on these issues will enable management to create an equitable and enabling workplace which improves employees' well-being and relations in a hybrid environment.

4.6.9 Proactive Wellness Initiative

Proactive wellness initiatives were highlighted as a need by participants:

Participant 10: “There is a need for ORG A to have more proactive wellness initiatives, such as wellness sessions or activities, on a quarterly basis.”

Participant 6: “Such wellness interventions should not be activities for a particular time but should be incorporated into the operations activities of the organisation.”

The stress on there being proactive wellness strategies highlights how employees are affected by the culture of the organisation. By integrating these practices into the organisational routine, regular and systematic wellness activities can significantly enhance overall health and satisfaction. The feedback highlighted a growing need for proactive wellness initiatives within the organisation. Participants expressed a desire for more consistent and integrated wellness activities rather than occasional events. Additionally, periodic wellness initiatives impart a feeling of the organisation’s interest in the welfare of employees. This creates an atmosphere of goodwill in which employees appreciate and are appreciative of their welfare with magnitudes ranging higher than their remuneration. Respondent 10 on the other hand would want a much more vigorous approach with wellness initiatives such as a quarterly wellness or exercise session. This suggests that employees would benefit from regular opportunities to focus on their health and well-being. When an organisation actively invests in such initiatives, it shows that it values employees’ overall health, strengthening the bond between the organisation and its staff. Participant 6 elucidated that it would be more appropriate to consider wellness programmes as practices rather than events. In this way, the company effectively

embeds wellness into employees' daily lives and allows for their well-being to be constantly safeguarded. This omnipresent emphasis makes it possible to mold a culture of health in the workplace and proves the organisation's steady dedication to its workers' health.

Regular wellness activities give employees more control over their health and well-being. By offering ongoing opportunities for wellness, employees can take charge of their health in a way that fits their individual needs. Consistent wellness programmes help employees feel more capable of managing their stress and maintaining their health. When wellness is part of the organisational routine, employees have the resources and support they need to stay healthy and effective in their roles.

Management should focus on integrating wellness initiatives into the organisation's daily operations to enhance employee well-being in a hybrid working model. Including regular and structured health-focused activities in the workplace is beneficial as it improves health as well as the level of job satisfaction. Establishing a culture where well-being is an integral part of the organisation's work ethic and professionally means that the employees are of concern. Management, therefore, striving to achieve these goals will build a firm with a low level of such dissatisfaction leading to a general improvement in employee welfare.

Recognition and validations is critical for the future and welfare, participants reported a concern for recognition and valuation:

Participant 8: "There is a need for quarterly or more events that concentrate on recognition of certain achievements and the well-being of employees."

Participant 10: “Target market goals for employees should be of equal priority as recognition of their well-being and the encouragement of employees.”

Regularly recognising and valuing employees boosts their motivation and welfare. Plans for regular appreciation events promote a spirit of thanking and appreciation within such organisations as this is crucial in the promotion of high levels of morale and interest. With a hybrid working model, the participants focus on the experience and assert that there is the need for regular recognition and the need to value employees. Participants were on agreement that acknowledging a person as having accomplished something and that wellbeing’s durability with motivation is relevant. Participants that sustained the position that recognition moved in 8 stated that quarterly recognition events would be the best times to recognise achievements.

Appreciation should be distributed consistently as it influences preventive measures towards the deterioration of effort by the employee. It is evident that once an employee’s efforts are recognised, it builds their relationship with the business which in turn increases their level of commitment. Employee 10 stressed consideration of these employees’ health and appreciation in addition to the performance objectives. Enhancements and achievements should not be external developments in the organisation, but rather implemented by the core culture of the business. It suffices to maintain a well-balanced environment in which appreciation is shown but targets are met.

Recognition of employees on the basis of their efforts seemed to be an essential component and a performance-enhancing tool. The employees are encouraged to perform at a higher level as a result of receiving such assistance. Employees ought to be supported in their

attempts and achievements, and worded acknowledgement and reinforcement of a job well done should encourage employees to do their jobs efficiently. There is no doubt that management's acknowledgement of an employee's effort performed in a constructive manner creates a sense of worthiness or validation within the employee.

Management should prioritise implementing regular and meaningful recognition practices in order to improve employees' well-being in a hybrid work arrangement. Recognition of employees and their needs uniformly uplifts the morale, motivation, and general well-being of the employees. Management should invest time in employees' recognition and valuation to offer appreciation that enhances well-being and engagement, making the workforce more satisfied and active.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter explained how the organisational culture of ORG A impacted employee well-being during the shift to a hybrid working model post-COVID-19. The research indicated that the shift to a hybrid work model has deeply influenced how organisations operate and how employees feel about their work. On the other side, it brought greater efficiency and more flexibility. Still, it caused some problems too, such as handling the technology, absence of physical contact and difficulty in separating work from leisure. Employees have shown they can adjust, but such aspects as comfort with novelty in the workplace, with routines and balance between online and face-to-face communication are important for feeling skilled with this new setup. There is control and connection in the hybrid model, but supervision has to be applied in regard of feelings of isolation, communication stress and intrusion of work into personal life and vice versa that the synergy of the two models creates.

With regard to how the culture of the workplace can affect the well-being of the employees, it was obvious that when implementing the hybrid model in ORG A's structure, employees did benefit as well as suffered. Though many fans of work-life integration and greater leisure, it resulted in a decrease of social interactions and communication across levels and fusing of professional and personal life. To improve care for any specific employee ORG A has to improve communication from management, more concrete wellness strategies, better work-life integration and better social contacts in the hybrid approach.

