The Mind of the Cynical Employee:

Development and Validation of a Multidimensional Scale to Measure the Cognitive Underpinnings of Organisational Cynicism

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of

Doctor of Philosophy
(Business and Management)



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South Australia

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Submitted 10 November 2023, **Revised** 3 March 2024

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Table of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BAT	Burnout Assessment Tool
CAOC	Cynicism About Organisational Change
CATCS	Cynical Attitudes Towards College Scale
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CI	Confidence Intervals
CTC	Cynicism Towards Change
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
ICD	International Classification of Disease
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources
K10	Kessler Psychological Distress Scale
MBI, MBI-GS	Maslach Burnout Inventory; Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Scale
MMPI, MMPI - RF	Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory; Restructured Form
OCS	Organisational Cynicism Scale
PANAS	Positive and Negative Affect Scale
PHN	Philosophies of Human Nature
RBSE	Role Breadth Self-Efficacy
RS	Rescaled Estimates
RW, RWA, RW-CI	Relative Weights, Relative Weights Analysis, RW Confidence Intervals
UWES	Utrecht Work Engagement Scale

Summary

Background: "It's always the same, nothing I do will matter – it is futile, things are never going to change," – a sentiment epitomising cynicism in today's workplaces. Economic instability and hybrid work arrangements intensify this cynicism, reported by approximately 80% of employees. Such sentiments extend beyond lost productivity to adversely impact employee well-being and organisational culture. Earlier attempts to measure this issue have been plagued by inconsistencies, inadequacies, and fragmented approaches, highlighting the urgent need for reliable measurement tools. Although not a new concept, the phenomenon warrants scholarly attention due to its increasing relevance in modern work settings. Researchers originally framed it as a dispositional trait but have revised their interpretation multiple times. Despite a wealth of existing research, its fragmented nature complicates scholarly understanding and fuels ongoing debates about whether cynicism is a dispositional trait, an attitudinal state, or an aspect of other psychological variables like burnout. Given these challenges, researchers still lack a cohesive nomological network and measurement tools to understand cynicism's predictors, prevalence, and consequences. I aim to address these gaps.

Aims: My research has four aims. The first standardises our understanding of organisational cynicism through synthesising literature across multiple disciplines. The second captures employees' lived experiences. The third and primary aim is to develop and validate the Organisational Cynicism Scale (OCS), to measure the cognitive underpinnings of organisational cynicism. The final aim is to integrate the new scales into a nomological framework incorporating the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, encompassing cynicism's multifaceted nature.

Methods and Results: The research adopted a mixed methods approach across three studies. Study 1 involved interviews and focus groups with employees in a large state government organisation to identify futile beliefs as key indicators. Preliminary 30-item OCS

were developed to assess cynicism's multifaceted impact on mental well-being and engagement. In Study 2, the tool was refined to the 20-item OCS through factor structure analysis, confirming adequate psychometric properties for the full scale and the four subscales: *futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *adopt change* (OCS full scale α = .967, subscales α = .931 to .979). Study 3, a longitudinal investigation, validated the incremental validity of the OCS over existing scales, explaining unique variances in outcomes such as burnout, psychological distress, and organisational trust. While the OCS showed some ability to account for a significant portion of the variance for employee engagement, its strength lay in its multidimensional utility. The findings also substantiated the mediating role of the OCS between job demands – role conflict, role ambiguity, witnessed disrespectful behaviours, and cynical workplace climates – and related well-being and engagement outcomes. The research concluded with the development of a nomological framework for organisational cynicism.

Conclusion: The research establishes a theoretical framework and empirically validated tools for assessing cynicism in organisations, thereby enriching the scholarly and practical understanding of the phenomenon. By addressing gaps in the existing literature, I establish a foundation for future empirical and theoretical research that endeavours to respond to the complexities of modern work environments shaped by technological advancements and diverse work models. Although the OCS exhibited promising psychometric robustness, future research should extend these findings by administering the scales to broader and more diverse populations.

Statement of Declaration

I declare that:

This thesis presents work carried out by myself and does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge, it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; and all substantive contributions by others to the work presented, including jointly authored publications, are clearly acknowledged.

Kathryn Stephenson

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Kathryn Louise Stephenson 10 November 2023

Declaration: Copy Editing Tools

In the preparation of this thesis, tools such as Grammarly, ChatGPT, and a formal editor were used as copy editing aids. They provided guidance on grammar, structure, punctuation, and spelling. The final content underwent careful review, and modifications were made to correct spelling, refine grammar, and enhance flow and readability. The author assumes full responsibility for the presented content.

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Acknowledgements

I extend a sincere thank you to those who have contributed to this research. Financial support came from the University of South Australia and the Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship. I am honoured to have received the Vice-Chancellor and President's Scholarship, which is awarded to the top PhD candidate in each academic unit. Thanks to an Australian state government department for initial participant recruitment and to participants from Australia, the UK, and the US involved in various study phases. Further gratitude goes to UniSA employees for their time. Your collective contributions have been invaluable.

To my supervision team – Associate Professor Ruchi Sinha, Dr Amy Zadow, and Associate Professor Bart de Jong – my sincere thanks. Your approach to supervision was perfectly aligned with my research style, allowing me the freedom and trust to craft a thesis that is authentically my own. Your invaluable insights have enriched this academic undertaking. A special note of thanks and gratitude is extended to Associate Professor Ruchi Sinha for her unwavering support from the inception of this project, for developing my research skills, and for continually pushing me to expand my research boundaries.

I also wish to thank my UniSA Business and CWeX colleagues for a supportive environment throughout this PhD journey. Special thanks to my friends and family, particularly Natalie and Kylie. Thank you goes to Tina Morganella for her editorial work, which has enhanced the quality of this thesis.

Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to Paul, Dylan, Adelia, Jasmyn, their partners, and my mum. Your support during late nights and early mornings, patience, and enduring love have been the cornerstone of this project's success. Your contributions have been tangible and emotional; I am eternally grateful for that.

Completing this thesis stands as a monumental achievement, enabled by many invaluable contributions, including the efforts of those who examined my final work; for this, I remain grateful, and I am proud to say I did it.

Personal Inspiration: Guided by Theodore Roosevelt's "Man in the Arena" Speech

Theodore Roosevelt delivered an inspirational and impassioned speech on a Saturday afternoon in Paris, on April 23, 1910, at 3 pm. It was this speech that formed the inspiration behind my PhD and guided my journey.

The Man in the Arena

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

"It’s always the same, nothing I do will matter – it is futile, things are never going to change," (interviewee response, 2022). In today's rapidly evolving work environment, the issue of cynicism stands as a concern. Approximately 80% of employees report experiencing it, and this prevalence seems unlikely to diminish in a post-Covid landscape shaped by economic uncertainty, organisational transformations, and the complexities of hybrid work arrangements (Petitta & Ghezzi, 2023; Schwab & Malleret, 2020). The ripple effects of workplace cynicism extend beyond productivity losses to affect employee well-being and the organisational culture (Akar, 2019; Hewett et al., 2019; Maslach, 2017). Moreover, the shift from high to low engagement among employees has cost the global economy an estimated US$ 8.8 trillion in lost productivity alone (Gallup, 2023). In an era marked by the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and other technological advancements into the workplace, this adds another layer of complexity and an urgency to understand this problem (Mishra & Tripathi, 2021; Murugesan & Kadalmani, 2023). Existing scales inadequately capture cynicism's cognitive and contextual complexity in the modern workplace. I contribute to filling this gap by developing and validating a multidimensional scale – the Organisational Cynicism Scale (OCS) – to assess the complexities of cynicism in contemporary work settings.

Despite extensive study across disciplines like psychology and management, a unified understanding of how to define and measure cynicism remains elusive (Cole et al., 2006; Demerouti et al., 2001; Stanley et al., 2005). This lack of consensus is compounded by the complex and multifaceted nature of organisational cynicism, and is further complicated by inconsistent historical and thematic frameworks (Bedeian, 2007; Schraeder et al., 2016). The depiction of cynicism as distrust in, or negativity towards, an organisation/leadership or as a component of burnout, presents challenges for its quantification (Andersson, 1996; Dean et al.,

1998). Existing measurement tools frequently exhibit shortcomings, either failing to capture the full scope of cynicism's state-based and trait dimensions within organisational settings or offering scales that are either too general or overly specialised (Bedeian, 2007; Ben-Porath, 2012; Brockway et al., 2002). These methodological constraints impede a thorough understanding of cynicism's influence on critical organisational variables such as employee well-being, trust, and engagement (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Maslach, 2017).

The complexity of the organisational cynicism problem manifests on multiple levels, affecting both employee well-being and how organisations function (Andersson, 1996; Brandes & Das, 2006). Confounding this issue is a lack of academic consensus on whether cynicism exists primarily as a trait, a transient state, or a component of burnout (e.g., Dean et al., 1999; Guthier et al., 2020). This absence of a unified theoretical framework impedes efforts to operationalise and measure cynicism, leading to a heterogeneity in scholarly methodologies and interpretations (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Schaufeli et al., 2020). The problem is not limited to any specific industry, so its scope and influence are magnified across multiple professional settings and sectors (Vance, 2017). The issue reverberates through employee attitudes to organisational culture and overall productivity (Abraham, 2000; Meyerson, 1990; Niederhoffer, 1967).

The problem's multifaceted nature increases its importance not just for academics focusing on organisational psychology, but also for industry practitioners tasked with managing employee attitudes effectively (Bedeian, 2007). Not only does organisational cynicism have a pronounced effect on outcomes like burnout and social connectedness (Stavrova et al., 2023), but it also has implications for key organisational metrics such as trust and employee engagement (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Guthier et al., 2020). The reach of cynicism's influence is not confined to isolated units within an organisation; it permeates the entire organisational structure (Bedeian, 2007). This

pervasive nature impacts not only short-term operational goals but also how long-term organisational strategies are shaped and executed (Brown & Cregan, 2008; Reichers et al., 1997). The issue also impacts external stakeholders like investors, because organisational performance suffers due to the presence of cynicism (Indibara et al., 2023). Given its far-reaching effects on both internal and external organisational facets, a deeper level of understanding is needed for effective mitigation (Brandes & Das, 2006).

As traditional office roles change, problems caused by cynicism intensify, creating a gap between employer expectations and the evolving needs of employees (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). Complicating matters further, existing conceptualisations and measurement tools frequently confound cognitive dimensions with emotional or behavioural aspects of cynicism or burnout components (Dean et al., 1998; Maslach et al., 1996). This confounding, coupled with inconsistent psychometric standards and construct contamination, undermines the reliability and validity of existing scales (Ben-Porath, 2012; Brandes et al., 1999). Consequently, these shortcomings contribute to fragmented understandings and impede the development of effective interventions.

Recent research identifies cynicism as a multifaceted construct deeply rooted in beliefs of futility, which have a broad impact on individual performance, team dynamics, and overall organisational culture (Vance, 2017). Evidence, such as the statement, "I don't know why we are here; it is a waste of time to give us a chance to contribute, it makes no difference what is the point" (interviewee quote, 2022), underscores the cognitive foundation of this issue, which manifests in the form of beliefs that *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *to adopt change.* The issue's complexity is further evident in its dual nature, comprising both a situational cognitive framework and deeply ingrained employee beliefs (Abraham, 2000; Dean

et al., 1998). This multilayered impact across the organisational hierarchy calls for advanced strategies to mitigate its repercussions.

The complexities of modern workplaces make the need to understand organisational cynicism more pressing; however, the absence of a comprehensive theoretical framework has hindered the identification of situational indicators that are predictors of employee cynicism (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013). Simultaneously, outdated, and non-peer-reviewed scales used to evaluate cynicism have compromised the validity of empirical findings (e.g., Brandes et al., 1999; Brooks & Vance, 1991). These methodological issues have research consequences, as shown by meta-analyses that have failed to consistently link cynicism to job-related stressors (Guthier et al., 2020). The lack of clarity becomes especially relevant when we look at well-established frameworks like the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In this context, the largely unexamined role of cynicism as a mediator between job demands, resources, and workplace outcomes represents a critical gap in the academic literature (Bakker & de Vries, 2021). Investigating these areas is pivotal to our understanding of how indicators such as employee beliefs about the futility of voicing concerns, being proactive, building relationships, and adopting change, affect productivity and mental well-being in the workplace.

1.1. Evolution of Cynicism Research

The concept of "cynicism" has its roots in ancient Greek philosophy, originating around the 4th Century BC, notably discussed by Antisthenes (485-380 BCE; Dudley, 1937). This philosophical concept has now been elevated to a modern concern in organisational psychology, making it a subject of scholarly interest (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013; Guthier et al., 2020). However, it only gained academic attention much later, specifically in the 1940s, which was a period marked by social and political upheaval due to the industrial revolution and the world

wars (e.g., Hathaway & McKinley, 1943). Early scholarship framed cynicism as a stable personality trait, capturing negative dispositions towards the world (Cook & Medley, 1954). Initially, cynicism was largely viewed through the lens of trait theory, seen as a stable, enduring characteristic embedded in the individual's personality (Costa et al., 1986; Hathaway & McKinley, 1943).

Over time, the discourse evolved, and in the 1960s cynicism was recognised as an attitudinal state, particularly in organisational settings (e.g., Niederhoffer, 1967). This perspective changed as researchers began to note the influence of various situational factors within workplaces, such as organisational policies, climate, and relationships, on levels of cynicism (Bommer et al., 2005; Brown & Cregan, 2008). Consequently, the focus shifted towards understanding cynicism as a changing state-based construct, influenced by context and organisational changes (Dean et al., 1998; Wanous et al., 2000). This shift allowed for a more detailed exploration of cynicism, including its manifestation in specific professions like policing (Niederhoffer, 1967) and within broader organisational settings (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Accompanying this shift in understanding were changes in how cynicism was measured, transitioning from early instruments like the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI [Hathaway & McKinely, 1943]) to modern, context-specific scales (Bedeian, 2007; Brockway et al., 2002).

Before the development of specialised cynicism scales, the construct suffered from inconsistent measurement, with researchers arbitrarily selecting various attitudinal dimensions. These ranged from (but not limited to) the presence of hostility or anger (Cook & Medley, 1954), frustration (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989), hopelessness (Andersson, 1996), disillusionment (Andersson & Bateman, 1997), disappointment (Vance et al., 1995), questioning of others' motives (Butcher et al., 1989), and how "nothing makes a difference" (Brooks & Vance, 1995).

Such unsystematic approaches to the measurement of cynicism – choosing some dimensions while ignoring others yet labelling the outcomes of these disparate measures as cynicism – have rendered the accumulated knowledge on the topic fragmented and unreliable.

In the 1990s the evolution of work dynamics and the adoption of internet technologies rendered employees constantly reachable and introduced a new layer of complexity to the study of cynicism (e.g., Maslach et al., 1996). The era saw burnout rise, prompting researchers to consider cynicism as a core component of this broader construct (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Maslach et al., 1996). While tools like the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT) made significant contributions to measuring burnout, they did not fully capture the subtle aspects of organisational cynicism (e.g., Schaufeli et al., 2020). Despite these advances, the field continues to face challenges, such as inconsistent definitions and measures, indicating the need for an updated approach. The ongoing evolution of cynicism research underscores the imperative for more systematic approaches that tackle its complexity and contextual variability.

1.2. Conceptual Challenges

The pursuit of understanding organisational cynicism has been fraught with conceptual challenges that have impeded scholarly progress. One issue is the unsystematic approach to measurement, as highlighted by a meta-analysis that found no correlations between job stressors such as workload, role conflict, role ambiguity, and cynicism (Guthier et al., 2020). Further complicating the field are issues such as construct contamination and a disconnect between theoretical definitions and operationalised items, which compromise the reliability of research findings (e.g., Brockway et al., 2002; Stanley et al., 2005). Past research frameworks measured cynicism as an attitude comprised of beliefs, affects, and behaviours (Dean et al., 1998). However, aligning with contemporary scholars, I contend that cynicism is more precisely

captured by the cognitive beliefs of employees, which subsequently inform their affects and guide their behaviours (Bedeian, 2007; Cole et al., 2006; Vance, 2017). By adopting this focused cognitive approach, I clarify the latent indicators of organisational cynicism, thereby providing a strong foundation for actionable insights and targeted interventions for both academic research and organisational practice.

1.3. Problem Statement

The abundance of disparate interpretations and inconsistent operationalisations of organisational cynicism in the scholarly literature poses a challenge for researchers. Such divergence results in an ongoing debate about whether cynicism should be captured as a disposition with the target being life and the world as a whole or should we conceptualise it as a specific attitude towards specific targets such as one's organisation or job. Further there is debate on whether cynicism is a cognitive attitude or a set of emotions and a facet of burnout or disengagement (Dean et al., 1998; Hathaway & McKinley, 1943; Schaufeli et al., 2020). These variances have precipitated incoherent approaches to measuring cynicism, undermining the utility of existing research and casting doubt on its empirical conclusions (Abraham, 2000; Chiaburu et al., 2013; Coles et al., 2006).

Amidst evolving workplace dynamics, such as the rise of remote and hybrid work settings and the increasing influence of AI, the absence of a unified definition and standardised measurement criteria becomes even more problematic (Chi et al., 2020). These work contexts introduce new challenges, like cynicism's impact on employee expectations, trust in organisational effectiveness, and perceptions of their own voice within the organisation (Brockway et al., 2002; Cole et al., 2006; Naus et al., 2007). Despite these complications, existing literature falls short of offering comprehensive frameworks that capture the multifaceted nature of cynicism or a robust nomological network to understand its predictors, prevalence, and

consequences (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Demerouti et al., 2001). The Conservation of Resources model is often used to explore these relationships; however the JD-R model also emerges as promising exploring some of these relationships and will be explored further within this thesis (Bakker & de Vries, 2021).

1.4. Proposed Solution to the Problem

Addressing the intricate issue of employee cynicism requires a multifaceted solution that goes beyond superficial treatment. I aim to make a contribution by conducting a comprehensive theoretical review that defines the construct of cynicism, identifies its antecedents, and outlines its potential consequences in the workplace. To support this aim, I develop and validate a multidimensional scale to measure the cognitive underpinnings of organisational cynicism: the OCS. These tools will serve as resources for future researchers, enabling them to measure varying levels of cynicism among employees and gauge its impact on a multitude of workplace outcomes.

1.5. Research Aims

The aims of this thesis are four-fold:

Aim 1: Review and Synthesise Existing Literature Across Multiple Disciplines

The first aim is to undertake a narrative and integrative synthesis of the existing literature concerning cynicism, within the fields of psychology, business management, and stressor–burnout research. This comprehensive review seeks to highlight variations, inconsistencies, and ambiguities in how cynicism is defined and measured in workplace contexts. Further, the aim extends to constructing a nomological network that delineates the construct of cynicism, articulating its known and potential predictors, and its distinctions and similarities to related constructs like trust and burnout.

Aim 2: Conceptualisation

The second aim is to capture the beliefs of the lived experienced of cynicism in the workplace. Study 1 utilises qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups to fulfill this aim. This approach intends to synthesise employee experiences with the literature findings to develop an integrated grounded theory conceptualisation of cynicism. This new conceptualisation will provide the foundation on which to develop survey items and validate a cynicism measurement tool (aim 3).

Aim 3: Scale Development and Validation

The third aim focuses on the development and validation of a psychometrically reliable and valid scale. Study 2 uses exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to explore the reliability and validity of the new cynicism scales across various demographic factors. Study 3, a longitudinal investigation, applies confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to lend support to the proposed model. Additional analyses for convergent and discriminant validity will establish the scales' construct validity, and their incremental predictive value over existing measures for critical workplace outcomes such as burnout, psychological distress, engagement, and trust.

Aim 4: Mediation in JD-R Model and Nomological Network Development

The fourth and final aim examines the mediating role of organisational cynicism within the JD-R model. Specifically, I will explore how organisational cynicism mediates the relationship between selected job demands and the outcomes of exhaustion and burnout, as well as between the resource RBSE and engagement. Additionally, I will develop a nomological network that delineates the association of cynicism with related constructs.

1.6. Theoretical Contributions

This thesis advances the field by developing the theoretical understanding of the nomological network for organisational cynicism. It outlines the construct's boundaries, core

attributes, predictors, and outcomes, such as burnout, engagement, psychological distress, and trust. By offering a comprehensive nomological network and construct clarity, I provide a solid foundation for identifying theoretical gaps in existing frameworks, thereby driving future theoretical innovations. My study goes beyond the tripartite frameworks that have dominated the discourse on organisational cynicism. Instead, it introduces a cognitive framework comprised of four indicators, which measure the following beliefs: *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *adopt change*. These dimensions add complexity and depth to our theoretical understanding of cynicism. Additionally, I integrate organisational cynicism into the JD-R model. It posits cynicism as a mediating variable that bridges job demands, resources, and important employee outcomes such as burnout, exhaustion, and engagement.

Empirical Contributions

I make an empirical contribution to the field of organisational psychology by validating a new psychometric scale. The OCS underwent comprehensive psychometric evaluation, encompassing convergent and discriminant validity, reliability, and incremental predictive validity. Through methodologically rigorous approaches, the OCS contributed a more comprehensive understanding of cynicism over existing measures of cynicism (e.g., burnout subscales and unpublished scales). This has established its incremental predictive validity for a variety of workplace outcomes like engagement, trust, and burnout. Data from this research delineates cynicism from burnout, identifying distinct latent indicators for each construct. Such differentiation underscores the necessity for tailored interventions for cynicism and burnout, underlining the practical significance of these scales. The qualitative study employed in Study 1 refined the conceptualisation of organisational cynicism (Podsakoff et al., 2016).

1.7. Bridging the Gap

By offering a comprehensive theoretical framework and empirically sound tools for measuring the multifaceted nature of organisational cynicism, I provide resources for both academic researchers and industry practitioners. My research responds to the need for empirical and theoretical clarity amidst the dynamic shifts in work environments, influenced by ongoing technological advancements and the variable nature of hybrid work models. In undertaking this endeavour, the research not only bridges current literature gaps but also lays a solid foundation for subsequent empirical studies and theoretical developments.

1.8. Thesis Overview

This thesis comprises six interrelated chapters that systematically explore the complexities of organisational cynicism, aiming to address gaps in existing research. **Chapter 1** has served as an introduction, presenting the problem statement, research aims, and the anticipated contributions of this study. **Chapter 2** delves into a narrative literature review, examining the concept of organisational cynicism and establishing the need for sound measurement tools. This sets the stage for the development of the new scale, which are central to the thesis. **Chapter 3** outlines my study's methodological framework across three interrelated studies: qualitative interviews and focus groups in Study 1, cross-sectional survey data in Study 2, and longitudinal survey data in Study 3. This robust methodology ensures the validity of the newly developed scales and provides a foundation for the empirical analyses in subsequent chapters.

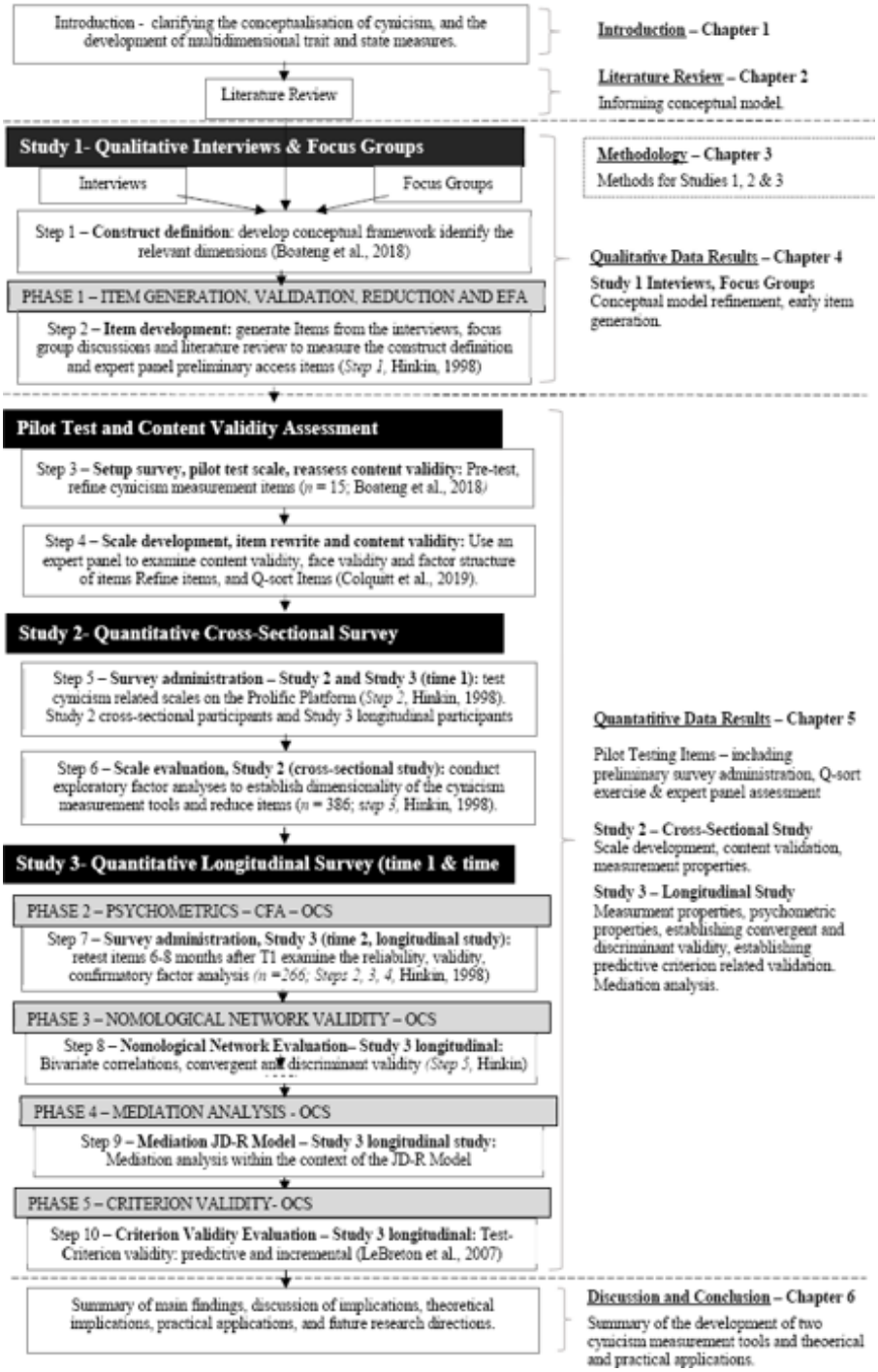
Chapters 4 and 5 present the empirical data of the thesis. **Chapter 4** reports on a qualitative investigation within a large state government department, identifying core dimensions of cynicism. It synthesises these empirical insights with the literature review to formulate a

modern conceptualisation of cynicism and provides the groundwork for the development of the OCS scale.

Chapter 5 brings these scales to the forefront, refining and validating them through two subsequent studies. This chapter confirms the psychometric properties of the . The thesis concludes with **Chapter 6**, which synthesises the main findings, validates the developed scales, and positions organisational cynicism as an influential construct in the workplace, affecting employee engagement, well-being, and trust. This approach not only enriches academic discourse but also provides actionable insights for future research and practical interventions. Figure 1.1 presents a summary of the outline, methodology, content, and structure of each chapter.

Figure 1.1.

Overview of Thesis Structure, Methodology, and Content



Note. The figure outlines the thesis's structure and methodology, detailing the development of the OCS scale starting with an initial literature review. Study 1 employs qualitative methods, followed by a pilot study. Studies 2 and 3 involve quantitative surveys. The thesis progresses across five phases and follows a 10-step plan to test the reliability and validity of the scales, adapted from Brod et al. (2009) and Hinkin (1998).

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

"A cynic is not merely one who reads bitter lessons from the past; he is prematurely disappointed in the future." (HL Mencken 1880–1956)

2.1.Overview and Structure

In today's hybrid work environment, cynicism remains a complex psychological and organisational construct that warrants scholarly inquiry, emphasizing the need for a precise and well-defined conceptual framework. This thesis employs a methodological approach, guided by the recommendations of Podsakoff et al. (2016), to construct a conceptual definition for organisational cynicism. Their four-step process ensures clarity, precision, and a strong theoretical foundation in exploring organisational cynicism. The four steps used to develop the conceptual definition are as follows.

1) First, this literature review will collect relevant academic definitions to identify key attributes.

2) Second, these attributes will be categorised to enhance clarity and organisation.

3) Then, this literature review will conclude by taking the key points and commonalities in existing definitions to develop a current definition of “organisational cynicism” as it exists in the literature. At the end of this step, I will also provide a critical analysis of what may be the conceptual and measurement issues in the current literature with respect to the definition and conceptualisation of organisational cynicism. The outcome of this step provides the motivation for Study 1, qualitative interviews.

4) The fourth and final step in refining the conceptual definition of organisational cynicism occurs in Chapter 4, employing qualitative interviews to integrate real-world perspectives, enriching the depth and validity of the research.

To achieve this conceptual framework approach, I have organised this chapter into key sections, each targeting a specific aspect of cynicism, ranging from its historical roots to evolving definitions, challenges in measurement, and theoretical frameworks. The review identifies several obstacles impeding cynicism research, such as inconsistencies between conceptualisation and measurement, and issues of construct contamination, mainly when cynicism is considered a component of employee burnout. By spotlighting these challenges, the review emphasises the need for a standardised conceptualisation and a reliable, valid workplace measurement instrument.

2.2.Objectives and Search Strategy

This section delineates the objectives guiding this review and the literature search strategy. The first objective investigates the evolution of cynicism, tracing its journey from Greek philosophical roots to its modern conceptualisation as a trait, an attitudinal state, and a sub-component of burnout (Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998; Maslach et al., 1996). Second, the review highlights inconsistencies and contradictions in conceptualising and measuring cynicism. Third, it provides a preliminary examination of the nomological network of cynicism, focusing on its theoretical foundations in stressor–burnout literature and broader psychology and management literature. Finally, the review aims to establish a comprehensive framework for future measurement developments in workplace cynicism.

To achieve these objectives, I conducted a comprehensive search which spanned multiple databases, including Business Source Complete, Business Source Ultimate, ProQuest (covering

ERIC, Psychology, Sociology, and Social Science), PsycINFO, and Google Scholar. The search included literature up to October 2023 and encompassed dissertations, peer-reviewed articles, and A-star journal articles. Keywords such as "cynicism," "organisational cynicism," "organisational cynicism," "employee cynicism," and "trait cynicism" were used to capture employee cynicism in psychology and business literature specifically.

2.3.Evolution of Cynicism: From Ancient Philosophy to Modern Constructs

Cynicism, as a phenomenon, has persisted across various historical epochs, emphasising its enduring nature. While it is not exclusive to the 20th century, its historical continuity underscores the importance of situating workplace cynicism within a broader historical and organisational context, enhancing our understanding of its multifaceted nature.

The term "cynicism" originates from the ancient Greek word "*kynikos*," which translates to "dog-like," rooted in "*kyon*," the Greek word for "dog", and was intended as an insult. Alternatively, some scholars suggest the term may trace its origins to "Cynosarges," near Athens, where Cynic philosophers engaged in scholarly discussions. In essence, the philosophy of cynicism emanates from the ascetic and ethical lifestyles of influential Greek philosophers Antisthenes and Diogenes (Dean et al., 1998). Contrary to this foundational idea, Epictetus reframes cynicism as a discipline promoting self-control rather than criticism of societal institutions (Laursen, 2009). The individualistic and anti-institutional nature of ancient cynicism limits its development into an accepted school of thought (Cutler, 2000). In later periods, figures like Roosevelt and Machiavelli redefined a "cynic" as a calculating, insincere critic engaged in criticism, thereby imbuing the term with negative connotations (Machiavelli et al., 1988; Roosevelt, 1910).

In the context of organisations, cynicism takes on a different facet. Here, it often refers to a negative attitude towards one's place of employment, characterised by disbelief in the integrity or

sincerity of the organisation and its leaders (Abraham, 2000; Dean et al., 1998). Thus, the concept has evolved considerably from its ancient origins and now serves as a lens through which to examine employee attitudes within modern organisations (Naus et al., 2007).

Modern dictionaries provide different definitions of cynicism that reflect its evolving nature. *Merriam-Webster* (1993) defines cynicism as a belief in human behaviour driven solely by self-interest. This sentiment is echoed by the *Cambridge Online Dictionary* (2023) and the *Oxford Online Dictionary* (2023), which both describe cynics as sceptical of altruistic motives. This shift in understanding aligns with previous academic discourse, which characterises contemporary cynics as individuals who doubt the sincerity and ethicality of human actions (Dean et al., 1998) and question societal and political systems (Cutler, 2000). Such cynics are described as casting aspersions (Stanley et al., 2005) and displaying mistrust (Schraeder et al., 2016). A political theorist, Chaloupka (1999), suggests that today's cynics have lost faith in nearly everything.

My research concluded that cynicism manifests as a belief in the futility of effort, casting endeavours such as proactivity, speaking up, building relationships, and adopting change as pointless and a waste of time. This sentiment echoes early philosophical debates around the utility of philosophy itself. In his 1931 work, Fuller struggled with similar questions, asking, "What is the use of philosophy? Does it get us anywhere?" (p. 12). These inquiries align closely with the cynic's mindset, which also interrogates the value and usefulness of actions. This scepticism can be viewed as an early intellectual framework that encapsulates the modern cynic's sense of futility (Fuller, 1931).

2.3.2. Evolution of Definitions in Academia

While ancient in origin, the concept of cynicism has undergone different transformations since its inception, it did not capture scholarly attention until the 1940s. This section explores the

academic evolution of cynicism through its different conceptual frameworks, setting the foundation for its reconceptualisation to align with modern workplaces.

Historical and Conceptual Evolution of Trait-Based Cynicism. Personality traits manifest as enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that influence how an individual interacts with the world (Cook & Medley, 1954; Dean et al., 1998; Guastello et al., 1992). As conceptualised within the domain of personality traits, cynicism remains stable over time and is less susceptible to changes by external influences such as workplace environments (Dean et al., 1998). The origins of this trait-centric view emerged from research into personality traits around World War II (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943). Cynicism as a dispositional trait encompasses feelings of hostility, anger, and a pervasive belief that people in this world are inherently selfish or dishonest (Cook & Medley, 1954; Costa et al., 1986; Hochwarter et al., 2004).

The post-World War II period marked an academic interest in cynicism as scholars pivoted towards the study of cynicism (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943). Initially, this attention focused on cynicism as a sub-component of hysteria, with physical symptoms serving as psychological defence mechanisms for expressing underlying cynicism in a socially acceptable manner. However, by the 1950s, academic focus had shifted towards the social and cultural factors influencing behaviour. Pioneering this shift, Cook and Medley (1954) explored the role of cynicism and hostility in interpersonal relationships, arguing that these traits contribute to individual distrust and little faith in peers. This work paved the way for understanding how trait cynicism influences broader societal structures, including workplace behaviour. Specifically, trait cynicism fosters scepticism and predisposes employees to adopt cynical attitudes towards their organisations (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Reichers et al., 1997; Stanley et al., 2005).

From 1960 to 1980, scholarly inquiry focused on societal attitudes towards institutions and authority, punctuated by seminal experiments like Milgram's study on obedience (Milgram, 1963) and the Stanford Prison Experiment (Zimbardo et al., 1971). These studies illuminated the role of systemic and situational factors in shaping hostility and how external forces can lead to a dislike for others, questioning their motives, and mistrust in relationships (Ben-Porath, 2012; Duckworth & Anderson, 2019; Friedman et al., 2014; Rogers et al., 2006). Building on this foundation, the American Psychological Association (APA) initiated research into individual differences that might predispose people to cynical views. This academic interest resulted in the revised 1989 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III) (APA, 1980) formally defining cynicism as a stable personality trait, framing it as a generally negative attitude towards life and as a coping mechanism for navigating a suboptimal world (Butcher et al., 1989; Costa et al., 1986; Graham, 1990; Mirvis & Kanter, 1989). Table 2.1 outlines the historical periods, scholars, nature of cynicism, its definition, and key attributes during its evolution from 1940 to 1989.

Evolution of Workplace Cynicism: From Attitude to Multifaceted Construct. In contrast to personality traits, which generally remain stable over time and capture inclinations across situations in life, cynicism in the workplace is likely to be a dynamic and evolving state of being wherein one’s experiences in the specific workplace environment is likely to increase or decrease cynicism levels (Niederhoffer, 1967). Scholars who adopt such a lens of looking at cynicism as a state which can vary between situations- define it as a negative self-defensive state of being that manifests in terms of combinations of dimensions, such as (a) beliefs/thoughts, (b) affect/emotions, and/or (c) behaviours/actions (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Cole et al., 2006; Dean et al., 1998). Historically, cynicism was considered as a psychological state which was an adaptive response to the stresses and challenges of an organisational environment (Meyerson, 1990). Over

time, its definition has evolved, influenced by broader social, political, and technological changes (Cole et al., 2006).

Before the 1950s, researchers focused on cynicism in the context of life in general rather than the workplace. The 1960s marked the first study that examined occupational cynicism, specifically among police officers (Niederhoffer, 1967). This initial study defined occupational cynicism as an adaptive behavioural response to the stressors associated with confronting adversaries and navigating toxic organisational cultures (Niederhoffer, 1967). Within this framework, cynicism functioned as a coping mechanism to manage emotional stress and ambiguity within organisations (Meyerson, 1990; Regoli et al., 1990). The prevailing notion held that this form of cynicism arises from experience; for instance, police officers began to distrust the very communities they were meant to protect, resulting in a loss of "faith in people, society, and eventually in themselves" (Niederhoffer, 1967, p. 9).

The 1990s presented a critical juncture in studying cynicism within social sciences, influenced by distinct situational pressures. This decade witnessed significant political upheaval, including the first Gulf War and the end of the Cold War, and credibility crises for world leaders like US President Bill Clinton. Alongside these political shifts, technological advancements such as the World Wide Web revolutionised individual communication, enabling the rapid dissemination of both information and disinformation. These societal changes have guided the academic agenda, evidenced by a surge in studies examining workplace cynicism during this period (Andersson, 1996; Reichers et al., 1997).

Table 2.1

Conceptual Evolution of Trait-Based Cynicism

Historical Period	Scholars	Nature	Cynicism Definition Evolution Overview	Key Attributes of this Subdimension of Cynicism
WWII	Hathaway & McKinley (1943)	Dispositional Trait	• Hysteria was first formally defined as a construct that indicated a psychological disorder wherein an individual showed symptoms of stress through negative emotional expression and psychosomatic symptoms (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943). • The construct of Hysteria included within it a sub-component that was labelled cynicism.	Hysteria sub-component cynicism attributes: • questioning nature • difficulty convincing people of the truth • the belief that others used unfair means to gain an advantage.
Post-WWII	Cook & Medley (1954)	Dispositional Trait	• Cynicism was labelled hostility. • Hostility was first conceptualised as a trait – an individual's disposition towards hate, cynicism, and a general attitude of distrust for others	Hostility cynicism attributes: • chronic hate and anger • dislike for others • the belief that others are dishonest and insincere.
DSM-III, 3rd Ed.	Butcher et al. (1989)	Dispositional Trait	• This formal definition of cynicism classified it as a stable personality trait in the 3rd Ed., of the DSM-III (Costa et al., 1986; Graham, 1990). • Negative connotations, but psychopathology not implied (Costa et al., 1986).	Cynicism subscale attributes: • a reduced vulnerability; being guarded and untrusting in relationships (Duckworth & Anderson, 2019; Friedman, 2014) • hostility and dislike for others (Ben-Porath, 2012) • a critical worldview: expecting others to lie and cheat, a distrustful belief that questions the motives of others (Rogers et al., 2006) • rigid, suspicious, and hypersensitive (Butcher, 2006) • resentful of demands placed on them (Graham, 1990).
DSM-III, 3rd Ed.	Kanter & Mirvis (1989)	Coping mechanism	• A coping mechanism and a protective shield for dealing with a world perceived as less than optimal (Mirvis & Kanter, 1989).	Measures of life attitudes cynicism attributes: • unrealistic high expectations of self and others • protective (Mirvis & Kanter, 1989) • disappointed and frustrated with the outcomes • disillusionment – sense of being let down, deceived, and betrayed by others • adopting a realist, cold, calculating view of life • mistrust others' motives and assume others act in their self-interests.

Simultaneously, the 1990s saw a transformative shift in the academic understanding of cynicism. During this time, Brooks and Vance (1991) presented a new framework for cynicism, defining it through two learned beliefs. First, fixable problems exist within organisations. Second, individuals felt powerless to fix these problems. Scholars built upon this groundwork by adding more depth to the definition of cynicism. They argued that cynical employees commonly believed that fixable problems would remain unresolved due to uncontrollable external factors (Tesluk et al., 1995). They saw suggesting improvements as futile (Vance et al., 1995, p. 2). Brooks and Vance's (1991) conceptualisation of cynicism established the groundwork for my research, which centres on the cognitive dimension of cynicism, encapsulating employees' beliefs in futility.

In the 2000s, corporate environments became breeding grounds for opportunistic behaviours, fostering broad societal mistrust (Twenge et al., 2004). Reduced regulation on internet platforms and the introduction of mobile phones further facilitated this, changing how individuals expressed themselves and enabling the spread of misinformation (Van Dijck, 2013). This era reflected a shift in scholarly understanding of cynicism towards change, which comprised two key components: a pessimistic expectation about change outcomes and placing blame on those managing the change for failures (Wanous et al., 2000). It was a state characterised by negative emotions towards others, ideology, or institutions (Wanous et al., 2000). This shift in academic attention underscored the complexity and evolving nature of cynicism related to organisational dynamics.

Over the decades, definitions of cynicism have alternated between multidimensional and unidimensional frameworks. For instance, some scholars defined cynicism as a "negative attitude towards one’s employing organisation," comprising beliefs, affects, and behaviours (Dean et al.,

1998, p. 345). However, other scholars streamlined cynicism into a more precise attitude focused on its cognitive component to mitigate issues stemming from complex constructs across different contexts (Bedeian, 2014; Stanley et al., 2005). These varied conceptualisations underscore the necessity for my research, which clarifies these notions by concentrating on the cognitive underpinnings of cynicism.

This evolution in understanding cynicism has also led to an expansion in the focus on referent targets within scholarly discussions. Earlier studies of state cynicism as a psychological attitude and emergent state primarily considered cynicism towards organisations or specific roles (Abraham, 2000; Niederhoffer, 1967). However, modern research has begun to address cynicism towards more diversified referent targets such as academia (Bedeian, 2014), colleges (Brockway et al., 2002), and change (Stanley et al., 2005; Wanous et al., 2000). This emerging trend highlights the need for more adaptive and flexible scales, another gap my research aims to fill by designing new scales with adaptive referent targets.

Scholars have conceptualised cynicism in various ways, emphasising different attitudinal dimensions and shifting referent targets. Table 2.2 presents the evolution of workplace cynicism from the 1960s to the 2000s. It includes dimensions such as historical epochs, key researchers, attitudinal facets, referent objects, and defining characteristics. This table highlights the complexity involved in conceptualising cynicism, which further complicates the pursuit of a unified definition. This theme of complexity continues in the upcoming section, where the examination shifts to cynicism's dual role as an element of burnout constructs and a self-defence mechanism.

Table 2.2

Evolution of Workplace Cynicism: From Attitude to Multifaceted Construct

Historical Period	Scholars	Attitudinal State	Referent Target	Cynicism Definition Evolution Overview	Key Attributes of this Subdimension of Cynicism
Post-WWII	Niederhoffer (1967)	Behavioural /coping mechanism	Occupation	• Cynicism towards one's occupation was first formally observed and reported as a phenomenon evident among police officers • An adaptive behavioural reaction to the stress of dealing with adversaries and being embedded in a context with unhealthy cultures • Inability to express those feelings towards the structure or person causing them, so directed towards the occupation • The belief was that cynicism was a emergent psychological state derived from experience	• Loss of enthusiasm, personal pride, and integrity • Hostility and hate • A detached, passive, and apathetic belief • Helplessness • Adaptive coping reaction
Political turmoil & Gulf War	Regoli et al. (1990)	Behavioural /coping mechanism	Occupation	• The same definition as Niederhoffer (1967), except resentment and cynicism not to be used interchangeably • An individual with cynicism does not genuinely change values	• Loss of enthusiasm, personal pride, and integrity • Hostility and resentment • A detached, passive, and apathetic belief • Helplessness • Adaptive coping reaction
Political turmoil & Gulf War	Meyerson (1990)	Behavioural Affective	Occupation	• Cynicism among social workers and the human services field • An emotion revealed through humour, particularly cynical humour, to cope with ambiguity • Adaptive response to ambiguity balancing contradictions (e.g., enthusiasm/frustration, idealism/realism, rope/hopelessness) • Acknowledging ambiguities without need for resolution	• Apathy and self-defeat expressed as deleterious cynicism • Exacerbated feelings of despair • Cynical humour
Introduction of the World Wide Web	Brooks & Vance (1991)	Learned belief	Organisation	• A learned belief was that fixable problems existed within organisations, and cynics felt	• A feeling of powerlessness towards externally constrained problems

	Vance et al. (1995)			powerless to fix problems (Brooks & Vance, 1991)	• A belief that it is a waste of time to make improvement suggestions (Vance et al., 1995) • A premature disappointment in the future (HL Mencken, 1880-1956)
World Wide Web	Tesluk (1995)	Learned belief	Organisation	• Added the following aspects to Brooks & Vance (1991): (a) that problems would remain unresolved due to elements outside the individual's control (Tesluk et al., 1995) (b) problems are fixable, but making improvement suggestions was a waste of time (Vance et al., 1995)	• A feeling of powerlessness towards externally constrained problems • A belief that it is a waste of time to make improvement suggestions (Vance et al., 1995)
World Wide Web	Reichers et al. (1997)	Attitude	Organisation and change	• Cynicism towards change was the focus • It related to experiences of unsuccessful change attempts and from a lack of confidence in management • It was a psychological state characterised as losing faith in management's ability to implement change successfully	• A self-defensive attitude to protect from perceived failures • A loss of confidence in management's ability
World Wide Web	Dean et al. (1998)	Negative Attitude Cognitive Affective Behavioural	Organisation	• The cynicism examined as an employee's attitude towards the workplace to capture the employee's perceived experiences within the workplace • A negative attitude that comprised three dimensions: (a) a belief, (b) an affect, and (c) a behaviour. • May give a "voice of conscience for the organisation" (p. 347)	• A belief the workplace lacks integrity • Negative emotions towards the workplace • Degrading and denigrating workplace behaviours, including rolling-eyes, smirks, and sarcastic humour
New millennium	Abraham (2000)	Self-Defensive Attitude Cognitive Affective Behavioural	Organisation	• Cynicism conceptualisation prevailed as a self-defensive attitude that comprised three dimensions: (a) belief, (b) affect, and (c) behaviour • A belief that management lacked integrity and would pursue self-interests through hidden motives	• A belief that leadership would seek to further self-interests through hidden motives and deception • Characterised by anger, contempt, distress, shame, suspicion, and disillusionment • Disparaging, harsh, and critical workplace behaviours

				• Negative emotions of anger, contempt, distress, shame, and disparaging and critical workplace behaviours	
New millennium	Wanous et al. (2000)	General and specific attitude	Change	• Cynicism is a specific and general attitude marked by frustration, disillusionment, and negative sentiments, coupled with mistrust toward individuals, groups, ideologies, or institutions • Attitude related to organisational change (Cynicism About Organisational Change [CAOC]) is comprised of two elements (p. 135) (a) pessimistic outlook for successful change (b) blamed placed on those deemed incompetent in effectively managing change • Cynicism from change failure to blaming others signals dispositional attribution rather than situational attribution, as there is no one to blame • Not associated with the trait of negative affectivity	• Frustration and disillusionment • Negative emotions towards others, ideology, or institutions
Reduced internet regulation	Brockway et al. (2002)	Attitude Cognitive	Specific Target - College	• The development of a scale with a specific target. • Student cynical attitudes and perceptions towards various college dimensions, e.g., policy, academic, social, and institutional	• Perceived mismatch between expectations and environment
Reduced internet regulation	Stanley (2006)	Cognitive	Change	• Cynicism conceptualisation focuses on others' integrity and questioning their implied or stated motives. • It relates to people's and management's motives in general and the individual's and manager's specific motives (Stanley et al., 2005). • Attitude comprises only a cognitive component to avoid potential problems	• Questioning motives

				associated with complex constructs across different contexts.	
Smart phones for work	Chiaburu et al. (2013) Meta-analysis	Cognitive Affective Behavioural	Organisation	• Cynicism meta-analysis of antecedents and consequences of employee organisational cynicism • According to Dean et al. (1998), organisation cynicism definition a "negative attitude towards one's employing organisation." • Expanded to include organisational procedures, processes, and management (Wilkerson, 2002).	• Negative attitude towards the organisation as a whole • Belief the organisation lacks integrity • A psychological state or attitude comprised of beliefs, affects, behaviours
Smart phones for work	Bedeian (2014)	Cognitive Critical Appraisal Attitude	Academia	• An attitude that critically judges the motives, actions, and values of one's employing organisation (i.e., university) • Viewed as a subjectively based construct	• An evaluative judgment of an individual's employment experiences

Historical Evolution: Cynicism as a Burnout Component. During the 1980s, a period marked by economic deindustrialisation and corporate takeovers, the term "burnout" emerged to describe a psychological state characterised by emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and depersonalisation (Hadzibajramović et al., 2020; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Initially, depersonalisation encompassed what professionals now call "cynicism," indicating a psychological withdrawal from work and its associated demands. As economic and occupational landscapes evolved, the term transformed from "depersonalisation" to "cynicism," accommodating a broader range of professions and attitudes towards work (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). This transformation illustrates the historical and conceptual fluidity of cynicism within the broader framework of workplace burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

Further nuance of cynicism's role in the burnout construct comes from scholars like Leiter and Maslach (1988) and Lee and Ashforth (1993), who propose that cynicism serves both as a precursor and an outcome within the burnout process. Divergent models illustrate this complexity. For instance, Leiter and Maslach's process model posits that exhaustion triggers cynicism, which impairs professional efficacy (Leiter & Maslach, 1988). In contrast, the phase model by Golembiewski et al. (1986) argues that cynicism initiates burnout, affecting both work performance and perceptions of accomplishment. Further complicating the narrative, Lee and Ashforth (1996) propose a hybrid approach: while exhaustion leads to cynicism, reduced personal efficacy evolves independently. This heterogeneity in theoretical models highlights cynicism's multifaceted role in burnout, challenging the notion of it being merely a burnout component and underscoring the need for a separate examination of cynicism.

In the late 1990s, the academic discourse shifted emphasis, framing cynicism as a coping mechanism, which contributed to its conceptual complexity independent of burnout. This body of research underscored cynicism's multifaceted nature, delineating it as both a generalised and specific attitude that is context-dependent and influenced by experience (Andersson & Bateman, 1997). This shift in understanding marks an important divergence from traditional perspectives, emphasising that employees utilise cynicism as a psychological buffer against emotionally threatening situations (Andersson, 1996). Furthermore, before the advent of Covid-19, the conceptualisation of cynicism had evolved from a state of withdrawal to a state of emotional indifference, characterised by a mental distancing from work (Schaufeli et al., 2020). Recent research frames cynicism as a beneficial protective coping mechanism, especially in stressful work environments, further complicating its role within the burnout construct (Yu et al., 2022).

In the 2010s, the advent of smartphones for work brought about new considerations in conceptualising cynicism as a component of burnout. Alarcon's (2011) burnout meta-analysis defines cynicism as an attitude characterised by scepticism, distrust, negative beliefs and distancing oneself from the job or clients by ignoring their engaging qualities. This view of cynicism as a key element of burnout was further supported by the World Health Organisation's 11th revision of the International Classification of Diseases (2018), which characterises it by increased mental distance from one’s job and feelings of negativism related to work. Schaufeli et al. (2020) defined cynicism as emotional indifference, exhibiting symptoms such as withdrawal and finding one's job meaningless. Similarly, other scholars assert that cynicism remains a core dimension of burnout, characterised by distancing from work and questioning its value (Guthier et al., 2020).

The conceptualisation of cynicism has evolved substantially over time. Initially framed as a component of employee burnout in the late 1990s (Maslach et al., 1996), it was later identified

as a self-defensive mechanism independent of burnout (Andersson, 1996). Advances in technology and shifts in work dynamics in the 2010s further complicated its role within the burnout construct (Alarcon, 2011; Guthier et al., 2020). Today, cynicism is more than a negative disposition towards work; it encompasses critically questioning work's inherent value (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). This historical evolution demonstrates that it is inadequate to categorise cynicism as a subset of burnout for two main reasons. First, it limits the scope of cynicism to work-related stress and exhaustion, neglecting its broader implications (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Second, it overlooks the independent mechanisms through which cynicism operates (Schaufeli et al., 2020).

Traditional frameworks may no longer fully capture the complexities of cynicism in the modern workplace. To provide context, Table 2.3 presents a summary that traces the historical evolution of cynicism as a component of burnout/coping mechanisms. The table includes the historical periods, contributing authors, attitudinal aspects, referent targets, definitions, and key attributes.

Table 2.3

Evolution of Cynicism as a Burnout Component/Coping Mechanism

Historical Period	Authors	Attitudinal Aspect	Target	Cynicism Definition Evolution Overview	Key Attributes of this Subdimension of Cynicism
Economic Deindustrialisation	Maslach & Jackson (1981)	Behavioural (trait components that change contextually)	Component of Burnout	• "Burnout" was coined and identified as a psychological state characterised by emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and depersonalisation (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) subdimension of depersonalisation, in many ways, encompassed the idea of cynical attitudes and feelings • Indicates the act of distancing oneself from work and work demands (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) • Captured inappropriate or negative attitudes towards clients, a loss of idealism, and increased irritability and withdrawal at work (Maslach & Leiter, 2016)	• Depersonalisation • A negative attitude or a negative emotion • A loss of idealism • Withdrawal • Irritability
Introduction of World Wide Web	Maslach et al., 1996)	Behavioural Protective mechanism (trait components that change contextually)	Component of Burnout	• Cynicism as a core burnout component, along with inefficacy and exhaustion • It represents the interpersonal burnout dimension • Refers to a negative, hostile, or an excessive detached response to the job • Self-protective, serving as an emotional buffer	• A negative attitude or a negative emotion • A loss of idealism • Withdrawal • Irritability
Introduction of World Wide Web	Andersson 1996 Andersson & Bateman (1997)	Generalised and specific attitudes Self-defensive mechanism	Occupational Examined using Psychological Contract Violation	• Conceptualisation of cynicism was a generalised and specific attitude defined by experience. • Employees used it as a shield to protect themselves from psychologically threatening emotions (Andersson, 1996; Andersson & Bateman, 1997) • As a workplace attitude, it was "characterised by frustration, hopelessness, and disillusionment, as well as contempt towards and distrust of organisational business executives, and/or other objects in the workplace" (Andersson, 1996, p. 1395) •	• Characterised by frustration, hopelessness, and disillusionment • A belief of contempt and distrust towards management • A behavioural coping mechanism

Smart Phones for Work	Alarcon (2011)	Meta-analysis	Component of Burnout	• Defined as an attitude or mindset characterised by scepticism, distrust, and negative beliefs about others or the world	• Attempt to distance from job or clients by actively ignoring their unique engaging qualities
Pre-Covid-19	World Health Org. (2018)	11th revision of international classification of disease (ICD)s	Component of Burnout	• Defined as a component of burnout in ICD-11 • Burnout defined a syndrome stemming from unmanaged chronic workplace stress, encompassing three dimensions. One of these dimensions includes heightened emotional detachment or cynical attitudes toward one's job	• Mental distancing from job • Feelings of negativism or cynicism related to job
Pre-Covid-19	Schaufeli et al., (2020)	A state of emotional indifference (trait components that change contextually) Cognitive Affective	Component of Burnout	• Cynicism conceptualised as mental distancing from one's work • Symptoms of mental distance include cynicism, no motivation, withdrawal, indifference, and finding one's job meaningless	• Mental distancing from one's work • Exhaustion • Emotional impairment • Cognitive impairment
Pre-Covid-19	Guthier et al. (2020)	Meta-analysis	Component of Burnout	• Conceptualised as a core dimension of burnout	• Distancing from work • Cynical about whether one's work contributes anything

2.4.Conceptual Framework for Organisational Cynicism

This section clarifies the conceptualisation of cynicism within the literature following Podsakoff et al. (2016) framework, using step 1, step 2, and step 3.

Step 1: Potential Attributes and Challenges. In developing the conceptual framework for organisational cynicism, the first step involved exploring the literature's evolution on cynicism. This aimed to gather academic definitions and identify key attributes essential for understanding the construct (Podsakoff et al., 2016), providing a foundational understanding of its historical roots and modern iterations.

Step 2: Organise Attributes by Themes. The second step involved organising the identified attributes presented in Tables 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3, into thematic categories to enhance clarity and organisation. Providing a structured framework for understanding organisational cynicism, as defined in the literature. Figure 2.1 supplements these tables and provides a timeline illustrating the historical evolution of cynicism from its philosophical roots to its present roles as a trait, a state, and a component of burnout. To provide clarity and enrich the conceptual framework, I refined the key attributes from the different conceptualisations into thematic categories. Table 2.4 captures this synthesis, detailing the themes, their respective attributes, the relevant scholars who have contributed to these themes, and various types of conceptualisations.

After synthesising key attributes into thematic categories, I identified 6 cognitive themes and 2 emotional outcomes that are associated with the cognitive dimension of cynicism. The following discussion overviews these themes and emotional outcomes. The first theme, *mismatched expectations*, identifies a discord between an individual's anticipations and reality, a sentiment prevalent in both trait and state conceptualisations. This mismatch not only leads to perceptions of lacking integrity but also instigates a feeling of unmet expectations for oneself and others (Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989).

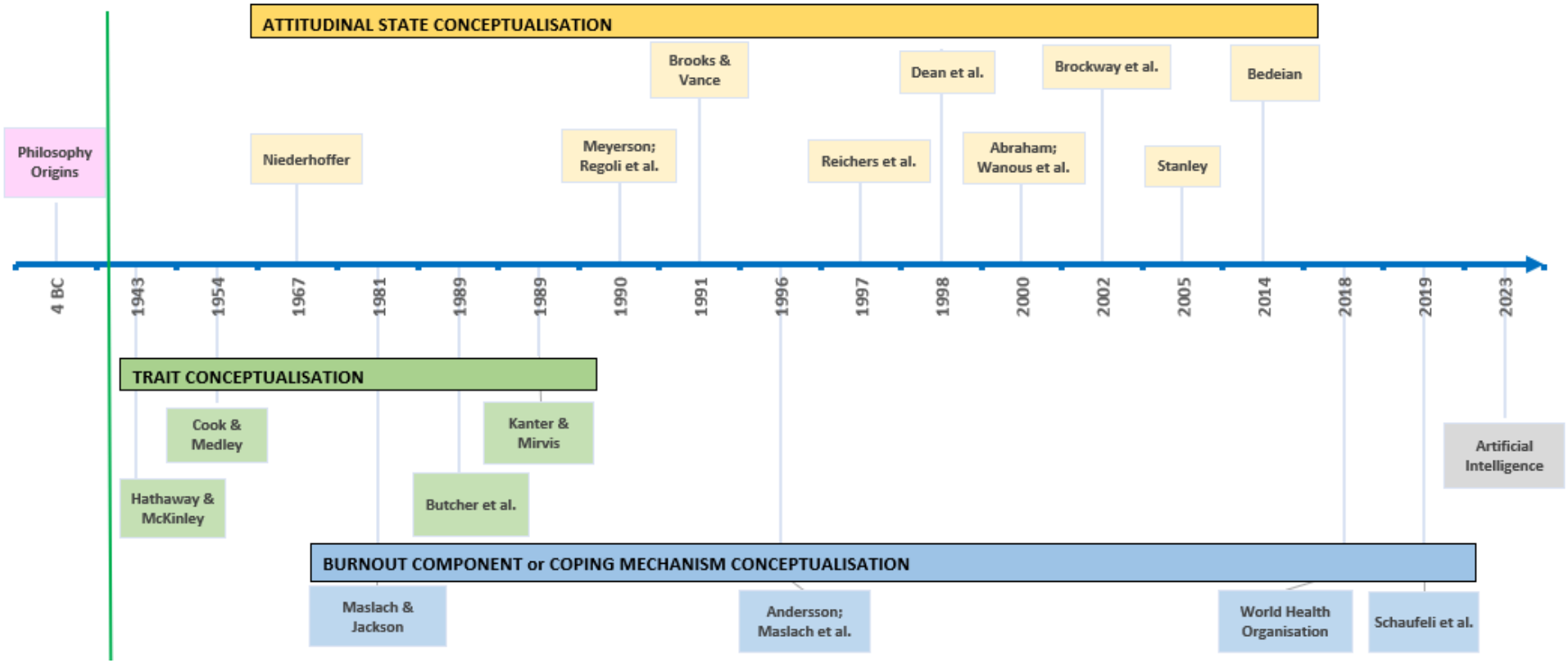
The second theme encapsulates the *futility of organisational change*, where employees perceive their suggestions and efforts as futile and devoid of impact (Brooks & Vance, 1991; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). This theme manifests as an attitudinal state and as a component of burnout. *distrust in organisational effectiveness*, the third theme, articulates a prevailing belief that efforts to initiate change are likely to fail, resulting in a dismissive view towards others' ideas (Abraham, 2000; Brooks & Vance, 1991).

Cynicism also manifests in *critical judgment towards authority*, a theme entrenched in historical antecedents dating back to Greek philosophy and present in trait and state conceptualisations (Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998). This critical outlook often extends to the theme of *questioning the motives of others*, where an individual distrusts the intentions behind actions and decisions (Greek philosophy 4th Century BC, Abraham, 2000; Stanley et al., 2005).

The sixth cognitive themes, perceptions of value and recognition, underline how employees perceive deception and betrayal, influencing their judgments about organisational fairness (Abraham, 2000; Andersson, 1996). This theme extends into the emotional realm, where *negative emotions and attitudes* emerge, fuelled by chronic feelings of anger and resentment (Cook & Medley, 1954; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Emotional outcomes also include *detachment and withdrawal*, revealing self-protective behaviours that serve as coping mechanisms (Butcher et al., 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Reichers et al., 1997).

Figure 2.1.

The Evolution of the Conceptualisation of the Construct of Cynicism



Note. The faint lines indicate the year of each conceptualisation of the construct of cynicism. Philosophy Origins are represented in pink, scholars who shaped trait theory in green, those who defined attitudinal states in yellow, experts who developed frameworks for burnout and coping mechanisms in blue, and AI in grey.

Table 2.4

Cynicism Key Attributes and Thematic Analysis: From Greek Philosophy to Modern Research (4th Century BC–2020)

Themes	Key Attributes	References	Type of Conceptualisation
Cognitive Cynicism – Capturing Employees' Current Beliefs about Future Expectations			
Mismatched expectations	A mismatch between expectations and reality coexists with perceptions of lacking integrity and unmet high expectations for self and others.	Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Reichers et al., 1997.	Dispositional trait Attitudinal state
Futility in organisational change	Speaking up or making suggestions is considered futile and a waste of time due to the perception of minimal benefit.	Brooks & Vance, 1991; Maslach & Jackson 1981.	Attitudinal state Component of burnout
Distrust in organisational effectiveness	Problems that could be fixed remain unresolved due to the prevailing belief that change is unlikely and efforts are destined to fail, leading to contempt for others' ideas.	Abraham, 2000; Brooks & Vance, 1991.	Attitudinal state
Critical judgement towards authority	An overly critical worldview manifests in finding fault with others and making disparaging remarks or denigrating comments.	Greek philosophy 4th Century BC, Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989.	Greek philosophy Dispositional trait Attitudinal state
Questioning the motives of others	Distrust of others' motives, a tendency to question the status quo, challenge changes, and pursue hidden motives.	Greek philosophy 4th Century BC, Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Stanley et al., 2005.	Greek philosophy Dispositional trait Attitudinal state
Perceptions of value and recognition	Perceptions of deception and betrayal shape beliefs about organisational fairness and recognition.	Abraham, 2000; Andersson, 1996; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989.	Dispositional trait Attitudinal state Coping mechanism
Emotional Outcomes Associated with Cognitive Cynicism			
Negative emotions and attitudes	Chronic anger and resentment stem from perceived unfair treatment, fuelling negative emotions and attitudes.	Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998; Cook & Medley, 1954; Maslach & Jackson, 1981, Niederhoffer et al., 1967.	Dispositional trait Attitudinal state Component of burnout
Emotional detachment and withdrawal	Self-protective actions manifest as detachment, apathy, and defensiveness, serving as coping mechanisms.	Abraham, 2000; Andersson, 1996; Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Niederhoffer, 1967; Reichers et al., 1997	Dispositional trait Attitudinal state Coping mechanism Component of burnout

From this analysis, a central sentiment becomes clear, cynicism embodies employees' present beliefs and evaluative judgements about future expectations. Each cognitive theme inherently contains a subjective assessment or appraisal of situations, authorities, or the organisation. For example, *mismatched expectations* encapsulate judgments regarding unmet expectations, and *critical judgment towards authority* involves an evaluative stance towards those in power. Similarly, *futility in organisational change* and *distrust in organisational effectiveness* reflect judgments about the efficacy and reliability of organisational systems and processes.

By distilling and thematically organising key attributes, my goal was to establish a foundational cognitive theoretical framework. This approach offers an in-depth understanding of the multifaceted nature of organisational cynicism and sets the stage for subsequent explorations in my thesis. This synthesised literature will inform the analytical lens for my qualitative study, capturing employees' lived experiences of cynicism through interviews and focus group discussions within modern organisations.

Step 3: Preliminary Definition of Organisational Cynicism Conceptualised from Literature Review. Following the Podsakoff et al. (2016) guidelines for defining constructs, I have developed a preliminary definition of organisational cynicism based on insights synthesised from the literature review mentioned above. Up until now (2024), past work has conceptualised organisational cynicism as employees' perceptions and attitudes in the workplace which includes several attributes such as mismatched expectations, distrust in organisational effectiveness, futility in organisational change, critical judgment, questioning of motives, perceptions of value and recognition, negative emotions and attitudes, and emotional detachment and withdrawal. Past definitions of cynicism differ in how they include and exclude the following attributes:

- Define it as a relatively stable psychological state that is an aggregation of chronic negative emotions and emotional detachment,
- Define it as a cognitive coping mechanism/process characterised by displayed apathy and defensiveness.
- Change the referent of the psychological state of emotions or attitudes comprised of beliefs such that it sometimes looks at cynicism towards specific change initiatives, while at other times choosing the referent to be individual leaders or organisations in general. For example, cynicism towards leader is conceptualised as a critical judgment of authority – where dispositionally cynical employees question others motivations within the organisation; and perceive unfair treatment, distrust & organisational dishonesty. When cynicism is targeted at the organisation, the definition capture different dimensions such as current stable perceptions of past deception, betrayal, and breach of psychological contract across time.
- It is critical to note that the attributes typically included in the existing definitions of cynicism span cognitions/beliefs, emotional states as well as specific behavioural choices. In the current literature, organisational cynicism has also been conceptualised as a psychological state that can change over time and with change in situational context, rather than remaining consistent and stable as a trait across situations.
- However, existing literature on organisational cynicism presents several conceptualisation challenges. Scholars diverge and have not gained consensus on whether cynicism is a cognitive-attitudinal state versus an emotional state, or a blend of both. This lack of specification has led to inconsistency between definitions and misaligned measurements. In addition, there is no clarity on whether cynicism as an

attitude pertains to beliefs about the past or the future. The current inconsistencies in the literature have led to scholars not differentiating between cynicism towards human versus non-human entities. In essence, the construct as it exists in the literature today, has not been clearly defined and conceptualised such that the necessary and sufficient attributes of cynicism are outlined clearly and the conceptualisation of the construct as a unidimensional versus multi-dimensional latent constructs had not been articulated. The current conceptualisation of cynicism within the literature lacks precision and clarity, which is essential to be able to scientifically study a phenomenon and measure it in empirical studies to improve our ability to predict and explain.

2.5.Cognitive Focus

To simplify the complexity of current conceptualisations of cynicism, and to bridge existing gaps, I adopt a cognitive-centric focus. This approach fulfils two primary objectives. Firstly, it addresses a notable gap in the existing literature, which frequently conflates cognitive elements with emotional or behavioural dimensions, thereby obscuring conceptual clarity (Bedeian, 2007; Dean et al., 1998). By isolating cognitive of belief based indicators of cynicism, I aim to delineate the construct and offer a more focused framework for comprehending the meaning and existence of employee cynicism towards organisations. Secondly, this focus permits an investigation into the core beliefs, mental frameworks, and evaluative judgments about the future that are at the core of the conceptualisation of cynicism. This cognitive emphasis weaves together the various literatures of cynicism, laying the groundwork for a more precise conceptualisation, definition and measurement of the construct.

2.6.Measurement of Cynicism, Trait, State and Outcomes like Burnout

This section examines the academic landscape of measuring cynicism, tracing its roots from early historical models to modern applications. It starts by reviewing cynicism in the 1940s as a dispositional trait and then highlighting the inherent shortcomings in these early measures. It then investigates cynicism as a context dependent psychological state or attitude commencing in the 1960s, followed by identifying limitations and challenges in current state-based measures within organisational settings. A shift in focus occurs as the discussion explores the emergence in the 1980s of, first, depersonalisation, then cynicism as a component of the mental health outcome construct of burnout, followed by an evaluation of burnout measurement tools and their implications for cynicism assessment. The section culminates in a critical evaluation that clarifies the evolution of cynicism measurement tools and how my research will address these shortfalls and move the research landscape of cynicism forward.

2.6.1. Trait-Based: 1940s – 1980s

Around the early 1940s, researchers began to measure cynicism using psychometric tool. The field evolved substantially from its inception, reflecting broader changes in the fields of psychology and management. The initial scales, such as those developed by Cook and Medley (1954) and Hathaway and McKinley (1943), incorporated cynicism within larger frameworks designed to assess mental health and personality. In the mid-1960s, the scope shifted to cynicism as a worldview – a global attitude, as evidenced by Wrightsman's 1964 scale. Subsequently, Niederhoffer (1967) examined cynicism as a part of workplace attitudes, specifically among police. Parallel developments include the introduction of new diagnostic criteria with the 1980 release of DSM-III (APA, 1980). By 1989, employee surveys in the US revealed that 43% of respondents exhibited a cynical mentality, defined in the study as a global overarching negative worldview (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989). The following sections provide a detailed examination of

the scholars' instruments that shaped the measurement of cynicism as a dispositional trait from the 1940s to the 1980s.

Hathaway and McKinley (1943), Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. In 1943, Hathaway and McKinley introduced the MMPI, a psychometric test designed initially for diagnosing clinical disorders, including a 60-item subscale called Hy aimed at diagnosing hysteria in female patients (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943). This subscale featured a 6-item cynicism component, influenced by psychiatric practices of the 1930s that what we know now wrongly thought of women in negative terms and assumed that cynicism is gendered and part of the concept of hysteria (see Appendix 2.A – all scale details are available on request as supplementary material). Low scores on this subscale were assumed to indicate a form of dispositional cynicism. It is a complex measure with specialised training requirements to administer, and it took 60 to 90 minutes to complete. It does not meet current psychometric standards and has now been phased out (Ben-Porath, 2012).

Cook and Medley (1954), Cook-Medley Ho Scale. In 1954, Cook and Medley introduced the Cook-Medley Ho Scale to assess individual personality and hostility levels (Cook & Medley, 1954; Dean et al., 1998). The scale, with a construct validity of $\alpha = .75$, comprised 50 true-or-false items, including a 9-item cynicism component (Greenglass & Julkunen, 1991). Once again, the conceptualisation of cynicism as a form of hostility followed the earlier assumptions of seeing it as a form of mental health disorder. Unlike the MMPI, this scale was easier to administer and did not require specialised training. However, the scale includes items that introduce bias or confounding variables, such as questions related to gender relations (reflecting the gendered perceptions of those times), potentially affecting the clarity of the measured construct.

Wrightsman (1964), Philosophies of Human Nature. In 1964, Wrightsman developed the Philosophies of Human Nature (PHN) scale to assess general attitudes about life. It includes a component to measure cynicism towards human nature (Wrightsman, 1964). The cynicism scale contains 10 items with a construct validity of $\alpha = .77$. However, this measure does not address cynicism towards specific aspects of life at work and focussed broadly on life and the world as a whole, making it less relevant for capturing cynicism in an organisational context.

Butcher et al. (1989), MMPI-2. In 1989, Butcher et al. updated the MMPI to include cynicism as a stable personality trait, featuring two components: misanthropic beliefs and interpersonal suspiciousness (Butcher et al., 1989; Graham, 1990). The MMPI-2 incorporated a 23-item cynicism content scale (CYN) with a construct validity of $\alpha = .81$ (Jackson et al., 1997). Example items include "People are honest because they do not want to be caught." However, researchers stated in many publications that a high CYN score does not accurately reflect an individual's cynical motives (Clark, 1994). Additionally, this copyrighted test is specialised for clinical settings, requires training to administer, takes about 90 minutes to complete, and features dispersed cynicism items, complicating scoring (Jackson et al., 1997).

Kanter and Mirvis (1989), Measures of Life Attitudes. In 1989, Kanter and Mirvis introduced the General Cynical Worldview Scale as part of their Measures of Life Attitudes scale. This scale assesses cynicism in two categories: exploitation of the less powerful and self-defensive attitudes. It has seven items with a mix of new and modified components. The scale's construct validity is $\alpha = .78$ (Guastello et al., 1992). Despite later additions of five items to improve internal consistency, the validity only increased marginally by .05, putting its efficacy in capturing the intended construct in question (Guastello et al., 1992).

Greenglass and Julkunen (1989) Cynical-Distrust 9-Item Scale. Greenglass and Julkunen (1989) introduced the 9-Item Cynical-Distrust Scale, a straightforward and easily administered instrument to measure general personality traits such as distrust, cynicism, hostility, and anger expression. The scale has various correlations with psychological, health, and interpersonal variables, such as Type A behaviour, coronary heart disease, and is negatively correlated with interpersonal relationships (r =-.35) (Greenglass & Julkunen, 1989; Watkins et al., 1992). However, despite its psychometric properties, the scale's shortcomings become apparent when applied to organisational settings. Its focus on a broad range of personality traits, including hostility and anger expression, does not align well with the specific construct of organisational cynicism.

Ben-Porath (2012) MMPI-2-RF (Restructured Form). In a significant update to the MMPI-2, Ben-Porath (2012) introduced the MMPI-2-RF, a restructured form focusing on comprehensive personality assessment, including a redesigned 15-item cynicism scale (RC3). This revised scale incorporates 12 of the 23 original cynicism items from the MMPI-2 and aims to capture individual-level traits such as mistrust and hostility towards others. Unlike the MMPI-2, which takes 90 minutes to administer, the MMPI-2-RF takes 35 to 50 minutes. However, like its predecessor, the test requires administration, scoring, and interpretation by qualified professionals, such as clinical psychologists or psychiatrists. Despite its advancements, the MMPI-2-RF underscores the challenges and limitations inherent in existing tools, emphasising the need for a more targeted approach in organisational settings.

2.6.2. Shortcomings in Trait-Based Measurement

Table 2.5 provides an overview of the evolution of dispositional cynicism measurement tools, outlining key metrics such as authors, scales used, validity, and reliability, alongside a critical analysis of each instrument's contribution to understanding cynicism as a dispositional

trait. Additionally, it evaluates each instrument's alignment with the conceptualisation of cynicism as defined in this thesis and developed in Chapter 4.

Historical tools for measuring dispositional cynicism suffer from outdated standards and construct contamination issues. Wrightsman's 1964 scale lacks workplace relevance, while the MMPI-2 and MMPI-2-RF are also ill-suited to organisational settings (Ben-Porath, 2012; Butcher et al., 1989; Jackson et al., 1997). Other scales, like the Greenglass and Julkunen 9-item Cynical-Distrust Scale (1989) and Kanter and Mirvis's 1989 scale, are limited in focus and efficacy (Guastello et al., 1992). These shortcomings underscore the need for more focused, reliable, and relevant cynicism measurement tools that can be applied in organisational settings.

Table 2.5

Cynicism Dispositional Trait Measurement Tools

Historical Period	Authors and Measurement	Dispositional Trait	Scale	Validity	Reliability	Cynicism	Overview and Critical Analysis	Critique in Relation to Thesis Defined Cynicism (Chapter 4)
WWII	Hathaway & McKinley (1943) MMPI	√ Psychometric test, designed to diagnose clinical disorders and measure an individual's personality	• A 60-item true or false response subscale called Hy. • The subscale mainly diagnosed hysteria (a somatic disorder) in female psychiatric patients but included a 6-item cynicism component. • Low scores indicated a disposition towards cynicism.	√	√	Individual level – personality trait measure	• Psychiatric practices and the language of the 1930s guided the development of these items (Ben-Porath, 2012). For example: "Most people will use somewhat unfair means to gain profit or an advantage rather than to lose it." • It was a specialised test requiring specialised training to administer and contained over 500 items, taking 60 to 90 minutes to complete (Ben-Porath, 2012). • The dispersal of the cynicism items throughout this measure made it complicated to measure cynicism. • Furthermore, this measure has been superseded and is no longer in use because it does not meet modern psychometric standards (Ben-Porath, 2012).	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
PostWWII	Cook-Medley Ho Scale (Hostility)	√ A psychology scale designed to measure an individual's personality	• The scale comprised 50 true or false questions. • It included a cynical component of nine items comprising a mix of new, borrowed, and modified items. • This measure's reported construct validity was α = .75 (Greenglass & Julkunen, 1991).	√	√	Individual level – personality trait measure	• It determined the degree of hostility by measuring chronic hate and anger, providing insight into an individual's personality (Dean et al., 1998). • Broadly, it measured an individual's ability to get along with others, highlighting interpersonal relationship problems (Cook & Medley, 1954). • In contrast to the MMPI, this scale was quicker to administer and required no specialist training. • At face value, some items in this scale appear to belong to other constructs. For	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure

						example, "When a man is with a woman, he is usually thinking about things related to her sex," suggesting this construct is contaminated.	
PostWWII	Wrightsman (1964) PHN Scale	√ Negative View of Human Nature	• PHN scale. • It evaluated an individual's attitude and measured people's views about life in general. • The PHN scale included a cynicism component, which measured cynicism towards human nature (Wrightsman, 1964). • The 10 cynicism scale items were a mix of new, borrowed, and modified items. • This measure's reported construct validity was α = .77	√		Individual level - Human nature	• It was a published measure in an academic, non-management peer-reviewed journal. It focused on people's general views about life; cynicism was only one factor in this broad measure. • Example items are "The typical student will cheat on a test when everybody else does, even though he has a set of ethical standards'" and "The average person is conceited." • The measure is also not relevant to a workplace context.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
DSM-III, 3rd Ed.	Butcher et al. (1989) MMPI-2	√ Personality disorder measure	• This scale comprised 567 items. • It includes a cynicism scale, CYNICISM, comprised of 23 items, broken into two components: • CYN1 measures misanthropic beliefs, • CYN2 measures interpersonal suspiciousness.	√	√	Individual level – personality trait measure	• Butcher et al. revised the MMPI psychometric test and captured cynicism as a stable personality trait (Graham, 1990). • Cynicism in the instrument contained two components: one measuring misanthropic beliefs and the other interpersonal suspiciousness (Butcher et al., 1989). • Example items are, "People are honest because they do not want to be caught," and "People have friends because they are useful." • Some findings have suggested that a high CYN score may not indicate an individual's cynicism motives (Clark, 1994).	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure

			• The reported construct validity was α = .81 (Jackson et al., 1997).				• Furthermore, this specialist test is for clinical settings, requires training to administer, and takes 60 to 90 minutes to complete. • The cynicism items are also dispersed throughout the testing, making it difficult to score, and the scales are subjected to copyright and not available for use without permission.	
DSM-III, 3rd Ed.	Greenglass & Julkunen (1989) Cynical-Distrust Nine Item Scale	√ Personality trait measure	• 9-item Likert scale. • Measures distrust, cynicism, hostility, and anger expression	√	√	Individual level	• It was developed as a shorter alternative to the Cook-Medley Hostility 50-item Scale. • This scale positively correlates with Type A behaviour (r=.25), and cynicism is related to Type A belief systems (Watkins et al., 1992). • It also positively correlates with concepts of irritability (r=.32) and anger expression (r=.26) and negatively with interpersonal relationships (r-=.35; Watkins et al., 1992). • The hostility aspect of the scale can be a predictor of coronary heart disease (Greenglass & Julkunen, 1989).	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
DSM-III, 3rd Ed.	Kanter & Mirvis (1989) General Cynical Worldview Scale	√ General negative worldview	• Measure of Life Attitude (1989); it included a subscale – General Cynical Worldview Scale (1989) • Measured cynicism as a general and societal attitude in two broad categories: (a) individuals who exploited and deceived those less powerful and (b) individuals who adopted a self-defensive attitude.	√	x	Individual level	• It was a book-published measure, and no scale development details are available. • An example item is "People claim to have ethical standards regarding honesty and morality, but few stick to them when money is at stake." • Five additional items were added to this measure to improve internal consistency; however, they only resulted in a .05 increase (Guastello et al., 1992), suggesting that the original scale did not capture its intended construct.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure

			• It included seven items that were a mix of new, borrowed, and modified items. • The reported construct validity was α = .78 (Guastello et al., 1992)					
Reduced internet regulation	Ben-Porath (2012) MMPI-2-RF	√ Personality disorder measure	• A scale comprised of 338 items. • It includes a 15-item (RC3) cynicism scale. • It captures mistrust and hostility towards others.	√	√	Individual level – personality trait measure	• It includes 12 of the 23 CYNICISM items from MMPI-2 (Igram et al., 2011). • Elevated RC3 scores suggested that the individual holds a range of cynical beliefs about other people's motivations, distrusts others and believes they look out for their interest. • It is a specialised test & should only be administered & scored & interpreted by those who have specialist training, e.g., clinical psychologist or psychiatrist. • The test takes 35–50 minutes to administer.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure

2.6.3. Contextual State: 1960s – 2010s

The literature on measuring cynicism evolved during this era, transitioning from early scales designed for specific professions, such as the police force, to broader organisational measures, and assessments of cynicism towards change. Niederhoffer's 1967 work initiated this journey by focusing on police cynicism (Niederhoffer, 1967). Subsequent research maintained this domain-specific focus (Regoli et al., 1990). The 1990s broadened the scope of organisational cynicism, although some scales remain unpublished (e.g., Brandes et al., 1999; Brooks & Vance, 1991). During this period, scales for cynicism towards organisational change were also developed (Reichers et al., 1997). In the 21st Century, this trend has continued with scales for specific groups like students and academic professionals (Bedeian, 2007; Brockway et al., 2002). Understanding this historical trajectory is crucial for identifying the gaps I aim to fill, particularly in developing a multidimensional scale to measure organisational cynicism.

