

### **Popular summary of the project**

The issue of employee ill-being (understood as an individual's experience of mental suffering and meaninglessness at work), although it has been analyzed for many years both by international institutions (e.g. WHO, the European Commission, the Gallup Institute, etc.) and researchers in the social sciences (management, sociology or psychology), is still a major challenge for researchers dealing with this issue. First of all, because, as researchers have demonstrated, ill-being is not the simple reverse of employee well-being, and the same measures or similar conclusions cannot be made here on the basis of analogy. Mental ill-being is a partially independent dimension of experience from well-being (one can feel both at the same time), has different causes and leads to different consequences than well-being. Second, there is a lack of good (reliable and valid) measures of employees' psychological ill-being (beyond the most commonly used indicators in the form of negative emotions, or emotional exhaustion) to better understand employees' negative experiences in the work environment and develop preventive interventions. Third, relatively little research has been devoted to understanding the organizational drivers (HRM practices, organizational climate, leadership, etc.) of ill-being and the work consequences of this condition, in the form of task performance and contextual performance. This is because the psychological ill-being of is not only related to the personal dimension of the individuals' functioning (leading to job burnout or illness), but has its own implications for professional outcomes (relationships, task performance) and economic outcomes (work productivity). Therefore, it is an important area of research in the field of organization and management studies.

Fourth, there is a lack of longitudinal studies to understand the dynamics of changes over time in employees' psychological ill-being, the self-regulatory mechanisms used by employees and the consequences this has for work processes. Indeed, experienced difficulties at work do not necessarily lead to the emergence of ill-being in employees, in situations where they have developed constructive methods of self-regulation, or use various proactive coping strategies (e.g., job crafting).

Thus, there is a research gap regarding both the understanding and measurement of employee ill-being, the dynamics of its changes over time, and the work outcomes resulting from such experiences in employees.

The **main purpose** of the project is a longitudinal and multistage diagnosis of the organizational determinants, manifestation and occupational consequences of employees' ill-being at work. The **application purpose** is related to the development of practical recommendations that allow employees to minimize suffering and meaninglessness at work. The main research question is: What organizational factors (e.g., leadership, organizational practices, etc.) lead to employees' ill psychological well-being and what are the resulting consequences for work processes.

The research will be carried out in several phases, using methodological triangulation, i.e. qualitative as well as quantitative research methodologies.

The qualitative and quantitative research is planned to be conducted simultaneously. Whereby, qualitative research will run throughout the project, even after the quantitative research is completed. This will allow both a deeper identification of the phenomenon (prior to the quantitative research) and an understanding of the quantitative research results obtained. It is planned to conduct 10 IDI interviews with employees experiencing ill-well-being and meaninglessness at work. Through employees' narratives, stories and experiences, it will be possible to understand the dynamics of this phenomenon, distinguish self-regulatory mechanisms used by employees in difficult work situations, as well as identify work-related outcomes. The quantitative methodology will involve a longitudinal (1-year long) quantitative survey using the CAWI method on a group of 2,000 employees. They will consist of four moments of measurement to capture the dynamics of changes in employees' psychological ill-being in the work environment and their relationship to work performance, as well as to capture self-regulatory mechanisms for effective work performance despite the presence of detrimental organizational factors.

The main outcomes of the project will be:

1. Developing more appropriate (beyond measuring negative emotions) measures of employee ill-being.
2. Capture the mechanism (mediating variables) of the impact of organizational factors on employees' ill-being.
3. Staggered measurement of changes in employees' ill-being and the relationship of that ill-being to job performance.
4. Understanding the self-regulatory mechanisms used by employees to function effectively regardless of organizational conditions.