

Timesizing Proximity and Perceived Organizational Support:  
Contributions to Employee Well-Being and Extra-Role Performance

Pedro Neves<sup>a</sup>, Salar Mesdaghinia<sup>b</sup>, Robert Eisenberger<sup>c</sup> and Robert E. Wickham<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Nova School of Business and Economics, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal;

<sup>b</sup>Department of Management, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI, USA;

<sup>c</sup>Psychology Department, University of Houston, Houston, TX, USA;

<sup>d</sup>Clinical Psychology PhD Program, Palo Alto University, Palo Alto, CA, USA

Abstract

Timesizing, i.e. reduced work hours, has emerged as a less problematic alternative to layoffs. However, timesizing carries problems in terms of employee stress, attitudes, and performance. Based on the transactional theory of stress and the job demands-resources model, the authors proposed that timesizing proximity and perceived organizational support (POS) interactively predict employee stress appraisal and its outcomes. Through a field quasi-experiment involving 251 employees and their supervisors in a social service agency that was undergoing timesizing, the study found that higher POS minimized the effect of timesizing proximity on employees' stress appraisal. In turn, stress appraisal was related to a number of cross-sectionally assessed outcomes including emotional exhaustion, reduced affective commitment to change, and reduced extra-role performance. These results highlight POS as a key organizational resource that lessens the negative consequences of proximity to timesizing.

*Keywords:* Timesizing, perceived organizational support, stress, commitment to change

Neves, P., Mesdaghinia, S., Eisenberger, R., & Wickham, R.E. (2018). Timesizing proximity and perceived organizational support: Contributions to employee well-being and extra-role performance. *Journal of Change Management*, 18, 70-90.

Timesizing Proximity and Perceived Organizational Support:  
Contributions to Employee Well-Being and Extra-Role Performance

**Introduction**

In recent decades, employment restructuring (downsizing) through such means as layoffs, work hour reductions, and pay cuts has become one of the most common strategies organizations use to cope with diminished customer demand (American Management Association, 2000; Datta, Guthrie, Basuil & Pandey, 2010) and declining profits (Greenhalgh, Lawrence & Sutton, 1988) during economic slumps. Organizations often carry out downsizing believing they can maintain the cost savings associated with reorganization through a more effective use of the remaining, albeit diminished, workforce (Harrigan, 1980; Cascio, 2002). However, the short-term cost reductions associated with layoffs have often been accompanied by negative effects on the psychological wellbeing of remaining employees, the *survivors* (e.g., Devine, Reay, Stainton & Collins-Nakai, 2003; Dragano, Verde & Siegrist, 2005; Moore, Grunberg & Greenberg, 2004; Probst & Lawler, 2006).

More recently, during expansionary economic periods, employment restructuring has become a popular way to boost short-term profits (American Management Association, 2000; Cascio, 2002). While many large organizations restructure through layoffs, many others attempt other approaches to avoid such drawbacks of layoffs as loss of human capital and harm to employee morale and well-being (Cascio, 2002; 2005; Datta et al., 2010). For example, such companies as JC Penney, Forever 21, SeaWorld, and Walmart have recently used reduced work hours as a strategy to cut employment costs (Fickenscher, 2016; Bhasin, 2013; Melendez, 2013; Nassauer, 2015).

Despite this increase in popularity of alternatives to layoffs, research on employment restructuring has focused predominantly on layoffs. As a result, researchers have called for more research on reduced work hours (timesizing) and other forms of restructuring that are less deleterious than layoffs (Data et al., 2010; Kalimo, Taris, & Schaufeli, 2003).

Although timesizing saves the organization the costs of replacing employees when business improves, it does have a number of negative consequences associated with it: 1) salary reductions and their effect on employees' sense of equity (Kalimo et al., 2003); 2) increased work pressures arising from fewer hours to complete the same amount of work, and 3) stress owing to the anticipation of additional future restructuring, in particular layoffs (Kalimo et al., 2003).

Relying on the transactional theory of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and the job demands-resources model (JD-R) (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001), the authors theorized that employees with more proximity to timesizing – that is, those who are in timesized organizational units where they or their co-workers have been forced to work fewer hours – may have higher stress appraisal due to work disruptions than employees in other non-timesized organizational units for whom timesizing is not as salient (see Figure 1).. Such stress appraisal can reduce commitment to change including employees' behavioural support for an organization's change initiatives (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). The stress appraisal can also increase employees' emotional exhaustion. In turn, these factors can reduce employees' voluntary efforts in the form of extra-role performance, which are crucial in a period of timesizing when the expectation is that everybody has to do more with fewer resources.

Further, based on the transactional theory of stress and the JD-R model, the authors hypothesized that perceived organizational support, (POS, employees'

perception that they are valued positively and cared for by the organization, Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986) will serve as a buffer, lessening these aversive relationships by creating a favourable, less stressful, appraisal of the situation and by acting as a resource that employees can rely on in the face of excessive job demands. POS facilitates a favourable appraisal of the situation by increasing trust in the organization, optimism about the future, and a sense of equity. In addition, due to the socio-emotional and tangible resources that shape POS, it can be considered as a resource that buffers against the negative effects of excessive job demands created by timesizing. Therefore, POS can lessen the negative effects of timesizing proximity mentioned above.

The present research contributes to the organizational change literature in three ways. First, it examines potential attitudinal, affective, and behavioural downsides of timesizing as an under-studied form of organizational restructuring. Organizations seeking to use timesizing as a way to reduce costs need to take into account and try to limit its deleterious consequences to employees' commitment to organizational change, their well-being, and their performance. Second, the research findings have important implications for the change management process by providing evidence for the important role of POS in ameliorating the negative consequences of timesizing. Organizations can make the change process smoother by cultivating POS before and during timesizing. Third, the study uses data from a quasi-experiment involving employees in a social service agency that was going through timesizing to test the hypotheses. Although a quasi-experimental design, which in our case compares participants from timesized and non-timesized sites, provides stronger evidence for causality than correlational designs, it has rarely been used in the study of downsizing. Given that in downsizing organizational change happens at a specific point in time and

often influences some but not all organizational units, quasi-experiments can be effectively used to enhance the internal validity of the findings while also preserving their external validity (Grant & Wall, 2009).

The current study also contributes to the transactional theory of stress and the JD-R model by testing some aspects of these theories in the context of timesizing for the first time, and by identifying POS as a contextual variable that influences primary appraisal of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and serves as a resource buffering the aversive impact of excessive job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

### **Timesizing Salience, Perceived Organizational Support, and Stress Appraisal**

The transactional theory of stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) maintains that individuals cognitively evaluate potential dangers to their well-being. This process, called *primary appraisal*, depends on individual and contextual factors that influence whether individuals interpret a situation as stressful. A salient primary appraisal leads to a *secondary appraisal* involving the individual's attempts to cope with the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 1991). Coping behaviour refers to cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage demands that tax personal resources (Lazarus, 1991). The hypotheses presented above are focused on stress appraisal due to timesizing exposure, as influenced by POS, with consequences for affective commitment to change, emotional exhaustion, and extra-role performance. Coping mechanisms were not the focus of the study. Thus, the article is mainly concerned with the primary appraisal process and not secondary appraisal.

