

## **Psychological Well-being at Work in K-Market Kilo**

Mariam Sanyang

## Abstract

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<b>Author(s)</b> Mariam Sanyang	
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<b>Report/thesis title</b> Psychological Well-being at Work in K-Market Kilo	<b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b> 23 + 3
<p>Thesis subject is psychological well-being in K-Market Kilo. The aim is to research how psychological well-being is experienced by the employees.</p> <p>Thesis consist of introduction, theoretical framework, research and discussion. Introduction covers background information and purpose of the thesis. Theoretical framework covers the subjects and their theory that has been used on the research. Research introduces the questionnaire used, results and conclusion. Lastly discussion chapter covers the thesis process and learning outcomes.</p> <p>A questionnaire was used as a research method. The answer rate was 100% so results are expected to be very accurate.</p> <p>The research showed that the overall psychological well-being was positive but quite mediocre as were all the areas of the research. Even though results were positive, psychological well-being wasn't experienced on the highest level possible. This means that there's a lot of room for improvement.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Well-being at work, Psychological well-being, Positive psychology, Positive organizational behaviour, PsyCap, Meaningfulness of work	

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## 1 Introduction

Well-being at work has been a relevant topic throughout the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century and its relevance seems to be increasing all the time. It is something every employee and organization needs to take into consideration and make it a priority. Well-being at work needs to be built, maintained and developed to experience the benefits it provides.

The importance of well-being at work will never fade so this topic is relevant in years to come. That is one of the reasons I picked this topic, but also because it is a personal interest of mine. This thesis has also personal relevance to me since I currently work in K-Market Kilo, where the research is performed. I expect that the information covered in this thesis will also help me in my future career path.

Although overall well-being consists of physical, psychological and social well-being, in my thesis I will be focusing on psychological well-being. To be more specific I will be focusing on the field of positive psychology and some of its subtopics such as positive organizational behaviour, psychological resource capacities, PsyCap and meaningfulness of work. Even though such topics as job satisfaction and employee engagement are part of the subject, they will not be a focus point in this thesis but will come up from time to time.

K-Market Kilo is a grocery store that is part of the K-Market Oy chain owned by Finnish food trade giant Kesko. It has operated since summer of 2011. K-Market Kilos values are to work as a trustworthy local market to the residents of Kilo by offering a selection of items after their wishes and providing the best service. Alongside the store owner, the service is currently provided by 12 permanent staff members working either full time or part-time and occasional interns. The staff consist of heads of departments and shop assistants. Being a quite small store, employees do multiple tasks to be efficient and productive.

The objective of the research is to find out how psychological well-being is experienced at K-Market Kilo. Being part of a chain there are standard researches done regularly in every store that measure the well-being of all Kesko employees. So overall well-being by Kesko standards has been researched in K-Market Kilo. There are some parts that cover psychological well-being, but this is the first research dedicated to that subject only. The aim is to measure current psychological well-being and draw attention to the subjects covered. Based on the theory and result, further development can be planned.

## **1.1 Methods**

The method used in this research is a questionnaire that is made to reflect the theory part of the research. The questionnaire about psychological well-being at work is answered by the staff of K-Market Kilo. The questionnaire is answered on a paper form during a period of one week. Based on the answers I will analyse how wellbeing at work is experienced in K-Market Kilo.

## **2 Psychological well-being at work**

Well-being at work means safe, healthy and productive work that professional employees and work communities execute in a well-managed organization. The employees and work communities feel that their work is likeable and rewarding and they feel that their work supports their management of life. According to studies well-being at work has a significant positive connection to a company's productivity, profit, customer satisfaction, small staff turnover, sick absences and accidents. (Työterveyslaitos 2017.) Even though the overall well-being at work consists of physical, psychological and social well-being, this thesis focuses on the psychological side of well-being.

There are two important aspects of psychological well-being: hedonic and eudaimonic. Hedonic aspect of psychological well-being at work refers to the enjoyment felt at work, the subjective feelings of happiness. This aspect is an extremely important ingredient in psychological well-being but experiencing positive emotions and feeling happy about one's work isn't enough on its own. We also need to feel that the work matters and that's where the less-well known term "Eudaimonic" well-being comes in. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 6.) Eudaimonic aspect of psychological well-being at work refers to the meaning and purpose we feel about our work. It is important to feel that the work we do is meaningful and worthwhile no matter what the job is. The importance of this aspect grows when the job in question is difficult, dangerous or unpleasant. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 49.) Meaningful work has become more and more important to employees. In fact, it has emerged to be one of the most valued job outcomes. According to studies by Caudron meaningful work passes most external rewards as an outcome. (Scroggins 2008, 68.)

Studies have shown that there is a direct link between psychological well-being and job performance. The higher the level of psychological well-being, the better job performances by staff and vice versa. In the service industry employees are often expected to go the extra mile or to carry out a task that is not strictly part of their normal role. Studies show that employees are more likely to go the extra mile in service organizations where staff well-being is higher. This also improves customer satisfaction and service quality. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 16.) Researches by Malcolm Patterson show that there are eight specific factors that can be linked to productivity: supervisory support, concern for employee welfare, skill development, effort, innovation and flexibility, quality, performance feedback and formalization. The factor with the strongest link to productivity was that the organization shows concern about the well-being of their employees. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 15.)

As stated before it has been proved that high psychological well-being of employees makes the organizations perform better because they are more productive, have less sick leaves, perform better and so makes the customers more satisfied. The reason why it happens could be found in positive psychology. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 23.)

Psychology for a long time has focused on the negative side of human mind and fixing illnesses and dysfunctional behaviour. The pioneer of positive psychology, Martin Seligman, brought to light the lesser known side that focuses on understanding healthy “normal” people’s well-being, productivity, optimal functioning, growth and development as well as realizing one’s full potential. (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan 2017, 340.) Positive psychology studies made by Barbara Fredrickson and her colleagues shows that people’s attention, action and thought processes are broaden after experiencing positive emotions. So, experiencing positive emotions at work enhances the way employees think and act and they improve employees’ psychological capabilities. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 24-25.)

