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ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE DURING THE CRISIS CAUSED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA: EXPERIENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Abstract: COVID-19 pandemic had a deeply disturbing impact on organizations in different sectors around the world, forcing them to quickly adapt and find new, flexible forms of organising and functioning in order to achieve their goals and social roles, while simultaneously enabling the required level of employee and client protection. The main organizational challenges included (1) fast organizational redesign through reconsidering high and low priority tasks and critical roles and key positions, job redesign, regrouping units and cross-functional teams, developing effective decision-making under various scenarios, introducing flexible and remote work options and redefining mechanisms to coordinate and control the activities of different units, as well as (2) new focus in people management by ensuring effective communication with employees, organising safe work environment for employees who cannot work remotely, preparing for increased absenteeism (due to school and other forms of quarantine), responding effectively to the increased stress burden on employees and life-work imbalance, preparing temporary succession plans for key executives and critical roles; also, introducing new leadership styles, providing necessary trainings and regular payroll payments, etc. Individual, as well as organisational ability to overcome obsta-

cles, to adapt positively and to bounce back from adversity became one of the qualities that make a difference. This quality is defined as “resilience”. The term resilience has been applied in recent years at individual, group, organizational, interorganizational and societal level as to address the ability to cope with often sudden and dramatic changes while maintaining positive adjustment under pressure and capacity to learn and to act upon a call.

Driven by the idea to identify, describe, explain, and systematize the effects of COVID-19 pandemic impact on managing organizations and people, we designed a research using a questionnaire with 2 171 answers collected from the end of March till the beginning of May 2021, during the pandemic and overlapping changes that kept bringing to the forefront the question “Are we to adopt “the new normal”?”

The main idea of this paper is to explore organisational resilience during the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Republic of Serbia and to discover the most effective organisational responses that best served organisations, employees and the community. The basic assumption is that organisations in various sectors have adapted to work in pandemics by changing the standard task design, organisational structures,

systems, routines, HRM policies and practices. This organisational change was forced by an external threat to people's lives, under the pressure of emergency reaction and without prior preparation, and to the best of our knowledge, it differs from the previously developed and accepted models of organisational change during the crisis. We question if organisational resilience is an important

organisational quality in the enduring crisis, how organisational resilience is interrelated with other organisational qualities and explain how firms can develop capacity for resilience as a part of preparation strategy for future unpredictable crisis.

Keywords: Crisis; Changes; Organisational resilience; "The New Normal"; Serbia.

Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic had a deeply disturbing impact on organizations in different sectors around the world, forcing them to quickly adapt and find new, flexible forms of organising and functioning to achieve their goals and social roles, while simultaneously enabling the required level of employees' and clients' protection. Both economic and non-economic organizations have reacted and changed in a state of uncertainty, discontinuity and emergency caused by COVID-19 pandemics. They changed the usual task design, organizational routines, HRM policies and working practices. This organizational change was forced by an external threat to people's lives, under the pressure of emergency reaction and without prior preparation, and according to our best knowledge, it differs from the previously developed and accepted models of organizational change in the crisis.

The main organizational challenges of adapting to the new working conditions included (1) *extremely fast organizational redesign* and (2) *the new focus in people management*. *The fast organizational redesign* was operationalized through reconsidering high and low priority tasks and critical roles and key positions, job redesign, regrouping units and cross-functional teams, developing effective decision-making under various scenarios, introducing flexible and remote work options, and redefining mechanisms to coordinate and control the activities of different units. *The new focus in people management* included ensuring effective communication with employees, organizing a safe work environment for employees who cannot work remotely, preparing for the increased absenteeism (due to school and other forms of quarantine), responding effectively to the increased stress burden on employees and life-work imbalance, preparing temporary succession plans for key executives and critical roles and introducing new leadership styles, providing necessary training and regular payroll payments, etc. One of the most important changes was the *work from home*. Covid-19 sent office people worldwide home, moving them from the usual office workplace to their living areas, making a huge change in the life of those who did not have this kind of experience before. These new conditions brought into the forefront individual as well as organisational ability to overcome obstacles, adapt positively and bounce back from adversity. This capacity we consider as "resilience". The