During downsizing, the salience of the threat to employees often depends on the psychological proximity of downsizing. For example, in the context of layoffs, stress reactions among survivors are more severe when downsizing is more salient for them due to personal contact with laid-off employees (Grunberg, Moore, & Greenberg, 2001)

or when there are repeated exposures to downsizings (Moore et al., 2004; Smollan, 2006). Similarly, in the context of timesizing, due to the primary appraisal process, the threat of timesizing will be more salient, and the resulting stress appraisal will be stronger among employees with more proximity to timesizing, that is, those in timesized organizational units, than those who are more distanced from timesizing. In the first place, employees in the timesized units have to exert extra effort to finish the same amount of work in less time or with less support from their timesized co-workers. Second, employees in the timesized units will be disgruntled and distracted because reduced pay hurts their sense of equity (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001; Smollan, 2006). The pay reduction contributes to stress appraisal both by demoralizing co-workers and thus making them less cooperative, and by making it difficult for employees to meet their financial needs and family obligations. Third, timesizing can signal the worsening of the organization's financial situation and the threat of future layoffs. The anticipation of being laid off can create considerable work disruption and negatively impact employees' productivity and well-being. Accordingly, a survey of U.S. employees published during the recent economic recession reported that, on average, employees spent three hours per working day worrying about their job security (Cascio, 2010). Therefore, by signalling the possibility of layoffs, timesizing can make it difficult for employees to concentrate on their work or help co-workers, thereby adding to the level of work disruption and stress appraisal in timesized units. Consistent with this argument, Kalimo et al. (2003) found anticipation of layoffs has a considerable negative effect on employee well-being. All of these factors lead employees in timesized units to perceive timesizing as threatening and stressful.

This emotional loss associated with timesizing is also consistent with the JD-R model (Demerouti et al., 2001) which categorizes working conditions as job demands or

resources. Demerouti et al. (2001) presented evidence that, whereas a lack of job resources is primarily related to disengagement, job demands are primarily related to exhaustion. Subsequent research has also supported the association between job demands and exhaustion and stress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2001). According to the JD-R model, the excessive demands posed by timesizing should lead to exhaustion and stress.

However, not everyone in timesized units bears the same amount of stress. From the view of the transactional theory of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), POS may serve as an important contextual factor that influences employees' primary appraisal, making timesizing less stressful (see Figure 1). Organizational support theory holds that employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011). POS develops based on employees' personal experience of organizational policies and procedures, the receipt of resources, and the quality of interactions with the organization's agents, all of which, in turn, would help employees infer the organization's favourable (or unfavourable) general orientation toward them (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011).

POS may contribute to a favourable appraisal of the situation for employees with timesizing proximity in several ways. First, meta-analytic evidence suggests that POS boosts trust in the organization and its management (Kurtessis et al., in press), resulting in a more favourable perception of the organization's intention behind timesizing. This creates a more positive expectation about the organization's treatment of employees during and after timesizing. Due to having more trust in their organizations, employees with high POS are more optimistic about their job security and their treatment by the organization during timesizing than those with low POS. The high POS employees are

less likely to interpret timesizing as a precursor of future layoffs and more likely to believe that the organization will support them in the face of excessive demands by providing needed resources and giving them more control over job demands. This optimism lessens the stress related to job insecurity and excessive job demands (Kalimo et al., 2003).

Second, POS may also contribute to a favourable appraisal of the situation by protecting employees' sense of equity. Employees with high POS more readily accept the organization's narrative that emphasizes the need to timesize in order to survive through tough times without having to resort to more severe employment actions such as layoffs. Importantly, the employees will not interpret timesizing as the organization's attempt to boost profit or to protect managers at the employees' expense. Further, POS signals that the organization will attempt to treat the employees more favourably in the future when the financial situation improves. Therefore, timesizing proximity should do less damage to employees' sense of equity when POS is high and, hence, not be as demotivating, disruptive of work, and stressful as it is for low POS employees.

Third, the caring and concern for employees' well-being expressed by POS may help employees maintain a positive outlook in dealing with the new challenges at work by providing much-needed socioemotional support (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011). In summary, employees in timesized units who have high POS see the situation as less threatening and easier to cope with.

Research on the JD-R model also supports the buffering effect of POS. Although the initial formulation of the theory did not include the interaction between job demands and job resources (Demerouti et al., 2001), subsequent research showed that job resources can serve as a buffer against the negative effects of job demands, although the specific resources that can serve as buffers might vary depending on the nature of job



demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Baker and Demerouti (2007) noted that social support serves as an important resource that buffers stress. Various kinds of social support received from the organization, such as esteem, helpful information, and tangible resources contribute to POS, which can be considered a global resource at work that buffers many job demands (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011). This leads to

*Hypothesis 1:* POS moderates the positive relationship between timesizing proximity and stress appraisal, such that when POS is low, timesizing proximity will be more strongly related to stress appraisal.

### **Affective Commitment to Change, Emotional Exhaustion, and Extra-Role Performance**

Timesizing often involves many changes for employees in the amount and kind of job responsibilities and employees' relationship with one another. Although organizations often see the post-restructuring period as important for gaining the cooperation of employees in implementing these changes, employees themselves may view their new situation with uncertainty and concern. Therefore, timesizing might lead to adverse attitudinal, emotional, and behavioural reactions among employees.

The stress that results from proximity to timesizing can adversely affect employees' affective commitment to change. Commitment to change reflects the mind-set that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative (Conner, 1992; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Of particular interest is employees' affective commitment to change, which reflects the desire to provide behavioural support for the change based on a belief in its inherent benefits (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). This dimension of commitment to change is essential for the change's success due to its relationship with such organizational

outcomes as in-role and extra-role performance and turnover intentions (Cunningham, 2006; Neves, 2009; Neves & Caetano, 2009; Parish, Cedwallader & Busch, 2008).

Hence, it is important for organizations to gain employees' affective commitment to change while implementing change initiatives such as timesizing.

However, the stressful nature of timesizing might diminish employees' affective commitment to change. It is certainly harder for organizations to win the commitment of employees to an initiative that is causing them difficulties and stress. Hence, timesizing proximity as a stressor would be negatively related to affective commitment to change via stress appraisal. However, as argued above, POS is expected to reduce stress appraisal among employees in timesized units, thereby mitigating the negative effects of timesizing proximity on affective commitment to change. This leads to

*Hypothesis 2:* POS moderates the indirect relationship between timesizing proximity and affective commitment to change via stress appraisal such that when POS is low, timesizing proximity has a stronger indirect negative relationship with affective commitment to change than when POS is high.

As mentioned earlier, employees in timesized units usually face different stressors including: excessive workload, less help from co-workers in doing interdependent tasks, a lower sense of equity, and anticipation of future threats to job security. Continuously facing these pressures will be emotionally distressful and lead to emotional exhaustion (Maslach, 1982), a chronic state of emotional and physical depletion. Emotional exhaustion, a type of strain resulting from workplace stressors (Cropanzano, Rupp & Byrne, 2003), is characterized by feelings of overextension, drainage, and an inability to recover (Greenglass, Burke & Moore, 2003).

As argued before, when POS is low, employees with timesizing proximity will experience higher levels of stress, and thereby be more likely to experience emotional exhaustion. When POS is high, however, it serves as a buffer weakening the relationship between timesizing proximity and emotional exhaustion. This leads to

*Hypothesis 3:* POS moderates the indirect relationship between timesizing proximity and emotional exhaustion via stress appraisal such that when POS is low, timesizing proximity has a stronger indirect positive relationship with emotional exhaustion than when POS is high.

By reducing affective commitment to change and increasing emotional exhaustion of employees, timesizing proximity diminishes the motivation and energy needed to exceed the minimum job requirements (i.e., extra-role performance). Lack of commitment to change can shut down employees who were otherwise willing to engage in extra-role activities. Thus, Neves and Caetano, (2009) found a positive relationship between affective commitment to change and extra-role performance.