Positive psychology research has risen over the past two decades and alongside the interest towards positive sides of organizational life has increased. This interest brings attentions to phenomena such as engagement, job satisfaction and well-being. Focusing on these matters a field of positive organizational behaviour (POB) has emerged. (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel 2013, 95.) It is defined as:

“the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today’s workplace”

(Luthans 2002, 59.)

So, in today’s work environment it is important to go beyond trying to avoid employee burnouts and fixing shortcomings and focus more attention to positive state-like psychological resources that have impact on performance. (Luthans & Sweetman 2010, 55.)

These positive state-like psychological resource capacities are self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resiliency and they will be introduced more closely later in the text. The label state-like refers to the resources being rather stable but still malleable and open to development. They are more stable than “pure” states (e.g. mood and emotions) but they aren’t genetically based and extremely difficult to change like pure traits (e.g. intelligence). (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan 2017, 344-345.) These four capacities are more effective in combination and interaction. This combination is called Psychological capital or shortly PsyCap. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 334.)

## **2.1 Self-efficacy as a state-like psychological resource capacity**

As defined by Albert Bandura (1995, 2), “self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations”. In other words, having confidence in oneself to take on and succeed at challenging tasks.

Self-efficacy has many unique factors that make it relevant to positive organizational behaviour. There have been established extensive researches that for example show the relationship between self-efficacy and many work-related performance outcomes such as leadership effectiveness, moral or ethical decision making, creativity, participation, career decision making and entrepreneurship. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 328.)

Employees with less efficacy are prone to failure, despair and losing confidence when receiving negative feedback to name some. Whereas employees with high self-efficacy have challenging self-set goals, take on difficult tasks, motivate themselves, invest effort and do not back down when facing obstacles. Efficacious employees also can visualize products, processes and outcomes (Symbolizing), can anticipate near and distant futures milestones, accomplishments and obstacles (Forethought), can learn from others by observing (Observation), can provide the initiative, proactiveness and self-discipline needed for productive behaviour (Self-regulation) and lastly can use past experiences as learning tools and utilize them to future opportunities and challenges (Self-reflection). (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 329.)

According to Bandura there are four main forms of influence through which efficacy can be created and developed. First and the most effective way is through mastery experiences. By having an experience of mastering a task will build one’s self-efficacy in a powerful way. To have a strong and resilient sense of self-efficacy, one needs to have experienced the success by facing and overcoming adversity. (Bandura 1995, 3.)

Second way is through vicarious experiences of observing someone similar to oneself performing a task. If someone a person considers similar to themselves succeeds in a certain task, they believe they can as well. The more similar the person the stronger the belief. This also goes the other way around. When the similar type of person seems to fail in a task, one is prone to think they would as well. (Bandura 1995, 4.)

Third way is social persuasion made by others. If a person is positively persuaded by others that they are capable of doing a certain task they are likely to put more effort into it. By putting more effort, they are more likely to succeed, and this success grows their self-

belief. Again, this works the other way around. Negative persuasions of the lack of capability are likely to lead the person to avoid challenging tasks and so weaken their efficacy. (Bandura 1995, 4.)

Finally, the fourth influence is person's physiological and emotional state. Capability is determined based on what a person's body and mind are telling. What comes to body, stress or pain are interpreted as result of weak performance. Then again with mind, positive mood can enhance sense of efficacy whereas negative mood can do the opposite. The way to develop self-efficacy based on this is to enhance physical status and correct the misinterpretations of bodily states as well as to reduce stress and negativity.

(Bandura 1995, 4-5.)

## **2.2 Hope as a state-like psychological resource capacity**

Like self-efficacy, hope is about self-set goals. More than that hope is about goal-directed motivations and behaviours as well as planning and redirecting pathways to reach the goals. As defined by Snyder (1991, 287), "positive motivational state based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency ("willpower") and (b) pathways ("way-power")". So, according to Snyder hope includes two different mechanisms through which goals are reached. First mechanism to accomplish one's goals is the internal control that ignites the determination and motivation also known as willpower. Another is way-power, which is the process through which alternative pathways are created to overcome obstacles or to adapt to new situation in order to reach the goals. Hope is about how goals are selected, approached, accomplished and changed. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 330.)

These two components, willpower and way-power are not enough separately on their own to represent the concept of hope. When there is a strong sense of agency, there should be some pathways to reach the goal. Also, when there are evident pathways, the agency can't be non-existent. So, both components are necessary, but hope is most efficiently created when the main focus is on one of the components. (Snyder, Irving & Anderson 1991, 300.)

Snyder and his colleagues have discovered through research that hope has links with multiple positive work-related outcomes. For example, goal expectancies, mental health, better performance, job-satisfaction, organizational commitment and profitability. Managers with higher hope levels were found to have better performing work units, more satisfied employees and higher retention rates. (Luthans, Luthans & Luthans 2015, 190.)

Snyder's researches show that hope is open to development through recognized interventions such as goal-setting training, setting goals that are slightly beyond reach (stretch-goaling) and re-goaling. Employees' hope can enhance in organizational cultures that encourage participation, creativity, contingency planning and "out-of-the box" thinking. Recently emerged studies show how relevant hope is in a workplace and how it impacts performance outcomes. These studies show for example a positive link between employee hope, performance, work attitude and organizational profitability as well as a positive link between leaders' hope and the profitability of their unit. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 330.)