The experience of the effect of changes in organisational culture on their well-being when shifting to a hybrid working model post-COVID-19 brought challenges and opportunities for NGO employees. It is essential for organisations to focus on helping employees find a better work-life balance and to offer clear guidance and support as they navigate this new landscape. Moreover, strengthening bonds and improving the communication of the team can be perceivable benefits as well. NGOs can demonstrate their willingness to their people's issues, in this case, emotional, as well as financial, by undertaking any such welfare initiatives. By doing this, such organisations help their employees to go through this transition and make the workplace more colourful and productive. This, in turn, contributes to the organisation's overall success, making it a place where everyone can thrive together.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapters laid the groundwork for understanding how changes in organisational culture, resulting from adopting hybrid working models post-COVID-19, have effected employee well-being at ORG A, a healthcare-focused NGO in the Free State.

Chapter 1 introduced the study by setting the context of ORG A's transition to hybrid work in response to the pandemic and its potential influence on both organisational culture and employee well-being. It indicated the importance of this research in understanding how employees adjusted to these significant changes.

Chapter 2 focused on a review of the literature, exploring the connection between organisational culture, hybrid working models, and employee well-being. The chapter explored how flexible work arrangements reshaped the workplace and emphasised the need for organisations to align their cultures with the evolving needs of employees in a post-pandemic world.

Chapter 3 outlined the research methodology, explaining the qualitative approach used to collect and analyse data from ORG A employees. The chapter detailed how this research design allowed for an in-depth understanding of the complex relationship between shifts in organisational culture and employee well-being.

Chapter 4 presented the findings, capturing the experiences of employees as they went through changes in their work environment. Key themes such as work-life balance,

adaptability, communication, and management's role in supporting well-being were explored, offering insights into both the positive and negative effects of these cultural changes.

Considering the findings, Chapter 5 will provide conclusions about the effect of hybrid work and cultural shifts on employee well-being. It will also offer recommendations for future organisational strategies aimed at fostering a healthy, productive work environment.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS

This study aimed to explore how the changes in the organisational culture at the participating NGO influenced the employees' well-being when implementing a hybrid working model post-COVID-19. In order to achieve this, objectives were set. These objectives, with the discussion of the findings, are subsequently presented.

5.2.1 Identify and Explore the Fundamental Constructs that underlie Organisational Culture

The literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2) explored the concept of organisational culture within NGOs, showing how it plays an important role in their success and ability to create lasting impact. It highlighted the critical role of a healthy organisational culture in NGOs implementing hybrid working arrangements that navigate the unique challenges of combining remote and in-office work, necessitating a thoughtful and adaptable approach, including tailored strategies, effective communication, work-life balance, mental health support, trust-building, and inclusive leadership. A strong organisational culture is essential for improving

employee well-being and productivity in hybrid settings; by addressing these factors, NGOs can cultivate a more supportive and engaged workforce.

Understanding and defining organisational culture within NGOs is essential as it forms the foundation of their success and effectiveness. In Chapter 2, Muscalu (2014) described organisational culture as the collective set of values, beliefs, and behaviours that evolve within an organisation over time, shaping how it operates and influencing employee well-being. The above understanding of organisational culture is in accordance to the original thoughts of Hofstede (1998) who proposed that organisational culture is essentially about how things are collectively done, directly affecting overall organisational performance and employee well-being.

The six core dimensions of organisational culture were discussed, including power dynamics, how uncertainty is managed, the balance between individualism and collectivism, gender role expectations, the time orientation of the organisation, and the extent of indulgence or restraint practised within it.

Table 1 in (Chapter 2) illustrated the elements of culture and how they affect employee well-being, indicating that in a workplace, where employees are open to changes, beneficial shifts in the organisational culture are easily accepted. Although stable and rather structured cultures may sometimes lead to resistance, other employees who thrive on flexibility, find it easier to adapt. This was also noted in the participants' views where some participants were open to changes, while others were more reluctant. Employees also indicated the need for more input in decision-making, aiming for a work environment where their voices are heard and

valued. Alongside this, personal well-being and work-life balance remain top priorities, often taking precedence over strictly organisational goals. Despite this focus on individual needs, many still feel a strong sense of responsibility to their teams and workplaces. The participants indicated that in their ability to function independently, they missed human interaction and the feeling of being a part of the team.

The literature and participants agreed that culture is about putting people first. Focusing on work-life balance, ensuring that employees have a voice in shaping up the culture, decisions, and staying open to new ways of working shows a genuine commitment to individual well-being. This approach will help reduce burnout and make people feel more valued, naturally boosting motivation and well-being. When employees see that their well-being matters, they will likely feel more connected to their work and bring their best energy and ideas. This is not just good for the team; it benefits the whole organisation by driving creativity and success.

In conclusion, understanding these organisational culture dimensions can help ORG A build an environment that drives organisational success and support their employees' well-being as a well-rounded and inclusive culture fosters long-term success, creating a positive and productive work atmosphere.

5.2.2 The Influence of Organisational Culture on Employee Well-Being

This objective was addressed in the literature review (Chapter 2) and the data from the interviews (Chapter 4). Chapter 2, Section 2.2.4 indicated that organisational culture influences employee well-being. According to Coldwell (2019), and Ficarra et al., (2020) organisational culture is an important determinant of behaviour in organisations. Section 4.3 addressed the

participants' views on how organisational culture affected their well-being and its relation to the literature in Chapter 2 , by referring to aspects such a healthy culture promotes belongingness, involvement and satisfaction which is beneficial to our employees' physical and emotional well being.As the literature further indicated, there is an increased sense of community, enhanced engagement, and boosted well-being as a result of a positive organisational culture (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). In their description of well-being, Taylor et al. (2023) cited it as a combination of being healthy, functioning well – having positive experiences such as being contented and enjoying life, realising one's potential and having a clear aim while surrounded with people who offer support. It was pointed out by Sulaiman and Effendi (2022) organ national culture and work satisfaction of an individual affects the level of success of the organisation in the workplace. In contemporary organisations, it must be sufficient for promote staff welfare in terms of culture and sustainability of the businesses. Similarly, participants agreed that a positive culture fosters engagement, autonomy, and satisfaction, improving well-being. Zhou et al. (2019) noted that enhancing employees' subjective well-being (SWB) is crucial for promoting organisational survival, productivity, and sustainable development. Participants acknowledged the challenges of organisational culture change, particularly in virtual work, such as stress, disconnection, and technical difficulties. These challenges can negatively affect well-being by causing isolation and frustration, which reflects the growing realisation that organisations must provide a pleasant psychosocial work environment (Fadipe, 2019).

