



The Affective Dimension of People  
Management: the Influence of Affective Work  
Environment on the Nature and Level of  
Employees' Performance.

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**The affective dimension of people management: The influence of affective work environment on the nature and level of employees' performance.**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study of job performance within organizations is one of the most relevant topics for the field of management and especially human resources management. There is some consensus among the conceptual models proposed over the last decades for the construct of job performance about the importance to encompass components linked to the technical requirements and behaviors of a more social nature in support of other individuals and/or the organization.

A holistic view of job performance entails the challenge of adopting models of multidimensional nature to define its antecedents and consequents. In line with this concern, we have seen emerging a new paradigm in the field of organizational behavior, based on a growing acknowledge of the importance of affects in the life of organizations. Likewise, in this study it is proposed a model closely matching the affective events theory (AET) to analyze the influence of affective dimensions to describe and explain individual differences on the nature and level of performance. The study adopted a correlational design and was based on data gathered from a sample made up of 393 employees and their supervisors, working in nine organizations from different economic sectors. The data analysis approach applied principles from structural equation modeling (SEM). Results show evidence that emotional energy caused by the affective work environment, as well as the affective components of work attitudes - organizational commitment and trust in managers and colleagues, have a substantial and significant effect on the two performance criteria.

## INTRODUCTION

The literature on HRM has given prominence to what can be described as a technical or rational view of managing people looking at effective ways to influence employees' behaviours that contribute to enhance organizational performance (Clinton & van Veldhoven, 2013; Guest, 2011). This approach matches the metaphor of organizations as a machine (Morgan, 2006), where its focus favors planning, organizing and controlling, and in which the individual is devoid of all its socio-affective reality. Furthermore, in the history of industrial and organizational psychology some scholars, from an early age, have called our attention to workers' affective life, for example, Bingham (1950, pp. 495) "The need for industry to carry out studies on movements has now been overcome by the need for studies on emotions". This perspective has opened new avenues for contemporary HRM research in line with what Barsade, Brief and Spataro (2003, pp. 3) referred with profound elegance as being at the center of a true affective revolution - "A new research paradigm is emerging in organizational behavior, both theoretically and empirically, based on the growing importance of affections for organizational life". The reason vs. emotion debate does not put in question the rational nature of organizations, but rather looks at reconciling that nature with the full integration of the affective dimension. In this regard, it is worth mentioning one of the great thinkers of human psychology, Jean Piaget (1981) commented on the impossibility of finding behaviors that stem exclusively from affectivity and without any cognitive element, as it is equally impossible to find behaviors composed solely of cognitive elements. Later, Pekrun and Frese (1992) presented what is referred to be the first taxonomy of emotions related to work, guided by the recognition that work can trigger emotions (affective states). These affective states can influence cognitive and motivational processes, which in turn, affect the task and social behaviors associated with performance.

The theory of affective events (AET) developed by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) is presented as the main framework to date, and it corresponds to a model that operationalizes the role of affect as a link between the work environment, the affective predispositions of individuals and attitudes and behaviors

at work - Ashkanasy, Hartel and Daus (2002, pp. 308) stated that “AET has a unique contribution in explaining what is going on inside the “black box” ”. The AET model suggests that certain stable characteristics of the work environment influence the occurrence of affective events, positive or negative. The experience of these events, in turn, leads to certain affective states (reactions of an affective nature), a process that can also be influenced by individual dispositions. These affective states can directly cause affective-based behaviors, while contributing to the formation of attitudes, which are also influenced by the more stable characteristics of the work environment. Finally, attitudes at work influence judgment-based behaviors (Ashkanasy & Ashton-James, 2005; Weiss & Beal, 2005). The content of organizational events / episodes that are at the center of people's affective reactions seems to be of high relevance, for example, Weiss and Beal (2005, pp. 4 ) “... there may be differences of opinion about the way events are interpreted, the relative impact of positive and negative events, ..., but the events trigger changes in emotional states ”. Two leading authors, Basch and Fisher (2000, 2004) studied the events most likely to produce positive or negative affective reactions at work. These authors think there are two fundamental properties of these small everyday events, i.e., some are “hassles” phenomena (difficulties) and others are “uplifts” (stimulants). They suggest that the frequency of events and the respective intensity are different phenomena. Intensity may be a more subjective notion resulting from a very personal interpretation of events, therefore being more likely to be influenced by factors of personality. In turn, the frequency may be influenced essentially by factors of organizational context.

Furthermore, a related concept of special interest for our study is the concept of emotional energy. Originally proposed by Collins (1981) as referring to the level of emotional energy resulting from social interactions. This theme was later developed by other authors, e.g., Bruch and Ghoshal (2003), Dutton (2003) or Quinn, Spreitzer and Lam (2012), who refer to this energy as being associated with a type of positive affective activation, for example, Bruch and Ghoshal (2003, pp. 46) “ ... it is the intersection of intensity and quality that determines an organization's energy status. ”.

In the present study, we address these issues. The study of the affective dimension in the management of people emerged as the main problem for the investigation, to which is associated a sub-theme that deals with the influence of the affective work environment, in the nature and level of attitudes and behaviors associated with individual and organizational success. In the content analysis of affective work environment, this study seeks to define the type of events that can integrate this context; understand the different affective reactions they trigger, in terms of frequency and intensity; and to explore the possibility of its effects being expressed through two independent factors, called positive emotional energy (PEE) and negative emotional energy (NEE), or alternatively through its combined effect (GEE). On the other hand, we also study possible antecedents, such as, psychological climate and personality traits. Finally, we consider its role in terms of organizational consequents, direct and indirect, both in terms of the affective component of organizational attitudes - trust in managers and in colleagues, and organizational commitment, and in performance, both task and supportive behaviors - individual and organizational directed.

We begin this chapter by presenting a review of the fundamental literature related to the concept of affects within OB and HRM field, as well as looking for evidence of the linkages between affective reactions and employees' performance, and finally exploring psychological climate and personality traits as possible antecedents of affective work environments. Next, we present and explain the methodological options in executing the study. Followed by the presentation and interpretation of the study's main results. Finally, the chapter ends with a general discussion of theoretical and practical implications and possible future research directions.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **The affective work environment construct**

In the domain of organizational behavior the concept of affective reactions is used as a generic term that refers to both emotions and states of mind, concepts associated in some way with positive or

negative feelings (Ashkanasy & Ashton-James, 2005; Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017; Lord & Kanfer, 2002). It is partly due to this affective element that regulation with objects from the outside world takes place, what Rivera (1977) referred as two types of movements of the individual, to move to (approach) or move away from (avoidance). An equivalent way of associating affects with organizational behaviors was advocated by Judge and Kammeyer - Mueller (2008), who focused the attention on emotions as a source of action and energy trends for individuals to undertake certain actions.

There are two dominant conceptual models on the dimensional structure of affects (Seo, Barrett & Jin, 2008; Totterdell & Niven, 2014). In one case, the dimensions of valence / activation associated with the circumplex model of affect; on the other, the dimensions of positive / negative activation associated with a simple structure model. For the scope of our research, the approach of hedonic valence (pleasure or displeasure) and level of activation associated with the affective phenomenon are of interest. Thus, all affective stimuli can be defined as combinations of these two independent dimensions, positive affect and negative affect. Other authors, e.g., Watson and colleagues (1992), argue for the emergence of a general positive affect factor, i.e., individuals who report feeling enthusiastic are also more likely to describe themselves as satisfied, excited, confident and active. Conversely, the general dimension of negative affect reflects the co-occurrence between negative moods, that is, individuals who report feelings of irritation are also likely to describe themselves as nervous, sad and guilty. The empirical evidence in general suggest a weak correlation between positive and negative affect. The notions of independence and interdependent influence of these two dimensions was also supported by Larsen and Ketelaar (1991) or David and colleagues (1997). The interest of these approaches for the domain of organizations, especially for the model of the theory of affective events (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), is related to the support they give to the argument that people when speaking about their state of mind, intuitively describe it using two words - good and bad. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that people also categorize their moods in terms of their intensity, they can say that they feel ok, very well or more or less. In summary, the two models discussed here, although apparently contradictory,

can be considered as alternative solutions. The positive affect / negative affect and the hedonic tone / intensity models describe mood in terms of two orthogonal factors.

