

**Wellbeing in the Workplace:  
Exploring the Individual Effects of Wellbeing as a HR  
Strategy**

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## Abstract

Wellbeing in the workplace is an emerging topic in strategic human resource management. A lack of research related to the practical application of wellbeing programmes formed the initial purpose of the study. The study explores the individual effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy. It is particularly interested in the psychological wellbeing, engagement, and motivation levels of individuals. The aim of the study is to analyse the effects a workplace wellbeing programme may have on an individual, examining the existence and comprehensiveness of the programme compared with responses from psychometric scales related to wellbeing, engagement, and motivation.

The wellbeing concepts and theories explored in this dissertation form a framework for the study and certain hypotheses were created as a result. In particular, the researcher sought to explain the interrelated nature of wellbeing topics, such as hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing, flourishing, and self-actualisation, and their connections with pre-existing motivation and engagement theory. The theoretical research suggests positive relationships between wellbeing, motivation, and engagement and highlighted many positive effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy for the individual and the organisation.

A survey was completed by 117 valid participants of working age between the ages of 20-66. The average age of participant was 37 years old. Participants were from a diverse range of work sectors, locations, and various organisation sizes. The survey included pre-existing measures of psychological wellbeing and job and organisation scales, as well as a survey developed by the researcher. Approximately 67% of participants worked in a company that provided a wellbeing programme.

Results indicate there is slight correlation between psychological wellbeing and self-reported motivation levels, as well as psychological wellbeing and both job and organisation engagement, respectively. In addition, differences were discovered in relation to organisation engagement between categories of participants with and without workplace wellbeing programmes.

Keywords: Wellbeing, Hedonism, Eudainism, Positive Functioning, Flourishing, Self-Actualisation, Motivation, Engagement

## Declaration

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## List of Abbreviations

CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSO	Central Statistics Office
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resources Management
HSA	Health & Safety Authority
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
PPF	Positive Psychological Functioning
UK	United Kingdom
WHO	World Health Organisation

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# Chapter 1

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background and Rationale

The overarching theme of this research is wellbeing in the workplace. This research seeks to investigate the individual effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy and explore potential links between the existence and vigor of organisational wellbeing programmes and their impact on individual wellbeing. Wellbeing can be defined as a state of complete physical, social and psychological health (Who.int, 2020), and will be further developed throughout the dissertation. Wellbeing is worthy of studying because it is linked to positive results for the individual, the organisation, and society (Diener, 2000). Wellbeing is an important issue at government level in national health policies in countries like the UK (GOV.UK, 2014); and Ireland (Gov.ie., 2019). In the 2013-2025 Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing in Ireland, positive wellbeing is noted as contributing to lower healthcare costs and increased physical and mental health benefits (Gov.ie., 2019). Wellbeing is also a trending topic in the business sector. Previous studies of wellbeing indicate a positive wellbeing is linked to reduced absenteeism, and increased productivity and employee engagement in the workplace (Baicker, Cutler and Song, 2010). Following a large poll of adult workers in the United States, Gallup (2018) reported findings that a high-engagement culture in an organisation leads to better retention, higher productivity, increased customer engagement, and a 21% increase in profitability. According to WHO, 58% of the world's population spend 1/3 of their lives working (World Health Organisation, 1994), making wellbeing in the workplace a hugely important topic for further research.

This dissertation explores how wellbeing is defined, the evolution of the approach to wellbeing, and how wellbeing can be measured. The proposed research extends on pre-existing concepts and theories and seeks to explore potential relationships between key themes of flourishing and self-actualisation, motivation, and engagement, and their contributions to wellbeing as a HR strategy. The dissertation also explores the practical application of a wellbeing programme in the workplace and the resulting effects on individuals and the organisation. Previous research in the field of wellbeing has not measured

a specific relationship between these exact concepts and the existence and comprehensiveness of an integrated wellbeing programme. Exploration of appropriate literature and quantitative research methods took place to achieve an understanding of the effects that wellbeing as a HR strategy may have on an individual as it relates to work.

## Chapter 2

### 2. Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction and Objectives

A literature review of research related to the field of wellbeing in the workplace demonstrated several key areas of interest, which cultivated the research question, 'What are the individual effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy in the workplace?' This chapter will review the theoretical and conceptual exploration of wellbeing, and the associated topics of flourishing, self-actualisation as it relates to motivation, job and organisation engagement, and wellbeing as a HR strategy in the workplace.