A strong culture encourages well-being by promoting positive emotions and health, which are essential for individual success and organisational growth. However, Akanksha and

Arun (2020) emphasized the fact that, in regard to positive psychology where the appreciation of well-being is at the forefront, employees still reported higher levels of work stress & disembodied. This is reflective of the Social Exchange Theory whereby the employees determine the efficiency around the advantages of reduced social engagement. Employees reported mixed feelings regarding their new work environment; on the one hand, the move to virtual work provided the convenience of reduced commuting time and increased flexibility; on the other hand, many felt a deep sense of social isolation. However, it is vital that one appreciates the fact that the self-reported measures are bound to have associations which will be positive and are trust driven interrelationships at the workplace.

Remote work is beneficial for the business, albeit there are some challenges for the employees, such as bringing work home or having to work after official hours instead of spending time with family (Nakrošienė et al., 2019). Such conclusions coincide with the findings of Abdullah et al. (2020), who claimed that remote working incurs negative consequences on family roles, relationship roles, and roles within the home.

Technology has had an influential factor during this shift as well. There are employees who embraced the tools that enhanced work communication and made work interactions better, but there are also those who couldn't adjust to the pace of changes brought about very quickly. These experiences can be understood through the lens of the Self-Determination Theory as they underline the need for competence. Those who were confident in the use of digital tools were more satisfied, while those who struggled reported low levels of satisfaction. This indicates the potential importance of customised training programs to ensure all team members are prepared and provide adequate support to perform their tasks in the digital realm.

As employees adjusted to the hybrid model, their willingness to adapt exhibited a preference to control how and where they worked. With the new freedom to do various things as they deemed necessary, came the responsibilities that were not easy to deal with. Other employees were eager to meet coworkers in-person, stressing the role of relatedness in work. The hybrid work arrangement has its positive aspects but a disengagement from person-to-person contact can give a sense of loneliness so it is worth stressing that while flexibility is important, developing a workplace setting that places more emphasis on personal relationships is vital too.

In addition, employees also mentioned that although it was beneficial to have the choice of doing both work and personal activities on flexible hours, doing so had the opposite effect of working in a set office location. If limits are not clearly defined, the end result can be extreme stress. Organisations must endorse and safeguard employee well-being on a general level by creating reasonable work requirements and self-governance about the hours worked and off hours.

Developing structured habits was also reported as an additional useful tactic for the purpose of providing employees with a sense of permanence within the conditions of hybrid working pattern. Many considered the implementation of a routine as being able to add some constancy to their lives and a sense of power which further emphasizes the need for structure in a flexible regime.

5.2.3 The Experiences of NGO Employees on the Effect of Changes in Organisational Culture on Their Well-being when shifting to a Hybrid Working Model post-COVID-19

After COVID-19, NGO workers' experiences switching to a hybrid working paradigm have provided important new insights into how organisational culture shifts may affect their general well-being. This change has been difficult since many workers have struggled to keep a good work-life balance. Increased stress has frequently resulted from the blurring of work and personal life borders, with some people feeling pressured to be available all the time, even on the weekends. When we consider this through the lens of Social Exchange Theory, as discussed in Chapter 2, it becomes apparent that fostering a sense of reciprocity and appreciation within the workplace is crucial for cultivating a positive environment. Similarly, Self-Determination Theory emphasises the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, highlighting how essential it is for employees to feel empowered, capable, and connected to their colleagues.

The study identified several important issues about the opportunities and difficulties presented by the hybrid work environment. Although the shift to virtual communication has improved information exchange, it has brought new technological and connectivity-related difficulties. Furthermore, many workers feel alone due to the lack of frequent team-building exercises, which lowers their morale and sense of belonging. Additionally, employees expressed the need for greater all-encompassing support that considers their financial and emotional requirements in addition to their professional ones.

Post COVID19, a hybrid model of work has changed the day to day experience of work for the NGO employees in positive and also negative ways. However, moving away from the

conventional workmanship was not merely technology; it changed even the culture or ethos of the organisations. As reported by Mustajab et al. (2020), staying at home as a solution to the outbreak of the disease had different implications on productivity and even the mood of the employees, with different employees responding in varied manner. For some, remote work meant more opportunities and greater fluidity. For others, the abrupt disconnection and the spilling of the work-life into the household life caused anger and tension. This duality emphasizes exactly how distinct people are in their understanding and adjustments to new workplaces.

The changing boundaries can become a cauldron of stress for the workers, and in this context, Social Exchange Theory models the role of support or recognition as vital in performing the role. When employees are not appreciated or provided feedback and support, particularly in distant settings, their level of engagement and contentment may drop (Adams et al., 2020). Such feeling has also been embraced by Self – Determination Theory which cites autonomy, competence and connectedness as core tenets, stressing on the need for workers to have the feeling of control, capability or social connectedness. In a hybrid model where workers do not occupy the same space as the employer (Sulaiman & Effendi, 2022) there is need to cultivate and enhance these feelings so as to boost morale and guard against burnout.

On a general note, there are advantages of the hybrid work model such as costs attached to renting offices as well as boosting the flow of information due to different tools available. Programs such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom have turned out to be very useful in effective virtual collaborations (Hang & Minsook, 2023). But at the same time, friction and interruptions such as technical difficulties and poor internet connections can further aggravate the situation.

