

# Improving the organizational behavior management through FLOW concept

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## Abstract

*In a dynamic and competitive environment, the necessity in high – quality human resources have become more of a necessity than luxury. The paper brings into discussion the concept of flow state and its impact on organizational behavior and perceived performance. Described as a state of maximum concentration, the flow feeling has proven its surprising effect on the performance of organizational employees. Considering the organizational management theories, this study contains qualitative research where the main objective was on analyzing the factors that can induce this state, as well as the type of influence it has on the individuals. Through an interpretation of literature, based on inductive and deductive analysis of factors that induce the flow state, we emphasize the connection between flow and perceived performance in organizations. The data was collected through the journaling method, where three out of five employees who work in outsourcing companies of Iași, Romania, shared their opinions and experiences regarding flow state. The results show that there are tangible factors, like food and coffee, as well as intangible – breaks and rest, that positively influence the achievement of flow state. Moreover, the study reveals that being in flow is also dependent on the time of the day, season of the year and weather. This study can serve as an informational support for literature in management field, bringing practical recommendations for leaders who want to create a productive working environment.*

**Keywords:** FLOW, work performance, motivation, behavioral management, motivational factors

## Introduction

The wish for power and mass submission was and remains an action that concerns society from its beginning. Still, in Kant's Rational Autonomy, there is a saying that individuals who behave morally, taking into consideration rational principles, are the ones with free will (Kant, 1930). On the other hand, the idea of morality is influenced by supervision and discipline, a theory that communicates about the process of behavior manipulation through specific power structures, like schools, government, prisons (Focault, 1975). A similar example can be found in religion – the 10 Commandments of God and Solomon's Wisdoms. Organizational behavior management persists in

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being an interest, raising questions about the factors that determine a certain behavior and the measures that can be taken to manipulate and adjust it to a company organizational management. Once the accent is set on the positive effects that behavioral management can bring, the companies' attention should also lie on the variables that are influencing a specific conduct, when the main objective is to generate wealth. In an era in which the business environment is more dynamic and complex, the success of an organization depends not only on material resources and development strategies, but also on the ability to coordinate the employees' behavior. The understanding and the management of the way in which individuals act and communicate, to create a result driven environment, represents organizational behavior management. On this subject, Csikszentmihalyi (1975; 1988) introduces a new term – flow state—supposed to be used as a key component in human resources strategies. Classified as a moderator variable, flow at work is considered to help organizations to make their employees more motivated and concentrated on their work. Unfortunately, in Romanian literature there are few studies on the concept of flow state and how it can be obtained in order to create a performance driven organizational behavior, which creates a gap of understanding how to operate in terms of flow. The general aim of this study is to complete the Romanian literature on organizational behavior with the concept of flow and its beneficial effects on behavior management. Moreover, in this research, we want to give an answer to the following problem statement: how can flow improve overall organizational behavior and what are the factors that help the employees to be in a flowing state. Besides, we stumble upon several research questions: (1) what are the factors that make the employees feel the flow state, (2) how can these factors influence flow and the perceived performance of the organization and (3) how can managers use the identified factors to create strong environments for an easy flowing experience. Our objective is to find these factors through an exploratory analysis, and observe conceptual implications on performance. Combining sciences like organizational psychology, sociology and human resources, the concept brings new inspiration in the construction and application of different behavioral strategies that can lead companies to motivate their employees better and to reduce internal conflict. A strong culture develops positive characters, while a weak culture can bring negative outcomes (Schein, 2010). In this case, the main point of managers nowadays is to identify and supervise behaviors that can take the organization to another level of adaptability and success.

## **1. The implication of FLOW state in the improvement of organizational behaviormanagement**

Over time, organizational behavior raises lots of issues in the business environment, being the construction that reorganizes cultures, systems, and the one that has the most influence on the external

and internal environment of a company.

