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Positive Emotions at Work

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Abstract

Positive organizational scholarship has led to a growing interest in the critical role of positive emotions for the lives of both workers and organizations. We review and integrate the different perspectives on positive emotions (i.e., positive valence, positive emotion regulation strategies, and positive adaptive function) and the four main mechanisms (i.e., cognition, affect, behavior, and physiology) that lead to positive organizational outcomes. There is growing evidence that positive emotions influence variables vital for workplace success such as positive beliefs, creativity, work engagement, positive coping, health, teamwork and collaboration, customer satisfaction, leadership, and performance. We additionally review dynamic features of positive emotions (i.e., intraindividual variability, reactivity, inertia, cycles, feedback loops) and their relation to psychological and work outcomes. Finally, we discuss additional questions and future directions for consideration.

INTRODUCTION

With the affective revolution in organizational research and the advent of positive organizational scholarship (Cameron et al. 2003), positive emotions have gained ever greater attention in organizational science with more researchers delving into new approaches and methods to studying it. These scientific endeavors have been further bolstered because an increasing body of evidence has demonstrated the importance of positive emotions for work outcomes such as job performance (Kaplan et al. 2009) and creativity (Amabile et al. 2005).

Given this significant interest in positive emotions, there have been both conceptual and quantitative reviews examining different aspects of positive emotions within organizational scholarship (e.g., Ashkanasy & Dorris 2017). These include descriptions of the dimensions of positive emotions (e.g., Wright 2005), meta-analyses of the influence of (positive) emotions on work outcomes (e.g., Kaplan et al. 2009), emotion processes among interaction partners (e.g., Elfenbein 2007), and conceptualizations of emotion variability in the workplace that account for contexts and affective events (e.g., Weiss & Cropanzano 1996). Our review integrates past work but also adds to these advances, drawing from broad psychological perspectives and methodological advances. Our focus is on positive emotions at the individual level. We prioritize the individual perspective of positive emotions because emotions are underpinned by processes (e.g., biological, social, cognitive) that are individual level at their core. Moreover, there already exist excellent treatments of (positive) emotions in organizations at an interpersonal level (Elfenbein 2007) and more broadly from a multilevel perspective (Ashkanasy & Dorris 2017).

Our focus is on the positive emotions in relation to work outcomes. We seek to address the following questions: What are the different perspectives on positive emotions (i.e., what are positive emotions)? How does experiencing positive emotions exert positive effects (i.e., what are the mechanisms)? What types of outcomes do positive emotions produce (i.e., what are the effects)? What are the different forms of positive emotion dynamics (i.e., what are the ways it changes over time)? Finally, what are some recommendations for future directions within organizational research?

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Emotion research in psychology and organizational science does not have a single predominant view of positive emotion. There are a multiplicity of perspectives and each emphasizes a unique view on emotion. However, there are also commonalities that we can draw on to conceptualize positive emotions. Biological, physiological, cognitive, motivational, social-cultural, and evolutionary perspectives of emotions (e.g., Barrett 2006, Ekman 1992, Fredrickson 1998, Gross 1998) generally seek to answer three major questions to account for emotions: What constitutes an emotion? How are emotions regulated? Finally, what is the function of emotions? Whether organizational researchers implicitly or explicitly consider these accounts of emotions, we propose that our definitions of positive emotions have coalesced in these three prominent ways. These definitions of positive emotions are responses to the constituent-based, regulation-based, and functional accounts of emotions. We label them as positive valence (i.e., positive discrete emotions, positive dimensions), positive emotion regulation strategies, and positive adaptive function, respectively.

Positive Valence

One perspective on emotions stems from the view that emotions are comprised of multiple aspects that include distinct neural substrates, facial expressions, and unique feeling states (Izard

1992), which are the foundation for basic emotions (e.g., Ekman 1992). Although there are debates as to the number and type of basic emotions, the broader argument is that emotions can be understood and studied as discrete entities. One type of basic positive emotion is happiness (Ekman 1992). Beyond this, other positive discrete emotions have been proffered. These stem from the perspectives of self-conscious emotions (e.g., organizational pride), broaden-and-build theory (e.g., joy, interest, contentment, pride, and love), and positive psychology (e.g., awe, elevation). Additional work in psychology on the science of discrete positive emotions encompasses other positive emotion-related constructs such as humor and optimism (Salovey et al. 2000).

Importantly, under the emotions-as-discrete-units view, each of the positive emotions are assumed to be psychologically meaningful units that have unique organizational significance. For example, it is proposed that different positive emotions have differential effects on job attitudes where pride is linked to psychological empowerment, interest is linked to work satisfaction, and gratitude is linked to satisfaction with supervisors and colleagues (Hu & Kaplan 2015). Discrete positive emotions are a growing area of research in organizational science, and in recent years there has been more work on the subject, including both conceptual reviews explicating the role of positive discrete emotions in multilevel organizational framework [e.g., episodic gratitude at the event level, persistent gratitude at the individual level, and collective gratitude at the organizational level (Fehr et al. 2017)], and empirical studies on the influence of positive discrete emotions on organizational outcomes (e.g., Lanham et al. 2012). Such studies hypothesize unique individual and organizational effects associated with each specific positive emotion. For example, work-related gratitude negatively predicts emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and positively predicts job satisfaction controlling for hope and dispositional gratitude (Lanham et al. 2012).

Another perspective on positive emotion that covers a large swath of positive emotion research in organizational science is positive valence, which refers to the positive dimensions in dimensional affect models. Dimensional affect models posit that the common thread among the varieties of positive discrete emotions (e.g., joy, happiness, love) is an underlying dimension of feeling good (rather than bad) (Russell 2003). In this vein, one prominent dimensional affect model is the circumplex model, which posits two orthogonal dimensions: the arousal dimension (low arousal to high arousal) and the valence dimension (negative to positive). Of interest here is the valence dimension where positive emotions lie within the positive half of the valence dimension. In other words, positive emotions are construed as positively valenced states or moods. Another prominent dimensional affect model is the hierarchical model of affect (Tellegen et al. 1999)—on which the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule is based on—where positive emotion corresponds to the positive affect dimension. In dimensional models, the emphasis is on the general experience of feeling positive and less so on the specific types of discrete emotions. Therefore, these positive emotion dimensions are typically measured using a composite of positive emotion terms. For example, the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule measure (Tellegen et al. 1999) is widely used in organizational research and its positive valence measure (i.e., positive affect) is an aggregate of discrete positive emotion terms such as excited, enthusiastic, inspired, and proud. The assumption here is that positive emotion labels are (fallible) indicators of an underlying positive emotion construct. In organizational science, positive valence has been associated with better performance, job attitudes, and other important individual and organizational outcomes (e.g., Barsade & Gibson 2007).

In sum, these two approaches seek to describe the fundamental constituents of positive emotions: Positive emotions are positive discrete emotional states or episodes (e.g., joy, awe) or positive valence dimensions. These perspectives of positive emotions typically construe them as predictors in the causal chain, as **Figure 1** depicts.