term resilience has been applied at individual, group, organizational, inter-organizational and societal levels to address ones' capacity to cope with sudden and dramatic changes, while maintaining positive adjustment under pressure and capacity to learn, act, adapt and even develop a new skill in disruptive and uncertain conditions (Coutu, 2002; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Kantur, İşeri-Say, 2012; Boin, Van Eeten, 2013, Cunha, Castanheira, Neves, Story, Rego, A. and Clegg, 2013). Some authors suggest that resilience will prove to be the critical competitive advantage in the age of turbulence—when companies are being challenged to change more profoundly, and more rapidly, than ever before (Hamel & Välikangas, 2003).

Driven by the idea to identify, describe, explain, and systematize the effects of COVID-19 pandemic impact on managing organizations and people, we designed research using a questionnaire with 2 171 answers collected from the end of March till the beginning of May 2021, during the pandemic and overlapping changes that kept bringing to the forefront the question “*Are we to adopt “the new normal”?*”

The main idea of this paper is to explore the resilience of organisations in the Republic of Serbia during the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, within those that changed their standard working habits by shifting to work from home. We were motivated by the willingness to understand factors that contribute to individual and organizational resilience and to discover the most effective organisational responses that best served organisations, employees and the community. The basic assumption is that organisations in various sectors have adapted to work in pandemics by changing the standard task design, organisational structures, systems, routines, HRM policies and practices. The main research questions we aim to answer are: Have organizations and the employees in Serbia revealed organizational and individual resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic? What are the main sources of organizational resilience in the Republic of Serbia? Is it possible for firms to develop this potential capacity as a part of preparedness strategy for some future unpredictable crisis? The experiences of different types of organizations in Serbia represent a newly-generated, invaluable knowledge that should be systematized and generalized so it could be used in possible future crises as well as for improving their everyday functioning

The paper is structured as follows. We provide a brief theoretical framework of the analysis together with the research background. We proceed by explaining research methodology including context, questionnaire, sample, measures, data, and statistical techniques used. Research findings are presented in Section 4. We finalize with a discussion and implications of the study, conclusion, limitations of the study and the directions for future research.

Theoretical and research background

Theoretical Background

Since the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemics, we have witnessed that some organizations and institutions demonstrated the capability of maintaining functional behaviour and structures facing extreme macro-environmental changes, while others crumbled under ongoing pressure of disruptive, uncertain and extremely challenging conditions. This observation opens the question of how / *how some organizations, institutions, and individuals within them managed to strike back and survive without losing ground under their feet and to bounce back without the losses in the key defining elements of their organizations?; how do the individuals and units of which they are composed continue to achieve desirable outcomes amidst adversity, strain, and significant barriers to adaptation or development?*

This is the issue that emerged for organizations from the beginning of the crisis, but it is not of less importance for the national economies. National economies all over the globe have faced deeply disturbing influence throughout 2020 and 2021. Back in 2008, when the World was faced with the danger of global crisis, the World Economic Forum echoed “resilience” quality, been applied at individual, community, organizational, and societal scales, to describe an ability to cope with often sudden and dramatic changes. According to WEF, ‘*Resilience*’, *denotes society’s ability to withstand and recover from these shocks when they occur. Together, insured resilience frames a society designed to both prevent and protect against crisis, and to recover quickly from damage.*

Consequently, resilience research appeared, leveraging important knowledge from social science, physics, and engineering science (Gibson, Tarant, 2010). In physics, the term resilience means the ability of a body that has deformed under the action of a force to return to its original state and regain its former shape¹. Psychological literature observes the resilience of an individual who is exposed to a very negative situation, trauma or series of stresses, and assess the degree of his ability to return to his normal state. According to Milivojević (2000) optimal mental resilience is not hard insensitivity, but elastic sensitivity. Hypersensitive people are those who attach great importance to negative events, perceiving them as catastrophes, which makes them prone to emotional disorders. Nor should the negative event be underestimated, that is, hardness and insensitivity. Between hypersensitivity and insensitivity, there is sensitivity.