### **2.3 Optimism as a state-like psychological resource capacity**

The difference of optimist and pessimist is simply stated as "Optimists are people who expect good things to happen to them; pessimists are people who expect bad things to happen to them" (Carver, Scheier & Segerstrom 2010, 879)

As Martin Seligman's researches show, optimism can be viewed as a positive explanatory style that internalizes positive events and externalizes negative events. Positive events are attributed to permanent and pervasive whereas negative events as temporary and situation-specific. On the contrary pessimism externalizes positive events with temporary and situation-specific attributes and internalizes negative events with permanent and pervasive attributes. So, in practise optimists have positive expectations and for that are motivated to pursuit their goals. Optimism has largely been associated with positive outcomes such as physical and psychological health, well-being, coping and recovery whereas pessimism has been linked to negative outcomes such as depression and physical illness. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 331.)

Like self-efficacy and hope, optimism is about pursuing personal goals. However, unlike self-efficacy and hope, optimism adds external factors as possible sources to positive expectancies. Also, as stated before optimism externalized failures. Other differences to two previous resource capacities are that optimism is utilizing generalized attributions unlike self-efficacy and is not including the pathways for goal accomplishment like hope. Lastly as the two previous ones are primarily cognitive, optimism has emotional and motivational components to it as well. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 331.)

Optimism is very relevant to positive organizational behaviour because of its strong effect on performance results. According to studies of Seligman optimism can be learned and

developed. A person can be a type of pessimist who feel responsible of a bad situation even if it's out of their control or credits someone else on their accomplishments. In these cases, optimism can be developed by identifying and challenging these assumptions and beliefs and replace them with positive ones. A person can also be a type of pessimist who had unrealistic expectations and goals that were not realistically reachable, and because of that they were likely to fail and turn into pessimism. In these cases, optimism can be developed by learning to set more effective and reasonable goals. It is also noted that pessimism shouldn't always be seen in a negative way and in some situations, it is necessary to alternate between optimistic and pessimistic points of views. This is what Peterson and Schulman call "flexible optimism". (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 332.)

## **2.4 Resiliency as a state-like psychological resource capacity**

As Luthans (2002, 702) defined resiliency, "the capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure or even positive events, progress and increased responsibility".

Even though resiliency might sound like a capacity that only rare exceptional people possess, from the positive psychology and positive organizational behaviour point of view it can be learned and developed by anyone. Coutu describes resilient people as the ones who accept reality, hold on strongly onto meaningful and stable values and beliefs, and who can easily adapt and improvise in unexpected situations. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 332.)

In today's world there are constant changes, risks and uncertainty in different areas such as economics, technology, work-life balance and increasing customer service orientation. This makes resiliency an even bigger factor when it comes to turning these threats into opportunities. Resiliency should not be just a resource of individuals but the whole organization. Resilient organization culture is enhanced with strong vision, mission and values. Strategic planning, teamwork, employee involvement and open communication channels are useful tools when building a resilient organization (Luthans, Luthans & Luthans 2015, 192.)

When building resiliency, Masten outlines asset-focused, risk-focused and process focused strategies. Asset-focused strategies focuses on improving one's assets such as knowledge, skills, abilities, personality traits, social relationships and support, that are ingredients for higher performance and so on lead to success. Risk-focused strategies focuses on eliminating or reducing risk factors such as stress, conflict, job insecurity, lack of

communication and feedback, ineffective leadership and negative group dynamics, that can weaken performance and thus weaken success. Lastly process-focused strategies do not particularly focus on assets and risks factors that one possesses but focuses on creating a coping mechanism that utilizes one's assets when dealing with the risk factors to overcome adversity. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 333.)

When talking about bouncing back, negative events are the first to come to mind, but positive organizational behaviour also accounts the need to do so after positive events that might have been overwhelming e.g. increased responsibility. Bouncing back refers to one regaining their normal level of performance but in today's organizational world it might not be enough. Setbacks are opportunities for learning, growth and development, that's why positive organizational behaviour expands the term bouncing back to "bouncing back and beyond". So, resiliency doesn't only view setbacks as opportunities, it also engages creative and flexible adaptive mechanism. Both of which help achieving personal and organizational goals that are predicted to lead to positive work-related outcomes. (Luthans & Youssef 2007, 333-334.)

## **2.5 Psychological capital as a state-like psychological resource capacity**

Psychological capital or PsyCap is the core construct that consist of the four capacities introduced above. It has stronger relation to desired outcomes than the individual capacities that forms it. (Luthans & Sweetman 2010, 56.) PsyCap is defined as:

"an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterized by:  
(1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success"  
(Luthans & Youssef 2007, 3).

PsyCap has a direct link to positive emotions since they are a by-product of good PsyCap. As stated before positive emotions broaden one's thinking process that increases creativity and leads to broader range of pathways. Studies made by Avey to find out the outcomes of PsyCap, support that it is a predictor of performance and desirable employee attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and psychological well-being.

It is also found to negatively relate to such attitudes as cynicism, turnover intentions, work stress and anxiety. PsyCap is also found to have a stronger relation to its outcomes in the service sector, compared to e.g. industrial sector. (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan 2017, 348-349.)

PsyCap can be developed the same as the four of its constructs. As presented previously in the text each of these constructs have their own development methods. By combining some of these methods, PsyCap training interventions can be created. (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan 2017, 345.) Right environment is essential in these training interventions to make them efficient. Since PsyCap development focuses on positive thinking patterns, instead of skill sets and behaviour patterns, it needs to be done in the surrounding of positive organizational culture of support, empowerment, recognition, appreciation and fairness that lets the employee be authentic and innovative. In these circumstances PsyCap and its desired outcomes are likely to thrive. (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan 2017, 357.)

Positive leadership is a key factor in PsyCap development and management. In order to develop the employees' PsyCap, the leaders need to lead by example and transform themselves to be positive, authentic, transparent and trustworthy. The leaders need to genuinely believe in the value of people and have the motivation and authentic desire to improve the employees' psychological resources to succeed in PsyCap development. (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan 2017, 359.)

## **2.6 Positive and negative pressures**

In today's environment filled with fast pace changes, rapid advancement in technology and innovations are creating expectations towards employees to meet greater demands with less resources (Luthans & Sweetman 2010, 54).