This leads to the following proposition:

Proposition 1. The affective work environment is a construct composed of two independent factors, positive affective environment and negative affective environment.

### **Antecedents of affective work environment - psychological climate and personality traits**

Accordingly to the AET model the affective work environment is influenced by a set of possible antecedents related to the persons and to the context.

The one that has been most frequently studied is personality traits. In terms of theoretical rationale, the basic idea is to think that certain personality traits seem to predispose people to feel in certain ways or to experience different types of affective reactions over time and through situations (Chiaburu, , In-Sue, & Marinova, 2018; Cropanzano et al., 2003; Weiss & Kurek, 2003). In support of the dispositional nature of affects, some empirical evidence can be mentioned, for example, correlations in the range of .26 to .64 between positive affect and extraversion and .16 to .65 between negative effect and neuroticism (David et al., 1997; Watson et al., 1999), and, in one study that also considered the trait of agreeableness a correlation of .20 with positive affect and -.22 with unpleasant affect (Côte & Moskowitz, 1998).

The other common antecedent of affective reactions refer to the organizational context. In this regard, the theory of affective events (AET) suggests that stable characteristics of the work environment influence the occurrence of certain affective events. In a similar line of thought, other scholars, for example, Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller (2008) argue that dispositions and situations jointly influence affective states / emotions, or the recognition that the characteristics of the work environment, including managers, colleagues, job requirements shape people's affective and motivational patterns (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Kanfer & Stubblebine, 2008). In empirical terms, information is still scarce, one example, a relationship of .42 is reported between pleasant work events and a positive state of

mind and .34 between unpleasant work events and a negative state of mind (David et al., 1997). Assuming psychological climate as an antecedent of affective responses stems from the importance that has been given in the literature to the context in which the interactions of individuals occur. To a large extent, the authors who defend this position argue that context is relevant because it influences the cognitions, affects and behaviors of individuals (Johns, 2006; O'Neill & Arendt, 2008). In this study, context is operationalized based on the concept of psychological climate, i.e., how individuals perceive their organizational environment in a spectrum of several discrete dimensions (D'Amato & Zijlstra, 2008; Schneider, Ehrhart & Macey, 2013; Schneider et al., 2017) – e.g., Ehrhart et al. (2014, pp. 70) “psychological climate that characterizes climate as an individual-level and personal perception.”. The focus of this concept is on the way situational stimuli are interpreted by individuals and less if they exist outside individuals, hence the best way to know these phenomenological experiences is through the use of self-descriptive surveys. The most recent empirical evidence support the importance of this concept in explaining organizational phenomena, and especially in its effect in relation to attitudes at work, with significant and moderate correlations (D'Amato & Zijlstra, 2008; O'Neill & Arendt, 2008).

Therefore, we hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1. The affective work environment is associated to psychological climate and personality traits - extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism.

H1.1. The affective work environment - positive emotional energy - is positively associated to psychological climate

H1.2. The affective work environment - negative emotional energy - is negatively associated to psychological climate.

H1.3. The affective work environment - positive emotional energy - is positively associated to the personality traits of extraversion and agreeableness.

H1.4. The affective work environment - negative emotional energy - is positively associated to the personality trait of neuroticism.



H1.5. The affective work environment – positive and negative emotional energy - is not significantly associated to the personality trait of conscientiousness.

H1.6. The variables of psychological climate, extraversion and agreeableness when combined remain significant and positively associated with the affective work environment - positive emotional energy.

H1.7. The variables of psychological climate and neuroticism when combined remain significant and negatively associated with the affective work environment - negative emotional energy.

### **Affective work environment and the affective component of organizational attitudes**

The relationship between the affective work environment and the affective component of organizational attitudes, namely, interpersonal trust (colleagues and managers) and organizational commitment, constitute one of the main features of our theoretical model. In fact, the AET model predicts that behaviors at work are largely determined by the affective responses to events in the organizational context which determine the subsequent attitudes and behaviors (Ashkanasy & Ashton-James, 2005; Mignonac & Herrbach, 2004; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). One reason supporting this perspective stems from the knowledge that attitudes regarding interpersonal relationships in the workplace are influenced by people's emotional experiences, characterized by the simultaneous existence of positive and negative elements. These emotions have the power to move individuals towards or away from other individuals, their tasks and their organizations. In other words, emotions (the affective tone) organize the way people think, feel and, ultimately, their actions (Kahn, 2007; Quinn, 2007). On the other hand, based on Lewin's (1936) field theory, it is feasible to think that individuals react more strongly to psychological factors in their proximal rather than distal environment, among which managers and colleagues stand out (Colquitt, Scott & LePine, 2007; Dirks & Skarlicki, 2009; Yang & Mossholder, 2010). The association between moods and organizational behavior led George (1996) to identify several potential implications of positive moods, for example, promoting supportive behaviors for colleagues or encouraging constructive suggestions in favor of the organization. Other authors have backed these propositions (Forgas, 2006; Lord & Kanfer, 2002), one

example, in a study testing the assumptions of AET (Mignonac and Herrbach, 2004), work events were shown to be correlated with affective states, and these latter with attitudes at work. Attitudes, not susceptible to direct observation, need to be inferred from the statements and behaviors of people - what Ajzen (1989) referred to as the modes of response: cognitive, affective, and, conative. For the scope of this study, it is also interesting to highlight that in the process of evaluating an object, attitudes involve the use of affective information (Bohner & Dickel, 2011; Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). This affective component of attitudes encompasses all the affects of a person in relation to the object being evaluated, be it managers, colleagues or the organization in which they work (Haddock & Huskinson, 2004; Sander & Scherer, 2009). Consistent with these principles takes central role the affect as information model (Clore, Gasper & Garvin, 2001), accordingly to it affect influences attitudes through the way positive or negative feelings signal evaluations that are also positive or negative; or the affect infusion model (Forgas and George, 2001) in which people's attitudes towards their work are partly a function of the affects that contaminates their cognitive processing.

Another debate in the field of attitudes addresses the question of how to organize attitudes, into specific or general factors. Authors such as Organ (1997) or Harrison, Newman and Roth (2006) support the idea that a global attitude is of critical importance for understanding people's behavior at work . The evidence are consistent with the notion that the existence of a positive global attitude leads people to contribute to desirable actions within the scope of their work roles (Thoresen et al., 2003) The empirical data strongly support the discriminative validity of positive and negative affectivity in organizational context, emphasizing that both dimensions contribute in a unique way to the prediction of each of the attitudes.

Hence, we suggest the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2. The affective work environment is associated to the affective component of employees' affective trust in colleagues, affective trust in managers and affective organizational commitment.

H2.1. The affective work environment - positive emotional energy - is positively associated to affective trust in colleagues, affective trust in managers, and affective organizational commitment.

H2.2. The affective work environment - negative emotional energy - is negatively associated to affective trust in colleagues, affective trust in managers, and affective organizational commitment.

H2.3. The global affective work environment - positive and negative emotional energy - has a significant incremental association with global affective organizational attitudes - affective trust in colleagues, affective trust in managers, and affective organizational commitment.

