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MSC in Social, Health and Organizational Psychology

A study examining the relationships between empowering leadership, organizational inclusive culture, collective mindfulness and well-being in workplaces

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Abstract

Nowadays, it is well known how the twenty-first century organizations are increasingly becoming multicultural and fast-paced environments. In this global vision, to be able to outperform exceedingly, successful companies must focus on employee's well-being by promoting supportive behaviors in a positive and safe climate. The importance to establish an inclusive culture, encourage leaders to empower followers and improve efficient cooperation in teams, are essential elements to nurture people's wellness in the corporate setting. On this basis, the aim of this investigation is to analyse how empowering leadership and organizational inclusive culture relate each to well-being and how those relationships are influenced by the team's process of collective mindfulness. One hundred fifty-eight working adults living in the Netherlands participated on the online survey. Results confirmed the existing positive relationships between empowering leadership, corporate inclusive culture, and well-being, meaning that the more the employees perceive their leaders as empowering as well as an established inclusive culture within the organization, the better they feel (hypotheses 1 and 2). Contrary to the expectations, collective mindfulness did not moderate those relationships, denoting that the existing direct associations are not statistically stronger for higher levels of collective mindfulness perceived (hypotheses 3 and 4). Although further quantitative studies on this subject are required to contribute more empirical evidence, those last two hypotheses must be rejected. Overall, the present findings remark the importance of creating an inclusive and safe atmosphere as well as motivating leaders in supporting and empowering followers to be able to foster people's well-being in the workplace.

Keywords: empowering leadership, organizational inclusive culture, collective mindfulness, well-being, workplaces

Introduction

People spend about one-third of their time at work, and in an ever more worldwide vision, it is well known how organizations are becoming growing-fast environments where success is measured on employees' effectiveness and productivity. This should be a starting point for a contemplation of those features that nurture positive outcomes of human's life in workplaces, where well-being has increasingly become a common topic in the mainstream organizational research, affecting both employers and employees (Okoro & Washington, 2012). On this basis, happier workers perform better, and the promotion of wellness should be a priority for companies to succeed fruitfully in this multicultural global market.

Heterogeneity within organizations can vary on different features: people can differ on age, gender, nationality, personality but also on educational backgrounds, experiences or tasks performed. This means that diversity is a key component and an ever-present aspect in the working environment, and corporate should be highly interested in supporting it by promoting an inclusive climate among employees: valuing differences between people and expect them to treat everyone with respect. Such climate makes employees emphasize a sense of psychological safety, meaning that they experience to be themselves and voice their opinions without fear of being judged or criticized (Dollard et al., 2017). Contingent on the literature presented, inclusion refers to an environmental feeling of belonging, and companies that develop an inclusive workplace are creating a culture where employees feel respected regardless of their differences. This type of climate is perceived by the personnel as an influence of the work environment on their well-being (Jones & James, 1979) promoting also, but not limited to; job satisfaction (Madera et al., 2013), prosocial behavior (Twenge et al., 2007), self-regulation (Baumeister et al., 2005) and motivation (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In this vision, establishing an inclusive culture is a mutual interest of both employees and organizations but, is there anything else that companies can do to foster the promotion of this

effective climate? A possible affirmative answer can be linked to the following theoretical insights. Thinking about the influence that superiors in workplaces have over others demonstrate that the power of a status affects the degree of heed. Management and leadership are two example of those employment levels that can guide, inspire, and motivate other professionals by nurturing shared organizational culture and values (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). Although, it is a common mistake to think that leadership is all about having authority over people and believe that some titles allow to force certain behaviors from different team members; yet leadership has nothing to do with having control over someone, but it is more about using the influence to inspire and empower people (Ahearne et al., 2005; Chen et al., 2011; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). Therefore, leadership is a process of persuading others to agree on a common goal and work together to achieve it; and effective leaders play a vital role in creating an environment where their teams can reach their potential and continuously improve themselves (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). As no one else is more qualified to foster a positive work environment than managers; leadership styles and organizational cultures are key features, strictly connected, that influence life in workplaces and can allow employees to be motivated and to collaborate efficiently with each other's.

More recently, other researchers have begun to investigate another interesting organizational process carried out by organizational members, especially those on the front line, and so, linked to both inclusive culture and empowering leadership: the collective mindfulness. It is important to remark that this concept differs from the psychological construct of "mindfulness" that is common to hear and has received a great deal of attention during the past years. In fact, while this last refers to a state of consciousness where the attention is focused on events occurring in the present moment without any kind of evaluation (Badham & King, 2021). On the other hand, collective mindfulness, or mindful organizing, refers to a social process conceptualized and explored at the level of the organization that focus on stimuli that

may constitute a threat to any organization's operation (Sutcliffe et al., 2016). With this regard, individual mindfulness is a mental activity that brings awareness on both internal and external dimensions linked to thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environments (Dane, 2011). In contrast, mindful organizing is the collective capability to anticipate and recover from unexpected events and it can be displayed by interactions and actions of team members (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2012). As a result, this bottom-up organizational process is not only reflecting the relationships between co-workers but also their perception of an established supportive atmosphere in the working environment. From this perspective, the importance to value employees by fostering supportive behaviours in an inclusive context should be essential to promote well-being in workplaces. Eventually, the purpose of this study is to examine whether empowering leadership and organizational inclusive culture each relate to well-being and how those positive relationships are influenced and supported by the collective mindfulness.

