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Growth-oriented management and employee outcomes: Employee resilience as a mechanism for growth

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Abstract

Purpose

Support from managers that enables employee growth promotes adaptation to changing and complex job challenges. Guided by social exchange theory, this study establishes growth-oriented management (GOM) as a key management capability to support employee growth. It also identifies employee resilience as a mechanism for growth in employees and examines its role in mediating the relationships between GOM and key employee outcomes: wellbeing and work engagement.

Design/methodology/approach

This study draws on survey data (n=751) from white-collar employees in Australia. Structural equation modelling was used to estimate the fit of the hypothesized model to the data. Confirmatory factor analysis was also performed to examine convergent and discriminant validity of the study variables.

Findings

Findings show GOM influenced wellbeing and work engagement, both directly and indirectly through employee resilience. This reveals more broadly that the unique combination of behaviors that comprise GOM plays a pivotal role in supporting growth-oriented outcomes in employees.

Originality/value

This is the first empirical study on the impact of GOM on wellbeing and engagement, as well as on the mediating mechanism of employee resilience in these relationships. GOM is an innovative contribution to scholarship on employee and organizational development, reflecting the changing nature of management, and responding to the increasingly diverse development needs of employees.

Keywords: Managers, Employee development, Growth, Employee resilience

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Introduction

Employees are increasingly expected to be resilient, grow, and maintain their wellbeing in order to effectively deal with the complexities within today's workplaces (Kuntz *et al.*, 2017). For many employees the ability to engage in continuous learning, develop new skills, and adapt to change is crucial, particularly in an era of continuous organizational change and disruption, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies find that employee capabilities are more state- than trait-like and are strongly influenced by workplace factors, particularly managers (Kuntz *et al.*, 2017).

The psychological growth of employees is of increasing interest to scholars and organizations, and is addressed across several topic areas. The 'growth mindset' literature is prominent in this area (Han and Stieha, 2020), which rests on the belief that people are capable of change and adaptation, and that they do this through accepting feedback and criticism (Forsythe and Johnson, 2017), persevering (Dweck, 2014), and learning from mistakes (Han and Stieha, 2020). Similar concepts are reflected in scholarship on careers, where researchers argue for the importance of career exploration (Zikic *et al.*, 2006), being in 'learning mode' (Heslin and Keating, 2017), and managing connections with others (de Janasz *et al.*, 2003). In this study we posit that these 'positive psychology' mechanisms for employee growth can be enacted through employee resilience, encompassing behaviors which enable employees to respond effectively to day-to-day challenges as well as crises, and to not only bounce back, but to learn and thrive as well (Kuntz *et al.*, 2017; Näswall *et al.*, 2019). We extend this by proposing that these behaviors in turn support further flourishing and other employee outcomes, such as wellbeing and work engagement (Tonkin *et al.*, 2018).

While the careers literature focuses on individuals' impetus for learning, managers play a crucial role in promoting growth in followers, particularly for those who may not have access to other, perhaps more formalized, opportunities for development (Gilley *et al.*, 2015). Some functional line manager behaviors can promote growth through well-studied practices including coaching and feedback for task performance (Sue-Chan *et al.*, 2011). Employee growth may also be facilitated through providing social and career support, developing employee confidence and self-concept, and modelling, as well as promoting teamwork and leadership in employees (Franken *et al.*, 2021). Yet, line manager behaviors that foster employee growth have not been adequately addressed from both theoretical and empirical perspectives. This omission is particularly salient to leaders in line management and

supervisory positions (Fitzpatrick, 2011), who may supervise staff who need growth but have limited opportunities to get it.

This paper responds to the omissions described above in regard to the development of employee growth, and examines management behaviors specifically geared towards fostering such growth, termed in this paper as growth-oriented management (GOM). We define GOM as "behaviors by line managers to actively build employee capability", in order "to develop subordinate capabilities that help their own growth and adaptation" (Franken *et al.*, 2021, p. 662). Rather than focusing on specific job-related skills, GOM concerns "behaviors that help followers develop their own capacity to grow in their jobs" (Franken *et al.*, 2021, p. 682). Such behaviors, we argue, support employee growth, and further flourishing, by developing the behaviors associated resilience in employees.