### **The construct of individual performance**

The construct of performance has been acknowledged in the academic and business literature as the main dependent variable and a central theme of interest to the management sciences and by natural extension to human resources management. The research on the concept of individual performance has underlined its multidimensional nature (Campbell, 2012; Campbell & Wiernik, 2015; Carpini & Parker, 2018). Thus, in addition to the task or in-role dimension of performance, the literature agrees on the importance of performance related to discretionary behaviors that go beyond the tasks and job responsibilities. Among those behaviours several scholars (Borman et al., 2001; Griffin, Neal & Parker, 2007; Koopmans et al., 2011; Podsakoff et al., 2009) have highlighted two critical types, namely, supportive behaviors directed at other individuals (OCB-i) and at the organization (OCB-o). Being of particular interest for the affective perspective adopted in this study, Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939), who referred to these two dimensions of performance as having two types of logic underlying. On the one hand, the facts logic, associated with the productivity that results from the formal organization, job specifications and technology; on the other hand, the logic of feelings, in which cooperation comes from acts that serve the purpose of maintaining internal balance and can be seen as a product of informal organization.

The analysis of performance factorial structure recognises the distinction of different behaviors at work and that they can contribute independently to the effectiveness of organizations. Despite this trend, the

empirical differentiation between these two concepts is less obvious, so the question of the dimensionality of organizational citizenship behaviors, as well as its distinction from task performance, remains open (Hoffman et al., 2007). For example, Podsakoff and colleagues (2009), using the Williams and Anderson (1991) model, stressed that the results are illustrative of the relative independence of the OCB-i (individual) and OCB-o (organizational) dimensions in relation to task performance, with correlations of, respectively .47 and .54. On the other hand, and despite the two perspectives of OCBs show a high correlation, .75, it is possible to defend the idea of being independent since the level of explained variance is around 57%. One complementary position argues the presence of a general performance factor. Likewise, Viswesvaran, Schmidt and Ones (2005), suggest as a possible reason in support of this general factor the fact that citizenship performance behaviors affect assessments of all dimensions of performance. Their results indicate that different dimensions of performance share a substantial variance, which suggests that the performance construct needs to be conceived in order to accommodate this common variance, that is, a general factor. However, specific factors representing 40% of the true variance not explained by the general factor can play an important role in performance theories. This suggests that combining measures of different components of performance into an overall measure of performance has justified grounds.

Therefore, we propose:

Proposition 2. The performance construct is composed of two independent factors, although strongly related, supportive behaviors - individual and organizational directed - and task performance.

**The influence of organizational affective attitudes towards supportive behaviors - individual and organizational directed – and task performance.**

The quality of relationships (or connections) in work context is associated with triggering different levels of emotional energy, that is, individuals experience with others are more or less positive. They may experience a set of positive affective reactions, for example, feeling good, satisfied, proud, enthusiastic, or, conversely, negative reactions such as disillusioned, angry or sad (Dutton & Ragins,

2007; Ohy & Schmitt, 2015; Quinn, 2007). The evidence available in the literature, including some meta-analyzes, point to a relevant effect of trust in performance behaviors, regardless of their nature, whether they are task or behavioral oriented, although somewhat higher magnitude is noted in the latter (Moorman, Brower, & Grover, 2018). Furthermore, trust in managers indicates it has an effect of similar magnitude with the two targets of OCBs, the organization and other individuals. And, in the few studies that considered the relationship of trust with co-workers, conclusions go in the same direction (Dirks et al., 2009; Eisenberger et al., 2010; Yang & Mossholder, 2010). Studies comparing each of the type, OCB-i and OCB-o, support the moderating role of the OCB target in the magnitude of its effects, with .38 versus .31, respectively, OCB-i and OCB-o (Ilies, Nahrgang and Morgeson, 2007).

With regard to the attitude of affective organizational commitment, several studies, in particular meta-analyzes, have examined the nature and strength of the relationships that exist with various consequents at work. The empirical evidence of meta-analysis studies suggest that the correlations between organizational commitment and performance are of moderate to high value (Hoffman et al., 2007; Meyer et al., 2002; Shore et al., 2006). On the other hand, there are reasons to defend it happens for two different dimensions, task or role performance and extra-role or organizational citizenship behaviors, with values in the range of .12 to .22, for the first type, and slightly higher values, between .25 to .29, for the second type.

These two attitudes, interpersonal trust and organizational commitment, can fit into a broader spectrum of attitudinal variables. For the scope of our research, it is particularly interesting the evidence that supports the notion of aggregation, possibly with reciprocal effects, among some of the main attitudinal variables in the domain of organizational behavior. Two interesting works were carried out by Colquitt, Scott and LePine (2007) and Eisenberger and colleagues (2010), who in different ways provide solid empirical data on the possibility of integrating trust and commitment in the same nomological network. These authors found support to defend the relevance of these two variables on different types of

performance - task and citizenship, with approximate correlation values, .22 to .28 with task performance and .29 to .35 for citizenship performance.

The individual organizational experiences associated with trust have also a direct impact on affective organizational commitment (Bernerth & Walker, 2009; Eisenberger et al., 2010; Yang & Mossholder, 2010). One of the most salient arguments is that when the perception of employees regarding the existence of a favorable exchange relationship with their direct manager is generalized to the scope of the organization, this effect can lead to a reinforcement of the affective organizational commitment - see Song, Tsui and Law (2009, pp. 64) “In accordance with the norm of reciprocity employees respond to the perception of a social exchange relationship with strengthened socio-emotional bonds with the organization manifested in elevated affective commitment, improved task performance, and heightened OCB”.

In line with previous studies, we predict:

Hypothesis 3. Affective organizational attitudes - affective trust in colleagues, affective trust in managers, and affective organizational commitment - are associated in distinctive ways to the two types of employees’ supportive behaviors - individual and organizational directed, and to task performance.

H3.1. Each organizational affective attitudes is positively associated to individual and organizational supportive behaviors and task performance.

H3.2. The composite measure of affective organizational attitudes - trust in colleagues, trust in managers and organizational commitment - is positively associated and of greater magnitude to the composite measure of the two supportive behaviors - individual and organizational directed.

H3.3. The composite measure of affective organizational attitudes - trust in colleagues, trust in managers and organizational commitment - is positively associated and of greater magnitude to task performance.

H3.4. The effect of the composite measure of affective organizational attitudes to the composite supportive behaviors - organizational and individual directed – and task performance remains

significant when combined with the effects of affective work environment - positive and negative emotional energy.

### **Affective work environment influence on supportive behaviors - individual and organizational directed, and task performance**

Back to the theory of affective events (AET) it is estimated that affective reactions in the workplace can influence different types of work behaviors, in particular supportive and task oriented behaviors. The arguments in the literature are divided more or less equally between those who emphasize the affective influence on performance more related to tasks and those who consider essentially the connection with supportive behaviors. One of the most frequently proposals on the hypothetical relationship between moods and organizational behaviors was presented by George (1996) claiming that positive moods have a diverse range of influences, among which promotion of supportive behaviors for colleagues; encourage the protection of the organization; make constructive suggestions in favor of your organization; or be more motivated to stay at work. These ideas have been corroborated by several authors (Forgas, 2006; Mostafa, 2017; Parke & Seo, 2017), who speak of effects to the level of effectiveness in social relationships, involvement in the organization, pro-social behaviors, creativity and better allocation of cognitive resources. It follows from the above that the consequences attributed to moods touch on two aspects of individual performance, task and organizational citizenship behaviors (Weiss & Kurek, 2003, Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Sharifiatashgah, 2020). These conceptual assumptions have been empirical supported. One of the most recurring situations has to do with the fact that individuals exhibit more pro-social and helping behaviors when they are in a positive mood (Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017; George, 1991). Other references in this same line of analysis include, Fisher (2002), the positive affective reactions .48 with supportive behaviors, and in turn, the negative reactions, respectively, -.01. Regarding task performance, although there is less evidence, the influence of emotional processes on the allocation of cognitive resources and

motivational factors associated with the direction and intensity of our actions stands out (Beal and colleagues, 2005; Carmeli, & Josman, 2006; Tsai, Chen & Liu, 2007).