Coldwell (2019) further noted that despite the many benefits, digitalisation puts other work away from the centre stage as workers do not have the right tools or skills. To do this poses a major issue for Non-Governmental Organisations in terms of strategies on how to foster inclusive and flexible work cultures in our current digital age.

Moreover, remote work has gone beyond technology as an offshoot and has also extended to social relationships on the workplace. For NGO teams that tend to flourish when there are common objectives and opportunities for face-to-face interactions, the absence of team-building activities has left missing points for many people. Coldwell (2019) observed that without a regular opportunity to meet, people's routines change, and they start to become demotivated and less focused on the common goal of the organisation. In a context characterized by virtual team working dynamics, maintaining the feeling of being integrated into a team requires enhanced focus and innovation in managing the teams' cohesion.

Concerning support, we observe that there is an increasing demand for more advanced support structures that do not only focus on work-related expectations. The staff would like a more rounded approach where their physical, psychological, and emotional needs are taken into consideration. Sulaiman and Effendi (2022) state that these activities are an essential part of the working practices as it helps the employees' work perspectives change from being arduous to more manageable and supportive. Coldwell (2019) reiterated that these aspects will need to be considered for any organisation in today's hybrid work era as it is the type of work that offers opportunities for everyone.

5.2.4 The Management Implications for Ensuring Employee Well-being by Implementing a Hybrid Working Model

This objective was addressed in the literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.5), discussing overcoming obstacles in fostering a healthy organisational culture. Section 2.2.6 explored best practices in promoting well-being under hybrid work agreements. It was also addressed by participants' responses in (Chapter 4, Section 4.5).

The literature highlighted the importance of fostering a healthy organisational culture in NGOs implementing hybrid working arrangements. For example, Mustajab et al. (2020) and Rudnicka et al. (2020) highlighted the need for tailored strategies, like using AI to enhance communication, promoting work-life balance, and building trust. These approaches are critical in navigating the unique challenges of blending remote and in-office work settings. Additionally, Coldwell (2019) stated that the technological developments brought on by the Fourth Industrial Revolution were a double-edged sword, enabling remote work and creating disparities for employees who may lack digital literacy or reliable internet access. Baragar (2021) explained the role of virtual communication platforms like Microsoft Teams and Zoom, which have been essential for collaboration in hybrid models but can also contribute to feelings of isolation without regular in-person interactions. This highlights the importance of balancing digital and in-person support initiatives to maintain employee morale. Research emphasises that fostering a robust organisational culture directly supports employee well-being, boosting productivity (Mustajab et al., 2020; Sulaiman & Effendi, 2022). Therefore, NGOs can create a more supportive and engaged workforce by addressing these factors. The literature indicated the importance of a comprehensive approach to employee well-being in hybrid work

environments. Organisations can foster an inclusive and engaged workplace by focusing on communication, support, tailored initiatives, and strong leadership.

Participant insights reinforced the literature's emphasis on effective communication, support networks, and consistent recognition as key elements in creating a positive hybrid work environment. Chapter 2 of the Social Exchange Theory cites the importance of resource access and communication for employee loyalty and engagement. Employees who believe their organisation cares about them are most likely to be loyal and engaged which is explained by the Social Exchange Theory. Management communication and achievement of the targeted resources create bonds between employees and the organisation. Employees invest their trust and commitments into the organisation and vice versa in return for their recognition and value, which enhances their satisfaction and engagement levels.

By placing greater emphasis on autonomy, competence, and relatedness, self-determination theory serves to advance the employees' well-being. This situation requires improving connectivity and providing digital literacy training for employees in remote areas (Coldwell, 2019) which enables them to feel more competent and self-sufficient in managing hybrid work situations. By addressing technological barriers and enhancing leadership communication, management can empower employees to feel more in control of their work. Initiatives like providing digital literacy training and improving connectivity, especially in rural areas, enhance employees' sense of competence, allowing them to navigate the complexities of hybrid work more effectively. Additionally, establishing regular check-ins and fostering strong support networks can help combat feelings of isolation and strengthen team cohesion, creating a sense of belonging.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the recommendations made based on the conclusions reached.

5.3.1 Strengthen Organisational Culture to boost Well-being

A positive organisational culture is essential for employee well-being, especially in a hybrid work environment. NGOs should foster a culture built on trust, openness, and support. Regular team building activities, both virtual and in-person, can help keep employees connected and motivated. ORG should ensure that employees feel heard, respected, and part of a community where their contributions matter. A strong, value-driven culture will not only boost morale but also enhance the organisation's overall success.

5.3.2 Create Clear Boundaries to Protect Work-Life Balance

Flexibility in hybrid work is important but can lead to burnout if not managed properly. Establish clear boundaries between work and personal life by setting designated working hours and encouraging employees to log off when their day is done. Managers should model this behaviour and emphasise that after-hours communication is discouraged unless it is truly urgent. Promote a culture that values taking breaks, time off, and self-care, ensuring employees are not pressured to be "always on".

5.3.3 Improve Communication and Transparency across All Levels

In a hybrid work model, clear and frequent communication is critical. Management should regularly update staff on organisational changes, goals, and progress to maintain trust and engagement. Hold virtual town halls or team meetings to keep everyone in the loop and

encourage open channels for feedback. Transparent communication helps employees feel valued and included, reducing anxiety and building a stronger connection with the organisation.

5.3.4 Invest in Technology and Digital Skills Training

Not all employees are equally comfortable with new technology, which can create frustration. NGOs should provide ongoing digital literacy training to ensure all staff feel confident using the tools required for hybrid work. Invest in stable internet and technology resources, particularly for employees in rural or remote areas. This will help employees feel more competent and reduce the stress associated with technical difficulties.

