

The contribution of job characteristics of green jobs to meaningful work:

a qualitative, single-case study on how job characteristics of green jobs contribute through mechanisms of meaning to the perceived meaningfulness of work

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Date: 16th of July, 2020

Abstract

A large body of research exists on meaningful work and job characteristics. Yet, the field lacks thorough research into the combination of both with respect to green jobs. The impact of job characteristics of green job on meaningful work has not yet been addressed in literature. Green jobs form an increasing job market and more knowledge on how meaningful green job workers experience their work is valuable. This study investigates how job characteristics of green jobs contribute to the meaningfulness of work. This thesis addresses the following research question: How do job characteristics of green jobs contribute to the meaningfulness of work? To answer this research question, this study deployed an in-depth, qualitative single-case study at a subsidiary of a Dutch grid operator. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 respondents. The data analysis method employed is template analysis, using the Gioia Method. The study concludes a positive relationship between job characteristics of green jobs and the experienced meaningfulness of work. Job characteristics of green jobs contribute considerably through a number of mechanisms to meaningful work. The findings showed that task significance and autonomy are the key contributors to experienced meaningfulness of work. Several promising directions for future research are outlined, that hopefully stimulate further investigation in this rich area of study. From an organizational design perspective, this thesis highlights the importance of a strong and inspiring vision and the identification of feasible goals to enhance job-based feedback.

Keywords: meaningful work, job characteristics theory, mechanisms of meaning, green jobs

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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Meaningfulness and, in particular, meaningful work are notable subjects within organizational studies (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Wrzesniewski, 2003). In the search for meaning, work plays a central role, since the majority of adults spend most of their time at work (Lysova et al., 2019). As put forward by Michaelson, Pratt, Grant and Dunn (2014, p. 77), work often ‘serves as a primary source of purpose, belongingness, and identity’. As a result, organizational scholarship on meaningful work is a prominent area of study. Particularly within the field of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS), academics continue to be interested in the nature, causes and consequences of meaningful work (Rosso et al., 2010).

Meaningfulness or meaningful work refers to ‘work experienced as particularly significant and holding more positive meaning for individuals’ (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 95). For the purpose of this thesis, meaningfulness embodies the amount of significance people individually and subjectively attribute to their work (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012; Rosso et al., 2010; Steger et al., 2006, 2012).

Meaningfulness is a key notion to understand, since it is coupled to positive and negative work outcomes. Positive work outcomes include work engagement (Fairlie, 2011; Geldenhuys et al., 2014), higher commitment to the organization (Geldenhuys et al., 2014), higher job satisfaction (Allan et al., 2019; Steger et al., 2012), and improved social functioning at the workplace (Ward & King, 2017). In addition, Ward and King (2017, p. 65) relate meaningful work to fewer negative effects, such as ‘lower depressive symptoms, hostility, burnout, exhaustion, absenteeism and intentions to leave one’s organization’. These outcomes demonstrate that meaningful work research is crucial for organizations.

Positive and negative outcomes of meaningfulness stress the importance of gaining further insights into the concept of meaningfulness. As a consequence, several investigations into various sources of meaningfulness have been conducted. For example, meaningful work is linked to motivation towards relatedness, competence, and autonomy, as formulated in Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ward & King, 2017). Other proposed sources of meaningfulness are job crafting (e.g., Berg et al., 2013; Wrzesniewski et al., 2013), social interactions and relationships (Wrzesniewski, 2003), goal pursuit (Humphrey et al., 2007) and coherence and structure (Heintzleman et al., 2013). Some scholars have put effort in examining work characteristics and how this contributes to meaningful work (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2007; Oldham & Fried, 2016). A good illustration of research on the role of work characteristics as a determinant for meaningful work is Job Characteristics Theory by Hackman and Oldman (1976). The five core job characteristics Oldham and Hackman distinguish are skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and job-based feedback. Oldham and Hackman (2010) acknowledge that the first three job characteristics contribute to meaningfulness of work.

To understand how diverse job types or professions may influence meaningful work, researchers have sought to identify differences across professions, such as psychologists (e.g., Zyl et al., 2010), university employees (e.g., Zeglal & Janbeik, 2019), teachers (e.g., Fouché et al., 2017; van Wingerden

& Poell, 2019), and nurses (e.g., Beukes & Botha, 2013). Despite many meaningful work studies regarding various professions, research has not yet explored the concept of meaningful work among green job workers. Hence, this thesis sets out to examine meaningful work in the context of ‘green jobs’. An explanation of the term ‘green jobs’ and its societal relevancy is put forward by Hendricks et al. (2009, p. 230): ‘green jobs enhance environmental quality [and] build a vibrant clean-energy economy’.

Bearing in mind that only a few scholars have explored the notion of green jobs, it is still clear that the concept demonstrates a relevant development on the labour market (OECD Green Growth Studies, 2014; Renner et al., 2008). An US study (McClure et al., 2017) as well as a Dutch study (Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, 2018) substantiate this by reporting an emerging job market of green jobs. A fast increase in employment opportunities within the (renewable) energy sector can be attributed to recent developments, such as climate change. Especially at the start of the energy transition acceleration, Hendricks et al. (2009) predict a growth in green employment opportunities. Hence, this topic is vital to study. Regardless of the fact that research into meaningfulness is key for organizations, little research has been published on meaningful work and green jobs. It is of particular importance to investigate green jobs in the light of the relation between job characteristics and meaningful work.

1.2. Problem statement

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the existing literature about the relation between job characteristics and meaningful work by means of an in-depth, qualitative single-case study which investigates how job characteristics of green jobs contribute to the meaningfulness of work.

This thesis aims to address the following research question: How do job characteristics of green jobs contribute to the meaningfulness of work?

1.3. Research approach

This study entails a qualitative, inductive single-case study (Bleijenbergh, 2016; Myers, 2013). This single-case study takes place at Enpuls, a Dutch organization that focuses on accelerating the energy transition. One of the departments is called ‘concepts’. Enpuls develops a number of visions or vision lines within themes like mobility, electricity and urban planning. Consultants and transition managers are responsible for the content of these vision lines. Concept developers develop solutions and concepts within these vision lines that help society (individuals, governments and (commercial) organizations) to accelerate the energy transition. This department also consists of explorers who look for trends within the energy transition. This department receives business support from the business support team.

Enpuls was founded by and is part of Enexis Group, a semi-public grid-operator. This thesis utilizes information retrieved from Enpuls to develop causal explanations with regards to the phenomenon studied (Bleijenbergh, 2016). In this organization, workers with a green job are selected as research subjects for this research, because the researcher is particularly interested in how this specific group of workers experiences their work as meaningful as a result from their job characteristics. Data

about the relation between job characteristics and meaningful work are gathered through interviews with the research subjects.

1.4. Relevance

This thesis adds to the existing literature by determining the impact of job characteristics of green jobs on meaningful work. From this study crucial findings may emerge, since green jobs form an increasing job market. In addition, a better understanding of how job characteristics of green jobs contribute to meaningful work through mechanisms of meaning would benefit science on the topic of meaningful work. Furthermore, this thesis could serve as a relevant source for future research because according to Bleijenbergh (2016, p. 48) ‘in-depth knowledge from a single case could be important’ for theory development. The “Building Block” studies, a theory-building research objective proposed by George and Bennett (2005, p. 76), offers one way in which this thesis could be useful for further research.

As indicated previously, meaningful work is associated with positive work outcomes for individuals (Rosso et al., 2010). These outcomes include ‘satisfied, engaged and committed employees, individual and organisational fulfilment, productivity, retention and loyalty’ (Geldenhuis et al., 2014, p. 1). Taking the benefits of meaningful work into account, this study will provide relevant insights for organizations who have a high degree of green jobs and for workers with a green job. Furthermore, organizations increasingly acknowledge their societal contribution in terms of facilitating meaningful work to individuals (e.g., Nolles, 2016; Tomesen, 2014). Organizations enable individuals to fulfil needs for purpose, values, efficacy and self-worth (Wrzesniewski, 2003). It is likely that the outcomes of this thesis will help managers of green job workers to facilitate this better. More practically, this thesis could help organizations that employ green job workers to realize more meaningful work by enhancing certain job characteristics and could serve as a foundation for future job (re)design of green jobs (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Lysova et al., 2019)

All in all, more well-substantiated theory on job characteristics, meaningful work and the mechanisms underlying this relation is vital for workers and organizations, since factors contributing to meaningful work are valuable for improving working life (Michaelson et al., 2014).

1.5. Outline

The remainder of this thesis is structured as follows. The second chapter begins by providing a theoretical framework, in which relevant literature is examined, and concludes with a conceptual model. The third chapter discusses the methodology of this research. The fourth chapter outlines the findings of this study. In the fifth chapter, a conclusion from the preceding chapters is drawn. The sixth chapter then criticises the findings of this research and provides a reflection on the methodological and theoretical choices of the research. The last chapter concludes by discussing the managerial implications and by offering several promising directions for future research.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter presents a discussion of literature relevant for this thesis. The first paragraph explores meaningful work against the backdrop of Positive Organizational Scholarship; it further discusses mechanisms of meaning. The second paragraph evaluates job characteristics. The third paragraph reviews articles on green jobs. Finally, the last two paragraphs elaborate on the relation between job characteristics and meaningful work and display the conceptual model.

2.1. Meaningfulness and meaningful work

2.1.1. Meaningful work within Positive Organizational Scholarship

The domain of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) is focused on ‘positive outcomes, processes and attributes of organizations and their members’ (Cameron et al., 2003, p. 4). This domain includes several theories that are primarily concerned with positive states and associated dynamics, which could be termed as ‘*excellence, thriving, flourishing, abundance, resilience, or virtuousness*’ (Cameron et al., 2003, p. 4). The emphasis on positivity distinguishes POS from traditional organizational studies.

A good illustration of one research area within POS is meaningfulness. This concept is seen as an outcome or effect associated with positive phenomena (Cameron et al., 2003). Wrzesniewski (2003) claims that research on how people come to view their work as meaningful complements the POS perspective on organizational life. Wrzesniewski (2003, p. 297) further points out: ‘it is not so much the *kind* of work that matters as it is the *relationship* to the work’. In other words, this research area seeks to determine which aspects and mechanisms contribute to individuals’ perceptions of their work. It further examines how this can be improved and how this benefits the well-being of workers and the functioning of organizations. This explains why meaningfulness is complementary to POS.

Meaningful work is a commonly used notion in the field and yet it is a difficult concept to define precisely. One scholar articulates her ideas on the subject (Wrzesniewski, 2003, p. 298):

‘As a work life (or any domain of life) unfolds, individuals strive to fulfil needs for purpose, values, efficacy, and self-worth (Baumeister, 1991). While the shape of the elements that satisfy those needs may differ [...], the basic tenet remains that people everywhere need to find some way of interpreting the deeper purpose, or meaning, of what they do.’

This draws attention to the four main needs for meaning: purpose, values, efficacy and self-worth. These main needs could serve as a guide for people to establish meaningfulness. According to Baumeister and Vohs (2002), fulfilling these needs increases the likelihood of perceiving life as meaningful. In this way, individuals may use meaningfulness instrumentally to create stability in their life. While not completely relevant to work life, organizational scholars generally accept the underlying idea. As the citation illustrates, Wrzesniewski explains that the needs can be considered as elements that, while they may have varying interpretations, represent a deeper purpose. A different definition of meaningfulness is provided by May, Gilson, and Harter (2004, p. 14): ‘the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in

relation to an individual's own ideals or standards'. This definition deviates somewhat from Wrzesniewski's conceptualization by placing emphasis on internal comparison as a means to assign value to work. A concise definition is put forward by Rosso et al. (2010, p. 95) who understand the concept as 'work experienced as particularly significant and holding more positive meaning for individuals'. The authors further highlight that 'meaningfulness has a positive valence in the literature' (2010, p. 95). The major difference of this conceptualization is that, unlike Wrzesniewski (2003) and May et al. (2004), Rosso et al. (2010) do not pinpoint the source of experienced meaningfulness. Furthermore, the positive valence of the concept is underexposed in the other two definitions.

The above substantiates that it is vital to understand how meaning comes into existence. Baumeister and Vohs (2002, p. 608) indicate that 'the essence of meaning is connection'; in other words, a connection between two humans creates a 'non-physical reality' (Wrzesniewski, 2003, p. 298). To cite Baumeister (1991, p. 15): 'A rough definition would be that meaning is shared mental representations of possible relationships among things, events, and relationships.' The author further proposes that meaning is 'owned' by culture and society and that it is transferred to each new member of a social system. Baumeister's positive psychology perspective on meaning, though interesting, is challenging to translate to organizational life. Nevertheless, Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, p. 657) provide a comparable interpretation of meaningfulness when relating it to work: 'when someone experiences his or her work as meaningful this is an individual subjective experience of the existential significance or purpose of work'. Similarly, Pratt and Ashforth (2003) incorporate subjectivity as a key element in their conceptualization of meaningfulness; the meaning people attach to their work can be understood as a sensemaking process. The authors stress that depending on the social group within which an employee or organization is embedded the interpretation given to meaning of work differs. The authors construct their argument from the work of Weick (1995, p. 71) on organizational sensemaking and, in particular, intersubjectivity, in the sense that individuals within an organization socially construct meaningfulness. In adhering to Weick, Pratt and Ashforth make the noteworthy observation that organizations can facilitate whether and how employees experience and interpret their work as meaningful.

In conclusion, given the contrasting theoretical views on meaningful work, this thesis regards this concept as an individual, subjective experience of the existential significance or purpose of work.

2.1.2. Meaningful work framework

Recently, scholars developed several frameworks to measure meaningful work. One measurement instrument is provided by Steger, Dik, and Duffy (2012), in which they highlight three facets: subjectively experiencing positive meaning in work, meaning making through work and the desire to positively impact the greater good. Around the same time, Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012) established a multidimensional, quantitative scale, built on qualitative studies. This is considered a strength. This scale (Appendix A) identifies four dimensions that are subsumed under the term meaningful work: unity with others, developing and becoming the inner self, serving others and expressing full potential. The

authors furthermore include the two dimensions ‘reality’ and ‘inspiration’ in their Meaningful Work Framework. These dimensions encompass the need for hope and the need to face reality. These dimensions go hand-in-hand, because too much reality would deflate ideas and possibilities, and inspiration without reality is seen as pretence and alienates from the self, each other, and the organizational purpose, according to Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, p. 661): ‘When we cannot regulate our responses in light of a higher goal, purpose, or ideal, we experience hopelessness or existential despair’. In line with prior research (Baumeister & Vohs, 2002; Rosso et al., 2010), Lips-Wiersma and Wright draw on the suggested dynamic relation between multiple sources of meaning. Since ‘meaningfulness is achieved through experiencing a sense of wholeness or coherence’, an integration of these sources is key (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012, p. 658). Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, pp. 660–661) explain that the framework depicts the tensions inherent to the search for meaning, including: ‘Tensions between the need to meet the needs of the *self* and the need to meet the needs of *others*; and the need for *being* (reflection) as well as the need for *doing* (action).’ A lack of balance can cause meaninglessness. The ongoing search to balance these tensions helps people ‘to (re)articulate what is meaningful for them’ (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012, p. 661).

This comprehensive measure can serve as a tool ‘to capture the richness of meanings that people naturally attribute to their work’ (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012, p. 678). For this reason, this thesis adopts the logic of the Meaningful Work Framework and accepts the provided definitions. Descriptions of each dimension and the tensions are displayed in Table 1.

Dimensions of meaningful work	Descriptions
<i>Developing and becoming the inner self</i>	‘Depending on one’s worldview <i>developing the inner self</i> it can be based on simply wanting to be a good person, or the best we can be.’
<i>Unity with others</i>	‘the meaningfulness of working together with other human beings’
<i>Expressing full potential</i>	‘the meaningfulness expressing talents, creativity and having a sense of achievement’
<i>Service to others</i>	‘the meaningfulness of making a contribution to the well-being of others (and the world we live in), from helping an individual to making a difference in the wider world.’
<i>Ongoing tensions between “Being” and “Doing”</i>	““Being” refers to the meaning of examining one’s work [...] Doing is focused out into the world. It is heard in phrases such as; “I just can’t wait to get my hands onto that clay,” [...]. Research participants often described a dynamic tension between these, which in turn caused them to refocus on questions about meaning.’
<i>Ongoing tensions between “Self” and “Others”</i>	‘The tension between self and other refers to the ongoing challenge of meeting the needs of the self, while also meeting the needs of others.’
<i>Inspiration</i>	‘the need for hope’
<i>Reality</i>	‘the need to face our reality’

Table 1. Dimensions of meaningful work, based on the definitions of Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, pp. 661–674)

2.1.3. Mechanisms of meaning

‘In a basic sense, mechanisms are the underlying engine driving a relationship between two variables, capturing the processes through which one variable influences another.’ (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 108). Rosso et al. (2010) seek to bring clarity to literature on meaningful work by uncovering and categorizing mechanisms driving perceptions of meaningfulness. The authors identify seven categories of key mechanisms explaining the processes through which work becomes meaningful. The mechanisms include authenticity, self-efficacy, self-esteem, purpose, belongingness, transcendence, and cultural and interpersonal sensemaking (see Table 2 for the categories, the corresponding mechanisms and descriptions). By reviewing prior research, the authors provide convincing support for their claims regarding the seven categories of mechanisms of meaning. With exception of the last category, all categories tend to focus on the psychological processes underlying the experience of meaningfulness, as opposed to the processes underlying the construction of meaning. Since this thesis addresses meaningfulness instead of meaning construction, the last category does not apply. Analysing the sources and mechanisms of meaningfulness in pursuit of fundamental underlying patterns allowed Rosso et al. (2010) to develop a credible theoretical framework that proposes four main pathways to meaningful work (Appendix B). The two dimensions of the framework are key to the creation of meaningful work. The dimensions are the agency-communion distinction and the self-others distinction. The latter is, among others, based on theory by Lips-Wiersma and Morris (2009). At the intersections of the dimensions, meaningful work is most likely to be experienced. While it has not yet been empirically tested, this framework seems promising as the underlying analysis is based on a large body of research.

The four quadrants or pathways that form this theoretical framework are: individuation, self-connection, contribution and unification. A closer look at one of the pathways, Contribution, shows that it reflects ‘the meaningfulness of actions perceived as significant and/or done in service of something greater than the self.’ (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 115). The Contribution pathway consists of the following categories and mechanisms: self-efficacy (perceived impact), purpose (significance), and transcendence (interconnection and self-abnegation). In more detail, the last mechanism refers to ‘connecting or superseding the ego to an entity greater than the self or beyond the material world’ (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 112). Many other definitions on this topic exist. For example, Ashforth and Pratt (2003, p. 322) emphasize the role of organizations in fostering transcendence by providing strong linkages ‘between who we are, what we do, and why we are here in this context, while simultaneously connecting workers to something greater than themselves, their tasks, or perhaps even the organization for which they work’. Based on research on the transcendence mechanism, Rosso et al. (2010) distinguished two sub-mechanisms, namely, self-abnegation and interconnection. The latter is referred to as follows (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 112): ‘meaningfulness that results from connecting or contributing to something outside of or greater than the tangible self’. This description roughly corresponds with one of the dimensions of meaningful work, ‘service to others’, as put forth by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012). A comparable dimension is recognizable in the so called greater good motivations-dimension, which is defined as ‘the

desire to make a positive impact on the greater good’, reflecting ‘commonly held ideas that work is meaningful if it has an impact on others’ (Steger et al., 2012, p. 4). This remark shows that this mechanism somewhat overlaps with the dependent variable. Scholars have not yet addressed this flaw.

In summary, the theoretical framework by Rosso et al. (2010) is comprehensive and well-substantiated. Therefore, this thesis uses these conceptualizations of the mechanisms of meaning and the pathways to meaningful work. Furthermore, it is concluded that the mechanisms in the Contribution pathway are conceptually fitting. Despite the fact that the mechanisms are not quite conceptually distinctive, the review by Rosso et al. (2010) does provide an illuminating perspective on mechanisms of meaning existing in literature. Consequently, whilst these insights are not useful in the sense that this thesis could use it deductively, the mechanisms can be used inductively as sensitizing concepts.