Further, emotional exhaustion resulting from timesizing stress leaves employees in a depleted state wherein they lack the physical and psychological resources necessary for performing well (Taris, 2006), let alone going beyond minimum job requirements. Hence, the stressful situation resulting from timesizing proximity is expected to negatively affect extra-role performance through emotional exhaustion. Supporting this view, previous research has reported a negative link between emotional exhaustion and extra-role performance (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004; Cropanzano et al., 2003).

Building on the arguments discussed above regarding the buffering role of POS, the authors proposed that timesizing proximity will have a negative indirect relationship

with extra-role performance only when POS is low. When POS is high, on the other hand, timesizing proximity will have a weaker relationship with affective commitment to change and emotional exhaustion, and thereby, extra-role performance. This leads to

*Hypothesis 4:* POS moderates the indirect relationship between timesizing proximity and extra-role performance via serial mediators of stress appraisal and affective commitment to change such that when POS is low, timesizing proximity has a stronger indirect negative relationship with extra-role performance than when POS is high.

and

*Hypothesis 5:* POS moderates the indirect relationship between timesizing proximity and extra-role performance via serial mediators of stress appraisal and emotional exhaustion such that when POS is low, timesizing proximity has a stronger indirect negative relationship with extra-role performance than when POS is high.

In sum, the authors theorized that timesizing is more stressful for employees in timesized units when POS is low and that this effect should reduce employees' affective commitment to change and increase emotional exhaustion with consequences for extra-role performance. On the other hand, when POS is high, timesizing proximity will have a weaker relationship with these variables. These hypotheses describe mediated moderation (Morgan-Lopez & MacKinnon, 2006) with multiple mediators (Hayes, Preacher & Myers, 2010). That is, the interaction of timesizing proximity and POS affects a first mediator (stress appraisal), which in turn is related to two parallel

mediators (affective commitment to change and emotional exhaustion), and an outcome (extra-role performance).

## **Method**

### **Sample and procedure**

Participants for the present study were drawn from 395 employees and their supervisors at a social service organization in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. which was undergoing a timesizing process that reduced the number of work hours in several of its sites. A total of 290 employees agreed to participate in the study (a 73% response rate). Out of these, 251 provided usable data, and 31 supervisors rated the employees' extra-role performance. The organization had a total of 30 sites, seven of which timesizing affected. The hours cut at each site due to timesizing ranged from 56 to 128 hours per week.

Most research on downsizing focuses either on the victims or survivors. The present study adopted a quasi-experimental design that compared participants from timesized and non-timesized sites in the same organization. Similar to the approach of Brockner et al., (2004) in the context of layoffs, employees who were part of sites undergoing a cut in work hours were considered proximal to timesizing. Those at sites not directly affected by the timesizing were categorized as the non-proximal or distant employees. Altogether 91 participants were proximal, and 160 were distant employees. The two groups did not significantly differ in age, organizational tenure, or percentage of female and full-time employees. However, members of the proximal group had significantly higher average tenure with supervisors. Given that this was not the basis for choosing timesized sites, this difference seems to have been produced by chance. Nevertheless, tenure with supervisor was controlled in all analyses. The sample

included employees from all of the organization's sites. Participants completed the surveys in their site in groups of 5-20.

Of the participants, 78% worked full-time, 55% were female, and the average age was 40 years. Average organizational tenure was 4.7 years, while the average tenure with the current supervisor was 1.7 years. Participants' educational attainment was 34% college and 66% high school. Of the supervisors, 97% worked full-time, 63% were female, the average age was 38 years, and the average tenure was 7 years. Their educational attainment was 97% college and 3% high school.

### **Measures**

Employees reported their own POS, stress appraisal, affective commitment to change, and emotional exhaustion. Supervisors rated each employee's extra-role performance. Unless indicated otherwise, participants rated their agreement with each item using a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = "strongly disagree"; 7 = "strongly agree"). Table 1 presents all of the items as well as their loadings in the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

**Control variables.** Employees' age, gender, and job status (full-time vs. part time) were controlled as these factors may affect how employees evaluate and cope with downsizing (e.g., Burke & Greenglass, 2000; Isaksson & Johannson, 2003). Tenure with the supervisor was also controlled as this may influence the rating of extra-role performance by the supervisor and because it was different among proximal and non-proximal employees.

**Proximity to timesizing.** Similar to the approach used by Brockner et al. (2004) for differentiating survivors of layoff from others, a dummy-coded variable was created that differentiated those employees who worked in units directly affected by timesizing

(N = 91) from those employees who worked in units not directly affected by timesizing (N = 160).

**Perceived organizational support.** Because of the high internal consistency and unidimensionality of the survey of POS (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Tetrick, 1991), eight high-loading items from this survey were selected to measure POS ( $\alpha = .91$ ).

**Stress appraisal.** Stress appraisal due to timesizing was assessed with four items adapted from Terry, Tonge and Callan (1995) on a scale ranging from 1 (“not at all”) to 6 (“extremely”). These items evaluated the level of demand, disruption, interference and difficulty associated with the timesizing ( $\alpha = .95$ ). The word “downsizing” was used in the items instead of “timesizing” because the organization in the study used the former term to refer to the restructuring initiative.

**Affective commitment to change.** Employees rated their affective commitment to change on a six-item scale developed by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002). As noted above, due to the specific nature of the change initiative for this specific organization, the wording of the items was changed; rather than referring to “this change”, the items specifically mentioned “downsizing” ( $\alpha = .83$ ).

**Emotional exhaustion.** Employees reported their emotional exhaustion using the five-item scale developed by Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach and Jackson (1996) on a scale ranging from 1 (“never”) to 7 (“every day”). These items assess feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

**Extra-role performance.** Supervisors evaluated their subordinates' extra-role performance using the eight-item scale presented by Eisenberger et al. (2010) which evaluates four dimensions of organizational spontaneity: making constructive suggestions, enhancing one's own knowledge and skills in ways that will help the

organization, protecting the organization from potential problems, and helping co-workers ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

## Results

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations, reliabilities and the correlation matrix for the study.

### Discriminant validity

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using AMOS 17.0 to verify the distinctiveness of the constructs: POS, stress appraisal, affective commitment to change, emotional exhaustion, and extra-role performance. The proposed five-factor model was compared with four nested alternative models using chi-square difference tests and three other fit indexes (Bentler & Bonett, 1980; James, Mulaik, & Brett, 1982). The first alternative was a four-factor model that combined stress appraisal and emotional exhaustion, since emotional exhaustion is a dimension of burnout which is closely related to stress displays. The second alternative was a three-factor model that further combined POS and affective commitment to change, as these variables both captured employees' view of the organization's actions. The third alternative was a two-factor model that distinguished all employee-reported variables (Factor 1), from extra-role performance rated by supervisors (Factor 2). The fourth alternative was a one-factor model that loaded all items on the same factor.

The results indicated that the hypothesized five-factor model fit the data well (SRMR = .05; RMSEA = .07; CFI = .92); and significantly better than the four-factor model ( $\Delta\chi^2 (4) = 933.30, p < .001$ ; SRMR = .10; RMSEA = .11; CFI = .75); the three-factor model ( $\Delta\chi^2 (7) = 1326.0, p < .001$ ; SRMR = .12; RMSEA = .13; CFI = .67); the two-factor model ( $\Delta\chi^2 (9) = 1771.60, p < .001$ ; SRMR = .13; RMSEA = .14; CFI = .59); and the one-factor model ( $\Delta\chi^2 (10) = 3537.70, p < .001$ ; SRMR = .21; RMSEA = .19);



CFI = .27). Further, as Table 1 shows, all items loaded acceptably on the expected factors, with standardized coefficients of .47 or above. Therefore, the five constructs were considered distinct.