Social exchange theory (SET) offers a meaningful lens through which to explore how GOM might bring about resilience and further growth-oriented outcomes in employees. SET refers to "the reciprocal flow of valued behaviour between participants" (Emerson, 1976, p. 347). For GOM, this might be seen when employees reciprocate positive behaviours at work as a result of experiencing trust, active support and genuine recognition from their managers. We argue more specifically that GOM facilitates exchange behaviors that are not only beneficial to the broader team or organization (as assumed in SET), but also reflective of employee growth, a beneficial individual outcome.

This study's contributions are three-fold. First, it establishes employee growth as a key measurable capability for managers to develop in today's dynamic and complex workplaces. Second, it explores the pathways through which GOM is likely to shape employee outcomes and thus advances the literature on both employee growth and resilience, by offering an explanation for resilience as a key growth *mechanism,* rather than as a distinct antecedent or outcome, which is relatively commonplace in current scholarship (Davies *et al.*, 2019; Plimmer *et al.,* 2023). Third, it extends research on the developable and behavioral view of employee resilience, and its important relationship to leadership and management (Richard, 2020). These contributions pave the way for future studies on employee growth and how line managers can develop it.

Review of the literature

While many studies are concerned directly with employer centric outcomes such as engagement and organizational citizenship behavior, studies of managerial behaviors that

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facilitate employee growth and development are less common (Gilley *et al.*, 2015; Kara *et al.*, 2013). So too are studies on how growth and development can then support further flourishing in employees, such as wellbeing and engagement (Barrio, 2013). Yet, there have been an increase in studies focused more generally on how people grow and develop in their jobs, which are often fast changing, and without formal leadership (Dachner *et al.*, 2021). Positive psychology is an approach to human potential that is consistent with such developments, through its emphasis on growth, wellbeing, and the creation of positive experiences for individuals (and, in our case, employees) (Donaldson *et al.*, 2019). Further to being informed by these underpinnings of positive psychology, where individual flourishing is central (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), we are primarily guided by the mechanisms of positive social exchanges and in particular, how growth-oriented managers support broad and deep social exchanges with employees that facilitate growth-related employee behaviors, such as those related to learning, collaborating, and adapting (Näswall *et al.*, 2019). This connection between employee growth and GOM is examined below.

Growth and GOM

We define employee growth as the capacity to learn and adapt in the face of emerging challenges (Näswall *et al.*, 2019; Dweck, 2014). Rather than the development of specific, job-related skills, growth concerns capabilities of employees to conduct their own development, in the face of daily and acute challenges. Such capabilities are well-grounded across a range of disciplines, including positive psychology (Ashford *et al.*, 2003), and are linked to helping people to remain vigorous and committed (Weng *et al.*, 2010), and bolstering positive attitudes (Cooper *et al.*, 2014), which enhance work effectiveness (Mackay *et al.*, 2017). GOM corresponds to this understanding of growth in employees, in that it comprises behaviors that foster it.

GOM comprises several core behaviors that work to support growth-oriented outcomes in employees (Franken, 2019). First, managers who engage in GOM support subordinates, through coaching, feedback and empowering employees to engage in decisions regarding their own development (Marques-Quinteiro *et al.*, 2019; Forner *et al.*, 2020). This support also extends to encouraging employees to experiment and be open to the learning that can emerge from errors and mistakes (Weinzimmer and Esken, 2017). Second, GOM requires providing opportunities to develop skills through challenging and novel work assignments, and access to networks, both internal and external to the organization (Plimmer *et al.*, 2021).

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Third, leaders supporting employee growth enable effective teams, as well as organizational functioning, rather than just a series of dyads (Klaic *et al.*, 2020). As a result, teams have a shared degree of psychological safety and members develop greater self-efficacy and trust to provide and receive the coaching, support, feedback and experimentation needed for growth (Salas *et al.*, 2004). The ways in which managers support employee growth are likely to be interrelated. For instance, supervisory support should include coaching, stretch assignments and other explicit forms of development. And well managed teams can enhance the effects of supervisory support and active development beyond just supervisor–follower dyads, through self-leadership and other enhanced employee-level capabilities (Antoni and Hertel, 2009).

Beyond explicitly developing growth in employees, we posit that GOM supports other employee outcomes that can arise both directly through GOM behaviors, and through the positive experiences of growth itself. GOM supports a positive state of mind in employees by showing a belief in their competence, and providing them with autonomy in how they achieve work goals (Park *et al.*, 2017). This, coupled with the positive affect instilled through the cultivation of a positive team environment (Albrecht, 2012), point to GOM's potential impact on the overall wellbeing of employees. Growth-oriented managers also value employees as individuals as well as members of the organization and take their career aspirations seriously (Zhang *et al.*, 2015; Gilley *et al.*, 2011). This recognition of an employees' self-worth by managers can also support feelings of engagement (Park *et al.*, 2017).