From Occupational to Organisational Measures. The following section investigates how the focus of cynicism measurement has broadened over time, expanding from specific occupations to encompass a broader range of organisational contexts and targeted measures. It provides an in-depth examination of the evolution of cynicism measurement.

Niederhoffer (1967), Police Cynicism Scale – Occupational Specific. In 1967, Niederhoffer introduced the Police Cynicism Scale, which was the first tool specifically designed to measure workplace cynicism, tailored to the unique attitudes of the police workforce (Regoli et al., 1976). This 20-item measure employs a multiple-choice format to capture varying degrees of cynicism towards life, the world, and the police system. However, its restricted response options and specialised police language contributed to inconsistent results and undermined its predictive validity (Anson et al., 1986). Subsequent research proposed that the scale might capture up to five separate dimensions of cynicism (Regoli et al., 1976). Despite its pioneering

focus on cynicism, limitations in construct validity led to its modification to a Likert-type scale and its eventual obsolescence.

Regoli et al. (1990), Police Cynicism Scale – Occupational Specific. In 1990, Regoli et al. introduced a 16-item Police Cynicism Scale as a multidimensional alternative to Niederhoffer's 1967 measure. This new scale aimed to distinguish various facets of police cynicism targeting the public, workplace, and organisation. It included items assessing cynicism towards rules, the legal system, superiors, and the public, with strong construct validity for most factors (O'Connell et al., 1986). While the scale successfully identified the specific targets of officers' cynicism, its specialised language limits its generalisability beyond the police context.

Vance and Brooks (1991; unpublished) – Organisational Cynicism. In 1991, Brooks and Vance developed a 9-item scale to measure organisational cynicism focusing on attitudes about organisational behaviour. Though unpublished, the scale has influenced subsequent research and has been subject to various adaptations (Agars & Vance, 1997; Decelles et al., 2013; Tesluk et al., 1995; Tesluk et al., 1999). With a construct validity of $\alpha = .85$, the scale showed initial promise but failed to fully capture its conceptualised construct (Vance et al., 1995). The authors themselves pointed out the scale's limitations, highlighting the need for future measures to target specific aspects of cynicism more accurately within organisations. Due to its focus on cognitive aspects of organisational cynicism, this scale provides an essential foundation for the development of my OCS, which is the primary aim of this thesis.

Brandes et al. (1999; unpublished) – Employee Cynicism. In 1999, Brandes et al. introduced an 11-item employee cynicism scale that focuses on three dimensions: beliefs, affects, and behaviours towards leadership and the organisation. Despite its unpublished status, the scale has seen extensive adaptation in subsequent research (Arslan & Roudaki, 2019; Brandes & Das, 2006; Scott & Zweig, 2020). The scale demonstrates strong construct validity

across its cognitive (α = .90), affective (α = .94), and behavioural (α = .89) subscales. However, core cynicism may be most effectively captured through beliefs, which often guide affective and behavioural outcomes (e.g., Bedeian, 2007). This calls for a re-evaluation of multidimensional scales. Additionally, scholars have incorrectly attributed this scale to Dean et al. (1998), further complicating the research landscape (e.g., Chi et al., 2020; Simha et al., 2014).

Brockway et al. (2002), Cynical Attitudes Towards College Scale (CATCS) – Specific Entity. In 2002, Brockway et al. introduced the 18-item Cynical Attitudes Towards College Scale (CATCS), designed to measure undergraduate students' cynicism towards various targets, including individuals, leadership, and the university organisation. The scale comprises four subscales: policy (α = .80), academic (α = .79), social (α = .73), and institutional (α = .82), each assessing a unique facet of the university environment. While the scale's focus on an academic setting restricts its broader organisational applicability, its incorporation of a diverse range of referent targets is notable. This includes individuals, leaders, and organisations. Such a multi-target approach aligns with an objective of my research, which is to develop unified, multidimensional scale for organisational cynicism. By incorporating variable referent targets within a scale, the aim is to reduce the continuous creation of specialised scales.

Cole et al. (2006) – Employee Cynicism. In 2006, Cole et al. created a 7-item scale to measure employee cynicism, focusing on the team and organisation. Despite its construct validity of α = .87 in German, the scale raises questions because of its apparent lack of review of existing scales (e.g., Brandes et al., 1999; Brooks & Vance, 1991; Reichers et al., 1997; Wanous et al., 2000). Item redundancy within this scale is another issue, as evidenced by overlapping items such as "There is a cynical atmosphere in my workgroup" and "There is a lot of cynicism in my workgroup." This lack of item distinction, coupled with the potential for subtleties to change in translation, raises concerns about its robustness in English. The scale also underscores

the necessity of conducting comprehensive literature reviews prior to developing new measures to avoid duplicating existing valid scales.

Naus et al. (2007) – Organisational Cynicism. The 2007 scale by Naus et al. included 26 items, with a six-item cynicism subscale, aiming to extend the Exit, Voice, Loyalty, Neglect (EVLN) model by focusing on reactions to workplace adversity. While it addressed both situational job factors and personality traits like assertiveness and rigidity, its items are prone to ambiguity. For instance, phrases such as '"Use cynical humor to let off steam" may lead to diverse interpretations, highlighting the need for clarity in item wording (Hinkin & Tracey, 1999). This lack of clarity in item wording undermines the scale's suitability for accurately measuring organisational cynicism, as ambiguous terms can lead to varied interpretations and reduced construct validity.

Bedeian (2007) Academic Cynicism – Specific. In 2007, Bedeian developed a 12-item scale to assess organisational cynicism among university academics, achieving a high construct validity of $\alpha = .93$. Published in a peer-reviewed management journal, the scale serves as a foundational resource for developing versatile measures of cynicism. Bedeian also advocated for future studies to explore cynicism from a "top-down vantage," specifically from leaders towards employees (Bedeian, 2007). This recommendation aligns with the aim of my research to create a multidimensional scale with interchangeable referent targets, thus reduce the need for specialised scales in subsequent studies. Specifically, this top-down perspective could be captured by modifying the referent target in the scale to focus on managers' attitudes towards employees.

Towards Organisational Change. This section reviews key instruments that explore this dimension of cynicism. The discussion begins with Reichers et al.'s work in 1997, examining its application in industrial settings, and proceeds to examine subsequent scales developed or

modified by Decelles et al. (2013), Stanley et al. (2005), and Wanous et al. (2000). These scales vary in their focus, validation settings, and construct validity, yet they each provide important perspectives on cynicism related to organisational change. Through this exploration, the section aims to identify elements to be integrated into the multidimensional scale I seek to develop.

Reichers et al. (1997), Cynicism About Organisational Change Measure – State Towards Change. In 1997, Reichers et al. introduced the CAOC scale, specifically targeting industrial plant operators' attitudes towards leadership and change efforts. The 8-item scale consists of newly formulated agree-or-disagree statements that critique leadership's problem-solving and improvement efforts. Although published in a peer-reviewed management journal, the scale's psychometric properties have not been disclosed. While the scale's narrow focus on cynicism towards change restricts its broader applicability to organisational cynicism, this specific dimension aligns with the objectives of my thesis. Specifically, capturing cynicism towards change could be incorporated into my multidimensional scale.

Wanous et al. (2000) – State Towards Change Efforts. In 2000, Wanous et al. introduced an instrument aimed at evaluating both dispositional and situational cynicism concerning organisational change. The scale, validated on manufacturing workers, included pointed questions such as "Those in charge of improvements lack the necessary knowledge" and "Those tasked with solving issues can't be faulted for lack of progress." The reported construct validity was robust at $\alpha = .86$. Despite its focused scope on the attribution of failed change initiatives, aspects of this dimension of cynicism towards change could be integrated into my scales.

Stanley et al. (2005) – State Towards Change Efforts. In 2005, Stanley et al. introduced a comprehensive 18-item scale tailored to differentiate between various targets and types of cynicism: dispositional, leadership-specific, and change-specific. The scale underwent testing on

a diverse workforce and features items such as "Most people conceal their real motives" (targeting dispositional cynicism) and "Management obfuscates its true intentions for decision approval" (targeting leadership-specific cynicism). With solid construct validity, dispositional cynicism at $\alpha = .78$, leadership-specific at $\alpha = .83$, and change-specific at $\alpha = .88$. This scale lays the groundwork for my new scales with its cognitive focus and aim to distinguish between different referent targets of cynicism.

Decelles et al. (2013) – State Towards Change. In 2013, Decelles et al. adapted organisational cynicism items from Tesluk et al. (1995) to formulate a 3-item Cynicism Towards Change (CTC) scale. This scale evaluates pessimistic beliefs about organisational change efforts, featuring items like "Efforts to make improvements usually fail" and "When we try to change things here, they just seem to go from bad to worse." The scale underwent testing on correctional officers. While the adaptability of existing scales can be advantageous, especially when no suitable scales or items are available, it also introduces questions about the consistency and integrity of the adapted measures. Despite these concerns, the CTC items, originally developed by Brooks and Vance (1995) and Tesluk et al. (1995), offer a valuable foundation for the new scales, given their focus on cynicism towards change.

2.6.4. Limitations in Current State-Based Organisational Measures

Table 2.6 provides a comprehensive overview of the evolution of state-based cynicism measurement tools. It outlines key metrics such as historical development, authors, scales used, validity, and reliability. This table also includes a critical analysis of each instrument's contribution to the understanding of cynicism, as an attitudinal state. Additionally, it evaluates each instrument's alignment with the conceptualisation of cynicism as defined in this thesis and developed in Chapter 4.

The existing scales for measuring state-based organisational cynicism present several limitations that compromise their applicability and construct validity. First, many of these scales are context-specific, and designed for professional groups such as those in the police force or academia (Bedeian, 2007; Brockway et al., 2002; Niederhoffer, 1967). This focus limits their generalisability across a range of organisational settings. Second, some scales are narrowly tailored to measure specific dimensions like cynicism towards organisational change, neglecting other important facets like relationship, voice, initiative etc. (Decelles et al., 2013; Stanley et al., 2005; Wanous et al., 2000). This selective focus results in an incomplete understanding of organisational cynicism as a multifaceted construct.

Third, the academic literature falls short in resolving these issues. For example, some published scales exhibit methodological flaws, such as item overlap, compromising their validity (Chi et al., 2020; Naus et al., 2007). Additionally, scales cited in scholarly articles but remaining unpublished present a challenge; their psychometric properties are largely unverified, casting doubt on their utility (e.g., Brandes et al., 1999; Brooks & Vance, 1991). Another concern arises from the widespread adoption of the tripartite attitude model. This model dilutes the importance of cognitive elements by equating them with affective and behavioural dimensions, a problematic approach given the significant role cognitive indicators play in shaping cynical attitudes (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013; Dean et al., 1998). Furthermore, the model inaccurately portrays affective and behavioural dimensions as independent constructs, ignoring that they often stem from pre-existing cognitive frameworks (Bedeian, 2007).

Table 2.6

Cynicism as an Attitudinal State Measurement Tools

Historical Period	Authors and Measurement	State Cynicism	Scale	Validity	Reliability	Cynicism Target/ Components	Overview and Critical Analysis	Critique in Relation to Thesis Defined Cynicism (Chapter 4)
Post-WWII	Niederhoffer (1967): NCS	Specific Occupation	• The scale contained 20 developed cynicism items. • The respondents were given three multiple-choice responses to choose from for each item.	X	X	Towards • Life • World • People in general • Police system	• It was the first workplace cynicism scale to measure attitudes. • The measure was specific to the police workforce. Research has indicated that police have distinctive attitudes and values (Regoli et al., 1976). • This measure captured low to high scores on cynicism. • The scale included nuanced police language. • An example item is "The best arrests are made – coming from the 'coop'" (suggested response). • The multiple-choice test format restricted respondent's perceptions and may have contributed to this measure producing inconsistent results and the inability to establish predictive validity (Anson et al., 1986), suggesting the scale tapped into more than one dimension of cynicism. • It has been suggested that there could be up to five separate dimensions (Regoli et al., 1976). • It has since been superseded and is no longer in use	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
Industry deregulation	Regoli (1990):	Specific Occupation	• The scale contained 16 items.	X low	X low	Towards • Public • Workplace	• It was developed as an alternative measure to Niederhoffer's (1967) scale.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up,

	Police Cynicism Scale		• Assessed job cynicism as: (a) rules and regulations, (b) legal system, (c) police superiors, and (d) the public. • The items were a mix of new, borrowed, and modified items. • Measure validity: decision-makers α = .86, rules α = .81, legal system α = .65, and respect α = .69 (O'Connell et al., 1986).		• Organisation	• Measured cynicism as multidimensional. The aim was to distinguish different areas of police cynicism conceptually. • The multidimensional approach helped identify what the police officers were cynical about and their cynicism's specific targets. • The nuanced language used in this scale restricts the generalisation to a broader context. • An example item includes "In the past few years, the respect shown to officers by citizens has decreased."	be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
Industry deregulation	Brooks & Vance (1991): Organisational Cynicism	Organisation Cynicism	• This scale measured cynicism as a perceived attitude about behaviours. • The nine items were all newly developed and included reverse-coded items. • This measure's construct validity was α = .85	√	Towards • Organisation Components: • Cognitive	• Unpublished scale. • Despite being an unpublished scale, others have adopted and modified it (Agars & Vance, 1997; Decelles et al., 2013; Tesluk et al., 1995; Tesluk et al., 1999). • Scale items failed to measure the conceptualised construct. • Example items are "It is hard to be hopeful about the future because people around here have such bad attitudes" and "Most people in this organisation think things will get better instead of worse" (reverse coded). • The authors did acknowledge that this unpublished scale required refining.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, and build deep relationships, not captured in measure • Situational contextual dimension of futile to adopt change is included in measure.

			.				• Authors suggested that future measures should capture the target of cynicism, as the impact may differ when directed towards different targets (e.g., individual, team, leadership, and organisation or outsiders).	
Industry deregulation	Reichers et al. (1997): Cynicism About Change	External attribution of employees change cynicism		X	X	Towards • Change Components: Attitude about work-related change cynicism	• The items testing occurred on industrial plant operators. • Example items are "The people who are responsible to solving problems around here do not try hard enough to solve them" and "The people who are responsible for making improvements around here do not know enough about what they are doing." • The measure's reported psychometric properties are unknown. • It was an academic management peer-reviewed journal-published measurement. However, it is a narrow-scope measurement of cynicism towards change and not generalisable to a broader employee cynicism context.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, and build deep relationships, not captured in measure • Situational contextual dimension of futile to adopt change is included in measure.
Introduction of the World Wide Web	Brandes et al. (1999): Employee Cynicism	Employee Cynicism	• It included three subscales (cognitive, affective, and behavioural) and comprised 11 items. • The reported subscales' construct validities were cognitive α = .90, affective α = .94, and	√		Towards • Leadership • Organisation Components: • Cognitive • Affective • Behavioural	• Unpublished scale. • An employee cynicism scale that measured cynical beliefs affects, and behaviours. • Despite also being an unpublished scale, others have adopted and modified it (Arslan & Roudaki, 2019; Bedeian, 2007; Brandes & Das, 2006; Chi et al., 2020; Karadag et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2009; Qian & Daniels, 2008; Scott & Zweig, 2020). • Adapted example items are: "I see little similarity between what my organisation says it will do and what it actually does," (cognitive subscale),	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure

			behavioural α = .89				"When I think about my organisation, I feel angry," (affective subscale) and 'I criticise my organisation's practices and policies with other" (behavioural subscale). • This scale measured the conceptualisation of the cynicism construct by Dean et al. (1998), which is sometimes incorrectly attributed to Dean et al. (1998; e.g., Chi et al., 2020; Griep et al., 2022; Mousa et al., 2021; Scott & Zweig, 2020; Simha et al., 2014). It is compounding inaccuracies in the published cynicism literature.	
New millennium	Wanous et al. (2000): CAOC	Internal and external attribution of employees change cynicism	• A scale to measure employees' attitudes about organisational change, measuring (a) dispositional cynicism and (b) situational cynicism • The eight items were a mix of new and borrowed items. • This measure reported construct validity was α = .86.	√	√	Towards • Change efforts • Leadership • Organisation Components: • Pessimism • Dispositional • Situational	• The testing population was manufacturing plant employees. • Example subscale items are as follows, "The people responsible for making improvements do not know enough about what they are doing" (dispositional subscale), and "The people responsible for fixing problems around here cannot really be blamed if things do not improve" (situational subscale). • It was an academic management peer-reviewed journal-published measurement. • However, the measurement focuses on attributing change failure efforts, leadership motivation, and leadership incompetence – reducing the generalisability. • This change failure focus restricts the ability to generalise this scale to a broader organisational context.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
New millennium	Brockway et al. (2002): CATCS	Specific Entity	• The 18-item measure comprised four	√	√	Towards • Individuals • Leadership	• The scale measured undergraduate students' cynical attitudes to	• Situational contextual dimensions of

			subscales (policy, academic, social, and institutional). • All items were newly developed. • Reported construct validities were policy α =.80, academic α =.79, social α =.73, and institutional α =.82.		• Organisation (university) Components: •	understand how to target cynicism interventions (Brockway et al., 2002). • Workplace aspects measured were policy, academic, social, and institutional environments. • Sample items included "Policies made by the administration cause more problems than they solve," "For many courses, going to class is a waste of time," and 'I am cynical about this place." • This scale was a published measure in a non-management peer-reviewed journal. • It focused on a specific cynical population, reducing its generalisability to the broader organisational context. • The varied targets reference groups approach provides a foundation for developing a multidimensional employee cynicism tool.	futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
New millennium	Stanley et al. (2005): COAC	Internal and external attribution of employees change cynicism	• A scale that modified and created items to measure CAOC. • The 18 items, measured on three subscales, were a mix of new and modified items. • The reported construct validity was dispositional cynicism α = .78, management-	√	Towards • Change efforts • Individuals • Leadership • Organisation Components: • Scepticism • Dispositional • Situational Cognitive	• The measure's change-specific focus aimed to discriminate change cynicism from dispositional, leadership-specific, and scepticism. • The scale testing occurred on employees from various organisations. • Examples are "I find that most people disguise their true motives for doing something" (dispositional cynicism), "I think that management would misrepresent its intentions to gain acceptance for a decision it wanted to make" (management-specific), and "I believe that management's motives for this change are different from those stated publicly" (management-specific cynicism)	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure • Cynicism about organisational change dimension included in measure

			specific cynicism α = .83, and change-specific cynicism α = .88.				• The measurement demonstrated cynicism at different levels (e.g., individual, management, organisational). Although the measure had a cynicism change-specific focus, it provides a good foundation for developing a new measurement tool.	
New millennium	Cole et al. (2006): Employee Cynicism	Employee Cynicism	• It was a 7-item German scale, and testing occurred with company employees. • All items were newly developed. • The reported construct validity in German was α = .87.	√		Towards • Team • Organisation Components: • Cognitive	• When developing this scale, they failed to evaluate the literature for existing scales (e.g., Brandes et al., 1999; Brooks & Vance, 1991; Reichers et al., 1997; Wanous et al., 2000). • It was published in a management academic peer-reviewed journal. • However, on face value, the items in this scale appear to overlap. • For example, "There is a cynical atmosphere in my workgroup," and 'there is a lot of cynicism in my workgroup.' • These items' nuances may change when translated into English, suggesting that the scale's validity in English may not be robust. • As validated scales already exist, this study highlights the importance of a thorough literature review before developing a new measurement to ensure that a valid scale does not exist.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, and build deep relationships, not captured in measure
New millennium	Naus et al. (2007): Organisational Cynicism	Organisational cynicism And Personality Traits	• It was a 26-item scale with a cynicism subscale comprising six items. • The cynicism items were developed to	√	√	Towards • Situational job characteristics (e.g., job conflict & role autonomy) • Organisation Personality traits:	• They were extending the EVLN model to include and identify conditions in which employees may exhibit cynicism. • It conceptualised cynicism as a "distinct response to adverse circumstances in the workplace" (Naus et al., 2007).	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, and build deep relationships, not captured in measure

			reflect cynicism behavioural expressions in the workplace, including distrust, frustration, disillusionment, hopelessness, scorn, and contempt.			• Assertiveness • Rigidity Components: • Affective • Behavioural	• The items captured employee's reactions to stressful work conditions. • For example, "Use cynical humor to 'let off steam,'" and "Shrug your shoulders at what management requires you to do." • These developed items are ambiguous and open to different interpretations and meanings by employees. They also assume that all employees would understand the term "cynical" and the colloquialism "let off steam." • It is important to use simple language to reduce a wide variety of interpretations of meaning and avoid colloquial language in developing items (Hinkin & Tracey, 1999?).	
New millennium	Bedeian (2007); Academics Cynicism	Specific Entity	• It is a scale that measures the cynicism of university academics. • The 12-item scale testing occurred on university academic management scholars, and the items were a mix of new and modified items. • The reported construct validity was α = .93.	√	√	Towards • Organisation • Academia • University Department Components: • Cognitive	• It measures the individual's perceptions of the organisation's motives, actions, and values. • Sample items include, "I marvel at the disparity between reality and the university's claims," and 'I have suspected that the university's public statements reflect more spin than reality." • The mix of six negatively phased and six positively phased items ensured its applicability to diverse respondents rather than cynical respondents. • This scale was a published measure in a management academic peer-reviewed journal. • It focused on cynicism within the academic population, reducing its generalisability to the broader organisational context. • However, it provides a good foundation for developing a new organisational cynicism scale. It also	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, and build deep relationships, not captured in measure

					suggested that future research consider an "evaluation of cynicism from a top-down vantage" (Bedeian, 2007, p. 28). • The development of a multidimensional measurement with changeable reference groups would allow scholars in the future to explore cynicism from a top-down perspective (e.g., leadership cynicism directed towards employees), increasing our understanding of employee cynicism.	
Reduced internet regulation	Decelles et al. (2013): CTC	Pessimistic beliefs towards change	• They adopted the organisational cynicism scale in Tesluk et al. (1995) to measure CTC. • A 3-item scale	Towards • Change efforts • Organisation Components: • Cognitive? • Behavioural?	• Conceptualises cynicism as a multilevel phenomenon, as employee attitude and organisational climate. • Focus on pessimistic beliefs about organisational improvements rather than individual beliefs. • Sample items are: "Efforts to make improvements ___ usually fail" and 'When we try to change things here at ___, they just seem to go from bad to worse." • The study was conducted on correctional officers. • This measurement demonstrates how scholars adapt cynicism measurement tools and items to fit different purposes, undermining the integrity of existing cynicism scales.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, and build deep relationships, not captured in measure • Situational contextual dimension of futile to adopt change is included in measure.

Addressing these limitations aligns with the central aim of my thesis: to develop a psychometrically valid and reliable multidimensional scale for measuring organisational cynicism. This scale aims to capture an employee's current level of cynicism towards their organisation.

2.6.5. Burnout Component: 1940s – 1970s

The measurement of workplace burnout has evolved in response to shifting work dynamics. The late 1990s marked a pivotal period in the evolution of workplace burnout measurement. During this time, industry changes and the rise of the World Wide Web facilitated increasing employee demands. This shift in work conditions prompted a growing need to quantify burnout, including its various components, such as cynicism (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Maslach et al., 1996). As work environments transformed, employees began to experience exhaustion, reduced personal accomplishment and heightened cynicism, particularly towards their organisations.

From the 2000s to the 2020s, the MBI emerged as the leading tool for assessing burnout. However, this scale primarily focuses on an individual's evolving attitudes and feelings towards their work and is a paid, copyrighted tool. The restrictions and deficits of the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Scale (MBI-GS) led to the development of the BAT by Schaufeli et al. in 2020, which also targets an individual's attitudes and engagement towards work. While these tools represent significant advancements in burnout measurement, they fall short of capturing the nuanced and context-specific nature of organisational cynicism, which often involves intricate dynamics between employees and their workplaces.

Maslach et al. (1981), Maslach's Burnout Inventory – Depersonalisation as a Component of Burnout. In 1981, Maslach et al. introduced the MBI, which informed the study

of employee attitudes towards work. Initially featuring a 22-item scale with three factors (emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and depersonalisation), the MBI primarily focuses on measuring enduring patterns of group-level burnout. Despite its broad application, the 5-item depersonalisation subscale falls short of specifically capturing organisational cynicism. It measures impersonal responses to a job rather than delving into the cognitive elements that underpin cynical attitudes towards an organisation. Further, the MBI has since been updated to include a cynicism subscale, although it lacks a focus on organisational contexts.

Maslach et al. (1996), Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Scale (MBI-GS) – Cynicism as a Component of Burnout. In 1996, Maslach et al. introduced the MBI-GS, featuring a cynicism subscale with five newly developed items such as "I have become more cynical about whether my work contributes anything" and "I have become less interested in my work since I started this job." This subscale gauges cynicism levels as a continuous variable aimed at capturing an emotional distancing or indifference towards one's work. However, the scale's construct validity is notably low, with an alpha of $\alpha = .60$, indicating a need for item refinement (de Beer et al., 2020; Kline, 1998). Moreover, it is necessary to obtain permission before using this copyrighted scale.

Andersson and Bateman (1997) - Cynicism as a Defensive Coping Mechanism. In 1997, Andersson and Bateman introduced a 23-item scale to measure cynicism towards specific businesses and leaders, achieving a high internal consistency with an alpha of $\alpha = .86$. This scale, developed through scenario-based experiments, conceptualises cynicism as a defensive coping mechanism within the framework of psychological contract violations. It identifies three key areas prone to inducing cynicism: workplace misalignment, ineffective management, and job demands. However, the scale has limitations, such as leading questions like "The President and CEO of Regeneration is untrustworthy," which may bias responses and limit generalisability.

Moreover, the scale's narrow focus on psychological contract violations overlooks other important contributing factors like job demands, resources, and organisational culture. As a result, it falls short of being a comprehensive measure of organisational cynicism.

Schaufeli et al. (2020), Burnout Assessment Tool – Component of Burnout. In 2020, Schaufeli et al. developed the BAT to address the limitations of the MBI-GS (Maslach et al., 1996). The BAT incorporates a 5-item "mental distance" subscale, capturing employee cynicism towards work. Example items include "I feel a strong aversion towards my job" and "I am cynical about what my work means to others." The scale asserts a robust construct validity with alpha values ranging from $\alpha = .80$ to .93 and has been validated in various countries. However, the BAT primarily aims to measure mental distance as a core symptom of burnout, thus narrowing its applicability to broader organisational cynicism assessments (Hadzibajramović et al., 2020; Schaufeli et al., 2019; 2020).

2.6.6. Inadequacies of Burnout Measurement Tools

Table 2.7 reviews the development of measurement tools that assess cynicism as either a component of burnout or a coping mechanism. This table outlines essential metrics, including the historical period in which each tool was developed, the authors responsible, the scales used, and their respective validity and reliability. Additionally, the table provides a critical analysis of each instrument's contribution to our understanding of cynicism, particularly as a component of burnout. Additionally, it evaluates each instrument's alignment with the conceptualisation of cynicism as defined in this thesis and developed in Chapter 4.

The shift from the MBI to the BAT marks an advancement in the field of burnout measurement. However, these tools have limitations when assessing the cynicism component. While they do measure aspects of cynicism, such as diminished interest, enthusiasm, and job engagement, they fall short of adequately capturing the multifaceted nature of organisational

cynicism. These scales have limitations in capturing the full scope of organisational cynicism, which often involves complex dynamics between employees and their workplaces. Despite these limitations, the foundational elements of cynicism in these established burnout scales provide valuable insights that will inform the development of my cynicism scales.

2.7.Evaluation of the Measurement of Cynicism

The history of cynicism measurement reveals a complex array of tools and frameworks that have evolved but still face limitations. Initial attempts to measure cynicism as a dispositional trait, spanning from the 1940s to the 1980s, resulted in the creation of scales such as the MMPI and the Cook-Medley Ho Scale. These scales now seem outdated and suffer from construct contamination (Cook & Medley, 1954; Hathaway & McKinley, 1943). Later scales, such as Wrightsman's, focused on existential cynicism but lacked applicability in organisational contexts (Wrightsman, 1964). Tools like the MMPI-2 and MMPI-2-RF, which scatter cynicism items across the test, were not designed for organisational settings, thus limiting their utility (Ben-Porath, 2012; Butcher et al., 1989; Jackson et al., 1997).

State-based scales emerged to address the limitations of trait-based measures but introduced their own challenges. These scales often target specific occupational sectors, such as the police forces or academia, limiting their broader applicability (Bedeian, 2007; Brockway et al., 2002; Regoli et al., 1990). Moreover, their narrow focus on aspects like cynicism towards organisational change leads to an incomplete understanding of the construct (Decelles et al., 2013; Stanley et al., 2005; Wanous et al., 2000). Adopting tripartite models further complicates the landscape by amalgamating cognitive, affective, and behavioural components, thereby diluting the cognitive attributes that often drive cynical attitudes (Bedeian, 2007; Chiaburu et al., 2013; Dean et al., 1998).

Table 2.7

Cynicism as a Burnout Component/Coping Mechanism

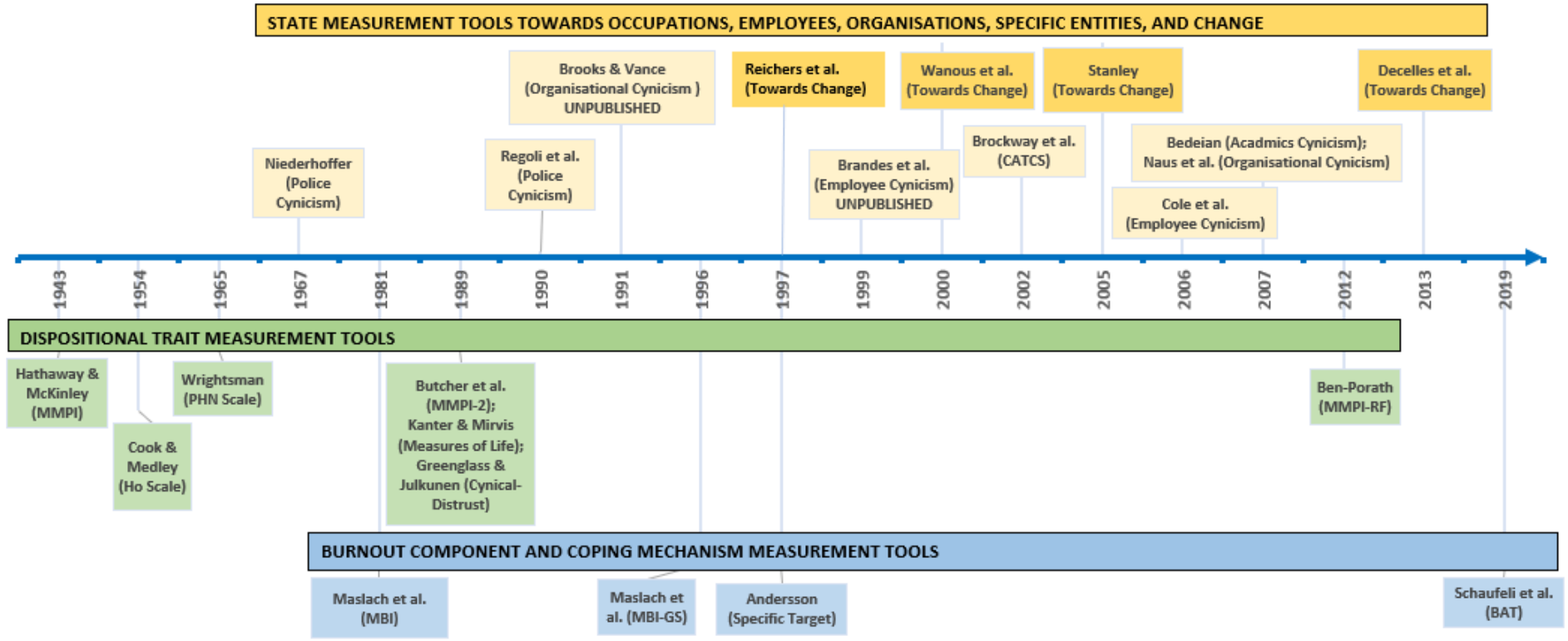
Historical Period	Authors	Cynicism Self-Defensive State	Scale	Validity	Reliability	Cynicism Target/ Components	Overview and Critical Analysis	Critique in Relation to Thesis Defined Cynicism (Chapter 4)
Industry deregulation	Maslach et al. (1981): MBI	Depersonalisation • A component of burnout	• A 22-item scale to measure an individual's attitude about their relationship with work on a continuum from engagement to burnout • The scale included three factors: (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) personal accomplishment, and (c) depersonalisation. • The scale included a depersonalisation subscale.	√	√	Towards • Work Components: • Behavioural	• It is designed to measure an enduring state of experienced burnout and patterns of burnout. • Depersonalisation is measured as a continuous variable ranging from low to high on a 5-item subscale. • It measured an unfeeling and impersonal response to the individual's job, care, treatment or instruction. • It captures group-level patterns of multifaceted burnout and does not measure individual distress. • It takes approx. 10–15 minutes to complete. • The measure has been updated, and the depersonalisation subscale has been replaced with a cynicism subscale to facilitate assessments beyond human service occupations.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
Introduction of the World Wide Web	Maslach & Jackson (1996): MBI-GS	Cynicism • A component of burnout	• A revised 16-item scale measures individual's work attitude on a continuum from engagement to burnout. • The scale includes three factors: (a) exhaustion, (b) professional efficacy, and (c) cynicism.	√	√	Towards • Work Components: • Behavioural	• It is designed to provide a three-dimensional burnout perspective. • The scale measured an individual's level of cynicism towards work as a continuous variable, ranging from low to high, to capture the distancing of indifference towards work. • Example items are "I have become more cynical about whether my work contributes	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not

			• The cynicism subscale comprises five new items. • The reported construct validity was α = .60 – a low internal consistency (Kline, 1998).				anything" and "I have become less interested in my work since I started this job." • A low alpha suggests removing various items, and one suggestion was to remove the item "I just want to do my job and not be bothered" (de Beer et al., 2020). • The scale also costs money, requires permission to be used, and is copyrighted.	captured in measure
Introduction of the World Wide Web	Andersson & Bateman (1997): Cynicism towards a specific business and specific leaders	Defensive coping mechanism	• A scale with 23 items • The items were a mix of new, modified, and adopted items. • (Likert scale internal consistency alpha = 0.86)	√	x	Towards • Organisation • Senior Leaders • A specific business • Workplace objects Components: • Cognitive	• Used a scenario-based experiment study based on a fictional company and theory-driven, then field-tested to validate findings externally empirically. • They measured employee cynicism within the psychological contract violations framework as a defensive coping belief/attitude. • Cynicism violations fall into three categories: (a) workplace environment misalignment, (b) organisational characteristics of poor communication, management incompetence at change, and lack of employee involvement, and (c) job demands. • Sample items are, "The President and CEO of Regeneration, John Moore, is untrustworthy and self-serving" and "The management at Regeneration will take advantage of you if you give them a chance." • The items in this scale are specific to one organisation and include leading questions.	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure
Pre Covid-19	Schaufeli et al., (2020): BAT	Mental distancing • A component of burnout	• It captured employee cynicism on a 5-item subscale dimension called "mental distance," measuring	√	√	Towards • Organisation Components: • Cognitive	• The BAT's development goal was to overcome the flaws of the MBI-GS (Maslach et al., 1996).	• Situational contextual dimensions of futile to speak up, be proactive,

	mental distancing from work. The items are a mix of new and modified. • The subscales reported construct validity that ranged from α = .80 to .93, as validated in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Australia, Ireland, Finland, and Japan.		• Affective • Behavioural	• Example items are "I feel a strong aversion towards my job" and "I am cynical about what my work means to others." • This instrument can be used as an employee screening device to identify those at risk of burnout (Hadzibajramović et al., 2020). • It is free and available online. • However, it was developed for a specific purpose: to measure mental distance as a core burnout symptom to capture general perceptions of the individual's work role (Schaufeli et al., 2019; 2020). This focus reduces the ability of this tool to generalise to a broader organisational context.	build deep relationships, and adopt change not captured in measure

Figure 2.2.

The Evolution of the Measurement of the Construct of Cynicism



Note. The faint lines indicate the developmental year of the measurement tools. Scholars who developed trait measurement tools are represented in green, those who measured dynamic states in yellow, researchers who measured states towards change in a darker yellow, and those scholars who developed scales to measure burnout and coping mechanisms in blue.

Including cynicism as a component of burnout represents some progress but also comes with limitations. Tools like the MBI and the BAT capture some facets of cynicism but fail to fully encapsulate its nuanced nature in organisational settings (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Schaufeli et al., 2020). Despite these gaps, they provide a foundation for understanding how employees may approach their jobs with minimal commitment and withdraw additional effort or proactivity. In summary, the measurement of cynicism has seen multiple evolutionary.

phases, each contributing valuable yet incomplete perspectives. This fragmentation highlights the need for more reliable, valid, focused, and applicable tools to measure dispositional and state-based cynicism in diverse organisational settings. Figure 2.2 illustrates the evolution of cynicism measurement, from its initial conceptualisation in 1943 as a trait to its later understanding in 1967 as an attitudinal-based state and finally to its inclusion in 1981 as a component of burnout or coping mechanism.

2.8. Gaps in Cynicism Measures: The Rationale for a New Tool

The historical and contemporary measurement tools for cynicism reveal persistent gaps and limitations that necessitate a valid, reliable, and comprehensive approach. They include the relevance of dispositional measures, contextual state-based tools, shortcomings of burnout tools, unpublished and non-peer reviewed tools, issues of definition and measurement misalignment, construct contamination, and challenges in adapting existing measures across referent targets.

2.8.1. Relevance of Dispositional / Trait Based Measures of Cynicism

Early measures like the MMPI (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943) and Cook-Medley Ho Scale (Cook & Medley, 1954) provided foundational understandings of dispositional cynicism. The scales also struggle with issues like outdated psychometric standards, highly gendered and patriarchal assumptions, and construct contamination, diluting the reliability of

results and even misleading practitioners and scholars alike (Ben-Porath, 2012; Butcher et al., 1989; Jackson et al., 1997).

2.8.2. Contextual State-Based Measures of Cynicism

The more contemporary state-based cynicism scales offer an organisational focus but present their own set of limitations. These scales were developed primarily for specific sectors like law enforcement or industrial settings and did not readily lend themselves to broader organisational applications for knowledge workers in contemporary offices (Bedeian, 2007; Brockway et al., 2002; Regoli et al., 1990). Moreover, these scales often suffer from over-specialisation, concentrating too narrowly on facets, such as cynicism towards organisational change, thereby missing other critical aspects of the construct of organisational cynicism (Decelles et al., 2013; Stanley et al., 2005; Wanous et al., 2000).

2.8.3. Shortcomings of Burnout Tools

The limitations of the MBI and the BAT in capturing the full range of organisational cynicism are evident. Although these tools gauge general work-related cynicism, they fail to measure its nuanced dimensions within an organisational setting (Maslach et al., 1981; Schaufeli et al., 2020). Their focus is on minimal job engagement and lacks depth in capturing organisational-specific facets of cynicism.

2.8.4. Unpublished and Non-Peer-Reviewed Tools

Alarmingly, the most frequently cited measures of organisational cynicism have not undergone peer review and come from unpublished sources (Brandes et al., 1999; Brooks & Vance, 1991). This lack of peer review raises questions about the reliability and validity of such widely used scales.

2.8.5. Issues of Definition and Measurement Misalignment

Many cynicism scales show a lack of alignment between theoretical definitions and operationalised items. For example, many scholars emphasize a self-defensiveness and

protective attitude dimension in their conceptualisation of cynicism (Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Niederhoffer, 1967; Reichers et al., 1997). Yet only two studies incorporate items to specifically assess this dimension (Brandes et al., 1999; Maslach et al., 1996). Such inconsistency undermines the empirical validity of the construct, affecting its practical implications.

Conversely, only a few studies discuss the "judgmental" nature of cynicism in their definitions (Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989). Despite this, many scales include items capturing this attribute (Bedeian, 2007; Brandes et al., 1999; Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Reichers et al., 1997; Stanley et al., 2005). These examples further exemplify the misalignment between what the construct theoretically represents and how researchers measure it.

2.8.6. Construct Contamination

Beyond definition–measure misalignment, construct contamination complicates the measurement landscape further (Brandes et al., 1999; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Wrightsman, 1964). Certain scales capture aspects not explicitly delineated in their respective construct definitions. For example, the item "Most people inwardly dislike putting themselves out to help other people" (Cook & Medley, 1954; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989) gauges beliefs about others' willingness to help – an attribute not mentioned in these studies' definitions of cynicism. Such contamination compromises both the reliability and validity of the scales. The situation becomes increasingly problematic when researchers shift the construct's referent, leading to inconsistencies in what is being measured. These inconsistencies not only make cross-study comparisons difficult but also contribute to varied and even conflicting empirical results concerning cynicism's relationship with other work-related constructs (Banister et al., 2011; Chiaburu et al., 2013; Guastello et al., 1992; Guthier et al., 2020).

2.8.7. Challenges in Adapting Existing Measures Across Referents

Another deficit in the measurement of cynicism arises when scholars adapt existing cynicism measures for specific referents, such as colleagues or organisations; they frequently modify both item content and dimensionality (e.g., Brandes et al., 1999). This alteration undermines the construct's comprehensiveness, thereby complicating the comparison of empirical results across studies. Second, there is no theoretical discussion on whether the conceptualisation of cynicism changes across levels of the target, such that cynicism for one person versus another non-human collective entity is different. It may be that there are substantial differences, but the current work does not systematically address that, either theoretically or via measurements. A solution to this issue is to develop a single comprehensive measure of cynicism that is worded such that scholars can change the reference of the items without essentially changing the core scope of the construct/item content.

In summary, the current cynicism measurement tools have limitations that necessitate a comprehensive overhaul. Addressing these challenges is not merely an academic exercise but also essential from an organisational perspective. I aim to address this need by systematically developing comprehensive and valid cynicism measures that focus on resolving these weaknesses.

2.9.Integrated Overview of Literature Conceptualisation and Measurement

The earlier literature review in this chapter provided a conceptualisation framework for organisational cynicism, identified two primary components, cognitive cynicism, and emotional outcomes, along with various subthemes. This thematic framework combines insights from stressor-burnout literature with broader psychology and business studies. Table 2.8 summarises these themes/attributes, indicating scholars who conceptualised and measured them, example items, and their corresponding definitions from the previously developed framework.

Table 2.8

Comparative Analysis of Cynicism Themes/Attributes for Scale Development

Themes/Attributes	**Conceptualised in Definition**	**Measured in Items**	**Example Trait Items**	**Example Target Items:** Another person	**Example Target Items:** Entity: Collective - Organisation/Profession/Industry	**Example Target Items:** Specific Intervention or Job aspect	**Definition** (from Table 2.4)
Capturing Employees' Current Beliefs about Future Expectations							
Mismatched Expectations	Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Reichers et al., 1997. (4)	Brandes et al., 1999*; Brockway et al., 2002; Stanley et al. 2005. (3)	no item/s	no item/s	• What the administration does is different from what they say they are going to do. (Brockway et al., 2002) • I see little similarity between what my organisation says it will do and what it actually does. (Brandes et al., 1999)	• My organisation expects one thing of its employees but rewards another. (Brandes et al., 1999) • My organisation's policies, goals, and practices seem to have little in common. (Brandes et al., 1999)	A mismatch between expectations and actual experiences; lack of integrity; annoyed by demands posed by others; an unrealistic high expectation of self and others; disappointed and frustrated with outcomes; loss of confidence.
Futility in Organisational Change	Brooks & Vance, 1991; Maslach & Jackson, 1981. (2)	Brooks & Vance, 1991; Reichers et al., 1997. (3)	no item/s	no item/s	• Changes to the usual ways of doing things at this organisation are more trouble than they are worth. (Brooks & Vance, 1991) • I have pretty much given up trying to make suggestions for improvements around here. (Brooks & Vance, 1991)	• Most of the programs that are supposed to solve problems around here will not do much good. (Reichers et al., 1997) • Suggestions on how to solve problems will not produce much real change. (Reichers et al., 1997)	A waste of time, making suggestions will bring little benefit, and efforts are futile.
Distrust in Organisational Effectiveness	Abraham, 2000*; Brooks & Vance, 1991. (2)	Brandes et al., 1999*; Brooks & Vance, 1991; Reichers et al., 1997. (4)	no item/s	• The people who are responsible for solving problems around here do not try hard enough to solve them. (Reichers et al., 1997)	• When my organisation says it is going to do something. I wonder if it will really happen. (Brandes et al., 1999) • Plan for future improvement will not amount to much. (Reichers et al., 1997) • Most people in this organisation think things	• Administrators ask for student input but then do nothing with it. (Brockway et al., 2002) • I have confidence the university will do what is right when interacting with faculty. (R.) (Bedeian, 2007)	Fixable problems go unresolved, not worth considering something; things will never change, the likelihood that change will fail, hold others or their ideas in disregard or contempt.

				will get better instead of worse. (R) (Brooks & Vance, 1991)			
Critical Judgement Towards Authority	Greek philosophy, Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998*; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989. (4)	Bedeian, 2007; Brandes et al., 1999*; Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Reichers et al, 1997; Stanley et al., 2005. (6)	• I have often met people who were supposed to be experts who were no better than I. (Butcher et al., 1989)	• The people who are responsible for making things better around here do not care enough about their jobs. (Reichers et al., 1997) • The people who are responsible for making improvements around here do not know enough about what they are doing. (Reichers et al., 1997)	• When decisions are made in this organisation, they are typically in the best interests of management. (Stanley et al., 2005) • I complain about things happening in my organisation to friends outside the organisation. (Brandes et al., 1999)	• I criticise my organisation's practices and policies with others. (Brandes et al., 1999) • I am sure university officials can be counted on to put the university's interests ahead of their own self-interests. (R) (mod Bedeian, 2007; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989)	Fault finding in others, overly critical worldview, calculating view of life, disparaging remarks, or denigration.
Questioning the Motives of Others	Greek philosophy, Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Stanley et al., 2005. (5)	Bedeian, 2007; Hathaway & McKinley, 1943; Reichers et al., 1997; Stanley et al., 2005. (4)	• I commonly wonder what hidden reason another person may have for doing something nice for me. (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943)	• I find that most people disguise their true motives for doing something. (Stanley et al., 2005)	• I believe that there are ulterior motives for most of the decisions made by management in this organisation. (Stanley et al., 2005) • I often question the motives of management in this organisation. (Stanley et al., 2005).	• I have questioned whether university officials are really interested in addressing the problems facing the university. (mod Bedeian, 2007; Reichers et al., 1997)	Questioning the status quo, questioning changes, or pursue self-interest through hidden motives, distrusting motives, perceived deception.
Perceptions of Value and Recognition	Abraham, 2000; Andersson, 1996; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989.	Brooks & Vance, 1991; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989;	• I am cynical about what my work means to	• People pretend to care about things more	• Efforts to make improvements are recognised within this	• People around here get the credit they do not deserve for work they did not do. (Brooks & Vance, 1991)	Beliefs about the fairness and sincerity within the organisation, shaped by underlying perceptions of

	(3)	Maslach et al., 1996; Schaufeli et al., 2020. (4)	others (mod Maslach et al., 1996) (Schaufeli et al., 2020)	than they really do. (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989)	organisation. (R) (Brooks & Vance, 1991)		deception, betrayal, and inadequacy in value and recognition.
Emotional Outcomes Associated with Cognitive Cynicism							
Negative Emotions and Attitudes	Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998*; Cook & Medley, 1954; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Niederhoffer et al., 1967. (6)	Brandes et al., 1999; Brockway et al., 2002; Cook & Medley, 1954; Schaufeli et., 2020. (4)	• No one cares much what happens to you. (Cook & Medley, 1954)	no item/s	• When I think about my organisation. I feel angry. (Brandes et al., 1999*) • I often experience tension when I think about my organisation. (Brandes et al., 1999*)	• Faculty here generally do not care enough about the needs of their students. (Brockway et al., 2002) • I feel a strong aversion towards my job. (Schaufeli et al., 2020)	Chronic hate, chronic anger, hostile, bitter resentment about unfairness treatment, negative emotions, negative attitudes.
Emotional Detachment and Withdrawal	Abraham, 2000; Andersson, 1996; Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Niederhoffer, 1967; Reichers et al., 1997 (7)	Brandes et al., 1999*, Maslach et al., 1996. (2)	no item/s	no item/s	• I would not recommend this place to anyone (Brockway et al., 2002)	• I just want to do my job and not be bothered (Maslach et al., 1996). • I find myself mocking my organisation's slogans and initiatives. (Brandes et al., 1999*) • I often talk to others about the way things are run in my organisation. (Brandes et al., 1999*). • At work, I do not think much about what I am doing, and I function on autopilot. (Schaufeli et al., 2020).	Self-protective, detached, withdrawal, passive, apathetic, guarded, defensive actions, coping mechanisms.

Note. (R) indicates a reversed scored item. *Dean et al., 1998 defined the conceptualisation, and Brandes et al., 1999 crafted the associated measurement. The numbers in brackets, e.g. (3) denote the number of researchers in the respective columns that defined or measured the attribute. Mod – is a shortening of the word modified to indicate an item that has been modified from another scale.

2.9.1. Cognitive Cynicism Conceptualisation and Measurement in the Literature

Cognitive cynicism reflects employees' current beliefs and their expectations for the future. In the literature, measurement attributes capturing cognitive cynicism vary widely. They include attributes like *futility in organisational change*, examining beliefs about the minimal benefits and futility of change efforts, and *perceptions of value and recognition*, scrutinising beliefs regarding fairness and acknowledgement in organisations. This section aims to offer a detailed understanding of cognitive cynicism by dissecting its primary measurement attributes. The discussion begins with *mismatched expectations*, focusing on the disparity between what organisations promise and their actual behaviours as perceived by employees.

Mismatched Expectations. Measurement of this item captured the divergence between what an organisation purports to do and its actual conduct, substantiated by items like "What the administration does is different from what they say they are going to do" (Brockway et al., 2002). This attribute primarily measures current employee beliefs in the context of organisational cynicism, capturing the cognitive aspects of this phenomenon. These beliefs do not exist in isolation but are products of past experiences that have demonstrated the inconsistency between the organisation's promises and actions (Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989).

While its measurement items focus on present attitudes, they also serve as indirect predictors of future expectations, especially if employees believe that the present incongruities will persist. Additionally, the items extend into perceptions of an absence of organisational integrity, touching on broader constructs like institutional deceitfulness (Brandes et al., 1999). Thus, this attribute encapsulates not just the immediate cognitive reactions of employees but also provides a lens through which to examine their historical interactions and future outlooks with the organisation.

Futility in Organisational Change. This attribute predominantly targets the cognitive aspect of organisational cynicism, capturing employees' current beliefs about the inefficacy of change initiatives within the organisation (Brooks & Vance, 1991; Reichers et al., 1997). Central to this attribute is the perception of futility in suggesting improvements or engaging in problem-solving efforts, as exemplified by items such as "Changes to the usual ways of doing things at this organisation are more trouble than they are worth" (Brooks & Vance, 1991). These beliefs often draw from past experiences, where attempts to effect change yielded no beneficial outcomes, further entrenching cynicism (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Reichers et al., 1997).

While the attribute primarily measures cognitive cynicism, it has secondary implications for affective and behavioural outcomes. A deeply entrenched belief in the futility of change diminishes emotional engagement and reduces participation in future organisational change efforts (Reichers et al., 1997). Hence, this attribute provides a multidimensional understanding, where cognitive beliefs form the core, and affective responses and future behaviours emerge as consequential outcomes of these foundational beliefs.

Distrust in Organisational Effectiveness. This attribute focuses on employee beliefs about an organisation's ability to solve problems and fulfil its stated goals. Items such as "The people who are responsible for solving problems around here do not try hard enough to solve them" (Reichers et al., 1997) and "When my organisation says it is going to do something, I wonder if it will really happen" (Brandes et al., 1999) epitomise this doubt. This distrust extends to questioning the efficacy and integrity of leadership in implementing meaningful changes or acting upon employee or stakeholder input (Abraham, 2000; Brooks & Vance, 1991). In this attribute, efficacy refers to the organisation's ability to produce intended outcomes, casting a spotlight on the lack of confidence that the organisation will genuinely act to resolve issues or fulfil its promises.

Although the attribute primarily measures present beliefs, it encapsulates a multi-temporal scope by blending these current evaluations with future implications. For instance, items like "Plan for future improvement will not amount to much" (Reichers et al., 1997) and "Administrators ask for student input but then do nothing with it" (Brockway et al., 2002) provide insight into employees' doubts about future organisational effectiveness. Thus, this attribute offers an understanding of organisational cynicism, capturing both the current cognitive state of employees and their expectations for the organisation's future behaviour (Bedeian, 2007; Brandes et al., 1999; Brockway et al., 2002; Brooks & Vance, 1991; Reichers et al., 1997).

Critical Judgement Towards Authority. This attribute traces its lineage back to Greek philosophy and remains relevant today (Dean et al., 1998; Stanley et al., 2005). This attribute focuses on employees' cynicism towards individuals in authoritative roles within the organisation. For example, the survey item "When decisions are made in this organisation, they are typically in the best interests of management" (Stanley et al., 2005) exemplifies employees' critical evaluation of decision-making processes. These critical views often take the form of disparaging or denigrating remarks. The attribute underscores the notion that those in positions of power may be self-serving or lack competency, thereby diminishing organisational integrity and fostering a culture of criticism (Reichers et al., 1997). Other survey items like "I criticize my organisation’s practices and policies with others" (Brandes et al., 1999) more directly capture these cognitive aspects of cynicism.

Questioning Motives of Others. This attribute focuses on the doubts that employees have about the intentions behind actions and decisions within the organisation (Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Stanley et al., 2005). It reflects a consistent suspicion of the motives underlying actions, particularly of those in authority. For example, the survey item "I commonly wonder what hidden reason another person may have for doing

something nice for me" (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943) is an illustrative measure of this scrutiny. Other items, such as "I find that most people disguise their true motives for doing something" (Stanley et al., 2005) or "I often question the motives of management in this organisation" (Stanley et al., 2005), delve into present beliefs about the concealed agendas or authenticity of those in power. Similarly, "I have questioned whether university officials are really interested in addressing the problems facing the university" (Bedeian, 2007; Reichers et al., 1997) evaluates doubts about organisational leadership.

Perceptions of Value and Recognition. This attribute centres on beliefs about fairness and sincerity within an organisation, shaped by underlying perceptions of deception, betrayal, and inadequacy in value and recognition (Abraham, 2000; Andersson, 1996; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989). Items such as "People get undeserved credit" (Brooks & Vance, 1991) and "I question my work's value to others" (Schaufeli et al., 2019) focus on fairness and value, respectively. The item "People feign concern" (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989) examines sincerity, while "Improvement efforts are recognized" (Brooks & Vance, 1991), when reversed, gauges acknowledgement of efforts to improve. Together, these items capture current cognitive beliefs regarding the degree to which the organisation values and recognises its members (Brooks & Vance, 1991; Schaufeli et al., 2020).

2.9.3. Summary Cognitive and Emotional Themes/Attributes

The six cognitive cynicism themes/attributes synthesised from the psychology and business management literature that capture employees' current beliefs about future expectations are 1) *mismatched expectations, 2) futility in organisational change, 3) distrust in organisation effectiveness, 4) critical judgement towards authority, 5) questioning motives of others,* and *6) perceptions of value and recognition*. Essentially, these attributes range from doubts about the organisation's sincerity and effectiveness to doubts about change initiatives and authority figures. Collectively, they map out the cognitive landscape of cynicism,

spotlighting critical judgments and perceptions around value and recognition within organisations. The emotional attributes of *negative emotions* and *attitudes and emotional detachment and withdrawal* expand on the six cognitive attributes, highlighting the emotional impact of organisational cynicism.

2.9.4. Addressing the Literature Gaps

Existing cynicism conceptualisations and scales show persistent limitations and lack comprehensive, reliable theory-based attributes. My thesis develops a scale to address these limitations. The scales will be designed to capture the multifaceted nature of organisational cynicism, thereby filling gaps left by previous dispositional and attitudinal-state-based measures. Rigorous validation will ensure that these scales meet modern psychometric standards, solving issues related to reliability and validity suffered by previous measures. Lastly, by aligning operationalised items with theoretical definitions, the scales will measure what they intend to measure, lending empirical validity to the research. These approaches overcome the issues of construct contamination suffered by many existing scales, where the scales inadvertently measure other variables or constructs, thereby reducing the validity of the findings. Furthermore, the scales will be designed with interchangeable referent targets to ensure their versatility within research and to reduce the proliferation of the future development of scales.

2.9.5. Conclusion: Conceptualisation and Measurement

The advancement of the construct of cynicism in the workplace has been impeded by divergent definitions and dimensions, presenting challenges for consistent operational measurement. This ambiguity complicates meta-analytic endeavours and dilutes the clarity of cynicism's impact on workplace outcomes. By establishing a construct-valid, multidimensional framework for cynicism, this thesis contributes to a refined theoretical understanding. This review provides a foundation for the next stage of my thesis.

2.10. Laying out the Landscape of Organisational Cynicism

This section explores the multifaceted nature of organisational cynicism. It first distinguishes cynicism from related constructs, thereby establishing its unique position within the broader contexts of management and psychology. The goal is not merely to add to the existing body of knowledge but to offer a unique lens through which cynicism can be understood and studied. It then identifies theoretical challenges and gaps in existing research, setting the stage for a critical examination of the subject in the (a) broader management and psychology literature and (b) stressor–burnout literature. This section then focuses on the established predictors and outcomes associated with cynicism. The objective is to bridge and integrate divergent views into a coherent conceptual framework. This section also includes hypotheses that aim to test the OCS for convergent and discriminant validity. These hypotheses test the nomological predictors and outcomes and test the scales predictive and incremental validity.

2.11. Differentiation from Related Constructs

First, it is important to differentiate cynicism conceptually from constructs that may share more or less conceptual overlap (Hinkin, 1998; Lambert & Newman, 2023). When a measurement fails to distinguish the construct of interest from other related constructs, the measure's validity is compromised (Kline, 1998). The following section aims to demonstrate the cynicism construct's uniqueness compared to other similar constructs. Some constructs confused with cynicism are pessimism, scepticism, burnout, job dissatisfaction, change resistance, hopelessness, learned helplessness, and distrust. While each of these constructs shares similarities with cynicism, it is also crucial to understand their distinct orientations and targets to avoid conflating them with cynicism. We will begin this differentiation exploration by reviewing the similarities and differences between cynicism and pessimism.

Pessimism. Pessimism is the generalised expectation of a negative outcome and a negative outlook on life (Chang et al., 1997). It includes "present perceptions, appraisals, and future expectancies" (Chang et al., 1997, p. 433). Sample pessimism items are, "I hardly ever expect things to go my way" and "Things never work out the way I want them" (Chang et al., 1997). Pessimism and cynicism are both judgmental beliefs about the future. The constructs share negativity and apprehension about future events (McConnell & Bill, 1993) and foster disillusionment (Best, 2001). Pessimism differs from cynicism in its focus. Pessimism directs negative views internally towards future events (McConnell & Bill, 1993), whereas cynicism targets individuals and objects externally (Andersson & Bateman, 1997). Cynicism requires specific targets (Vance, 2017).

Scepticism. Scepticism is an attitude of doubt about a particular object and originates from "an intellectual doubt about knowledge" (Fortier & Rouillard, 2003, p.4). It is a suspension of judgment based on the assumption that things are unknown and uncertain (Fortier & Rouillard, 2003). Sample scepticism items include, "I have doubts that this change will work as intended" and "I need to be convinced that this change will achieve its objectives" (Stanley et al., 2005). Scepticism and cynicism both emphasise evaluating a specific object but differ in approach. A sceptic questions the truth and adequacy of evidence, setting it apart from cynicism (Bunge, 1991). A sceptic is open to reason and willing to be convinced of a different truth (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989). In contrast, cynicism questions the underlying reality and discredits the message (Fortier & Rouillard, 2003). Research indicates that dispositional scepticism has a moderate correlation with cynicism, with a correlation of $r = .26$ (Stanley et al., 2005), and scepticism towards management, with a correlation of $r = .50$ (Stanley et al., 2005). These correlations indicate that the two constructs, although related, are not identical and require distinct examinations.

Job dissatisfaction. Job dissatisfaction is an overall unpleasurable affective appraisal of the value of one's job or specific aspects (Locke, 1969). Sample job dissatisfaction items are, "In general, I do not like my job" and "In general, I like working at [company]" (reverse scored) (Zhou & George, 2001). Job dissatisfaction and cynicism are work-related attitudinal responses (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). Job dissatisfaction is distinct from cynicism in that it is retrospective and self-focused, while cynicism is broader in scope (Andersson,1996), outwardly directed and anticipatory (Wanous et al., 1994). Given that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are often considered opposite ends of a continuum (Judge et al., 2001; Locke, 1976), it's noteworthy that job satisfaction shows a negative correlation with cynicism, ranging from r = -.50 to -.58 (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Thompson et al., 2000). This relationship suggests that as job dissatisfaction increases, cynicism also tends to rise, further emphasising the importance of distinguishing between these related but distinct constructs.

Change Resistance. Change resistance is a higher-level construct of cynicism in the organisational literature. It is the need to maintain the status quo and apprehension to changing a familiar way one works (Jenks, 1990). Also defined as a generalised disposition, inflexible thinking, intolerance to change, and an unwillingness to change old habits (Oreg, 2003). Sample change resistance items are "Changing plans seems like a real hassle to me" and "I do not change my mind easily" (Oreg, 2003). Change resistance and cynicism are attitudes towards organisational change initiatives (Stanley et al., 2005). Change resistance is distinct from cynicism in that it captures an individual's objections to the nature and content of the change initiative and a preference for the status quo (Jenks, 1990). In contrast, cynicism about change is a more general attitudinal state, wherein an employee may or may not object to the nature or uncertainty of the change but holds negative beliefs about the change's motives and doubts its impact (Chaloupka, 1999). Research shows a moderate correlation between change resistance and cynicism, with a correlation of r = .52 (Thundiyil et al., 2014). The correlation

indicates that while the two constructs relate, they are not identical and merit distinct examination.

Hopelessness. Hopelessness is a feeling about the future. It is a state of despair and sensing that there is no hope (Beck et al., 1974; Lazarus, 1999). Hopelessness is also an attitude towards the future, characterised as a collection of negative beliefs concerning the individual and their future life (Beck et al., 1974). Some hopelessness items are, "The future seems dark to me," and "It is very unlikely that I will get any real satisfaction in the future" (Beck et al., 1974). Hopelessness and cynicism are both judgments about future expectations. Hopelessness is distinct from cynicism in that it is the individual's negative expectancy about themselves and their future life. Alternatively, cynicism involves the same negative expectancy but is about others – that is, it does not matter what I do; it will make no difference; we have tried it all before (Brandes & Das, 2006).

Learned Helplessness. Learned helplessness is a state that arises when individuals cease efforts to control aversive situations after repeated failures (Seligman & Maier, 1967). Sample learned helplessness items are, "When I do not succeed at a task, I do not attempt any similar tasks because I feel that I would fail them," and "When I perform poorly, it is because I cannot perform better" (Quinless & McDermott Nelson, 1988). Learned helplessness and cynicism are both about giving up – that is, the situation is not going to change. Learned helplessness is distinct from cynicism in that it is an individual's performance issue. For example, it reflects an "I cannot" approach (Brooks & Vance, 1991, p.5). The individual does not know how to overcome the problem, and it is an internal attribution. In contrast, cynicism is a learned response to unsuccessful efforts (Wanous et al., 1994) and can occur with high and low self-efficacy in one's belief to make changes to the external context. A cynic is not constrained by one's limited resources to help or be helped. Instead, the assumption is that others possess the means to assist and fix the issues but choose not to act (Wanous et al., 1994).

Burnout. Burnout is defined as a psychological syndrome that includes emotional exhaustion, cynicism (depersonalisation), and diminished professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). It reflects an individual's negative self-evaluation and perception of the workplace (Maslach, 2003). Sample burnout items are, "I feel used up at the end of the workday," and "I feel emotionally drained from my work" (Maslach et al., 1996). Cynicism within burnout correlates strongly with emotional exhaustion, with correlations ranging from r = .49 to .70 (Bakker et al., 2005; Dollard et al., 2019), and moderately with diminished professional efficacy, r = .26 (Dollard et al., 2019). Burnout encapsulates an unwillingness to commit to the organisation and a depletion of job resources (Brill, 1984; Wanous et al., 1994). Conversely, cynicism indicates indifference towards the job and organisation (Bang & Reio, 2017). In summary, burnout, and cynicism, while related, are distinct constructs requiring separate, nuanced measurement tools for accurate organisational assessment.

Trust. Trust is defined as benevolence, competence and integrity, a willingness to be vulnerable. It is inherently relational, and a future expectation of a person's behaviour (Lewicki et al., 2006). The expectation is on how an individual believes they will be treated in the future. Trust is "confident, positive expectations regarding another's conduct" (Lewicki et al., 1998, p. 439). Sample trust items are, "If I shared my problems with this person, I know s(he) would respond constructively and caringly," and "I can rely on this person not to make my job more difficult by careless work" (McAllister, 1995). Trust and cynicism both involve beliefs about competence and integrity but differ in their relational focus and scope. While trust is relational and centres on the competence and integrity of people and entities, cynicism is more about work and is directed towards people and entities themselves (Lewicki et al., 2006; McAllister, 1995). It is a misalignment of expectations and actual experiences. Research indicates a strong negative correlation between organisational trust and cynicism, ranging from r = -.63 to -.65 (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Thundiyil et al., 2014). This suggests that as trust decreases, cynicism

tends to increase, emphasising the need to differentiate between these related but distinct constructs.

Distrust. Distrust is a confident negative expectation about another's conduct, differing from but closely related to cynicism (Lewicki et al., 1998). Unlike trust, distrust has been understudied as a distinct construct. It arises from past experiences that create doubt about another's actions and intentions, leading to an unwillingness to take risks (Deutsch, 1960; Guo et al., 2017). While distrust and cynicism involve negative beliefs about the outcomes of others' actions, they focus on different aspects: distrust centres on a lack of confidence in competence and integrity, while cynicism can exist even when trust exists in these areas (Guo et al., 2017). Research shows a moderate positive correlation between organisational distrust and cynicism, with a correlation of r =.41 (Adams, 2008). Therefore, distrust and cynicism, although related, should be treated as separate but connected constructs.

2.11.10. Addressing Construct Contamination

Accurately measuring cynicism hinges on its clear conceptual demarcation from related constructs. The multifaceted nature of cynicism (Stanley et al., 2005) presents a challenge, as there is no existing theoretical framework to guide the selection of components, such as pessimism, scepticism, learned helplessness, and distrust, for cynicism definition and measurement. This lack of guidance becomes particularly problematic when scholars indiscriminately incorporate items from these related constructs into cynicism scales. Such practices result in construct contamination, which not only undermines the validity of the cynicism measure but also impedes the ability to make meaningful comparisons across studies or establish the relationships between cynicism and other constructs (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Thundiyil et al., 2014).

Table 2.9 presents a summary of the comparison between cynicism and related constructs. This table delineates each construct's definition, sample measurement items, unique

aspects, and their similarities and differences with cynicism. By presenting these constructs side-by-side, the table serves as a guide, emphasising the need for rigorous measurement and conceptualisation to preserve the integrity of cynicism in organisational research.

2.12. Clarifying Cynicism Across Divergent Literatures

This section highlights the theoretical inconsistencies and gaps that obscure our understanding of cynicism in organisational settings. From two distinct research streams, broader psychology and management literature and stressor–burnout literature, cynicism is a construct with multiple interpretations and applications. In some contexts, diverse workplace experiences shape it as an attitudinal outcome; in others, it functions as a subdimension of burnout. Researchers often overlook cynicism as a precursor or mediating attribute that interacts with other workplace predictors like performance, well-being, and engagement.

This section investigates the existing literature to decipher the theoretical disparities and empirical misalignments. It reveals a nomological network for cynicism that remains obscured in ambiguity. Figure 2.3 presents a multidimensional conceptualisation of cynicism that draws from both academic disciplines to guide the reader through this complex literature landscape. The subsequent sections elaborate on these conceptualisations.

Table 2.9

Differentiating Cynicism from Related, Convergent, and Discriminant Constructs

Construct	Definition	Sample Measurement Items	Similarities with Cynicism	Distinction from Cynicism	Cynicism's Uniqueness	Constructs Covariance Magnitude
Pessimism	A generalised expectation of a negative outcome and a negative outlook on life (Chang et al., 1996).	• I hardly ever expect things to go my way. • Things never work out the way I want them. (Chang et al., 1997)	• Both judgement beliefs about the future • Share the negativity and apprehension elements about future events (McConnell & Bill, 1993) • Foster disillusionment (Best, 2001)	• It internally directs negative views of future events (McConnell & Bill, 1993)	• Externally directed towards individuals and objects (Andersson & Bateman, 1997) • Requires specific targets (Vance, 2017).	• Magnitude unavailable
Scepticism	An attitude of doubt towards a particular object originates from "an intellectual doubt about knowledge" (Fortier & Rouillard, 2003, p.4). A suspension of judgment based on the assumption that things are unknown and uncertain (Fortier & Rouillard, 2003).	• I have doubts that this change will work as intended. • I need to be convinced that this change will achieve its objectives. (Stanley et al., 2005)	• Anchored in an assessment towards a particular object	• As a sceptic is willing to question the truth and adequacy of evidence (Bunge, 1991) • A sceptic is open to reason and willing to be convinced of a different truth (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989).	• Questions the underlying reality and discredits the message (Fortier & Rouillard, 2003)	• Dispositional r = .26 (small; Stanley, 2005) • Towards management r = 0.50 (large, Stanley, 2005)
Change resistance	It is the need to maintain the status quo and apprehension to changing a familiar way one works (Jenks, 1990). Also defined as a generalised disposition, inflexible	• Changing plans seems like a real hassle to me. • I do not change my mind easily. (Oreg, 2003)	• Both attitudes towards organisational change initiatives (Stanley et al., 2005)	• A higher-level construct of cynicism in the organisational literature • Captures an individual's objections to the nature and	• A more general attitudinal state wherein an employee may or may not object to nature or uncertainty from change but holds negative beliefs about	• Organisational level r = .52 (large, Thundiyil et al., 2014)

	thinking, intolerance to change, and an unwillingness to change old habits (Oreg, 2003).			content of the change initiative and a preference for the status quo (Jenks, 1990).	the change's motives and doubts its impact. (Chaloupka, 1999)	
Hopelessness	A feeling about the future, a state of despair, a lack of hope (Beck et al., 1974; Lazarus, 1999). Hopelessness is also an attitude towards the future, characterised as a collection of negative beliefs concerning the individual and their future life (Beck et al., 1974).	• The future seems dark to me. • It is very unlikely that I will get any real satisfaction in the future.	• Both judgements about future expectations	• The individual's negative expectancy about themselves and their future life	• Involves the same negative expectancy but is about others: it does not matter what I do; it will make no difference; we have tried it all before (Brandes & Das, 2006).	• Magnitude unavailable
Learned helplessness	A state defined by the act of giving up on attempts to avoid or escape aversive stimuli (Seligman & Maier, 1967). It is a behaviour that manifests in both individuals and animals that generalises to new situations after repeatedly failing to master their environment (Seligman & Maier, 1967).	• When I do not succeed at a task, I do not attempt any similar tasks because I feel that I would fail them. • When I perform poorly, it is because I cannot perform better. (Quinless & McDermott Nelson, 1988)	• Both about giving up; the situation is not going to change.	• An individual's performance issue. For example, it reflects an "I cannot" approach (Brooks & Vance, 1991, p.5). • The individual does not know how to overcome the problem, which is an internal attribution.	• A learned response to unsuccessful efforts (Wanous et al., 1994) can occur with high and low self-efficacy in one's belief to change the external context. • A cynic is not constrained by one's limited resources to help or be helped. Instead, the assumption is that "others know how to help and there is scope to help" and fix the problem but that "others will not do	• Magnitude unavailable

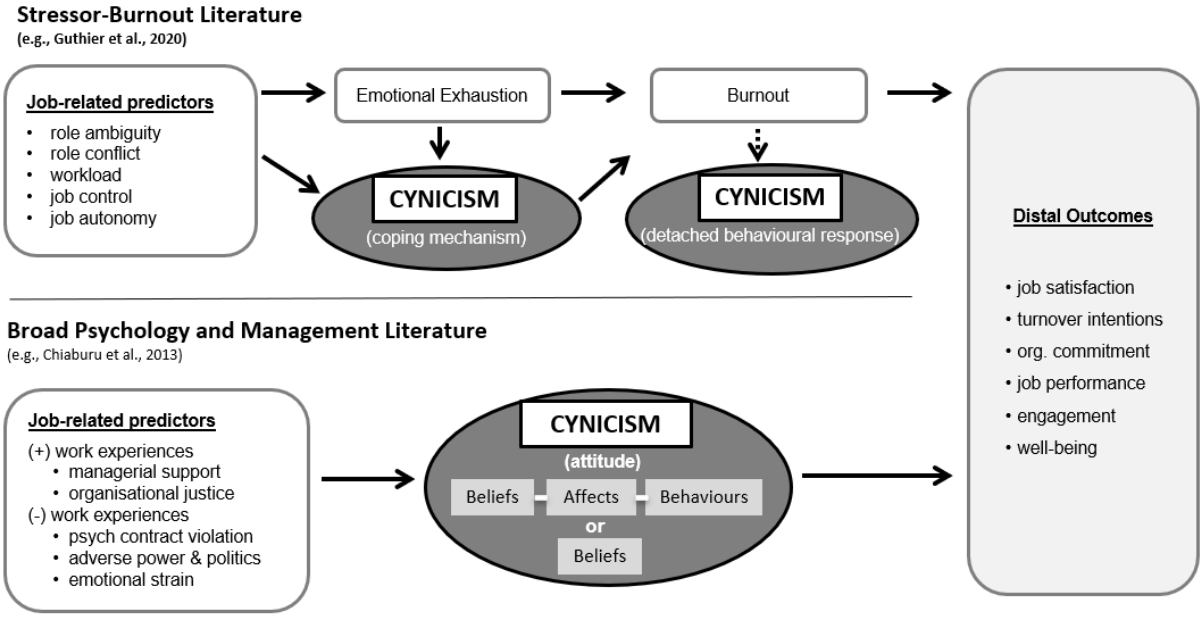
					anything about it" (Wanous et al., 1994).	
Burnout	A psychological syndrome that includes a "work-related state of exhaustion" (Schaufeli et al., 2019, p. 3). It comprises three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, cynicism (depersonalisation), and diminished professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). It is an individual's negative evaluation of the self and the workplace (Maslach, 2003).	• I feel used up at the end of the workday. • I feel emotionally drained from my work. (Maslach et al., 1996)	• Burnout, including cynicism, captures the individual's unwillingness to exert commitment to the organisation (Wanous et al., 1994).	• The entire burnout construct differs from the cynicism dimension as it also encompasses a state of depletion of job energy and resources (Brill, 1984).	• An indifferent attitude towards the job, coworkers or organisation (Bang & Reio, 2017).	• Emotional exhaustion individual level *r* = .37 to .49 (medium, Bakker et al., 2005; Dollard et al., 2019) • Emotional exhaustion collective level *r* = .70 (large, Dollard et al., 2019) • Professional efficacy individual level *r* = .26 (small, Dollard et al., 2019)
Trust	Benevolence, competence and integrity, a willingness to be vulnerable. It is inherently relational and a future expectation of a person's behaviour (Lewicki et al., 2006). The expectation is on how an individual believes they will be treated in the future. Trust is a "confident, positive expectation regarding another's conduct" (Lewicki et al., 1998, p. 439).	• If I shared my problems with this person, I know s(he) would respond constructively and caringly. • I can rely on this person not to make my job more difficult by careless work.	• Both beliefs about competence and integrity	• Is inherently relational and the competence and integrity of people and entities.	• Is more about the work and towards people and entities. It is a misalignment of expectations and actual experiences.	• Organisational trust *r* = -.63 to -.65 (large, Chiaburu et al., 2013; Thundiyil et al., 2014)

Distrust	"Confident negative expectations regarding another's conduct" attributing sinister intentions (Lewicki et al., 1998, p. 439). In general, distrust originates from knowing and doubting another entity's actions, intent, and capabilities based on past experience. Distrust manifests as an unwillingness to take risks, as the expectation is that the target of distrust will engage in undesirable behaviour (Deutsch, 1960; Guo et al., 2017).	• I fear that my superior will treat me unfairly. • I am afraid that my superior will behave in a way that will be to my disadvantage. (Bijilsma-Frankema et al., 2015).	• Acknowledged as the closest construct to cynicism • Both a negative belief that others' actions will not manifest in an outcome desired by the individual. • Both evaluative in nature and impact assessment of worth to invest effort.	• As the focus of distrust is on lack of confidence in another person's competence, benevolence, and integrity.	• Can manifest even if individuals trust another entity's competence and benevolence. The individual is disillusioned about the worthiness of the entity's actions and the impact on the more extensive system. (Guo et al., 2017). • In this sense, cynicism can be moderate to high, even when domain-specific distrust is low.	• Distrust *r* = .43 (medium, Adams, 2008)

Note: *r* = construct covariance magnitude, small = ≥10 to ≤..29, medium = ≥.30 to ≤..49, large = ≥.50.

Figure 2.3.

Conceptualisations of Cynicism in Stressor–Burnout and Psychology and Management Literatures



Note. This figure succinctly integrates different conceptualisations of cynicism from stressor–burnout literature, psychology, and management. It shows cynicism as both a coping mechanism and a burnout sub-component. In the broader literature, cynicism is illustrated as an attitude influenced by beliefs, or a combination of beliefs, affects, and behaviours. The figure also outlines the distal outcomes and job-related predictors associated with cynicism, as identified in existing research (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Guthier et al., 2020).

2.12.1. Broader Management and Psychology Literature

In the broader psychology and management literature, cynicism is an attitude towards the organisation, often composed of beliefs, affects, and behavioural outcomes (Bateman et al., 1992; Dean et al., 1998). More recent work suggests a unidimensional conceptualisation focused solely on beliefs (Bedeian, 2007; Cole et al., 2006; Stanley et al., 2005). A diverse range of antecedents influences this form of cynicism, including positive work experiences like perceived justice and support, as well as negative ones such as psychological contract violations, perceived politics, and emotional strain (see Figure 2.3). For example, cynicism beliefs manifest into an emotional state characterised by resentment, reduced motivation, and distrust, frequently originating from perceptions of workplace injustice (Rousseau, 1989). Additionally, cynicism can result in a behavioural outcome in response to emotional strain,

often triggered when organisations set unrealistically high expectations (Brockway et al., 2002), contributing to the emotional toll experienced in the workplace. Such complexities add layers to our understanding of cynicism, underlining its multifaceted nature in organisational settings.

2.12.2. Cynicism in Stressor–burnout Literature

Within the stressor–burnout literature, cynicism often emerges as a crucial facet of burnout, characterised by prolonged emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion (Maslach et al., 2001). Utilising the JD-R model as a lens, cynicism is understood as both a symptom of burnout and a form of withdrawal behaviour (González-Morales et al., 2012; Maslach et al., 1996). Elevated job demands like role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload exacerbate stress and feed into the burnout process, thus amplifying cynicism. In contrast, insufficient job resources, such as limited job control and autonomy, fail to alleviate these stressors, driving employees towards cynicism as a maladaptive coping mechanism. This dual role enriches the complexity of cynicism's conceptual understanding, particularly within the stressor–burnout domain (refer to Figure 2.3 for a visual representation

The JD-R Model: In the stressor-burnout literature, cynicism is crucial, often seen as a facet of burnout and a withdrawal behaviour. The JD-R model, a foundational framework in this field, categorizes job characteristics into demands and resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Job demands, like workload, exacerbate stress and cynicism, while resources, such as autonomy, mitigate them Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The model's health impairment process highlights how excessive demands lead to burnout, while its motivational process shows how resources can alleviate cynicism (Hall et al., 2013). Choosing the JD-R model over the COR theory was based on its tailored focus on workplace factors and its alignment with observed dynamics in the literature.

2.13. Overview of Established Predictors

The established predictors of organisational cynicism are examined across the two bodies of literature. First, the broader psychology and management literature findings. Second, the stressor–burnout literature. Collectively, these discussions will offer a comprehensive understanding of the predictors of organisational cynicism.

2.13.1. Predictors in The Broader Psychology and Management Literature

This section draws upon meta-analytic findings from broader psychology and management literature (Chiaburu et al., 2013). These predictors can be broadly categorised into a) positive workplace experiences, such as organisational and managerial support, and organisational justice and b) negative workplace experiences, such as psychological contract violation, adverse power and politics, and emotional strain. These predictors are discussed in detail below and supported by empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks.