Mechanisms of meaning	Description of mechanism
1. Authenticity	‘alignment between one’s behaviour and perceptions of the “true” self [...] shape [...] meaningfulness because they enable individuals to maintain consistency with valued attitudes, beliefs, values, and identities while working’
1.1 Self-concordance	‘people believe they are behaving consistently with their interests and values [...]. This sense of self-connectedness can be deeply meaningful because it promotes feelings of internal consistency’
1.2 Identity affirmation	‘To the extent that his work affirms or verifies these types of self-conceptions, it is likely to be experienced as a more authentic activation or enactment of his “true” self, and therefore more meaningful’
1.3 Personal engagement	‘if an individual feels engaged or intrinsically motivated by her work, she will be likely to perceive those activities as important and allowing for the expression of her authentic self’
2. Self-efficacy	‘the experience of self-efficacy in or as a consequence of work contributes to meaningfulness because it enables individuals to feel they have the capability and competence to effect change or exercise control in their environment’
2.1 Control or autonomy	‘people have a need to see themselves as capable of exercising free choice and effectively managing their own activities or environments [...] and that these cognitions are meaningful’
2.2 Competence	‘when an individual sees herself learning, growing, and effectively responding to challenges, she is likely to feel more personally competent and efficacious in her work [...]. This felt competences provides a sense of meaning for individuals in their work’
2.3 Perceived impact	‘when individuals feel they are making a difference or having a positive impact on their organizations, work groups, co-workers or other entities beyond the self, they feel more capable of effecting positive change, and thus are more likely to experience greater levels of meaningfulness in their work’
3. Self-esteem	‘feelings of accomplishment or affirmation resulting from work experiences help to fulfil individuals’ motivations for believing they are valuable and worthy individuals’
4. Purpose	‘a sense of directedness and intentionality in life’
4.1 Significance of work	‘an individual doing work she perceives to be important to society or to her community is likely to perceive work as significant and serving a greater purpose, and therefore more meaningful’
4.2 Value systems	‘a set of consistent values shared by a group of people [...]. Acting in accordance

	with these value systems contributes to the meaningfulness of the work’
5. Belongingness	‘drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships’
5.1 Social identification	‘membership in workplace groups produces a sense of shared identities, beliefs, or attributes that are experienced as meaningful to employees because they feel like they belong to something special’
5.2 Interpersonal connectedness	‘feelings of interpersonal closeness in the workplace contribute to a sense of belongingness and togetherness that is experienced as meaningful because these connections feel comforting and supportive’
6. Transcendence	‘work is meaningful when individuals can subordinate themselves to groups, experiences, or entities that transcend the self’
6.1 Interconnection	‘meaningfulness that results from connecting or contributing to something outside of or greater than the tangible self’
6.2 Self-abnegation	‘deliberately subordinating oneself to something external to and/or larger than the self’

Table 2. Sensitizing concepts based on an article by Rosso et al. (2010, pp. 108–112)

2.2. Job Characteristics Theory

Within the field of job (re)design or work design, numerous scholars have developed theories on why job (re)design is significant and how it should be executed. One line of research examines job characteristics. Job or work characteristics are defined as ‘the attributes of the task, job, and social and organizational environment’ by Humphrey et al. (2007, p. 1333). Job characteristics is a key notion to understand, since it is advocated that the design of jobs, and ergo, job characteristics, contribute to workers’ experiences of meaningful work. It is suggested that organizations may enhance workers’ experiences of meaningful work by means of designing jobs that ‘respect individuals’ needs and qualifications’ (Lysova et al., 2019, p. 6). One widely accepted theory on this topic is Job Characteristics Theory, which was first formulated in the 1970’s (Oldham & Hackman, 2010, p. 465):

‘the essence of JCT is that the presence of certain attributes of jobs increases the probability that individuals will find the work meaningful, will experience responsibility for work outcomes, and will have trustworthy knowledge of the results of their work.’

Job Characteristics Theory encompasses five core job characteristics: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and job-based feedback. Table 3 lists the definition of each job characteristic, as put forward by the authors. These definitions are generally accepted, and this thesis adopts these definitions. Other authors refer to this set of job characteristics as motivational characteristics (Humphrey et al., 2007). Strong results demonstrate that the first three job characteristics contribute to meaningfulness of work (Humphrey et al., 2007; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). Meaningfulness of work is one of the three psychological states that mediate the relation between the job characteristics and work outcomes (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The other two psychological states are ‘experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work’ and ‘knowledge of the actual results of the work activities’. This hypothesis is contradicted by the findings of Fried and Ferris (1987) whose data suggest that experienced meaningfulness and experienced responsibility can be integrated into one dimension.

The authors show that task identity has a stronger relationship with experienced responsibility compared to experienced meaningfulness. The four work outcomes Oldham and Hackman (1976) indicated are ‘high internal work motivation’, ‘high quality work performance’, ‘high satisfactions with the work’ and ‘low absenteeism and turnover’. Furthermore, the researchers incorporate the moderating effect of individuals’ growth need strength. This moderates at both links; in other words, it moderates between job characteristics and psychological states as well as between psychological states and work outcomes, except for absenteeism.

Oldham and Hackman claim that high internal work motivation or intrinsic motivation should be the highest when a) the job is high on at least one of the first three dimensions; b) the job is high on autonomy; and c) the job is high on feedback. More recent research clarifies that all motivational characteristics impact work outcomes through experienced meaningfulness (Humphrey et al., 2007). Another significant statement is that the relationships among job characteristics, psychological states and work outcomes are generally proven to be consistent across cultures (Oldham & Hackman, 2010).

Whilst the Job Characteristics Model may be assumed to be quite traditional, it is still relevant as can be seen by recent research elaborating on this theory (e.g., Allan, 2017; Humphrey et al., 2007; Simonet & Castille, 2020). Although recent extensions of this model gather noteworthy findings, this thesis will solely deal with the job characteristics as put forward by Hackman and Oldham.

All in all, job characteristics is a particularly useful notion for this study, since it is widely acknowledged, and prior research has clearly linked it to meaningful work.

Job characteristic	Definition
<i>Skill variety</i>	‘The degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, which involve the use of a number of different skills and talents of the person.’
<i>Task identity</i>	‘The degree to which the job requires completion of a "whole" and identifiable piece of work; that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome.’
<i>Task significance</i>	‘The degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether in the immediate organization or in the external environment.’
<i>Autonomy</i>	‘The degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out.’
<i>Job-based feedback</i>	‘The degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance.’

Table 3. Job characteristics, based on definitions of Hackman and Oldham (1976, pp. 257–258)

2.3. Green jobs

Various terms are used to describe “green jobs”, the most common are “green occupations” (Schnoor, 2009), “green-collar job” (Hendricks et al., 2009) and “green collar workers” (Peters, 2014). These terms

are often used interchangeably and without precision. Furthermore, the current literature lacks a general consensus on the definition of green jobs. One definition of the term “green jobs” is put forward by Hendricks et al. (2009, p. 230): occupations in which individuals ‘enhance environmental quality, build a vibrant clean-energy economy’. The authors highlight the fact that green jobs are blue- and white-collar alike. A somewhat different definition is provided by Jones (2008, p. 1) as this definition solely concentrates on blue-collar employment ‘that has been upgraded to better respect the environment’. Blue-collar workers do physical, manual work as opposed to white-collar workers who work in offices (van Dale, 2006). The United Nations Environment Programme views green jobs as ‘positions in agriculture, manufacturing, construction, installation, and maintenance, as well as scientific and technical, administrative and service-related activities, that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality’ (Renner et al., 2008, pp. 35–36). This definition includes green ‘white-collar’ jobs and green ‘blue-collar’ jobs.

The emergence of the term green collar jobs is difficult to pinpoint and is difficult to attribute to one source. It is often thought that the term ‘green collar jobs’ was first coined by Alan Durning, who wrote a book in 1999 on the transition from timber-dependent economies to other economic activities. Nevertheless, in 1992 a journal already published an article on green jobs and introduced a range of green jobs (Gray, 2009). The term took on further meaning in 2004 as a result of a study by Raquel Pinderhughes (2007, p. 2), who defines it as: ‘blue collar jobs in green businesses – that is, manual labor jobs in businesses whose products and services directly improve environmental quality’. She further found that green jobs provide workers with ‘meaningful work’ (Pinderhughes, 2007, p. 4). The most widely recognized person to have championed the term green collar is Van Jones (2008), who wrote a bestseller using this term in the title. As mentioned above, he focuses on blue collar employment. The preceding discussion demonstrates that the meaning of green jobs has changed over the years. Yet, to date, there appears to be little consensus on what the term green jobs actually means. As a generally accepted definition is lacking, this thesis adopts the above stated definition of Hendricks et al. (2009) and adheres to the inclusion of both blue- and white-collar jobs.

Furthermore, little academic research has been carried out to relate this concept to other fields, such as Positive Organizational Scholarship. Whilst the concept is barely discussed in recent literature, it may be argued that the conceptualization of green jobs demonstrates a relevant development on the labour market. CBS (2018) reports a declining number of traditional jobs in the energy industry and an increasing number of green jobs. An increase in employment opportunities within the (renewable) energy sector could be attributed to developments in the last decade, such as climate change and the energy transition (Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013; Fankhaeser et al., 2008; OECD Green Growth Studies, 2014). Fighting climate change necessitates an increase in green jobs employment. Political will is crucial for the formulation and implementation of policies that stimulate green jobs growth (e.g., Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013; Fankhaeser et al., 2008).

Few scholars have put effort in understanding the attributes of green jobs. One aspect that has

been explored is how green jobs vary in greenness. Researchers established that because only very few jobs solely consist of green tasks, 'the term 'green' should be considered a continuum rather than a binary characteristic' (Bowen et al., 2018, p. 264). This is corroborated by the finding that green jobs differ in terms of number, use and relevance of green tasks (Peters, 2014). This researcher gathered his findings, while developing a categorization of green jobs. While a categorization of green jobs has some merit, the value of such 'scaling' or 'shading' typologies is criticized by scholars as 'the greenness of jobs may differ over time and place' (Pettinger, 2017, p. 4).

Although no empirical research connecting Job Characteristic Theory to green jobs has been found, the theory serves as an appropriate background for examining green jobs, as demonstrated by Robertson and Barling (2015). These authors provide a useful line of reasoning in which they associate this theory with environmental jobs, which are similar to green 'white-collar' jobs. They suggest that high values on all job characteristics serve to increase the experienced meaningfulness of work. 'For the environmentally committed employee, meaningful work provides an important opportunity to express their environmental values or act in value-consistent ways' (Robertson & Barling, 2015, p. 110). High skill variety allows employees 'to engage in different types of workplace pro-environmental behaviour' (Robertson & Barling, 2015, p. 109). Similarly, high task identity and high task significance exist because 'as employees work through each stage of a project from start to finish, they may develop in-depth knowledge of their work activities allowing them to take initiative to act in environmentally friendly ways' (Robertson & Barling, 2015, p. 110). They further argue that high autonomy allows employees to have control over work processes, resulting in more opportunities and increased self-efficacy to engage in pro-environmental behaviour. With respect to job-based feedback, the authors distinguish feedback on job performance and feedback regarding the ecological sustainability of one's work. While the latter would encourage employees to engage in pro-environmental behaviour, the former would decrease attention to environmental behaviour. Based on the preceding reasoning, it is proposed that green 'white-collar' jobs have high values on all five job characteristics and that the job characteristics of these jobs positively contribute to the experienced meaningfulness of work. For green 'blue-collar' workers to have a meaningful work experience, a) the job is high on at least one of the first three job characteristics; b) the job is high on autonomy; and c) the job is high on feedback. However, it is plausible that they have a lower score on autonomy because blue-collar work is characterized by hierarchical management (Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004). Blue-collar work is further considered as repetitive work activities, requiring a low variety of skills (Gibson & Papa, 2000). Still, task significance is likely to be high, as one study proves that blue-collar workers think that 'all work is valuable and important' (Lucas, 2011, p. 366). Job characteristics of green 'blue-collar' jobs most likely negatively contribute to the experienced meaningfulness of work due to a lack of autonomy.

2.4. Relation between job characteristics and meaningful work

Unsurprisingly, work elicits a broad range of perceptions and experiences, from an obligatory necessity

to support oneself to a source of happiness (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). How people experience work may be derived from ‘intrinsic qualities of the work itself, the goal, the values, and beliefs that the work is thought to serve, or the organizational community within which the work is embedded’ (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, p. 311). This explains why, historically, scholars have focused their efforts on discovering the sources of varied experiences. The question whether the meaningfulness of work is shaped internally (within the individual) or externally (by the job, the organization or the environment) results in an ongoing debate in the literature, which has led to support for both views. A good illustration of research on external determinants of meaningful work is Job Characteristics Theory by Hackman and Oldham (see Paragraph 2.2). The validity of this theory is corroborated by a recent study (see Allan et al., 2019). Another recent study proves that task significance is related to work carried out in and with the service of others (purpose) and task variety, feedback, and autonomy likely promote meaning by expressing and cultivating the self (realization) (Simonet & Castille, 2020). This shows how job characteristics can be an external source of meaningfulness at work.

Unlike Hackman and Oldham, Wrzesniewski (2003) strongly argues that meaningful work is shaped internally in individuals’ minds. Job Crafting Theory by Berg, Dutton and Wrzesniewski (2013, p. 81) elaborates on this and defines job crafting as ‘the process of employees redefining and reimagining their job designs in personally meaningful ways’. This concept considers employees as capable of proactively reframing the boundaries of their job descriptions to find deeper meaning in work. This theory has some merit, particularly due to the logic that individuals are not passive but can take on an active role in coming to view their work as more meaningful. Yet, other scholars point out that a well-designed job functions as a basic premise for how people come to view their work and that their (job-crafting) behaviour is a result of such organizational practices (Lysova et al., 2019). Thus, in spite of recent findings on the role of job crafting in viewing work as more meaningful (Berg et al., 2013), scholars such as Pratt and Ashforth (2003) underline the role of organizational practices in fostering meaningfulness. A notable example of a subset of practices to foster meaningfulness in working is job redesign. Regardless of the value of job crafting, this thesis adheres to the assumption that meaningfulness is shaped externally through, among others, job characteristics (please refer to Paragraph 2.2).

Scholars argue that work becomes meaningful through a set of underlying mechanisms (see Paragraph 2.1.3). At first glance, these mechanisms of meaning appear to be useful. However, the mechanisms put forward by Rosso et al. (2010) have not yet been empirically tested. Also, due to the fact that this field of research is rather young, meta-analyses are still lacking. Meta-analyses tend to clarify definitions, and this would have been helpful to overcome a flaw in the literature on meaningful work. Looking critically at the mechanisms, it seems that aspects of the mechanisms are overlapping with the conceptualization of meaningful work. For example, the meaning of the purpose mechanism bears resemblance to the definition of meaningful work used Lips-Wiersma and Wright’s framework (2012). Similarly, the interconnection mechanism overlaps somewhat with one of the dimensions of Job

Characteristics Theory, namely task significance. Generally, it is desirable that the independent and dependent variables do not overlap with the mechanisms underlying this relationship. While it may seem that these mechanisms are flawed and that this issue is overlooked by the authors, it does at the same time make sense that these concepts overlap. According to the authors, work becomes meaningful to workers when it provides them with sufficient opportunities to experience or enact one or more of the pathways of mechanisms. The mechanisms connect the independent and dependent variables. All in all, the theoretical framework by Rosso et al. (2010) holds significance for this research. As a consequence of the theoretical inadequacy, the mechanisms of meaning are deployed inductively as sensitizing concepts instead of deductively driving the operationalization.

2.5. Conceptual model

The figure below depicts the conceptual model, which is a visual representation of the relation explained in the preceding paragraph. To summarize, this thesis investigates the contribution of job characteristics of green jobs to meaningful work through mechanisms of meaning. The job characteristics included in this research are skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and job-based feedback (Paragraph 2.2). Meaningful work is approached using the Meaningful Work Framework of Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012). The mechanisms underlying this relation are deployed as sensitizing concepts. This conceptual model serves as a sensitizing instrument to guide the research.

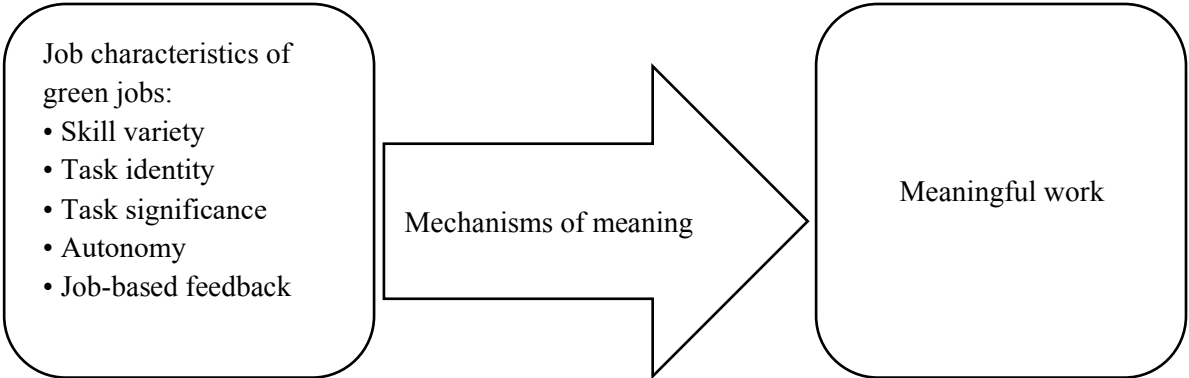


Figure 1. Conceptual model

3. Methodology

This chapter describes the methodological approach employed in this research and it justifies the methodological choices in light of the research question. First, the overall research strategy and the case description are outlined. Subsequently, the data collection method is explained, prior to the operationalization of key concepts and the development of the interview protocol. Then, the fifth paragraph clarifies the data analysis strategy (i.e. interpretation criteria). Finally, the quality criteria that this thesis complied with and certain limitations are discussed, before explicating the research ethics.

3.1. Research strategy

The methodological approach of this thesis is qualitative, since this provides the richest material in a study (Bleijenbergh, 2016). Likewise, the use of interviews enabled the researcher to ask more complex questions and to ask for clarifications and examples. These techniques were important in this study, because in-depth knowledge concerning the relation between job characteristics of green jobs and meaningful work was lacking in the literature. Altogether, the main advantage of qualitative research is that based on a relatively small number of observations the researcher can explain a specific phenomenon in the social reality (Bleijenbergh, 2016). This advantage was particularly useful for this thesis, since the time period was limited, yet the researcher sought to gain sufficient insights to answer the research question. The richness of qualitative data allowed the researcher to develop a well-substantiated and detailed answer.

This study used an inductive reasoning. The objective was to build theory based on the empirical data gathered in this research. As explained in Chapter 2, little research has so far been undertaken on the relationship between the central concepts. Consequently, this thesis used sensitizing concepts to focus the research and to steer the data collection and the data analysis. These sensitizing concepts were inspired by state-of-the-art literature. Indirectly, these sensitizing concepts guided the theory development in Chapter 4. The inductive reasoning underlying this research allowed the researcher to derive theory from the empirical data. Whilst the relationship between the central concepts has received little attention from scholars, this was not the case for the central concepts. For this reason, the concepts of job characteristics and meaningful work were operationalized (please refer to Paragraph 3.4). Based on the collected data, this thesis developed theory on the relationship between job characteristics of green jobs and meaningful work.

The research method underlying this qualitative research is case study research. This ‘aims to explore or explain contemporary real-life situations; in business and management the focus is normally on one organization’ (Myers, 2013, p. 251). Yin (2014) argues in favour of case study research in case of “how” research questions; when controlling behavioural events is undesirable or impossible; and when the focus of the study is a contemporary phenomenon in its real-world context. This corresponds with the objective and research approach of this study. In conclusion, a case study research was deemed the most appropriate research method for this thesis.

3.2. Case description

This thesis used a single-case study, as this allows a researcher to focus efforts on one organization. One of the rationales, described by Yin (2014, p. 154), that make a single-case study an appropriate design is termed ‘revelatory’. While some researchers view a revelatory case as a way to capture a phenomenon previously inaccessible for scientists (Yin, 2014), others view it as a way to develop ‘new insights into an understudied phenomenon’ (Langley & Abdallah, 2011, p. 118). Using the last interpretation, it is clear that in this case a single-case study was appropriate, since this study examined a relation between two concepts with specific attention for green jobs, an area which has received little academic attention. Hence, this single-case study had high revelatory potential with regard to an understudied phenomenon within the domain of Positive Organizational Scholarship. In addition, for this reason, the case specified one condition that had to be met: the recruited organization had to employ green job workers.

This case study took place at Enpuls B.V.. Enpuls is an organization focussing on accelerating the energy transition. Enpuls is funded by and part of Enexis Holding N.V., a grid-operator. In 2019 alone, Enexis invested roughly 13 million euros in Enpuls to ensure further development of energy savings and energy greening initiatives (2019, p. 99). There are virtually no revenues for the costs incurred by Enpuls, causing a negative result. Enpuls’ head office is located at Den Bosch, The Netherlands. Enpuls employs approximately 35 green job workers. It is a relatively small organization with few hierarchical levels and three departments: ‘concepts’, ‘business support’, and ‘health infrastructure’ (see Appendix C). This thesis focuses on the first two. The concepts department consists of three teams: explorers, transition managers, and concept developers.

In general, Enexis aims to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals; in particular, goal 13 Climate Action, is relevant for Enpuls as it attempts to reduce Dutch emissions. According to the annual report of Enexis (2019, p. 8), Enpuls ‘develops a vision regarding sustainable urban planning, efficient energy system and mobility in order to accelerate the energy transition’. This mission lays the foundation for ‘scalable concepts that are transferred to the commercial parties and governments’. These concepts are future-oriented solutions that facilitate a more sustainable society. For example, Enpuls developed a concept named “VvE Zonnecoach”, a homeowners association solar panels coach. This service enables people living in apartment buildings to use solar panels, which was a previous barrier.

In conclusion, this organization is appropriate as case for this research, since the research question focuses on green jobs and everyone working for Enpuls has a green job due to the mission statement and core activities; yet, the degree of greenness differs for concepts jobs and business support jobs. The case study at this organization has provided relevant and valuable insights into the relation between job characteristics of green jobs and meaningful work. As a consequence of the emphasis on job characteristics of green jobs, the main data sources are the individual (green job) employees. Chapter 2 reveals that green jobs can consist of blue- and white-collar workers. Enpuls solely employs white-collar workers to execute the core activities. For the purpose of this thesis, the individual (white-collar) workers with a green job at Enpuls are the unit of data collection as well as the unit of analysis. This

approach makes it a holistic single-case study (Yin, 2014).