Theoretical Framework

Four constructs have been considered in the following investigation: well-being, empowering leadership, organizational inclusive culture and collective mindfulness. No existing theory or model has been found to link those concepts. Nevertheless, the theoretical framework is presented, and the possible associations are then hypothesized.

Well-being

The promotion of health, defined as a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity" (WHO, 1948) is a key action to develop both individual and social wellness. According to the biopsychosocial approach, health is a dynamic process where well-being is affected not only by biological factors, as the traditional biomedical model claimed, but also by psychological (emotions, thoughts, behaviors) and social (economical, environmental, cultural) elements (Bertini, 2012; Braibanti,

2015). In other words, the term of well-being has expanded from the traditional point of view focused on just medical care, but it is now considered as a combination and interaction of those dimensions that can affect people daily. It refers to an individual's experience of "feeling good" and, in working environments, it is influenced by various circumstances that can affect, task performance and other on-the-job behaviors such as employees' engagement, motivation and teamwork (Sonnetag, 2015). On this basis, well-being relates to all aspects of working life, from the quality of the physical environment and the organizational culture to people's attitudes about their teams and jobs. Employees who are not in good health may be less productive, make poorer judgments, be more likely to miss work and overall, consistently decreasing contributions to the organizations (Price, & Hooijberg, 1992). In this sense, the ability to feel good at work is not just something that the personnel hope for, but it is a necessity for organizations to achieve goals and be able to develop successfully. Eventually, in the current study, as well-being refers to a dynamic and multi-level process, three different components of wellness are considered: emotional, social, and psychological, all of which influence individuals on intrapersonal as well as interpersonal levels (Kayes, 2005).

Empowering leadership

Empowering leadership is defined as "a process of sharing power and allocating more autonomy and responsibilities to followers through enhancing the meaningfulness of work, fostering participation in decision-making, expressing confidence in high performance, and providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints" (Cheong et al., 2016, pp. 603–604). Empowering leaders allow and encourage employees to control their own job-related behaviors through motivational processes rather than simply delegate the power to followers (Srivastava et al., 2006; Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Therefore, in order to be empowering and to increase motivation, leaders should help team members to understand their roles and value the importance of their performances (Ahearne et al., 2005). Moreover, the ability to support in

decision-making encourages followers to believe that their leaders treat them with fairness, consideration, and respect. Finally, those behaviors contribute to the development of a trust-based relationship and a psychologically safe atmosphere which lead to a multitude of positive outcomes in workplaces (Walumbwa et al, 2010; Kim et al., 2018).

Although most studies examining the increasing promise of empowering leadership have focused on task performance and other on-job related behaviors, it has also been demonstrated its influence on different aspects related to health (Chen et al., 2011; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). By this means, organizations' leaders, who raise team members' intrinsic motivation using supportive behaviors, have a great impact on employees' wellness (Ahearne et al., 2005; Srivastava et al., 2006). Eventually, while employers can value workers well-being as a possible source of effective performance, employees recognize well-being as desirable for themselves. (Ledford, 1999; Fisher, 2003).

Hypothesis 1. The more the employees perceive leaders as empowering in workplaces, the more they feel good.

Organizational inclusive culture

Another factor that has been investigated to positively impact well-being in working environments is the perceived inclusiveness in an organization (Postmes et al., 2005). In particular, the following study aims to analyze the inclusive culture, or climate, present in the workplace, and defined as an overall perception of fair treatment, integration, and involvement among team members where employees feel accepted and respected regardless of their differences (Shore et al., 2011; Nishii, 2013; Çelik, 2018). Various research demonstrated that individuals usually outperform when they are valued for who they are, they are fairly treated and they feel included in decision-making processes (Nishii, 2013; Azmat et al., 2014). Those perceptions will stimulate a friendly environment as well as promote team's effective communication in a psychologically safe context (Ferdman, 2014). As a result, where there is

a high level of psychological safety, there is a culture of inclusion where people feel safe to speak up, to offer ideas, and to ask questions (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2012). Hence, the inclusiveness of an organizational culture is linked to different positive outcomes such as higher motivation, confidence, productivity, and performance as well as greater employees' satisfaction and well-being (Çelik, 2018; Wallace & Pillans, 2016; Postmes et al., 2005; Shim, 2010; Brenman, 2012).