The researcher intends to examine possible relationships between these concepts with the following research objectives:

- Define and explore the concept of wellbeing and its conceptual evolution;
- Explore the concept of the integrated wellbeing approach through research of pre-existing theory;
- Explore the concept of flourishing through research of pre-existing theory;
- Explore the concept of self-actualisation as it relates to motivation and flourishing through research of pre-existing theory;
- Explore job and organisation engagement and wellbeing as it relates to HR strategy through research of pre-existing theory;
- Explore wellbeing practices in the workplace and examine its connection with the HR function through research of pre-existing theory, studies, and further research; and
- Explore and identify the individual effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy and briefly highlight the organisational effects through research of pre-existing theory, studies, and further research.

Through the following literature review, key concepts and theories related to the study were identified in multiple, peer-reviewed sources and certain hypotheses are presented as a result.

## 2.2 Wellbeing Concepts

### 2.2.1 Hedonia and Eudaimonia

Wellbeing can be defined as a person's positive physical, mental and social state (Robertson and Cooper, 2010). This definition broadens the historical idea of 'good health' from only physical in nature, to psychological (Robertson and Cooper, 2010). However, some researchers argue the difficulty in defining wellbeing as it is subjective in nature (Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders, 2012). In fact, wellbeing research is typically examined through two perspectives, hedonic and eudaimonic, or subjective and psychological wellbeing, respectively (Diener, 2000). The hedonic perspective suggests happiness is achieved through fragmented experiences of pleasure, versus the eudaemonic, or holistic approach towards happiness as an overarching goal of a fulfilling life, and is therefore longer-term (Diener, 2000). Some researchers argue that hedonic activities which simply seek pleasure and avoid pain, are not necessarily good or healthy for an individual and have shorter-term effects that can vacillate between positive or negative results (Steger, Kashdan and Oishi, 2008). A more rounded view surmises hedonism into three dimensions, a combination of greater positive affects than negative affects, and better life satisfaction (Diener, 1984; Ryan and Deci, 2001). Wellbeing through a hedonic lens equates wellbeing with happiness and is often characterised as subjective because it requires the individual to seek emotional experiences that are specific to each individual and evaluate their own satisfaction with life (Henderson and Knight, 2012). In contrast, eudainism is based in the philosophy that wellbeing is achieved through personal growth and meaningful activities (Waterman, Schwartz and Conti, 2006) that are aligned with the individual's true self and beliefs (Ryan and Deci, 2001). The factors associated with eudaimonic wellbeing are also considered to be subjective, but are vaster and include six dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). Participating in eudaemonic activities help individuals achieve fulfillment and actualisation, and conversely not participating in eudaimonic activities creates a negative effect (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Both wellbeing theories are concerned with satisfaction, and negative and positive affect and its correlation with wellbeing, just in varying degrees. An interesting distinction is that hedonic philosophers are interested *that* a person is happy, and eudaimonic philosophers are interested in *why* a person is happy (Henderson and Knight, 2012).



A bifactor modelling evaluating the relationship between hedonism and eudainism indicated that at a high level of analysis, psychological and subjective wellbeing are two facets of an overarching general wellbeing, not competing ideals (Chen, Jing, Hayes and Lee, 2012). However, within the two dimensions are uniquely associated variables (Chen, Jing, Hayes and Lee, 2012). In an article critiquing the polarisation of the two traditions of happiness, the authors agreed the concepts of hedonism and eudainism are simply two intellectual ways of researching happiness, and researching both is not only informative, but necessary (Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King, 2009). Another distinction surrounding the classification of wellbeing infers that the layperson uses both pleasure and purpose ideas when conceptualizing wellbeing in the real world (McMahan and Estes, 2010). This demonstrates the subjectivity surrounding the definition and labels surrounding wellbeing and is significant to the workplace as it may be the difference between delivering an effective or ineffective wellbeing programme.

Hedonic wellbeing in the workplace is highly measurable because the individual is simply gauging if they are having a pleasurable experience or not (Bartels, Peterson and Reina, 2019). Examples of workplace hedonism are activities that are specifically carried out for pleasure and avoidance of negative feeling, such as seeking out a social interaction or having a tea break (Taquet et al., 2016). Arguably, this has little to do with the work itself, but is an aspect of the working environment. In contrast, eudaimonic wellbeing in the workplace is more difficult to measure, and therefore initiate, because of the many variables that affect it, combined with the fact that it is subjective experience (Bartels, Peterson and Reina, 2019). Remarkably, an employee's subjective perspective of how wellbeing is approached in their organisation can actually contribute to the level of wellbeing that employee achieves (McMahan and Estes, 2010). This poses an interesting question in terms of the nature of self-reported wellbeing studies and the affect an employee's perspective influences their responses. Further research in this area would be interesting to establish what internal and external factors are the most significant in contributing to an employee's perspective of their working environment. Eudaimonia is comprised of more complex psychological dimensions which can be applied in the workplace through activities that promote its six dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Examples of eudaimonic activities in the workplace are learning

and development programmes, counselling services, and promotional opportunities. Workplace wellbeing programmes will be discussed in other sections of the dissertation. It is further proposed that eudaimonic wellbeing can also be divided into two concepts, general eudaimonic wellbeing and eudaimonic workplace wellbeing (EWW) (Bartels, Peterson and Reina, 2019). This conceptualisation highlights the relevance of workplace wellbeing research in the field of psychology as well as the business sector. A combination of hedonic and eudaimonic pursuits in the workplace is proposed to be linked with other workplace measures such as employee engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction (Bartels, Peterson and Reina, 2019). The complexities within the study of wellbeing make planning and implementing wellbeing programmes that integrate both hedonic and eudaimonic approaches more complicated, albeit still important to explore.