3.3. Data collection

Myers (2013) argues that in case study research most evidence comes from interviews and documents. Likewise, in order to formulate an answer to the research question, the data collection method underlying this case study are (open) semi-structured interviews (Bleijenbergh, 2016). Accordingly, the data sources are ten employees of Enpuls (see Table 4 below). The inclusion criterium is that the workers have a so-called green job. Due to the organization's orientation towards accelerating the energy transition, it was concluded that all interviewees have relevant, green jobs and therefore meet the inclusion criterium. Some interviewees are part of the concepts team and others belong to the business support team (please refer to Appendix C for the organization chart). The first four interviewees were gathered through the contact person at Enpuls. The other interviewees were reached through a snowballing sampling technique, since this helped the researcher 'to obtain a critical mass of interview data' (Myers & Newman, 2007, p. 14). A disadvantage is the potential closed circuit of respondents and their perspectives and experiences.

Bleijenbergh (2016) explains that triangulation of data sources entails a systematic comparison between findings resulting from different data sources obtained through the same data collection method, interviews in this case. This thesis incorporates the perspective of different interviewees about the same social phenomenon, since it valued 'the possibility of multiple realities' (Yin, 2014, p. 395). Even though all interviewees have to a certain extent a green job there are differing degrees of green jobs which could result in each interviewee having a 'distinctive meaning or perspective' on the phenomenon (Yin, 2014, p. 395). The main advantages of triangulation of data sources are that the researcher can correct for any bias as a result of these multiple perspectives and that it strengthens the quality of research, especially 'the analysis of the content' (Bleijenbergh, 2016, p. 109).

Given the intended time span of approximately 60 minutes, the interviews can be characterized as 'shorter case study interviews' (Yin, 2014, p. 342). Consequently, the researcher followed the interview protocol more closely (due to time sensitivity). The interview protocol consists of the interview instruction and the interview format (Appendix E and F, respectively). Advantages of using a protocol is the structure and the focus it offers the researcher during the interview; moreover, it helps to maintain consistency across interviews (Bleijenbergh, 2016; Myers, 2013). The latter contributes to the reliability of the data collection. The interview protocol was constructed based on the operationalization of the core concepts (see Paragraph 3.4). All questions were formulated in an unbiased, friendly and nonthreatening manner and leading questions were avoided (Yin, 2014, p. 339). The questions are clearly formulated, free from potential barriers and are open-ended (Bleijenbergh, 2016). To encourage fuller narratives, a few questions ask interviewees to recall specific experiences (Myers, 2013). This brings 'liveliness' into the interview (Evers & de Boer, 2012). The interview format was revised once, after a pre-test was conducted with a green job worker, who is not working for Enpuls. The formulation

of some questions was adjusted and overlap between questions was minimized (Appendix E.2).

Semi-structured interviews are an appropriate data collection method, since pre-formulated questions help to steer the conversation and certain topics can deliberately be addressed and explored in-depth with interviewees (Bleijenbergh, 2016; Evers & de Boer, 2012; Myers, 2013). Two goals of interviews relate to detail and depth. Detail refers to gathering more information on all aspects of a topic and ‘depth is reached by searching for an answer, that transcends the superficial’ (Evers & de Boer, 2012, p. 31). Profound data collection benefits from striving for both goals.

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews allow a researcher to pursue any new questions emerging during an interview; this open-mindedness ensures that interviewees are given the opportunity to provide additional insights during interviews. Semi-structured interviews enable a researcher to follow the intended ‘line of inquiry’ and, simultaneously, to use probes and follow-up questions, when necessary (Evers & de Boer, 2012; Yin, 2014, p. 339). Probes can add to the richness of the information gathered (Evers & de Boer, 2012). In addition, by means of probes, the interviewer encourages ‘nuances’ in the responses of interviewees, to more accurately reflect the reality (Evers & de Boer, 2012).

With permission of interviewees, interviews were taped using a recording device (including a verbal informed consent from the interviewees). To finalize data collection, the recordings were transcribed verbatim (in Dutch), as shown in Appendix G. This enabled the researcher to utilize citations (translated to English), which are more credible than paraphrases (Myers, 2013). After completion of each interview, the researcher created a systematic reflection memo to assess the quality of the interview (Evers & de Boer, 2012). The insights of these observational memos, in Appendix H, were valuable and useful for transcribing and analysing the interviews (Bleijenbergh, 2016).

One last remark concerning the set-up of the data collection, in light of the situation around the coronavirus outbreak it was not possible to collect data face-to-face. Therefore, most interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams. Such a video-calling platform is seen as a useful, flexible alternative to face-to-face interviews and it resolved the place limitations (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Io Iacono et al., 2016). Furthermore, video-calling allowed the researcher to notice (non-)verbal cues, which could provide a similar authenticity level with in-person interviews (Janghorban et al., 2014). Depending on how reserved an interviewee was, establishing rapport through video-calling was challenging (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Io Iacono et al., 2016). Especially for a sensitive topic such as meaningful work, building a trusting relationship between interviewer and interviewee is vital for a good exchange of information (Evers & de Boer, 2012). To ensure a methodological sound data collection, the researcher asked interviewees prior to the interview to pick a quiet environment free from distractions, which strengthened attempts of the researcher to create an atmosphere of confidence (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Evers & de Boer, 2012). ‘This enhances the probability that the respondent will share important information, and that this information corresponds to reality. This again stimulates the validity of [the] research.’ (Evers & de Boer, 2012, p. 50).

Respondent	Function title	Department	Interview duration
<i>Respondent 1</i>	Innovation analyst	Not applicable	60 minutes
<i>Respondent 2</i>	Organization consultant	Business support	70 minutes
<i>Respondent 3</i>	Office manager	Business support	80 minutes
<i>Respondent 4</i>	Concept developer	Concept development	60 minutes
<i>Respondent 5</i>	Consultant	Business support	60 minutes
<i>Respondent 6</i>	Business support manager	Business support	65 minutes
<i>Respondent 7</i>	Explorer	Explorers	85 minutes
<i>Respondent 8</i>	Business analyst	Business support	70 minutes
<i>Respondent 9</i>	Manager concept development	Concept development	70 minutes
<i>Respondent 10</i>	Concept developer	Concept development	60 minutes
<i>Respondent 11</i>	Manager explorers	Explorers	65 minutes

Table 4. List of interviewees (the pre-test was conducted with respondent 1)

3.4. Operationalization

The following two subparagraphs operationalize the abstract central concepts, job characteristics and meaningful work, in such a fashion that they are empirically measurable. The operationalization relies on existing academic literature (Bleijenbergh, 2016). Finally, the last subparagraph outlines the sensitizing concepts used to inductively approach the relationship between both central concepts.

3.4.1. Operationalization of job characteristics

As shown in Paragraph 2.2, this thesis adopts the theoretical definition of job characteristics by Humphrey et al. (2007), which is in line with the Job Characteristics Theory by Hackman and Oldham (2010). Tuning this definition to the case results in the formulation of operational or stipulative definitions (Bleijenbergh, 2016). In this thesis, the variable job characteristics is understood as *'the attributes of the task, job, and social and organizational environment within green jobs at Enpuls'*. This variable encompasses five dimensions. The theoretical definition of each dimension, in Paragraph 2.2, is tuned to the case, as displayed in Table 5. For each dimension, a set of indicators is developed, based on the Job Diagnostics Survey (Hackman & Oldham, 1974). This quantitative survey was intended for diagnosing jobs. Therefore, the survey questions serve as a useful foundation for establishing the indicators for this research. The authors did not provide any definitions of the items and consequently, this thesis does not provide any stipulative definitions. The indicators are empirically observable by means of the formulated interview questions. Table 6 illustrates the tree structure for this variable.

Job characteristic	Definition
Skill variety	<i>'The degree to which a green job at Enpuls requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, which involve the use of a number of different skills and talents of the person.'</i>
Task identity	<i>'The degree to which a green job at Enpuls requires completion of a "whole" and identifiable piece of work; that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome.'</i>
Task significance	<i>'The degree to which a green job at Enpuls has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether in the immediate organization or in the external'</i>

	<i>environment. This could also be in terms of an environmental and ecological impact.'</i>
Autonomy	<i>'The degree to which a green job at Enpuls provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the green job worker in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out.'</i>
Job-based feedback	<i>'The degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the green job results in the green job worker obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance at Enpuls.'</i>

Table 5. Stipulative definition of the job characteristics' dimensions

Dimensions	Indicators	Items
<i>Skill variety</i>	Different work activities	What are your daily work activities? - What does your day look like?
	Use of multiple, complex skills	What skills do you need for doing your job?
	Repetitive activities	How varied is your job? - Many repetitive activities?
<i>Task identity</i>	Complete set of activities (from beginning to end)	To what extent does your job involve doing a "whole" and identifiable piece of work? I.e. is your job a complete piece of work with an obvious beginning and end? Or is it a small part of the overall work and is it finished by other people?
	Job design: finish what you start	
<i>Task significance</i>	Job impacts lives or well-being of other people	How does your job influence other people's lives? - With respect to colleagues? - And with respect to clients?
		How does your job contribute to the well-being of people, in terms of reducing the environmental impact?
<i>Autonomy</i>	Decisions on how to do the job	To what extent do you have the freedom to make your own decisions on how to do your job?
	Independence and freedom	
	Personal initiative	
<i>Job-based feedback</i>	Job provides information on performance	How do you know that you are doing well or poorly at your job? - Besides through feedback of your supervisor or colleagues, how do tasks provide you with feedback?

Table 6. Tree structure of the job characteristics variable

3.4.2. Operationalization of meaningful work

As stated in Paragraph 2.1, this thesis adopts the theoretical definition of meaningful work by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012). Tuning this to the current case, this thesis understands meaningful work as *'a green job worker at Enpuls individually and subjectively experiences his or her work as meaningful in terms of the existential significance or purpose of work'*. This variable encompasses four dimensions (the first four in Table 7), and this variable seeks to balance the tensions between Being and Doing as well as Self and Others. Furthermore, Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, p. 661) argue in favour of including the dimensions reality and inspiration, which are 'inherent to the structure of being'. The theoretical definition of each dimension (in Paragraph 2.1.2) is tuned to the case in Table 7. For each dimension, a set of indicators is developed, based on the Meaningful Work Scale (Lips-Wiersma &

Wright, 2012). This quantitative measure was developed to approach meaningful work as a subject with multiple sources of meaning. Because the survey is grounded in qualitative research, the scholars were able to develop specific and appropriate questions. In conclusion, this precise and comprehensive scale was deemed the most suitable basis for formulating indicators. Since no detailed indicators are provided in this scale, this thesis uses the survey questions as foundation to formulate indicators and these are empirically observable by means of the formulated interview questions. Stipulative definitions of the indicators are not included because theoretical definitions are not provided by the researchers.

Dimensions of meaningful work	Stipulative definitions
Developing and becoming the inner self	<i>'Depending on one's worldview, green job workers at Enpuls can simply want to be a good person, or the best she or he can be'</i>
Unity with others	<i>'the meaningfulness of working together with other human beings, as experienced by green job workers at Enpuls'</i>
Expressing full potential	<i>'the meaningfulness of expressing talents, creativity and having a sense of achievement, as experienced by green job workers at Enpuls'</i>
Service to others	<i>'the meaningfulness of making a contribution to the well-being of others (and the world we live in), from helping an individual to making a difference in the wider world, as experienced by green job workers at Enpuls'</i>
Ongoing tensions between "Being" and "Doing"	<i>'examining one's work as a green job worker at Enpuls, while also focussing on getting things done'</i>
Ongoing tensions between "Self" and "Others"	<i>'the ongoing challenge of green job workers at Enpuls to meet the needs of the self, while also meeting the needs of others'</i>
Inspiration	<i>'the need for hope of green job workers at Enpuls'</i>
Reality	<i>'the need to face reality of green job workers at Enpuls'</i>

Table 7. Stipulative definitions of meaningful work dimensions

Dimensions	Indicators	Items
<i>Developing and becoming the inner self</i>	Sense of what is right and wrong	How does your work influence how you are at work? - How would you describe the difference between how you are at work and at home? - In your work, how can you act upon what you feel is right and wrong?
	Like who you become at work	
	Being yourself at work	
<i>Unity with others</i>	Sense of belonging	How meaningful is for you your cooperation with your colleagues? - How do you feel that you belong in your team? - What do you enjoy about working together? - To what extent do you and your colleagues support each other?
	Enjoy working together	
	Support and reassure each other	
	Be open about values and talk about what matters	
<i>Expressing full potential</i>	Make a difference that matters to others	In what way do you make a difference with your work that matters to others?
	Experience sense of achievement	How gives your work you a sense of achievement?

	Excited by available opportunities	How makes being excited about opportunities to develop yourself your work meaningful?
	Create and apply new ideas or concepts	How makes being able to create and apply new ideas or concepts your work meaningful?
<i>Service to others</i>	What we do is worthwhile	What makes your work meaningful for you?
	Contribute to products/ services that enhance human well-being and/or the environment	- What gives you the feeling that what you do is worthwhile?
	Truly help customers/clients	- What do you feel when you help customers/clients? - What contributions does your work make to human well-being? - And regarding the environment?
<i>Ongoing tensions between Being-Doing and Self-Others</i>	Time and space to think	How is the balance at your work between focussing on getting things done and noticing how people are feeling?
	Balance between focussing on getting things done and noticing how people are feeling	- How frequently do you have time and space to think about this?
	Balance between the needs of others and own needs	What is the balance between your need to meet your own needs and the need to meet the needs of others?
<i>Reality</i>	Face up to reality	How do you at work face and handle reality?
	Tolerant of being human	
	Recognize that life is messy and that is OK	
<i>Inspiration</i>	Feel inspired at work	What role does your work play in feeling inspired?
	The work enables employees to feel hopeful about the future	- How does your work make you feel hopeful about the future?
	The vision which employees collectively work towards inspires them	- How does Enpuls' vision inspire you?
	Sense of spiritual connection with the work	- Do you experience a sense of spiritual connection with your work?

Table 8. Tree structure of the meaningful work variable

3.4.3. Sensitizing concepts

As explained in Paragraph 2.1, a lack of specification of attributes of the mechanisms of meaning is a serious conceptual shortcoming vis-à-vis the possibility of deductively operationalizing the mechanisms (Blumer, 1954). Consequently, the relationship between the two central concepts was approached inductively using sensitizing concepts because these offered guidance to the researcher in collecting and analysing empirical data, serving as starting points and suggesting directions on where to look for (Bowen, 2006). The sensitizing concepts used in this thesis are the six mechanisms of meaning as described by Rosso et al. (2010): authenticity, self-efficacy, self-esteem, purpose, belongingness, and transcendence. This thesis employed the descriptive meanings of the sensitizing concepts as detailed in Table 2.

3.5. Data analysis

The data analysis procedure deployed in this research is template analysis, using the “Gioia Method” (Langley & Abdallah, 2011). Template analysis is a ‘thematic analysis that balances a relatively high degree of structure in the process of analysing textual data with the flexibility to adapt it to the needs of a particular study’ (King, 2012, p. 2). According to Langley & Abdallah (2011, p. 109), this is most appropriate for ‘a single case chosen for its revelatory potential and richness of data’, using ‘real-time interviews’ and this gains trustworthiness through member checks and triangulation. In other words, the Gioia Method specifically appreciates revelatory single-case studies. The Gioia Method is driven by an interpretative epistemological approach, which fits well with the overall research. The Gioia Method deploys ‘a disciplined coding and analysis process’, resulting in ‘a hierarchical “data structure”’ (Langley & Abdallah, 2011, p. 119). To arrive at this, an iterative process of constant comparison of data and codes is deployed. While the Gioia Method does not explicitly advocate the use of a priori themes, it was useful to capture this in the initial template (Appendix J), which also included the sensitizing concepts. In this way, the initial template guided the data analysis. Template analysis is characterized by being somewhere in the middle of both a top-down approach and a bottom-up approach to a coding process (King, 2012); this fits the inductive nature of this study. Keeping the a priori themes in mind, the researcher first started with iteratively ‘open coding’ the transcripts using the words of interviewees (Appendix K). Secondly, through comparison of the data the researcher sought for a higher level of abstraction. The researcher grouped the open codes into first-order concepts and second-order themes and integrated this in the final template, shown in Appendix L (Langley & Abdallah, 2011). In such an iterative process a ‘chain of evidence’ is useful and this process is captured using a computer-assisted tool, called Atlas-Ti (Yin, 2014, p. 387), shown in Appendix M.

Throughout the data analysis, the researcher kept the sensitizing concepts in mind. After coding fragments related to mechanisms, the researcher used the set of mechanisms of meaning as a way to examine and interpret the data. First, the researcher paid attention to the mechanisms included in the pathway that were deemed most applicable to the case. Subsequently, because meaningful work is most likely to be experienced through a combination of two or more pathways, according to the developers of the framework, the other mechanisms were used more extensively as sensitizing concepts. In this manner, from the data theory emerged.

3.6. Quality criteria

Guba and Lincoln were the first to suggest a set of quality criteria to assess qualitative research (Symon & Cassell, 2012): credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These quality criteria are applied to this research and considerations concerning these criteria have guided research decisions. These also fit particularly well with the Gioia Method (Langley & Abdallah, 2011). The first criterium is met when ‘the researcher tries to demonstrate a good fit between “constructed realities of respondents

and reconstructions attributed to them” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 237, as cited in Symon & Cassell, 2012, Chapter 12). This was mostly achieved through progressive subjectivity, in terms of member checking and a research diary (Appendix I and N, respectively). The second criterium, transferability, is achieved through a ‘thick description’ of the case which enables readers of this thesis to evaluate whether this research may be useful for their own situation. The third criterium, dependability, is satisfied by means of a research diary which captures methodological changes and the emergent refinement of understanding. The last criterium, confirmability, becomes most apparent in this chapter: it provides a detailed account of how data were gathered and transformed into the findings.

Given the data collection, some limitations became evident. This study only focused on interviews. While some documents were provided by the organization, due to their confidential nature the documents could only serve as background information. Including (more) documents and observations would have increased the quality of the research. Another limitation is a result of the situation around the coronavirus outbreak. Video-calling interviews provide valuable insights; yet, non-verbal cues are more difficult to recognize. Furthermore, literature points to some obstacles in video-calling interviews, such as difficulties to establish rapport (Io Iacono et al., 2016).

3.7. Research ethics

The researcher has executed this entire research with integrity. The researcher took several measures to ensure the ethical quality. For one, the researcher read the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018). Five principles or virtues can be subsumed under this code of conduct: honesty, scrupulousness, transparency, independence and responsibility. The code of conduct entails 61 standards for good research practices. The researcher embraced these principles and standards to the extent that these were applicable to the research. Consequently, upholding these standards had methodological implications. For example, the researcher covered certain scientific ethical standards in the interview protocol. Regarding confidentiality and anonymity, the interviewees were informed beforehand that the interview content, the recording and the transcript were handled confidentially and anonymously. Names were coded using a name key and were not included in the transcript nor in the report. In addition, interviewees were informed that citations could be used in the research, but in such a manner that they are not easily traceable to the interviewees. The interview protocol further detailed that the interviewees were to be informed on the research aim, the research method, their (voluntary) efforts (e.g., time and information) and the possibility to withdraw. The interviewees were also instructed that the interview transcripts would be shared with them afterwards to check for mistakes (i.e. member check). Data like transcripts and recordings are saved offline. Furthermore, the researcher signed an integrity form in which she promises to comply with the university’s integrity standards (please refer to Appendix P). Finally, the researcher reflected in the last chapter on any ethical issues she encountered during the research and clarified how she dealt with them.

4. Data analysis

This chapter outlines the theory that emerged from the data. This chapter discusses the findings in the following order: first, it elaborates on each dimension of meaningful work; then, it discusses each dimension of job characteristics and how it relates to meaningful work; lastly, it explains how job characteristics of green jobs contribute to meaningful work through the mechanisms of meaning.

4.1. Meaningful work

4.1.1. Developing and becoming the inner self

This dimension refers to one's desire to be a good person. All green job workers at Enpuls (hereafter referred to as "worker") indicate that they can be themselves; there is nearly no difference between how they behave at work and at home. They indicate that they can be themselves because they do not have to spend energy on behaving differently than normally, nor have to take expectations or unwritten rules into account. Workers argue that they can be themselves because they feel free to decide on how to do their job. Being oneself is considered as very valuable by workers, as demonstrated in the citation below.

'I worked at other companies before and the fact that, at Enpuls, I can now be myself is worth its weight in gold. At this company, we work hard to just be yourself, regardless of your position and your role, and I also contribute to this. And that gives you so much, so much confidence, peace of mind, to do good things.' (respondent 6)

Workers perceive being oneself at work not only as valuable but also argue that it 'results in a high degree of job satisfaction' (respondent 11). Nevertheless, a few respondents do state that they adapt their behaviour and actions to suit their professional role better. However, the findings are not sufficiently robust to draw any conclusions on whether they feel a pressure to alter the self and the impact this may have on the meaningfulness of their work.

Workers like who they become at work because they can live up to their need to work for a socially relevant purpose. They are strongly driven to contribute to a sustainable future, exemplified by one explorer's claim that he 'would also do this [work] if Enpuls didn't exist' (respondent 7). Workers generally feel that their work allows them to contribute to a higher purpose, resulting in a meaningful experience. Furthermore, workers feel that they become their higher selves at work, especially those who initially were not intrinsically driven. Ever since they started working at Enpuls, they feel like they 'fight for a higher purpose' (respondent 6). Especially, colleagues' dedication and enthusiasm regarding the acceleration of the energy transition makes workers want to become a better person.

Concerning dealing with a sense of right and wrong, all respondents feel the room to speak out on matters related to their norms and values. No one feels hindered to speak up and they feel encouraged to have discussions, as the citation below shows.