### **Tests of hypotheses**

Because employees (level 1) were nested under supervisors (level 2) who provided rating for extra-role performance, the authors assessed the need for multilevel analysis by examining the proportion of variance explained by level 2 by running a fully unconditional model – that is, a null model which has no predictors – for each dependent variable in the model (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Of the total variances in stress appraisal, affective commitment to change, emotional exhaustion, and extra-role performance as the dependent variables, the authors found that around 10%, 8%, 5%, and 40% of variances were due to level 2 respectively. This underscored the need for multilevel analysis. Thus, the hypotheses were tested via hierarchical linear modelling (HLM) using SAS 9.4 PROC MIXED. All continuous variables were grand-mean centred for better interpretation of the results.

As Table 3 shows, there were no differences in stress appraisal between employees who were proximal to timesizing and others ( $\gamma = .35$ ,  $SE = .27$ ,  $ns$ ), but the effect of the interaction between timesizing proximity and POS on stress appraisal was significant ( $\gamma = -.30$ ,  $SE = .15$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\Delta$  pseudo  $R^2 = 3.7\%$ ). To further analyse the nature of the interaction, the authors plotted the relationship between timesizing proximity and stress appraisal at  $\pm 1 SD$  of POS (Figure 2), and tested the simple slopes using the computational tool provided by Preacher, Curran, & Bauer (2006). As Figure 2 shows, timesizing proximity was significantly related to stress appraisal when POS was low ( $B = .80$ ,  $SE = .34$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but not when POS was high ( $B = -.10$ ,  $SE = .36$ ,  $ns$ ). These results support Hypothesis 1.

Next, to test Hypotheses 2-5 the authors ran HLM models involving affective commitment to change, emotional exhaustion, and extra-role performance as dependent variables. As Table 3 shows, stress appraisal was significantly related with affective commitment to change ( $\gamma = -.17$ ,  $SE = .05$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\Delta$  pseudo  $R^2 = 2.8\%$ ) and emotional exhaustion ( $\gamma = .26$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\Delta$  pseudo  $R^2 = 8.6\%$ ). Furthermore, affective commitment to change was significantly related to extra-role performance ( $\gamma = .13$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\Delta$  pseudo  $R^2 = 3.7\%$ ), but emotional exhaustion was not ( $\gamma = .03$ ,  $SE = .06$ , *ns*).

Hypotheses 2-5 involved conditional indirect effects of timesizing proximity on affective commitment to change (Hypothesis 2), emotional exhaustion (Hypothesis 3), and extra-role performance (Hypotheses 4 and 5). Although it would have been more preferable to use bootstrapping to test these mediation hypotheses, the available bootstrapping tools do not allow the application of bootstrapping for multi-level data such as found in this study (Hayes, 2013; Muthén & Muthén, 2015). Therefore, the study used Krull and MacKinnon's (2001) product of indirect effects method to test the hypothesized conditional indirect effects. MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, and Sheets (2002) demonstrated that testing mediation using product of indirect effects with  $z'$  distribution provides superior power and a lower Type I error rate than other methods. In  $z'$  table (MacKinnon et al., 2002), the critical values for a two-tailed significance test ( $\alpha < .05$ ) are  $-.89$  and  $.88$  when the IV is dichotomous, such as in the present case. Using this approach on the data indicated that stress appraisal mediated the relationship between timesizing proximity and affective commitment to change when POS was low ( $ab = -.14$ ,  $SE_{ab} = .07$ ,  $z' = -1.97$ ;  $p < .05$ ), but not when POS was high ( $ab = .02$ ,  $SE_{ab} = .06$ ,  $z' = .27$ ; *ns*), therefore supporting Hypothesis 2. Similarly, stress appraisal mediated the relationship between timesizing proximity and emotional exhaustion when

POS was low ( $ab = .21$ ,  $SE_{ab} = .10$ ,  $z' = 2.09$ ;  $p < .05$ ), but not when POS was high ( $ab = -.02$ ,  $SE_{ab} = .09$ ,  $z' = -.27$ ; ns), thus providing support for Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 involved the conditional indirect effect of timesizing proximity on extra-role performance through two serial mediators: stress appraisal and affective commitment to change. To calculate the standard error, the authors used the multivariate delta formula (equivalent to Sobel in the case of two serial mediators) provided by Taylor, MacKinnon, and Tein (2008), and they tested the indirect effect using the  $z'$  distribution (MacKinnon et al., 2002). Supporting Hypothesis 4, the indirect effect was significant when POS was low ( $abc = -.02$ ,  $SE_{abc} = .01$ ,  $z' = -1.41$ ;  $p < .05$ , critical  $z'$  value for significance was  $-.89$ ), but not when POS was high ( $abc = .002$ ,  $SE_{abc} = .008$ ,  $z' = .26$ ; ns).

Hypothesis 5 involved the conditional indirect effect of timesizing proximity on extra-role performance through serial mediators of stress appraisal and emotional exhaustion. However, given that emotional exhaustion was not related to extra-role performance, one of the necessary conditions for mediation with multiple mediators was not present. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

## Discussion

### Findings and Implications

The study found that when POS was low, timesizing proximity was positively related to stress appraisal. However, when POS was high, this relationship was completely absent. Furthermore, when POS was low (but not high), timesizing proximity was indirectly related to affective commitment to change and emotional exhaustion through stress appraisal, and to extra-role performance through stress appraisal and affective commitment to change.

The results shed light on the consequences of timesizing as an under-studied form of downsizing. Overall, these results suggest that timesizing can have a negative impact on employee well-being, attitudes, and extra-role performance and that POS can buffer against these negative effects.

Regarding employee well-being, the present study's findings are consistent with those of Grunberg et al. (2001) who found that a closer contact with downsizing was associated with greater appraised stress. However, the current study found that such impact was lessened when employees believed the organization was supportive. The same pattern was observed for the indirect relationship between timesizing proximity and emotional exhaustion through stress appraisal. Emotional exhaustion, as a key dimension of burnout (Cropanzano et al., 2003), is an important measure of employee well-being. The current study's results are also similar to prior results concerning the buffering effect of POS for survivors of layoffs (Armstrong-Stassen, 2004). Taken together, the findings regarding employees' stress appraisal and emotional exhaustion emphasize the potentially negative effects of timesizing on employee well-being. Although timesizing is believed to be a less stressful alternative to layoffs (Kalimo et al., 2003), it can still be stressful and exhausting for employees, especially when POS is low.

Another important finding of this study is the carryover of the interaction between POS and timesizing proximity on employees' affective commitment to change, and subsequently to extra-role performance. When POS was low (but not high), timesizing proximity had negative indirect relationships with employees' desire to support the downsizing strategy and their engagement in extra-role performance. These findings underscore the potential downside to timesizing not only for employees, but

also for organizations, and emphasize the value of POS as an important tool for buffering stressful work experiences.

The present findings contribute to the transactional theory of stress in the organizational context. Lazarus (1991) emphasized the appraisal of the environment as a key factor in employees' adaptation to the workplace. The present study provides evidence that POS plays an important role in the primary appraisal process. The assurance that the organization values employees' contributions and cares about their well-being, appears to lead employees toward a less unfavourable attribution of unsettling treatment of various kinds. As indicated both by the present findings and prior findings concerning survivors of layoffs (Armstrong-Stassen, 2004), POS appears to have a quite general favourable influence on primary appraisal.