Hence, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 4. The two types of affective work environment are directly and indirectly associated to performance evaluation criteria – supportive behaviors, individual and organizational directed, and task performance.

H4.1. The affective work environment - positive emotional energy - is positively associated to individual and organizational supportive behaviors and to task performance.

H4.2. The affective work environment - negative emotional energy - is negatively associated to individual and organizational supportive behaviors and to task performance.

H4.3. The global affective work environment - composite of positive and negative emotional energy - is positively and to a greater magnitude associated to individual and organizational supportive behaviors and task performance.

### **The multidimensional nature of employees' overall performance judgment**

The literature offers reasons to think that managers structure their performance assessments considering both organizational citizenship behaviors (for the scope of this study referred to as supportive behaviors) and task behaviors. One of the earlier examples on this topic, Hausman and Strupp (1955), spoke of effects related to non-technical factors in the assessment of global proficiency, having considered three dimensions: relations with colleagues, diligence and reactions to direct leadership. These elements correlate significantly with the overall performance judgement and have an incremental effect beyond technical competence in predicting global proficiency. Over more than fifty years of research, this hypothesis has remained at the center of a lively debate, studies carried out in organizational contexts and based on judgments by supervisors support the existence of significant associations between those variables, and that these two types of performance criteria contribute independently to overall performance judgments (Campbell, & Wiernik, 2015; Carpini, Parker, & Griffin, 2017; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). For example, Nielsen, Halfhill and Nielsen (2005) or



Edwards and colleagues (2008), refer high correlations with overall performance criteria, and combined these factors explain 59% of the total performance variance. Although the incremental value of each of the performance variables is very favorable to task performance, 20% versus 3% for contextual performance.

In summary, the results indicate that the behaviors classified as individual and organizational supportive behaviors, as well as task performance, have solid and diversified evidence that they have a relevant impact on overall performance assessment. We expect to find significant effects of these performance criteria influencing employees’ overall performance judgments.

Hypothesis 5. The employees’ overall performance judgment is positively associated to the two components - supportive behaviors and task performance.

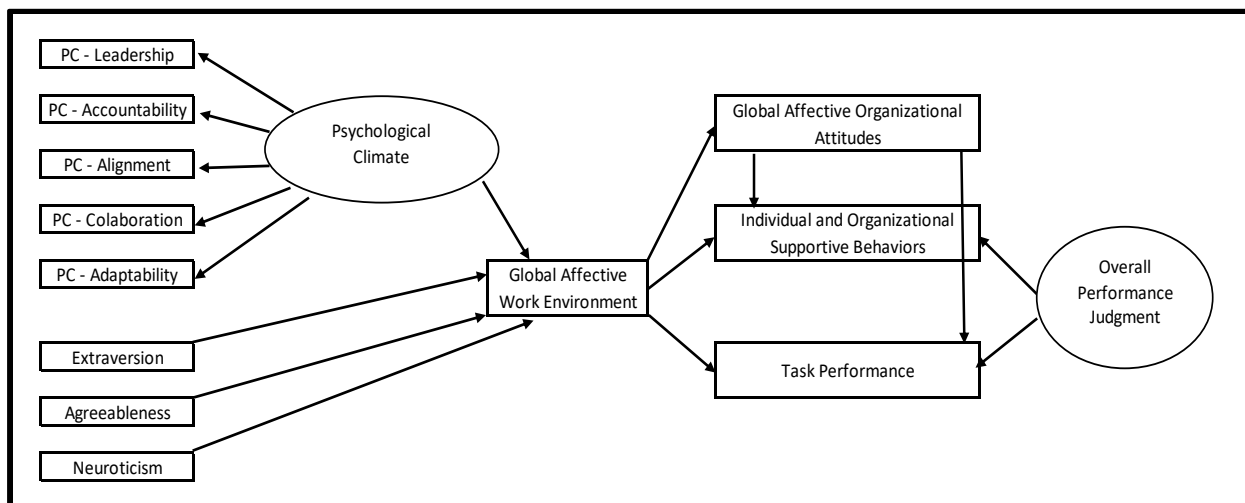
H5.1. The supportive behaviors – individual and organizational directed – are positively associated to the overall performance judgment.

H5.2. Task performance is positively associated to the overall performance judgment.

H5.3. Task performance has an effect of higher magnitude than supportive behaviors on overall performance judgement.

Below we present the hypothesized research model that was built to synthesize the constructs, their linkages and the resulting hypotheses; see Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Hypothesized research model



## **METHOD**

### **SAMPLE AND PROCEDURES**

This is an empirical study aimed at extending a pre-existing theoretical model, i.e., the affective events theory (AET) model, and deepening its application in the field of human resources management. The investigation adopts a quantitative design, with a structure that fits into what is classified as “correlational design”. In the theoretical research model defined for this study, are identified as endogeneous variables, the overall performance judgment (OPJ), the task performance behaviors (TP) and the supportive behaviors - individual (OCB-i) and organizational (OCB-o) and, as exogeneous variables, psychological climate, personality traits, affective work environment (emotional energy), affective work attitudes - affective trust in colleagues and managers, and organizational affective commitment. In addition, a set of control variables were also considered, including demographic variables, such as gender, age and organizational tenure, as well as work satisfaction.

To collect the data we sent an e-mail invitation to the heads of HR from the list of 100 largest firms in Portugal based in Lisbon. Of these, nine organizations from different economic sectors agreed to participate. In a second phase, the participating organizations were invited through their HR manager to identify a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 100 employees and their supervisors to respond to the questionnaire. The initial respondents were 411 employees, varying by organization between 24 and 81. In addition, 91 individuals with the role of supervisors were also involved. Our final sample was made up of 393 employees and 91 supervisors – 28 were excluded either because they did not answer adequately to the questionnaire or the supervisor did not fulfill the performance assessment, with an average of 41.5 years old, 12.8 years of organizational tenure, 40% female and 60% male. The questionnaire was based on a combination of scales available in the academic literature with the necessary adjustments taking into consideration the purpose of the study, and a scale developed to measure the affective work environment.

Otherwise said we used a seven-point likert-type scale with the following wording from 1-I totally disagree to 7- I totally agree.

## **MEASURES**

### **Psychological climate**

The scale used to assess the psychological climate is based on the Organizational Vital Signs™ developed by Joshua Fredman and colleagues (2005). This scale encompasses five dimensions that are considered relevant to the focus of the present investigation, namely, leadership, alignment, accountability, collaboration and adaptability. It has 49 items, for example, People here take responsibility for work; Everyone here has good intentions; or We make decisions as a team. The response scale is a five-points likert-type with the options from 1-Disagree, to 5-Strongly Agree.

### **Personality Traits**

The framework for this variable is the model of the big five personality traits, which, as referred in the literature review, is considered an excellent model to assess the personality traits (Barrick & Mount, 2005; Kankaraš, 2017; Salgado et al., 2015). Furthermore, the questionnaire developed by Costa and McCrae (1992) was selected because it is one of the most used forms of measurement. We opted for the short version of the questionnaire, given that it is much more feasible for studies in an organizational context, and because overall its psychometric indicators are very acceptable. The authors refer that the short version was developed with the aim of measuring the core aspects of each of the personality domains. It uses 12 items to measure each personality trait, for a total of 60 items. For the scope of our study were included the personality traits of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness.