'Enpuls is best characterized as an organization where a lot, practically everything, can be discussed. So, the moment you don't like something or think it is wrong, we challenge each other,

or we invite each other to just discuss it. (respondent 11)

This is in line with the statement of respondent 3 that they strive for a speak-up culture. Workers feel respected when expressing their opinion. They know that their opinion is not always followed through. While some feel that depending on their role in the conversation it is better to keep their opinion to themselves, others indicate that they can always offer their opinion. However, if they are truly reluctant, they are not afraid to voice their opinions: ‘So if there are things that I really don't want to, then that's really not going to happen.’ (respondent 4).

In conclusion, the data reveal that workers experience their work as meaningful to the extent that they can be themselves, that they like who they become, that they can become their higher selves and that they can deal with a sense of right and wrong and can speak freely about this.

4.1.2. Unity with others

This dimension refers to the meaningfulness of working together with others. Workers highlight the meaningfulness of working together with colleagues and feeling united with them.

One of the indicators of this dimension, ‘being open about values’, is an extension of the last indicator ‘sense of right and wrong’ in the previous paragraph. Workers are confident in sharing their perspective and personal values. There is room for discussion, which is considered as very important by workers. Everyone feels heard, listened to, respected and appreciated; everyone accepts that it is not the intention to reach a consensus. All managers view ‘open dialogue’ as key (respondent 11), because if everyone trusts that they can speak freely, this allows ‘everyone [to have] their say and it works out best’ (respondent 6). However, a few respondents feel considerably hindered in how freely they can voice their positions on sustainable issues. Explanations include that they ‘don't want to kill the buzz’ (respondent 7) and ‘don't always [want to] comment critically on everything’ (respondent 5). Both respondents sometimes feel ‘impeded by [the] bubble in which [they] find [them]selves’ (respondent 5). Thus, although sustainability is a shared value among workers (see Paragraph 4.1.7), this can also prevent some workers from experiencing this aspect of their work as meaningful. Still, every employee really feels capable of freely discussing their values and finds this possibility meaningful.

Regarding the frequency workers talk about what matters to them, workers use weekly or monthly conversations with their manager. More frequently, they speak to direct colleagues during ‘team meetings’ (respondent 2) or ‘desk conversations’ (respondent 5). To illustrate, they speak daily about important matters to substantiate certain conceptual choices. Respondent 9 adds: ‘Perhaps not as a primary topic of conversation, but this is often exposed in a discussion.’ Remarkably, the data show that the frequency of talking about important topics is not a meaningful aspect of work.

With regards to what workers find meaningful and enjoy about working together, two aspects become apparent from the data. First, workers show appreciation for perspectives or ideas emerging from discussions with colleagues, as demonstrated by the citation below.

‘I sometimes say: alone you go faster, together you go further. The moment you collaborate

with people you get different insights and then it is not just your own frame of reference. That's why I find it valuable to get visions from different people.' (respondent 4)

To them, these kinds of conversations make their collaboration energizing, valuable and meaningful. Second, workers emphasize the crucial role their colleagues play in sharpening ideas. At the same time, workers enjoy assuming this role: 'devising other perspectives, new lenses - thinking about this is very cool - and taking other people along, and if that succeeds, it makes me very happy.' (respondent 11). In conclusion, the data demonstrate that workers experience working with colleagues as meaningful.

Concerning supporting and reassuring colleagues, the vast majority of workers experience sufficient support from their colleagues. Three types of support can be distinguished from the data. First, besides providing each other with valuable perspectives, workers enjoy the feeling of mutually inspiring each other (see Paragraph 4.1.7). They also appreciate explaining things to colleagues and learning from them (see Paragraph 4.1.3). Second, almost everyone interviewed feels glad to help colleagues professionally as well as emotionally; however, some set the condition that they only help colleagues they like. Helping colleagues makes work meaningful to workers: 'It makes me happy if I can help people' (respondent 8). Finally, some respondents note how they like to pass their positive view on work and life on to colleagues. All three types of support represent ways in which working with colleagues becomes meaningful to workers.

Workers experience a strong sense of belonging, especially with regards to their direct colleagues and own team. 'You really notice that it is a tight team; there is this team spirit.' (respondent 8). Workers derive this sense of belonging from 'a thank you' (respondent 5), 'a look of satisfaction' (respondent 6), 'personal comments' (respondent 7), 'compliments [and] feedback' (respondent 6), and 'recognition' (respondent 9) from their colleagues about their work and input. When asked about what gives him a sense of belonging, a concept developer replies (respondent 4): 'People's appreciation for what you do [...] and the feedback you receive, that they are happy that I am on the team.' From the data it is clear that people derive meaningfulness from working together with colleagues and especially from the appreciation colleagues show towards them. The latter becomes also evident when colleagues ask for help on a particular topic. When colleagues are aware of a colleague's specific skills or knowledge and explicitly ask this person for help, this person derives meaningfulness from this.

'You notice that people quickly find you for certain types of questions. [...] I have the idea, at least in my area, that people know how to find you and appreciate you for what you can contribute.' (respondent 8)

This citation exemplifies situations in which workers feel that their input is valuable and cherished by their colleagues. This results in a strong sense of belonging, which strengthens the perceived meaningfulness of work.

In summary, workers experience the meaningfulness of unity with colleagues. The possibility of being open about their norms and values, the aspects of joyful collaborations, the mutual support and the strong sense of belonging all enhance the workers' meaningful work experience.

4.1.3. Expressing full potential

This dimension refers to the meaningfulness of expressing creativity and having a sense of achievement. To begin with, workers feel like they can be creative in terms of creating and applying new ideas. It is true that this is a key part of the jobs of explorers, consultants and concept developers, but it is equally true that business support team members and managers also experience the possibility to create and apply new ideas in their work. Workers relate creating and applying new ideas to both the content of their job (i.e. developing new concepts or coming up with an out-of-the-box solution to an organizational issue) and to the process of how they do their job (i.e. using different approaches). To illustrate, one explorer clarifies that his job becomes worthwhile because he can express his creative abilities in his job (respondent 7). The data reveal the applicability of the theory by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012) to green jobs in that workers experience the meaningfulness of expressing creativity.

Workers derive a meaningful sense of achievement from multiple aspects in their work. Workers express a clear feeling of pride from (in)directly contributing to a new concept or result. Workers take pride in knowing that this contributes to targets and ultimately advances a sustainable future. For many, a clear moment to experience a sense of achievement is when they meet targets and deadlines or give a presentation in which they discuss their achievements. Receiving positive feedback and compliments from their colleagues afterwards confirms and strengthens their sense of achievement. Finally, only some respondents' sense of achievement depends solely on seeing the actual market result.

'As a team and as Enpuls, we have targets. These are targets that I believe in. I also believe that if we meet those targets, we can make an impact and that is very important to me. I just know if we achieve those targets, then we are really making an impact on the future. I really like that; then I feel that what we do is relevant. [...] it gives me pride. I want to meet my targets; I really feel sick at heart if it fails.' (respondent 9)

This citation shows how workers derive pride and thus meaningfulness from achieving targets. This finding extends the theory by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012) by demonstrating its applicability to green jobs. Another interesting finding is that workers feel very accomplished if they produce results together with their colleagues. For example, one interviewee said:

'For me, work only has value if you can do it with others and deliver results together. When I deliver something on my own, I sometimes think "yes, okay, this was it again", whereas if I can achieve something with a team, the cooperation in that team may even be more beautiful than the result itself.' (respondent 2)

This citation demonstrates how workers experience a sense of co-achievement, and meaningfulness, from producing results together with colleagues. This finding unifies this dimension with the dimension 'unity with others'.

An examination of the responses of the managers points to the fact that they draw partly on the success of meeting targets and partly on their team's performance. Managers feel accomplished when the team and the team members flourish and grow. They experience a tremendous sense of achievement

from the team's appreciation for their part in the success. 'When my team says: "[name respondent] is a very good manager, who gives me space and allows me to excel." Yes, then I feel proud.' (respondent 9). Managers deemed their work meaningful when they feel that their team is successful.

This dimension also refers to being excited about opportunities to develop oneself. Most workers view the ability to develop oneself as important. As one concept developer puts it: 'Expanding my knowledge is continuously necessary in this industry.' (respondent 4). Besides education, workers appreciate learning from colleagues, especially if they possess a different set of skills.

'I think it is important to develop myself in terms of content, to keep [my knowledge] up to date, [...] because it also contributes to the effect that I can achieve with my work.' (respondent 5)

From the citation, it is apparent that the possibility to develop oneself is greatly appreciated and becomes meaningful to people as it allows them to strengthen their talents, enhancing their impact. Nevertheless, some workers emphasize that feelings of pleasure in their work or the ultimate goal of their work are more important drivers than opportunities to develop oneself.

In conclusion, because workers can express their creativity in their work, have a strong sense of (co-)achievement resulting from their work and have the possibility to develop their selves, they experience their work as meaningful.

4.1.4. Service to others

This dimension refers to the meaningfulness of making a contribution to the well-being of others and the environment. In the opinion of the workers, they have a substantial contribution to products and service that enhance human well-being and the environment. The workers claim to work in service of the vision of the organization, which is to accelerate the energy transition. Explorers and consultants indicate that they impact the well-being of others and the environment by collecting insights and developing ideas, putting them on the agenda and linking them to actions. They can take these actions themselves or argue that colleagues or other organizations take action. Explorers argue that they have a human-centred perspective on the energy transition, by taking 'human well-being' and 'quality of life' as starting points and viewing energy as a sub-theme (respondent 11). By listening to the needs of the target audience and acknowledging other perspectives, explorers hope to contribute to 'the happiness of people' (respondent 7). These are ways in which they assume to truly help others.

Concept developers claim that they make a valuable contribution to the well-being of others and the environment by annually bringing a number of concepts or 'good-quality, effective propositions' to the market (respondent 9). Concept developers think that these concepts contribute to the well-being of others by helping and supporting them and their needs regarding (obstacles in) the energy transition. They think that these concepts 'make it easier for the target audience' to contribute to the energy transition and that the concepts allow people 'to make more conscious decisions, without feeling that it will throw their whole life upside down' (respondent 10). They feel enthusiastic, happy and energized from helping people. Furthermore, concept developers believe that the concepts ultimately contribute to

the energy transition, since concepts can influence people's behaviour to waste less energy and resources and to enhance preservation of nature. Workers experience meaningfulness of (in)directly contributing to the well-being of others and the wider environment, as illustrated by this concept developer: 'Contributing to making the world more sustainable, to make the world a little bit better again, that is what is meaningful.' (respondent 4).

In addition to a meaningful work experience from contributing to people external to the organization, workers also have a meaningful work experience due to contributing to the well-being of others in the immediate organization. In particular, business support team members emphasize that they contribute to the energy transition by supporting their colleagues. They feel that reducing the administrative burden for colleagues allows colleagues to focus their time and efforts on accelerating the energy transition. They believe that offering this support makes their work worthwhile. Business support members experience meaningfulness of being of service to others. For example, one organization consultant said: 'It gives me meaning if I feel that I can help people, that is direct colleagues in the office, but also broader in society.' (respondent 2). Similarly, managers see their task as 'to keep [their team members] focused, to let them take the right steps and the right assumptions' to accelerate the energy transition 'in an effective and efficient way' (respondent 6). Managers feel responsible for the well-being and work happiness of their team members, taking pride in making them flourish, letting them take the stage and enabling them to achieve results. All in all, managers derive meaning from the impact they have on the lives of their team members, as shown in the following quote. By contributing to the way colleagues work, business support members and managers have a major societal, yet indirect, impact. Surprisingly, not only business support team members consider their contribution to others' well-being in the immediate organization to be substantial, also other workers derive meaning from this.

'The challenge for me, and I find it very satisfying, is to not only do it by myself, but get a team, an organization, in such a flow that it leads to impact. I get a lot of satisfaction from Enpuls' bigger picture, our higher purpose, to make an impact. I really enjoy it when we have success together.' (respondent 9 – manager concept development)

All in all, work becomes meaningful to workers by making a contribution to the well-being of others and the external environment. They generally believe that what they do is worthwhile and that they truly help others. They think they make an (indirect) difference in the wider world by accelerating the energy transition. From the data, it emerges that these are all ways in which work becomes meaningful to them.

4.1.5. Ongoing tensions between “Being” and “Doing”

A key finding is that most interviewees notice that while they have the time to reflect on their role, they do not do this often enough. The interview questions stimulate them to critically reflect on this tension.

Workers perceive the tension between the need for being and the need for doing as a key part of their job. For example, one concept developer sees it as her job to sense what something does to people in a target group in order to expose bottlenecks for the purpose of developing a new concept. A

consultant echoes this: to get things done he has to put himself in someone else's shoes. A similar tension is experienced by an organizational consultant who indicates noticing how colleagues feel as a part of her job. One manager extends this by calling it a 'significant dependency' to get things done (respondent 9). Another manager experiences a strong tension between ensuring that what the organization pursues happens, while simultaneously ensuring that employees experience joy and put the right energy into it.

A common remark is that the workers attach more significance to the road to results than the actual results. Ultimately, the quality of the interaction between people determines the quality of the end result, according to one manager. Another manager feels that he should be more goal-oriented to maximize the potential of his team members, but he admits caring more about their daily happiness.

In brief, from the data, it can be concluded that a lack of balance between the need for being and the need for doing does not cause meaninglessness in itself. Workers consider elaborate reflection on the feelings of others as vital to action. Instead of experiencing meaninglessness, workers see this as a valuable aspect to achieve their goals. Workers draw meaning from sensing how people feel and value this process.

4.1.6. Ongoing tensions between “Self” and “Others”

From the data, it becomes evident that everyone feels the need to maintain a balance between the needs of themselves and the needs of their colleagues or the target group. For example, one concept developer seeks to balance his personal need to realize a sustainable future and his need to help colleagues and other people. In the data, three categories can be distinguished. First, some workers prioritize their own work, while, for instance, maintaining 'a safe space for colleagues' (respondent 7). Second, other workers are inclined to value the needs of others over their own, having difficulties maintaining an acceptable balance. This category mainly consists of managers and business support team members.

'I have to be careful that I do not become too concerned with the needs of others, because I also have to keep a close eye on my own goals. [...] my natural reflex is to look after people. [...] I can forget myself, so it is a point of attention.' (respondent 6 – business support manager).

Lastly, respondents relate their own needs to the needs of others, since these are 'aligned' (respondent 9). One concept developer suggests that the needs of herself and others are equal, since she has to enjoy her job, while meeting the needs of the target group for whom she develops concepts. One manager goes even further in regarding the needs of others as his own needs, as the citation below illustrates.

'I think that it is secretly one of my needs to meet the needs of others and thus it might be my need. This might be something that suits me well in my role as manager. So, I indirectly meet my needs by meeting the needs of my colleagues.' (respondent 11)

This thesis considers the ongoing challenge to meet the needs of the self while simultaneously meeting the needs of others inherent to the search for meaning. Especially the workers in the last two categories derive meaning from helping colleagues or target groups. Relating their own needs to the needs of others is a remarkable way to articulate what is meaningful for them.

4.1.7. Inspiration & reality

The following paragraph first discusses the findings regarding the dimension ‘inspiration’, before looking at the dimension ‘reality’. Since Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012) explain that humans are caught between both dimensions, this paragraph concludes by discussing the relation between both.

4.1.7.1. Inspiration

A source of inspiration is the vision which workers work towards. Although workers draw inspiration from Enpuls’ vision, its overall potential remains unfulfilled. The majority of workers find it inspiring to work for an organization that aims to make a positive contribution to society. As one respondent puts it: ‘the purpose itself gives meaning’ (respondent 7). A striking finding is that sustainability does not only unite workers through the organizational vision but also because it serves as ‘a shared value’ (respondent 8). Both the organizational vision and the shared value of sustainability function as an overarching purpose that steers the daily operations at Enpuls. The intrinsically motivated workers deem striving for a sustainable future as a common goal. Yet, simultaneously, the written vision of Enpuls is perceived as too abstract, broad, and large to be inspirational, as demonstrated by this comment: ‘It gives room to operate, but otherwise it is not an inspiration to me.’ (respondent 11). Some workers are in favour of a more tangible vision with attainable goals, since this would be more inspiring to them.

‘I don't know whether [the vision] really inspires me a lot or that it motivates me more, because this is actually the purpose of the work, we do every day. So, I get up from my bed to do this. [...] It's just very nice that you work somewhere where you clearly know what you're doing it for, even though that maybe accelerating the energy transition is not very tangible, but it is a very clear goal in itself.’ (respondent 10)

This illustrates a seemingly paradoxical finding; while the general purpose is inspiring, the actual vision would be even more inspiring if it contains clear goals towards accelerating the energy transition.

Workers feel inspired at work, deriving it from numerous aspects. First, workers perceive Enpuls as an inspiring environment and as an organization that leads the way. Involvement in ‘cool future-oriented developments’ is, for instance, inspirational (respondent 4). In particular, the Enpitch, a weekly team meeting, is identified as a source of inspiration. In this meeting, team members share fascinating solutions in the field of sustainability. Second, workers also draw their inspiration from confrontations with other perspectives. Besides the Enpitch, this occurs at internal and external events and meetings. Third, the design of the office is perceived as a location with an inspirational atmosphere.

Furthermore, workers also feel inspired by their colleagues and many workers experience their work as meaningful when they are able to inspire their colleagues. This dynamic is captured in the following two citations.

‘I usually get [inspiration] from looking at what is happening in the world. So, what [an] explorer does, makes me feel inspired.’ (respondent 10 – concept developer)

‘I think it is really cool to see people brighten up at a new idea or a new concept. A lot is due to

the interaction. The moment you speak to someone and you just see someone sparkle with ideas or new possibilities emerge in someone's mind, I think that is very cool to see and then I think: "yes, I did it!" and that makes me very happy. Then I can end my working day with a good feeling.' (respondent 11 – manager explorers)

Workers experience inspiring their colleagues as meaningful and these inspiring colleagues are seen as a crucial source of inspiration. This finding is remarkable, since this is a valuable addition to Lips-Wiersma and Wright's theory (2012).

While many workers feel a connection to their work and colleagues, no one calls it a spiritual connection due to their rationality. One respondent comments: 'The work we do is very intrinsically linked to my norms and values.' (respondent 8). In other words, a connection exists among workers and the organization at large. This becomes most visible in the shared values and through the vision that they work towards. This allows work to take on meaningfulness.

Work makes the workers feel hopeful about the future: they are confident that the earth is going to be alright. A variety of reasons is put forward; for example, they feel that they are 'in control' (respondent 10) and make 'small steps forward' (respondent 7). This citation points to the connection workers experience and the hope and confidence that they have in the future: 'To be part of that [organization] makes you feel that in a group of smart people, people you respect, you think: "but this has been well thought out, isn't it?" That gives confidence.' (respondent 9). While workers feel confident about the future, they are also conscious that it is hard not to become cynical, sceptical or pessimistic, since they are daily confronted with climate issues. In addition, they acknowledge that they have to accept that they only have a rather small impact on climate change and are not capable of ending it. This provides corroborating evidence for the theory by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012), since workers experience a kind of hopelessness as a result of their difficulties to cope with the somewhat unrealistic purpose to fight climate change.

4.1.7.2. *Reality*

The need to face reality is a dimension of meaningful work that is very present in the data obtained. Workers acknowledge that things work out differently in reality and that reality is not comparable to a dreamworld: for one, every little step goes slower than preferred. Workers confront reality by trying to do things differently. Respondent 9 explains that instead of being bummed about a situation, 'I could be more concerned by how I handle that situation'. Workers often link facing reality to being tolerant to humans: working with people requires flexibility. Two methods to deal with this include: be pragmatic and search for the middle ground or reach a consensus on matters. Some seek a balance in this: 'choose your battles [...] It's about the bigger picture' (respondent 9).

Workers also link reality to climate change, having to deal with it on a daily basis. They are aware of the urgency of climate change and try to do everything that is in their power. Respondent 6 states: 'Believe in something and do your best for it and that's what you can do.' Workers acknowledge

reality and derive meaning from facing it. Coping techniques include ‘putting things into perspective’ (respondent 2), ‘downplaying it’ (respondent 3), ‘nonchalance’ (respondent 6), and ‘rationalize, externalize’ (respondent 7). If nothing else helps, some ‘bury [their] head in the sand’ (respondent 2) or use ‘escapism’ to escape reality (respondent 7).

Concerning climate change solutions, two interviewees explain that one needs to be realistic that people ‘outside their bubble’ do not share the same ideas on sustainability (respondent 5); listening to others and respecting their opinion is key. There is no ‘one size fits all’ for the energy transition and Enpuls offers people an inspiring perspective for action (respondent 9).

In conclusion, workers accept that reality may differ from their wishes. They have several ways to deal with reality. Some respondents derive meaning from dealing with reality.

4.1.7.3. Inspiration and reality in relation to each other

In summary, workers experience inspiration and reality in relation to one another. Workers are aware of and inspired by their shared vision on a sustainable future. Simultaneously, they are aware of their capabilities and limitations in dealing with this reality. In conclusion, they are to a large extent capable of regulating their actions in light of their overarching purpose. These findings further support the findings by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, p. 661), who underline that both inspiration and reality are inherent to and grounded in the existential structure of being, ‘because without either we would not need to make conscious choices to accept responsibility for creating meaningful lives’.