### *Organizational environment*

In theory, organizational structures are a form of rational coordination obtained through the interaction and communication of people that are working together for the same scope (French *et al.*, 1999). From the coordination of human resources depend on the health and functionality of every organization, a role that it is attributed to the manager, per usual, that specialist that can discover and design a behavior (Bordean, 2010). In other words, he is responsible for the quality of behavior of team members that can lead the organization to success. According to the literature, there are several roles of organizational behavior analysis: (1) acts as common knowledge for employee and employer in terms of behavior at the work place, (2) serves as a background for the reasons of a certain behavior in a specific environment, (3) uses predictors of employees' behavior and anticipates crises, (4) influences overall organizations' behavior, in interdependence with its aims (Griffin and Moorehead, 2011). Further, we emphasize four key concepts that affect a behavior: human resource, which is the employee, teams, organization and environment (Wilson, 1999). Employees interact with each other, creating teams that can influence organizations and, in the end, the environment. In the same order, organizations have an impact on teams' behavior. In this order of ideas, we can say that organizational environment is a way of living for the employees, a stable construct over the time with its values and beliefs and with strong impact on performance and satisfaction of stakeholders (Munteanu *et al.*, 2017). Reaching high organizational efficiency attracts both academician's and practitioners' interest, taking into consideration nowadays environment hit by numerous crises. Thus, a need occurs – to build new methods to upgrade and stimulate those behaviors. That kind of method is flow (Hyeon, 2023) – a concept introduced by Csikszentmihalyi in 1990.

### *Behavioral management*

In literature, most of the authors studies about the importance of organizational behavior, considering it as a main factor that can increase productivity and the quality of work (Clipa, 2011). Due to organizational behavior, we can observe the efficiency of individuals, with a strong accent on how their results can increase or decrease the organization's profit (Dailey *et al.*, 1990). In this case, it is crucial to analyze in detail the concepts mentioned earlier: on a micro level – the employee, and on a macro level – the team and organization (Wilson, 1999). In the first scenario, attention is pointed

to personality, motivations, attitudes and the willingness to grow in the career of employees. On the other hand, the macro level reflects the unity – organization as a total variable. After mixing these concepts, we can talk about the elaboration and development of organizational theory with implications on behavior management (Mullins, 2007). In understanding how this behavior can be influenced, across the years, new theories appeared, one of them being the classic theory of management (Webber, 2007), in which it is said about work division a bureaucracy for profit growth. In contrast, the human relations theory (Mayo, 1933), says that the employees will be more eager to improve their productivity, if there would be stimulants for motivation and psychological factors. A similar opinion we can see in the contingent theory (Fiedler, 1964), but it tells us about the importance of leadership in crisis incidents. But we still stumble over an idea from systems theory – theory of systems (Katz *et al.*, 1966) - in which we found out that productivity can be reached throughout total equilibrium. All these theories demonstrate the multidimensionality of this concept, like organizational behavior, putting the emphasis on motivational factors and self-efficacy.

When we refer to motivation, we mostly take into consideration intrinsic motivation, which represents that force that makes the individuals act (Haritonov, 2020). Of course, we also stumble upon external motivators, such as salary (Dobre, 2013). Unfortunately, this indicator is not a long-term solution for overall organizational performance and is capable to change the behavior of the employee in terms of seeking only financial remunerations for every task (Whitley, 2002). From this point of view, in management theories, motivational factors are divided in three categories (Hong Le *et al.*, 2021): (1) human factor, (2) external factor and (3) work-related factor. In fact, the relationships between colleagues and managers are the ones that motivates the most, rather than the financial part. But only motivation has influence on the behavior? Another important concept is mentioned in the study realized by Oprea and Bădoi (2018) on Romanian organization environment through the adaptation of WOLF (work-related flow inventory) and it refers to the self-efficacy of the employee. In the literature, the term self-efficacy indicates the strong belief in one's capacity to accomplish an objective or task (Waddington, 2023). To be self-efficient means to be successful. The more the successful experiences an employee has, the more he feels self-efficient, which leads to a higher probability to reach the flow state (Schunk, 1995). On the other side, failure makes them to question their skills and confidence. The concept is also related to the amount of effort the employee puts in his daily work. An ambitions person will make sure the effort allocated for the task is at a high level (Cherian and Jacob, 2013). Margolis identifies several sources of self-efficacy, mentioning the (1) artistry, (2) experiences, (3) verbal manipulation and (4) psychological state (Margolis and McCabe, 2006). These factors help the employee to reach not only intrinsic motivation and full concentration,

but also enter the flow state. In the end, management should be an essential permit, to upgrade, maintain a good working environment, with advantages for all parties. Here, we can see more of the implications of flow in applied strategic management.