5.3.5 Prioritise Mental Health and Well-Being Programmes

The shift to hybrid work has affected mental health, with many employees experiencing feelings of isolation or burnout. NGOs must offer comprehensive mental health support, such as access to counselling services, wellness programmes, and regular mental health check-ins. Create a culture where mental health is openly discussed, and encourage employees to take time for self-care. Prioritising mental well-being will improve individual health and foster a more resilient and engaged workforce.

5.3.6 Recognise and Reward Employee Efforts

Recognition is key to keeping employees motivated and engaged. Establish a consistent system to recognise individual and team achievements through public acknowledgement in meetings, personal notes of appreciation, or formal rewards. Feeling valued and appreciated directly impacts employee satisfaction and well-being, contributing to a more positive work environment.

5.3.7 Balance Autonomy with clear Expectations

While employees appreciate the autonomy that hybrid work offers, it is important to balance this freedom with clear expectations. Set transparent performance goals and accountability measures to ensure employees know what is expected of them while allowing flexibility in meeting those goals. Trust employees to manage their work but offer guidance and support when needed, helping them thrive in a more autonomous setting.

5.3.8 Offer Tailored Support for Hybrid Work Challenges

Each employee faces unique challenges in a hybrid work environment, whether needing better home office setups or balancing personal responsibilities with work. NGOs should offer personalised support, such as financial assistance for home office equipment, flexibility for those with caregiving responsibilities, or tailored work schedules. By addressing individual needs, the organisation can show it genuinely cares about its employees' well-being, making them feel more supported and valued.

5.3.9 Encourage Continuous Learning and Adaptation

Hybrid work and technological changes require employees to adapt quickly. NGOs should encourage a culture of continuous learning by providing regular training and development opportunities. Whether it is new skills related to digital tools or leadership development programmes, investing in employees' growth will boost their competence and confidence and improve overall well-being and retention.

5.3.10 Foster a Culture of Belonging and Connection

Hybrid work can make employees feel disconnected from their teams. Organisations should make a conscious effort to maintain strong social connections by organising team-building activities and fostering regular in-person interactions when possible. Even small, casual check-ins can help maintain a sense of camaraderie and trust, ensuring that employees feel part of a supportive community.

5.3.11 Strengthen Leadership Development

The organisation should invest in leadership training focused on emotional intelligence and effective communication. Leaders should have the skills necessary to support their teams and uphold a positive organisational culture.

5.3.12 Monitor and Adjust Hybrid Work Policies

Ongoing evaluation is important, as well as regularly assessing the effectiveness of hybrid work policies through surveys and employee feedback. Be willing to make adjustments based on what employees find beneficial or challenging. By implementing these recommendations, ORG A can create a supportive and engaging workplace that prioritises employee well-being within the hybrid working model. This comprehensive approach will enhance individual satisfaction and contribute to the organisation's overall success and effectiveness.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As the study sought to investigate the effect of the shifts in organisational culture on the employees' health in an NGO that has adopted a hybrid working approach, certain challenges

like sample size were encountered where the sample was confined to people in management and the Free State, implying that the results may be less generalisable than would be ideal.

Surveys that were self-administered due to the likely use of interview techniques in the field to collect data from the respondents may result in some of the respondents being biased about what responses were appropriate or not remembering the events as they described them.

This research concentrated on the activities of only one NGO; therefore, the generalisation of the findings to other organisations with distinct structures, problems, and cultural contexts could be a serious limitation. Since the research was carried out during post-pandemic periods, this view may be challenged because it would have been difficult to disentangle the enduring consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic on employees' mental states and work-life quality from hybrid schemes of work.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter investigated the chief results as to how the changes in the organisation's culture have affected the employees' well-being in an NGO that adopted the hybrid working approach. The research confirmed that a resultant shift of this kind should be sustained by a strong and committed organisational culture. The literature and participants' responses both emphasised that clear communication, supportive leadership, mental health support, and inclusivity are crucial elements in fostering a positive work environment.

The hybrid model introduced both opportunities and challenges. While the flexibility of remote work improved productivity and work-life balance for some, it also raised issues such as feelings of isolation and blurred boundaries between personal and professional life. All

the respondents and some sources have emphasised that these challenges can be surmounted if hybrid working conditions are designed in a way that will consider all the connections, equity and wellness to balance out the various complexities.

By tailoring strategies, enhancing the level of digital skills and ensuring a conducive culture, NGOs will foster a sense of worth among their employees. The chapter further validated the role of innovative and continuous leadership in fostering these practices as mechanisms of promoting employee well-being and outcomes for the organisation.

5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to understand how changes in organisational culture at the participating NGO affected employee well-being during the transition to a hybrid working model after COVID-19. In order to address this aim, the focus was on several key objectives: to identify and explore the fundamental aspects that shape organisational culture, to provide an overview of how organisational culture impacts employee well-being, to delve into the experiences of NGO employees regarding how changes in culture influenced their well-being in the hybrid work environment and to gain insights into what these cultural changes mean for management in terms of supporting employee well-being in a hybrid model.

The results provided some useful reflections about the relationship between the culture of the organisation and the level of employee wellness. It was established that a positive organisational culture plays an important role in the enhancement of employee well-being. Variable study participants pointed out that strong cultures allow them to belong and engage, improving health and well-being in the process. This reinforces the idea that organisations

should prioritise cultivating a supportive culture to enhance well-being and drive overall performance.

Opportunities and challenges were discovered while navigating the shift to hybrid work models. Many employees appreciated the flexibility of remote work. On the other hand, they also expressed worries about a sense of social loneliness and a merging of the boundaries between work and home. Such duality fits into the concepts of Social Exchange Theory and Self-Determination Theory, demonstrating how effort efficiency by employees includes sociocultural costs incurred by lower employee interaction.

The study found that effective communication and adapting to new technologies were critical to employee experiences in this hybrid setting. Organisations need to invest in training and resources that help employees build the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly digital world. When employees are encouraged and feel comfortable and capable of using them, their well-being is enhanced.