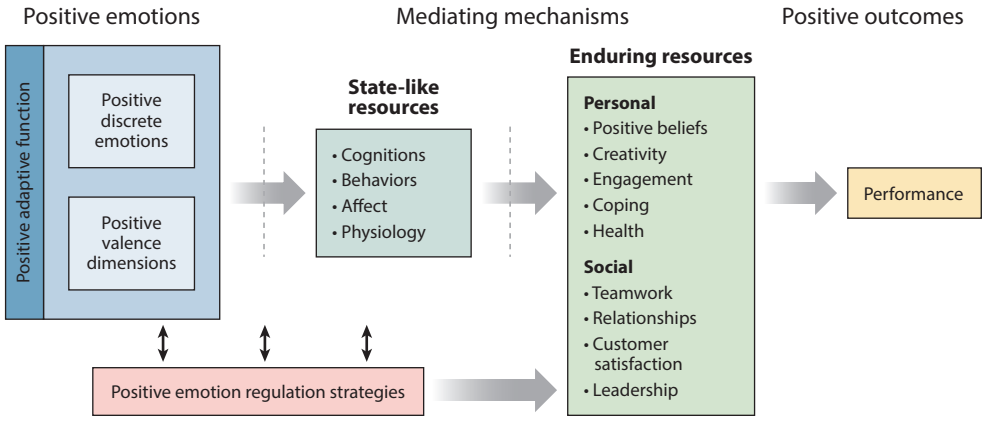

Figure 1

Model linking positive emotions to positive outcomes. Aligned with organizational interests, performance is the ultimate criterion. However, positive emotions can contribute to other types of positive outcomes, including personal and social ones. The figure shows these penultimate outcomes as enduring resources that can cascade to performance.

Positive Adaptive Function

One increasingly popular approach stems from an evolutionary perspective on emotions that emphasizes their social and adaptive function (e.g., Knight & Eisenkraft 2015). This approach calls upon organizational researchers to consider the utility of emotions in their context and challenges the prevailing belief that positive constructs lead to positive outcomes and negative constructs lead to negative outcomes (Lindebaum & Jordan 2014). The upshot is that emotions are regarded as positive insofar as they lead to positive personal and organizational outcomes; positivity is not so much a feature of the experience of affect valence but an evaluation of the outcomes it produces (Gruber et al. 2011). As such, this view posits that no emotion is universally "good" or "bad" but its value is context dependent. For example, anger may be considered to be negative, but it can have prosocial functions if elicited by perceptions of injustice and unfairness when it induces remedial behavior to address the wrongdoing—also referred to as moral anger in organizations (Lindebaum & Geddes 2016). Another example concerns the negative emotion of shame. A recent meta-analysis showed that shame can be positive, as it leads to prosociality and self-improvement when reparative actions can be taken (Leach & Cidam 2015). With regard to positive emotions, although inducing gratitude can lead to prosocial behavior, it can have burdening effects on the helpers and therefore can have negative effects on the experiencer (Bartlett & DeSteno 2006).

Figure 1 illustrates this view of positive emotion as a shadow (underlying the positive discrete and positive valence views of positive emotions). As with a metaphorical shadow, we cannot fully evaluate the positivity of emotions until it has cast its effects. This definition of positive emotions provides a broader view of positive emotions to include even typically negatively valenced emotions (e.g., shame and anger), if it serves a positive purpose in context. From this perspective, positively valenced emotions do not automatically qualify as positive but are dependent on context-specific outcomes.

Positive Emotion Regulation Strategies

Another perspective on positive emotions comes from a growing interest in emotion regulation in general and in the workplace (Grandey 2000), which broadly refers to processes that individuals

use to influence emotional experience, the timing of such experience, and how they are expressed and experienced. Positive emotion regulation strategies commonly encompass two processes. First, they are regulatory approaches that highlight, harness, and maintain positive emotions (Tugade & Fredrickson 2007). Common examples of this approach include cognitive practices such as savoring and positive rumination (e.g., Bono et al. 2013). Second, they are emotion regulation approaches that promote emotional integrity—where the inner experience and outer expression of emotions are in alignment. This is viewed as positive not only because of the implicit value placed on emotional authenticity but also because it is functionally less draining for individuals. An important example of this approach in organizational science is the concept of deep acting, as opposed to surface acting, where deep acting is the practice of modifying the inner emotion as required of a job, whereas surface acting is merely modifying external emotional expressions (Grandey 2000). In organizational research, deep acting is typically regarded as a more desirable emotion regulation strategy and has been shown to have more positive outcomes than surface acting (e.g., Grandey 2003). Furthermore, there is also growing interest among organizational researchers in understanding related concepts such as emotional intelligence, which refers to the ability to understand one's own and others' emotions, distinguish them, and use that knowledge to guide one's thoughts and behavior (Salovey & Mayer 1990).

As **Figure 1** shows, positive emotion regulation strategies lie within the sphere of positive emotions but are also distinct from positive discrete emotions and positive valence dimensions. This is similar to Elfenbein's (2007) model of emotion process where she distinguishes between controlled (or regulatory) components of emotions, from the more automatic components—which in our model are emotional experiences labeled as positive discrete emotions and positive valence dimensions. Positive emotion regulation strategies such as behavioral display of positive expression (Adelmann & Zajonc 1989), being present and paying attention to current positive moments (Erisman & Roemer 2010), and capitalizing on positive events through celebration (Langston 1994) can be used to change the quality of experience in emotions in the moment. Conversely, the degree and type of emotions can also affect the choice of regulation strategies leading to a reciprocal relation. For example, positive emotions—specifically optimism—is predictive of more effective coping or emotion regulation strategies for dealing with stress such as solving problems, planning, and positive reinterpretation rather than less effective strategies such as avoidance, denial, disengagement, and turning to alcohol and drugs (Scheier & Carver 1992).

Because positive emotion regulation strategies are distinct and modulate immediate responses (cognitive, behavioral, affective, and physiological) of positive emotions, **Figure 1** shows them as a moderator. Researchers have also proposed that positive emotions can promote self-regulation (Tice et al. 2007); therefore, we have bidirectional arrows in **Figure 1** where positive emotions and immediate outcomes can also influence positive emotion regulation strategies. Finally, positive emotion regulation strategies can also directly influence outcomes as shown in **Figure 1**. We describe these ideas further in our discussion below of the mechanisms through which positive emotions promote positive outcomes.

HOW DO POSITIVE EMOTIONS PROMOTE POSITIVE OUTCOMES?

Four Mediational Channels

Positive emotions are affective states, processes, and functions regarded as valuable in themselves. They are also increasingly recognized as causal entities in workplace behavior. There are several different theories and frameworks explicating how positive emotions produce positive outcomes. Drawing on the prominent broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson 1998), conceptual and empirical works in health psychology (Salovey et al. 2000), and occupational health (Macik-Frey et al.

2007), our review synthesizes the literature into four mediating channels: cognitions, behaviors, affect, and physiology. These mediating mechanisms are proposed as more state-like and immediate in nature.

We propose that the first channel is an affect-to-cognition-to-outcome route. According to the broaden-and-build theory, positive emotions widen the range of cognition and attention of individuals, enabling them to engage in more expansive and novel behaviors. Indeed, positive emotions promote greater favorability toward external stimuli, which leads to greater approach tendencies. For example, interviewers who experience positive emotions evaluate applicants more favorably (Baron 1987). In addition, positive emotion can lead to a more global orientation effect (compared to a local orientation) (Zadra & Clore 2011). This finding suggests that positive emotion can promote a big-picture holistic perspective for individuals. Moreover, positive emotions have been shown to expand cognitive repertoires as seen from empirical studies that show that positive emotion induction leads to more accurate cognitive decisions (Staw & Barsade 1993), better judgment making (Chuang 2007), and greater creativity (Baas et al. 2008, Davis 2008).