Organizational theory on resilience is in a developing phase (Boin, Van Eeten, 2013; Annarelli, Nonino, 2015; Linnenluecke, 2017). It is cited that the topic of resil-

1 Often given example is with a sheet of paper: if we bend a sheet of paper, it will return to its original state, but if we crumple it, this action will prevail over its ability to bounce back and retain the form, and it will no longer be able to regain its shape.

ience has started to gain attention within management academia and scholars after Holling's work in 1973. The concept of organizational resilience has been developed within the two recognizable streams. The first one is predominantly focused on operationalizing resilience as an economic output expressed in financial terms (Pal, Tors-tensson, & Mattila, 2014). From this viewpoint, a resilient organization retains financial health and economic performance under disadvantaged market circumstances. Not only that resilience allows organisations to go through times of organisational instability and adversity, but to thrive and capitalise on change and uncertainty (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). More recent standpoints include dimensions of organizational resilience (Horne, Orr, 1997; Mallak, 1998; Riolli, Savicki, 2003; Boin, Van Eeten, 2013; Cunha et al, 2013; Kantur, İşeri-Say, 2012; King, Newman, and Luthans, 2015; Rodríguez-Sánchez, Vera Perea, 2015; Van Der Vegt, Essens, Wahlström, & George, 2015; Annarelli, Nonino, 2016; Shatté, Perlman, Smith, & Lynch, 2017; Vera, Rodríguez-Sánchez, Salanova, 2017) suggesting a more holistic view of resilience as *“embedded in a set of individual-level knowledge, skills, and abilities and organizational routines and processes by which a firm conceptually orients itself, acts decisively to move forward, and establishes a setting of diversity and adjustable integration that enables it to overcome the potentially debilitating consequences of a disruptive shock* (Lengnick-Hall, Beck, & Lengnick-Hall, 2011)“ or as *“the process by which an actor (i.e., individual, organization, or community) builds and uses its capability endowments to interact with the environment in a way that positively adjusts and maintains functioning prior to, during, and following adversity”* (Williams et al., 2017: 742); Another approach (Rose, 2004; Worline, Dutton, Frost, Kanov, Lilius, J. & Maitlis, 2002) made a distinction between the “static” and the “dynamic” resilience. The first one indicated *the ability of a system or organization to maintain its core functions when shocked*, while the later refers to *resilience as the speed at which it is possible to return to ideal functioning conditions*.

Some authors even emphasize that organizational resilience is quite a different phenomenon compared to adaptability, agility, flexibility, improvisation, recovery, redundancy or robustness; it refers to the organization reaction and capacity to recover and develop in a state of uncertainty, discontinuity, and emergency (Xiao and Cao, 2017). It may be comprehended as having three levels: individual level, group level, and organizational level, whereas the individual resilience of an employee is the main source of organizational resilience (Cunha et al, 2013; Bardoel, et al, 2014; Horne, Orr, 1997; Lengnick-Hall et al, 2011; Malik, Garg, 2017).