### **2.2.2 Integrated Wellbeing Approach**

It is important to understand the evolutionary process of wellbeing research from a physical health perspective that associated wellbeing with the absence of disease to the development of the mental health perspective and the resulting constructs; psychological and subjective wellbeing (Helliwell, 2004). Both concepts hold merit in wellbeing research and reposition wellbeing from a purely objective to cognitive understanding that supports positive psychological health. This is not to say physical health is insignificant to an individual's overall wellbeing. In fact, good physical health is linked to positive mental health and is evidenced to influence an individual's quality of life, mood and self-esteem, and lower their risk of depression, anxiety and dementia (Keyes, 2007). Conversely, poor psychological health is linked to poor physical health, such as the relationship between depression and obesity (Askari et al., 2013). Poor physical health affects the workplace materially through low productivity, monetary costs to the organisation and through absenteeism (Keyes, 2007), but also through the impacts poor mental health has on an employee's emotional health in their working life. An individual with poor self-esteem is unlikely to achieve hedonic or eudaimonic happiness or fulfillment and therefore, these dimensions of wellbeing overlap constantly in all facets of life.

An integrated approach towards wellbeing not only incorporates aspects of physical and mental health, but also hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing by focusing on increasing positive

affect, and decreasing negative affect in every day working life, while also pursuing organisation structures and initiatives that support fulfillment and growth of employees. In this regard, hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing are complementary concepts and suggests a combination of eudaimonic and hedonic activities may yield a greater overall wellbeing (Henderson and Knight, 2012).

### **2.2.3. Social Wellbeing and Integrated Wellbeing**

Building on the initial integrated approach, the exploration into social aspects of wellbeing has developed another subsection of general wellbeing, social wellbeing, (Keyes, 1998), which is often associated with subjective wellbeing (Helliwell, 2004). The concept of social wellbeing was introduced in 1948 by the World Health Organisation (Who.int, 2020) and is related with a person's sense of belonging, inclusion, and stability in social interactions, such as with family members, friends, and community (Helliwell, 2004). In the workplace, this translates to the positive or negative nature of a person's working relationships with clients, colleagues and managers. Social wellbeing theory is divided into five dimensions: social integration, social acceptance, social contribution, and social coherence (Keyes, 1998), and suggests that an individual's level of social wellbeing directly correlates with their physical, mental, and social health in all aspects of life (Berkman, Glass, Brissette and Seeman, 2000). Interestingly, the five dimensions of social wellbeing are introduced as 'challenges to social wellness' (Keyes, 1998, p.122), which an individual responds to depending on their abilities and circumstances. For example, social aspects of wellbeing are reported to contribute to the health of ageing or isolated individuals, and poor social wellbeing can lead to stress, depression, poor sleeping habits, lower cognitive function and even death (Berkman, Glass, Brissette and Seeman, 2000). Thus, similar to hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing, social wellbeing also influences the physical, mental, and social health of individuals.

Social wellbeing has a reciprocating relationship in society in terms of a person's socioeconomic status and means, and their ability to access education or some types of work, and how we interact and behave accordingly (Berkman, Glass, Brissette and Seeman, 2000). Employees also face and respond to these challenges in the workplace through the structuring of job specifications that require specific levels of education, power dynamics associated with hierarchies, and existing social networks within the organisation. Arguably, the workplace is

one of the few social constructions where individuals from various means, locations, and cultures are required to interact on a regular basis and poses an interesting challenge in implementing effective workplace wellbeing programmes that work for all (Berkman, Glass, Brissette and Seeman, 2000). A contemporary viewpoint builds on the social workplace wellbeing concept and suggests the five factors of social wellbeing combined with the six factors of psychological wellbeing can be divided into interpersonal and introspective dimensions to form the recent concept of eudaimonic workplace wellbeing (Bartels, Peterson and Reina, 2019). Researchers propose eudaimonic workplace wellbeing is distinct from general eudaimonic wellbeing and places importance on social interactions specific to the workplace (Bartels, Peterson and Reina, 2019). Interpersonal dimensions of eudaimonic workplace wellbeing focus on the quality of external relationships in the workplace, and intrapersonal dimensions focus on eudaimonic endeavours in a social context, such as building meaningful connections and finding purpose within the organisation (Bartels, Peterson and Reina, 2019). This concept demonstrates the integrated nature of eudaimonic and social wellbeing and its application in the workplace.