The second channel is an affect-to-behavior-to-outcome route, which explores how positive emotions help broaden not only thoughts but also actions (Fredrickson 1998). In other words, positive emotions lead individuals to engage in novel and larger behavioral repertoires that lead to new opportunities and building of new skills. Positive emotions are related to positive promotion-focused individual behaviors that are important for worker health and productivity such as healthier eating (e.g., Sirois et al. 2015), exercise (e.g., Boehm & Kubzansky 2012), and social behaviors like collaboration and cooperation (e.g., Baron 1990). These can occur in the moment and over the longer term. For example, Garg et al. (2007) showed that individuals induced in a sad mood chose more unhealthy foods (e.g., buttered popcorn) as compared to healthy foods (e.g., fruit). Over the longer run, negative mood is associated with greater alcohol consumption, smoking more, and less exercise as reflected in depressed individuals (Strine et al. 2008). In contrast, positive emotion is linked to more health-promoting behavior such as eating habits, exercise, sleep behaviors, and stress management (Sirois et al. 2015).

The third channel is an affect-to-affect-to-outcome route. On the basis of this channel, maintaining (or savoring) and enhancing positive emotions can promote positive outcomes, which is evinced in the ideas of positivity spirals (i.e., positive emotions beget more positive emotions—both degree and types of positive emotions) and undoing effects (i.e., positive emotions mitigate the effects of negative emotions) (Fredrickson 1998). In the work context, Dimotakis et al.'s (2011) experience sampling study tested the undoing effect of positive emotion and found that at the within-individual level, high positive affect mitigated the negative relationship between negative affect and job satisfaction. Apart from affective experiences, the affective channel also includes affective expressions, where emotions act as social information and can spread to others (Van Kleef 2009). In a similar vein, positive emotion expressions can lead to interindividual positive emotion contagion. For example, Grandey et al. (2005) found that the affective expression of positive emotions through genuine smiles (or Duchenne smiles) promotes perceptions of employee friendliness and customer satisfaction. In general, positive emotion expressions are associated with more positive social outcomes such as greater potential for business relationships (Kopelman et al. 2006) and cooperation (Van Doorn et al. 2012).

The fourth channel is an affect-to-physiology-to-outcome route. Substantial research now supports the role of positive emotions for positive health outcomes such as greater longevity (Cohen & Pressman 2006), lower intensity of illness and higher immune resistance (e.g., Boehm & Kubzansky 2012), and better physiological recovery (e.g., Fredrickson & Levenson 1998). The physiological systems—cardiovascular functioning, endocrine functioning, and immune functioning—have been implicated in this causal chain (Kuykendall & Tay 2015). For instance,

in a study of middle-aged adults, Steptoe et al. (2005) found that positive emotion may counter age-relevant health issues by altering disease vulnerability via the physiological systems (lowering salivary cortisol output, lower ambulatory heart rate, and reduced fibrinogen, which is a sign of a competent immune system). These effects were observed controlling for age, sex, socioeconomic status, smoking, body mass index, and psychological distress, and they were replicated in a three-year follow-up study. Additional research has shown that positive emotions—especially low arousal positive emotions—promote cardiovascular function [i.e., lower heart rate and blood pressure (see, for example, Bhattacharyya et al. 2008)], endocrine function [i.e., lower cortisol levels (see, for example, Lai et al. 2005)], and immune function [i.e., reduced inflammation (see, for example, Cohen et al. 2003)]. This has implications in the growing role of positive emotions and its promotion in workers for occupational health.

Resource Pathways to Outcomes

Psychological and organizational science is moving toward the use of resources as explanatory factors for human behavior. Past research suggests that resources are fundamental for individuals dealing with stress (Hobfoll 1989) and job demands (Bakker & Demerouti 2007), and for energizing performance (Avey et al. 2011). Therefore, in **Figure 1**, the mediating mechanisms can be construed as resources.

Mediational channels as resources. In describing how positive emotions promote positive outcomes, we identify the idea of enlarging resources as a mediational pathway. These resources include physical, intellectual, social, and psychological aspects that mediate positive outcomes, or buffers against the deleterious effects of stressful circumstances (e.g., Bono et al. 2013). The four mediational channels here—cognitions, behaviors, affect, and physiology—can be similarly viewed through the lens of individual-level resources. In other words, resources can be operationally defined in terms of cognitions, behaviors, affect, and physiology. For example, it has been proposed that positive emotions serve to counteract resource drain (i.e., ego depletion) (e.g., Tice et al. 2007) instantiated in physiological terms (e.g., physiological arousal, cardiovascular recovery). Therefore, as shown in **Figure 1**, we include the four mediational channels under the subheading "Resources."

Intermediate outcomes as resources. The four mediational channels proposed represent short-term states. However, the concept of resources also includes longer-term patterns of cognitions, behaviors, emotional responses, and physiology. Indeed, broaden-and-build theory proffers the view that positive resources are an outcome of cumulative effect of positive emotions over time and are explicitly described as enduring (Fredrickson 2001). This view is echoed in conservation of resource theory, where individuals can protect and build on their personal resources, which assumes a quality of enduringness (Halbesleben et al. 2014). Therefore, resources imply qualities that emerge from habitual cognitions, behaviors, affect, and physiological patterns. In this regard, apart from the proposed mediational channels previously mentioned, resources can also include positive outcomes that are penultimate to performance as shown in **Figure 1**. For example, positive emotions promote social resources such as lasting social relationships (Aron et al. 2000) and personal resources such as greater creativity (Baas et al. 2008, Davis 2008). In other words, positive emotions produce positive changes in cognitions, behavior, affect, and physiology that lead to positive personal and social outcomes. These positive and social outcomes are penultimate to performance and may also be construed as more enduring types of resources themselves that contribute to performance.

Mediational Channels in Relation to Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation serves to modulate the expression of emotions and is therefore depicted in **Figure 1** as also moderating the relation between positive emotions and the four mediating channels of cognitions, behaviors, affect, and physiology. Within organizational research, emotion regulation strategies have been shown to help change responses and emotional expression. Different emotion regulation strategies in the workplace (simulation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation) have been effective for both undoing negative emotions and upregulating positive emotion, thereby influencing the affect-to-affect-to-outcome mechanism. For example, there is evidence that attentional deployment before, during, and after a positive event increases positive emotion (Quoidbach et al. 2015). Similarly, Brans et al. (2013) investigated the use of six emotion regulation strategies (reflection, reappraisal, rumination, distraction, expressive suppression, and social sharing) and found that different regulatory strategies were related with different affect. For instance, rumination and expressive suppression are associated with a decrease in positive affect, whereas reflection was associated with an increase in positive affect. The use of positive humor was a successful emotion regulation strategy at down-regulating negative and up-regulating positive emotion (Samson & Gross 2012). Using different emotion regulation strategies can therefore moderate the effects of positive emotions outlined in our model.

WHAT ARE THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF POSITIVE EMOTIONS ON WORKER AND WORKPLACE OUTCOMES?

There is a growing body of work supporting the positive effects of positive emotions on favorable worker and workplace outcomes. We consolidate and build on past reviews and meta-analyses to incorporate these findings in our conceptual model (e.g., Ashkanasy & Dorris 2017, Tenney et al. 2016). In our conceptual model, for the purposes of organization, we discuss the outcomes as personal and social outcomes, which are also regarded as resources that emerge from positive emotions. We include performance as the final outcome in the model.

