

# ~~Work hard be happy~~ Work hard on being happy

*Happy workers are engaged workers: the role of inclusive leadership and  
person-group fit*

Radboud University, Nijmegen School of Management

Master Strategic Human Resources Leadership

Academic year 2023-2024

**Radboud University**



MAN-MTHHRA-2023-FM-JAAR-V

Inclusive Leadership

Date: June 17, 2024  
Student: Nathalie Elenbaas  
s1027754  
Supervisor: Dr. M.L. van Engen  
Second examiner: Dr. A. Ahmad  
Word count: 13.010

## **Abstract**

Inclusive leadership has received a lot of attention in the last couple of years, this positive leadership style has been linked to work engagement in several studies. However, the underlying aspects of this relationship remained unexplored. This cross-sectional quantitative research examines the role of happiness at work and person-group fit in the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement. It was expected that happiness at work mediated the relationship and that person-group fit moderated the relationship. The moderated mediation model was grounded using empirical theories and findings from earlier studies. In order to test the hypotheses, quantitative data of 183 respondents was collected. The results showed a positive relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement, partially mediated by happiness at work. Furthermore, the results showed a moderating effect of person-group fit on this relationship. Notable is that if person-group fit is split into two factors (supplementary & complementary fit) only complementary fit has a significant moderating effect. With these findings, this study contributed to the growing field of inclusive leadership research and further examined its relationship with work engagement. Furthermore, this study contributed to practical ways of creating engagement in new generations.

*Key words:* inclusive leadership, person-group fit, happiness at work, work engagement

## **Table of contents**

<b>Introduction</b> .....	4
<b>Theoretical Framework</b> .....	7
<b>The relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement</b> .....	7
<b>The mediating role of happiness at work</b> .....	9
<b>Methodology</b> .....	13
<b>Research design</b> .....	13
<b>Sample</b> .....	14
<b>Procedure</b> .....	15
<b>Measuring items</b> .....	16
<b>Results</b> .....	19
<b>Preliminary results</b> .....	19
<b>Regression analysis</b> .....	20
<b>Additional analysis</b> .....	23
<b>Discussion</b> .....	25
<b>Reference list</b> .....	31
<b>Appendices</b> .....	42

## Introduction

In today's work environment energetic, dedicated and fully engaged employees are needed, as the quality of human capital is crucial to the success of organizations (Lu et al., 2014). Work engagement is not only important to the organization, but also to the individual employee (Shuck et al., 2011), this is why this topic has gained much attention from organizational researchers. Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind, characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Shaufeli et al., 2002). Work engagement is by many scholars determined as a stimulus for organizational success and employee outcomes (Lai et al., 2020; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2010). Employees who feel emotionally connected to their organization work harder, stay longer, and motivate others to do the same. Furthermore, higher work engagement leads to customer loyalty, a better service climate, organizational commitment and extra role behaviour Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Salanova & Shaufeli, 2008; Salanova et al., 2005; Robertson & Cooper, 2011). Hence, boosting employee work engagement has become a primary concern for many organizations (Shuck et al., 2011).

Positive leadership styles have been linked to work engagement in several longitudinal studies (Biggs et al., 2014; Chughtai et al., 2014; Fletcher, 2016; Li & Liao, 2014; Mehmood et al., 2016). Cenkci et al. (2020) even described leadership as a vital driver to enhance work engagement, the researchers found that especially inclusive leadership has a strong influence on work engagement. Inclusive leaders lay a focus on good relationships with and between their followers, to create an environment in which employees can share their perspectives, experience psychological safety, and inspire creativity and innovation (Shore & Chung, 2021). Inclusive leaders create more diverse and creative workplaces where employees feel connected to and supportive of one another (Hollander, 2012; Javed et al., 2017). Inclusive leader's efforts are specifically focused on fostering group members' perceptions of both belonging and value for uniqueness as a group member (Randel et al., 2018, p. 192). Due to the advantages employees experience created by inclusive leadership, work engagement emerges. This is in line with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) which describes a reciprocal relation between two or more parties, due to positive interactions between the two. However, how the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement is formed, is not fully clear yet. Despite the importance of inclusive leadership in enhancing work engagement, few studies have examined what underlies this relationship (Bao et al., 2022).

Although studies of Zhou (2018) and Cenkci et al. (2020) explain how inclusive leadership impacts work engagement, an important potential mediator has remained unexplored. Ghadi et al. (2023) suggest that happiness at work (HAW) plays a crucial role in enhancing work engagement. Nowadays, people are more and more thinking about how we want to live our lives, instead of only focussing on what we do for a living, consequently, happiness in today's workplace is not an afterthought, but a driving force (Moss, 2023). This focus shift is also seen in the societal shift from financial survival towards quality of life (Moccia, 2016). Moccia (2016, p. 144) stated 'the new millennium goal is to be happy at work'. Unhappiness at work is not only a drain for the employee, but unhappiness also leads to more turnover, less performance and less efficiency (Blau & Boal, 1987). According to the broaden-and-build theory feelings of happiness at work will enhance work engagement (Brown & Leigh, 1996; Fredrickson, 2001). It is thus important that organizations enhance happiness at work. Inclusive leadership can create happiness, through leader-member exchange, which focusses on creating qualitative relationships that target belongingness and uniqueness within a group (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991). This indicates that the position of an individual within a group is also a key factor to consider.

This study furthermore explores employees' person-group fit (PG fit) in the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work. Astakhova (2016) argues that employees generally have a need to fit into their work environment and therefore seek jobs that match, cherish organizations that provide fit and leave environments that do not fit. Fit has a positive impact on well-being and reduces emotional exhaustion levels and psychological satisfaction due to the positive feelings that are created when they experience a match in needs, desires, preferences, and rewards (Lin et al., 2014). Following optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) it can be argued that person-group fit can be an important moderator in the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work. Inclusive leadership focusses on relationships with followers, especially by creating uniqueness as well as belongingness for individuals in a group, which leads to wellbeing and happiness (Volmer et al., 2012). This relationship is strengthened if there is a high person-group fit.

This study suggests that person-group fit as well as happiness at work, have an impact on the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement. A moderated mediation model is proposed, with happiness at work as the underlying mechanism in the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement, and person-group fit as the moderator of the underlying mechanism. This leads to the following research question:

*“To what extent is inclusive leadership related to work engagement mediated by happiness at work and is this relation moderated by person-group fit?”*

This study contributes to the existing literature in several ways. First, according to Inceoglu et al. (2018) research on relational forms of leadership and their outcomes is scarce. Inclusive leadership is a form of relational leadership that was only recently researched, which means it is a relatively new concept. This study adds to the existing literature, by providing more insight into the effects and outcomes of this leadership style (Inceoglu et al., 2018). Secondly, this study also unpacks the black box that is the influence of happiness at work as a mediator, this deepens our understanding of how the underlying mechanisms are related to each other. Further examination of happiness at work is important, as there is an increasing shift in what is important for employees at work (Moccia, 2016). For many organizations it is beneficial to know how they can capitalize on this shift and create happiness at work. Furthermore, Frey (2008) argues that happiness at work is overlooked by many scholars, resulting in Fisher (2010) calling for further research in this area. Furthermore, the importance of team context in the inclusive leadership process is addressed by several authors, but it is not adequately researched yet (Shore et al., 2022; Korkmaz et al., 2022). This study will take a first step in closing this gap in literature. Additionally, this study builds on recent work by Nijs et al. (in press), who found that person-team fit was even more effective than inclusive leadership in relation to autonomy, belongingness and competence. It is interesting to see if this study will support this mechanism by examining related, but different outcomes to determine which of these variables is most influential.

This study offers valuable practical insights for organizations, as this study can provide more insight into how to reach organizational success and positive employee outcomes. As work engagement is a critical driver for business success it is important to know how organizations can get employees to be more engaged in their work (Lai et al., 2020; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2010). This study examines how organizations can do this by introducing several ways to enhance work engagement.

# Theoretical Framework

## **The relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement**

The concept of work engagement was first introduced in the 1990's, human capital became more and more important for organizations because of the increase in knowledge work (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). Organizations needed their employees to put more psychological effort into their jobs, which resulted in a new approach for employee motivation: engagement (Kahn, 1990). Later on, scholars picked up the concept of work engagement and defined it as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind, characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption” (Shaufeli et al., 2002, p. 702). Vigor is characterized by having high levels of energy, willingness, and perseverance in dealing with workplace duties and difficulties. Dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. In other words, dedication refers to the knowledge, enthusiasm, and honour an individual has in the workplace. Absorption is characterized by having an emotionally stimulating preoccupation with work. Work engagement can achieve organizational success and positive employee outcomes. Shaufeli and Bakker (2010) found that engaged employees have higher levels of energy and dedication and have a strong focus on work. Furthermore, engaged employees are more attentive, connected and focused on their tasks as well as their performance (Lai et al., 2020).

Work engagement can be created by inclusive leadership (Cenkci et al., 2020). Inclusive leadership is defined as “the behaviour that ensures belongingness by supporting inclusion, preserving equity and sharing decision-making while preserving the followers’ uniqueness” (Randel et al., 2018). This type of leadership is seen as an extension of relational leadership and revolves around including employees more in the processes and decision making, instead of only giving orders (Shore et al., 2011; Carmeli et al., 2010). An inclusive leader tries to achieve inclusion, “the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the workgroup through experiencing treatments that satisfies his or her need for belongingness and uniqueness” (Shore et al., 2011, p. 1265). Korkmaz et al. (2022) described four dimensions of inclusive leadership, (1) fostering employees’ uniqueness, which focusses on supporting and empowering employees and promoting diversity (2) strengthening belongingness within a team, which involves building relationships, equality and shared decision making (3) showing appreciation, mainly for employees’ efforts and contributions and (4) supporting organizational efforts, which includes a focus on inclusion and being open to organizational changes.

The social exchange theory provides a framework explaining why inclusive leadership can enhance engagement (Saks, 2006; Erden, 2009). This theory states that every relationship consists of costs (negative elements) and rewards (positive elements) (Blau, 1964). These costs and rewards are formed through consecutive interactions between two or more parties (Mitchell et al., 2012; Cropanzano et al., 2017). Ghadi et al. (2013) state that the interactions between leader and follower cause obligations from one party to another. If one party provides a service, the other party feels obliged to show gratitude when the opportunity presents itself (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano et al., 2017). Inclusive leaders provide several positive elements in the relationship: they are accessible, listen to preferences and needs, create trust and promote better working conditions (Carmeli et al., 2010; Volmer et al., 2012; Tse et al., 2013). Due to these ‘rewards’, employees will reciprocate this by demonstrating positive work attitudes, such as work engagement (Li & Cropanzano, 2009). Work engagement is thus influenced by leadership style (Strom et al., 2014).