### *The concept of flow state*

But what is flow and how can it improve organizational behavior? The flow state (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi, 2014) is a model built by Csikszentmihalyi in 1975, taking into consideration the Maslow's pyramid of needs. It is a concept of modern positive psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), where the individual reaches his peak of performance, similar to the absolute happiness (Privette and Bundrick, 1987). The state is considered the perfect equilibrium between task and the ability of an individual to do it (Monitorul Psihologiei, 2023). It requires two essential characteristics to feel the flow, maximum concentration and the happiness that comes after the job is done (Ghani *et al.*, 1991). Another feature that describes the flow state is the feeling of full control of an individual on his surroundings. It is not only about the equality in task and skill, but also about their level which often needs to be high enough to start flowing (Obadă, 2015). When someone experiences flow, they can reach moderate to high levels of happiness and moderate to high levels of performance. If we look at the flow state from a closer perspective, we realize how complex in fact it is. Taking into consideration the literature, we understand that flow can be a unidimensional, as well as a multidimensional concept. The multidimensionality is given by (1) a clear aim or task (Chen, 2006), (2) constant feedback, (3) equilibrium of challenge and ability (Guo and Poole, 2009), (4) total concentration (Chen *et al.*, 1999), (5) the feeling of control, (6) lost meaning of time and (7) self-efficacy.

The balance between the challenge and skill is also demonstrated in Csikszentmihalyi's quadratic flow model (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). These two variables are often taken into account by managers to build human resource strategies. Moreover, Bakker developed a more complex model related to employees' self-efficacy and motivation to get the job done (Bakker and Woerkom, 2017). This model explains that, in order to feel self-determined, the individuals need to set up several objectives. The authors emphasize the concept of job drafting, where the employees shape their job in order to adapt it to their abilities. On the other hand, the model shows that it is important for managers to focus on the strengths of their employees, when assigning tasks. Another model that reflects the role of managers, is the HRM Model built by Wang (Wang and Shaheryar, 2020), where the human resource is put in the first place. There should be more effort invested in equal recompence, transparency of information and equilibrium between task/skill, if the aim or corporations lies on

inducing the employees in flow state. When an employee is in flow, he is fully concentrated on identifying the solution and not on other external factors, like time of physical needs. On the other hand, this feeling is so ephemeral that very less people can actually experience it.

Unfortunately, in Romanian culture and organizational philosophy, this concept is less studied, which creates a breach between the informational background and practical strategies of management. It is important to highlight the results of flow theory in worldwide organizations, in order to have a trustworthy model which can be followed by Romanian entrepreneurs and managers (Oprea and Bădoi, 2018). It has been concluded that the flow state is not only a personal feeling, but can also be experienced inside a team, which results in higher creativity and performance in an organization (Sawyer, 2007). Moreover, in companies where the environment is adapted to employees' needs, there is a higher rate of experiencing the flow state (Butkovic et al., 2015). When individuals 'flow', they are less tempted to resign and to feel in burnout (Bakker, 2008; Eisenberger and Jones, 2009). In other study on Romanian organizational behavior, a new role of flow was revealed, the authors recognizing the concept as a mediator at work between job performance and self-efficacy (Ştefan and Vîrgă, 2024). When the employee has constant positive feedback, rewards and overall behavior-focused leaders and team members, he will be more self-efficient and intrinsic motivated to solve the tasks.

Now that we have several definitions of flow, we can analyze the factors that help the individuals actually reach the flow state. Taking into consideration the flow theory developed by Csikszentmihalyi, there are two important factors: (1) the ability to complete a task and (2) the task. We observe here a similarity to the earlier described dimensions of flow and it is fair to admit that the antecedents of flow are, in fact, its dimensions (Stavrou and Zervas, 2004). Flow is considered a result of the knowledges and resources of the individual (Buil et al., 2017). On the other hand, Csikszentmihalyi reveals additional conditions of the flow, emphasizing the state and location of the person, the activity that is done and his environment (Schmidt et al., 2014). In a study on experience sample method, the father of flow concept, classifies the trigger factors of flow in two categories: personal factors, which refers to autotelic personality, demographic background, education, ambition and intelligence; and external factors mentioned earlier, the moment of day, the activity and the location (Schmidt et al., 2014). Similar, Medical News Today reflects the importance of the mental state of the individual in the process of reaching flow. The author suggests several ways to amplify the opportunity to reach the flowing feeling: (1) allocate a generous amount of time for the task, as is hard to reach flow in a short amount of time, (2) ignore any distractions and (3) understand if the employee really has the ability to solve a certain task (Gepp, 2022). In this order of ideas, Akyol defines a new perspective on the factors that trigger flow, putting the importance of internal emotions

