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Impact of Positivity Pressure on Burnout and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Emotional demands in the workplace may significantly affect employee wellbeing. One such demand is the expectation to remain positive, known as 'positivity pressure', which has been associated with burnout and lower job satisfaction. However, it remains unclear whether burnout explains how positivity pressure influences job satisfaction.

This study therefore investigates the mediating role of burnout in the relationship between positivity pressure and job satisfaction among employees between in New Zealand and India, with a small number of participants from other countries. The final sample consisted of 129 participants.

After conducting a mediation analysis, we found that our results are consistent with previous research and support the link between positivity pressure and lower job satisfaction and burnout. However, we found that burnout partially mediates the relationship between positivity pressure and job satisfaction, but that positivity pressure also directly affects job satisfaction.

These findings may have implications for managers, practitioners, and leaders interested in understanding factors related to workplace satisfaction, job retention, and emotional safety at work.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Artificial intelligence Declaration

Artificial Intelligence Guidelines:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, including generative AI tools approved for use by AUT ([AI Tool Register](#)), can be used as learning tools when preparing to write your research proposal or research component. AI tools also have capability to assist with data modelling, data analysis and data visualisation. However, the research component you submit for examination must be substantively your own work. AI tools cannot solely be used to generate content when writing or creating an artwork/artefact, as this constitutes plagiarism. The formal guidelines for appropriate use of AI on the [AI Hub](#) must be followed. Also refer to the [Using Artificial Intelligence in your Research: Self-Assessments, Checklists, and Sample Text](#), for examples and sample text.

If you do plan to use AI tools, this declaration should be submitted with the initial research proposal, Confirmation of Candidature, and when you submit your research component for examination. You must complete the template below for each AI output used detailing the following:

- **Chapters where AI was used in any way**
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- **AI Tool(s) Used**
- **Prompts Used**
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Specify the chapter number(s) in your research proposal/research component where AI was used.	
Chapter number(s):	All chapters
Briefly explain why the AI tool was used (e.g., idea generation, summarization, data analysis, image creation, etc.).	
Purpose of AI Use:	<p>First, The AI tool was used to assist in the development of a scale relevant to this study (Positivity Pressure Scale). All necessary specifications, including subscales and the required response format, were provided, and the scale was subsequently approved by the ethics committee.</p> <p>Additionally, AI was used solely for proofreading purposes, including checking grammar, sentence structure, consistency of tense, punctuation, and formatting. It was not used for any other aspect of this research.</p>
Clearly state the AI tools used.	
AI Tool(s) Used:	Copilot and Chat Gpt
Prompts or queries entered into the AI tool (only the instructive portion of the prompt is required). Include all relevant variations.	
Prompts Used:	<p>Prompt 1: "Generate a self-report questionnaire with items that assess exposure to positivity pressure and toxic positivity in social and workplace contexts. The items should cover emotional invalidation, suppression of negative emotions, and emotional dissonance. Items should be suitable for adult working populations, written in first-person statements, and rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'never' to 'always'. Ensure consistency with existing research on surface acting, emotional labour, and emotional regulation."</p> <p>Prompt 2: Check grammar and sentence structure for the following for the below mentioned content : *pasted paragraphs of each section*</p>

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Describe how the AI output was used, edited, or transformed.

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Student Name: Pearl Kobad Bulsara

Signature:

Date: 19/03/2026

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Impact of Positivity Pressure on Burnout and Job Satisfaction.

In recent years, modern workplaces have undergone rapid transformation, with increasing performance pressures, changing employment expectations, and rising concerns about employee retention (Zhu et al., 2023). As organisations compete to maintain productive and motivated workforces, employee satisfaction has emerged as an important psychological and organisational outcome (Edward et al., 2002).

Spector (1985) suggests that job satisfaction is not determined by salary alone but reflects an interaction between social support, organisational systems, and individual work experiences. Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which an employee is content with their job, demonstrating an overall appreciation for their work (Spector, 1985). It is a multidimensional construct shaped by factors such as pay, promotion, opportunities, fringe benefits, nature of work, and communication (Spector, 1985).

Beyond these traditional job facets, studies show that an employee's work environment and engagement level also play a key role in job satisfaction. Chinyamurindi and Mashavira (2024) found that South African public service employees who experienced fair treatment, clear role descriptions, and supportive work structures were more engaged at work, which increased job satisfaction and reduced intentions to resign. Similarly, in Nepal's healthcare sector, where high workload and staff shortages are common, support from supervisors and autonomy were equally important predictors of satisfaction and motivation (Batura et al., 2016). These findings highlight the importance of both structural and social aspects of work when examining satisfaction across organisations.

Further evidence supports this view. Edward et al. (2002) identified quality leadership, communication, workload, and job clarity as key predictors of job satisfaction. High stress levels

have also been linked to lower satisfaction and increased employee turnover (Zhu et al., 2023). How employees perceive their workplace also matters, as Raab (2020) found that those who reported positive work experiences also reported higher satisfaction. Overall, job satisfaction appears to be shaped by both workplace organisation and employees' personal experiences. While job satisfaction is influenced by structural and environmental factors, emotional well-being can become compromised when workplace demands exceed coping capacity, resulting in burnout. Burnout is defined as a psychological syndrome consisting of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). It occurs particularly in environments where workload is high, role expectations are unclear, and organisational support is limited. For example, AlMarzooqi et al. (2025) found that high task demands and low role clarity among United Arab Emirates (UAE) public sector employees were associated with lower job satisfaction and increased psychological strain. Similarly, Gao et al. (2025) reported that excessive demands and unclear responsibilities reduced resilience in working students, illustrating the importance of workplace structure.

Organisational interventions can reduce the risk of burnout and its impact on job satisfaction. Karaferis et al. (2022) found that Greek hospital employees who received structured feedback, recognition, and coaching reported higher engagement and lower stress and burnout levels. Raab(2020) also found that maintaining positivity in the work environment and fostering strong communication helped employees cope with demands and reduced burnout. In contrast, chronic stress and neglect of psychological needs were linked to high emotional strain, low satisfaction, and increased intentions to resign (Edward et al., 2002). Positivity has been widely studied for its benefits, including enhanced motivation, creativity, problem-solving, and resilience (Bastian et al., 2014). However, when employees feel forced to maintain constant

positivity regardless of their true emotional state, this creates *positivity pressure*, which has been linked to emotional stress, reduced motivation, and lower job satisfaction (Lau & Saili, 2024). Workplaces frequently require employees to manage their emotions for example, hiding negative feelings or displaying positive ones regardless of authenticity. Research by Lee and Madera (2019) found that strategies such as surface acting (hiding negative emotions) and deep acting (attempting to genuinely feel positive emotions) were associated with stress and lower engagement. These findings suggest that emotion regulation itself is a source of strain.

Extending this, recent research shows that employees who are forced to hide negative emotions experience lower motivation, reduced satisfaction, and greater difficulty managing workplace challenges (Lau & Saili, 2024). Emotional dissonance defined as a mismatch between internal feelings and outward emotional expression is one of the main mechanisms linking positivity pressure to burnout (Grandey et al., 2003). These findings emphasise the importance of emotional authenticity at work. Encouraging employees to express both positive and negative emotions without fear of judgment promotes motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction (Dejonckheere et al., 2022).

Literature Review

Previous research states that job satisfaction is shaped by multiple work factors including tasks, supervision, relationships, and work structures (Spector, 1985). Research within job satisfaction also found that higher job satisfaction leads to positive outcomes such as better performance, higher commitment to the organisation and lower turnover intentions (Pieters, 2018). However, recent studies question these assumptions, particularly regarding frameworks related to job satisfaction (Lee & Madera, 2019). One of the most influential theories of job satisfaction and motivation in a workplace is Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory, which sheds light on distinguishing between 'hygiene factors', such as salary, company policies, and supervision, that prevent dissatisfaction from taking place, and 'motivators', like achievement, recognition, and responsibility, that promote satisfaction among employees. Pieters (2018) critiqued this theory for its oversimplification and proposed the idea that the same factor can be both a hygiene factor and a motivator depending on individual context, challenging the narrow dimension of this theory. AlMarzooqi (2025) also critiqued that this theory ignores social and cultural moderators, for example, the collectivistic and individualistic value systems that influence how employees respond to reward and recognition.

While Herzberg's theory focuses on static job factors influencing satisfaction, motivation-based frameworks provide a more dynamic explanation of how employees evaluate effort. This brings us to the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), that explains motivation is a result of three key categories. The first is expectancy, which is the belief that putting in effort will lead to good performance. Second is instrumentality, which is the belief that good performance will lead to reward. And third is valence, which shows how much the person values that reward (Vroom, 1964). This theory has been widely applied in organisational settings, particularly in terms of performance, incentives, and goal setting (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). When organisations link effort to rewards such as bonuses or promotions, employee motivation tends to

increase (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). Clear communication of expectations strengthens employees' beliefs that effort leads to performance, while meaningful rewards improve the outcomes of job satisfaction (Vroom, 1964). The theory also emphasises the fact that individuals make evaluations around their work when they decide how much effort needs to be invested into it, and these evaluations are often influenced by personal factors such as ability, experience, and self-confidence that later shape expectancy judgements (Vroom, 1964). Employees who believe that they can perform successfully are more likely to feel motivated by challenging tasks, whereas those who doubt their abilities may experience lower motivation (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). As a result, expectancy theory continues to guide organisational practices across sectors by helping align performance expectations with valued outcomes.