Inclusive leadership may, in comparison to other leadership styles, play a unique and strong role in fostering work engagement, because this type of leadership has a strong focus on meeting the uniqueness and belongingness needs of the employees, whereas other forms of leadership diverge in this regard (Rodriguez, 2018). According to Randel et al. (2018) this satisfaction of the employees’ needs of belongingness and uniqueness inspires them to fully engage in their work. Several studies found a positive relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement. For example, Aslan et al. (2021) found a strong positive relation between inclusive behaviour of a leader and how engaged employees were. They stated that inclusive leaders provide useful resources that motivate employees to contribute to their job role. Several other studies found the same positive effect between the two variables (Choi et al., 2015; Charlton & Eschleman, 2019; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Ly, 2023; Nguyen & Tsang, 2023; Bao et al., 2023; Vogel & Feldman, 2019).

Inclusive leaders provide their employees with positive interactions, activities and support, employees want to return this favour, by putting more effort into their work and going the extra mile. Hence, the expectation is that there is a direct relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement. This leads to the following hypothesis:

*H1: Inclusive leadership has a positive effect on work engagement*

While research found a direct effect between the two variables, some studies examined mediators that partially explained the effect of inclusive leadership on work engagement, for

example: organizational commitment, employee creativity, psychological safety and person-job fit (Choi et al., 2015; Charlton & Eschleman, 2019; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Ly, 2023; Nguyen & Tsang, 2023; Bao et al., 2023; Vogel & Feldman, 2009). In this study happiness at work will be examined as a mediator variable, this will be explained in the next paragraph.

### **The mediating role of happiness at work**

Happiness is a fundamental emotion to human experience (Diener & Diener, 1996). Happy people are more successful, have a greater memory and a greater overall well-being. Consequently, creating happiness should be a goal for organizations (Fisher, 2010). Happy employees experience higher levels of motivation and a stronger sense of well-being, whereas unhappy employees experience daily feelings of anxiety and frustration (Lyubimorsky et al., 2005). Happiness at work is described as an umbrella concept of positive moods, emotions, and attitudes towards three work-related concepts, the work itself, the job including contextual factors and the organization as a whole. Important indicators for happiness at work are (1) engagement, the cognitive involvement and enjoyment of the work, (2) job satisfaction, judgements about pay, co-workers, supervisors and the work environment and (3) affective commitment, the feelings of attachment, belonging and value to the organization. Kun and Gadanez (2022) defined the overall quality of the workplace as a key determinant of happiness. This quality is strongly influenced by the leader (Block, 2003; Wang et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2007). Inclusive leaders try to enhance this quality by creating qualitative relationships with and between their followers (Shore et al., 2011).

The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory helps to explain how inclusive leaders build strong relationships with their team members (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991). This theory is an extension of the social exchange theory, applied to leadership. The theory states that most effective leadership processes occur when leaders and followers can develop mature relationships, resulting in gaining access to the many benefits these relationships bring (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991). Inclusive leaders are accessible for their team members, ready to listen to concerns and deal with emergent issues in the workplace (Carmeli et al., 2010). With this behaviour they send clear signals to their team members that they care for their interests and give feelings of trust and safety (Carmeli et al., 2010). The formed relationships lead to trust, respect, mutual obligation, and partnership, which contribute to enhancing followers' well-being (Volmer et al., 2012; Tse et al., 2013). Inclusive leadership is focused on the creation of these kinds of qualitative relationships with their followers, which leads to wellbeing and eventually happiness (Volmer et al., 2012). Based on the existing literature it is expected that

inclusive leadership has a positive influence on happiness at work, which leads to the following hypothesis:

*H2: Inclusive leadership has a positive effect on happiness at work*

Ouweneel et al. (2012) state that a specific state of happiness can create engagement. This is because feelings of happiness can lead to broadened thinking, which results in absorption, dedication and vigor, which are determinants of work engagement (Brown & Leigh, 1996). The broaden-and-build theory states that positive emotions, like happiness, can broaden people's thinking (Fredrickson, 2001). Brown and Leigh (1996) argue that this broadened thinking enhances extensive exploration of relevant information in the work environment and the amount of effort put into one's work activities, which is an important aspect of work engagement.

This is in line with the findings of Ghadi (2023), which suggest that happiness at work plays a crucial role in enhancing work engagement. They found that happy employees find their organization more enjoyable, leading to higher levels of engagement. This finding is associated with earlier research that also found a positive relation between happiness and engagement (Reijseger et al., 2017; Rodríguez Muñoz et al., 2014). DeStasio et al. (2019) found that feelings of happiness lead to positive emotions and positive work outcomes, such as work engagement. This leads to the third hypothesis:

*H3: Happiness at work has a positive influence on work engagement*

Inclusive leadership can enhance feelings of fit and belongingness, which create happiness (Shore et al., 2011). Jha et al. (2023) also found that inclusive leadership had a positive effect on happiness at work, mediated by an inclusive climate. Bakker et al. (2014) found that happiness created work engagement. Happiness at work thus plays a crucial part in the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement. The relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement is mediated by happiness at work, explained through the leader member exchange theory and broaden-and-build theory. This leads to the following hypothesis:

*H4: Happiness at work mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement*

### **The moderating role of person-group fit**

The fit an employee has with their work group is a meaningful reference point for organizations, as this fit is related to satisfaction, commitment and performance (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Shin & Choi, 2010; Werbel & Gililand, 1999). Person-group fit (PG fit) is defined as “the compatibility between individuals and their work groups” (Kristof, 1996., p. 7). This fit can enhance compliance with important group norms and help promote group performance, coworkers who experience fit are more likely to give and receive valuable resources from coworkers (Feldman, 1984; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Person-group fit exists when there is interpersonal congruence between an individual and other members of their workgroup or team (Judge & Ferris, 1992; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Werbel & Gilliland, 1999). For congruence to exist there needs to be comparison between the goals, values and personality traits of the team (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Adkins et al, 1996). This congruence is split into (1) complementary fit, the need to be unique in a team and (2) supplementary fit, the need to fit into the team.

The optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT) describes that individuals strive to achieve the best balance between belongingness (similarity) and uniqueness (distinctiveness) when managing their relationship (Brewer, 1991). This theory explains relationships between individuals and their team members and how individuals try to conform with the group without losing their own uniqueness and values (Leonardelli et al., 2010). If individuals feel too assimilated (lacking distinctiveness) they may experience feelings of identity loss, but when individuals feel too unique (no similarities), they may experience feelings of loneliness and alienation. The distinctive characteristics of inclusive leadership are ensuring belongingness, while still preserving uniqueness in the work group, which fulfils vital human needs (Randel et al., 2018). Inclusive leaders do this by providing special attention, engaging in open communication, and promoting openness and uniqueness of employees in the organizational environment (Simons et al., 2015). Inclusive leaders facilitate a sense of belonging without requiring individuals to sacrifice their unique identities. Individuals that feel that they belong to their workgroup while also maintaining their unique identities, are more likely to experience happiness and fulfilment (Volmer et al., 2012).

If employees experience a high level of person-group fit, they experience a balance between supplementary fit and complementary fit, meaning they feel strong relations with their group, but also feel like a unique member of the group (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This study expects that person-group fit strengthens the relationship between inclusive leadership and

happiness at work. Inclusive leaders focus on strengthening belongingness in a group (building relationships), while still preserving the uniqueness of an individual employee (promoting diversity) (Randel et al., 2018). This connects to the attributes of person-group fit. Therefore, this study assumes that person-group fit and inclusive leadership will strengthen each other. When there is high person-group fit, and there is an inclusive leader that shows they want to further support this, by providing special attention, engaging in open communication, strengthening relationships, and valuing uniqueness, happiness will increase (Shore et al., 2011; Volmer et al., 2012). Consequently, if person-group fit is low, there is low supplementary fit as well as low complementary fit or a disbalance between these two. In this case, even if a leader shows inclusive behaviour and intentions, the potential positive effects of inclusive leadership on happiness at work will be dampened.

The moderating effect of person-group fit has previously been demonstrated in several studies. For example, Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) found that person-group fit moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee motivation and effort. Fit with a group created a stronger positive relationship between transformational leadership and motivation, as this kind of fit ensured that goals and values were aligned, which made it easier for the leaders to motivate their followers. Charlton and Eschleman (2019) only found a small moderating effect of person-group fit on the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour. Vogel and Feldman (2009) found that the fit an employee has with its group moderated the relationship between person-job fit and in-role performance, citizenship behaviours and job satisfaction. The higher the fit the stronger the relationship became. Nijs et al. (in press) studied the moderating effects of supplementary fit and complementary fit in the relationship between inclusive leadership and satisfaction of the need for autonomy, belongingness, and competence. They found that complementary fit as well as supplementary fit can moderate this relationship and even found that only one of these fits is necessary to moderate the relationship. In this study the fits will not be split up, but person group-fit as a whole will be used. Thus, when person-group fit is high, the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work will be enhanced. If person-group fit is low, the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work will be weakened or even reversed.

Concluding, person-group fit is used as a moderator in the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work, because the extent to which inclusive leadership

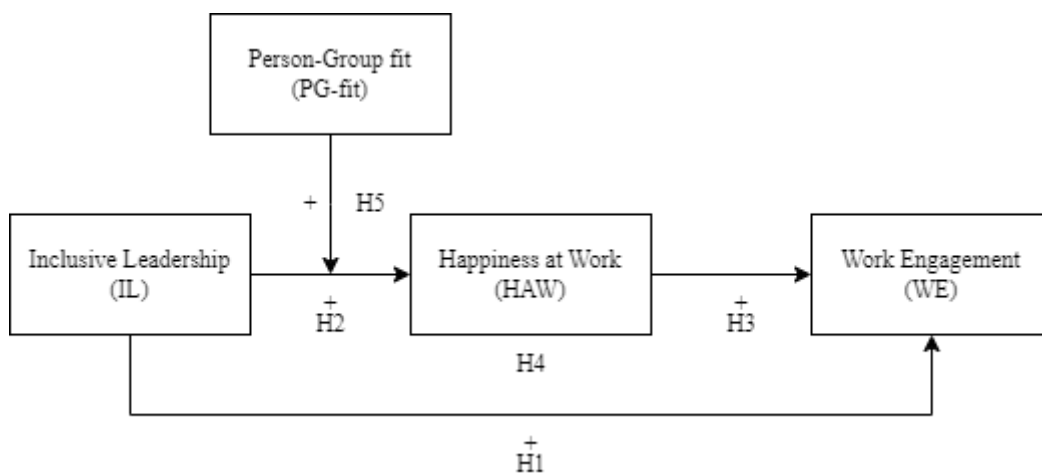
and happiness at work are related depends on the level of person-group fit. This leads to the following hypothesis:

*H5: Person-group fit moderates the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work such that the direct relationship is strong in the presence of person-group fit and vice versa.*

The conceptual model shows the discussed relationships, the model of moderated mediation is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual model*



Note: own work

## Methodology

### Research design

This study aims to examine a conceptual model of moderated mediation, in which the assumption is that inclusive leadership (X) has an effect on work engagement (Y) and this effect is mediated by happiness at work (M) and the relationship of inclusive leadership and happiness at work is moderated by person-group fit (W). The aim of this research is to further examine the relationships between the variables in the model. This is why this study is going to be quantitative (Hair et al., 2018). Quantitative survey research can provide valuable insights to reality and materialized discourses and can mitigate personal bias (Savela, 2018). The data used to test the hypotheses, were collected at one point in time, through an online survey, which makes this a cross-sectional study (Levin, 2006). Online surveys can potentially reach a larger

sample size that can span multiple geographic areas and reach a diverse and scattered sample of respondents (Mellinger, 2015). Moreover, an online questionnaire has advantages like minimal costs and fast response times, however as a researcher, you have to be aware of confidentiality concerns and technical problems (Dillman et al., 2014). Mellinger (2015) also states that surveys should be short, focused, easy to read and complete, if the survey lacks these attributes, response rates will be lower and this will cause decreased reliability.

