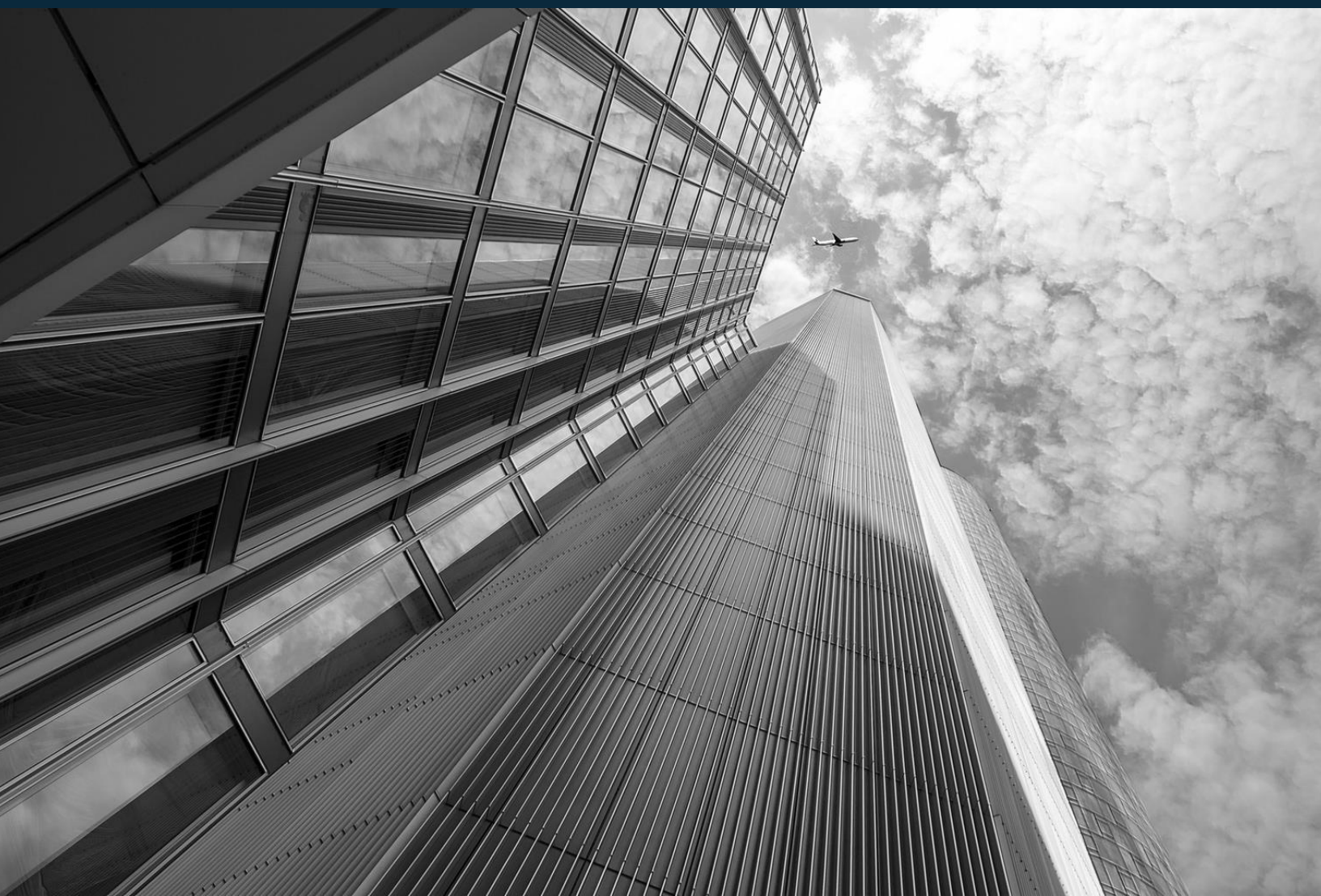


PURPOSE TRENDS REPORT

A selection of what has been published about Purpose in Jul & Ago 2025



Jul-Ago 2025

Cifrian, J.; Garcia de Santos, T.; Florez-Jimenez, M.P. & Lleo, A.
School of Economics and Business. University of Navarra