4.2. Job characteristics of green jobs and their relationship to meaningful work

4.2.1. Skill variety

This job characteristic refers to the degree to which jobs require a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, involving the use of a number of skills and talents. Despite having different job functions, workers recognize three key skills needed for their job: creativity, analytical and communicative skills/ human knowledge. As one worker puts it: ‘I think I really fit this organization, because I am creative and flexible. That are features that characterize Enpuls.’ (respondent 2). Logically, curiosity is also seen as key. Furthermore, managers view human knowledge, being interested in people and their drivers as essential for their job. Likewise, one organization consultant, whose work revolves around people, sees this as a vital skill to possess. Similarly, communicative skills, persuasiveness and the ability to put oneself in the shoes of a target group are for all workers essential. Especially the concept developers emphasize the value of adaptability skills and the skill to deal with disappointments, since concepts could get invalidated. Workers claim that having work in which they can express their creativity and analytical talents contribute to the meaningfulness of work, as illustrated by this quote: ‘I can express my creativity and analytical skills and that makes [my job] worthwhile’ (respondent 7).

Regardless of the similarity in the required skills, everyone at Enpuls ‘is unique in their way of thinking and their customs’ (respondent 3), according to a majority of interviewees. This variety in skills

is valued because it allows workers to ‘complement each other’ (respondent 4), and ‘each bring their own expertise’ (respondent 10). For example, vision lines are developed in ‘multidisciplinary teams’ (respondent 11). One concept developer considers it ‘nice’ that within her team not everyone has the same profile, ‘because everyone has thus his own way, kind of his own input in the team’ (respondent 10). As shown in Paragraph 4.1.2, when workers’ skills are recognized and valued by colleagues, they experience a strong sense of belonging, contributing to a meaningful work experience. Skill variety further allows them to learn from each other, contributing to the experienced meaningfulness of work.

Workers perceive their work as very diverse. As respondent 3 puts it: ‘No single working day is really the same for me, there is always something.’ Although the kind of work activities is repetitive, the content of each activity varies. For example, one manager sees a rhythm or repetition in personal meetings with team members and in the coaching of concepts; however, the content differs every time. Workers deem variety in activities to be crucial because they are ‘a bit allergic’ for repetition (respondent 8); hence, they attempt to do repetitive tasks in different ways ‘to keep it attractive for [themselves]’ (respondent 6). This highlights how everyone enjoys sufficient variety in one’s work activities. Thus, skill variety adds to the meaningfulness of work because it enables workers to keep work interesting for themselves and, in this way, they can express their full potential.

In summary, jobs at Enpuls require various activities and carrying these out involves a variety of skills. Workers’ engagement in activities that require a full set of skills contributes to the experienced meaningfulness of expressing their full potential. All in all, this thesis extends Hackman and Oldham’s claim (1976) that the presence of this job characteristic leads to experienced meaningfulness of work to green jobs.

4.2.2. Task identity

This dimension refers to the degree to which jobs require completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work. Although many workers perceive their work as reasonably well demarcated and thus identifiable, internal dependencies among the teams exist. One respondent argues that the organization’s internal process cannot be seen as a ‘flow’ or ‘chronological line’ but should be viewed as an ‘iterative process’ (respondent 11). This makes it difficult for workers to be responsible for a whole piece of work.

The explorers work at ‘the front-end and the side’ (respondent 7). The former refers to the ‘scout, find, inspire’ part of the job to ‘inspire and challenge [colleagues] on solutions, directions or vision lines’ (respondent 11), while the latter relates to how explorers work in multidisciplinary teams with consultants to develop vision lines. Concept developers feel supported by explorers, because they ‘make a filter of what is interesting for us and for our work in the energy transition.’ (respondent 10). Opinions among explorers are divided as to how well demarcated their activities are. It is difficult to identify their exact piece of work, since explorers have the challenging responsibility to pick up on topics that colleagues, like consultants, do not look at. In comparison, consultants and transition managers have a clearer deliverable, namely vision lines and activation strategies; after this, ‘it is also a bit out of [one’s]

hands', as they hand it over to concept developers (respondent 5). Enpuls has numerous vision lines on topics in the energy transition. Concept developers start when a complete vision is created and consultants and transition managers provide them with input for the concepts, functioning as clients, to whom the concept developers report to. Ergo concept developers depend on what they receive from transition managers and consultants. Concept developers create new concepts, such as propositions, products, and services, within the frameworks of the visions. In this way, they contribute to the realization of the visions. Throughout the process, concept developers keep the internal stakeholders up to date. Insights gathered by concept developers can also become relevant for transition managers for their visions. In addition, concept developers' decisions have consequences for transition managers, because they are responsible for further market transfer and securing the concept.

The concept development process consists of fixed phases. Concept developers know that they complete a whole and identifiable piece of work. The end of each phase is marked by a phase transition meeting, using a portfolio board. The job of concept developers evidently contains a high degree of task identity, as one concept developer said: 'a concept is really made from A to Z.' (respondent 10).

For business support employees, it is more complicated to identify a "whole" piece of work, because their projects are rather intangible and not easily measurable. Projects are internally oriented, requiring input from colleagues and having to report to internal clients. In the few cases that they have a role in concept development, they feel like 'a small cog in a larger project team' (respondent 8). Likewise, managers feel like 'a part of the whole' (respondent 9). Managers feel responsible for the actions of the team. The task of managing a team is never finished; it lacks a clear beginning and end.

'As long as Enpuls and the team exists, the work isn't finished. If you just have a project, you go from A to Z and then you can finish that. That doesn't apply to my work.' (respondent 9)

In conclusion, the job characteristic 'task identity' is present in varying degrees in the jobs of the interviewees. This is most visible in the job of concept developers: their job requires completion of a "whole" and identifiable piece of work, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome. The same can be said about the jobs of consultants and transition managers, however, to a lower extent. This job characteristic is less visible for explorers, business support and managers. The varying degrees of the presence of this job characteristic does not appear to influence the experienced meaningfulness of work. This could be explained by the responsibility workers feel regarding the overall objective of the organization. The data show that although task identity does not directly contribute to the experienced meaningfulness of work, the internal dependencies and collaboration with colleagues are key to experience a sense of belonging and to feel unified with others and to draw meaningfulness from this.

4.2.3. Task significance

This dimension refers to the degree to which a job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether in the immediate organization or in the external environment. While workers have different job functions, they are convinced that through their jobs they have a substantial direct or

indirect contribution to the well-being of others, i.e. colleagues and other individuals, as well as the environment. In brief, their job enables workers to help others and this job characteristic allows them to experience their work as meaningful in three ways. First, workers see to some extent that through their job they have an impact on others and the environment; they feel in service of others. As a result, they perceive their work as meaningful. Second, because workers' jobs enable them to make an impact, they recognize that they are valuable contributors to the organizations' achievements and their self-esteem grows, making their work meaningful. Work becomes meaningful to them, because they can express their full potential. Third, knowing that their job has a valuable impact on others, suits workers' personal engagement, enhancing the experienced meaningfulness. Furthermore, workers know that as an organization they deliver a contribution to society by means of the developed concepts enhancing human well-being and the environment. This objective embodies the task significance and emphasizes the purpose of their work, causing it to take on greater meaningfulness. In addition, this purpose, and thus the task significance, unifies the workers and their values. As a result, they come to view their work as more meaningful and they feel a strong sense of belonging, also contributing to the perceived meaningfulness.

4.2.4. Autonomy

This dimension relates to the degree to which jobs provide substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to workers in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out. Workers experience the freedom to do their job the way they want to. This is the reason why workers feel they can behave the way they like and why they enjoy their work. This freedom serves as a space for creativity, to develop ideas to solve problems, or to determine one's own path to the pre-agreed end result. Workers are autonomous in how to perform their work, but 'within certain frameworks' (respondent 8); they must be able to substantiate their decisions and process. Freedom is not experienced as 'non-committal' (respondent 11). Workers know that responsibility comes with autonomy, but they also perceive autonomy as a precondition for having responsibility, as shown below.

'Autonomy is extremely important to me. If someone would give me responsibility or a challenge but would subsequently tell me exactly how I should tackle that challenge, then the fun is over for me.' (respondent 9)

Thus, autonomy and freedom are valued highly. Examples of experienced freedom include the space to search for information, to determine one's own direction of research, to network, and the freedom to attend conferences and to meet external parties for inspiration. Workers also experience autonomy in the ability to take control over their personal development, provided that it suits Enpuls. Workers value space and require being autonomous; they do not want to be limited by process descriptions. If workers were not allowed this freedom and autonomy in their work, they would feel constrained, resulting in less energy. Indeed, managers recognize that providing appropriate operating space to team members contributes to their work happiness. The citation below shows a manager's philosophy on this subject.

'If I would provide them with very little freedom for their own initiative or their own interpretation, I think it would really be a lot less fun for them. [...] I think that space is very important for the pleasure they take in their work.' (respondent 9)

Enpuls is a young organization with little set in stone and countless possibilities for one's own initiative and discretion, as illustrated in the citation below. The broadness of the vision allows workers to use their own interpretation and stimulates their own initiative, contributing to their job satisfaction. One worker perceives self-efficacy and self-organizing abilities as necessary skills for people who work at Enpuls. These skills reflect the freedom and autonomy.

'But I think at Enpuls, whether you are in my function or in another, that almost everyone can exercise a great influence over the things he or she does and the way he or she can shape it.' (respondent 8)

All in all, workers perceive their green job at Enpuls to provide substantial freedom, independence and discretion in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures used in carrying it out. This thesis found that the autonomy to organize one's work allows workers to take their responsibility and to maintain an appropriate variety of work activities, enhancing skill variety. This brings meaningfulness to their work as it allows them to be themselves in organizing their work. Moreover, autonomy also directly contributes to meaningful work in several ways. First, autonomy contributes to the experienced meaningfulness by providing workers with a sense of self-efficacy: instead of feeling powerless they are empowered actors. Second, the independence and freedom workers experience in their work contribute to the perceived meaningfulness because they are free to initiate and work on concepts that are close to their own goal of contributing to society and accelerating the energy transition. They can behave according to their own values and this adds to their experienced meaningfulness.

4.2.5. Job-based feedback

This dimension refers to the degree to which carrying out work activities results in the worker obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of her performance. The most striking finding with respect to this dimension is that workers have difficulties to determine job-based feedback. Carrying out work activities barely leads to clear information about the effectiveness of someone's performance. This may be mainly due to a lack of clear and tangible goals. Shown in Paragraph 4.1.7, the vision is perceived as abstract, lacking clear goals. While some annual targets and key performance indicators (KPI's) exist, the actual contribution of one's job to these targets is rather unclear. Some workers assign more significance to these KPI's and accomplishing them than others. The presence of valuable job-based feedback is most visible in the experience of concept developers. They have a clear target on how many concepts should be brought to the market annually and workers are responsible for the development of a certain number of concepts. Therefore, when handing over a concept to a market party, a concept developer's impact and contribution to the overarching purpose is fairly clear, as reflected in this quote: 'Achieving success, that's fantastic, isn't it? When you finish a project, ultimately achieve

your goal, that's what you do it for.' (respondent 4). In addition, they have frequent phase transition meetings which also provide interim feedback on their progress.

In contrast, consultants and explorers obtain less clear information on their performance from their work activities. Explorers in particular have difficulties to make it 'concrete' when they do their work right (respondent 11). Consultants generally use the results in the market as a measure (shown in the next quote); however, this feedback takes more time (i.e., months or years) to become visible. As a result, the information about the effectiveness of their performance is noticeably less direct. Usually, receiving job-based feedback is useful to determine one's progress towards accomplishing one's goal, which allows someone to improve one's performance or behaviour to reach the goal in a different manner. This is difficult in the current situation of job-based feedback. When consultants do receive job-based feedback, they feel 'proud' of their contribution to a change on the market.

'I find that the result in the market determines whether I do my job well or badly, when I actually recognize something that comes from the vision line and it is reflected in the market. Sometimes we think that laws and regulations need to be adjusted, and other parties, larger companies or market parties pick up the ball - that is my success criterion and I use this as a measure. I think that is the primary, most important goal.' (respondent 5)

For the business support team, job-based feedback is more subjective because the goals are intangible, except for some KPI's. However, shown in the quote below, these scores lack detailed information on individuals' performance and their role in achieving a goal, resulting in unclear feedback.

'At least a number of things are measurable for my work, for example, a score on employee satisfaction is measurable, but it is of course still difficult to say what my part in it was. I'd say how I know whether I'm doing my job well or not depends on how satisfied my colleagues are about me.' (respondent 2)

Above citation suggests that some workers receive insufficient feedback on their performance and their progress towards accomplishing a goal. Job-based feedback is essential, because it provides them with learning opportunities to improve their performance. Awareness of one's progress towards reaching a goal and of the actual results of work activities is a condition for people to experience their work as meaningful, according to Hackman and Oldham (1976). One concept developer (respondent 10) explains that their clear process gives her the feeling that her work is worthwhile, proving that regular job-based feedback contributes to meaningfulness of work: 'you continuously test in small sprints whether what you are doing is of added value. [...] You get confirmation that you are doing the right thing, that you are heading in the right direction, so to speak.' This highlights the important contribution of job-based feedback to experienced meaningfulness in green jobs. To sum up, the overall potential contribution of this job characteristic to meaningful work remains unfulfilled in green jobs.

4.3. Mechanisms of meaning

The data reveal that green job workers experience meaningful work through all four pathways. This

finding is in line with the suggestion by Rosso et al. (2010, p. 113): ‘it is at the intersection of these dimensions that meaningful work is most likely to be experienced.’ The authors proposed that the pathways may be activated simultaneously. From the data, prove emerges for the authors’ assumption that ‘work experiences that activate more than one of the pathways could contribute to stronger perceptions of meaningfulness’ (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 115). Each subsequent paragraph outlines one pathway through which the job characteristics of green jobs contribute to meaningful work.

4.3.1. Contribution

‘*Contribution* reflects the meaningfulness of actions perceived as significant and/or done in service of something greater than the self.’ (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 115). The first mechanism of this pathway is ‘perceived impact’, a self-efficacy mechanism. The perceived impact on colleagues and the environment that one could have through work activities stimulates the experience of self-efficacy and this is experienced as meaningful. As explained in Paragraph 4.2.3, the job characteristic ‘task significance’ makes a valuable contribution through this mechanism to meaningful work. Similarly, all workers perceive their work as societal relevant and feel that they serve a greater purpose. The perception of the ‘significance of work’, a purpose mechanism, contributes to the experience of meaningful work. This is a very strong mechanism for workers. At Enpuls, this mechanism and the ‘interconnection’ mechanism of transcendence are closely related. Being part of a larger organization, whose members all focus their efforts on positively impacting society in order to accelerate the energy transition, allows them to feel a strong sense of meaningful interconnection. The main contributor through this mechanism to meaningful work is the job characteristic ‘task significance’.

The second mechanism of transcendence is self-abnegation, which refers to subordinating oneself to something external to the self. Although it can be said that workers enjoy being part of Enpuls, they still have the control to quit or change jobs. Likewise, the lack of spiritual connection with work confirms that this mechanism is not applicable to the current case.

4.3.2. Individuation

‘*Individuation* reflects the meaningfulness of actions that define and distinguish the self as valuable and worthy.’ (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 115) As explained in Paragraph 4.2.4, workers experience a strong sense of autonomy in their work. For example, they are capable of making decisions on how to do their job. This job characteristic provides workers with a sense of self-efficacy, meaning that instead of feeling powerless they feel like empowered actors. As a result, this self-efficacy mechanism, ‘autonomy or control’, allows workers to experience greater meaningfulness in their work.

A second self-efficacy mechanism is ‘competence’. While some individual cases on overcoming challenges in one’s work exist (e.g., persuading reluctant colleagues to join change initiatives feels like a victory, respondent 2), the main challenge is to accelerate the energy transition, to minimize climate change. It is true that people feel that they can impact this challenge and that improving their personal

competence, skills and knowledge helps them to perform better, but it is equally true that they are aware of their limited abilities to overcome this complex goal. A stronger feeling of personal competence and efficacy could provide them with a greater sense of meaning in their work. This is in line with the finding that workers receive too little direct and clear feedback on their performance and progress toward a goal and as a result, they have limited learning opportunities to strengthen their competencies.

While both ‘self-esteem’ and ‘self-efficacy’ mechanisms are triggered by accomplishments, self-esteem offers a different pathway to meaningfulness, according to Rosso et al. (2010, p. 110); the difference lies in that self-esteem ‘is rooted in a sense of oneself as worthwhile’, whereas self-efficacy ‘operates through a sense of control over one’s environment and fate’. Self-esteem as a mechanism of meaning is very visible in the data. Workers assess their self-worth as a result of their personal and group accomplishments at work. These achievements are a strong driver for workers to see themselves as thriving and as valuable contributors to their organization. This becomes most apparent as a result of the job characteristic ‘task significance’.

4.3.3. Self-connection

‘*Self-connection* reflects the meaningfulness of actions that bring individuals closer into alignment with the way they see themselves.’ (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 115). This pathway consists of three different forms of the ‘authenticity’ mechanism, which refer to how work becomes meaningful through the alignment of one’s behaviour and perceptions of the true self. The first form, ‘self-concordance’, is evident, since most workers value sustainability and they feel fulfilled to work in an organization that aims to contribute to a sustainable future. This perception adds to feelings of behaving authentic to their values at work, feelings of internal consistency and authentic connection to oneself. This leads to a greater experienced meaningfulness, which is substantiated by this statement of respondent 4: ‘I do this job because I like it and because it supports my belief’. The job characteristic that most clearly contributes to the experienced meaningfulness through this mechanism is ‘autonomy’ because the experienced freedom and autonomy allows the workers to be open about their opinions and values.

This positive experience is also explained by the second authenticity mechanism: ‘personal engagement’ in work. This mechanism refers to feeling personally involved and intrinsically motivated by one’s work, which results in perceiving work activities as significant and being able to express the authentic self. This is reflected in the findings discussed in Paragraph 4.1.1. The job characteristic ‘task significance’ contributes through this mechanism to the experienced meaningfulness. A job that has an impact on other people and the environment allows green job workers to unite their personal engagement and desire to have a societal contribution with their work, resulting in a meaningful work experience.

The last authenticity mechanism is captured in ‘identity affirmation processes’. Colleagues affirm self-conceptions of others by asking each other’s help and specialism, which contributes to others’ experience of an authentic enactment of the true self. This results in a meaningful work experience. The job characteristic ‘skill variety’ adds through this mechanism to ‘unity with others’

because workers experience a strong sense of belongingness as a result of colleagues' affirmation of their skills and identity (see Paragraph 4.1.2).

4.3.4. Unification

'*Unification* reflects the meaningfulness of actions that bring individuals closer into harmony with other beings or principles.' (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 115). The first mechanism of this pathway is 'value systems', a purpose mechanism. One key shared value that workers consider important is sustainability, which generates a sense of purposeful action among the workers. Acting in accordance with this value contributes to the meaningfulness of the work. The data confirm the theory (Rosso et al., 2010). The job characteristic 'task significance' contributes through this mechanism to 'unity with others'.

Secondly, one mechanism of belongingness refers to 'social identification'. Extending the previous mechanism, it can be observed that Enpuls' workers feel that they belong to something special: a group with like-minded people who care about sustainability. Being part of a group 'produces a sense of shared identities, beliefs, or attributes that are experienced as meaningful to workers' (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 111). This is true to some extent, since, for example, people are willing to change their personal behaviour to fit better in the group. The job characteristic 'task significance' contributes through this mechanism to the dimension 'unity with others' of meaningful work.

Lastly, the other mechanism of belongingness is 'interpersonal connectedness'. Workers feel like a family, who support each other. The job characteristic 'task identity' contributes to some extent through this mechanism to 'unity with others' because workers experience a strong sense of belonging and feel part of a larger whole as a result of internal dependencies.

5. Conclusion

The main aim of this thesis has been to contribute to the existing literature about the relation between job characteristics of green jobs and meaningful work. The research question addressed is: How do job characteristics of green jobs contribute to the meaningfulness of work? This thesis established a conditionally positive relationship between job characteristics of green jobs and meaningfulness of work. In other words, job characteristics of green jobs contribute to the meaningfulness of work through certain mechanisms of meaning.

First, the job characteristic of green jobs that has the largest contribution to meaningfulness of work is ‘task significance’. Task significance is reflected in workers’ belief in the indirect and direct impact of their jobs on the well-being of others, i.e. colleagues and other individuals, as well as the environment. Their job enables workers to help others and this allows them to experience their work as meaningful in several ways. First, workers see to some extent that through their job they have an impact on others and the environment. Through this perceived impact, work takes on greater meaningfulness in terms of being in service to others. Second, seeing the impact of their work allows people to assign significance to their work, contributing to the overall meaningfulness of work. Third, workers are proud of their contribution in terms of delivering concepts and achieving targets because they know that this enhances their impact. They see themselves as valuable contributors to the organizations’ achievements; ergo their self-esteem and self-efficacy grows. This contributes to workers’ sense of achievement and the experienced meaningfulness of expressing one’s full potential. Receiving positive feedback and compliments from colleagues confirms and strengthens this sense of achievement. In addition, work becomes meaningful through producing results together with colleagues. Fourth, workers feel strongly about having a socially relevant job and this is reflected in their values. Being able to make a valuable impact suits workers’ personal engagement and this results in the experienced meaningfulness of being in service to others. They feel that they serve a greater purpose. Knowing that as an organization they deliver a contribution to society by means of the developed concepts allows the workers to experience feelings of internal consistency and authentic connection to oneself. Workers perceive work as meaningful when they can be true to and open about their values. The overarching purpose and their shared values connect green job workers, unifying them and contributing to the perceived meaningfulness of work. Lastly, meaningful interconnection and social identification, i.e. feelings of belonging to a group of like-minded people who care about sustainability, leads to experiencing work as meaningful.