Growth oriented managers promote both broad and deep and social exchanges of affective and cognitive resources through the development of trust, support, and the range of proactive, social, and adaptive behaviors allowed. Such exchanges, particularly when enacted across teams or groups, are likely to prompt further exchanges, such as peer-to-peer supportive behaviors (Dasborough *et al.*, 2009). Social exchanges between manager and employee, and between peers, are known to foster additional work outcomes too, such as job satisfaction and commitment (Banks *et al.*, 2014).

While the above evidence shows broad understanding of how GOM supports employee growth and other employee outcomes, the processes that occur during growth are less understood. Below we examine the growth-related mechanisms of employee resilience, and illustrate how, and through what processes, GOM might bring about growth in employees.

Employee resilience and GOM

Employee growth is well encapsulated in modern theories of resilience. While previous versions of employee resilience construed it as bouncing back from crises, modern definitions construe it as the capability to flourish and grow in the face of day-to-day crises as well as challenges (Kuntz *et al.*, 2016). It consists of a set of attitudes and behaviours that allow expansion of the self, thus further supporting a wide range of outcomes, such as greater wellbeing and a heightened commitment to change and development (Hartmann *et al.*, 2020). Studies increasingly construe employee resilience as shaped by the environment rather than trait-like. For example, employee resilience has been associated with environmental antecedents such as social and supervisory support, and well-distributed workloads (Burns *et al.*, 2013; Todt *et al.*, 2018; Peters and Pearce, 2012). As such, the role of resilience as a mediator has recently received increased attention in organizational studies (Hartmann *et al.*, 2020; Crane and Searle, 2016). Consequently, we draw on the elements of employee resilience, along with the theoretical underpinnings of social exchange to investigate how the phenomenon represents a mechanism through which GOM works to support growth.

We adopt a modern construal of employee resilience, viewed as the behavioral capacity of individuals to continually adapt and flourish, even in challenging circumstances (Kuntz *et al.*, 2017). This construal comprises growth-oriented and developable capabilities, centered on *learning*, *adapting*, and *network leveraging*, and is linked to continuous learning and growth which helps individuals adapt to change (Näswall *et al.*, 2019). This emphasis on learning and adaptation corresponds with growth mindset; the belief that people are capable of change and adaptation, can accept feedback and criticism (Forsythe and Johnson, 2017), can learn from mistakes (Han and Stieha, 2020) and persevere (Dweck, 2014). Network leveraging also corresponds to managing connections with others – an important aspect of career growth (de Janasz *et al.*, 2003). In sum, employee resilience comprises behaviors that extend beyond one's typical job role and are pro-growth.

The learning aspect of employee resilience relates to incorporating new knowledge into work practices, problem-solving, and responding constructively to feedback (Plimmer *et al.*, 2021). Workplace experiences are powerful sources of learning, with some studies illustrating that on-the-job experiences are the main sources of employee learning (Maurer, 2002). GOM likely supports this form of learning through providing stretch assignments that challenge and expand current self-conceptions, whilst ensuring adequate resources and support. Through this enhanced support and encouragement, employees may be more willing put learnings into practice, and engage in complex decision making, in ways that benefit the organization as

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well as perpetuate their own growth-oriented behaviors (Malik and Garg, 2017; Chen and Hung, 2010). This expansive approach of GOM stands in contrast to restrictive approaches such as micro-management, which entail losses of job support, autonomy, and personal development (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003).

The adaptation component of employee resilience occurs through the ability to manage complexity, respond swiftly to uncertainty, and view change in a positive light (Näswall *et al.*, 2019). GOM provides employees with the autonomy (and support) to engage in flexible decision making, situational awareness, and creative problem solving, all of which aid adaptation (Tonkin *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, growth-oriented managers understand the unique needs and personalities of individual employees, and as a result, are adept at capably and appropriately recognizing and supporting them flexibly, in ways that work for them as individuals, and which may also change over time (Yu *et al.*, 2022; Zhang *et al.*, 2015). This flexible approach to job and career management allows employees to see that their behaviors, and the associated standards for performance, are not fixed, and they are supported to adapt their behaviors as demands on work change (Näswall *et al.*, 2019). This tailored support and feedback is also known to result in employee satisfaction and engagement (Nilakant *et al.*, 2016), as well as an organizational capacity to adapt (Walker *et al.*, 2020).