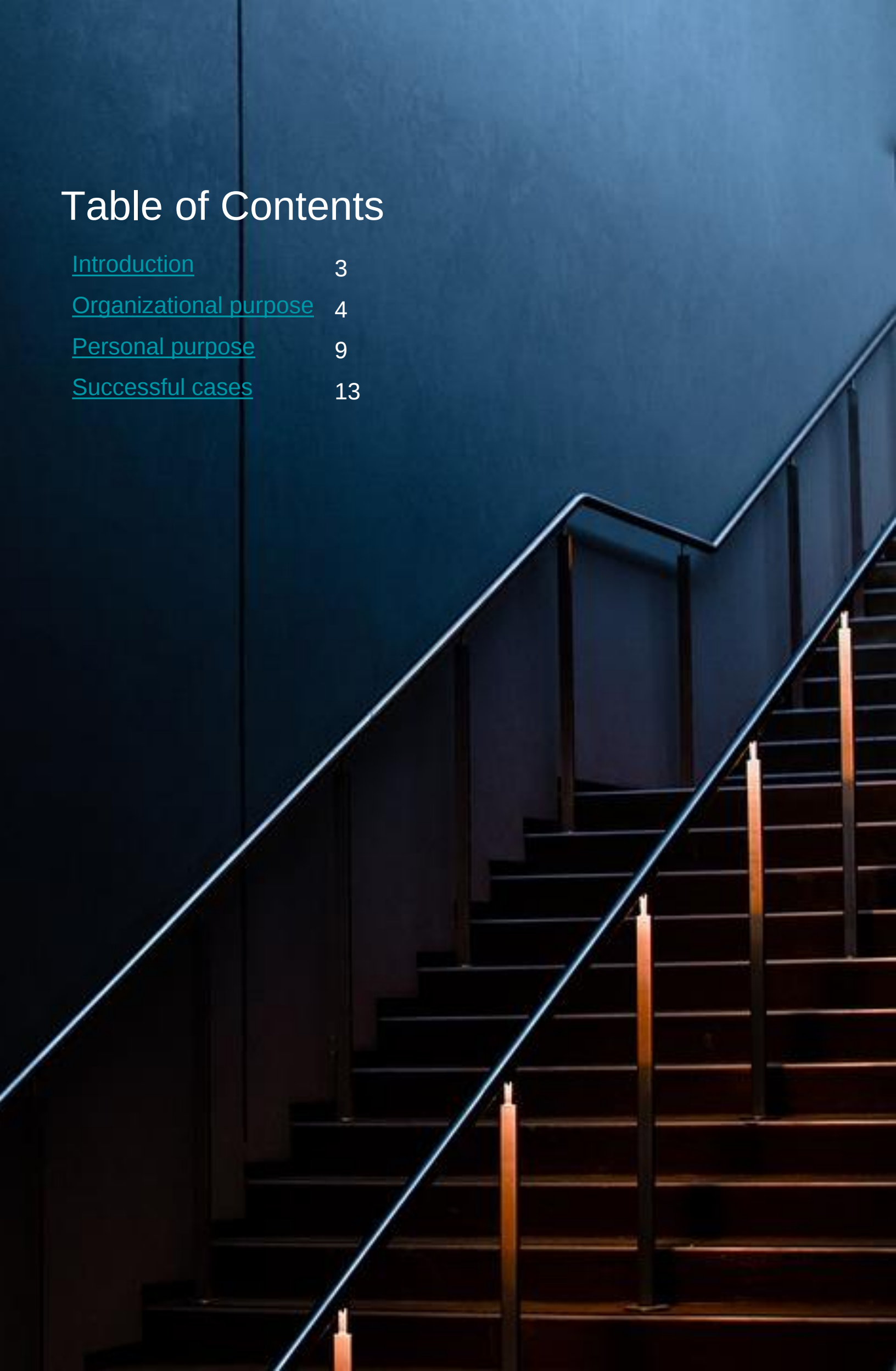
Purpose Trends Report ISSN 2952-1157
<https://doi.org/10.15581/025.2025.008>