Hypothesis 2. The more the employees perceive an inclusive culture within the organization, the more they feel good.

Collective mindfulness

Aforementioned, this term has been defined as a collective capability to detect discriminatory details about emergent concerns and act quickly in response to them. (Weick et al., 1999). In this sense, mindful organizing enables teams to anticipate and recover from any faults or unexpected events that arise (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2012). Therefore, this structural emphasis on corporate mindfulness, along with group-level minding, is related to social activities (Weick & Roberts, 1993) and supported by leadership capabilities (Aviles & Dent, 2015; Badham & King, 2021). This notion may be viewed as a dynamic system based on extensive communication and continuous real-time interactions that occur through briefings, meetings, information updating and a general teamwork (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2012; Cooren et al., 2013; McPhee et al., 2006; Schulman, 1993). Although there is growing interest in this field, a recent review by Sutcliffe et al. (2016) revealed that empirical research about this construct is still scarce and more need to be done to tackle this organizational construct (Sutcliffe et al., 2016). In one of the few studies available on the topic, Gracia and collaborators (2020) showed that empowering leadership is positively correlated to mindful organizing and that empowering leaders can contribute to develop collective mindfulness in their teams. Analogously, this process is related to organizational inclusive culture since it promotes

communication and teamwork. Henceforward, the goal of this investigation is to detect, in part, whether collective mindfulness affect the positive relationship between empowering leadership and well-being as well as organizational inclusive culture and well-being.

Hypothesis 3. The positive relationship between empowering leadership and employees' well-being will be stronger for higher levels than for lower levels of collective mindfulness perceived by the employees.

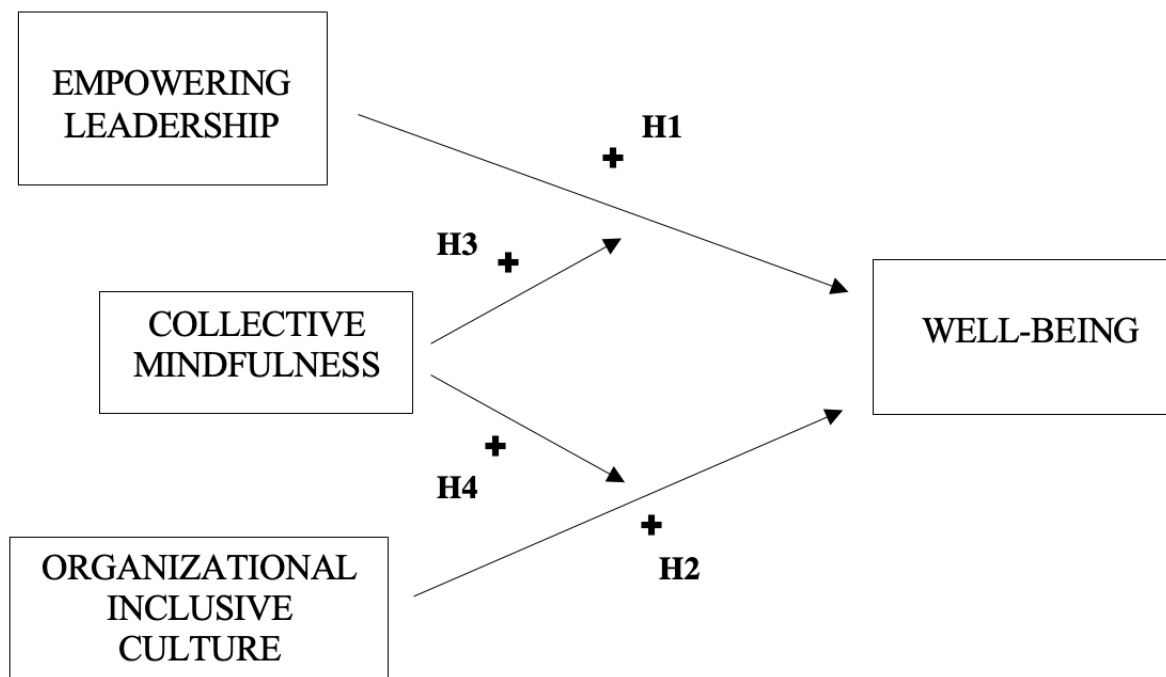
Hypothesis 4. The positive relationship between organizational inclusive culture and employees' well-being will be stronger for higher levels than for lower levels of collective mindfulness perceived by the employees.

Research question and hypotheses

To what extent, do empowering leadership and organizational inclusive culture relate each to well-being? And how are those relationships influenced by collective mindfulness?