in the first place, as well as the always emerging curiosity of an individual (Akyol and Imamoglu, 2019). The manager should understand the relevance of taking into account the environment and personality of the employee, in order to shape his or her behavior to be in a constant feeling of flow and concentration.

Considering today's toxic and competitive environment, organizations are more concerned about results rather than the employees' wellbeing, managers often tend to forget that the last aspect is strongly correlated with company's performance (Salanova *et al.*, 2006). Another challenge is given by the last years crisis, like Covid – 19 that had the most drastic impact on economic environment with lots of people getting fired or the bankruptcy of small enterprises (AmCham Moldova, 2020). With the introduction of remote work, it has been observed a decrease in employees' efficiency and in the intrinsic motivation to maintain high productivity levels (Platforma Națională a Forumului Societății Civile din Parteneriatul Estic, 2021). Another crisis that affected the individuals' performance, is the Ukrainian war – a time for companies to take into consideration their human resource more (Prohorov, 2022). Thus, we can see a gap between the desired performance and the perceived one at the workplace, which makes it difficult to obtain a full concentration state. But how can managers create an environment to fit that state? Let us see below what factors we might take into consideration when trying to reach the flow feeling.

## 2. Method

The aim of this study is to observe the possible causality between the factors that determine the flow state, and the performance perceived over time at the workplace. As per the above, we take into consideration the following objectives:

**O1:** To identify the possible determinant factors of flow.

**O2:** To describe the potential influence of these factors on the workplace's perceived performance.

### *Research design*

In this study, we operated with a concept introduced in the '90, and the Romanian literature and research in this domain is still in a continuous growth. Thus, this analysis has an alternative aim, to serve as a supply for the gaps in Romanian literature, adding new and detailed information about flow. To answer this problem, we used the qualitative research method, which gives us the possibility

to see beyond numbers, to observe relations between individuals and phenomenon, and to formulate hypotheses and interpretations that can be hidden for a quantitative researcher (Heloise and Rafique, 2021). We applied journaling as an instrument for an efficient qualitative analysis, with a strong accent on reflections of the sample taken into consideration (Bandini *et al.*, 2021).

### *Population and sample*

In the analysis of behaviors at the organizational level, the population considered for the study was formed from employees working for an international organization in human resources which is conducting its activity in Iași, Romania. Inside the company, a Google Form was sent on the work email of the employees, in order to filter the individuals who felt at least one time the state of full concentration from the ones who were yet to achieve this feeling. The form was completed by five people, and only three of them gave their acceptance to participate in the research (annexes nr. 1). The aim and the objectives of the study were communicated to and they have been assured that their feedback is completely anonymous and will be used just for academical purposes. The demographical background of participants consists of different ages, two of them were Millennials and only one from Gen Z, and sexes – two females and one male. From geographical aspect, as their contract offers the possibility of remote working, two of them were located in rural areas around the county of Iași, and only one was living in the urban area.

### *Data gathering*

The employees that gave their acceptance to participate to the journaling experiment, have been contacted on a separate group created in Microsoft Teams. In the starting, they were asked about their state at that moment and later, an explanatory text was posted in the group. Further, we gave a note with the definition of flow state for them to have more understanding of what they need to write about. The journal was sent to the employees in Word format, in which they could give their opinion on the questions like ‘When you felt the most concentrated during the work day?’. Also, the document contained free space to complete for each day of the study. The journaling method lasted 5 days, being conducted in the period 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2024. During this period, the participants were notified daily to complete the journal with their reflections. After, the journals were collected from the participants and each of them was analyzed through a content evaluation which resulted into the

identification of several topics that responded to the earlier established objectives and research problem.