In support of an integrated approach of hedonic, eudaimonic and social wellbeing, three models have subsequently been organised in Figure 1 (Gallagher, Lopez and Preacher, 2009).

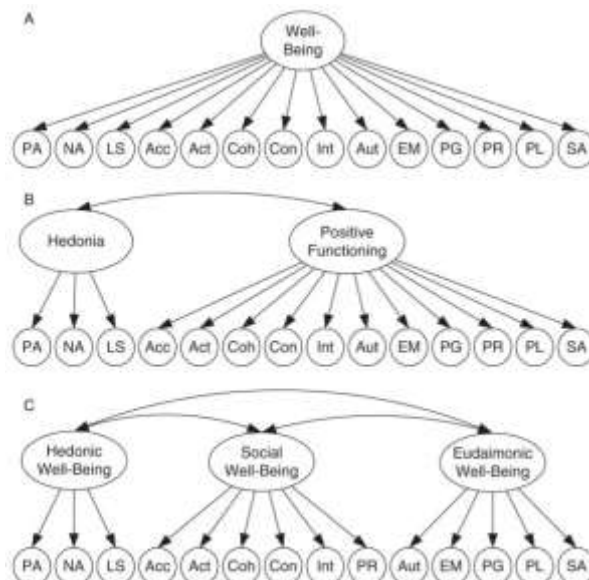


Figure 1: 'The Hierarchical Structure of Well-being' (Gallagher, Lopez and Preacher, 2009)

The model demonstrates the evolution and relationship order within wellbeing theory between hedonic, eudaimonic, and social wellbeing, and assigns their associated dimensions

(Gallagher, Lopez and Preacher, 2009) to better understand outcomes in wellbeing research that focus on particular wellbeing areas. Model C depicts the three accepted approaches to wellbeing (Diener, 1984; Ryff and Keyes, 1995; Keyes, 1998) that form the integrated wellbeing approach discussed in this research. The relationship between these three concepts forms the framework of the study's understanding of wellbeing as an integrated concept for future measures and practices. The intermediate model B repeats the same factors but integrates the terms social wellbeing and eudaimonic wellbeing into a new label, positive functioning (Keyes, 2005). Positive functioning is the outcome of positive feelings when self-reflecting and is related to the field of positive psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology will be discussed in the next section of this dissertation as it relates to flourishing and self-actualisation. The highest model in the hierarchy includes all the factors under the umbrella term, wellbeing, demonstrating the overlapping nature of hedonic, eudaimonic, and social wellbeing theories and their associated factors (Keyes, 2005). The model helps us understand the breadth of wellbeing research to date and forms a basis for assigning wellbeing measures in future studies (Gallagher, Lopez and Preacher, 2009).

Evidenced through the review of conceptual wellbeing literature, our understanding of wellbeing includes hedonic, eudaimonic, and social dimensions to form an integrated wellbeing approach. Each concept contributes to positive effects for physical, mental, and social health through various wellbeing measures. Therefore, the research suggests implementing an integrated approach to wellbeing in the workplace that incorporates the three dimensions using the three health parameters of physical, mental, and social health when applying wellbeing practices will lead to increased individual wellbeing.

*Hypothesis 1: An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will yield higher individual psychological wellbeing scores.*

## **2.3 Positive Psychology, Flourishing and Self-Actualisation**

### **2.3.1. Positive Psychology**

The integrated approach is further explored through the concept of Positive Psychology, or positive human functioning and flourishing (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As depicted in Figure 1, positive functioning is a combination of both eudaimonic and social

wellbeing (Gallagher, Lopez and Preacher, 2009). Positive psychology intends to shift the focus of wellbeing research from a negative to positive predisposition, with the ultimate goal to maximising an individual's potential to produce authentic happiness and build a 'good life' by focusing on a person's strengths (Peterson, Park and Sweeney, 2008). Positive psychology places an importance on the idea of flourishing (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), which incorporates aspects of social wellbeing, emotional wellbeing, and psychological wellbeing that have already been explored in wellbeing research and linked to hedonic, eudaimonic, and social happiness (Keyes, 2012). This initially indicates flourishing as an acceptable measure of an integrated approach towards wellbeing.