The response scale is a five-points likert-type with the options from 1-Disagree, to 5- Strongly Agree.

### **Affective Work Environment**

The starting point for developing the questionnaire that will be used in this research to measure the emotional energy, positive and negative, resulting from the affective reactions to events of daily

organizational life, is the work of Basch and Fisher (2004). Their work resulted in the proposal of a questionnaire including 26 stimulating events (“uplifts”) and 56 difficult events (“hassles”). Although highly acclaimed it is deemed useful to explore the possibility of creating another version more adapted to the scope of our study (Connelly & Torrence, 2018; Chacko & Conway, 2019). First, to validate the events originally suggested for the context of Portuguese companies. Second, to design a questionnaire with a better balance between the two types of work events, if feasible with the same number of positive and negative events. Likewise, in this study we asked a panel of 36 human resource specialists to refer three to five events they regularly observe occurring in their organizations that trigger positive or negative affective reactions. Afterwards we conducted a comparative analysis with the events included in Basch and Fisher list and produced a final version of the affective environment questionnaire. Finally, we used this new version with a pre-test sample.

The group of human resource specialists recorded 113 positive affective events and 124 negative events. The Affective Work Environment questionnaire, as we name it, it is made up of 40 events of a positive affective nature and an equal number of events of a negative nature. These events include 33 of the events suggested in the study by Basch and Fisher, plus 18 whose formulation has been slightly changed and 29 new following the suggestions of the panel of experts.

The response scale request that for each work event it is selected the frequency it occurred in the last 6 months - never, very rarely, a few times, sometimes, quite often and many times; and, unless the previous answer was never, to select the option that best represents the way a person felt after the situation occurred - very well, quite well, well, indifferent, bad, quite bad or very bad.

Finally, it should be said that for each work event it is calculated a score equal to the product of the two parameters – frequency \* reaction. Moreover, it is calculated a score for the total of positive work events and another to the negative work events, as well as a global score corresponding to the difference between the previous scores.

Finally, this new version of the Affective Work Environment questionnaire was applied to a convenience sample consisting of 31 individuals. The objective of this pre-test analysis was essentially to detect whether the response trends go in the expected direction and whether the emotional energies – i.e., the scores of the affective reactions, appear to have a sufficiently heterogeneous distribution that provides some guarantee to detect possible effects on the remaining variables that are intended to be studied.

The questionnaire uses as temporal reference of the events, six months, higher than what scholars usually consider that individuals were able to accurately report, up to three months. In our study it was decided to extend this time reference to six months. This decision was taken to increase the probability that all events included in the questionnaire will occur at least once, since situations such as awards, promotions, project achievements, to name a few, may require a longer period of time to be captured in a data collection that will be carried out in a single point in time. A few examples of positive work events: I was creative and had good ideas, I helped a colleague or my supervisor, or I kept a promise at work; and for negative work events: Someone questioned my reputation, A suggestion I made was ignored, or I had too much work to do.

### **Affective work attitudes**

#### **Affective Organizational Commitment**

It was used the scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1997). For this study, we chose the portuguese version validated in Botelho Phd thesis (2012). There are two reasons in support of this decision: the version used at that time (the 8 original items) was applied to a sample of professionals with characteristics equivalent to the sample of this study; and the reliability indicators of the scale were adequate, for example, Cronbach's alpha of .78, and with the exception of one item, the item-total correlation values were higher than .30. An example of the items that make up this scale are as follows: I would very much like to develop the rest of my career at this company.

### **Affective Interpersonal Trust – Manager and Colleagues**

It was used McAllister's (1995) model as the main source for the scale of affective trust, whose five original items include for example there is a sharing relationship between us that allows us to be comfortable enough to talk about our ideas, feelings and expectations. To these items it was decided to add other three items for three reasons: first, to keep the scale dimension identical to the scale of affective organizational commitment, with eight items; second, to include some items with negative wording; third, to reinforce the nature of trust as a special form of relationship with another person, based on empathy, respect and emotional support. As a result, the following items were added: When I have a problem that concerns me, whether professional or personal, I do not have the habit of venting with my supervisor (colleagues) (r); I believe I know my supervisor (or colleagues) as person(s); I think I would be able to easily feel as connected to another supervisor (other colleagues) as I am connected to him/her (them) (r).

### **Performance criteria**

The aim is to measure employees' performance based on a multidimensional framework, covering both task or in-role performance, and discretionary behaviors that go beyond the job responsibilities, namely supportive behaviors directed at other individuals or the organization (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015; Carpini & Parker, 2018)

As result of an extensive literature review (Borman et al., 2001; Botelho, 2012; Carpini & Parker, 2018; Williams & Anderson, 1991) we have designed a questionnaire with 27 performance indicators, grouped into three categories, namely, task behaviors, individual supportive behaviors and organizational supportive behaviors. More specifically, the task category includes for example: the quality of work, or systematically meets deadlines for completing tasks. Individual supportive behaviors include, e.g.: offers help to colleagues when they are having some difficulty in carrying out a task; supports and / or encourages a colleague when he/she has a personal problem. Finally,

organizational supportive behaviors examples are, defends the organization when a customer criticizes it or actively and positively promote the organization's products and services.

Moreover, to validate the relevance of this set of performance indicators a pre-test analysis was carried out with the same group of 36 human resource professionals. They were asked to indicate the influence of each of these performance indicators on the way their organization's managers evaluate employees' performance. For this purpose, a five-point scale was used: very important (5), important (4), moderately important (3), not very important (2), not at all important (1). In the case of task performance, the opinion was practically unanimous about the importance of the 9 indicators. On the other hand, for supportive behaviors, whether they are individual or organizational directed, opinions are more heterogeneous, although the category of very important / important gathered a relative majority. Moreover, the options that devalue the relevance of these indicators for people's performance are the least expressive, less than 15% responses. It should also be noted that organizational supportive behaviors are perceived as slightly more relevant than those that focus on other individuals.

In summary, it seems adequate to consider the performance evaluation criteria presented to the panel of human resources specialists valid to measure employees' performance. In addition, we used also a single item scale to measure the overall performance.

### **Control Variables**

Consistent with previous studies on performance it will be checked the potential influence of personal variables related to our sample, namely, organizational tenure, age and gender. It will be also controlled work satisfaction measured by a single item.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

We performed the data analysis based on Structure Equation Model (SEM) and used for conducting the analysis the SPSS and AMOS version 22. The analysis was carried out in two steps. First, we tested

the measurement model for each variable. Second, we tested the goodness-of-fit of the proposed theoretical model, compared it with other alternative models and test the hypotheses.

## **4. RESULTS**

### **MEASUREMENT MODEL**

The initial step consisted in performing CFA for the different measures part of the full model, using some of the most common fit indices CFI, GFI, NFI, RMSEA and  $\chi^2/df$  to test the quality of adjustment (Hair et al., 2010). Overall and by large the loadings of all individual items correspond to their original factors and being in line with the theoretical models.

We present below some key aspects for each main variable:

\* Psychological climate - reliability score .88, adequate adjustment of the data to a latent factorial structure, CFI .99 and RMSEA .06. The CFA supports one second order common factor with the five first order factors loadings between .74 to .91.

\* Personality traits - reliability scores in the range .69 to .86, and the adjustment of the data to four first order factors is adequate, CFI between .90 to .97 and RMSEA .076 to .049.

\* Affective work environment, considering the specificities of this instrument, there is no reason to proceed with the traditional psychometric validation tests that are used with the other measurement instruments. Alternatively, see details on the development of this questionnaire on pages 19/20.

\* Affective organizational attitudes - Trust in colleagues reliability .84 (one item dropped), CFI .98 and RMSEA .063; Trust in managers reliability .88 (one item dropped), CFI .96 and RMSEA .081; Organizational commitment reliability .87 (one item dropped), CFI .97 and RMSEA .077.