Universidad
de Navarra

Table of Contents

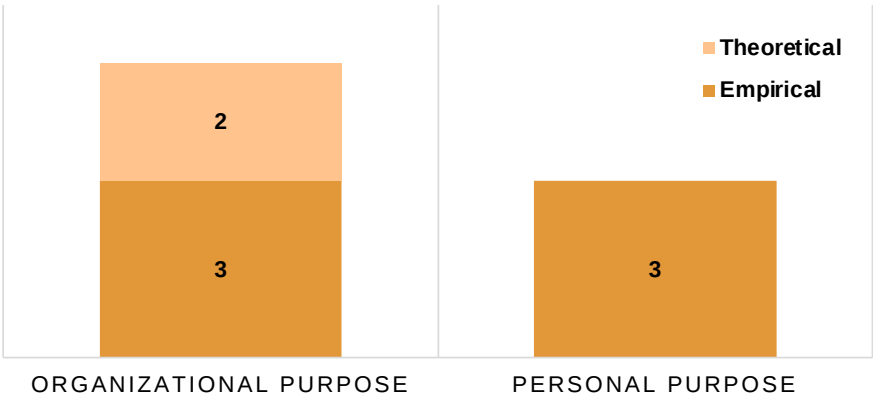
Introduction	3
Organizational purpose	4
Personal purpose	9
Successful cases	13



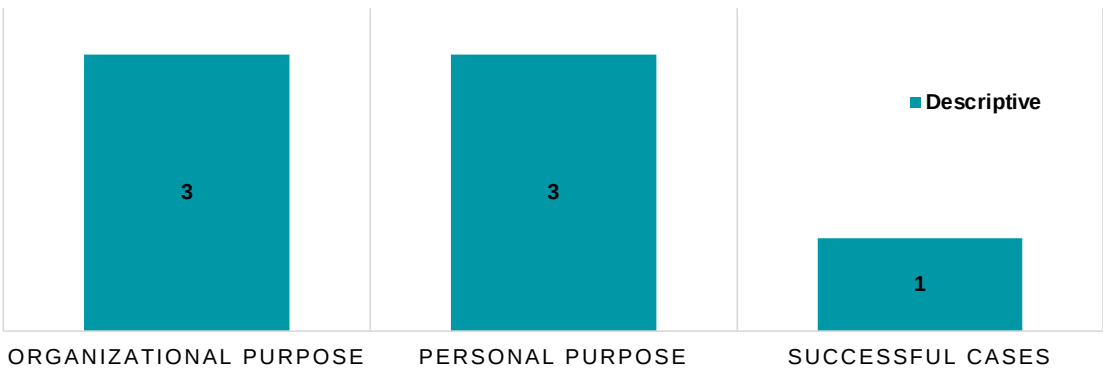
INTRODUCTION

In this report, we want to synthesize the most relevant about corporate purpose published in Jul-Ago 2025. For this aim, we did a content search (using selected keywords) in Scopus and Google Scholar for academic publications; and diffusion magazines and other trusted sites for articles and reports. We selected relevant publications about organizational purpose and personal purpose. Also, we include successful cases that show how corporate purpose has been implemented. Bellow, we present statistics about the selected literature.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS - JUL-AGO 2025



ARTICLES AND REPORTS – JUL-AGO 2025



Recent academic work highlights how integrated corporate purpose—combining inside-out and outside-in perspectives—drives stronger alignment with sustainability goals. Leadership plays a key role, especially when purpose is meaningfully communicated and embodied in systems and culture. Articles reinforce this, showing that purpose is sustained through participatory memory, systemic behavior over slogans, and the critical role of middle managers in translating abstract values into daily actions, ultimately shaping trust, identity, and employee engagement.