Personal Outcomes

Positive emotions impact a variety of personal outcomes. We focus on personal beliefs, creativity, work engagement, coping, and health in our review. These can subsequently influence performance.

Positive beliefs. Positive emotion enhances positive belief in self that arm individuals against negative consequences of negative experiences (Fredrickson 2001). Self-efficacy is one such positive belief that has clear connections to work motivation and performance (Gist 1987). There is substantial evidence that positive emotions promote self-efficacy. An experiment that induced emotions show that positive affect enhances self-efficacy compared to negative affect (Saavedra & Earley 1991). In addition, Wright & Mischel (1982) found that when participants imagined a happy, sad, or neutral situation of their choosing for 12 minutes and then performed a mental-rotation task those in the happy condition rated themselves as having performed better on the difficult task when their performance was ambiguous and were more optimistic about their future performance. There is also evidence that people in a good mood set more ambitious goals and have higher expectations (Forgas 1998). Therefore, people who feel good see the world in a more optimistic light and have more positive beliefs about succeeding, which in turn promotes higher

performance downstream (Stajkovic & Luthans 1998). Studies also suggest that positive emotions are related to increases in ego-resilience over time (e.g., Seaton & Beaumont 2015).

Creativity. Creativity is vital for organizations in terms of both performance and growth. In the organizational literature, creativity is understood in various ways, including person, process, and product approaches (Rhodes 1961). For our purposes, we focus on how positive emotions enhance the creativity process and the creativity in products (or outcomes/outputs). Our review shows that there is a robust link between positive emotions and creativity on these dimensions.

The creativity process details the process by which creative outcomes are produced, such as problem finding, ideation, and evaluation (Davis 2008). This process includes divergent and flexible thinking. In the creativity literature, positive emotion (conceptualized often as mood) is one of the most reliable predictors of the creativity process. Multiple meta-analyses of the influence of positive mood on creativity have found positive moods to be a predictor of the creativity process (e.g., flexibility and fluency, the number of unique ideas produced) when compared to control conditions ($r = 0.15$) (Baas et al. 2008, Davis 2008). For example, Estrada et al. (1997) showed that physicians in a positive mood were more flexible and made more accurate diagnoses when solving a case of a patient with liver disease. In another instance, within-person examinations found that positive mood was positively associated with the creative process engagement: a process of redefining and thinking about a problem, researching from different information sources, and brainstorming new alternatives (To et al. 2012).

Creativity as products refer to the outcomes of the creativity process, commonly evaluated on their novelty and usefulness. In their seminal field study, Amabile et al. (2005) found a positive linear relationship between positive affect and creativity such that, on a daily basis, workers who experienced positive moods were more creative in terms of creative thinking as well as peer-rated creative performance at work. There is also evidence that positive emotion-related constructs enhance creativity. Optimism has been found to be predictive of employee creativity as reported by supervisors (Rego et al. 2012). In addition, Madjar et al. (2002) demonstrated that positive mood, but not negative mood, predicted on-the-job ratings of creativity and mediated the effects of social support on creativity ratings.

Work engagement. Work engagement is defined as a positive work-related state of mind. It is characterized by vigor (high energy and motivation to invest effort at work), dedication (strong involvement in work and experiencing pride and enthusiasm about work), and absorption in work (flow at work) (Schaufeli & Bakker 2004). It is an important organizational variable due to its influence on organizational and individual performance and well-being (see Halbesleben 2010). Theoretically, Schaufeli & Salanova (2007) proposed that positive emotions are a key antecedent of work engagement. Empirically, Ouweneel et al. (2012) found a positive within-person relationship between positive emotions and work engagement in a daily diary study. Past research also suggests that a lack of positive emotions leads to disengagement. For instance, Cropanzano et al. (1993) proposed that commitment is a consequence of affective experiences at work. In two studies, they found that affective commitment mediated the relationship between positive emotions and turnover intentions such that more positive emotions led to higher affective commitment and subsequently lower turnover intentions. Overall, the body of evidence suggests that positive emotion can lead to various forms of work engagement.

Coping. Work and workplaces can be inherently stressful, and positive emotions can contribute to effective coping strategies. Research suggests that problem-focused coping is more effective

in the long-term; however, emotion-focused coping, although considered maladaptive long-term, can be more effective for short-term outcomes (Gooty et al. 2014). Positive emotions and positive constructs such as optimism have been predictive of problem-focused coping strategies such as solving problems, planning, and positive reinterpretation rather than some of the less effective emotion-focused strategies such as avoidance, denial, disengagement, and turning to alcohol and drugs (Scheier & Carver 1992, Schmidt et al. 2010). At the same time, Gooty et al. (2014) found that those with high levels of emotional intelligence use emotion-focused coping such as venting, denial, and disengagement, for both letting go of negative emotions and prolonging positive emotions (e.g., joy), and this coping strategy is more effective for short-term performance outcomes.

In addition, effective coping is also a direct consequence of positive emotion regulation strategies. One example of a positive emotion regulation strategy is savoring, which refers to cognitive strategies of maintaining and extending positive emotional experiences by being consciously aware of and paying deliberate attention to pleasant experiences (Bryant et al. 1989). Positive attentional deployment and appraisal to regulate emotions encompass positive coping strategies, such as positive reappraisal and creating positive sensory events, that can help promote greater well-being (Shiota 2006). Similarly, Tugade & Fredrickson (2007) found that coping strategies focused on maintaining and increasing positive emotional experiences have an important role in building resilience to stressful events.

Health. For ethical and legal reasons, organizations are committed to protecting the health of their workers. Additionally, there are also business reasons for caring about worker health, which include lowered health insurance costs and enhanced productivity. Indeed, past conceptual models in organizational research have linked worker health to work performance (e.g., Danna & Griffin 1999). There is robust evidence demonstrating positive emotions being predictive of health outcomes, and these effects hold even beyond negative emotions. Indeed, multiple meta-analyses have found positive moods to be associated with better health and greater longevity, even when initial health and other factors are controlled (Diener & Chan 2011, Lyubomirsky et al. 2005).

Here we discuss some specific examples of how positive emotions affect health outcomes. Research suggests that positive affect was associated with lower blood fat and blood pressure and a healthier body mass index (Blanchflower et al. 2013). In a prospective longitudinal study, Davidson et al. (2010) found that those with low positive feelings were at a higher risk for heart disease. In cross-lagged analyses of a large adult sample, it was found that positive emotions were predictive of greater self-reported health and lowered functional limitations even while simultaneously modeling for negative emotions (Wiese et al. 2018). Positive emotions also serve a health protective function after negative experiences. For instance, experimental studies have found that inducing positive feelings led to faster cardiovascular recovery (Fredrickson & Levenson 1998).

Social Outcomes

Given that organizations are fundamentally comprised of relational entities (e.g., teams, colleagues, leader-member relationships) (Katz & Kahn 1966), it is important to review research examining the effects of positive emotions on different types of social outcomes such as teamwork and cooperation, social relationships, customer satisfaction, and leadership.