### **2.3.2. Flourishing**

The goal of flourishing is to achieve a good life through an active pursuit of fulfillment, happiness, and meaning and most closely relates to eudainism (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Flourishing is often related to the idea of life satisfaction, and sometimes the terms are used interchangeably (VanderWeele, 2017). However, life satisfaction is arguably only one of many facets of flourishing which is comprised of 'mental and physical health, happiness and life satisfaction, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, and close social relationships' (VanderWeele, 2017). Many psychologists view overall life satisfaction as a primary determinant of happiness, or wellbeing. In contrast, others find this term problematic as it relies too heavily on an individual's mood and is too subjective and vague (Schueller and Seligman, 2010). Alternatively, the idea of self-actualisation is a better related term as it relates to development of self, and is the single, innate drive within us that inherently explains all organic behaviours, and that it must be regarded in totality with an individual's environment (Whitehead, 2017). Through these definitions, the correlation between flourishing and self actualisation is proposed and will be explored in the motivation section of this dissertation as it relates to motivation theory.

The origins of flourishing stem from Aristotle's idea of living an actively virtuous life (Paul, Miller and Paul, 1999) but has since developed to align success with an individual's abilities (Keyes, 2012). Flourishing is specific to each individual and is dependent on a person's abilities, circumstances, and efforts, although it also requires the individual to pursue general good will (Dawson, 2012). Flourishing is not a means to an end, it is an experience viewed

through individual lenses, therefore, one must purposely self-direct choices, habits, and actions to flourish (Paul, Miller and Paul, 1999). The actual experience of flourishing is entirely subjective. This is an indication that the previous question around reliability of self-reported wellbeing testing is in fact a necessary process, and not ‘uncontrolled’ because of its subjectivity.

In order to study the science of flourishing and its effects, several measures and models have been created. The PERMA model of flourishing in Figure 2 and its associated theory establishes the building blocks of flourishing as: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement (Schueller and Seligman, 2010). Clearly, elements of the integrated wellbeing approach are evident in the model as well as the interrelation and flow between the dimensions of flourishing. This suggests an interconnected relationship between the integrated areas of hedonic, eudaimonic, and social wellbeing and flourishing.



Figure 2 PERMA Model of Flourishing (Schueller and Seligman, 2010)

An 8-item Flourishing Scale was created with integrated wellbeing items to measure an individual’s self-perceived success in the following areas: relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism (Diener et al., 2009). The scale is widely used in psychology research around the world and is considered a valid and reliable measure of wellbeing. The instrument provides the following statements:

1. *I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.*
2. *My social relationships are supportive and rewarding.*
3. *I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.*
4. *I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others.*

5. *I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me.*
6. *I am a good person and live a good life.*
7. *I am optimistic about my future.*
8. *People respect me.*

The questions relate to eudaimonic and social aspects of wellbeing and the responses are totaled to form an ultimate psychological wellbeing score. This supports the idea that in order to flourish, an individual must have positive functioning in emotional, psychological, and social dimensions of their lives, and re-asserts the researcher's rationale for assuming flourishing as an excellent measure of wellbeing amongst individuals.

### **2.3.3. Flourishing in the Workplace**

This dissertation seeks to understand the positive effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy and will therefore focus on its benefits, however, negative effects of poor wellbeing are demonstrated throughout the dissertation as a rationale for the purpose of this study. The benefits of flourishing can be seen inside and outside the workplace. Flourishing employees are 'self-motivated, booming, successful, happy and continuously learning' through 'positive experiences and the efficient management of job-related factors' (Erum, Abid and Contreras, 2020, p.15). Flourishing individuals are also evidenced to have higher hedonic, eudaimonic, and social wellbeing by being happier, having better physical and mental health, and positive relationships (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade, 2005). Mental health factors associated with flourishing are an interest in life and cheerful demeanor, seeking development and challenges, an understanding of self-worth and purpose, and an acceptance of differences in social settings (Keyes, 2007). Reportedly, flourishing individuals are less likely to have chronic illness, disability, and lower healthcare needs and possess characteristics such as honesty, responsibility, courage, and concentration (Keyes, 2007). Flourishing individuals reportedly have less regret, frustration, and dissatisfaction in their work, and have a stronger commitment to self-actualise, rather than treat work as merely a job for financial gain (Erum, Abid and Contreras, 2020). These benefits and traits are valuable in the workplace but are also associated with supplementary benefits such as increased productivity, motivation, and engagement (Erum, Abid and Contreras, 2020). Flourishing and wellbeing as it relates to motivation and engagement will be developed further throughout the dissertation.



In order to support flourishing in the workplace, it is imperative to understand that individuals flourish in various ways and hold different personality and character strengths that can be beneficial to their occupation and organisation (Schueller and Seligman, 2010). In a study on the strengths of character of work, researchers concluded that specific character traits align with specific types of jobs, and there is an association between character strengths and work satisfaction (Peterson et al., 2009). For example, a flourishing CEO will hold character strengths that match the requirements of the role, such as higher focus on self, with determinant factors of zest, curiosity, hope, and social intelligence (Schueller and Seligman, 2010). This suggests the importance of matching a task or job with the correct individual, and its association with job satisfaction and overall life satisfaction and thus, flourishing (Peterson, Park and Sweeney, 2008).