The present study also has implications for the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). This study extends the scope of job demands by showing that timesizing proximity (i.e., being in a timesized unit), regardless of whether it directly or indirectly influences an employee's work, has the potential to be a significant demand with consequences for how individuals appraise the work context. In this study, the job demands incurred by greater proximity to timesizing were related to employees' stress appraisal, emotional exhaustion, and reduced affective commitment to change and extra-role performance. Moreover, and aligned with the theoretical tenets of the JD-R model, this study also provides additional evidence that job resources, POS in particular, determine the strength of the relationship between job demands and their outcomes (Bakker, Demerouti & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). The findings suggest the value of promoting POS as an effective resource for helping employees withstand stressful events such as timesizing.

On the practical side, these findings provide valuable information for managers dealing with or preparing for financial difficulties. Organizations should consistently cultivate POS among employees, not only during timesizing but also in times of stability. There are a variety of demonstrated ways to foster POS organization-wide, including paying careful attention to organizational fairness, and using such HR practices as giving autonomy in solving problems, providing tangible resources and socioemotional support, affording supervisory support, and strengthening social networks (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2016; Kurtessis et al., in press). Two important factors influence the successful implementation of these practices. First, they should be regularized. Beginning to enact them only when timesizing or other aversive treatments are implemented will make employees sceptical about the organization's motives and reduce the effectiveness of the practices in promoting POS. Secondly, POS must be grounded in reality. Repeated substantial unfavourable treatment will wear down POS (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011).

### **Methodological Advantages and Disadvantages**

An advantage of the study's design was its quasi-experimental nature which provided stronger evidence for causality regarding the relationship between timesizing proximity X POS and stress appraisal. Given the difficulties involved in doing truly randomized field experiments, especially during turbulent periods, and given the important threats to external validity in both field and lab experiments, quasi-experiments can provide a valuable alternative (Grant & Wall, 2009). As a field quasi-experiment, the present study has more external validity than lab experiments and randomised field experiments. It also provides stronger causal evidence than cross-sectional field surveys do.

However, this advantage was limited to the first relationship that was studied, namely the relationship between POS X timesizing proximity and stress appraisal. The same cannot be said for the rest of the relationships because the constructs were measured cross-sectionally. Thus, although the study's hypotheses were theoretically driven and built on past empirical research, the usual threats to validity in cross-sectional surveys, such as the possibility of reverse causality, exist for the relationships between stress appraisal, affective commitment to change, emotional exhaustion, and extra-role performance. Therefore, it is recommended that future research use longitudinal designs to provide stronger evidence on these relationships.

Another advantage of the present study was that its data came from three sources. The organization provided the objective timesizing proximity data; the supervisors rated extra-role performance of the employees; and the employees rated the rest of the variables. Thus, the relationships involving two different sources, that is, timesizing proximity and stress appraisal, and affective commitment to change and extra-role performance, were not subject to same-source bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). However, this is not true for the relationships among stress appraisal, affective commitment to change, and emotional exhaustion. Thus, future research should re-examine these latter relationships using other methods such as measuring these variables at different points in time (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

As an understudied area, timesizing deserves more research attention. Future research should consider other outcomes of timesizing and other moderators that might buffer against or amplify its negative effects. It would be especially useful if future studies would compare consequences of timesizing *vis-à-vis* other forms of restructuring for employees' well-being and attitudes (Kalimo et al., 2003). This

comparison would empirically test the assertion that timesizing is a more positive alternative to layoffs (Cascio 2002, 2005, Kalimo et al., 2003).

Also, research has shown that layoffs can deteriorate the work environment by reducing supervisory and co-worker support and by increasing conflict among employees (Amabile & Conti, 1999 & Gilson, Hurd, & Wagar, 2004). Further research is needed to find out whether the effects of timesizing on the work environment are severe enough to produce similar outcomes. Finally, other behavioural outcomes that have been reported in the context of layoffs, such as reduced creativity (Amabile & Conti, 1999), reduced in-role performance (Brockner et al., 2004), and increased voluntary turnover and absenteeism (Travaglione & Cross, 2006; Trevor & Nyberg, 2008), should also be studied in the context of timesizing.

In addition to outcomes, it is worthwhile to consider additional possible moderating variables that may mitigate the negative effects of timesizing proximity. One such moderator concerns the quality of communication by managers (involving adequacy, sincerity, timeliness, and usefulness of provided information) while informing employees of upcoming aversive treatment (Biggane, Allen, Amis, Fugate, & Steinbauer, 2016; Greenberg, 1990). Greenberg (1990) reported that when managers communicated adequately and sincerely about the reasons for a pay cut, plant employees were less likely to retaliate via theft or to leave the organization. Similarly, Biggane et al., (2016) found a negative relationship between employees' perceived quality of change communication and their threat appraisal and, thereby their turnover intentions during acquisition and restructuring. Communication by management might have an important role in timesizing as well. Thus, it would be a worthwhile topic to study.



Although the present study used the transactional theory of stress as a theoretical basis, it focused on the aspects of the theory that helped determine the level of stress appraisal. Future research might examine secondary appraisals involving ways that employees cope with timesizing exposure. For example, in the context of layoffs, Armstrong-Stassen (2004) studied the role of organizational commitment and POS in layoff survivors' choice of coping mechanisms, and the impact of this choice on survivors' well-being and job attitudes. POS was positively related to control-oriented coping, involving actions and cognitive reappraisals that were active and problem-oriented, and negatively related to avoidance-coping involving escapist and avoidant strategies. The examination of such coping mechanisms would increase our understanding of responses to timesizing exposure and buffering influences of POS.

Further, although past research on downsizing stress has focused mainly on the impact of downsizing on individuals, downsizing (including layoffs and timesizing) happens in a collective context (e.g., unit, organization) in which employees collectively interpret and respond to stress (Johnson, 1989; Lansisalmi, Peiro, & Kivimaki, 2000). Therefore, it is very important that future research consider how employees as a collective view stress and how they collectively cope with it during organizational downsizing.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study found that when POS is low, proximity to timesizing leads to higher stress appraisal, which is in turn related to lower affective commitment to change, higher emotional exhaustion, and ultimately lower extra-role performance among employees. These relationships disappear when POS is high. Therefore, by enhancing POS, organizations can avoid the negative outcomes of timesizing in times when cost-cutting measures are necessary.

## References

- Amabile, T., & Conti, R. (1999). Changes in the work environment for creativity during downsizing. *Academy of Management Journal*, *42*, 630-640.  
doi:10.2307/256984
- American Management Association. (2000). *2000 survey on staffing and structure*. New York: Author.
- Armstrong-Stassen, M. (2004). The influence of prior commitment on the reactions of layoff survivors to organizational downsizing. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *9*, 46-60. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.9.1.46
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *22*, 309-328.  
doi:10.1108/02683940710733115
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Sanz-Vergel, A.I. (2014). Burnout and work engagement: The JD-R approach. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *1*, 389-411. doi:10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091235
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Verbeke, W. (2004). Using the job demands-resources model to predict burnout and performance. *Human Resource Management*, *43*, 83-10. doi:10.1002/hrm.20004
- Bentler, P. M., & Bonett, D. G. (1980). Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psychological Bulletin*, *88*, 588-606.  
doi:10.1037/0033-2909.88.3.588
- Bhasin, K. (2013, August 19). Forever 21 slashes worker hours and health benefits, Denies Obamacare is to blame. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/08/16/forever-21-memo\\_n\\_3769605.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/08/16/forever-21-memo_n_3769605.html)