Teamwork and cooperation. Teamwork and cooperation among workers are essential for the success of any organization (Edmondson 2012). Research shows that positive emotions can contribute to collaborative behavior as well as choices and trust. Negotiation studies have found that positive emotions boost cooperative and collaborative instead of withdrawal or competitive

behavior. Individuals induced with positive moods are more willing to make concessions (Baron 1990). Moreover, displaying positive emotions during negotiations can lead to increased interest in future business relationships and the likelihood of closing a deal as well as greater concession from the other party (Kopelman et al. 2006). The latter was further supported in studies where perceiving happiness in others led participants to be more cooperative (Van Doorn et al. 2012). Interestingly, displaying positive emotions, whether it be surface or deep acting, can lead to positive other reception and behavior. In group managerial settings, induced positive affect promoted positive emotion contagion; in turn, it improved cooperation, decreased group conflict, and increased perceived task performance (Barsade 2002).

Multiple studies have found positive emotion to be associated with cooperative behavior. Positive mood directed at coworkers and customers predicted supervisor ratings of altruism, even controlling for justice and workplace fairness beliefs as well as dispositional affect (George 1991). Similarly, induced gratitude was found to cause an increase in prosocial behavior (Bartlett & DeSteno 2006) and cooperative economic behavior in economic exchange experiments (DeSteno et al. 2010), while incidental gratitude led to higher trust and cooperation-relevant behaviors such as advice taking (Gino & Schweitzer 2008).

Relationships. For workers, good relationships at work—and at home—form the basis of a balanced and flourishing life. There is firm evidence for the relation between positive emotions and good relationships; additionally, some studies also show that positive emotions may causally lead to better relationships. Indeed, the broaden-and-build hypothesis posits that positive emotions make people more open to engaging with others and more playful, such that people who are in a good mood are more pleasant and fun to be around, leading to more shared positive experiences (Fredrickson 1998). Those with higher positive affectivity tend to be more social and have quality relationships with friends, family, and romantic partners, according to self- and peer-reports (Diener & Seligman 2002). Experimental studies also find that positive mood induction leads to interpersonal communication and self-disclosure (Cunningham 1988), improved social skill assessments (Kazdin et al. 1984), and lasting social relationships (Aron et al. 2000). At the workplace, McGrath et al. (2017) used daily diary methodology with US and New Zealand workers and found that morning positive affect positively predicted collegial interactions with coworkers and subsequently work engagement.

Customer satisfaction. There is also a body of work showing a causal relation between positive emotions of employees to positive customer experience. Studies have identified emotion contagion as one of the explanations for how positive mood of workers can lead to better customer satisfaction. For instance, Pugh (2001) found that the positive mood of bank tellers led to emotional contagion among their customers and subsequently positive customer evaluations of service quality. Similarly, Barger & Grandey (2006) found that the strength of the employees' smiles predicted customers' smiles during the purchase encounter, even above the degree of smiling the customers came into the coffee shop with). This emotional contagion also predicted customers' satisfaction with the encounter. In addition, Tsai & Huang (2002) found that positive behaviors of shoe salespeople, such as greeting, smiling, and eye contact, correlated with customers' in-store positive mood and subsequently the time they spent in the store and their willingness to shop there again. In general, there is evidence that positive emotions can promote greater sales performance through higher customer satisfaction.

Leadership. In the leadership literature, emotions are recognized as a crucial aspect of charismatic, transformational, and authentic leadership (for a review, see Gooty et al. 2010). We focus

here on the effects of positive emotion in terms of the leader-follower relationship, where positive emotions experienced or displayed by the leader can influence the follower positively and vice versa. Theoretical and empirical work on authentic leadership posits positive emotion as a distinguishing feature between authentic and nonauthentic leadership (Michie & Gooty 2005). In fact, Rego et al. (2014) found that authentic leaders affect employee creativity through the mediating role of employees' positive affect and hope. The emotions as social information theory posits that a follower's affective reaction is directly influenced by the leader's affect (Van Kleef 2009). Experimental studies have found that positive displays result in more positive affective reactions and favorable inferences about performance compared to negative displays (Van Doorn et al. 2012). In addition, George & Bettenhausen (1990) found that a leader's positive mood was positively related to self-reports of better customer service and negatively related to work groups' voluntary turnover rates.

Performance Outcomes

Effects of positive emotion on performance have been studied on multiple fronts, resulting in multiple review and meta-analytic articles. Kaplan et al. (2009) investigated the meta-analytic effects of positive affectivity on job performance and reported moderate effect sizes. A qualitative review by Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) found cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental studies converging to show the potential causal effects of positive emotions on job performance and also career success. As **Figure 1** shows, we chose to position performance as the ultimate outcome (Thorndike 1949) where the effects of positive emotions are conceptually mediated through both state-like and enduring resources (e.g., Fredrickson 2001). We recognize that performance may not always be mediated through enduring resources (e.g., momentary performance) and that there may also be reciprocal effects between performance and antecedent positive emotions and resources (e.g., Sonnentag 2015); we have, however, diagramed a cascading model in **Figure 1** to show simply how positive emotions can lead to performance in the long run. We focus our review here on effects of positive emotions on performance acknowledging that there may be unmeasured mediating effects in the studies presented and that there are studies that have explicitly examined mediating pathways (e.g., Tsai et al. 2007).

Given that performance is often evaluated by a third party (e.g., supervisor or colleague), positive emotion may lead to better performance in part due to positive interpersonal dynamics (e.g., affect-to-affect channel of emotional contagion and liking). Research has shown that individuals disposed to positive affectivity perform better in ratings on decisional and interpersonal tasks (Staw & Barsade 1993). Furthermore, positive interpersonal affect has been shown to be associated with better performance ratings (e.g., Robbins & DeNisi 1994, Varma et al. 1996). Importantly, there is also experimental work supporting this idea. For instance, in tasks such as singing in front of others or public speaking, raters found participants who were coached to reappraise their anxiety as a positive exciting feeling as performing better at the tasks compared to other conditions (Brooks 2014). In addition, individuals were rated as performing better in negotiations when participants had been placed in a positive mood, especially when the interaction was face-to-face (Carnevale & Isen 1986).

Job performance literature distinguishes between task performance and contextual performance (Motowidlo et al. 1997), and there is growing evidence that positive emotions predict both. Task performance–relevant constructs such as judgement and decision making are directly affected by induction of positive emotion such that those in induced positive emotional states made more accurate choices, took longer to research information, and processed greater amounts of information compared to those in negative emotional states (Chuang 2007). Oswald et al. (2015) investigated how positive feelings influence productivity in an experimental setting. They found that

those in an induced positive mood produced a greater quantity of work output (approximately 10–12%) but at a similar quality. Furthermore, in a longitudinal study, Tsai et al. (2007) found that sales employees in positive moods had better task performance through two mechanisms: through higher motivational processes (self-efficacy and persistence) and through interpersonal processes (helping others and getting help in return).

Beyond task performance, positive emotion also enhances organizational citizenship behavior. For example, Dalal's (2005) meta-analysis supports positive affect as an antecedent of organizational citizenship behavior (corrected $r = 0.34$). In addition, positive emotion predicted helping behavior toward coworkers and customers among office workers and retail clerks (Fisher 2002). Positive mood directed at coworkers and customers predicted supervisor ratings of altruism, even controlling for justice and workplace fairness beliefs as well as dispositional affect (George 1991). More generally, induced gratitude was found to increase prosocial behavior (Bartlett & DeSteno 2006).