### 3. Results

Data received from the completed journals were processed through simple content analysis, where we identified 5 general themes that can give an answer to our research problem. In the following, we present a detailed image of each theme, refined through data coding.

**Table 1. Initial state**

Code	Frequency
<b>P_Positive_state</b>	<b>19</b>
Ready	1
Happy	2
Good sleep	4
Energy	4
Silence	1
Nice vibe	2
Concentration	1
Easy	1
Comfortable	1
Emotional	1
Productive	1
<b>N_Negative_State</b>	<b>14</b>
Tired	4
Less energy	3
Pushing	1
Pain	1
Lack of focus	3
Insomnia	1
Slow activity	1

Source: own representation of data processed based on journal analysis

The aim of this theme was to observe the initial state of the participants, to see their predisposition to be in flow, as the analysis of the mood can influence the behavior of employees in the workplace (Zaborilă, 2005). From the above table, we can see that the state of the individuals was rather positive (19 mentions) than negative (14 mentions). From the positive state, the good sleep was

the most mentioned (4 mentions), the most important factor that affected the wellbeing of the employees and the only one who helped them be more energetic (4 mentions) throughout the day. Quote: 'I started the day with more energy, as I had a good and qualitative sleep'. Throughout the journaling period, the participants felt happy (2 mentions) and they had a nice vibe (2 mentions). Quote: 'My day started quite peacefully, with a nice vibe'. On the other hand, one of them mentioned quite often tiredness (4 mentions) as being the most often felt state. Quote: 'I started my shift very tiredly, and it took me more time than usual to concentrate, due to insomnia'. Moreover, all the participants had days with less energy (3 mentions) and with a lack of focus (3 mentions). In conclusion, we can affirm that for a good state for the whole day, it is important for the individuals to have a good sleep that can give them an energy boost and that can help them focus more easily.

**Table 2. Factors that induce flow state**

Code	Frequency
<b>T_Tangible_Factors</b>	17
<b>Coffee/Water</b>	8
<b>Scented candle</b>	1
<b>Podcast</b>	1
<b>Food</b>	4
<b>Social scrolling</b>	1
<b>People</b>	2
<b>I_Intangible_Factors</b>	21
<b>Cozy atmosphere</b>	3
<b>Rest</b>	3
<b>Break</b>	3
<b>Writing</b>	1
<b>Avoiding multitasking</b>	2
<b>Avoiding social media</b>	2
<b>Silence</b>	1
<b>Room temperature</b>	2
<b>Music</b>	3
<b>Exercises</b>	1

Source: own representation of data processed based on journal analysis

Considering that the objectives of this study refer to the determinants of flow state, the above theme offers a clearer image on them. Thus, we can observe that we have tangible factors (17 mentions) and intangible (21 mentions). The latter have a higher influence on inducting the flow, as the participants said that for them, a cozy and nice work atmosphere is very important (3 mentions).

Also, they mentioned rest (3 mentions) and frequent breaks (3 mentions). Quote: 'Before starting the shift, I made coffee and I lit a scented candle to create a nice and cozy atmosphere'. We emphasized that the rest is connected to a good sleep, and the atmosphere with the nice vibe, codes that were analyzed in table 1. Another interesting factor that the participants mentioned was music (3 mentions). This result is like an outcome obtained by Csikszentihalyi in research with the usage of Flow Questionnaire. Quote: I discovered that music helps me to concentrate better on my tasks'. In contrast, for the tangible factors, the highest influence on inducing the flow state was generated by coffee (8 mentions). Quote: 'At 11, after 3 coffees, I started to feel productive'. In conclusion, we extracted 4 main factors that offer the possibility for the employees to approach the feeling of flow, these being: workplace atmosphere, rest, breaks and coffee.