During the last two decades, some authors have called for more research in organizational theory that would provide insight into how organizations, individuals and groups continue to achieve desirable outcomes amidst adversity, strain, and significant barriers to adaptation and development (Sutcliffe, Vogus, 2003; Bardoel, Petit, De Cieri, & McMillan, 2014; Linnenluecke, 2017; Williams et al., 2017; Vera, Rodríguez-Sánchez, & Salanova, 2017). In a systematic literature review accompa-

nied with the co-citation analysis, Annarelli & Nonino (2015) propose the definition of organizational resilience as *“the organization’s capability to face disruptions and unexpected events in advance thanks to the strategic awareness and a linked operational management of internal and external shocks. The resilience is static, when founded on preparedness and preventive measures to minimize threats probability and to reduce any impact that may occur, and dynamic, when founded on the ability of managing disruptions and unexpected events to shorten unfavourable aftermaths and maximize the organization’s speed of recovery to the original or to a new more desirable state”*. Their finding from systematic literature search reveals the predominance of conceptual and literature review studies, compared to empirical studies on resilience (65% vs 35%). We find this result challenging to search for more empirical evidence on organizational resilience.

Research Background

Work from home implies a work arrangement in which the worker fulfils the key tasks and essential responsibilities of his job while staying at home, using information and communication technology. Until the escalation of the pandemics COVID-19, working from home in Serbia was a work practice applied by a very small number of organizations and was mostly related to the ICT industry and knowledge-intensive jobs. According to the Labour Law of the Republic of Serbia² Article 42, an employment relationship may be established for work outside the employer’s premises and includes teleworking and working from home. The Law further (in Article 43) specifies the essential elements of the contract (duration of working time following the work norms, manner of supervision and quality of employee performance, use of employee’s means of work and compensation for the use thereof, compensation of other work-related cost and ways to determine them, and other rights and duties) and defines that the basic salary of an employee cannot be less than the basic salary of an employee who performs the same job at the employer’s premises. Also, the Law specifies that the amount and deadlines for the performance of work performed based on employment contracts from home cannot be determined in a way that prevents the employee from using the rights to rest during daily work, daily, weekly and annual leave, by the Law and the general act. So, although the Law regulates work from home as an institute of work engagement of employees, the complex work practice caused by the pandemic surpassed modest legal provisions and raised some new issues for employees, employers and public policymakers in the Republic of Serbia.

The first case of the Corona virus in Serbia was publicly reported on March 6th 2020. Only a week after the state of emergency was declared, and kindergartens, schools and universities were closed. At that moment, a lot of companies operating in Serbia decided to shift to work from home, in part or completely. During 2020 and 2021, the

² *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* no. 24/2005, 61/2005, 54/2009, 32/2013, 75/2014, 13/2017, 113/2017 & 95/2018.

Government implemented various measures that regulated social life and influenced working practices. We started our research in March 2021 when a lot of organizations in Serbia have already experienced work from home as work practice. The sample included only the subjects who experienced work from home from the beginning of Covid-19 in Serbia.

Methodology

Instrument

The basic research instrument used for the data collection was a specially designed questionnaire consisting of several sections, covering a wide range of organization related constructs (work attitudes, organizational culture, leadership, individual and organizational learning, work-life balance, to name a few). For the point of this paper, we forefront the 1) questions about the demographic characteristics of the respondents and general questions about the characteristics of the organisation in which the respondents are employed and 2) questions related to organizational resilience. Our research students helped administer the questionnaire in Google form. The data were collected between March and May 2021.

Sample

Our sample included 2,138 respondents from as many different organizations operating in the Republic of Serbia. A comprehensive description of the researched sample is presented in Table 1.

Measures

For the most of research items in our questionnaire we used scales that have been validated and which are well-known in the literature, following the reliability information by Cronbach's α (Cronbach, 1951). However, some scales are tailor-made for this research and have been evaluated for the first time. Scale for organizational resilience is one of them. We assessed "organizational resilience" with the nine items scale inspired by Näswall, Kuntz, Hodliffe, & Malinen (2013). The analysis showed that the two items of the scale are correlated negatively with the rest of the scale. Following the rule that if an item correlates negatively with the rest, but it is not because of reverse-wording of the item, then that items is not measuring the same thing as the other items in the subset and it should be dropped altogether. Reliability information (Cronbach's α) for the original and corrected measurement scales of resilience are presented in Tables 2 and 3. The scale we developed is presented in Table 4.