While the expectancy theory assumes calculation and universality, cultural differences challenge this assumption (AlMarzooqi et al., 2025). In some cultural settings outcomes that benefit close social groups such as teams or organisational units may be prioritised over individual rewards (Al Marzooqi et al., 2025). Additionally, workplace dynamics such as relationships with peers and leadership styles can influence the link between effort and outcomes (Karaferis et al., 2022). For example employees may reduce effort when they think reward distribution is unfair or biased within their social group (Karaferis et al., 2022). Measurement inconsistencies make research more complicated; motivation is often measured through self-reports or task performance indicators, which may introduce common method bias and reduce the reliability of findings (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) emphasises external rewards and outcomes, whereas later motivational research highlights the importance of intrinsic motivation and psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Employees may feel pressured or stressed if the rewards are perceived as controlling (Wang et al., 2022). The

assumptions of rigid values for expectancy, instrumentality, and valence often do not take into consideration changing work environments (Vroom, 1964). Organisational challenges, shifting priorities, or team conflicts usually alter the outlook of effort (Karaferis et al.,(2022). Individual differences such as resilience or prior experience also help modify the outlook of motivation but are not fully captured by this model (Vroom, 1964). Overall, expectancy theory is valuable for explaining motivation, yet the neglect of social, cultural, and contextual factors limits the power of its predictivity in a diverse workplace setting (AlMarzooqi et al., 2025).

Extending beyond motivational calculations, job design theories provide another perspective on how workplace structure influences satisfaction, which brings us the Job Satisfaction Model (JSM) (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), linking job satisfaction to five main dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. This theory states that jobs that are high on these dimensions lead to higher intrinsic motivation and higher job satisfaction. Skill variety refers to the degree a job requires multiple abilities that enhance meaningfulness in a job. Task identity, on the other hand, is the extent to which a job involves completing a whole piece of work from start to the finish, which also increases the value of the work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Task significance measures how a job impacts others, contributing to experiencing meaningfulness (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Autonomy describes the degree of freedom, independence, and discretion an employee has in terms of scheduling and performing tasks, influencing experience and responsibility (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Feedback refers to receiving clear, direct information about performance, improving the knowledge of results, and the combination of these dimensions is often summarised in the ‘Motivating Potential Score’, which predicts job-related outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Organisations have applied JCM in healthcare, education and corporate sectors to redesign roles, increasing engagement and reducing the will for people to resign. For example, adding feedback loops in roles related to nursing usually helps staff to see

the impact of their work, enhancing psychological states and satisfaction. Autonomy initiatives and corporate projects also allow employees to plan tasks more individually, improving responsibility as well as motivation in a workplace (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

While it is an influential model, it has been critiqued for the assumption of being individualistic in nature and limited to culture. For example, autonomy is highly valued in Western cultures, but in collectivist societies, guidance and supervision are valued more (AlMarzooqi et al., 2025). Social and organisational factors like peer support and fair policies can help bridge the gap between job characteristics and satisfaction, which the JCM fails to address (Edward et al., 2022). It underestimates social and cultural moderation, as in collectivistic cultures, task significance usually motivates people only if the work benefits the entire group (AlMarzooqi et al., 2025). Leadership, support, and mentorship frequently outweigh jobs that are more structural and have dimensions shaping satisfaction (Karaferis et al. (2022). Autonomy at high rates may overwhelm employees if guidance and resources are not given to them by workplaces (Karaferis et al. (2022). Measurement inconsistencies also reduce the generalisability of findings, as the core dimensions are often different across studies and most psychological states are often self-reported (Spector, 1985). Additionally, this model emphasises task-related design while it underestimates affective and relational factors. For example, supportive peers may buffer negative effects of task significance, while unsupportive leadership can undermine benefits of high autonomy (Karaferis et al. (2022).

The equity theory, developed by Adams in 1963, shows satisfaction as a function of fairness in the form of 'input and output'. According to this theory, employees assess whether their efforts and rewards are balanced among their colleagues, and failure to achieve equity leads to dissatisfaction and withdrawal among employees. While it is quite an intuitive theory, it has

been criticised for overemphasising cognitive evaluation and underestimating emotional responses. Studies have shown that individuals who have higher resilience and good coping mechanisms tolerate inequities without reduced satisfaction, whereas others may strongly react to even minor unfairness (Batura et al., 2016). Additionally, cultural and social norms have not been considered in this theory as well, which has been critiqued by Pieters (2018), who argues that the perception of fairness is shaped by organisational and social contexts rather than purely individual comparisons.

Despite differences in focus, several limitations are consistent across major job satisfaction theories. First, vague concepts: job satisfaction is measured operationally across all studies, reflecting a mix of cognition and behaviour, which complicates comparison across research findings (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Second, cultural and context moderators often challenge universal applications of these theories that suggest one constant theme of findings developed in Western nations may not apply to other nations that are collectivistic (AlMarzooqi et al., 2025). Third, causal assumptions: while high job satisfaction is assumed to drive commitment as well as performance, evidence through studies indicates that conditional relationships where supportive environments and positive interactions help create job satisfaction create a dynamic interplay (Wang et al., 2022). And lastly, many models isolate structural and task-based determinants from social and interpersonal dynamics, often neglecting the influence of leadership styles, peer support, and organisational fairness (Karaferis et al. (2022).

Collectively, these theories show that the satisfaction of employees is shaped not only by structural rewards but also by social expectations within an organisation (Adams, 1963). When employees face a constant mismatch between effort, reward, emotional authenticity, and workplace support, psychological strain gradually becomes higher (Adams, 1963). These strains

are important, as they are not static; they, in fact, affect motivation and emotional functioning over time (Vroom, 1964). As a result, longer exposure to concerns related to fairness, emotional labour expectations, and motivation contributes to higher psychological stress (Hochschild, 1983). One of the most widely studied consequences of such high levels of stress is burnout (Maslach et al., 1969).

Burnout is a major concern in occupational psychology and is linked to long-term workplace stressors such as emotional labour and emotional dissonance and decreased personal engagement from work (Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005). Workers who are expected to maintain an outward appearance of optimism often engage in critical self-regulation that could otherwise be used for more productive activities such as adaptive problem-solving and recovery (Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005). Fatigue and disengagement are influenced by the expectation to remain positive in roles that require a lot of interpersonal interactions (Demerouti et al., 2005). Employees in emotionally demanding jobs such as healthcare, teaching, and customer service experience high levels of burnout when forced to suppress genuine emotions only to follow rules and norms of an organisation (Zhao et al., 2025). This suppression of emotion may lead to emotional dissonance, which refers to a mismatch between felt emotions and emotions that employees are required to display in the workplace (Jindal et al., 2022).

Evidence to back literature for burnout lies in viewing burnout through a theoretical lens. This is offered through the Job Demands Resources (JDR) model, created by Demerouti and Bakker in 2001, which emphasises how burnout is caused through a series of higher job demands and insufficient resources to cope with emotional demands, serving as a psychological stressor. Within this framework, demands from jobs are defined as aspects that require long-term physical, emotional, and cognitive effort; these demands usually involve workload, time

pressure, role conflicts, and interpersonal stressors (Demerouti et al., 2001). It lays emphasis on employees who face continuous expectations to meet demands without enough support or recovery opportunities and face a gradual decline in emotional and cognitive functions. To counter this, the model not only lays out the problem but also proposes a motivational process that shows that job resources usually foster higher engagement, resilience, and motivation. This shows that the JDR model was not only created solely to point out factors leading to burnout but also solutions to decrease it (Demerouti et al., 2001). Another key strength of this model is how diverse it is, and unlike other burnout models, it acknowledges the fact that different occupations demand different kinds of resources and norms.

Although JDR provides a robust framework, Demerouti et al. (2001) also critique concerns related to its broad categorisation of job demands and resources; while they offer flexibility and create a more inclusive space, it creates an overlap of concepts and limits precision for explanation due to its broadness. Grandey and Gabriel (2015) also argue that the JDR usually identifies ‘what’ conditions are associated with burnout but do not offer much clarity on the psychological mechanisms that are responsible for internalisation that leads to exhaustion and disengagement. As a result, the model does not specify how cognitive processes like rumination and emotional dissonance contribute to burnout (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Beyond structural job demands, burnout can also be understood through emotional and cultural processes in the work place. A critical perspective within burnout research is that emotionally demanding work environments should not be based only on workload or pressure but also on shared values, beliefs, and culture, also known as systems of normative control in research (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Through this lens, burnout may be defined more accurately as a response towards value or culture rather than a simple failure to cope with high-end job demands (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Previous studies also emphasise how disengagement is a by-product of burnout, but through this lens, it represents

a self-protective withdrawal technique as a response to emotional demands at a workplace (Mesmer-Magnus, 2012).