- Biggane, J. E., Allen, D. G., Amis, J., Fugate, M., & Steinbauer, R. (2016). Cognitive appraisal as a mechanism linking negative organizational shocks and intentions to leave. *Journal of Change Management*, 1-25.  
doi:10.1080/14697017.2016.1219379
- Brockner, J., Spreitzer, G., Mishra, A., Hochwarter, W., Pepper, L., & Weinberg, J. (2004). Perceived control as an antidote to the negative effects of layoffs on survivors' organizational commitment and job performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 49, 76-100. doi:10.2307/4131456
- Burke, R. J., & Greenglass, E. R. (2000). Effects of hospital restructuring on full time and part time nursing staff in Ontario. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 37, 163-171. doi:10.1016/S0020-7489(99)00058-9
- Cascio, W. F. (2002). *Responsible restructuring: Creative and profitable alternatives to layoffs*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Cascio, W. F. (2005). Strategies for responsible restructuring. *Academy of Management Executive*, 19, 39-50. doi:10.5465/AME.2005.19417906
- Cascio, W. F. (2010). Employment downsizing: causes, costs, and consequences. In *More than Bricks in the Wall: Organizational Perspectives for Sustainable Success* (pp. 87-96). Wiesbaden, Germany: Gabler.
- Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, C. O., & Ng, K. Y. (2001). Justice at the millennium: a meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 425-445. doi:10.1037//0021-9010.86.3.425
- Conner, D. R. (1992). *Managing at the speed of change: How resilient managers succeed and prosper where others fail*. New York: Villard Books.

- Crawford, E. R., LePine, J. A., & Rich, B. L. (2010). Linking job demands and resources to employee engagement and burnout: a theoretical extension and meta-analytic test. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 95*, 834–848. doi: 10.1037/a0019364
- Cropanzano, R., Rupp, D. E., & Byrne, Z. S. (2003). The relationship of emotional exhaustion to work attitudes, job performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*, 160-169. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.88.1.160
- Cunningham, G. B. (2006). The relationships among commitment to change, coping with change, and turnover intentions. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 15*, 29-45. doi:10.1080/13594320500418766
- Datta, D. K., Guthrie, J. P., Basuil, D., & Pandey, A. (2010). Causes and effects of employee downsizing: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Management, 36*, 281-348. doi:10.1177/0149206309346735
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*, 499-512. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.499
- Devine, K., Reay, T., Stainton, L., & Collins-Nakai, R. (2003). Downsizing outcomes: Better a victim than a survivor? *Human Resource Management, 42*, 109-124. doi:10.1002/hrm.10071
- Dragano, N., Verde, P.E., & Siegrist, J. (2005). Organisational downsizing and work stress: Testing synergistic health effects in employed men and women. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 59*, 694-699. doi:10.1136/jech.2005.035089
- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived

organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71, 500-507.

doi:10.1037/0021-9010.71.3.500

Eisenberger, R., Karagonlar, G., Stinglhamber, F., Neves, P., Becker, T. E., Gonzalez-Morales, M. G., & Steiger-Mueller, M. (2010). Leader–member exchange and affective organizational commitment: The contribution of supervisor's organizational embodiment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95, 1085–1103.

doi:10.1037/a0020858

Eisenberger, R., Malone, G. P., & Presson, W. D. (2016). *Optimizing perceived organizational support to enhance employee engagement*. SHRM-SIOP Science of HR Series. Retrieved from <http://www.siop.org/SIOP-SHRM/SHRM-SIOP%20POS.pdf>

Eisenberger, R., & Stinglhamber, F. (2011). *Perceived organizational support: Fostering enthusiastic and productive employees*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. doi:10.1037/12318-000

Fickenscher, L. (2016, May 5). JCPenney takes emergency measures to protect bottom line. *New York Post*. Retrieved from <http://nypost.com/2016/05/05/jcpenney-taking-emergency-measures-to-stay-afloat>

Gilson, C., Hurd, F., & Wagar, T. (2004). Creating a concession climate: the case of the serial downsizers. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15, 1056-1068. doi:10.1080/09585190410001677313

Grant, A. M., & Wall, T. D. (2009). The neglected science and art of quasi-experimentation: Why-to, when-to, and how-to advice for organizational researchers. *Organizational Research Methods*, 12, 653-686.

doi:10.1177/1094428108320737

Greenglass, E. R., Burke, R. J., & Moore, K. A. (2003). Reactions to increased

- workload: Effects on professional efficacy of nurses. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 52, 580-597. doi:10.1111/1464-0597.00152
- Greenhalgh, L., Lawrence, A. T., & Sutton, R. L. (1988). Determinants of work force reduction strategies in declining organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 13, 241-54. doi:10.5465/AMR.1988.4306878
- Greenberg, J. (1990). Employee theft as a reaction to underpayment inequity: The hidden cost of pay cuts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75, 561. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.75.6.667
- Grunberg, L., Moore, S. Y., & Greenberg, E. (2001). Differences in psychological and physical health among layoff survivors: The effect of layoff contact. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 6, 15-25. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.6.1.15
- Harrigan, K. R. (1980). Strategy formulation in declining industries. *Academy of Management Review*, 5, 599-605. doi:10.5465/AMR.1980.4288965
- Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to Mediation, Moderation and Conditional Process Analysis: A regression-based approach*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Hayes, A. F., Preacher, K. J., & Myers, T. A. (2010). Mediation and the estimation of indirect effects in political communication research. In E. P. Bucy & R. L. Holbert (Eds.), *Sourcebook for political communication research: Methods, measures and analytical techniques*. New York: Routledge.
- Herscovitch, L. & Meyer, J.P. (2002). Commitment to Organizational change: Extension of a three-component model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87, 474-487. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.87.3.474
- Isaksson, K., & Johansson, G. (2003). Managing older employees after downsizing. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 19, 1-15. doi:10.1016/S0956-5221(01)00040-9

- James, L. R., Mulaik, S. S., & Brett, J. M. (1982). *Causal analysis: Assumptions, models, and data*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Johnson, J. V. (1989). Collective control: strategies for survival in the workplace. *International Journal of Health Services, 19*, 469-480. doi:10.2190/H1D1-AB94-JM7X-DDM4
- Kalimo, R., Taris, T. W., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2003). The effects of past and anticipated future downsizing on survivor well-being: an equity perspective. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 8*, 91. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.8.2.91
- Krull, J. L., & MacKinnon, D. P. (2001). Multilevel modeling of individual and group level mediated effects. *Multivariate Behavioral Research, 36*, 249-277. doi:10.1207/S15327906MBR3602\_06
- Kurtessis, J. N., Eisenberger, R., Ford, M. T., Buffardi, L. C., Stewart, K. A., & Adis, C. S. (in press). Perceived organizational support: A meta-analytic evaluation of organizational support theory. *Journal of Management*. doi:10.1177/0149206315575554.
- Lansisalmi, H., Peiro, J. M., & Kivimaki IV, M. (2000). Collective stress and coping in the context of organizational culture. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 9*, 527-559. doi:10.1080/13594320050203120
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). Psychological stress in the workplace. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 6*, 1-13.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal and coping*. New York: Springer.
- MacKinnon, D. P., Lockwood, C. M., Hoffman, J. M., West, S. G., & Sheets, V. (2002). A comparison of methods to test mediation and other intervening variable effects. *Psychological Methods, 7*, 83-104. doi:10.1037/1082-989X.7.1.83

Maslach, C. A. (1982). *Burnout: The cost of caring*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Melendez, E. D. (2013, September 10). SeaWorld cuts hours in possible Obamacare maneuver. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/10/seaworld-obamacare\\_n\\_3900026.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/10/seaworld-obamacare_n_3900026.html)

Moore, S., Grunberg, L., & Greenberg, E. (2004). Repeated downsizing contact: The effects of similar and dissimilar layoff experiences on work and well-being outcomes. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 9*, 247-257. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.9.3.247

Morgan-Lopez, A. A., & MacKinnon, D. P. (2006). Demonstration and evaluation of a method for assessing mediated moderation. *Behavior Research Methods, 38*, 77-87. doi:10.3758/BF03192752

Muthén, L. K., & Muthén, B. O. (2015). *Mplus: Statistical Analysis with Latent Variables User's Guide* (7th Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Muthén & Muthén.