Academic studies emphasize that meaningful work, personal values, and recognition are essential for long-term engagement—especially in care professions. Emotional connection and intrinsic meaning outweigh structural support in promoting well-being. Articles mirror this, stressing how leaders must move beyond commands to foster shared purpose through dialogue and collaboration. When individuals co-create and connect with organizational values, personal purpose flourishes, reinforcing resilience, retention, and authentic motivation across diverse roles.

Finally, successful cases illustrate how businesses exemplify how purpose and profit can co-exist. Through mission-driven strategies across sectors, it demonstrates community impact—from education to agriculture—while maintaining strong business performance. This real-world case supports the broader trend: organizations that embed purpose deeply and authentically not only drive social change but also sustain long-term commercial success.

Academic publications (5)

Addressing the Sustainable Development Goals Through Outside-In and Inside-Out Corporate Purposes

Business Strategy and Development, JCR Q2 [see online](#)

Abstract: The growing severity of societal issues, addressed by the sustainable development goals (SDGs), has raised questions about companies' purpose and their roles in solving these issues. While scholars conceptualize two perspectives (outside-in and inside-out) on corporate purpose, it is unclear how they influence companies' actions on the SDGs. To address this knowledge gap, this article poses the research question: How do outside-in and inside-out corporate purposes shape companies' actions on the SDGs? Drawing upon interviews with 28 managers from 16 large companies in Australia and Japan, the article reveals that companies adopting both perspectives of corporate purpose are more advanced in implementing the SDGs than those who adopt only one perspective. The article's main contributions are the development of an "ideal type" of corporate purpose and implementation pathways to more comprehensively understand how companies can integrate the SDGs into their purpose.

Meaning-based leadership, empowering leadership, and team strategy implementation

Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: The concept of meaning-based leadership, leader advocacy of the meaning organizational purpose gives to the work, was proposed to capture the core role of leadership in organizations: motivating pursuits in the service of the organization's purpose. We study the influence of meaning-based leadership on one such pursuit – strategy implementation. We argue that team leaders may motivate team strategy implementation efforts through meaning-based leadership, because of this leadership's influence on team alignment around organizational values. We propose that this influence is contingent on team leader empowering leadership, such that meaning-based leadership has a stronger influence on team value alignment, and thus indirectly on team strategy implementation, with higher empowering leadership. This research model was supported in a multi-source survey of teams in an insurance company.

“ Building on Selznick's analysis, meaning-based leadership theory proposed the concept of meaning-based leadership to capture how leadership can draw on organizational purpose to motivate efforts in the service of organizational purpose. ”

Active participation matters: Impacts of green organizational identity on employees’ voluntary green behaviors

International Journal of Hospitality Management, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: This research aims to analyze the green behavior of hotel back-of-house employees by examining how ideology-based culture, employee green regulatory fit, and employee green organizational fit influence the relationship between green organizational identity and employees' pro-environmental actions, both voluntary and task-related. Data were collected from a two-wave survey of 489 employees through self-administered questionnaires over three months in 2024 in St. Petersburg and Clearwater, Florida, USA. The analysis showed that employee green organizational fit and employee green regulatory fit are positively associated with both voluntary and task-related green behaviors. The findings suggest that a green organizational identity and culture significantly impact employees' environmentally friendly actions. Furthermore, the results indicate that organizations can boost employees' green behavior by fostering strong alignment between employee values and their organizational commitment to sustainability.

“ Organizations can promote a feeling of purpose and commitment to environmental goals by developing a strong green organizational identity and an ideology-based culture. ”



Banking crises and the performance of microfinance institutions

Journal of International Financial Markets, Institutions & Money,
JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: Banking crises affect both banks and their clients, yet their impact on microfinance institutions (MFIs) that serve marginalized populations excluded from the formal financial system remains underexplored. This study examines the effects of banking crises on MFIs using panel data from 1,746 institutions across 123 countries, including five that experienced crises between 2004 and 2017. Despite limitations in the available data, the analysis reveals that most MFIs did not suffer adverse effects on financial performance or outreach, nor did they exhibit mission drift away from their traditional client base. However, microfinance banks—a subset of MFIs—did experience mission drift during banking crises. The findings suggest that MFIs’ resilience stems from their unique characteristics and focus on marginalized clients who often operate within the informal or semi-formal economy. The study highlights the resilience of the microfinance sector and the potential vulnerabilities among microfinance banks, offering insights for donors and stakeholders.