### **Sample**

The participants of this research were individual employees of various organizations in the Netherlands. The participants needed to have a paid job, could not be self-employed, and needed to work in a team with a direct manager. This was necessary for the measuring of the independent variable as employees had to evaluate their leader on inclusive leadership. As well as for the moderator variable as the participants had to determine how well they fitted in their workgroup or team.

A power analysis was conducted using G\*Power (G\*Power 3.1) to determine a sample size with sufficient statistical power (Hair et al., 2018). For a small effect size ( $f=.20$ ) a sample of at least 199 participants was needed ( $\alpha = .05$ ,  $df = 1$ ) to reach a Power of .80. The dataset consisted of 508 respondents before the data cleaning process. However, this number consisted of test rounds, respondents who did not complete the questionnaire, did not meet the requirements to participate (not having a supervisor) or did not agree with the informed consent. We deleted all respondents who completed less than 80% of the questionnaire. After data cleaning, 356 valid responses remained, from which 183 responses were useful in this research. The actual sample consisted of 183 participants, born between 1958 and 2004 ( $M= 1989,45$ ;  $SD= 13.425$ ). 35% of the sample identified themselves as male and 65% as female. Furthermore, the sample consisted of 8.7% who finished high school, 17.5% finished vocational education, 50.8% of the participants finished higher vocational education, 21.9% finished a university degree, 1.1% finished a PhD. Of the sample 24.6% worked a maximum of 20 hours a week, another 69.9% worked 20 to 40 hours a week and 5.5% of the sample worked more than 40 hours per week. The average tenure of the sample was 6.24 years ( $SD = 8.66$ ).

The participants were collected using a convenience sample, which means that the participants were selected based on practical considerations (Etikan et al., 2016), also snowball sampling and self-selection sampling were used. The participants were collected by five students in the thesis circle inclusive leadership. The five researchers asked their social circle to fill in the questionnaire. This allowed the researchers to gather different participants, the

respondents were employees from different organizations from various regions in the Netherlands. This therefore stimulated source triangulation, where diverse individuals with varying roles in different organizations are surveyed through a questionnaire about the same phenomenon (Bleijenbergh, 2016). Various perspectives were collected, enhancing the validity of this research.

## **Procedure**

First of all, the questionnaire used for this research was set up by five master students in collaboration with their supervisor. The questionnaire consisted of several topics researched by the students. In this methods section, only the topics relevant to this study are described.

The questionnaire was developed using the online program Qualtrics (Qualtrics XM), resulting in an online questionnaire, which was available online from 18 April to 1 May. The questionnaire was distributed through the following online channels: WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Radboud University Sona Systems. At first, the questionnaire was distributed within the social network of the researchers (convenience sampling), but the questionnaire was also forwarded by respondents to their own social networks (snowball sampling). This sampling method has the limitation that the sample often will not be representative, resulting in selection bias and lower internal validity (Valdez & Kaplan, 1998), however the convenience and snowball sampling was divided among five different researchers all from different parts of the Netherlands and also from different socioeconomic classes. With this, the sample is expected to remain representative of the Dutch population. Finally, a self-selection sample was used, as the questionnaire was posted on Radboud University's research site (Radboud Research Participation System). Students could choose for themselves if the research appealed to them and if they wanted to participate in the study.

Before participating, respondents were provided with an informed consent form that they needed to sign before continuing (Appendix A). In this form the study was explained shortly, and information was given about the processing of the data. It was addressed that the data would be kept confidential and anonymous during the analysis, and the data would be stored in the Radboud University's secure environment (Research Information Service, RIS) for ten years. It was explained that participants could stop with the survey at any moment, if they wanted to. The email address of one of the researchers was shown in case the respondents had questions about the research afterwards. In addition, it was told that participation in this study was completely anonymous, ensuring that the participants were aware of their rights and privacy. As a result, the data obtained were acceptable for the further analyses. Informed

consent is an ethical and legal requirement for research with human participants. The goal is to provide sufficient information about the study so that participants can make a voluntary decision regarding if they want to participate or not.

After participants agreed to the terms, they could choose the language in which they wanted to complete the questionnaire, Dutch or English. Subsequently, the questionnaire started with personal demographic questions about gender, age, and educational level. Next, general questions about work were asked, for example how many hours respondents worked, in what sector and how long they have worked at their current organization. Also, the participants were asked if they had a manager. If the participant did not have a manager, the questionnaire ended. If the participants did have a manager, questions were asked about the frequency of contact with their manager. Simultaneously, these items were used as control variables because they may have an impact on the outcome (Ogbonnaya, 2019). Next, questions were asked about the concepts that needed to be measured in the conceptual model: inclusive leadership, happiness at work, work engagement and person-group fit. The concepts were all measured by Likert scales. Likert-type scales can be used in a wide range of applications to measure latent constructs that indicate attitudes, knowledge, perceptions, and values (Vogt & Johnson, 1993). Additionally, the concepts of the other researchers were measured in the questionnaire. After measuring the concepts, the participants were thanked for their involvement. At the ending stage of the questionnaire there was a comment section for feedback or asking questions.

### **Measuring items**

The four concepts in the conceptual model were measured by scales, operationalized in different items. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 meaning ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 meaning ‘strongly agree’. Furthermore, control variables were inserted in the questionnaire. The used items were translated into Dutch or English if needed, as the questionnaire was distributed in Dutch as well as English. Translations were made using the translation program DeepL, subsequently, the items were then translated back to the original language of the scale, to examine translation adequacy. To measure scale validity a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used (Straits & Singleton, 2017). To determine the constructs and the number of factors, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criterion was used, this needed to exceed  $>0.5$  (Kaiser, 1974). Furthermore, the Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was used, and needed to be significant ( $p < .05$ ). To determine the number of factors the Eigenvalues ( $>1$ ) and a scree-plot was used (Field, 2018). Furthermore, a reliability analysis was

conducted, by calculating the Cronbach's alpha, which ideally needed to be .80 or higher (Hair et al., 2018). Items in the scale were deleted if 'Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted' increased the Cronbach's Alpha by .05.

*Inclusive leadership.* Inclusive leadership was measured by a scale of 34 items based on the framework of Korkmaz et al. (2022). The items cover the four dimensions of their framework (1) fostering employee's uniqueness, (2) strengthening belongingness within a team, (3) showing appreciation and (4) showing organizational effort. An item used for example is '*My manager encourages team members to build closer connections with one another*'. A factor analysis was conducted with multiple iterations, in which 14 items were deleted, the deleted items are presented in bold in appendix A. This means there were 20 items used in total for this variable. The items in the factor analysis showed a KMO value of .908 and Bartlett's test of sphericity of <.001. The communalities ranged from .470 to .755, which is above the minimum loading of 0.2 (Hair et al., 2018). The factor analysis showed five factors explaining 72.51% of the variance, also five factors were shown in the screeplot. The eigenvalue was 1.079. Next, a reliability analysis was conducted, this scale had a Cronbach's alpha of .928, there was thus strong internal consistency ( $M= 3.76$ ,  $SD= .673$ ).

*Work engagement.* Work engagement was measured using the shortened UWES scale (Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004b), this scale includes the three constituting aspects of work engagement: vigor, dedication and absorption. An item measuring vigor was '*At my work, I feel bursting with energy*'. An item measuring dedication was '*My job inspires me*'. And an item measuring absorption was '*I am immersed in my work*'. A factor analysis was conducted, one factor was found, explaining 50.12 % of the variance, no items needed to be deleted. The items in the factor analysis showed a KMO value of .884 and Bartlett's test of sphericity <.001. The communalities ranged from .298 to .668. Next, a reliability analysis was conducted, showing a Cronbach's alpha of .896, which indicates strong internal consistency ( $M = 3.715$ ,  $SD = .692$ ).

*Happiness at work.* Happiness at work was measured by a shortened happiness at work scale, based on a scale created by Fisher (2010). The shortened scale was developed by Sallas-Vallinas and Allegré (2018), three items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree, the other three items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) extremely dissatisfied to (5) extremely satisfied. Items used were for example '*I am enthusiastic about my job*' and '*How satisfied are you with the nature of the work you perform.*' A factor analysis was conducted, one factor was found that explained 50.12 % of the variance, no items needed to be deleted. The items in the factor

analysis showed a KMO value of .785 and Bartlett's test of sphericity  $<.001$ . The communalities ranged from .399 to .726. The reliability analysis showed a Cronbach's alpha of .857, indicating good internal validity ( $M= 3.555, SD = .723$ ).

Person-group fit. Person-group fit was measured using the Multidimensional Perceived Person-Group Fit scale (Li et al., 2018). Items used were for example, '*My group members are similar to me in terms of values*' (similarity/belongingness) and '*I contribute unique talents to my group*' (distinctiveness/uniqueness). A factor analysis was conducted, two factors were found that together explained 60.3% of the variance, no items needed to be deleted. However, in this research we conducted one scale for person-group fit. The items in the factor analysis showed a KMO value of .822 and Bartlett's test of sphericity  $<.001$ . The communalities ranged from .635 to .852. The reliability analysis showed a Cronbach's alpha of .821, indicating good internal validity ( $M= 3.776, SD = .723$ ).