The pressures that come from demands placed on the workers are factors that can either increase or decrease psychological well-being. Too much demands and too little demands can both be damaging to psychological well-being. The demands of work make employees feel worthwhile and useful and meeting the demands gives them satisfaction. But when demands are too excessive for too long it is likely to start impacting the psychological well-being in a negative way. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 21.)

"When the pressure (e.g. demands of the job or internal drive to perform) is low, performance will not be at its maximum. As the pressure increases, performance increases but as

pressure increases even further it becomes too great – and performance actually begins to suffer.”  
(Robertson & Cooper 2011, 22.)

Pressure can be classified into two categories: challenge pressures and hindrance pressures. Roughly said challenge pressures are seen as positive and hindrance as negative pressures. Although challenge pressures (e.g. workload, additional responsibility, time pressure...) may create some strain on a worker they are associated with growth, development and opportunity to achieve. Whereas hindrance pressures (e.g. lack of control, unclear goals, unrealistic deadlines...) are likely to damage performance and create barriers to achievement and growth. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 82.)

Research of Working Conditions and Well-being in the Service sector made by Työterveyslaitos and its associates shows that pressure and hecticness are less straining when the tasks are experienced as pleasing and have variety. The variety in tasks also has a significant impact on work flow. When tasks are pleasing and have variety, workers are more satisfied and dedicated to them. Workers who felt lack of variety in their tasks had more physical and psychological symptoms as well as more sick leaves. (Kandolin, Tilev, Lindström, Vartia & Ketola 2009, 79.)

## **2.7 Meaningfulness of work**

Meaningful work experiences form the base for employee engagement. Since engagement strongly correlates to employee turnover, organizations need to create meaningful work experiences for its employees to keep them in the organization. (Scroggins 2008, 68.) When employees experience their work as meaningful, they have less intentions to leave. (Scroggins 2008, 75.)

Self-concept-job fit means that employees' performance matches the employees' self-perception and ideal self. Work is experienced more meaningful when it is in line with the employees' perception of who they are. Work is also experienced more meaningful when it enhances the employees' self-esteem and strengthens their perceptions of what they want to be. (Scroggins 2008, 70.)

Experienced meaningfulness of work plays a centric role in self-concept-based motivation theory by Shamir. It implies that when job tasks match the employees' self-concept, the

work is perceived as meaningful. Experienced meaningfulness of work has motivational effect. (Scroggins 2008, 69.)

According to Richard Hackman and Greg Oldham's Job Characteristics Model there are five core job characteristics (skill variety, task significance, task identity, autonomy and feedback from job) that have an impact on people's critical psychological state (meaningfulness of work being one of them), which again influences motivation, satisfaction and work performance. (Robertson & Cooper 2011, 80-81.) As seen in a figure below, meaningfulness of work is derived from skill variety, task identity and task significance.