Nassauer, S. (2015, August 31). Wal-Mart cuts workers' hours at some stores. *Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.wsj.com/articles/wal-mart-reduces-worker-hours-at-some-stores-to-lower-expenses-1441046019>

Neves, P. (2009). Readiness for change: Contributions for employee's level of individual change and turnover intentions. *Journal of Change Management, 9*, 215-231. doi:10.1080/14697010902879178

Neves, P., & Caetano, A. (2009). Commitment to change: Contributions to trust in the supervisor and work outcomes. *Group & Organization Management, 34*, 623-644. doi:10.1177/1059601109350980



- Parish, J.T., Cedwallader, S., & Busch, P. (2008). Want to, need to, ought to: Employee commitment to organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 21*, 879-891. doi:10.1108/09534810810847020
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioural research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*, 879-903. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879
- Preacher, K. J., Curran, P. J., & Bauer, D. J. (2006). Computational tools for probing interaction effects in multiple linear regression, multilevel modeling, and latent curve analysis. *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics, 31*, 437-448. doi:10.3102/10769986031004437
- Probst, T. M., & Lawler, J. (2006). Cultural values as moderators of employee reactions to job insecurity: The role of individualism and collectivism. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 55*, 234-254. doi:10.1111/j.1464-0597.2006.00239.x
- Raudenbush, S. W., & Bryk, A. S. (2002). *Hierarchical linear models: Applications and data analysis methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 698 -714. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.698
- Schaufeli, W. B., Leiter, M. P., Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1996). MBI-General survey. In C. Maslach, S. E. Jackson, & M. P. Leiter (Eds.), *Maslach burnout inventory manual* (3rd ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Shore, L. M., & Tetrick, L. E. (1991). A construct validity study of the survey of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 76*, 637-643. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.76.5.637

- Smollan R. K. (2006). Minds, hearts and deeds: Cognitive, affective and behavioural responses to change. *Journal of Change Management*, 6, 143-158.  
doi:10.1080/14697010600725400
- Taris, T. (2006). Is there a relationship between burnout and objective performance? A critical review of 16 studies. *Work & Stress*, 20, 316-334.  
doi:10.1080/02678370601065893
- Taylor, A. B., MacKinnon, D. P., & Tein, J. Y. (2008). Tests of the three-path mediated effect. *Organizational Research Methods*, 11, 241-269.  
doi:10.1177/1094428107300344
- Terry, D. J., Tonge, L., & Callan, V. J. (1995). Employee adjustment to stress: The role of coping resources, situational factors and coping responses. *Anxiety, Stress and Coping*, 8, 1-24. doi:10.1080/10615809508249360
- Travaglione, A., & Cross, B. (2006). Diminishing the social network in organizations: Does there need to be such a phenomenon as “survivor syndrome” after downsizing? *Strategic Change*, 15, 1-13. doi:10.1002/jsc.743
- Trevor, C. O., & Nyberg, A. J. (2008). Keeping your headcount when all about you are losing theirs: Downsizing, voluntary turnover rates, and the moderating role of HR practices. *Academy of Management Journal*, 51, 259-276.  
doi:10.5465/AMJ.2008.31767250



**Notes on contributors**

**Pedro Neves** is an Associate Professor at Nova School of Business and Economics and is currently the director of the PhD in Management program. He has published in journals such as Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, and The Leadership Quarterly. His research interests focus on interpersonal relationships in the workplace, change management, toxic workplaces, leadership, and entrepreneurship. **Email:** [pneves@novasbe.pt](mailto:pneves@novasbe.pt)

**Salar Mesdaghinia** is an Assistant Professor of Management at Eastern Michigan University. His research interests include organizational ethics and morality, leadership, and employee-organization relationship. He is a member of the Academy of Management. **Email:** [smesdagh@emich.edu](mailto:smesdagh@emich.edu)

**Robert Eisenberger** is a Professor of Psychology and Management at the University of Houston. His main research interests are employee–organization relationships, moral emotions, and intrinsic interest and creativity. He is a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science, Divisions 1, 6, 14, and 25 of the American Psychological Association, the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and the Society for Experimental Social Psychology and is a member of the Society for Organizational Behavior. He has published in such journals as Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Psychological Bulletin, American Psychologist, and Psychological Review.

**Email:** [reisenberger2@uh.edu](mailto:reisenberger2@uh.edu)

**Robert E. Wickham, PhD**, is an Assistant Professor at the Pacific Graduate School of Psychology at Palo Alto University. His research focuses on interpersonal perception, interpersonal conflict, and psychological authenticity, as well as applied statistical approaches for dyadic and longitudinal designs. He is also interested in close relationship processes, internet behavior, and self-esteem.

**Email:** [rwickham@paloaltou.edu](mailto:rwickham@paloaltou.edu)

Table 1

*CFA loadings for all items*

| Item #   | Items   | Loading |
|--|---|---------|
| <b>Factor 1 (POS)</b>                            |   |         |
| 1.   | (This organization) values my contribution to its well-being.                                     | .75     |
| 2.   | (This organization) fails to appreciate any extra effort from me. (R)                             | .67     |
| 3.   | (This organization) would ignore any complaint from me. (R)                                       | .73     |
| 4.   | (This organization) really cares about my well-being.   | .81     |
| 5.   | (This organization) shows very little concern for me. (R)   | .77     |
| 6.   | (This organization) takes pride in my accomplishments at work.                                    | .76     |
| 7.   | Even if I did the best job possible, (this organization) would fail to notice. (R)                | .70     |
| 8.   | This organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.                                    | .81     |
| <b>Factor 2 (Stress appraisal)</b>               |   |         |
| 9.   | How much the downsizing may have been difficult for your work?                                    | .90     |
| 10.  | How much the downsizing may have been disruptive for your work?                                   | .94     |
| 11.  | How much the downsizing may have been interfering for your work?                                  | .92     |
| 12.  | How much the downsizing may have been demanding for your work?                                    | .87     |
| <b>Factor 3 (Affective commitment to change)</b> |   |         |
| 13.  | I believe in the value of this downsizing.  | .76     |
| 14.  | This downsizing was a good strategy for this organization.  | .82     |
| 15.  | I think that management made a mistake by introducing this downsizing. (R)                        | .52     |
| 16.  | This downsizing served an important purpose.  | .81     |
| 17.  | Things would be better without this downsizing. (R)   | .47     |
| 18.  | This downsizing was not necessary. (R)  | .53     |
| <b>Factor 4 (Emotional exhaustion)</b>           |   |         |
| 19.  | I feel emotionally drained by my work.  | .86     |
| 20.  | I feel used up at the end of the workday.   | .78     |
| 21.  | I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.                | .66     |
| 22.  | Working all day is really a strain for me.  | .49     |
| 23.  | I feel burned out from my work.   | .84     |
| <b>Factor 5 (Extra-role performance)</b>         |   |         |
| 24.  | This employee makes suggestions to help the organization.   | .82     |
| 25.  | This employee speaks favourably of the organization to other employees.                           | .78     |
| 26.  | This employee takes action to protect the organization from potential problems.                   | .88     |
| 27.  | This employee encourages others to try new and more effective ways of doing their job.            | .81     |
| 28.  | This employee looks for new ways to improve the effectiveness of his/her work.                    | .89     |
| 29.  | This employee looks for ways to make the organization more successful.                            | .93     |
| 30.  | This employee gains knowledge, skills, and abilities that will be of benefit to the organization. | .80     |
| 31.  | This employee keeps well-informed where his/her opinion might benefit the organization.           | .80     |

Note. R = Item reversed. All items loadings were significant at  $p < .001$ .

Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix*

|                                   | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | 1      | 2       | 3       | 4      | 5      | 6      | 7     | 8   | 9   | 10 |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-----|-----|----|
| 1. Timesizing proximity           | .36      | .48       | -      |         |         |        |        |        |       |     |     |    |
| 2. POS                            | 4.39     | 1.48      | -.17** | (.91)   |         |        |        |        |       |     |     |    |
| 3. Stress appraisal               | 3.13     | 1.64      | .08    | -.11    | (.95)   |        |        |        |       |     |     |    |
| 4. Affective commitment to change | 4.04     | 1.25      | -.10   | .34***  | -.23*** | (.83)  |        |        |       |     |     |    |
| 5. Emotional exhaustion           | 3.15     | 1.55      | -.01   | -.44*** | .26***  | -.17** | (.86)  |        |       |     |     |    |
| 6. Extra-role performance         | 4.41     | 1.49      | .12    | .04     | .03     | .12    | .04    | (.95)  |       |     |     |    |
| 7. Age                            | 40.06    | 11.92     | .00    | .16*    | .05     | .02    | -.18** | .06    | -     |     |     |    |
| 8. Gender                         | .45      | .50       | -.02   | .16*    | .05     | -.01   | -.03   | .00    | .17** | -   |     |    |
| 9. Tenure with the supervisor     | 1.69     | 1.53      | .17**  | .05     | -.09    | .02    | .00    | .22*** | .18** | .08 | -   |    |
| 10. Job status                    | .78      | .41       | .00    | -.01    | .05     | .00    | .18**  | .15*   | .06   | .11 | .08 | -  |

*N* = 251. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

*Note.* Cronbach's alphas are on the diagonal. Timesizing proximity was coded as 0 = distant, 1 = close. Gender was coded as 0 = female and 1 = male. Job status was coded as 0 = part-time, 1 = full-time. Age and tenure with the supervisor were counted in years.

Table 3  
*Hierarchical Linear Modelling Results*

|                                | Stress appraisal |     | Affective commitment to change |     | Emotional exhaustion |     | Extra-role performance |     |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
|                                | Coefficient      | SE  | Coefficient                    | SE  | Coefficient          | SE  | Coefficient            | SE  |
| Intercept                      | 2.81***          | .26 | 4.11***                        | .13 | 2.72***              | .23 | 4.27***                | .26 |
| Age                            | .01              | .01 | .00                            | .01 | -.03**               | .01 | .01                    | .01 |
| Gender                         | .18              | .21 | .03                            | .16 | -.10                 | .19 | -.04                   | .17 |
| Tenure with supervisor         | -.11             | .07 | .00                            | .06 | .06                  | .07 | .18**                  | .06 |
| Job status                     | .17              | .24 | -.01                           | .19 | .67**                | .22 | .35                    | .19 |
| Timesizing proximity           | .35              | .27 | -.16                           | .19 | -.13                 | .23 | .21                    | .29 |
| POS                            | -.03             | .09 |                                |     |                      |     |                        |     |
| Timesizing proximity × POS     | -.30*            | .15 |                                |     |                      |     |                        |     |
| Stress appraisal               |                  |     | -.17***                        | .05 | .26***               | .06 | -.04                   | .05 |
| Affective commitment to change |                  |     |                                |     |                      |     | .13*                   | .06 |
| Emotional exhaustion           |                  |     |                                |     |                      |     | .03                    | .06 |

*N* = 251. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Figure Captions

*Figure 1.* The conceptual model

*Figure 2.* Interaction plot for employees' stress appraisal as a function of timesizing proximity at low (-1 SD) and high (+1 SD) levels of perceived organizational support (POS)



Figure 1.

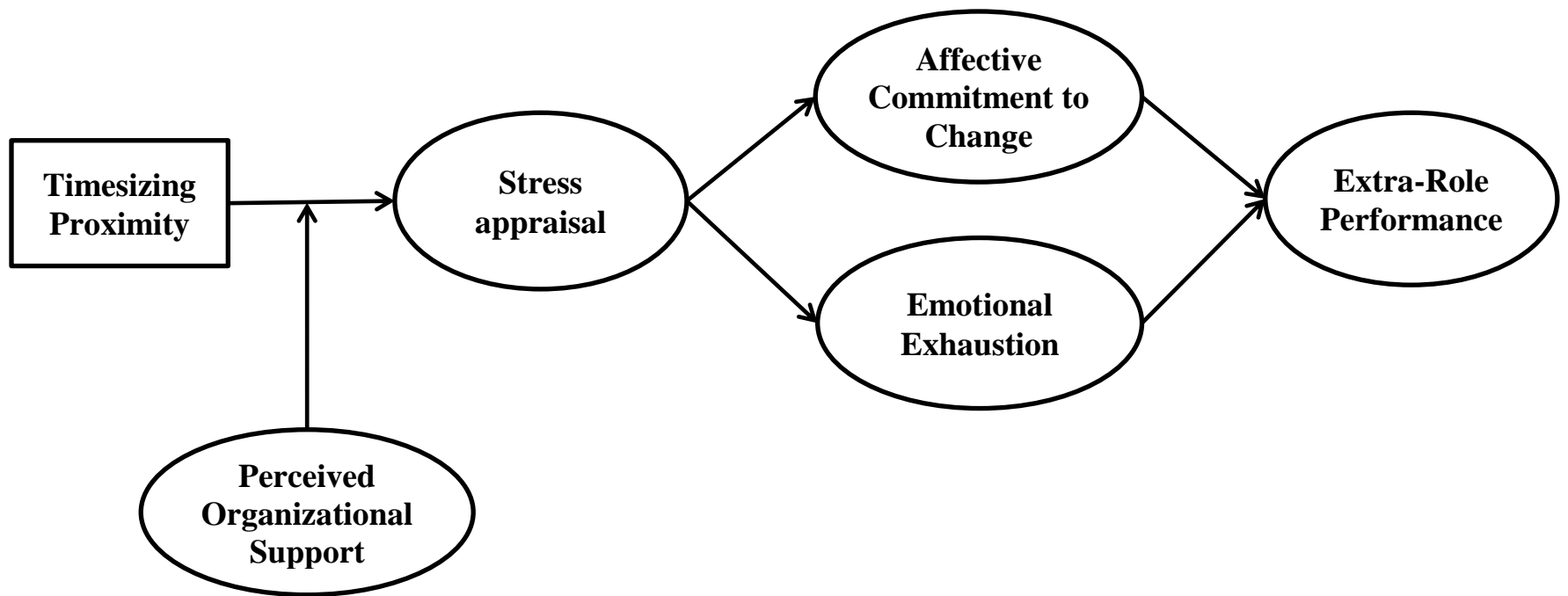


Figure 2.