Therefore, it is clear that organisations have a responsibility to aim for preventative measures for the disruptive impacts of transforming work dynamics. Defining structured routines, encouraging a good work-life balance and promoting healthy relationships between employees are fundamental areas that should be addressed to promote well-being. Such orientation creates a resilient workforce that can cope with the intricate challenges of the modern workplace while remaining engaged and productive.

To summarise, this study clearly highlighted the particular role of the organisation's culture in enhancing the wellbeing of employees as its most pressing needs. The need to foster

such cultures that promote and nurture employee well-being is also important for continued growth and success, even as organisations change. In light of these changes, further studies could consider other aspects of organisational culture with a bearing on well-being and the nature of the work setting. In any case, advancing comprehension of the relationship between organisational culture and employee well-being and vice versa will assist with the design of more conducive and effective workplaces for all employees.

REFERENCES

- Abdullah, N. A. A., Rahmat, N. H., Zawawi, F. Z., Khamsah, M. A. N., & Anuarsham, A. H. (2020). Coping with post COVID-19: can work from home be a new norm? *European Journal of Social Sciences Studies*, 5(6). <http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejsss.v5i6.933>.
- Afonja, A. F. (2020). Application of family-friendly policies in public and private institutions for effective service delivery in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Organizational Cultures: An International Journal*, 20(2), 1–12. 10.18848/2327-8013/CGP/v20i02/1-12.
- Akanksha, J., & Arun, J. C. (2020). What comprises well-being at workplace? A qualitative inquiry among service sector employees in India. *South Asian Journal of Business & Management Cases*, 9(3), 330–342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2277977920958508>.
- Baragar, S. L. (2021). Finding balance while the pendulum swings: An exploration of work-life balance among academic parents in Iceland during COVID-19 (Doctoral dissertation). <http://hdl.handle.net/1946/39854>.
- Beugelsdijk, S., & Welzel, C. (2018). Dimensions and dynamics of national culture: Synthesizing Hofstede with Inglehart. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 49(10), 1469–1505. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022118798505>.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 57–71). American Psychological Association.

- Breevaart, K., & Bakker, A. B. (2018). Daily job demands and employee work engagement: The role of daily transformational leadership behavior. *Journal of occupational health psychology, 23*(3), 338. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000082>.
- Bryman, A., Bell, E., & Hirschsohn, P. (2021). *Research methodology business and management contexts*. Oxford University Press.
- Cachia, M., & Millward, L. (2011). The telephone medium and semi-structured interviews: a complementary fit. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal, 6*(3), 265-277. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17465641111188420>.
- Chandrasekar, K. (2011). Workplace environment and its impact on organisational performance in public sector organisations. *International Journal of Enterprise Computing and Business Systems, 1*(1), 1–19. <http://www.ijecbs.com>.
- Chartered Management Institute. (n.d.), (2015). Understanding organisational culture. <https://www.managers.org.uk/~media/Files/PDF/Checklists/CHK-232Understanding-organisational-culture.pdf>.
- Coldwell, D. A. (2019). Negative influences of the 4th Industrial Revolution on the workplace: Towards a theoretical model of entropic citizen behavior in toxic organizations. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 2670*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16152670>
- Creswell, J. W. (2021). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. SAGE.

- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 874–900.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>.
- Cypress, B. S. (2017). Rigour or reliability and validity in qualitative research: Perspectives, strategies, reconceptualization, and recommendations. *Dimensions of critical care nursing*, 34(4), 253-263. DOI: 10.1097/DCC.0000000000000253
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012). Self-determination theory. In P.A.M Van Langge, A.W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, 1(20), 416–436. SAGE Publications.
- Deci, E. L., Olafsen, A. H., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). Self-determination theory in work organizations: The state of a science. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 4(1), 19–43. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032516-113108>.
- Demirhan, A., & Bulgur, N. E. (2023). How does remote working enhance flow experience? the role of employees' psychological well-being. *Management Research & Practice*, 15(2).
- Fadipe, T. G. (2019). Evaluating the complementarity of knowledge and psychosocial risk management to improve employee well-being and performance through improved work organisation and management [Doctoral dissertation, University of Nottingham]. <https://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/id/eprint/57086>.

- Ficarra, L., Rubino, M. J., & Morote, E.-S. (2020). Does organizational culture affect employee happiness? *Journal for Leadership and Instruction*, 19(2), 38–47. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1282787>.
- Fusch Ph D, P. I., & Ness, L. R. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(9), 1408-1416.
- Grawitch, M. J., Gottschalk, M., & Munz, D. C. (2006). The path to a healthy workplace: A critical review linking healthy workplace practices, employee well-being, and organizational improvements. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 58(3), 129. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1065-9293.58.3.129>.
- Hofstede, G. (1998). Attitudes, values and organizational culture: Disentangling the concepts. *Organization Studies*, 19(3), 477–493. <https://doi.org/10.1177/017084069801900305>.
- Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online readings in psychology and culture*, 2(1), 8. <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>.
- Humble, N., & Mozellus, P. (2022). Content analysis or thematic analysis. *European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies*, 21(1), 74–81.
- Kirpik, G. (2020). The concept of employee's happiness in human resources management: A systematic literature review. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, 8(3), 2750–2775. <https://doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v8i3.1517>.