The network leveraging component of employee resilience entails the development and maintenance of effective groups and networks in the workplace, which supports engagement in pro-social behaviors and collective problem solving (Plimmer *et al.*, 2021). Embedded in GOM is an ability to build shared coherence by linking individual goals to the group and developing compatible role expectations both at the individual and collaborative levels (Franken, 2019). These behaviors build the confidence for employees to effectively develop and leverage networks themselves, facilitating collective learning and the productive exchange of knowledge and ideas (Yu *et al.*, 2022; Nguyen *et al.*, 2016). This is essential for the maintenance of resilience (and thus the development of growth), since the open collaboration that arises through network leveraging is likely to bolster other resilient behaviors related to learning and adapting, as it allows for the adaptive use of "collective competencies to resolve shared issues and challenges" (Franken *et al.*, 2019, p.19).

Proposed hypotheses

GOM and employee resilience

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As presented above, GOM likely develops employee resilience through multiple pathways that correspond to supporting the resilient behaviors of learning, adapting, and network leveraging. In particular, the development and active support of GOM would promote a willingness in employees to learn from mistakes and adapt through experimentation. The favorable behaviors of GOM, including the facilitation of new challenges and opportunities and the encouragement of problem-solving and experimentation, would elicit reciprocity in employees that would extend beyond narrow task performance to broader attitudes and behaviors (Robinson, 2008). Contextual factors also influence perceptions of social exchange. For instance, a manager that encouraged subordinates to collaborate would spill over to colleagues as the collaboration ensued, further deepening exchanges within both dyads and wider groups (Abu Bakar and Sheer, 2013). Also, the team management capabilities embedded in GOM would directly facilitate and encourage network leveraging, as well as added peer support and opportunities for social learning (Franken *et al.*, 2021). In summary, GOM provides the support, resourcing and opportunities for employees to engage in resilient behaviors, which not only promote growth in employees, but also help the organization to adapt (Walker *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, we propose that:

H1. GOM is positively associated with employee resilience.

GOM and work engagement

Work engagement consists of three core cognitive states: Vigor, Dedication and Absorption (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006). It is commonly treated as an enduring state, and one that encompasses ongoing persistence and dedication. Growth-oriented leaders recognize and value employees' potential, and encourage ways to enhance their growth trajectories. This interpersonal consideration facilitates positive social exchanges (Hansen *et al.*, 2014). Such an approach from managers is likely to result in intentions to reciprocate pro-social and pro-organizational behaviors (Okurame, 2012) in exchange for their support, illustrative of heightened work engagement. Furthermore, growth-oriented managers play a targeted role in enabling career growth, learning, and the effective use of resources, all of which are associated with engagement (Yang *et al.*, 2018; Son and Kim, 2021). Therefore, we expect that:

H2. GOM is positively associated with work engagement.

GOM and wellbeing

Wellbeing is understood here as the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of their life as a whole in a favorable way (Veenhoven, 1991; Boujbel and d'Astous, 2012). Growth-oriented managers show a positive orientation to work, show care for employees as individuals, explicitly recognize employees' strengths and career pathways, and as such, work to improve self-concepts (Franken *et al.*, 2021). A positive self-concept has been identified as a core contributor to psychological wellbeing (Sirgy, 2021). Growth-oriented managers enhance growth through providing stretch assignments that challenge and expand current self-conceptions, whilst ensuring adequate resources and support for them to do so. This expansive approach stands in contrast to restrictive approaches such as micro-management, which entail losses of job support, autonomy, and personal development and shrinking of the self-concept (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003). As self-concepts expand and become more positive, people in turn become more open to new ideas, feedback, and experimentation (Forsythe and Johnson, 2017; Han and Stieha, 2020). This enhances confidence, as well as cognitive flexibility to problem solve (Kuntz *et al.*, 2017). The realistic and responsive nature of GOM also prompts the likelihood of meaningful social exchanges and the provision of resources needed to support employees' performance and wellbeing (Eisenberger and Stinglhamber, 2011). Furthermore, GOM facilitates positive social exchanges between manager and employee, as well as horizontally between employees through supporting collaboration and network leveraging. This likely plays a role in supporting feelings of belonging and team cohesion that are in turn supportive of wellbeing (Settoon *et al.*, 1996; Casimir *et al.*, 2014; Mellor *et al.*, 2008). We therefore propose that:

H3. GOM is positively associated with wellbeing.