**Table 3. The moment of flow**

Code	Frequency
<b>F_First_Part_of_Day</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Around 10:00</b>	2
<b>First part of the day</b>	5
<b>S_Second_Part_of_Day</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Before lunch break</b>	2
<b>After lunch break</b>	2
<b>16:00</b>	1
<b>14:00 – 16:00</b>	3
<b>12:30 – 16:00</b>	1
<b>D_Duration</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Half an hour</b>	1
<b>2 hours</b>	1
<b>3 hours and 30 minutes</b>	1
<b>3 hours</b>	1
<b>4 hours</b>	2

Source: own representation of data processed based on journal analysis

The moment of flow is useful when measuring the frequency and duration of this state experienced by the employees. After the codification of journal, we can see that participants are more likely to feel the flow in the second part of the day (9 mentions), rather than in the first part (7 mentions). They were flowing mostly in the time frame from 14:00 till 16:00 (3 mentions), a period connected also to after lunch break code (2 mentions). Taking into consideration this information, we can observe a correlation between one of the tangible factors - food (4 mentions) analyzed earlier and

the period of lunch break, participants saying that they need food for energy and maximum concentration. Quote: 'The strongest state of concentration I felt from 14:00 till 16:00, because I had food and relaxed myself a bit'. We can define another two factors mentioned – rest and break. If we are talking about the duration of flow state, then the reflections are different from person to person, as everyone has a complex personality that is influenced by personal life elements. Thus, the longest flow state was almost 4 hours (2 mentions), and the shortest – half an hour (1 mention).

**Table 4. Effects of flow**

Code	Frequency
<b>P_Positive_Effects</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Satisfaction</b>	2
<b>Wellbeing</b>	3
<b>Stressless</b>	1
<b>Fulfillment</b>	1
<b>Happiness</b>	1
<b>Productivity</b>	3
<b>Pleasure</b>	1
<b>Focus</b>	3
<b>Energy</b>	1
<b>Active</b>	1
<b>Victory</b>	1
<b>N_Negative_Effects</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Exhaustion</b>	2
<b>Tiredness</b>	8
<b>Sleep</b>	1

Source: own representation of data processed based on journal analysis

Once we identified the factors that can influence the flow state, we want to continue with an analysis of the nature of the influence, which is done in the above table. As we can see, this nature is rather positive (18 mentions), than negative (11 mentions). From the positive effects mentioned, are wellbeing (3 mentions), productivity (3 mentions), focus (3 mentions) and satisfaction (2 mentions). Quote: 'Emotions were of satisfaction and wellbeing knowing that I had the time to finish all the daily tasks without stress', 'I could focus more and to pay more attention to little details', 'The maximum concentration state was around 15:00 and it lasted 3 hours – time when I was very active and productive'. However, we observe that the negative effects also had an influence on flow state, tiredness being mentioned 8 times. Quote: 'The shift ended at 20:00 with a high level of exhaustion' .

In conclusion, we can affirm that the flow state is usually accompanied by focus and attention, when the employees feel the most productive and satisfied by their work. But on the other end, the exhaustion and tiredness are the ones who take place as the workday ends.

**Table 5. Factors that stopped the induction in flow**

Code	Frequency
<b>F_Factors</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Full morning</b>	1
<b>Bad sleep</b>	2
<b>Weekend thoughts</b>	1
<b>Winter season</b>	1
<b>Weaknesses</b>	2
<b>Weather</b>	3
<b>Tiredness</b>	3
<b>Diverse events</b>	2
<b>Night shift</b>	1
<b>Unfinished tasks</b>	1
<b>High work volume</b>	1

Source: own representation of data processed based on journal analysis

Beside the factors that help to induce the flow state, throughout the analysis of participants' reflections, we identified some elements that were stopping them to reach be in flow. We can see that the accent is on bad sleep (2 mentions), weather (3 mentions), tiredness (3 mentions) and diverse events (2 mentions). In total, the word 'tired' was said 15 times, which tells about the proportion between productivity and human resources, when the first one rises, the second one will decrease. Quote: 'Because it is December, the weather outside is gloomy and cloudy, which makes me feel tired and sleepy'. Thus, we can say that external factors have a high influence on flow state.

After the analysis of journals, we have extracted and defined the following hypotheses, which will serve as a breaking point for future studies:

**H1:** The workplace atmosphere, rest and breaks represent the factors with the most influence on flow through organizational employees.

**H2:** The consistency and frequency of flow is determined by the personality and behavior of each organizational employee.

**H3:** Tiredness is representative of all organizational employees, and it is perceived as a factor that stops the feeling of flow.