*Control variables.* The control variables used in this research were: *gender, age, education tenure, the frequency of contact with the supervisor and the number of hours worked per week*. First of all, gender, age and tenure have been indicated as affect perceptions of organizational performance in several empirical studies (Choi & Rainey, 2010). Furthermore, Suan and Nasurdin (2016) found that gender influences work engagement as well as supervisor support. Gender was measured using the question 'I identify as...' with the following options (1) male, (2) female, (3) non-binary, (4) other. Bernerth et al. (2017) state that age is an important variable in leadership studies. Kearney (2008) stated that some leadership styles, for example transactional leadership, is more appropriate for young people, as transformational leadership is more suited for older people. Additionally, age also influences work engagement, older people are more engaged than younger people (James et al., 2011). Age was measured by the year of birth of the respondents, an open question was used wherein the respondents could insert their birthyear. Ng and Feldman (2010) state that age and education influence job performance. Coetzee and Rothmann (2005) state that education also influences work engagement, higher educated employees are more likely to be engaged workers. Education was measured using the question '*What is your highest completed education?*' with the following options (1) *primary school*, (2) *secondary school*, (3) *vocational education*, (4) *higher vocational education, bachelor*, (5) *master*, (6) *PhD*. Moreover, the number of working hours also has a positive effect on work engagement (Simpson, 2009). The amount of hours worked per week was measured using an open question '*How many hours do you work per week?*' Tenure may have an effect on person-

group fit and inclusive leadership, as tenure increases, relationships will be stronger as the people and the environment become more and more similar (Ostroff & Rothausen, 1997). Tenure was measured using the following question: '*How long have you been employed at your current organization (in years)?*' Additionally, the frequency of contact with the supervisor was measured with the question '*How often do you have contact with your supervisor?*' Using the following options (1) *daily*, (2) *weekly*, (3) *monthly* and (4) *less than monthly*.

## Results

### Preliminary results

The means ( $M$ ), standard deviations ( $SD$ ) and Pearson correlations ( $r$ ) of the four variables and the six control variables used in this study are shown in Table 1. All the variables included in the conceptual model correlate significantly with each other. There were a few control variables found that correlate significantly with variables in the conceptual model.

First of all, contact with the supervisor correlated with inclusive leadership, which indicates that the frequency of contact with the manager has an influence, indicating that if the contact with the manager is less than monthly, they will perceive their manager as less inclusive ( $r = -.198, p < .05$ ). Also, gender and education correlated with person group fit, this indicates that gender ( $r = -.181, p < .05$ ) and education ( $r = .156, p < .05$ ) influence perceived person-group fit. This indicates that women have a lower perceived person-group fit than men. The correlation of education with person-group fit indicates that the higher the education, the higher the person-group fit a respondent perceives.

For categorical variables with more than two categories, education and contact with the manager, MANOVA testing was used, using Bonferroni's post-hoc test. This was done to explore the statistical differences between the categories of the variables (Tabacnick & Fidell, 2012). The MANOVA showed no differences between the categories of the variables on educational level ( $F = 2.055, p = .089$ ). The multivariate test for contact with the manager was significant for the category 'less than monthly' ( $F = 2.868, p = .038$ ), this means that this category differs significantly from the other categories in the variable. Therefore, two dummy variables were created, one dummy variable with the categories 'daily', 'weekly' and 'monthly' and another dummy variable with the category 'less than monthly'. These dummy variables were used in the analyses.

An examination of the data revealed that most of the variables showed negative skewness, indicating deviations from a normal distribution (Hopkins & Weeks, 1990). Inclusive leadership showed a moderate negative skew (-.659), as well as work engagement (-.557). Person-group fit also showed moderate negative skew (-.644). Lastly, happiness at work showed a weak negative skew (-.474).

**Table 1**

*Descriptive statistics and correlations*

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Inclusive leadership	3,796	,673									
Work engagement	3,715	,692	<b>,426**</b>								
PG-fit	3,776	,593	<b>,340**</b>	<b>,487**</b>							
HAW	3,555	,723	<b>,454**</b>	<b>,844*</b>	<b>,526**</b>						
<i>Control variables</i>											
Birthyear	1989,45	13,425	-0,42	-,038	,011	-,061					
Gender	1,66	,488	,069	-,098	<b>-,181*</b>	-,104	,022				
Education	3,89	,883	,076	-,011	<b>,156*</b>	,023	,007	,091			
Contact	1,94	,853	<b>-,198*</b>	,026	-,080	,038	-,145	,108	,108		
Tenure	6,243	8,664	-,027	-,082	-,055	-,042	-,059	,018	,018	-,019	
Hours per week	29,000	11,672	0,097	,050	,059	,127	<b>-,168*</b>	,035	,026	,060	-,015

\*\* p < 0.01 level (2-tailed); \* p < .05; N = 183

**Regression analysis**

The SPSS add-on macro PROCESS, designed by Andrew Hayes, was used to test the hypotheses in this study (Hayes, 2013). Model 4, for mediation analysis, was used to test the first three hypotheses. Additionally, model 1 was used to test the moderation of person group fit in the model. Lastly, model 7 was used to test for moderated mediation. The control variables that correlated significantly with variables used in the model were included in the analysis, control variables that only correlated significantly with other control variables were excluded from the analysis. This means that contact, gender and education were included in the analysis. The results of the hypotheses testing are presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

*Hypothesis 1.* The first hypothesis stated that inclusive leadership has a positive effect on work engagement. The second model in table 2 presents the main effects of the independent variables and control variables on the dependent variable ( $F(5, 177) = 94.3886, p < .001, r^2 = .7198$ ). The analysis showed that there is a significant effect of inclusive leadership on work engagement ( $b = .0764, t(177) = 1.3677, p < .001$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is confirmed.

*Hypothesis 2.* The second hypothesis stated that inclusive leadership had a positive effect on happiness at work. The first model in Table 2 presents the main effects of the independent variables on the mediator ( $F(4, 177) = 8.4561, p < .001, r^2 = .2249$ ). The analysis showed that there is a significant effect between inclusive leadership and happiness at work ( $b = .5120, t(177) = 5.6849, p < .001$ ). Therefore, the second hypothesis is confirmed.

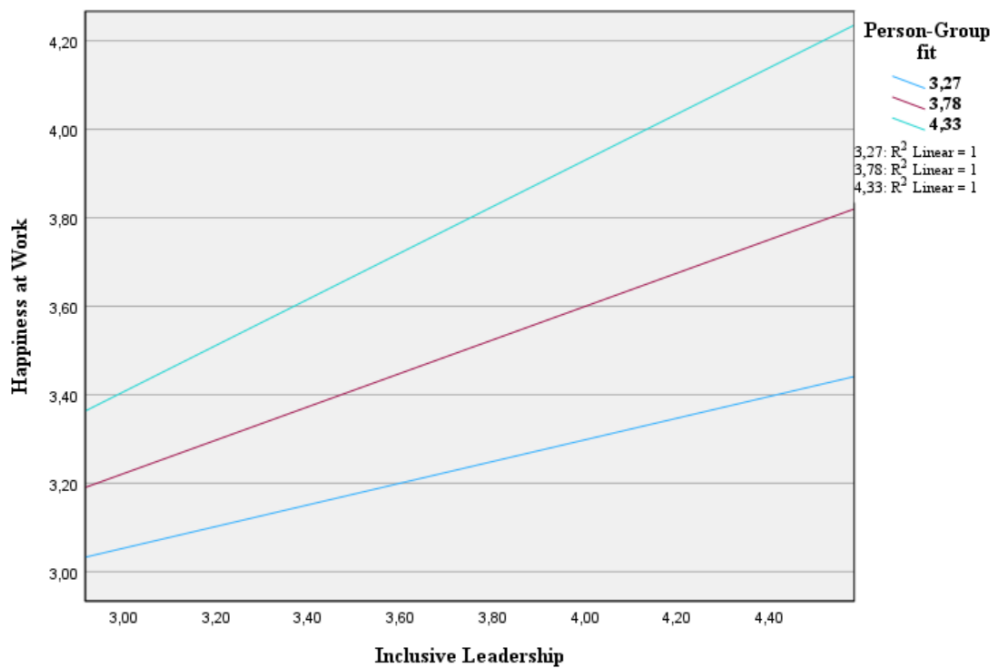
*Hypothesis 3.* The third hypothesis stated that happiness at work has a positive effect on work engagement ( $F(4, 177) = 8.4561, p < .001, r^2 = .2249$ ). The analysis shows a significant effect of happiness at work on work engagement ( $b = .7770, t(177) = 1.3677, p < .001$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 3 is confirmed.

*Hypothesis 4.* The fourth hypothesis stated that happiness at work mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement. To speak of mediation, the criteria that Baron and Kenny (1986) have set for mediation must be met. The first criterion is that the total effect (path c) is significant, this criterion was met ( $b=.4743, t(178)= 5.3794, p < .001$ ). The second and third criteria stated that path a and path b need to be significant, these two criteria were also met, as shown in Table 2. The fourth criterion of Baron and Kenny is that the direct effect (path c') is not significant after adding the mediator, or decreases in the case of partial mediation ( $b = .3349, t(178)=3.553, p < .001$ ). Based on the criteria of Baron and Kenny, there is mediation. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is accepted. However, the relationship is only partially mediated, as it does not make the c' path zero.

*Hypothesis 5.* The fifth hypothesis stated that person-group fit moderates the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work such that the direct relationship is strong in the presence of person-group fit and vice versa. The analysis showed that there is a significant effect of the interaction term on happiness at work ( $b = -.2621; t(176)= -.3272, p = .0015$ ). Therefore, the fifth hypothesis was accepted. Figure 2 describes the moderating effect of person-group fit on the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work.

## **Figure 2**

*Moderation effect of PG fit on the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work*



The conceptual model stated that the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement is mediated by happiness at work and moderated by person-group fit. The analysis shows that there is moderated mediation present in the model ( $b = .2037$ ;  $LLCI = .0385$ ,  $ULCI = .3974$ ). Therefore, moderated mediation was confirmed.