Mediating role of employee resilience

There has recently been a surge in research on the impact of supervisory behaviors on the behavioral construal of employee resilience. For example, Plimmer et al. (2021) found constructive leadership to support employee resilience in public sector workplaces. In addition, Franken et al. (2019) found that paradoxical leadership behaviors of line managers to support resilient employee behaviors via the social exchange mechanism of perceived organizational support.

Despite the increase in research on its antecedents, employee resilience as an enabler or mediator of employee outcomes is less understood. However, Psychological Capital (PsyCap) has had considerable examination as a mediator between manager-level antecedents and

employee outcomes (Park *et al.*, 2017; Wang *et al.*, 2018). PsyCap is worth mentioning here since it comprises the element of resilience, along with self-efficacy, hope and optimism. Yet, it differs markedly from employee resilience in that is not a behavioral capacity but "a psychological state of development" (Newman *et al.*, 2014). Nevertheless, its state-like and developable nature provides useful hints for how the behavioral capacity of resilience may work as a mediating mechanism between supervisory behaviors and employee outcomes.

Resilience as a discrete construct has only recently emerged as a possible mediator in organizational scholarship (Hartmann *et al.*, 2020). However, these studies tend to conceptualize resilience as a developable *psychological* state, much like its existence in PsyCap (Malik and Garg, 2017). We posit that the *behaviors* embedded in employee resilience – learning, adapting and network leveraging (Näswall *et al.*, 2019) – are likely to be important mechanisms through which supervisor behaviors can lead to positive employee outcomes. More specifically, we expect that GOM, through its activation of resilient employee behaviors reflective of growth, brings about heightened work engagement and wellbeing. When employees engage in learning, network leveraging and adapting on a continuous basis, they are likely develop increased knowledge of their work and confidence in their work abilities, through the ability to experiment, use individual and collective resources effectively, and learn from challenges (Kuntz *et al.*, 2017). This not only enhances positive cognition towards the self, supportive of wellbeing (Nielsen and Munir, 2009); it also supports an increase in energy towards work itself and a willingness to reciprocate through pro-social and -organizational behaviors, reflecting heightened work engagement (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2010). Resilient behaviors may also provide employees with the proactivity and adaptability to change their work environment in order to stay engaged over time (Bakker, 2011). Therefore, we predict the following:

H4. Employee resilience partially mediates the relationship between growth-oriented leadership and work engagement.

H5. Employee resilience partially mediates the relationship between growth-oriented leadership and wellbeing.

Method

Sample

To test our hypotheses, we accessed Australian employees via a panel research company. Both private sector and public sector workers in Australia were sent a survey link. Inclusion criteria were that they were full-time workers, in white collar professional jobs, and over the age of 18. There were 751 usable responses.

In our sample of 751 respondents, 50.2% were male, and the majority (55%) were in the age range of 31-50 years. 35.8% worked in managerial roles, whilst the same percentage worked in technical and scientific roles. 16.8% had secretarial positions and 11.5% of respondents worked in sales or personal services.

Measures

Control variables consisted of gender, age, and tenure. Except for the controls, all study variables were measured using a 1-7 point Likert scale.

GOM was measured using a 15-item scale adapted from Franken (2019). An example item is "My manager encourages me to seek out opportunities for my own development. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .95. *Employee resilience* was measured using Näswall et al.'s (2019) nine-item employee resilience scale. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .90, and an example item is: "I learn from mistakes at work and improve the way I do my job." *Work engagement* was measured using the nine-item scale from Schaufeli and Bakker (2006). An example item is: "I get carried away when I am working" and .92 was the Cronbach's alpha. *Wellbeing* was measured using the five-item scale by Diener et al. (1985), with an example item of "The conditions of my life are excellent". The Cronbach's alpha was .88.

Analyses and results

To examine the hypothesized model, we used structural equation modelling (SEM) with R 4.2.2 (lavaan package) (Rosseel, 2012). We adopted Anderson and Gerbing's (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) two-step analytical strategic in order to test the hypothesized model. First, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine convergent and discriminant validity of the measures in our model. We then used SEM to estimate the fit of the hypothesized model to the data.