Despite the universal agreement that emotionally demanding work leads to burnout, the emotional labour theory counters the argument. This theory proposes that burnout develops when employees are forced to display emotions that conflict with their genuine internal emotional state (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Another theory to support the above lens is Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which views burnout as a collection of ‘resource loss spirals’, where emotional regulation leads to a decline of cognitive, emotional, and motivational resources over time. While burnout has been treated as a standard outcome of chronic work and stress, evidence through research challenges this, suggesting burnout is rather broader and not a standard outcome (Reis et al., 2025). Research using the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI; Demerouti et al., 1998) sheds light on how exhaustion and disengagement are distinct but are still related and emerge through different stages of stress (Mesmer-Magnus, 2012). Exhaustion is more of an immediate result, whereas disengagement appears to develop over time when motivation is lost. This distinction shows that burnout is not a standard but a multidimensional outcome where an individual may experience higher levels of exhaustion but lower levels of disengagement and vice versa (Demerouti, 2005).

Rather than functioning solely as an outcome of stress at work, burnout may serve as a mechanism that is diverse in nature by which emotionally demanding work leads to positive work environments (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Exhaustion can undermine an employee's capacity to derive pleasure or meaning in their work, whereas disengagement shows psychological distancing that weakens identification with one's role and organisation (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). The emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and disengagement highlighted in

burnout research show how emotional demands take a toll on an employee's wellbeing (Maslach et al., 1996). Studies also show that these outcomes are not just results of workload but are strongly influenced by emotional norms and expectations in a workplace. For example, research by Grandey and Gabriel (2015) found that employees who constantly monitor and regulate emotions to meet expectations, such as maintaining cheerfulness or optimism, experience higher levels of emotional exhaustion linking to burnout. This suggests that the pressure to remain positive is not just a factor but a contributor to the disengagement levels captured by the frameworks of burnout. Such findings then naturally lead to the study of positivity pressure, where emotional labour is examined as a mechanism that can amplify stress, reduce authenticity, and impact overall job satisfaction (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). This emotional dimension becomes particularly relevant when considering the role of positivity expectations in the workplace.

Since a long time, positivity has been a central focus of organisational psychology; it has been viewed not as a fleeting emotional state but as a construct that is widely linked to motivation, resilience, adaptive coping, and overall work performance (Diener et al., 2020). The impact of positivity on work includes a wide range of experiences such as enthusiasm, contentment, pride, and optimism; all of these contribute towards increased engagement, cognitive flexibility, and proactive employee behaviour in the workplace (Bastian et al., 2014). Being positive is frequently used as a key indicator of engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being, which emphasises its effectiveness in an organisation (Diener et al., 2020). While research highlights the benefits of positivity, these results rely highly on self-reported measures that sometimes overstate strengths and associations (Diener et al., 2020). Additionally, the assumption that positivity is universally advantageous overlooks potential consequences that come with emotional expectations (Bastian et al., 2014). Employees often feel pressure to display positivity that creates tension between real feelings and expected behaviour,

challenging the universal view that happiness is beneficial for job satisfaction and wellbeing (Diener et al., 2020).

When positivity is experienced authentically in its real and true form, it serves as a protective function supporting coping strategies and recovery from stressors that include high demands and decision-making (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). According to Fredrickson's 2001 broaden-and-build theory, positivity increases cognition, or in other words, critical thinking and attention span in an individual, which in turn would allow employees to achieve opportunities, generate solutions, and engage in the problem-solving process more effectively. Beyond cognition, a positive mindset improves social functioning by increasing interpersonal collaboration, empathy, and communication; these are all important in team-based environments, client-facing roles such as retail and leadership positions (Bastian et al., 2014). Linked to resilience, a positive mindset allows employees to recover from setbacks, perform better under pressure, and maintain long-term engagement in their work roles (Fredrickson, 2001). This theory is critiqued by Mesmer-Magnus et al. (2012); they argue that the highlight of this theory is the assumption that positivity is generated internally and experienced freely while overlooking pressures from organisations that compel employees to act positively. In real-world contexts, employees may conform to these expectations even when they don't genuinely feel happy; this undermines the cognitive and social benefits proposed in the theory (Mesmer-Magnus, 2012). Additionally, this theory does not consider individual differences in personality, regulation of emotions, or coping mechanisms, all of which usually influence positive emotions in high-demand workplaces (Bastian et al., 2014).

However, when positivity is externally imposed rather than internally experienced its effects on employees becomes more complex. The benefits of positivity depend on how authentic it is. Past research shows that when positivity is imposed rather than experienced, it manifests into the phenomenon referred to as

'toxic positivity', which is characterised by overgeneralisation of positive thinking, emotions being invalidated, and psychological strain (Mesmer-Magnus & Magnus, 2012). While frameworks around positivity, such as those proposed by Diener et al. (2020), highlight advantages of positive emotions for motivation, resilience, and well-being, these aspects assume that positivity is generated internally rather than freely, which reveals a significant gap in theories. The pressure to remain positive functions in the form of socioemotional regulation, where employees internalise expectations of their organisation to align with norms (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). This process resembles Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory in which employees change their behaviour for rewards or avoidance of outcomes that are negative.

Studies have highlighted the dual nature of positivity as a double-edged sword; while genuine positivity promotes motivation, imposed positivity has the opposite effect, creating emotional exhaustion, reduced engagement, and less flexibility in thinking (Bastian et al., 2014). Research by Dejonckheere et al. (2022) suggests that these effects are not limited to isolated situations, as constant pressure to display happiness has been associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms, low wellbeing, and overall reduced satisfaction in life. Emotional labour research provides a lens to understand how pressure to remain positive shows up in practice; a core component is surface acting, which involves displaying emotions that are not in line with one's authentic feelings (Grandey, 2003). The link between positivity norms in a company and surface acting shows that it is not just a theoretical concern but a workplace phenomenon that has consequences on the way employees think, deal, and act (Grandey, 2003).

Longitudinal studies found that surface acting leads to less attention, poor decision-making, and lack of critical thinking (Lee & Madera, 2019). While research frames surface acting as a necessary component of emotional labour, it is vast in nature, which means although

it intends to maintain interactions to remain positive in nature, it undermines the social and cognitive benefits that positive psychology constantly sheds light on (Lee & Madera, 2019). Although Grandey (2003) identifies emotional dissonance because of surface acting, existing literature treats it as a descriptive notion rather than investigating why individuals face a negative impact, thereby limiting the power of these findings. Emotional dissonance is considered a theoretical construct that refers to conflict between emotions that people genuinely feel and emotions they are expected to display at work (Grandey, 2003). This gap is not looked at as a minor burden to critical thinking but as a suppressing emotional technique to align with external expectations of positivity (Gross, 1998). Over time, management of this emotional gap reduces resilience and increases stress responses like elevated cortisol levels, heart rate variability, and other nervous system problems (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011).

Research has also provided support for the negative consequences of emotional dissonance; prolonged surface acting predicts emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and overall burnout (Zapf & Holz, 2006), along with psychosomatic complaints like headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances, and sleep disruption. These findings are not confined to just a workplace but are observed across other sectors such as healthcare, social services, education, customer services, and managerial roles (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Emotional dissonance also acts as a mediator between pressure to remain positive and resilience, basically showing that internalisation of positivity norms can intensify the psychological toll of surface-level acting (Mesmer-Magnus & Magnus, 2012). Healthcare research also provides examples of these dynamics; surface acting and forced positivity, according to nurses, physicians, and frontline workers in high-demand environments, lead to emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, reduced job satisfaction, and increased intention to leave the job no matter what the position (Zapf &

Holz, 2006). Associations have been similar among teachers, customer service representatives, and managers; that shows that surface-level acting and positivity pressure both are widespread and have the same effects in a workplace (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). These highlight how broad the risks associated with surface acting and positivity pressure are (Grandey, 2003).

Further research shows that these outcomes are usually due to lack of autonomy or workplace support, due to which the intensity of these outcomes increases (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Employees that work in environments that don't have any autonomy and are hierarchical experience high levels of burnout due to surface acting under pressure (Lee & Madera, 2019). According to research surveys, many workers feel pressured to look happy at work (Dejonckheere et al., 2022). This obligation takes away authenticity and increases emotional labour. In Zapf and Holz's (2006) research, these mechanisms lead to high burnout and high intentions to leave. When employees cannot express their difficulties, learning and problem-solving suffer as a result. According to research by Rusu et al. (2020), happiness is framed as an individual's responsibility in the workplace, which in turn increases self-criticism, rumination, and emotional repression. Anxiety, depression, and below-expectations work performance are also associated with this effect (Bastian et al., 2014).