It is also important to understand how an individual's strengths can be utilized in the best way towards achievement of self-actualisation in work. Individuals that are not flourishing are either languishing or in average health and have low levels of psychosocial functioning and poor mental health (Keyes, 2002). Interestingly, research suggests a link between languishing and average individuals to higher rates of depression and limitations on daily life, including their work (Keyes, 2002). A flourishing employee is neither ideal for the individual or for the organisation and demonstrates the significance of creating a workplace that supports flourishing individuals through the inclusion of positive emotional, psychological, and social components in a workplace wellbeing programmes.

## **2.4. Motivation and Wellbeing**

Research related to motivation theory is vast and the topic holds merit in its own right. The current research seeks to explore the potential relationship between wellbeing and motivation and motivation as a possible individual effect of wellbeing as a HR strategy.

### **2.4.1 Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Flourishing as Self-actualisation**

The idea of self-actualisation permeates the field of strategic Human Resources when discussing motivation theory (Lester et al., 1983) and closely relates to the wellbeing concepts of flourishing and psychological wellbeing. In particular, the researcher proposes self-actualisation and flourishing are interchangeable terms and produce the same individual

effects of growth, self-fulfillment, and purpose. The term self-actualisation is most associated with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs motivation model (1943) in Figure 3 which proposes that motivation is achieved when an individual's physiological, safety, belonging, esteem and self-actualisation needs are met in a hierarchical order (Maslow, 1943).



Figure 3 Hierarchy of Needs Model of Motivation (Maslow, 1943)

Self-actualisation was originally proposed to be achieved through the attainment of the first four needs (Maslow, 1943), which is in contrast with our understanding of flourishing as a continuous state, not a static, pinnacle point of achievement. More contemporary motivation research proposes these needs as overlapping in which one can return to at any time (Deci, Olafsen and Ryan, 2017). It is also argued that the label of self-actualisation is too vague, does not outline specific experiences or behaviours in which to achieve it, and is a product of a process, not a need (Deci, Olafsen and Ryan, 2017). The model also highlights parallels between the conceptual evolution of the approach to wellbeing which originally focused on basic, physical health needs as a priority over psychological wellbeing needs. Interestingly, in westernised countries, basic needs in the model are seen to be provided automatically, and organisations are recommended to focus on higher-tiered needs, such as belonging, esteem, and self-actualisation (Baumgartel and McGregor, 1960) and the intrinsic motivators they are related to (Van Doorn, 2015). In many countries and businesses there has been a shift towards addressing psychological and mental health needs, however, many employers still do not actively support the psychological needs of employees in the workplace. The negative effects associated between poor wellbeing and motivation are well researched, such as the link between lack of motivation and poor physical and psychological health through ill-health

measures such as disease, disability, and disorders (Who.int, 2020). The positive effects of motivated individuals can be increased productivity, and good physical and psychological health

Self actualisation and flourishing are interrelated concepts associated with the same eudaimonic ideals of inner-drive, the fulfillment of self, and growth, and are interrelated terms (Evanytha, 2019) However, some researchers argue they are distinctive terms since flourishing involves more intense elements of achievement and success not found in self-actualisation, an internal process likened with transcendence (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade, 2005). A recent study examining self-actualisation as a predictor of flourishing in Indonesia explored self-actualization through the dimensions of the PERMA model of wellbeing, as shown in Figure 2 (Evanytha, 2019) The research concluded that although the individuals were self-actualised, self-actualisation actually had a negative contribution on flourishing dimensions. This was attributed to probable cultural constraints related to the autonomous nature of self-actualisation against inter-dependency norms in non-westernised cultures (Evanytha, 2019). This points out the research thus far has approached wellbeing in a westernised capacity. It would be interesting to study the relationship between flourishing and self-actualisation in an independent study in Ireland in future research. For the purposes of this dissertation, the researcher proposes the use of the Flourishing scale (2009) instead as a measure of self-actualisation and is hypothesised below. Specifically, the researcher seeks to identify if there is a correlation between psychological wellbeing scores and self-reported levels of motivation.

*Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.*

#### **2.4.2 Self-Determination Theory**

Motivation as it relates to wellbeing is further developed as a cognitive approach which explores how an individual's behaviours, values, and ideas are transformed into their actions (Deci and Ryan, 2000). The Self-Determination Theory of motivation supports the relationship between motivation and wellbeing, and outlines three innate human psychological needs: competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Deci and Ryan, 2000) as seen in Figure 4 below.