**Internal Market Orientation and Its Impact on Social and Business
Purpose Fulfilment in Organisations**

Business Strategy and Development, JCR Q2 [see online](#)

Abstract: The present study examines the Internal Market Orientation (IMO) concept and its impact on corporate social and business purpose fulfillment. Recognizing employees as pivotal assets, businesses increasingly integrate IMO into their Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies. In this vein, this study positions IMO as a complex internal marketing concept influencing job satisfaction and, subsequently, fulfilling both corporate social and business purposes. To achieve the posed aim, this research employs an empirical quantitative approach and causal study by developing an original theoretical framework, positing seven research hypotheses and surveying 405 employees in business organizations operating in Eastern Europe with an application of the recognized PLS-SEM technique for model validation and hypothesis testing. The findings stemming from this study corroborate the positive effects of IMO implementation on fulfilling an organization's corporate and business purposes. However, this study has not evinced a positive impact of the corporate social purpose fulfillment on accomplishing the organization's business purpose. These and other findings revealed by the present research have significant implications for marketing, HRM, and strategic management literature. On top of that, this research generates valuable insights and recommendations for managers aiming to align HRM strategies with social and business purposes through deploying the IMO concept in their organizations.

“ The latter researchers have determined that Social purpose, referred to as CSR in their respective study, has a positive impact on the organization's business performance indicators, such as competitive advantage. ”

Articles (3)

How Corporate Memory Drives Purpose, Culture And Employee Engagement

Vibhas Ratanjee, Forbes [see online](#)

The article explains that corporate memory is more than archiving—it is a strategic, cultural asset that connects employees to an organization’s purpose. It argues that memory should be participatory, allowing employees to see their impact on the company’s story. It defends the value of storytelling, rituals, and informal culture as essential components of identity and engagement. It states that when people feel their contributions are remembered, purpose becomes personal and motivating. The article highlights how companies like IBM and Marriott use memory to support onboarding, leadership, and continuity. It warns against over-reliance on AI, asserting that while machines can organize data, they can’t convey emotional meaning. Ultimately, it claims that preserving memory helps organizations retain authenticity, reinforce values, and engage employees by making them active participants in the legacy they’re helping build.

To Change Company Culture, Focus on Systems—Not Communication
Benjamin Laker; Chidiebere Ogbonnaya; Yasin Rofcanin; Tomasz Gorny; Marcello Mariani, Harvard Business Review [see online](#)

The article explains that while leaders frequently emphasize culture, their actions often fail to align with their words, leading to employee distrust. It argues that culture is not shaped by messaging campaigns or perks, but by consistent behaviors, visible trade-offs, and structural change. It defends the idea that values only hold weight when they cost leaders something—such as power, speed, or control. It states that silence in organizations often signals fear, not alignment, and that middle managers can’t uphold values executives won’t model. It highlights that culture changes only when leadership habits, decision-making, and power dynamics shift. Ultimately, it asserts that real culture work begins with action, not announcements. To build trust, leaders must embody the culture they promote—consistently and visibly—before expecting others to follow.

“ The lesson is clear: if culture isn’t consistently modeled at the highest levels, it won’t take root anywhere else. Middle managers cannot enforce what senior leaders won’t embody. Culture isn’t a message to be passed down. It’s a behavior to be practiced up close. ”

Not Just Parrots: Why Middle Managers Are The Missing Link In Purpose-Driven Companies

HEC Paris Insights, Forbes [see online](#)

The article explains that while corporate purpose is widely promoted by executives, it often fails to resonate with employees. It argues that true commitment stems not from top-down slogans, but from ongoing, meaningful dialogue between middle managers and their teams. It defends the role of middle managers as mediators who humanize purpose, rather than just repeat it. It states that when employees feel trusted, treated fairly, and invited to interpret purpose personally, their engagement and commitment rise. Research shows that strong “purpose dialogue,” combined with autonomy and fairness, creates emotional connection and shared meaning. It challenges the “purpose-performance paradox,” claiming the gap lies not in the message itself, but in how it’s experienced daily. Ultimately, it asserts that middle managers are key to transforming purpose from abstract language into lived experience.