- Kniffin, K. M., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S. P., Bakker, A. B., ... & Vugt, M. V. (2021). COVID-19 and the workplace: Implications, issues, and insights for future research and action. *American psychologist*, 76(1), 63.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000716>.
- Knight, R. (2020). How to manage a hybrid team. Harvard Business Review. Haettu osoitteesta <https://hbr.org/2020/10/how-to-manage-a-hybridteam>.
- Kossek, E. E., Valcour, M., & Lirio, P. (2014). Organizational strategies for promoting work–life balance and wellbeing. *Work and wellbeing*, 3, 295-319.
10.1002/9781118539415.wbwell14.
- Mer, A., & Srivastava, A. (2023). Employee engagement in the new normal: Artificial intelligence as a buzzword or a game changer? In The adoption and effect of artificial intelligence on human resources management, Part A (pp. 15-46). *Emerald Publishing Limited*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80382-027-920231002>.
- Meyer, J. P., & Herscovitch, L. (2002). Commitment to organizational change: Extension of a three-component model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(3), 474.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.3.474>.
- Minkov, M., & Hofstede, G. (2011). The evolution of Hofstede's doctrine. *Cross cultural management: An international journal*, 18(1), 10-20.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/13527601111104269>.

- Molino, M., Ingusci, E., Signore, F., Manuti, A., Giancaspro, M. L., Russo, V., ... & Cortese, C. G. (2020). Wellbeing costs of technology use during Covid-19 remote working: An investigation using the Italian translation of the technostress creators scale. *Sustainability*, 12(15), 5911. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su1215591>.
- Mooney, D. (2016). Exploring the sustainability of hybrid working as a workforce model. *Global Journal of Business and Integral Security*, 1(1), 1-12. <http://www.ijecbs.com>.
- Muscalu, E. (2014). Organizational culture change in the organization. *Land Forces Academy Review*, 19(4), 392–396. <https://doi.org/10.1515/raft-2014-0040>.
- Mustajab, D., Bauw, A., Rasyid, A., & Ira, A. (2020). Working from home phenomenon as an effort to prevent COVID-19 attacks and its impacts on work productivity. *The International Journal of Applied Business*, 4(1), 13–21. <https://doi.org/10.20473/tijab.V4.I1.2020.13-21>.
- Nakrošienė, A., Bučiūnienė, I., & Goštautaitė, B. (2019). Working from home: characteristics and outcomes of telework. *International journal of manpower*, 40(1), 87-101. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-07-2017-0172>.
- NEAC. (2021, April 27). *Research benefits and harms*. National Ethics Advisory Committee. <https://neac.health.govt.nz/national-ethical-standards/part-two/8-research-benefits-and-harms>

- Nurunnabi, N., Alhawal, H. M., & Hoque, Z. (2020). Impact of COVID-19: How CEOs respond to SMEs recovery planning in Saudi Arabia. White paper. *Prince Sultan University*.
- Panhwar, A. H., Ansari, S., & Shah, A. A. (2017). Post-positivism: An effective paradigm for social and educational research. *International Research Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 45(45), 253-259.
- Rudnicka, A., Newbold, J., Cook, D., Cecchinato, M., Gould, S., & Cox, A. (2020). Eworklife: Developing effective strategies for remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic. <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/45905>.
- Smollan, R. K., & Sayers, F. G. (2009). Organizational culture, change and emotions: A qualitative study. *Journal of Change Management*, 9(4), 435–457.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14697010903360632>.
- Spicer, A. (2020). Organizational culture and COVID-19. *Journal of Management Studies*, 57(8), 1737-1740. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12625>.
- Sulaiman, A. A., & Effendi, A. A. (2022). An assessment of the effect of work from home on academic worker's well-being in Malaysian Higher Educational Institutions. *Global Business & Management Research*, 14.
- Taylor, et al. (2023). Well-being refers to the combined feeling of having good health and functioning well. *Journal of Medical Philosophy*, 46(6), 645–662.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jmp/jhab031>.

- Tran, H. T. D., & Kim, M. (2023). Factors Influencing the Continued Intent to Use Virtual Interactive Platforms in Korean Small-and Medium-Sized Enterprises for Remote and Hybrid Work. *Sustainability*, 15(13), 9972. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15139972>.
- Trudy, E. (2022). Understanding organizational culture: The blend of formal structure and informal social dynamics. *Culture Talk*. Retrieved from <https://culturetalk.com>
- Weideman, M., & Hofmey, K. B. (2020). The influence of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement: An exploratory study. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(1) 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v18i0.1209>.
- Wels, J., Wielgoszewska, B., Moltrecht, B., Booth, C., Green, M. J., Hamilton, O. K., ... & Ploubidis, G. B. (2023). Home working and social and mental wellbeing at different stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK: Evidence from 7 longitudinal population surveys. *PLoS medicine*, 20(4), e1004214. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1004214>.
- Zettl, A., Seewald, B., & Trübswetter, A. (2021). Value-based organisational culture- understanding change processes as a dance. In *ISPIM Conference Proceedings* (pp. 1-13). The International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM). ISBN 978-952-335-467-8.
- Zhou, Q., Chen, G., & Liu, W. (2019). Impact of perceived organizational culture on job involvement and subjective well-being: A moderated mediation model. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 47(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.7478>.

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL



GENERAL HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

Registration Number: REC-112922-058

26-Jun-2024

Dear Miss Palesa Makhubu

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

The influence of a changed organisational culture on employee wellbeing at an NGO shifting to a hybrid working model

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2023/2320

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted via an Amendment on RIMS to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit a Final Report on RIMS for your study/research project to the ethics office once the project has concluded. Should you require more time than the allotted 12 months to complete this research, please apply for an extension by submitting a Continuation/Report on RIMS. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance. We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

Digitally
signed by Dr
Adri du Plessis
Date:
2024.05.26
18:15:32
+0200

205 Nelson Mandela P.O. Box 339
Drive Bloemfontein 9300
Park West Tel: +27 (0)51 4019337
Bloemfontein 9301 duplessis@ufs.ac.za
South Africa www.ufs.ac.za



APPENDIX 2: ORG A APPROVAL LETTER

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY: MS PALESA MAKHUBU

On behalf of Right to Care NPC, I am writing to formally indicate our awareness of the research study proposed by Ms Palesa Makhubu, a student at the University of the Free State.