The CFA analysis supports the extraction of three first order factors, fully matching the affective attitudes of trust in manager, trust in colleagues and organizational commitment. Although there is no



support for creating a latent factor of the reflective type, it seems appropriate to treat this factor as a general attitude based on a construct of aggregate nature (formative) (Bagozzi and Edwards, 1998; MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Jarvis, 2005), in which the results obtained in their dimensions are added, so that the dimensions are assigned identical weights. This composite variable will be called global affective organizational attitudes.

\* Performance criteria - Task performance, reliability .93, CFI .97 and RMSEA .087; Individual supportive behaviors, reliability .94, CFI .97 and RMSEA .084; Organizational supportive behaviors, reliability .94, CFI .96 and RMSEA .093. The CFA identifies one first order factor including the nine items identified as task performance, while the other first order factor extracted encompasses the remaining eighteen items, related to supportive behaviors.

Finally, we checked for possible common method variance applying the procedure of Harman's single-factor (Podsakoff et al, 2003). The 46% variance explained by a single factor shows that the common method bias is not a major concern in this study (less than 50% cut-off point). The result is obtained by running unrotated, a single-factor constraint of factor analysis in SPSS statistic.

In addition, intercorrelations between the latent variables are shown in table 1. There is also no evidence of possible constraints due to non-normality of multivariate data, based on kurtosis and skewness, which is suggested as being close to 0 and no case of skewness >2 and kurtosis > 7 (Hair, Jr. et al., 2010).

## **STRUCTURAL MODELS**

A structural equation modelling (SEM) methodology was used to test the theoretical research model (see Fig.1) and the associated hypotheses. We begin analyzing the theoretical research model (where all paths relating to the constructs were estimated). This model did not show acceptable adjustment indices, RMSEA value above 1 and  $\chi^2/df$  more than 5.

Table 1 – Correlation Matrix

		Psychological Climate	Affective Work Environment	Affective Organizational Attitudes	Individual and Organizational Supportive Behaviors	Task Performance	Overall Performance Judgment
Psychological Climate	Pearson Correlation	1	,543**	,642**	,401**	,226**	,244**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
Affective Work Environment	Pearson Correlation	,543**	1	,565**	,369**	,284**	,271**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000	,000	,000
Affective Organizational Attitudes	Pearson Correlation	,642**	,565**	1	,503**	,312**	,356**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,000	,000	,000
Individual and Organizational Supportive Behaviors	Pearson Correlation	,401**	,369**	,503**	1	,655**	,664**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000		,000	,000
Task Performance	Pearson Correlation	,226**	,284**	,312**	,655**	1	,823**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000		,000
Overall Performance Judgment	Pearson Correlation	,244**	,271**	,356**	,664**	,823**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

To get a better adjustment for the research model the modification indices suggested that we consider as an alternative a model where psychological climate has a direct effect on affective organizational attitudes, and the personality trait of agreeableness has also a direct effect on affective organizational attitudes.

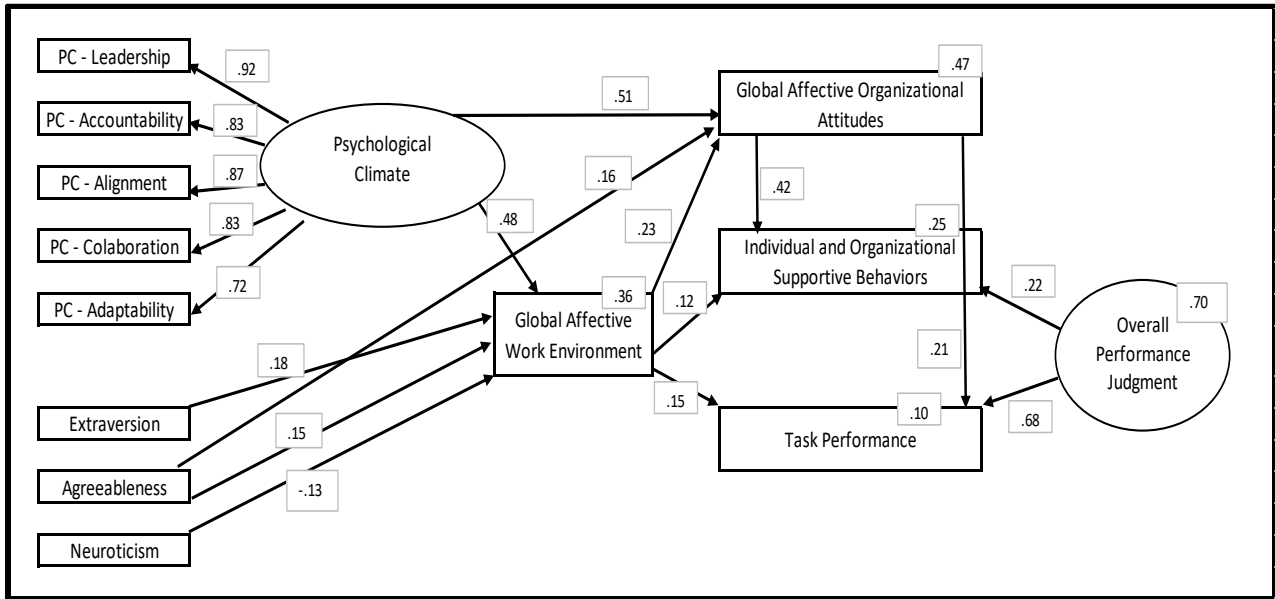
This new model has excellent fit indices, namely CFI (.959), GFI (.939) and NFI (.943), and RMSEA (.076). Thus, we will proceed all further analyses based on the updated theoretical research model, see Figure 2, which illustrates the path model and the measurement results with the standardized path coefficients and the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values.

Moreover, other alternative models used to compare against this theoretical model got worse fit indices, namely, a model with only the direct effects of psychological climate, personality traits, affective organizational attitudes and affective work environment on supportive behaviors and task performance.

## HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The results indicate that the updated theoretical model, see Fig.2, explains 70% of the variance of employees' overall performance judgement. Since all variables have a positive direct and/or indirect effect the findings provide overall support for this integrative framework.

Figure 2 – Updated research model



Regarding our first proposition, the data do not reject that the two dimensions of the affective environment (positive emotional energy and negative emotional energy) are independent factors and are weakly correlated with each other. Our data are consistent with the theoretical proposals that the dimensional structure of affects is characterized by two dimensions, positive affect and negative affect. The correlation obtained between the two dimensions of the affective environment, .19, has an absolute value which, according to the guidelines, should be classified as weak. In a complementary analysis, the Wilcoxon non-parametric test was performed, in which the differences in the results obtained in the two samples of emotional energy (PEE / NEE) are tested. The results allow us to affirm that with a sig. = 0.000 < 0.05 H<sub>0</sub> is rejected, so that it can be verified that there are significant differences between this pair of variables (positive emotional energy and negative emotional energy).

The second proposition show that the three factors of performance, task, individual supportive behaviors and organizational supportive behaviors, have very high correlations with each other, being a somewhat stronger in the relationship between the two types of supportive behaviors (OCB -i / OCB-o, .749; OCB-i / TP, .600; OCB-o / TP, .624). The analysis by principal components method shows that it was possible to obtain three factors with an eigen value greater than 1, which together have an accumulated variance close to 68%. This structure clearly shows that the items in theory predicted to be related to the task factor constitute a very distinct, robust and homogeneous component, see weights of the nine items in the range of .67 to .80. In contrast, the other two components related to individual and organizational supportive behaviors show a mixed trend. Thus, the extraction of a model with only two components, task performance and supportive behaviors, confirmed the factor designated as task, while the other factor expected to include the remaining 18 items also gives very strong indications in this regard. This adjustment is not perfect just because one item shows an equally high factor loading with the task factor. In any case, it does not seem to be a sufficient reason for its elimination and, as such, this structure of the performance criteria organized in these two dimensions will be used in the remaining analyzes.