“ Corporate purpose is one of the most powerful levers for transforming organizations (...) In that way, middle managers are not obstacles to purpose—they’re its amplifiers. They don’t just parrot. They humanize. And that, in today’s workforce, is what makes all the difference. ”



Academic publications (3)

Socially assistive robots and meaningful work: the case of aged care

Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: As socially assistive robots (SARs) become increasingly integrated into aged care, it becomes essential to ask: how do these technologies affect caregiving work? Do SARs foster or diminish the conditions conducive to meaningful work? And why does it matter if SARs make caregiving more or less meaningful? This paper addresses these questions by examining the relationship between SARs and the meaningfulness of care work. It argues that SARs should be designed to foster meaningful care work. This presupposes, as we will argue, empowering caregivers to enhance their skills and moral virtues, helping them preserve a sense of purpose, and supporting the integration of caregiving with other aspects of caregivers' personal lives. If caregivers see their work as meaningful, this positively affects not only their well-being but also the well-being of care recipients. We begin by outlining the conditions under which work becomes meaningful, and then we apply this framework to caregiving. We next evaluate how SARs influence these conditions, identifying both opportunities and risks. The discussion concludes with design recommendations to ensure SARs foster meaningful caregiving practices.

“ The caregiving becomes meaningful—through skill development, the development of moral virtues, a sense of purpose, and better integration of personal and professional life. ”

The role of loneliness, work meaning and organizational support in compassion satisfaction among primary care professionals during the pandemic

Scientific Reports, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: Compassion satisfaction (CS) refers to the positive emotional reward derived from helping others, particularly in healthcare settings. This study examines the influence of emotional and social loneliness, positive meaning of work, and organizational support on CS among primary care professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this cross-sectional study, 261 professionals completed a questionnaire assessing emotional and social loneliness, positive meaning of work, perceived organizational support (POS), and professional quality of life. Results showed positive meaning of work as the strongest predictor of CS, followed by a negative association with emotional loneliness. While POS was positively related to CS, its contribution was comparatively modest, and social loneliness showed no significant effect. These findings suggest that CS among primary care professionals is more strongly associated with intrinsic work-related factors and emotional well-being than with external organizational conditions. Promoting a sense of meaning in work and addressing emotional loneliness may be key strategies for organizations to enhance professionals' well-being and job satisfaction, fostering a more humane and balanced approach to medical practice that ultimately benefits both patient care and organizational efficiency.

Being a professional nurse until retirement – a qualitative interview study in Germany