Organisational and Managerial Support (Positive Workplace Experience). Organisational support significantly influences employees' attitudes, including organisational cynicism. This construct is the belief that the organisation values an employee's contributions and well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1987). Empirical evidence substantiating this relationship reveals a correlation coefficient of $-r = 0.63$ between cynicism and perceived organisational support (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Parallel to organisational support, managerial support is a preventive measure against cynicism. Effective managerial strategies include reducing employee isolation, clarifying policies, and balancing job demands with available resources (Bang & Reio, 2017; Yu & Lui, 2023). Low levels of organisational and managerial support strongly correlate with high organisational cynicism (Byrne & Hochwarter, 2008; Treadway et al., 2004). Organisational and managerial support serve as established predictors of organisational cynicism.

Organisational Justice (Positive Workplace Experience). Organisational justice significantly influences employees' attitudes, notably organisational cynicism (Bernerth et al., 2007). This multifaceted construct covers fairness in reward allocation, process management, and interpersonal treatment (Greenberg & Cropanzano, 2001; Leventhal, 1980). Positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes generally result from perceived organisational justice (Khan et al., 2015). Conversely, when employees perceive that the organisation fails to deliver on its promises or mistreats its workforce, negative behaviours, and attitudes, including cynicism, are likely to ensue (Cohen & Diamant, 2017; van Dijke & De Cremer, 2016). Empirical evidence, such as a correlation coefficient r = -0.55 between perceived justice and cynicism, further substantiates this relationship (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Therefore, organisational justice is an established predictor of organisational cynicism.

Psychological Contract Violation (Negative Workplace Experience).

Psychological contract violation serves as a predictor of organisational cynicism. This concept relates to an individual's beliefs about the terms of a reciprocal exchange agreement with their organisation (Rousseau, 1989). When breaches of these agreements occur, they trigger a contract violation response, causing negative emotions like anger and frustration (Rousseau, 1995). These emotional states often act as precursors to organisational cynicism. In the aftermath of such a violation, employees typically find it challenging to rely on their previous psychological contract, which often reduces their felt obligations towards the employer (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Tomprou et al., 2015). Empirical support for this relationship confirmed a correlation of r = 0.51 between cynicism and psychological contract violation (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Given this evidence and existing theoretical frameworks (Andersson, 1996), psychological contract violation affects emotional well-being and is an established predictor of organisational cynicism.

Adverse Power and Politics (Negative Workplace Experience). Perceptions of organisational politics emerge as another predictor of organisational cynicism. These perceptions are understood as individual subjective evaluations of organisational situations or behaviours as being political, extending to how employees view the actions of coworkers and supervisors (Harrell-Cook, et al., 1999). Such perceptions often paint the organisation as self-serving, prioritising its interests over those of its employees (Ferris & Hochwarter, 2010). Employees who perceive a high degree of organisational politics are more likely to develop organisational cynicism (Hochwarter et al., 2020). Empirical evidence of the correlation coefficient of $r = 0.55$ between cynicism and perceived organisational politics supports this relationship (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Actions perceived as unethical or unjust further exacerbate cynicism, leading to resistance to change and negative attitudes (Mayer et al., 1995). Therefore, perceptions of organisational politics, characterised by self-interest and a lack of benevolence, serve as predictors of organisational cynicism.

Emotional Strain (Negative Workplace Experience). Finally, psychological strain emerges as a significant predictor of organisational cynicism, grounded in an individual's perception that environmental demands exceed their available coping resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This psychological strain relates to stress responses such as feeling overwhelmed or overloaded (Beehr & Franz, 1987). Elevated tension often results in employees feeling exploited, as they perceive their social exchange relationship with the organisation to be imbalanced (Banks et al., 2012). Such strain fosters negative attitudes, particularly organisational cynicism, as corroborated by empirical evidence indicating a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.30$ between cynicism and emotional strain (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Gkorezis et al., 2015; Kranabetter & Niessen, 2017). Moreover, emotional strain serves as a self-defensive mechanism that depletes employees' resources and triggers cynical

attitudes in the workplace (Simha et al., 2014). Therefore, emotional strain adversely affects employee well-being and is an established predictor of organisational cynicism.

Since researchers have well-substantiated these constructs as predictors of cynicism – organisational and managerial support, organisational justice, psychological contract violation, adverse power and politics, emotional strain – I have strategically chosen not to empirically test them in my thesis.

2.13.2. Predictors in The Stressor–burnout Literature

In the context of the JD-R model, the literature on stress and burnout identifies two main categories of predictors of cynicism: 1) job demands, which include role stressors like role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload, and 2) job resources, such as job autonomy and job control. While role stressors contribute to increased stress and cynicism (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Guthier et al., 2020), job resources like autonomy and control serve as mitigating factors (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Guthier et al., 2020). This complex interplay between job demands and resources establishes them as key predictors of organisational cynicism within the stressor–burnout literature.

Job demands and role stressors. Job demands and role stressors are determinants of organisational cynicism, contributing to negative attitudes and poor mental health outcomes among employees. These stressors, often analysed as job-related antecedents, encompass factors like role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload, each of which has been linked to varying degrees of cynicism and burnout in the workplace (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Guthier et al., 2020; Nixon et al., 2011). These demands amplify cynical perceptions and show consistent associations with mental health concerns (Borg & Kristensen, 1999; Bourbonnais et al., 1999). Therefore, understanding the nuances of these job demands and

role stressors is pivotal for comprehending their intricate relationship with organisational cynicism and subsequent impact on well-being.

Role ambiguity. Role ambiguity, characterised by unclear job expectations and responsibilities, serve as predictors of organisational cynicism (Thomas et al., 2020). A lack of role clarity fuels negative attitudes and correlates with detrimental mental health outcomes, adding another layer of complexity to the issue (Caplan & Jones, 1975). The ambiguity stems from employees lacking crucial information about their work roles, creating a sense of uncertainty and confusion that can contribute to cynicism (Kahn, 1978). In line with this, Andersson (1996) asserts that such vagueness in roles provides a conducive environment for cynicism to flourish. This confluence of factors underscores the need to understand the complex way role ambiguity catalyses organisational cynicism.

Role conflict. Role conflict, characterised by conflicting job demands, is also a predictor of cynicism in the workplace (Andersson, 1996; Naus et al., 2007; Thomas et al., 2020). The tension originates from inconsistent expectations between employees and various stakeholders, such as supervisors. This conflict can take multiple forms, including conflicting stakeholder demands or the pressure from handling complex, multifaceted job responsibilities (Van Sell et al., 1981). These contradictory demands create a breeding ground for cynicism and contribute to negative attitudes, not only towards the job but also towards supervisors (Jackson & Schuler, 1985)

Workload. Workload is an antecedent of cynicism, particularly when it reaches excessive levels (Guthier et al., 2020). Two distinct categories, quantitative and qualitative, can dissect the notion of overload. Quantitative overload refers to the perception of having an impossible number of tasks within a specific time frame. In contrast, qualitative overload occurs when the complexity of the tasks exceeds an employee's capabilities (Maslach &

Jackson, 1984). These forms of overload are especially prevalent in restructures, where employees face increased responsibilities and demands (Andersson, 1996). Such overloads serve as direct antecedents to adverse psychological outcomes, including cynicism (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993).

Job Resources: Control. Job resources, particularly job control/autonomy, counterbalance the effects of role stressors on cynicism (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Guthier et al., 2020). Control in a job could come structural factors in how the job is designed or it can come from a sense of efficacy – typically captured by role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). When employees have higher role breadth self-efficacy, they are more likely to craft their jobs and have confidence in identifying and executing control, potentially mitigating their sense of futility and cynicism.

My thesis empirically measures key predictors within the JD-R model, focusing on job demands, role conflict, and role ambiguity. It examines how role conflict, by escalating job demands, heightens cynicism and affects attitudes towards work and supervisors, influencing workplace dynamics. The assessment of role ambiguity is crucial in understanding its contribution to organisational cynicism and employee mental health. Additionally, evaluating job control/autonomy is vital, showing how job resources can alleviate the impact of role stressors on cynicism. These measurements collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the interaction between job nature, role variables, and resources, and their influence on employee perceptions, attitudes, and organisational cynicism.

2.14. Overview of Distal Outcomes

This section explores distal outcomes influenced by cynicism, demonstrating the parallels between the broader psychology and management literature and the stressor–burnout domain in identifying these outcomes. Despite their different lenses, there is a consensus on

cynicism's influence on elements like negative emotions and attitudes, emotional detachment and withdrawal, job satisfaction, job performance, organisational commitment, and intention to quit. I aim to deepen this understanding by further exploring the outcomes, such as engagement and well-being. The overarching goal is to provide a nuanced, interdisciplinary view of the complex role of cynicism within organisational settings.

Negative Emotions and Attitudes. This attribute captures enduring emotional state outcomes like hate and anger and sustained negative viewpoints towards both the job and the organisation (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Reichers et al., 1997). These emotional states extend beyond temporary feelings of disapproval or disappointment, representing a more profound and lasting form of emotional disengagement and animosity (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Reichers et al., 1997). These outcomes can be seen as related constructs to cynicism, potentially originating from cognitive beliefs about the organisation's sincerity or integrity (Abraham, 2000; Dean et al., 1998). Informing what employees believe, shaping emotional outcomes and negative attitudes.

Emotional Detachment and Withdrawal. This attribute encapsulates self-protective outcomes that employees adopt as a response to cynicism, characterised by passive, apathetic, and defensive actions (Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Items such as "I just want to do my job and not be bothered" (Maslach et al., 1996) highlight how employees emotionally and mentally pull away from their organisation. These outcomes are a type of coping mechanisms for cynical thoughts (Abraham, 2000).

Reduced Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction, a multifaceted construct encompassing cognitive, affective, and behavioural components (Hulin & Judge, 2003; Locke, 1976), is adversely influenced by cynicism. The literature identifies cynicism as a negative antecedent to job satisfaction, a relationship often mediated by the infusion of negative emotions into job

evaluations (Wanous et al., 1994). Additional contributing factors include a perceived lack of organisational support and justice (Colquitt et al., 2001; Riggle et al., 2009). Empirical evidence confirms the significant impact of cynicism on variations in job satisfaction (Abraham, 2000; Akar, 2019). A mean true-score correlation (ρ^) of -0.63 further validates that elevated cynicism levels are associated with reduced job satisfaction (Chiaburu et al., 2013). As the negative relationship between cynicism and job satisfaction is well-established in the literature, I will not empirically measure it.

Reduced Organisational Commitment. Organisational commitment is negatively associated with cynicism – a relationship supported by multiple frameworks, including the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfall, 1989, 2002; Hodson, 2001). COR theory suggests that employees use cynicism as a self-defensive strategy in high-stress environments, which impacts their commitment to the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). This defensive cynicism leads to emotional and cognitive detachment, reducing organisational commitment levels (Häusser et al., 2010). The relationship between cynicism and organisational commitment is further substantiated by a mean true-score correlation (ρ^) of -0.55, confirming that higher cynicism correlates with lower organisational commitment (Chiaburu et al., 2013). As this relationship is well-established in the literature, it is not a subject of empirical measurement in my thesis.

Reduced Job Performance. Empirical evidence supports the notion that cynicism influences job performance, defined as the effectiveness and efficiency of completing tasks (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Grounded in the COR theory, cynicism is a self-protective strategy when employees perceive their job resources to be at risk (Hobfall, 2002; Hodson, 2001). This protective strategy leads to emotional and cognitive disengagement, adversely affecting job performance (Häusser et al., 2010). While there's debate about the potential positive roles of cynicism in specific contexts (Brandes & Das, 2006), the prevailing academic stance and

empirical data assert its negative impact on job performance (Sims & Szilagyi, 1975; Wilkerson, 2002). Specifically, a mean true-score correlation (ρ^) of -0.10 confirms that higher levels of cynicism are associated with decreased job performance (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Job performance is not an empirical focus of my thesis.

Reduced Engagement. Engagement, characterised by an energetic and effective connection with work and the capacity to fully handle job demands (Schaufeli et al., 2002), is not yet well-established as an outcome of cynicism. Although cynicism frequently appears in the literature as a component of burnout or an attitude shaped by workplace experiences (Andersson, 1996; Dean et al., 1998; Maslach et al., 2001), its specific influence on engagement remains underexplored. Frameworks like the COR theory and the JD-R model posit that cynicism acts as a self-protective mechanism in stressful, resource-depleting environments (Hobfoll, 2002; Hodson, 2001). In such conditions, cynicism leads to emotional and cognitive disengagement, undermining the energetic connection with work pivotal to engagement. This observation suggests that cynicism might be a precursor to diminished engagement – a proposition I aim to examine empirically.

Reduced Well-being. While academic discourse acknowledges well-being as a state of psychological health and meaningful engagement, cynicism is often identified as a factor that undermines these positive outcomes, although its role has not been well- established (Andersson, 1996; Dean et al., 1998; Maslach et al., 2001). My research addresses this ambiguity, proposing to empirically assess reduced well-being as a potential consequence of organisational cynicism within the frameworks of the JD-R model. According to the JD-R model, job demands such as cynicism can erode personal resources, detrimental to well-being. Emotional and cognitive disengagement, often associated with cynicism, conflicts with engagement and emotional connection crucial for well-being (Schaufeli et al., 2002). My research contends that cynicism is an underexplored precursor to reduced well-being. This

perspective calls for empirical substantiation to enhance our understanding of cynicism's complex role in organisational contexts.

Increased Intention to Quit (Turnover Intentions). Turnover intentions, defined as the intent to leave one's current employment, emerge as an attitudinal outcome influenced by cynicism (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Empirical evidence supports that increased cynicism corresponds with higher turnover intentions, substantiated by a mean true-score correlation (ρ^) of 0.39 (Chiaburu et al., 2013). My research seeks to add empirical depth to this relationship, measuring turnover intentions as a distal outcome. Cynicism can deplete personal resources, thereby amplifying intentions to quit. Given the costly implications of turnover for organisations, sometimes amounting to 200% of an employee's annual pay (Cascio, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2001), I aim to examine the link between cynicism and turnover intentions, further contributing to an understanding of cynicism's multifaceted impact in organisational settings. The next section aims to bridge a multidimensional conceptualisation across the two bodies of literature.

2.15. Integrating Perspectives: Towards a Cognitive Framework

This section synthesises multiple perspectives on cynicism, emphasising its cognitive core. In the stressor–burnout literature, cynicism emerges primarily as a facet of burnout, influenced by job demands and resources such as role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload (González-Morales et al., 2012; Guthier et al., 2020; Maslach et al., 2001). This view underscores cynicism's functional role as a symptom and a coping mechanism in the workplace. It also posits that employees use cognitive beliefs to distance themselves from job stressors emotionally, reinforcing cynicism's functional role (Maslach et al., 2001). Additionally, emotional exhaustion, another core element of burnout, amplifies cynicism by fostering negative beliefs about competence (Maslach et al., 1996).

Contrastingly, the broader psychology and management literature conceptualises cynicism as an attitude consisting of beliefs, affects, and behaviours. In this framework, cognitive beliefs are foundational, initiating emotional responses and guiding actions (Andersson, 1996; Bedeian, 2007). For instance, negative thoughts about organisational justice translate into cynical attitudes in the workplace (Andersson, 1996; Rousseau, 1989). Likewise, perceived violations of psychological contracts with organisations lead to beliefs that become precursors to cynicism (Rousseau, 1989). These beliefs influence a range of workplace outcomes, including engagement and well-being.

I advocate conceptualising cynicism primarily as a cognitive construct, using beliefs as the latent indicator. This approach blends the diverse perspectives from the stressor-burnout and broader psychology and management literatures. It also incorporates cynicism's functional role, as outlined by the stressor–burnout literature. This unified framework sets the stage for future empirical studies, especially concerning cynicism's interaction with key workplace variables (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). In adopting this cognitive framework, I align with recent academic work advocating a unidimensional focus on beliefs (Bedeian, 2007; Cole et al., 2006; Stanley et al., 2005), thereby offering a coherent direction for future research.

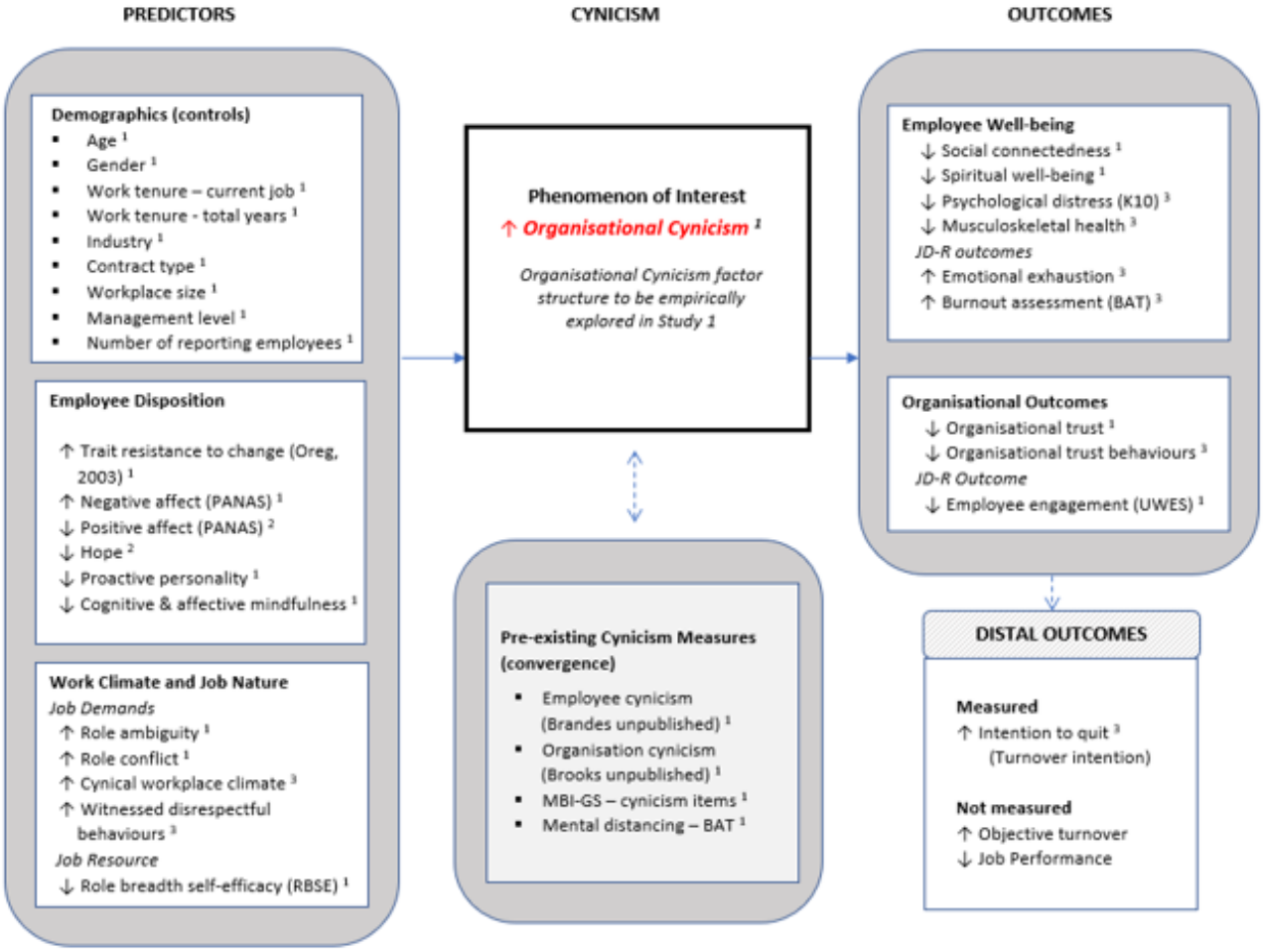
2.16. Nomological Network for Empirical Examination

The development of the OCS necessitates articulating its nomological network, which maps out the theoretical predictors of OCS with related constructs, thus offering evidence of its nomological validity (Lambert & Newman, 2023). Defining the direction and magnitude of these relationships is also important for a rigorous empirical examination (Edwards & Berry, 2010). This section shows the comprehensive theoretical framework that anchors the empirical exploration in my thesis, graphically depicted in Figure 2.4. Comprising three primary columns, Predictors, Cynicism, and Outcomes, the model also includes a

subcategory labelled Distal Outcomes. The Predictors category incorporates demographic control variables, employee dispositional elements, and work climate and job nature variables. The categorisation of work climate variables further divides into job demands and job resources.

Figure 2.4.

Theoretical Nomological Network for Organisational State Cynicism



Note. Scales marked with [1] appear in both Study 2 and 3; scales marked with [2] belong exclusively to Study 2, and scales marked with [3] are unique to Study 3. Scales highlighted in red signify the new cynicism measurement tools this thesis develops, and their placement as theorised within the nomological network. The '↓' symbol represents a decreasing relationship with organisational cynicism, while '↑' indicates an increasing relationship.

The core Cynicism column introduces the proposed OCS, set for empirical development in Study 1. This column also includes existing cynicism scales for future validity testing. The Outcomes column outlines established and hypothesised consequences

of organisational cynicism, specifying distinctions between employee well-being and organisational outcomes. This column also presents distal outcomes, such as intention to quit, objective turnover, and job performance. Except for objective turnover and job performance, all variables in this figure will undergo empirical measurement as part of my thesis. This complex model sets the stage for subsequent sections, which explore these theorised predictors and outcomes, delve into the JD-R model, and offer an overview of incremental validity and hypotheses for future testing.

2.17. Predictors for Empirical Investigation

This section aims to identify and elaborate on potential predictors warranting empirical exploration in my thesis. I propose a comprehensive set of predictors for organisational cynicism, recognising its multifaceted nature. Predictors are categorised into demographic control variables, employee disposition predictors, and work climate and job nature predictors. The latter category employs the JD-R model as its guiding framework. By identifying these potential predictors, I offer a more nuanced understanding of the forces that may influence organisational cynicism. This exploration extends the existing literature and provides a robust foundation for the empirical investigations to follow.

Demographics Control Variables. In the study of organisational cynicism, demographic factors such as age, gender, occupation, and years of experience often serve as control variables to isolate the primary relationship under investigation (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Chiaburu et al., 2013; Naus et al., 2007). Additional control variables – current job tenure and workplace size – further refine the study's focus. The inclusion of job tenure reflects findings of a curvilinear relationship between tenure and cynicism (O'Connell et al., 1986). Controlling for workplace size is motivated by its potential to elevate cynicism in larger, less efficient settings (Brown et al., 2022; Hausknecht et al., 2009). However, the indiscriminate inclusion of control variables risks multicollinearity and can compromise the

study's robustness (Becker, 2005). Control variables are carefully selected in line with my study's theoretical framework and research questions, although meta-analytic results suggest that demographic characteristics may not significantly impact organisational cynicism (Chiaburu et al., 2013).

Employee Disposition Predictors. This section introduces an array of dispositional predictors that impact organisational cynicism, like the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS), Hope, Proactive Personality, and Trait Resistance to Change also feature alongside Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness. These constructs offer an understanding of the emotional and attitudinal dimensions that either exacerbate or mitigate cynicism. The overarching aim is to deepen our knowledge of how individual traits interact with organisational contexts to influence cynicism levels.

Positive and Negative Affect Scale. Previous research has established a significant relationship between cynicism and negative affective states in employees (Vance et al., 1995; Wanous et al., 1994). Dean et al. (1998) further conceptualised cynicism as a negative affect directed towards the organisation. Given this established link, the PANAS emerges as a well-validated predictor to capture these affective antecedents. Consistent with previous empirical evidence, the theory posits that organisational cynicism will positively correlate with negative affectivity and negatively correlate with positive affectivity (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Utilising PANAS enriches my study's theoretical framework and offers a lens for examining how general emotional dispositions explain a significant portion of the variance of organisational cynicism thoughts.

Hope. Hope is a psychological construct described as the ability to create pathways to desired goals and self-motivate oneself through agency thinking (Snyder, 2002). The literature suggests that hope acts as a counterbalance to cynicism, which often functions as a

protective mechanism against thwarted hopes and feelings of hopelessness (Kudo et al., 2016). Individuals who harness hope tend to maintain an optimistic outlook, even when confronted with the less favourable facets of organisational life, potentially improving outcomes such as well-being, job performance, and psychological well-being (Kudo et al., 2016; Snyder, 2002). This resilient disposition makes it a pivotal individual trait – dependent on path and agency towards a goal – to be explored as a dispositional predictor of organisational cynicism.

Proactive Personality. Proactive Personality emerges as a construct for understanding the intricate dynamics of organisational cynicism. While cynicism can serve as a coping mechanism to shield against disappointments, it may also inhibit proactive behaviour in the workplace (Margelyte-Pleskiene & Vveinhardt, 2019). Against this background, a proactive personality, characterised by a stable tendency to identify opportunities and take initiative (Bateman & Crant, 1993), gains prominence. This trait could buffer against cynicism, encouraging initiative and responsibility where cynicism might otherwise prevail. Therefore, I incorporate proactive personality as a dispositional predictor to examine its role in the theoretical framework.

Trait Resistance to Change. Resistance to Change emerges as a dimension for investigation as a dispositional predictor in the study of organisational cynicism (Chaloupka, 1999; Jenks, 1990). Defined by an individual's objections to changes and a preference for maintaining the status quo, this construct aligns closely with the general attitudinal traits of cynicism, such as negative beliefs about the motives for change and doubts about its impact (Chaloupka, 1999; Jenks, 1990). Oreg (2003) provides a comprehensive understanding of resistance as a disposition by identifying specific indicators like stress responses to change and a reluctance to alter plans, which capture an individual's dispositional resistance level and link to the beliefs inherent in organisational cynicism.

Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness. Mindfulness, defined as purposeful, non-judgmental awareness of the present (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), emerges as a negative dispositional predictor of organisational cynicism. Based on the COR theory, mindfulness is a coping resource for work-related stressors, potentially mitigating negative attitudes and emotions (Hobfoll, 1989). Empirical studies support the beneficial effects of mindfulness on occupational health and emotional well-being (Haun et al., 2018). While mindfulness is not strongly analytic or action-oriented, it discourages unproductive dwelling and passive behaviours often linked to cynicism (Feldman et al., 2007).

The following section transitions from individual traits to the broader work environment and examines situational and contextual factors that impact organisational cynicism.

Work Climate and Job Nature Predictors (JD-R Model Predictors). This section empirically measures work climate and job nature as situational and contextual predictors of organisational cynicism. Grounded in the JD-R model, the analysis includes job demands such as role ambiguity and role conflict, situational factors like cynical workplace climates and witnessed disrespectful behaviours. Additionally, job control, operationalised as role breadth self-efficacy, is examined as a key job resource. These varied predictors collectively deepen our understanding of how the work environment influences organisational cynicism, thereby merging insights from diverse bodies of literature.

Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict (Job Demand). Within the JD-R framework, role ambiguity and role conflict are identified as significant job demands that influence organisational cynicism. While previously discussed in the context of the stressor–burnout literature, their importance warrants further exploration as part of integrating the bodies of literature in the realm of work climate and job nature predictors. Role ambiguity,

characterised by unclear job expectations, and role conflict, marked by conflicting job demands, have been established as predictors of cynicism and negative attitudes in the workplace (Andersson, 1996; Thomas et al., 2020). I will empirically measure these constructs to assess their impact on the newly developed OCS.

Cynical Workplace Climate (Job Demand). A cynical workplace climate is recognised as a predictor of increased organisational cynicism (Decelles et al., 2013; Wanous et al., 2000). This study includes it as a job demand variable because it encapsulates the affective and cognitive dimensions of cynicism, as measured by the pessimism subscale of the COAC Scale (Wanous et al., 2000). Such a climate is characterised by scepticism towards organisational initiatives, with employees doubting the efficacy of problem-solving programs. This doubt often manifests in negative attitudes and behaviours, particularly resistance to change (Decelles et al., 2013). Given its substantial impact on employee perceptions and the overall work environment, the presence of a cynical workplace climate is an essential component in understanding and predicting organisational cynicism.

Witnessed Disrespectful Behaviours (Job Demand). Witnessed disrespectful behaviours at work, typified by undermining and social exclusion, have been identified as potential predictors of organisational cynicism (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Such behaviours, which constitute a violation of organisational norms, are posited to influence the cognitive and affective dimensions that contribute to cynicism (Kaplan, 1975). Employees who observe these forms of incivility are more likely to adopt negative beliefs and attitudes towards the organisation (Robinson et al., 2014), potentially questioning its integrity and values. This breach in the normative expectations of the workplace can fundamentally challenge the organisation's ethos (Feldman, 1984) and is thus critical to understanding the development of organisational cynicism. The inclusion of this

job demand variable acknowledges the impact that the social context and witnessed interactions have on shaping employee workplace cynicism (Stavrova et al., 2020).

Role Breadth Self-efficacy (Job Resource). RBSE is posited as a form of resource in this study, with a focus on its capacity to explain organisational cynicism—as well as moderate the negative effects of other job demands on cynicism- a relationship not yet empirically established (Parker et al., 2006). RBSE is a form of personal resource related to job roles, and represents a cognitive-motivational state that encourages proactive job crafting, enhanced confidence and managing a variety of work tasks (Crant, 2000). It is theorised that individuals with high RBSE perceive greater task controllability, leading to increased personal initiative and reduced likelihood of effort withdrawal – a potential buffer that could counteract the development of cynicism (Frese et al., 2000). This study examines both the direct relationship between RBSE and organisational cynicism in reducing the posited negative effects of job demands on cynicism.

In summary, I have intentionally selected work demands and resources within the JD-R model that have the strongest psychological connections to the development of organisational cynicism. The chosen job demands – role ambiguity, role conflict, cynical workplace climate, and witnessed disrespectful behaviours – each have a direct link to the conservation or depletion of resources theory and have been in the past proposed to link to both emotional exhaustion and cognitive states like cynicism (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Hobfall, 2012). For example, role ambiguity and role conflict directly influence employee attitudes by creating unclear expectations and conflicting demands, respectively (Andersson, 1996; Thomas et al., 2020). A cynical workplace climate and the witnessing of disrespectful behaviours have been proposed to relate closely to the affective and cognitive dimensions of cynicism (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Wanous et al., 2000). RBSE is the central resource examined (Parker et al., 2006) and may empower employees with a sense of control and

proactive capabilities, potentially mitigating the adverse effects of organisational cynicism on engagement (Crant, 2000; Frese et al., 2000, as cited in Frese & Fay, 2001).

2.18. Outcomes for Empirical Investigation

This section explores the various established and potential outcomes of organisational cynicism, advancing the empirical scope of my thesis. The section aims to explore the immediate psychological, social, and physical aspects of well-being and the long-term organisational impacts by employing theoretical frameworks, such as the JD-R model. Specifically, the section investigates a range of outcomes, including but not limited to social connectedness, spiritual well-being, burnout, psychological distress, organisational trust, and intentions to quit. The intent is to comprehensively understand how organisational cynicism can significantly affect various dimensions of employee life and organisational dynamics.

Employee Well-Being. This section empirically measures the multifaceted outcomes of organisational cynicism on employee well-being. The focus here is not just on the psychological, social, and physical dimensions of well-being. The examination includes social connectedness, spiritual well-being, burnout, psychological distress, musculoskeletal health, and emotional exhaustion. These proposed outcomes offer a holistic view of how organisational cynicism can permeate various facets of an employee's life, thereby contributing to a comprehensive understanding of its far-reaching impact.

Social Connectedness. Organisational cynicism can influence social behaviour, often leading to increased selfish actions and perceived disrespect from others (Stavrova et al., 2020; Zaki et al., 2021). This negative social impact manifests as disconnection and alienation among employees, significantly affecting individual well-being (Abraham, 2000). Leiter and Maslach (2016) extend this observation to argue that cynicism is associated with the quality of social relationships in the workplace. They note that negative social

interactions, such as those influenced by different attachment styles, deplete energy and alienate individuals within their workplaces (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Therefore, given cynicism's impact on social behaviours and relationships within the workplace, it is reasonable to theorise that social connectedness will emerge as an outcome influenced by levels of organisational cynicism.

Spiritual Well-Being. Operationalised through frameworks like the Spirituality Index of Well-being (Daaleman & Frey, 2004), spiritual well-being represents an avenue for understanding the multifaceted impacts of organisational cynicism on employee well-being. Although spirituality often appears as a dynamic process linked to a transcendent force that surpasses reality (Connor et al., 2003; Zellers & Perrewé, 2003), research exploring its potential role as an outcome has thus far been limited. Research suggests that spirituality may offer an internal locus of purpose and a belief in a higher meaning, which could protect against the detrimental effects of organisational cynicism (James, 2005; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). This outcome implies that employees experiencing high organisational cynicism might exhibit compromised spiritual well-being.

Burnout Assessment (BAT). Often framed as a significant component of burnout in the stressor–burnout literature, cynicism captures prolonged states of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion in the workplace (Maslach et al., 2001). However, the distinct cognitive dimensions of cynicism set it apart from the emotional and physical exhaustion traditionally linked to burnout (Aronsson et al., 2017; Bakker et al., 2023; Leiter & Maslach, 2016). Given that the BAT measures exhaustion, mental distance, cognitive impairment, and emotional impairment (Schaufeli et al., 2020), the tool could serve as a mechanism for examining the theorised relationship between organisational cynicism and burnout. The cognitive and emotional dimensions of cynicism may parallel the mental distance and emotional impairment components of the BAT. This overlap implies that organisational cynicism could

explain a significant portion of the variance of burnout, adding a layer to our understanding of its impact on employee well-being. This burnout prediction aligns with the identified theoretical gap in the stressor–burnout literature, which calls for a shift in scholarly focus towards treating cynicism as an independent construct with the potential to explain a significant portion of the variance for outcomes like burnout.

Psychological Distress (K10). Drawing upon the JD-R model, excessive job demands can deplete mental resources, leading to psychological distress such as anxiety and depression (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Hall et al., 2013). Within this model, the research conceptualises organisational cynicism as a job demand that impairs mental health. As a negative mental framework, cynicism likely contributes to the health impairment process described in the JD-R model, thereby exacerbating symptoms of anxiety and depression. The JD-R model also stipulates that different job demands and resources can interact to moderate the impact of excessive job demands on health outcomes like psychological distress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Therefore, in the context of organisational cynicism, it is reasonable to theorise that cynicism beliefs could explain a significant portion of the variance of psychological distress, further emphasising the need to explore cynicism as an independent construct impacting employee well-being.

Musculoskeletal Health. Organisational cynicism may have far-reaching consequences, affecting psychological and physical well-being, as existing research demonstrates that cynical beliefs undermine overall health (Guthier et al., 2020, Smith et al., 2004; Stavrova & Ehlebracht, 2016). Within this context, the psychological stress and emotional exhaustion associated with organisational cynicism could exacerbate musculoskeletal symptoms like aches, pain, or discomfort in areas such as the neck, shoulders, wrists/hands, upper back, or lower back (Kuorinka et al., 1987). Reduced workplace engagement and poor posture, potentially exacerbated by a cynical mindset, could

intensify these physical symptoms (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 2003; Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). Therefore, organisational cynicism affects emotional and psychological states and may have measurable, detrimental impacts on physical health, specifically musculoskeletal health.

Emotional Exhaustion. Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly (2003) found that cynicism fully mediates the relationship between psychological contract breach and emotional exhaustion, underscoring the negative impact of cynical attitudes on individual well-being within an organisation. The sense of "world-weariness" and constant vigilance associated with cynicism can contribute to this emotional exhaustion, as it entails the continuous monitoring and assessment of a broad range of workplace issues (Andersson, 1996). This concept aligns with the measurement of emotional exhaustion in the MBI-GS, which assesses how emotionally drained individuals feel by their work (Maslach et al., 1996). Hence, the continuous scrutiny and evaluation of organisational practices and ethics through a cynical lens could lead to personal strain, culminating in emotional exhaustion.

I now shift focus to examining organisational outcomes, further broadening the scope of understanding the effects of organisational cynicism.

Organisational Outcomes. This section investigates the organisational repercussions of cynicism, extending the focus beyond individual well-being to explore its influence at the organisational level. Employing frameworks like the JD-R model and trust theories, this section scrutinises how organisational cynicism explains a significant portion of the variance in key organisational outcomes like employee engagement and organisational trust and trust behaviours. Exploring these outcomes contributes to an understanding of how cynicism permeates organisational dynamics, thereby reinforcing the comprehensive scope of my study on organisational cynicism.

Employee Engagement. In the JD-R model, job demands erode work engagement (Bakker et al., 2014). This concept is expanded by identifying vigour and dedication as measurable facets of engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2002). These facets are theoretically the opposite of emotional exhaustion and cynicism respectfully – a relationship substantiated by empirical studies (González-Romá et al., 2006; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Additional empirical evidence associates elevated cynicism levels within an organisation with reduced employee motivation, satisfaction, and commitment, which are indicators of low engagement (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Naseer et al., 2021). Stress research further correlates cynicism with burnout, the negative antithesis of job engagement (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006; Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Therefore, a synthesis of theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence affirms that organisational cynicism explains a lower portion of the variance of work engagement. Based on this, I posit that organisational cynicism could mediate the dynamic between job demands and engagement.

Organisational Trust and Trust Behaviours. Trust and organisational cynicism are closely intertwined, each influencing the other in a dynamic relationship (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Loss of trust occurs when the negative attitudes exhibited by cynics erode trust, integrity, and motivation within the organisation (Dean et al., 1998). Employees who perceive their workplace as lacking in fairness and organisational support are likely to adopt a cynical outlook, which, in turn, erodes trust and inhibits trust-based behaviours such as collaboration and open communication (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Conversely, reduced trust can fuel cynicism, particularly when employees perceive an imbalance in social exchanges or perceived fairness (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; McAllister, 1995). Cynicism is not redundant with trust; instead, they interact, have independent antecedents and operate in complex ways (Chiaburu et al., 2013). Furthermore, I propose that organisational cynicism shapes trust and trust behaviours as multifaceted outcomes.

Now that we have examined the immediate organisational outcomes, our attention turns to the longer-term, distal outcomes, broadening our understanding of the extended reach of organisational cynicism.

Distal Outcomes. Employees with cynical attitudes often exhibit negative job evaluations and reduced organisational commitment, which subsequently influence their intentions to quit (Chiaburu et al., 2013). The research defines turnover intention as an individual's desire to remain with or leave their current employer (Bedeian, 2007). Regarding job performance, cynicism is a negative predictor, with cynical employees often perceiving a disconnect between their performance and rewards (Brandes & Das, 2006; Chiaburu et al., 2013). Chiaburu et al. (2013) showed that cynicism holds an 86% relative importance in predicting job performance and is a predictor of turnover intentions. Therefore, the evidence theorises that organisational cynicism, influenced by job demands and resources, negatively affects key occupational outcomes, especially the intention to quit. While objective turnover and job performance are important, my research theorises that organisational cynicism will positively influence the intention to quit as a distal outcome of organisational cynicism.

In summary, this section examined the multi-dimensional consequences of organisational cynicism. The analysis incorporates various variables ranging from individual well-being parameters like social connectedness and emotional exhaustion to organisational outcomes such as employee engagement and trust behaviours. These variables offer empirical avenues for exploration and contribute to an enriched understanding of the complex ways in which cynicism influences employee life and organisational health. This approach directly aligns with my overarching goal of delving into the multidimensional impacts of organisational cynicism, thereby paving the way for future research and empirical inquiries.

2.19. Cynicism Mediating in the JD-R Model

This section explores the mediating role of organisational cynicism in the JD-R model, specifically its impact on work engagement, employee burnout, and emotional exhaustion. While the JD-R model is well-studied, cynicism's mediating effects remain unexamined (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). This section explores this gap by integrating recent research, such as Bakker and de Vries (2021), to empirically test cynicism's influence on job demands, resources, and employee outcomes.

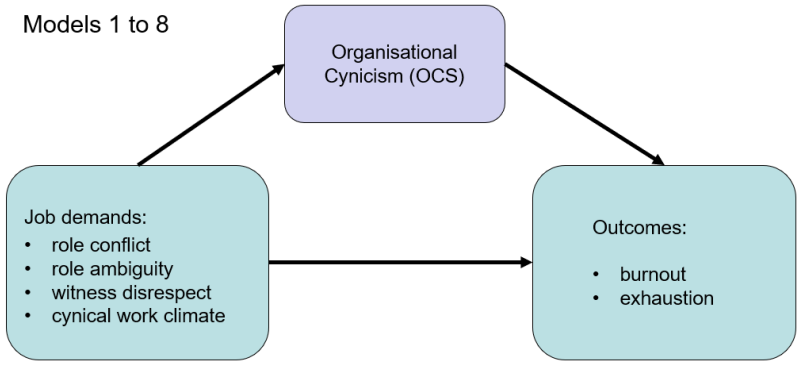
Cynicism as a Mediator in the JD-R model. In the traditional JD-R model, cynicism typically remains an unacknowledged element, serving as an implicit outcome rather than a mediating explanationatory mechanism between demands/resources and the distal productivity and wellbeing outcomes (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). I propose a nuanced role for cynicism within the JD-R model; drawing upon Bakker and de Vries (2021) and identify cynicism as a mediator that influences the dynamics between job demands, job resources, and crucial employee outcomes such as burnout, exhaustion, and engagement. Consistent with Bakker and de Vries (2021), who delineate the negative relationship between job resources and the cynicism component of burnout, I posit that cynicism intensifies the detrimental effects of job demands (Bakker et al., 2014; Maslach et al., 2001) while mitigating the favourable influences of job resources (Demerouti et al., 2001). This position extends the work and findings from the meta-analysis by Alarcon (2011), which examines how job demands like role conflict, and role ambiguity predict burnout components, including exhaustion and cynicism. Consistent with Bakker and de Vries (2021), I also posit that cynicism can be both the outcome of adverse job demands (Bakker et al., 2014; Demerouti et al., 2001; Maslach et al., 2001). Therefore, the theoretical models outlined in my thesis aim to test cynicism's mediating effects, potentially advancing our understanding of the JD-R model.

The JD-R model is a framework and not a single meta-theory. In terms of being a framework, the JD-R model outlines many possible and often a long list of anticipated job characteristics that could be seen by employees as demands at work that deplete their emotional and cognitive energy or as resources that conserve or provide energy. From a practical standpoint, no single study can measure all possible work characteristics. In the previous sections, I have outlined the key reasons for selecting a few critical job demands and resources to test their influence on cynicism as a specific outcome variable. While other job demands, such as workload and resources like support and decision autonomy, are acknowledged as important within the JD-R framework, they have been extensively explored in prior research (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Guthier et al., 2020). In my research, I aim to explore the less examined yet impactful predictors of cynicism, thereby adding new insights to the JD-R literature. The rationale for focusing on these specific and under-studied constructs is to uncover the direct pathways through which they can influence organisational cynicism, addressing a gap in the empirical understanding of these relationships.

Theoretical JD-R Organisational Cynicism Models. To empirically examine these complex interactions, I outline Models 1 to 8, with each focused on testing the health impairment process of the JD-R model. These models explore how organisational cynicism mediates the relationship between specific job demands and employee outcomes like burnout and exhaustion. For instance, Model 1 focuses on the mediating role that organisational cynicism plays between role conflict and burnout, as illustrated in Figure 2.5. Conversely, Model 9 investigates the motivational process within the JD-R model by exploring the mediating effect of the new organisational cynicism scale (OCS) between the job resource RBSE and engagement, as illustrated in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.5.

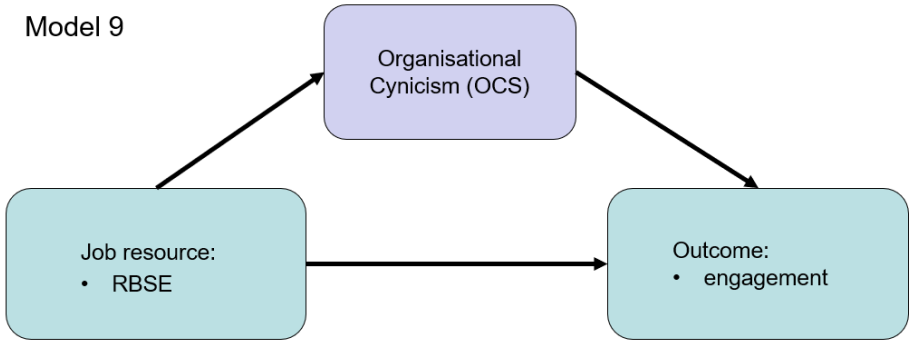
Conceptual Diagram: OCS as Mediator Between Job Demands and Burnout/Exhaustion



Note. The figure presents eight specific models for empirical testing. Models 1 to 8 test the mediating role of organisational cynicism between the relationship of various job demands (role conflict, role ambiguity, witnessed disrespect behaviours, cynical work climate) on outcomes (burnout, exhaustion).

Figure 2.6.

Conceptual Diagram: Organisational Cynicism as Mediator Between RBSE, and Engagement



Note. The figure presents a single model, model 9, for empirical testing, which examines the mediating role of organisational cynicism in the relationship between job the resource RBSE, and engagement.

2.20. Literature Review Conclusion

In my literature review, I have addressed my first aim to set the stage for subsequent empirical research. In alignment with Aim 1, I conducted a narrative and integrative review that simplifies our understanding of the construct of cynicism across psychology, business management, and stressor–burnout literature. This clarification serves as a foundation for the thesis, effectively meeting the first research aim. After reviewing the literature, I identified 6 pivotal cognitive themes/attributes: *mismatched expectations, futility in organisational*

change, distrust in organisational effectiveness, critical judgment towards authority, questioning motives of others, and *perceptions of value and recognition*. These themes/attributes not only deepen the academic discourse on cynicism but also pave the way for a subsequent evaluation of Study 1, which aims to uncover hidden indicators of cynicism in modern workplaces.

The review also discussed the theoretical nomological network that situates cynicism in the context of related constructs like trust, burnout, and engagement. The theoretical network identifies gaps in existing measurement tools, supporting the rationale for creating the OCS. These scales will provide a comprehensive framework for measuring employee and organisational cynicism, filling a gap in academic and organisational settings.

This literature review is a foundational pillar for the entire thesis. It addressed the multidimensionality of cynicism, identified gaps in existing research, and proposed new avenues for empirical study. However, the literature review highlights a significant gap in our understanding of workplace cynicism despite extensive research on its general nature. To address this, my thesis employs interviews to explore cynicism's nuances in organisational settings, offering a unique contribution to the field. A decision to use grounded theory inductive methodology to develop conceptualisation of cynicism in Chapter 4, Step 4 (Podsakoff et al., 2016), stems from the recognition that existing research lacks depth in capturing workplace cynicism's complexity. While previous studies provide quasi-definitions, they often overlook organisational-specific nuances. Thus, the inductive approach adopted in Chapter 4 will offer a fresh perspective, enabling a deeper exploration of workplace cynicism. In summary, this review accomplishes the first research aim and establishes a platform for the development and validation of a new scale.

2.21. Towards Criterion Validity of the OCS

Cynicism within organisations remains a complex construct, closely intertwined with various job demands, resources, and employee outcomes. While existing scales have contributed to our understanding of organisational cynicism, gaps remain. It is in this context that the proposed OCS finds its relevance. The ultimate test of the OCS measurement utility will lie in its criterion validity, which is twofold: predictive and incremental (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2019). Predictive validity will assess the OCS's ability to explain a significant portion of the variance of organisational outcomes such as burnout, psychological distress, employee engagement, organisational trust, and trust behaviours. Incremental validity will examine whether the OCS offers additional explanatory power over and above existing cynicism scales (refer to Figure 2.4 for pre-existing scales used for criterion validity).

This focus on criterion validity is a foundational step in substantiating the OCS and extending the existing body of literature. The foundations established in this chapter pave the way for the subsequent empirical sections that will systematically explore these aspects of validity. The next section delineates the specific research hypotheses that will guide the empirical validation processes.

2.22. Research Hypotheses: From Literature Review

Based on a comprehensive literature review related to organisational cynicism, I formulate several hypotheses to address existing research gaps. The following hypotheses explore multiple facets, such as the validity of the new OCS, the nomological network surrounding the OCS, and the mediating roles of cynicism in the JD-R model.

Hypotheses 1a to 1d investigate the convergent and discriminant validity of the OCS, thus:

H1a. The OCS will positively correlate and demonstrate convergence with existing cynicism measures and dimension subscales (convergent validity).

H1b The OCS will have a weak or moderate relationship with other distal and theoretically non-overlapping constructs like Musculoskeletal Health, Spiritual Wellbeing, K10 Anxiety subscale, and K10 Depression subscale (discriminant validity).

Hypothesis 2 examines nomological predictors of the OCS, thus:

H2. The OCS will positively correlate with employee dispositional variables (PANAS negative affectivity) and job demand variables (role ambiguity, role conflict). Conversely, the OCS will negatively correlate with job resources such as RBSE.

Hypothesis 3 examines nomological outcomes of the OCS, thus:

H3. The OCS will positively correlate with distal and negative well-being outcomes (such as Burnout - BAT, K10 – depression and anxiety, poor - musculoskeletal health, exhaustion).OCS will negatively correlate with positive emotional state (AM happy), social connectedness, spiritual well-being, pertinent organisational outcomes (employee engagement, organisational trust, trust behaviours), and the distal outcome (turnover intentions).

Hypothesis 4a examines the mediating role of OCS in the JD-R model.

H4. The OCS will mediate the effects of job demands—specifically role conflict, role ambiguity, witnessed disrespectful behaviour, and a cynical work climate—on burnout, exhaustion, and engagement, with higher demands linked to increased cynicism and consequently, more negative outcomes.

Hypotheses 5a and 5b explore the criterion validity of the OCS, focusing on its predictive and incremental validity, thus:

H5a. Predictive Validity: The OCS is hypothesised to explain a significant portion of the variance in distal outcomes such as burnout, K10, employee engagement, organisational trust, and trust behaviours.

H5b. Incremental Validity: The OCS is hypothesised to demonstrate incremental validity over existing scales by uniquely predicting distal outcomes such as burnout, K10, employee engagement, organisational trust, and trust behaviours.

Our focus now shifts to the methodology chapter. This forthcoming section will explore the empirical studies of my thesis. Study 1 employs qualitative methods, using interviews and focus group discussions to develop a modern conceptualisation of organisational cynicism and scale items. Study 2 is a quantitative cross-sectional investigation to test and refine the newly developed measurement tools from Study 1. Lastly, Study 3 features a longitudinal quantitative study to validate the newly developed scales. Each study is a crucial step in the development and validation process, designed to contribute to academic discourse and practical applications in organisational settings.

Chapter 3 – Overall Methodology

3.1. Methodology and Research Design

I adopted a mixed-methods longitudinal paradigm to evaluate and reconceptualise the construct of employee cynicism in workplaces, which is inherently a latent construct and, therefore, cannot be directly observed (Nunnally, 1978). Instead, its manifestations are discernible through its effects on other variables, with scale development pivotal in measuring these unobservable phenomena (DeVellis, 2021). The chapter outlines the methodology used to develop and validate the new multidimensional scale.

I commenced with Study 1, utilising an inductive research strategy underpinned by the grounded theory method within a constructivist framework. This qualitative phase, comprising in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, laid the groundwork for conceptualising organisational and employee cynicism. A process to establish item content validity involved pilot testing, a Q-sort exercise with graduate participants, and an expert panel assessment.

Study 2 transitions to a deductive paradigm, focused on rigorous item refinement (Hinkin, 1998). Using a cross-sectional sample, Study 2 examined the factor structure of the scales. Study 3 utilised CFA and assessments for convergent, discriminant, and discriminant validity and employed stepwise regressions to ascertain criterion validity against burnout, psychological distress, employee engagement, organisational trust, and organisational trust behaviours, within a longitudinal sample. Study 3 introduces mediation analysis to investigate the mediating role of OCS within the JD-R model. I examine how cynicism mediates the relationship between job demands (role conflict, role ambiguity, witnessed disrespectful behaviours, and a cynical workplace climate) and outcomes (burnout and exhaustion). I also explore how cynicism mediates the relationship between the job resource RBSE and the outcome of engagement.

My research, aimed at establishing the reliability and validity of the newly developed scales, adopted a systematic 10-step approach across the three studies. This approach combined the methodological guidelines established by Boateng et al. (2018), DeVellis (2021), and Hinkin (1998) (refer to Figure 3.1). By integrating qualitative and quantitative methods, this multifaceted approach enhances methodological rigour. It enables an intricate exploration of the cognitive underpinnings of organisational cynicism alongside the empirical validation of the OCS.

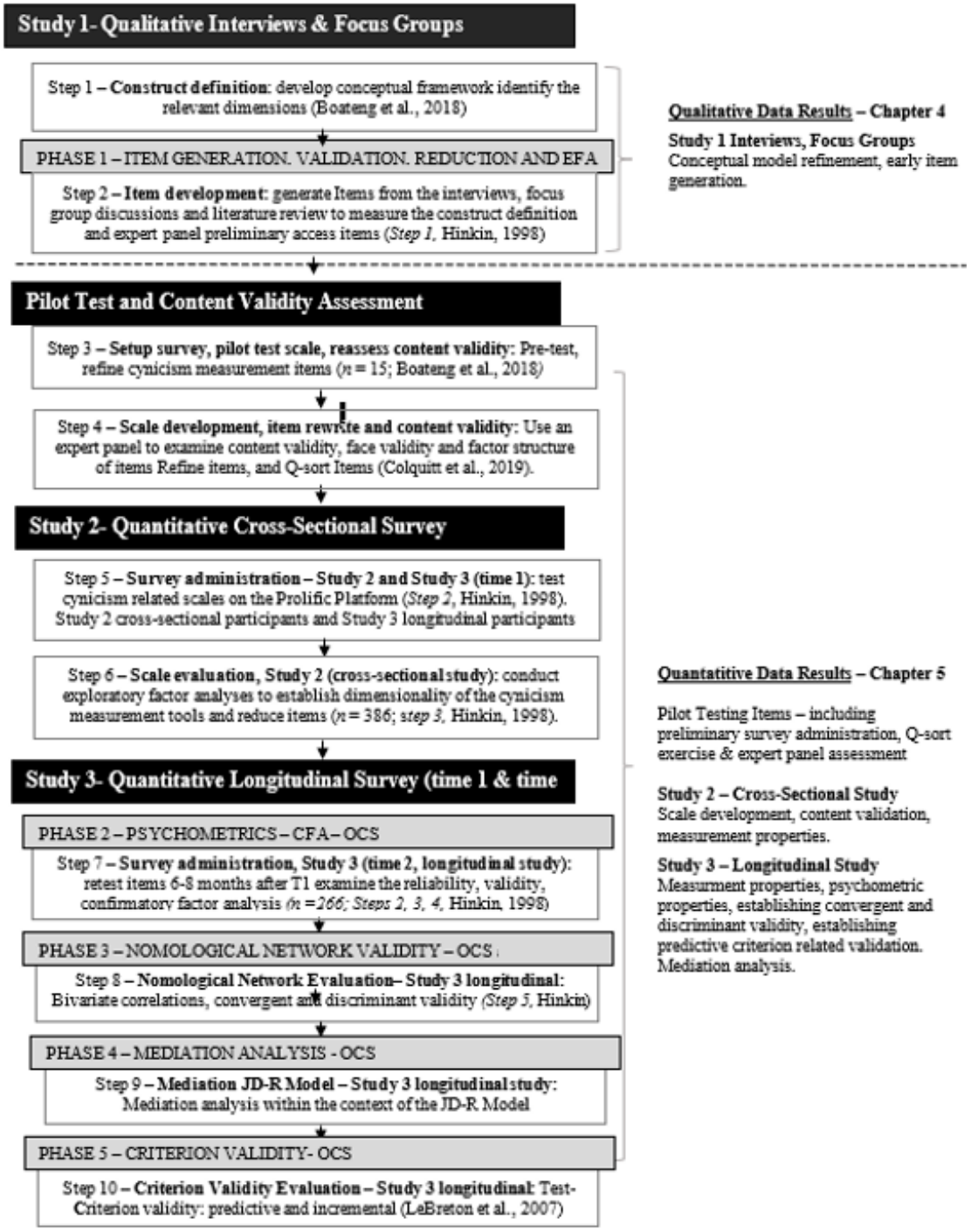
3.2. Participants

The following sections present a detailed account of the recruitment strategy, demographic composition, and compensatory mechanisms employed for participants in each segment of this multifaceted research project. In Study 1 participants were recruited from an Australian state government department for interviews and focus group discussions. This was followed by the recruitment of pilot study survey participants, and then graduate participants to conduct a Q-sort exercise on the new OCS items. Next the supervisor panel were engaged to assess the content validation of the items. Study 2 and 3 recruited participants via an online survey platform to complete surveys for the purpose of scale validation through factor structure analysis (cross-sectional study) and scale psychometrics validation (longitudinal study). Each recruitment phase aligned with the distinct objectives of this research.

Demographic Data Collection. Study 1, 2, and 3 all captured demographic variables like gender, age, employment tenure, contract type, and organisational role to ensure a nuanced and comprehensive data analysis. Study 2 and 3 captured additional factors such as workplace size, industry type, and geographical and linguistic diversity which enriched the dataset and enhanced the studies' generalisability. The categorisation of industries within this study utilised the classifications established by the Australian Workplace Barometer (Dollard et al., 2014).

Figure 3.1.

Methodology Steps for OCS Development: Studies 1-3 and Pilot Test



Note. This figure is a partial reproduction of Figure 1.1, presented here to recapitulate the methodology.

Study 1 Interview and Focus Group Participants. Within a large government department, 13 sites participated in Study 1, contributing 13 leader interviews and 13 staff

focus groups, totalling 56 employees. Senior site leaders, teaching staff, and support staff accounted for 34%, 59%, and 7% of the participants, respectively. The age spectrum ranged from 21 to 75 years, with an average age bracket of 40 to 49, and females represented 79% of the participants. Tenure within the current site and the Department varied widely, with an average length of service comprising 8 and 19 years, respectively. Geographic distribution showed that 38% of sites were in rural areas, 54% in metro areas, and 8% in outer metro areas.

Q-sort Graduate Participants. In the Q-sort exercise, six graduate participants were recruited on a voluntary basis using convenience sampling. The criterion for participation was an interest in or familiarity with organisational behaviour, particularly cynicism in the workplace. The term "graduate participants" here refers to individuals holding a degree beyond secondary education. The ages of these participants varied from 21 to 53 years. The sample was predominantly female, constituting 67% of the total participants. Regarding their occupational distribution, 33% were employed in the retail sector, another 33% worked in the health sector, 17% specialised in information technology, and 17% held positions in upper management. Half of these participants were employed on a full-time basis.

Expert Panel Participants The content validation phase employed expert panel comprising subject matter experts in key areas of relevance to my study, specifically workplace cynicism, burnout, and organisational trust. These experts constituted my PhD supervision team, thereby ensuring high levels of expertise and familiarity with the overarching research objectives and themes.

Pilot Study Participants. Recruitment for the pilot study occurred through word-of-mouth and snowball sampling methods. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 59 years, with a majority being older than 40. Most held full-time and permanent employment positions and were female. Comprehensive demographic information is presented in Table 3.1.

Recruitment Strategy for Studies 2 and 3 Participants. The Prolific online survey platform facilitated participant recruitment for both studies. Eligibility criteria required participants to be aged between 18 and 59, be native English speakers, and be currently employed for at least 2 years. The recruitment strategy targeted a diverse range of occupations, English-speaking nationalities, and participants from Australia, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States of America (USA) to broaden the generalisability of the findings (Aguinis et al., 2020).

Sample Size and Power for Studies 2 and 3. The recruitment aimed to secure a minimum of 400 participants to Ensure adequate statistical power for Studies 2 and 3, using the power Monte Carlo simulation for CFA (Rönkkö & Cho, 2022). Calculated using a minimum of five participants per items to achieve robust results. Ultimately, 407 participants were recruited, meeting the targeted statistical power.

Study 2 Scale Validation Through Structure Analysis Participants. In Study 2, 407 participants initially completed the survey. Following the exclusion of 21 participants for failing attention checks, the final sample size was 386. Each participant received a compensation of approximately AUD$11. Detailed demographic information for this sample appears in Table 3.1. I aimed to confirm the dimensional structure of workplace cynicism, building on previous research that supports cynicism as a multidimensional construct (Brooks & Vance, 1995; Dean et al., 1998). Based on the results of Study 1, cynicism was theorised to manifest in four dimensions: *futile to voice, to be proactive, to build deep relationships,* and *to adopt change*. The sample from Study 2 explored these theorised dimensions with an EFA.

Study 3 Longitudinal Participants. Conducted 8 months after Study 2, Study 3 served as a follow-up. A subset of the original Study 2 participants was reinvited to participate. I employed CFA to lend support to the proposed model. For methodological rigour, the Time 2

sample was treated as distinct from the Time 1 sample – a decision supported by several factors. First, the investigation was conducted within an *a priori* theoretical framework (Bollen, 2002; Marsh et al., 2014). Second, modifications were made to the survey tool, including the reordering of items. Third, the substantial 8-month gap between the two studies could influence attitudes, as supported by existing literature (Lee et al., 2015; Rosen et al., 2006). Despite these sample distinctions, the relevance of Time 1 and Time 2 was to obtain predictor and criterion data at different time points for comprehensive scale validity analyses (Podaskoff, 2003). Out of the 275 participants who completed both surveys, nine were excluded for failing attention checks, resulting in a final sample of 266. These participants received AUD$25 as compensation, and comprehensive demographic information is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Participant Demographics: Pilot, Study 2 and 3

Characteristic	Pilot Study		Study 2		Study 3 Time 1		Study 3 Time 2	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Total Participants	15	-	386	-	266	-	266	-
Gender								
Male	6	40	177	45.9	115	43.2	114	42.9
Female	9	60	205	53.1	148	55.6	148	55.6
Non-Binary	-	-	3	0.8	2	0.8	2	0.8
Prefer not to say/opt out	-	-	1	0.3	1	0.4	2	0.8
Age								
18 – 20	1	7	10	2.6	3	1.1	1	0.4
21 – 29	2	13	73	18.9	40	15.0	39	14.7
30 – 39	2	13	136	35.2	95	35.7	89	33.5
40 – 49	5	33	95	24.6	70	26.3	75	28.2
50 – 59	5	33	72	18.7	58	21.8	62	23.3
Total Employment Years								
2 – 5	2	13	58	15.0	29	10.9	29*	10.9
6 – 15	3	20	121	31.3	80	30.1	80*	30.1
> 15	10	67	207	53.6	157	59.0	157*	59.0

Years in Current Workplace								
< 2	8	54	72	18.7	43	16.2	57	21.4
2 – 5	2	13	142	36.8	90	33.8	70	26.3
6 – 15	5	33	127	32.9	97	36.5	91	34.2
> 15	-	-	45	11.7	36	13.5	48	18.0
Working Hours								
Full-time	9	60	283	73.3	199	74.8	207	77.8
Part-time	6	40	103	26.7	67	25.2	59	22.2
Contract Type								
Permanent (with paid leave)	11	73	308	79.8	217	81.6	228	85.7
Fixed Term (with paid leave)	2	13	22	5.7	15	5.6	5	1.9
Casual (without entitlements)	2	13	56	13.5	34	12.8	33	12.4
Employment Role								
Manager Level	6	40	153	39.6	117	44.0	117	44.0
Non-Managerial Employee	9	60	233	60.4	149	56.0	149	56.0
Number of Reporting Employees								
0	9	60	233	60.4	149	56.0	149	56.0
1 – 9	3	20	97	25.1	71	26.7	72	27.1
10 – 49	2	13	50	13.0	41	15.4	37	13.9
> 50	1	7	6	1.6	5	1.9	8	3.0
Workplace Size								
Small (< 19 employees)	6	40	71	18.4	48	18.0	46	17.3
Medium (20 – 199 employees)	5	33	127	32.9	92	34.6	91	34.2
Large (> 200 employees)	4	27	188	48.7	126	47.4	129	48.5
Industry								
Academia	-	-	10	2.6	4	1.5	4	1.5
Agriculture & Forestry	-	-	3	0.8	2	0.8	1	0.4
Charity/NGOr	-	-	7	1.8	6	2.3	7	2.6
Communication Services	-	-	9	2.3	9	3.4	3	1.1
Construction	-	-	9	2.3	6	2.3	8	3.0
Cultural &	-	-	6	1.6	5	1.9	2	0.8

Recreation Service								
Education	2	13	43	11.1	28	10.5	28	10.5
Electricity & Gas	-	-	6	1.6	4	1.5	1	0.4
Finances	-	-	32	8.3	24	9.0	23	8.6
Government	3	20	34	8.8	24	9.0	22	8.3
Healthcare	3	20	43	11.1	30	11.3	31	11.7
Hospitality	-	-	13	3.4	9	3.4	6	2.3
Information Tech	-	-			12	4.5	27	10.2
Manufacturing	-	-	28	7.3	20	7.5	23	8.6
Personal Services	-	-	23	6.0	15	5.6	11	4.1
Property Services	5	33	9	2.3	9	3.4	4	1.5
Protective Services	-	-	4	1.0	2	0.8	3	1.1
Retail Trade	1	7	37	9.6	22	8.3	19	7.1
Transport	-	-	12	3.1	8	3.0	10	3.8
Wholesale Trade	-	-	10	2.6	7	2.6	4	1.5
Other	1	7	31	8.0	20	7.5	29	10.9
Residential Country								
Australia	15	100	49	12.7	34	12.8	34	12.8
UK	-	-	189	49.0	147	55.3	153	57.5
USA	-	-	148	38.3	85	32.0	79	29.7
Country of Birth								
Australia	15	100	40	10.4	28	10.5	28	10.5
UK	-	-	182	47.2	143	53.8	143	53.8
USA	-	-	139	36.0	81	30.5	81	30.5
Other	-	-	25	6.5	14	5.3	14	5.3
Only Speak English at Home								
Yes	12	80	240	88.1	240	90.2	240	90.2
No	3	20	46	11.9	26	9.8	26	9.8

Note. Industry types categorised per the Australian Workplace Barometer classifications (Dollard et al., 2014). Also, total employment years data not recollected in Study 3, Time 2.

3.3. Ethics and Approvals

I received and complied with the following ethical considerations and approval. Study 1 obtained approval from the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol numbers: 202978 and 203792), a state government department (Approval #2020-3031), and BIS-Executive Services for Covid-19 Safe Fieldwork. Participants individually consented, and I ensured confidentiality through data de-identification. For Studies 2 and 3, the same committee (Protocol number: 203792) granted ethics amendment approvals, with

participants providing consent for data collection without including identifying information. Additionally, I obtained copyright permissions for the MBI-GS and the Social Connectedness Scale (refer to Appendix 3.A).

3.4.Procedural Phases and Steps Overview

Phase 1: Item Generation, Validation, Reduction, and EFA (Steps 1–6). My empirical data collected commenced with Study 1, which laid the conceptual foundation for understanding organisational cynicism through a comprehensive literature review (Step 1). This phase continued with qualitative interviews and focus groups to generate initial items for the OCS. An expert panel and Q-sort provided validation (Step 2). A pilot test assessed face validity and conducted a preliminary EFA (Step 3). Based on these findings and expert feedback, items were revised to lend support to content validity (Step 4). Phase 1 concluded with Study 2, which utilised a cross-sectional design to administer the refined scales and simultaneously collect data for Study 3 (Time 1) (Steps 5–6).

Phases 2–5: Psychometrics, Nomological Network, JD-R Model, and Criterion Validity. Study 3, conducted 8 months later, initiated Phase 2 by focusing on the longitudinal validation of the scales (Step 7). Phase 3 situated the scales within a broader nomological network (Step 8). and Phase 4 concluded my research by assessing the criterion validity of the OCS (Step 10).

For a comprehensive overview of the methodology, sequential steps, and corresponding phases, refer to Figure 3.1. Each step in the methodology will be elaborated upon in the subsequent paragraphs to provide a more in-depth understanding. While the methodology is structured around these steps, it is worth noting that the phases serve a different purpose: They will be used to structure the results in subsequent chapters.

Study 1: Interview and Focus Group Workshops Methodology

Recruitment for interview and focus group participants from various sites within a large government department took place as part of a broader research project. Purposive and representative sampling techniques guided this recruitment. Site selection occurred through anonymous identification, meaning pseudo-IDs replaced the actual names and locations of sites. This method ensured participant diversity across sites with low, medium, and high-performance ratings. The study identified 173 sites for potential participation and sought approval to invite them. Invitations and consent forms went to a total of 42 approved sites. From these, 13 sites contributed to the interviews and focus group discussions. Another 13 sites agreed to participate, but analysis of the initial data from 56 participants across 13 sites indicated the achievement of data saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Data collection from senior site leaders occurred during a one-to-one interview to reduce impression management and elicit more accurate data. Focus group workshops facilitated the collection of data from employees, offering collective insights into perceptions of cynicism across the sites. Data collection used a mix of face-to-face, virtual, online, and written formats. Self-disclosure of interest in the research area and a focus on participants' voices and experiences established rapport (Crabtree & DiCicco-Bloom, 2006). Before the interviews and focus groups began, participants received an explanation of the research purpose and a copy of the broad questions (see Appendix 3.B).

The Interviews were 60 minutes long, and the focus group discussions were 45 minutes duration. Audio recording captured all sessions with consent from participants. The data collection period started on May 31st, 2021, and concluded on August 26th, 2021. The interviews took approximately 760 minutes, with an average one-hour session. Qualitative judgment on data saturation occurred after 26 interviews and focus group discussions across 13 sites, when it was determined that no new themes were emerging (Brod et al., 2009; Glaser &

Strauss, 1967). This assessment confirmed that the sample size met the requirements for the grounded theory methodology, leading to the closure of data collection for study 1.

Study 1 – Interview Questionnaire. A semi-structured interview guide facilitated discussion on cynicism in Study 1, allowing themes to unfold based on participants' direction in the interview. The guide contained themed questions about the nature and indicators of cynicism. While the main questions remained consistent across interviews, follow-up questions evolved to address specific issues as my research progressed. This inductive approach, rooted in grounded theory, facilitated the organic exploration of cynicism (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I conducted all 13 interviews and focus group workshops, enabling iterative refinement of questions throughout my study.

3.5. Step 1 – Define Construct and Identify Dimensions

The initial step involved defining the construct of organisational cynicism and developing a conceptual framework that identified the salient dimensions within the workplace. A grounded theory approach and narrative analysis guided the thematic analysis of data from the literature review and interviews. This analysis identified core themes/dimensions that informed the conceptualisation of organisational cynicism (Chapter 2). These core themes formed the basis of initial measurement items to capture the latent construct of cynicism in workplaces.

Study 1, Data Management and Analysis. I conducted all interviews and focus groups, transcribed the discussions verbatim, and removed any identifying information. I assigned pseudonyms to participants and imported the transcripts into NVivo 1.5 (935; QRS International, 2021) for analysis. Initial data analysis involved myself and the lead supervisor to mitigate any single-researcher bias, with periodic meetings held throughout this phase for

ongoing validation. A sample of transcripts underwent a review by the primary supervisor to confirm code accuracy and maintain inter-rater reliability.

I employed the grounded theory method within a constructivist framework, emphasising iterative data collection and theory development (Charmaz, 2006). This method involved an inductive exploration in which the interviewer and interviewees jointly explored employees' definitions of cynicism. The aim was to understand employees' definitions, experiences, and perceptions of cynicism across various workplace sites. The thematic analysis took place in subsequent steps. The process involved transcribing interviews, generating initial codes, and collating these codes into sub-themes and major themes. The themes underwent further refinement, validation and definition, with periodic consultation with my research panel to check for theme bias.

To ensure data consistency and mitigate bias, the same interviewer interviewed all 56 participants. The iterative discovery and validation process included regular meetings with the primary supervisor and validating the data for theoretical saturation. The supervisor reviewed a random selection of transcriptions to ensure inter-rater coding reliability and comprehensive theme identification.

3.6. Step 2 – Scale Item Development

Upon establishing the conceptual definition of cynicism in Step 1, the methodology shifted focus to item generation based on identified core themes to measure the construct of organisational cynicism. Both inductive and deductive methods informed comprehensive item development. Existing scale items underwent alignment assessment with the theoretical attributes to develop preliminary items. Qualitative data from interviews and focus groups, guided by Hinkin’s 1998 framework, contributed to creating new items. A deductive approach led to additional items, drawing from academic literature, empirical findings, and the expert

panel (Boateng et al., 2018) guidelines. This methodology aimed to establish an item pool with a minimum of four to five items for each OCS subdimension. This approach aligned with the minimum recommendations for testing item homogeneity and scale reliability (Harvey et al., 1985). The final item pool included 17 trait cynicism constructs and 26 state cynicism constructs, capturing facets of cynicism such as *it is futile to voice, build deep relationships, be proactive,* and *adopt change*.

Process of Writing of Items. To ensure high-quality items, the writing of the items adhered to established best practices (Streiner et al., 2015). Vague descriptors like "many," "some," and "few" were omitted to reduce measurement error. Items were designed for simplicity, devoid of jargon, and adaptable to different referent targets. Best practices dictated the removal of duplicate items, ambiguous language, double-barrelled statements, and value-laden words (Streiner et al., 2015). An additional review of the items eliminated common pitfalls such as ambiguous pronoun references or misplaced modifiers (Clark et al., 2020). The chosen 7-point Likert scale provided discrimination between participant responses and captured broader cynicism levels (Likert, 1932; Nunnally, 1978). A common question stem integrated into each item minimised survey length and respondent fatigue by capturing the essence of cynicism. Specifically, every item commenced with a stem conveying the futile belief of actions such as building deep relationships, being proactive, adopting change, or speaking up. Interchangeable referent targets were accommodated in the item design, mitigating the necessity for future scale proliferation.

3.7. Step 3 – Pilot Testing and Initial Scale Validation

Step 3 provided the platform to begin the data collection process. It integrated multiple foundational components that set the stage for empirical studies. In this step, I established the online platform, administered a pilot survey study, assessed face validity, and conducted a preliminary EFA.

Setup Survey Platform. Qualtrics served as the online platform for administering the survey, titled "Employee's Workplace Experiences Item Refinement Survey." The Centre for Workplace Excellence, the University of South Australia's Business School platform, hosted the survey. The survey refined a broad list of workplace experience items that measure employee attitudes towards their organisations. A landing screen provided initial study details, requested informed consent, and verified human identity via a Captcha task. To proceed to the survey, participants had to meet specific eligibility criteria: aged between 18 and 59 years, fluency in English, and a minimum of 2 years of employment. The survey incorporated attention check questions and open-ended prompts to guard against bot activity and participant distraction (Dennis et al., 2019).

The survey had three main parts: pre-screening questions, demographic questions, and a central questionnaire. The latter contained 16 to 17 blocks of questions and included open-ended items for more nuanced insights (see Appendix 3.E for Study 2, and Appendix 3.F for Study 3). The survey, although accessible via mobile devices, was optimised for desktop viewing and ideally required one uninterrupted session for completion. Participants could expect to spend approximately 25 to 30 minutes on the survey. I provided assurances about data confidentiality and secure storage on a University of South Australia server for 7 years after publication.

An alert mechanism was integrated into the survey to flag any unanswered questions at the end of each page to reduce the likelihood of skipped questions. This alert prompted participants to continue without answering or return to complete the missed question.

Pilot Test Scale, Face Validity and Preliminary EFA. The pilot test recruited a small sample of 15 employees to refine the cynicism items and test their initial attribute structure. Participants completed the cynicism items after reading the study's purpose and giving

informed consent. Participant comments provided insights into the face validity of the items, as well as feedback on the survey's structure, instructions, and length.

A preliminary EFA offered an early glimpse into the scales' structural integrity. Although the broader focus of my study targeted organisational cynicism, this pilot specifically measured cynicism towards managers. This approach tested the items' adaptability to different organisational referent targets.

3.8.Step 4 – Scale Development, Item Rewrite and Content Validity

Step 4 delved into the phase of scale development, item rewriting and content validity, targeting two principal aims: enhancing item quality and validating construct definition. The pilot test led to a rewriting of the items, followed by an expert panel's evaluation for face and content validity to ensure alignment with the construct and intended attribute's structure (Haynes et al., 1995). Subsequently, graduate participants used a Q-sort method to scrutinise the items' alignment with the defined constructs. This process used statistical indices to quantify the degree of agreement among the sorters and ensure the scales' robustness. This dual-layered approach checked scale items against conceptual ambiguities and enhanced their efficacy in measuring organisational and employee trait cynicism.

Scale Development and Items Rewriting. Following the results of the pilot test and initial evaluations from the EFA and face validity assessments, I revised the scale items. This process aimed to eliminate ambiguity, enhance readability, and align the items more closely with the targeted constructs. After these modifications, the items underwent content validation to meet established psychometric and substantive standards (Colquitt et al., 2019).

Content Validation Using an Expert Panel. Content validation using an expert panel assessed the relevance and adequacy of items for the OCS. Experts in the field, familiar with the construct under study, evaluated these items for face validity (i.e., Does the instrument

appear to assess the desired qualities?) and content validity (i.e., Does the instrument sample all the important or relevant content or domains?). Their feedback improved the technical quality of the items, including their scale anchor points. This step was crucial due to the often-overlooked importance of content validation in scale development studies (Colquitt et al., 2019). Their insights led to further refinement of the items and ensured alignment with the desired indicator structure and construct.

Content Validation Using Graduate Participants to Conduct Q-Sort. I employed Q-sort to assess further the construct validity of the OCS (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991; Hinkin & Tracey, 1999; Schriesheim et al., 1993). This revalidation aimed to clarify the scope and boundaries of "organisational cynicism" – a construct often plagued by conceptual ambiguity. A secondary objective was to scrutinise the definitional distinctiveness of cynicism and evaluate face validity inferences (Colquitt et al., 2019).

Participant Recruitment and Task Description. Postgraduate students, currently employed, were recruited for this phase. They received a set of tailored survey items and detailed construct definitions (see Appendix 3.C). I used Anderson and Gerbing's (1991) Q-sort methodology to validate theorised *a priori* indicators for testing in Step 7. This exercise was designed to validate the content of the cynicism items and took participants approximately 5–10 minutes to complete.

The Q-Sort Process. Instructions guided participants to categorise items into defined attribute dimensions. Six individuals completed this sorting task, enabling further analysis of item alignment with the intended constructs. Participants began by reading the definitions of the four cynicism dimensions to familiarise themselves with the categories. The four cynicism definitions included *it is futile to build relationships, voice, be proactive,* and *adopt change.* Participants read through each of the 47 cynicism items on the list and placed an“"”" in the

corresponding box in the Excel spreadsheet to indicate which dimension they believed best represented each item. They then emailed back their responses for further analysis. Data from the Excel spreadsheets was then analysed using key indices: the proportion of substantive agreement (PSA) and the substantive validity coefficient (SVC) (Colquitt et al., 2019). These measures evaluated the content validity and reliability of the cynicism items.

Statistical Indices Used for Validation. I utilised two statistical indices for item validation. A Substantive Validity Coefficient, or SVC, evaluated the alignment of items with the construct of employee cynicism. Concurrently, a Proportion of Substantive Agreement, known as PSA, assessed the degree of participant consensus in allocating items to intended constructs. Items registering low validity, as evidenced by a PSA under .75 or an SVC below .55, were removed from the scale (Clark et al., 2020). Subsequent analysis relied on these indices, including PSA values ranging from 0 to 1, to confirm alignment between items constructs (Colquitt et al., 2019).

Study 2: Scale Validation Through Structure Analysis Methodology

Study 2 employed a cross-sectional design, structured into two key steps. The first key step involved administering the newly refined OCS to a broad sample (Step 5). Next, the process scale evaluation (Step 6) was carried out, where statistical techniques like EFA assessed the proposed psychometric properties of the scales. Conducted between August and September 2022, I collected responses from 407 participants, laying the groundwork for further validation and refinement.

3.9.Step 5 – Survey Administration, Study 2 and Study 3, Time 1

This step administered the newly developed OCS to a large sample via the Prolific online platform with an embedded link to the Qualtrics online survey platform. The survey included essential information such as study description, details on participant involvement, survey

length, ethics approval, and contact information for inquiries. The survey communicated assurance of data confidentiality to participants through aggregation methods. The scale order was also varied to account for common method bias.

The OCS featured a 30-item scale covering four dimensions of *it is futile to voice* (9 items), *adopt change* (6 items), *be proactive* (7 items), and *build deep relationships* (8 items). The survey instructed participants to rate each item on a 7-point scale, ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "7 = strongly agree," and to reflect on their organisational interactions over the previous 3 months.

Survey Scales Order Variance, Study 2 and 3. Participants were recruited in batches of 100 to enable a diverse sample and iterative data quality checks. The sequence of survey scales and the order of individual items within each scale were varied among different batches. Appendix 3.D displays the specific order in which participants received the scales. This method aimed to control for potential order effects and common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003)

Data Review and Management. After reaching the target number of participants, the Prolific survey online platform automatically closed. The Qualtrics Survey was ended manually. Data downloaded from Qualtrics was transferred to Excel for cleaning, including removing missing or incomplete cases. Then, the cleaned data was fed into SPSS v26 for initial analyses (IBM Corp, 2020). The first analysis stage encompassed multiple quality checks to ensure data reliability, eliminating participant responses that failed attention checks (Colquitt et al., 2019). An EFA followed, employing principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation within SPSS. Examination of the scree plot, eigenvalues, and the percentage of variance explained by the indicators suggested a 4-dimension solution.

Key reliability metrics such as Cronbach’s alpha, item discrimination index, inter-item correlations, and item–total correlations underwent review to identify any items for potential

removal, in line with classical test theory item analysis. I predefined an outlier cutoff value at ≥ 3.29 (Aguinis et al., 2013).

3.10. Step 6 – Scale evaluation, Study 2 Cross-Sectional Study

Step 6 aimed to evaluate the structure analysis, using a cross-sectional study sample. Study 2 focused on three primary objectives: validating the OCS, testing the *a priori* hypothesised dimensions, and refining the cynicism items according to established guidelines (Hinkin, 1998).