Within this context alternative models have been proposed to better understand emotional regulation at work. Another important concept in positivity research is emotional equilibrium, which is defined as the ability to experience and process emotions in a balanced manner without being overwhelmed by emotional extremes (Rusu et al., 2020). Outcomes such as resilience, wellbeing, and adaptive coping strategies are a result of emotional equilibrium (Rusu et al., 2020). Unlike emotional dissonance, which focuses on conflict between felt and displayed emotions, emotional equilibrium emphasises maintaining psychological stability while acknowledging both positive and negative emotions. However, individual differences in personality, emotional regulation, and

coping mechanisms usually pose a challenge to this theory (Lee & Madera, 2019). Their study demonstrated that under forced positivity, employees with higher neuroticism or low trait emotional intelligence experience high levels of emotional dissonance. Over a period, it was also noticed that even employees with higher emotional intelligence are not immune and that repeated exposure to positivity pressure and prolonged surface acting led to strain on cognition and emotional well-being (Lee & Madera, 2019). Studies showed that teachers who face similar pressures often show decreased engagement, low satisfaction, and higher turnover intentions (Rusu et al., 2020). When customer service representatives are required to maintain a positive attitude during client interactions, they also experience high amounts of stress and emotional labour (Lehrer, 2017). These findings shed light on how these are all common effects of positivity pressure across various workplace sectors.

Pressure to remain positive also undermines the fact that employees who feel obligated to display positivity are less likely to share concerns, admit mistakes, or disclose uncertainty (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). This reduction in disclosure has a negative impact on learning, problem-solving, and innovation; teams that are subject to pressure to remain positive report lower trust among peers, low motivation to collaborate, and low efficacy (Lehrer, 2017). In high-risk environments such as healthcare and aviation, failure to communicate negative emotions has serious consequences for safety (Lee & Madera, 2019). Cross-cultural research on positivity pressure sheds light on the dimension of society; as per past research, happiness norms and the idealisation of happiness in a workplace are pressures in collectivist societies (Dejonckheere et al., 2012). Research also demonstrates that positivity pressure has magnified in remote and work-from-home setups; studies conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic indicate that there was a

higher level of forced optimism among employees who were constantly at home (Rusu et al., 2020).

Interventions have been designed to reduce the negative effects of positivity through research; studies suggest emotion-focused coping strategies such as cognitive reappraisal (reframing negative to productive, not just positive), mindfulness, and emotional granularity training (labelling and distinguishing emotions) that can help reduce effects of positivity pressure. Supportive leadership and inclusive environments that are emotionally safe have been linked to lower emotional exhaustion among employees (Lehrer, 2017). Studies from various industries, including healthcare, customer service, education, and corporate management, show that employees feel compelled to express happiness, optimism, or enthusiasm even when they are stressed, frustrated, or fatigued (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). For example, Grandey and Gabriel (2015) found that nurses frequently describe a culture of forced optimism where they are discouraged from expressing personal stress, frustration, and vulnerability. This is not only done through formal workplace policies but is also an expectation from peers and supervisors. Employees in the service industry also report that organisations display rules showing positivity as something that always needs to be present; in daily interaction this creates the pressure to not embrace one's negative emotions (Dejonckheere et al., 2022).

Mechanisms such as manager models, supervisory feedback, performance reviews, and unofficial reward systems also follow these internalised expectations (Hochschild, 1983). Workers discover that breaking these emotional norms by expressing exhaustion, unhappiness, or any kinds of negative emotions may lead to a poor performance review, a lesser chance towards advancement in work, or subtle judgements from supervisors and peers (Zapf & Holz, 2006). This eventually causes employees to internalise the pressure to always remain positive

(Dejonckheere, 2022). This is in line with the research of Hochschild (1983), where employees control their emotions as part of their official as well as informal demands from their workplace. Internalisation of pressure to always remain positive has serious repercussions, as it takes a lot of mental work to continuously monitor affective expression; such employees report a higher cognitive load (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and decreased engagement are signs of burnout linked to increased mental effort (Zapf & Holz, 2006). Lee & Madera (2019), in their study, suggested that employees may have elevated cortisol levels, heart rate variability, and somatic chronic stress symptoms; these outcomes result in decreased output, absenteeism, and increased turnover in demanding and emotionally taxing jobs such as customer service, teaching, and healthcare (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015).

Positivity pressure is frequently reinforced culturally and contextually, which means that employees in collectivist cultures or organisations that follow hierarchy very closely may experience higher levels of employees who internalise their emotions due to stronger social norms and expectations of conformity (Dejonckheere, 2022). Recognising the mechanisms through which positivity pressure is internalised helps organisations develop interventions accordingly (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). Leadership development programmes that emphasise emotional expression, creating psychologically safe environments, and policies that balance expectations to always remain positive are all potential strategies according to Hülshager & Schewe (2011).

In conclusion, a more comprehensive framework for analysing the relationship between organisational norms, employee emotional regulations, and occupational outcomes is provided through the lens of expectancy theory that was proposed by Vroom in 1964 in his book *Work and Motivation*. While expectancy theory explains how employees acquire and internalise the

pressure to remain positive, it does not show the side of individual differences in how these norms are enacted in terms of age, experience, or developmental stage. To complement this viewpoint, Socioemotional Selective Theory (SST), introduced by Laura Carstensen in 1999, provides insights into how personal and developmental factors influence emotional regulation and affect in a workplace. According to this theory, as people age, they become more selective about their social goals; they prioritise emotionally meaningful interactions that focus on more critical thinking and emotional depth rather than chasing novelty-driven goals (Carstensen et al., 1999). When older employees prioritise engaging selectively with positive stimuli while not engaging much with the negative ones, they are proven to be more efficient and provide high adaptability in high-demand workplaces (Isaacowitz et al., 2006).

Research shows that older employees report lower levels of burnout and higher job satisfaction compared to younger employees even when subject to similar levels of stress and emotional labour requirements (Raab, 2020). To support this statement, the study of Karaferis et al. (2022) shows that in healthcare settings, senior nurses frequently report less emotional exhaustion and faster recovery after intense patient interactions, showing years of experience, selective attention to meaningful tasks, and redefining coping strategies. Similarly, in the study from Dejonckheere (2022), it was shown that in customer service roles, experienced/older employees showed greater control over their emotions, navigating interactions that require optimism or patience with clients without experiencing stress compared to less experienced colleagues. These studies further strengthen the theory of socioemotional selectivity, proving that age and work experience serve as protective factors that lower psychological stress and likelihood of burnout.

The age-related factors of SST are further supported by research in cognitive and physiological data. According to neuroimaging research, the attention on selectivity and positivity is associated with increased prefrontal cortex activity that supports emotional control and reduced amygdala hyperactivity to negative stimuli (Mather & Carstensen, 2005). These mechanisms provide a biopsychological explanation as to why older employees can tolerate pressure to remain positive better and experience less emotional stress (Gross et al., 1997). Apart from neurological research, behavioural studies show how older employees navigate emotional expectations; an instance from Carstensen et al. (1999) is that older employees frequently prioritise mentoring younger employees with supportive teams and methods, and they avoid and disengage in interactions that are likely to bring forth negative experiences. This behaviour usually results in lesser burnout and more job satisfaction. In contrast, younger employees feel more compelled to engage in more tasks that are related to exhaustion to prove their worth, resulting in accumulating stress and the absence of better coping strategies (Riediger & Freund, 2003).

The implications of incorporating SST in organisations are important; age-related differences indicate that interventions to reduce burnout and increase satisfaction cannot be just one-sided or, in other words, benefit only older employees (Raab, 2020). Organisations could design mentoring programmes where older employees share adaptive coping strategies with younger colleagues, fostering resilience and skill transfer (Karaferis et al. (2022). Incorporating training programmes will also lay emphasis on the selective prioritisation of meaningful tasks for all employees; it would also bridge the gap between individual development and organisational expectations, suggesting that policies regarding emotional labour and positivity pressure must take age and experience into consideration (Batura et al., 2016). To back

this statement, an instance would be targeted support that teaches stress management, emotional regulation strategies, and cognitive reappraisal to benefit younger employees in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, services, and education, thereby reducing the intensity of positivity pressure and reducing burnout in early stages of one's career (Dejonckheere, 2022), while in the meantime, senior employees may require autonomy in selecting emotionally significant engagements (Carstensen et al., 1999).

Lastly, socioemotional selectivity theory bridges the gap with expectancy theory by showing how experience and age affect the way internalised norms are applied (Carstensen et al., 1999). Older workers can manage psychological strain by using their selective attention, emotional regulation, and goal prioritisation, whereas younger workers may comply with positivity expectations due to social pressures and external forces (Riediger & Freund, 2003).