Finally, there is some evidence that positive emotions can promote team performance as well. For instance, Barsade (2002) conducted an experimental study where positive emotional contagion among group members in leaderless group discussions lead to improved cooperation, lower conflict, and perceived task performance. They also predicted how positively the other group members rated their performance. Similarly, Meneghel et al. (2016) applied broaden-and-build theory to study the mechanisms of the positive emotion effect on team performance. They found that collective positive emotions led to team resilience, which in turn leads to increased team performance as measured using supervisor ratings.

TEMPORAL DYNAMICS IN POSITIVE EMOTIONS

The study of positive emotions—and emotions more generally—requires looking through the lens of time (Ancona et al. 2001). Part of this impetus has arisen from a growing recognition that temporal parameters are vital to our theoretical understanding of organizational phenomena (Shipp & Cole 2015); these parameters include, not exhaustively, inertia, variability, and cycles (e.g., Beal & Ghandour 2011). Technological and methodological advances have also led to the proliferation of daily diary, experience sampling, and ecological momentary assessment designs in organizational psychology to capture and analyze momentary data (Beal 2015).

These trends in organizational research have led to an embracing of positive emotions as fundamentally dynamic in nature. Therefore, understanding how positive emotions promote positive outcomes requires a temporally dynamic account. Positive emotions fluctuate as a function of person and situation factors as they unfold over time. For instance, person factors such as emotion regulation processes (Larsen 2000) modulate the variability in positive emotions, and situations in and out of work influence the experience of positivity (i.e., affective events) (Weiss & Cropanzano 1996). Although there have been multiple theoretical and empirical within-person investigations to understand how affect is temporally related to organizational constructs (e.g., Dalal et al. 2014), we describe different features of positive emotion dynamics (i.e., variability, inertia, and cycles) in relation to their outcomes (Kuppens & Verduyn 2017). Furthermore, we discuss how these different features (i.e., variability, inertia, and cycles) may reveal insights into person and situation factors in the workplace.

Intraindividual Variability

One of the most researched dimensions of positive emotion temporal dynamics is variability over time. This can be seen in the broader program of research on the intraindividual variability of emotions (Eid & Diener 1999). Classically, variability in positive emotions is defined as the degree of

fluctuation of positive states (i.e., hedonic variability) around more stable states (i.e., hedonic level) (Wessman & Ricks 1966). Intraindividual variability is often operationalized as within-person variance or some measure of dispersion (e.g., standard deviation) (e.g., Beal & Ghandour 2011).

Although it is a temporal dynamic feature, intraindividual variability in positive emotions can be construed as reflecting a stable person attribute; that is, there are individual differences in positive emotion variability such that it can be described as trait-like (Kuppens et al. 2007). Such a construal of variability may be anticipated when one considers that personality traits have been conceptually defined by variability. For example, neuroticism has been equated to a lack of emotional stability and as expected, neuroticism is related to negative affect variability (i.e., variability in levels of negative emotions) (e.g., Bringmann et al. 2016). Empirically, positive emotion variability (i.e., variability in levels of positive emotions) has been found to be stable enough to be considered a psychological trait (Eid & Diener 1999). However, positive emotion variability is not merely the corollary of one or more of the Big 5 traits and is distinct from purely personality traits such as neuroticism and extraversion (Eid & Diener 1999).

Intraindividual variability in positive emotions is predictive of important psychological outcomes beyond mean levels of positive emotions. Researchers examined macrolevel (i.e., over two weeks) and microlevel (over a day) variability in positive emotions in two different samples and found that both were incrementally predictive of poorer psychological health (e.g., lower life satisfaction, higher depression, greater anxiety) beyond average levels of positive emotions (Gruber et al. 2013). These findings have been replicated by other research groups as well and in non-US populations [e.g., among 15,050 Chinese adults (Chan et al. 2016)]. Such findings suggest that fluctuations in positive emotion, regardless of the mean levels or intensity of positivity, is maladaptive.

Variability can go beyond a unidimensional valence dimension (i.e., variability in the degree of positivity, for example, standard deviation) to also include the arousal dimension. Variability in emotions—in this two-dimensional space of valence and arousal—is labeled affect spin (Beal et al. 2013, Kuppens et al. 2007). This form of variability is based on the standard deviation of emotion vectors within the valence (positive and negative) and arousal (high and low) space. Affect spin has been conceptualized as a form of trait reactivity and has robust associations with Big 5 traits, which were stronger than average levels of affect or affect variability (Kuppens et al. 2007). Because of this, affect spin has gained some attention in organizational science, where it has been found to be associated with intrinsic task motivation, a moderator for reactivity and a buffer to affective events (Beal & Ghandour 2011, Beal et al. 2013, Kuppens et al. 2007). Clark et al. (2018) also investigated workplace correlates of daily affect spin over two weeks and discovered a negative indirect relationship between daily affect spin and organizational citizenship through lower daily positive mood.

Reactivity

Another aspect of positive emotion dynamics that relates closely to positive emotion regulation is reactivity. Unlike typical intraindividual variability conceptualizations where variability of positive emotions alone is examined over time, reactivity is about positive emotions changes to situations or events (e.g., magnitude of change in positive emotions to daily events) (Ong & Ram 2017). This reactivity is typically viewed as a vulnerability when there is high positive emotion variability to negative events (e.g., drastic drop in positive emotion in reaction to stress). Indeed, past work utilizing within-person measures of affective reactivity show that high positive emotion reactivity to daily stressors predicts poor sleep (Ong et al. 2013), elevated inflammation, and doubling of mortality risk, even after controlling for the effects of negative affect reactivity (Mroczek et al.

2013, Sin et al. 2015). O'Neill et al. (2004) demonstrated that heightened positive emotion reactivity to daily interpersonal stressors was a unique vulnerability factor in the development of later depressive symptoms. Therefore, a high level of positive affect reactivity to negative events may be maladaptive to well-being.

Inertia

Related but distinct from the concept of reactivity is inertia, or the extent to which affective states are resistant to change or persistent over time (Koval et al. 2016, Kuppens et al. 2010). Inertia is operationally defined by the autocorrelation in emotion states, or the current emotion state being predicted by the preceding emotion state, often using intensive longitudinal data including ESM, daily diary, and other ambulatory assessments. A higher autocorrelation would thus reflect greater inertia. Kuppens et al. (2010) found that, on average, all emotions have autocorrelations, but positive emotions had higher autocorrelations than the negative ones.

Does positive emotion inertia lead to better outcomes? Research reveals mixed results. On one hand, it has been posited that inertia reflects a type of psychological maladjustment due to lack of emotional reactivity. Indeed, Kuppens et al. (2010) found that positive emotion inertia—along with negative emotion inertia—was associated with low self-esteem and depression. Emotional inertia is linked to emotional regulation as it seems to stem from difficulties regulating one's emotions (Koval et al. 2015). It is also related to cognitive perseverative tendencies such as rumination (Koval et al. 2012) and linked to inefficient (at least in the sense of having impact on emotional experience) regulatory strategies such as suppression (Koval et al. 2015). Moreover, it is not surprising that as emotional inertia reflects emotional resistance to change and thus the general failing of emotion regulation goals and efforts, it is associated with poor psychological adjustment (Kuppens & Verduyn 2015). However, other studies have found association between higher levels of positive affect inertia and positive well-being outcomes such as better recovery for participants with recurring depression (Höhn et al. 2013). This finding aligns with broaden-and-build theory of positive emotion, which posits that resilient individuals use positive emotions as repository to buffer negative experiences. Inertia in this case can be theorized as a reflection of this resource building. Further research can explicate the contexts in which inertia may be tied to positive or negative functioning. For example, emotional inertia in stressful workplaces may be adaptive, whereas emotional inertia in circumstances that require adaptive performance may be maladaptive.