Study Design and Sample. The cross-sectional design served as the research approach for my study. Data collection spanned from August to September 2022 and incorporated a sample of 386 participants.

Data Collection Instruments. The preliminary OCS aimed to capture various *a priori* dimensions of cynicism within organisational context, including the futility to speak up, be proactive, build relationships, and to adopt change.

Data Analysis Framework. Before embarking on the factor analysis, the dataset underwent a factorability assessment. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ensured the data was appropriate for factor analysis (Nunnally, 1978).

Factor Analysis. To explore the scale factors, I utilised two primary factor analysis techniques: EFA and parallel analysis. The EFA, conducted using SPSS v26 with Principal Axis Factoring and direct oblimin rotation, provided the initial validation of the latent factor structure for the scales. Specific criteria for item retention included eigenvalues exceeding 1, absence of cross-loadings, and factor loadings above .30 (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Field, 2018). Complementing the EFA, parallel analysis was applied as a statistical method to further affirm the number of factors derived, enhancing the scales' validity. This process confirmed the

existence of four distinct indicators within each scale, aligning with the theoretical constructs underpinning the scales (Hayton et al., 2004).

Item Refinement Strategy. Retention criteria included items with the highest factor scores, item loadings, inter-item correlations, and the greatest face validity (Boateng et al., 2018; Hinkin, 1998). The item reduction process guided evaluation, with guidelines advocating a minimum of four items per subscale directed the final stage of item reduction (Hinkin, 1998). As a result, the OCS scale was reduced from 30 to 20 items, retaining five items for each of the four attributes.

Study 3: Longitudinal Design Methodology

Study 3 employed a longitudinal design to build on the findings from the previous cross-sectional study (Study 2). Conducted over two distinct time points, my study with 275 participants aimed to achieve multiple objectives. These objectives included the assessment of test–retest reliability (Step 7), positioning the scales within a broader nomological network (Step 8), evaluating their criterion validity (Step 9), and conducting mediation analysis (Step 10). My study served as an advanced validation step to provide deeper insights into the situational context and predictive capabilities of the OCS.

3.11. Step 7 – Survey Administration and Psychometric Properties

Step 7 involved administering Study 3 for the second time, and the focus pivoted to evaluating the psychometric properties and underlying dynamics of the OCS. I collected data at two time points using a longitudinal research design. The first sub-step involved a demographic analysis of the samples, utilising one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVAs) and t-tests. Subsequently, I examined the psychometric properties and the CFA lends support to my proposed factor structure of the scales, along with an examination of the model fit indices.

Next, I assessed the test–retest reliability of both scales. This step entailed a measure invariance analysis to evaluate the consistency of the scales across the two time points.

Research Design. Study 3 adopted a longitudinal research design to investigate the psychometric properties and dynamics of the OCS. Data collection occurred at two distinct time points: Time 1 in September 2022 and Time 2 in May 2023. The revised survey administered at Time 2 contained the same items from Study 2 and Study 3 Time 1 and a broader range of control, predictor, and outcome variables (see the "Measure" section of this chapter for the variables measured).

Sample. In Study 3 Time 2, participants from Time 1 that met specific inclusion criteria and were re-invited via the Prolific online platform to complete the revised survey. The study sample comprised 275 participants, with nine removed for failing the attention checks. The final sample contained 266 participants.

OCS Items. The cynicism items tested at Time 2 remained the same as at Time 1, with additional scales added to the survey to measure different predictors and outcomes of organisational cynicism. The "Measures for Study 2 and Study " section below and Appendix 3.P provide details of these scales.

Data Collection Procedure. Study 3 Time 1 participants were invited via the Prolific platform to complete the Time 2 survey. The study collected consent to participate before data collection and assured confidentiality.

Data Preparation and Initial Analysis. Data was downloaded from the Qualtrics online survey platform, loaded into Excel, screened for missing data and participants who failed the attention checks, and then imported into the SPSS software for subsequent checks and analysis.

Demographics Analyses. Data analysis in Study 3 began by examining the effect of demographic variables on OCS scores at two distinct time points. One-way ANOVAs

evaluated the demographics' potential influence on employee and organisational cynicism, as substantiated by previous research (Chiaburu et al., 2013). These analyses compared organisational cynicism across multiple factors: age, gender, industry, employment status (part-time or full-time), managerial role, number of direct reports, workplace size, years employed at the current location, total years of employment, country of residence, and country of birth (e.g., Andersson, 1996; James, 2005; Schwab, 2017). The methodology employed various statistical techniques, including one-way ANOVAs for multiple group comparisons, Independent Samples t-tests for examining binary categorical variables, and post-hoc Tests for further scrutiny of significant ANOVA results.

ANOVA Analyses. ANOVA analyses aimed to identify any significant differences in OCS scores across the range of demographic variables at both Time 1 and Time 2. Each analysis reported the *F*-ratio and *p*-value, and significant outcomes resulted in conducting post-hoc tests to identify differing groups.

Independent Samples T-tests. T-tests compared mean scores between different levels of categorical demographic variables, such as employment role. Each case reported the *t*-value, degrees of freedom, and *p*-value.

Post-hoc Tests. When ANOVA analyses revealed significant findings, post-hoc tests, such as Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD), were employed. Analysis underwent Welch and Brown-Forsyth (Welch, 1951) tests for instances of violating the assumptions of homogeneity of variances.

Factors Statistical Analysis for OCS. Study 3 sought to confirm the factors established in Study 2 by conducting a CFA. This section covers the methodology for the factor extraction, rotation, and loadings, along with the CFA and model fit indices used to assess the reliability and validity of both scales.

Factor Extraction, Rotation, and Loadings. PAF with direct oblimin rotation and Kaiser normalisation examined the factor structures of the OCS based on the assumption that the factors were not orthogonal (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Field, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001)

CFA and Model Fit Indices. The Time 2 sample underwent CFA in SPSS to confirm the number of factors for both scales. AMOS software version 28 (Collier, 2020) assessed model fit. The analysis first tested a 4-factor model for each scale, then considered alternative 3-factor and 2-factor models. Finally, an analysis with all items loading onto one latent factor determined the best model fit for each scale. Various indices examined the model goodness of fit, including the chi-square/df ratio, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI; Bentler, 1990), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Goodness of Fit Indices (GFI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA; Browne & Cudek, 1992). These indices guided the evaluation of four distinct models presented in Chapter 5. Criteria for a good fit included a χ^2/df ratio < 3 and values for CFI, TLI, NFI, and GFI ≥ .90, along with an RMSEA ≤ .08 (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 1998).

Test–Retest Reliability for OCS. A repeated-measures design evaluated the stability and consistency of the OCS over 8 months, using SPSS v26 for statistical analyses. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient served as the initial method for gauging test–retest reliability. Independent sample *t*-tests determined the magnitude of differences between means, with a significance level set at $p < .05$. Analyses also examined variations in subscale scores across demographic categories such as gender, occupation, and employment status. A two-way mixed model with absolute agreement and 95% confidence intervals calculated the Intraclass Correlation Coefficients (ICC) for further validation of test–retest reliability. Additional metrics, the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) and the Minimal Detectable Change (MDC), helped to distinguish true changes from random fluctuations. The statistical analyses

were conducted using SPSS version 26, while the formula-based calculations were performed in Excel.

Measurement Invariance Analysis for OCS. This section details the procedures for testing measurement invariance. Utilising mPlus Software v8.9, I initially established a default model as the baseline for evaluating measurement invariance across two distinct groups (Byrne, 2016; Muthén & Muthén, 2018, Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). Bayesian Structural Equation Modelling (BSEM) included 10,000 iterations and two Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC).

Purpose of Measurement Invariance Analysis. Measurement invariance analysis validated the consistency of my study's measurement instruments across various groups or time points. This analytical process established whether participants interpreted the content or wording of the measures in a similar manner, thereby ensuring that the instruments captured the intended constructs reliably (Fischer et al., 2009; Gouveia et al., 2009).

Participant Division. The application of randomisation syntax in the SPSS software divided the sample of 266 participants into two equal groups, each containing 133 individuals.

Measurement Invariance Tests: Configural, Metric, and Scalar. The measurement invariance analysis involved examining three levels: configural invariance (where the factor loadings are the same), metric invariance (where each item contributes similarly to the latent construct), and scalar invariance (where comparison of raw scale scores and means occurs across samples). The assumption of configural invariance occurs when the assignment of item scores to the latent factor reasonably fits both samples (Fischmann et al., 2021).

The analysis began with step 1, the configural invariance model, which served as the default or baseline model, estimating all parameters without constraints. Then, step 2, metric invariance, which involved constraining the factor loadings to be equal across all groups while

leaving the intercepts unconstrained. Then, step 3, scalar invariance, constrains the factor loadings and the intercepts to be equal across all groups. The goodness-of-fit for each model was determined using common fit indices.

Bayesian Estimation in Model Constraints. The model implemented a Bayesian approach, with 10,000 iterations, for the more restrictive mode. The BSEM identified the smallest delta values for reference indicators, which were then restrained within each subscale (Thompson et al., 2021).

Model Fit Assessment Indices. Indices such as the CFI, TLI, and RMSEA evaluated the goodness-of-fit of the models. Acceptable fit levels for the CFI and TLI are considered as ≥ .90 (Byrne, 2016), and for RMSEA, a value of .10 generally indicates a poor fit but is considered acceptable based on existing literature (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016).

Invariance Verification. Comparison of $\Delta\chi^2$ and ΔCFI values between constrained and unconstrained models also verified measurement invariance across groups.

3.12. Step 8 – Nomological Network Validity of OCS.

Step 8 aimed to investigate the nomological network validity of organisational cynicism by examining the convergent, and discriminant validity of the OCS.

Research Instruments and Statistical Analyses. Analyses utilised SPSS v26 for general statistics and R package v2023.03.1+446. The R package incorporated "library(psych)" and "library(apaTables)" to calculate correlations. Bivariate correlations and EFAs were the primary statistical tools for assessing convergent, and discriminant validity. Cohen's (1988) criteria guided the interpretation of correlation strengths.

Validity Assessments of the OCS: Convergent, and Discriminant. A multifaceted approach evaluated the convergent, and discriminant validity. For assessing convergent

validity, bivariate correlation analyses linked each scale with established cynicism measures at Time 1 and 2. EFAs evaluated the proposed model of the OCS Step 9 – Mediation Analyses

This step aimed to investigate the OCS's mediating role within the JD-R model. The analysis sought to clarify the mediating role of OCS between job demands/job resources and employee outcomes such as burnout, exhaustion, and engagement.

Research Instruments and Statistical Analyses. SPSS v26 and the Process 4.2 package by Hayes (2022) served as the tools for analysis. The selected options included a bootstrap of 10,000, 95% confidence intervals, mean-centring variables with "centre = 1" calculating standardised coefficients with "stand = 1" and assigning a seed number for each analysis run. This mean-centring approach mitigated potential multicollinearity issues (Aiken et al., 1991). The seed number assignment ensured result replication, aligning with best practices (Hayes, 2022). The analysis generated unstandardised and standardised scores and computed a 95% Bias-corrected and accelerated (bCa) bootstrap confidence interval to enhance reliability.

Mediation Analysis Variables. I examined job demands—role conflict and ambiguity, disrespectful behaviours, and work climate—as independent variables. The OCS was the mediating variable, with burnout, exhaustion, and engagement as dependent variables reflecting employee outcomes.

3.13. Step 10 –Criterion Validity of the OCS

Step 10 aimed to investigate the criterion validity of the OCS using two approaches. First, I explored predictive validity by examining whether OCS Study 3 scores at Time 1 could be predictor criterion parameters at Time 2. Second, I explored incremental validity by comparing the OCS scales with alternate measures reflective of organisational cynicism.

Criterion Parameters. I examined five criterion parameters: burnout (measured using the BAT), psychological distress (measured using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale [K10]), employee engagement, organisational trust, and trust behaviours at work.

Research Instruments and Statistical Analyses. SPSS v26 calculated criterion validity, while the Relative Weights Analysis (RWA) Web Tool (Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2014: rwa-web.shinyapps.io/multipleregression/) determined the relative weights (RW), relative weights confidence intervals (RW CI), and the rescaled estimates (RS) using 10,000 bootstrap replications and an alpha value of 0.05.

Data Cleaning Protocol. I managed outliers through Z-score calculations for each outcome variable. In alignment with best practices, the analysis omitted data points with Z-scores less than -3.29 or greater than 3.29 to uphold data integrity and reliability (Field, 2018).

Predictive Validity of the OCS and OCS Subdimensions. Predictive validity concerns a scale's ability to forecast future behaviours or outcomes with which it should theoretically correlate. I measured the OCS and its dimensions of *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change* at Time 1 to evaluate their ability to be predictors of outcomes at Time 2.

The analytical approach for assessing the OCS dimensions consisted of three main steps. Initially, hierarchical multiple regressions evaluated whether each dimension of the OCS independently contributes to the prediction of outcomes (LeBreton et al., 2007). Due to the potential for multicollinearity among predictors, I additionally employed RWAs. These analyses confirmed the significance of the relative weights through 95% bCa confidence intervals (Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2011). Lastly, the relative weights underwent rescaling to facilitate their interpretation as percentages of unique variance explained.

OCS Incremental Validity Relative to Prior Cynicism Measures. Incremental validity assessed the added predictive value of the OCS over pre-existing cynicism measures. Hierarchical multiple regressions compared the OCS to established cynicism scales such as those from Brandes et al. (1999, unpublished), Brooks and Vance (1991, unpublished), the MBI-GS cynicism subscale (Maslach et al., 1996), and the BAT (Schaufeli et al., 2020) mental distancing subscale. The analytical process replicated the steps employed in the predictive validity section. The next section covers the constructs and measurement scales utilised within Studies 2 and 3.

3.14. Measures

This section includes the details of the measurement instruments utilised in Studies 2 and 3. It includes the refinements made to the OCS items in Study 3 (time 2), the overview of new measures included in Study 3, followed by attention check items, and the OCS. The existing measures are organised into four categories: (1) control variable measures, (2) predictor variable measures, (3) correlates – convergent and discriminant variable measures, and (4) outcome variable measures.

Refinements to OCS Items in Study 3 (Time 2). Studies 2 and 3 involved the same OCS items. In Study 3 (Time 2), however, a grammatical adjustment occurred in item cyn_relation2_1, from "detrimental for my own welfare" to “detrimental to my own welfare" Additionally, item cyn_change_2_1 underwent a stylistic revision, from "will be superficial – not addressing the underlying problem" to "will be superficial (i.e., not addressing the underlying problems)."

Overview of Measures Introduced in Study 3. Study 3 incorporated a variety of convergent and discriminant measures, detailed below. All scales, except for the PANAS subscale for positive affect and the positive disposition items, were measured at Time 2. Time

2 also featured the introduction of several additional measures: cynical workplace climate, witnessed disrespectful workplace behaviours, promotive and prohibitive workplace voice behaviours, proactive performance subscales, proactive socialisation behaviours, burnout assessment subscales for exhaustion, cognitive impairment, and emotional impairment, psychological distress (K10), musculoskeletal health, MBI subscale for emotional exhaustion, and organisational trust behaviours.

Attention Check Items. The recommendation is that a minimum of two attention checks should be included in surveys to detect inattention (Ramsey et al., 2016; Thomas & Clifford, 2017). I included two attention check items to verify participant attentiveness. Attention check item number one: "Think about my organisation, then select the option 'agree' to show you are paying attention" (5 = *agree*) and attention check item two: "Select the option 'some of the time' to show you are paying attention" (4 = *some of the time*).

Organisational Cynicism Scale. The version of the OCS tested in Studies 2 and 3 comprised 30 items and four subscales: *futile to voice* (9 items), *be proactive* (7 items), *build deep relationships* (8 items), and *adopt change* (6 items). Participants were asked to think back on their interactions with their organisation over the past 3 months and rate their agreement with each statement (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree)*.

The OCS uniquely features the flexibility to incorporate a changeable referent target, which enables more nuanced data collection. This design allows a user to adapt the scale to different organisational contexts or specific targets within the same organisation. For instance, the scale includes items like, "In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time to speak up …)" This innovation allows for a more tailored measurement, capturing variations in cynicism levels across different organisational levels,

such as attitudes towards managers, teams, or peers. The referent target towards "my manager" was tested in the pilot study, and towards "my organisation" in study 2 and 3.

3.14.1. Control Variables

I collected data on several control variables, including age, gender, broad working industry, part-time/full-time employment status, managerial role (manager/non-manager), the number of employees reporting to the participant, workplace size, years employed at the current location, total years of employment, country of residence, and country of birth (Andersson, 1996; James, 2005; Schwab, 2017). Participants indicated their age, the number of employees reporting to them, workplace size, years employed in the current location, and total years of employment using predefined range blocks.

This approach to collecting control variable data aligns with prior literature (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013). It aims to capture the impacts of the newly developed OCS across demographic variables.

3.14.2. Predictors

I measured known predictor variables in the cynicism nomological network against the newly developed OCS to test the relationships. Grouping of these variables occurred as disposition- and state-level predictors.

Dispositional Predictors. I evaluated disposition-level predictors against the newly developed OCS. The measures included positive and negative affect, hope, proactive personality, mindfulness and emotion regulation, and emotional exhaustion.

Positive and Negative Affect (positive affect measured in Study 3 Time 1 only). I used the 20-item PANAS (Watson et al., 1998). Participants were given a list of adjectives (e.g., interested, distressed, hostile, scared) and asked to rate themselves on how often they have felt

this way towards their organisation over the past 3 months on a 7-point scale (1 = *very slightly or not at all*, 7 = *extremely*).

Hope. I measured the trait hope as agency and pathways to achieve goals using seven items from the Adult Hope Scale (AHS) (Snyder, 1991) and dispositional motivation to endure using the 4-item Preserving Hope Scale (PHS) (Rueger et al., 2022). The AHS subscales included three pathway items to measure goal-directed thinking and four agency items to measure planning to meet goals thinking. Items included "Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem" and "My past experiences have prepared me well for my future" Items from the PHS to measure enduring motivation included, "I do not give up" and "I am determined to see things through to the end" Participants were asked to rate their agreement with how each statement relates to their general life (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Proactive Personality. I assessed proactive personality using the 4-item Proactive Personality Scale (PPS) (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Participants were asked to rate their agreement with how each statement relates to their general life (1 = *not very true at all*, 5 = *very true*). Items included “No matter what the odds, if I believe in something, I will make it happen" and "I have excelled at identifying opportunities."

Trait Resistance to Change. I measured resistance to change with the 12-item Resistance to Change Scale (Oreg, 2003). This scale consists of four 3-item subscales: routine seeking, emotional reaction, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity. Participants were asked to rate their agreement with how each statement relates to their resistance to change at work (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Items included "I generally consider changes to be a negative thin”" (routine seeking), "When things don't go according to plans, it stresses me out" (emotional reaction),"When someone pressures me to change something, I tend to resist it even

if I think the change may ultimately benefit me" (short-term thinking), and "Once I've come to a conclusion, I'm not likely to change my mind" (cognitive rigidity).

Mindfulness and Emotion Regulation. I assessed mindfulness and emotion regulation using the 12-item Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale-R (CAMS-R) (Feldman et al., 2007). The CAMS-R consists of four 4-item subscales: attention, present focus, awareness, and acceptance. Participants were asked to rate how often in their daily life each statement applied to them (1 = *rarely/not at all*, 4 = *almost always*). Items included "It is easy for me to keep track of my thoughts and feelings" and "I am able to focus on the present moment"

State Level Predictors. I assessed known cynicism state-level predictors against the newly developed OCS. Selected measures included role ambiguity and role conflict as aspects of job demands and role self-efficacy to capture employees' perceptions of voice.

Role Ambiguity (job demand). I measured role ambiguity with the 4-item People at Work Role Ambiguity subscale (Jimmieson et al., 2016). Participants were asked how often each statement applied to them in their current job (1 = *never,* 7 = *always*). Sample items included "I am clear what is expected of me at work" and "I know how to go about getting my job done"

Role Conflict (job demand). I evaluated role conflict with the 4-item People at Work Role subscale (Jimmieson et al., 2016). Participants were asked how often each statement applied to them in their current job (1 = *never,* 7 = *always*). Sample items included "Different people at work expect conflicting things from me" and "Different groups at work demand things from me that are difficult to do at the same time."

Role Self-Efficacy (perception of voice). I measured role self-efficacy with the 7-item RBSE scale (Parker et al., 2006). Participants were asked about their perceived capability to

speak up in the workplace and to rate their confidence level on each statement (1 = *not at all confident*, 5 = *very confident*). Example statements included how confident would you feel "analysing a long-term problem to find a solution" and "presenting information to a group of colleagues."

Cynical Workplace Climate – Change Adoption Behaviours. I measured cynical workplace climate in Study 3, Time 2 with the CAOC Scale 4-item pessimism subscale (Wanous et al., 2000). Participants were asked to think back on their interactions with their organisation over the last 3 months and rate their agreement with each statement (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Items included "Most of the programmes that are supposed to solve problems in my workplace will not do much good" and "When things don't go according to plans, it stresses me out."

Witnessed Workplace Disrespectful Behaviour. I evaluated witnessed workplace disrespectful behaviour in Study 3, Time 2, measured with five items. Participants were asked to rate the degree to which they had experienced/witnessed disrespectful behaviour in the workplace over the last 6 months: 1 = *never*, 2 = *a few times*, 3 = *once or twice a month*, 4 = a few times a month, 5 = *once a week*, 6 = *a few times a week*, 7 = *every day*). Items included "Undermining: gossip, slander, or false or malicious rumours; interference with property and task sabotage" and "Social exclusion: made to feel isolated; not included or welcomed in groups; ostracised."

3.14.3. Correlates (Convergent and Discriminant)

Convergent validity is the extent to which two or more measures of the same construct produce similar results. Discriminant validity is the extent to which measures of different constructs produce different results. In other words, convergent validity assesses the extent to

which measures of the same construct are related. In contrast, discriminant validity assesses the extent to which measures of different constructs are unrelated.

Pre-existing Cynicism Measures – Convergent. To assess convergent validity, the newly developed OCS was analysed against the following existing measures of cynicism: employee cynicism, organisational cynicism, resistance to change, cynicism as a burnout component, and a self-rate cynicism item.

Employee Cynicism. I measured employee cynicism with the 13-item Brandes et al. (1999) unpublished modified (semantic differential) version scale to assess the cognitive, affective, and behavioural components of cynicism described by Dean et al. (1998). To locate the original copy of this scale, I emailed Professor Brandes in January 2021 and was unsuccessful in receiving a response. I also emailed President James W. Dean Jr. and received an answer that they could not locate a copy. I successfully found a copy of the original conference paper that contained this unpublished scale using the time machine internet function to roll back the internet search engine to 1999. When responding to these items, participants were asked to think back on the interactions with their organisation over the past 3 months and rate their agreement with each statement (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree)*. Items included "When my organisation says they are going to do something, I wonder if it will really happen" and "When I think about my organisation, I experience aggravation."

Organisational Cynicism. I tested organisational cynicism with the 8-item Brooks and Vance (1991) unpublished scale. I emailed Mr Robert Vance on September 1^{1t}h, 2000, to access this scale. He sent back a comprehensive reply and was generous with his information on the cynicism scale and how cynicism carried weight in his findings when measuring improbability and cynicism. When responding to these items, participants were asked to think back on the interactions with their organisation over the past 3 months and rate their agreement

with each statement (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree)*. Items included "Personal initiative does not count for much in this organisation" and "People around here get credit they do not deserve for work they did not do."

Mental Distancing. I measured mental distancing with the BAT Work Related Version 5-item subscale mental distance (Schaufeli et al., 2020). Participants were asked how often each statement applied to them in their current job (1 = *never*, 5 = *always*). Items included "I feel a strong aversion towards my job" and "I'm cynical about what my work means to others."

Cynicism as a Burnout Component. I evaluated cynicism as a component of burnout with the MBI-GS (Maslach et al., 1996) cynicism 5-item subscale. Participants were asked to rate how often in their daily life each statement applied to them (1 = *rarely/not at all*, 4 = *almost always*). An example item shared with permission is "I doubt the significance of my work." Note that I received approval and made payment for the use of these items in my research. This scale is Copyright ©1996 Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Michael P. Leiter, Christina Maslach & Susan E. Jackson. All rights reserved in all media, published by Mind Garden, Inc., www.mindgarden.com.

Cynicism Self Rate item. I measured participants' perceived level of cynicism using a single-item self-measure. They were asked, "Do you think you are cynical? Please rate yourself on the below scale" (0 = *not cynical*, 5 = *moderately cynical*, 10 = *highly cynical*, 11 = *I don't know the meaning of the word*). The choice of "I don't know the meaning of the work" was included to capture the possibility that not all participants understood the meaning of the term.

3.14.4. Outcomes

Known outcome variables in the cynicism nomological network were measured against the newly developed OCS to test the relationships. This categorisation organised the variables

into four categories: direct behavioural outcomes, employee well-being outcomes, organisational outcomes, and experienced emotional states.

Direct Behavioural Outcomes. I measured promotive and prohibitive workplace voice behaviours against the OCS dimensions. These behaviours corresponded to the *it is futile to voice dimension*. Similarly, proactive workplace behaviours (PWB) aligned with the *be proactive* dimension, proactive socialisation behaviours corresponded to the *build deep relationships* dimension, and organisational change adaptivity behaviours related to the *to adopt change* dimension.

Promotive and Prohibitive Workplace Voice Behaviours. The measurement of promotive and prohibitive voice behaviours, linked to the cynicism voice scale dimension, was measured in Study 3, Time 2 and with nine items from the two subscales: promotive voice and prohibitive voice, developed by Liang et al. (2012). The scale items' referent target was altered from the "unit" to the "organisation." Participants were asked to reflect on their willingness to speak up within their organisation and rate their agreement on each statement (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Items included "I make constructive suggestions to improve the organisation's operation"(promotive voice) and "I dare to point out problems when they appear in the organisation, even if that would hamper relationships with colleague" (prohibitive voice).

Proactive Workplace Behaviours. The measurement of PWB, linked to the be proactive cynicism scale dimension, was measured in Study 3, Time 2. I evaluated nine items from four subscales: individual task proactivity, organisational member proficiency, and organisational member proactivity. These items came from the Performance Items developed by Griffin et al. (2007). Participants were asked to rate their willingness to be proactive within their organisation (1 = *never*, 4 = *a few times a month*, 7 = *every day*). The scale items were semantically altered to future tense. Items included "Initiate better ways of doing your core

task”" (individual task proactivity), "Present a positive image of the organisation to other people (e.g., clients”" (organisational member proficiency), and "Come up with ways of increasing efficiency within the organisation" (organisation member proactivity).

Proactive Socialisation Behaviour. The measurement of proactive socialisation behaviour, linked to the building deep relationships cynicism scale dimension, was included in Study 3, Time 2. This was measured with three subscales from the Proactive Socialisation Tactics measure (Ashford & Black, 1996): general socialising (2 items), building relationships with leadership (3 items), and networking (3 items). The build relationships items were semantically altered from “boss" to “senior leadership" and "not in your department" to "different areas of your organisation" to generalise to a broader range of organisations. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they have engaged in each socialisation behaviour in their current organisation (1 = *to no extent*, 7 = *to a great extent)*. Items included "Attended organisational social gathering" (general socialising), "Tried to form a good relationship with senior leadership" (build relationships with leadership), and "Tried to socialise with people in different areas of your organisation" (networking).

Organisational Change Adaptivity Behaviours. Organisational change adaptivity behaviours, linked to the adopt change cynicism scale dimension, were measured with the Proactive Performance subscale: organisational change adaptivity (3 items). Participants were asked about their willingness to be proactive within the organisation and to rate how willing they are to perform certain behaviours (1 = *never*, 4 = *a few times a month*, 7 = *every day*). An example item is "Respond flexibly to overall changes in the organisation (e.g., changes in management)."

Employee Well-being Outcomes. The well-being outcomes measured against the new OCS were burnout, spiritual well-being, professional efficacy, and psychological distress.

Social Connection and Belonging. I evaluated social connection and belonging by using 11 items from the 10 positively and 10 negatively worded 20-item Social Connectedness Scale – R (Lee et al., 2001). The items selected from this scale had factors loading of over .60. The scale is copyrighted. I emailed Professor Richard Lee in April 2023 to request permission to use items from this scale to measure employee perceptions of social connectedness, was granted permission to use it in my study. To gauge participant's social connectedness, they were asked to rate their agreement with how each statement relates to their sense of closeness within their organisation (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Items included "I feel distant from people" and "I feel I don't want to participate with anyone or any group."

Spiritual Well-being. I tested spiritual well-being with the Spirituality Index of Well-being (Daaleman & Frey, 2004). The 12-item scale consists of two 6-item subscales: self-efficacy and life scheme. Participants were asked to rate their agreement with how each statement relates to their feelings and choices in their daily life (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Items included "I have a lack of purpose in my life" (life scheme), and "There is not much I can do to help myself" (self-efficacy).

Burnout. I measured burnout with the BAT Work Related Short Version (Schaufeli et al., 2020). The research added this measure to Study 3, Time 2. This 12-item scale measures the dimensions of exhaustion (3 items), mental distance (3 items), cognitive impairment (3 items), and emotional impairment (3 items). Participants were asked how often each statement applied to them in their current job (1 = *never*, 5 = *always*). Items included "At work, I feel mentally exhausted," "When I'm working, I have trouble concentrating," and "At work, I feel unable to control my emotions."

Psychological Distress. I included the measurement of psychological distress in Study 3, Time 2, using the K10 Scale (K10; Kessler & Mroczek, 1994). The scale consists of 10 items.

Participants were asked to rate their degree of experienced anxiety and depressive symptoms over the last 3 months (1 = *none of the time*, 5 = *all of the time*). Items included "How often did you feel tired out for no good reason?" and "How often did you feel worthless?"

Musculoskeletal Symptoms. I examined musculoskeletal symptoms in Study 3, Time 2, measured using five musculoskeletal organ items from the Standardised Nordic questionnaires (Kuorinka et al., 1987). Participants were asked to rate their degree of ache, pain or discomfort experienced in the neck, shoulders, wrists/hands, upper back or lower back areas (1 = *never*, 2 = *a few times a year*, 3 = *once or twice a month*, 4 = a few times a month, 5 = *once a week*, 6 = *a few times a week*, 7 = *every day*).

Emotional Exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion was included in Study 3, Time 2 to measure emotional exhaustion from the MBI-GS (Maslach et al., 1996). It was measured using the emotional exhaustion 5-item subscale of the MBI-GS. Participants were asked to rate how often in their daily life each statement applied to them (1 = *rarely/not at all*, 4 = *almost always*). An example item shared with permission is "I feel emotionally drained from my work." Note that I received permission and made payment for the use of these items in my research. This scale is Copyright ©1996 Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Michael P. Leiter, Christina Maslach & Susan E. Jackson. All rights reserved in all media, published by Mind Garden, Inc., www.mindgarden.com.

Organisational Outcomes. The organisational outcomes measured against the new OCS were work engagement, organisational trust, and behavioural trust towards the organisation.

Work Engagement. I measured work engagement with the 9-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). The scale consists of three 3-item subscales: absorption, dedication, and vigour. Participants were asked to rate how often they feel this way

about their job (1 = *never*, 7 = *every day)*. Items included "I feel bursting with energy when I am at work," and "When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work."

Organisational Trust. I examined organisational trust using the 10-item Manager Trust Scale (Mayer & Gavin, 2005). The referent target chosen for this scale was "my organisation" to capture the participant's belief in the trustworthiness of their organisation. Participants were asked to rate their agreement with how each statement relates to their belief in the trustworthiness of their organisation (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Items included "I would share my opinion about sensitive issues with my organisation even if my opinion was unpopular" and "I am afraid of what my organisation might do to me at work."

Behavioural Trust Towards the Organisation. I measured organisational trust using six items from the Behavioural Trust Inventory Scale (Gillespie, 2003). The survey used three items from the competence-based reliance dimension and three items from the vulnerability/disclosure dimension. The referent target chosen for this scale was semantically changed from "leader" to "the organisation" to capture participant's behavioural trust towards the organisation. Participants were asked to rate their agreement with how each statement relates to their belief in the trustworthiness of their organisation (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Items included "How willing are you to rely on your organisation's skill and abilities to deliver on their promises" and "How willing are you to discuss work-related problems or difficulties with senior representatives from your organisation that could potentially be used to disadvantage you."

Experienced Emotional States. To determine the experienced emotional states related to cynicism, I noted the negative and positive emotions participants mentioned during the interviews and focus group discussions.

Negative Affect (Affects from Qualitative Interviews). I measured negative affects associated with cynicism in employees' minds from the interviews and focus group study (i.e., Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). I included these items to capture cynicism from participant discussions, separate from the PANAS assessment. The measured indicators were disappointed, disillusioned, jaded/bitter, exploited, resentful, frustrated, and angry. Participants were given the list of these adjectives and asked to rate how often they have felt this way towards their organisation over the past 3 months on a 7-point scale (1 = *very slightly or not at all*, 7 = *extremely*).

Positive Affect. Positive affects not included in the PANAS were also included here. The positive affects measured were optimism, motivated, joyful, happy, curiosity, energetic, satisfied, content, and calm. On a 7-point scale, participants were given this list of adjectives and asked to rate themselves on how often they have felt this way towards their organisation over the past 3 months (1 = *very slightly or not at all*, 7 = *extremely*).

Happiness. I measured participants' ratings of their perceived level of happiness with the Aréchiga-Moldovan Happy Scale (AM Happy Scale; Moldovan, 2018). They were asked, "What is your current level of happiness" (1 = *down in the dumps*, 10 = *on top of the world*).

Distal Outcomes. I measured the distal outcome of intention to quit against the new OCS in Study 3 at Time 2.

Intention to Quit. According to Bedeian (2007), turnover intentions are "the desire to continue (or terminate) employment" with one's employing organisation (p. 18). The survey used three items to measure intention to quit (turnover intentions). Participants were asked to rate their agreement with each statement (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). The items were "In the past few months, I have thought about quitting my job at the current organisation I

am working at," "I have started exploring other job opportunities to exit my current employer," and "I am keen to leave my current employer."

3.15. Theoretical Model

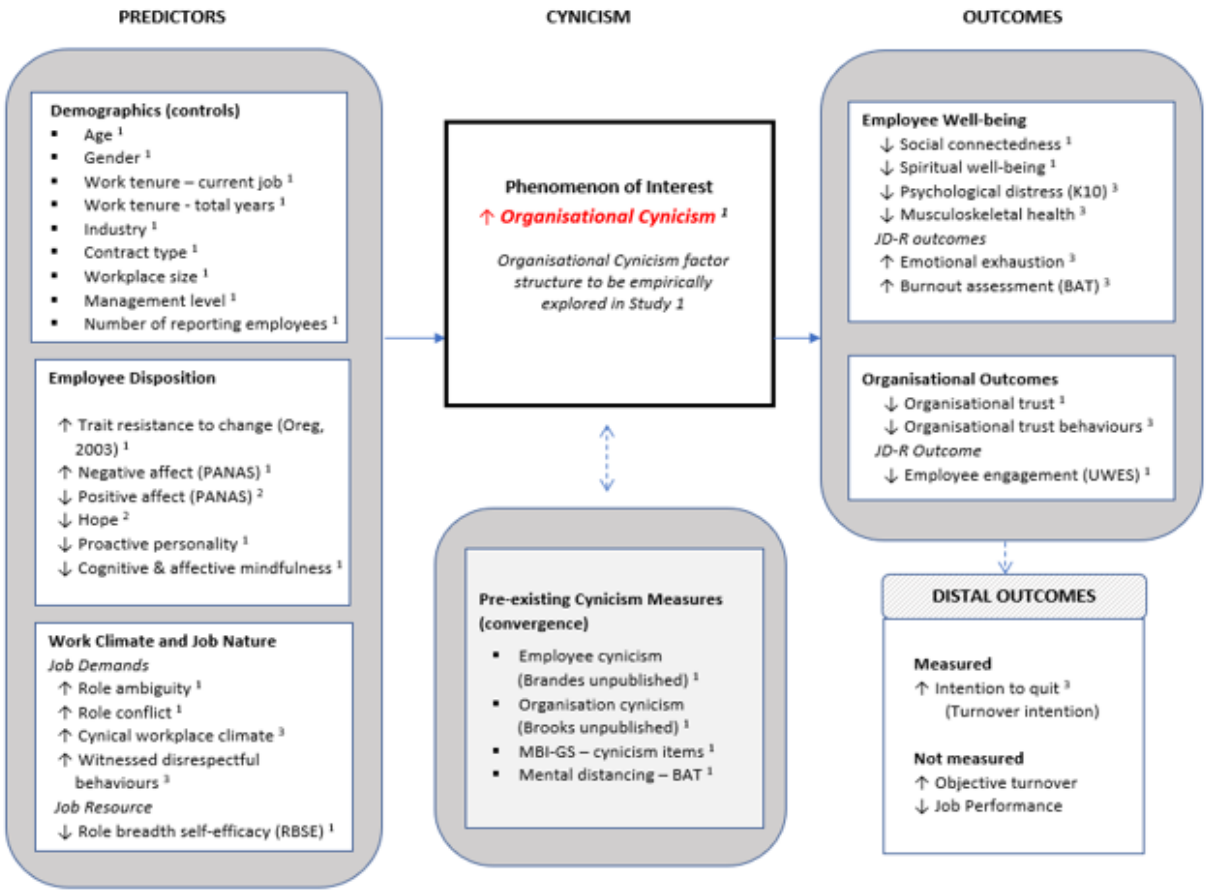
The theoretical model underlying Studies 2 and 3 appears in Figure 3.2. This comprehensive model incorporates control variables, predictor variables, correlate variances, the OCS, and targeted outcomes. The model acts as a conceptual roadmap for understanding the relationships and interactions among the study's components. The subsequent section builds on this theoretical framework to ensure usability and acceptance of the scales in academic and organisational contexts by adopting dual names for the scales.

3.16. Naming of Dual Scale: OCS/O-Cat

This section discusses the rationale behind the dual naming of scales developed for assessing organisational cynicism and employee trait cynicism, targeting scholarly research and practical application in organisational settings. The OCS is aimed explicitly at academic research, focusing on individuals' organisational cynicism. This same scale will adopt the name Organisational Cynicism Assessment Tool (O-CAT) in real-world business contexts. This strategic naming encourages broader acceptance and minimises potential resistance, aiding its successful implementation in organisational settings. The primary objective of O-CAT consists of the systematic identification and understanding of organisational cynicism, enabling managers and practitioners to pinpoint specific elements of employee cynicism and tailor interventions accordingly.

Figure 3.2.

OSC Theoretical Model with Study 1 Empirical Dimensions



Note. This figure extends Figure 2.4, incorporating the OCS futile dimensions. Scales used across Studies 2 and 3 are marked with [1]. Study 2 specific sales with [2], and Study 3 exclusive scales with [3]. Red text denotes the new cynicism scales, with '↓' indicating negative and '↑' positive relationships with OCS.

3.17. Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has laid the foundational framework for conducting a rigorous and comprehensive examination of organisational cynicism through three interrelated studies. The scale validation through structure analysis methodology and longitudinal studies' design ensures the reliability, validity, and generalisability of the OCS. Among other methodological considerations, my research design considered sampling strategies, psychometric properties, and statistical techniques. This multifaceted, rigorous approach aims to produce robust results

that enrich academic discourse on organisational cynicism and practical applications in the workplace.

The methodologies delineated in this chapter set the stage for the upcoming empirical analyses. Future chapters will present the results of Studies 1, 2, and 3, utilising the methodologies outlined here to examine the cognitive mechanisms underlying organisational cynicism.

Chapter 4 – Results and Discussion Qualitative Study 1

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of Study 1, a qualitative investigation into cynicism within a state government department. I employed a grounded theory approach within a constructivist framework and included 56 participants from a variety of roles, including senior site leaders, educational professionals, and support staff, across 13 different sites. Data was collected through one-to-one interviews and focus group discussions, facilitated by a semi-structured interview guide. This approach offered a multidimensional perspective on how employees in similar professional roles defined and experienced modern-day cynicism.

The objective of this chapter is to offer qualitative insights into the cognitive underpinnings of employee cynicism, aligning directly with Aim 2 of the thesis. These insights are derived from a thematic analysis that identified core themes, including *it is futile to voice, build deep relationships, be proactive,* and *adopt change* (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2006). The findings from this chapter will be synthesised with the literature review outlined in Chapter 2. This grounded theory conceptualisation lays the groundwork for Aim 3: the development and validation of two tools for assessing both trait and state levels of cynicism in contemporary workplaces.

4.2. Identifying Features of Cynicism

To investigate the complexities of workplace cynicism, interviews and focus group discussions began with a set of foundational questions. These questions aimed to elicit comprehensive viewpoints on cynicism from the participants. Initial queries focused on defining "employee cynicism," outlining its features, and understanding personal experiences. These foundational questions served as the basis for qualitative data collection, shaping the trajectory of the ensuing discussions. The structured approach facilitated discursive fluidity,

enabling discussions to evolve based on participants' initial responses, and additional probing further enriched the exploration of cynicism's multifaceted nature (e.g., Charmaz, 2006).

4.3. Futile Beliefs: Indicators of Organisational Cynicism

The qualitative data strongly supports the notion that futile beliefs are the foundational cognitive underpinnings of organisational cynicism. In this context, futile is defined as the certainty that actions or efforts are not just ineffective but essentially useless. Such a belief in futility, as outlined by Vance (2017), is a critical precursor to organisational cynicism. When employees attribute the uselessness of their efforts to external factors or systemic incompetence, they are more likely to have beliefs embedded in cynicism (Vance, 2017).

This pervasive sense of futility manifests across various facets of organisational life, influencing attitudes towards initiatives for change, relationships, voice, and proactivity. For example, a participant encapsulated this pervasive belief, stating, "It's always the same, it's never going to change, it doesn't matter what you do, it's always the same, you know what, just a different day." This perspective illustrates that the latent construct of cynicism as fundamentally rooted in a belief that efforts, whether individual or organisational, yield no useful outcomes. Similarly, the frustration with systemic issues expressed by another participant as "frustrated, by the way the world works," accentuates the ingrained conviction that efforts to instigate meaningful change are futile.

Moreover, the data extends the scope of futility beyond mere resistance to organisational changes. It permeates other critical areas of work life, affecting voice, proactiveness, and interpersonal relationships. For example, one participant expressed a sense of powerlessness and futility in voicing opinions, stating, "I didn't have a lot of voice, and it was very much well I'm the leader, I have the say." Another participant highlighted the futility of speaking up in an environment dominated by louder voices: "just those larger voices were prominent … and you

just, it's kind of like, well, what is the point of me saying something." Further, participants demonstrated a marked reluctance to engage socially or trust others, encapsulated by one participant's statement: "fool me once, shame on me, fool me twice, shame on you … I'm not going to put myself in that position … I don't leave my room. I stay in my room." This reluctance not only emphasises the futility of engagement and building relationships at work, but also illustrates the depth of futility beliefs ingrained in the thought patterns of the employees interviewed (see Appendix 4.A).

Measurement tools targeting cynicism as a latent construct should reflect the multifaceted nature of futile beliefs, as indicated by the findings in my literature review. These beliefs significantly shape the attitudes, emotions, and behaviours of today's employees, which will be defined throughout the following sections.

4.4. Redefining Organisational and Employee Cynicism

I contribute to the existing body of knowledge by offering conceptualisations of both organisational and employee cynicism, each grounded in a synthesis of empirical data and literature. Organisational cynicism emerges as a dynamic, context-driven cognitive framework developed by employees in relation to their organisation, its management, colleagues, or a specific entity/process/procedure. It is primarily characterised by a belief in futility, manifesting across four distinct dimensions: *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *adopt change*.

On the other hand, employee cynicism is conceptualised as a dispositional trait, characterised by a futile belief that remains relatively consistent over time. Specifically, individuals with this trait believe *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* or *adopt change*. Here, the focus is on individual characteristics that predispose some employees to view situations and relationships more cynically. While organisational cynicism is malleable

and shaped by contextual experiences, employee cynicism is relatively stable and likely to influence how an individual perceives and reacts to various situations, regardless of whether they change work environments. These two conceptualisations offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the cognitive complexities that underpin cynicism in the workplace. They allow for differentiation between individuals who are inherently more negative and those whose cynicism is contextually driven.

Organisational Cynicism – A Dynamic Cognitive State Context-Driven Framework

Derived from a synthesis of empirical data and the literature review, organisational cynicism is fundamentally a cognitive framework that employees construct in response to their interactions with their organisation, its management, and their colleagues, among others. This framework is not static but evolves, largely influenced by the dynamic nature of workplace relationships and experiences. The defining characteristic of this form of cynicism is the anticipation of future disappointment, which stems from past negative experiences. Central to this construct is the belief in futility – a deeply ingrained conviction that efforts or actions within the organisation are largely pointless. This futility manifests across four key dimensions:

1. ***Futile to Voice*:** the belief that voicing opinions and ideas to my <referent target, e.g., organisation> is futile as they will likely be ignored, overlooked, undervalued, or marginalised.
2. ***Futile to Be Proactive*:** the sense that additional effort or initiative taken for the benefit of my <referent target, e.g., organisation> will be neither valued, rewarded, nor appreciated.
3. ***Futile to Build Deep Relationships***: the expectation that forming deep work relationships with/within my <referent target, e.g., organisation> will hold no value, as they will likely be superficial, one-sided, or will expose one to advantage-taking.

4. ***Futile to Adopt Change*:** the judgment that embracing changes for my <referent target, e.g., organisation> will be pointless because such changes will likely worsen situations, will be poorly planned, will not address underlying issues, or will only be temporary.

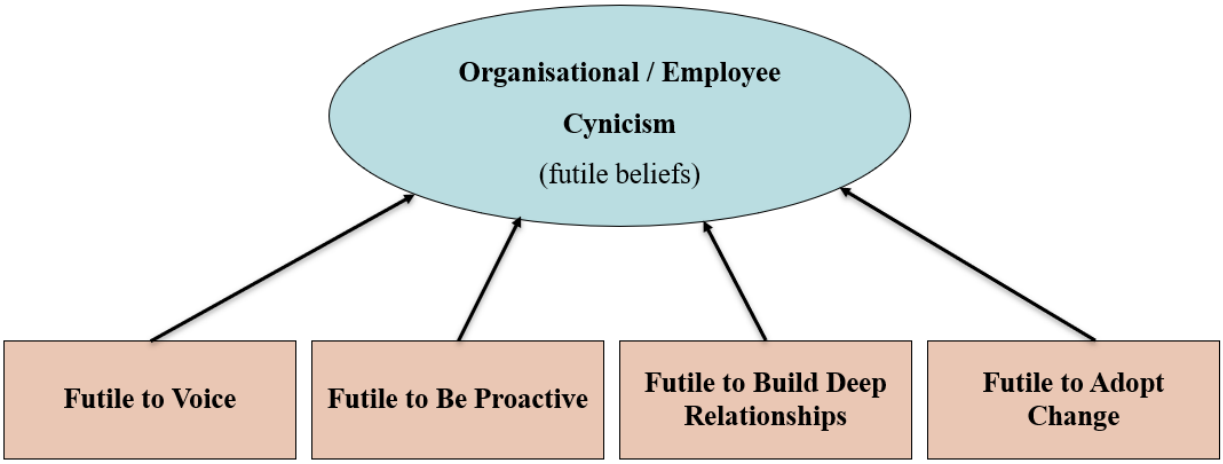
4.5. Empirical Evidence: Conceptual Definitions

The preceding conceptualisations of organisational and employee cynicism serve as theoretical frameworks that were rigorously tested and refined through empirical investigation. The following sections will examine the empirical evidence that not only supports these definitions but has also shaped them. This evidence, collected from participant interviews and focus groups, adds layers of complexity and depth to our understanding of cynicism in the workplace. It also serves as the foundation upon which these new conceptualisations stand, ensuring they are grounded in real-world experiences and perspectives. Next, I examine the core dimensions of *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *adopt changes,* which encapsulate the multifaceted manifestations of futility in both organisational and employee cynicism.

Figure 4.1 offers an integrative summary of the key findings from Study 1's interviews and focus group discussions. This visual representation illustrates the relationships among the dimensions of *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change*, and their influence on the latent construct of organisational cynicism. The figure serves not only as a synthesis of the qualitative data gathered but also as a roadmap for the in-depth discussion of each futility dimension that follows in the subsequent paragraphs.

Figure 4.1.

Study 1 Results: Multidimensional Framework of Futile Beliefs

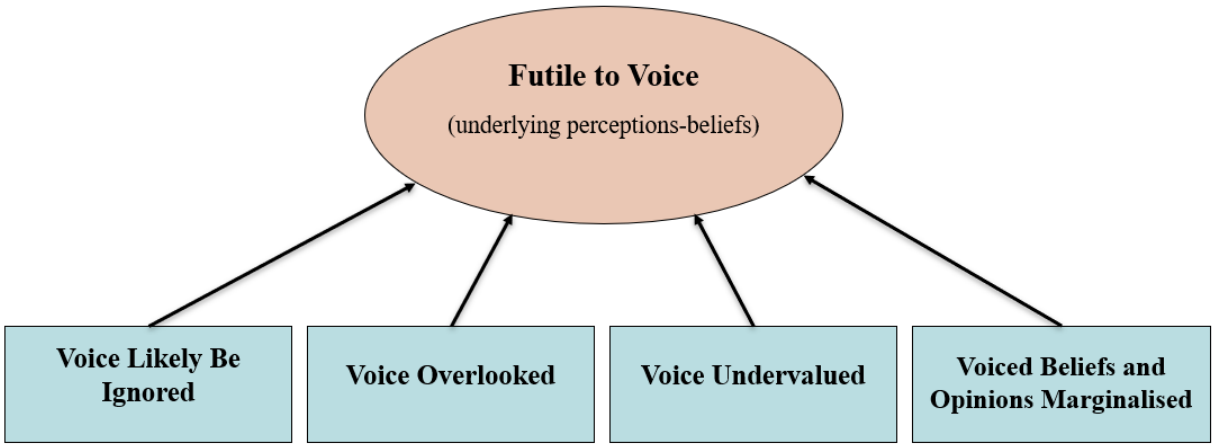


4.5.1. Theme: Futile to Voice

The data collected in Study 1 strongly suggests a pervasive futility when it comes to speaking up in organisational settings. Interviews and focus group discussions revealed not just isolated incidents but entrenched beliefs that contribute to this sense of futility. These beliefs are that their voice is likely to be ignored, overlooked, undervalued, and their views and opinions marginalised. These are not simply reasons for employees' reluctance to speak up – they form core employee perceptions that underly cynicism in their workplaces. A discussion of each of these voice thematic sub-themes, as presented in Figure 4.2, follows this section and provides a lens through which to explore how these indicators of futility feed into the broader construct of cynicism in workplaces.

Figure 4.2.

Study 1 Results: Underlying Beliefs of it is Futile to Voice



Voice Likely to Be Ignored: This sub-theme emerged as a concern among employees who frequently expressed feelings of active neglect by their leaders and peers. Statements like "Nobody ever listens to me; there's no point in me saying anything" and "You just stop giving your opinion, because you feel like it's not being listened to" highlight a perception of being disregarded. This belief extends to a systemic level, as some respondents felt that even when they utilised proper channels and made their "best effort," their voice "still [hadn't] been heard." The sentiment "didn't have a lot of voice, and it was very much well I'm the leader, I have the say" encapsulates the notion that the power dynamics within the organisation contribute to this issue. Such beliefs foster a sense of being "unheard or unsupported," thereby increasing the cynicism that employees feel towards their organisational environment.

Voice Overlooked: This sub-theme surfaced as a more passive form of neglect in the organisational context. Employees felt sidelined, not necessarily because of deliberate action, but perhaps due to the dynamics of the work environment or meeting settings. Statements such as "Just when those larger voices were prominent … and you just, it's kind of like, well, what is the point of me saying something" exemplify how the presence of dominant voices can

unintentionally push others into the background. Similarly, the absence of "normal staff meetings" and the selectiveness of leaders in engaging only with a "clique" of staff contribute to a sense that not everyone's voice is equally valued or even noticed. The sentiment "because you didn't have relationships … you weren't being heard" further illustrates how interpersonal dynamics can lead to some employees feeling overlooked, reinforcing these employees' cynical attitudes towards the organisation.

Voice Undervalued*:* This sub-theme captures the essence of employees thinking that their contributions and ideas, although recognised, are not given the weight they deserve. For instance, the notion that employees "won't want to tell the boss what the boss doesn't want to hear" highlights a perceived lack of openness to differing viewpoints. The sentiment is further compounded by unilateral decision-making, as observed in the statement, "most decisions were unilateral … it's like this is how it is, and there's no if's or but's about it." Employees also sensed that their voices were drowned out by "very strong voices," leading to a diminished sense of value and discouragement in putting in the effort to speak up. Phrases such as "some staff members are often quite strong in those meetings" and "there's actually not a voice for that down here" underscore the lack of a level playing field for all voices to be equally valued. This perception of being undervalued drives cynical beliefs among staff.

Voiced Beliefs and Opinions Marginalised*:* The sub-theme encapsulates the belief among employees that their specific verbal contributions or opinions are trivialised or dismissed. The sentiment that being marginalised "can make them distrust and devalue the system" indicates a systemic issue where voice is not only ignored but actively diminished. Employees expressed reluctance to even approach leadership with their thoughts, as evidenced by the quote, "you wouldn't go to her anyway, because it wouldn't get the outcome you even hoping for." This devaluation extends to formal settings like meetings, where the question arises, "If we're going to ask them, are we going to do anything with it?" This stance amplifies

employees' perception of the futility tied to speaking up, as it calls into question the very usefulness of voicing their opinions. Collective silence permeates the workplace, as "most of us probably feel like we can't feed back individually," and some are "too afraid to say something." The irony emerges when feedback sessions are used as a platform to reprimand staff, further discouraging open dialogue and perpetuating the cycle of diminished input, as captured in this quote: "I'm not giving my opinion anymore, because we get told off about it in staff meeting." This sub-theme contributes to a deeper understanding of how thoughts and opinions are marginalised, as staff fear a reprimand when they speak up, thereby fostering organisational cynicism.

Futile to Voice: Summary. The overarching theme of *it is futile to voice,* which encompasses the four sub-themes of voice *likely being ignored, overlooked, undervalued, or beliefs and opinions marginalised*, offers a comprehensive understanding of the pervasiveness of organisational cynicism in contemporary workplaces. Employees harbour the belief, not just a transient feeling, that their voices are systematically marginalised, overlooked, and undervalued, forming a core perception that intensifies workplace cynicism. These nuanced sub-themes provide a multifaceted picture of futility. This pattern not only reinforces cynicism but also reveals it to be a deeply systemic issue ingrained in organisational culture, rather than isolated incidents. These findings pave the way for the ensuing discussion on the indicator *it is futile to be proactive*, further exploring the dimensions of futile beliefs.

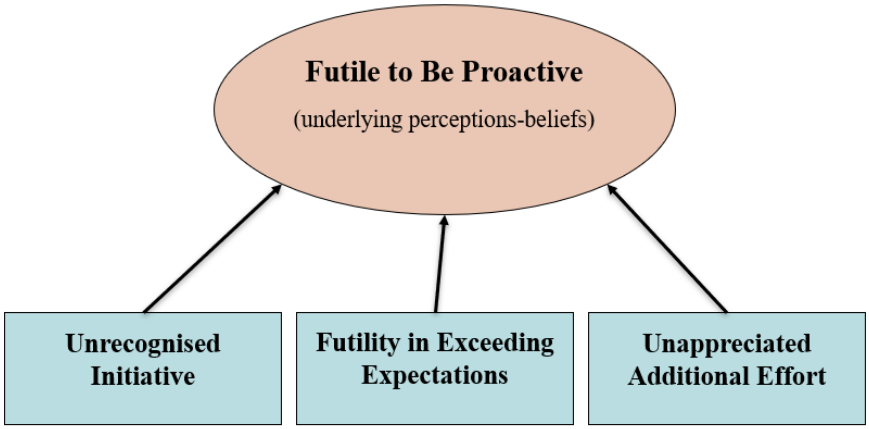
4.5.2. Theme: Futile to Be Proactive

The data from my study provides evidence of a widespread sense that *it is futile to be proactive* in organisational settings. Employees perceive that their efforts to take initiative or exceed expectations often go unrecognised, or are deemed futile, failing to achieve any additional appreciation. These are not just reasons for a lack of proactive behaviour – they are

core beliefs that contribute to the pervasiveness of cynicism in the workplace. A discussion of these sub-themes, as delineated in Figure 4.3, follows this section.

Figure 4.3.

Study 1 Results: Underlying Perceived Beliefs of it is Futile to Be Proactive



***Unrecognised Initiative*.** This sub-theme captures the sentiment among employees that their proactive efforts and self-started initiatives are neither noticed nor acknowledged by the organisation. Employees frequently reported feeling undervalued, as highlighted by statements such as "feeling as if you are not valued," "not feeling valued," and "staff not feeling valued, staff not being supported." These expressions point to a broader issue of lack of recognition, especially when employees go beyond their regular duties. The comment "leadership not recognising staff/appreciating staff" underscores the gap in acknowledgement from the managerial level, further intensifying these beliefs. Additionally, the sentiment, "if we've already decided what the path is, don't waste their time by asking... because I think that actually devalues," reveals a cognitive dissonance between the organisation's proclaimed inclusivity and the lived experiences of its employees. The statements that "there are some days where I go, this is actually really crap," and "everything is undervalued" support the belief that *it is futile to be proactive.* These sentiments suggest in the minds of employees that taking the initiative goes unrecognised and is futile.

Futility of Exceeding Expectations. This sub-theme emerged from the data, highlighting a pervasive sense of futility among participants when it comes to going above and beyond in their roles. For instance, one participant witnessed instances where misconduct or poor performance was not penalised but rewarded. For example, "Director didn't care that there was all this dodginess going on," followed by the observation that the individuals involved were "given permanency and got rewarded," serves as a powerful deterrent for ethical and high-performing behaviours. This creates a perception that doing the right thing, such as exceeding job expectations, won't yield any positive outcomes, but rather is an exercise in futility.

This notion is amplified by sentiments like "disbelief that the system will follow up any issue," indicating a lack of faith in the organisational systems. Significantly, the comment "overload her until she retires" not only underscores the futility of exceeding expectations but also reveals a more insidious motive: the encouragement to excel may be a disguised attempt to overwhelm and ultimately break the employee. This perspective finds reinforcement in sentiments like "just a number in the system, and easily replaced would make it [cynicism] worse," and "made me feel like I was about to lose everything, while they just got rewarded." Collectively, these findings solidify the belief in the futility of exceeding expectations and serve as a catalyst for organisational cynicism. Concluding this sentiment, participants voiced the despairing thought that "it won't matter what I say or do, it is never gonna change, so what's the point," encapsulating the cycle of organisational cynicism that these experiences engender.

Unappreciated Additional Efforts. This sub-theme focuses on the widespread belief among employees that their extra efforts go unacknowledged and unrewarded. For example, one participant's remark, "so having been here for 20 years... getting out of the car has just been the hardest part of my whole day," speaks to the long-term emotional toll of unacknowledged efforts. Similarly, sentiments like "it's stupid to make us do that" and "oh well, that's on top of everything else you want me to do, well, sorry I'm not going to do it," portray additional tasks

as both unimportant and burdensome. The statement "overworked, goals not in sight" underscores the pointlessness perceived in going the extra mile.

Further complicating this are instances where employees feel their efforts are undermined. The comment "you get given donated staff that you don't want to have... that can unsettle you... I'm going" illustrates how a leader's hard work in creating a stable work environment is paradoxically rewarded with the assignment of problematic staff, rendering their efforts counterproductive. This contributes to a heightened cynicism and ultimately, resignation. The notion "you could spend... seven years wanting to convince them, this was a good idea... but at the end of the day, you're paralysed into doing nothing" caps off this sub-theme, reinforcing the idea that additional efforts are not only unappreciated but also futile, as they seldom lead to positive outcomes. This is emphasised by statements like "I may as well give up" and "Don't put in the effort," which reflect the chronic, debilitating effect of unappreciated efforts on employee proactivity and perpetuate the cycle of organisational cynicism.

Futile to Be Proactive: Summary. An analysis of the sub-themes – *unrecognised initiative*, the *futility of exceeding expectations*, and *unappreciated additional efforts* – reveals a complex, multidimensional sense of futility that is ingrained in the organisational culture. This futility stems from a range of factors, including systemic issues, psychological burdens, and organisational inconsistencies, all of which contribute to a pervasive sense of workplace cynicism. The data clearly illustrates that employees often find themselves caught in a disheartening cycle where their proactive efforts are neither acknowledged nor rewarded, reinforcing the belief that any form of proactivity is futile. These experiences not only validate the construct of futility as a significant indicator of cynicism in my study but also highlight how these sub-themes function as interconnected elements in a system that methodically devalues employee initiative and well-being. The overarching conclusion is that the belief that

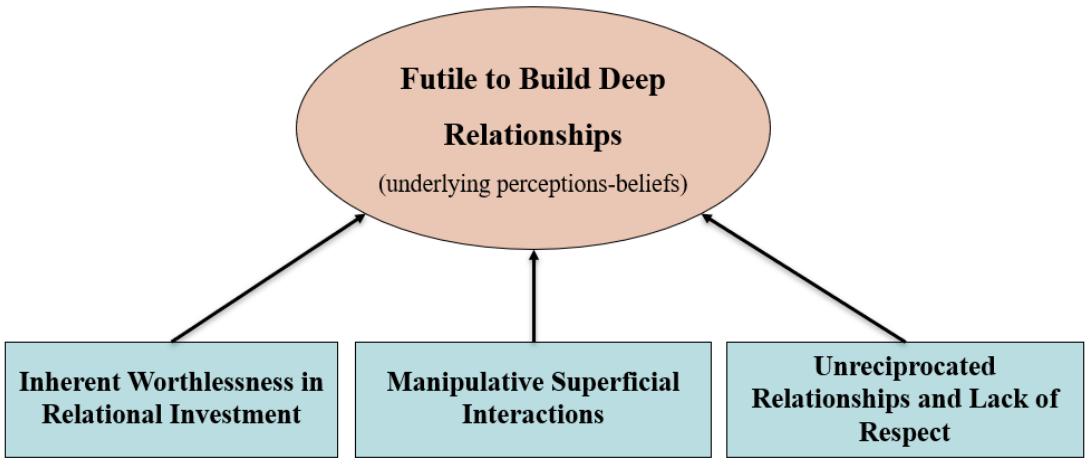
it is futile to be proactive serves as both a reflection and a catalyst of organisational cynicism. This futility underscores the sentiment that putting forth the effort often yields no positive outcomes and can even prove counterproductive.

4.5.3. Theme: Futile to Build Deep Relationships

The theme that *it is futile to build deep relationships* captures the belief among employees that their attempts to forge meaningful relationships often prove futile, due to a lack of reciprocation and respect. The data further revealed an inherent sense of worthlessness in relational investment, along with experiences of manipulative and superficial interactions. These are not just situational experiences but may function as a form of protection, and form core beliefs that amplify cynicism among employees. A detailed exploration of these relationship-related sub-themes, as presented in Figure 4.4, follows this section.

Figure 4.4.

Study 1 Results: Underlying Perceived Beliefs of it is Futile to Build Deep Relationships



Inherent Worthlessness in Relational Investment. This sub-theme captures the futility that employees felt about forming meaningful relationships in the workplace. Statements like "feeling as if you are ... alone to deal with challenges" and "felt just alone and helpless" were

not mere complaints – they were representative of an ingrained belief in the futility of relational efforts. These sentiments manifest in strategic social withdrawal, exemplified by comments such as "I'm real quick to withdraw and I'm not going to the staff room; I'm not hanging around after work," and "my new attitude is I don't put myself in any position, so I don’t go in the staffroom." These actions were not casual choices but calculated moves to avoid the disappointment that employees expected from relational investment. The calculated withdrawal extended beyond individual actions, suggesting a systemic issue. The observation that "people don't come to the staff meeting at lunchtime but rather hide" was not just a comment; but indicated a pervasive organisational failure to foster meaningful connections. Finally, comments like "people are saying the morale’s low … that's an indicator that there's something not right between leadership and staff" reinforced that the cynicism was not restricted to peer relationships but infected the entire organisational fabric. In sum, these beliefs and behaviours collectively embodied the deep cynicism that employees perceived about the inherent worthlessness of investing in workplace relationships.

Manipulative Superficial Interactions. This sub-theme reveals the belief among employees that workplace relationships are platforms for hidden agendas rather than avenues for authentic connections. This belief is manifested through their experiences of selective inclusion or exclusion within social circles. Illustrative comments like "it was just a select few that seem to be a clique with those leaders" and "you weren't part of the group" emphasise the employees' perceptions that such exclusion is intentionally designed to serve hidden agendas. Such social circles are the essence of superficial interactions, as evidenced by observations like "there was her group, and you would see them in her office all the time; it was very clear." To those on the outside, these cliques exist to consolidate power or information among a select group.

The manipulative belief extends to neutral spaces like staff rooms, which are traditionally viewed as safe havens for open interaction. Comments such as "the staff room wasn't a happy place to be" and "don't come to the staff room for lunch and avoid it" illustrate that employees believe they cannot let their guard down even in areas designed for open interaction. Cynicism about building genuine relationships is not confined to specific groups but permeates the organisational environment. Other expressions further reinforce the belief that avoidance of these communal spaces mitigates the risk of manipulative dynamics. Notably, the phrase "you just lay low and don't get your head lopped off" encapsulates the notion that these potential relationships present not only psychological distress but also a risk of adverse consequences. Therefore, these observations underscore the belief among employees that attempting to form authentic connections in this work environment is a futile endeavour. This sense of futility not only discourages employees from engaging in meaningful interactions but also reinforces their reluctance to invest in what they perceive to be disingenuous relationships.

Unreciprocated Relationships and Lack of Respect. This sub-theme encapsulates the belief among employees that their endeavours to form meaningful relationships are met with indifference and are undervalued. Testimonies such as "Fool me once, shame on me, fool me twice, shame on… I'm not going to put myself in that position" reveal a calculated reluctance to engage, borne out of a history of betrayal and broken expectations. Moreover, expressions like "It is sad to see adults who call themselves professionals behave in this way… the injustice of it was the hardest part" serve as indicators of the systemic nature of the lack of mutual respect and unreciprocated relationships within the organisation. Such observations are further corroborated by comments like "you kind of get the sense of people talking behind your back," which reveal an underlying culture of distrust and gossip that discourages genuine interaction. These sentiments collectively amplify the belief that employees' efforts to establish meaningful relationships will not be valued or reciprocated and deepen their cynicism.

The erosion of mutual respect and reciprocity extends beyond peer-to-peer interactions; it also undermines faith in organisational leadership. Statements such as "issues often got brushed under the rug, and nothing was done about it" illustrate the scope of this disillusionment belief. This situation becomes toxic in the absence of professional integrity among colleagues, highlighted by comments like "one of the people in the group, the leader can’t keep her mouth shut." This propensity for gossip manifests in a culture of guarded interactions, as well as a "loss of faith and trust," perpetuating employees' reluctance to invest in what they perceive as one-sided and disingenuous relationships. Overall, the lack of mutual respect, unreciprocated efforts, and broken confidentiality contribute to a work environment steeped in cynicism, confirming the broader theme that building deep, authentic relationships in such a setting is often a futile exercise.

Futile to Build Deep Relationships: Summary. In synthesising the sub-themes of *inherent worthlessness in relational investment*, *manipulative superficial interactions*, and *unreciprocated relationships and lack of respect*, it highlights that the belief that *it is futile to build deep relationships* operates as a multifaceted contributor to workplace cynicism. This complex interplay manifests as an overarching belief among employees that their efforts to forge meaningful relationships are systematically undervalued, manipulated, or met with indifference. Whether through calculated withdrawal from social spaces or a pervasive erosion of faith in organisational leadership, these dimensions of futility collectively deepen cynicism. The intertwining of these sub-themes thereby acts as a self-reinforcing mechanism that magnifies the foundational beliefs underpinning organisational cynicism. Ultimately, this creates a self-perpetuating cycle that not only isolates individual employees but also impacts the organisational culture, confirming that the futility of building meaningful relationships is an indicator of cynicism at both the individual and organisational levels. Together, these

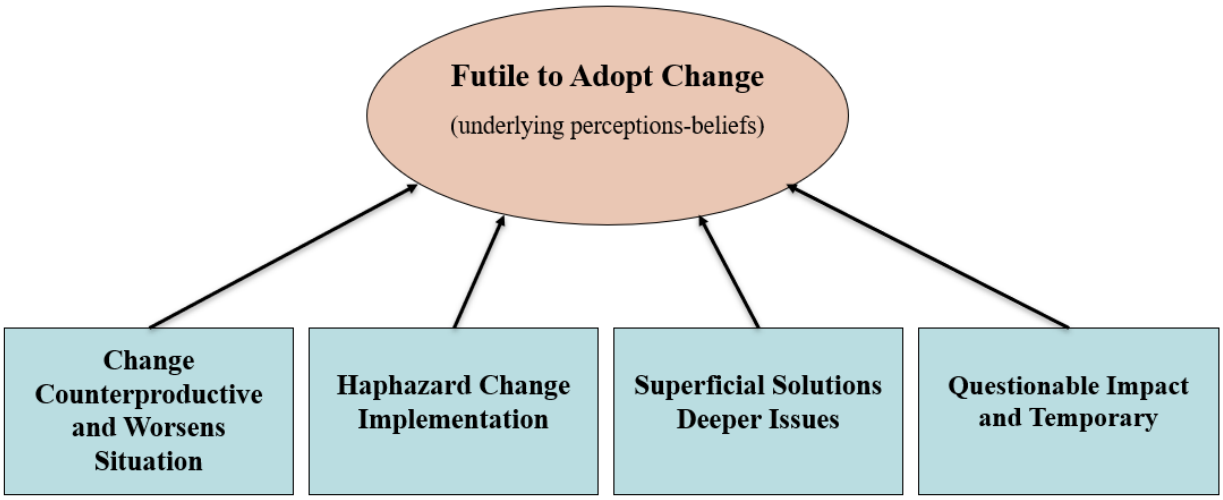
expressed beliefs and experiences deepen our understanding of how cynicism manifests in the broader theme that *it is futile to build deep relationships.*

4.5.3. Theme: Futile to Adopt Change

The theme that *it is futile to adopt change* uncovers yet another facet of organisational cynicism, highlighting employee beliefs about the inefficacy and counterproductivity of change initiatives. Employees expressed the sentiment that changes within the organisation often exacerbate problems rather than solve them. They perceive these changes as haphazardly implemented, providing only superficial solutions to deeper issues, and having questionable impact and temporary effects. These beliefs deepen their sense of futility and cynicism towards organisational change efforts. An overview of these change-related sub-themes is provided in Figure 4.5, and a discussion on each theme will ensue next.

Figure 4.5.

Study 1 Results: Underlying Perceived Beliefs of it is Futile to Adopt Change



***Change Counterproductive and Worsens Situation*.** This sub-theme encapsulates a collective belief among employees that organisational changes are not merely ineffective but detrimental. Phrases such as "the way it's set up is not always the best" and "this is not going to work" capture the doubt and negative expectations surrounding the impact of change. These

statements not only reflect a lack of faith in the change process but also substantiate the idea that such changes worsen the existing situation. This notion is further reinforced by comments indicating that change leads to an increase in workload without offering corresponding benefits, as expressed in the quote, "the reasoning behind them not changing is probably the workload that came with it." Additionally, the sentiment "well, it's not working, and we have to change it" but "why change if it's working the way it is, but it doesn't work," embodies the cognitive dissonance experienced by employees. It captures a dilemma: On one hand, there is recognition that the current system is flawed, but on the other hand, there is also a fear that attempts to modify it could be counterproductive.

This cognitive dissonance adds to a broader understanding that changes are not just ineffectual but actively worsen existing situations. Statements such as "you can't see the positive, what's the point" amplify this view, implying that if change does not yield immediate, tangible benefits, then it is counterproductive. Furthermore, employees' comments like "I'm sure sometimes that you will be feeling like, oh, this is a load of crock, you know, how come I can't do this, or I can't do that," highlight that organisational changes can be perceived as nonsensical or irrelevant and that employees believe these changes are obstacles that hinder their ability to do their job. Overall, these diverse yet interrelated beliefs and attitudes underscore the belief that change, rather than offering a solution, often compounds existing challenges.

***Haphazard Change Implementation*.** This sub-theme captures employees' negative perceptions towards the ad-hoc and poorly planned nature of organisational changes. Employees express their discontent with phrases like "I can't do that … now I'm not happy. Because I didn't have time to weigh up the whole thing," highlighting the lack of proper planning and communication before changes are rolled out. The sentiment "an idea is given, and someone might just be like, but what about this, or about this and not actually taking on

board, some parts of the idea that might work" underscores the absence of thoughtful consideration and engagement with the staff. This is further emphasised by quotes like "come up some crazy idea … it's like the failure in the information," indicating that changes are often introduced without a thorough analysis or understanding of their implications. Statements such as "saying no, nup, nup can't do it" and "you know what's done previously, if you notice someone is kind of just what can't be done" portray a workforce that is not only resistant to change but also increasingly cynical about the organisation's capability to implement effective and well-considered modifications. This sub-theme manifests the employees' beliefs that change is not only unplanned but also implemented in a manner that is bound to fail, thereby heightening organisational cynicism.

***Superficial Solutions to Deeper Issues*.** This sub-theme captures the employees' sentiment that organisational changes often focus on addressing symptoms rather than the root causes of problems. For example, the statement "you know, why are you bothering to do that, what's the point," reflects a pervasive doubt that changes are meaningful or effective. Another quote, “yeah, so there's lots of things that we've done here as tradition, and they may have worked 20 years ago, but they just weren't working," highlights the belief in the organisation's tendency to recycle outdated practices that no longer serve their original purpose. Employees express their cynicism further with quotes like "done as tokenism, doing them for the sake of doing them," and "yeah, they just asking us because they have to, you know," indicating a belief that changes are often tokenistic and initiated for the sake of appearances rather than substantive improvement. The sentiment "I don't know why we are here; it is a waste of time to give us a chance to contribute, it makes no difference what is the point," underscores the perception that employee input is not valued in the change process. Moreover, the statement that "they are reintroducing the same thing over and over" reveals a cyclical pattern of ineffective changes that do not evolve with the times or current needs. These beliefs about the

superficial nature of organisational changes not only deepen employees' cynicism but also underscore a sense of ineffectiveness. As a result, employees lose faith in the ability of these changes to bring about meaningful improvements, rendering such initiatives essentially futile.

***Questionable Impact and Temporary*.** This sub-theme encapsulates the employees' beliefs towards the longevity and effectiveness of organisational changes. Statements like, "I often think about that the fish that fell out of the bucket. It's we're doing this one minute and then we're doing that, and you know, oh well, they're just going to change their mind in two years, and why should I do anything?" illustrate employees' perception of change as transient and fleeting. This belief of change as temporary is further supported by remarks such as, "the curriculum's changed that many times ... why am I even gonna bother about putting that into place," which express doubt about the longevity and impact of these changes. Such beliefs suggest that changes are not only short-lived but also susceptible to being overturned, thereby failing to achieve lasting impact.

This sense of transience is compounded by comments questioning the effectiveness of repeated change initiatives. Phrases like "we have done this before, I don't know, why are we doing this, we've done this before didn't work last time, what's gonna make everyone think it's gonna work this time," and "just another new craze," amplify the uncertainty surrounding the efficacy of change measures. These observations encapsulate a general belief of disillusionment among employees. They view organisational changes as both questionable in their effectiveness and temporary in their nature, thereby contributing to an overarching sense of cynicism and futility in adopting them.

***Futile to Adopt Change: Summary*.** The sub-themes of *change counterproductive and worsens situation*, *haphazard change implementation*, *superficial solutions to deeper issues*, and *questionable impact and temporary* collectively form an understanding of futility in the

context of organisational change, thereby significantly contributing to workplace cynicism. The inefficacy and detrimental nature of changes, as highlighted in the first sub-theme, are compounded by haphazard and poor planning, which erode faith in the organisation's ability to enact meaningful improvements. These elements further intertwined with the notion that organisational changes are merely superficial measures, designed to address symptoms rather than root causes of underlying issues. This sentiment of superficiality aligns closely with the belief that changes are temporary and of questionable impact, rendering efforts not just ineffective but essentially futile. The intricate layering of these sub-themes enriches our understanding of the cynicism indicator *it is futile to adopt change*. This multifaceted perspective adds depth to our understanding of the broader framework of organisational cynicism.

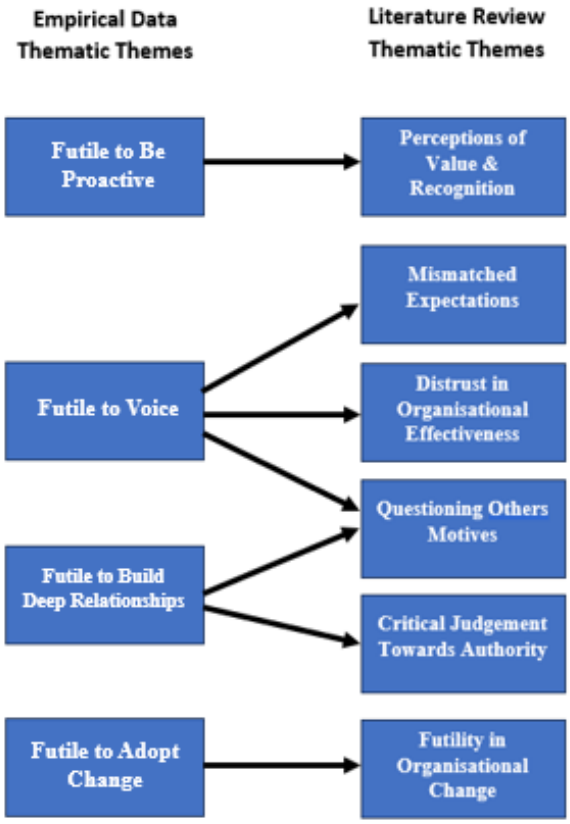
4.6. Empirical Themes: Multifaceted Dimensions of Cynicism

The empirical investigation culminates in a conceptualisation of organisational and employee cynicism grounded in real-world experiences. Four core dimensions of futile beliefs emerged as essential elements of this cynicism: *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *adopt change*. Each dimension contributes a unique but interconnected layer of complexity to our understanding of cynicism in the workplace. The overwhelming sentiment of futility in these areas converge to capture the deeply systemic and pervasive form of cynicism found in contemporary workplaces. These dimensions function as the foundational pillars for the conceptualised definitions of organisational and employee cynicism. By breaking down each dimension characterised as futile into their underlying beliefs and attitudes, I present a multidimensional framework that captures the complex nature of cynicism. This synthesis serves as the empirical foundation upon which the new conceptualisations of organisational and employee cynicism stand, thereby ensuring that these theoretical

frameworks are not mere academic constructs, but reflective of complex realities faced by employees in today's organisations.

Figure 4.6.

Study 1: Empirical Data versus Literature Review Themes Comparison



Note. The arrows indicate which themes the empirical data most closely aligns within the literature.

4.7. Comparative Analysis: Empirical Versus Literature Themes

This section commences with a comparative analysis between the empirical themes derived from my study and the theoretical themes discerned from the literature review (Chapter 2). Figure 4.6 provides a visual representation of this comparison. The overarching objective is to confirm that the empirical themes offer a richer, more nuanced portrayal of cynicism in organisational settings. Through this comparative analysis, I aimed not just to validate the empirical findings but also to establish their superior depth and scope in capturing the

multidimensional nature of organisational cynicism. The empirical themes that *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *adopt change* will be aligned with their corresponding theoretical counterparts from the literature.

Aligning Futile to Voice to Literature Themes – Mismatched Expectations, Distrust in Organisational Effectiveness, and Questioning Motives of Others. The empirical theme *it is futile to voice* provides the foundation for understanding the nuanced aspects of organisational cynicism, especially when considered alongside existing theoretical themes identified in the literature: *mismatched expectations, distrust in organisational effectiveness,* and *questioning motives of others*. This section aims to elaborate on these intersections, thereby achieving two key objectives: validating the empirical findings through alignment with existing theoretical frameworks and contributing new perspectives to our understanding of workplace cynicism. By delving into these alignments, it establishes *futile to voice* as an empirically robust and practically relevant construct that enhances the extant literature and provides a more targeted measure of organisational cynicism.

Mismatched Expectations. The empirical theme of *futile to voice* aligns with the theoretical theme of *mismatched expectations,* as both centre on the misalignment between an organisation's intentions and actions – for example, an organisation may state that they value employee input but then fail to demonstrate this in practice. At the same time, *mismatched expectations* outline the general cognitive structures that contribute to cynicism, such as the gap between organisational promises and outcomes. I*t is futile to voice* enriches this framework by offering specific mechanisms, like being ignored or undervalued, through which cynicism manifests in daily interactions. A synthesis of these insights demonstrates that *it is futile to voice,* serves as a more granular exploration that fits within the broader conceptual umbrella of *mismatched expectations*. Consequently, *futile to voice* offers a more nuanced and

comprehensive representation of modern workplace cynicism than *mismatched expectations*, establishing it as an essential component for measuring cynicism in organisational settings.

Distrust in Organisational Effectiveness. The empirical theme of *it is futile to voice* also aligns with the theoretical theme of *distrust in organisational effectiveness*, with both focusing on employees' cynicism towards organisational structures and leadership. While the theoretical theme offers a broad overview that encompasses both present beliefs and future expectations about the organisation's performance (Brandes et al., 1999; Brockway et al., 2002), *futile to voice* provides a focused, more specific lens. It captures the various ways, such as being ignored, overlooked, or marginalised, that employees' contributions are dismissed as inconsequential, thus revealing the day-to-day embodiments of distrust. This specificity not only extends the scope of *distrust in organisational effectiveness*, but also highlights the empirical theme's strength as a more targeted and actionable measure of organisational cynicism, reinforcing it as a crucial component to capture the cognitive underpinnings of cynicism.