The following hypotheses will be tested:

1. The more the employees perceive leaders as empowering in workplaces, the more they feel good.
2. The more the employees perceive an inclusive culture within the organization, the more they feel good.
3. The positive relationship between empowering leadership and employees' well-being will be stronger for higher levels than for lower levels of collective mindfulness perceived by the employees.
4. The positive relationship between organizational inclusive culture and employees' well-being will be stronger for higher levels than for lower levels of collective mindfulness perceived by the employees.

Figure 1*Conceptual Model*

Note. Visualisation of the hypothesized relationships between empowering leadership, organizational inclusive culture, collective mindfulness and well-being

As empirical research on mindful organizing is still scarce, the model was analyzed through different consecutive steps. First, the positive relationships between empowering leaderships and well-being as well as organizational inclusive culture and well-being were verified. Subsequently, the moderating role of collective mindfulness was tested in order to check if this construct was affecting the existing relationships between the predictors and the dependent variable. In this research, collective mindfulness has been considered as a moderator variable since both the predictors (empowering leadership and organizational inclusive culture) are positively correlated to the dependent variable (well-being), as previous research have

shown in different contexts (see theoretical framework section). In this study, no control variables have been included.

Methods

Procedure

Data was gathered at a single moment in time by a team of two researchers who were both working on projects related to individual well-being. As a result, this research features a cross-sectional design aimed to observe characteristics present in the population and explore the associations between the different variables of interest, given limited time and resources available. The online survey was created and shared using Qualtrics whereas individuals who met the inclusion criteria were requested to fill out the questionnaire and/or forward the questionnaire to others who met the criteria. A written briefing was presented to participants along with an informed consent form to explain the purpose of the study. The anonymity, confidentiality and importance of the study has also been mentioned prior to the questionnaire (see Appendix A). Furthermore, the University of Utrecht adheres to the Psychologists' Code of Ethics (NIP, 205) meaning that the Utrecht University Student Ethics Review & Registration Site was used to register this research study (UU-SER) which has been approved by the Faculty Ethics Review Board.

Participants

Population of this research study is constituted by working adults living in the Netherlands. Participants were recruited through the researchers' own social circles by using the social media platforms of Instagram and LinkedIn. Friends, family, and acquaintances were also contacted by email and WhatsApp. Prior to the study, a power analysis using the G power tool was conducted in order to estimate the minimum number of participants required ($n = 74$) given Cronbach's alpha at the level of .05, power of .95 and effect size (f^2) of .15. Respondents were only eligible to participate if they were working as employees in a company based in the

Netherlands. The survey has been completed by 158 people and thus, the power demand was met. Fifty-nine (37.3%) of the participants were men, 96 (60.8%) were women and 3 (1.9%) stated as non-binary/third gender. The participants' average age was 33.27 years (SD = 12.29). Most respondents were Dutch (115), while 25 from other European countries and 18 from the rest of the World. The majority of participants had at least a master's degree (46,8%) and a bachelor's degree (44,3%), while the most stated level of employment was an entry-junior position (38%) followed by intermediate professionals (33,5%). Finally, only 15,2% and 13,3% were working respectively on a first-middle and senior management position.

Measures

Four variables were measured using items from existing scales selected on basis of validity and reliability in former studies that suit the definitions of the design and the target group considered: empowering leadership, organizational inclusive culture, collective mindfulness, and well-being. Prior, participants were asked about some demographic's questions regarding their gender, age, nationality, level of education and level of employment (see Appendix B).

Empowering leadership. Arnold and colleagues (2000) proposed the Empowering Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ), a twenty-eight-items scale, including different dimensions: leading by example (five items), participative decision-making (six items), coaching (six items), informing (five items) and showing concern/interacting with the team (six items). Items are measures on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree." The scale showed discrete reliability given Cronbach's alpha of .78 and high levels of validity (Arnold et al., 2000). In the current study, only the participative decision-making subscale has been used. Reliability of this dimension has shown a value of .81 Cronbach's alpha. Few example items are "In this organization management listen to ideas and

suggestions of staff” and “In this organization management encourages staff to express ideas/suggestions”. One item ($n = 6$) has been recoded.

Organizational inclusive culture. Nishii’s (2013) inclusive climate scale is an eight-items survey aimed at measuring the perceived inclusive culture of an organization at the individual level regarding the team. This scale is composed by two dimensions: integration of differences (five items) and inclusion in decision-making (three items). All items are measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”. Sample items are “My team has a safe environment in which team members can be their true selves” and “Team members are valued for who they are as people, not just for the jobs they fill”. This scale demonstrated high levels of reliability ($\alpha = .84$) and validity (Nishii, 2013). In the current investigation, this scale was reliable at a level of .79 Cronbach’s Alpha.