Table 2: 9-item scale (.067)

Scale Reliability Statistics	Item Reliability Statistics		if item dropped
	mean	Cronbach's α	
I don't like surprises at work and I think the task of management is to prevent them.	2.57	0.762	
When I face unusual situations at work, I always manage to cope.	3.96	0.611	
I think it is important for employees to be able to cope with any situation that befalls them at work, no matter how unusual and new it may be.	3.94	0.596	
I notice that my colleagues successfully solve unusual and new problems they face at work.	3.68	0.591	
One should be able to apply a new method of work or approach to work if the situation or requirements have changed.	4.12	0.597	
The management of my organization appreciates and actively supports the resourcefulness of the employees.	3.76	0.577	
My organization is not too rigid and has the ability to adapt to any change, even drastic.	3.64	0.574	
In my organization, we have the freedom to deviate from established practices, procedures or rules if the situation requires it.	3.42	0.598	
If we allow everyone to deviate from the usual way of working at their own discretion, chaos will occur.	2.42	0.773	
Scale	Cronbach's α		
			0.67

Table 3: 7-item scale (.087)

Scale Reliability Statistics	Item Reliability Statistics		if item dropped
	mean	Cronbach's α	
78.2 When I face unusual situations at work, I always manage to cope.	3.96	0.855	
78.3 I think it is important for employees to be able to cope with any situation that befalls them at work, no matter how unusual and new it may be.	3.94	0.848	
78.4 I notice that my colleagues successfully solve unusual and new problems they face at work.	3.68	0.85	
78.5 One should be able to apply a new method of work or approach to work if the situation or requirements have changed.	4.12	0.846	
78.6 The management of my organization appreciates and actively supports the resourcefulness of the employees.	3.76	0.844	
78.7 My organization is not too rigid and has the ability to adapt to any change, even drastic.	3.64	0.846	
78.8 In my organization, we have the freedom to deviate from established practices, procedures or rules if the situation requires it.	3.42	0.866	
Scale	Cronbach's α		
			0.869

Table 4: Items within resilience construct

Ability to cope.	When I face unusual situations at work, I always manage to cope.
Adjustment to unusual.	I think it is important for employees to be able to adjust to any situation that come about them at work, no matter how unusual and new it may be.
Colleagues' ability to face uncertainty.	I notice that my colleagues successfully solve unusual and new problems they face at work.
Openness towards new work method.	You should be able to apply a new method of work or approach to work if the situation or requirements change.
Resourcefulness.	Management of my organization appreciates and actively supports the resourcefulness of the employees.
Flexibility.	My organization is not too rigid and has the ability to adapt to any change, so it was drastic
Freedom.	In my organization, we have the freedom to deviate from established practices, procedures or rules if the situation requires it

Source: Authors

Results

Overall resilience in Serbian organizations. Research results show that the respondents from the sample report, on average, high resilience (the rated level of resilience for each item has a value above the neutral mean). If the observed items ranked according to the rated resilience level, the collected data show that the average resilience level of the respondents is highest with the *ability to apply new work method* ($M = 4.12$), while lowest ($M = 3.64$) for organizational flexibility as opposite to rigidity. The highest std. deviation in the respondents' responses occurred for "the freedom to deviate from established practices, procedures or rules if the situation requires it" ($SD = 1.20$), while the smallest one occurred for "the personal ability to cope unusual work situations" ($SD = 3.29$). Descriptive measures (Mean and Standard Deviation) are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Descriptive on resilience

	78.2	78.3	78.4	78.5	78.6	78.7	78.8
N	2171	2171	2171	2171	2171	2171	2171
Missing	97	97	97	97	97	97	97
Mean	3.96	3.94	3.68	4.12	3.76	3.64	3.42
Median	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Standard deviation	0.944	1.00	1.03	0.969	1.11	1.12	1.20
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Source: Authors

Previous experience with work from home. Experience is an important element that influences behaviour of individuals and organizations. It is strongly connected to individual and organizational ability to learn, which is very well documented in organization theory (for the review look at Aleksić Mirić, 2017). Individuals learn from the experience of performing a task (learning by doing) while organizational ability to gain insight from its own experience, the experience of others, and to modify the way it functions according to such insight is considered to be the core of organizational learning behaviour. Therefore, previous experience with work from home could have been expected to influence organizational ability to resiliently react to Covid-19 work from home social measure.