The second most important job characteristic of green jobs that contributes to the experienced meaningfulness of work is ‘autonomy’, which is also a precondition for meaningful work. Work takes on greater meaningfulness for green job workers when they are provided with plenty of space to be autonomous. Autonomy is also reflected in green job workers’ experience of freedom and independence and the discretion as to how work is scheduled and completed. This autonomy enables workers to take

their responsibility and to maintain an appropriate variety of work activities, enhancing skill variety. Workers consider this meaningful because it allows them to be themselves. In addition, autonomy also directly contributes to meaningful work through several mechanisms. First, autonomy contributes to the experienced meaningfulness by providing workers with a sense of self-efficacy: instead of feeling powerless, they are empowered actors. Second, the independence and freedom workers experience in their work contribute to the perceived meaningfulness because they are free to initiate and work on concepts that are close to their own goal of contributing to society and accelerating the energy transition. They can behave according to their own values and this adds to the experienced meaningfulness. Autonomy allows workers to express their creativity, in terms of the content of one's job and the ability to create and apply new ideas as well as the procedures used to carry it out.

The job characteristic 'skill variety', reflecting workers' involvement in various activities that require numerous skills and talents, contributes to the experienced meaningfulness of expressing their full potential. Moreover, small gestures of appreciation and being asked for help by colleagues on a particular topic affirms one's self-conceptions, contributing to one's experience of an authentic enactment of the true self. Through the affirmation of one's skills, skill variety contributes to the experienced meaningfulness of belongingness.

The job characteristic 'task identity' contributes to some extent to meaningful work. Task identity of green jobs refers to well-defined jobs with internal dependencies among teams. These internal dependencies relate to the collaboration with colleagues and the team, which are key aspects of a meaningful work experience of green job workers. Task identity contributes through interpersonal connectedness to the meaningfulness of feeling united with others in one's work. Interpersonal connectedness refers to an exchange of views, mutually supporting, inspiring and learning from one's colleagues. This enhances workers' experience of being part of a larger whole, resulting in a strong sense of belonging and contributing to the meaningfulness of work.

The potential contribution of the job characteristic 'job-based feedback' to meaningful work remains unfulfilled. Currently, some workers receive insufficient feedback on their performance and progress in light of the goals, while they would benefit from job-based feedback because this provides them with learning opportunities. Awareness of one's progress towards reaching a goal and the actual results of work activities is a condition for people to experience their work as meaningful. This is most clearly visible in the jobs of concept developers; the process with milestones provides them with sufficient feedback, adding to a meaningful work experience. While it appears that the possibility to develop oneself is not important to every green job worker, for others, work does become meaningful when they can strengthen their competencies because this contributes to their overall impact.

Furthermore, green job workers consider reflection on the emotions of others vital to action. Instead of experiencing meaninglessness from an imbalance of the need for being and the need for doing, workers consider work meaningful when they relate the former to the latter. Similarly, aligning one's own needs to those of others is inherent to the green job workers' search for meaning.

Green job workers are hopeful about the future, because they are in control and see that they make small contributions. At the same time, they experience a kind of hopelessness due to difficulties in accomplishing the complicated goal of fighting climate change. They try to do everything that is in their power. Furthermore, although they are aware of the reality and employ coping techniques to deal with reality, they are also aware of their limitations in dealing with this reality. In conclusion, they are to a large extent capable of regulating their actions in light of the overarching purpose. Green job workers require an inspiring, yet realistic vision that serves as an overarching purpose steering daily operations. A realistic vision with feasible goals would allow them to overcome challenges, adding through self-efficacy to meaningfulness of work.

6. Discussion

The first paragraph outlines the methodological and theoretical choices that may have implications for the conclusions drawn and discusses how the researchers' role influenced the research conduct. The chapter concludes by elaborating on the theoretical contributions of this study, the practical implications of this study and recommendations for future research.

6.1. Limitations

6.1.1. Methodological reflection on the limitations of this study

This thesis applied Guba and Lincoln's set of quality criteria to assess the quality of the research (Symon & Cassell, 2012). The first criterium, credibility, is mainly assured through member checking (Appendix I): after each interview, interviewees were given the opportunity to check the transcript (two interviewees used this option). Throughout the research, the researcher kept a research diary to record the researcher's developing understanding (Appendix N). This became more elaborate during the data analysis. The quality of the progressive subjectivity would have been better if the researcher had written in the research diary more in-depth while writing the theoretical framework. While not documented in memos, the researcher discussed her findings with a graduate (while taking anonymity of respondents into account) to challenge her assumptions about the data and verify interpretations of transcripts. These discussions functioned as a sounding board and allowed the researcher to meet the criterium credibility by means of peer debriefing. Lastly, prolonged engagement and negative case analysis are two methodological means of credibility discussed by Symon and Cassell (2012) that the researcher could have used were it not for time constraints and the coronavirus outbreak.

The second criterium, transferability, is met through a 'thick description' of the case to inform readers on the applicability to one's own situation. The case description in Paragraph 3.2 enables readers to judge whether the findings in Chapter 4 could be transferred to similar contexts.

The third criterium, dependability, is met through keeping a record of methodological changes and shifts in theoretical constructions (See Research Diary in Appendix N). Concerning the methodological changes, a number of remarks should be considered. These are discussed below.

The last criterium, confirmability, is met through the detailed account of how data were gathered and transformed into the findings, as provided in Chapter 3. Although this was done carefully with meticulous attention, some concerns emerged, as described below. A minor issue related to confirmability is the finding that according to employees of Enpuls, they and Enpuls as an organization differs considerably from Enexis. Conducting this research at a grid operator most likely results in different findings. Hence, this statement should prevent confirmability issues.

A main methodological limitation is a result of the snowball sampling technique. This technique in combination with time constrains and difficulties around the coronavirus outbreak hindered the researcher in that she could only reach a low number of potential respondents. Therefore, all workers of

Employees that agreed to participate in the research were selected as respondents. As a consequence, not all job functions are equally represented in the data (e.g., five respondents are part of the business support team whereas no transition managers were included). Furthermore, as a result of these issues, the selection of respondents paid insufficient attention to the inclusion criterion of the degree of greenness in jobs. This impacts the transferability and the confirmability. Another consequence of this technique is that certain opinions and experiences are potentially underexposed in the data. Finally, employing this technique let the researcher to raise concerns about the ethical implications, like the potential reduced anonymity. Before forwarding colleagues, respondents inquired who had already participated, potentially harming the respondents' honesty and freedom of expression. However, since all respondents were aware of this technique, the researcher's only option was to reassure respondents and to carefully handle the transcripts and citations to minimize the possibility of tracing it back to someone.

Secondly, conducting interviews over a video-calling platform led to, apart from the methodological limitations stated in Paragraph 3.3, issues like misunderstood sentences and time shortage due to a bad internet connection. Additionally, it is unclear whether sufficient rapport with the respondents was established. This issue may impact the credibility.

Finally, it turned out that the template analysis, using the "Gioia method" was not the most appropriate method to analyse the data. The researcher had difficulties employing the coding and analysis process as proposed by this method. Although the researcher managed to deploy an iterative process of constant comparison of data and codes, the researcher had trouble to use the template as a means to integrate the bottom-up and top-down approach of a template analysis. This makes it difficult to exactly replicate this research, thus, impacting the confirmability of this research. In dealing with these issues, the researcher recorded her concerns in the research diary, which slightly limits the confirmability problems. For comparable, future research, it is highly recommended to employ an inductive data analysis method, such as the context mapping analysis method (Stappers, 2012) because this inductive technique allows researchers to distil findings better and truer to the data.

6.1.2. Theoretical reflection on limitations of this study

Throughout the research, certain limitations resulting from theoretical choices became apparent. As discussed in Chapter 2, the conceptualization of meaningful work slightly overlaps with the conceptualization of job characteristics. For instance, the concepts are not mutually exclusive in the sense that the dimension of 'task significance' and the dimension of 'service to others' are very similar and partly overlapping. This had two major implications for the research. First, as a result of the overlapping dimensions, some interview questions were too similar for respondents to understand. In addition, some respondents provided the researcher with very elaborate replies, (seemingly) answering both questions at the same time. Second, the combination of both concepts in the operationalization resulted in difficulties with respect to the coding process of the transcripts. Consequently, during the data analysis, the researcher decided to assign fragments that could relate to both dimensions with the

code based on an indicator of job characteristics, 'job contributes to life/well-being of others', and decided to eliminate the codes based on the similar indicators of meaningful work. The minor differences were not enough to keep the separate codes. In hindsight, it would have been better to exclude the similar questions or replace these questions with more suitable ones, also to simplify the coding process. While the researcher conducted a pre-test interview to evaluate the interview questions, this did not prevent this issue. In conclusion, to the researcher's knowledge, the theoretical issue of combining both concepts has not yet been described and addressed in literature on this topic.

This thesis used the Comprehensive Meaningful Work Scale as developed by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012) as foundation for developing the interview questions. During the data analysis, three issues related to this operationalization became clear. First, one dimension focuses on "being", which refers to 'examining one's work' (p. 674) and is at the same time narrowly focused at 'noticing how people are feeling' (p. 677). The operationalization, interview questions and coding process revolved around the latter. As a result, the first explanation is underexposed, which may influence the findings. So far, literature has addressed this issue insufficiently. Second, one indicator of 'expressing full potential' is named 'being excited by the available opportunities'. While operationalizing this, the researcher first interpreted it as opportunities to learn and develop oneself. During the data analysis, however, it became evident that this "personal development" interpretation does not fit with the definition of this dimension. Instead, it may fit better with the dimension 'developing and becoming inner self'. Lips-Wiersma and Wright's theory (2012, p. 673) draws a distinction between the dimension 'expressing full potential' and the dimension 'developing the inner self' in that the former is 'active and outward directed', whereas the latter is 'inward and reflective'. This data demonstrate that although this distinction exists, it is somewhat blurred. This has not yet been described in literature.

Another theoretical reflection relates to the finding that the dimension 'expressing full potential' may be unified with the dimension 'unity with others'. This exact phenomenon has not yet been described by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012), although they did anticipate that a measure needs to assess the relationship between dimensions.

Furthermore, in contradiction to Lips-Wiersma and Wright's theory (2012), this thesis establishes that a lack of balance between the need for being and the need for doing does not cause meaninglessness in itself. The main argument opposing their notion is that workers consider elaborate reflection on the feelings of others as vital to action. Correspondingly, the balance shifts in favour of the need for being. Instead of experiencing meaninglessness, workers see this as a valuable aspect to achieve their goals. The workers draw meaning from sensing how people feel and value this process.

Finally, a few indicators based on the quantitative questions by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012) are quite similar and not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, 'face up to reality' and 'recognize that life is messy and that is OK' are quite similar. This limitation may be explained by the idea that quantitative items attempt to measure one construct, instead of a separate item. Operationalizing this into a qualitative indicator may have hindering implications.

Likewise, the indicators derived from the quantitative measurement tool developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976) are sometimes partly overlapping. For example, the dimension ‘autonomy’ consists of three indicators: ‘decisions on how to do the job’, ‘independence and freedom’, and ‘personal initiative’. However, the data revealed that one cannot exist without the other. In other words, workers strongly require freedom and independence to feel able to make decisions on how to do their job. Simultaneously, workers experience freedom as a result of the discretion to do their job the way they want to. The same goes for personal initiative; it goes hand in hand with the experience of the other two indicators. One could argue that this finding is due to the fact that the researcher only incorporated one interview question to cover all three indicators. Yet, respondents proactively made an association between these three indicators and additional questions may have been redundant.

Another point of reflection relates to the job characteristic ‘task identity’. Hackman and Oldham (1976) argue that if workers are responsible for a complete product or unit of service, he/she should find the work more meaningful compared to being responsible for only a small part. Nevertheless, this may especially apply to manual labour and be less relevant for an organization with less strict work processes. In contrast with the notion by Hackman and Oldham, the rather low presence of this job characteristic does not appear to influence the experienced meaningfulness of workers. This could be explained by the responsibility workers feel regarding the overall objective of the organization.

Finally, another major theoretical limitation is that the concept of green job workers includes both white-collar and blue-collar workers, while this study solely focused on white-collar workers. This is due to the selection of the organization in which this case study took place; it only employs white-collar workers. It is very likely that a replication of this study with both white- and blue-collar workers will yield different findings. Therefore, it is highly recommended to conduct a similar case study in an organization consisting of green jobs with both white- and blue-collar workers and to compare these findings with the current findings.

6.1.3. Reflexivity

Throughout the data collection and the data analysis phases, the researcher was aware of her role in conducting the research. For this reason, the researcher kept a research diary and wrote reflective memos on her emotions and interpretations (Appendix O).

The personal connection of the researcher to the research topic is twofold. On the one hand, the researcher is passionate about the environment and considers a career in sustainability. On the other hand, the researcher has experienced first-hand what it is like to work for an organization that does not aspire optimal working conditions in terms of job characteristics. This motivated her to research this subject in more detail. This is closely related to meaningful work because she felt that her work was not meaningful enough due to her job characteristics. Although evidently this coloured the conduct of the researcher to some extent, she attempted to reduce her effect on the research object and respondents.

As an interpretivist, the researcher examined how reality is an ongoing social construction of the respondents and the researcher. The researcher attempted to understand respondents' interpretations of their experiences. This also explains the researcher's stance on meaningful work as an individual and subjective experience. Since the researcher is aware of her own pre-understandings of matters, she decided to reflect in memos in case of confronting opinions between herself and the respondent. In the interpretation of such fragments, the researcher tried to be aware of her own opinion and she tried to see the fragments separate from her own opinions, in a more neutral way. During the data analysis, the researcher tried deliberately to explain replies of respondents in light of the whole, since the meaning of one reply can only be understood in relation to the larger whole.

The researcher's position regarding the methodology and theory are to some extent affected by her epistemological approach. For example, according to the literature, the Gioia method for template analysis fits best with an interpretivist approach and was therefore selected as data analysis method. The same goes for the theory underlying the concept of meaningful work. This theory takes an individual subjective experience of significance of work into consideration. This supports the researcher's perspective on how reality is socially constructed by individuals.

Although the researcher attempted to be open-minded, her position with respect to the respondents is most clearly exemplified by the subconscious assumption of the researcher that all respondents would be very motivated to accelerate the energy transition and that they would be very sustainably minded. However, when this was not the case for all respondents, the researcher did not want to let this assumption colour her judgment and interpretation. Nevertheless, she did ask more follow-up questions to get a better understanding of the respondents' perspectives and reasons. In this way, she drew attention to a specific subject, possibly affecting the respondents.

6.2. Recommendations

6.2.1. Contribution to the knowledge

As stated in Chapter 1, little empirical research has examined the contribution of job characteristics of green jobs on the meaningfulness of work. Since green jobs form an increasing job market, this thesis highlighted the need and the importance of exploring the concept of meaningful work among green job workers, especially with regard to the role of job characteristics. Therefore, the contribution of this thesis to existing literature is the empirical evidence for the relationship between job characteristics of green jobs and meaningful work through mechanisms of meaning.

First, in the body of literature on meaningful work, no attention has been paid to green jobs. This thesis proved what job characteristics of green jobs contribute to the experienced meaningfulness of work. It further shed light on how job characteristics of green jobs contribute to meaningfulness of work, namely through which mechanisms work becomes meaningful for green job workers. A better understanding of this benefits meaningful work research.

Second, this thesis has contributed to the field by determining that differing degrees of greenness

of jobs influence the relationship between job characteristics and meaningful work. This thesis suggests that degrees of greenness of jobs could play a moderating role on this relationship. Certain aspects in this relationship change as a result of differing degrees of greenness. Future research on this is advised.

Third, the Comprehensive Meaningful Work Scale developed by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, p. 659) aids a better assessment of ‘the full range of dimensions of meaningful work but also their relationship to each other’. Indeed, a concept such as job characteristics impacts the full range of dimensions of meaningful work. Moreover, as demonstrated in Paragraph 6.1.1, the distinction between certain dimensions appears to be blurred and they are strongly related to one another. For example, ‘developing and becoming inner self’ is closely linked with ‘expressing full potential’.

Fourth, Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, p. 661) argue that ‘sustained lack of balance can cause meaninglessness in itself’, while this thesis determined that imbalance does not cause meaninglessness. For instance, green job workers align their own needs with those of others.

A final key finding is that this thesis provides empirical evidence for the suggestion by Rosso et al. (2010) that one can experience all pathways (consisting of different mechanisms of meaning) simultaneously. It furthermore provides evidence in support of the authors’ assumption that the activation of more pathways contributes to stronger perceptions of meaningfulness.

6.2.2. Managerial implications

This study aimed to provide (managers of) organizations employing green job workers with insights on how work becomes meaningful for green job workers and how certain job characteristics can be enhanced to realize greater meaningful work. Knowledge on factors contributing to meaningful work are considered valuable for improving working life. The following recommendations are therefore offered to (managers of) organizations with green jobs and, in particular, to managers of Enpuls.

Firstly, job characteristics of green jobs that should be maintained to foster a meaningful work experience are in descending order of importance: task significance, autonomy, skill variety and task identity. Secondly, attention should be paid to enhancing the job characteristic job-based feedback. Currently, this characteristic is hardly present in green jobs, while it is a critical contributor to meaningful work. Green job workers have to be aware of their performance and their progress towards reaching a goal. Knowing how their work contributes to the energy transition is key for a meaningful work experience. In addition, such goals need to be feasible and can, for example, be captured in the vision. Feasible goals and an achievable vision are necessary for green job workers, because inspiration and reality need to be balanced; otherwise, it may result in meaninglessness. Furthermore, a key recommendation is to maintain a collaborative working atmosphere since green jobs become meaningful through extensive collaboration with colleagues. Finally, it is highly recommended to foster an open culture in which green job workers feel free to speak and to be open about their values. This is highly valued and contributes to the experienced meaningfulness of work. Overall, this thesis highlights the importance of work as a place for individuals to fulfil their needs for purpose, values, efficacy, and self-

worth. The findings could help managers to develop, change and implement job design of green jobs.

6.2.3. Directions for further research

The theoretical contribution of this thesis implies some directions for further research. First, further studies, which should take the limitations mentioned in Paragraph 6.1 into account, need to be conducted. More empirical single-case studies should be conducted to confirm and strengthen the findings of this study. Comparing multiple cases and the findings gathered on how job characteristics of green jobs contribute to meaningful work should provide further substantiation for this topic. Future research may derive a general theory based on the findings of these single-case studies, according to Bleijenbergh (2016). George and Bennett (2005, p. 76) further propose “Building Block” studies, a theory-building research objective. They argue that single-case studies on a phenomenon could be useful for theory development, each study or building block filling ‘a “space” in the overall theory’ (2005, p. 78). The findings of this thesis are based on a department of a grid operator. While this is interesting, the scope is narrow. Combining the findings of this thesis with comparable (single-)case studies into other green job industries, like commercial wind energy companies, could lead to a more general theory.

Moreover, this study has gained a better understanding of mechanisms, which benefits science on meaningful work. More research with a focus on these mechanisms is key. Furthermore, it is advised to replicate this study with a different method. Despite the richness of qualitative data, both operationalizations are based on quantitative measurement scales. Further research incorporating both scales will most likely provide interesting results.

Second, this thesis employed the concept of job characteristics by Hackman and Oldham (1976). This theory is mainly aimed at manual labour and is not quite appropriate for research into green jobs. It is advised to conduct further research into the contribution of work design to meaningful work for green jobs. Using different theories such as Humphrey’s (2007) on work design or Simonet and Castille’s (2020) on personality could be useful for further research. Furthermore, this study assumed that meaning is shaped externally through job characteristics. However, Wrzesniewski (2003) proposes another way to examine determinants of meaningful work, by looking more closely to the relationship to work. This is formulated in her Job Crafting Theory, which offers promising research directions for future research, especially with regards to green jobs.

Third, little is known about green jobs. Since it is an emerging job market, further research is required to gain a better understanding of the concept of green jobs. To illustrate, interviews on the meaning of green jobs is one way of gathering more insights on this subject. It would also be useful to explore how green job workers use job crafting to redefine their job design in a meaningful way.

Fourth, prior research explores differing degrees of greenness in jobs. This thesis proves the impact of this on the relationship between job characteristics and meaningful work. Some findings suggest a moderating role of green jobs. Further research with more focus on this is therefore suggested.

Finally, an advised direction of research relates to positive work outcomes of meaningful work

as described in Chapter 2. Research on meaningful work would benefit from further research on how the relationship between job characteristics and meaningful work result in and have influence on a number of positive work outcomes for green job workers.