Cycles

Another emotion dynamic feature of interest in the workplace is cyclicality—or recurring patterns of positive emotions over time. We use this term broadly to cover both seasonality and cycles that are technically different: Seasonality refers to repeating patterns (which may vary in magnitude) based on a fixed duration (e.g., days, weeks, months), whereas cycles can also refer to repeating patterns that are not based on a fixed duration (e.g., business cycles) (Jebb & Tay 2017). Cycles in positive emotions may emerge as circadian rhythms at the day level from a combination of person factors (e.g., biology and physiology) and daily activities (e.g., work and rest).

Research has found daily cycles for positive emotions but not negative emotions (Murray et al. 2002) and weekly cycles for both, although in more predictable form for positive emotions (Beal & Ghandour 2011, Larsen & Kasimatis 1990). Such cyclical patterns may reflect the typical work week schedule of "five days on, two days off" where people have higher positive affect during the weekend and later "blue Mondays" where people have steep downward slopes in positive emotion (Beal & Ghandour 2011). This suggests that when assessing positive emotions throughout the

week one should account for this cyclical pattern. Although underresearched, these patterns may also be subject to individual differences in affective spin and other factors characteristic of the individual (Beal & Ghandour 2011).

At longer intervals, it is also well-known that seasons can influence emotion states where individuals tend to experience less positive mood in winter as compared to summer (Rosenthal et al. 1984). These patterns may be not only a function of seasons but may also be moderated by person attributes like personality traits (openness, neuroticism) (Murray et al. 2002).

Feedback Loops

Another dynamic aspect of positive emotions emerges from the viewpoint of the self-control process that positive (and negative) emotions are part of a feedback system that motivates (or demotivates) individuals in goal-striving behavior. Higher (or lower) than expected rates of progress toward a goal generate positive emotions (or negative emotions). In turn, positive emotions (or negative emotions) affect positive (or negative) goal-striving via positive (or negative) cognitive processing [e.g., focusing on positive (or negative) aspects of a situation] (Carver & Scheier 1990). In short, this feedback loop from positive emotions creates continued goal-directed behavior, whereas the feedback loop from negative emotions creates disengagement. Supporting this, Ilies & Judge's (2005) work has indeed found that affect mediates the relationship between manipulations of task performance feedback and goal setting, wherein positive emotions reinforced subsequent goal setting (i.e., setting higher goals).

More generally, positive emotions are an essential component of self-regulating and motivating approach behavior. Therefore, broaden-and-build theory draws on these similar principles and proposes positivity spirals—where positive emotions generate positive behaviors and outcomes that in turn feed back into positive emotions. In this regard, Aknin et al. (2012) have shown initial evidence of positive feedback loops between happiness and prosocial spending. This suggests that there may be longer periods of time in which positive emotion feedback loops are enacted beyond moments in time (e.g., Ilies & Judge 2005).

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Although there is much extant literature studying the effects of positive emotions in the workplace, there is much more work needed to gain an increased understanding of such effects. In this review, we provide a framework to facilitate such understanding by integrating the diverse conceptualizations of positive emotions, the mechanisms through which they affect workplace outcomes, and the resulting effects they have on workplace outcomes. In addition, we call attention to temporal properties of positive emotions, a largely underresearched area in organizational science, in hopes of inspiring further research into this topic. We discuss additional considerations for each of these areas guided by specific questions.

How Do the Different Views of Positive Emotions Promote New Research Directions?

Our review delineates positive discrete emotions and positive valence in research. Despite multiple calls for research in the area, there is still a scarcity of work looking at the function of specific discrete emotions in the workplace, particularly for positive emotions. For example, awe as a discrete positive emotion has gained some attention in emotion research for its unique effects on the

perception of time availability. Compared to another discrete positive emotion like happiness, awe led to the perception that time is more plentiful, reduced impatience, and increased willingness to volunteer time (Rudd et al. 2012). In addition, it is associated with significantly more goal progress, compared to amusement emotion induction and neutral conditions (Seaton & Beaumont 2015).

Given that the positive valence conception of emotions considers emotions with respect to the arousal dimension, more work will also need to examine whether the types of positive emotions—high arousal or low arousal—promote positive outcomes. Indeed, Carver & Scheier (2012) propose that it is not merely positive emotions as generally understood but also positive activated emotions (e.g., excitement) as compared to deactivated positive emotions (e.g., contentment) that are related to goal directed behaviors. One possible implication is that positive emotions generated from activities can also generate coasting behaviors—where individuals do not engage in greater effort. For instance, when focal goal attainment is imminent, positive emotions decreased effort toward the focal goal in order to allocate effort to other goals (Louro et al. 2007). Clearly, this has implications with respect to the degree to which different types of positively valenced emotions motivate behaviors and outcomes.

Another fruitful area to consider is positive emotion regulation strategies. Due to space considerations, our review of positive emotion regulation strategies has been general. There are different components in emotion regulation, ranging from antecedent-focused components such as situation selection and modification, attentional deployment, and cognitive change to the response-focused response modulation, that require greater specific consideration (Gross 2001). Understanding when and how positive emotion regulation strategies maintain and promote positive emotions or how different strategies enhance positive outcomes can provide valuable insights in emotion and organizational literature. In addition, recent works in the area have also embraced the central role of time in emotion regulation (Kuppens & Verduyn 2015). Merging emotion regulation and emotion dynamics may provide additional insights on the nature of positive emotion regulation and how that affects outcomes through time.

Do Positive Outcomes Always Emerge From Positive Emotions?

The positive adaptive function view of emotions states that not all positive discrete emotions or positive valence dimensions invariably lead to positive outcomes. There are several underlying reasons for this. Cognitively, positive emotions are associated with the use of more heuristic thinking—or the use of simple rules of thumb—that may lead to less than optimal problem solving and decision making (e.g., Mackie & Worth 1989). This perspective is aligned with the view that positive emotions may promote a more global view of processing information as compared to a more local focus of information processing with negative emotions (e.g., Gasper & Clore 2002). The implication is that positive emotions may not always produce better outcomes due to shallow cognitive processing. For example, Forgas (2007) found that that people in negative, compared to positive, moods produce higher quality and more effective interpersonal persuasive messages. Such findings support the sadder-but-wiser hypothesis, where people experiencing negative emotions are less compelled by surface-level persuasion tactics compared to those experiencing positive emotions (Mackie & Worth 1989). This idea has implications for organizations in terms of promoting diversity and inclusion as well, given that individuals in more positive moods used more stereotypes in person-perception tasks as compared to those in neutral mood conditions (Bodenhausen et al. 1994).

Motivationally, Tamir (2009) has suggested that immediate positive emotions may be a hindrance to longer-term goal pursuits. This is because positive emotions serve a satiation function for behaviors and goal pursuit. Indeed, in laboratory settings, positive emotions have been

associated with cognitive distractibility and perseverance despite promoting cognitive flexibility (Dreisbach & Goschke 2004). Cross-sectional and longitudinal research also shows that whereas those who experience the highest levels of happiness have better close relationships and engage in more volunteer work, those who experience slightly lower levels of happiness have greater success in terms of income (De Neve & Oswald 2012), lower rates of unemployment (Diener et al. 2002), and greater political participation (Oishi et al. 2007). In general, this motivational account posits that maximal happiness is not ideal, but it does not imply that individuals should be persistently unhappy.