Contrary to the expected, our results report that previous work from home experience has no statistically significant impact on resilience (Table 6).

Table 6: Previous experience of working from home

Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p
Rez(7f)	Student's t	-0.2749	2106	0.783

^aLevene's test is significant ($p < .05$), suggesting a violation of the assumption of equal variances

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Rez(7f)	Yes	210	-0.01469	0.1752	0.772	0.0533
	No	1898	3.83e-4	0.1320	0.752	0.0173

Source: Authors

We evaluated the influence of the following individual, employee related factors: gender, age, marital status, education, occupation, and children. Among **employee-related factors**, results indicated two factors to be related with the resilience behaviour: *gender* and *age*.

Resilience and gender. Compared to male, female report higher overall resilience (Table 7).

Table 7: T-test resilience and gender

Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p
Rez(7f)	Student's t	-3.17	2136	0.002

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Rez(7f)	Male	852	-0.0553	0.0687	0.762	0.0261
	Female	1286	0.0491	0.188	0.735	0.0205

Source: Authors

Observed by the resilience components, statistically significant differences appear in the following resilience elements **adjustment to unusual** (*When I face unusual situations at work, I always manage to cope.*), **ability to cope with the unusual** (*I think it is important for employees to be able to cope with any situation that befalls them at work, no matter how unusual and new it may be*), **colleagues' ability to face uncertainty** (*I notice that my colleagues successfully solve unusual and new problems they face at work*), **openness towards newwork method** (*You should be able to apply a new method of work or approach to work if the situation or requirements have been mentioned*), **flexibility** (*My organization is not too rigid and has the ability to adapt to any change, so it was drastic*), where female report statistically significant higher resilience (Table 8).

Table 8: T-test resilience and gender

		Independent Samples T-Test		
		Statistic	df	P
P78.1mod	Student's t	-0.21	2136	0.834
P78.2mod	Student's t	-2.592	2136	0.01
P78.3mod	Student's t	-2.609	2136	0.009
P78.4mod	Student's t	-3.538	2136	< .001
P78.5mod	Student's t	-3.711	2136	< .001
P78.6mod	Student's t	-0.405	2136	0.686
P78.7mod	Student's t	-2.757	2136	0.006
P78.8mod	Student's t	-1.017	2136	0.309
P78.9mod	Student's t	0.571	2136	0.568

^aLevene's test is significant ($p < .05$), suggesting a violation of the assumption of equal variances

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
P78.1mod	Male	852	-0.01185	-0.4947	0.998	0.0342
	Female	1286	-0.0026	-0.4947	0.999	0.0279
P78.2mod	Male	852	-0.06087	0.0474	0.998	0.0342
	Female	1286	0.05312	0.0474	0.994	0.0277
P78.3mod	Male	852	-0.05791	0.0571	1.007	0.0345
	Female	1286	0.05634	0.0571	0.981	0.0274
P78.4mod	Male	852	-0.08662	0.3078	1.006	0.0345
	Female	1286	0.06913	0.3078	0.99	0.0276
P78.5mod	Male	852	-0.08825	-0.1222	1.046	0.0359
	Female	1286	0.07444	-0.1222	0.955	0.0266
P78.6mod	Male	852	-0.00699	0.2202	0.982	0.0336
	Female	1286	0.01088	0.2202	1.009	0.0281
P78.7mod	Male	852	-0.06576	0.3206	1.01	0.0346
	Female	1286	0.05556	0.3206	0.987	0.0275
P78.8mod	Male	852	-0.02081	0.4824	0.991	0.0339
	Female	1286	0.02407	0.4824	1.004	0.028
P78.9mod	Male	852	0.0128	-0.3499	1.021	0.035
	Female	1286	-0.01245	-0.3499	0.987	0.0275