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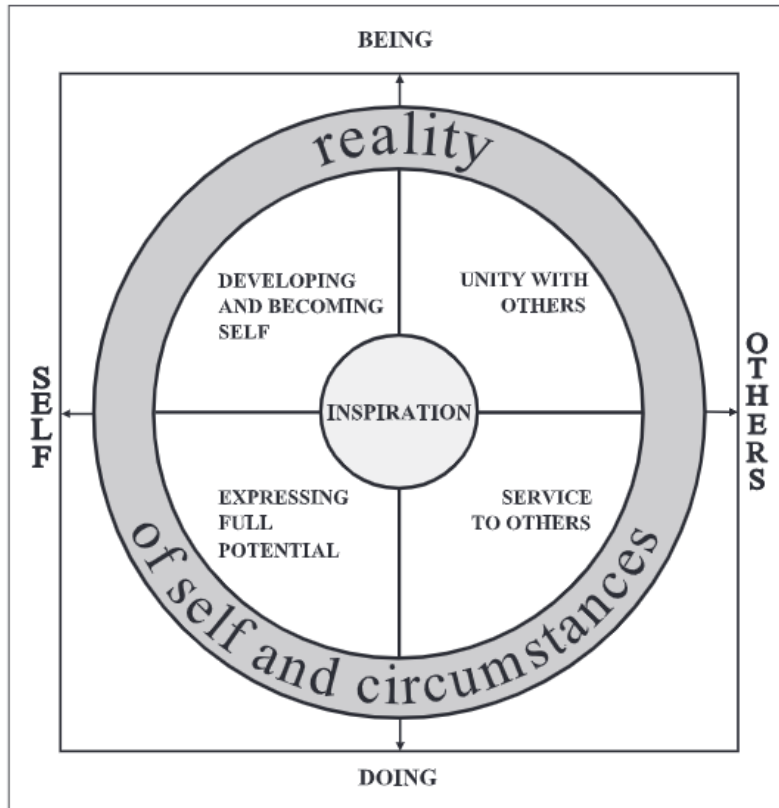
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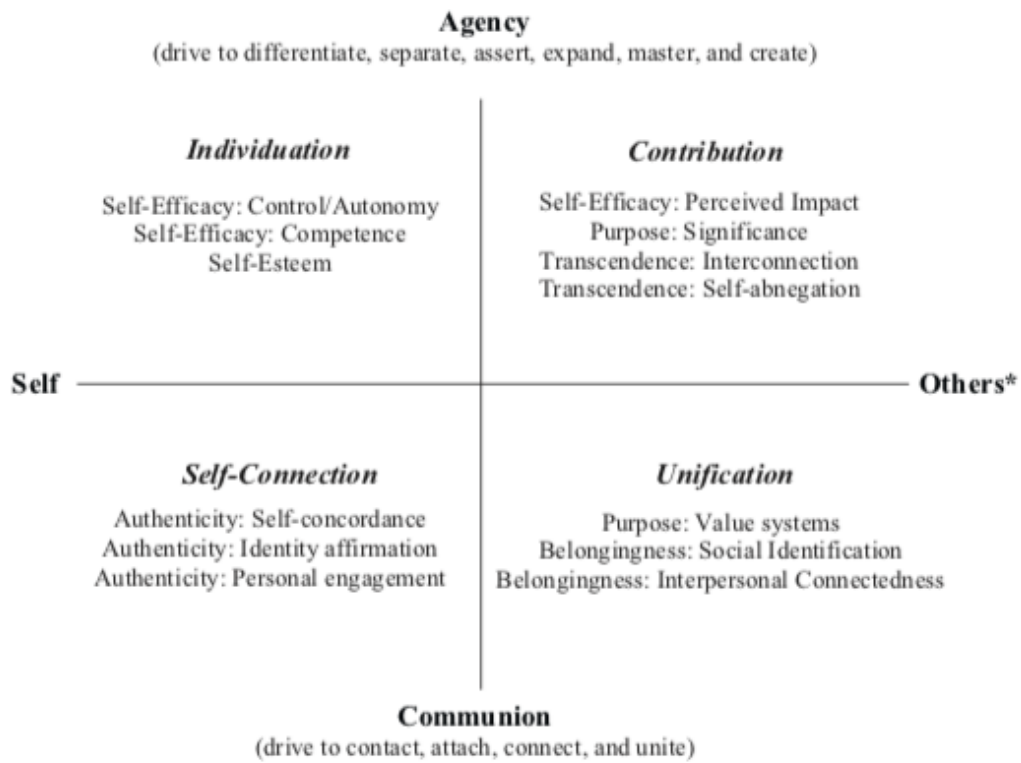
Appendices

A. Framework of meaningful work



Framework of meaningful work by Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012, p. 660).

B. A theoretical framework: four major pathways to meaningful work



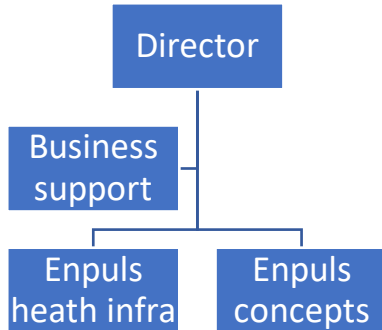
*Others = other individuals, groups, collectives, organizations, and higher powers

Above framework is proposed by Rosso, Dekas and Wrzesniewski (2010, p. 114).

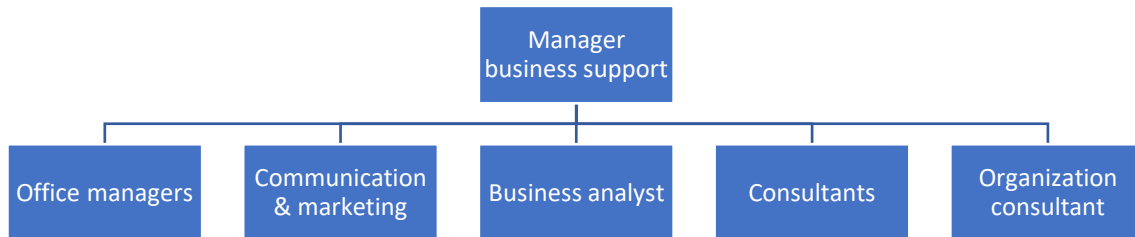
C. Organization chart of Enpuls

Based on the training manual of Enpuls (confident)

Complete organization (the health infrastructure department of Enpuls is out of the scope of this study).



Business Support



Concepts



D. Email contact with organization

C.1 First email contact with organization

The following email was sent on the 5th of March, 2020 by an acquaintance of the researcher who has been employed at the case organization.

Hoi [name],

Hoe gaat het met je?

Ik heb een vraagje voor je, namens mijn vriendin, Saskia (cc). Ze studeert Business Administration in Nijmegen, en is voor haar afstudeeronderzoek op zoek naar 10 mensen om te interviewen binnen een organisatie actief in de duurzame energiesector. Dit zou ze graag doen bij Enpuls (kan natuurlijk niet anders na mijn positieve verhalen 😊).

Onderstaand Saskia's toelichting op wat ze zoekt, kun je haar verder helpen? Je kunt de vraag ook doorspelen naar iemand anders bij Enpuls als je denkt dat dat handiger is.

In het kader van mijn master Business Administration met de specialisatie Organisational Design & Development aan de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, zoek ik een afstudeeropdracht/-plek voor mijn master scriptie. In mijn master scriptie wil ik onderzoek doen naar de relatie tussen de organisatiestructuur en betekenisvol werk. Organisatiestructuur heeft te maken met hoe de organisatie is ingericht en de wijze waarop arbeid verdeeld is over taken (functies) in de organisatie. Betekenisvol werken gaat over hoe betekenisvol mensen hun werk ervaren. Betekenisvol werken wordt vaak verbonden aan positieve werkuitkomsten zoals werktevredenheid, toewijding aan iemands baan, loyaliteit aan de organisatie en een beter sociaal functioneren op de werkplek.

De samenhang tussen deze twee concepten wil ik graag onderzoeken met behulp van interviews met mensen werkzaam in een sector waar duurzaamheid een belangrijke rol speelt – zogenaamde green jobs of green collar workers. De (semipublieke) energiesector zou een uitstekende plek zijn om dit te onderzoeken. Het zou gaan om circa 10 interviews van ongeveer 1 uur (indien gewenst kan dit natuurlijk geheel anoniem).

De resultaten van dit onderzoek kunnen nuttig zijn voor Enpuls, omdat het iets zegt over hoe betekenisvol mensen hun werk nu ervaren en hoe dit samenhangt met de huidige arbeidsverdeling. Dit onderzoek kan ook een suggestie doen hoe veranderingen in de organisatiestructuur kunnen bijdragen aan een meer betekenisvolle ervaring van het werk.

Mocht u geïnteresseerd zijn, dan kunt u telefonisch of per mail contact opnemen met mij op 06 46760675 of saskia.budke@student.ru.nl.

We spreken elkaar vast snel weer een keer!

C.2 Emails for interview request

The following email was sent to each potential respondent.

Beste [name respondent],

Op aanraden van [name previous respondent] neem ik contact met jou op. Hij/zij verwacht dat jij geïnteresseerd kan zijn in het meewerken aan mijn afstudeeronderzoek / scriptie.

Voor mijn afstudeeronderzoek interview ik een aantal medewerkers van Enpuls over kenmerken van hun werk en hoe betekenisvol zij hun werk ervaren.

Een (online) interview kan de komende twee weken ingepland worden en duurt ongeveer 1 uur.

Graag hoor ik van jou of je tijd hebt en bereid bent een uur vrij te maken voor een interview.

Alvast bedankt voor je reactie!

Met vriendelijke groet,

Saskia Budke

Master student Business Administration – Organisational Design & Development

Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen

E. Interview instruction

The interview protocol consists of an introduction and a closing. The introduction covers the following proceedings (Bleijenbergh, 2016):

1. Introduce the interviewer.
2. Explain that the interview, the recording, the transcript and the information is treated anonymously and confidentially. Names will be coded using a name key and will not be used in the transcript nor in the thesis. To some extent, citations could be used in the thesis. However, I will ensure that citations are not traceable to the interviewees.
3. The thesis will be published in the thesis repository (data base) of the Radboud University. The transcripts will not be included. The transcripts will not be given to anyone, except for the thesis supervisor and the second reader.
4. Explain that I will transcribe the interview recording in order to use it to answer the research question. Request permission to record the interview using a recording device. The agreement is taped.
5. Mention the duration of the conversation (circa 60 minutes) and ask whether this fits with any other appointments of the interviewee.
6. Mention the research question: How do job characteristics of green jobs contribute to the meaningfulness of work?
7. Explain the objective of the interview.
8. Explain why I chose for this interviewee and mention that I will speak with other people from the organization as well. Mention that the interviewee has valuable insights on this research topic, since they have a green job. This helps to ‘maximize the recognition’ (Bleijenbergh, 2016, p. 83).
9. Mention the topics that will be discussed (see interview protocol).
10. Ask if the interviewee has any questions. Mention that if something in one of the questions is unclear, the interviewee should say this.

The closing consists of the following steps:

1. Thank the interviewee for all the valuable insights, his/her time and effort.
2. Ask if the interviewee has any questions or final remarks.
3. The transcript will be sent to the interviewee to establish whether I understood everything correctly. In this way, I ensure that the results are a correct reflection of how the interviewee has meant it.
4. When the research has been completed, I will send the thesis to the point of contact in the organization, who could distribute it within the organization.

F. Interview protocol

E.1 Interview protocol - version 1

- Goede morgen/middag [naam interviewee]!
- Ten eerste, ontzettend bedankt voor het vrijmaken van tijd om mee te doen aan dit interview.
- Ik zal mezelf kort introduceren. Ik ben Saskia Budke, een master student organizational design and development aan de Radboud Universiteit. Dit is onderdeel van het Business Administration programma. In het kader van mijn masterscriptie voer ik deze interviews uit.
- Ik wil graag het interview opnemen, zodat ik het accuraat kan transcriberen. Ik zal de enige zijn die naar de opnames luistert. Het transcript kan enkel gelezen worden door mijn begeleiders vanuit de universiteit en het wordt niet opgenomen in een database. In mijn scriptie, die gepubliceerd wordt in de database van de universiteit, maak ik wel gebruik van citaten, maar deze zullen niet makkelijk herleidbaar zijn naar jou. Ik noem geen namen in mijn scriptie en in de transcripten en zal ik de namen versleutelen met behulp van een naamsleutel. Ik ga vertrouwelijk om met alle informatie. Heb ik jouw toestemming om het interview op te nemen? Ik neem je toestemming op.
- Het gesprek zal ongeveer 60 minuten duren. Past dit met je andere afspraken?
- Ik zal een korte uitleg geven over het onderzoek en het interview.
- Het doel van het interview is om inzicht te krijgen in hoe jij jouw werk als betekenisvol ervaart en hoe jouw werk betekenisvol wordt. Deze bevindingen zullen mij helpen om mijn onderzoeksvraag te beantwoorden. Mijn onderzoeksvraag is: hoe dragen taakkenmerken van green jobs (groene banen) bij aan betekenisvol werk?
- Taakkenmerken zijn de kenmerken van een baan, taak, en de sociale en organisatorische omgeving. De aanwezigheid van bepaalde kenmerken in een baan verhogen de waarschijnlijkheid dat mensen hun werk als betekenisvol ervaren.
- De term betekenisvol werk betekent dat mensen bepaalde behoefte hebben, zoals een doel en eigenwaarde. Door deze behoeften te vervullen, wordt de kans groter dat mensen hun leven als zinvol of betekenisvol ervaren.
- Green jobs zijn beroepen waarin mensen de kwaliteit van het milieu verbeteren en betrokken zijn bij het ontwikkelen van een clean-energy economie. Dit is nauw verbonden met het versnellen van de energietransitie. Dit is een onderbelicht thema binnen onderzoek, waardoor het voor mij interessant is om hierop te focussen.
- Dit is ook de reden waarom ik ervoor gekozen heb om mijn interviews met medewerkers van Enpuls te doen. Enpuls werkt aan het versnellen van de energietransitie en daarom hebben medewerkers een green job. Hierdoor heb jij interessante inzichten voor mijn onderzoek. Naast jou zal ik ook spreken met andere medewerkers van Enpuls.
- De onderwerpen die we zullen bespreken zijn: jouw achtergrond, taakkenmerken van jouw werk en tot slot, wat jouw werk betekenisvol maakt.
- Als je vragen hebt tijdens het interview of als iets onduidelijk is, laat het me alsjeblieft weten. Wees je ervan bewust dat er geen goede of foute antwoorden bestaan. Ik ben geïnteresseerd in jouw ervaring.

Achtergrond

1. Kun je jezelf kort introduceren en je functie toelichten?
2. Hoe ben je binnen jouw werk betrokken bij het versnellen van de energietransitie?

Taakkenmerken

We gaan het nu hebben over het eerste inhoudelijke onderwerp: taakkenmerken.

3. Wat zijn binnen jouw functie je dagelijkse werkzaamheden?
 - a. Hoe ziet een werkdag er voor jou uit?

4. Hoe gevarieerd is je werk?
 - a. Heb je bijvoorbeeld veel herhaalde (*terugkerende/repetitieve*) werkzaamheden?
5. Welke vaardigheden heb je nodig voor jouw werk?
6. In hoeverre doe je in jouw werk een 'heel' en herkenbaar deel van het werk?
 - a. D.w.z. is jouw baan een compleet deel van het werk met een duidelijk begin en einde? Of is het een klein deel van het gehele werk en wordt het door andere mensen afgemaakt?
7. Welke rol spelen andere mensen in jouw werk?
 - a. Hoe heeft jouw werk invloed op het leven van andere mensen?
 - b. *Doorvragen:* Met betrekking tot je collega's? En hoe m.b.t. klanten/cliënten?
 - c. Hoe draagt jouw werk bij aan het welzijn van mensen?
 - d. *Doorvragen:* Bijvoorbeeld door middel van het verlagen van de milieu impact?
8. In hoeverre heb je de vrijheid om zelf beslissingen te maken over hoe je je werk doet?
 - a. *Doorvragen:* Hoe ervaar je dit (*deze vrijheid*)?
9. Hoe weet je dat je je werk goed of slecht doet?
 - a. Naast feedback van je baas of collega's, hoe geven taken je feedback over je werk?
 - b. *Doorvraag:* kun je daar een voorbeeld van geven?
 - c. *Uitleg:* als je een taak uitvoert, heb je profijt van je aanpak of heb je last van de door jou gemaakte fouten?
 - d. *Voorbeeld:* omdat je een stappenplan hebt gemaakt kun je effectiever of sneller een project voltooien. Of, omdat je een stap over hebt geslagen in een computerprogramma, heb je uiteindelijk meer tijd nodig.

Betekenisvol werk

Nu wil ik graag verder gaan met het volgende onderwerp: betekenisvol werk.

10. Hoe beïnvloedt jouw werk hoe je bent op je werk? Qua persoonlijkheid?
 - a. *Doorvragen:* Wat in jouw werk maakt dat je je zo voelt/gedraagt?
 - b. *Doorvragen:* Hoe omschrijf je het verschil tussen hoe je op werk bent en hoe je thuis bent?
 - c. Hoe kun je in jouw werk omgaan met wat jij goed en slecht vindt?
11. Hoe betekenisvol (*waardevol*) is voor jou je samenwerking met collega's?
 - a. Hoe voel je dat je thuishoort in jouw team?
 - b. Waar geniet je van in het samenwerken met anderen?
 - c. In hoeverre ondersteunen jij en je collega's elkaar?
12. Hoe vaak praat je op je werk over wat belangrijk voor jou is?
 - a. In hoeverre kun je open zijn over jouw waarden?
13. Op welke manier maak je in jouw werk een verschil dat ertoe doet voor anderen?

- a. *Doorvragen*: kun je dit toelichten? Bijvoorbeeld met een voorbeeld?
14. Hoe zorgt je werk voor een gevoel van prestatie?
- a. *Doorvragen*: hoe ervaar je dit?
15. Hoe maakt enthousiast zijn over kansen om jezelf te ontwikkelen jouw werk betekenisvol?
16. Hoe maakt het kunnen creëren en toepassen van nieuwe ideeën of concepten in jouw werk betekenisvol?
17. Wat maakt jouw werk betekenisvol voor jou?
- a. Wat geeft je het gevoel dat dat wat je doet de moeite waard is?
- b. Wat voel je als je klanten/cliënten kan helpen?
- c. Welke bijdragen levert jouw werk aan het welzijn van mensen? En aan de omgeving?
18. Hoe is de balans in jouw werk tussen focussen op dingen gedaan krijgen en opmerken hoe mensen zich voelen?
- a. Hoe vaak heb je tijd en ruimte om hierover na te denken?
19. Wat is de balans tussen je behoefte om jouw behoeften te vervullen en de behoefte om aan de behoeften van anderen te voldoen?
20. Hoe ga je op het werk om met de realiteit?
- a. *Doorvragen*: Kun je hiervan een voorbeeld geven?
21. Hoe laat jouw werk je geïnspireerd voelen?
- a. Hoe laat jouw werk je hoopvol over de toekomst voelen?
- b. Hoe inspireert Enpuls' visie jou?
- c. Ervaar je een gevoel van spirituele verbinding met je werk? Zo ja, kun je dit beschrijven?

Afronding

- Daarmee komen we aan het einde van dit interview. Ontzettend bedankt voor de waardevolle inzichten, je tijd en je moeite!
- Heb je nog eventueel opmerkingen of toevoegingen die nuttig kunnen zijn voor mijn onderzoek? Of heb je nog vragen?
- Na ons interview ga ik het transcriberen. Ik zal het transcript naar je sturen, zodat je het kan nalezen om te zien of dit een correcte reflectie is van hoe je het bedoeld hebt.
- Als het onderzoek afgerond is, zal ik mijn scriptie delen met [naam contactpersoon], die het in de organisatie kan verspreiden.
- Tot slot, op advies van [naam contactpersoon], wil ik je graag vragen of je mij kan verbinden met twee andere collega's. Ik heb op dit moment namelijk nog onvoldoende interviews om een goede uitspraak voor mijn onderzoek te kunnen doen. Dat zou mij heel erg helpen.

E.2 Interview protocol - version 2

- Goede morgen/middag [naam interviewee]!
- Ten eerste, ontzettend bedankt voor het vrijmaken van tijd om mee te doen aan dit interview.
- Ik zal mezelf kort introduceren. Ik ben Saskia Budke, een master student organizational design and development aan de Radboud Universiteit. Dit is onderdeel van het Business Administration programma. In het kader van mijn masterscriptie voer ik deze interviews uit.
- Ik wil graag het interview opnemen, zodat ik het accuraat kan transcriberen. Ik zal de enige zijn die naar de opnames luistert. Het transcript kan enkel gelezen worden door mijn begeleiders vanuit de universiteit en het wordt niet opgenomen in een database. In mijn scriptie, die gepubliceerd wordt in de database van de universiteit, maak ik wel gebruik van citaten, maar deze zullen niet makkelijk herleidbaar zijn naar jou. Ik noem geen namen in mijn scriptie en in de transcripten en zal ik de namen versleutelen met behulp van een naamsleutel. Ik ga vertrouwelijk om met alle informatie. Heb ik jouw toestemming om het interview op te nemen? Ik neem je toestemming op.
- Het gesprek zal ongeveer 60 minuten duren. Past dit met je andere afspraken?
- Ik zal een korte uitleg geven over het onderzoek en het interview.
- Het doel van het interview is om inzicht te krijgen in hoe jij jouw werk als betekenisvol ervaart en hoe jouw werk betekenisvol wordt. Deze bevindingen zullen mij helpen om mijn onderzoeksvraag te beantwoorden. Mijn onderzoeksvraag is: hoe dragen taakkenmerken van green jobs (groene banen) bij aan betekenisvol werk?
- Taakkenmerken zijn de kenmerken van een baan, taak, en de sociale en organisatorische omgeving. De aanwezigheid van bepaalde kenmerken in een baan verhogen de waarschijnlijkheid dat mensen hun werk als betekenisvol ervaren.
- De term betekenisvol werk betekent dat mensen bepaalde behoefte hebben, zoals een doel en eigenwaarde. Door deze behoeften te vervullen, wordt de kans groter dat mensen hun leven als zinvol of betekenisvol ervaren.
- Green jobs zijn beroepen waarin mensen de kwaliteit van het milieu verbeteren en betrokken zijn bij het ontwikkelen van een clean-energy economie. Dit is nauw verbonden met het versnellen van de energietransitie. Dit is een onderbelicht thema binnen onderzoek, waardoor het voor mij interessant is om hierop te focussen.
- Dit is ook de reden waarom ik ervoor gekozen heb om mijn interviews met medewerkers van Enpuls te doen. Enpuls werkt aan het versnellen van de energietransitie en daarom hebben medewerkers een green job. Hierdoor heb jij interessante inzichten voor mijn onderzoek. Naast jou zal ik ook spreken met andere medewerkers van Enpuls.
- De onderwerpen die we zullen bespreken zijn: jouw achtergrond, taakkenmerken van jouw werk en tot slot, wat jouw werk betekenisvol maakt.
- Als je vragen hebt tijdens het interview of als iets onduidelijk is, laat het me alsjeblieft weten. Wees je ervan bewust dat er geen goede of foute antwoorden bestaan. Ik ben geïnteresseerd in jouw ervaring.