Collectively, this literature demonstrates that job satisfaction, burnout, and positivity pressure are interconnected psychological and organisational experiences shaped by thinking, emotions, and social factors. The purpose of this research is to explore the concept of positivity pressure, the societal and interpersonal expectation to maintain a consistently positive outlook, and its psychological impacts. The main aim of this study is to analyse whether increased positivity pressure is associated with lower job satisfaction and if burnout acts as a mediator between positivity pressure and job satisfaction. Based on this the present study purposes that higher levels of positivity pressure will be associated with lower job satisfaction and higher levels of burnout. It is further proposed that burnout will be negatively associated with job satisfaction.

Methods

Participants

A total of 205 people initially took part in this research. Of these, 42 participants failed the attention check and were excluded from the final dataset. An additional 34 participants did not complete at least 60% of the survey leaving a sample of 129 participants. The final samples included participants from New Zealand (n=45), India (n=52) and other countries (32). To be eligible, participants had to be at least 18 years of age, as the study targeted working populations. English proficiency was also required to ensure comprehension of study materials. Recruitment was conducted through convenience and snowball which helped gather participants from a variety of workplace industries.

Measures

Positivity Pressure Scale (PPS)

The Positivity Pressure Scale (PPS) was created using artificial intelligence (AI) specifically for this study, as existing scales did not adequately capture the construct. The drafting process was guided by established theoretical frameworks such as surface acting, emotional labour theory, and emotional suppression (Hochschild, 1983).

The following prompt was used to guide the AI-assisted generation of the PPS:

Generate a self-report questionnaire with items that assess exposure to positivity pressure and toxic positivity in social and workplace contexts. The items should cover emotional invalidation, suppression of negative emotions, and emotional dissonance. Items should be suitable for adult working populations, written in first-person statements, and rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'never' to 'always'. Ensure consistency with existing research on surface acting, emotional labour, and emotional regulation.

The PPS contains four subscales. The first is, *emotional invalidation*. This subscale assesses experiences of being discouraged or penalised for expressing negative emotions. These experiences can contribute to long-term discomfort with authentic emotional expression. It was informed by the Invalidating Childhood Environment Scale (Mountford et al., 2007). Example items included: “I am told to just stay positive when I express negative emotions.” The complete set of scales is provided in the appendix. The second scale is, *suppression of negative emotions*. This subscale measures the frequency with which individuals hide emotions such as grief, frustration, or vulnerability in professional settings to maintain harmony (Gross & John, 2003). An example item would include: “I feel pressure to always appear happy, even when I am struggling.” Third subscale was, the *social and workplace pressure*. This subscale captures external expectations from supervisors, co-workers, and broader social environments to remain positive regardless of internal emotional states (Jindal et al., 2022). An example item would include: “I feel pressure to be upbeat and enthusiastic, even when I don’t feel that way.” The fourth subscale was the *negative psychological impact*. This subscale reflects emotional strain and dissonance, including exhaustion, guilt, and rumination (Grandey et al., 2002). Example item would include: “I feel exhausted from pretending to be happy all the time.”

All the 20 items that had 4 subscales were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Higher mean scores indicated greater positivity pressure. The Positivity Pressure Scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency in the present sample (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .91$). Therefore, the overall scale score was used in subsequent analyses. A principal axis factor analysis indicated that the scale was unidimensional, and therefore the total score was used for all subsequent analyses.

Oldenberg Burnout Inventory (OLBI)

Burnout was measured using the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI; Demerouti et al., 2001). This 16-item scale assesses two central dimensions of burnout: Exhaustion and Disengagement from work. The OLBI includes both positively and negatively worded items to reduce response bias and enhance psychometric validity. Items were rated on a 4-point scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. Negatively phrased items were reverse-coded so that higher scores reflected higher burnout. The OLBI has demonstrated good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients typically ranging from 0.74 to 0.87 for both subscales, and validity has been supported through factor analyses and correlations with related constructs such as job satisfaction and work engagement (Demerouti et al., 2001).

Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)

Job satisfaction was measured using the 36-item Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS; Spector, 1985). The scale captures satisfaction across nine domains: pay; promotion; opportunities; supervision; fringe benefits; rewards; operating procedures; co-worker relationships; nature of work and communication. Negatively worded items were reverse-coded for consistency. Four items (JSS21R, JSS23R, JSS27, and JSS30) were removed following reliability analysis due to very low or negative item total correlations, indicating these items did not align well with the overall scale the correlations ranged from -0.678 to -0.017, suggesting poor contribution to internal consistency. After removing these items, the final scale demonstrated acceptable reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .786$).

Materials

Qualtrics (Provo, UT), a secure online survey platform, was used to collect data. Participants were recruited through word of mouth, professional networking, and social media

platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp. The survey included an information sheet outlining the purpose of the study, participant rights, and assurances of confidentiality. During the initial distribution phase, it was observed that, in the absence of bot-detection measures, a large number of automated responses were recorded within a short period of time. Consequently, the survey was relaunched with bot protection enabled.

After completing the reCAPTCHA bot-protection step, participants proceeded to demographic questions, including country of residence, weekly working hours, occupation, gender, and age.

Following the demographic section, participants completed the Positivity Pressure Scale (PPS), the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI), and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). To ensure that fatigue and disengagement were assessed independently, the order of the measures was intentionally structured to minimise priming effects and emotional carry-over.

At the end of the survey, participants were invited to enter an optional randomized prize draw for a \$100 gift card. They were directed to a separate link to submit their email address for draw eligibility.

After data collection was completed, ten participants were selected using a randomized number generator, and each received a \$100 gift card via email. The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete, and no personally identifying information was collected.

Ethics approval for this study was granted by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK) on May 16, 2025.

Results

Descriptive statistics were calculated for all study variables including positivity pressure, burnout, job satisfaction, age, and weekly work hours. Participants reported moderate levels of positivity pressure ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.80$) and low to moderate levels of burnout ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.42$). Overall job satisfaction levels were relatively high ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 0.56$).

The average participant age was 32.39 years ($SD = 17.73$), indicating a wide age distribution within the sample. Participants worked an average of 33.60 hours per week ($SD = 13.52$), reflecting both part-time and full-time employment.

Mean Country Level Differences

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine mean differences in positivity pressure, burnout, and job satisfaction between participants from New Zealand and India. This was done to compare workplace experiences across the two groups, particularly since the majority of responses were obtained from participants residing in New Zealand ($n = 45$) and India ($n = 52$). Mean scores and standard deviations for each variable are presented in Table 2. Overall, there were no statistically significant differences between countries on positivity pressure, burnout, or job satisfaction. This indicates that country of residence did not significantly influence workplace experience variables in this sample.

Table 1.

Independent Sample T- tests Comparing Workplace Variables Between New Zealand and India.

Variable	New Zealand M (SD)	India M (SD)	t	p
1. Positivity Pressure	3.00 (0.71)	2.78 (0.89)	1.33	.187
2. Burnout	2.45 (0.44)	2.36(0.43)	1.08	.284
3. Job Satisfaction	3.73 (0.62)	3.82(0.53)	-0.79	.431
4. Age	32.39(17.73)	30.25(16.40)	0.65	.517
5. Work Hours	33.60(13.52)	33.60(14.10)	-0.95	.344
6. Gender	M=20, F=22	M=22, F=20	-	-

Note. Independent samples t-tests were conducted. Mean scores and standard deviations are presented. Higher scores indicate higher levels of the measured construct. No statistically significant differences were found between participants from New Zealand and India on positivity pressure, burnout, or job satisfaction.

Correlations Amongst Key Variables

A Pearson correlation analysis examined relationships among positivity pressure, burnout, job satisfaction, age, and weekly work hours. As shown in Table 2, Positivity pressure

and burnout were strongly positively correlated indicating that higher pressure to appear positive was associated with higher burnout. Positivity pressure and job satisfaction were strongly negatively correlated, suggesting that higher positivity pressure was linked to lower job satisfaction. Burnout and job satisfaction were moderately negatively correlated, showing that higher burnout was associated with lower job satisfaction. Age showed a small negative correlation with burnout and a small positive correlation with job satisfaction, suggesting that older participants were less likely to report burnout, and more likely to report job satisfaction.