## Discussions

The analysis of flow concept can help the organizations to reach a new level of development from the human resources management point of view (Bakker, 2008). Thus, the results of this study can serve as an informational basis for managers of multinational companies from Romania in regards with employees' behavior coordination. Also, it can help them to reach a new level of understanding of their employees and how to create a perfect environment for flow. After the content analysis of journals, we observed that the flow state can have different factors of influence, internal and external, it may have positive or negative outcomes and can be felt in diverse time intervals. Moreover, it is important that the initial state of employees before starting the workday be good and positive, with a qualitative sleep and rest (Table 1). In the table referring to factors that can induce flow, we determined more factors than the ones specified in the literature review on this subject, like music, work atmosphere and coffee breaks. Here we can add the results obtained by Csikszentmihalyi in a study on art people, where he identified the efficiency of music on productivity (Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura, 2002). An unexpected factor that was found is coffee, all the participants saying that this is what gives them strength to concentrate better and to be more productive (table 2). In this case, we can confirm that we accomplished our first objective, where we identified the factors that determine flow. The second objective was accomplished due to table 4, where we emphasized the effects of flowing on workplace performance. We found out that the nature of these factors is positive, with adverse effects. Even though the employees feel more focused and are paying attention to details, they must deal with tiredness, lack of good sleep and high work volumes. These results can be folded on dimensions underlined by Engeser like concentration on present tasks, loss of us, loss of the concept of time and control on our own actions (Engeser *et al.*, 2021). Due to the analysis of data collected from journal, we can see the frequency of flow and its duration. On the other hand, when creating management strategies for a good flow environment, the human resources specialist needs to take into consideration also the factors that stop the feeling of flow.

## Conclusions

This study implies an interdisciplinary view, from the perspective of organizational management and human resources, business psychology and behavioral economy. Combining concepts like organizational behavior management and flow, this research can contribute significantly to strategic and applicative methodologies, with the aim to improve the quality of behavioral

management and with a direct impact on increase of performance and wellbeing in general. Throughout the analysis, we saw how important the role of the manager in an organization is, we defined the theory of organizational behavior, and we gave an explanation regarding flow, and what it means to be in this state. Flow – a state of maximum concentration and optimal performance, which is hard to obtain without specific conditions. One of them was mentioned in the journal by the participants and it is related to the workplace atmosphere. It is imperial for it to be nice, cozy and comfortable for them to start the day with energy. Here we can also mention the implications of music, aroma therapy and even furniture. Another important factor refers to the workload, as when its levels are high, it is impossible to reach flow. Coffee breaks represent another essential aspect that needs to be taken into consideration, as they are crucial for the employees' well-being. All these elements help the individuals to focus on their activities better, to understand their own behavior, and manage their tasks more efficiently. Organizational behavior is also related to altruism and help, which is mentioned in the journals. A good collaboration between the team members is another element that helps to reach flow. Moreover, another aspect that was emphasized by the participants was movement, which helps them to clear their mind and concentrate better on their daily tasks. On the other hand, in managers' strategy it is important to take into consideration also those factors that have a negative influence on flow. In conclusion, we can confirm that we have accomplished our aim and the objectives we set earlier, as we observed what are the factors that can help in reaching the flow state and analyzed the nature of their influence on participants and organizational performance.

Even though the goals of this study have been reached, during the research we stumbled upon several limitations which are related to (1) small number of participants in the journaling experience, (2) participants were yet to be fully honest in their feelings, (3) some of the participants kept forgetting to update the journal on a daily basis, completing it on the last day for all the experiment period, (4) there was a vague understanding of the flow state concept among the participants, even after the given explanations. To surpass these limitations, we advise the following future research directions: (1) extend the number of participants and repeat the journaling method with more attention to details in the process, (2) add one more qualitative study, such as interviews with Romanian organizational employees, adapted with items from Self-efficacy Scale (Resnick *et al.*, 2000) and The Individual Performance Scale (3) with the results retrieved from interviews and items from the Flow Questionnaire (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002) build a questionnaire and apply it on multinationals that are located in Iași, Romania at the present time, (4) take into consideration the generational theory, in order to see how different generations reach the flow state and what are the afterwards sensations – are they similar or not. Through these future studies, we will be able to tighten the informational gap

regarding the flow state and make the entrepreneurs and managers more aware of the benefits and perceived performance the companies might get.

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