Questioning Motives of Others. The empirical theme of *it is futile to voice* also corresponds with the theoretical theme of *questioning motives of others*, with both targeting the inherent scepticism that employees hold towards the integrity of others within the organisation. The theme that *it is futile to voice*, encapsulates employees' feelings that their opinions and concerns are likely to be marginalised or ignored, which fits with the theme of *questioning motives of others*. When employees doubt the authenticity or hidden agendas of those in power, it translates into the belief that speaking up is futile (Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Stanley et al., 2005). This connection suggests that employees doubt the sincerity or effectiveness of those in authority and extends it to a general belief that their voices are not valued or heard. Therefore, *futile to voice* adds actionable specificity by identifying how this

distrust manifests daily and provides a more precise and actionable metric than *questioning motives of others* for capturing workplace cynicism.

Aligning Futile to Be Proactive to the Corresponding Literature Theme: Perception of Value and Recognition. The empirical theme that *it is futile to be proactive* aligns with the theoretical theme of *perceptions of value and recognition*. While the literature highlights the importance of employees feeling valued and recognised for fairness and sincerity (Abraham, 2000; Schaufeli et al., 2020), the empirical findings introduce the concept of futility as a lived experience of employees. These employees engage in proactive behaviours only to find their efforts unappreciated or unrecognised. The empirical theme adds depth by revealing how these perceptions translate into beliefs of futility and, therefore, also provides a more precise conceptualisation than the *perception of value and recognition* to capture employees' *futile to be proactive* beliefs that indicate cynicism.

Aligning Futile to Build Deep Relationships to the Literature Themes: Questioning Motives of Others and Critical Judgement Towards Authority. This section explores the empirical theme *futile to build deep relationships*, and its alignment with two theoretical themes from the literature: *questioning motives of others* and *critical judgement towards authority*. This alignment offers a more intricate understanding of organisational cynicism by examining how relational dynamics are shaped by employees' critical attitudes towards authority and others within the organisation.

Questioning Motives of Others Alignment to Futile to Build Deep Relationships. The empirical theme *futile to build deep relationships* aligns with the theoretical theme *questioning motives of others*. While the theoretical 'heme scrutinises employees' cynicism towards the intentions of authority figures (Abraham, 2000; Butcher et al., 1989; Stanley et al., 2005), the empirical theme drills down to the consequential unwillingness to foster meaningful

interpersonal relationships. This reluctance reflects the cynicism evident in the theoretical theme, unifying the idea that suspicion is a foundational element of organisational cynicism. The empirical theme expands on this suspicion of others by introducing sub-themes like *inherent worthlessness in relational investment* and *manipulative superficial interactions*, highlighting how cynicism leads to intentional social withdrawal and beliefs about the futility of relationship-building. As such, the empirical theme *futile to build deep relationships* offers a more nuanced conceptualisation by focusing on how cynicism translates into actionable relational challenges in the workplace, extending our understanding beyond the mere questioning of others' motives.

Critical Judgment Towards Authority Alignment to Futile to Build Deep Relationships. The empirical theme that *it is futile to build deep relationships* resonates closely with the theoretical theme of *critical judgment towards authority*, with both addressing the central issue of distrust within organisations. While *critical judgment towards authority* narrows its focus to cynicism directed towards organisational leaders and decisions (Butcher et al., 1989; Dean et al., 1998; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989), *futile to build deep relationships* broadens this lens to incorporate the relational dynamics among peers. Specific sub-themes such as *manipulative superficial interactions* and *inherent worthlessness in relational investment* spotlight how cynicism is initially directed at authority and filters down to affect employees' willingness to foster meaningful connections. By capturing a broader range of cynicism manifestations, from leadership to peer relationships, the empirical theme enriches our understanding of the phenomenon's pervasiveness across different levels of organisational interaction. Thus, *it is futile to build deep relationships* provides a more holistic, multidimensional lens to capture cynicism in organisations compared to critical judgment towards authority.

Aligning Futile to Adopt Change to the Corresponding Literature Theme: Futility in Organisational Change. The empirical theme that *it is futile to adopt change* aligns with the theoretical theme of *futility in organisational change*. Bot' themes focus on employees' cognitive cynicism towards the efficacy of change initiatives (Brooks & Vance, 1991; Reichers et al., 1997). While the theoretical construct illuminates the perceived uselessness of recommending improvements, the empirical theme elaborates on the poorly planned and superficial nature of change implementation. The empirical theme also contributes unique sub-themes that go beyond a basic understanding of cynicism by highlighting that changes not only seem futile but could exacerbate existing issues. By integrating these insights, the empirical theme offers a more comprehensive understanding of organisational cynicism. It successfully blends the cognitive beliefs from the theoretical construct with real-world manifestations of cynicism.

Integrating Themes. Through a comparative analysis, the empirical themes that *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change* were validated against existing theoretical constructs from the literature. This process substantiated the empirical themes' dominance in capturing the multidimensional nature of organisational cynicism. The empirical themes added precision to broad theoretical constructs such as *mismatched expectations, distrust in organisational effectiveness,* and *questioning motives of others*. Moreover, unique sub-themes like *inherent worthlessness in relational investment* and *manipulative superficial interactions* introduced new dimensions of cynicism that encompass day-to-day interactions and relational dynamics among peers. This complex interplay between empirical and theoretical dimensions not only extends the scope of existing frameworks but also provides a more comprehensive, multidimensional lens through which organisational cynicism can be studied and measured.

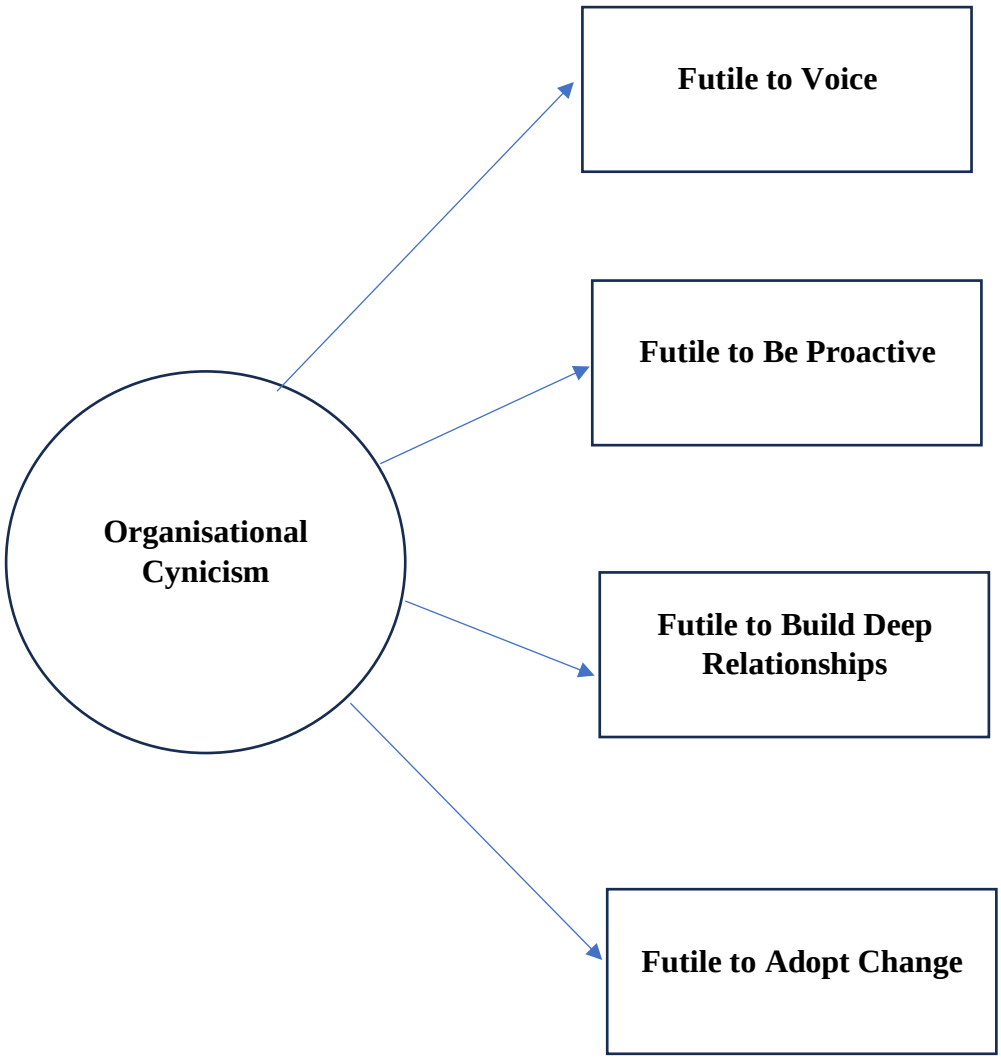
These validated empirical themes served as a solid foundation for the development of the OCS. The themes, revealing the cognitive complexities of cynicism in organisations, guide the item development for these scales. In-depth qualitative methods fulfilled the objectives of Aim 2 by capturing the lived experiences of workplace cynicism. The empirical themes established in this chapter were integrated with theoretical themes developed in Chapter 2 to form a nuanced conceptual framework. This framework now provides the foundation for the next phase of my research. Attention now turns to Aim 3: the development and validation of the OCS.

4.8. Conceptualisation of Organisational Cynicism as a Multi-Dimensional Construct

Cynicism's conceptualisation as a multi-dimensional construct, is taken from Edwards (2011), Johnson et al. (2012), and Law et al. (1998). To underscore cynicism's latent nature and the distinction between reflective and formative constructs. Cynicism, transcending surface-level manifestations, emerges as an unobservable latent construct with four distinct dimensions: futility in speaking up, being proactive, forming deep relationships, and embracing change. While these dimensions are perceived as equally significant, individual variations may exist. Envisioned as a higher-order construct, cynicism serves as the foundation for these four cognitive beliefs. High cynicism levels correlate with pronounced futility beliefs across all dimensions, yet varying levels of cynicism are acknowledged, with some individuals exhibiting moderation. This conceptualisation informs the methodological approach, employing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as a latent measurement model congruent with cynicism's reflective nature.

Figure 4.7. *OCS Conceptual Measurement Model*

OCS Reflective Conceptual Multi-Dimensional Measurement Model for Testing in Study 2 and Study 3



4.9. Multi-Dimensional Conceptualised of Organisational Cynicism

Cynicism is a multidimensional construct. At its core lies a pervasive belief in futility, where efforts and actions within the organisation are seen as largely pointless.

Organisational Cynicism exists when employees demonstrate the following four necessary attributes. Cynicism comprises four interrelated dimensions:

1. the belief that voicing opinions is futile,
2. that proactive efforts go unrewarded,
3. that building close relationships at work is a waste of time
4. that adopting changes within the workplace yield limited benefits.

Key aspects of the above definition:

1. Organisational cynicism is a cognitive state – that is it is comprised of beliefs and not emotional states
2. Nature of the Beliefs: Is about the future and is anticipatory in nature. It is beliefs about what will or is likely to happen.
3. Valence of the Beliefs: Cynicism is predominantly a set of negative beliefs of what will not happen versus constructs like hope where the beliefs are about positive outcomes in the future.
4. Target/Entity/Referent: Organisational cynicism is a construct where the target of the cynicism is the organisation as an entity.
5. Nomological Network: Predictors & outcomes: Chapter 2 covers a number of past studied predictors and outcomes of organisational cynicism. However, my goal is to clarify how job demands and resources impact the development of it

and how it is related to organisationally relevant outcomes like engagement, trust and well-being. The conceptualisation of the constructs sits within the nomological network such that organisational cynicism as a future-oriented negative set of beliefs is likely to be predicted by interactions and experiences in the past and is likely to effect behaviour, cognition and emotions in the future.

4.10. Research Hypotheses: From Employees' Lived Experiences

Based on the collection of empirical data from employees' lived experiences and analysis of this data with theoretical literature themes, I formulate additional hypotheses to address existing research gaps. This intends to capture the situational context (OCS) dimensions of modern-day workplace cynicism.

Hypothesis 6explores the indicator structure and multidimensionality of the new OCS.

H6. The OCS is multidimensional, such that a 4-dimensional model, representing the beliefs dimensions that *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change*, provides a good fit to the data across samples.

4.11. Phase 1a: Item Development for the OCS

In Phase 1a, the focus shifted toward generating a foundational set of items to measure organisational cynicism and employee trait cynicism. This stage of my study employed qualitative methods, specifically interviews and focus group discussions, and synthesised the empirical findings with the literature review results. Adopting this approach, I sought to establish items that encapsulated the facets of cynicism, both organisational and individual. This next phase synthesised empirical data with theoretical underpinnings (e.g., Hinkin, 1998) and adhered to the scale development process depicted in Figure 1.1. This phase yielded a list of survey items consistent with both empirical findings and theoretical constructs. This groundwork facilitated the subsequent empirical investigations.

Item Generation from Existing Items. Upon establishing a conceptual foundation for cynicism, the methodology shifted to item generation, which was guided by core themes. Inductive and deductive methods were employed for comprehensive item development. Items from existing scales were mapped onto the dimensions of cynicism, such as *futile to speak up* and *futile to adopt change*. Sample items from established scales, such as "Personal initiative does not count for much in this organisation" (Brooks & Vance, 1991), "Most of the programs that are supposed to solve problems around here will not do much good" (Reichers et al., 1997), and "Most people make friends because friends are likely to be useful to them" (Cook & Medley, 1954), were used to guide the preliminary item pool.

Item Development Framework. Hinkin's (1998) framework steered the item formulation process, with additional input sourced from interviews, focus groups, academic literature, and expert panel consultations. The aim was to develop at least four to five items per subdimension of OCS to ensure scale reliability. Consequently, 26 items were formulated for the OCS. These items were crafted with the flexibility to adjust referent targets, thereby testing their efficacy in various relational contexts, while still aligning with my study's overarching focus on organisational attitudes. These items were designed to evaluate the effectiveness of changing referent targets – for example, "I believe it is futile to speak up as no notice will be taken by my <referent target>".

Item Design and Structure. Throughout the item-writing phase, a rigorous commitment to quality was adhered to. Items were transparent, free from jargon, and broadly applicable. Any problematic descriptors, as well as ambiguous or redundant statements, were discarded. A 7-point Likert scale was adopted for nuanced responses, and a consistent stem phrase was utilised to encapsulate cynicism’s essence efficiently.

The constructed items aimed to capture the sentiments expressed in interviews and focus groups. They were crafted to assess the futility that employees believed about voicing concerns, being proactive, forming relationships, and adapting to changes. A recurrent thematic structure was used, with shared stems like "I believe it is futile to...," followed by specific actions such as "speak up" or "adopt changes" (see Appendix 4.B). This approach functioned to reduce survey fatigue by creating a more streamlined, focused survey experience. Participants were likely to engage more deeply when they encountered consistent wording, enhancing the reliability of the responses. Additionally, the thematic structure allowed for a detailed exploration of cynicism beliefs. By framing the questions within a recurring theme, the survey was more adept at isolating and capturing the specific facets of cynicism that were of interest, thereby increasing the validity of the findings.

Items were then categorised to reflect varying levels of cynicism, providing insights into why employees might view organisational activities as futile. The items for situational context (OCS) were designed to be flexible, so that referent targets could be altered – for example, "I believe it is futile to speak up as no notice will be taken by my <target>". Appendix 4.B illustrates the process behind the structuring of the early items. The finalised list of items developed in this preliminary phase that formed the basis of the pilot test study are presented below in Table 4.1. The table shows the core of the items, listed under their dimension and how they relate to the conceptualised definition of cynicism. The full list of items that were developed and pilot tested for the OCS is presented in Appendix 4. C.

Table 4.1

Initial OCS Items for Pilot Testing: Organised by Themes and Sub Themes

PRELIMINARY SCALE ITEMS DEVELOPED FOR PILOT TESTED	OCS
FUTILE TO VOICE	
Voice Likely to Be Ignored	
as no notice <…..>	x
as my views <…..>	x
as my ideas <…..>	x
as my voice <…..>	x
Voice Overlooked	
as my inputs get <…..>	
Voice Undervalued	
as my opinion <…..>	
as my suggestions <…..>	x
as my inputs <…..>	x
Voiced Beliefs and Opinions Marginalised	
as my suggestions <…..>	x
FUTILE TO BE PROACTIVE	
Unrecognised Initiative	
as doing more <…..>	x
as my proactive <…..>	x
as my initiatives <…..>	x
Futility of Exceeding Expectations	
as working harder <…..>	x
Futility in Exceeding Expectations or Giving Extra Effort	x
it is futile <…..>	
Unappreciated Additional Efforts	
as my extra effort <…..>	
as my proactivity <…..>	x
as doing more <…..>	x
FUTILE TO BUILD DEEP RELATIONSHIPS	
Manipulative Superficial Interactions	
as the relationship <…..>	x
the relationship <…..>	x
Unreciprocated Relationships and Lack of Respect	
relationship needs <…..>	x
as attempts to have a genuine relationship <…..>	x
as the relationship <…..>	x
FUTILE TO ADOPT CHANGE	
Change Counterproductive and Worsens Situation	
Changes made <…..>	x
Changes made <…..>	x
Changes made <…..>	x
Changes made <…..>	x

Note: Item details are omitted due to pending copyrights and trademarks, full scale is available on request and can only be used with a license and explicit permission from the author/s

Chapter 5 captures the empirical testing and refinement of the developed items for the OCS. The focus is on assessing the reliability and construct validity of these scales through comprehensive empirical studies. The chapter commences with overview and proceeds to pilot testing the items formulated in this chapter.

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This thesis includes cynicism items under review for protection by copyright and trademark laws. It may be shared for review, examination, and academic purposes related to the review, but all readers must acknowledge the pending intellectual property rights. Unauthorised use, reproduction, distribution, or dissemination is strictly prohibited during this review. Updated: the full scale is available on request and can only be used with a license and explicit permission from the author/s

Chapter 5: Results

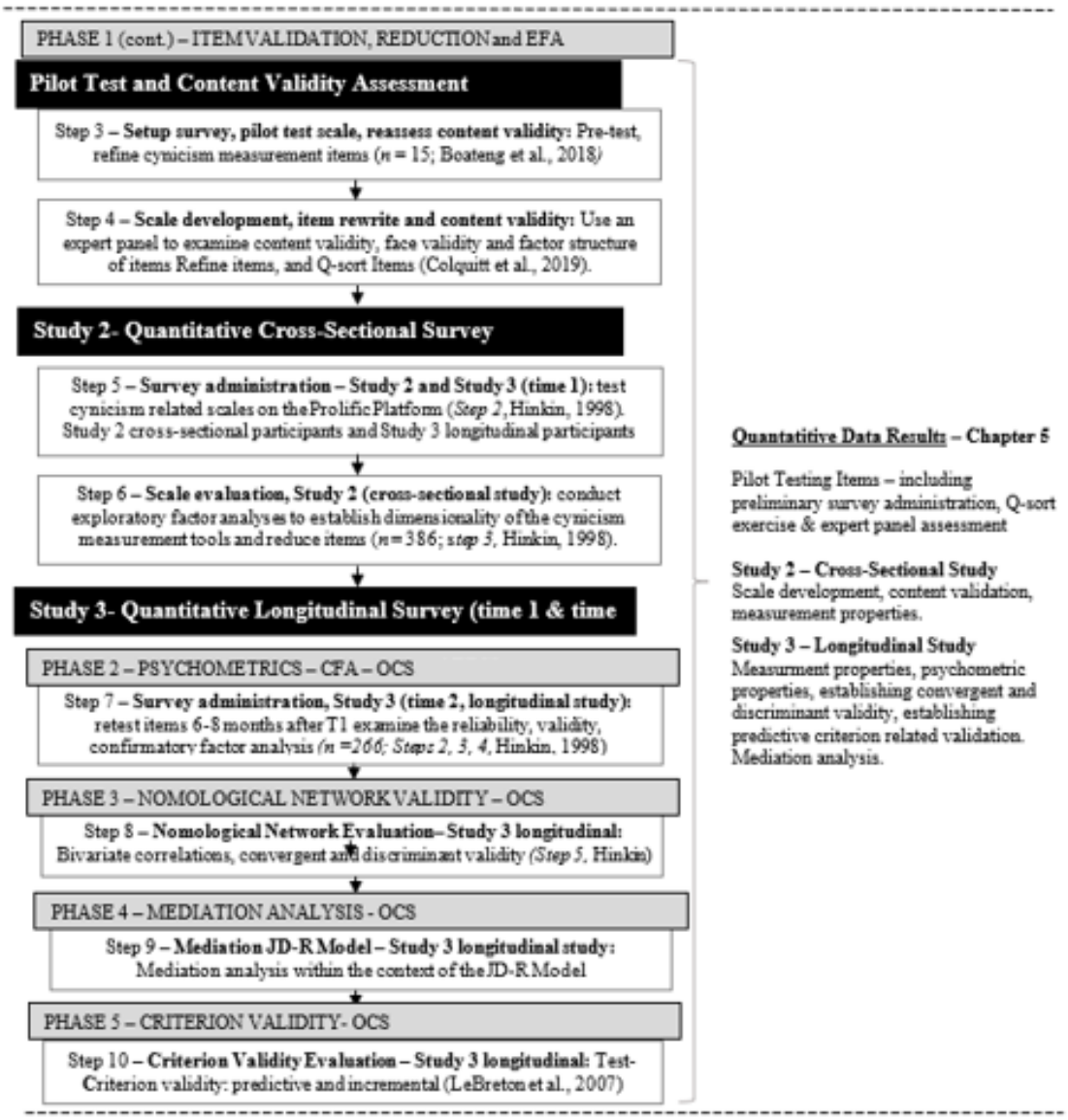
This chapter progresses the thesis by developing and validating the OCS– thereby fulfilling the third aim of my research. The chapter is structured into phases and examines the quantitative findings from Studies 2 and 3. Phase 1, spanning Chapter 4 and the present chapter, discusses item generation, validation, and reduction for both scales, EFA results, pilot tests, Q-sort outcomes, and expert panel evaluations. Phase 2, Study 3, appraises the psychometric properties of the scales, verifying their 4-dimensional structures through measures such as reliability, validity, and goodness-of-fit tests. Phases 3 and 4 explore the nomological network of the OCS, focusing on its predictive and incremental validity for specific organisational outcomes such as well-being.

5.1.Phase 1b: Content Validation, Item Reduction and EFA

This phase builds on the initial item development outlined in Chapter 4. Pilot testing, guided by established protocols (e.g., Boateng et al., 2018; Hinkin, 1998), reassessed content validity and led to item refinement (see Figure 5.1). An expert panel further qualitatively reviewed these refined items. Using the Q-sort method (Colquitt et al., 2019), selected participants sorted the revised items, and their sorting data was entered into an online platform through a survey on Prolific.

Figure 5.1.

Chapter 5 Methodology, Phases and Studies Overview



Cross-sectional data from Study 2 indicated the presence of 4-factors. Subsequent sections present these Phase 1 results in greater detail, starting with findings from the pilot test.

5.1.1. Pilot Test Results

The pilot test involved 15 voluntary participants (refer Chapter 3 for demographics), recruited via the snowball method, using a few "seed" participants known to the researcher. These initial participants then actively recruited additional respondents. The pilot survey focused on the adaptability of the OCS towards immediate managers. This choice aligns with

the broader study objective, which aims to evaluate the scales' applicability to various referent targets, including an organisation. A preliminary EFA proposed two underlying dimensions in the OCS items and suggested a potential 4-factor structure. Based on the collective insights gathered from the pilot test, EFA, and expert panel, I refined the scales' items.

5.1.2. Expert Panel Review of Items Outcome

The expert panel, consisting of members of my supervision panel, conducted a review of the cynicism items, which were designed to capture participants' sense of futility towards various referent targets, including teams, leaders, and the organisation. A shared stem approach guided this development, with each item statement beginning with "I believe it is futile to..." (details in Appendix 5.A). This comprehensive review led to multiple modifications to improve item clarity and validity. For instance, the panel recommended replacing the phrase "felt futile" with "I believe" to better reflect participants' perceptions and beliefs.

To offer a more expansive assessment of cynicism, the panel suggested enriching the voice items and introducing additional questions. The items concerning relationships underwent a focused reduction and refinement process, while proactive items were adjusted for specificity and relevance. In a similar vein, items related to adopting changes were reduced and further nuanced for precision in capturing participants' sentiments. The items assessing employee trait cynicism, which encapsulate participants' overarching beliefs, were entirely rewritten for clarity and understanding. These modified stems now begin uniformly with "Overall, it is futile..." to ensure consistent measurement of the broader cynicism construct. Following these revisions, the newly rewritten items were subjected to Q-sort by the six graduate participants, to test their *a priori* dimensionality that *it is* futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change.

5.1.3. Q-sort Results

To evaluate the content validity and reliability of the newly developed cynicism scales, I implemented a Q-sort process aided by two specific statistical indices: the PSA and the SVC (Colquitt et al., 2019). The Q-sort process required participants to classify 47 cynicism items into four distinct dimensions of cynicism, which were predefined. This sorting procedure allowed for a rigorous assessment of whether the items appropriately represented their intended constructs. The PSA and SVC indices further refined this evaluation. Items that scored a PSA below .75 or an SVC under .55 were excluded to ensure that only valid and reliable items remained in the scales (e.g., Clark et al., 2020).

The results of the Q-sort analysis revealed evidence of strong alignment between the items and their intended cynicism dimensions. Specifically, 45 out of the 47 items achieved a PSA score of 1, while two items, cyn_change4_4 and cyn_change4_1, scored .83. Regarding the SVC index, 45 items also obtained a perfect score of 1, with the remaining two items registering at .67. These statistics not only affirm the content validity but also indicate only minor variations in agreement level, validating the reliability of the newly developed cynicism scales. Thus, the evidence establishes a strong basis for further validation in Studies 2 and 3.

5.1.4. Data Integrity Checking

The subsequent sections detail the results of both studies, which aimed to assess the psychometric robustness, validity, and reliability of the OCS within the context of organisational cynicism research. Study 2, cross-sectional in nature, focused on scale validity and dimensions, while the longitudinal Study 3 (Time 1 and Time 2) examined psychometric attributes, test–retest reliability, as well as convergent, and discriminant, incremental, and predictive validity. The first step post-data collection for both studies was data verification for accuracy and reliability.

Data Verification Process. To ensure the robustness of the data collected through online surveys in Studies 2 and 3, a comprehensive approach to data verification was critical. Online surveys inherently pose risks of inattentive responses and skewed data; therefore, four key measures were implemented to mitigate these risks and uphold data integrity (Aguinis et al., 2020). Specifically, the approach incorporated: (1) attention check item screening to identify and remove hasty or careless respondents, (2) elimination of participants who exhibited inattention, (3) rigorous assessment of missing data to determine its randomness and influence on outcomes, and (4) examination for skewness and kurtosis to confirm data normality. These measures collectively ensured that the data remained robust and reliable across all analytical phases.

Attention Check Items Results. Two attention check items were integrated into the survey to evaluate participant attentiveness. In total, 30 participants who failed these checks were classified as inattentive and consequently excluded from further analyses, thus enhancing data accuracy and reliability (Dennis et al., 2019).

Removal of Participants. In Study 2, of the 407 original participants, 21 failed attention checks and were therefore excluded, resulting in a final sample of 386 participants (representing 95% of the initial group). Similarly, in Study 3, 9 out of 275 were disqualified for attention failures, yielding a final sample of 266 participants (97% of the original cohort). This exclusion process served to enhance my study's precision, validity, and reliability.

Data Cleaning. Both datasets exhibited no missing values, eliminating the need for conventional data cleaning methods such as imputation or listwise deletion. The absence of missing data supports the integrity of the subsequent analyses and mitigates potential biases.

Skew and Kurtosis Checking. The rigorous verification process set a solid foundation for ensuing analyses, validating the quality and trustworthiness of the data used for assessing the

newly developed cynicism scales. Both datasets were evaluated for skewness and kurtosis to ensure data normality and accuracy. Two cases that exceeded the critical skewness threshold of 3.29 were removed, aligning with data analysis best practices (Field, 2018). The removal of these outliers helped prevent distortion of the overall data distribution and safeguarded the validity of subsequent analyses, fortifying both the accuracy and reliability of my study's findings.

Study 2: Results

In Study 2 (scale validation through factor structure analysis), I conducted a preliminary examination of the OCS using a sample of 386 participants between August and September 2022. This analysis involved testing the assumptions for factor structure and conducting an extensive evaluation of both scales. From an initial list of 30 items for the OCS, I retained 20 and found support for the *a priori* 4-factor structure. The subsequent sections offer comprehensive details about the analyses, including demographic information, EFA, parallel analysis, and scale item reduction processes for both scales.

Study 2: Demographics. For Study 2, the participant pool consisted of 386 individuals, predominantly female (53.1%). A substantial proportion were aged 30–39 years (35.2%), followed by those aged 40–49 years (24.6%). In terms of employment tenure, the majority had over 15 years of total employment (53.6%). Most were in full-time employment (73.3%) and held permanent positions with paid leave (79.8%). As for the industry, the sample was diverse, but many were from the UK (49.0%), providing demographic diversity that enhances my study's generalisability and fortifies its empirical rigour. For a comprehensive demographic breakdown, refer to Table 3.1. The subsequent analyses will delve into the attribute structures of the OCS by evaluating the results of preliminary scale testing.

5.1.5. Study 2: Preliminary OCS Exploratory Factor Analysis and Parallel Analysis.

Study 2 focused on the OCS's factor structure, in line with the framework detailed in Chapter 4. Utilising EFA and parallel analysis (software program SSPS v26), I aimed to explore the dimensions of the OCS using 30 preliminary items. I examined the *a priori* dimensions that *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change*. Before proceeding with the subsequent analyses, I first confirmed the data's suitability for factor analysis.

Factorability Assumptions and Factor Extraction, Rotation, Loadings. The data's suitability for factor analysis was affirmed through the KMO measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Nunnally, 1978). Both indices fell well within the acceptable range of scores above .60, with the ideal range closer to 1.0, affirming the data's appropriateness for factor analysis (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). I utilised PAF and direct oblimin rotation for factor extraction (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The decision to retain items was influenced by eigenvalues greater than 1, the absence of cross-loadings, and factor loadings greater than .30. This process yielded four factors, accounting for 79.70% of the variance.

Parallel Analysis Results. The four factors for the OCS were confirmed through parallel analysis in SPSS v26, using parallel analysis syntax (O'Connor, 2000). By comparing observed eigenvalues with those from randomly generated parallel datasets and retaining factors with greater values (see Table 5.1), this method has proven more reliable than traditional approaches such as the scree plot and eigenvalues >1 (Hayton et al., 2004). After this validation, the EFA further evaluated the OCS structure.

Table 5.1

Study 2 OCS Eigenvalues from Observed Data and Parallel Analysis

Factor Number	Observed Eigenvalue	Random Eigenvalue
1	17.75	1.66
2	2.69	1.56
3	1.93	1.49
4	1.54	1.43

OCS Exploratory Factor Analysis Results. The EFA analysis proposed a 3-factor structure for the OCS in Study 2. The first factor, comprising 15 items, explained 59.17% of the variance and included eight items labelled "voice" and seven labelled "be proactive," all with loadings >.85. The second factor, containing eight items labelled "build relationships," accounted for 8.96% of the variance. The third factor, featuring seven items and labelled "adopt change," explained 6.44% of the variance. High internal consistency across factors was demonstrated by Cronbach's alphas: $\alpha = .96$ for voice, $\alpha = .97$ for proactivity, $\alpha = .95$ for build relationships, and $\alpha = .95$ for adopt change.

The EFA did not delineate four clear factors, as the data revealed that items related to *voice* and *be proactive* converged on a single factor. Notably, the *be proactive* items demonstrated high factor loadings (α =.89 to .95), whereas *voice* items showed lower factor loadings (α .58 to .70). Additionally, some of the *voice* items with higher levels of cynicism cross-loaded on multiple factors. However, the parallel analysis from Study 2 validated the existence of four factors and provided support for the four hypothesized dimensions of the OCS as outlined in H6. These findings underscored the necessity to revisit and refine the voice items to distinguish them more clearly from the proactive items to improve the scale's construct validity.

OCS Scale Item Reduction Process and Criteria. To refine the OCS scale, I embarked on a systematic process, which began by reducing the number of items in each subscale to five.

This decision adhered to scholarly recommendations to maintain a minimum of four items per scale (Hinkin, 1998) for examining homogeneity within latent constructs. The subsequent selection process prioritised items with the highest factor scores, item loadings, and inter-correlation values (Boateng et al., 2018; Hinkin, 1998). These attributes indicated their strong alignment with the underlying construct. Items possessing high face validity were also included, signifying their clear relevance to the intended construct.

OCS Implementation of Scale Item Reduction Process Across Dimensions. The OCS preliminary 30-items underwent evaluation this included inspecting means, standard deviations (SD), and factor loadings for all 30 original items as shown in table 5.2. The items marked with an asterisk (*) in the table are the final retained items, that comprise the refined 20-item OCS. The reduction process also included running a CFA, the results are shown in Figure 5.2 and Table 5.3 and inspecting the CFA Direct Effect Standardised Items Loadings for Each Dimension. The 30 items were assessed across dimensions that *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change*. In the *voice* dimension, alpha values and cross-loadings results informed the decision to exclude items v7, v8, and v9, and high inter-correlation led to the removal of v6. Other dimensions followed a similar reduction process, guided by lower alphas, face validity, and high inter-correlations, thereby enhancing the OCS scale's validity and reliability.

Table 5.2

Study 2 OCS Metrics: Item, Means, SDs, Cronbach's Alphas, and Factor Loadings (n=386)

Items		Mean	SD	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time) to speak up …						
v1, cyn_voice1_1	as my ideas <.....>. *	3.15	1.83	.687		
v2, cyn_voice1_2	as my views <.....>. *	3.26	1.86	.701		
v3, cyn_voice1_3	as my voice <.....>. *	3.14	1.82	.699		
v4, cyn_voice2_1	as my voice <.....>. *	3.05	1.82	.685		
v5, cyn_voice2_2	as my ideas <.....>. *	3.20	1.84	.712		
v6, cyn_voice2_3	as my suggestions <.....>.	3.26	1.83	.718		
v7, cyn_voice3_1	as my suggestions <.....>.	2.66	1.64	.579	.636	.619
v8, cyn_voice3_2	as my ideas <…….>.	2.96	1.75	.583	.578	.537
v9, cyn_voice3_3	as my suggestions <.....>.	3.16	1.81	.660	.622	.593
In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time) to build deep relationships …						
r1, cyn_relation1_1	as most work relationships <.....>	3.47	1.68		.746	
r2, cyn_relation1_2	as most work relationships <.....>*	3.13	1.66		.885	
r3, cyn_relation1_3	as most work relationships <.....> *	3.46	1.74		.835	
r4, cyn_relation1_4	as most work relationships <.....>*	3.13	1.67		.846	
r5, cyn_relation2_1	as investing in strong connections <.....>	2.77	1.55		.802	
r6, cyn_relation2_2	as investing in deep work relationships <.....>*	2.98	1.71		.867	
r7, cyn_relation2_3	as investing in deep work relationships <.....>	2.88	1.61		.872	
r8, cyn_relation2_4	as investing in genuine work relationships <.....>*	3.04	1.70		.861	

Pending Trademark and Copywrite on items

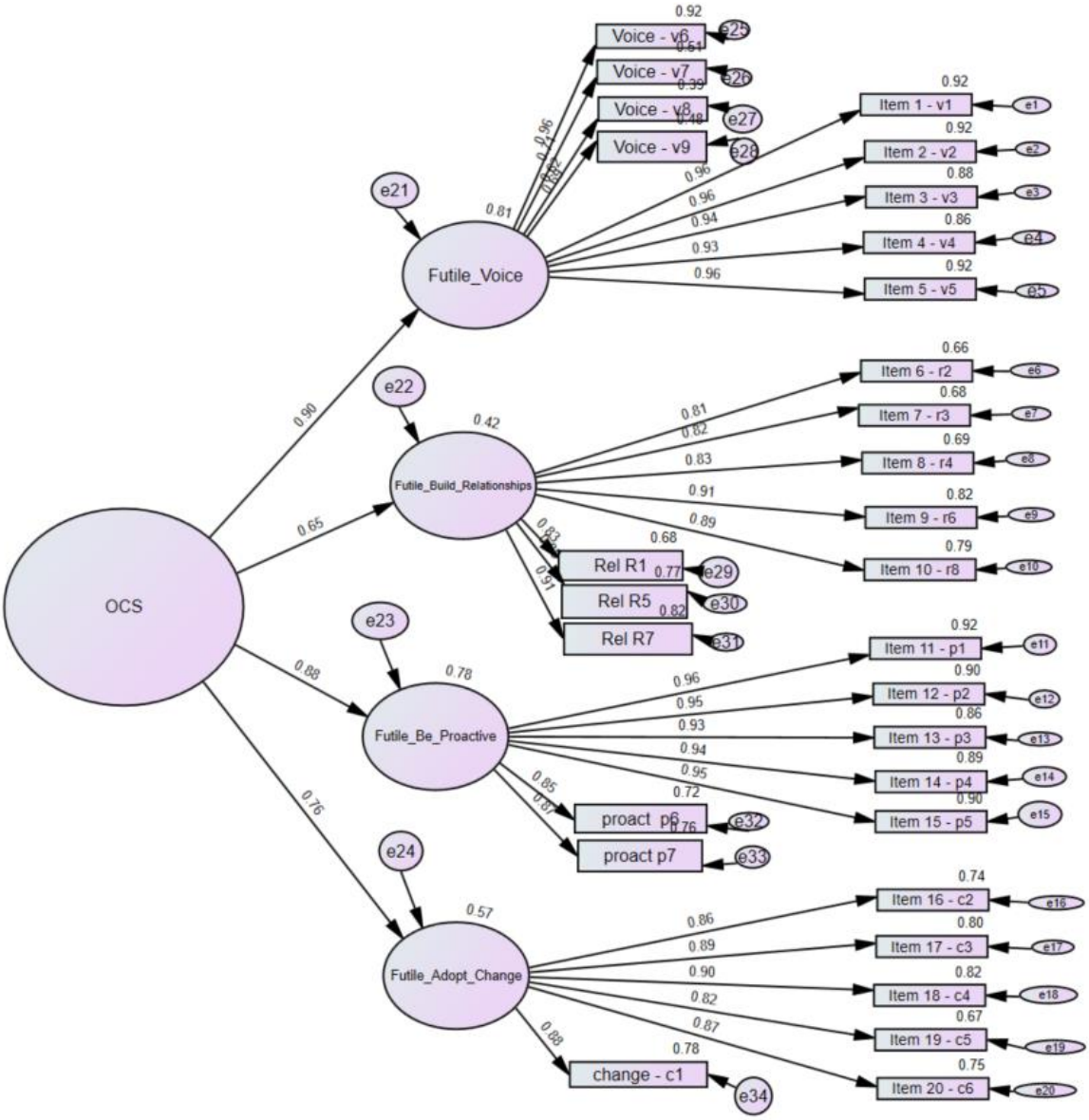
Pending Trademark and Copywrite on items

In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time) to adopt change …					
c1, cyn_change_1	as the changes proposed by my organisation <.....>.	3.05	1.56		.858
c2, cyn_change_2	as the changes suggested by my organisation <.....> *	2.98	1.53		.889
c3, cyn_change2_1	as the changes suggested by my organisation <.....>*	3.49	1.75		.877
c4, cyn_change2_2	<.....>changes suggested by my organisation. *	3.18	1.66		.897
c5, cyn_change3_1	as it will be futile to adopt my organisation's suggested changes <.....>*	3.45	1.73		.832
c6, cyn_change3_2	as the changes suggested by my organisation <.....>*	3.13	1.64		.839
In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time) to be proactive …					
p1, cyn_proact1_1	as my proactive actions <.....>*	3.31	1.86	.910	
p2, cyn_proact1_2	as my extra effort <.....>*	3.46	1.93	.942	
p3, cyn_proact1_3	as putting in more effort <.....>*	3.40	1.85	.939	
p4, cyn_proact1_4	as doing more <.....>*	3.59	1.91	.946	
p5, cyn_proact2_1	as my proactivity <.....>*	3.65	1.87	.948	
p6, cyn_proact2_2	as working harder <.....>.	4.13	2.02	.862	
p7, cyn_proact2_3	as my proactiveness <.....>	3.89	2.04	.891	

Note.* Items retained in the final version of the scale. Item details are omitted due to pending copywrite, full scale details are available on request.

Figure 5.2.

Study 2: CFA Preliminary OCS 30-Items



Note. The CFA was conducted to examine the factor structure and model fit of the Preliminary 30-item OCS. The CFA was performed using the AMOS software package, employing maximum likelihood estimation. The model fit indices were assessed to evaluate the goodness of fit between the proposed factor structure and the observed data (Schumacker & Lomax, 2016). The final items kept in the scale, are numbered item 1 to 20, on the righthand side of the figure the 10 items not retained are show in the centre column of the figure.

Table 5.3 *Study 2 OCS 30-Item CFA Direct Effect*

Study 2 OCS Preliminary 30-Items, CFA Direct Effect Standardised Items Loadings for Each Dimension

Item Number and Item Name	OCS	Futile_ Voice	Futile_Build_ Relationships	Futile-Be_ Proactive	Futile_Adopt_ Change
cyn_state_voice	.899	.000	.000	.000	.000
cyn_state_change	.757	.000	.000	.000	.000
cyn_state_proact	.882	.000	.000	.000	.000
cyn_state_relation	.648	.000	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_change_1	.000	.000	.882	.000	.000
T2_cyn_proact2_3	.000	.000	.000	.869	.000
T2_cyn_proact2_2	.000	.000	.000	.851	.000
T2_cyn_relation2_3	.000	.000	.000	.000	.907
T2_cyn_relation2_1	.000	.000	.000	.000	.878
T2_cyn_relation1_1	.000	.000	.000	.000	.827
T2_cyn_voice3_3	.000	.693	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_voice3_2	.000	.621	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_voice3_1	.000	.713	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_voice2_3	.000	.958	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_change3_2	.000	.000	.866	.000	.000
T2_cyn_change3_1	.000	.000	.819	.000	.000
T2_cyn_change2_2	.000	.000	.903	.000	.000
T2_cyn_change_2	.000	.000	.861	.000	.000
T2_cyn_change2_1	.000	.000	.895	.000	.000
T2_cyn_proact2_1	.000	.000	.000	.946	.000
T2_cyn_proact1_3	.000	.000	.000	.926	.000
T2_cyn_proact1_4	.000	.000	.000	.944	.000
T2_cyn_proact1_2	.000	.000	.000	.947	.000
T2_cyn_proact1_1	.000	.000	.000	.961	.000
T2_cyn_relation2_4	.000	.000	.000	.000	.890
T2_cyn_relation2_2	.000	.000	.000	.000	.907
T2_cyn_relation1_4	.000	.000	.000	.000	.830
T2_cyn_relation1_3	.000	.000	.000	.000	.824
T2_cyn_relation1_2	.000	.000	.000	.000	.815
T2_cyn_voice2_1	.000	.930	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_voice2_2	.000	.960	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_voice1_3	.000	.938	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_voice1_1	.000	.957	.000	.000	.000
T2_cyn_voice1_2	.000	.957	.000	.000	.000

Study 3: Results

Study 3 presents a longitudinal analysis of the OCS, capturing data at two time points: Time 1 in September 2022 and Time 2 in May 2023, with a participant sample of 266. Initial analyses evaluate demographic variables through t-tests and ANOVAs, setting the stage for subsequent, more nuanced evaluations across Phases 2 to 5. Specifically, Phase 2 examines the psychometric robustness the OCS by assessing their validity and reliability, and employing CFA. Phase 3 extends this examination to the OCS's nomological network by investigating its bivariate correlations, convergent, and discriminant validity. Phase 4 turns its focus to criterion validity for the OCS. These progressive phases collectively enhance our understanding of the OCS in terms of their psychometric attributes, validity, and intricate interrelationships, with demographic variables serving as a foundational starting point.

5.1.6. Control Variables

This section examines potential demographic control variables, from Study 3, utilising ANOVA and t-test analyses to determine which variables might influence OCS scores. These analyses compared scores at two different time points, Times 1 and 2, across an array of demographics, such as gender, age, total employment years, current job tenure, contract type, managerial status, number of employees, industrial sector, workplace size, and geographical variables (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013).

Demographic Variable Scores. To contextualise the findings, this section focuses specifically on how various demographic factors influence OCS scores. Drawing upon analyses conducted at two time points, this section aims to highlight the relative impact of demographics like gender, age, and workplace variables on OCS outcomes. The objective

is to discern whether demographic factors significantly contribute to variations in organisational cynicism as measured by the OCS.

Table 5.4 presents the results of ANOVA and t-test comparisons between Time 1 and Time 2 OCS scores across various demographic variables. For example, the F-statistics and p-values indicated no significant differences in OCS scores among different gender groups at both Time 1 ($F(3, 262) = 0.91$, $p = .44$) and Time 2 ($F(3, 262) = 1.49$, $p = .22$).

Table 5.4

Study 3 OCS Time 1 & 2: ANOVA and T-test Results by Demographics

Demographic Variable	Time 1	Time 2
Gender	$F(3, 262) = 0.91$, $p = .44$	$F(3, 262) = 1.49$, $p = .22$.
Age	$F(4, 261) = 0.65$, $p = .63$	$F(4, 261) = 1.58$, $p = .18$
Total Years Employed	$F(2, 263) = 0.96$, $p = .39$	$F(2, 263) = 0.20$, $p = .82$
Years of Employment in Current Workplace	$F(3, 262) = 2.28$, $p = .08$	$F(3, 262) = 0.42$, $p = .74$
Contract Type	$F(3, 262) = 0.87$, $p = .46$	$F(3, 262) = 0.40$, $p = .76$
Manager vs Non-Manager	$t(264) = -1.45$, $p = .15$ (two-tailed)	$t(264) = 1.62$, $p = .44$ (two-tailed)
Number of Reporting Employees	$F(2, 114) = 1.56$, $p = .22$	$F(2, 114) = 0.87$, $p = .42$
Broad Industry Type	$F(20, 245) = 1.08$, $p = .37$	$F(20, 245) = 1.26$, $p = .21$
Workplace Size	$F(2,263) = 9.34$, $p = .01$**	$F(2,263) = 4.24$, $p = .01$*
Country of Birth	$F(16, 249) = 0.80$, $p = .68$	
Residential Country	$F(4, 261) = 1.77$, $p = .14$	$F(2,263) = 3.50$, $p = 0.03$*

*Note***.** This table presents the results of ANOVA and t-test analyses comparing OCS scores at Time 1 and Time 2 across various demographic variables. The F-statistics and corresponding p-values are provided for each demographic variable under study. A non-significant p-value ($p > .05$) indicates no statistically significant difference in OCS scores across the groups within that demographic variable. Mean (M) and SD values for industry types are reported in the text.

Though most demographic variables did not exhibit a significant relationship with OCS scores, some intriguing patterns emerged. For instance, the highest and lowest mean scores within the broad industry type category did vary between Time 1 and Time 2. At Time 1, the accommodation, cafes, and restaurants sector showed the highest mean OCS score ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 1.66$), while the wholesale trade and finance and insurance sectors exhibited the lowest

(M = 2.44, SD = 1.09; M = 2.48, SD = 1.17, respectively). At Time 2, the protective services sector had the highest mean score (M = 4.18, SD = 2.09), while the transport and storage sector had the lowest (M = 2.59, SD = 0.72).

Significant Results in ANOVA Analyses for OCS Scores. The ANOVA analyses revealed statistically significant relationships between OCS scores and select demographic variables, specifically workplace size and residential country. For workplace size, Time 1 showed a significant effect with $F(2,263) = 9.34$, $p = .01$, while Time 2 presented similar results with $F(2,263) = 4.24$, $p = .01$. Regarding residential country, Time 2 indicated a statistically significant relationship with $F(2,263) = 3.50$, $p = 0.03$. These significant results pointed to the existence of complex interactions that merited further examination.

Rationale for Examining Complex Interactions. The rationale for examining complex interactions between the OCS and key demographic variables, specifically workplace size and residential country, is anchored in the quest to deepen our academic understanding of the multidimensional nature of organisational cynicism. By examining these significant results, I sought to provide insights into the differential levels of cynicism that manifest across diverse contexts. The principal aim was to enhance the diagnostic and interpretive robustness of the OCS by establishing its sensitivity to various contextual factors (Abdi & Williams, 2010; Brown & Forsythe, 1974). These considerations not only lend greater empirical validity to the OCS but also provide a more refined understanding of which demographic and organisational contexts are currently experiencing elevated levels of cynicism.

Statistical Tests for Complex Interactions. To explore the complex interactions, I used ANOVA analyses and post hoc tests. When homogeneity of variance assumptions was met, Tukey's HSD functioned as the chosen post hoc test (Abdi & Williams, 2010). For situations violating these assumptions, I employed Welch and Brown-Forsyth tests (Brown & Forsythe, 1974).

***Residential Country at Time 2*.** To evaluate differences in organisational cynicism levels among participants from Australia, the UK, and the USA, I conducted a one-way ANOVA. Levene's test confirmed the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F(2, 263) = 3.50$, $p = .03$. The analysis revealed significant differences in organisational cynicism levels among these countries, $F(2, 263) = 3.50$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Subsequent Tukey HSD post hoc tests demonstrated that UK participants ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.29$, $n = 146$) reported higher levels of organisational cynicism at Time 2 compared to their USA counterparts ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.44$, $n = 86$).

Workplace size at Time 1 and Time 2. At Time 1, Levene's test indicated a violation of the homogeneity of variances assumption, $F(2, 263) = 9.34$, $p = .01$. Consequently, I employed Welch and Brown-Forsyth tests, uncovering a significant influence of workplace size on cynicism levels, $F(5, 127.84) = 4.55$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .96$. At Time 2, I corroborated these findings, identifying a significant effect of workplace size on cynicism levels, $F(2, 263) = 4.24$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2 = .03$. Games-Howell (1976) post-hoc analysis showed that larger workplaces (over 200 employees) exhibited significantly elevated cynicism levels at both Time 1 and Time 2 when contrasted with smaller workplaces (fewer than 19 employees).

Exclusion of Demographic Controls in Scale Development. In light of previous research on demographic variables affecting cynicism (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013), the analysis unexpectedly identified residential country and workplace size as significant variables. Due to the absence of theoretical backing for these results, I opted not to employ these variables as controls in subsequent scale development (Spector & Brannick, 2011). Having thoroughly examined the demographic variables, I pivoted to its next critical phase – assessing the psychometric properties of the OCS to establish their reliability and validity.

5.2. Phase 2: Psychometrics – CFA, Reliability and Validity

In Phase 2 of my research, I began the psychometric examination of the OCS, setting the groundwork for subsequent analyses. I first conducted a CFA to validate the underlying constructs of the scales, confirming the hypothesised factors. I then applied test–retest reliability procedures to ensure the measurements' stability over time, using techniques like repeated measures and calculating the ICC. Moreover, I assessed measure invariance to ensure the scales' applicability across diverse groups. These comprehensive psychometric evaluations not only support the validity and reliability of the OCS but also build upon the item development and factor dimensionality from Phase 1.

5.2.1. CFA Results

Building upon the initial findings in Phase 1, Study 3 sought to lend support to the 4-factor structure solution by analysing the latent factors identified in Chapter 4. Initially, the data underwent factor extraction, rotation, and loadings to examine the factor structures, and corresponding Cronbach’s alphas. The OCS, as represented in Figure 5.2 was conceptualised as a reflective construct model, with direct paths from this higher-order latent variable to its dimensions(Williams et al., 2009). Subsequently, the 20-item model fit indices were tested, and the 4-factor model provided the best fit to the observed data, when compared to alternative

models. This result consolidated the structure of the OCS, thereby establishing a strong foundation for the subsequent analyses and interpretations.

Factor Extraction, Rotation, and Loadings. The factor structure of the 20 items of the OCS was explored using PAF and direct oblimin rotation because factors were not presumed to be orthogonal, with Kaiser normalisation. This approach aimed to validate the four factors of *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change* as identified in Chapter 4 (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Field, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The PAF revealed four factors that explained 85.90% of the total variance. The overall scale reliability was high ($\alpha = .967$), and the reliabilities for the subscales varied between $\alpha = .931$ and $\alpha = .979$. Subsequently, a CFA was executed using AMOS version 28 (Collier, 2020). The CFA utilised maximum likelihood estimation to confirm the factor structure, playing a pivotal role in assessing the fit between the proposed 4-factor structure of the OCS and the observed data from Study 3.

Model Fit Indices. The CFA validates the 4-factor structure (software AMOS, v28). Model fit indices, such as χ^2/df ratio, CFI, TLI, NFI, and GFI, meet or exceed recommended thresholds for good fit. As depicted in Table 5.5, the 4-factor model provided a superior fit to the data compared to the 3-factor, 2-factor, and 1-factor alternatives, with χ^2 difference tests further substantiating this conclusion. The standardised factor loadings, which varied between .80 and .96 as illustrated in Figure 5.3, highlighted the robust association between the observed variables and the underlying latent factors. This evidence underscores the appropriateness of the 4-factor model for the OCS and validates the structure of the finalised 20-item OCS, detailed in Table 5.6. Together, these findings provide support for the 4-factor OCS model, supporting H6.

Table 5.5

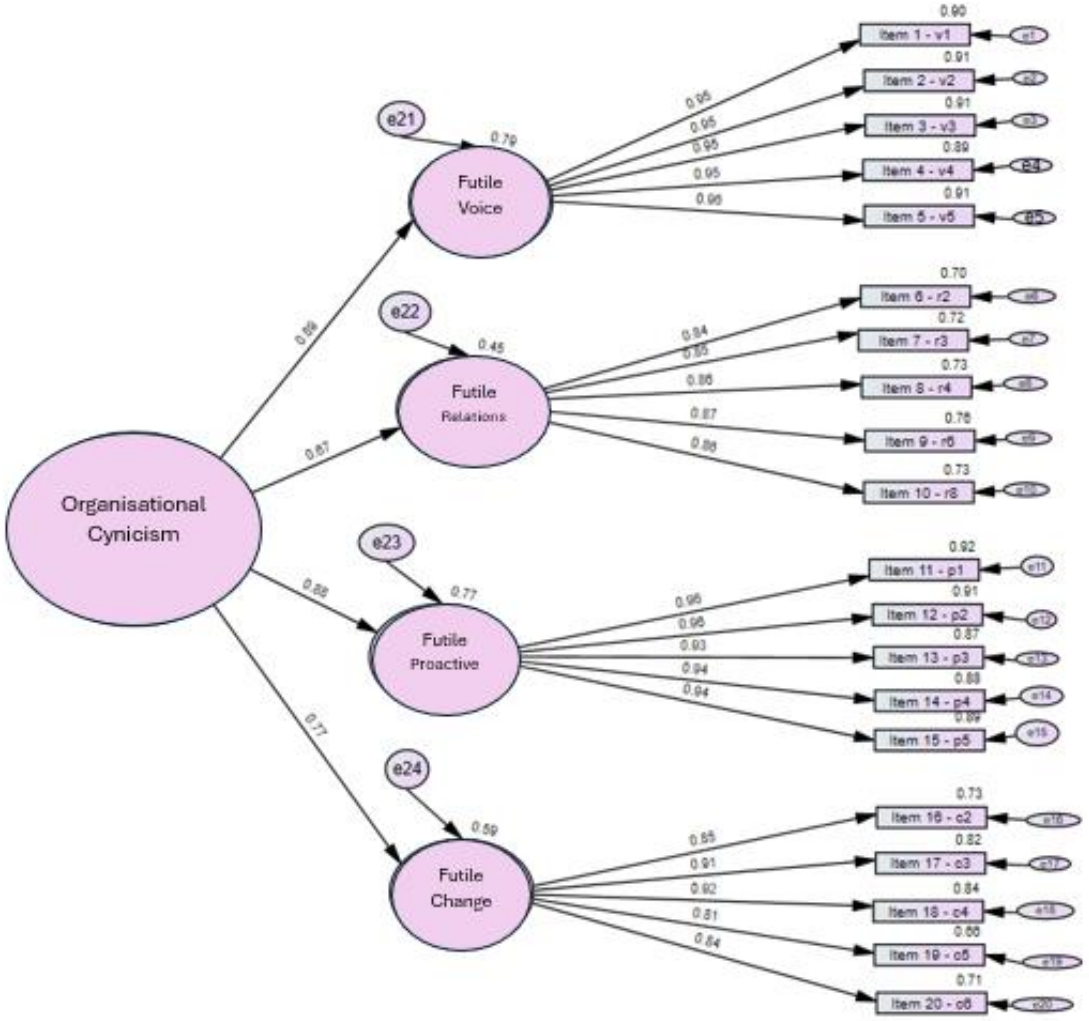
Study 3 OCS: CFA Model Fit Comparison (n = 266, Time 2 sample)

Model	χ^2	*df*	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	NFI	GFI	$\Delta\chi^2$	ΔCFI
OCS	Study 3 (*n* = 266)									
4-factor (voice, relationship, proactivity, adopt change)	603.39	166	3.63	.100	.939	.930	.918	.818		
3-factor (voice/proactivity, relationship, adopt change)	1641.77	167	9.83	.183	.795	.766	.777	.527	1362.80	-.188
2-factor (voice/proactivity, relationship/adopt change)	2269.02	169	13.43	.217	.708	.671	.692	.431	672.25	-.087
1-factor (all combined)	2975.97	170	17.51	.250	.609	.563	.596	.363	706.95	-.099

Note. Absolute fit indices: χ^2/df = normed Chi-square statistic; $\Delta\chi^2$ = change in Chi-square statistic; ΔCFI = change in CFI.

Figure 5.3.

Study 3, Time 2 Final OCS Items Hierarchical Model (n = 266)



Note. The CFA was conducted to examine the factor structure and model fit of the OCS. The CFA was performed using the AMOS software package, employing maximum likelihood estimation. The model fit indices were assessed to evaluate the goodness of fit between the proposed factor structure and the observed data (Schumacker & Lomax, 2016).

Table 5.6

Study 3: OCS: 20-Item Final Scale

NOTE: This scale is trademarked and copyrighted – Please do not use without explicit permission from the uthors (Kathryn Stephenson & Colleagues, 2023).

Organisational Cynicism 20-Item Final Scale	
Futile to voice Dimension	
In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time) to speak up …	
1	as my ideas <…..>
2	as my views <…..>
3	as my voice <…..>
4	as my voice <…..>
5	as my ideas <…..>
Futile to Build Deep Relationships Dimension	
In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time) to build deep relationships …	
6	as most work relationships <…..>
7	as most work relationships <…..>
8	as most work relationships <…..>
9	as investing in deep work relationships <…..>
10	as investing in genuine work relationships <…..> [a]
Futile to Adopt Change Dimension	
In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time) to adopt change …	
11	as the changes <…..>
12	as the changes <…..>
13	as it will be pointless <…..>
14	as it will be futile <…..>
15	as the changes <…..>
Futile to Be Proactive Dimension	
In my organisation <changeable referent target>, I believe it is futile (of no value, waste of time) to be proactive …	
16	as my proactive actions <…..>
17	as my extra effort <…..>
18	as putting in more effort <…..>
19	as doing more <…..>
20	as my proactivity <…..>

[a] *Note*. Item details are omitted due to pending copyrights and trademarks. The full scale is available on request and can only be used with a license and explicit permission from the author/s. Item 10 in the original survey was also revised in the final scale version

5.2.2. Repeated Measures Results

In Study 3, a repeated measures methodology was employed to assess the consistency and stability of cynicism levels within the OCS across Times 1 and 2. I used t-tests in SPSS v26 to determine the extent of differences between the means, setting the significance threshold at $p < .05$. The results, outlined in Table 5.7, indicate that most scales remained stable over time. Nevertheless, I identified certain measures that displayed significant disparities, suggesting potential fluctuations over the study duration. Specifically, the OCS voice subscale (t(265) = -2.45, p = .015, $d = .13$; Cohen, 1977), and the organisational trust scale ($t(265) = 3.89$, $p < .001$, $d = .19$) each revealed statistically significant differences with small effect sizes. The OCS Voice Subscale showed a significant increase over time (p = .015), indicating that employees' perceptions related to their ability to speak up or influence decisions in the organisation have become more cynical. This change could be attributed to situational factors such as organisational changes, leadership transitions, or perceived injustice, which might have occurred between the two measurement times. Personal factors such as individual sensitivity to organisational dynamics or a personal experience that negatively impacted one's view of the organisation's openness to employee input could also explain this increase.

A detailed exploration examined how results for the OCS voice subscale, and organisational trust scale differed across various demographic groups. The findings, as summarised in Table 5.8, revealed specific trends within gender, occupation, employment status, workplace size, and geographical location. For instance, both male and female participants exhibited a decline in organisational trust, though the decline was more pronounced for males: $t(265) = -3.46$, $p = .001$ (two-tailed). Within different occupations, academics showed a decrease in organisational trust: $t(265) = -4.19$, $p = .025$, a trend that was also observed among those working in accommodation, cafes, and restaurants: $t(265) = -3.37$, $p = .020$.

Table 5.7

Study 3 Repeated Measures Results (n = 266)

Scale	Time 1 Mean (*SD*)	Time 2 Mean (*SD*)	T-test (two-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% CI
Organisational Cynicism Scale	64.62 (27.57)	66.12 (26.89)	*t* (265) = 1.14, *p* =.255	-1.50	[-4.10:1.09]
OCS Voice Subscale	15.58 (8.59)	16.73 (8.46)	*t* (265) = .2.45, *p* =.015**	-1.15	[-2.08:-.23]
OCS Relationship Subscale	15.71 (7.45)	15.66 (7.08)	*t* (265) = -.14, *p* = .892	.14	[-.71:.82]
OCS Proactive Subscale	17.25 (8.95)	17.89 (8.95)	*t* (265) = 1.26, *p* = .207	-.64	[-1.63:.35]
OCS Change Subscale	16.07 (7.25)	15.84 (7.11)	*t* (265) = -.57, *p* = .569	.23	[-.56:1.02]
Existing Cynicism Scales					
Brandes Cynicism Scale	43.07 (19.29)	42.79 (19.23)	*t* (265) = -.30, *p* = .762	.28	[-1.53:2.08]
MBI Cynicism Scale	17.37 (9.14)	17.91 (8.71)	*t* (265) = 1.19, *p* = .237	-.54	[-1.43:.36}
Mental Distancing Scale	12.46 (4.79)	12.65 (5.00)	*t* (265) = .83, *p* = .409	-.19	[-.64:.26}
Brooks Cynicism Scale	25.06 (8.67)	25.26 (8.73)	*t* (265) = .46, *p* = .649	-.20	[-1.04:.65]
Cynicism Predictor					
Panas NA	18.14 (9.71)	17.37 (9.05)	*t* (265) = -1.49, *p* = .137	.77	[-.25:1.79]
Role Ambiguity	7.94 (3.94)	7.85 (3.78)	*t* (265) = -.44, *p* = .660	.09	[-.31:.49]
Role Conflict	12.76 (5.25)	12.53 (5.38)	*t* (265) = -.75, *p* = .451	.22	[-.36:.80]
RBSE	24.64 (6.92)	24.63 (7.39)	*t* (265) = -.04, *p* = .965	.02	[-.65:.68]
Resistance to Change	41.89 (10.13)	41.85 (10.70)	*t* (265) = -.08, *p* = .938	.03	[-.82:.89]
Cynicism Outcomes					
Organisational Trust Scale	44.21 (10.07)	42.27 (10.62)	*t* (265) = -3.89, *p*<.001***	1.95	[.96:2.93]
UWES	41.03 (14.43)	41.33 (14.24)	*t* (265) = .51, *p* = .611	.30	[-1.46:.86]

Note. T-tests are two-tailed.

Full-time employees exhibited an increase in OCS voice scores ($t(265) = 2.82$, $p = .005$) and a concomitant decrease in organisational trust ($t(265) = -3.71$, $p < .001$). In workplaces with over 200 employees, an increase in OCS voice scores were observed ($t(265) = 2.75$, $p = .007$), along with a significant decline in organisational trust ($t(265) = -3.77$, $p < .001$). Among UK participants, the findings indicated increased OCS voice scores ($t(265) = 2.07$, $p = .041$) and decreased organisational trust ($t(265) = -2.91$, $p = .004$). In summary, the results highlight a consistent decrease in organisational trust across various demographics, with

the reactions to OCS voice depending on specific demographic and occupational contexts. This section now turns to an exploration of the test–retest reliability and ICC of the scales over time.

Table 5.8

Study 3: Repeated Measures Significant Results by Demographics (n = 266)

Demographics	Group	OCS Voice	Trust (Mtrust)
Age	18-20		
	21-29		$t(265) = -2.84$, $p = .007$
	30-39		
	40-49		$t(265) = -2.11$, $p = .039$
	50-59	$t(265) = 2.03$, $p = .048$	$t(265) = -2.36$, $p = .022$
Gender	Male		$t(265) = -3.46$, $p = .001$
	Female		$t(265) = -2.27$, $p = .024$
	Non-binary		
	Opt out		
Occupation	Academia		$t(265) = -4.19$, $p = .025$
	Accom., Cafes, Restaurants		$t(265) = -3.37$, $p = .020$
	Healthcare	$t(265) = 2.29$, $p = .029$	
	Manufacturing	$t(265) = 3.62$, $p = .002$	
Employment Role	Manager		$t(265) = 1.22$, $p = .009$
	Non-Manager	$t(265) = 2.22$, $p = .028$	$t(265) = -2.87$, $p = .005$
Working Hours	Full-time	$t(265) = 2.82$, $p = .005$	$t(265) = -3.71$, $p<.000$
	Part-time		
Employment Contract	Permanent with Paid Leave	$t(265) = 2.27$, $p = .024$	$t(265) = -3.59$, $p<.001$
	Fixed Term		
	Casual		
Working hours	Full-time	$t(265) = 2.82$, $p = .005$	$t(265) = -3.71$, $p<.000$
	Part-time		
Years in current job	<2 years		$t(265) = -2.32$, $p = .024$
	2 to 5 years		
	6 to 15 years	$t(265) = 3.17$, $p = .002$	$t(265) = -2.52$, $p = .013$
	15+ years		
Workplace size	Medium 20-199	$t(265) = 2.15$, $p = .034$	
	Large 200+	$t(265) = 2.75$, $p = .007$	$t(265) = -3.77$, $p<.001$
Country Living	Australia		
	UK	$t(265) = 2.07$, $p = .041$	$t(265) = -2.91$, $p = .004$

USA	$t(265) = -2.81$, $p = .006$

Note. The table delineates all significant t-test results for the OCS voice dimension, and Organisational Trust (Mtrust) for a variety of demographic variables. It examines factors like age, gender, occupation, employment role, working hours, employment contract, duration of current employment, workplace size, and country of residence. *p*-values <.05, indicate statistical significance between-group differences for the given demographic variable. For instance, notable levels of trust were found to be significant among individuals aged 21–29 and 40–49 years.

5.2.3. Test-retest Reliability, Intraclass Correlation Coefficients

To examine the test–retest reliability of the OCS for Study 3, ICC were calculated using a two-way mixed model with absolute agreement and 95% confidence intervals (Weir, 2005). The same participants were measured at Times 1 and 2, allowing for generalisation beyond the existing participants. Over 8 months, significant differences were found between Times 1 and 2 on the OCS subscales. The SEM was calculated as SEM = SD * √(1-ICC), where SD is the mean standard deviation from Times 1 and 2. The MDC, distinguishing true changes from random fluctuations, used the formula MDC = 1.96 * √(2) * SEM (Learmonth et al., 2013). The analysis was conducted in SPSS v26, and the above formulas were calculated in Excel (e.g., Beninato & Portney, 2011; Portney & Watkins, 2009).

Test–retest Reliability Results. The test–retest reliability results for the OCS and its subscales, including Means, ICC, 95% CI for ICC, SEM, and MDC, are presented in Table 5.9. The ICC values, ranging between 0.00 and 1.00, indicate the agreement between scores obtained at Time 1 and Time 2, with values closer to 1.00 representing stronger reliability (Portney & Watkins, 2009). The overall OCS scores demonstrated a mean of 65.37 (*SD* = 1.67) at Time 1 and 66.12 (*SD* = 1.65) at Time 2. The ICC for the OCS was .815 (95% CI: .77, .86), indicating substantial agreement between the scores obtained at these two time points. The ICC values for the OCS subscales ranged from .734 to .767, reflecting moderate to substantial agreement between Times 1 and 2 scores. The assessment of the overall reliability of the OCS and its subscales indicated it to be substantial to high (at least 0.7; Baumgartner & Chung, 2001; van Wijngaarden, 2000).

The OCS SEM was 11.72, and values ranged from 3.64 to 4.53 for the OCS subscales, representing the estimated random variation in scores when no real change occurred. The SEM gives an idea of the amount of error in the scores due to the measurement process itself. A value of 11.72 suggests that when an individual's score on the OCS is obtained, there could be a variation of approximately ±11.72 points just because of random measurement error. This provides context on how to interpret individual changes in scores.

The OCS MDC_{95} was 32.47, and values ranged from 10.09 to 12.58 for the subscales, indicating the minimum amount of change needed to be considered a real change. The % MDC_{95} represents MDC expressed as a percentage of the overall mean from both time points. The MDC95 (MDC at 95% confidence) tells us how much a score needs to change before we can be reasonably confident (95% sure) that the change isn't just because of measurement error. For the OCS, this value is quite large at 32.47, suggesting that minor fluctuations in scores might not represent genuine changes in the construct being measured. The SEM and MDC provide additional insights into the test–retest reliability results. The SEM represents the expected random variation in scores due to measurement error, while the MDC indicates the minimum amount of change needed to be considered a real change. These statistics help differentiate between true changes and random measurement error, providing additional information for interpreting the results.

Table 5.9

Study 3 OCS and OCS Subscales: Test-Retest Results

Scale	Time 1 Mean (*SD*)	Time 2 Mean (*SD*)	Overall Mean (*SD*)	ICC[a]	95% CI ICC	SEM	SEM % SD	MDC_{95}	% MDC_{95}
OCS	64.61 (1.69)	66.12 (1.65)	65.37 (1.67)	.815[b]	.77,.86	11.72	18	32.47	50
Subscales OCS									
Voice	15.58 (.53)	16.73 (.52)	16.16 (.53)	.743[b]	.67,.80	4.33	18	12.00	74
Proactive	17.25 (.55)	17.89 (.55)	17.57 (.55)	.734[b]	.66,.79	4.53		12.58	72
Relationship	15.71 (.46)	15.66 (.43)	15.69 (.45)	.767[b]	.70,.82	3.68		10.21	65
Adopt Change	16.07 (.44)	15.84 (.44)	15.96 (.44)	.738[b]	.67,.79	3.64		10.09	63

Note. 95% CI ICC – 95% confidence intervals intraclass correlation; MDC_{95} – minimal detected change at 95% confidence intervals; %MDC_{95} is MDC express as a percentage of the overall mean from both time points. The model is a two-way mixed effects model where people effects are random and measures effects are fixed. The estimator is the same, whether the interaction effect is present or not. [an] ICC is calculated with average measures and type A ICC using an absolute agreement definition.

Summary and Implications. The results of Study 3 suggest that the OCS has strong test–retest reliability. The ICC values, which show the level of agreement between scores taken at two different times, were substantial for both scales, implying that they are reliable over time. The SEM and MDC95 values provide a clearer understanding of how much of the observed changes in scores can be attributed to random variations or measurement errors. This reliability indicates that the scales are robust tools for assessing cynicism levels in organisational contexts.

5.2.4. Measurement Invariance Results

This section presents the results of the measurement invariance analysis from Study 3, time 1, which aimed to assess the stability of measurement properties across. This was conducted using multigroup analysis (with MPlus Software v8.9 [Byrne, 2016; Muthén & Muthén, 2018]). Prior to analysis, participants from Study 3, Time 1 were randomly divided into two groups (methodology detailed in Chapter 3). This analysis employed a three-tiered

approach to measurement invariance, encompassing configural, metric, and scalar levels. Configural invariance verified the consistency of factor loadings, ensuring a good fit between item scores and the latent factor across samples (Fischmann et al., 2021). Metric invariance confirmed that each item equivalently contributed to the latent construct, enabling valid comparisons of factor structures between groups. Scalar invariance allowed for the meaningful comparison of raw scale scores and means across diverse samples.

Measurement Invariance Results. The analysis began with a default model, estimating all parameters to be the same across groups, and served as the baseline for subsequent comparisons ($\chi^2 = 786.35$, $df = 328$). Next, models were tested with measurement weights constrained to examine if the strength of the relations between specific scale items are the same across groups. A fully constrained model was also tested to determine if the models were invariant across both groups. The fully constrained model included equality constraints for all factor loadings, factor variances, and covariances in both samples. The fully constrained model was analysed using Bayesian Estimate with 10,000 iterations and 2 MCMC. BSEM was applied to identify the reference indicator to restrain on each subscale, with the subscale indicators showing the smallest delta (reflecting the loadings and intercept) selected for restraint (Thompson et al., 2021).

Invariance testing revealed that the default model was not significantly different from either the constrained metric model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 809.01$, $df = 226$, $p = .12$) or fully constrained scalar model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 843.52$, $df = 368$, $p = .08$) indicating that the equality constraints held across both subsamples (Byrne, 2016). The configural model (CFI = .936, TLI = 926), the metric model (CFI = .935, TLI = .929), and the scalar model (CFI = .934, TLI = .932), had values of ≥ .90, showing acceptable fit (see Byrne, 2016; refer to Table 5.10 for the full results). Though the scalar model's RMSEA (.10) was considered a poor fit, it was still deemed acceptable, as values of < .05 indicate a close fit and values of .10 are considered

acceptable (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016; O'Boyle & Williams, 2011). Furthermore, ΔCFI values ≤ .01 for both the metric and scalar models supported that the equality constraints did not significantly worsen the fit compared to the previous models (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002).

Summary and Implications. The results provide evidence of metric invariance. The findings confirm the scale's metric invariance, indicating consistent relationships between observed variables and underlying constructs across various groups. This consistency underscores the scale's robustness and reliability across different subsamples. Consequently, its established metric invariance makes it a trustworthy tool for comparative research, ensuring unbiased measurement across diverse groups or conditions.

Table 5.10

Study 3 Time 1: Measurement Invariance Testing Results (n = 266)

Scale	Model	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	ΔCFI	ΔTLI	ΔRMSEA
OCS	Configural Model (default model)	786.35	328	.936	.926	.103	-	-	-	-	-
	Metric Model (measurement weights factor loadings constrained)	809.01	344	.935	.929	.101	22.66	16	-0.001	0.003	-0.002
	Scalar Model Fully Constrained [a]	843.52	368	.934	.932	.099	34.51	24	-0.001	0.003	-0.002

Note. Sample 1 *n* = 133, Sample 2 *n* = 133. Absolute fit indices: ΔCFI = Change in Comparative Fit Index from the previous model; ΔTLI = Change in Tucker-Lewis Index from the previous model; ΔRMSEA = Change in Root Mean Square Error of Approximation from the previous model. [a] The fully constrained model was run with a Bayesian approach: 10,000 iterations, with restraints on items Ve1, Re4, Pe1, and Ce4. [b] The fully constrained model was run with a Bayesian approach: 10,000 iterations, with restraints on items v3, r2, p4 and c5.

Summary and Implications. In summary, the results confirm that the measurement invariance assumption was met for the OCS. The configural, metric, and scalar models all exhibited an adequate fit across the tested constraints, thereby highlighting the stability of the measurement properties across different groups. Although the RMSEA values exceeded the conventional threshold of .08, thus indicating a potential concern for model fit, this observation should be contextualised within the broader analytical framework. The minimal changes in CFI, TLI, and RMSEA between the models, which are typically within the accepted ranges for establishing invariance, further affirm the evidence for measurement invariance. The application of a Bayesian approach, with specific restraints on items in the fully constrained models, also enhanced the analysis (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2021). These findings validate and reinforce the robustness of the newly developed measurement instrument for the OCS, enhancing the comparability and reliability of the measurements.

5.3. Phase 3: Nomological Network Validity

The third phase focuses on the nomological network of the OCS. Initially, this section evaluates the convergent and discriminant validity of both scales and their subscales through bivariate correlations. Discriminant validity is then examined to distinguish the new scales from existing cynicism measures. The section proceeds to explore the nomological network predictors, using correlations and regression analyses to investigate employee dispositional factors, work climate, and job nature. Finally, this section discusses the outcomes within the nomological network, specifically addressing experienced emotional states and organisational outcomes. Overall, this phase aims to situate the OCS within a broader theoretical framework, thereby deepening our understanding of organisational cynicism.

5.3.1. OCS and OCS Subscales Validity Results

I used bivariate correlations for the convergent and discriminant validity, and CFA for discriminant validity of the newly developed OCS and its subscales by employing SPSS v26 for analysis and the R package v2023.03.1+446 for computing correlations. Specifically, bivariate correlations proposed support for convergent validity through congruence with established measures. I then examined discriminant validity of the OCS items against existing cynicism measurement items, to demonstrate the scales' distinctiveness. Additionally, it ascertained discriminant validity through correlations with theoretically unrelated constructs like musculoskeletal health, and spiritual wellbeing. The detailed correlation findings are presented in Table 5.11, which includes mean scores and SDs. Correlations were interpreted using Cohen's (1988) criteria: correlations exceeding .30 were categorised as moderate, and greater than .50 were considered large. Significantly large correlations are highlighted in bold in the table. Empirical insights on the convergent and discriminant validity is elaborated upon in subsequent sections.

Convergent Validity. As expected significant positive correlations were observed between the OCS and several existing cynicism scales at both Times 1 and 2. Specifically, the OCS correlated with the unpublished Brandes employee cynicism scale (r = .57 to .78, p <.01) and the Brooks and Vance organisational cynicism scale (r = .60 to .85, p <.01). Additional significant correlations were found with the MBI-GS cynicism subscale (r = .47 to .68, p <.01) and the mental distancing subscale (BAT) (r = .48 to .69, p <.01). These results provide support for H1a by demonstrating that these scales exhibited moderate to large convergent validity with the OCS.

Table 5.11

Study 3 OCS: Correlations, Means and SDs to Pre-existing Cynicism Measures and Direct Behavioural Outcomes (n = 266)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Organisational Cynicism Scale														
1. OCS T1 (overall)	3.23	1.38	(0.97)											
2. *OCS - Adopt Change Subscale T1*	3.21	1.45	**.82****	(0.94)										
3. *OCS - Be Proactive Subscale T1*	3.45	1.79	**.89****	**.63****	(0.98)									
4. *OCS – Relationships Subscale T1*	3.14	1.49	**.83****	**.58****	**.65****	(0.93)								
5. *OCS - Voice Subscale T1*	3.12	1.72	**.88****	**.62****	**.71****	**.62****	(0.98)							
6. OCS T2 (overall)	3.31	1.34	**.69****	**.55****	**.62****	**.55****	**.62****	(0.97)						
7. *OCS - Adopt Change Subscale T2*	3.17	1.42	**.59****	**.58****	**.55****	.40**	**.50****	**.84****	(0.94)					
8. *OCS - Be Proactive Subscale T2*	3.58	1.79	**.58****	.42**	**.58****	.42**	**.53****	**.89****	**.64****	(0.98)				
9. *OCS - Relationships Subscale T2*	3.13	1.42	**.58****	.44**	.45**	**.62****	.47**	**.77****	**.59****	**.54****	(0.93)			
10. *OCS - Voice Subscale T2*	3.35	1.69	**.59****	.46**	**.53****	.43**	**.60****	**.89****	**.65****	**.77****	**.55****	(0.98)		
Pre-existing Cynicism Measures (Convergence to Organisational Cynicism Scale)														
11. Brandes Scale T1	3.31	1.48	**.76****	**.64****	**.71****	**.56****	**.67****	**.61****	**.58****	.50**	.45**	**.56****	(0.96)	
12. Brooks & Vance T1	3.58	1.24	**.79****	**.68****	**.73****	**.54****	**.71****	**.68****	**.64****	**.57****	.50**	**.61****	**.81****	(0.82)
13. MBI-GS Cynicism T1	3.47	1.83	**.63****	.50**	**.61****	.49**	**.55****	**.57****	**.53****	.48**	.45**	.47**	**.69****	**.65****
14. Mental Distancing T1	2.49	0.96	**.64****	**.51****	**.60****	.50**	**.56****	**.60****	**.54****	**.52****	.48**	.50**	**.70****	**.65****
15. Resistance to Change T1	3.49	0.84	.26**	.23**	.23**	.20**	.22**	.29**	.24**	.23**	.21**	.30**	.27**	.26**
16. Cynical Self Rate Item T1 (*n* = 261)	5.53	2.63	.37**	.30**	.35**	.27**	.32**	.41**	.40**	.30**	.32**	.38**	.40**	.37**
17. Brandes Scale T2	3.29	1.48	**.57****	**.52****	**.51****	.39**	**.51****	**.78****	**.71****	**.69****	**.52****	**.72****	**.70****	**.65****
18. Brooks & Vance T2	3.61	1.25	**.60****	**.52****	**.56****	.40**	**.55****	**.85****	**.72****	**.76****	**.55****	**.82****	**.57****	**.68****
19. MBI-GS Cynicism T2	3.58	1.74	.47**	.38**	.42**	.41**	.40**	**.68****	**.58****	**.60****	**.55****	**.57****	.47**	.49**
20. Resistance to Change T2	3.49	0.89	.21**	.20**	.21**	.14*	.18**	.32**	.30**	.24**	.23**	.32**	.25**	.27**
21. Mental Distancing T2	2.53	1.00	.48**	.38**	.43**	.38**	.45**	**.69****	**.59****	**.62****	**.51****	**.61****	**.51****	**.54****
22. Cynical Self Rate Item T2 (*n* = 261)	5.64	2.73	.29**	.25**	.30**	.20**	.23**	.44**	.41**	.33**	.38**	.38**	.34**	.35**
Direct Behavioural Outcomes (Convergence to Organisational Cynicism Subscales)														
23. Promotive Voice T2	4.42	1.68	-.31**	-.22**	-.23**	-.20**	-.38**	-.41**	-.30**	-.36**	-.23**	-.47**	-.23**	-.27**
24. Prohibitive Voice T2	4.03	1.65	-.26**	-.16**	-.21**	-.17**	-.33**	-.35**	-.25**	-.33**	-.18**	-.39**	-.19**	-.23**
25. Proactive Socialisation (overall) T2	3.38	1.42	-.29**	-.26**	-.23**	-.21**	-.29**	-.46**	-.38**	-.44**	-.29**	-.42**	-.22**	-.30**
26. *Proactive Social General Subscale T2*	3.02	1.73	-.18**	-.15*	-.15*	-.17**	-.15*	-.28**	-.24**	-.26**	-.18**	-.25**	-0.11	-.18**
27. *Proactive Social Network Subscale T2*	3.64	1.61	-.26**	-.24**	-.18**	-.18**	-.28**	-.40**	-.32**	-.39**	-.28**	-.36**	-.20**	-.27**
28. Proactive Workplace Beh T2 (PWB overall)	4.51	1.49	-.32**	-.25**	-.31**	-.19**	-.34**	-.48**	-.36**	-.48**	-.26**	-.48**	-.33**	-.37**
29. *PWB Individual Task Subscale T2*	4.39	1.74	-.20**	-.13*	-.22**	-0.08	-.24**	-.31**	-.21**	-.33**	-0.12	-.36**	-.18**	-.24**
30. *PWB Organisation Adapt Subscale T2*	4.69	1.58	-.27**	-.23**	-.25**	-.16*	-.26**	-.40**	-.30**	-.44**	-.22**	-.38**	-.30**	-.32**
31. *PWB Org. Proficiency Subscale T2*	4.74	1.74	-.41**	-.33**	-.38**	-.29**	-.40**	**-.57****	-.48**	**-.54****	-.37**	**-.53****	-.44**	-.45**
32. *PWB Org. Proactivity Subscale T2*	4.13	1.82	-.25**	-.21**	-.23**	-.15*	-.27**	-.40**	-.30**	-.39**	-.22**	-.43**	-.27**	-.31**

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 (large) are highlighted in bold.