**Table 2**

*Regression analysis – hypotheses testing*

Antecedent	Coeff.	t	p	95% CI	R <sup>2</sup>
<b>Mediation – model 4</b>					
<b>Model 1:</b> F(4. 178)=8.4561***					.225
Main effect on mediator:					
Constant	2.108	5.228	<.001	[1.312, 2.903]	
Inclusive leadership	.512	5.685	<.001	[.334, .689]	
Gender	-.003	-1.853	.066	[-.370, -.012]	
Education	-.003	-.046	.964	[-.121, .116]	
Freq. of contact with manager	-.203	-1.139	.257	[-.554, .149]	
<b>Model 2</b>					
F(5. 177)= 94.3886***					.720
Main effect on dependent variable					
Constant	.968	3.695	.0003	[-.451, 1.485]	

Inclusive leadership	.335	3.553	<.001	[-.034, .187]
Happiness at Work	.777	18.816	<.001	[.696, .859]
Gender	-.017	-.275	.403	[-.137, .104]
Education	-.030	-.838	.403	[-.100, .041]
Freq. of contact with manager	-.026	-.760	.448	[-.094, .042]
<hr/>				
Total, direct and indirect effects				
Total direct effect of X on Y	.474	5.379	<.001	[.300, .649]
Direct effect of X on Y	.076	1.368	.173	[-.034, .187]
Unconditional indirect effects	.387			[.279, .487]
<hr/>				
<b>Model 7 Interaction term</b>				
F(6, 176)= 20.233***				.408
Constant	4.23	3.567	.0005	[1.892, 6.577]
Inclusive leadership	-.613	-2.032	.046	[-1.207, -.017]
Person-Group fit	-.454	-1.337	.183	[1.123, .216]
Inclusive leadership* PG-fit	.262	-.327	.0015	[.101, .423]
Gender	-.029	-.327	.748	[-.207, .148]
Education	-.044	-.808	.420	[-.527, .071]
Freq. of contact with manager	-.228	-1.369	.173	[-.556, .100]
<hr/>				
<b>Boot indirect effect</b>	<b>Coeff.</b>	<b>Boot SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	
	<b>(b)</b>			
3.2711	.190	.075	[.039, .335]	
3.7778	.294	.067	[.163, .426]	
4.3333	.467	.086	[.238, .578]	
<hr/>				
	<b>Index</b>	<b>Boot SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	
<b>Ind. of moderated mediation</b>	.204	.083	[.039, .397]	

Note:  $N=183$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

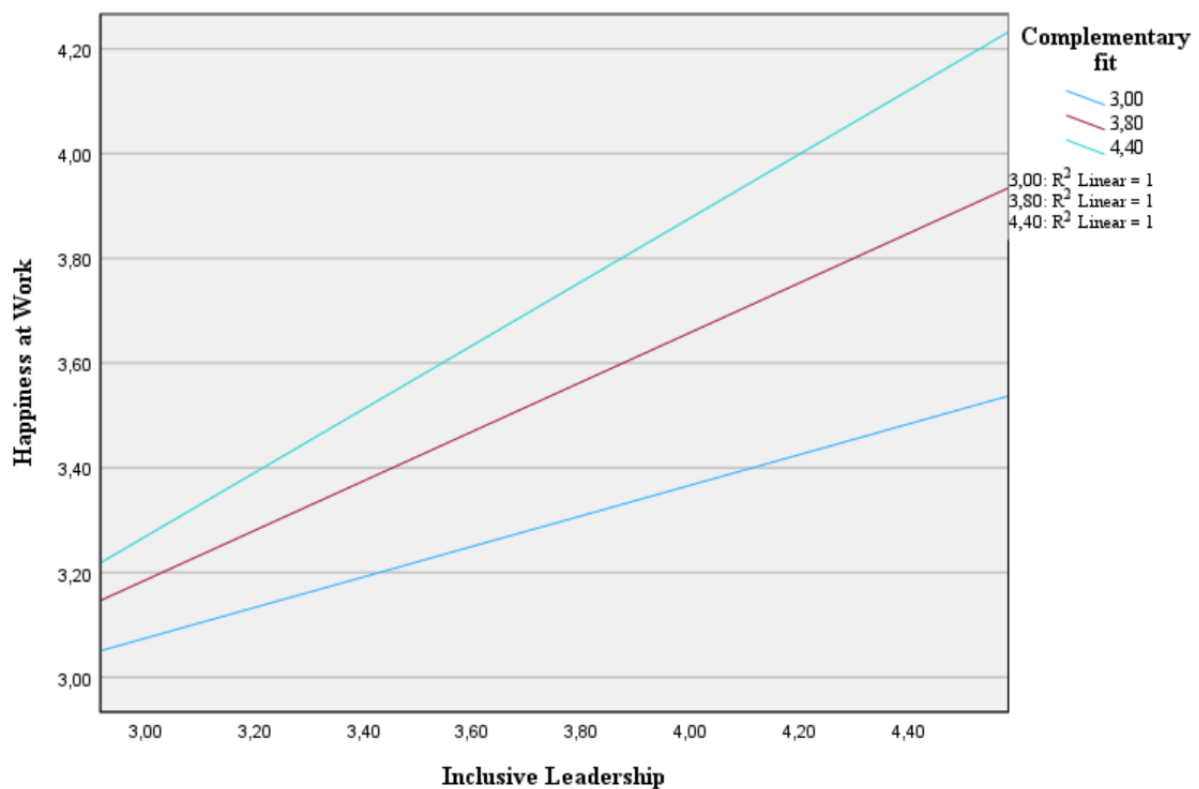
### Additional analysis

In the factor analysis, two factors were found for person-group fit, in the previous analysis these two factors were not further analyzed. In this additional analysis, a distinction will be made between the two factors of person-group fit, namely supplementary fit and complementary fit. Two extra moderation analyses were done to find differences between the effects of the two fits. The analysis showed that there is a difference in the significance of the interaction term when splitting person-group fit into the two factors, as seen in Table 3.

Looking at supplementary fit, it is seen that the interaction term, and thus the moderating function of person-group fit is not significant ( $b = .1510, t(176) = 1.5829, p = .1152$ ). Looking at complementary fit, it is seen that the interaction term is significant ( $b = .2260, t(176) = 2.7317, p < .05$ ). This indicates that the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work is strengthened if there is high complementary fit. The moderating effect is shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**

*Moderation effect of complementary fit on the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work*



**Table 3**

*Distinction in person-group fit*

<b>Moderation - model 1</b>							
<b>Model summary</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Model summary</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
	.367	14.753	.000		.342	15.633	.000
<b>Predictor variable</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Predictor variable</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Inclusive leadership	-.202	2.455	.573	Inclusive leadership	-.386	-1.178	.240
Supplementary fit	-.153	-.401	.689	Complementary fit	-.539	-1.580	.116
Inl. leadership * PG fit	.151	1.583	.115	Inl. leadership * PG fit	.226	2.732	.007
Gender	-.112	-1.244	.215	Gender	-.059	-.624	.533
Education	-.036	-.660	.511	Education	-.029	-.494	.622
Contact	-.315	-1.780	.077	Contact	-.152	-.943	.347

N=183

Furthermore, the study of Nijs et al. (in press) found that person-group fit was more effective than inclusive leadership in relation to autonomy, belongingness, and competence. In their study they found there is only a strengthening relationship between the two variables, if person-group fit is low. When there is high person-group fit, there is a weakened relationship if inclusive leadership is high. In this additional analysis it was tested if this is also the case in terms of happiness at work and work engagement. In hypothesis 5 and in the additional analysis it was shown that there is a strengthening relationship when there is high PG fit and when there is high complementary fit. Indicating that the results of this analysis are not in line with the results found in the study of Nijs et al. (in press).

## **Discussion**

This study examined the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement, investigating what role person-group fit and happiness at work play in this relationship. The data of 183 respondents was analyzed in order to answer the following research question: “*To what extent is inclusive leadership related to work engagement mediated by happiness at work and is this relation moderated by person-group fit?*” Support was found for the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement. This relationship is partially mediated by happiness at work and moderated by person-group fit, complementary fit in particular.

According to the social exchange theory, cost and rewards in a relationship need to be equal. Which means that if someone puts in a lot of rewards, or positive actions, these actions need to be reciprocated to keep the relationship balanced. Inclusive leaders put in a lot of

positive actions and activities in their leadership style. Employees feel the need to reciprocate this by working harder, resulting in them being more engaged. The results of this research indicate that inclusive leadership enhances how engaged employees are at work. These results align with the theoretical framework. Inclusive leaders provide accessibility, listen to preferences and needs of employees, create trust and promote better working conditions (Carmeli et al., 2010). Employees will reciprocate these rewards by positive work attitudes (Li & Cropanzano, 2009). This also aligns with results found in earlier research, for example by Cenkci et al. (2020).

Furthermore, the leader-member exchange theory explains how qualitative relationships are created between leader and follower. These relationships lead to the well-being and happiness of the employee (Volmer et al., 2012). Subsequently, the broaden-and-build theory explains that being happy, leads to broadened thinking. This state of mind then leads to a higher amount of effort put into one's work activities, meaning work engagement will be higher. The results of this research show that inclusive leadership leads to happiness at work and that happiness at work creates work engagement. In addition, the results show that happiness at work partially mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement. Meaning that happiness at work is an important indicator of the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement.

The optimal distinctiveness theory describes that individuals strive for a balance between belongingness and uniqueness in groups. In their team, employees want to be part of the group, without losing their own uniqueness and values. One of the distinctive characteristics of inclusive leadership is creating relationships within the group, while also maintaining diversity of individual members. This is why the theory expects that these two concepts will strengthen each other. This research found that there is a moderating effect of person-group fit on the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work. This finding is in line with the theoretical framework, as it was expected that if there was high person group fit as well as high inclusive leadership these two will strengthen each other and increase happiness at work. This is also in line with earlier findings from Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) and Charlton and Eschleman (2019).

This study furthermore examined the distinction between complementary fit and supplementary fit in person-group fit as a moderator in an additional analysis. In the study of De Cooman et al. (2016) it was stated that only one of the perspectives of person-group fit needed to be achieved in order to moderate the relationship. As two different factors were

found after conducting the factor analysis, these two concepts were measured separately in the additional analysis. The results show that complementary fit has a strengthening effect on the relationship between inclusive leadership and happiness at work. This finding of De Cooman et al. (2016) was thus also supported by this research.

### **Limitations and future research**

This research has several limitations. First of all, this research has made use of convenience sampling as well as snowball sampling. These sampling methods have the advantage of reaching a big sample, without the costs getting too high. However, a disadvantage is that the participants in the sample are very similar to each other as they often come from the same region and socio-economic status, resulting in lower representativeness of the population and lower internal validity. This study tried to avoid these limitations as there were five researchers from different parts of the Netherlands and from different socio-economic statuses. However, the sample was relatively high educated, 73.7% of the sample completed at least higher vocational education. The effects of the sampling method can also be seen in the distribution of gender, as 65% was female. These disproportionate distributions could have influenced the results and thereby the representativeness of this research.

Another limitation of this research is that it did not control for some important variables. Firstly, this research did not control for how long the reviewed supervisors were managers of the respondent's teams. Some of the respondents indicated in the comment section that their manager was only employed for a short time, resulting in that they could not accurately fill in some of the items, as they did not have this experience with their supervisor yet. It was also indicated in some of these comments that these respondents therefore filled in the most neutral option 'neither agree, nor disagree'. This limitation applies to the variable inclusive leadership. Secondly, this research did not control for whether the respondents worked in a team or not, to complete the questionnaire, respondents needed to fill in the person-group fit items. It was only mentioned in the research invitation people could not be self-employed, but there was not a separate question confirming this. It may have been that some respondents missed this announcement and did fill in questions although they weren't part of a team. Additionally, this research did not control for the amount of people in a team, it could be that team size has an influence on several things like happiness. For example, introverted people may thrive in a small team, while extroverted people may thrive in large teams. Future research should focus on these differences in personality.