Factor analyses

First, we conducted a CFA on our measurement model to confirm the degree to which the study measures loaded on to their expected constructs (Browne and Cudeck, 1992). The CFA

results are presented in Table 1 below. The measurement (hypothesized) model shows acceptable fit measures as well as the best fit to the data, having the lowest χ^2 value, the highest CFI and GFI, and the lowest RMSEA and SRMR (Beauducel and Wittmann, 2005).

We recognize that given the cross-sectional nature of this study, there is a risk of common method bias (CMB) (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012). The study variables are also very difficult to measure in ways that do not involve self-reporting, however in an attempt to minimize procedural CMV risks, we used anonymity and structured the survey in a manner that separated predictors and outcomes (Plimmer *et al.*, 2021). To assess the risk of CMB statistically, we tested for it using a common latent factor (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012), which did not change CFA conclusions (see Table 1, CMB-adjusted model). Using this technique, common method variance in the CFA was 32%, under the threshold of 50% (Eichhorn, 2014).

Insert Table 1 here

As part of the CFA we also performed the Fornell and Larcker (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) test for discriminant validity. Table 2 shows that all AVE scores exceeded the benchmark of >.50 and are greater than the correlation values (Hair, 2009), establishing discriminant validity.

Insert Table 2 about here

Test of hypotheses

The SEM results in Table 3 suggest that the hypothesized model fits the data well (Beauducel and Wittmann, 2005). We compared the hypothesized model, which represents a partially mediated model, with an alternative, fully mediated model to assess any improvement or reduction in model fit (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The fully mediated model involved the removal of the two direct paths from GOM to both work engagement and wellbeing. As can be seen in Table 3, the hypothesized model resulted a better model fit.

Insert Table 3 about here

Table 4 and Figure 1 reveal the standardized path estimates of the hypothesized model. We find that the results support our hypotheses, showing direct positive relationships between GOM and employee resilience (H1), wellbeing (H2), and work engagement (H3). We also

find that our mediation hypotheses are also supported, such that employee resilience partially mediates the relationships between GOM and work engagement (H4), and GOM and wellbeing (H5). The indirect effect is stronger for H4 (.19***) than it is for H5 (.05*) but both indirect effects are significant.

Insert Table 4 about here

Insert Figure 1 about here

Discussion

This study examined leadership behaviors by line managers which we posit to foster growth in employees. Drawing on the concept of growth and its applicability to employees, we conceptualized that GOM supports growth through developing resilient employee behaviors, and also supports employee work engagement and wellbeing. Our study revealed that GOM is positively associated with employee resilience (H1), work engagement (H2) and wellbeing (H3). Employee resilience also acts as a mediator for GOM's impact on both work engagement and wellbeing.

A positive psychological approach guided this study, with an emphasis on human growth and flourishing, and its benefit for both individuals and organizations (Rodríguez-Carvajal *et al.*, 2010). Through this lens, we examined the positive social exchanges that are likely to take place through the enactment of GOM, which in turn support the enactment of employee resilience - established in this study as a mechanism for growth. We further posit that these deep exchanges that take place between manager and employee support further flourishing in the form of enhanced wellbeing and work engagement.

Key contributions

This study also shows that employee resilience, through its embedded behaviors, is a powerful source not only to enact growth, but also as a mechanism through which GOM can influence other employee-centric outcomes. The exploration of resilience as a mechanism through which supervisory behaviors support positive employee experiences is relatively new (Djourova *et al.*, 2020; Batool *et al.*, 2021), and would benefit from further empirical examination across a broad range of employee-centric outcomes. These new understandings surrounding both GOM as a key managerial behavior to support employee growth, and

employee resilience as a mechanism of growth, establish a conceptually strong and tangible way of examining, measuring, and observing employee growth in future studies.

The prosaic nature of GOM, as a set of daily behaviors performed by managers, is a welcome contribution to the area of management, as well as employee and organizational development. In organizations, much attention is given to the development of senior managers and executives (Fitzpatrick, 2011), but not so much is afforded to the behaviors of the majority of those in positions of authority: line managers and their teams. A focus on line manager behaviors potentially provides access to growth where it is most needed – more junior staff who may not have access to formal development opportunities, and who are in most need of it. Furthermore, many existing leadership constructs that have been studied extensively, such as transformational and transactional models, emphasise the role leaders play in employees' task compliance and job performance (Wang *et al.*, 2005; Paarlberg and Lavigna, 2010). Yet, they tend to lack the important dimension of responding to the development needs of employees, which sits at the core of GOM.