Variable	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Pre-existing Cynicism Measures (Convergence to Organisational Cynicism Scale)														
13. MBI-GS Cynicism T1	(0.93)													
14. Mental Distancing T1	**.87****	(0.91)												
15. Resistance to Change T1	.30**	.36**	(0.89)											
16. Cynical Self Rate Item T1 (*n* = 261)	.43**	.42**	.29**											
17. Brandes Scale T2	**.57****	**.60****	.25**	.38**	(0.96)									
18. Brooks & Vance T2	.49**	**.53****	.28**	.29**	**.81****	(0.83)								
19. MBI-GS Cynicism T2	**.66****	**.65****	.28**	.39**	**.70****	**.63****	(0.90)							
20. Resistance to Change T2	.32**	.34**	**.77****	.28**	.28**	.27**	.31**	(0.90)						
21. Mental Distancing T2	**.67****	**.71****	.32**	.36**	**.71****	**.65****	**.85****	.35**	(0.92)					
22. Cynical Self Rate Item T2 (*n* = 261)	.38**	.41**	.24**	**.65****	.42**	.38**	.44**	.26**	.44**	-				
Direct Behavioural Outcomes (Convergence to Organisational Cynicism Subscales)														
23. Promotive Voice T2	-.25**	-.26**	-.25**	-.14*	-.26**	-.37**	-.34**	-.25**	-.37**	-.20**	(0.94)			
24. Prohibitive Voice T2	-.25**	-.25**	-.27**	-.14*	-.23**	-.28**	-.32**	-.28**	-.35**	-.16*	**.81****	(0.94)		
25. Proactive Socialisation (overall) T2	-.34**	-.35**	-.22**	-.23**	-.34**	-.41**	-.38**	-.21**	-.42**	-.26**	.42**	.38**	(0.93)	
26. *Proactive Social General Subscale T2*	-.24**	-.26**	-.20**	-.24**	-.16**	-.20**	-.22**	-.22**	-.26**	-.17**	.21**	.17**	**.78****	(0.93)
27. *Proactive Social Network Subscale T2*	-.33**	-.33**	-.22**	-.20**	-.28**	-.36**	-.34**	-.20**	-.39**	-.24**	.39**	.38**	**.91****	**.58****
28. Proactive Workplace Behaviour T2 (PWB overall)	-.35**	-.34**	-.25**	-.17**	-.40**	-.43**	-.40**	-.28**	-.45**	-.21**	**.60****	**.55****	.47**	.27**
29. *PWB Individual Task Subscale T2*	-.21**	-.19**	-.23**	-.10	-.19**	-.28**	-.23**	-.24**	-.28**	-.10	**.57****	**.53****	.29**	.14*
30. *PWB Organisation Adapt Subscale T2*	-.32**	-.32**	-.23**	-.15*	-.37**	-.35**	-.35**	-.26**	-.39**	-.14*	.39**	.36**	.44**	.31**
31. *PWB Org Proficiency Subscale T2*	-.43**	-.43**	-.14*	-.19**	**-.55****	**-.55****	-.48**	-.19**	**-.51****	-.30**	.50**	.44**	**.54****	.30**
32. *PWB Org Proactivity Subscale T2*	-.29**	-.29**	-.27**	-.18**	-.31**	-.33**	-.36**	-.30**	-.40**	-.23**	**.59****	**.54****	.42**	.23**

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 (large) are highlighted in bold.

Variable	27	28	29	30	31	32
Direct Behavioural Outcomes (Convergence to Organisational Cynicism Subscales)						
27. *Proactive Social Networking Subscale T2*	(0.93)					
28. Proactive Workplace Behaviour T2 (PWB overall)	.45**	(0.95)				
29. *PWB Individual Task Subscale T2*	.30**	**.88****	(0.96)			
30. *PWB Organisation Adaptability Subscale T2*	.40**	**.86****	**.61****	(0.90)		
31. *PWB Organisation Proficiency Subscale T2*	**.51****	**.82****	**.56****	**.70****	(0.90)	
32. *PWB Organisation Proactivity Subscale T2*	.40**	**.90****	**.77****	**.77****	**.63****	(0.95)

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, T1 means time 1, and T2 means time 2, and. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 (large) are highlighted in bold.

OCS Subscales Convergent Validity. Each OCS subscale correlated significantly with their corresponding relevant measures. For instance, the *futile to adopt change subscale* exhibited a positive correlation with the *resistance to change scale* (r = .20 to .30, p <.01). Conversely, the *futile to be proactive subscale* correlated negatively with the *PWB scale* and its constituent subscales (r = −.31 to −.54, p <.01). The *futile to build deep relationships subscale* yielded negative correlations with the *proactive socialisation scale* and its *subscales* (r = −.17 to −.29, p <.01). Finally, the *futile to voice subscale* correlated negatively with the *promotive and prohibitive voice scales* (r = −.33 to −.47, p <.01).

Discriminant Validity of OCS Items Compared to Pre-existing Cynicism Items. The OCS items were initially examined with an EFA to explore the relationships to pre-existing cynicism scales. Specifically, items from the OCS subscale *build deep relationships* suggested they loaded onto factor 3, with factor loadings ranging from .813 to .885. In contrast, *adopt change* items seem to load on factor 5, with a range of .695 to .892. Items from the *voice subscale* show indications of loading on factor 6, with a range between .899 and .925. Interestingly, the *be proactive* items also loaded on factor 6 suggesting comparatively lower loadings, ranging from .598 to .634. As a point of comparison, items from the Brandes cynicism scale primarily clustered around factors 1 and 2, and those from the Brandes cynicism scale showed loadings on factors 1 and 6. Additionally, items from the mental distancing subscale (BAT) and the MBI cynicism subscale most frequently loaded onto factor 2 (refer to Table 5.12 for comprehensive factor loadings). Additional information related to the discriminant Validity are shown in the CFA Figure 5.4, the standardized direct effects Table 5.13. The CFA in Table 5.14 shows that the model that retains all scales as separate scales is the best fit to the data.

Summary and Implications. The distinct factor loadings signify that the OCS captures aspects of cynicism that might not be entirely represented in other established scales, providing researchers with an expanded tool for measuring various facets of cynicism. The EFA results lend support to the distinctiveness of the OCS's subscales. Items related to *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships, and adopt change* primarily load on separate factors, highlighting the multidimensional nature of the OCS.

Table 5.12

Study 3, Time 2: EFA for OCS and Existing Cynicism Items (n = 266)

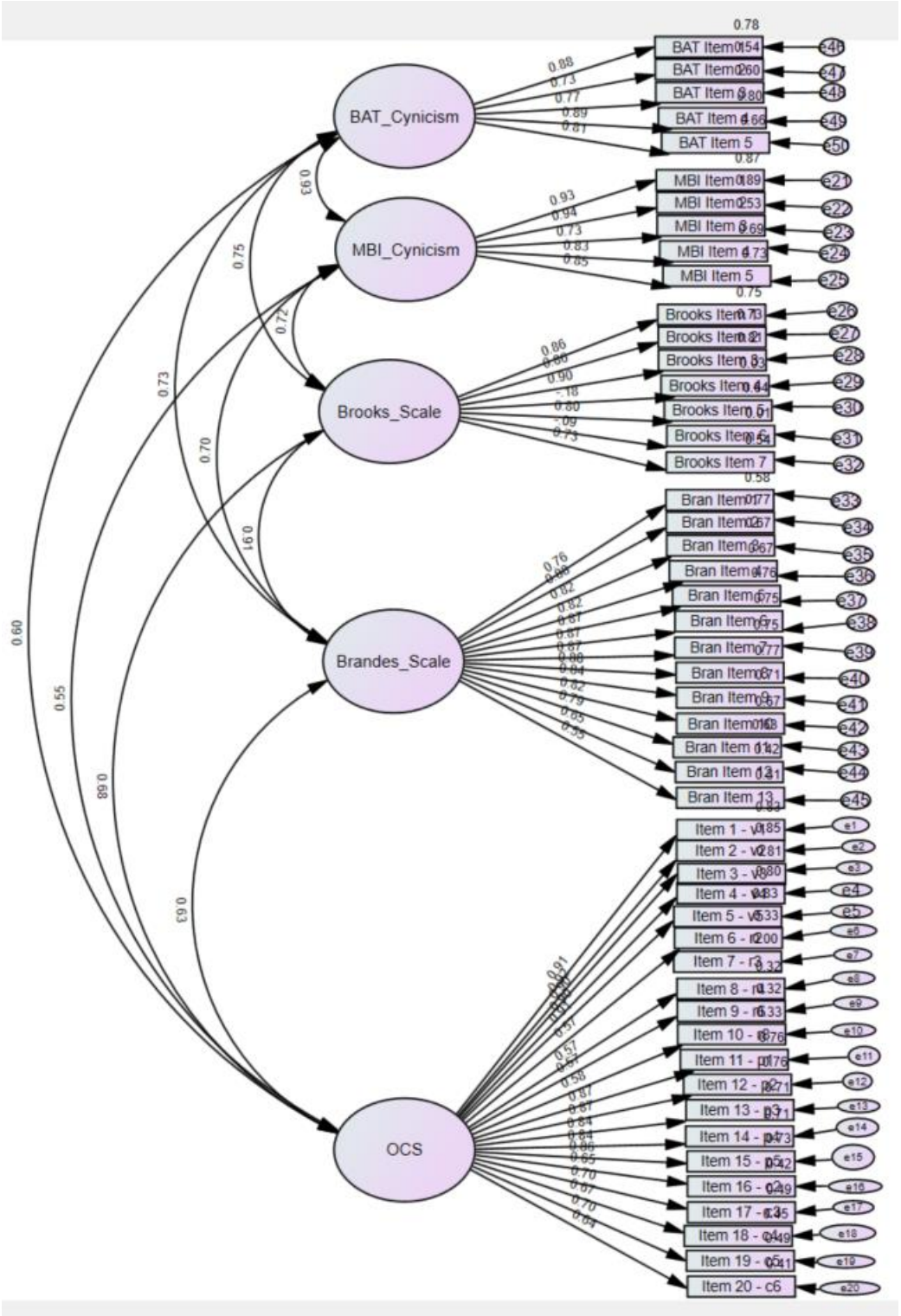
	Factor						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T2_cyn_relation2_2			0.885				
T2_cyn_relation2_4			0.849				
T2_cyn_relation1_4			0.843				
T2_cyn_relation1_3			0.839				
T2_cyn_relation1_2			0.813				
T2_cyn_voice1_3						0.925	
T2_cyn_voice2_1						0.915	
T2_cyn_voice2_2						0.912	
T2_cyn_voice1_1						0.906	
T2_cyn_voice1_2						0.899	
T2_cyn_change2_2					0.892		
T2_cyn_change2_1					0.853		
T2_cyn_change3_2					0.817		
T2_cyn_change_2					0.811		
T2_cyn_change3_1					0.695		
T2_cyn_proact1_1						0.634	
T2_cyn_proact1_2						0.630	
T2_cyn_proact2_1						0.619	
T2_cyn_proact1_4						0.618	
T2_cyn_proact1_3						0.598	
T2_bran_cyn_2	0.900						
T2_bran_cyn_5	0.863						
T2_bran_cyn_3	0.833						
T2_bran_cyn_4	0.813						
T2_bran_cyn_7	0.776						
T2_bran_cyn_6	0.727						
T2_bran_cyn_9	0.724						
T2_bran_cyn_1	0.705						
T2_bran_cyn_10	0.676						

T2_bran_cyn_8	0.755			
T2_bran_cyn_11	0.589			
T2_bran_cyn_12		0.569		
T2_bran_cyn_13				
T2_brooks_cyn_5	0.693			
T2_brooks_cyn_7	0.660			
T2_brooks_cyn_1				0.677
T2_brooks_cyn_6R				
T2_brooks_cyn_3				0.741
T2_brooks_cyn_2				0.646
T2_brooks_cyn_4R				
T2_bat_1		0.914		
T2_mbi_2		0.851		
T2_mbi_1		0.847		
T2_mbi_4		0.822		
T2_bat_3		0.820		
T2_mbi_5		0.811		
T2_bat_5		0.801		
T2_bat_4		0.801		
T2_bat_2		0.729		
T2_mbi_3		0.615		

Note. Extraction Method: PAF. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation.

Figure 5.4. *Study 3, CFA Cynicism Scales Discriminant Validity*

Study 3, CFA for OCS and Cynicism Scales – Discriminant Validity



Note. The CFA was conducted to examine the discriminant validity and model fit of the OCS. The CFA was performed using the AMOS software package, employing maximum likelihood estimation. The model fit indices were assessed to evaluate the goodness of fit between the proposed factor structure and the observed data (Schumacker & Lomax, 2016).

Table 5.13 *Study 2 OCS and Cynicism Scales CFA Direct Effect*

Study 2 OCS and Cynicism Scales CFA Direct Effect Standardised Items Loadings for Each Item

	BAT_Cyn	MBI_Cyn	Brooks	Brandes	OCS
T1_bat_5, item 5	.811	.000	.000	.000	.000
T1_bat_4, item 4	.894	.000	.000	.000	.000
T1_bat_3, item 3	.772	.000	.000	.000	.000
T1_bat_2, item 2	.733	.000	.000	.000	.000
T1_bat_1, item 1	.881	.000	.000	.000	.000
T1_mbi_5, item 5	.000	.855	.000	.000	.000
T1_mbi_4, item 4	.000	.834	.000	.000	.000
T1_mbi_3, item 3	.000	.730	.000	.000	.000
T1_mbi_2, item 2	.000	.941	.000	.000	.000
T1_mbi_1, item 1	.000	.934	.000	.000	.000
T1_brooks_cyn_7	.000	.000	.732	.000	.000
T1_brooks_cyn_6	.000	.000	-.092	.000	.000
T1_brooks_cyn_5	.000	.000	.799	.000	.000
T1_brooks_cyn_4	.000	.000	-.177	.000	.000
T1_brooks_cyn_3	.000	.000	.901	.000	.000
T1_brooks_cyn_2	.000	.000	.857	.000	.000
T1_brooks_cyn_1	.000	.000	.864	.000	.000
T1_bran_cyn_13	.000	.000	.000	.553	.000
T1_bran_cyn_12	.000	.000	.000	.650	.000
T1_bran_cyn_11	.000	.000	.000	.794	.000
T1_bran_cyn_10	.000	.000	.000	.817	.000
T1_bran_cyn_9	.000	.000	.000	.844	.000
T1_bran_cyn_8	.000	.000	.000	.878	.000
T1_bran_cyn_7	.000	.000	.000	.866	.000
T1_bran_cyn_6	.000	.000	.000	.866	.000
T1_bran_cyn_5	.000	.000	.000	.870	.000
T1_bran_cyn_4	.000	.000	.000	.816	.000
T1_bran_cyn_3	.000	.000	.000	.821	.000
T1_bran_cyn_2	.000	.000	.000	.878	.000
T1_bran_cyn_1	.000	.000	.000	.762	.000
T2_cyn_voice1_3, item 5	.000	.000	.000	.000	.902
T2_cyn_change3_2, item 20	.000	.000	.000	.000	.641
T2_cyn_change3_1, item 19	.000	.000	.000	.000	.702
T2_cyn_change2_2, item 18	.000	.000	.000	.000	.671
T2_cyn_change_2, item 17	.000	.000	.000	.000	.649
T2_cyn_change2_1, item 16	.000	.000	.000	.000	.697
T2_cyn_proact2_1, item 15	.000	.000	.000	.000	.857
T2_cyn_proact1_3, item 13	.000	.000	.000	.000	.841
T2_cyn_proact1_4, item 14	.000	.000	.000	.000	.842

	BAT_Cyn	MBI_Cyn	Brooks	Brandes	OCS
T2_cyn_proact1_2, item 12	.000	.000	.000	.000	.871
T2_cyn_proact1_1, item 11	.000	.000	.000	.000	.871
T2_cyn_relation2_4, item 10	.000	.000	.000	.000	.575
T2_cyn_relation2_2, item 9	.000	.000	.000	.000	.569
T2_cyn_relation1_4, item 8	.000	.000	.000	.000	.566
T2_cyn_relation1_3, item 7	.000	.000	.000	.000	.574
T2_cyn_relation1_2, item 6	.000	.000	.000	.000	.573
T2_cyn_voice2_1 item 3	.000	.000	.000	.000	.897
T2_cyn_voice2_2, item 4	.000	.000	.000	.000	.913
T2_cyn_voice1_1, item 1	.000	.000	.000	.000	.912
T2_cyn_voice1_2, item 2	.000	.000	.000	.000	.923

Table 5.14

Study 3: OCS and Existing Scales: CFA Model Fit Comparison for Discriminant Validity (n = 266, Time 2 sample)

Model, Study 3 (*n* = 266)	*df*	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	NFI	GFI
Theoretically sound 3 factor model: OCS, MBI and Brandes Scale						
5-factor model: OCS, Brooks, Brandes, BAT, MBI,	1166	.119	.719	.705	.670	.468
4 factor model: OCS, Brooks, Brandes, BAT & MBI (combined)	1170	.120	.716	.702	.667	.468
3 factor model: OCS, Brooks & Brandes (combined), BAT & MBI (combined)	1173	.121	.707	.694	.659	.465
2 factor model: OCS, Brooks & Brandes & BAT & MBI (combined)	1175	.134	.644	.629	.600	.397

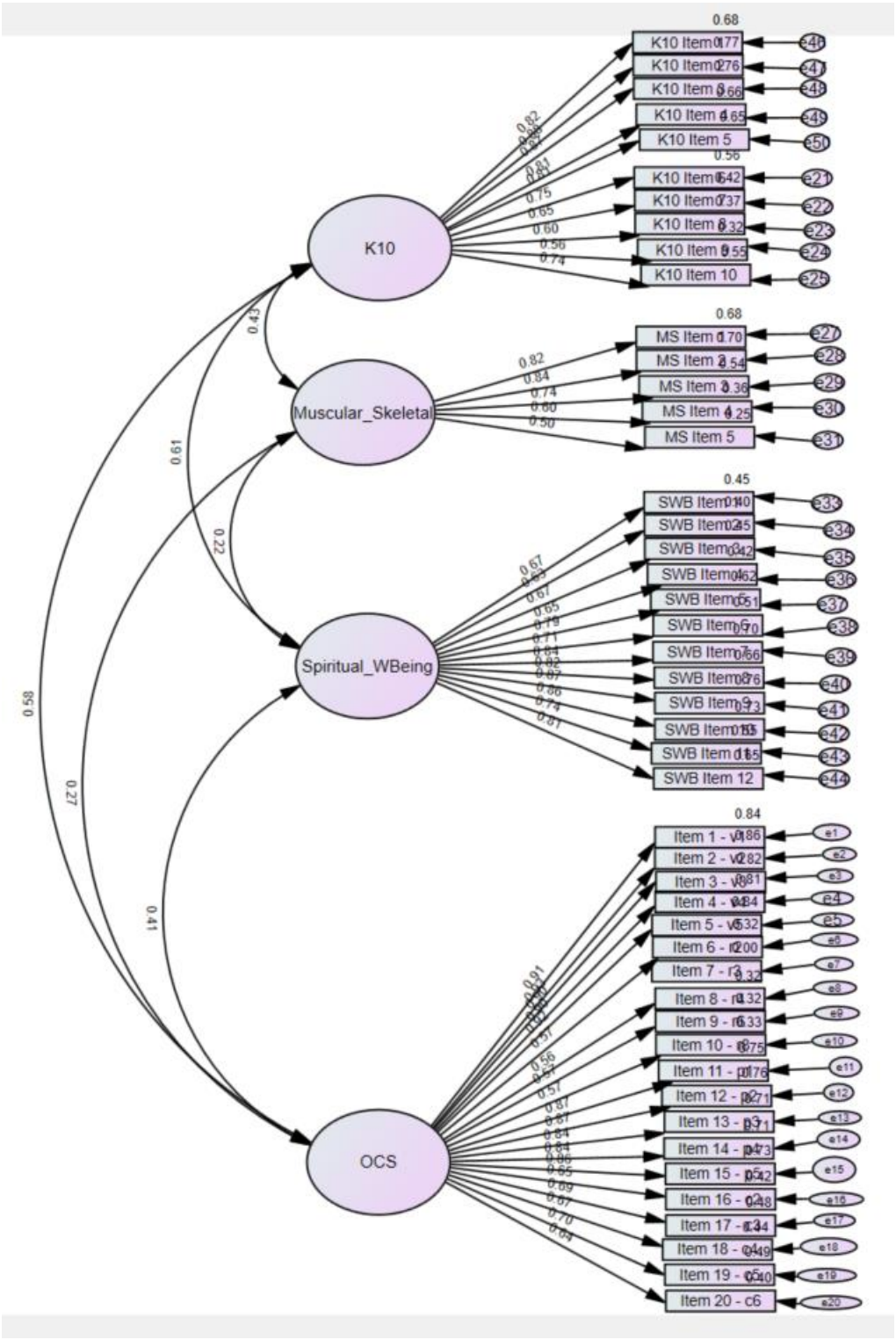
Note. Absolute fit indices: χ^2/df = normed Chi-square statistic; $\Delta\chi^2$ = change in Chi-square statistic; ΔCFI = change in CFI.

The CFA results presented in Table 5.14 compare the model fit of various factor models involving the OCS and other existing scales (Brooks, Brandes, BAT, MBI) to assess discriminant validity. Discriminant validity refers to the extent to which a scale is distinct from other scales measuring different constructs. Evaluating the RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), we know that values close to .06 or less indicate a good fit, and values up to .08 represent a reasonable fit. The reported RMSEA values (.119 to .134) are considerably higher than the acceptable threshold, suggesting poor model fit across all models. In modelling all existing scales in one CFA analysis- it became evident that existing scales have extremely high overlap such that they have factor correlations higher than r=.90. For example, BAT and MBI are correlated .93 and Brookes and Brandes are correlated .91. Given these obvious conceptual and statistical overlap, to truly show the discriminant validity of my OCS scale with past scales, I ran a 3 factor model with only OCS, MBI and Brandes – to show distinct measures.

Further CFA analyses, illustrated in Figure 5.5 were performed to establish the discriminant validity of the OCS against theoretically distinct constructs at Time 2. As hypothesized, the OCS showed moderate correlations with musculoskeletal health ($r = .25$, $p < .05$), spiritual wellbeing ($r = .46$, $p < .05$), and K10 anxiety ($r = .35$, $p < .05$) subscales, supporting its discriminant validity. A strong correlation was observed with the K10 depression subscale ($r = .58$, $p < .05$), suggesting a potential overlap that might indicate convergent rather than discriminant validity between the OCS and depression as measured by the K10 subscale. The results of the CFA Model Fit Comparison presented in Table 5.15 for standardized direct loadings, revealed model fit indices for the following 3 factors: OCS, Brandes and Brookes (combined) and MBI and BAT (combined), ($df = 1173$, $CFI = .707$, $TLI = .694$, $GFI = .465$, $RMSEA = .121$) and demonstrate discrimination validity between my scales and the most unique exiting cynicism scales. Consequently, the OCS demonstrated

Figure 5.5. *Study 3, CFA OCS Discriminant Validity*

Study 3, CFA for OCS and Cynicism Outcomes – Discriminant Validity



Note. The CFA was conducted to examine the discriminant validity and model fit of the OCS. The CFA was performed using the AMOS software package, employing maximum likelihood estimation. The model fit indices were assessed to evaluate the goodness of fit between the proposed factor structure and the observed data (Schumacker & Lomax, 2016).

Table 5.15 *Study 2 OCS and Cynicism Scales CFA Direct Effect*

Study 2 OCS and Cynicism Scales CFA Direct Effect Standardised Items Loadings for Each Item

	K10	Muscular_ Skeletal	Spiritual_ WBeing	OCS
T2_K10_5	.809	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_4	.810	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_3	.872	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_2	.875	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_1	.823	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_10	.740	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_9	.564	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_8	.605	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_7	.646	.000	.000	.000
T2_K10_6	.750	.000	.000	.000
T2_MS_wrists_5	.000	.495	.000	.000
T2_MS_head_4	.000	.601	.000	.000
T2_MS_lback_3	.000	.737	.000	.000
T2_MS_uback_2	.000	.837	.000	.000
T2_MS_neck_1	.000	.825	.000	.000
T1_swellbe_12	.000	.000	.806	.000
T1_swellbe_11	.000	.000	.739	.000
T1_swellbe_10	.000	.000	.856	.000
T1_swellbe_9	.000	.000	.873	.000
T1_swellbe_8	.000	.000	.815	.000
T1_swellbe_7	.000	.000	.835	.000
T1_swellbe_6	.000	.000	.711	.000
T1_swellbe_5	.000	.000	.786	.000
T1_swellbe_4	.000	.000	.649	.000
T1_swellbe_3	.000	.000	.674	.000
T1_swellbe_2	.000	.000	.630	.000
T1_swellbe_1	.000	.000	.669	.000
T2_cyn_voice1_3, item 3	.000	.000	.000	.904
T2_cyn_chang3_2 item 20	.000	.000	.000	.635
T2_cyn_chang3_1 item 19	.000	.000	.000	.698
T2_cyn_chang2_2, item 18	.000	.000	.000	.666
T2_cyn_change_2 item 16	.000	.000	.000	.646
T2_cyn_chang2_1 item 17	.000	.000	.000	.692
T2_cyn_proact2_1 item 15	.000	.000	.000	.856
T2_cyn_proact1_3 item 13	.000	.000	.000	.840
T2_cyn_proact1_4 item 14	.000	.000	.000	.841
T2_cyn_proact1_2 item 12	.000	.000	.000	.869
T2_cyn_proact1_1 item 11	.000	.000	.000	.869
T2_cyn_relatio2_4 item 10	.000	.000	.000	.574

	K10	Muscular_ Skeletal	Spiritual_ WBeing	OCS
T2_cyn_relation2_2 item 9	.000	.000	.000	.567
T2_cyn_relation1_4 item 8	.000	.000	.000	.562
T2_cyn_relation1_3 item 7	.000	.000	.000	.572
T2_cyn_relatio1_2, item 6	.000	.000	.000	.570
T2_cyn_voice2_1, item 4	.000	.000	.000	.899
T2_cyn_voice2_2, item 5	.000	.000	.000	.916
T2_cyn_voice1_1, item 1	.000	.000	.000	.915
T2_cyn_voice1_2, item 2	.000	.000	.000	.925

that discriminant validity was supported, except in the case of the K10 depression subscale at Time 2, which provided partial support for H1b.

Summary and Implications. In summary, the OCS and its subscales demonstrated convergent, discriminant, and divergent validity. Bivariate correlations confirmed convergent validity with existing cynicism scales, discriminant validity was supported by EFA results, distinguishing OCS from other cynicism v, while divergent validity was mostly established, except for an unexpected strong correlation with the K10 depression subscale. These findings collectively suggest that the OCS is a reliable tool for measuring organisational cynicism, and fully support H1a, and partially support H1b.

Table 5.16

Study 3 OCS Correlations to Employee Dispositional Predictor Variables (n = 266)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Organisational Cynicism Scale												
1. OCS T1 (overall)	3.23	1.38	(0.97)									
2. *OCS - Adopt Change Subscale T1*	3.21	1.45	**.82****	(0.94)								
3. *OCS - Be Proactive Subscale T1*	3.45	1.79	**.89****	**.63****	(0.98)							
4. *OCS – Relationships Subscale T1*	3.14	1.49	**.83****	**.58****	**.65****	(0.93)						
5. *OCS - Voice Subscale T1*	3.12	1.72	**.88****	**.62****	**.71****	**.62****	(0.98)					
6. OCS T2 (overall)	3.31	1.34	**.69****	**.55****	**.62****	**.55****	**.62****	(0.97)				
7. *OCS - Adopt Change Subscale T2*	3.17	1.42	**.59****	**.58****	**.55****	.40**	**.50****	**.84****	(0.94)			
8. *OCS - Be Proactive Subscale T2*	3.58	1.79	**.58****	.42**	**.58****	.42**	**.53****	**.89****	**.64****	(0.98)		
9. *OCS - Relationships Subscale T2*	3.13	1.42	**.58****	.44**	.45**	**.62****	.47**	**.77****	**.59****	**.54****	(0.93)	
10. *OCS - Voice Subscale T2*	3.35	1.69	**.59****	.46**	**.53****	.43**	**.60****	**.89****	**.65****	**.77****	**.55****	(0.98)
Employee Dispositional Variables												
11. Hope T1	5.31	0.98	-.22**	-.15*	-.23**	-.11	-.22**	-.32**	-.25**	-.30**	-.22**	-.32**
12. PANAS – Negative Affect T1	1.81	0.97	**.56****	.42**	**.51****	.45**	**.53****	.43**	.37**	.34**	.34**	.41**
13. PANAS – Positive Affect T1	3.83	1.69	-.52**	-.43**	**-.50****	-.38**	**-.46****	-.49**	-.46**	-.45**	-.36**	-.40**
14. Proactive Personality T1	3.32	0.88	-.21**	-.16**	-.23**	-.09	-.22**	-.24**	-.23**	-.23**	-.10	-.25**
15. Resistance to Change T1	3.49	0.84	.26**	.23**	.23**	.20**	.22**	.29**	.24**	.23**	.21**	.30**
16. Cognitive & Affect Mindfulness T1	2.96	0.47	-.25**	-.16*	-.25**	-.20**	-.22**	-.31**	-.23**	-.27**	-.25**	-.29**
17. Hope T2	5.18	1.04	-.27**	-.18**	-.26**	-.16**	-.32**	-.39**	-.32**	-.37**	-.23**	-.38**
18. PANAS – Negative Affect T2	1.74	0.91	.36**	.30**	.32**	.27**	.34**	**.51****	.42**	.43**	.38**	.49**
19. Proactive Personality T2	3.11	0.94	-.22**	-.18**	-.21**	-.09	-.25**	-.32**	-.28**	-.30**	-.15*	-.34**
20. Resistance to Change T2	3.49	0.89	.21**	.20**	.21**	.14*	.18**	.32**	.30**	.24**	.23**	.32**
21. Cognitive & Affect Mindfulness T2	2.90	0.49	-.26**	-.20**	-.24**	-.19**	-.24**	-.34**	-.30**	-.28**	-.23**	-.33**

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 (large) are highlighted in bold.

Variable	11	12	13	14	15	16
Employee Dispositional Variables						
11. Hope T1	(0.94)					
12. PANAS – Negative Affect T1	-.29**	(0.91)				
13. PANAS – Positive Affect T1	.40**	-.47**	(0.97)			
14. Proactive Personality T1	**.68****	-.16*	.37**	(0.89)		
15. Resistance to Change T1	-.40**	.34**	-.30**	-.35**	(0.89)	
16. Cognitive & Affect Mindfulness T1	.57**	-.32**	.34**	.45**	-.46**	(0.83)

17. Hope T2	**.75****	-.32**	.36**	.57**	-.38**	**.58****
18. PANAS – Negative Affect T2	-.32**	**.60****	-.34**	-.17**	.34**	-.38**
19. Proactive Personality T2	**.61****	-.20**	.33**	**.71****	-.34**	.44**
20. Resistance to Change T2	-.36**	.32**	-.30**	-.33**	**.77****	-.42**
21. Cognitive & Affect Mindfulness T2	**.51****	-.37**	.34**	.41**	-.40**	**.78****

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 (large) are highlighted in bold.

Variable	17	18	19	20	21
Employee Dispositional Variables					
17. Hope T2	(0.95)				
18. PANAS – Negative Affect T2	-.37**	(0.91)			
19. Proactive Personality T2	.71**	-.28**	(0.91)		
20. Resistance to Change T2	-.36**	.38**	-.30**	(0.90)	
21. Cognitive & Affect Mindfulness T2	**.64****	-.44**	**.53****	-.42**	(0.84)

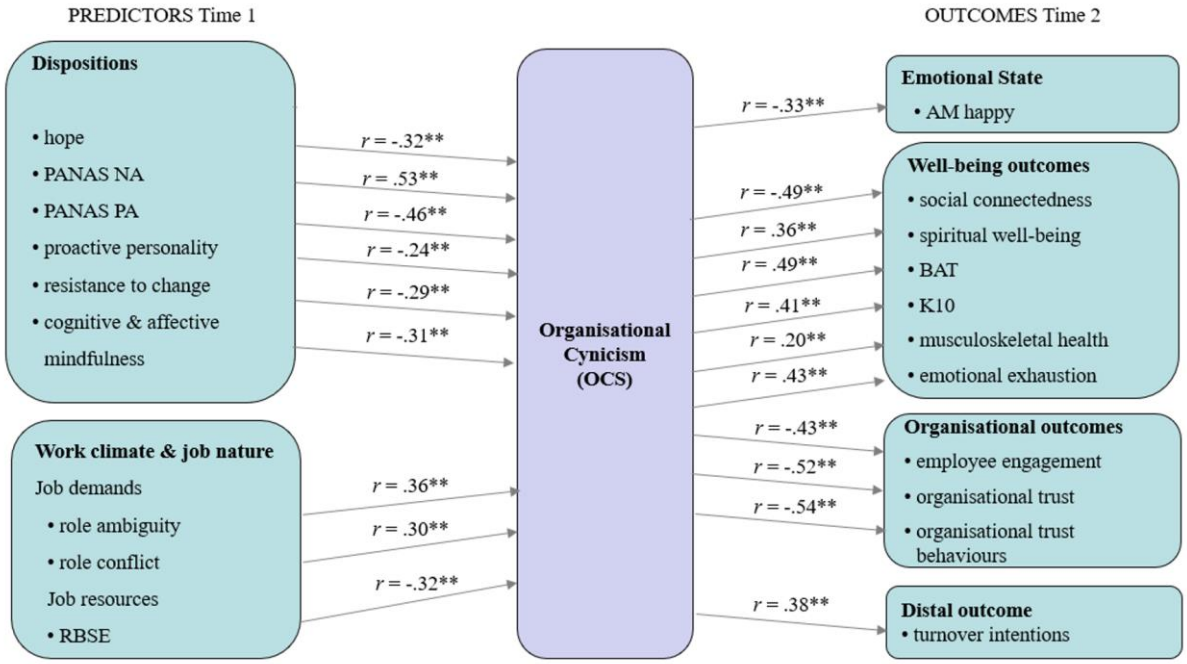
Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 (large) are highlighted in bold.

5.3.2. Nomological Network Validity Results

This section explores the OCS's nomological network validity Study 3 results, which is the final part of the Phase 3 analyses. It is divided into two main sections: nomological network predictors and nomological network outcomes of OCS. The first section investigates predictive variables, including employee dispositions, and workplace conditions. These predictors are analysed through correlation and regression models. The second section examines the resultant outcomes of OCS within its nomological framework, focusing on emotional states, employee well-being, and organisational variables. The analytical approach uses correlation analyses, with the overarching goal of highlighting the associations between OCS and other relevant constructs. Figure 5.6 presents the nomological network OCS predictor and outcomes results that are discussed in the following sections.

Figure 5.6.

Study 3, Time 1 and 2 Nomological Network of OCS Predictors and Outcomes



Note. *r* = correlations, ** indicates $p < .01$. *** indicates $p < .001$

Nomological Network Predictors. The following analysis explores the predictive factors for OCS, organised under three main categories: employee dispositional predictors, work climate and nature variables. The first section explores how PANAS negative affect function as predictors of OCS, employing correlation and regression analyses. The subsequent section investigates the role of situational variables such as role ambiguity, role conflict, and RBSE in predicting OCS.

Employee Dispositional Predictors: Correlations and Regression Analyses. The OCS at Time 2 significantly positively correlates with PANAS negative affect at Time 1 (r = .43, p < .01). PANAS negative affect at Time 1 is also a significant predictor of OCS at Time 2 (β = .43, $t(264) = 7.66$, $p < .001$) and accounts for a significant variance (R^2 = .18, $F(1, 264) = 58.73$, $p < .001$). Bivariate correlation coefficients for all variables examined to validate the employee dispositional predictor variables are reported in Table 5.16, calculated using SPSS v26.

Summary and Implications. These results support H2 and suggest that individual predispositions as measured by PANAS negative affect, play crucial roles in shaping employees' cynicism towards organisations over time.

Work Climate and Job Nature Predictors: Correlations and Regression Analyses. The OCS at Time 2 significantly positively correlates with work climate and job nature predictors' role ambiguity and role conflict at Time 1 (r = .36, p < .01; r = .30, p < .01,

Summary and Implications. These results support H2 and indicate that the organisational environment, specifically role clarity, conflicts, and an individual's self-esteem in their role, are pivotal in influencing their perceptions of and cynicism towards their workplace.

respectively), but negatively correlates with RBSE at Time 1 (r = -.32, p < .01). Regression analyses reveal role ambiguity at Time 1 as a significant positive predictor of OCS at Time 2 (β = .36, t(264) = 6.19, p < .001), accounting for a portion of variance in OCS scores (R^2 = .13, F(1, 264) = 38.25, p < .001). Similarly, role conflict at Time 1 is a significant predictor of OCS at Time 2 (β = .30, t(264) = 5.05, p < .001) and accounts for a significant portion of the variance (R^2 = .09, F(1, 264) = 25.51, p < .001). Conversely, RBSE at Time 1 serves as a significant negative predictor of OCS at Time 2 (β = -.32, t(264) = -5.49, p < .001) and accounts for a variance in OCS scores (R^2 = .10, F(1, 264) = 30.11, p < .001). Bivariate correlation coefficients for all variables examined to validate the nomological predictors of work climate and job nature are reported in Table 5.17.

Nomological Network Outcomes. This section delineates the outcomes associated with the OCS within its nomological network, encompassing employee well-being, organisational outcomes, and distal outcomes. Correlation analyses serve as the primary analytical method. Bivariate correlation coefficients for all variables examined to validate the nomological network are reported in Table 5.18. The overarching aim was to examine the associations between OCS and other theoretically congruent constructs within a predefined theoretical framework.

Employee Well-being Outcomes. The OCS at Time 1 significantly positively correlated with facets of employee well-being at Time 2. Specifically, in terms of employee well-being, the OCS at Time 1 correlated positively with the spirituality index (r = .36, p < .01), the BAT (r = .49, p < .01), and the MBI exhaustion subscale (r = .43, p < .01). It also exhibited significant positive correlations with musculoskeletal health (r = .20, p < .01) and psychological distress, including its subscales for anxiety and depression (r = .41, r = .31, r = .41, p < .01, respectively). Conversely, it negatively correlated with social connectedness (r = - .49, p < .01).

Table 5.17

Study 3 OCS: Correlations to Work Climate and Job Nature Predictors Variables (n = 266)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Organisational Cynicism Scale														
1. OCS T1 (overall)	3.23	1.38	(0.97)											
2. *OCS - Adopt Change Subscale T1*	3.21	1.45	**.82****	(0.94)										
3. *OCS - Be Proactive Subscale T1*	3.45	1.79	**.89****	**.63****	(0.98)									
4. *OCS – Relationships Subscale T1*	3.14	1.49	**.83****	**.58****	**.65****	(0.93)								
5. *OCS - Voice Subscale T1*	3.12	1.72	**.88****	**.62****	**.71****	**.62****	(0.98)							
6. OCS T2 (overall)	3.31	1.34	**.69****	**.55****	**.62****	**.55****	**.62****	(0.97)						
7. *OCS - Adopt Change Subscale T2*	3.17	1.42	**.59****	**.58****	**.55****	.40**	**.50****	**.84****	(0.94)					
8. *OCS - Be Proactive Subscale T2*	3.58	1.79	**.58****	.42**	**.58****	.42**	**.53****	**.89****	**.64****	(0.98)				
9. *OCS - Relationships Subscale T2*	3.13	1.42	**.58****	.44**	.45**	**.62****	.47**	**.77****	**.59****	**.54****	(0.93)			
10. *OCS - Voice Subscale T2*	3.35	1.69	**.59****	.46**	**.53****	.43**	**.60****	**.89****	**.65****	**.77****	**.55****	(0.98)		
Work Climate and Job Nature Variables														
11. Role Ambiguity T1	1.98	0.99	.30**	.28**	.26**	.23**	.26**	.36**	.31**	.31**	.26**	.32**	(0.90)	
12. Role Conflict T1	3.19	1.31	.43**	.40**	.40**	.39**	.29**	.30**	.32**	.23**	.21**	.26**	.36**	(0.89)
13. Role Breadth Self Efficacy T1	3.52	0.99	-.37**	-.24**	-.34**	-.27**	-.39**	-.32**	-.28**	-.28**	-.21**	-.31**	-.26**	.01
14. Role Ambiguity T2	1.96	0.94	.31**	.29**	.29**	.24**	.25**	.35**	.34**	.32**	.26**	.26**	**.62****	.31**
15. Role Conflict T2	3.13	1.35	.38**	.33**	.33**	.35**	.30**	.50**	.41**	.41**	.38**	.48**	.41**	**.59****
16. Role Breadth Self Efficacy T2	3.52	1.06	-.34**	-.22**	-.31**	-.24**	-.38**	-.35**	-.26**	-.31**	-.22**	-.39**	-.26**	.05
17. Cynical Workplace Climate T2	3.54	1.66	**.62****	**.56****	**.57****	.39**	**.58****	**.84****	**.77****	**.75****	**.52****	**.79****	.37**	.31**
18. Witnessed Disrespectful Behaviours T2	1.77	1.11	.39**	.27**	.36**	.34**	.35**	.47**	.39**	.41**	.37**	.43**	.20**	.32**

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 are highlighted in bold.

Variable	13	14	15	16	17	18
Work Climate and Job Nature Variables						
13. Role Breadth Self Efficacy T1	(0.92)					
14. Role Ambiguity T2	-.20**	(0.89)				
15. Role Conflict T2	-.01	.45**	(0.91)			
16. Role Breadth Self Efficacy T2	**.70****	-.29**	-.07	(0.93)		
17. Cynical Workplace Climate T2	-.26**	.33**	.49**	-.32**	(0.98)	
18. Witnessed Disrespectful Behaviours T2	.01	.24**	.52**	-.06	.43**	(0.90)

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 are highlighted in bold.

Table 5.18

Study 3 OCS: Correlations, Means and SDs to Outcomes (n = 266)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Organisational Cynicism Scale																	
1. OCS T1 (overall)	3.23	1.38	(0.97)														
2. *OCS Adopt Change Subscale T1*	3.21	1.45	**.82****	(0.94)													
3. *OCS - Be Proactive Subscale T1*	3.45	1.79	**.89****	**.63****	(0.98)												
4. *OCS – Relationships Subscale T1*	3.14	1.49	**.83****	**.58****	**.65****	(0.93)											
5. *OCS - Voice Subscale T1*	3.12	1.72	**.88****	**.62****	**.71****	**.62****	(0.98)										
6. OCS T2 (overall)	3.31	1.34	**.69****	**.55****	**.62****	**.55****	**.62****	(0.97)									
7. *OCS Adopt Change Subscale T2*	3.17	1.42	**.59****	**.58****	**.55****	.40**	**.50****	**.84****	(0.94)								
8. *OCS Be Proactive Subscale T2*	3.58	1.79	**.58****	.42**	**.58****	.42**	**.53****	**.89****	**.64****	(0.98)							
9. *OCS Relationships Subscale T2*	3.13	1.42	**.58****	.44**	.45**	**.62****	.47**	**.77****	**.59****	**.54****	(0.93)						
10. *OCS Voice Subscale T2*	3.35	1.69	**.59****	.46**	**.53****	.43**	**.60****	**.89****	**.65****	**.77****	**.55****	(0.98)					
Experienced Emotions States																	
11. Negative Disposition Items T1	2.37	1.58	**.64****	**.52****	**.59****	.49**	**.57****	**.52****	.49**	.43**	.40**	.47**	(0.97)				
12. Positive Disposition Items T1	3.68	1.63	**-.59****	-.50**	**-.58****	-.42**	**-.51****	**-.55****	**-.52****	**-.51****	-.38**	-.47**	**-.63****	(0.97)			
13. AM Happy Single Item T1	6.32	1.84	-.36**	-.26**	-.36**	-.30**	-.30**	-.38**	-.36**	-.32**	-.32**	-.30**	-.36**	.52**	-		
14. Negative Disposition Items T2	2.35	1.45	.47**	.41**	.43**	.31**	.44**	**.66****	**.59****	**.57****	.48**	**.61****	**.65****	-.50**	-.36**	(0.95)	
15. AM Happy Single Item T2	6.32	1.85	-.33**	-.22**	-.32**	-.28**	-.30**	-.45**	-.39**	-.40**	-.35**	-.38**	-.33**	**.51****	**.68****	-.43**	-
Employee Wellbeing																	
16. Social Connectedness T1	4.20	1.06	**-.53****	-.35**	-.49**	-.48**	-.48**	**-.57****	**-.53****	-.43**	**-.51****	-.49**	-.48**	**.57****	**.56****	-.43**	**.52****
17. Spiritual Wellbeing T1	2.26	0.91	**.37****	.25**	.37**	.26**	.36**	.42**	.36**	.37**	.35**	.37**	.31**	-.42**	**-.70****	.38**	**-.61****
18. Social Connectedness T2	4.30	1.10	-.49**	-.34**	-.44**	-.43**	-.45**	**-.65****	**-.57****	**-.53****	**-.56****	**-.58****	-.41**	**.53****	.45**	**-.55****	.49**
19. Spiritual Wellbeing T2	2.08	1.00	.36**	.24**	.34**	.28**	.35**	.46**	.40**	.39**	.36**	.42**	.31**	-.44**	**-.62****	.42**	**-.71****
20. Burnout Assessment Tool T2	2.35	0.72	.49**	.40**	.44**	.42**	.43**	**.66****	**.57****	**.57****	**.51****	**.61****	**.54****	**-.54****	-.50**	**.66****	**-.59****
21. Psych. Distress (K10) T2	1.87	0.76	.41**	.25**	.39**	.35**	.38**	**.54****	.46**	.48**	.38**	.50**	.48**	-.42**	**-.52****	**.55****	**-.62****
22. *K10 Anxiety Subscale T2*	1.80	0.76	.31**	.21**	.29**	.26**	.30**	.35**	.28**	.34**	.22**	.33**	.36**	-.27**	-.42**	.38**	-.45**
23. *K10 Depression Subscale T2*	2.30	1.05	.41**	.25**	.39**	.36**	.38**	**.58****	**.51****	**.51****	.42**	.53**	.49**	-.46**	**-.51****	**.57****	**-.64****
24. Musculoskeletal Health T2	3.10	1.39	.20**	.14*	.18**	.20**	.17**	.25**	.24**	.14*	.18**	.30**	.30**	-.17**	-.22**	.35**	-.28**
25. MBI-GS Exhaustion Subscale T2	3.97	1.81	.43**	.32**	.43**	.34**	.36**	**.59****	**.51****	**.55****	.40**	**.54****	.49**	**-.60****	-.49**	**.63****	**-.56****
Organisational Outcomes																	
26. Employee Engagement T1	4.56	1.60	**-.52****	-.42**	-.49**	-.38**	-.47**	-.49**	-.45**	-.45**	-.36**	-.40**	**-.55****	**.76****	.46**	-.39**	.45**
27. Organisational Trust T1	4.42	1.01	**-.68****	**-.54****	**-.65****	-.49**	**-.61****	**-.60****	**-.51****	**-.54****	-.42**	**-.54****	**-.53****	**.60****	.34**	-.48**	.41**
28. Employee Engagement T2	4.59	1.58	-.43**	-.36**	-.41**	-.31**	-.40**	**-.58****	**-.52****	**-.52****	-.40**	**-.51****	-.47**	**.63****	.44**	**-.57****	.50**
29. Organisational Trust T2	4.23	1.06	**-.52****	-.39**	-.49**	-.41**	-.49**	**-.71****	**-.55****	**-.65****	**-.54****	**-.66****	-.43**	**.51****	.30**	**-.58****	.39**

30. Behavioural Trust T2	4.04	1.66	**-.54****	-.45**	**-.52****	-.36**	-.49**	**-.73****	**-.65****	**-.67****	-.48**	**-.67****	-.46**	**.52****	.32**	**-.61****	.36**
Distal Outcomes																	
31. Turnover Intentions T2	3.11	2.00	.38**	.32**	.37**	.32**	.29**	**.60****	**.54****	**.52****	.45**	**.54****	.47**	-.50**	-.39**	**.67****	-.45**

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 are highlighted in bold. Variables that are in *italics* are subscales where the full scale has also been included in the correlation tables.

Variable	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Employee Wellbeing																
16. Social Connectedness T1	(0.95)															
17. Spiritual Wellbeing T1	**-.57****	(0.94)														
18. Social Connectedness T2	**.80****	**-.51****	(0.95)													
19. Spiritual Wellbeing T2	**-.52****	**.80****	**-.56****	(0.96)												
20. Burnout Assessment Tool T2	**-.53****	**.51****	**-.61****	**.60****	(0.92)											
21. Psychological Distress (K10) T2	**-.52****	**.59****	**-.58****	**.69****	**.78****	(0.93)										
22. *K10 – Anxiety Subscale T2*	-.37**	.48**	-.43**	**.56****	**.62****	**.86****	(0.87)									
23. *K10 – Depression Subscale T2*	-.54**	**.58****	**-.59****	**.67****	**.78****	**.96****	**.68****	(0.93)								
24. Musculoskeletal Health T2	-.26**	.22**	-.24**	.23**	.41**	.41**	.28**	.43**	(0.83)							
25. MBI-GS Exhaustion Subscale T2	-.44**	.45**	-.47**	**.54****	**.80****	**.64****	.45**	**.67****	.45**	(0.95)						
Organisational Outcomes																
26. Employee Engagement T1	**.54****	-.36**	.50**	-.38**	**-.56****	-.45**	-.29**	-.48**	-.18**	**-.51****	(0.96)					
27. Organisational Trust T1	**.51****	-.34**	**.51****	-.36**	-.45**	-.41**	-.33**	-.40**	-.09	-.45**	**.52****	(0.85)				
28. Employee Engagement T2	.48**	-.41**	**.57****	-.44**	**-.64****	-.50**	-.30**	**-.55****	-.25**	**-.57****	**.77****	.47**	(0.96)			
29. Organisational Trust T2	.45**	-.30**	**.55****	-.36**	**-.57****	-.46**	-.32**	-.48**	-.15*	**-.53****	.47**	**.69****	**.55****	(0.87)		
30. Behavioural Trust T2	.48**	-.36**	**.55****	-.38**	**-.56****	-.45**	-.30**	-.48**	-.24**	**-.51****	.47**	**.51****	**.62****	**.67****	(0.92)	
Distal Outcomes																
31. Turnover Intentions T2	-.42**	.38**	-.50**	.39**	**.61****	.50**	.30**	**.56****	.24**	**.59****	-.47**	-.40**	**-.63****	**-.55****	**-.54****	(0.94)

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively, and. * indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$, significant correlations >.50 are highlighted in bold.

Summary and Implications. Collectively, these correlations provide support for H3 and underscore the potential cascading effects of organisational cynicism on various aspects of employee well-being, emphasizing the importance of addressing cynicism in workplace settings.

Organisational and Distal Outcomes. Furthermore, the OCS at Time 1 yielded significant correlations with various organisational and distal outcomes. Specifically, it negatively correlated with employee engagement at Time 2 (r = - .43, p < .01), organisational trust at Time 2 (r = - .52, p < .01), and behavioural trust at Time 2 (r = - .54, p < .01). On the other hand, it positively correlated with turnover intentions at Time 2 (r = .38, p < .01). Collectively, these findings establish that OCS scores at Time 1 show expected relationships with the positive emotional state (AM happy), specific well-being outcomes (social connectedness, spiritual well-being, BAT, K10, musculoskeletal health, exhaustion), organisational outcomes (employee engagement, organisational trust, trust behaviours), and the distal outcome (turnover intentions). Thereby providing full support for H3. Exploration of the predictive validity of the OCS occurs in the following section.

Summary and Implications. These correlations emphasize the significant, pervasive impacts of organisational cynicism on both individual employee outcomes and broader organisational dynamics. The findings support H3, suggesting that the OCS may indicate predictive capacity for various emotional, well-being, and organisational outcomes.

5.4. Phase 4: OCS Mediation Analysis

Phase 4 addresses the fourth aim: examining the mediating role of OCS within the JD-R model. This phase indicates how OCS mediates the relationship between job demands – such as role ambiguity, role conflict, witnessed disrespectful behaviours, and cynical workplace climate – and outcomes – such as exhaustion, burnout, and engagement. However, it is crucial to note that the data collection time points within this research did not allow for a proper and rigorous test of mediation.

5.4.1. OCS Mediation Analysis Results

The focus of this section is the mediation analysis results for the OCS within the framework of the JD-R model. Data from 266 participants in Study 3, Time 2, underpins the analysis, which was conducted using SPSS v26 and the Process 4.2 package (Hayes, 2022). I employed fixed seed numbers to ensure result replication and control for bootstrap sample randomness. The analysis incorporates both unstandardised and standardised scores, applying mean centring to variables to mitigate multicollinearity issues (Aiken et al., 1991).

Mediating Role of OCS in the JD-R Model. This subsection explores OCS as a potential mediator in the JD-R model. The discussion examines OCS's potential mediation effects between distinct job demands – such as role conflict, role ambiguity, witnessed disrespect behaviours, and work climate – and outcomes like burnout and exhaustion. Additionally, this section explores OCS's potential mediation effects on the relationship between the job resource RBSE and engagement. Table 5.19 presents the full results of the mediating analysis, including unstandardised scores, SE, standardised scores, direct effects, indirect effects, percentage of variance accounted for with R^2, and *F*-statistics. The subsequent analysis focuses on exploring the potential influence of OCS in mediating the relationships between job demands and burnout.

Table 5.19

Study 3 OCS: JD-R Mediator Models Results (n = 266)

Mediator Models	Outcome								
	Cynicism T2			Burnout T2			Exhaustion T2		
Predictor	*B*	*SE*	β	*B*	*SE*	β	*B*	*SE*	β
Job Demands (JD-R Theory)				**Model 1[b]**			**Model 2[b]**		
Role Conflict T2	2.49***	.27	.50***	.44***	.08	.28***	.37***	.09	.22***
Cynicism T2				.17***	.02	.53***	.16***	.02	.48***
Constant	34.87***	3.63		11.37***	1.11		4.48***	1.29	
Indirect Effects Unstandardised				*B* = .423 [0.32,0.54]			B = .404 [0.29,0.53]		
Indirect Effects Standardised				*b* = .263 [0.20,0.33]			*b* = .240 [0.17,0.32]		
	R^2 = .25			R^2 = .50			R^2 = .39		
				ΔR^2 = .25			ΔR^2 = .14		
	F (1,264) = 87.54***			*F* (2,263) = 130.94***			*F* (2,263) = 82.69***		
				Model 3[b]			**Model 4[b]**		
Role Ambiguity	2.48***	.41	.35***	.59***	.11	.26***	.22	1.32	.09
Cynicism T2				.19***	.02	.58***	.19***	.02	.56***
Constant	46.67***	3.57		11.31***	1.17		5.66***	1.29	
Indirect Effects				*B* = .459 [0.30,0.64]			B = .466 [0.29,0.66]		
				b = .201 [0.13,0.27]			*b* = .195 [0.12,0.27]		
	R^2 = .12			R^2 = .50			R^2 = .36		
				ΔR^2 = .38			ΔR^2 = .24		
	F (1,264) = 36.44***			*F* (2,263) = 130.97***			*F* (2,263) = 73.07***		
				Model 5[b]			**Model 6[b]**		
Witnessed Disrespect T2	2.29***	.26	.47***	.34***	.08	.22***	.28**	.09	.17**
Cynicism T2				.18***	.02	.56***	.17***	.02	.51***
Constant	45.86***	2.75		13.20***	1.04		6.01***	1.19	
Indirect Effects				*B* = .414 [0.30,0.57]			B = .394 [0.27,0.55]		
				b = .266 [0.20,0.34]			*b* = .242 [0.17,0.32]		
	R^2 = .22			R^2 = .48			R^2 = .37		
				ΔR^2 = .26			ΔR^2 = .15		
	F (1,264) = 75.72***			*F* (2,263) = 120.38***			*F* (2,263) = 77.86***		
				Model 7[b]			**Model 8[b]**		
Cynical Work Climate	3.40***	.13	.84***	.32**	.11	.25**	.48***	.12	.35***
Cynicism T2				.15***	.03	.46***	.10**	.03	.30**
Constant	17.91***	2.10		13.88***	1.04		6.48***	1.16	
Indirect Effects				*B* = .498 [0.29,0.71]			B = .338 [0.12,0.55]		
				b = .383 [0.22,0.54]			*b* = .249 [0.09,0.40]		
	R^2 = .71			R^2 = .46			R^2 = .39		
				ΔR^2 = -.25			ΔR^2 = -.32		
	F (1,264) = 639.95***			*F* (2,263) = 111.92***			*F* (2,263) = 82.63***		
	Cynicism T2			Engagement T2					
Job Resources (JD-R Theory)				**Model 9[b]**					
RBSE T2	-1.28***	.21	-.35***	.42***	.10	.22***			
Cynicism T2				-.27***	.03	-.50***			
Constant	97.73***	5.39		48.48***	3.61				
Indirect Effects				*B* = .341 [0.21,0.49]					
				b = .177 [0.11,0.25]					
	R^2 = .12			R^2 = .38					
				ΔR^2 = .26					
	F (1,264) = 37.56***			*F* (2,263) = 79.37***					

*** *p*<.001, ** *p*<.01, **p*<.05, *B* = unstandardised path coefficients, *b* = unstandardised effect, β = standardised path coefficients, T2 = variables measured at Time 2, CI = 95% confidence intervals. [b] The seed was fixed for each model to control for randomness of bootstrap sample and to allow for replication of the data. Seed numbers for each model are as follows: Model 1 = 453624, 2 = 701000, 3 = 30000, 4 = 301000, 5 = 7895784, 6 = 1565842, 7 = 4899575, 8 = 1054480, 9 = 874586.

Potential Mediating Role of OCS in the Relationship Between Job Demands and Burnout. Analysis indicates a mediating role of OCS between multiple job demands and burnout. Details for the direct and indirect effects of these relationships are reported below for each job demand and presented in Figure 5.7.

Role Ambiguity (Job Demand). Model 3 evaluated the role of OCS as a mediator between role ambiguity at Time 2 and burnout at Time 2. The significant standardised indirect effect measured at b =.201, supported by a 95% BCa CI [0.13, 0.27]. The data indicates OCS may mediate between role ambiguity and burnout.

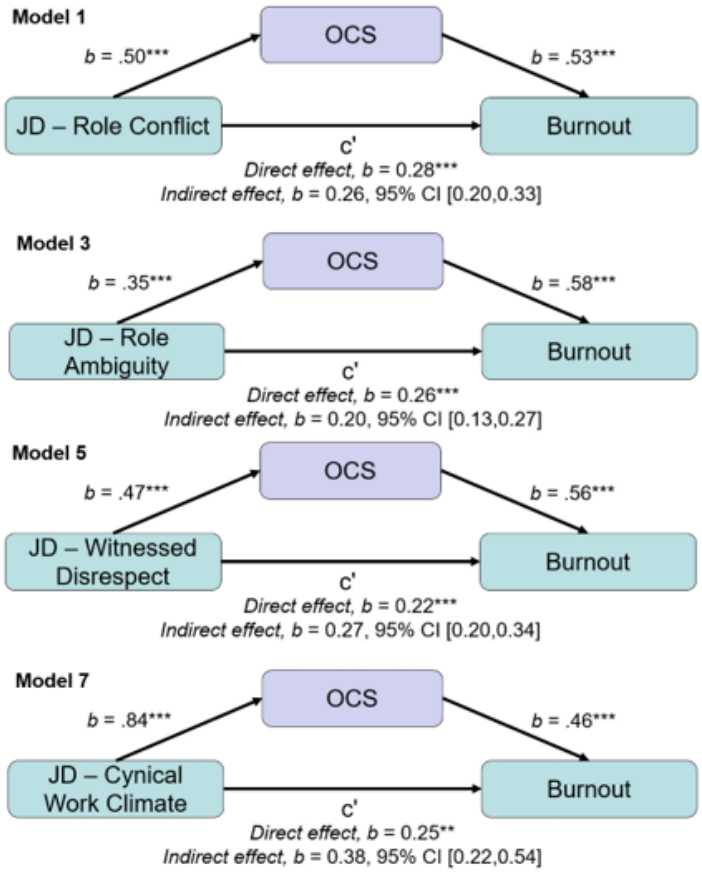
Witnessed Disrespect Behaviours (Job Demand). Model 5 examined the role of OCS as a mediator between witnessed disrespect behaviours at Time 2 and burnout at Time 2. The significant standardised indirect effect measured at b =.266, supported by a 95% BCa CI [0.20, 0.34]. These findings indicate a potential role of OCS in the relationship between witnessed disrespect behaviours and burnout.

Cynical Work Climate (Job Demand). Model 7 examined the role of OCS as a mediator between cynical work climate at Time 2 and burnout at Time 2. The significant standardised indirect effect measured at b =.383, supported by a 95% BCa CI [0.22, 0.54]. The data suggests the role of OCS in the relationship between cynical work climate and burnout.

Summary and Implications. In summary, the results underscore the potential mediating role of the OCS between various job demands and the incidence of burnout. Specifically, they suggest significant indirect effects of role conflict, role ambiguity, witnessed disrespect behaviours, and cynical work climate through the OCS, as a mediator. This evidence indicates that the OCS may connect job demands to burnout outcomes.

Figure 5.7.

Study 3, Time 2 OCS Mediating Between Job Demands and Burnout



Note: The standardised results are reported, *** indicates $p < .001$. ** indicates $p < .01$, JD is job demands, CI is confidence intervals.

Mediating Role of OCS in the Relationship Between Job Demands and Exhaustion.

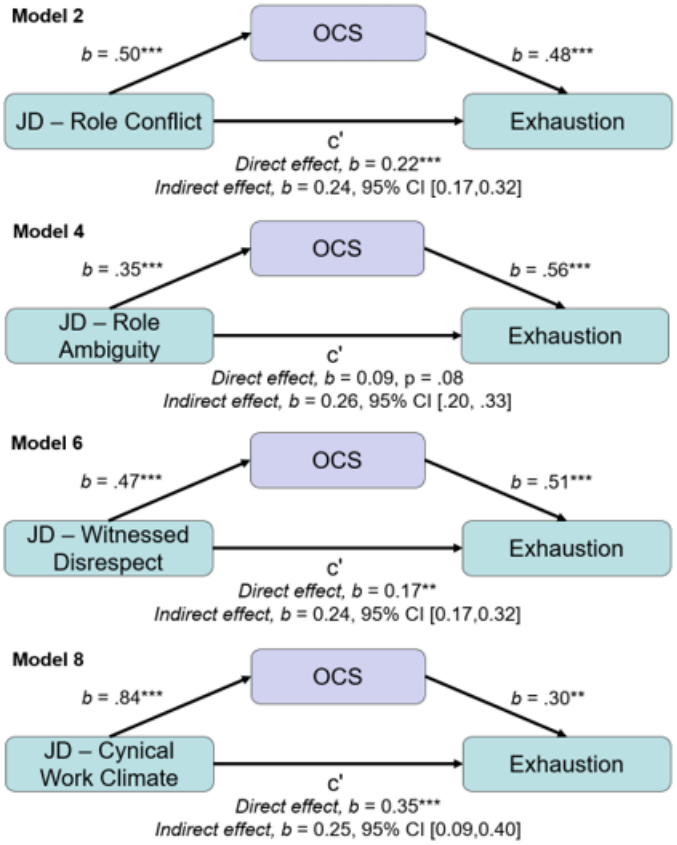
This section highlights the potential mediating function of the OCS between various job demands and the work-related outcome of exhaustion. Details for the direct and indirect effects of these relationships are reported below for each job demand and presented in Figure 5.8.

Role Conflict (Job Demand). Model 2 scrutinises the role of OCS as a mediator between role conflict at Time 2 and exhaustion at Time 2. Analysis indicates a significant standardised indirect effect measured at b =.240, supported by a 95% BCa CI [0.17, 0.32]. These findings suggest a mediating role of OCS in the relationship between role conflict and exhaustion.

Role Ambiguity (Job Demand). Model 4 evaluates how OCS may mediates between role ambiguity at Time 2 and exhaustion at Time 2. The significant standardised indirect effect measured at *b* =.195, supported by a 95% BCa CI [0.12, 0.27]. This data suggests the potential role of OCS as a mediator between role ambiguity and exhaustion.

Figure 5.8.

Study 3, Time 2 OCS Mediating Between Job Demands and Exhaustion



Note: The standardised results are reported, *** indicates $p < .001$. ** indicates $p < .01$, JD is job demands, CI is confidence intervals.

Witnessed Disrespect Behaviours (Job Demand). Model 6 aims to identify the mediating function of OCS as a mediator between witnessed disrespect behaviours at Time 2 and exhaustion at Time 2. The significant standardised indirect effect measured at *b* =.242, supported by a 95% BCa CI [0.17, 0.32]. The data highlights the potential mediation role of OCS between witnessed disrespect behaviours and exhaustion.

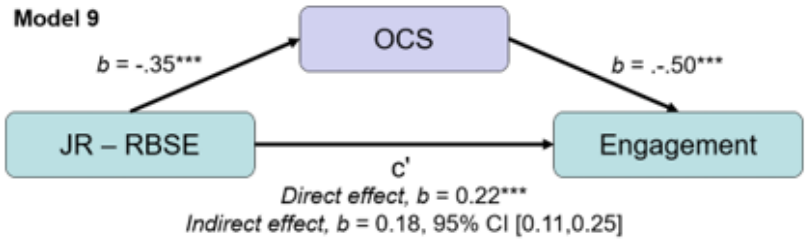
Cynical Work Climate (Job Demand). Model 8 examines the mediating effect of OCS as a mediator between cynical work climate at Time 2 and exhaustion at Time 2. The significant standardised indirect effect measured at b =.249, supported by a 95% BCa CI [0.09, 0.40]. These results indicate a mediating role of OCS in the relationship between cynical work climate and exhaustion.

Summary and Implications. In summary, the evidence indicates a potential mediating role of OCS between job demands and the outcome of exhaustion. Each job demand such as role conflict, role ambiguity, witnessed disrespectful behaviours, and cynical work climate shows a significant indirect effect through OCS, which suggests its potential role as a mediator in these relationships. The data indicates the value of further exploring the inclusion of OCS within the JD-R model.

Mediating Role of OCS Between Job Resource RBSE and Engagement. The evidence suggests that OCS significantly mediates the relationship between the job resource RBSE and employee engagement. The mediating role of OCS is indicated in Model 9 (refer Figure 5.9), which evaluated the relationship between RBSE at Time 2 and engagement at Time 2. A standardised indirect effect emerges, measured at b = .177, supported by a 95% BCa CI [0.11, 0.25]. This data suggests a potential mediating influence of OCS between RBSE and engagement.

Figure 5.9.

Study 3, Time 2 OCS Mediating Between RBSE and Engagement



Note: The standardised results are reported, *** indicates $p < .001$. ** indicates $p < .01$, JR is job resources, CI is confidence intervals.

Summary and Implications. Taken together, the mediation models conclusively support H4, underscoring a potential role of organisational cynicism as measured by the OCS. These findings indicate that cynicism may mediate negative outcomes such as burnout and also play a positive role in influencing outcomes like engagement. As such, these results suggest further exploration of the potential influence of cynicism as a mediator within the JD-R model.

5.5. Phase 5: OCS Criterion Validity

Phase 5 concludes the results of my thesis and establishes the criterion validity of the OCS (refer aim 3). This section advances prior explorations of predictive validity by rigorously assessing the OCS's incremental validity relative to existing cynicism measures. Detailed investigations target the scale's effectiveness in predicting a range of organisational outcomes, including burnout, psychological distress (K10), employee engagement, organisational trust, and trust behaviours. By scrutinising the unique contributions of individual OCS dimensions, I aim to validate the scale as a comprehensive tool in organisational psychology and management. The culmination of this phase aims to solidify the OCS's role as a multidimensional instrument capturing organisational cynicism's nuanced facets.

5.5.1. Predictive Validity of the OCS and OCS Dimensions

In Study 3, the examination of predictive validity pertains to the OCS and its dimensions, aligning with the overarching research goal. The subsequent sections examine the OCS's role in predicting burnout, psychological distress (K10), employee engagement, organisational trust, and organisational trust behaviours at Time 2. Each subsequent segment unravels the distinctive predictive influence of OCS dimensions on these outcomes, thus highlighting the intricate connections between cynicism and organisational dynamics. Additionally, Table 5.20 succinctly encapsulates the specific contributions, coefficients, and weights of the dimensions, accentuating their incremental importance and collective predictability. Continuing the exploration of OCS and its dimensions' predictive validity, the following sections will explore how they explain a significant portion of the variance of specific outcomes.

OCS Predictor of Burnout at Time 2. For the prediction of burnout at Time 2, the OCS accounted for 26% of the variance. Two variables within the OCS, proactivity (unstandardised $\beta = .19$, $p < .05$) and relationship building ($\beta = .18$, $p < .05$), significantly contributed to this outcome. They accounted for 55.75% of the explained variance in burnout at Time 2.

OCS Predictor of K10 at Time 2. Regarding the prediction of K10 scores at Time 2, the OCS explained 21% of the variance. Within the OCS, three variables emerged as significant predictors: proactivity ($\beta = .21$, $p < .05$), voice ($\beta = .18$, $p < .05$), and relationship building ($\beta = .21$, $p < .01$). Specifically, proactivity accounted for 31%, voice for 29%, and relationship building for 32% of the explained variance. Collectively, these dimensions were responsible for 92% of the explained variance in K10 scores at Time 2.

Table 5.20

Study 3 OCS: Predictive Validity of OCS Dimensions

Relative Importance of Organisational Cynicism Dimensions								
	Raw importance estimates						Rescaled estimates	Incremental importance
Predictor	*R*	*B*	*SE*	β	RW	[RW CI]	RS-RW (%)	ΔR^2
Criterion: Burnout Assessment T2 (outcome)								
T1 Intercept (*n*=265) (R^2 = .26***)		17.67***	1.21					
OCS (overall)		.16***	.02	.51***				
Voice T1	.43***	.09	.08	.09	.06	[.03:.10]	21.37	.18***
Be Proactive T1	.47***	.18*	.08	.19*	.07	[.04:.12]	28.04	.05***
Relationships T1	.49**	.21*	.09	.18*	.07	[.03:.12]	27.71	.02**
Adopt Change T1	.49	.16	.09	.14	.06	[.03:.11]	22.89	.01
Be Proactive and Relationships Totals					.14		55.75	.07
Criterion: K10 T2 (outcome)								
T1 Intercept (*n*=264) (R^2 = 21***)		11.62***	1.07					
OCS (overall)	.	.12***	.02	.43***				
Voice T1	.40***	.15*	.07	.18*	.06	[.03:.11]	28.63	.16***
Be Proactive T1	.43**	.17*	.07	.21*	.07	[.03:.11]	31.32	.03**
Relationships T1	.45*	.21**	.08	.21**	.07	[.03:.12]	31.60	.02*
Adopt Change T1	.46	-.10	.08	-.10	.02	[.01:.03]	8.45	.00
Voice, Be Proactive, and Relationships Totals					.20		91.55	.21
Criterion: Employee Engagement T2 (outcome)								
T1 Intercept (*n*=266) (R^2 = 20***)		55.24***	2.09					
OCS (Overall)		-.22***	.03	-.44***				
Voice T1	.40***	-.29*	.14	-.18*	.06	[.02:.11]	30.53	.16***
Be Proactive T1	.44**	-.34*	.14	-.21*	.07	[.03:.11]	33.36	.03**
Relationships T1	.44	.00	.15	.00	.03	[.01:.06]	13.62	.00
Adopt Change T1	.44	-.22	.15	-.11	.04	[.02:.09]	22.49	.01
Voice and Be Proactive Totals					.13		63.89	.19
Criterion: Organisational Trust T2 (outcome)								
T1 Intercept (*n*=265) (R^2 = .31***)		54.63***	1.43					
OCS (overall)		-.21***	.02	-.55***				
Voice T1	.51***	-.33**	.10	-.28**	.16	[.11:.21]	31.64	.26***
Be Proactive T1	.55***	-.30**	.10	-.26**	.16	[.11:.20]	30.32	.04***
Relationships T1	.55	-.13	.10	-.09	.10	[.05:.17]	20.26	.01
Adopt Change T1	.55	.01	.11	.01	.09	[.05:.13]	17.77	.00
Voice and Be Proactive Totals					.32		61.96	.30
Criterion: Organisational Trust Behaviours T2 (outcome)								
T1 Intercept (*n*=266) (R^2 = .31***)		36.26***	1.35					
OCS (overall)		-.20***	.02	-.54***				
Voice T1	.49***	-.24*	.09	-.20*	.09	[.05:.14]	28.87	.24***
Be Proactive T1	.55***	-.36***	.09	-.32***	.12	[.07:.17]	36.95	.06***
Relationships T1	.55	.08	.10	.06	.03	[.02:.06]	10.89	.00
Adopt Change T1	.56*	-.22*	.10	-.16*	.07	[.03:.12]	23.29	.01*
Voice, Be Proactive, and Adopt Change Totals					.28		89.11	.31

Note. The intercept R^2 significance and the ΔR^2 totals significance are calculated on the full scales; *B* = unstandardised scores*; SE* = standard error; β = standardised scores; RW = raw relative weight; [RW CI] = relative weight rescaled as a percentage of predicted variance attributable to each predictor; *n* = number of participants; T1 = time 1; and T2 = Time 2, *** *p*<.001, ** *p*<.01, * *p*<.05.

OCS Predictor of Employee Engagement at Time 2. For the prediction of employee engagement at Time 2, the OCS explained 20% of the variance. The variables voice (β = -.29, $p < .05$) and proactivity (β = -.34, $p < .05$) emerged as significant predictors, both negatively correlating with employee engagement. Specifically, voice accounted for 31% and proactivity for 34% of the explained variance. Together, these dimensions contributed to 64% of the explained variance in employee engagement at Time 2.

OCS Predictor of Organisational Trust at Time 2. Regarding the prediction of organisational trust at Time 2, the OCS accounted for 31% of the variance. Two variables within the OCS, voice and proactivity, emerged as significant predictors with negative correlations to organisational trust. Specifically, voice (β = -.33, $p < .01$) was responsible for 32% of the explained variance, while proactivity (β = -.30, $p < .01$) accounted for 30% of the explained variance. Collectively, these dimensions contributed to 62% of the explained variance in organisational trust at Time 2.

OCS Predictor of Organisational Trust Behaviours at Time 2. For the prediction of organisational trust behaviours at Time 2, the OCS accounted for 31% of the variance. Within the OCS, three variables emerged as significant predictors: proactivity (β = -.36, $p < .001$), voice (β = -.24, $p < .05$), and adopt change (β = -.22, $p < .05$). Specifically, proactivity accounted for 37%, voice for 29%, and adopt change for 24% of the explained variance. Collectively, these dimensions were responsible for 90% of the explained variance in organisational trust behaviours at Time 2.

Summary and Implications. In summary, the results presented above, in conjunction with the data in the table, highlight the distinct contributions of various dimensions within the OCS to the prediction of diverse outcome variables. These findings offer comprehensive support for H5a, affirming the predictive validity of the OCS scale. The OCS is a robust predictor of various workplace outcomes at Time 2. Specifically, the OCS dimensions proactivity, relationship building, and voice are pivotal in determining burnout, K10 scores (indicative of psychological distress), employee engagement, organisational trust, and trust behaviours. Notably, increased proactivity and relationship building in the OCS align with heightened burnout and psychological distress, whereas voice and proactivity negatively influence employee engagement and organisational trust. These findings underscore the intricate interplay of OCS dimensions with different facets of workplace well-being and trust. In essence, certain OCS components can critically shape or are predictors key workplace outcomes, providing a clearer understanding of the OCS's multifaceted impact on the organisational environment.

With the scale's predictive validity established, the subsequent focus is on investigating the incremental validity of the new OCS scale in comparison to existing cynicism measures.

5.5.2. OCS Incremental Validity Relative to Prior Cynicism Measures

The Study 3 sample validated the incremental validity of the OCS relative to established measure's like MBI-GS cynicism subscale and the BAT mental distancing subscale, as well as unpublished scales such as Brandes et al. (1999) and Brooks and Vance (1991), following the approach by LeBreton et al. (2007). Hierarchical multiple regressions substantiated this finding. However, this methodology has limitations in addressing highly correlated predictors and multiple dimensions of organisational cynicism (Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2015). To mitigate these limitations, relative importance analysis identified each predictor's unique contribution to the explained variance (R^2). Table 5.23 summarises these contributions, including raw important estimates and weights, highlighting the incremental importance and collective predictability of each scale.

Incremental Predictive Validity for Burnout (BAT). The hierarchical multiple regression results for burnout assessment, as indicated by the change in R^2 values, show the OCS accounted for additional variance over and above Brandes cynicism scales. ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .001$), Brooks and Vance cynicism scales ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $p < .01$), and the MBI-GS cynicism subscale ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .001$) in predicting burnout (see Table 5.21). It also accounted for a larger portion of the total predicted variance in burnout (52% to 65% of the total R^2) compared to Brooks and Vance scale and the MBI-GS cynicism subscale. The OCS dimensions build relationships and voice 15% to 21% and 12% accounted for the total variance in burnout scores respectively.

Summary and Implications. These findings highlight the OCS's nuanced and potent capability in understanding and predicting burnout in organisational settings, beyond existing measures such as those by Brandes et al., Brooks and Vance, and the MBI-GS cynicism subscale (Maslach et al., 1996).