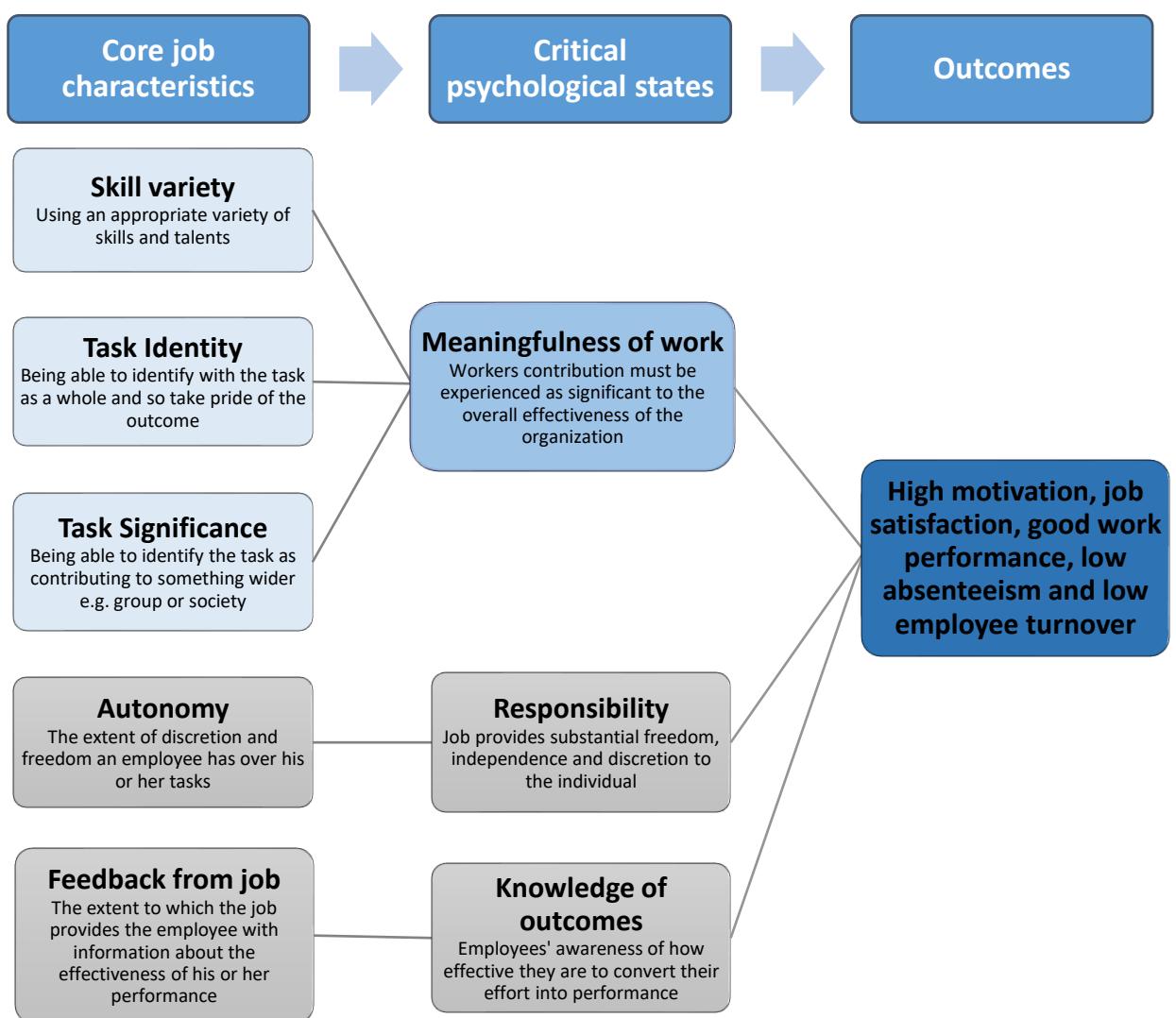


Figure 1. Figure drawn based on Hackman & Oldham's Job Characteristic Model (1980)

Since in this part the focus is on meaningfulness of work, in the figure above all the factors are highlighted with blue colour. The grey boxes are there to illustrate the theory as a whole but are not relevant to this part. As seen in the figure, meaningfulness of work is derived from skill variety, task identity and task significance. These factors all contribute to the experienced meaningfulness. This experienced meaningfulness of work then again contributes to positive outcomes such as high motivation and job satisfaction.

### **3 Research**

Based on the theory above, research part was executed in K-Market Kilo. I chose a survey as my method to do the research on how psychological well is being experienced at K-Market Kilo. I chose the survey because I wanted the research to happen anonymously. I felt that anonymous answers were the only way to get honest answers. Had I performed interviews, the people answering wouldn't have felt the same freedom to answer truthfully especially because I am part of the organization.

The survey was answered by all of the permanent staff members, excluding myself. I wanted to be just the researcher without being a participant, so the results are based on the remaining 11 staff members. With a 100% answering rate the results are expected to be very accurate. In the results I will present what was the general opinion based on the calculated averages of the answer and the quantity of the individual worst and best answers. I present quantities instead of percentages since the research group is so small. The survey and a chart of the averages of the answers can be found in the appendices.

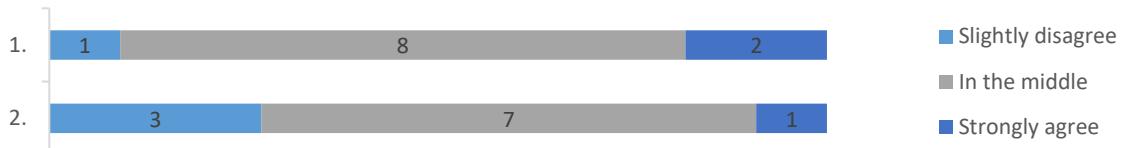
#### **3.1 Survey**

In my research it is irrelevant what gender, age or education the participants represent, so that background information is left out of the survey. The survey consists of 23 statements. There are 2-3 statements per theory subjects of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resiliency, PsyCap, pressure and meaningfulness. There are also a few statements of overall psychological well-being. Some of the statements I have come up with according to my theory and some I have altered from existing well-being questionnaires by International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics and Sykettätyöhön. The survey was answered in Finnish in a paper form. I placed the papers in the staff break room where all staff members go multiple times during their shift. The answering time was one week.

As answering options, I have used the Likert-scale as a base, but I added a sixth option. Instead of a scale from 1 to 5, I wanted to use a scale from 1 to 6 so that the neutral "neither agree nor disagree" isn't an option. By separating that option into "slightly agree" and "slightly disagree" forces the answers to slightly lean on the positive or negative side. The whole scale then being: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree and 6 = strongly agree.

### 3.2 Results

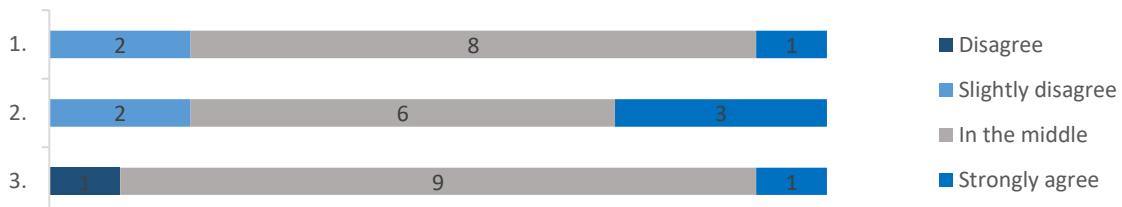
When measuring self-efficacy, the statements targeted confidence as an employee. According to the results of the survey most employees are quite confident to make decisions with an average of 4,45. There were some differences in the answers as one was slightly disagreeing with being confident on decision making but two were strongly agreeing (1). Generally, employees were slightly confident to take on challenging tasks at work with an average of 4. Three were slightly disagreeing and one strongly agreeing (2).



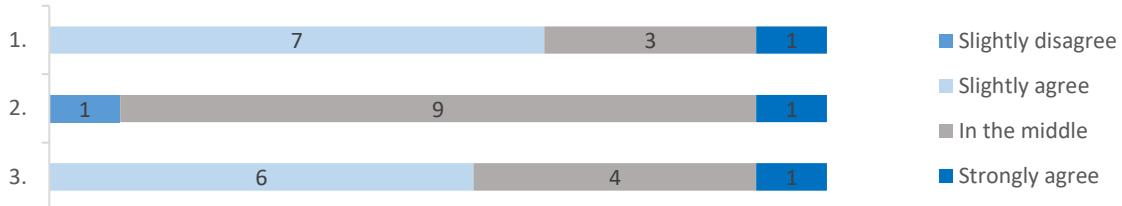
Statements of hope focused on goals and pathways to reach them. Participants were motivated to reach their goals as employees with an average of 4,9. Only one was slightly disagreeing when there were four who were strongly agreeing (1). In general employees were slightly agreeing that when facing obstacles, they can easily find another way to reach their goals (avg. 4,1). Two were slightly disagreeing and one strongly agreeing (2).