# Self-Determination Theory

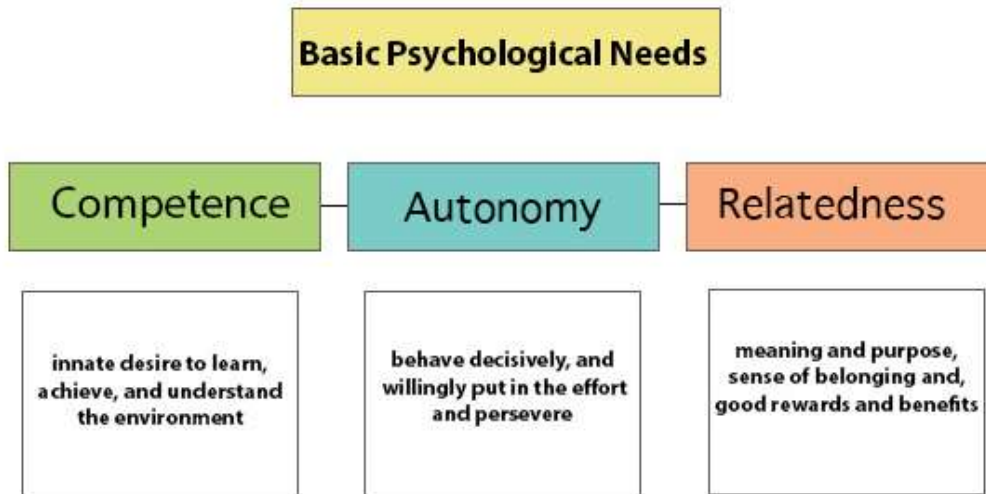


Figure 4: Model of Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

These needs are labels for developing mastery of skills and learning new things, having an established sense of belonging or community, and being in control of personal goals and behaviours through autonomy, respectively (Deci and Ryan, 2006). These dimensions are also prevalent in eudaimonic wellbeing and self-actualisation theory dimensions as discussed previously in the dissertation. Self-Determination Theory proposes there is an intrinsic motivation that propels all individuals, such as a desire for fulfillment and development (Ryan, Huta and Deci, 2006), similar to the innate drive for self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943) and eudaimonic flourishing. In fact, a model of eudaimonia based on Self-Determination Theory was created including four concepts of motivation (Ryan, Huta and Deci, 2006), as summarised: (1) pursuing intrinsic goals and values that are inborn rather than extrinsic, (2) operating on your own volition, (3) being mindful and aware, and (4) living in a way that fulfills the basic needs theory of competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Ryan, Huta and Deci, 2006). These four concepts of 'eudaimonic motivation' clearly overlaps with wellbeing theory. Therefore, the prediction in hypothesis 2 that motivation and wellbeing are correlated is further supported through Social Exchange Theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

### 2.4.3. Motivators and Wellbeing Strategy

The basic psychological needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy in Figure 4 also require supportive conditions in order for personal growth and motivation to be achieved (Deci, Olafsen and Ryan, 2017). A workplace wellbeing programme that supports the

autonomy, competence, and relatedness of an individual, is proposed to have positive effects on individual motivation, engagement and wellbeing. In support of this comparison, workplaces can provide resources through HR strategy that include appropriate rewards, opportunities for autonomous responsibilities and the mastery of skills, tasks that contain a degree of difficulty but are still achievable, and by cultivating a workplace community that supports a sense of belonging and connectedness amongst staff. Rewards and autonomy play a large part in the effectiveness of motivation as a HR strategy. In order to be truly motivated, an individual is rewarded by an intrinsic drive to experience the activity, not to earn a reward (Deci and Ryan, 2000). This drive refers to self-determination, self-fulfillment, and self-actualisation within individuals. It is suggested that the more autonomous a motivator is, the better the performance and wellbeing outcome will be, reconfirming the importance of autonomy to an individual's wellbeing and motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Interestingly, extrinsic and intrinsic motivations may be comparable to hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing in this way. Similar to hedonic pleasure, intrinsic motivation is for the pure enjoyment of a task, whereas extrinsic and autonomous motivation involves the perceived value of a task (Ryan and Deci, 2020). Conversely, amotivation, or the absence of motivation, is associated with an individual's perceived incompetence (Ryan and Deci, 2020), in contrast with demotivation which is the result of the poor execution of a motivating task (Taylor, 2014). Arguably, amotivation occurs regularly in social institutions like schools and the workplace as there are several opportunities for non-autonomous tasks to be distributed to employees unrelated to the individual's values, beliefs, or interests. In a meta-analysis of individuals moving from high school to college, researchers concluded intrinsic motivation, such as being interesting in the topic you are learning about, is the most beneficial towards academic achievement (Taylor, 2014). Another interesting idea is that elements of a wellbeing programme that individuals are not interested in, such as physical activity, or mindfulness, may affect motivation to complete the task or achieve positive psychological wellbeing. The individual elements of a wellbeing programme and their effect on individual wellbeing will be further explored in this study but research into the demotivation and amotivation of individuals as it relates to workplace wellbeing programmes would be interesting to explore in further research.