Table 2. Correlations among study variables.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Positivity Pressure	-				
2. Burnout	.67**	-			
3. Job Satisfaction	-.64**	-.62**	-		
4. Age	-.12	-.28**	.25**	-	
5. Work Hours	-.09	-.11	.25**	.67**	-

Note. Values represent Pearson's r (two-tailed). Ns and descriptive statistics for all variables are presented in Table 1. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

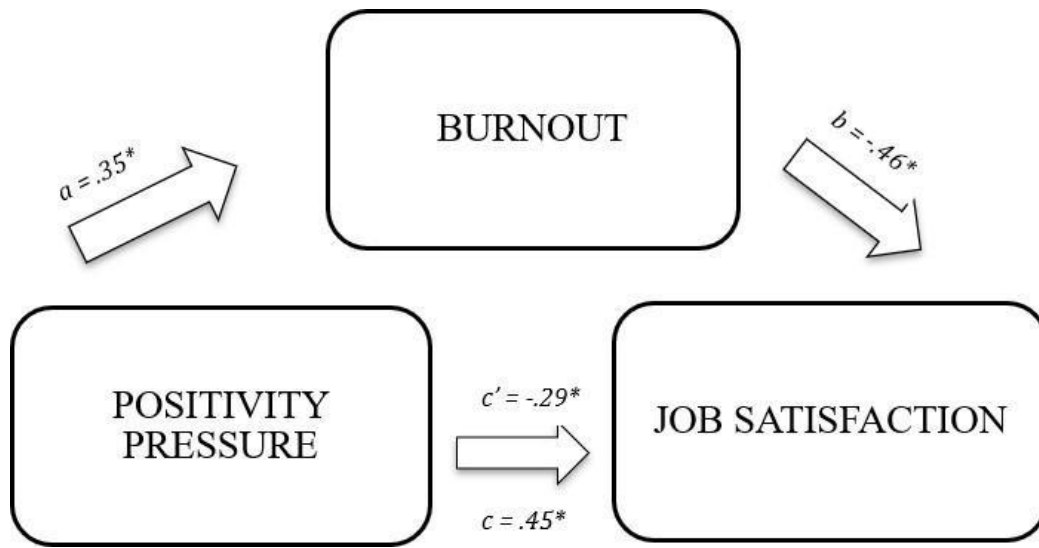
To test the study hypotheses, relationship among positivity pressure, burnout and job satisfaction were examined using Pearson Correlations and mediation analysis.

Burnout as a Mediator Between Positivity Pressure and Job Satisfaction

Results from a simple mediation analysis indicated that burnout mediated the relationship between positivity pressure and job satisfaction. Higher levels of positivity pressure were associated with higher levels of burnout ($a = 0.35, p < .001$) and higher burnout was associated with lower job satisfaction ($b = -0.46, p < .001$). A 95% bias-corrected confidence interval based on 10,000 bootstrap samples indicated the indirect effect ($ab = -0.16$) did not include zero ($-0.26, -0.06$), indicating a statistically significant indirect effect. Positivity pressure remained a significant predictor of lower job satisfaction after accounting for burnout ($c' = -0.29, p < .001$), indicating partial mediation. All reported coefficients are unstandardised coefficients generated using the PROCESS macro.

Figure 1:

Burnout mediating positivity pressure and job satisfaction Note: All presented effects are unstandardized coefficients. $p < .05 = *$, $p < .01 = **$, $p < .001 = ***$. a = effect of positivity pressure on burnout; b = effect of burnout on job satisfaction; c' = direct effect of positivity pressure on job satisfaction; c = total effect of positivity pressure on job satisfaction.



Discussion

Overview / Interpretation of Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine whether experiencing positivity pressure in the workplace is associated with lower job satisfaction, and whether burnout helps explain this relationship. The findings provide some support for both expectations. Participants who reported higher levels of positivity pressure also reported significantly higher burnout, and burnout in turn predicted lower job satisfaction. The significant indirect effect indicates that burnout serves as a meaningful pathway through which positivity pressure affects satisfaction. At the same time, positivity pressure continued to predict job satisfaction even after accounting for burnout, suggesting a partially mediated relationship.

Instead of viewing positivity as universally helpful, this study treats it as an emotional demand in the workplace, one that may create stress when employees are required to display positivity rather than genuinely feel it. Although positive emotions are typically associated with higher motivation and satisfaction, the findings suggest that the *authenticity* of emotional expression is more important than the mere presence of positive affect.

The results showed that higher positivity pressure was linked to higher burnout and lower job satisfaction. This indicates that positivity pressure may function as a long-term emotional stressor, gradually depleting the psychological energy required to perform effectively at work. When employees must constantly regulate their emotions, their capacity for engagement and satisfaction diminishes. These findings underscore the importance of distinguishing genuine positive emotion from forced emotional displays.

This study also includes participants from both New Zealand and India offering insights into how positivity pressure may manifest across different cultures. Results indicated no

meaningful differences in burnout, job satisfaction or positivity pressure between the two countries. While the sample size was relatively small, this finding may suggest that workplace expectations around positivity may operate similarly across different societies that may warrant further investigation.

The results also support the argument that burnout serves as a mediating mechanism linking positivity pressure to job satisfaction. Burnout may develop over time as employees repeatedly suppress authentic emotions to meet workplace expectations, resulting in decreased satisfaction. These patterns align with the Job Demands Resources (JDR) model (Demerouti & Bakker, 2001) which suggests that emotional demands reduce employee wellbeing when insufficient resources are available to cope with them. In this context, positivity acts as an emotional *demand* rather than a motivational resource.

Overall, the findings highlight that employee wellbeing depends on both structural factors and emotional experiences in the workplace.

Relationship Between Positivity Pressure and Job Satisfaction

The present study found a significant negative correlation between positivity pressure and job satisfaction. This suggests that employees who face stronger expectations to remain positive report lower overall job satisfaction. This finding reframes positivity as a potential psychological stressor rather than an inherently motivating factor. Although research often links positive emotions to engagement and wellbeing (Fredrickson, 2001) the results of this study show that when positivity becomes an obligation, it can undermine wellbeing and satisfaction.

This relationship can also be understood through self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Excessive

pressure to appear positive violates these needs by reducing autonomy (limiting freedom to express genuine emotions), weakening relatedness (creating emotional distance from others due to inauthenticity) and undermining competence (making employees feel inadequate for not being “positive enough”). Such dynamics hinder the basic psychological needs required for motivation and job satisfaction.

The findings also extend emotional labour theory (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labour typically involves strategies such as surface acting and deep acting to meet organisational expectations. Positivity pressure captures not only formal organisational rules but also *internalised* social norms that persist even in the absence of explicit requirements. This reveals a more complex form of emotional labour, where employees impose positivity norms on themselves based on perceived expectations (Zapf et al., 2001).

Cross-sectional literature (Jindal et al., 2022) supports these findings: employees in diverse sectors such as healthcare, education, customer service, and corporate environments report negative emotional and motivational effects when required to display positivity. This suggests that mechanisms such as emotional dissonance, self-monitoring, and role conflict are broad, universal processes rather than specific to any one occupation (Jindal et al., 2022).

Finally, the results are consistent with the JDR model, which positions emotional demands as resource-depleting. Positivity pressure represents an emotional labour requirement distinct from workload or time pressure. The lack of association between work hours and positivity pressure supports the idea that the emotional component, rather than time-based demand, is what drives decreased satisfaction (Zapf et al., 2001).

Overall, the negative relationship between positivity pressure and job satisfaction highlights its double-edged nature: genuine positivity boosts wellbeing, but *forced* positivity acts

as a chronic stressor. This underscores the importance of distinguishing internally motivated emotion from externally imposed affect.

Burnout as a Mediator

The study's mediation analysis provides evidence that burnout mediates the relationship between positivity pressure and job satisfaction. Higher levels of positivity pressure were associated with increased burnout, which in turn predicted lower job satisfaction. This indicates that the negative effects of positivity pressure operate partly through the development of burnout.

Burnout comprises emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment. Constant self-monitoring and emotional suppression increase psychological strain (Grandey, 2003), reducing resilience and coping capacity. Over time, these mechanisms lead to fatigue, irritability, and disengagement that are the core features of burnout (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011).

Burnout's mediating role aligns with the JDR model, which states that emotional and relational job demands lead to strain when employees lack the resources needed to manage them. Positivity pressure functions as a psychological demand requiring continuous regulation, even in the absence of high task loads or role conflict.

Previous research reinforces this interpretation. For example: Grandey et al. (2003) found that emotional labour involving forced positivity strongly predicts emotional exhaustion, reducing job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Hülshager and Schewe (2011) reported that surface acting contributes to heightened burnout and lower satisfaction, confirming that inauthentic emotional displays are psychologically taxing. Additionally, practical mechanisms help explain the mediation effect. Forced positivity often produces emotional dissonance, where internal emotions conflict with externally displayed affect (Zapf et al., 2001). Emotional

dissonance has been repeatedly linked to exhaustion, stress, and reduced satisfaction.

Furthermore, positivity pressure can exacerbate role ambiguity, social comparison, and conflict between emotional norms and personal wellbeing, strengthening the pathway to burnout.

Overall, the findings indicate that burnout is a key mechanism through which positivity pressure diminishes job satisfaction. This highlights the importance of addressing emotional demands, not only structural or task-related ones, when designing interventions to enhance workplace wellbeing.

Strengths of the Current Study

This study offers several important strengths in both its conceptual approach and methodological design. First, the study introduces positivity pressure as an emotional demand rather than assuming positivity is always beneficial. While positive emotions are typically linked to satisfaction and engagement (Fredrickson, 2001), this study challenges that assumption by demonstrating that *forced* positivity functions as a psychological stressor. Presenting positivity as a demand may also extend the Job Demands Resources (JDR) model beyond traditional task-based demands such as workload and time pressure. This strengthens the understanding of emotional demands at work.