Moreover, the results may be biased because of social desirability issues, although the questionnaire was completely anonymous, it could have been that socially desirable responses were given. Almost all respondents were part of the researchers' social circle, due to the convenience and snowball sampling. This may have led to socially desirable answers, resulting in social desirability issues, because people have the habit to present a favourable image of the self (Van de Mortel, 2008). This might have been the case for the variables happiness at work, person-group fit and work engagement. This affects the validity of the questionnaire (Huang et al., 1998). A suggestion for future research would be to use a random sampling method instead of a convenience or snowball sampling method to reduce bias (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

### **Recommendations for future research**

The results found in this research call for further research on this topic. First of all, future research may be focused on a creating a longitudinal study based on these variables to find causal linkages, not biased by for example mood. Additionally, a longitudinal study could also analyze if certain aspects change if a new team member for example joins the team. This could give more practical implications for the field and how to deal with these shifts. Moreover, future research should further explore the underlying dimensions of inclusive leadership and their effect on work engagement. The underlying dimensions of inclusive leadership, like belongingness and uniqueness could be more suited than other underlying dimensions when using person-group fit as a moderator.

Future research could focus, for example, on qualitative research methods. In this study, it became clear that relationships were found among the concepts studied. Qualitative research could gain even more insight and deeper insight into the various concepts and relationships by addressing employee attitudes, feelings, and motivations. Especially when it comes to happiness, feelings are important to investigate further, what exactly does someone feel and what does someone do with it. In addition, motivations are important for further exploring the concept of work engagement.

Lastly, it would be interesting if future research further explored the shift that is happening in the workplace. This research showed that happiness at work and person-group fit are important aspects in today's workplace. Moss (2023) states that people are focussing more on how they want to live. This may affect what people find important in the workplace. Krishnan et al. (2013) for example state that enjoyment and creativity play huge roles in the jobs of new

generations, and that their motivation and goals are different than other generations. Future research can further explore what aspects of organizations are most important to employees and what factors motivate them most to go the extra mile, resulting in more work engagement. It is interesting to see if aspects as happiness at work, enjoyment, a good fit with a team, or for example working at a sustainable company are more important than the ‘traditional’ motivational factors such as salary, or getting a promotion.

### **Practical implications**

Creating or enhancing work engagement is crucial for organizations to gain competitive advantage and other positive organizational outcomes. In earlier research positive leadership styles have been proven to enhance work engagement. This research again showed this positive relationship. Additionally, this research also showed the importance of happiness at work and person group fit. Organizations should focus more on these aspects to eventually create or enhance work engagement because of their impact.

The results of this research show the importance of happiness at work and why leaders should facilitate happiness at work. To ensure happiness at work leaders could follow a coaching program. Findings of Ramao et al. (2022) found that a manager’s coaching skills have a positive impact on employees’ happiness at work. The researchers also found that manager’s coaching skills also lead to less turnover. Therefore, organizations should encourage managers to integrate coaching skills into their leadership style. Rozkwitalska and Basinka (2020) found that managers can strengthen happiness at work by concerning the improvement of the employee’s psychological state by stimulating learning and vitality. Moreover, Saenghiran (2013) found that organizational development interventions, like appreciative inquiry and the happy eight can enhance happiness at work, if a manager actively focusses on these interventions, job satisfaction and subjective happiness will rise. Another coaching task of the inclusive manager should be fostering employee attitudes, according to Williams et al. (2017) managers can do this by supporting and reinforcing employee development programs. Thus, to improve happiness at work and work engagement, organizations need to invest in coaching programs for their managers. Additionally, they need to invest in the programs and activities managers need to provide happiness at work, so the managers can improve their coaching relationship with their team.

Moreover, as person-group fit is an important factor in happiness at work and work engagement it is also important for organizations to create a system that can facilitate high

person-group fit. Organizations and leaders should be connectors to ensure that there is a good fit with the employee and the existing team. In this case, connectors would be people who create groups of people that ‘work’, socially, but also workwise. An employees’ work experiences are increasingly shaped by their interface with their group members, as also shown by the results of this research. Therefore, organizations should pay more attention to the social inclusion model (De Cooman et al., 2016), as positive effects occur through cohesion with the team. This already starts at the recruitment process, it should not only be important to meet the requirements for the job, it should be as important, or even more important that a candidate fits within the team. HR can change the recruitment process to be more social and informal, to identify the values and personality of the applicant more accurately. A suggestion could be to invite several team members to the applications and make it a more democratic process. After the recruitment process the organization should facilitate programs or activities that strengthen person-group fit, like social activities or teambuilding days.

### **Conclusion**

Concluding, to create engagement in the workplace it is important to know how leaders can achieve an environment with good relationships, between leader and follower, but also between the employees within a team. This study shows the importance of happiness and fit with a group in the workplace. Furthermore, this study contributes to the existing literature by giving more insight into the relationship between inclusive leadership and work engagement and further exploring the concept of happiness in the workplace. The findings indicate that inclusive leadership has a positive effect on work engagement, confirming theoretical expectations, but also extending the literature by showing the importance of happiness in this relation. This study addresses the importance of good relationships and fit, which creates happiness and work engagement. Happiness is an important thing to achieve, not only in personal life, but also in the workplace.

## Reference list

- Adkins, C. L., Ravlin, E. C., & Meglino, B. M. (1996). Value congruence between co-workers and its relationship to work outcomes. *Group & Organization Management*, 21(4), 439–460. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601196214005>
- Aslan, H., Mert, İ. S., & Şen, C. (2021). The effect of inclusive leadership on the work engagement: An empirical study from Turkey. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 8(11), 169–178. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no11.0169>
- Astakhova, M. (2016). Explaining the effects of perceived person-supervisor fit and person-organization fit on organizational commitment in the U.S. and Japan. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(2), 956–963. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.08.039>
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Sanz-Vergel, A. I. (2014). Burnout and work engagement: The JD–R approach. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1(1), 389–411. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091235>
- Bao, P., Xiao, Z., Bao, G., & Noorderhaven, N. (2021). Inclusive leadership and employee work engagement: A moderated mediation model. *Baltic Journal of Management*, 17(1), 124–139. <https://doi.org/10.1108/bjm-06-2021-0219>
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173>
- Bernerth, J. B., Cole, M. S., Taylor, E. C., & Walker, H. J. (2017). Control Variables in leadership research: A qualitative and quantitative review. *Journal Of Management*, 44(1), 131–160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206317690586>
- Biggs, A., Brough, P., & Barbour, J. P. (2014). Relationships of individual and organizational support with engagement: Examining various types of causality in a three-wave study. *Work & Stress*, 28(3), 236–254. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2014.934316>

- Blau, G., & Boal, K. B. (1989). Using job involvement and organizational commitment interactively to predict turnover. *Journal of Management*, *15*(1), 115–127.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/014920638901500110>
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. New York: Wiley.
- Bleijenbergh, I. (2016). *Kwalitatief onderzoek in organisaties*. Den Haag: Boom Lemma.
- Block, L. (2003). The leadership-culture connection: an exploratory investigation. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *24*(6), 318–334.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730310494293>
- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: on being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *17*(5), 475–482.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167291175001>
- Brown, S. P., & Leigh, T. W. (1996). A new look at psychological climate and its relationship to job involvement, effort, and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *81*(4), 358–368. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.81.4.358>
- Buckingham, M., & Coffman, C. (1999). *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently*. New York: Simon & Schuster
- Carmeli, A., Reiter-Palmon, R., & Ziv, E. (2010). Inclusive leadership and employee involvement in creative tasks in the workplace: the mediating role of psychological safety. *Creativity Research Journal*, *22*(3), 250–260.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2010.504654>
- Cenkci, A. T., Bircan, T., & Zimmerman, J. (2020). Inclusive leadership and work engagement: The mediating role of procedural justice. *Management Research Review*, *44*(1), 158–180. <https://doi.org/10.1108/mrr-03-2020-0146>
- Charlton, R., & Eschleman, K. J. (2019). Person – group fit moderating the transformational leadership contextual performance relationship. *Proceedings - Academy of Management (1)*, 18624. <https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2019.198>
- Choi, S., & Rainey, H. G. (2010). Managing diversity in U.S. federal agencies: Effects of diversity and diversity management on employee perceptions of organizational performance. *Public Administration Review*, *70*(1), 109–121.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2009.02115.x>
- Choi, S. B., Tran, T. D., & Park, B. I. (2015). Inclusive leadership and work engagement: Mediating roles of affective organizational commitment and creativity. *Social Behavior and Personality*, *43*(6), 931–943. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2015.43.6.931>

- Chughtai, A. A., Byrne, M., & Flood, B. (2014). Linking ethical leadership to employee well-being: The role of trust in supervisor. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *128*(3), 653–663. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2126-7>
- Coetzee, S., & Rothmann, S. (2005). Work engagement of employees at a higher education institution in South Africa: research article. *Southern African Business Review*, *9*(3), 23–34.
- Cropanzano, R., Anthony, E. L., Daniels, S. R., & Hall, A. (2017). Social exchange theory: A critical review with theoretical remedies. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *11*(1), 479–516. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2015.0099>
- De Cooman, R., Van Tilborgh, T., Bal, P. M., & Lub, X. D. (2016). Creating inclusive teams through perceptions of supplementary and complementary person-team fit: Examining the relationship between person-team fit and team effectiveness. *Group & Organization Management*, *41*(3), 310-342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601115586910>
- DeStasio, K. L., Clithero, J. A., & Berkman, E. T. (2019). Neuroeconomics, health psychology, and the interdisciplinary study of preventative health behavior. *Social And Personality Psychology Compass*, *13*(10). <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12500>
- Diener, E., & Diener, C. (1996). Most people are happy. *Psychological Science*, *7*(3), 181–185. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.1996.tb00354.x>
- Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and Mixed-Mode surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Erden, N. S. (2019). Do organizations really gain without pain? The dark side of employee engagement. In N., Sharma, N., Chaudhary, & V.K. Singh (Eds), *Management Techniques for Employee Engagement in Contemporary Organizations* (pp. 57-76). <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-7799-7.ch004>
- Etikan, İ., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, *5*(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Feldman, D. C. (1984). The development and enforcement of group norms. *Academy of Management Review*, *9*(1), 47–53. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1984.4277934>