Source: Authors

Resiliency and age. In terms of age, a statistically significant difference in resilience occurs between respondents of 25-34 years of age on one side, and those older than 65 (still working), on the other side. Elder ones report statistically significant lower resilience compared to the group of their younger coworkers (Table 9; Table 10).

Table 9: Resilience-age mean results

Mean	do 24	3.83
	25-34	4.01
	35-44	3.91
	45-54	3.99
	55-64	3.99
	above 65	3.18

Source: Authors

Table 10: Resilience and age (One-way ANOVA)

One-Way ANOVA (Fisher's)							
	F	df1	df2	p			
Rez(7f)	2.77	5	2165	0.017			
Homogeneity of Variances Test (Levene's)							
	F	df1	df2	p			
Rez(7f)	4.44	5	2165	< .001			
Tukey Post-Hoc Test – Rez(7f)							
		Up to 24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	above 65
do 24	Mean difference	—	-0.0615	0.0428	-0.0405	-0.0281	0.611
	p-value	—	0.836	0.976	0.98	0.999	0.086
25-34	Mean difference		—	0.1042	0.021	0.0334	0.673
	p-value			—	0.182	0.997	0.037
35-44	Mean difference			—	-0.0832	-0.0709	0.569
	p-value				—	0.569	0.13
45-54	Mean difference				—	0.0124	0.652
	p-value					1	0.051
55-64	Mean difference					—	0.639
	p-value						0.07
above 65	Mean difference						—
	p-value						—

Source: Authors

In terms of individual items, there is a statistically significant difference in the category of **adjustment to unusual**: *I think it is important for employees to be able to adjust to any situation that come about them at work, no matter how unusual and new it may be* (see Table 11).

Table 11

Tukey Post-Hoc Test – P78.2mod		do 24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	above 65
Up to 24	Mean difference	—	-0.182	-0.0807	-0.1615	-0.16845	0.692
	p-value	—	0.081	0.897	0.26	0.541	0.212
25-34	Mean difference		—	0.1011	0.0203	0.0133	0.873
	p-value		—	0.531	0.999	1	0.046
35-44	Mean difference			—	-0.0808	-0.08779	0.772
	p-value			—	0.837	0.939	0.114
45-54	Mean difference				—	-0.007	0.853
	p-value				—	1	0.057
55-64	Mean difference					—	0.86
	p-value					—	0.064
above 65	Mean difference						—
	p-value						—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Source: Authors

None of the organizational design properties—job design, unit groupings, authority delegation, integration mechanisms did report to impact organizational resilience under work from home disturbance.

Discussion and conclusion

Covid-19 pandemic has changed the traditional workplace in so many ways through reconsidering high and low priority tasks and critical roles and key positions, job redesign, regrouping units and cross-functional teams, developing effective decision-making under various scenarios, introducing flexible and remote work options, and redefining mechanisms to coordinate and control the activities of different units as well as by ensuring effective communication with employees, organising safe work environment for employees who cannot work remotely, preparing for the increased absenteeism (due to school and other forms of quarantine), responding effectively to the increased stress burden on employees and life-work imbalance, preparing temporary succession plans for key executives and critical roles and introducing new leadership styles, providing necessary trainings and regular payroll payments, etc. With the COVID-19 outbreak, the application of these new forms of flexible organizing had to be additionally innovated so the organizations were able to adapt to working during the pandemic. Therefore, organizations around the world as well as in Serbia were forced to innovate and apply completely new methods of flexible, horizontal, and vertical organizing and people management. These new, flexible organizing and managing methods haven't yet been sufficiently studied, neither in Serbia nor in the world.