Collective mindfulness. Vogus and Sutcliffe’s (2007) Mindful Organizing Scale (MOS) is a nine-item, unidimensional survey that demonstrates high levels of reliability at a Cronbach's alpha of .84, linking both organizational and individual outcomes (Ausserhofer et al., 2013). This scale measures how attentive teams are to discriminatory facts about emergent concerns and how quickly they respond to them (Vogus, 2004; Weick and Sutcliffe, 2007; Wick et al., 1999). Items are answered on a seven-point Likert response scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”. Some examples items are “When discussing emerging problems with co-workers, we usually discuss what to look out for” and “we talk about mistakes and ways to learn from them”. Reliability of this scale was also confirmed ($\alpha = .83$).

Well-being. Kayes’s (2005) Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) is a fourteen-items growingly popular questionnaire designed to assess three different components of individual well-being: emotional, social, and psychological. The first refers to positive emotions along with life satisfaction and it is measured with three items; the second component involves social contribution and social integration, and it is represented by five items; finally,

the psychological dimension includes self-acceptance and personal growth measured through six items. Those components work on both intrapersonal and interpersonal levels, influencing the overall outcome of general well-being (Jovanović, 2015; Keyes et al. 2008). All items are measured on a six-point Likert scale from “Never” to “Everyday”. In this study, all dimensions are considered. The short form of the MHC has shown excellent reliability ($\alpha = .89$) and discriminant validity for the three scales (Keyes, 2005, 2006; Lamers et al., 2011; Westerhof & Keyes, 2010). In fact, in the current study the scale was highly reliable too, given Cronbach's alpha at a level of .89 (Cortina, 1993).

Data analysis

The hypotheses have been tested separately with the aid of the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics v28). This choice has been made considering the limited theoretical background available and the minimal previous studies present regarding the construct of collective mindfulness. In this sense, the relationships between the predictors (empowering leadership and organizational inclusive culture) and the outcome variable (well-being) have been analysed first by computing two different linear regressions and thus, testing hypotheses 1 and 2 individually. Subsequently, the moderating effects on those relationships (hypotheses 3 and 4) have been investigated running the program PROCESS macro v4.1 by Andrew F. Hayes' (model 1) twice in the SPSS program (Hayes, 2017). The p level for testing the hypothesis corresponded to .05.

Before the actual analysis, the assumptions associated with the linear regression model have been tested. First, the assumption of normality was met, as a normal distribution of the scores was visible. Then, the assumption of linearity was also met, as no non-linear relationships were detected. When verifying for homoscedasticity, an even spread of data was evident, indicating that this assumption was encountered. Subsequently, the multicollinearity assumption was not met since no high correlation between the predictors was observed.

Additionally, no relevant outlier was found meaning that all participants recruited have been included in the analysis. Furthermore, as Cronbach's Alpha was reliable for every scale, no item had to be deleted. More precisely, reliability concerning the sub-dimension considered for the empowering leadership scale corresponded to Cronbach's Alpha of .81 while the one related to the organizational inclusive culture one to .79. Analogously, the full scales of collective mindfulness and well-being used in the current study, have also shown an excellent reliability, respectively .83 and .89 (Cortina, 1993).

Results

Descriptive analysis

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and the intercorrelations between empowering leadership (EL), organizational inclusive culture (IC), collective mindfulness (CM), well-being (WB), age and gender.

Descriptive statistics for EL reveal an overall mean score of 3.85 on a five-point Likert scale (SD = .58), showing a positive perception of empowering leadership among participants. In the same manner, descriptive statistics for IC reveal an overall mean score of 4.08 on a five-point Likert scale (SD = .61) revealing a positive perception of organization inclusive culture among respondents. Analogously, descriptive statistics for CM show an overall mean score of 5.14 on a seven-point Likert scale (SD = 0.80) and therefore, it indicates a positive perception of collective mindfulness among participants. Finally, descriptive statistics for WB reveal an overall mean score of 4.33 on a six-point Likert scale (SD = .74), also displaying a positive perception of well-being among participants. Clearly, the highest correlation exists between EL and IC (.65) which is significant at the level of .01 while the lowest correlations exist between age and IC (.00) and between age and gender (.00), although are both not significant.

Table 1

Means, standard deviations and correlations between well-being, empowering leadership, organizational inclusive culture, collective mindfulness, age and gender

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Well-being	4.33	.74						
2. Empowering Leadership	3.85	.58	.26**					
3. Inclusive Culture	4.08	.61	.23**	.65**				
4. Collective Mindfulness	5.14	.80	.20*	.49**	.54**			
5. Age ^a	33.27	12.28	.20*	.09	.00	.06		
6. Gender ^b	1.65	.52	-.09	-.02	.03	.07	.00	-