The hypothesis 1, H1.1 to H1.7, were not rejected. The model of structural equations that analyzes the relationship between psychological climate and the affective work environment, verifies an effect of equivalent magnitude in relation to the two emotional energies, .39 and -.34, which explain 15% and 12% of the variance of those constructs. The adjustment indices of this model are very adequate, CFI> .95 and RMSEA in the range .07 to .05. In turn, the model that analyzes personality traits reveals an effect of equivalent magnitude between the traits of extraversion and agreeableness, respectively, .23 and .27, and positive emotional energy (PEE). In contrast, negative emotional energy (NEE) has a relevant effect with the trait of neuroticism, .35. The variance explained by these effects is 18%, PEE, and 13%, NEE. The adjustment indices are very adequate, CFI> .95 and RMSEA in the range .08 to .035.

With regard to the trait of conscientiousness, the weight is negligible and as such it supports the decision to exclude this variable from the model.

The data show that when combined the effects of organizational context (psychological climate) and personality traits remain significant in relation to the two types of emotional energy. This combined effect has a small incremental value in the variance explained in the two emotional energies. Thus, the 22% of explained variance for of PEE represents a gain of 4% in relation to the independent effects; and the 15% of the NEE is a gain of 2% in relation to the same variables.

In terms of adjustment indices, the values are globally adequate, for example, CFI close to .95 and RMSEA in a range that encompasses the value .08.

The hypothesis 2, H2.1 to H2.3, were partially not rejected.

Hypothesis H2.1. is supported with positive emotional energy displaying correlations of moderate-high magnitude, in the range of .30 to .43, and significant at  $p < .01$ , with the three organizational attitudes. On the other hand, H2.2 is partial support, negative emotional energy shows a heterogeneous pattern of relationships with the three attitudes, the relationship is not significant with trust in colleagues, weak but significant with organizational commitment, -.15, and trust in manager, -.21. Finally, the results of the structural models support H2.3. so that the affective work environment maintain a significant positive effect on global affective organizational attitudes when combined with psychological climate and personality traits – the agreeableness trait. The unique effect of affective work environment is .23.

The hypothesis 3, H3.1 to H3.4, were not rejected.

It seems adequate to consider that the correlations confirm H3.1. The values displayed for the three organizational attitudes towards the performance criteria, are significant at  $p < .01$ , with a magnitude moderate – high, in the range of .30 to .44, to supportive behaviors, and somewhat lower, .16 to .36, to task performance. The different strengths of these relationships seem to indicate the presence of an

effect related with the attitude object and the type of performance criteria. More specifically, the organizational commitment with a difference of plus .16 to its more proximal target, the organization; trust in colleagues, more .12 in relation to support to other individuals and, interestingly, trust in managers reflecting a relationship of identical value for both evaluation criteria. Overall, the magnitude of association towards supportive behaviors is always higher than to task behaviors.

H3.2 is also not rejected once the value of the correlations of the composite measure of affective attitudes is superior to all performance criteria variables, and presenting the highest value, .50, when related with the composite measure of supportive behaviors. However, H3.3 is not confirmed since affective trust in manager has the highest value. Finally, the results of the structural model support H3.4., so that global affective organizational attitudes when combined with affective work environment maintain a significant positive effect, .42 to supportive behaviors and .21 to task performance.

The hypothesis 4, H4.1 to H4.3, were partially not rejected.

The data does not reject H4.1 so that the relationships of positive emotional energy are significant at  $p < .01$ , and of a moderate level, with supportive behaviors, between .299 to .324, and task performance, .253. On the other hand, H4.2 is rejected since the effects of negative emotional energy despite being negative are not significant at  $p < .01$ . The hypothesis of the combined effect of the two emotional energies being of a greater magnitude is validated. i.e., there is an increase of magnitude in all options, albeit with a reduced value, between .03 to .05. Furthermore, the results of the structural models reinforce H4.3, so that the global affective work environment maintain a significant positive effect when combined with global affective organizational attitudes, with .12 to supportive behaviors and .15 to task performance.

The hypothesis 5, H5.1 to H5.3, were not rejected. Based on the structural equation model the unique effect shown by each of these variables, supportive behaviors (.21) and task performance (.68) confirm

H5.1 and H5.2. Moreover, the difference of magnitude is substantive and expressing the superior relevance of the criteria associated with the aspects most closely linked to the task domain and the technical-functional elements of organizations. So, H5.3 is confirmed.

#### Control variables

Overall, the data support that the three demographic variables are not expected to have a relevant influence. Moreover, being our main concern possible influences on the nuclear variables, namely: affective work environment, affective organizational attitudes and performance criteria, the data suggest to analyze only the effect of tenure in relation to attitudes and performance. The results are non significant. Thus, we won't consider them in the updated theoretical model.

The same happens with work satisfaction, which does not substantially modify the effects of affective work environment. Besides the model adjustment has worse indices.

In summary, the results of our updated research model provide robust support to the AET model, by large the propositions and hypotheses were not rejected. It is one of the few studies that we are aware of that perform a full test of AET model.

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## **DISCUSSION**

The main goal of our study was to demonstrate that the affective dimension in people management is an important variable for understanding and influence individual performance. Moreover, it is an analysis carried out in order to place the subject of affects at the forefront of HRM and HR practices, particularly in the field of performance management (Chacko & Conway, 2019; Connelly & Torresen, 2018)). Our findings demonstrated that regardless of the dimension of performance analyzed, task or supportive behaviors – individual / organization, factors of an affective nature have a direct and indirect, significant and substantive influence in the prediction of individual performance. Furthermore, this approach closely follows a line of thought defended by several authors when they

speak of the emergence of a new paradigm in the field of management and organizational behavior marked by the component of affects (Ashkanasy & Ashton-James, 2005; Barsade, Brief & Spataro, 2003; Fineman, 2006). In this regard we have adopted the theory of affective events (AET) proposed by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), as one of the main theoretical pillars of this research, a model suggesting the way affects (moods and emotions) function as a linkage mechanism between the characteristics of the work environment and the behaviors of individuals. Likewise, this study built and tested a model where the affective work environment (set of situations that occur in the daily life of employees) takes a central role. This model underlines the importance of everyday events in the formation of employees' affective environment, and the way they trigger affective reactions which are translated and combined in the form of an emotional energy. To answer the so what question, we analysed the association of the affective work environment with two types of organizational consequents, namely, the affective dimension of attitudes at work - trust in the managers / colleagues, and organizational commitment, and performance criteria, task and supportive behaviors - individual and organization. The total effects, direct and indirect, offer general support for the relevance of employees' emotional energy for those variables. For example, a unique effect .23 between affective work environment expressed in the form of a global emotional energy (score of the difference between positive and negative affective reactions) and the composite measure of the three affective organizational attitudes; and .12 / .15, with the evaluation of supportive behaviors (individual and organizational) and task performance – not corrected by the imprecision of the criterion (Murphy, 2008; Salgado & Moscoso, 2019).