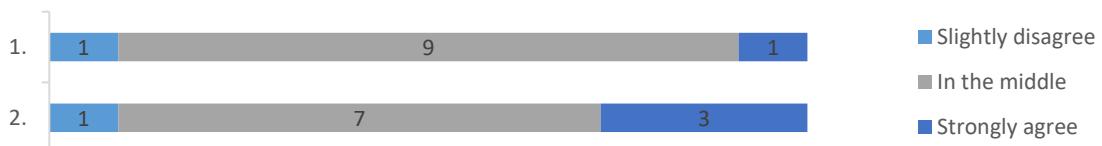
When measuring optimism, the focus was on positive outlook of present and the future. Employees had a quite positive outlook on their work performance in general with an average of 4,45. Two were slightly disagreeing and one was strongly agreeing on the matter (1). Most employees also felt like they were quite successful in their job (avg. 4,45). Two slightly disagreed when three strongly felt successful in their job (2). In general employees were slightly agreeing to having a positive outlook on their future with an average of 4,3. There was one that was disagreeing and only one that was strongly agreeing (3).



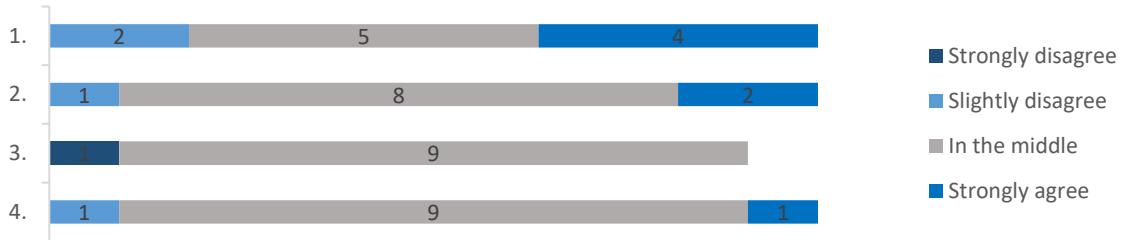
Resiliency was researched through statements about setbacks. In general employees were slightly agreeing that when facing setbacks, they easily recover to their normal level of performance (avg. 4,45). No one was disagreeing, and one was strongly agreeing (1). Generally, with an average of 4,45, it was slightly agreed that setbacks are a chance to grow as an employee. One was slightly disagreeing and one strongly agreeing (2). Most people felt that it was easy for them to improvise in unexpected situations (avg. 4,55). No one was disagreeing, and one was strongly agreeing (3).



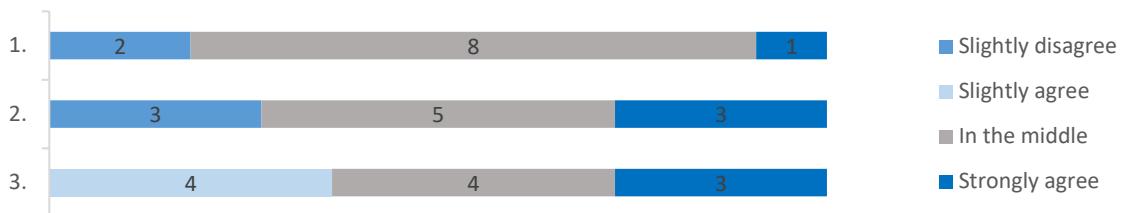
All the results above also reflect on the experienced PsyCap as it is a combination of the four capacities. To be more specific there were statements about positive emotions and commitment to the organization, which both are outcomes of high PsyCap. Employees slightly agreed on often experiencing positive emotions at work with an average of 4,45. One was slightly agreeing and one strongly agreeing (1). Employees felt quite committed to their work place on a general level with an average of 4,45. Although there was one who was disagreeing there were three that strongly felt committed (2).



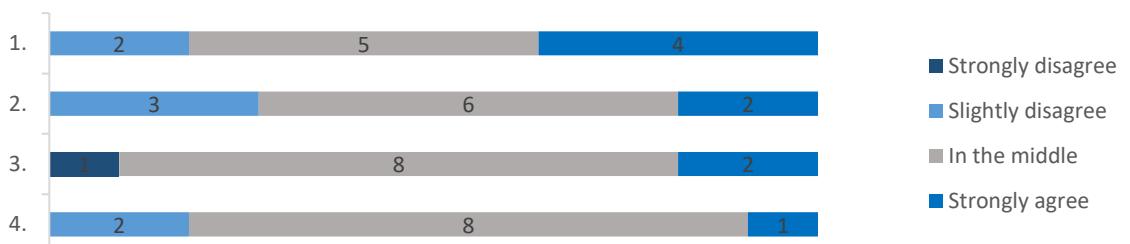
What comes to demands of the job most employees found them quite reachable with an average of 4,82. Two people were slightly disagreeing with the reachability but four strongly agreed (1). Also, with an average of 4,82, it was also quite agreed that the demands of the job help employees to grow. One was slightly disagreeing and two strongly agreeing (2). When asked if too much was expected from the employees the general answer was quite disagreeing with an average of 2,72. One was agreeing with the statement that too much was expected and two were strongly disagreeing (3). It was mostly agreed that employees' resources were sufficient to meet the demands of the job (avg. 4,63). One was slightly disagreeing and one strongly agreeing (4).



Meaningfulness of work was researched through statements about employees' ability to express oneself through work, whether they experience their work as meaningful and whether they feel like a useful asset to the workplace. Employees slightly agreed that they get express themselves through work with an average of 4,09. Two were slightly disagreeing and one was strongly agreeing (1). With an average of 4,45, employees also slightly agreed that they experience their work as meaningful. In this part answers were quite divided since three were slightly disagreeing whereas three were strongly agreeing (2). Employees mostly felt like they were a useful asset to their workplace (avg. 4,9) and no one was disagreeing. Four were slightly agreeing and three were strongly agreeing (3).