Note. ^a years; ^b 1 = male, 2 = female, 3 = non-binary/third gender

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Hypothesis testing

The model has been analysed by testing the hypotheses separately. In order to test the direct effects of the empowering leadership and organizational inclusive culture on well-being (hypotheses 1 and 2) two linear regressions were run. Table 2 shows the results of both regressions. First, hypothesis 1 has been tested: the more the employees perceive their leaders as empowering in workplaces, the more they feel good. As indicated in the table, this variable explained the 6.7% of the variance (R Square = .067) and therefore, hypothesis 1 was supported: empowering leadership had a significant positive effect on individual well-being,

given $p = .05$ ($b = .258$, $t = 3.341$, $p = .001$). Subsequently, hypothesis 2 has been tested: the more the employees perceive an inclusive culture within the organization, the more they feel good. This variable explained the 5.1% of the variance ($R\text{ Square} = .051$) and thus, hypothesis 2 was also supported: organization inclusive culture had a significant positive effect on individual well-being, given $p = .05$ ($b = .225$, $t = 2.890$, $p = .004$).

Table 2

Results of the Linear Regressions run between empowering leadership and well-being, and between organizational inclusive culture and well-being

Variable	<i>R Square</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Empowering Leadership	.067	.258	3.341	.001
Inclusive Culture	.051	.225	2.890	.004

Note. Dependent variable: Well-being; b = unstandardized coefficient

Furthermore, to perform a moderation analysis and test the last two hypothesis separately (hypothesis 3 and 4), the PROCESS macro-SPSS model 1 was run twice (Hayes, 2017), including respectively empowering leadership and organizational inclusive culture. First, hypothesis 3 was tested: the positive relationship between empowering leadership and employees' well-being will be stronger for higher levels of collective mindfulness perceived by the employees. This model explained 7,5 % of the variance ($R\text{ Square} = .075$) although hypothesis 3 was not supported as table 3 shows that collective mindfulness did not moderate the direct effect of empowering leadership on well-being at a statistically significant level of .05 ($p = .614$).

Table 3

Moderating effect of Collective Mindfulness on the relationship between Empowering Leadership and Well-being

Model	<i>b</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	4.318	.064	67.905	.000
Empowering Leadership	.271	.113	2.395	.018
Collective Mindfulness	.093	.083	1.128	.261
Interaction EL x CM	.063	.124	.506	.614

Note. *b* = unstandardized coefficient, *se* = standard estimate

Finally, hypothesis 4 was tested: the positive relationship between organizational inclusive culture and employees' well-being will be stronger for higher levels of collective mindfulness perceived by the employees. This model explained 5,9 % of the variance (R Square = .059) even though hypothesis 4 was also not supported as table 4 indicates that collective mindfulness did not moderate the direct effect of organizational inclusive culture on well-being at a statistically significant level of .05 ($p = .924$).

Table 4

Moderating effect of Collective Mindfulness on the relationship between Organizational Inclusive Culture and Well-being

Model	<i>b</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	4.336	.065	67.154	.000

Inclusive Culture	.199	.113	1.769	.079
Collective Mindfulness	.098	.086	1.134	.259
Interaction IC x CM	-.011	.110	-.095	.924

Note. *b* = unstandardized coefficient, *se* = standard estimate

Discussion

In an ever more global vision, where markets are growing fast and companies are required to be extremely productive and efficient to beat competitors, it is essential for organizations to focus on one of their main elements of success: their people. Promoting a good climate where supportive behaviours and environments foster motivation and collaboration should be a key action for employees' well-being; and "feeling good" at work should not only be a wish of workers but a necessity for organizations to achieve goals and be able to develop in an effective way. From this perspective, the aim of this paper was, in part, to investigate whether an empowering leadership style and a perceived inclusive culture each related positively to well-being.

Based on theory and research, it was hypothesized that the more the employees perceive their leaders as empowering the better they feel. Particularly, different studies have shown that instead than merely delegating authority to followers, empowered leaders enable and motivate staff to manage their own work-related behaviours (Srivastava et al., 2006; Conger & Kanungo, 1988). This supportive process leads to various positive outcomes and, among others, has a great impact on employees' well-being (Walumbwa et al., 2010; Ahearne et al., 2005; Srivastava et al., 2006). In this research, results have also shown a statistically significant effect ($p = .001$) of empowering leadership on well-being so that the existing positive relationship between those two constructs was once again confirmed. Analogously, formulated on other

studies and related theoretical framework, it was hypothesized that the more the employees perceive an inclusive culture within the organization they work for, the better they feel. Different research reported that when team members experience that they are welcomed and valued for who they are despite of their differences, they exhibit more supportive attitudes toward co-workers, are more driven to do better on activities linked to their jobs, and are generally happier (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Twenge et al., 2007; Jones & James, 1979; Madera et al., 2013). Consequently, results from this study have also revealed a positive statistically significant influence ($p=.004$) of the perceived corporate inclusive culture on well-being, meaning that also this already established link between those two conceptions is re-affirmed. The strong effects revealed in the current investigation are comparable with the ones that previous research presented above reported, underlying how corporate culture and leadership style are crucial elements that directly influence life at work. In other words, employees are happier if they feel they belong, regardless of their difference, to their working environment and if their leaders show supportive behaviours towards followers.