- Fisher, C. D. (2010). Happiness at work. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(4), 384–412. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2009.00270.x>
- Field, A.P. (2018) *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics*. 5th Edition. New York: Sage.
- Fletcher, L. (2016). How can personal development lead to increased engagement? The roles of meaningfulness and perceived line manager relations. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 30(7), 1203–1226. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1184177>
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American psychologist*, 56(3), 218. <https://doi.org/10.1037%2F%2F0003-066x.56.3.218>
- Frey, B. S. (2008). Happiness: a revolution in economics. *Choice Reviews Online*, 46(4), 46–2192. <https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.46-2192>
- Ghadi, M. Y. (2023). Linking job crafting to work engagement: the mediating role of organizational happiness. *Management Research Review*, 47(6), 943-963. <https://doi.org/10.1108/mrr-01-2023-0042>
- Ghadi, M. Y., Fernando, M., & Caputi, P. (2013). Transformational leadership and work engagement. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 34(6), 532–550. <https://doi.org/10.1108/lodj-10-2011-0110>
- Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 6(2), 219–247. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843\(95\)90036-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(95)90036-5)
- Hair, J., Anderson, R., & Black, W. (2018). *Multivariate Data Analysis (8th ed.)*. London: Pearson.
- Hollander, E. P. (2012). *Inclusive leadership: the essential leader-follower relationship*. London: Routledge.
- Hopkins, K. D., & Weeks, D. L. (1990). Tests for normality and measures of skewness and kurtosis: Their place in research reporting. *Educational And Psychological Measurement*, 50(4), 717–729. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164490504001>
- Huang, C., Liao, H., & Chang, S. (1998). Social desirability and the clinical self-report inventory: Methodological reconsideration. *Journal Of Clinical Psychology*, 54(4), 517–528. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(sici\)1097-4679\(199806\)54:4](https://doi.org/10.1002/(sici)1097-4679(199806)54:4)

- Ilies, R., Nahrgang, J. D., & Morgeson, F. P. (2007). Leader-member exchange and citizenship behaviors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(1), 269–277. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.269>
- Inceoglu, I., Thomas, G., Chu, C. W. L., Plans, D., & Gerbasi, A. (2018). Leadership behavior and employee well-being: An integrated review and a future research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 29(1), 179–202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.12.006>
- James, J. B., McKechnie, S., & Swanberg, J. (2011). Predicting employee engagement in an age-diverse retail workforce. *Journal Of Organizational Behavior*, 32(2), 173–196. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.681>
- Javed, B., Naqvi, S. M. M. R., Khan, A. K., Arjoon, S., & Tayyeb, H. H. (2017). Impact of inclusive leadership on innovative work behavior: The role of psychological safety. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 25(1), 117–136. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2017.3>
- Jha, I. N., Pal, D., & Sarkar, S. (2023). Unlocking the secret to happiness at work: The power of inclusive leadership, organizational justice and workplace inclusion. *Journal of Management Development*, 43(2), 200-221. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jmd-04-2023-0136>
- Judge, T. A., & Ferris, G. R. (1992). The elusive criterion of fit in human resources staffing decisions. *Human Resource Planning*, 15(4), 47. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242075450\\_The\\_Elusive\\_Criterion\\_of\\_Fit\\_in\\_Human\\_Resources\\_Staffing\\_](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242075450_The_Elusive_Criterion_of_Fit_in_Human_Resources_Staffing_)
- Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy Of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692–724. <https://doi.org/10.2307/256287>
- Kearney, E. (2008). Age differences between leader and followers as a moderator of the relationship between transformational leadership and team performance. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 81(4), 803–811. <https://doi.org/10.1348/096317907x256717>
- Korkmaz, A. V., Van Engen, M., Knappert, L., & Schalk, R. (2022). About and beyond leading uniqueness and belongingness: A systematic review of inclusive leadership research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 32(4), 100894. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2022.100894>

- Krishnan, S. K., Bopaiah, S., Bajaj, D., & Prasad, R. (2012). Organization, Generations and Communication - Infosys Experience. *NHRD Network Journal*, 5(4), 85–93.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0974173920120414>
- Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology*, 49(1), 1–49.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1996.tb01790.x>
- Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individual's fit at work: a meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-group, and person-supervisor fit. *Personnel Psychology*, 58(2), 281–342.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2005.00672.x>
- Kun, Á., & Gadanecz, P. (2022). Workplace happiness, well-being and their relationship with psychological capital: A study of Hungarian teachers. *Current Psychology*, 41(1), 185–199. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-019-00550-0>
- Lai, F. Y., Tang, H. C., Lu, S. C., Lee, Y. C., & Lin, C. C. (2020). Transformational leadership and job performance: the mediating role of work engagement. *SAGE Open*, 10(1), 215824401989908. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019899085>
- Leonardelli, G. J., Pickett, C. L., & Brewer, M. B. (2010). Optimal distinctiveness theory. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (pp. 63–113).  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/s0065-2601\(10\)43002-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0065-2601(10)43002-6)
- Levin, K. A. (2006). Study design III: Cross-sectional studies. *Evidence-Based Dentistry*, 7(1), 24–25. <https://doi.org/10.1038/sj.ebd.6400375>
- Li, A., & Cropanzano, R. (2009). Fairness at the group level: justice climate and intraunit justice climate. *Journal of Management*, 35(3), 564–599.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308330557>
- Li, C. S., Kristof-Brown, A. L., & Nielsen, J. D. (2018). Fitting in a group: Theoretical development and validation of the multidimensional perceived person–group fit scale. *Personnel Psychology*, 72(1), 139–171. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12295>
- Li, A. N., & Liao, H. (2014). How do leader–member exchange quality and differentiation affect performance in teams? An integrated multilevel dual process model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99(5), 847–866. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0037233>
- Lin, Y., Yu, C., & Yi, C. (2014). The effects of positive affect, person-job fit, and well-being on job performance. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 42(9), 1537–1547.  
<https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2014.42.9.1537>

- Lu, C., Wang, H., Lu, J., Du, D., & Bakker, A. B. (2014). Does work engagement increase person–job fit? The role of job crafting and job insecurity. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 84*(2), 142–152. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2013.12.004>
- Ly, B. (2023). Inclusion leadership and employee work engagement: The role of organizational commitment in Cambodian public organization. *Asia Pacific Management Review, 29*(1), 44–52. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2023.06.003>
- Lyubomirsky, S., King, L. A., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin, 131*(6), 803–855. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.6.803>
- Mehmood, Q., Nawab, S., & Hamstra, M. R. W. (2016). Does authentic leadership predict employee work engagement and in-role performance? *Journal of Personnel Psychology, 15*(3), 139–142. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000164>
- Mellinger, C. D. (2015). On the applicability of internet-mediated research methods to investigate translators’ cognitive behaviour. *The International Journal of Translation and Interpreting Research, 7*(1), 59-71.
- Mitchell, M. S., Cropanzano, R., & Quisenberry, D. M. (2012). Social exchange theory, exchange resources, and interpersonal relationships: A modest resolution of theoretical difficulties. In K. Törnblom & A. Kazemi (Eds.), *Handbook of social resource theory: Theoretical extensions, empirical insights, and social applications* (pp. 99–118). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-4175-5\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-4175-5_6)
- Moccia, S. (2016). Happiness at Work. *Papeles del Psicólogo, 37*(2), 143–151. doi: 10.1002/9780470666845.oth1
- Moss, J. (2023). *Creating a happier workplace is possible — and worth it*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2023/10/creating-a-happier-workplace-is-possible-and-worth-it>
- Ng, T. W. H., & Feldman, D. C. (2008). The relationship of age to ten dimensions of job performance. *Journal Of Applied Psychology, 93*(2), 392–423. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.93.2.392>
- Nguyen, T. V. T., & Tsang, S. (2023). Inclusive leadership and work-from-home engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic: A moderated mediation model. *International Journal of Manpower, 45*(2), 299-318. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijm-12-2022-0619>
- Nijs, S., van Engen, M., van der Meer, S., van Gestel, S., & Odstrčilíková, K. (in press, 2024). Wanneer inclusieve leiders het verschil (kunnen) maken: Het belang van

- supplementaire en complementaire team-fit voor werknemers' ervaren autonomie, verbondenheid en competentie. Article in preparation.
- Ogbonnaya, C. (2019). Exploring possible trade-offs between organisational performance and employee well-being: The role of teamwork practices. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 29(3), 451-468. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12238>
- Ostroff, C., & Rothausen, T. J. (1997). The moderating effect of tenure in person—environment fit: A field study in educational organizations. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 70(2), 173–188. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1997.tb00641.x>
- Ouweneel, A., Blanc, L., Schaufeli, W., & Wijhe, V. C. (2012). Good morning, good day: A diary study on positive emotions, hope, and work engagement. *Human Relations*, 65(9), 1129–1154. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726711429382>
- Romão, S., Ribeiro, N., Gomes, D. R., & Singh, S. (2022b). The impact of leaders' coaching skills on employees' happiness and turnover intention. *Administrative Sciences*, 12(3), 84. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci12030084>
- Randel, A. E., Galvin, B. M., Shore, L. M., Ehrhart, K. H., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., & Kedharnath, U. (2018). Inclusive leadership: Realizing positive outcomes through belongingness and being valued for uniqueness. *Human Resource Management Review*, 28(2), 190–203. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2017.07.002>
- Reijseger, G., Peeters, M. C. W., Taris, T. W., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2016). From motivation to activation: Why engaged workers are better performers. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 32(2), 117–130. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-016-9435-z>
- Robertson, I. T., & Cooper, C. L. (2012). Well-being: productivity and happiness at work. *Choice Reviews Online*, 49(5), 49–2773. <https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.49-2773>
- Rodriguez, J. L. (2018). *Inclusive leadership and employee engagement: the moderating effect of psychological diversity climate* [Master's thesis, California State University] Scholar Works. <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd/682/>
- Rodríguez-Muñoz, A., Sanz-Vergel, A. I., Demerouti, E., & Bakker, A. B. (2014). Engaged at work and happy at home: A spillover–crossover model. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 15, 271-283. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10902-013-9421-3>
- Rozkwitalska, M., & Basinska, B. A. (2015). Job satisfaction in the multicultural environment of multinational corporations: Using the positive approach to empower organizational

- success. *Baltic Journal of Management*, 10(3), 366–387. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BJM-06-20140106>
- Saks, A. M. (2006). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21(7), 600–619. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940610690169>
- Saenghiran, N. (2013). Towards enhancing happiness at work: A case study. *Social Research Reports*, 5(25), 21–33.
- Salanova, M., Nieto, S. A., & Peiró, J. M. (2005). Linking organizational resources and work engagement to employee performance and customer loyalty: The mediation of service climate. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(6), 1217–1227. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.90.6.1217>
- Salanova, M., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2008). A cross-national study of work engagement as a mediator between job resources and proactive behaviour. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19(1), 116–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190701763982>
- Salas-Vallina, A., & Alegre, J. (2018). Happiness at work: Developing a shorter measure. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 27(3), 460–480. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2018.24>
- Savela, T. (2018). The advantages and disadvantages of quantitative methods in schoolscape research. *Linguistics and Education*, 44, 31–44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2017.09.004>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: a multi-sample study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25(3), 293–315. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.248>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004b). Bevlogenheid: een begrip gemeten. *Gedrag & Organisatie*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.5117/2004.017.002.002>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2010). Defining and measuring work engagement: Bringing clarity to the concept. In A. B. Bakker (Ed.) & M. P. Leiter, *Work Engagement: A Handbook of Essential Theory and Research*. (pp. 10–24). New York: Psychology press.
- Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Salanova, M. (2006). The measurement of work engagement with a short questionnaire. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 66(4), 701–716. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405282471>