Lastly there were statements about how employees experienced overall psychological well-being. Participants generally felt quite good about coming to work with an average of 4,73. There were two that were slightly disagreeing but four that were strongly agreeing (1). When asked whether participants were enthusiastic about their job, it was generally slightly agreed (avg. 4,45). Three were slightly disagreeing and two strongly agreeing (2). Average of 4 shows that it was slightly agreed that the workplace supports employees' psychological well-being. Answers to that statement divided quite widely since one was strongly disagreeing and two were strongly agreeing (3). Employees mostly experienced their well-being at work as good with an average of 4,55. Two participants were slightly disagreeing with the statement and one was strongly agreeing (4).



## **4 Discussion**

Overall all the general results were on the positive side even though there were some individual disagreements. Based on the averages none of the statements were fully or strongly agreed on. This indicates that psychological well-being at K-Market Kilo is experienced on a positive but quite mediocre level which means that there is a lot of room for improvement.

The results on self-efficacy indicate that it is slightly positively experienced. Based on the theory employees' self-efficacy can be improved e.g. by frequently offering opportunities to practice and succeed by executing tasks and steadily increasing their difficulty level. Giving out suitable tasks to suitable employees and letting them know they are selected because they are believed to have what it takes is also a good way to build efficacy. Another effective way is giving the employees the chance to observe and learn from people they can relate to whether those people are fellow employees or trainers/men-tors/coaches.

The results on hope indicate that it is quite positively experienced. Hope can be improved by focusing on employees' goal-setting and by giving employees a kind of environment where they are encouraged to participate and be creative. Also, optimism can be developed by focusing on employees' goal setting if the goals are unrealistic. Realistic goals are important to become and stay optimistic hence it is good to help employees set reachable goals. The results on optimism indicate that at the moment it is experienced on a slightly positive level.

The results on resiliency indicate that resiliency is experienced quite positively. When building resiliency, it is important to constantly give the employees quality information to gain knowledge, training to improve their skills, organize teambuilding to im-prove social relationships and so on support. It is also important to reduce stress factors and conflicts by having open discussions, avoid communication problems by having good channels for communication and feedback, reduce negative group dynamics again by teambuilding. Also, employees need to learn how to use their assets in the face of adver-sity.

The general results of each individual capacities are not outstandingly high but are on the positive side. This also indicates that PsyCap is on the same level. The results on PsyCap clarify that PyCap indeed is experienced as results of the individual capacities previously indicated. Since PsyCap constructs of the above-mentioned capacities, PsyCap is im-

proved it by improving the capacities. PsyCap can be developed by combining capacities' development methods. Positive, supportive, empowering, appreciating and fair work organizational culture is the best environment for developing PsyCap.

What comes to the demands of the job, the averages indicated that it is on a quite good level, but the individual answers were quite divided. The inequality of the answers can be much affected by the position and job description of the employee. Employees have different tasks hence different experiences of demands. It is important to focus on balancing pressures coming from demands. There is a need to keep the balance between having too little or too much demands for everyone equally.

Results indicate that meaningfulness of work is experienced quite well. Individual answers were quite divided on some statements which means that the meaningful experiences are strong with other and others not. It is also important to equally create a sense of meaningfulness to all the employees through meaningful experiences and make sure employees feel useful and valued. Also, that their work significantly contributes to the success of the whole organization.

#### **4.1 Reliability**

The factors that might affect the reliability of the research are timing, interpretation and generality of statements. Timing could be a factor since it is assumed that the surveys were answered during a break. This means people have limited time to answer and other things to do during the break which might mean that the answers were given without further in depth thought.

Interpretation of statements might have also played a part in reliability. Different people might have thought of the statement from different angles and so on answered them differently. What comes to the statements they are quite general since there are only few statements per subject. To get more information about each subject there would need to be more questions that would be more in depth. In this case a longer time-consuming survey would have probably affected the answering rate. The answering rate of 100% and the fact that the survey was answered completely anonymously adds the reliability of the research.

## **5 Conclusion**

The research showed that the overall psychological well-being was on a positive side, which of course is a desirable situation, but results were quite mediocre in every research area. So, even though results were positive, psychological well-being wasn't experienced on the highest level possible which again means that there's a lot of room for improvement.

The psychological well-being of K-Market Kilo is on a good starting base but need focus and development to flourish. These are the resources that employees possess and by nurturing and growing these resources through positive psychology the whole organization grows.

If psychological well-being is developed through mechanisms introduced in theory and suggested in discussion part, the organization is expected to have decrease in absenteeism and turnover and increase in productivity, job performance, employee engagement, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and of course overall well-being.

### **5.1 Thesis process**

The thesis process started quite slowly for me as I was trying to decide my topic for a long time. I had an interest towards my chosen topic and I had the idea of it at the back of my head for a long time, but I was still weighing other ideas. When time was running out I ended up with this topic with the help of a teacher.

My idea at first was to cover well-being from physical, psychological and social aspects but as I went on it seemed way too wide. By the suggestion of my thesis supervisor I narrowed it down. First, I dropped the physical part and later the social part. From the start my interest was mostly on psychological well-being so I continued to focus solely on that. There was so much material on psychological well-being that it was hard at first to filter the ones that were and weren't necessary for me. I struggled a lot in the beginning to find the right subjects to focus on, but as I went through them I started to slowly form the structure. I ended up focusing on positive psychology and its sub-topics. These I found interesting and had some background information from courses.

It was hard for me to find the motivation and drive to do my thesis for most of the time. I was doing my final courses at the same time as the most of my thesis project which had a

negative affect on it. During that time, I was also working which again took my time and energy needed in the thesis process. Towards the end I started to find the drive and needed working mode. After my courses were done I had more time and didn't have any other assignments to distract me. I also decided to cut down my working hours, so I would have even more time to dedicate to the thesis. After those changes I felt like I found control and that I was on the right path. Through that feeling I found the working mode necessary to finish the process.