As Group Training Manager I am granting Palesa permission to conduct her research at our organisation. Furthermore, we are also granting Palesa access to our company's email addresses to contact respondents to participate in her research study.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my office. Yours

sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Theron', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Antonie Theron
Group Training Manager

APPENDIX 3: RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

DATE

June 2024

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The influence of a changed organisational culture on employee well-being at an NGO shifting to a hybrid working model

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR / RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Palesa Makhubu

2008025770

0829360444

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

Business School

Business

STUDY LEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

Prof. Rita Niemann

0833084234

WHAT IS THE AIM / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study aims to explore how the changes in the organisational culture at the participating NGO influenced the employees' wellbeing when implementing a hybrid working model post-COVID-19

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

The researcher is Palesa Makhubu, a Master of Business Administration, working at Right to Care. She is doing to study as an MBA research and exploring the changes in the organisational culture influence on employee's wellbeing when implementing a hybrid working model post-COVID-19.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

The study is still awaiting approval from the Research Ethics Committee of UFS.

Approval number: **UFS-HSD2023/2320**

WHY ARE YOU INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

The sample population comprises permanent employees of ORG A in management positions, who had been employed before COVID-19 and who were still part of the organisation. There are 23 employees in management positions in the Free State. From this population, the study will sample 10 participants. An email will be sent to all 23 employees and the first ten to consent were conveniently selected as part of the study sample. The rationale for choosing this population was to get insight into the impact of organisational culture change post-COVID-19 while shifting to a hybrid model. The participant's contacted details was obtained with the organisation's permission and the study utilised non-probability purposive sampling as it aims to deliberately select participants who had experienced the organisational culture change, and who had possibly been affected by the change as a result of COVID-19.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

Your role as a participant is to be informed by the study and consent to taking part. The study involves semi-structured interviews that will be done through Zoom for 40 minutes or more. The questions asked will be open-ended questions.

CAN THE PARTICIPANT WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

Participation is voluntary and there is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation. Being in this study is voluntary, and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

Studying the influence of a changed organisational culture on employee wellbeing in an NGO transitioning to a hybrid working model can yield valuable insights that benefit both employees and the organisation as a whole. By understanding the relationships between these variables, NGOs can create more supportive, flexible, and effective work environments that foster employee wellbeing, productivity, and organisational success.

WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED INCONVENIENCE OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is not much harm or risk in taking part in the study, although any potential harm to participants, such as emotional anguish or confidentiality breaches will be minimised. The advantages of the study were carefully studied and explained to participants, as well as to the larger field of research. Participants who experience distress due to their participation in the study will be referred for counselling services by a social worker. The cost was covered by the researcher. Participants will be given fair and equitable treatment without any bias or discrimination. Participants who experienced harm or distress due to their participation in the study could contact the researcher to refer them for counselling services by a social worker. The researcher was prepared to cover the cost.

WILL WHAT I SAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

All information gathered from this study will be kept private and securely stored on-cloud to avoid unauthorised access. The participants will not be identifiable in the research findings' reporting. All data from this study was kept confidential and securely stored in an encrypted file on-cloud to avoid unauthorised access. The identities of the participants will be protected in the reporting of the research findings by replacing their names with pseudonyms. The above risk-mitigating measures were vital in maintaining trust between the researchers and the participants, promoting the willingness of individuals to participate in this research study, and upholding the ethical standards that are essential for responsible and respectful research conduct.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?

Electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval for 5 years. The data will be Permanently deleted, Cloud service providers often have options for permanently deleting data. This usually involves multiple stages of deletion, including removing it from active servers and then wiping it from backups.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There won't be any payment or reward offered, financial or otherwise. The participants who might experience any harm will see a social worker at the cost of the researcher.

HOW WILL THE PARTICIPANT BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Palesa Makhubu on 0829360444. The findings are accessible for 5 years. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Palesa Makhubu on 0829360444 or email Makhubu.palesa@yahoo.com. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Rita Niemann on 0833084234 or email ritaniemann27@gmail.com

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, the undersigned,

_____ (*participant's full names to be included*), (the
“**Participant**”)

confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

The influence of a changed organisational culture on employee wellbeing at an NGO shifting to a hybrid working model

(the “**Study**”) in relation to

_____ and which Study is being conducted by

Palesa Makhubu

(*insert the name of the researcher*), (the “**Researcher**”).

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that–

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the **interview**.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): Palesa Makhubu

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNIE

Focus area	Questions
General Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you describe your role and responsibilities at the NGO? 2. How long have you been with the organisation?
Culture Change and Well-being	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Have you experienced any changes in the organisational since the shift to a different working model? If so, can you describe these changes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please share any specific examples of how the changed organisation has impacted your work or interactions with other colleagues? - How do you think these changes in the organisation have affected your well-being and the well-being of your colleagues?
Work-Life balance and support.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. How has the transition to a hybrid working model affected the balance of your work and your personal life, if so, how? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How did you experience the organisational culture that came with the new way of working supported or affected your ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance? Please explain. - In what ways did the organisation provide support and resources to help you adapt to the new hybrid working model? - What are the support measures or resources you believe would be helpful for your well-being in this changed environment?
Communication and Collaboration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. How has communication within the organisation changed with the shift to a hybrid working model? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What challenges and benefits related to communication and collaboration have you experienced? - How do you think these changes in communication and collaboration affected your well-being?
Coping with the changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. How have you personally coped with the changes in organisational culture and the transition to a hybrid working model? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there practices that have helped you maintain a sense of well-being during this transition? - What recommendations do you have for the organisation to better support employees as they adapt to these changes?
Future Outlook:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. What are your expectations or hopes for the organisational culture and your well-being in the context of the hybrid working model? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there specific areas or aspects of the organisational culture that you believe should be prioritised to enhance employee well-being in the future?