BMC Nursing, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: Nurses are crucial to the global healthcare system, yet there is a growing shortage, exacerbated by demographic shifts and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The International Council of Nurses projects a deficit of 13 million nurses worldwide in the near future, contributing to missed nursing care and jeopardizing patient safety. Although extensive research has explored reasons why nurses leave the profession, far less is known about the factors that support their long-term commitment and retention until retirement. Hence, study aimed to identify the factors contributing to long-term retention of nurses in the profession, particularly those who stay until retirement. Methods: This qualitative study used semi-structured expert interviews with 22 nurses in Germany who had at least 30 years of work experience, aiming to explore the personal, organizational, and societal factors that have supported their continued engagement in the profession. A purposive sampling method was used to select participants from various care settings, including acute, long-term, and outpatient care. Data were audio- and video-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using content-structuring qualitative content analysis. Thematic categories were developed using a structured content analysis approach following Kuckartz, supported by both deductive and inductive coding via the MAXQDA software to identify key themes related to job retention. Results: The analysis revealed three overarching thematic categories: personal resources and motivations, organizational context and working conditions, and recognition and social value. The first category includes factors such as career choice motives, personal values, and generation-specific influences, all of which are significant contributors to long-term career commitment. The category organizational context and working conditions, including job satisfaction, work-time control, role clarity, and coping strategies, plays a pivotal role in retaining nurses. The third category encompassed the perceived value of nursing work in society, appreciation from patients and peers, and the professional identity fostered by meaningful recognition. Discussion: This study provides valuable insights into the factors that contribute to nurses' decisions to stay in the profession until retirement. While many studies emphasize the challenges and negative aspects of nursing that lead to attrition, this research highlights the positive factors that promote job retention. Addressing these factors, such as improving working conditions, ensuring adequate recognition, and supporting personal values and career motivations, could enhance nurse retention strategies. These findings underscore the importance of retention-focused strategies that enhance meaning in work, professional identity, and workplace culture—shifting the policy lens from attrition prevention to long-term engagement.



Articles (3)

Faith And Leadership: Why Business Leaders Need Purpose More Than Ever

Karl Moore, Forbes [see online](#)

The article explains that effective leadership today requires more than data—it demands meaning. It argues that in uncertain times, leaders must go beyond analytics and tap into purpose, belief, and faith to inspire teams. It defends Alister McGrath's view that human motivation is rooted in more than facts, and that corporate purpose must be lived, not just stated. It states that middle managers play a key role in making purpose real through daily dialogue, and that employee engagement grows when people feel connected to shared meaning. The article highlights the need for conversation over command, community over isolation, and openness over certainty. Ultimately, it argues that modern leadership is about holding paradoxes, listening deeply, and fostering purpose—not as luxury, but as necessity in today's volatile world.

The Missing Link Between Purpose and Performance

Rodolphe Durand; Pauline Asmar; Jean-Marc Laouchez, MitSloan Management Review [see online](#)

The article explains that while corporate purpose offers strategic direction and motivation beyond profit, it complicates managers' roles. Team leaders must translate broad purpose statements into daily actions, balancing long-term goals with short-term performance. This creates tension, but also opportunity. Through research with 57,000 employees across 469 companies, the study introduces purpose dialogue—ongoing conversations between leaders and teams about corporate purpose. It finds that when leaders engage in these dialogues, build strong relationships, and grant autonomy, employee commitment significantly increases, making purpose a powerful tool for organizational success.