## **5.2 Learning outcome**

I learned a lot about the process itself and about psychological well-being. First, I learned a lot of theory that made me analyse myself as well as my surroundings. Throughout the research I reflected the information to my present situation and thought about how I can utilize what I've learned in the future. This theory will now always be at the back of my mind helping me as an employee and as a possible future employer. As an employee I will require well-being at my work and as an employer I would make well-being of my employees as a priority.

I learned to recognize reliable sources while making research on my topic. With this kind of topic, it is crucial to have trustworthy information. Towards the end I also started to learn the way to read these kinds of scientific researches and the way to scan what information is relevant to me. I also learned how to correctly refer to my used sources. I improved my vocabulary and writing skills throughout the process.

One thing that helped me a lot was learning to ignore distractions. I took a long time to learn this, but luckily, I did at the end. I often find it very hard to focus even without distractions, so when there are some I am easily taken off by them. I learned to drop the distractions that I can control (e.g. leaving my phone behind when working) and cut down the effect of distractions I didn't have control over (e.g. wearing earplugs when it was too noisy).

Time management was also a valuable thing I learned. I learned that using even a little time working on the thesis is progress. A lot of times when I decided to do just a little ended up doing much more once I started. But even when doing just a little it was good to wake up the thinking process, so it was easier to come back to next time. At the end I learned to prioritize my time working on the thesis over work, social time and activities but keep a nice balance between all. All in all, I learned a lot skills and knowledge from this thesis process that will help me in my future career and life in general.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Statements and Averages of Answers

I feel good about coming to work.	4,73
I am enthusiastic about your job.	4,45
I am confident to make decisions at my workplace.	4,45
I am confident to take on challenging tasks.	4
I am motivated to reach my goals as an employee.	4,9
When facing obstacles, I easily find another way to reach my goals.	4,1
I have a positive outlook on my work performance.	4,45
I feel like I am successful in my job.	4,45
I have a positive outlook on my future.	4,3
When facing setbacks, I easily recover to my normal level of performance.	4,45
I feel like setbacks are a chance to grow.	4,45
It is easy for me to improvise in unexpected situations.	4,55
I often experience positive emotions at work.	4,45
I feel committed to my work place.	4,45
The demands of my job are reachable.	4,82
The demands of my job help me to grow.	4,82
Too much is expected from me at work.	2,72
My resources are sufficient to meet the demands of my job.	4,63
I get to express myself through my job.	4,09
I experience my work as meaningful.	4,45
I feel like a useful asset to my workplace.	4,9
My workplace supports my psychological well-being.	4
My well-being is good at work.	4,55

## **Appendix 2. Questionnaire of Psychological Well-being**

The aim of this questionnaire is to study the psychological well-being of your work place for a thesis. Answer the following questions with the option that mostly reflects your feelings as an employee.

1 = Strongly disagree      2 = Disagree      3 = Slightly disagree      4 = Slightly agree  
5 = Agree      6 = Strongly agree

1. I feel good about coming to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I am enthusiastic about your job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I am confident to make decisions at my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I am confident to take on challenging tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I am motivated to reach my goals as an employee.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. When facing obstacles, I easily find another way to reach my goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I have a positive outlook on my work performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I feel like I am successful in my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I have a positive outlook on my future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. When facing setbacks, I easily recover to my normal level of performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I feel like setbacks are a chance to grow.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. It is easy for me to improvise in unexpected situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I often experience positive emotions at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I feel committed to my work place.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. The demands of my job are reachable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. The demands of my job help me to grow.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Too much is expected from me at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. My resources are sufficient to meet the demands of my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6

19. I get to express myself through my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. I experience my work as meaningful.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. I feel like a useful asset to my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. My workplace supports my psychological well-being.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. My well-being is good at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Thank you for answering !

### **Appendix 3. Psykologisen työhyvinvoinnin kyselylomake**

Tämän kyselylomakkeen tavoitteena on selvittää työpaikkasi psykologista työhyvinvointia opinnäytetyötä varten. Valitse seuraavista vastausvaihtoehtoista se, joka parhaiten kuvailee tunteitasi työtekijänä.

1 = Täysin eri mieltä      2 = Eri mieltä

3 = Jokseenkin eri mieltä

6 = Jokseenkin samaa mieltä      5 = Samaa mieltä

6 = Täysin samaa mieltä

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Tulen mielessäni töihin.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Suhtaudun työhöni innolla.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. Olen itsevarma tehdessäni päätöksiä töissä.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Olen itsevarma toteuttaessani vaikeita haasteita.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Olen motivoitunut saavuttamaan tavoitteeni työntekijänä                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Esteiden ilmetessä, koen löytäväni helposti uuden ratkaisun tavoitteiden saavuttamiseksi. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Minulla on positiivinen näkemys työsorituksestani.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. Koen olevani menestynyt työssäni.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. Minulla on positiivinen näkemys tulevaisuudestani.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. Vastoinkäymisten sattuessa, koen palautuvani normaaliiin suoritustasooni helposti.       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. Koen vastoinkäymiset mahdollisuutena kasvaa.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. Minun on helppo improvisoida yllättävissä tilanteissa.                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. Koen usein positiivisia tunteita työssäni.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

14. Olen omistautunut työpaikalleni.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Työni vaatimukset ovat toteutettavissa.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Työni vaatimukset auttavat minua kasvamaan.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Minulta vaaditaan liikaa työssäni.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. Voimavarani riittäväät työni vaatimusten toteuttamiseen.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Pystyn toteuttamaan itseäni työni kautta.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Työni on minulle merkityksellistä.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. Tunnen olevani hyödyllinen voimavara työpaikalleni.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Työpaikkani tukee psykologista hyvinvointiani.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Voin hyvin työssäni.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Kiitos kun vastasit !