Working from home soon became a working practice applied by organizations of various profiles, ranging from primary schools to multinational global companies. In this research, we understand working from home as a temporary, alternative work arrangement that occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic, when a large number of people in Serbia had to replace their business offices with a home work environment. The paper presents the experiences of employees in Serbia, based on a survey conducted on more than 2,100 employees in the period March-May 2021. Preliminary empirical testing shows the following.

- *Our measure of resilience captures both employee (individual) and organizational resilience, which are occasionally considered and measured separately. Our resilience measure is operationalized through the ability to cope with the unusual work situations, adjustment to unusual, colleagues' ability to face uncertainty, openness towards new work methods, resourcefulness, flexibility and freedom. The reliability results represent a good grounds for further improvements of the resilience measurement scales.*
- *Overall, organizations in Serbia demonstrated a high level of organizational resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.*
- *Covid-19 pandemic has changed the traditional workplace in so many ways that previous experience in working from home does not affect much the capacity of the organization to behave resiliently during these new disruptive, emergent, and uncertain circumstances. Literature in organizational theory following the stream of the importance of individual and organizational learning views resilience as a transformational process in which individuals not only strive to survive the uncontrollable change, but also learn from it (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Richardson, 2002; Baird et al., 2013). In that manner, employees can utilise past experiences to develop adaptive capacity of flexible reacting to external stresses. Contrary to the expected, in our dataset respondents with and without previous working from home experience did not report statistically significant difference in resilience level. Therefore, we may conclude, which is in line with previous research findings, the following:*
 - Proposition 1: *The organizational resilience is only a potential capacity of an organization which is demonstrated during, not before, the disruptive situation.*
 - Proposition 2: *The organizational resilience is derived from the individual resilience of the employees and their individual capacity to adapt, learn and develop new skills.*
- *As working from home implies a work arrangement in which the worker fulfils the key tasks and essential responsibilities of his job while staying at home, individual-related factors are more important than organization-related factors in building organizational resilience. Among employee-related factors, two of the explored do make a difference: gender and age. Our results suggest that organizational resil-*

ience strongly depends on individual resilience and is higher if the organization mainly employs women and younger people. Therefore, we may propose the following:

Proposition 3: Women, compared to men, and younger employees, compared to their colleagues older than 65, demonstrate higher levels of resilience and stronger individual capacity to adapt, learn and develop.

- Among organization-related factors, different *organizational design properties* did not report significant differences in resilience behaviours under work from home disturbance. This is a signal for us to *search for the sources of resilience differences in behavioural components of an organization* – organizational value system (culture), leadership, learning patterns and styles, etc. Therefore, we may propose the following:

Proposition 4: Structural dimensions of an organization do not influence organizational resilience.

The experiences of different types of organization in Serbia, although represent only a first step in our understanding of organizational resilience, created a new, invaluable knowledge that should be systematized and generalized so it could be used in possible future crises as well as for improving their everyday functioning. Still, this research is constrained by several methodological limitations. First, the data are collected a year after the beginning of the pandemic Covid-19 in the period of three months. It would be of interest to run a longitudinal study to determine resistance factors in conditions of prolonged disturbance. The second limitation refers to addressing resiliency only of organizations whose employees experienced work from home as one of the forms of adapting to working conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic. Further studies should explore other forms of adjustment applied by companies, primarily by those that did not have the option to send employees to work from home - public services, retail facilities, health services, etc. Third, our research did not capture group resilience, as our research design did not allow for it. Future studies should expand our knowledge about organizational resilience and its sources at all three recognized levels: organizational, group and individual. Furthermore, the research is done in a country with specific characteristics of national culture such as collectivism, high avoidance of uncertainty and female values. The open question for further research is whether the same results would be obtained in cultures - economies with different cultural values and whether resilience can be related to the dimensions of national culture?

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