Alongside, another organizational construct has been analysed in this research: the collective mindfulness. As previously defined, this social team's process involves anticipating and containing unexpected events in workplaces (Gracia et al., 2020). Based on past research, it was expected that a supportive and trustful leadership style was linked to collective mindfulness and that empowering leaders could contribute to develop mindful organizing in their teams (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007; Sutcliffe et al., 2016; Gracia et al., 2020). Given that, it was hypothesized that higher levels of collective mindfulness perceived across the workforce would result in a greater favourable association between empowering leadership and workers' well-being. Unfortunately, contrary to the expectations, this hypothesis was not supported, denoting that mindful organizing did not have a statistically positive effect on the existing relationship between this leader's behaviour and wellness ($p = .614$). In the same way, as the

dynamic construct of collective mindfulness is built on constant interactions and an effective communication, reflecting a general good teamwork; it was hypothesized that the positive relationship between organizational inclusive culture and employees' well-being would have been stronger for higher levels of collective mindfulness perceived (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2012; Cooren et al., 2013; McPhee et al., 2006; Schulman, 1993). In contrast to those assumptions, no statistical positive effect has been found ($p = .924$), and neither this last hypothesis could be supported. Therefore, results shown that mindful organizing did not affect the existing direct relationships between the variables presented in the current investigation, but a possible explanation of this findings can be linked to few limitations that have been taken into consideration during the analysis.

Whereas research is still scarce and although literature is useful for theoretical elaboration, further quantitative studies on this topic are needed to provide additional empirical evidence. Moreover, besides scarcity of time and resources available, participants recruited from different social circles, belonging to various working environments, and covering distinct job levels have certainly affected the outcome of those results. As collective mindfulness refers to a team's process, further investigations should analyse this term by considering individuals from the same working group in order to effectively tackle this mechanism. Parallel, an additional post-research analysis has been conducted in this study to gain a deeper knowledge of this organizational concept and help in the development of a possible and useful theoretical model. Two linear regressions have been run. The first regression, including mindful organizing as the outcome variable, has found that empowering leadership and corporate inclusive culture are indeed directly related to this construct. Table 5 shows that this variable explained the 32.9% of the model's variance ($R\text{ Square} = .329$) meaning that both empowering leadership and corporate inclusive culture have a significant positive effect on collective

mindfulness, given $\alpha = .05$, respectively $b = .329$, $t = 2.740$, $p = .007$ and $b = .513$, $t = 4.515$, $p = <.001$.

Table 5

Results of a Linear Regression run between empowering leadership, organizational inclusive culture and collective mindfulness

Variable	<i>R Square</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	-	1.780	4.552	<.001
Empowering Leadership	[.329]	.329	2.740	.007
Inclusive Culture	[.329]	.513	4.515	<.001

Note. Dependent variable: Collective Mindfulness; b = unstandardized coefficient

Secondly, another linear regression has been run considering collective mindfulness as a predictor and well-being as its dependent variable. Table 6 indicates that the 3.9 % of the model's variance (R Square = .032) can be explained by mindful organizing and that this construct has a significant positive effect on well-being, given $\alpha = .05$ ($b = .182$, $t = 2.530$, $p = .012$).

Table 6

Results of a Linear Regression run between collective mindfulness and well-being

Variable	<i>R Square</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
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(Constant)	-	3.398	9.088	<.001
Collective Mindfulness	.039	.182	2.530	.012

Note. Dependent variable: Well-being; *b* = unstandardized coefficient

Based on this results, further research should possibly consider collective mindfulness as a predictor or mediator, instead of a moderating variable with the possibility to include this concept in investigations that aim to target the multitude of positive behavioural outcomes linked to life in the workplace.

Altogether, the importance of the present findings is not solely theoretical but has also practical implications. For instance, it is possible to foster an inclusive culture in organizations by combining different elements and following various steps. Companies can implement *affirmative action policies* (AAP) aimed at ensuring that individuals from traditionally excluded groups such as women and minorities are proportionally represented in the workforce (Pratkanis & Turner, 1996). Although, those recruiting tactics can help in attracting and building a more diverse team, they do not directly convert the environment in an equitable and inclusive space. To do so and ensure that people feel a sense of belonging in the workplace, it is possible to relate to *diversity, equity and inclusion* (DEI)'s programs where employees can be educated in recognizing diversity issues and then developing skills and attitudes that can stimulate positive behaviours and collaboration among colleagues (Homanet al., 2015; Kulik & Roberson, 2008). In this learning perspective, managers should also be educated in being more "inspiring" motivators and be able to communicate effectively with followers. A multitude of evidence-based, interactive and engaging trainings can be delivered to ensure leadership development in supporting employees towards their job attitudes and fostering a general proactive behavior in workplaces (Kelloway & Barling, 2010). Additionally,

implementing healthy corporate initiatives by encouraging work-life balance, team building and involvement in social processes can contribute to nurture employees' well-being (Day & Nielsen, 2017).