Contextually, the functional view of positive emotions proposes that emotions solve problems and direct adaptive behaviors (Frijda 1988). In this regard, a host of negative emotions have utility. For example, anger can serve to help individuals in confrontational situations (Tamir et al. 2008). Indeed, within the organizational context, we see different instances of these findings. Guilt-proneness has been associated with higher levels of affective commitment (Flynn & Schaumberg 2012). Furthermore, prospective negative emotions (e.g., guilt) may prevent someone from engaging in counterproductive work behavior (e.g., Cohen et al. 2012). In addition, when people feel guilty, they are more likely to try to repair relationships they may have hurt, and when one is embarrassed or upset about a mistake, people may be more willing to forgive them (Keltner & Anderson 2000). In contrast, positive emotional constructs such as compassion can even have negative consequences for individuals at work. For example, so-called compassion fatigue can lead to burnout (Meadors & Lamson 2008). In the future, organizational researchers will need to develop empirical research and conceptual work that delineates individual- and contextual-level contingencies for why positive emotions may not promote positive outcomes—and why negative emotions may be salutary.

Does Culture Moderate the Effects of Positive Emotions on Positive Outcomes?

Related to the previous question, the model **Figure 1** provides may not universally hold across cultures, as there may be cultural contexts that emphasize other forms of emotions and emotion expression for positive outcomes. In this regard, a meta-analysis of 190 studies found that differences in emotional expression were attributable to cross-cultural factors, particularly cultural values, even after accounting for methodological factors (van Hemert et al. 2007). Cross-cultural research has demonstrated that cultures promote emotions consistent with their cultural values and that their members consequently experience them more frequently (Mesquita et al. 2017). One potential caveat is that positive emotion effects on positive outcomes may result from happiness being associated with personal achievement in Western societies in contrast to interpersonal connectedness in Eastern societies (Uchida et al. 2004). Moreover, even the type of discrete positive emotion may have differential effects across cultures. In Eastern societies, positive low arousal emotions (e.g., calm) rather than positive high arousal emotions (e.g., excited) appear to be more related to positive outcomes. For example, European Americans preferred excited (versus calm) applicants, whereas the converse was true for Hong Kong Chinese (Bencharit et al. 2019). We advocate for extending research on this frontier beyond East-West differences to other cultures—and even to conduct basic measurement validation of positive emotions across cultures (e.g., Tay et al. 2011).

Cross-cultural differences may also moderate the effects of positive emotions on positive outcomes and the mechanisms that underlie such connections. For instance, increased positive emotions were directly related to decreases in depression symptoms among European Americans, but not among immigrant Asians (Leu et al. 2011). This suggests that there may be cross-cultural variations in the affect-to-affect mechanisms. Similarly, there may be similar variations in

affect-to-cognition mechanisms. For instance, individuals' emotional experiences have a much more profound influence on the judgment of life satisfaction in individualist cultures than in collectivist cultures (Suh et al. 2017). More research will need to systematically uncover how cross-cultural differences can influence the effects of positive emotions on outcomes and the different underlying mechanisms.

Are Psychological and Physiological Mechanisms Linking Positive Emotions to Outcomes a Sufficient Causal Account?

In our account of how positive emotions promote positive workplace outcomes, we presented psychological and physiological mechanisms in a linear causative manner (**Figure 1**). However, this is a first-order approximation of temporal causation and is a simplification of the ongoing complex interactions among affective, cognitive, physiological, and behavioral systems within the individual. Indeed, some researchers such as Baumeister et al. (2007) have argued that positive emotions do not directly drive behaviors and need to be understood as a feedback system to guide behaviors. On this basis, conscious emotions provide feedback and stimulate appraisals of past actions (or future anticipated emotions) to facilitate learning and guide behaviors; automatic affective responses also provide information cognitively and behaviorally to direct behaviors. We expect that future organizational research integrating data science approaches to capture temporal slices of behavior, emotions, and physiology through wearable sensors and video recordings will be able to provide a more thoroughgoing accounting of the dynamic interplay among these different processes (i.e., affective, cognitive, and behavioral processes).

What Are the Linkages Between Temporal Dynamic Features of Positive Emotions and Workplace Outcomes?

Research in the area for temporal dynamic properties of positive emotions has substantial promise, and a lot of the work has been conducted in social and clinical psychology (Houben et al. 2015) with less emphasis on workplace outcomes. In general, we call for more organizational research in this area to understand how different temporal dynamic features (e.g., intraindividual variability, reactivity, inertia, cycles, feedback loops) are associated with worker outcomes such as performance and work-life outcomes.

There are at least two areas that require further specification and clarity to move this research forward rigorously. In much of the work on temporal dynamics, features are implicitly analyzed and typically discussed as person attributes. For example, positive emotion variability has been described as trait-like (Kuppens et al. 2007). However, it is difficult to isolate such effects using experience sampling designs where situational factors can play a substantial role in driving variability. There needs to be conceptual work and research designs providing a situational accounting of positive emotion variability. For example, what are the objective situations and different dimensions of psychological situations that workers encounter that vary affective states and that may also vary outcomes? This question has practical implications in terms of daily experiences of workers from a work design perspective.

Another area that requires consideration is the calculation of temporal features across individuals. One must determine if the individuals within a sample share similar timings (e.g., workdays, work schedules, work pace); otherwise, calculations of temporal features may inadvertently reflect differences in these confounding characteristics, rather than individual traits. In addition, less is known about whether differences in time frames modulate the relation between positive emotion temporal features and outcomes. There may be fundamentally different underlying temporal dynamic constructs within shorter (e.g., 1 day, 1 week) versus longer time frames (e.g., 4 weeks,

1 year). A straightforward example is differences between daily and monthly cycles; affect spin within the day may be quite different from affect spin found across multiple weeks, as it captures different habitual patterns and situational changes.

What Are the Practical Implications of Recognizing the Role of Positive Emotions for Positive Outcomes?

Positive emotions are important in and of themselves as a key dimension of worker well-being (e.g., Sonnentag 2015). Beyond their inherent value, we show the functional value of positive emotions in promoting organizational outcomes such as creativity, health, teamwork, leadership, and job performance, among others. Practically, more organizations can benefit by developing a workplace that promotes positive emotions. This can take the form of hiring or developing transformational leaders in the organization (Bono et al. 2007), providing adequate job resources to employees (Xanthopoulou et al. 2012), conducting stress management workshops for high stress jobs (Holman et al. 2018), and providing work conditions that enable workers to flourish in other life domains [e.g., family, leisure (Ford et al. 2018, Kuykendall et al. 2017)]. More generally, Barsade & O'Neill (2016) have argued that organizations will need to consciously manage and shape a positive emotional culture (e.g., culture of joy/fun/love versus culture of fear/anger) that can enhance financial performance downstream.

CONCLUSION

Given the growth of positive organizational scholarship and the increasing emphasis on worker and societal wellness, we expect that the topic of positive emotions will become ever more prominent in organizational research. By providing a broad framework to organize ideas about positive emotions, the mediators, their positive consequences, and temporal considerations, we hope that organizational scientists can use this as a launching point for the next few decades of positive emotion research. This research will include building on and replicating past work while also identifying new areas that require exploration and expansion.

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