- Sekaran, U. and Bougie, R. (2016). *Research Methods for Business: A Skill-Building Approach. 7th Edition*. New York: Wiley & Sons.
- Shin, Y., & Choi, J. N. (2010). What makes a group of good citizens? The role of perceived group-level fit and critical psychological states in organizational teams. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83(2), 531–552.  
<https://doi.org/10.1348/096317909x440233>
- Shore, L. M., & Chung, B. G. (2021). Inclusive Leadership: How leaders sustain or discourage work group inclusion. *Group & Organization Management*, 47(4), 723–754. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601121999580>
- Shore, L. M., Cleveland, J. N., & Sanchez, D. R. (2018). Inclusive workplaces: A review and model. *Human Resource Management Review*, 28(2), 176–189.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2017.07.003>
- Shore, L. M., Randel, A. E., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., Ehrhart, K. H., & Singh, G. (2011). Inclusion and diversity in work groups: A review and model for future research. *Journal of Management*, 37(4), 1262–1289.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310385943>
- Shuck, B., Reio, T. G., & Rocco, T. S. (2011). Employee engagement: an examination of antecedent and outcome variables. *Human Resource Development International*, 14(4), 427–445. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2011.601587>
- Simons, T., Leroy, H., Collewaert, V., & Masschelein, S. (2014). How leader alignment of words and deeds affects followers: A meta-analysis of behavioral integrity research. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 132(4), 831–844. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2332-3>
- Simpson, M. R. (2009). Predictors of work engagement among medical-surgical registered nurses. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 31(1), 44–65.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0193945908319993>
- Straits, B. C., & Singleton, R. (2017). *Social research: Approaches and Fundamentals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Strom, D. L., Sears, K. L., & Kelly, K. M. (2014). Work engagement: the roles of organizational justice and leadership style in predicting engagement among employees. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 21(1), 71–82.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051813485437>

- Suan, C. L., & Nasurdin, A. M. (2016). Supervisor support and work engagement of hotel employees in Malaysia. *Gender in Management*, 31(1), 2–18.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/gm-11-2014-0105>
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2013). *Using Multivariate Statistics (6th ed.)*. Boston: Pearson.
- Tse, H. H. M., Huang, X., & Lam, W. (2013). Why does transformational leadership matter for employee turnover? A multi-foci social exchange perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(5), 763–776. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.07.005>
- Valdez, A., & Kaplan, C. D. (1998). Reducing selection bias in the use of focus groups to investigate hidden populations: The case of Mexican American gang members from South Texas. *Drugs & Society*, 14(1–2), 209–224.  
[https://doi.org/10.1300/j023v14n01\\_15](https://doi.org/10.1300/j023v14n01_15)
- Van de Mortel, T. (2008). Faking it: Social desirability response bias in self-report research. *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 25(4), 40–48.
- Vogel, R. M., & Feldman, D. C. (2009). Integrating the levels of person-environment fit: The roles of vocational fit and group fit. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 75(1), 68–81.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2009.03.007>
- Vogt, W. P., & Johnson, R. B. (1993). *Dictionary of Statistics & Methodology: A Nontechnical Guide for the Social Sciences*. New York City: SAGE.
- Volmer, J., Spurk, D., & Niessen, C. (2012). Leader–member exchange (LMX), job autonomy, and creative work involvement. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(3), 456–465.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.10.005>
- Wang, H., Law, K. S., Hackett, R. D., Wang, D., & Chen, Z. X. (2005). Leader-member exchange as a mediator of the relationship between transformational leadership and followers’ performance and organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(3), 420–432. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2005.17407908>
- Werbel, J. D., & Gilliland, S. W. (1999). Person–environment fit in the selection process. In G. E. Ferris (Ed.), *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management* (pp. 209–243). Oxford: Elsevier Science.
- Williams, P., Kern, M. L., & Waters, L. (2017). The role and reprocessing of attitudes in fostering employee work happiness: An intervention study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00028>

Zhou, Y. (2018). *The impact of inclusive leadership on employee engagement: the mediator of psychological capital and the moderator of job embeddedness*. [Doctoral dissertation, international college].

<https://repository.nida.ac.th/handle/662723737/4369>

## Appendices

### A. Questionnaire: including informed consent

In which language would you like to complete this survey? / In welke taal wilt u deze enquête invullen?

- English
- Nederlands

---

Dear participant,

Thank you very much for your willingness to participate in this research! We are students of the master program Strategic Human Resources Leadership at Radboud University. This research focuses on the topic of inclusive leadership. We are very curious about your experience with this.

The questionnaire contains questions about your leader's leadership style and your experience of your work and health. We have provided several subtopics within the theme. To be able to participate in the research, it is important that you are currently employed in an organisation and have a supervisor (manager).

Completing the questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes. We greatly appreciate your time!

Kind regards,

Loes de Winkel, Nathalie Elenbaas, Lianne Fontein, Julie Harts and Siri Uijttewaal.

Under the supervision of Dr Marloes van Engen Associate Professor Strategic Human Resource

Anonymity and consent to participation.

Before proceeding to fill out the survey, we would like to ask you to read the following information carefully:

- Your answers will be processed anonymously and strictly confidential. This means that student survey reports will not show the answers given by individual participants.
- Your answers will be stored securely and anonymously in a database of the university; your answers cannot be traced back to you individually.
- Your answers will be used only for academic teaching and research purposes.
- You may stop filling in the survey at any time.
- You consent to the data being used for the purposes described above and retained for 10 years after completion of the study (1-5-2034).

For further questions regarding the study, please contact Siri Uijttewaal. You can send an email to [siri.ujttewaal@ru.nl](mailto:siri.ujttewaal@ru.nl). She will answer your question as soon as possible.

Good luck completing the questionnaire! Click "yes" below if you want to participate in the survey. This means that you have had enough opportunity to consider whether you want to participate in the study and that you understand that there are no consequences for participating.

---

I agree

- Yes
- No

*Skip To: End of Survey If I agree = No*

What is your birthyear?

---

I am a

- Man
  - Woman
  - Non-binair
  - Other
- 

What is your highest completed education?

- Primary School
  - Secondary School
  - Vocational Education
  - Higher Vocational Education, Bachelor
  - Master
  - PHD
- 

How long have you been employed at your current organization (in years)?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

How many hours per week do you work (average number of hours)?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Do you have a supervisor?

Yes

No

*Skip To: End of Survey If Do you have a supervisor? = No*

---

How often do you have contact with your own supervisor?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less than monthly

Do you have a managerial position yourself?

- Yes
- No

In the following statements, you will be asked to evaluate your supervisor (manager) based on her/his/their interaction with **individual** employees including you. To what extent are the following statements applicable?

Strongly disagree      Somewhat disagree      Neither agree nor disagree      Somewhat agree      Strongly agree

**My supervisor supports each one of us both at personal and work level.**

My supervisor encourages each one of us to approach him/her/them on personal issues.

**My supervisor encourages each one of us to approach them for support.**

My supervisor encourages each one of us to share our ideas openly.

My supervisor encourages everyone to make use of each other's unique backgrounds during problem-solving.

My supervisor fosters unique contributions of each one of us.

My supervisor makes sure that each one of us is invited to express different viewpoints.

My supervisor encourages each one of us to take initiative.

My supervisor gives each one of us personal authority to make decisions on how to accomplish tasks on our own.

My supervisor encourages each one of us to solve problems ourselves instead of just telling us what to do.

My supervisor empowers each one of us to make work-related decisions.

**My supervisor helps each one of us to learn from mistakes to develop ourselves.**

**My supervisor gives attention to learning and development opportunities for each one of us.**

My supervisor helps each one of us to further develop ourselves.



<p>The following statements are about how your supervisor (manager) interacts with your <b>team</b>. Please indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with the statement.</p>	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
<p><b>My supervisor encourages honesty as a virtue within the team.</b></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>My supervisor treats team members fairly.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>My supervisor treats team members equally.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>My supervisor makes sure that nobody is left out in the team.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><b>My supervisor encourages team members to build closer connections with one another.</b></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><b>My supervisor encourages collaboration within the team.</b></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><b>My supervisor facilitates a strong team spirit.</b></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>My supervisor fosters participative decision making within the team.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><b>My supervisor explains the reasoning behind the decisions to the team.</b></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><b>My supervisor motivates team members to come to a common agreement for action.</b></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**My supervisor makes decisions together with the team when it is possible.**

The following statements are about how your supervisor (manager) gives **appreciation**. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the statement.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
My supervisor shows recognition for the contributions made by the team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor praises the efforts of all team members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor shows appreciation for the effort made by individuals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The following statements are about how you rate your supervisor's (manager's) attitude towards the **organization** and organizational change. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with a statement.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
<b>My supervisor is open to change the way we proceed to achieve our goals within the organization.</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>My supervisor acts constructively to reluctance towards changes happening within the organization.</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>My supervisor is attentive to new opportunities to improve work processes within the organization.</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor communicates how inclusion contributes to organizational outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor communicates the benefits of diversity for our organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor communicates dedication to establishing an organization which represents diversity in society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The following statements are about how you **experience your work**. To what extent do these statements apply to you?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
My job inspires me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I get up in the morning I feel like going to work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am proud of the work that I do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am immersed in my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At my job I feel bursting with energy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At my job I feel strong and vigorous.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am enthusiastic about my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get carried away when I am working.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Engagement eng

Start of Block: HAW eng

The following statements are about how you **feel at work**. To what extent do the following statements apply to you?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel emotionally attached to this organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The following questions are about how you **feel about your job**. To what extent to the following statements apply to you?

	Extremely dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat satisfied	Extremely satisfied
How satisfied are you with the nature of the work you perform?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with the pay you receive for your job?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with the opportunities which exist in the organization for advancement?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: HAW eng

Start of Block: PG Fit eng

The following statements are about how you feel you **fit** in your team. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with a statement.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
My personality is similar to the team members I work with.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My personality is well suited for the personality or 'image' of this team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My skills and abilities match the skills and abilities this team looks for in team members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My ability level is comparable to those of my team members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that I am important to this team because I have different skills and abilities than my team members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My knowledge, skills, and abilities offer something that other team members in this team do not have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My team members rely on me because I have competencies that they do not have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Even though my personality differs from my team members, it seems to complement their personalities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When key decisions are made, my team members consult me because I have a different perspective than they do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>