Practical implications

The future of work requires individuals to have the ability to engage in continuous learning, develop new skills, and be adaptive in the face of change (Groves and Feyerherm, 2022). Future-ready employees need to be supported and developed. GOM responds to the development needs of employees, and promotes their ability to grow in their roles and throughout their careers. These managerial behaviors recognize collaborative demands present in new ways of working, within and between organizations and institutions (Getha-Taylor *et al.*, 2016).

A growth-oriented approach may raise capabilities amongst employees in relatively simple ways, rather than through costly training and development courses. This ongoing development is arguably fairer, more meaningful, more accessible and more sustainable for ongoing and continuous growth, than formalized and scheduled development initiatives. These routine but effective practices within GOM are often missing from the more traditional leadership and management literature, which tends to prioritize a focus on employer-centric outcomes, such as performance and proactive behaviors (Bande *et al.*, 2016), rather than on employee needs and expectations for their own growth and development (Sims and Weinberg, 2022).

Limitations

This study's cross-sectional nature means that inferences about causation should be interpreted cautiously. Further research, perhaps longitudinal, would be beneficial in further validating and establishing the scale. However, cross-sectional studies are still helpful in exploring new relationships and constructs (Spector, 2019).

Future research on GOM could consider an examination of the congruence between managers' and employees' perspectives of GOM, by matching the perspectives of dyads, or pairs, of managers and employees in organizations. This is particularly important given that effective management is likely to work best and be sustained when it exists for both parties. Such an examination would correspond to the understanding of supervisory influence as a process co-constructed through the interaction between managers and employees (Sims and Weinberg, 2022).

Finally, to actualize GOM in organizations and subsequently develop employees, it needs to be legitimized by supportive third parties (Franken, 2019). This means that in organizations, senior leaders need to also support and legitimize line managers as agents capable of developing growth in employees. Without a supportive, growth-enabling system, managers will lack the resources, incentives and motivations to engage in growth-enabling leadership behaviors.

Conclusion

The behaviors identified here provide a template for managers to help employees grow and build their own capability. The broad developmental behaviors embedded in GOM, focused on supporting careers and opportunities (beyond narrow job support), trusting staff capability, and leveraging the collective capacity of teams, provide effective means for allowing expansive employee behaviors. This is particularly salient when the mechanism of employee resilience, and essential capability for growth in today's workplaces, is recognized.

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Table 1: CFA model comparisons

Model	χ^2	df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Measurement model	2680.03	521	.78	.88	.07	.06
Measurement model (CMB-adjusted)	2660.19	520	.78	.88	.07	.06
Alternative model 1 (Three factors: GOM and resilience were combined into one factor)	4591.48	524	.62	.77	.10	.11
Alternative model 2 (Two factors: GOM, resilience and engagement were combined into one factor)	7499.00	526	.44	.61	.13	.14
Alternative model 3 (One factor: All the variables were combined into one factor)	9106.40	527	.39	.52	.15	.15

Table 2: Discriminant validity of study variables

Latent variable	AVE	CR	GOM	Employee Resilience	Wellbeing	Engagement
GOM	.62	.95	(.79)			
Employee resilience	.50	.90	.44**	(.71)		
Wellbeing	.60	.88	.33**	.22**	(.77)	
Engagement	.58	.92	.44**	.50**	.44**	(.76)

Table 3: Structural equation model comparison

Model	χ^2	df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Hypothesized (partially mediating model)	2960.20	623	.77	.88	.07	.05
Fully mediating model	3026.47	625	.77	.88	.07	.09

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Table 4: Direct and indirect effects

Path	Direct	Indirect
GOM → Employee Resilience	.47***	
GOM → Engagement	.26***	.19*** (via Employee Resilience)
GOM → Wellbeing	.29***	.05* (via Employee Resilience)
Employee Resilience → Engagement	.41***	
Employee Resilience → Wellbeing	.11*	

Engagement
$R^2 = .34$

GOM

Employee
Resilience
$R^2 = .22$

Wellbeing
$R^2 = .12$

0.26***

0.41***

0.47***

0.29***

0.11*