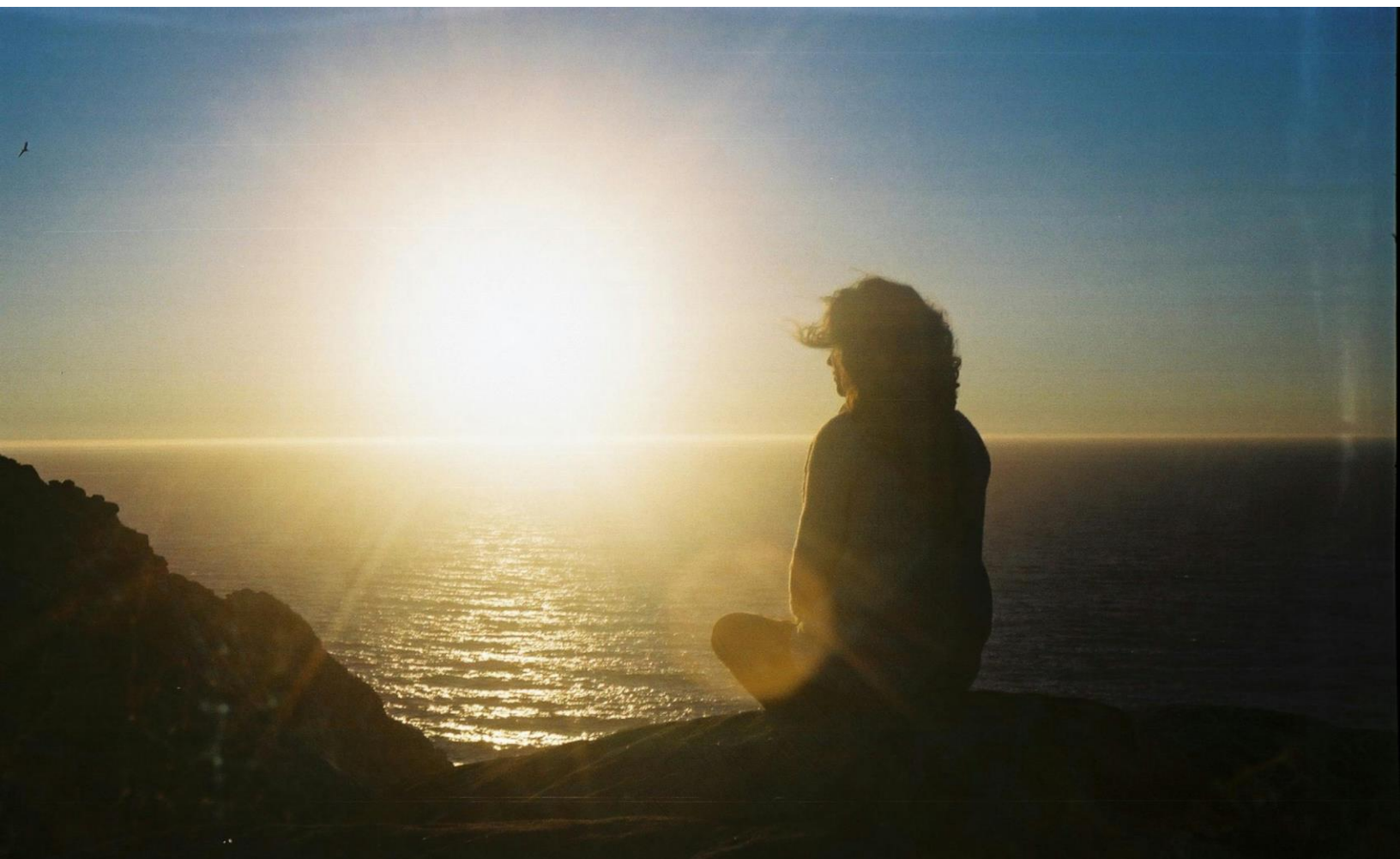


Collaboration: The Key To Making Your Purpose, Vision, And Values Come Alive

Michelle Herlein, Forbes [see online](#)

A company's purpose, vision, and values are only powerful when co-created, not imposed. Drawing on lessons from Built to Last and a case study at Barge Design Solutions, the article emphasizes that these cultural pillars must emerge from collaboration, not top-down decisions. When leadership teams are actively involved in shaping purpose and values, alignment and ownership grow. Purpose isn't just a statement—it's a process. Without inclusion, employees disconnect from the company's direction. True engagement comes from shared dialogue, not just declarations from the top. Without this process, even the best-intended mission statements can feel disconnected. Purpose is not a product—it's a process. When people help create it, they're more likely to believe in it, remember it, and lead through it.

“A purpose statement, a vision statement, and values are only powerful if they are intentionally and thoughtfully defined and articulated, which takes time, effort, and collaboration. When establishing the pillars of a company's culture, the process of engaging in conversation is just as important as the final product.”



Articles (1)

Why Profits Follow Purpose

Anish Shah, Harvard Business Review [see online](#)

The article discusses the importance of purpose in driving profit. With businesses spanning automobiles, finance, real estate, agriculture, hospitality, digital renewables, and more, Mahindra Group is one of India's largest and most prominent conglomerates. It employs over 260,000 people across more than one hundred countries. In this interview, Shah provides examples of Mahindra's positive impact on communities. He shares his thoughts on navigating the current political and business environment and maintaining Mahindra's mission-driven culture. He also explains how Mahindra is making a positive impact on communities, from educating children to empowering women to driving productivity in farming.



Mahindra