Achtergrond

22. Kun je jezelf kort introduceren en je functie toelichten?
23. Hoe ben je binnen jouw werk betrokken bij het versnellen van de energietransitie?

Taakkenmerken

We gaan het nu hebben over het eerste inhoudelijke onderwerp: taakkenmerken.

24. Wat zijn binnen jouw functie je dagelijkse werkzaamheden?
 - a. Hoe ziet een werkdag er voor jou uit?

25. Hoe gevarieerd is je werk?
- Heb je bijvoorbeeld veel herhaalde (*terugkerende/repetitieve*) werkzaamheden?
26. Welke vaardigheden heb je nodig voor jouw werk?
27. In hoeverre doe je in jouw werk een 'heel' en herkenbaar deel van het werk?
- D.w.z. is jouw baan een compleet deel van het werk met een duidelijk begin en einde? Of is het een klein deel van het gehele werk en wordt het door andere mensen afgemaakt?
28. Welke rol spelen andere mensen in jouw werk?
- Hoe heeft jouw werk invloed op het leven van andere mensen?
 - Doorvragen:* Met betrekking tot je collega's? En hoe m.b.t. klanten/cliënten?
 - Doorvragen:* Kun je hier een voorbeeld van geven?
 - Hoe draagt jouw werk bij aan het welzijn van mensen?
 - Doorvragen:* Bijvoorbeeld door middel van het verlagen van de milieu impact?
29. In hoeverre heb je de vrijheid om zelf beslissingen te maken over hoe je je werk doet?
- Doorvragen:* Hoe ervaar je dit (*deze vrijheid*)?
30. Hoe weet je dat je je werk goed of slecht doet?
- Naast feedback van je baas of collega's, hoe geven taken je feedback over je werk?
 - Doorvraag:* Kun je daar een voorbeeld van geven?
 - Uitleg:* Als je een taak uitvoert, in hoeverre geven die directe en heldere informatie over de effectiviteit van je prestatie? Hoe heb je profijt van je aanpak of heb je last van de door jou gemaakte fouten?
 - Voorbeeld:* Dus bijvoorbeeld. Je kunt een schroef niet aandraaien omdat je het gat te klein hebt gemaakt. Dit zegt je dat je uitvoering van een eerdere taak niet goed was. Omdat je een stappenplan hebt gemaakt kun je effectiever of sneller een project voltooien. Of, omdat je een stap over hebt geslagen in een computerprogramma, heb je uiteindelijk meer tijd nodig.

Betekenisvol werk

Nu wil ik graag verder gaan met het volgende onderwerp: betekenisvol werk.

31. Welke invloed heeft jouw werk op hoe je bent en gedraagt op je werk? (*Persoonlijkheid, gedrag*)
 - d. *Doorvragen:* Wat in jouw werk maakt dat je je zo voelt/gedraagt?
 - e. Kun je jezelf zijn op je werk? Waaruit blijkt dit?
 - f. *Doorvragen:* Hoe omschrijf je het verschil tussen hoe je op werk bent en hoe je thuis bent? Waar komt dit door?
 - g. Hoe kun je in jouw werk omgaan met wat jij goed en fout vindt?
32. Hoe vaak praat je op je werk over wat belangrijk voor jou is?
 - a. In hoeverre kun je open zijn over jouw waarden?
 - b. *Doorvragen:* Kun je hier een voorbeeld van geven?
33. Hoe betekenisvol (*waardevol*) is voor jou je samenwerking met collega's?
 - a. *Doorvragen:* Waardoor komt dit?
 - b. Waaraan voel je dat je thuishoort in jouw team?
 - c. Waar geniet je van in het samenwerken met anderen?
 - d. In hoeverre ondersteunen jij en je collega's elkaar?
34. Wat in je werk zorgt voor een gevoel van prestatie?
 - a. *Doorvragen:* hoe ervaar je dit?
35. Op welke manier maak je in jouw werk een verschil dat ertoe doet voor anderen?
 - a. *Doorvragen:* kun je dit toelichten? Bijvoorbeeld met een voorbeeld?
 - b. *Doorvragen:* wat motiveert je om dit werk te doen?
36. Hoe dragen kansen om jezelf te ontwikkelen bij aan hoe betekenisvol je jouw werk ervaart?
37. Hoe maakt het kunnen creëren en toepassen van nieuwe ideeën of concepten jouw werk betekenisvol?
38. Wat maakt jouw werk betekenisvol voor jou?
 - a. Wat geeft je het gevoel dat dat wat je doet de moeite waard is?
 - b. Wat voel je als je klanten/cliënten kan helpen?
 - c. Welke bijdragen levert jouw werk aan het welzijn van mensen? En aan het milieu?
39. Hoe is de balans in jouw werk tussen focussen op dingen gedaan krijgen en opmerken hoe mensen zich voelen?
 - a. Hoe vaak heb je tijd en ruimte om hierover na te denken?
40. Wat is de balans tussen je behoefte om jouw eigen behoeften te vervullen en de behoefte om aan de behoeften van anderen te voldoen?
41. Hoe ga je op het werk om met de realiteit?

- a. *Uitleg:* De ideale wereld is anders dan de werkelijkheid. Life is messy and that is OK. Tolerant zijn ten opzichte van het mens zijn.
- b. *Doorvragen:* Kun je hiervan een voorbeeld geven?

42. Hoe laat jouw werk je geïnspireerd voelen?

- a. Hoe laat jouw werk je hoopvol over de toekomst voelen?
- b. Hoe inspireert de visie van Enpuls jou?
'Enpuls is een jonge, onafhankelijke organisatie met denkers en doeners. We zijn verkenners, visiemakers en conceptontwikkelaars. En we hebben één doel: de versnelling van de energietransitie. Samen. Met anderen die ook dat doel nastreven.'
'Enpuls kijkt naar de toekomst, ziet kansen en helpt om lokale energieambities waar te maken.'
- c. Ervaar je een gevoel van spirituele verbinding met je werk? Zo ja, kun je deze verbinding beschrijven?

Afronding

- Daarmee komen we aan het einde van dit interview. Ontzettend bedankt voor de waardevolle inzichten, je tijd en je moeite!
- Heb je nog eventueel opmerkingen of toevoegingen die nuttig kunnen zijn voor mijn onderzoek? Of heb je nog vragen?
- Na ons interview ga ik het transcriberen. Ik zal het transcript naar je sturen, zodat je het kan nalezen om te zien of dit een correcte reflectie is van hoe je het bedoeld hebt.
- Als het onderzoek afgerond is, zal ik mijn scriptie delen met [naam contactpersoon], die het in de organisatie kan verspreiden.
- Tot slot, op advies van [naam contactpersoon], wil ik je graag vragen of je mij kan verbinden met twee andere collega's. Ik heb op dit moment namelijk nog onvoldoende interviews om een goede uitspraak voor mijn onderzoek te kunnen doen. Dat zou mij heel erg helpen.

G. Transcripts

Confident. Please refer to attachment.

H. Observational memos of interviews

Confident. Please refer to attachment.

I. Member check with interviewees

Confident. Please refer to attachment.

J. A priori themes – initial template

1. Meaningful work

- 1.1. Developing and becoming inner self
 - 1.1.1. Being yourself at work
 - 1.1.2. Like who you become at work
 - 1.1.3. Sense of right and wrong
- 1.2. Unity with others
 - 1.2.1. Be open about values
 - 1.2.2. Enjoy working together
 - 1.2.3. Sense of belonging
 - 1.2.4. Support and reassure each other
 - 1.2.5. Talk about what matters
- 1.3. Expressing full potential
 - 1.3.1. Create and apply new ideas or concepts
 - 1.3.2. Experience sense of achievement
 - 1.3.3. Make a difference that matters to others
- 1.4. Service to others
 - 1.4.1. Contribute to projects that enhance human well-being/environment
 - 1.4.2. Truly help customers/clients
 - 1.4.3. What we do is worthwhile
- 1.5. Tensions between Being and Doing
 - 1.5.1. Focusing on getting things done and noticing how people are feeling
 - 1.5.2. Time and space to think
- 1.6. Tensions between Self and Others
 - 1.6.1. Balance between needs of others and own needs
- 1.7. Inspiration
 - 1.7.1. Feel inspired at work
 - 1.7.2. Sense of spiritual connection with the work
 - 1.7.3. Vision which employees work towards inspires
 - 1.7.4. Work makes feel hopeful about future
- 1.8. Reality
 - 1.8.1. Face up to reality
 - 1.8.2. Recognize that life is messy and that is OK
 - 1.8.3. Tolerant of being human

2. Job characteristics contributing to meaningful work

- 2.1. Skill variety
 - 2.1.1. Different work activities
 - 2.1.2. Repetitive activities
 - 2.1.3. Use of multiple, complex skills
- 2.2. Task identity
 - 2.2.1. Complete set of activities
 - 2.2.2. Job design: finish what you start
- 2.3. Task significance
 - 2.3.1. Job contributes to life/well-being of others
 - 2.3.2. Job influences life/well-being of others

- 2.4. Autonomy
 - 2.4.1. Decisions on how to do the job
 - 2.4.2. Independence and freedom
 - 2.4.3. Personal initiative
- 2.5. Job-based feedback
 - 2.5.1. Job-based feedback

3. Mechanisms underlying the relationship between job characteristics and meaningful work

- 3.1. Individuation
 - 3.1.1. Self-efficacy: autonomy
 - 3.1.2. Self-efficacy: competence
 - 3.1.3. Self-esteem
- 3.2. Self-connection
 - 3.2.1. Authenticity: self-concordance
 - 3.2.2. Authenticity: identity affirmation
 - 3.2.3. Authenticity: personal engagement
- 3.3. Contribution
 - 3.3.1. Self-efficacy: perceived impact
 - 3.3.2. Purpose: significance
 - 3.3.3. Transcendence: interconnection
- 3.4. Unification
 - 3.4.1. Purpose: value systems
 - 3.4.2. Belongingness: social identification
 - 3.4.3. Belongingness: interpersonal connectedness

K. List of first codes

(Omgaan met) weerstand in org.	Enthousiasme overdragen collega's
Aanjagen en overdragen markt	Enthousiast door org. over ET
Aanjagen markt	Ervaring energiesector
Aanjager sfeer in org.	ET is een uitdagende, motiverende puzzel
Afgebakend werk	ET motiveert werk
Afgeremd, terughoudend over waarden/meningen	Fouten maken mag
Andere inzichten inspireren	Frequent praten over wat belangrijk is
Balans dingen doen en gevoelens mensen	Functie toegevoegde waarde
Balans eigen behoefte en behoefte anderen	Gaaf bijdrage ET versnelling
Balans vinden beter door leeftijd	Gaandeweg neemt enthousiasme af
Begeleiding beperking tot arbeidsmarkt	Geen oog voor detail
Behoeft aan nieuwe uitdaging in baan	Geen ruimte voor gesprek
Belangrijke onderwerpen vertalen in visielijnen	Geen verschil thuis en werk
Bewust negatieve klimaatimpact	Gevarieerd werk
Collega's complimenteren	Goed gedaan
Collega's helpen	Hoopvol over toekomst
Collega's inspireren	Iedereen andere competenties
Collega's weten je te vinden (voor specialisme)	Iets toevoegen aan snelheid ET is betekenisvol
Compromis	Informatie delen
Concepten veranderen barrières in ET oplossingen	Innovatief, creatief
Deadlines halen	Innovatieve, creatieve, lerende werkwijze
Doel werk	Interne afhankelijkheden
Draagvlak/ betrokkenheid creëren intern	Intrinsiek gemotiveerd
Duurzaamheid is een verbindende waarde	Jezelf zijn op werk
Dwarsverbanden, connecties sectoren	Kennis en ervaring delen
Eigen bijdrage ET versnelling	Kennis en netwerk
Eigen rol ET	Kennis ophalen in het veld
Elkaar helpen/aanvullen/ondersteunen	Kennisuitwisseling Enpuls en vrijwilligerswerk
Energie door team	Kleine / enorme impact op ET
Energie van leren, ontwikkeling	Klimaatdrammer, milieufreak
Enpuls geen winstoogmerk	Kritische houding

Leeftijd speelt (g)een rol bij ontwikkeling	Open over waarden
Legitimiteit Enpuls draagt bij aan succes concepten	Organisatie-/ bedrijfscultuur
Leren van anderen	Overdragen markt
Linking pin / mediating rol MT en team	Overtuiging
Luisteren naar anderen en hen respecteren	Overtuiging motiveert werken
Luisteren naar elkaar	Overwinningsgevoel prestatie / trots
Luxepositie	Persoonlijke doelen/ voortgang
Manager draagt bij aan werkgeluk	Platte organisatie met inmiddels ook managers
Markt analyse	Portfolio
Marktoverdracht inspannings-/ resultaatverplichting	Praktische inzichten om ET versnellen
Marktoverdracht wel betrokken	Prestatie gevoel
Markresultaat belangrijk succescriterium werk	Project succes
Mechanisme	Publicaties e.d.
Meer prioriteit geven aan ontwikkeling	Realiseren realiteit vaak anders
Mening delen	Realiteit balanceren
Meningsverschillen (algemeen)	Reflectie op rol
Mensen bewust maken duurzaamheid	Rol Enpuls in ET
Mensen hebben verschillende meningen m.b.t. klimaat	Ruimte autonomie
Napraten niet interessant	Samen doel behalen
Niet iedereen past bij Enpuls	Samenwerking waardevol
Niet ver vooruit plannen kan niet iedereen	Spirituele verbinding werk
Omgaan met realiteit	Sterkere band met eigen team dan hele org.
Onderdeel team	Targets halen
Ondersteunende functie t.b.v. anderen concentreren ET	Toekomst inspireert
Ongelijkheid door klimaatverandering	Tof experimenteren leren
Onjuiste scope afbakening, niet meeste klimaatimpact	Urgentie / noodzaak ET
Ontwikkeling draagt bij aan impact werk	Vaardigheden
Ontwikkeling is belangrijk	Valideren concept
Ontwikkeling staat los van MFW	Van gedachten wisselen, andere inzichten/ perspectieven

Ontwikkeling wordt gestimuleerd	Verantwoordelijkheid als manager
Verantwoordelijkheid geven aan team	
Verplaatsen in doelgroep	
Visie Enpuls inspireert	
Visie Enpuls/ ET te groot/ abstract	
Voldoening halen uit jezelf	
Voldoening halen uit prestaties van anderen	
Vooroplopende organisatie inspireert	
Vrijheid werk	
Vrijwilliger ET	
Vrijwilliger ET overtuiging	
Waardering collega's	
Weinig gesprekken over belangrijke onderwerpen	
Werk beïnvloedt gedrag	
Werk draagt bij welzijn van mensen	
Werk is belangrijk	
Werk moet zichtbare impact maken	
Werk motivatie geld	
Werk ondersteunt overtuiging	
Werk t.a.v. ET verandert privé gedrag	
Werkplek inspireert	
Werkwijze Enpuls visies	
Werkzaamheden	
Werkzaamheden	
Zelfsturend	
Zorgelijk debat	

L. Final template

1. Meaningful work

- 1.1. Developing and becoming inner self
 - 1.1.1. Being yourself at work and possibility to enact intrinsic motivation
 - 1.1.2. Like who you become at work and like who you become as a result of your work
 - 1.1.3. Sense of right and wrong and ability to share opinion
- 1.2. Unity with others
 - 1.2.1. Be open about values
 - 1.2.1.1. Share opinion about (confronting) values
 - 1.2.1.2. Listening to and respecting others
 - 1.2.1.3. Disagreements of opinions are not possible
 - 1.2.1.4. Confronting opinions about climate exist
 - 1.2.2. Enjoy working together
 - 1.2.2.1. Collaboration is valuable
 - 1.2.2.2. Energy derived from team
 - 1.2.2.3. Exchange of thoughts
 - 1.2.3. Sense of belonging
 - 1.2.3.1. Colleagues' appreciation (for one's specialization)
 - 1.2.3.2. Part of the team
 - 1.2.3.3. Strong connection with direct colleagues than whole organization
 - 1.2.4. Support and reassure each other
 - 1.2.5. Talk about what matters (frequently) and share information
- 1.3. Expressing full potential
 - 1.3.1. Create and apply new ideas or concepts and use creativity and innovation
 - 1.3.2. Personal development
 - 1.3.2.1. Personal development is important
 - 1.3.2.2. Personal development contributes to impact of work
 - 1.3.2.3. To learn from others (colleagues)
 - 1.3.2.4. Organization stimulates personal development
 - 1.3.2.5. Personal development is not meaningful
 - 1.3.3. Experience sense of achievement (pride)
 - 1.3.3.1. Colleagues applaud each other
 - 1.3.3.2. Experience sense of co-achievement: accomplish goals etc. together with colleagues
 - 1.3.3.3. Get satisfaction from doing oneself or one's job
- 1.4. Service to others
 - 1.4.1. Truly help target group
- 1.5. Tensions between Being and Doing
 - 1.5.1. Focussing on getting things done and noticing how people are feeling
- 1.6. Tensions between Self and Others
 - 1.6.1. Balance between needs of others and own needs
- 1.7. Inspiration
 - 1.7.1. Feel inspired at work
 - 1.7.1.1. Future inspires and working for a leading organization inspires
 - 1.7.1.2. Exchange of thoughts inspires
 - 1.7.1.3. Workplace inspires
 - 1.7.2. Inspire others (colleagues)
 - 1.7.3. Sense of spiritual connection with the work
 - 1.7.4. Vision which employees work towards inspires
 - 1.7.4.1. Vision of Enpuls or energy transition is too broad and intangible
 - 1.7.4.2. Working towards a sustainable future is a shared value that connects workers
 - 1.7.5. Work makes feel hopeful about future
- 1.8. Reality

- 1.8.1. Face up to and balance reality and feel the urgency of energy transition
- 1.8.2. Recognize that life is messy and that is OK
- 1.8.3. Tolerant of being human
 - 1.8.3.1. With respect to colleagues
 - 1.8.3.2. With respect to individuals in the energy transition

2. Job characteristics contributing to meaningful work

- 2.1. Skill variety
 - 2.1.1. Different work activities
 - 2.1.2. Repetitive activities and diverse work activities
 - 2.1.3. Use of multiple, complex skills
 - 2.1.3.1. Individuals have their own skill set
- 2.2. Task identity
 - 2.2.1. Complete set of demarcated activities with some internal dependencies
- 2.3. Task significance
 - 2.3.1. Job contributes to life/well-being of others
 - 2.3.1.1. Work and Enpuls contribute to energy transition and this is motivating
 - 2.3.1.2. Making people aware of sustainability through concepts
 - 2.3.1.3. Developing concepts that change barriers in energy transition into solutions
 - 2.3.1.4. Handing concepts over to the market contributes to well-being of others due to agreed effort obligation
 - 2.3.1.5. Job has added value
 - 2.3.1.6. Supporting job function to enable others to focus efforts on energy transition
 - 2.3.1.7. Manager contributes to job satisfaction of team
- 2.4. Autonomy
 - 2.4.1. Decisions on how to do the job
 - 2.4.2. Independence and freedom; receive responsibility
 - 2.4.3. Personal initiative
- 2.5. Job-based feedback
 - 2.5.1. Job-based feedback
 - 2.5.1.1. Project is successful
 - 2.5.1.2. Achieve targets
 - 2.5.1.3. Market result is key success criterium

3. Mechanisms underlying the relationship between job characteristics and meaningful work

- 3.1. Individuation
 - 3.1.1. Self-efficacy: autonomy
 - 3.1.2. Self-efficacy: competence
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M. Coded data set

Confident. Please refer to attachment.

N. Research diary

Confident. Please refer to attachment.

O. Reflective memos

Confident. Please refer to attachment.

P. Research Integrity Form – master thesis

Name: Saskia Budke	Student number: S1028708
RU e-mail address: saskia.budke@student.ru.nl	Master specialisation: OD&D

Thesis title: How do job characteristics of green jobs contribute to meaningfulness?
Brief description of the study: this thesis examines the relation between job characteristics of green jobs and meaningful work.

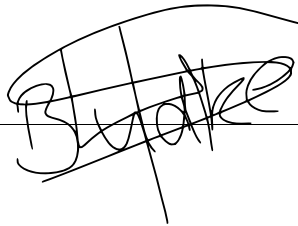
It is my responsibility to follow the university's code of academic integrity and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of my study. This includes:

- providing original work or proper use of references;
- providing appropriate information to all involved in my study;
- requesting informed consent from participants;
- transparency in the way data is processed and represented;
- ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data;

If there is any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the research, I will complete another Research Integrity Form.

Breaches of the code of conduct with respect to academic integrity (as described / referred to in the thesis handbook) should and will be forwarded to the examination board. Acting contrary to the code of conduct can result in declaring the thesis invalid

Student's Signature: _____ **Date:** 16-7-2020



To be signed by supervisor

I have instructed the student about ethical issues related to their specific study. I hereby declare that I will challenge him / her on ethical aspects through their investigation and to act on any violations that I may encounter.

Supervisor's Signature: _____ **Date:**