Table 5.21

Study 3 OCS: Incremental Validation of OCS to Prior Cynicism Scales

Prior cynicism scale: Brandes et al., 1999 (unpublished)								
	Raw importance estimates						Rescaled estimates	Incremental importance
Predictor	*R*	*B*	*SE*	β	RW	[RW CI]	RS-RW (%)	ΔR^2
Criterion: Burnout Assessment T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .34***) (*n*=264)		16.30***	1.23					
Beliefs T1	.51***	.10	.09	.11	.05	[.03-.09]	15.98	.26***
Affects T1	.56***	.38*	.15	.23*	.07	[.03-.11]	21.25	.05***
Behaviour T1	.56	.11	.11	.08	.05	[.02-.08]	14.36	.00
Brandes Scale T1					**.17**		**51.59**	**.31*** **
Voice T1	.57	.07	.08	.02	.04	[.02-.06]	10.29	.01
Be Proactive T1	.57	.04	.08	.04	.04	[.02-.07]	11.54	.00
Relationships T1	.58*	.18*	.08	.15*	.05	[.02-.09]	15.29	.02*
Adopt Change T1	.59	.09	.09	.07	.04	[.02-.07]	11.29	.00
Total OCS T1					**.17**		**48.41**	**.03*** **
Criterion: K10 T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .24**) (*n*=264)		10.90***	1.14					
Beliefs T1	.41***	.08	.08	.11	.04	[.02-.06]	14.58	.16***
Affects T1	.44**	.22	.14	.16	.05	[.02-.08]	18.68	.03**
Behaviour T1	.44	.06	.10	.05	.03	[.01-.06]	11.79	.00
Brandes Scale T1					**.12**		**45.05**	**.19*** **
Voice T1	.46*	.09	.08	.11	.04	[.02-.07]	15.16	.02*
Be Proactive T1	.47	.08	.08	.10	.04	[.02-.07]	15.40	.00
Relationships T1	.48*	.18*	.08	.19*	.05	[.02-.09]	19.79	.01*
Adopt Change T1	.50*	-.16*	.08	-.16*	.01	[.01-.02]	4.60	.01*
Total OCS T1					**.14**		**54.95**	**.04** **
Criterion: Employee Engagement T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .25*) (*n*=266)		56.41***	2.19					
Beliefs T1	.45***	-.13	.16	-.09	.04	[.02-.07]	17.21	.20***
Affects T1	.49***	-.76**	.27	-.27**	.07	[.03-.11]	25.86	.04***
Behaviour T1	.49	-.03	.19	-.01	.03	[.01-.06]	12.82	.00
Brandes Scale T1					**.14**		**55.89**	**.24*** **
Voice T1	.50	-.13	.14	-.08	.03	[.03-.06]	13.62	.01
Be Proactive T1	.50	-.15	.15	-.10	.04	[.01-.06]	14.04	.00
Relationships T1	.50	.07	.15	.04	.02	[.01-.04]	6.41	.00
Adopt Change T1	.50	-.10	.16	-.05	.03	[.01-.05]	10.01	.00
Total OCS T1					**.12**		**44.08**	**.01***
Criterion: Organisational Trust T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .39*) (*n*=264)		56.55***	1.45					
Beliefs T1	.57***	-.25*	.10	-.23*	.08	[.06-.10]	14.11	.33***
Affects T1	.61***	-.42*	.18	-.21*	.11	[.08-.15]	20.17	.04***
Behaviour T1	.61	-.16	.13	-.10	.06	[.04-.09]	11.31	.00
Brandes Scale T1					**.25**		**45.59**	**.37*** **
Voice T1	.61	-.03	.10	-.03	.09	[.06-.12]	15.80	.01
Be Proactive T1	.62*	-.21*	.10	-.18*	.10	[.07-.13]	16.89	.01*
Relationships T1	.62	-.05	.10	-.04	.07	[.03-.11]	11.93	.00
Adopt Change T1	.63	.11	.10	.08	.06	[.04-.08]	9.79	.00
Total OCS T1					**.32**		**54.41**	**.02***
Criterion: Organisational Trust Behaviours T2								

T1 Intercept (R^2 = .038***) (n=265)		37.52***	1.40					
Beliefs T1	.56***	-.23*	.10	-.22*	.08	[.05-.12]	20.17	.32***
Affects T1	.58**	-.33	.17	-.17	.07	[.04-.10]	17.35	.02**
Behaviour T1	.58	.05	.12	.03	.04	[.02-.06]	9.75	.00
Brandes Scale T1					**.19**		**47.27**	**.34*** **
Voice T1	.60**	-.15	.09	-.13	.06	[.03-.10]	15.77	.02**
Be Proactive T1	.61*	-.22*	.09	-.19*	.07	[.04-.10]	18.24	.02*
Relationships T1	.61	.11	.09	.08	.02	[.01-.04]	5.85	.00
Adopt Change T1	.62	-.13	.10	-.10	.05	[.02-.08]	12.87	.00
Total OCS T1					**.20**		**52.73**	**.04*** **

Prior cynicism scale: Brooks & Vance, 1991 (unpublished)

	Raw importance estimates						Rescaled estimates	Incremental importance
Predictor	*R*	*B*	*SE*	β	RW	[RW CI]	RS-RW (%)	ΔR^2
Criterion: Burnout Assessment T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .32**) (n=265)		13.98***	1.42					
Brooks Scale T1	.53***	.39***	.09	.40***	**.11**	[.07-.17]	**34.98**	**.28*** **
Voice T1	.54	-.03	.08	-.03	.04	[.02-.07]	13.41	.01
Be Proactive T1	.54	.04	.08	.04	.05	[.03-.09]	17.03	.01
Relationships T1	.56***	.24**	.08	.21**	.06	[.03-.11]	20.51	.02**
Adopt Change T1	.56	.02	.09	.02	.04	[.02-.08]	14.06	.00
Total OCS T1					**.19**		**65.01**	**.04** **
Criterion: K10 T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .24**) (n=264)		9.28***	1.29					
Brooks Scale T1	.43***	.25**	.08	.30**	**.07**	[.04-.12]	**28.75**	**.18*** **
Voice T1	.45*	.08	.08	.09	.05	[.02-.08]	19.02	.02*
Be Proactive T1	.46	.08	.08	.10	.05	[.02-.08]	20.38	.01
Relationships T1	.47*	.22**	.08	.22**	.06	[.02-.11]	25.04	.01*
Adopt Change T1	.49*	-.19*	.08	-.19*	.02	[.01-.02]	6.82	.02*
Total OCS T1					**.18**		**71.26**	**.06** **
Criterion: Employee Engagement T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .26) (n=266)		61.80***	2.47				S	
Brooks Scale T1	.50***	-.69***	.15	-.42***	**.09**	[05-.12]	**24.69**	.25***
Voice T1	.51	-.08	.15	-.05	.07	[.04-.10]	18.67	.01
Be Proactive T1	.51	-.09	.15	-.06	.08	[.04-.12]	21.95	.00
Relationships T1	.51	-.05	.15	-.02	.04	[.02-.08]	10.94	.00
Adopt Change T1	.51	.02	.16	.01	.08	[.05-.13]	23.75	.00
Total OCS T1					**.27**		**75.31**	**.01**
Criterion: Organisational Trust T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .40) (n=264)		60.86***	1.62					
Brooks Scale T1	.61***	-.65***	.10	-.55***	**.15**	[.11-.19]	**27.33**	.37***
Voice T1	.62	.01	.10	.01	.11	[.07-.14]	20.48	.00
Be Proactive T1	.62	-.13	.10	-.11	.12	[.09-.15]	21.78	.01
Relationships T1	.63	-.19	.10	-.13	.09	[.05-.14]	16.50	.01
Adopt Change T1	.63	.17	.10	-.12	.08	[.05-.11]	13.92	.01
Total OCS T1					**.40**		**72.68**	**.03**
Criterion: Organisational Trust Behaviours T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .36**) (n=266)		40.32***	1.61					
Brooks Scale T1	.58***	-.43***	.10	-.37***	**.13**	[.08-.19]	**35.39**	.34***
Voice T1	.59*	-.10	.09	-.09	.07	[.04-.10]	18.51	.01*
Be Proactive T1	.60*	-.21*	.09	-.19*	.09	[.05-.12]	23.47	.01*
Relationships T1	.60	.05	.09	.04	.03	[.01-.05]	7.73	.00

Adopt Change T1	.60	-.07	.10	-.05	.05	[.03-.09]	14.89	.00
Total OCS T1					**.24**		**64.60**	**.02****

Prior cynicism scale: MBI-GS cynicism subscale

Predictor	Raw importance estimates						Rescaled estimates	Incremental importance
	R	*B*	*SE*	β	RW	[RW CI]	RS-RW (%)	ΔR^2
Criterion: Burnout Assessment T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .40***) (*n*=264)		15.57***	1.10					
MBI Cynicism T1	.61***	.44***	.06	.48***	**.20**	[.13-.28]	**48.10**	**.37*** **
Voice T1	.63**	.04	.07	.04	.05	[.02-.08]	11.57	.02**
Be Proactive T1	.68	.00	.07	.00	.05	[.03-.08]	12.81	.00
Relationships T1	.64*	.17*	.08	.15*	.06	[.03-.10]	14.95	.01*
Adopt Change T1	.64	.11	.08	.09	.05	[.02-.09]	12.57	.00
Total OCS T1					**.21**		**51.90**	**.03*** **
Criterion: K10 T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .28**) (*n*=264)		10.46***	1.05					
MBI Cynicism T1	.49***	.28***	.06	.35***	**.12**	[.07-.18]	**42.20**	**.24*** **
Voice T1	.51**	.11	.07	.13	.05	[.02-.08]	16.62	.02**
Be Proactive T1	.51	.06	.07	.08	.05	[.02-.08]	16.58	.00
Relationships T1	.52*	.18*	.07	.18*	.05	[.02-.10]	19.32	.01*
Adopt Change T1	.53	-.15	.08	-.14	.02	[.01-.02]	5.28	.01
Total OCS T1					**.17**		**57.80**	**.04** **
Criterion: Employee Engagement T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .41) (*n*=265)		59.43***	1.85					
MBI Cynicism T1	.63***	-.90***	.10	-.58***	**.03**	[.03-.04	**57.03**	.40***
Voice T1	.64	-.18	.12	-.11	.07	[.04-.11]	11.55	.01
Be Proactive T1	.64	.02	.13	.01	.07	[.04-.11]	11.95	.00
Relationships T1	.64	.09	.13	.05	.04	[.02-.07]	6.44	.00
Adopt Change T1	.64	-.11	.13	-.05	.08	[.05-.12]	13.01	.00
Total OCS T1					**.26**		**42.95**	**.01**
Criterion: Organisational Trust T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .34***) (*n*=264)		56.32***	1.42					
MBI Cynicism T1	.51***	-.29***	.08	-.26***	**.09**	[.06-.13]	**17.97**	**.25*** **
Voice T1	.56***	-.12	.10	-.10	.13	[.09-.17]	25.15	.06***
Be Proactive T1	.58**	-.26**	.10	-.23**	.13	[.09-.16]	24.05	.03**
Relationships T1	.58	-.09	.10	-.07	.09	[.05-.14]	16.85	.00
Adopt Change T1	.59	-.06	.10	-.04	.08	[.05-.12]	15.98	.00
Total OCS T1					**.43**		**82.03**	**.09*** **
Criterion: Organisational Trust Behaviours T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .37***) (*n*=264)		37.75***	1.33					
MBI Cynicism T1	.52***	-.28***	.07	-.56***	**.10**	[06-.17]	**28.81**	**.27*** **
Voice T1	.58***	-.21*	.09	-.18*	.08	[.04-.12]	21.60	.07***
Be Proactive T1	.60**	-.24*	.09	-.21*	.09	[.05-.13]	24.15	.02**
Relationships T1	.60	.11	.09	.08	.03	[.01-.05]	7.75	.00
Adopt Change T1	.61*	-.19*	.10	-.14*	.07	[.03-.11]	17.69	.01*
Total OCS T1					**.27**		**71.19**	**.10** **

Prior cynicism scale: BAT - mental distancing subscale

	Raw importance estimates	Rescaled estimates	Incremental importance

Predictor	*R*	*B*	*SE*	β	RW	[RW CI]	RS-RW (%)	ΔR^2
Criterion: K10 T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .30*) (*n*=264)		8.38***	1.15					
Mental Distance T1	.51***	.61***	.11	.40***	**.14**	[.07-.21]	**45.92**	**.26*** **
Voice T1	.53*	.09	.07	.11	.05	[.02-.08]	15.33	.02*
Be Proactive T1	.53	.07	.07	.08	.05	[.02-.08]	15.81	.00
Relationships T1	.54	.16*	.07	.16*	.05	[.02-.10]	17.75	.01
Adopt Change T1	.55*	-.16*	.08	-.16*	.02	[.01-.02]	5.20	.01*
Total OCS T1					**.17**		**54.09**	**.04***
Criterion: Employee Engagement T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .45) (*n*=265)		66.34***	1.99					
Mental Distance T1	.67***	-1.94***	.18	-.65***	**.40**	[.03-.05]	**60.79**	**.45*** **
Voice T1	.67	-.12	.12	-.07	.07	[.04-.10]	10.33	.00
Be Proactive T1	.67	.01	.12	.01	.07	[.04-.11]	11.09	.00
Relationships T1	.67	.12	.12	.06	.04	[.02-.07]	5.95	.00
Adopt Change T1	.68	-.08	.13	-.04	.08	[.05-.11]	11.84	.00
Total OCS T1					**.26**		**39.21**	**.00**
Criterion: Organisational Trust T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .35***) (*n*=264)		57.66***	1.57					
Mental Distance T1	.50***	-.54***	.14	-.25***	**.13**	[.09-.18]	**24.08**	**.26*** **
Voice T1	.56***	-.18	.10	-.15	.12	[.08-.16]	22.62	.06***
Be Proactive T1	.59**	-.28**	.10	-.24**	.12	[.09-.16]	22.68	.03**
Relationships T1	.59	-.08	.10	-.06	.09	[.05-.14]	16.91	.00
Adopt Change T1	.59	.03	.10	.02	.07	[.05-.10]	13.71	.00
Total OCS T1					**.40**		**75.92**	**.09*** **
Criterion: Organisational Trust Behaviours T2								
T1 Intercept (R^2 = .37***) (*n*=265)		39.44***	1.50					
Mental Distance T1	.51***	-.52***	.14	-.25***	**.10**	[.06-.17]	**27.89**	**.26*** **
Voice T1	.58***	-.20*	.09	-.17*	.08	[.04-.12]	21.55	.07***
Be Proactive T1	.60**	-.26**	.09	-.23**	.09	[.05-.13]	24.94	.03**
Relationships T1	.60	.11	.09	.08	.03	[.01-.05]	7.82	.00
Adopt Change T1	.51*	-.19*	.10	-.14*	.07	[.03-.11]	17.80	.01*
Total OCS T1					**.27**		**72.11**	**.11*** **

Note: *** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, note intercept R^2 significance and the ΔR^2 totals significance are calculated on the full scales, and not the subscales, also note the slight differences in the totals may be due to the rounding adjustments

Incremental Validity in Predicting Psychological Distress (K10). Turning to measuring psychological distress (K10), as indicated by the change in R^2 values, the OCS accounted for additional variance over and above Brandes cynicism scale (ΔR^2 = .04, p < .01), Brooks and Vance cynicism scale (ΔR^2 = .06, p < .01), the MBI-GS cynicism subscale (ΔR^2 = .04, p < .01), and the mental distancing subscale (ΔR^2 = .04, p < .05) in the prediction of psychological distress. It also accounted for a larger portion of the total predicted variance in K10 over and above all four scales (55% to 71% of the R^2). The OCS dimensions *voice and*

build relationships accounted for an additional 15% to 19% and 19% to 20%, respectively, of the R^2 psychological distress scores.

Summary and Implications. This emphasises the pivotal role of the OCS, and specifically its *voice and build relationships* indicators, in gauging psychological distress in organisational contexts, beyond other established measures, including Brandes et al., Brooks and Vance, and the MBI-GS cynicism and mental distancing subscales.

Incremental Validity in Predicting Employee Engagement. The assessment of employee engagement indicated that the OCS showed significant incremental validity over Brandes et al. ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, $p < .05$) in predicting employee engagement. However, the OCS did not add significant variance beyond Brooks and Vance ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, $p = .228$), the MBI-GS cynicism subscale ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, $p = .171$), and the mental distancing subscale ($\Delta R^2 = .00$, $p = .567$). Although not adding significant variance beyond Brooks and Vance, the OCS accounted for a larger portion of the variance (75% of the total R^2) in predicting employee engagement. In contrast, it accounted for 42%, 43%, and 39% of the R^2 variance compared to Brandes, the MBI-GS cynicism subscale, and the mental distancing subscale, respectively.

Summary and Implications: While the OCS surpassed Brandes, MBI-GS cynicism subscale, and mental distancing subscale in terms of explained variance, with values ranging from 39% to 43%, its predictive power in the context of Brooks and Vance's measure needs further examination. This highlights the nuanced role of the OCS in the assessment of employee engagement, underscoring its importance but also its overlap with other well-established measures.

Incremental Validity in Predicting Organisational Trust. In assessing organisational trust, the OCS demonstrated significant incremental validity over Brandes et al. ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p <$

.05), the MBI-GS cynicism subscale ($\Delta R^2 = .09$, $p < .001$), and the mental distancing subscale ($\Delta R^2 = .09$, $p < .001$). Although OCS did not add significant variance beyond Brooks and Vance ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p = .079$), it did account for a substantial portion of the variance in predicting organisational trust over and above all four scales (54% to 82% of the total R^2). The dimensions be proactive, and voice contributed 17% to 24% and 23% to 25%, respectively, to the total R^2 organisation trust scores.

Summary and Implications: The OCS dimensions be proactive, and voice play pivotal roles, accounting for sizable portions (17% to 25%) of the total variance in organisational trust. This illustrates the OCS's robustness and distinctiveness in gauging organisational trust, especially in relation to specific OCS dimensions, but also emphasises areas of overlap with other tools like Brooks and Vance's.

Incremental Validity in Predicting Organisational Trust Behaviours. Lastly, the measurement of organisational trust behaviours demonstrated the OCS's incremental validity over all four prior cynicism measures: Brandes et al. ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $p < .001$), Brooks and Vance ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p < .01$), the MBI-GS cynicism subscale ($\Delta R^2 = .10$, $p < .01$), and the mental distancing subscale ($\Delta R^2 = .11$, $p < .001$). It also accounted for a substantial portion of the variance in predicting organisational trust behaviours over and above all four scales (52% to 72% of the total R^2). The dimensions, voice, build relationships, and adopt change contributed 16% to 22%, 18% to 25% and 18%, respectively, to the total R^2 organisation trust scores.

Summary and Implications: The results show the OCS's distinct capacity to account for a significant proportion (52% to 72%) of the explained variance in organisational trust behaviours beyond the contributions of prior measures. This further accentuates the OCS's nuanced approach and its potential to shed light on specific areas of organisational trust behaviours that may be overlooked or underserved by other measures.

Criterion Validity Summary and Implications: The OCS showed incremental validity relative to prior cynicism scales in a range of outcomes such as burnout, psychological distress, organisational trust, and trust behaviours. The scale reliably explained unique variance in these domains but did so selectively for employee engagement, demonstrating specific validity over Brandes et al.' and Brooks & Vance's scales. In terms of the total variance predicted across diverse outcomes, the OCS accounted for a substantial range of the R^2 values (42% to 82%). A detailed examination of the results reveals that individual dimension of the OCS, particularly *voice and build relationships,* serve as potent predictors in various constructs. Collectively, this body of evidence lends partial support to H5b, affirming the incremental validity of the OCS in predicting most outcome constructs, while providing limited support for its predictive ability in employee engagement. This incremental validation holds particular significance in the overarching objective to authenticate the OCS as a multidimensional tool, that captures the facets of organisational cynicism.

5.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the results fully support H1a, H2, H3, H4, H5a, H6, and partially support H1b and H5b, thereby affirming the posited relationships between cynicism, its dimensions, predictors, and outcomes. The findings validate the 4-indicator models for the OCS, comprising the dimensions of *futile to voice, be proactive, building deep relationships,* and *to adopt change.* Convergent and discriminant validity of the construct receives strong empirical

support. However, the relationship between the OCS and the K10 Depression subscale was stronger than anticipated (H1b), exhibiting a correlation coefficient of $r = .58$, $p < .01$. Moreover, H5b, concerning OCS's predictive utility for employee engagement and organisational trust, only found partial support. While most hypotheses yielded significant results, the exceptions highlight the complex interplay between individual, organisational, and contextual factors. Chapter 6 will elaborate on the theoretical and practical implications of these findings, exploring their broader impact on employee well-being, organisational functioning, and the nuanced domain of workplace cynicism. The synthesis of these results provides a comprehensive understanding of organisational cynicism's predictors and outcomes.

Chapter 6 – Discussion

6.1.Introduction to the Discussion

The objectives were to 1) conduct a comprehensive review of existing conceptualisations and measurements of cynicism to identify key attributes of the construct and strengths and weaknesses of existing measures, 2) capture the lived experience of cynicism within the workplace and amalgamate that with the literature findings to generate a multidimensional conceptualisation that encompasses the key attributes of the construct, but does not overlap with other related phenomena, 3) develop and validate a new multidimensional measure for organisational cynicism, and 4) investigate the potential role of organisational cynicism within the JD-R framework and develop a nomological network.

An in-depth literature review in Chapter 2 and an analysis of employees' lived experiences in Chapter 4 culminated in a multidimensional cognitive conceptualisation of organisational and employee cynicism. Both these conceptualisations theoretically proposed 4 indicators: *it is futile to voice*, *be proactive*, *build deep relationships*, and *adopt change*. Aligned with the new conceptualisation of organisational cynicism, I created and validated a 20-item multidimensional OCS measurement tool. The scale development process included a pilot study, expert panel review, Q-sort, cross-section data collection, and longitudinal data collection. In Study 2, I validated the scales through structure analysis and refined the items. Study 3 evaluated the content, convergent, discriminant, criterion-related, and incremental validity evidence for the new measure. Additionally, I developed a nomological network that delineates cynicism associations with related constructs. My research also examined cynicism as a potential mediating explanationatory mechanism between demands/resources and the distal productivity and wellbeing outcomes.

6.2.Main Empirical Findings

The review of prior conceptualisations and measures of organisational cynicism, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions identified key attributes of organisational cynicism. These attributes included that *it is futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *adopt change* (Bedeian, 2007; Brockway et al., 2002). These insights addressed and successfully met Aims 1 and 2, providing an understanding of concepts and attributes that make up the constructs of organisational and employee cynicism. The identification of these attributes substantiated the multidimensionality of organisational cynicism and clarified its cognitive underpinnings.

The factor analysis and model fit results for both scale development processes confirmed and replicated the theorised 4-factor structure with a scale validation through structure analysis and longitudinal samples. Moreover, the results of repeated measures, test–retest reliability, intraclass correlations, measurement invariance, Cronbach's alphas, discriminant and convergent validity, and criterion validity (predictive and incremental) demonstrate the measure's good psychometric qualities (e.g., Brod et al., 2009; Hinkin 1998). These qualities address critical measurement issues, including the absence of an appropriate validated measurement scale (e.g., Brandes et al., 1999, Brooks & Vance, 1991) or scales and conceptualisations that overlook the cognitive underpinnings of organisational cynicism, either due to construct contamination, limited scope, or a focus on unrelated dimensions (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989).

The following section elaborates on key findings. It includes the OCS, and the OCS and its subscales as predictors of theorised organisational outcomes, satisfying Aim 3. Additionally, it confirms OCS as a distinct construct from burnout, highlights its distinctiveness from existing cynicism measures, which address Aim 4.

6.2.1. Development and Validation of the OCS

The development and validation process of the psychometrically sound OCS contributes to the study of organisational cynicism. The methodological approach to developing the OCS integrated qualitative and quantitative research methods and incorporated a blend of inductive and deductive reasoning over longitudinal research. The OCS's four-indicator structure has been empirically validated across cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. To ensure this contribution, the validation process adhered to rigorous standards (e.g., Brod et al., 2009; Hinkin, 1998), confirming that the OCS meets the criteria of internal consistency, item discrimination, and both convergent and discriminant validity. In addition to these traditional psychometric properties, the scale also demonstrated incremental and predictive validity. This evidence supports the scale's capacity to effectively capture cognitive indicators of organisational cynicism (*futile to voice, be proactive, build deep relationships,* and *adopt change)*.

Furthermore, the OCS was designed with the flexibility to apply to various referent targets within an organisation, such as management, peers, and teams, addressing the need for a versatile tool. This versatility is a deliberate effort to counteract the trend of creating multiple distinct scales for different referent targets (Rosenbusch et al., 2020).

6.2.2. The OCS and OCS Subscales as Predictors of Organisational Outcomes

Previous research has demonstrated the impact of cynicism on employee well-being, mental health, and organisational dynamics (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Hall et al., 2013). Consistent with these findings, the OCS and its cynicism indicators revealed significant relationships between organisational cynicism and hypothesised outcomes. The results found that increases in organisational cynicism correspond with higher psychological distress, compromised spiritual well-being, emotional exhaustion, burnout, and intention to quit.

Furthermore, higher organisational cynicism was associated with decreased happiness, social connectedness, employee engagement, and trust in the organisation, including organisational trust behaviours. Although these overarching conclusions highlight the adverse effects of organisational cynicism on burnout, psychological distress, engagement, and trust, an in-depth examination of its dimensions yields more insights.

An examination of the cynicism dimensions findings revealed that *it is futile to voice*, *be proactive*, *build deep relationships,* and *adopt change*, uniquely explain a significant portion of the variance of outcomes. The *futile to be proactive* dimension significantly predicted all outcomes, *it is futile to voice* predicted all outcomes except burnout, and *it is futile to build deep relationships* was a significant predictor of burnout and the K10 (e.g., Hall et al., 2013). While some researchers focus on measuring cynicism as COAC (Wanous et al., 2000) and CTC (Decelles et al., 2013), my findings found that the *futile to adopt change* indicator only significantly predicted organisational trust behaviours. This finding implies that change-related cynicism is not just about resisting change – it may also reflect beliefs about the value of one's voice, relationships, and contributions (proactivity) during change. These findings suggest that the dimensions *it is futile to voice, be proactive,* and *build deep relationships* impact organisational cynicism more than change. This finding strengthens previous research that suggests that while resistance to change relates to cynicism, it is not the same construct (Thundiyil et al., 2014). This infers that researchers studying resistance to change should ensure that they capture not only change but also how the underlying organisational cynicism dimensions (*futile to voice, be proactive,* and *build deep relationships*) contribute to employees' resistance.

My findings also confirm that organisational cynicism cannot be reduced to a single dimension or captured through simplistic self-rating (e.g., Matthews et al., 2022). During the interview and focus group discussions, a few leaders stressed that they do not need a scale to

measure organisational cynicism. They do not have an issue with cynicism in their organisation, or they can tell when staff are cynical, or staff can assess their cynicism levels. However, my research findings and the moderate correlation between the cynicism self-rate item and OCS imply that understanding organisational cynicism extends beyond merely inquiring about employees' self-perceptions or assessing observable behaviours. Adopting these haphazard approaches may lead to wrong assumptions or underestimations of cynicism among employees and within organisations.

6.2.3. The OCS and Burnout

The correlation results demonstrate organisational cynicism's multifaceted nature, with subscales reflecting differing relationships with numerous outcome variables. This heterogeneity underscores organisational cynicism's independent existence, illustrating that it is neither driven by nor confined within the burnout construct. Instead, organisational cynicism is a complex construct with a unique range of outcomes that go beyond the boundaries of burnout. Furthermore, the criterion validity evidence from Study 3 also provides strong empirical support for the argument that cynicism is not merely a component of burnout but a distinct construct. The unique influence of each cynicism indicator highlights the need to recognise organisational cynicism as a separate construct that explains a significant portion of the variance of burnout. Collectively, these findings challenge the notion that cynicism is a subcomponent of burnout, as posited by previous researchers (e.g., Guthier et al., 2020; Schaufeli et al., 2020); instead, it is an independent construct with distinct contributions to burnout.

6.2.4. Distinctiveness of the OCS from Existing Measures

The results demonstrated that the OCS is related to, and not redundant with, existing workplace cynicism measures (e.g., Maslach et al., 1996; Schaufeli et al., 2020). The overlap

with existing measures is expected, given that they assess the same construct. The OCS correlated highly with unpublished cynicism scales (Brandes et al., 1999; Brooks & Vance, 1991), but their unpublished status and lack of validity hinder comparability. The OCS attributes also demonstrated a different relationship with prior cynicism measures, confirming the OCS's distinctiveness from existing scales through incremental validity analyses. The OCS showed significant incremental validity over Brandes (1999), Brooks and Vance (1991), the MBI-GS cynicism subscale (Maslach et al., 1996), and the BAT mental distancing subscale (Schaufeli et al., 2020) in predicting the outcomes of burnout, psychological distress, and organisational trust and behaviours.

Regarding the prediction of employee engagement compared to the existing measures, the mixed results warrant further exploration. A suggestion is that employee engagement is impacted by a complex range of indicators, with the results indicating that although the scale's contribution to predicting engagement is unique, the impact is minimal. Nonetheless, the incremental predictive validity of the OCS established that the *voice* and *proactive* indicators are significant predictors of employee engagement. Overall, the OCS is distinct from prior workplace cynicism measures and captures aspects of organisational cynicism not adequately represented by other scales (e.g., Brandes et al., 1999; Maslach et al., 1996; Schaufeli et al. 2020).

6.2.7. JD-R Model Mediation and Moderation Analysis Findings

My thesis's fourth aim was to explore the mediation effects of organisational cynicism within the JD-R framework, on the relationship between job demands and exhaustion/burnout relationships. The main findings are discussed below.

Organisational Cynicism's Mediating Role in the JD-R Framework. My findings advance the JD-R model, indicating that organisational cynicism significantly mediates within

the JD-R model (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker & de Vries, 2021; Demerouti et al., 2001). The results showed that organisational cynicism significantly mediated the relationship between job demands (role ambiguity, role conflict, cynical workplace climate, and witnessed disrespectful behaviours) and outcomes (burnout and exhaustion). Further, the results supported organisational cynicism as a mediator in the relationship between the resource RBSE and engagement (Hall et al., 2013). While job resources are less strongly negatively associated with burnout, my findings support previous research that has found that they have a consistent negative relationship with cynicism (Demerouti et al., 2001). In essence, the findings suggest that the effects of job demands and resources on employee outcomes like well-being and engagement are significantly shaped by organisational cynicism.

6.3.Future Research from Empirical Results

Considering the empirical results obtained from this study, it is crucial for future research to further investigate the nuanced relationships identified, while acknowledging the methodological limitations inherent in the current analysis. The findings of this study, derived from data collected at a single time point (Time 2), underscore the potential influence of organisational cynicism on employee well-being and engagement. However, the cross-sectional nature of this data introduces a significant challenge in establishing the directionality and causality of these relationships (Antonakis et al, 2010; Maxwell & Cole, 2007). The mediation results presented, particularly regarding the role of cynicism as a mediator within the JD-R model, should be interpreted with caution. The concurrent measurement of the mediator (cynicism) and several dependent variables complicates the ability to definitively ascertain mediation or the ordering of the causal chain.

Given these considerations, future research should prioritise longitudinal designs that can more effectively capture the temporal dynamics and potentially causal relationships among job demands, job resources, cynicism, and various outcomes related to employee well-being and

engagement. Such studies would greatly benefit from examining the impact of additional JD-R model factors, including but not limited to workload, time pressure, role overload, support, and decision autonomy. These elements have been demonstrated to influence outcomes within the JD-R model and may offer further insight into the mechanisms driving organisational cynicism and its effects (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Guthier et al., 2020; Maslach et al., 2001). While the cross-sectional data limit the conclusiveness of these relationships, they indicate an area for future longitudinal research to explore. Specifically, understanding how cynicism at an initial time point (Time 1) may affect outcomes at a subsequent time point (Time 2) and may influence potential long-term effects and implications for employee mental health and turnover intentions.

6.4.Surprising Results

This section explores surprising results from Study 3. They include the consistent predictive power of the OCS indicators, which are *futile to voice* and *be proactive*. The indicator *it is futile to voice* was a significant predictor of organisational trust. In addition, the OCS was a significant predictor of the K10 depression subscale.

6.4.1. The Predictive Power of OCS Futile to Voice *and* Be Proactive *Subscales*

The findings revealed the consistent significant predictive power of the OCS indicators of *it is futile to voice* and *to be proactive*. The *futile to voice* indicator significantly predicted all outcomes, including burnout, psychological distress, employee engagement, organisational trust, and trust behaviours, suggesting that this is the most universally important futility belief. Notably, the *proactive* dimension yielded the highest rescaled significant predictability scores for burnout, employee engagement, and organisational trust behaviours. The consistency of these indicators emphasises the importance of cultivating work environments that encourage communication and proactivity, as they may counteract issues such as burnout, mental health problems, disengagement, and eroding trust.

6.4.2. Surprising Result: OCS Futile to Voice *and* Trust *Dynamics*

The findings revealed a concerning trend: employees increasingly perceive voicing their opinions as futile. There was a significant rise in the *futile to voice* scores of OCS from Time 1 (September 2022) to Time 2 (May 2023). This growing sentiment was most evident among UK-based employees, larger organisations with over 200 employees, staff with mid-level tenure of 6 to 15 years, non-managers, permanent employees, and those aged between 50 to 59 years. Simultaneously, a pervasive decline in organisational trust was observed across all broad demographic categories at the same time, with the most substantial reduction recorded within academia, followed by large organisations and permanent, full-time staff. This widespread decline may suggest that systemic organisational issues, rather than isolated problems affecting individual groups, are prevalent. The notable sharp decline in trust within the academic sector may signal unique sector-specific challenges or indicate broader, more fundamental shifts affecting the global landscape of research and higher education.

Identifying the reasons behind the growing perception that employee voice is futile presents a challenge. My findings reveal a heightened level of cynicism in larger organisations, which may stem from the bureaucratic structures that impede clear communication and erode trust. This trend seemed to occur when the global workforce was shifting to new working models, including hybrid environments, following the Covid-19 pandemic—a factor that is likely influencing organisational trust and the effectiveness of employee voice. Economic instability might further contribute to this phenomenon by reinforcing organisational rigidity and suppressing trust and communication. These findings highlight an increase in employees' beliefs about the futility of voice and a decrease in organisational trust, representing a concerning trend for organisations.

6.4.3. Predictive Relationship of OCS to K10 Depression Scores

Unexpectedly, the OCS exhibited moderate to strong correlations with the K10 depression subscale at two separate time points, contradicting the hypothesised expectation of a weak to moderate relationship (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Cohen, 1988). This stronger than expected correlation implies a more profound link between cynicism, futility beliefs and symptoms of depression. Further examination of the OCS subdimensions' impact on the K10 scores revealed they collectively account for 21% of the variance in depression scores. Notably, the indicators *futile to build relationships*, *be proactive*, and *voice* was nearly equivalent in their significant predictive influence on depression levels. These findings indicate a prominent relationship between organisational cynicism and mental well-being.

6.5.Future Research from Surprising Results

The surprising results from my research provide various avenues for future research. Longitudinal studies could examine how the indicator of *futile to voice* shifts over time, assessing its impact across different demographics and workplace models, especially with the introduction of AI and the increase of hybrid work arrangements. Such research could explore the influences of work models on employee cynicism and trust, focusing on the complexities within larger organisations. An in-depth analysis of how cynicism interconnects with mental health concerns, such as depression, could shed light on preventive measures and supportive interventions. Additionally, comparative research across organisations of varying sizes could help determine if larger entities inherently breed more cynicism or if it's a byproduct of their structural complexities. Moreover, the substantial predictive strength of the *futile to voice* and *be proactive* indicators merits further investigation to validate their effect on the organisational outcomes observed in this research and assess their impact on a broader range of outcomes across diverse samples.

6.6.Theoretical Implications

The comprehensive exploration of organisational cynicism provides substantial insights and a re-evaluation of its role in the workplace. This section discusses the cognitive reconceptualisation of cynicism and redefines organisational cynicism. It then clarifies cynicism as distinct from burnout outcomes and explores cynicism within the JD-R model framework.

6.6.1. Organisational Cynicism: A Cognitive Reconceptualisation

This research presents a theoretical advancement in the approach to organisational cynicism, positioning it as a distinct cognitive construct (e.g., Bedeian, 2007; Vance, 2017). It characterises cynicism as a belief system rooted in resignation and the expectation of disappointment. This perspective represents a departure from the traditional tripartite model, which combines beliefs, affects, and behaviours (Dean et al., 1998), focusing instead on cognitive beliefs that underpin cynicism in the workplace. By addressing issues of construct contamination, the concept of cynicism is refined, clearly differentiating it from negative affective and behavioural outcomes of cynicism. This refined focus on cognition offers a clearer delineation of cynicism, facilitating a more accurate exploration of its presence and influence within organisational settings.

6.6.2. Defining Organisational Cynicism

This thesis provided a synthesis of the existing literature (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013; Guthier et al., 2020) and the qualitative interviews and focus group discussions to develop a theoretical conceptualisation of workplace cynicism. I developed an operational definition of organisational cynicism for empirical testing. The empirical findings from Studies 2 and 3 did not support including the sub-theme *voiced beliefs* and *opinions marginalised*. However, the

data supported the inclusion of all the other subthemes (indicators of futile beliefs). For an overview that aligns the final OCS items with the conceptual definition, refer to Appendix 6.A.

Organisation Cynicism Definition: Fundamentally, organisational cynicism represents a cognitive framework that employees develop, specifically in response to their organisation, its management, or colleagues, among others. It is characterised by the expectation of future disappointment based on past negative experiences. Central to this is the belief in futility – the strong sense or conviction that most efforts or actions within the organisation will likely be useless or will not lead to meaningful results. Organisational cynicism manifests within four distinct dimensions with changeable referent targets:

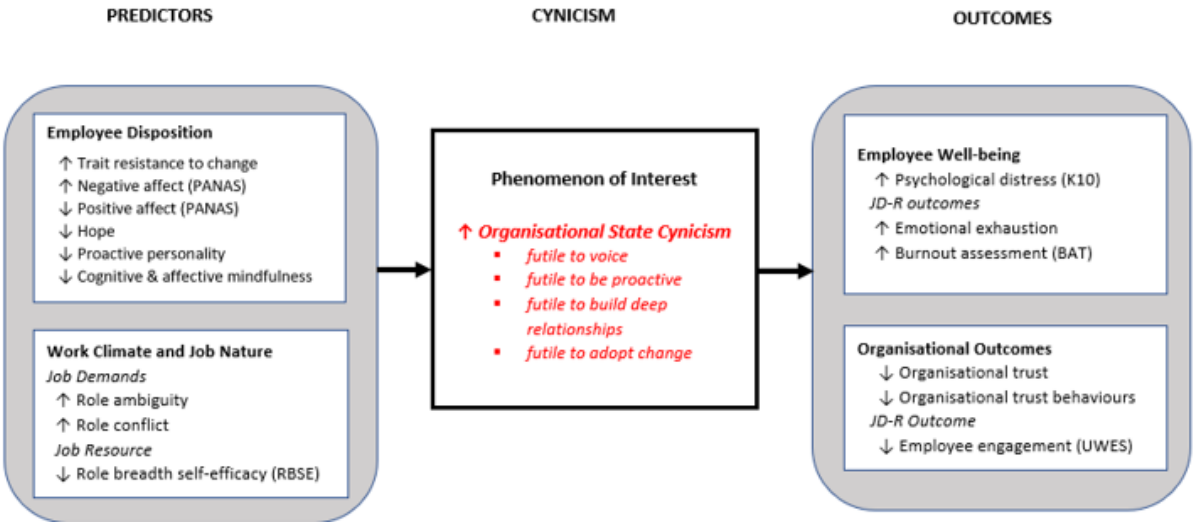
1. **Futile to Voice:** the belief that voicing opinions and ideas to my <referent target, e.g., organisation> is futile as they will likely be ignored, overlooked, or undervalued.
2. **Futile to Be Proactive:** the sense that additional effort or initiative taken for the benefit of my <referent target, e.g., organisation> will be neither valued, rewarded, nor appreciated.
3. **Futile to Build Deep Relationships:** the expectation that forming deep work relationships with/within my <referent target, e.g., organisation> will hold no value, as they will likely be superficial, one-sided, or will expose one to advantage-taking.
4. **Futile to Adopt Change:** the judgment that embracing changes for my <referent target, e.g., organisation> will be pointless because such changes will likely worsen situations, will be poorly planned, will not address underlying issues, or will be temporary.

6.6.3. OCS Nomological Network

Integration of the stressor–burnout literature (e.g., Guthier et al., 2020) and the broad psychology and management literature (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013) facilitated the development of a nomological network for organisational cynicism. Empirical evidence from Study 3, including correlations, hierarchical multiple regression analyses and RWAs, provided additional significant insights into the OCS's ability to explain a significant portion of the variance of various outcomes, expanding the nomological network surrounding organisational cynicism. Figure 6.1 presents the updated nomological network for the OCS. The OCS and its indicators exhibited incremental predictive validity for the outcome variables psychological distress (K10), emotional exhaustion, burnout (BAT), organisational trust, behavioural trust, and employee engagement.

Figure 6.1.

Empirically Tested OCS Nomological Network



Note. This figure is the tested nomological network for OCS. Red text denotes the new cynicism scales, with '↓' indicating negative and '↑' positive relationships with OCS.

6.6.4. Contribution to the Effects of JD-R on Well-being Outcomes

The integration of the OCS within the JD-R model serves as a preliminary exploration into the potential mechanisms underlying workplace well-being and engagement (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2001). My research tentatively suggests that organisational

cynicism may pay a role in mediating the relationship between job demands (such as role ambiguity, role conflict, witnessed disrespect behaviours, and cynical workplace climate), job resources (e.g., RBSE), and outcomes (including exhaustion, burnout, and engagement). While traditionally viewed as an outcome, often associated with burnout, this research proposes a re-evaluation of cynicism's position within the JD-R model to that of a potential mediator. However, it is important to acknowledge that the mediation analysis conducted in this study does not extend the JD-R model. Rather, it opens a dialogue on possible explanatory mechanisms of cynicism within the effects of workplace demands and resources on well-being outcomes This investigation highlights the necessity for future research to more comprehensively examine the mediating role of cognitive processes, like cynicism in the workplace environment.

6.6.5. ***Findings on the Temporal Nature of Cynicism***

A limitation of this work was that data on cynicism was collected at only two time points and thus I could not evaluate the evolution and changes in state cynicism across time and within -person. However, I could analyse and discuss some of the key findings on change in cynicism and related constructs across two time point.

The analysis indicated a notable stability in the overall scores of the OCS, including its Relationship, Proactive, and Change subscales. This stability suggests that employees' general sentiments towards their organisation, including their views on interpersonal relationships, proactive behaviours, and perceptions of organisational change, remain relatively constant over short-term periods. This constancy implies that situational factors, which did not significantly vary between the two measurement points, exert a limited influence on these dimensions of cynicism.

Contrastingly, the OCS Voice Subscale recorded a significant increase, highlighting a growing cynicism among employees regarding their capacity to voice opinions or effectuate change within the organisation. This rise in voice-related cynicism may be attributable to specific situational changes, such as organisational restructuring, leadership transitions, or instances of perceived injustice. These findings underscore the sensitivity of employee perceptions of influence and participation to organisational dynamics.

What was interesting to note was that across the two time points, employee perceptions of their Role Ambiguity, Role Conflict, and Role-Based Self-Esteem (RBSE) also remained the same and this could explain why cynicism levels did not change and were resistant to short-term shifts. This resistance could stem from the deeply entrenched nature of these attitudes or the absence of significant organisational events potent enough to elicit change. A significant decrease in organisational trust emerged as a stark contrast to the overall stability of cynicism, suggesting that trust is more susceptible to fluctuations and may be profoundly influenced by situational factors. This decrease in trust, potentially linked to the increased cynicism in voice, underscores the delicate balance between employee perceptions of their influence within the organisation and their trust towards it.

Moreover, the investigation into demographic variations revealed that factors such as gender, occupation, employment status, workplace size, and geographical location significantly influence organisational cynicism and trust. Notably, certain demographic groups demonstrated heightened voice cynicism and diminished organisational trust, indicating the profound impact of demographic and situational contexts on these attitudes.

The findings from this study emphasize the critical need for considering measurement reliability and the magnitude of observed changes in longitudinal research on organisational behaviour. Future research in the field of organisational cynicism should consider the role of

time passing in the development of cynicism. Specifically, investigations should explore questions such as how much time must elapse between predictors and the emergence of feelings of cynicism, and whether the road to cynicism follows an individual idiosyncratic path or a more general process influenced by time or exposure. Diary studies may not be the most suitable way to capture cynicism fluctuations, rather long-term multi-year studies where there are interventions to change situations and relationships dynamics for individuals is more likely to see evolution of cynicism as an attitude in employees. Such investigations will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the temporal and contextual factors shaping cynicism within organisational settings.

6.6.6. **My Theorising on the Temporal Nature of Cynicism**

To aid future research, below I describe my theoretical understanding and propositions with respect to the temporal nature and evolution of employee cynicism over time. In my exploration of the complex world of employee cynicism within organisations, I've ventured to propose a theoretical framework that attempts to capture the nuanced temporal dynamics of this phenomenon. Through my research, I aim to shed light on the pathways that might lead to the emergence and persistence of cynicism at work, suggesting a model that weaves together the myriad factors at play in how cynicism can develop and endure over time.

Temporal Phases of Cynicism Development: In my view, the journey of employee cynicism might unfold in distinct temporal phases, starting with what could be seen as a pre-cynical phase marked by mild scepticism or disillusionment. I propose that this early stage is critical, as it potentially sets the groundwork for a deeper form of cynicism to take root. I suggest that, influenced by ongoing negative experiences or expectations that go unmet, this initial scepticism might intensify, possibly evolving into what I term an emergent cynical phase. In the absence of effective intervention or positive change within the organisation, I

speculate that this phase could solidify into chronic cynicism, where cynical attitudes become a stable and pervasive part of an individual's perspective on their workplace. This phased approach, in my opinion, underscores the potential importance of timely recognition and intervention to perhaps prevent the deepening of cynicism.

Role of Time Intervals: I also highlight the potential significance of the time between key organisational events and the manifestation of cynicism. My framework points to the possibility that short-term triggers, such as sudden organisational changes or leadership failures, might quickly transform initial scepticism into outright cynicism. On the other hand, I suggest that long-term factors, like ongoing job dissatisfaction or persistent breaches of trust, could gradually nurture a deeper cynicism. This distinction aims to underline the nuanced impact that the timing of events might have on the development of cynicism, suggesting a need for organisations to address such triggers promptly.

Individual Differences in Cynicism Evolution: Recognising the variability in how individuals might progress from scepticism to cynicism, I highlight the influence of personal values, resilience, past experiences, and available social support within the organisation on this journey. This variability, in my view, points to the potential need for personalised and context-sensitive management strategies to reduce the risk of cynicism.

Impact of Antecedents and Organisational Culture: I propose that the inception of cynicism could be closely linked to discrepancies between an employee's personal values and the organisation's values, leading to dissatisfaction and mistrust. In this framework, I consider predictive expectations and the attribution of motives as possibly pivotal in this process, with unmet expectations potentially serving as a breeding ground for cynicism. This underscores, in my opinion, the critical role of organisational culture in either curbing or fostering cynicism.

Person-Environment Transactional Mechanisms: My proposed framework also explores the bidirectional influence between individuals and their organisational environments through proactive, reactive, and evocative mechanisms. This complex interplay suggests the possibility that employee cynicism is not merely a result of organisational conditions but also contributes to the organisational atmosphere, creating a feedback loop that might either mitigate or exacerbate cynicism.

Developmental Constancy Factors: Finally, I delve into the role of developmental constancy factors, such as genetic predispositions, cognitive and emotional vulnerabilities, and the stability of environmental conditions. These factors highlight the inherent complexity in predicting and managing employee cynicism, suggesting that while individuals may have certain psychological tendencies, their expression is significantly influenced by their interactions with the organisational environment.

Conclusion: In synthesising these propositions into a comprehensive model, I aim to elucidate the temporal dynamics of employee cynicism, proposing that recognising the multifaceted and evolving nature of cynicism within organisational contexts might contribute to a deeper understanding of its development and persistence. Moreover, I suggest that creating organisational environments that align with employees' values and actively engage in shaping positive perceptions and experiences is crucial. The insights derived from this theoretical exploration not only aim to advance academic discourse on organisational behaviour but also offer potential implications for practitioners seeking to foster a more engaged and less cynical workforce.

6.7.Limitations and Future Research

My study's methodology, which relied on self-reported data from online surveys used in Studies 2 and 3, inherently presents limitations. Using a paid platform to gather this data introduces selection bias, as it will likely attract respondents motivated by financial incentives (Aguinis et al., 2020). Furthermore, due to budget limitations, the range of participants was narrowed, which could limit the generalisability of the study's findings. Although the sample included participants from various countries and occupational backgrounds to counteract this bias, these measures may not fully compensate for the selection skew.

Additionally, self-reporting can lead to response distortion. It is recommended that future studies enhance the accuracy of their findings by using social desirability scales to gauge the authenticity of responses (Holtop et al., 2020) and employing overclaiming questionnaires to identify individuals who might fabricate their responses (Dunlop et al., 2020). These methodologies could help detect and reduce biases inherent in self-reported data, thereby improving the validity and reliability of the research outcomes. Future research should employ a longitudinal study within a single, large organisation to improve the replicability of findings and validate the OCS without the confounding effects of financial incentives. Incorporating hierarchical linear modelling could reveal the patterns of cynicism across different organisational levels and the fluctuation of the OCS over time. To ensure the integrity of longitudinal data, researchers could use unit root tests like the Augmented Dickey-Fuller test to reduce the likelihood of Type 1 errors (Braun et al., 2013).

A limitation pertains to the analysis of measurement equivalence and invariance (ME/I) in this study. The decision to randomly split the sample for ME/I tests, while intended to ensure unbiased results, may have added unnecessary complexity, and led to limited practical utility. Future research should consider a more targeted approach to assess measurement equivalence between time points.

The limitations of this study include the homogeneity of focus group participants, who were exclusively from government backgrounds and predominantly female, potentially constraining the diversity of perspectives gathered. Furthermore, reliance on academics to rate constructs and items in the Q sort exercise may limit generalisability, as academics tend to discern finer distinctions not always evident to individuals in more ordinary samples. Future research could address these limitations by expanding the participant pool to include diverse demographic groups and employing alternative rating methods, such as content validity that involve the target population to enhance the validity and generalisability of findings. In addition, for future research dominance analysis is noted as the recommended approach (Budescu, 1993), and should be applied as an improvement to the Q-sort process originally adopted in this research. Another limitation of this study is that it takes a singular approach to defining and examining OCS as a latent construct, which impacts the four dimensions such that OCS as a latent construct impacts all four dimensions equally and can be measured as a higher order unitary unidimensional construct by aggregating the scores on the measured dimensions. I would like to acknowledge that there exist other models of conceptualising and measuring multi-dimensional constructs – which could be explored in future research. For example, future research could look at OCS multi-dimensional constructs, focusing on two other ways – aggregate (formative models) and profile (pattern-based formative model)– and emphasizing the latent model's relevance to organisational cynicism. For example, one could develop a profile-based understanding of how the four dimensions differ and whether the pattern of magnitude on the four dimensions changes the impact of the higher order OCS on outcomes. Future research should explore the theoretical intricacies within the measurement model.

Future research should explore the importance of consistency across all dimensions in understanding workplace cynicism. It is essential to explore the relevance of these dimensions in various organisational contexts and among diverse employee groups, including different

genders, ages, occupations, and industries. Employing research formats like diary studies and longitudinal investigations can highlight the temporal aspects of cynicism and explore the relevance of the combination of these dimensions to predict high organisational cynicism.

While my research examined a range of organisational cynicism's antecedents, it did not account for certain factors like workload, job control, managerial support, organisational justice, and adverse power dynamics, which are known to influence cynicism (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2013). Additionally, some consequences of cynicism, such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and job performance, were not considered. Future studies should measure these constructs with OCS to enhance our understanding of cynicism's mediating role within the JD-R model and its broader implications on organisational outcomes, including productivity, turnover, and workplace well-being. Addressing these gaps will provide a more comprehensive picture of cynicism's impact on organisational dynamics.

6.8.Practical Implications for the OCS/O-CAT

The OCS/O-CAT has practical applications in real-world organisational settings. They provide a tool to operate as an organisational checkup (e.g., Maslach & Leiter, 2008). The dual naming approach ensures clarity and promotes broader acceptance and integration into organisational practices. The O-CAT identifies areas where employees exhibit cynical beliefs, and can provide valuable insights for data-driven decision-making to help create better work environments. The O-CAT focus on voice, proactivity, relationships, and adaptability, providing practical means to diagnose workplace cynicism. Specifically, the O-CAT offers actionable insights for understanding and enhancing organisational culture.

6.8.1. Practical Implications of the O-CAT

The O-CAT is positioned as a strategic diagnostic tool that provides a data-driven method for identifying and quantifying levels of cynicism within organisations for leaders or

practitioners. It can play a role in pinpointing the aspects of cynicism that may affect organisational well-being, cohesion, and effectiveness. The insights collected from the O-CAT would enable leaders to implement targeted interventions compatible with broader corporate strategies, enhancing culture and improving overall functionality.

The O-CAT's strength is its precise assessment of critical workplace aspects like employee voice, proactivity, relationship-building, and adaptability. This evaluation assists leadership in shaping workplace environments that encourage transparent communication, decision-making collaboration, and adaptation to change. The O-CAT would prove beneficial in major organisational shifts, including mergers and structural changes, providing leaders with empirical data to craft strategies that encourage employee engagement and enhance overall well-being.

6.9.Conclusion

Organisational cynicism, a complex and multidimensional characteristic, continues to influence contemporary workplaces 75 years after its initial identification. My findings revealed the influence of this phenomenon on today’s employees, demonstrating that organisational cynicism explains a significant portion of the variance of outcomes such as well-being, engagement, and organisational trust. The distinction between burnout and the identification of its cognitive multifaceted nature were central to the findings, positioning organisational cynicism as a unique and essential aspect of workplace dynamics. The newly developed measurement tool – the OCS– contributes to the field by offering a focused way to study cynicism. This tool assess diverse dimensions of cynicism as psychometrically sound measures, providing profound insights into its cognitive nature.

The present research contributes by identifying the unique cynicism indicators that contribute to reduced engagement, burnout, and eroded trust within organisations. My research highlights how the indicators of cynicism distinctly influence individual and organisational outcomes. These findings allow for targeted interventions that prioritise positive and productive organisational environments. While I provide insight into the nature of cynicism in today's workplaces, I also acknowledge limitations and highlight avenues for future exploration. By revealing multidimensional aspects and consistent predictive patterns, this research sets a strong foundation for further scholarly inquiry, recognising organisational cynicism's continuous evolution and complexities.

The development of cognitive multidimensional measures marks the profound contributions of my research, offering an innovative lens through which to view and address cynicism. The comprehensive examination of organisational cynicism has led to a refined understanding of this phenomenon, inspiring further exploration and shaping the future of this crucial area of research. In conclusion, my research redefines organisational cynicism as a complex and multifaceted cognitive phenomenon in contemporary organisational life. Through a comprehensive examination and the development of practical tools, my research sets the stage for transforming organisational practices and employee well-being.

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Appendices

Appendix 2.A. Chapter 2 Supplementary Material

Existing Scales Details Available on Request:

- Hathaway and McKinley (1943) – MMPI Cynicism Items
- Cook and Medley (1954) – HO Scale Cynicism Items
- Wrightsman (1964) – PHN scale Cynicism Items
- Niederhoffer (1967) – Police Cynicism Scale
- Butcher et al. (1989) – MMPI-2 Cynicism Items
- Kanter and Mirvis (1989) – Measures of Life Attitudes Cynicism Items
- Regoli et al. (1990) – Police Cynicism Scale
- Brooks and Vance (1991) – Organisational Cynicism Scale
- Maslach et al. (1996) – MBI-GS Cynicism Items
- Reichers et al. (1997) – CAOC
- Brandes et al. (1999) – Employee Cynicism Scale
- Wanous et al. (2000) – CAOC
- Brockway et al. (2002) – CATCS
- Stanley et al. (2005) – Cynicism Items
- Cole et al. (2006) – Employee Cynicism Measure
- Bedeian (2007) – Academics Cynicism
- Schaufeli et al. (2019) – BAT Cynicism Items

Appendix 2.B. Cynicism Items and Literature Themes Synthesis

Existing Items From Cynicism Scales Measuring the Synthesized Themes	Perception of Value & Recognition	Futility in Organisational Change	Questioning Others Motives	Mismatched Expectations	Distrust in Organisational Effectiveness
Personal initiative does not count for much in this organisation (Brooks & Vance, 1991)	x				
I have pretty much given up trying to make suggestions for improvements around here (Brooks & Vance, 1991)	x				
Administrators ask for student input, but then do nothing with it (Brockway et al., 2002)	x				
I have become more cynical about whether my work contributes anything (Maslach et al., 1996).	x				
Changes to the usual ways to doing things at this organisation are more trouble than they are worth (Brooks & Vance, 1991).		x			
Efforts to make improvements are recognised within this organisation. (R)(Brooks & Vance, 1991)		x			
Most of the programs that are supposed to solve problems around here will not do much good (Reichers et al., 1997)		x			
Attempts to make things better around here will not produce good results (Reichers et al., 1997)		x			
Suggestions on how to solve problems will not produce much real change (Reichers et al., 1997)		x			
Plan for future improvement will not amount to much (Reichers et al., 1997)		x			
Policies made by the administration cause more problems than they solve (Brockway et al., 2002)		x			
Most people in this organisation think things will get better instead of worse. (R) (Brooks & Vance, 1991)		x			
Item 57 – I commonly wonder what hidden reason another person may have for doing something nice for me. (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943)			x		
I have often had to take orders from someone who did not know as much as I did (Butcher et al., 1989)			x		
Most people make friends because friends are likely to be useful to them. (Cook & Medley, 1954)			x		
Most people inwardly dislike putting themselves out to help other people (Cook & Medley, 1954)			x		
People pretend to care more about one another than they really do (Wrightsman, 1964)			x		
Most people are just out for themselves (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989).			x		
My organisation expects one thing of its employees, but rewards another (Brandes et al., 1999)				x	
I complain about things happening in my organisation to friends outside the organisation (Brandes et al. 1999)					x
I often talk to others about the way things are run in my organisation (Brandes et al. 1999)					x
I criticise my organisation's practices and policies with others (Brandes et al. 1999)					x
I see little similarity between what my organisation says it will do and what is actually does (Brandes et al., 1999)					x
I believe my organisation management says one thing and does another (Brandes et al., 1999)					x
When my organisation says it is going to do something. I wonder if it will really happen (Brandes et al., 1999)					x
What the administration does is different from what they say they are going to do (Brockway et al., 2002)					x
I believe that there are ulterior motives for most of the decisions made by management in this organisation (Stanley et al., 2005)					x
I think that management would misrepresent its intentions to gain acceptance for a decision it wanted to make (Stanley et al., 2005)					x
I believe that management's motives for this change are different from those stated publicly (Stanley et al., 2005)					x
I believe that management has a "hidden agenda" in promoting this change (Stanley et al., 2005)					x
Management is trying to hide the real reason for this change (Stanley et al., 2005)					x
There is more to this change than management is admitting (Stanley et al., 2005)					x
I question management's motives for this change (Stanley et al., 2005)					x
I believe that management's intentions in introducing this change are very different than what they are telling employees. (Stanley et al., 2005)					x

Appendix 3.A. Chapter 3 Supplementary Material

Ethics Approvals and Copyright Scale Use Approvals available on request:

- Study 1, Ethics Approval (Protocol Number: 202978)
- Study 1, Ethics Approval to Conduct Research with Australian State Government Department Sites (Reference Number: 2020-0031)
- Study 1, Ethics COVID Safe Fieldwork activities approval
- Study 2 and 3, Ethics Approval (Protocol Number: 203792)
- Pilot Study, Ethics Amendment Approval (Protocol Number: 203792)
- Study 2, Ethics Amendment Approval for Survey Refinement (Protocol Number: 203792)
- Study 2, Ethics Amendment Approval to Change Survey Platform from MTurk to Prolific (Protocol Number: 203792)
- Study 3, Ethics Amendment Approval for Longitudinal Study (Protocol Number: 203792)
- MBI-GS Survey Items, Approval for Remote Online Use of a Mind Garden Instrument
- MBI-GS Licence Receipts for the use of 420 MBI-GS Remote Online Survey Licences
- Social Connectedness Scale, Approval from Professor Rich Lee to use the Social Connectedness Scale (Lee et al., 2008)

Survey's Available on Request

- Pilot Study Survey
- Study 3 (Time 2) Full Survey

Appendix 3.B. Study 1, Qualitative Interview Questions

Broad questions asked in Interviews and Focus Group Workshops:

What is key to leadership, creating a climate of low cynicism?

1) How would you define the term employee cynicism?
2) What are the features? (What do cynical employees do? How do they act?)
3) What are your experiences of cynicism?
4) Any thoughts on how cynicism spreads in organisations? (What reduces it? What makes it worse?)
5) What will reduce/remove cynicism? (examples)

Appendix 3.C: Q-Sort Exercise

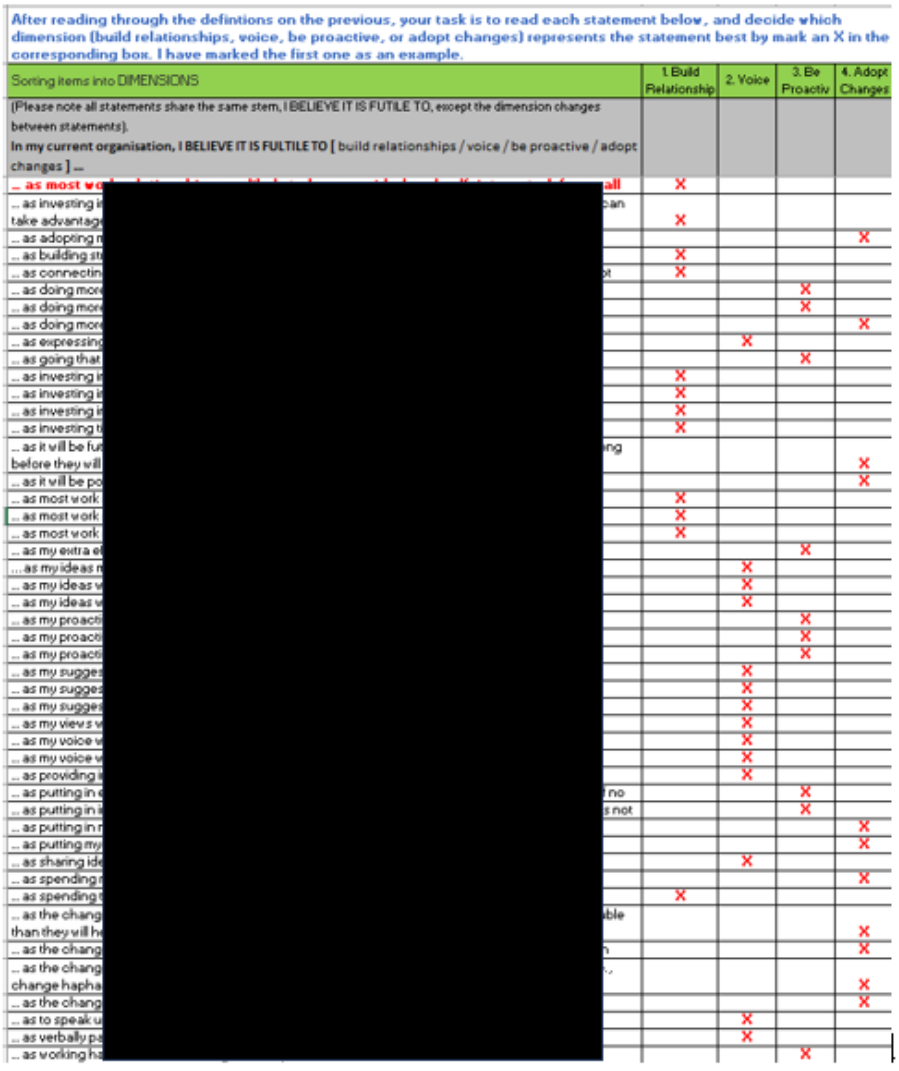
Definitions Supplied to Participants for Q-Sort Exercise

Thank you for your helping out with my research.

Please read through each defintion on this tab, then go to tab '2.Cynicism Item Sorting', to complete the sorting task?

Dimension	Definition
Futile to ...	*It is pointless, worthless, useless, waste of time, of no value*
1. Build Relationships	Futile to build relationships includes it's of no value or a waste of time to build relationships, invest in relationships, make connections, connect, or engage with others.
2. Voice	Futile to voice includes it's of no value or a waste of time to speak up as my voice or ideas will not be heard, suggestions given will be not considered or overlooked, used against me, or stolen. Speaking up and verbally participating or expressing ideas makes no difference; it is a waste of time.
3. Be Proactive	Futile to be proactive includes it's of no value or a waste of time to be proactive as effort, proactivity, working harder, going the extra mile, and doing more is not recognised, appreciated, rewarded, noticed, or not worthwhile.
4. Adopt Changes	Futile to adopt changes includes it's of no value or a waste of time, adopting new ways of doing things or implementing them, putting them into action, or doing things differently as it is pointless and not worth it.

Participant Item Sorting Sheet

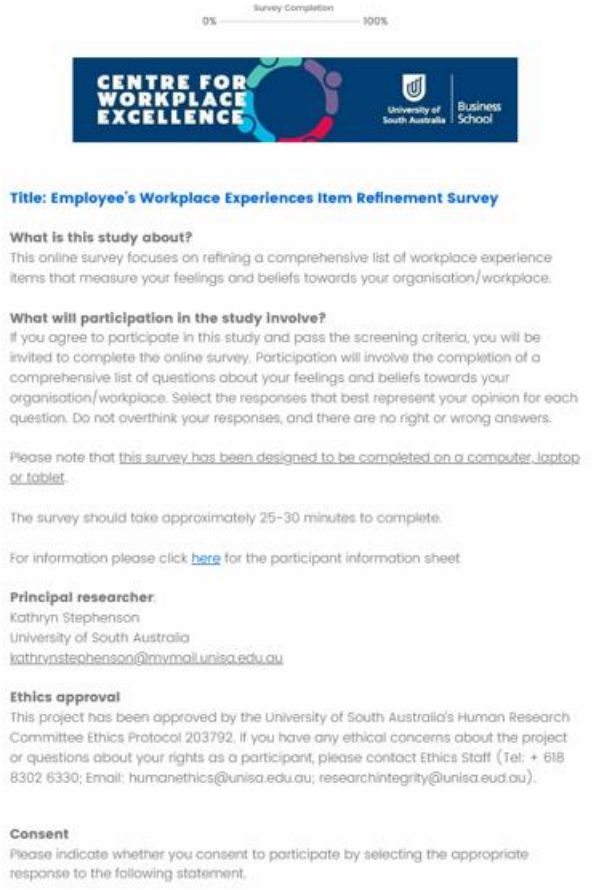


After reading through the defintions on the previous, your task is to read each statement below, and decide which dimension (build relationships, voice, be proactive, or adopt changes) represents the statement best by mark an X in the corresponding box. I have marked the first one as an example.

Sorting items into DIMENSIONS	1. Build Relationship	2. Voice	3. Be Proactiv	4. Adopt Changes
(Please note all statements share the same stem, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE TO, except the dimension changes between statements). **In my current organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FULTILE TO [** build relationships / voice / be proactive / adopt changes **] ...**				
... as most wo[redacted]all	X			
... as investing i[redacted]can take advantag[redacted]	X			
... as adopting n[redacted]				X
... as building st[redacted]	X			
... as connectin[redacted]t	X			
... as doing mor[redacted]			X	
... as doing mor[redacted]			X	
... as doing mor[redacted]				X
... as expressing[redacted]		X		
... as going that[redacted]			X	
... as investing i[redacted]	X			
... as investing i[redacted]	X			
... as investing i[redacted]	X			
... as investing t[redacted]	X			
... as it will be fu[redacted]ng before they will[redacted]				X
... as it will be po[redacted]				X
... as most work[redacted]	X			
... as most work[redacted]	X			
... as most work[redacted]	X			
... as my extra e[redacted]			X	
... as my ideas n[redacted]		X		
... as my ideas v[redacted]		X		
... as my ideas w[redacted]		X		
... as my proacti[redacted]			X	
... as my proacti[redacted]			X	
... as my proacti[redacted]			X	
... as my sugges[redacted]		X		
... as my sugges[redacted]		X		
... as my sugges[redacted]		X		
... as my views v[redacted]		X		
... as my voice w[redacted]		X		
... as my voice w[redacted]		X		
... as providing i[redacted]		X		
... as putting in e[redacted]no			X	
... as putting in i[redacted]s not			X	
... as putting in r[redacted]				X
... as putting my[redacted]				X
... as sharing ide[redacted]		X		
... as spending r[redacted]				X
... as spending t[redacted]	X			
... as the chang[redacted]ible than they will h[redacted]				X
... as the chang[redacted]n				X
... as the chang[redacted] change hapha[redacted]				X
... as the chang[redacted]				X
... as to speak u[redacted]		X		
... as verbally pa[redacted]		X		
... as working ha[redacted]			X	

Appendix 3.D. Study 2 and 3 Qualtrics Survey

Survey administered for Study 2 and Study 3 (time 1)



Survey Completion

0% 100%

CENTRE FOR WORKPLACE EXCELLENCE

University of South Australia | Business School

Title: Employee's Workplace Experiences Item Refinement Survey

What is this study about?
This online survey focuses on refining a comprehensive list of workplace experience items that measure your feelings and beliefs towards your organisation/workplace.

What will participation in the study involve?
If you agree to participate in this study and pass the screening criteria, you will be invited to complete the online survey. Participation will involve the completion of a comprehensive list of questions about your feelings and beliefs towards your organisation/workplace. Select the responses that best represent your opinion for each question. Do not overthink your responses, and there are no right or wrong answers.

Please note that this survey has been designed to be completed on a computer, laptop or tablet.

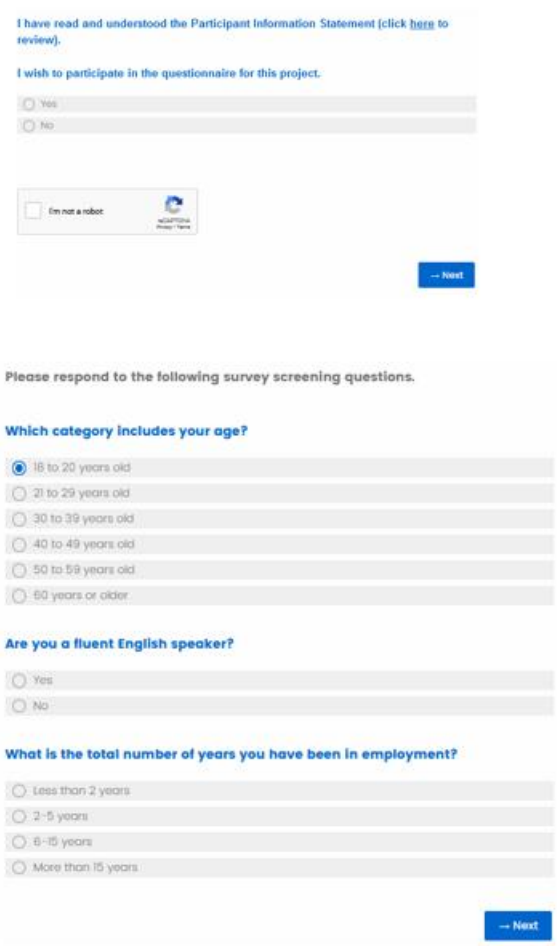
The survey should take approximately 25-30 minutes to complete.

For information please click here for the participant information sheet

Principal researcher
Kathryn Stephenson
University of South Australia
kathrynstephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

Ethics approval
This project has been approved by the University of South Australia's Human Research Committee Ethics Protocol 203792. If you have any ethical concerns about the project or questions about your rights as a participant, please contact Ethics Staff (Tel: + 618 8302 6330; Email: humanethics@unisa.edu.au; researchintegrity@unisa.eud.au).

Consent
Please indicate whether you consent to participate by selecting the appropriate response to the following statement.



I have read and understood the Participant Information Statement (click here to review).

I wish to participate in the questionnaire for this project.

- Yes
- No

I'm not a robot

→ Next

Please respond to the following survey screening questions.

Which category includes your age?

- 18 to 20 years old
- 21 to 29 years old
- 30 to 39 years old
- 40 to 49 years old
- 50 to 59 years old
- 60 years or older

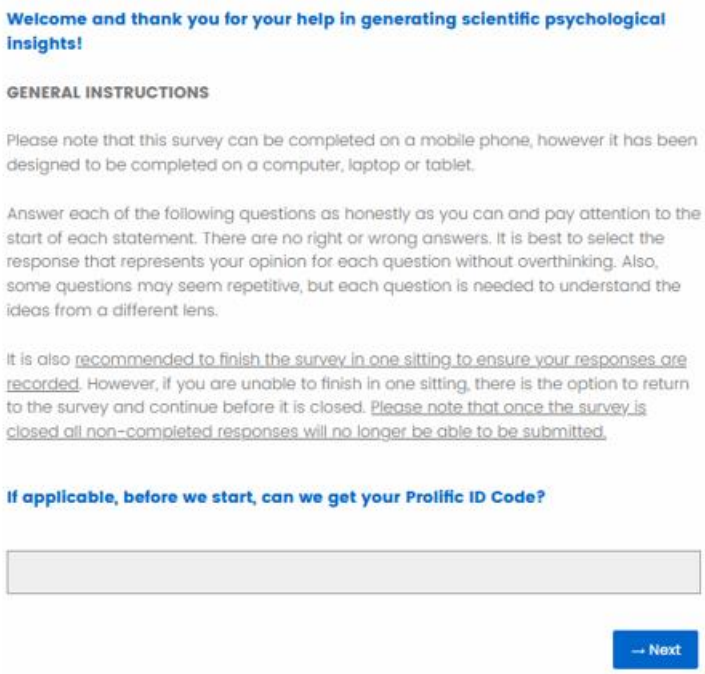
Are you a fluent English speaker?

- Yes
- No

What is the total number of years you have been in employment?

- Less than 2 years
- 2-5 years
- 6-15 years
- More than 15 years

→ Next



Welcome and thank you for your help in generating scientific psychological insights!

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

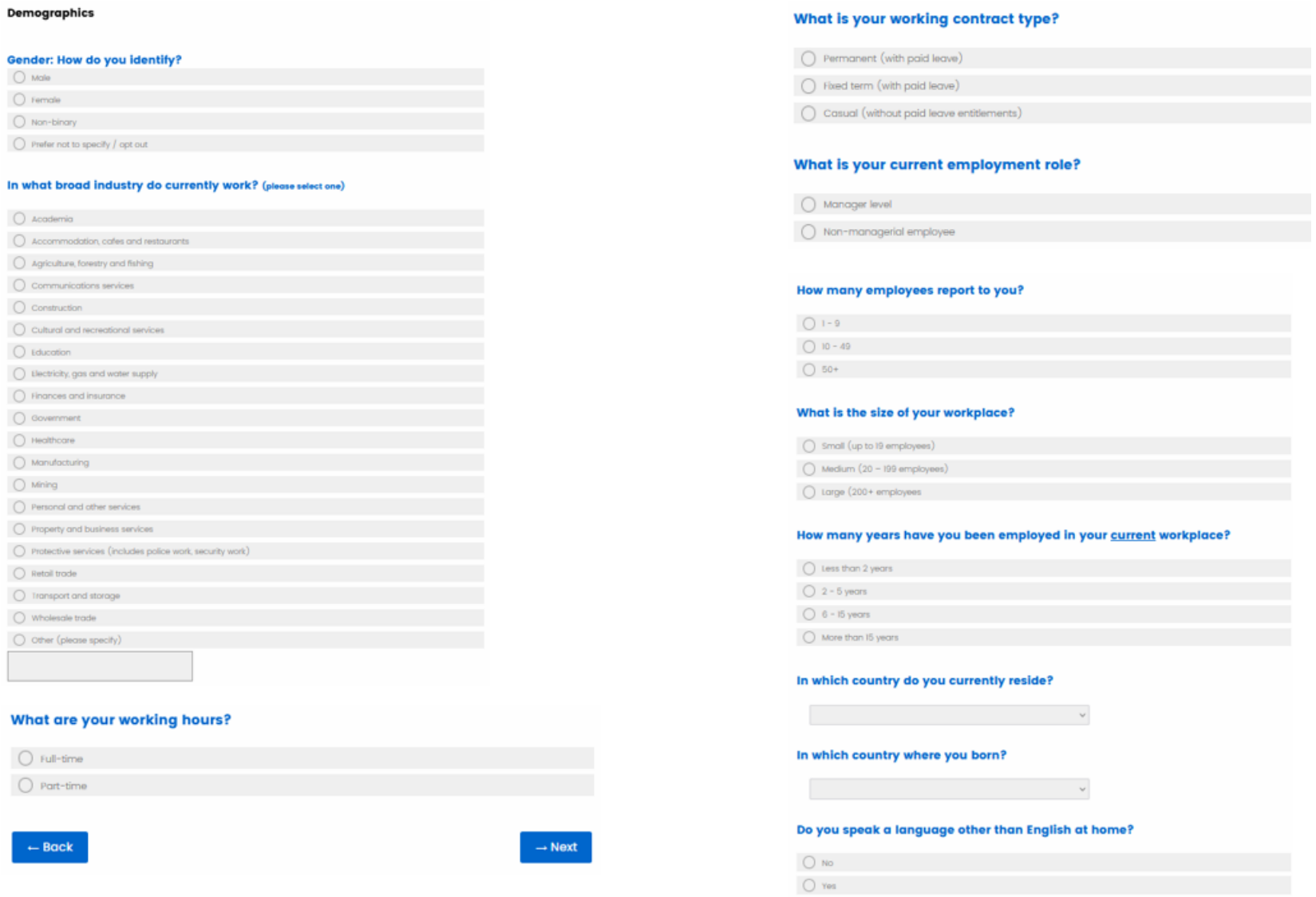
Please note that this survey can be completed on a mobile phone, however it has been designed to be completed on a computer, laptop or tablet.

Answer each of the following questions as honestly as you can and pay attention to the start of each statement. There are no right or wrong answers. It is best to select the response that represents your opinion for each question without overthinking. Also, some questions may seem repetitive, but each question is needed to understand the ideas from a different lens.

It is also recommended to finish the survey in one sitting to ensure your responses are recorded. However, if you are unable to finish in one sitting, there is the option to return to the survey and continue before it is closed. Please note that once the survey is closed all non-completed responses will no longer be able to be submitted.

If applicable, before we start, can we get your Prolific ID Code?

→ Next



Demographics

Gender: How do you identify?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to specify / opt out

In what broad industry do currently work? (please select one)

- Academia
- Accommodation, cafes and restaurants
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Communications services
- Construction
- Cultural and recreational services
- Education
- Electricity, gas and water supply
- Finances and insurance
- Government
- Healthcare
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Personal and other services
- Property and business services
- Protective services (includes police work, security work)
- Retail trade
- Transport and storage
- Wholesale trade
- Other (please specify)

What are your working hours?

- Full-time
- Part-time

← Back → Next

What is your working contract type?

- Permanent (with paid leave)
- Fixed term (with paid leave)
- Casual (without paid leave entitlements)

What is your current employment role?

- Manager level
- Non-managerial employee

How many employees report to you?

- 1 - 9
- 10 - 49
- 50+

What is the size of your workplace?

- Small (up to 19 employees)
- Medium (20 – 199 employees)
- Large (200+ employees

How many years have you been employed in your current workplace?

- Less than 2 years
- 2 - 5 years
- 6 - 15 years
- More than 15 years

In which country do you currently reside?

In which country where you born?

Do you speak a language other than English at home?

- No
- Yes

The following block of questions are about your **thoughts, feelings and perception** about your **relationship with the organisation/company/firm** at which you are **currently working.**

(ORGANISATION - refers to the organisation/company/firm at which you are currently working).

Think back to your **interactions with your ORGANISATION** - especially in the **PAST THREE MONTHS**, please rate your agreement with each statement.

In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE *(of no value, waste of time)*
to BUILD DEEP RELATIONSHIPS ... *(e.g. develop strong, real, authentic connections and relationships)* ..

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

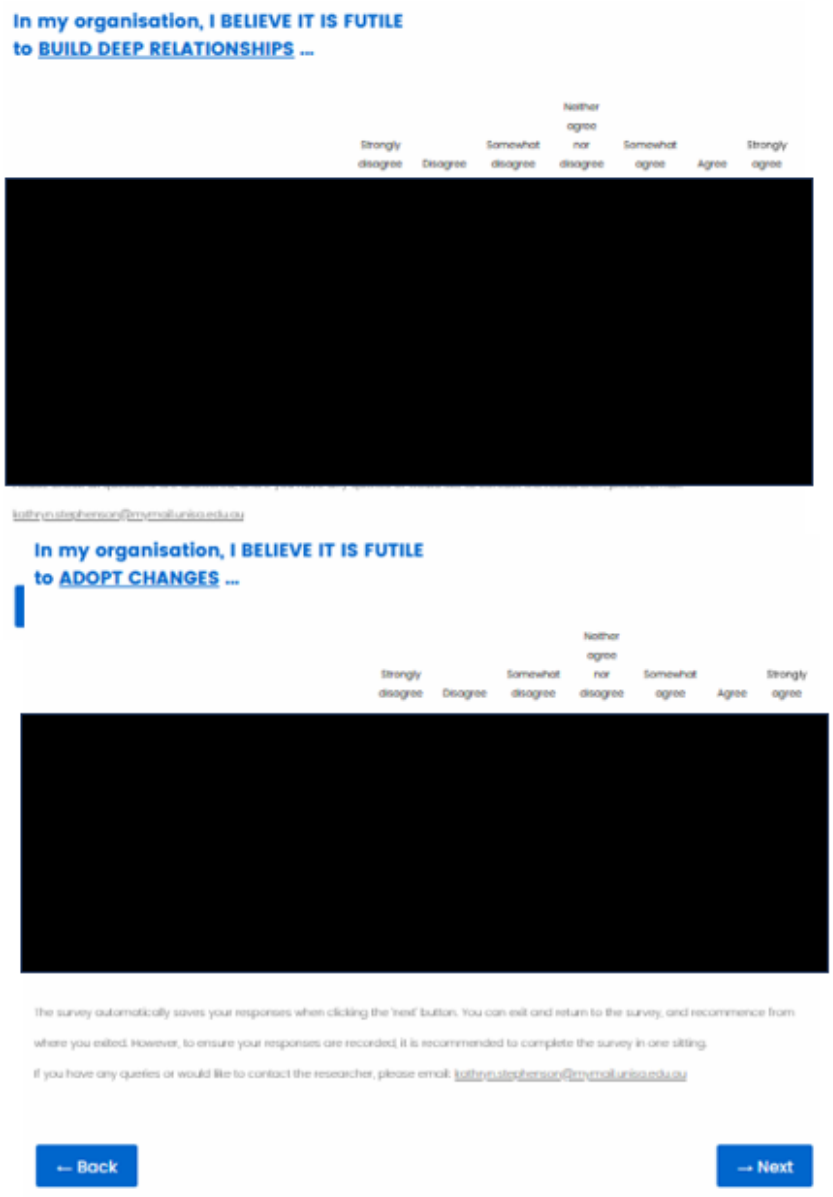


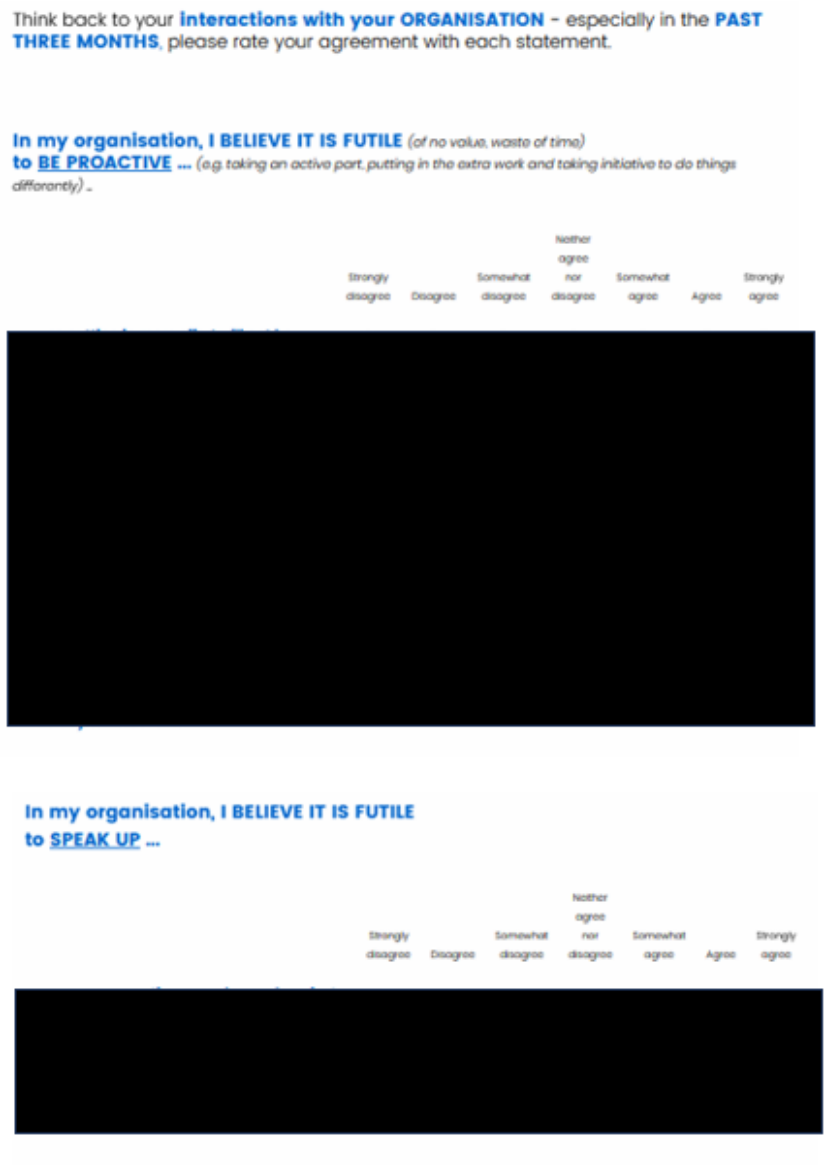
Think back to your **interactions with your ORGANISATION** - especially in the **PAST THREE MONTHS**, please rate your agreement with each statement.