The present study shows burnout as a mediator rather than simply examining direct relationships. By demonstrating that burnout explains how positivity pressure reduces job satisfaction, the findings show a plausible pathway. This moves the study beyond basic correlations and offers a more thorough explanation of how emotional strain develops over time.

The development of the PPS scale reflects an important exploratory step in examining an under-researched construct. Although further validation is required, the strong overall reliability

of the scale suggests that positivity pressure is a measurable and meaningful workplace phenomenon worthy of continued investigation.

Lastly, the study includes participants from both New Zealand and India. Emotional norms and expectations around positivity differ across cultures, particularly between individualistic and collectivist societies. Including participants from two distinct national contexts strengthens the external validity of the findings, suggesting that positivity pressure may not be limited to a single cultural setting.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations. As the data is cross-sectional, collected at a single point in time, it is not possible to make confident claims about causality. Although the mediation analysis suggests that burnout mediates the relationship between positivity pressure and job satisfaction, the design does not allow us to determine whether positivity pressure leads to burnout and lower job satisfaction, or whether employees who are already dissatisfied or emotionally exhausted simply perceive their environment as demanding constant positivity (Antonakis et al., 2010). For instance, an employee who feels undervalued or disengaged may interpret positive organisational messages as an additional burden rather than a primary cause of strain. Future research could address this limitation through longitudinal or experimental designs that clarify whether positivity pressure drives burnout or whether already burnt-out employees feel more pressured.

The study relies on self-reported measures, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability and subjective interpretation. Employees may be reluctant to fully disclose feelings of burnout or dissatisfaction, especially if they have internalised workplace norms around positivity (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Someone who feels obligated to appear optimistic or resilient

may downplay exhaustion and frustration, even in anonymous settings. Moreover, experiences of positivity pressure are inherently subjective and may reflect an individual's mood, coping style, or emotional sensitivity rather than a clearly identifiable organisational process. Future research could strengthen validity by incorporating multi-source data such as supervisor ratings, peer evaluations, or physiological indicators like cortisol levels.

The Positivity Pressure Scale was newly developed and requires further validation. Although the overall scale demonstrated high internal reliability, the subscales did not, suggesting that they may not independently capture the dimensions they were intended to measure. Additionally, some PPS items may overlap with related constructs such as emotional suppression or emotional labour more broadly (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). This makes it unclear whether the scale measures positivity pressure specifically or a combination of related emotional regulation processes. The sampling method may also have influenced results: convenience and snowball sampling may attract people who feel especially strongly either positively or negatively about positivity pressure, potentially inflating effect sizes. More representative sampling is recommended for future studies.

Individual differences such as personality traits, coping strategies, emotional intelligence, and workplace support likely influence how employees perceive positivity pressure, burnout, and job satisfaction. For example, someone who is generally resilient may interpret a manager's encouragement to "stay positive" as motivational, whereas someone who feels undervalued may view it as invalidating or dismissive. Without accounting for these variations, it is difficult to determine whether positivity pressure alone drives burnout and dissatisfaction (Ashkanasy et al., 2005). Including these individual differences in future models would help identify who is most vulnerable to the effects of positivity pressure.

The study design did not capture situational fluctuations in positivity pressure. Employees' emotional experiences can differ depending on tasks, team dynamics, workload, and time-sensitive stressors. For example, an employee may feel fine during a normal workday but overwhelmed when facing a tight deadline under a supervisor who insists on maintaining a positive attitude. A single survey cannot capture these moment-to-moment variations, meaning the data may not reflect real-world emotional fluctuations (Xiong et al., 2023). Using diary-based methodologies or ecological momentary assessment (EMA) in future research could illuminate how positivity pressure changes across contexts and how these variations contribute to burnout and satisfaction over time.

Future Research Directions

Building on the current findings, several directions for future research could be used. Longitudinal and experimental studies, could help clarify the dynamics of positivity pressure, burnout and job satisfaction, allowing stronger cause-effect relationship (Antonakis et al.,2010) Experimental designs could manipulate positivity expectations to directly create an effect on emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction, creating insights beyond data that correlates.

Research could examine moderating variables that would buffer or amplify the impact of pressure related to positivity on burnout. Personality traits such as emotional intelligence, resilience and trait optimism influence how employees respond to expectations of positivity (Mikolajczack et al.,2007) Similarly, climate factors in an organization including supportive leadership and psychological safety, may reduce negative effects of demands that are emotional in nature (Edmondson,1999)

Studies should explore more cultural and occupational differences to understand boundaries. Norms surrounding emotional expressions vary across industries, countries and

cultures, for instance positivity pressure may be looked at as emotional professionalism in customer service roles but as pressuring in corporate offices (AlMarzooqi et al.,2025).

Integrating cultural context into emotional labour models and job satisfaction would improve the generalisation of these findings.

Future research could look at intervention strategies aimed at reducing burnout induced by positivity pressure. Mindfulness training, emotional regulation program's job crafting interventions could help manage emotional demands better, increasing wellbeing and performance (Diener et al.,2020)

Research using daily diary or sampling methods could capture fluctuations in positivity pressure and burnout over time; examples such as deadlines, team dynamics, expectations through supervisors' influence responses from employees (Sonnentang et al.,2010) such a design would complement cross -sectional findings and provide a better understanding of emotional experiences.

Conclusion

Practical Implications

The findings of this study carry several implications for organisational practices, employee well-being, and managerial strategies. First, the mediating role of burnout between positivity pressure and job satisfaction highlights how important it is for organisations to recognise the emotional demands placed on employees. When workplaces encourage or expect employees to remain consistently positive without providing resources or emotional support, they increase the risk of emotional exhaustion and reduced job satisfaction (Demerouti et al., 2001). This can lead to long-term consequences such as lower productivity, higher turnover intentions, and reduced organisational commitment.

Managers need to be aware that although positivity pressure is often used to create a pleasant and motivating environment, it can instead have negative long-term effects that reduce morale and engagement (Grandey, 2003). Encouraging authenticity rather than forced emotional expression can help mitigate burnout and maintain job satisfaction. Creating spaces for employees to communicate genuine concerns, offering constructive feedback, and acknowledging the emotional labour required in their roles can normalise discomfort and reduce internal pressure (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Organisations may design interventions that support employees in managing emotional demands. Job resources such as autonomy, task variety, social support, and fair organisational policies can buffer the strain caused by positivity pressure (Bakker et al., 2014). Training programmes that target emotional intelligence, stress management, mindfulness, and emotional regulation have been shown to improve resilience and reduce burnout, contributing to higher satisfaction (Hülshager et al., 2013). Organisations may also need to adjust workloads and

provide systems that recognise the substantial effort involved in maintaining positivity, especially in roles with high emotional labour.

These findings have implications for human resource policies and performance evaluations. Expectations around positivity should not be embedded into performance criteria, and employees should not be penalised for expressing authentic emotions during day-to-day interactions. When policies overemphasise outward positivity while ignoring internal emotional experiences, they risk increasing emotional dissonance and contributing to burnout, undermining both employee wellbeing and workplace performance (Zapf et al., 2001). Recognising and addressing these emotional dynamics allows organisations to cultivate healthier environments where sustainable performance and genuine well-being can coexist.

Summary of Findings

Overall, this study examined the relationship between positivity pressure, burnout and job satisfaction providing insights into the dynamics of workplaces. Consistent with the JDR model (Demerouti et al., 2001), findings show that increased positivity pressure is linked to high levels of burnout which relates to lower job satisfaction. This aligns with previous research that highlights cost of emotional labour and strain of surface acting (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002).

The present study also introduces the Positivity Pressure scale as a tool for assessing employees' experiences of positivity demands. While the analysis suggests good to high reliability, further validation is also needed to differentiate this from constructs such as emotional suppression or labour (Mikolajczak et al., 2007).

The findings of this study also highlight the overall role of individual factors. Personality traits such as resilience, optimism or emotional intelligence may intervene with negative effects of pressure to remain positive (Mikolajczak et al., 2007), while cultural norms shape whether

positivity expectations are supportive or create a burden (Diener et al.,2020) Additionally, cross-sectional designs and reliance on self-reported data limit cause and effect, which results in suggestions of longitudinal or diary -based research needed as a future research criteria (Page and Graves,2021)

Overall, this study contributes to both theory and practice by demonstrating that well-intentioned encouragement to remain positive may actually have consequences that are unintentional for employee well-being. Organisations should consider balancing positivity initiatives with recognising employees' emotional experiences, creating environments where authentic emotional expression is supported. By interrogating individual differences, contextual factors and proper validated tools of measurement future research can deepen the understanding of how positivity pressure can deepen the understanding of expectations around positivity influencing burnout and job satisfaction in occupational and cultural settings.