Another important finding is related with the long-standing but still open discussion on the structure of the performance construct. The study offers an empirical validation of a multidimensional structure, which has been gaining prominence in academic literature, as the one that best reflects the nature of employees' contributions to the success of organizations (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015; Griffin, Neal & Parker, 2007). In this study, the results show that the three factors encompassed in the performance



construct are highly correlated with each other, values from .60 to .75, although they don't form a latent general factor. The model that was most suitable for the data is based on a general performance factor and two first order factors. In relation to the latter, one of the factors includes indicators of task performance, and the second factor brings together supportive behaviors of individual and organizational focus. Nevertheless, those factors did not weight the same on overall performance judgment, which has profound implications for the definition of the performance construct and how it is used in HR decisions (Carpini & Parker, 2018; Carpini, Parker, & Griffin, 2017). We found an implicit model with managers valuing task behaviors higher than supportive behaviors. This dominant orientation is reflected in the structural model, translated into the presence of a unique effect of .61 for task performance in comparison with the .29 associated with supportive behaviors. The combination of both effects explained 70% of the variance of overall performance judgment.

Our study expands previous discussion on dispositional and situational influences on individual affective reactions, i.e., the effects of the organizational context - psychological climate, and individual dispositions - personality traits. According to the literature, personality traits have been referred as one of the most impactful characteristics in the affective states of individuals. Our results show that there are two effects between personality traits and the affective work environment. Thus, the traits of extraversion and agreeableness, with unique effects of .23 and .27, respectively, show the strongest influence in the positive emotional energy (positive affective environment). These two traits explain 18% of the total variance. In turn, the negative emotional energy (negative affective environment), exhibits an important effect with the trait of neuroticism, .35. This personality trait explains 13% of the total variance. It is also important to note that the trait of conscientiousness did not have a significant effect. From a theoretical and empirical point of view, the data collected seem to support the general argument that individuals characterized by high results in extraversion experience more pleasant affects and the opposite in those with high neuroticism in face of unpleasant

affects (Cropanzano et al., 2003; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2008; Watson et al., 1999). In addition, the trait of agreeableness, less studied, displays a strong association to positive affect.

On the other hand, the effect of the organizational context, hereby analysed by the construct of psychological climate - translated in the way the situational stimuli are interpreted by the individuals, was considered in line with the argument that contexts are relevant because they influence individuals' cognitions, affects and behaviors (Ehrhart, Schneider & Macey, 2014; Johns, 2006; O'Neill & Arendt, 2008). Our results show that there is an influence on the two dimensions of the affective work environment. More specifically, there is an effect of equivalent magnitude in relation to positive and negative emotional energy, .39 and -.34, explaining 15% and 12% of the variance of these constructs. In summary, considering that the effects of personality traits and psychological climate are of similar magnitude, the data supports the argument in support of the usefulness of these two variables in order to build a positive work environment. In parallel, taking into consideration that the total variance explained by these two variables is 36%, we can be assured that work affective environment is a construct with a dynamic of itself that goes beyond the joint influence of dispositional and situational elements.

### **Practical implications**

This study has several contributions with relevance for human resource management and HR practices, especially for those designing people management systems. First, the implication for HR practices resulting from the multidimensional perspective of the performance construct advocated in this work, in that performance management systems should be rethink to ensure that, in parallel with the intention of encouraging high levels of task behaviors, they do not have the effect of discouraging citizenship-type behaviors. As mentioned by Werner (2000), the classic role-based performance paradigm has been dominant in the field of HRM, and it is justified to give rise to an alternative approach more focused on the person and his total contribution. This change also entails the challenge of adapting the reward and career management systems, that is, being consistent in terms of the characteristics that are

intended to be rewarded. In the field of recruitment and selection, the criteria most commonly used in organizations have emphasized characteristics related to knowledge, skills and experience that directly contribute to task performance. However, because the organization is a social space, the presence of another set of behaviors, aimed at maintaining the interpersonal environment, is essential for its effectiveness. The fact that this type of performance appears to be more closely associated with personality and attitudes suggest that these criteria can be integrated into the selection procedures.

Second, the model used in the study offers a framework to be used in creating conditions to promote healthier organizations. One way of looking at this issue relates with the recent notion of positive work environments (Cameron et al., 2011; Quinn, Spreitzer & Lam, 2012). The concept refers to the contextual factors and work conditions associated with subjective and objective well-being, and positive organizational behaviors. Such an environment exists when the social and physical environment within which individuals carry out their professional activities supports their growth as human beings. In summary, organizations need affective climates in which positive emotional experiences outweigh those of a negative nature. The recognition that employees' affects influence performance has contributed to justify a change in the theories used to describe and explain performance, which have been modified to incorporate elements that address this affective component. In this regard, this study allowed to expand the knowledge about the various organizational events that may be the source of affective reactions. And, this knowledge constitutes a source to intervene in the organizational system, with a view to creating favorable psychological work conditions.

Third, offering a practical validation in terms of the events selected to describe the affective work environment it found sufficiently robust indicators to validate a set of 80 events, half of which were of a positive nature and the remain of a negative nature. It is important to note that the logic followed to build this type of measurement instrument was to consider these events as representative of a phenomenon of a formative nature, reason why it is recommended to include a diverse number of events as long as they don't be redundant to capture the concept that you want to measure.

## **Limitations and future directions**

We must emphasize that despite the substantial effects of both key predictors – affective work environment and affective organizational attitudes - to explain employees' performance, it is recommended that future research uses the necessary caution in the interpretation of our results, especially with regard to the causal model that is tested in the research model. First, given the use of cross-sectional data, no causal inference can be made with regard to the relationships in this study, although the relationships depicted in the research model were based on a dominant theoretical framework, i.e., the Affective Events Theory. Thus, future research that adopts a longitudinal design is desirable to uncover the dynamic influence of those variables on employees' performance.

Another typical limitation due to the way in which our data were collected, self-respondents, is the potential for bias, and although we were careful to avoid common method bias by collecting data from two different sources (employees and supervisors), we were not able to eliminate it completely. Thus, we recommend that future studies expand the number of organizations and aggregate data at unit level to test the model as an organization phenomenon (Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017).

Moreover, the fact that performance evaluation were obtained from employees' supervisors. Although their perception of the degree to which subordinates' performance meets the assessment criteria may be an important fact in itself, it can raise doubts about the accuracy of these assessments. The most common suggestion in the literature based on various meta-analysis is that the average accuracy is around .52 (Murphy, 2008; Salgado & Moscoso, 2019).

Furthermore, it must be considered that, due to the use of a questionnaire to collect the data, some of the unique essence of employees' affective experience may have been lost. Hence, it may be interesting to consider other ways of obtaining this information, e.g., studies based on personal narratives or diaries. Another potential restraining factor that could be considered in future studies refers to the refinement of the instrument used for measuring the affective work environment : include and / or eliminate events, focus on the type of events, balance the number of events by category – job tasks,

colleagues, leadership, organization, customers, others. And, look also for a better definition of the time frame to assess the occurrence of these events. Eventually, using the EMS - Experience sampling methodology to obtain real-time data on affective experiences in organizations (Fisher, 2002).

Finally, given that this study is based exclusively on variables of an affective nature, it might be relevant to compare it with other models that include also variables of cognitive nature whose constructs are well identified in the literature. For example, perceived organizational support, or the cognitive dimension of trust and commitment.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study contributes to positioning the domain of affects in the agenda of HRM. The affective dimension proved to be a valuable predictor of employees' performance, both task and supportive behaviors - individual and organizational. A contribution of this research is to answer the fundamental question of applied research in organizational contexts, i.e., and so what? It did so by offering a theoretical and practical model for the use of the affective dimension in the management of people, with special emphasis on employees' performance management. From the point of view of the effects of affective work environment on the two consequences analyzed, affective attitudes and performance criteria, the data show that the magnitude of positive emotional energy is consistently superior to the effects associated with negative emotional energy. This fact seems to be in line with what is advocated by the positive organizational psychology movement. In any case, it is not to be overlooked that the effects of greater magnitude were obtained when the results of the two emotional energies are combined in a global factor.

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