Overall, where it is essential for organization to promote an established culture of belongingness in which people feel accepted for who they are, it is also necessary that leaders are trained to guide, inspire, and value skills and competencies of all employees. Those positive elements directly affect communication and cooperation on team level that in turn, have a beneficial effect on individual life and corporate success. Eventually, it is essential to remark, once again, that well-being's promotion in working environments have a great impact on both people and organizations' life; and fostering wellness should not only be a right but a common duty.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent

Dear participant,

Thank you for your interest in this study!

This questionnaire is part of the thesis for the MSc Social, Health and Organizational Psychology. It aims to investigate the impact of organization features on employees' well-being as well as the usage of LinkedIn as social networking site.

Procedure

You will be presented with statements that relate to you, how you experience your work in your organization and how social networking sites have an impact on you. You will be asked to indicate to what extent these statements apply to you and/or your work situation. If you are currently not employed, you can apply these questions to your last job.

There are no right or wrong answers, all you have to do is answer as truthfully as possible. The survey will take a maximum of 15 minutes to complete.

Voluntary Participation, Confidentiality, Data Protection & Data Sharing

This study is in compliance with the ethical board of Utrecht University. Participation in this experiment is entirely voluntary, data collection is anonymous to ensure confidentiality, and no personal data is reported.

Further Information

Should you have any questions about this study please contact:

Giulia Fausti (g.fausti@students.uu.nl)

Esmee Van Heesewijk (evanheesewijk@gmail.com)

By giving consent and clicking on the 'next' arrow I confirm that:

I am aged 18 or over;

I have been informed about the purpose of the research, data collection, and storage;

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research;

I understand that the information will be treated confidentially;

I understand that I can stop my participation at any time without any consequences.

→

Appendix B

Scales and Questionnaire

Socio-demographic questions

1. How old are you (in years)?
2. What is your Nationality?
3. What is your gender?
4. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?
 - a) High School Diploma
 - b) Bachelor's Degree
 - c) Master's Degree
5. What is your current level of employment?
 - a) Junior
 - b) Intermediate Professional
 - c) First level or Middle management
 - d) Executive or Senior management

Empowering Leadership

Range is a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) “Strongly agree” to (5) “Strongly disagree.” Only the subscale of participative decision-making has been used.

In this organizational unit/department:

1. Management encourages staff to express ideas/suggestions.
2. Management listens to ideas and suggestions of staff.
3. Management uses suggestions to make decisions that affect staff.
4. Management gives staff a chance to voice their opinions.
5. Management considers ideas of staff even when they disagree with them.
6. Management makes decisions based only on their own ideas

Organizational inclusive climate

A five-point Likert scale was used for responses ranging from (1) “Strongly agree” to (5) “Strongly disagree.” Only the subdimension of integration of differences has been considered.

In my team:

1. There is a safe work environment in which team members can be their true selves.
2. The work-life balance of team members is valued
3. Team members are valued for who they are as people, not just for the jobs they fill.
4. Team members share and learn about one another as people.
5. Team members recognize and value differences of team members.

Collective Mindfulness

A unimodal nine-items questionnaire with a seven-point Likert scale answers ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”.

Answer each question for the extent to which it characterizes the behavior of people you regularly work with:

1. When discussing emerging problems with co-workers we normally discuss what to look out for
2. We spend time identifying activities we do not want to go wrong.
3. We discuss alternatives as to how to go about our normal work activities.
4. We have a good “map” of each person’s talents and skills.
5. We discuss our unique skills with each other so that we know who has relevant specialized skills and knowledge.
6. We talk about mistakes and ways to learn from them.
7. When errors happen, we discuss how we could have prevented them.

8. When attempting to solve a problem, we take advantage of the unique skills of our colleagues.
9. When a crisis occurs, we rapidly pool our collective expertise to attempt to resolve it.

Well-being

Unimodal fourteen-items scale. Answer range is a six-point Likert scale from (1) “Never” to (6) “Everyday”.

During the past month, how often did you feel:

1. Happy
2. Interested in life
3. Satisfied with life
4. That you had something important to contribute to society
5. That you belonged to a community (like a social group, or your neighborhood)
6. That our society is a good place, or is becoming a better place, for all people
7. That people are basically good
8. That the way our society works makes sense to you
9. That you liked most parts of your personality
10. Good at managing the responsibilities of your daily life
11. That you had warm and trusting relationships with others
12. That you had experiences that challenged you to grow and become a better person
13. Confident to think or express your own ideas and opinions
14. That your life has a sense of direction or meaning to it