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Appendix A: Ethics Approval

The logo for Auckland University of Technology (AUT) features the letters 'AUT' in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a black rectangular background.

TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

16 May 2025

Jay Wood
Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences

Dear Jay

Re Ethics Application: **25/132 Impact of Positivity Pressure**

on Burnout and Job Satisfaction Thank you for your responses to
AUTEC's conditions.

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 15 May 2028.

Non-Standard Conditions of Approval

1. Ensure the location of data storage meets the AUT Research Data Management guidelines
<https://autuni.sharepoint.com/sites/Tuia/SitePages/Research-data-management.aspx>;
2. Changes to the Information Sheet:
 - a. In the 'What will happen' section, provision of more information on future research related to personal space perception, and for what purpose the data would be given to other researchers. The participants should be fully informed about the proposed future use of the data (note this information is inconsistent across the documents) .
 - b. Provide participants' a consent process for data to be retained and used indefinitely (as promised in I.1.2);

- c. In the 'How was I identified' section clarify the inclusion criteria of "working" and align this with Q5 in the questionnaire. What kind of participants does the primary researcher intend to recruit or exclude in terms of working status? Currently in paid employment? A minimum of how many hours in paid employment in the last week? Or month? Please note that the criteria of 'working' is inconsistent with question on employment status in the questionnaire;
3. In the poster, update the clarification on the inclusion criteria of "working" (to reflect the response to the condition above)
4. Send through for completion of file a PDF of the survey in the format that participants will see it.

Non-standard conditions do not need to be submitted to or reviewed by AUTEK unless requested but must be completed before commencing your study.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEK.
2. All public facing documents must have the AUTEK approval number and be of a high standard of spelling and grammar. Dates on the Information Sheet(s) and Consent Form(s) must be consistent.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEK prior to being implemented.
4. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date.
5. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project.
6. Any serious or adverse events must be reported to AUTEK, this includes unforeseen issues that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
7. AUTEK grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management permission for access from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

The application number and title need to be referenced on all correspondence related to this project.

All forms are available online <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

For any enquiries, please contact the Secretariat at ethics@aut.ac.nz

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEK Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: qkp6550@aut.ac.nz; erik.landhuis@aut.ac.nz

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Appendix B: Materials

Positivity Pressure Scale (PPS)

Instructions:

Please indicate how often you experience the following situations in your daily life. Use the following scale:

1 = Never

2 = Rarely

3 = Sometimes

4 = Often

5 = Always

Subscale 1: Emotional Invalidation (EI)

1. I am told to "just stay positive" when I express negative emotions.
2. People around me downplay my struggles by saying, "It could be worse."
3. I feel like my feelings are dismissed when I try to share my difficulties.
4. I am encouraged to suppress negative emotions rather than process them.
5. I am made to feel guilty for not being happy all the time.

Subscale 2: Suppression of Negative Emotions (SNE)

6. I avoid expressing sadness or frustration because I fear being judged as negative.
7. I feel pressure to always appear happy, even when I'm struggling.
8. I have been told that dwelling on negative emotions is unhelpful and unnecessary.
9. I feel like I must hide my true emotions to maintain social harmony.

10. I avoid talking about my problems because I believe they will be invalidated.

Subscale 3: Social and Workplace Pressure (SWP)

11. In my workplace or social environment, expressing distress is discouraged.

12. I feel pressure to be upbeat and enthusiastic, even when I don't feel that way.

13. People expect me to always look at the bright side, no matter the situation.

14. I have been told that acknowledging my struggles means I am weak.

15. I have been encouraged to "fake it till I make it" instead of addressing my emotions.

Subscale 4: Negative Psychological Impact (NPI)

16. I feel exhausted from pretending to be happy all the time.

17. I sometimes feel isolated because I can't express my true emotions.

18. I experience guilt when I feel sad, anxious, or frustrated.

19. I feel emotionally drained from suppressing my real feelings.

20. I have difficulty expressing authentic emotions due to fear of judgment.

Oldenberg Burnout Inventory : (OLBI)

Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI)

Instructions

Below is a series of statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the scale provided, please indicate the degree of your agreement by selecting the response option that corresponds with each statement.

Response Scale:

1 = Strongly Agree

2 = Agree

3 = Disagree

4 = Strongly Disagree

Items

1. I always find new and interesting aspects in my work.
2. There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work.
3. It happens more and more often that I talk about my work in a negative way.
4. After work, I tend to need more time than in the past in order to relax and feel better.
5. I can tolerate the pressure of my work very well.
6. Lately, I tend to think less at work and do my job almost mechanically.
7. I find my work to be a positive challenge.
8. During my work, I often feel emotionally drained.
9. Over time, one can become disconnected from this type of work.

10. After working, I have enough energy for my leisure activities.
11. Sometimes I feel sickened by my work tasks.
12. After my work, I usually feel worn out and weary.
13. This is the only type of work that I can imagine myself doing.
14. Usually, I can manage the amount of my work well.
15. I feel more and more engaged in my work.
16. When I work, I usually feel energized.

Developer Reference

Demerouti, E. (1999). *Burnout: Eine Folge konkreter Arbeitsbedingungen bei Dienstleistungs- und Produktionstätigkeiten* [Burnout: A consequence of specific working conditions among human services and production tasks]. Peter Lang.

Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)

JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY Paul E. Spector Department of Psychology University of South Florida Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved							
PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.		1 free very much	2 Disagree	3 Disagree	4 Agree	5 Agree	6 very much
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	I like the people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Raises are too few and far between.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6

<p>PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.</p> <p>Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.</p>		Disagree very much	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree very much
19	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	I have too much to do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30	I like my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	I have too much paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information

Kia ora ! My name is Pearl Bulsara, and I'm a psychology student at the Auckland University of Technology. Thank you for considering participating in my study on positivity pressure, burnout, and job satisfaction.

This research is being conducted as part of my Masters degree in Psychology under the supervision of Dr. Jay Wood and Dr. Erik Landhuis. You are invited to take part in a study about how workplace culture, particularly expectations around positivity, may affect employee well-being.

This sheet will help you understand what the study involves so you can decide whether or not you would like to participate.

What is the purpose of this research?

The aim of this research is to explore the effects of “positivity pressure” - The expectation to appear cheerful at work even when you don't feel that way and how it relates to burnout and job satisfaction. We hope this study will help highlight ways to improve mental well-being in workplace settings. The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You would have come to receive the information by clicking the link on a social media post or scanning the QR code presented on the advertisement poster. The QR code redirects people to the questionnaire, where this form (participant information sheet) is located. You are invited to participate if you are 18 years old, working and and are fluent in English.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

As this is an anonymous survey, and completion of the questionnaire will assume consent. Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the questionnaire at any time before you submit your answers. Note, however, that once you have submitted the survey your data will not be able to be withdrawn, as we will not be able to identify your responses.

What will happen in this research?

You will be asked to fill out an online questionnaire on a device (e.g., laptop, phone) consisting of general demographic questions and a number of questions regarding your opinions on various issues. You will be asked to complete an online survey with questions about your experiences of workplace positivity norms, burnout, and job satisfaction.

Note, there is a prize draw at the end of the survey that participants based in New Zealand have the option of entering. If you choose to enter this, we will need your email address. Should you wish to participate, you will be provided with a link to a different page on our survey hosting site, so your email is not connected to your questionnaire responses (your responses will remain anonymous). Your email address is only required to contact you about the prize draw and after completion these will be deleted.

What are the discomforts and risks?

This study involves answering questions about your feelings in and towards workplace. There are no immediate risks from the study, however, if you feel uncomfortable when completing the questionnaire, you can withdraw from the questionnaire at any time.

What are the benefits?

You will have the option to go into the draw to win one of 10 \$100 gift cards. Additionally, this research will contribute to enhancing our understanding of positivity pressure can contribute to burnout and job satisfaction which can give valuable insight into our knowledge of behaviour in diverse contexts. This research will also assist me in achieving a masters qualification.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

This questionnaire should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You can choose to complete the study until our data collection has been reached (approximately end of July).

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will be able to find a summary of the findings of this research on : <https://tinyurl.com/abwfc9d>. You can save the provided link to the research summary that will be updated at its conclusion.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Jay Wood:

email: Jay.wood@aut.ac.nz

work phone: +6499219999

ext 8506.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Pearl Kobad Bulsara (qkp6550@autuni.ac.nz)



PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Are you working hard and always trying to stay positive - Even on the tough days?

We'd love to hear from you !

Join our quick survey to help us understand how "staying positive" affects burnout and job satisfaction.

PARTICIPANTS MUST BE

- 18 years and older.
- Currently employed at a workplace.
- Be fluent in english.



THIS SURVEY SHOULD TAKE NO MORE THAN 20 MINUTES

Contact information: Pearl Bulsara | qkp6550@autuni.ac.nz

Approved by The Auckland University of Technology Ethics committee on 16/052025. AUTEK reference number 25/132