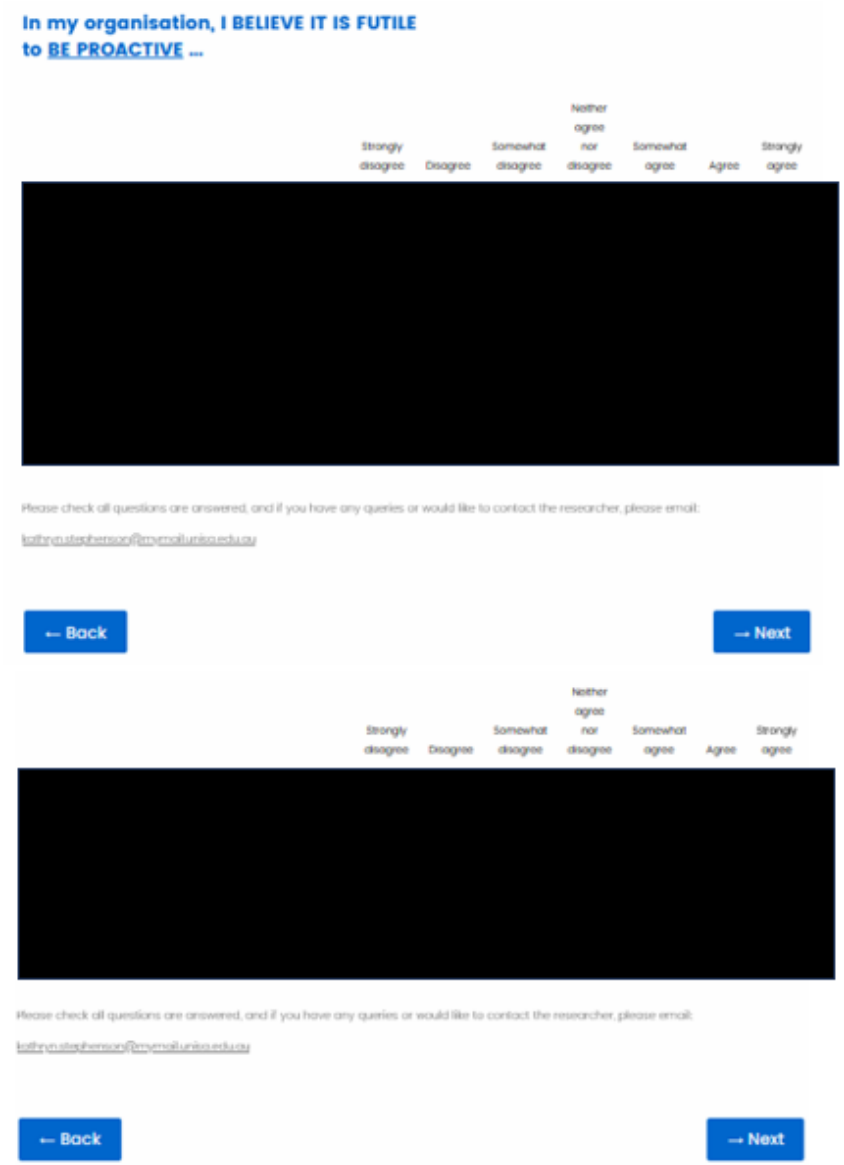
In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE *(of no value, waste of time)*
to ADOPT CHANGES ... *(i.e. follow all new changes in roles, policies, rules etc. made by my organisation)* ..

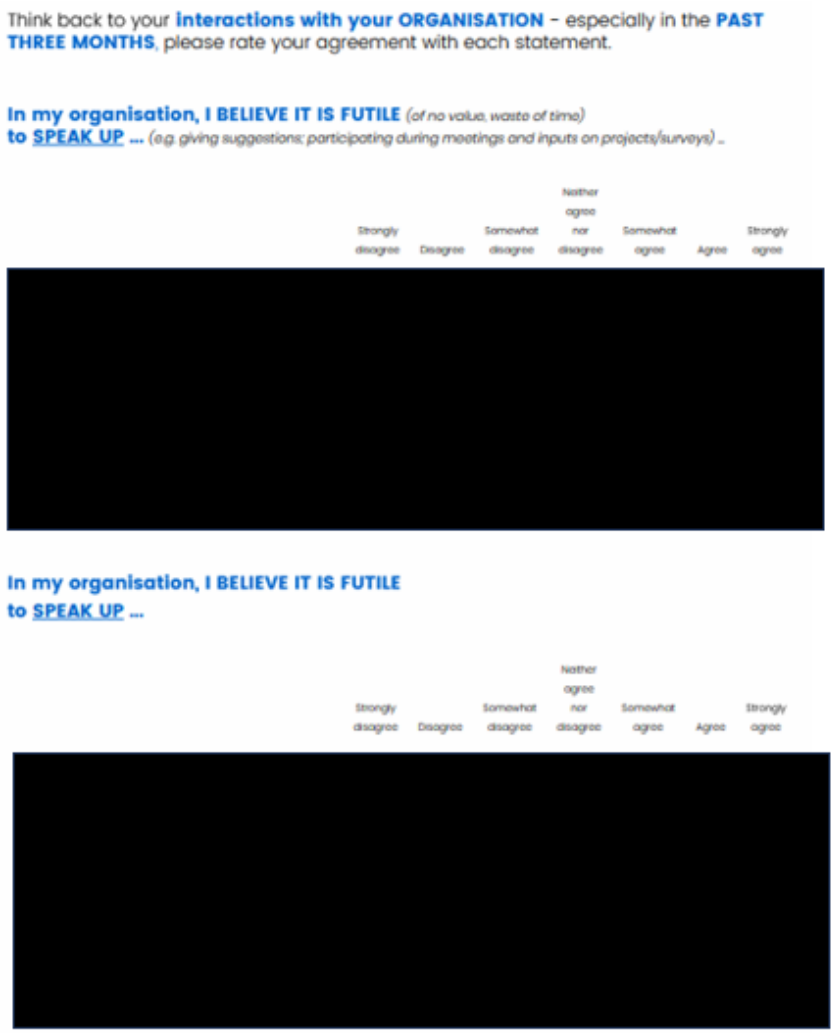
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

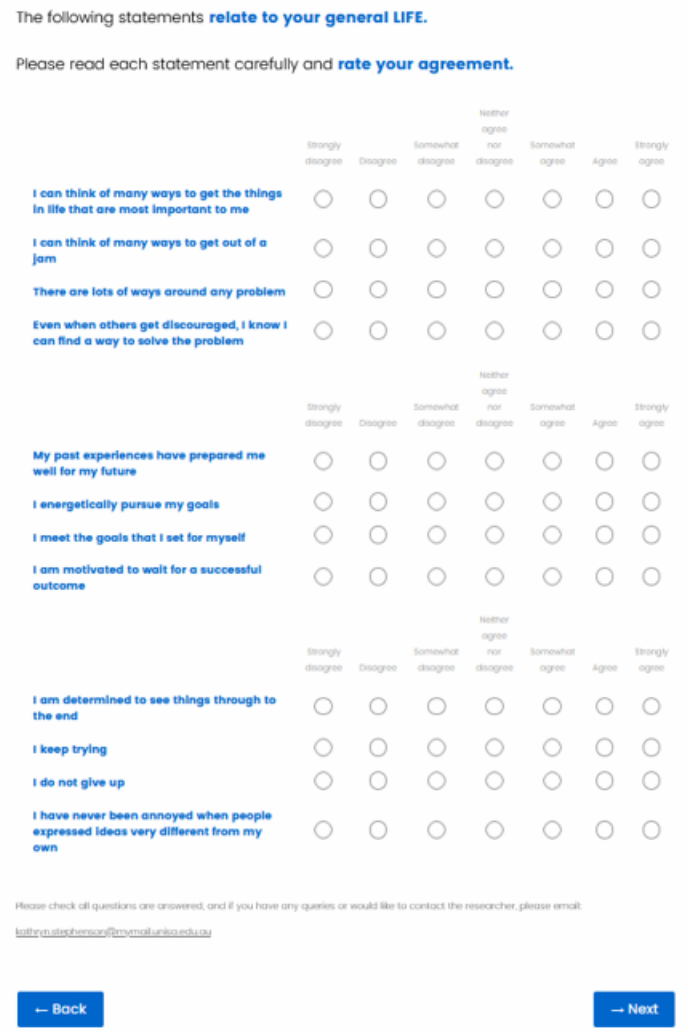



In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE
to BUILD DEEP RELATIONSHIPS ...
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree
[redacted]
kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au
In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE
to ADOPT CHANGES ...
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree
[redacted]
The survey automatically saves your responses when clicking the 'next' button. You can exit and return to the survey, and recommence from where you exited. However, to ensure your responses are recorded, it is recommended to complete the survey in one sitting.
If you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email: kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au
← Back
→ Next


Think back to your interactions with your ORGANISATION - especially in the PAST THREE MONTHS, please rate your agreement with each statement.
In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE (of no value, waste of time)
to BE PROACTIVE ... (e.g. taking an active part, putting in the extra work and taking initiative to do things differently) ..
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree
[redacted]
In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE
to SPEAK UP ...
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree
[redacted]


In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE
to BE PROACTIVE ...
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree
[redacted]
Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:
kathryn.stephenson@myemail.unisa.edu.au
← Back
→ Next
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree
[redacted]
Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:
kathryn.stephenson@myemail.unisa.edu.au
← Back
→ Next


Think back to your interactions with your ORGANISATION - especially in the PAST THREE MONTHS, please rate your agreement with each statement.
In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE (of no value, waste of time)
to SPEAK UP ... (e.g. giving suggestions; participating during meetings and inputs on projects/surveys) ..
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree
[redacted]
In my organisation, I BELIEVE IT IS FUTILE
to SPEAK UP ...
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree
[redacted]



The following statements **relate to your general LIFE.**

Please read each statement carefully and **rate your agreement.**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I can think of many ways to get out of a jam	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
There are lots of ways around any problem	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My past experiences have prepared me well for my future	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I energetically pursue my goals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I meet the goals that I set for myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am motivated to wait for a successful outcome	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am determined to see things through to the end	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I keep trying	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I do not give up	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have never been annoyed when people expressed ideas very different from my own	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:

kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

← Back → Next



The following statements are about **how you feel at work.**

Please read each statement carefully and **decide if you ever feel this way about your job.**

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Everyday
I feel bursting with energy when I am at work	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel happy when I am working intensely	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel strong and vigorous while doing my job	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am enthusiastic about my job	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My job inspires me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Everyday
I am immersed in my work	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I get carried away when I'm working	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am proud of the work that I do	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:

kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

← Back → Next

The following statements are about **your belief in the trustworthiness of your ORGANISATION**.

Please rate your agree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I would be willing to let my organisation have complete control over my future in my workplace	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would be comfortable giving my organisation a task or problem which was critical to me, even if I could not monitor their actions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If someone questioned my organisation's motives, I would give my organisation the benefit of the doubt	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If my organisation asked why a problem happened, I would speak freely even if I were partly to blame	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I would share my opinion about sensitive issues with my organisation even if my opinion were unpopular	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would tell my organisation about mistakes I've made on the job, even if they could damage my reputation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If my organisation asked me for something, I respond without thinking about whether it might be held against me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I had my way, I wouldn't let my organisation have any influence over issues that are important to me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Think back to **your interactions in your ORGANISATION** over the **PAST THREE MONTHS**.

(WORKPLACE- refers to any work setting (current or past) where you have been working (in-person or virtually) for the past three months).

Please read each statement carefully and **rate your agreement.**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Personal initiative does not count for much in this organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Changes to the usual ways of doing things at this organisation are more trouble than they are worth	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have pretty much given up trying to make suggestions for improvements around here	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Most people in this organisation think things will get better instead of worse	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
It is hard to be hopeful about the future because people around here have such bad attitudes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
In this organisation, it is what you know, not who you know, that counts	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
People around here get credit they do not deserve for work they did not do	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are related to **your day-to-day situation and how you experience that**.

Please rate how often each statement applies to you.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I struggle to find any enthusiasm for my work	○	○	○	○	○
At work, I do not think much about what I am doing and I function on autopilot	○	○	○	○	○
I feel a strong aversion towards my job	○	○	○	○	○
I feel indifferent about my job	○	○	○	○	○
I'm cynical about what my work means to others	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are about **job-related feelings.**

Please read each statement carefully and decide if you **ever feel this way about your job.**

	Never	A few times per year	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times per week	Everyday
I have become less interested in my work since I started this job*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have become less enthusiastic about my work*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I just want to do my job and not be bothered*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I doubt the significance of my work*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have become more cynical about whether my work contributes anything*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

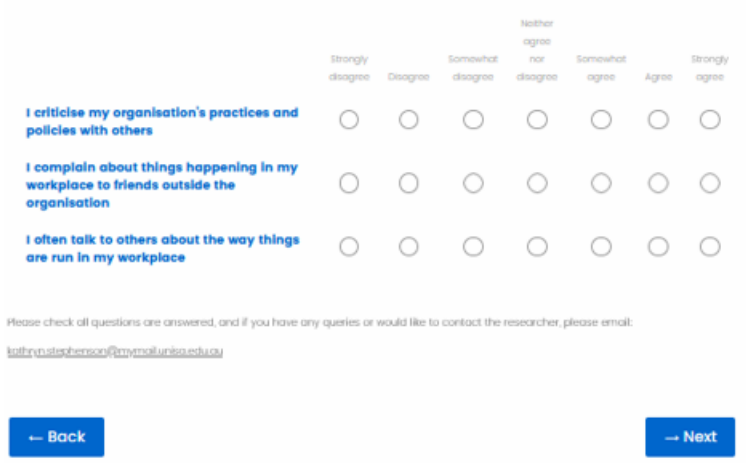
* These items belong to the **MBI - General Survey - MBI-GS:** Copyright ©1996 Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Michael P. Leiter, Christina Maslach & Susan E. Jackson. All rights reserved in all media. Published by Mind Garden, Inc., www.mindgarden.com

Think back to **your interactions with your ORGANISATION** over the **PAST THREE MONTHS**.

Please read each statement carefully and **rate your agreement.**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I see little similarity between what my organisation says they will do and what they actually do	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I believe my organisation says one thing and does another	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My organisation expects one thing of me but rewards another	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When my organisation says they are going to do something, I wonder if it will really happen	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My organisation's policies, goals, and practices seem to have little in common	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My organisation's attempt to make things better around here will not produce good results	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often experience tension when I think about my organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When I think about my organisation, I experience aggravation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When I think about my organisation, I feel angry	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I find myself mocking my organisation's slogans and initiatives	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

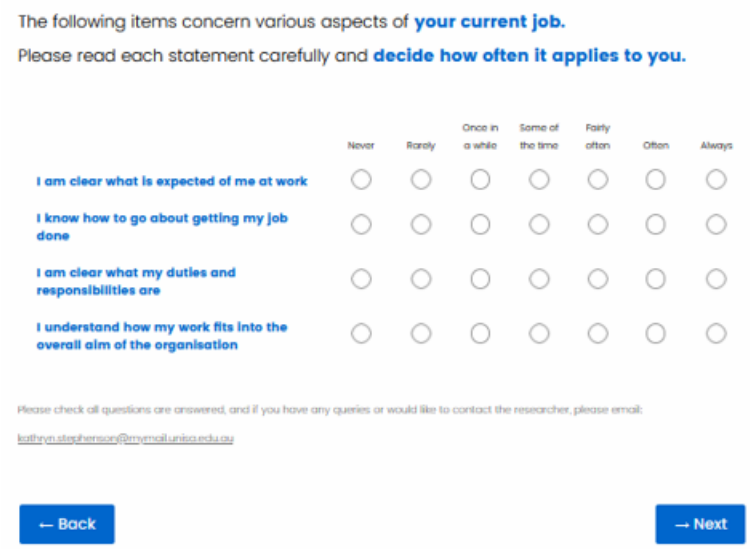


	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I criticise my organisation's practices and policies with others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I complain about things happening in my workplace to friends outside the organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often talk to others about the way things are run in my workplace	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:

kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

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The following items concern various aspects of **your current job.**

Please read each statement carefully and **decide how often it applies to you.**

	Never	Rarely	Once in a while	Some of the time	Fairly often	Often	Always
I am clear what is expected of me at work	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I know how to go about getting my job done	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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The following statements are about your **perceived capability** of carrying out tasks that require you **to speak up in your workplace.**

How CONFIDENT would you feel ...

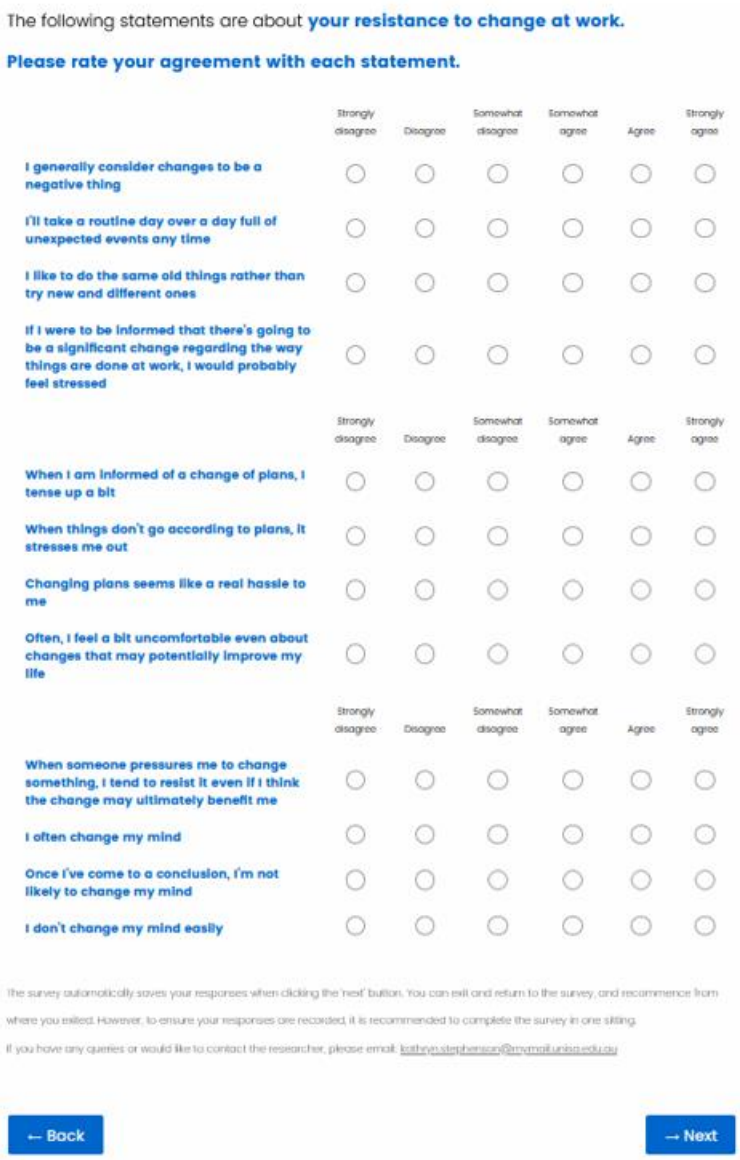
	Not at all Confident 1	2	Somewhat Confident 3	4	Very Confident 5
Designing new procedures for my work area	○	○	○	○	○
Visiting people from other departments to suggest doing things differently	○	○	○	○	○
Representing my work area in meetings with senior management	○	○	○	○	○
Analysing a long-term problem to find a solution	○	○	○	○	○

	Not at all Confident 1	2	Somewhat Confident 3	4	Very Confident 5
Presenting information to a group of colleagues	○	○	○	○	○
Helping to set targets in my area	○	○	○	○	○
Contacting people outside the company (e.g., customers) to discuss problems	○	○	○	○	○

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The following statements are about **your resistance to change at work.**

Please rate your agreement with each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I generally consider changes to be a negative thing	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'll take a routine day over a day full of unexpected events any time	○	○	○	○	○	○
I like to do the same old things rather than try new and different ones	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I were to be informed that there's going to be a significant change regarding the way things are done at work, I would probably feel stressed	○	○	○	○	○	○

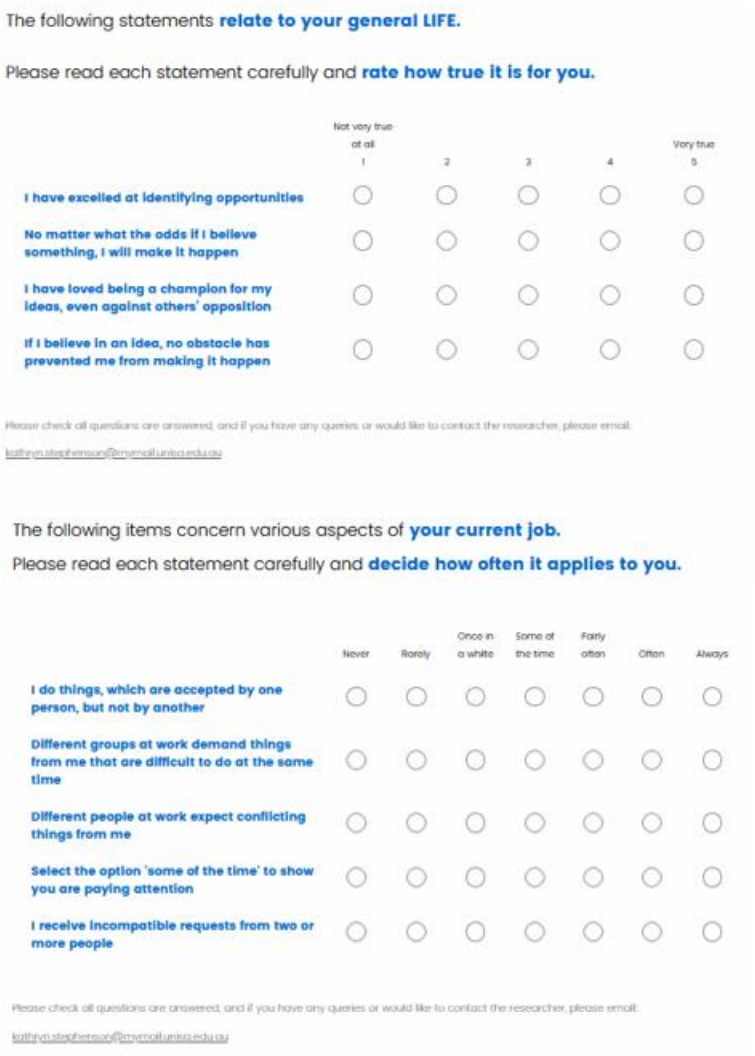
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
When I am informed of a change of plans, I tense up a bit	○	○	○	○	○	○
When things don't go according to plans, it stresses me out	○	○	○	○	○	○
Changing plans seems like a real hassle to me	○	○	○	○	○	○
Often, I feel a bit uncomfortable even about changes that may potentially improve my life	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
When someone pressures me to change something, I tend to resist it even if I think the change may ultimately benefit me	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often change my mind	○	○	○	○	○	○
Once I've come to a conclusion, I'm not likely to change my mind	○	○	○	○	○	○
I don't change my mind easily	○	○	○	○	○	○

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The following statements **relate to your general LIFE.**

Please read each statement carefully and **rate how true it is for you.**

	Not very true at all 1	2	3	4	Very true 5
I have excelled at identifying opportunities	○	○	○	○	○
No matter what the odds if I believe something, I will make it happen	○	○	○	○	○
I have loved being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition	○	○	○	○	○
If I believe in an idea, no obstacle has prevented me from making it happen	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email: kathryn.stephenson@myemail.unisa.edu.au

The following items concern various aspects of **your current job.**

Please read each statement carefully and **decide how often it applies to you.**

	Never	Rarely	Once in a while	Some of the time	Fairly often	Often	Always
I do things, which are accepted by one person, but not by another	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Different groups at work demand things from me that are difficult to do at the same time	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Different people at work expect conflicting things from me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Select the option 'some of the time' to show you are paying attention	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I receive incompatible requests from two or more people	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email: kathryn.stephenson@myemail.unisa.edu.au

The following statements are about **your sense of closeness within your ORGANISATION**.

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel close to people	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to relate to my peers	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to connect with other people	○	○	○	○	○	○
I see people as friendly and approachable	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I see myself as a loner	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel like an outsider	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel disconnected from the world around me	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel distant from people	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel I don't want to participate with anyone or any group	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel I don't relate to most people	○	○	○	○	○	○
I catch myself losing all sense of connectedness with society	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:

kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

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The following statements are about **how you have felt.**

Please indicate the extent you have felt this way TOWARDS YOU ORGANISATION over the PAST THREE MONTHS.

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	A bit more than a little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much	Extremely
Jaded (bitter)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anger	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Outrage	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Disappointed	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Resentful	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Frustrated	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	A bit more than a little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much	Extremely
Disillusioned	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Exploited	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Irritable	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Hostile	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Upset	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Distressed	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	A bit more than a little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much	Extremely
Scared	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Afraid	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Guilty	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Nervous	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Jittery	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ashamed	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are about **your feelings and choices in your daily LIFE.**

Please read each statement carefully and **rate how you feel about each statement.**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have a lack of purpose in my life	○	○	○	○	○
I haven't found my life's purpose yet	○	○	○	○	○
In this world, I don't know where I fit in	○	○	○	○	○
I am far from understanding the meaning of life	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
There is a great void in my life at this time	○	○	○	○	○
I don't know who I am, where I came from, or where I am going	○	○	○	○	○
There is not much I can do to help myself	○	○	○	○	○
Often, there is no way I can complete what I started	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I can't begin to understand my problems	○	○	○	○	○
There is not much I can do to make a difference in my life	○	○	○	○	○
I don't know how to begin to solve my problems	○	○	○	○	○
I am overwhelmed when I have personal difficulties and problems	○	○	○	○	○

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The following statements are about **your awareness of your daily LIFE EXPERIENCES.**

Please read each statement carefully and **rate how often it applies to you.**

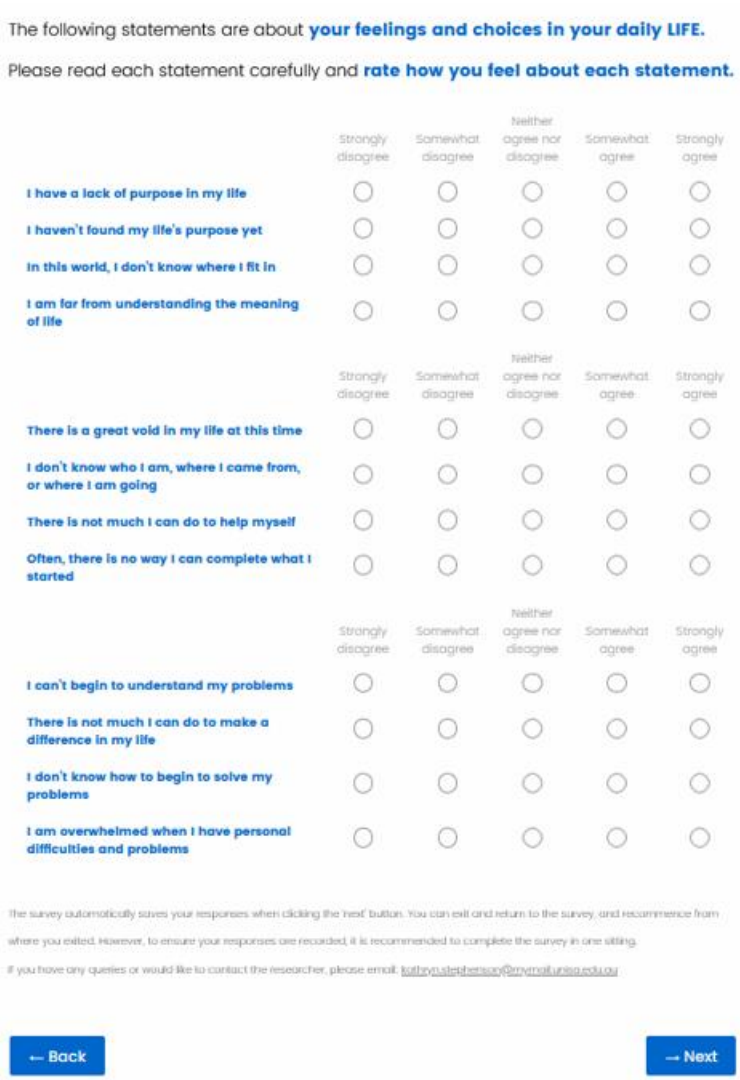
	Rarely / Not at all	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
It is easy for me to concentrate on what I am doing	○	○	○	○
I am able to pay close attention to one thing for a long period of time	○	○	○	○
I am able to focus on the present moment	○	○	○	○
It is easy for me to keep track of my thoughts and feelings	○	○	○	○

	Rarely / Not at all	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
I am easily distracted	○	○	○	○
I try to notice my thoughts without judging them	○	○	○	○
I can accept things I cannot change	○	○	○	○
I am able to accept the thoughts and feelings I have	○	○	○	○

	Rarely / Not at all	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
I can tolerate emotional pain	○	○	○	○
I can usually describe how I feel at the moment in considerable detail	○	○	○	○
I am pre-occupied by the future	○	○	○	○
I am pre-occupied by my past	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email: kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

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The following statements are about **your feelings and choices in your daily LIFE.**

Please read each statement carefully and **rate how you feel about each statement.**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have a lack of purpose in my life	○	○	○	○	○
I haven't found my life's purpose yet	○	○	○	○	○
In this world, I don't know where I fit in	○	○	○	○	○
I am far from understanding the meaning of life	○	○	○	○	○

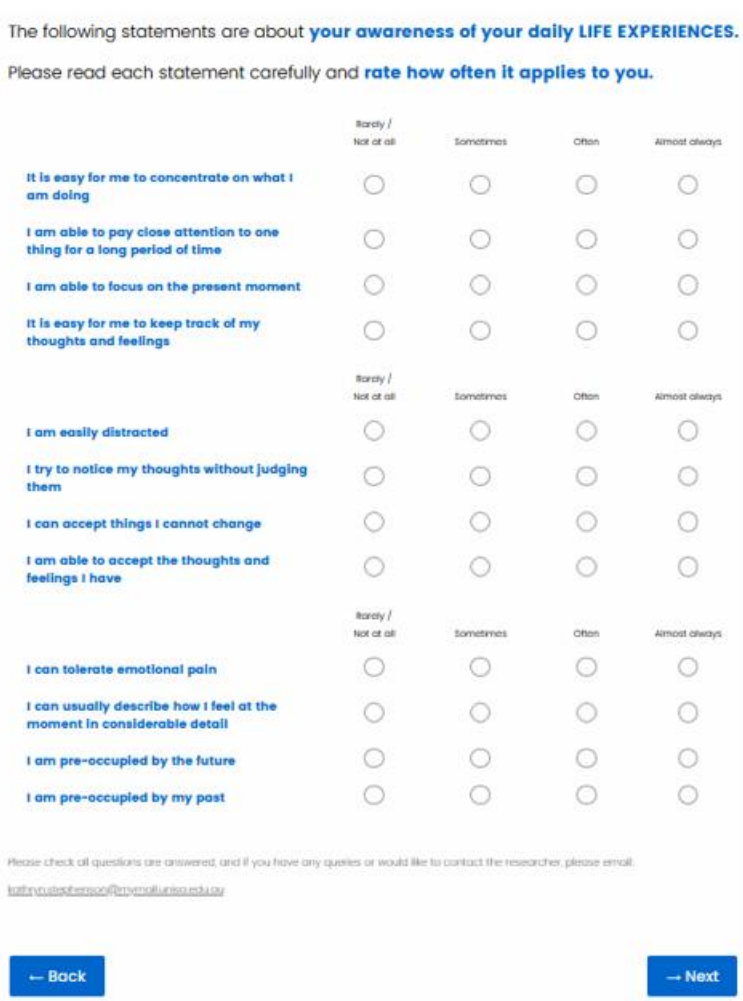
	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
There is a great void in my life at this time	○	○	○	○	○
I don't know who I am, where I came from, or where I am going	○	○	○	○	○
There is not much I can do to help myself	○	○	○	○	○
Often, there is no way I can complete what I started	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I can't begin to understand my problems	○	○	○	○	○
There is not much I can do to make a difference in my life	○	○	○	○	○
I don't know how to begin to solve my problems	○	○	○	○	○
I am overwhelmed when I have personal difficulties and problems	○	○	○	○	○

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The following statements are about **your awareness of your daily LIFE EXPERIENCES.**

Please read each statement carefully and **rate how often it applies to you.**

	Rarely / Not at all	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
It is easy for me to concentrate on what I am doing	○	○	○	○
I am able to pay close attention to one thing for a long period of time	○	○	○	○
I am able to focus on the present moment	○	○	○	○
It is easy for me to keep track of my thoughts and feelings	○	○	○	○

	Rarely / Not at all	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
I am easily distracted	○	○	○	○
I try to notice my thoughts without judging them	○	○	○	○
I can accept things I cannot change	○	○	○	○
I am able to accept the thoughts and feelings I have	○	○	○	○

	Rarely / Not at all	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
I can tolerate emotional pain	○	○	○	○
I can usually describe how I feel at the moment in considerable detail	○	○	○	○
I am pre-occupied by the future	○	○	○	○
I am pre-occupied by my past	○	○	○	○

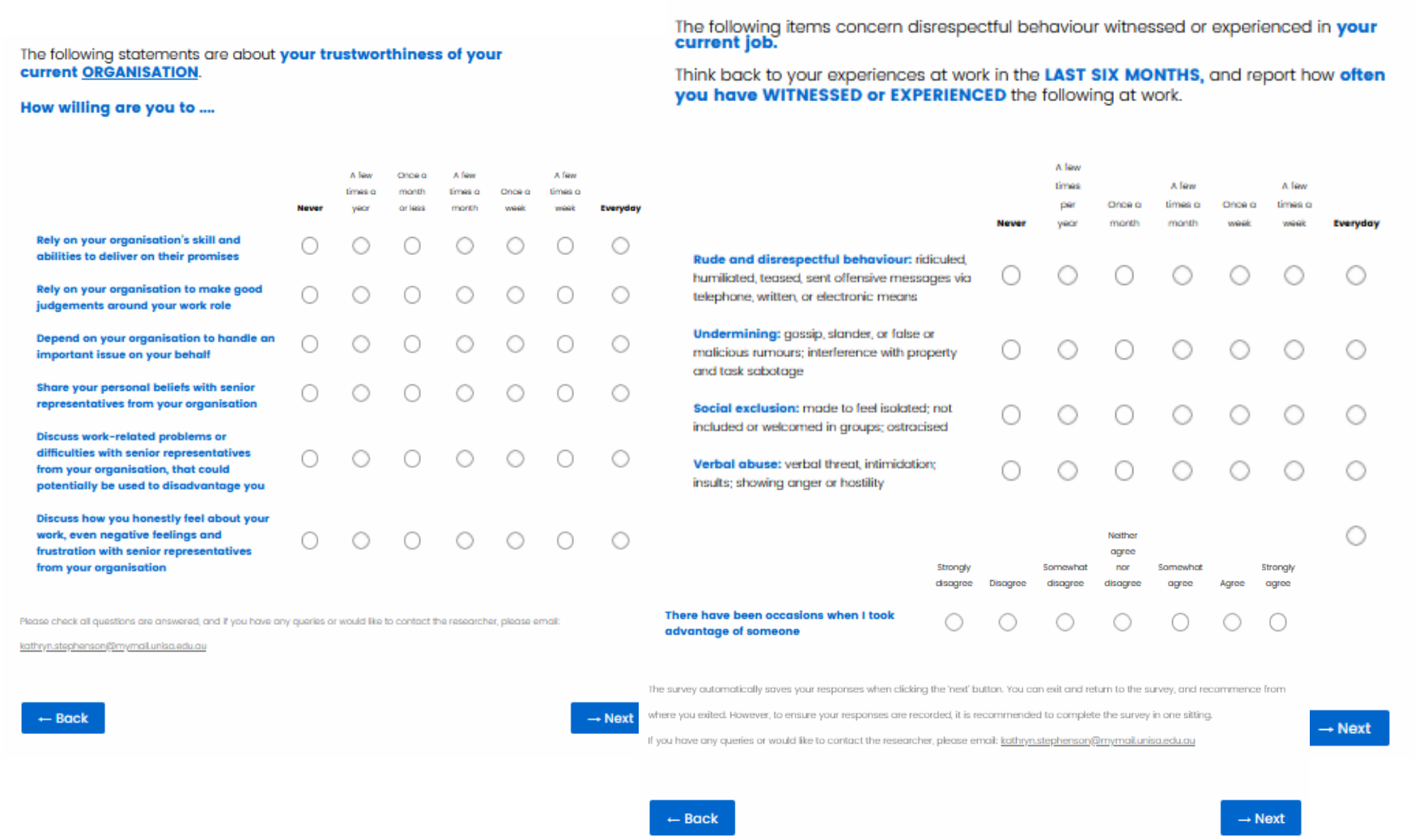
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Appendix 3.E: Study 3, Qualtrics Survey Item Additions

Study 3, Qualtrics survey components, only measured in time 2, full survey available on request



Think back to your interactions in your CURRENT WORKPLACE in the **LAST SIX MONTHS,** and please rate your agreement with each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Suggestions on how to solve problems at my workplace will not produce much real change	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Attempts to make things better will not produce good results	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Most of the programmes that are supposed to solve problems in my workplace will not do much good	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Plans for future improvement at my workplace will not amount to much	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email: kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

Think back to your experiences in your CURRENT WORKPLACE in the **LAST SIX MONTHS** and report your willingness to **BE PROACTIVE** within your organisation.

How willing are you to ...

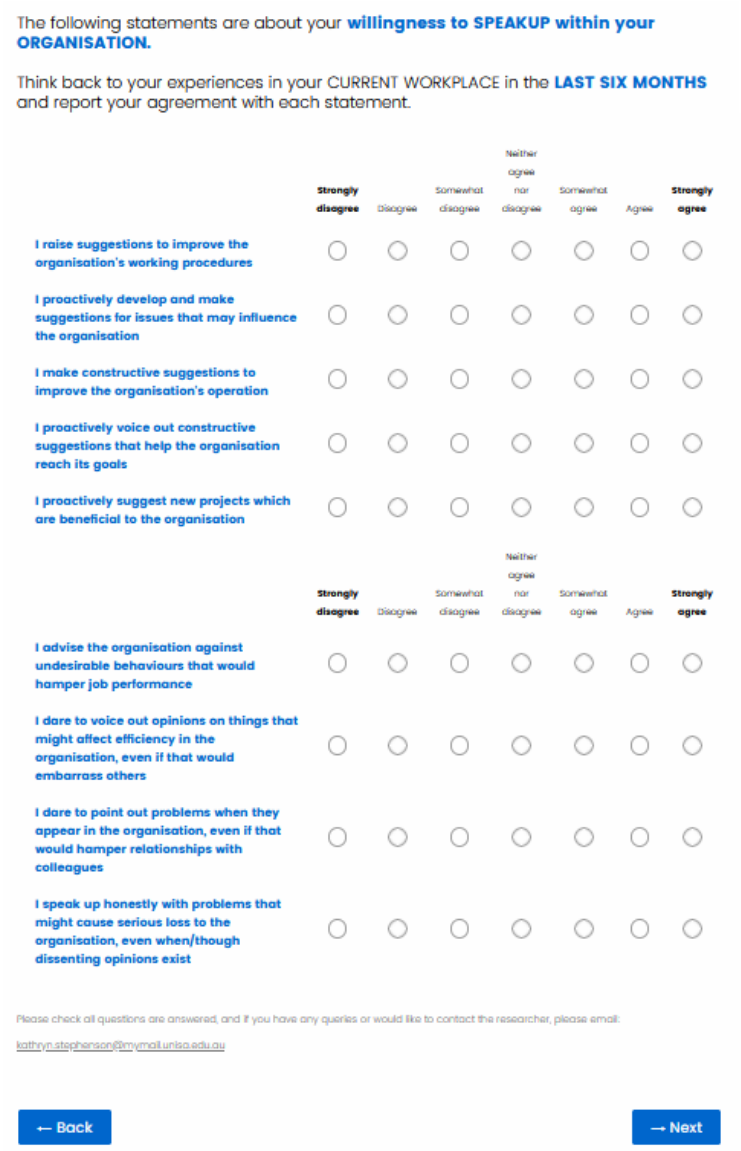
	Never	A few times a year	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times per week	Everyday
Come up with ideas to improve the way in which your core tasks are done	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Initiate better ways of doing your core tasks	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Make changes to the way your core tasks are done	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Present a positive image of the organisation to other people (e.g., clients)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times per week	Everyday
Cope with changes in the way the organisation operates	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Come up with ways of increasing efficiency within the organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Make suggestions to improve the overall effectiveness of the organisation (e.g., by suggesting changes to administrative procedures)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Involve yourself in changes that are helping to improve the overall effectiveness of the organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Talk about the organisation in positive ways	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Defend the organisation if others criticised it	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Learn skills or acquire information that helps you adjust to overall changes in the organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Respond flexibly to overall changes in the organisation (e.g., changes in management)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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The following statements are about your **willingness to SPEAKUP within your ORGANISATION.**

Think back to your experiences in your CURRENT WORKPLACE in the **LAST SIX MONTHS** and report your agreement with each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I raise suggestions to improve the organisation's working procedures	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I proactively develop and make suggestions for issues that may influence the organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I make constructive suggestions to improve the organisation's operation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I proactively voice out constructive suggestions that help the organisation reach its goals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I proactively suggest new projects which are beneficial to the organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I advise the organisation against undesirable behaviours that would hamper job performance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I dare to voice out opinions on things that might affect efficiency in the organisation, even if that would embarrass others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I dare to point out problems when they appear in the organisation, even if that would hamper relationships with colleagues	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I speak up honestly with problems that might cause serious loss to the organisation, even when/though dissenting opinions exist	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:

kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

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The following statements are about your **willingness to proactively BUILD SOCIAL CONNECTIONS within your current ORGANISATION.**

Think back to your experiences in your in the **LAST SIX MONTHS** and please rate the extent to which you have ...

	To no extent	To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	A very large extent	To an extremely large extent
Attended office parties	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Attended organisational social gatherings	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Tried to form a good relationship with senior leadership	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Tried to spend as much time as you could with senior leadership	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Worked hard to get to know senior leadership	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Started conversations with people from different areas of your organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Tried to get to know as many people as possible in different areas of your organisation on a personal basis	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Tried to socialise with people in different areas of your organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:

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The following statements are about **your sense of closeness within your current ORGANISATION**.

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel close to people	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to relate to my peers	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to connect with other people	○	○	○	○	○	○
I see people as friendly and approachable	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I see myself as a loner	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel like an outsider	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel disconnected from the world around me	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel distant from people	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel like I don't want to participate with anyone or any group	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel like I don't relate to most people	○	○	○	○	○	○
I catch myself losing all sense of connectedness with society	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:

kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

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The following statements are about **your turnover intentions.**

Please rate your agreement with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
In the past few months, I have thought about quitting my job at the current organisation I am working at	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have started exploring other job opportunities to exit my current employer	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am keen to leave my current employer	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

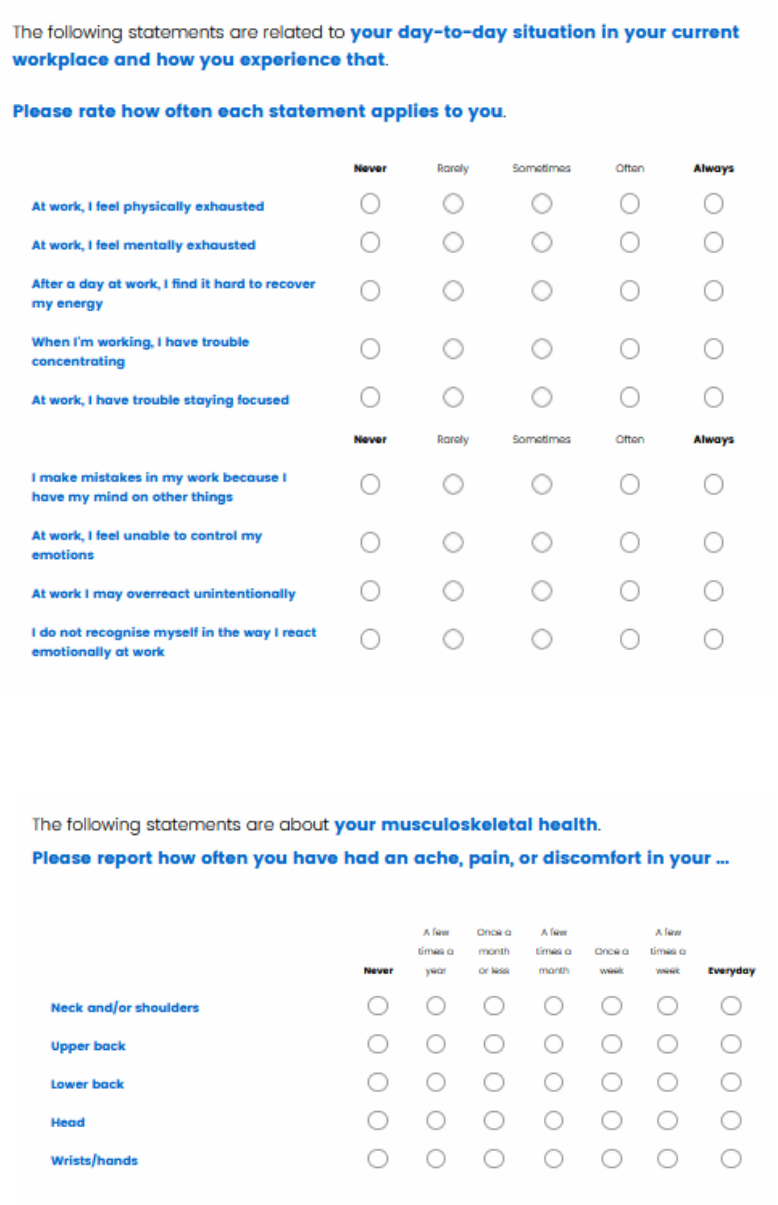
Please check all questions are answered, and if you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email:

The following statements are about **job-related feelings.**

Please read each statement carefully and decide if you **ever feel this way about your current job.**

	Never	A few times per year	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times per week	Everyday
I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel emotionally drained from my work*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Working all day is really a strain for me*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel used up at the end of the workday*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel burned out from my work*	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* These items belong to the **MBI – General Survey – MBI-GS:** Copyright ©1996 Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Michael P. Leiter, Christina Maslach & Susan E. Jackson. All rights reserved in all media. Published by Mind Garden, Inc., www.mindgarden.com



The following statements are related to **your day-to-day situation in your current workplace and how you experience that**.

Please rate how often each statement applies to you.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
At work, I feel physically exhausted	○	○	○	○	○
At work, I feel mentally exhausted	○	○	○	○	○
After a day at work, I find it hard to recover my energy	○	○	○	○	○
When I'm working, I have trouble concentrating	○	○	○	○	○
At work, I have trouble staying focused	○	○	○	○	○

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I make mistakes in my work because I have my mind on other things	○	○	○	○	○
At work, I feel unable to control my emotions	○	○	○	○	○
At work I may overreact unintentionally	○	○	○	○	○
I do not recognise myself in the way I react emotionally at work	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are about **your musculoskeletal health**.

Please report how often you have had an ache, pain, or discomfort in your ...

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Everyday
Neck and/or shoulders	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Upper back	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Lower back	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Head	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Wrists/hands	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are about **your job-related feelings.**

Please read each statement carefully and **decide if you ever feel this way about your job.**

	None of the time	A little of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
About how often did you feel hopeless?	○	○	○	○	○
How often did you feel depressed?	○	○	○	○	○
About how often did you feel so sad nothing could cheer you up?	○	○	○	○	○
About how often did you feel worthless?	○	○	○	○	○
About how often did you feel that everything was an effort?	○	○	○	○	○

	None of the time	A little of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
About how often did you feel so nervous that nothing could calm you down?	○	○	○	○	○
About how often did you feel nervous?	○	○	○	○	○
About how often did you feel restless or fidgety?	○	○	○	○	○
About how often did you feel so restless you could not sit still?	○	○	○	○	○
About how often did you feel tired out for no good reason?	○	○	○	○	○

The survey automatically saves your responses when clicking the 'next' button. You can exit and return to the survey, and recommence from where you exited. However, to ensure your responses are recorded, it is recommended to complete the survey in one sitting.

If you have any queries or would like to contact the researcher, please email: kathryn.stephenson@mymail.unisa.edu.au

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Appendix 3.F: Survey Sequence Order

Study 2 and Study 3 (time 1) measured with sample 1 to 4.

All participants	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4
400 participants	100 participants	100 participants	100 participants	100 participants
Developed Cynicism Sub Dimensions	Survey order: 1. Voice 2. Proactive 3. Changes 4. Relationships	Survey order: 1. Relationships 2. Changes 3. Proactive 4. Voice	Survey order: 1. Relationships * 2. Voice * 3. Change * 4. Proactive *	Survey order: 1. Relationships * 2. Change * 3. Proactive * 4. Voice *
Established Scales Order	A. Hope (2 scales) B. Proactive Personality C. Cognitive & Affective Mindfulness D. Spirituality Index of Wellbeing E. Brandes Employee Cynicism F. Maslach's Burnout Inventory G. Burnout Assessment Tool H. Brooks Organisational Cynicism I. Social Desirability J. Social Connectedness K. Organisational Trust L. Negative Affect M. PANAS NA N. Positive Affect O. PANAS PA P. Work Engagement Q. Role Ambiguity R. Role Conflict S. Role Self Efficacy T. Resistance to Change U. Cynicism Self Rate V. I AM Happy Scale	A. Hope (2 scales) B. Proactive Personality C. Cognitive & Affective Mindfulness D. Spirituality Index of Wellbeing E. Brandes Employee Cynicism F. Maslach's Burnout Inventory G. Burnout Assessment Tool H. Brooks Organisational Cynicism I. Social Desirability Social Connectedness J. Organisational Trust K. Negative Affect L. PANAS NA M. Positive Affect N. PANAS PA O. Work Engagement P. Role Ambiguity Q. Role Conflict R. Role Self Efficacy S. Resistance to Change T. Cynicism Self Rate U. I AM Happy Scale	A. Work Engagement B. Organisational Trust C. Brooks Organisational Cynicism D. Burnout Assessment Tool E. Maslach's Burnout Inventory F. Brandes Employee Cynicism G. Role Ambiguity H. Social Desirability I. Role Self Efficacy J. Resistance to Change K. Proactive Personality L. Spirituality Index of Wellbeing M. Cognitive & Affective Mindfulness N. Role Conflict O. Social Connectedness P. Negative Affect Q. PANAS NA R. Positive Affect S. PANAS PA T. Hope (2 scales) U. Cynicism Self Rate V. I AM Happy Scale	A. Work Engagement * B. Organisational Trust * C. Brooks Organisational Cynicism D. Burnout Assessment Tool E. Maslach's Burnout Inventory F. Brandes Employee Cynicism G. Role Ambiguity H. Social Desirability I. Role Self Efficacy * J. Resistance to Change K. Proactive Personality L. Spirituality Index of Wellbeing * M. Cognitive & Affective Mindfulness * N. Role Conflict O. Social Connectedness P. Negative Affect * Q. PANAS NA * R. Positive Affect * S. PANAS PA * T. Hope (2 scales) U. Cynicism Self Rate V. I AM Happy Scale

* Order the questions were asked within the scale/subscale changed

Study 3 (time 2) sample

Study	Study 3, Time 2
Participants	275 participants
Developed Cynicism Sub Dimensions	Survey order: 1. Relationships 2. Change 3. Proactive 4. Voice
Established Scales Order	A. Work Engagement B. Organisational Trust C. Behavioural Trust D. Brooks Organisational Cynicism E. Burnout Assessment Tool F. MBI – Cynicism Subscale G. BAT – Mental Distance Subscale H. Brandes Employee Cynicism I. Role Ambiguity J. Role Self Efficacy K. Role Conflict L. Witnessed Workplace Disrespect M. Cynical Workplace Climate N. Proactive Behaviours O. Proactive Socialisation P. Social Connectedness Q. Spirituality Index of Wellbeing R. MBI – Emotional Exhaustion Subscale S. BAT – remaining scale items T. Turnover Intentions U. Musculoskeletal Health V. Psychological Distress K10 W. Resistance to Change X. Proactive Personality Y. Cognitive & Affective Mindfulness Z. Negative Affect AA. Hope (2 scales) BB. Cynicism Self Rate CC. I AM Happy Scale

Appendix 4.A. Study 1, Thematic Analysis Overview

STUDY 1 (CHAPTER 4) · QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW & FOCUS GROUP CONVERSATIONS · THEMATIC ANALYSIS CODEBOOK OVERVIEW

OVERALL FUTILITY SENTIMENTS

QUOTES that hint or suggest an underlying futility, what's the point, nothing to be gained, no benefit in taking action, voicing, connecting, changing

"didn't have a lot of voice. And it was very much well I'm the leader, I have the say" (#4 SL)
"Just when those larger voices were prominent ... and you just, it's kind of like, well, what is the point of me saying something because it's just gonna get, it's the loud voices, they're the ones that have been here longer."
"you wouldn't go to her anyway, because it wouldn't get the outcome you even hoping for"
"because you didn't have relationships ... you weren't being heard"
"I contacted the Director...and she's like, oh, but wait, it's too late now... didn't we address that? I was like no, no, no ...and I just lost it, I was just so angry"

"often in our meetings, they go, oh, we should ask what this group of people? I say well, if we're going to ask them, are we going to do anything with it?"
"if you're not permanent, and you're just on your best behaviour, and you're not rocking any boat, don't want to give any negative feedback."
"I won't risk it again, and I've got too much riding on it, I've got kids, a mortgage, I'm not going to risk losing my job"
"So I will I just keep clear of everybody to give no one any reasons... I won't risk it again, and I've got too much riding on it, I've got kids, a mortgage, I'm not going to risk losing my job."
"The withdrawal, I think people don't come to the staffing at lunchtime, and rather hide in their classroom."
"then there were a few leaders that didn't sort of enable ALL staff to be part of the staff, it was just a select few that seem to be a click with those leaders. So didn't allow the whole staff to join in with any conversations or make decisions."
"you felt that you were not welcome, because you weren't part of the group. It was a very strong, very, yes, very clear line in the sand between who was one of our friends and who wasn't "
"fool me once, shame on me, fool me twice, shame on ... I'm not going to put myself in that position ... I don't leave my room. I stay in my room."
"it was a colleague, who was in that click, that ... sent a very accusation or if that's a word, email to all leadership. So this is how I ended up communicating with the Director ... it got brushed under the rug, and nothing was done about it."
"you kind of get the sense of people talking behind your back and things like that, and they're just no reasons given in you just go, um I think I'll get back out of this, because it's just not even, no one's even going to give it any credibility. And which is Yeah, leaves you feeling quite sick?"
"Employee cynicism is loss of faith and trust in the leadership and staff of the site"
"feeling as if you are not valued"
"Staff not feeling valued, staff not being supported"
"if we've already decided what the path is, don't waste their time by asking... Because I think that actually devalues"
"it won't matter what I say or do it is never gonna change, so what the point"
"I'm not even gonna bother doing (the) survey, because that, you know, nothing will change, why did we even do it, those kind of things"
"Disbelief that the system will follow up any issue."
"I definitely think what's the point why they are asking me if they won't do anything anyway. Yeah, nothing will change. "
"Director didn't care that there was all this dodginess going on, and the fact that the end and the person who made the accusations just gets shifted off to another site, given permanency, and she got rewarded"
"his actual words to me were overload her until she retires"
"Feeling as if you are just a 'number in the system' and easily replaced would make it (cynicism) worse"
"You often hear people say once we get through this, once we get through that, but we never get to the end."
"I may as well give up"
"Unachievable workload and expectations"
"frustrated, by the way the world works"
"you know, why are you bothering to do that, what's the point"

"the cynic goes it's always the same, it's never going to change, it doesn't matter what you do, it's always the same, you know what, just a different day"
"you can't see the positive, what's the point"
"people that are cynical ... they believe that things are done, just for the sake of it, and then not followed up"
"I don't know why we are here; it is a waste of time to give us a chance to contribute, it makes no difference what is the point"
"we have done this before, I don't know, why are we doing this, we've done this before didn't work last time, what's gonna make everyone think it's gonna work this time?"
"attached to the things they've always done"
"I often Think about that the fish that fell out of the bucket. It's we're doing this one minute and then we're doing that and you know, oh well, they're just going to change their mind in two years. And why should I do anything?"
"the curriculum's changed that many times ... why am I even gonna bother about putting that into place"
"they're like, we can't do that"
"it's doing what you've always done"
"here we go again"
"this is not going to work"
"just a lot of resistance"

FUTILITY TO VOICE

Perceived that their voices were ignored, overlooked, or that they were unsupported or diminished.

Ignored (sense of being unheard or unsupported)

"Nobody ever listens to me; there's no point in me saying anything."
"You just stop giving your opinion, because you feel like it's not being listened to."
"they don't really have a voice."
"unheard or unsupported."
"We identify cynicism when we've made our best effort and used good processes, yet still find our voice hasn't been heard."
"didn't have a lot of voice. And it was very much well I'm the leader, I have the say"

Overlooked (passive form of neglect, perception of being sidelined)

"Just when those larger voices were prominent ... and you just, it's kind of like, well, what is the point of me saying something"
"because you didn't have relationships ... you weren't being heard"
"we don't have normal staff meetings, we can't can't raise stuff"
"then there were a few leaders that didn't sort of enable ALL staff to be part of the staff, it was just a select few that seem to be a click with those leaders. So didn't allow the whole staff to join in with any conversations or make decisions."

Undervalued (contributions ideas not recognised, not given weight)

"won't want to tell the boss what the boss doesn't want to hear."
"But most decisions were unilateral ... she was very forceful in the way she budgets ... it's like this is how it is, and there's no if's or but's about it,"
"there are very strong voices, and they often get heard over the non strong."
"some staff members who are often quite strong in those meetings. And so it is really difficult to sometimes have to say,"
"I think those people are everywhere. But I think we've kind of managed to develop that. Well. There's actually not a voice for that down here,"

Thoughts & Feedback Diminished (opinions trivialised or dismissed, creates a sense of distrust)

"attitude which can make them distrust and devalue the system."
"you wouldn't go to her anyway, because it wouldn't get the outcome you even hoping for"

"often in our meetings, they go, oh, we should ask what this group of people? I say well, if we're going to ask them, are we going to do anything with it?"
"I think most of us probably feel like we can't feed back individually. We have to do it as part of a group,"
"although sometimes you don't want to give you feedback, because you don't know if they'll know who you are,"
"there's a lot of the specialist staff that wouldn't say a word ...or they're too afraid to say something,"
"it was kind of, you know, if you're having an issue, you need to come and tell us. Like we kind of felt like we were told off as staff,"
"So, today, we'd like to do this and get your, your feedback on this ...and that has been then perceived as I'm not giving my opinion anymore, because we get told off about it in staff meeting."

FUTILITY TO BE PROACTIVE

Perceived that their voices were ignored, overlooked, or that they were unsupported or diminished.

Unrecognised Initiative (perception that one's proactive efforts and initiatives are neither noticed nor acknowledged by the organisation)

"Feeling as if you are not valued"
"not feeling valued"
"when a worker has a negative attitude and everything is undervalued"
"Leadership not recognising staff/appreciating staff,"
"everything is undervalued "
"Staff not feeling valued, staff not being supported"
" there are some days where I go, this is actually really crap"
"if we've already decided what the path is, don't waste their time by asking... Because I think that actually devalues"

Unrewarded Exceeding of Expectations (exceeding expectations or going above & beyond does not lead to any positive changes or rewards)

"Director didn't care that there was all this dodginess going on, and the fact that the end and the person who made the accusations just gets shifted off to another site, given permanency, and she got rewarded"
"co-ordinator got promoted to leader.... so you can just do it all over again"
"his actual words to me were overload her until she retires"
"made me feel like I was about to lose everything, they just got rewarded, and so, my cynicism is deep"
"Feeling as if you are just a 'number in the system' and easily replaced would make it (cynicism) worse"
"it won't matter what I say or do it is never gonna change, so what's the point."
"I'm not even gonna bother doing (the) survey, because that, you know, nothing will change."
"Disbelief that the system will follow up any issue."

Unappreciated Additional Efforts (extra effort put in is neither appreciated nor valued, contributing to a sense of futility in being proactive)

"The feedback... is it's too much work"
" it's stupid to make us do that"
"oh well, that's on top of everything else you want me to do. Well, sorry I'm not going to do it"
"you get given donated staff that you don't want to have, so no say whatsoever ... that can unsettle you ... I'm going (resignation handed in)"
"So having been here for 20 years .... and for me, there's been times where I've really absolutely struggled to get out of the car, I can drive to work. But getting out of the car has just been the hardest part of my whole day and actually coming into this building."
"my cynicism is deep."
as "I may as well give up"
"Don't put in the effort."
"overworked, goals not in sight"
"this has been like death, like 1000 cuts."
"it's really hard to start a new thing if you know that someone could... completely shift the ship, because it happens so often."
"you could spend... seven years wanting to convince them, this was a good idea... but at the end of the day, you're paralyzed into doing nothing."

FUTILITY TO BUILD DEEP RELATIONSHIPS

Perceived that building relationships inherently worthless, only surface-level interactions for others gain, unreciprocated, lack mutual respect

Inherent Worthlessness in Relational Investment (relationships are not just unrewarding but are perceived as fundamentally worthless)

"feeling as if you are .... alone to deal with challenges"
"felt just alone and helpless"
"that you are alone to deal with challenges"
"So I will I just keep clear of everybody to give no one any reasons... I won't risk it again, and I've got too much riding on it, I've got kids, a mortgage, I'm not going to risk losing my job."
"I'm real quick to withdraw and I'm not going to the staff room, I'm not hanging around after (work) "
"my new attitude is I don't put myself in any position, so I don't go in the staffroom"

"people are saying the morale's low ... that's an indicator that there's something not right between leadership and staff, there is that level of cynicism."

"disengage and keep to themselves"
"The withdrawal, I think people don't come to the staffing at lunchtime, and rather hide in their classroom."
"So I will I just keep clear of everybody to give no one any reasons. And I've never been like this. I've always been very social. You know, even outside of my work, I've gone out with colleagues, but not anymore"

Manipulative Surface-Level Interactions (amiable on the surface but are fraught with underlying motives,In groups, out groups)

"then there were a few leaders that didn't sort of enable ALL staff to be part of the staff, it was just a select few that seem to be a click with those leaders."
"you felt that you were not welcome, because you weren't part of the group. It was a very strong, very, yes, very clear line in the sand between who was one of our friends and who wasn't"
"there was her group, that they will go for coffee, and you would see them in her office all the time, it was very clear."
"there was her group, that they will go for coffee, and you would see them in her office all the time, it was very clear. Yes, there was no, it was all implicit. But it was all it was so explicit, it is implicit."
"then there were a few leaders that didn't sort of enable ALL staff to be part of the staff, it was just a select few that seem to be a click with those leaders. So didn't allow the whole staff to join in with any conversations or make decisions."
"the staff room wasn't a happy place to be, you can see people not wanting to be in there."
"it is pretty much they don't want to stay after work. And even if that doesn't mean staying for a drink or staying for social events, they're like, don't come to the staff room for lunch and avoid it and you know, it's not just because they're having a busy day"
, " One of the people in the group, the leader can't keep her mouth shut, and I actually did tell her the things that are going on and she can't resist talking about she's such a gossip... and so my cynicism is that you just lay low and don't get your head lopped off."

Relationships Unreciprocated and Absence of Mutual Respect (respect & empathy lacking, one sided, disillusioned)

"fool me once, shame on me, fool me twice, shame on ... I'm not going to put myself in that position ... I don't leave my room. I stay in my room."
"it is sad to see adults who call themselves professionals behave in this way ... the injustice of it was the hardest part. And then know one giving a rats about it."
"it got brushed under the rug, and nothing was done about it."
"you kind of get the sense of people talking behind your back and things like that, and they're just no reasons given in you just go, um I think I'll get back out of this, because it's just not even, no one's even going to give it any credibility. And which is Yeah, leaves you feeling quite sick?"
"When I first arrived here in 2018, everything was pretty, everyone got along, and then the wellbeing coordinator arrived. And then it all went pear shaped. And, yeah, and she was, I always see her as the puppet master. She was there manipulating, this ended up being my impression."
"Employee cynicism is loss of faith and trust in the leadership and staff of the site"
"One of the people in the group, the leader can't keep her mouth shut, and I actually did tell her the things that are going on and she she can't resist talking about she's such a gossip and gossip ... and so my cynicism is that you just lay low and don't get your head lopped off."
"I've seen some of that (avoiding staffroom). And not saying goodbye at the end of staff meetings and things like that. They grab things and go."
"it's the body language, it's the you might have, you know, have one colleague that if you don't see her float around staffing for a couple of days, I'll go and check in on her."
"I'm real quick to withdraw and I'm not going to the staff room, I'm not hanging around after school"

FUTILITY TO ADOPT CHANGE

Perceived that change counterproductive, haphazard, superficial, not addressing the real issues, short-lived will change again and ineffective.

Change Counterproductive – Worsens Situation (fails to make things better, negative repercussions, makes it worse)

"frustrated, by the way the world works"
"The way it's set up is not always the best. And sometimes, you think, hang on a minute, it could be a lot better, but it's very difficult ... there's no opportunity to sit down and say ... where should we be going? Is this working? How do you feel?"
"you can't see the positive, what's the point"
"So, I think like the reasoning behind them not changing is probably the workload that came with it. Well, it's not working, and we have to change it, but why change and if it's working the way it is ... but it doesn't work"

"the cynic goes it's always the same, it's never going to change, it doesn't matter what you do, it's always the same, you know what, just a different day"
"this is not going to work"
"just a lot of resistance"
"I'm sure sometimes that you will be feeling like, Oh, this is a load of crock, you know, how come I can't do this, or I can't do that"
"well this isn't working, I'm just gonna do my thing"
"had been on a system for a long time, and didn't like change and didn't like things that were happening."

Haphazard Change Implementation (proper planning overlooked, perception people don't know what they are doing)

"I can't do that ... now I'm not happy. Because I didn't have time to weigh up the whole thing"
"an idea is given and someone might just be like, but what about this, or about this and not actually taking on board, some parts of the idea that might work and they just saying flat out, yeah, no, I can't do that, or that's going to be too much"
"come up some crazy idea ... It's like the failure in the information "
"saying no"
"some in that team are trying to get that to happen, and others are like, well, no, this is my program"
"you know what's done previously, if you notice someone is kind of just what can't be done. Yeah. Rather than thinking sort of solution oriented? Yeah. Yeah. It's very noticeable. That won't work because of this. Yeah, they come up with all sorts of reasons. Nup, nup can't do it."

Superficial Solutions to Deep-Rooted Issues (tokenism, just done for the sake of it, does not fix the real problem)

"you know, why are you bothering to do that, what's the point"
"So, I think like the reasoning behind them not changing is probably the workload that came with it. Well, it's not working, and we have to change it, but why change and if it's working the way it is ... but it doesn't work"
"yeah, so there's lots of things that we've done here as tradition, and they may have worked 20 years ago, but they just weren't working, and the reason was ... always done it this way"
"people that are cynical ... they believe that things are done, just for the sake of it, and then not followed up"
"done as tokenism, doing them for the sake of doing them."
"I don't know why we are here; it is a waste of time to give us a chance to contribute, it makes no difference what is the point"
"yeah, they just asking us because they have to, you know"
"We're not gonna worry about that, Sort of tokenally look at it and make out they are doing it."
"we've been there, been there done that before? Didn't work?"
"yeah, so there's lots of things that we've done here as tradition, and they may have worked 20 years ago, but they just weren't working, and the reason was ... always done it this way"
" I can see why you would think that that is, something that might help, and it might have helped you, but they might not help in 2021, with all these other things that we can do, as well."
"we've done that 10 years ago ... they are reintroducing the same thing over and over"

Questionable Impact and Short-lived (things keep changing, we've done this before it didn't work, no point doing this it will change soon)

"I often Think about that the fish that fell out of the bucket. It's we're doing this one minute and then we're doing that and you know, oh well, they're just going to change their mind in two years. And why should I do anything?"
"sometimes some of the small changes ... I've been a bit reluctant to do that ... I know that just looking at lots of the leaders around ... I've rolled it out and then changed it and then they kind of come and roll it out again"
"the curriculum's changed that many times ... why am I even gonna bother about putting that into place"
"The staff who have been here a long time, are probably more cynical, because things have changed so much in the department."
"we have done this before, I don't know, why are we doing this, we've done this before didn't work last time, what's gonna make everyone think it's gonna work this time?"
"do not do what has been agreed upon"
"not doing what was expected"
"Ignores directives"
"doesn't follow procedures, does not respect leadership of their decision making"
"they do their own thing when asked to take a specific approach"
"doesn't follow procedure – even if majority voted for the procedure"
"one of these, one of these staff just kept doing what they were doing"
Change Counterproductive – Worsens Situation
Haphazard Change Implementation
Superficial Solutions to Deep-Rooted Issues
Short-lived and Ineffective Impact
"been around a bit and seen a few things, it's very, can be easy, to I think we've been there, we've done that."
"Oh, yeah, we've done that"
" Everything changes again"
"So they get jaded because it's flip flopped"
"Yeah, so we sort of remember how things used to be. And things have changed in the departments so dramatically ... and a lot more administrative work that needs to be done. That I think older staff are more cynical, if and people who've been here longer, they don't even necessarily be old, but have been here longer."
"a common thing you hear, just another new craze?"
"don't like being told what to do"
"negative to new initiatives"

Appendix 4.B. Initial Development of Cynicism Items

A. Futility of EFFORT (E.g. VOICE)		Same stem (Value of effort/futility)	Negativity and strength and magnitude of the beliefs underlying cynicism	Reasons why they feel futility to voice	TIME FRAME	Avoid PAST & PRESENT - ONLY FUTURE Expectation	Intensity	Motive assessment (distrust as high cynicism)	Future Outcome expectations	Team /Peers	Leader /Manager	Org
Voice Cynicism Beliefs	1	I BELIEVE ... It is futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it) to .....SPEAK UP (give suggestions),	Low cynicism	[redacted]			Low	neutral	desired outcomes will not occur	by my <Target>		
	2									by my <Target>		
	3						Mod to High			by my <Target>		
	4									by my <Target>		
	5		High Cynicism				High cycnisim	Competence		by my <Target> = they		
	6							Benevolence		by my <Target> = they		
	7							Integrity		by my <Target> = they		
Overall Futility to voice - futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it)												
cynicism based voice behaviors - overall beliefs	1	I BELIEVE ... It is futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it) to .....SPEAK UP (give suggestions)		[redacted]			Mod to High	Purest form of cynicism		to my <Target>		
	2									with my <Target>		
	3									with my <Target>		

B. Futility of EFFORT (E.g. BE PROACTIVE)		Same stem (Value of effort/futility)	Negativity and strength and magnitude of the beliefs underlying cynicism	Reasons why they feel futility to be proactive	TIME FRAME	Avoid PAST & PRESENT - ONLY FUTURE Expectation	Intensity	Motive assessment (distrust as high cynicism)	Future Outcome expectations	Team /Peers	Leader /Manager	Org
Be Proactive Cynicism Beliefs	1	I BELIEVE ... It is futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it) to .....BE PROACTIVE (take active steps).	Low cynicism	[redacted]			Low		desired outcomes will not occur	by my <Target>		
	2									by my <Target>		
	3									by my <Target>		
	4						Mod			by my <Target>		
	5		High Cynicism							for my <Target>		
	6						High cycnisim			for my <Target>		
	7									my <Target> = they		
Overall Futility to Be Proactive - futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it)												
cynicism based be proactive behaviors - overall beliefs	1	I BELIEVE ... It is futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it) to ..... BE PROACTIVE (take active steps).		[redacted]			Mod to High	Purest form of cynicism		by my <Target>		
	2									for my <Target>		
	3									for my <Target>		

C. Futility of EFFORT (e.g. ADOPT CHANGE)		Same stem (Value of effort/futility)	Negativitiy and strength and magnitude of the beliefs underlying cynicism	Reasons why they feel futility to adopt change	TIME FRAME	Avoid PAST & PRESENT - ONLY FUTURE Expectation	Intensity	Motive assessment (distrust as high cynicism)	Future Outcome expectations	Team /Peers	Leader /Manager	Org
Adopt Change Cynicism Beliefs	1	**I BELIEVE ... It is futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it)** to ..... ADOPT CHANGES	Low cynicism	[redacted]			Low		desired outcomes will not occur	made by my <Target>		
	2									made by my <Target>		
	3						Mod to High			made by my <Target>		
	4									made by my <Target>		
	5		High Cynicism				High cycnisim			made by my <Target>		
	6									made by my <Target>		
Overall Futility to Adopt Change - futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it)												
cynicism based adopt change behaviors - overall beliefs	1	I BELIEVE ... It is futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it) to ..... ADOPT CHANGES		[redacted]			Mod to High	**Purest form of cynicism**		for my <Target>		
	2									my <Target> = their		
	3									my <Target> = their		
	4									my <Target> = their		

D. Futility of EFFORT (e.g. BUILD RELATIONSHIPS)		Same stem (Value of effort/futility)	Negativitiy and strength and magnitude of the beliefs underlying cynicism	Reasons why they feel futility to build deep relationships	TIME FRAME	Avoid PAST & PRESENT - ONLY FUTURE Expectation	Intensity	Motive assessment (distrust as high cynicism)	Future Outcome expectations	Team /Peers	Leader /Manager	Org
Interpersonally Connect Cynicism Beliefs	1	**I BELIEVE ... It is futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it)** to ..... BUILD DEEP RELATIONSHIPS	Low cynicism	[redacted]			Low		desired outcomes will not occur	by my <Target> = they		
	2									by my <Target>		
	3						Mod to High			by my <Target> = they		
	4									with my <Target>		
	5		High Cynicism							by my <Target> = they		
	6						High cycnisim			by my <Target>		
	7									my <Target> = their		
Overall Futility to Interpersonally Connect - futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it)												
cynicism based interpersonally connect behaviors - overall beliefs	1	I BELIEVE ... It is futile (of no value, waste of time, not worth it) to ..... BUILD DEEP RELATIONSHIPS		[redacted]			Mod to High	**Purest form of cynicism**		with my <Target>		
	2									with my <Target>		
	3									with my <Target>		

Appendix 4.C. Pilot Test OCS

FUTILE TO SPEAK UP ITEMS (cyn_voice) - 9 items

1. futile to speak up, <…..>
2. futile to speak up, <…..>
3. futile to speak up, <…..>
4. futile to speak up, <…..>
5. futile to speak up, <…..>
6. futile to speak up, <…..>
7. futile to speak up, <…..>
8. futile to speak up, <…..>
9. futile to speak up, <…..>

FUTILE TO BUILD DEEP RELATIONSHIPS (cyn_relation) - 6 items

10. futile to build a deep relationship <…..>
11. futile to build a deep relationship <…..>
12. futile to build a deep relationship <…..>
13. futile to build a deep relationship <…..>
14. futile to build a deep relationship <…..>)
15. futile to build a deep relationship <…..>

FUTILE TO BE PROACTIVE (cyn_proact) - 7 items

16. futile to be proactive, <…..>
17. futile to be proactive, <…..>
18. futile to be proactive, <…..>
19. futile to be proactive, <…..>
20. futile to be proactive, <…..>
21. futile to be proactive, <…..>
22. futile to be proactive, <…..>

FUTILE TO ADOPT CHANGE (cyn_change) - 4 items

23. futile to adopt changes at work as, <…..>
24. futile to adopt changes at work as, <…..>
25. futile to adopt changes at work as, <…..>
26. futile to adopt changes at work as, <…..>

The items were rated on a scale from (1) ‘Strongly disagree’ to (7) ‘Strongly agree’.

Pending Trademark and Copywrite on items

Appendix 5.A. Revised OSC Items Post-Pilot Testing

		Structure Matrix Component*				
Potential loading patterns	SPSS Item No.	1	2	Original Pilot Tested Item	SPSS New Item No.	Reworded/new item for Study 2 (Prolific participants) Testing
Similar loadings - proactive, relationship, change	cyn_proact_2	0.969		[redacted]	cyn_proact1_1	[redacted]
	cyn_proact_4	0.957			cyn_proact1_2	
	cyn_proact_5	0.957			cyn_proact1_3	
	cyn_proact_1	0.943			cyn_proact1_4	
	cyn_relation_5	0.939			cyn_relation1_1	
	cyn_change_2	0.928			cyn_change1_2	
	cyn_relation_4	0.914			cyn_relation1_2	
	cyn_proact_6	0.905			cyn_proact2_2	
	cyn_proact_7	0.900			cyn_proact2_3	
Similar loadings - voice, change, relationship	cyn_change_4	0.875			cyn_change1_1	
	cyn_proact_3	0.866			cyn_proact2_1	
	cyn_voice_6	0.855			cyn_voice1_2	
	cyn_change_1	0.844			cyn_change3_1	
	cyn_voice_4	0.840			cyn_voice1_1	
	cyn_change_3	0.840			cyn_change2_2	
					cyn_change2_1	
					cyn_change3_2	
	cyn_relation_2	0.834			cyn_relation1_4	
	cyn_voice_5	0.809			cyn_voice2_2	
	cyn_voice_7	0.802			cyn_voice2_3	
Similar loadings - relationship	cyn_relation_6	0.798			cyn_relation2_1	
	cyn_relation_3	0.657			cyn_relation2_2	
	cyn_relation_1	0.611			cyn_relation1_3	
					cyn_relation2_3	
					cyn_relation2_4	
Similar loadings - voice	cyn_voice_3	0.628	0.724		cyn_voice3_3	
	cyn_voice_9		0.954		cyn_voice3_1	
	cyn_voice_8		0.948		cyn_voice1_3	
	cyn_voice_1		0.715		cyn_voice3_2	
	cyn_voice_2		0.642		cyn_voice2_1	

Note. The structure matrix alpha's indicate that the scale were measuring onto 2 factors and shows how similar loading items were grouping when measure with a pilot sample of participants (n = 15). The pilot tested items are as shown under the column labelled, 'Original Pilot Tested Item', and the rewritten items with the addition of 4 new items are shown under the column labelled 'Reworded/new item for Study 2 (Prolific participants) Testing'

Appendix 6.A. Final OCS Items Aligned with Conceptual Definition

OCS - FINAL ITEMS AND HOW THEY CONCEPTUALLY ALIGN TO FINAL DEFINITION

FUTILE TO VOICE



FUTILE TO BE PROACTIVE



FUTILE TO BUILD DEEP RELATIONSHIPS



FUTILE TO ADOPT CHANGE