It is proposed that motivation and wellbeing have an interrelated relationship. The researcher suggests that similar to hypothesis 1, workplace wellbeing programme that supports the autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs of employees will most likely experience positive wellbeing results, although the current research focusses on other integrated wellbeing parameters to measure this. Further research in this area is pertinent to establishing a more thorough comparison of these variables and the effects they have on individual wellbeing. The positive individual effects of HR strategy will be explored further in this dissertation.

## **2.5 Engagement and Wellbeing**

The current research seeks to understand the individual effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy using motivation and engagement as possible effects of wellbeing in the workplace. Engagement is a versatile term but for the purposes of this dissertation, will be explored in terms of employee engagement and can be defined as an individual's involvement, contribution and ownership to their work (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday, 2004). It is also characterised using the terms, 'vigor, dedication, and absorption' (Schaufeli et al, 2002, p.74). The Institute of Employees Studies (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday, 2004) suggests the initial driver of employee engagement is feeling valued and involved (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday, 2004), and subsequently good quality line management, two-way open communication, effective co-operation, a focus on developing employees, clear and accessible HR policies and practices, fairness in relation to pay and benefits, a harmonious working environment, and a commitment to employee wellbeing, are important influencers (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday, 2004). Wellbeing and engagement are interrelated concepts with several overlapping dimensions in positive psychology. Engagement is also characterised as a 'flow state', or an optimal psychological state related to achievement and positive experiences (Wrigley and Emmerson, 2011) and can be likened to concepts of self-actualisation and flourishing in relation to psychological fulfillment and other eudaimonic perspectives. In a flow state, an individual is proposed to be fully engaged when challenges and abilities are both high, as demonstrated in Figure 5 below. Flow can also be related to intrinsic motivation associated with self-determination theory, as the result of challenging experiences, which optimizes happiness and overall wellbeing (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

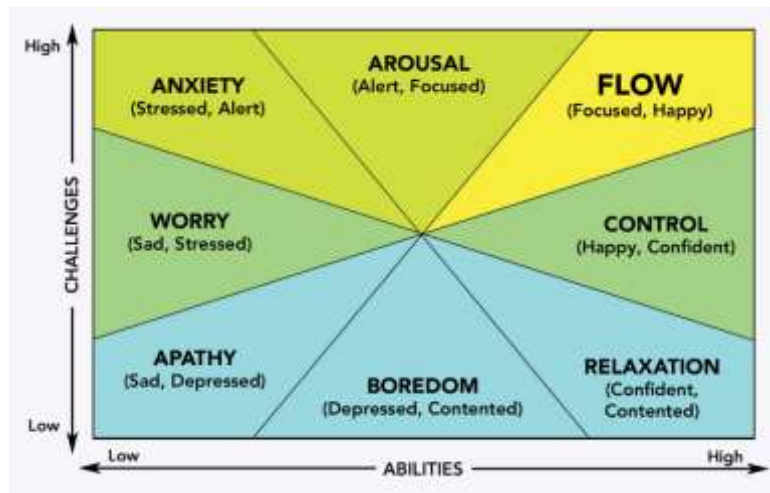


Figure 5: Flow Model (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990)

### 2.5.1. Engagement and Self

Engagement stems from the concept of 'self in role' or the way a person presents themselves in a performative way in a specific role or task (Goffman, 1959). The 'self' is an important concept in engagement (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) and is explored through many different avenues of psychology research, also overlapping with wellbeing and motivational theories of self-actualisation and expression (Maslow, 1954), and transference of ideas, beliefs and behaviours to one's true self as it relates to Self-Determination Theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000). It is proposed there is an innate, psychological condition in which individuals either associate or disassociate their true self at work to self-protect (Kahn, 1990). In this vein, research into the study of the calling of employees and work engagement summarised three purposes employees engage in work: purely financial reasons, career progression, or self-actualisation (Erum, Abid and Contreras, 2020). Interestingly the term 'calling' implies one's calling is a fixed trait, or perspective on life, but in reality, self-actualisation is the result of a combination of personal and controlled motivators (Ryan and Deci, 2000). This asserts the idea that engagement is not an inherent result of predisposed 'engaged people' and requires contributions from both employees and employers. An individual who is called to self-actualise is passionate about their work because it aligns with their interests, beliefs, and skills (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Self-actualised employees in this manner identify themselves with a task or and are therefore engaged in the job.

In order for engagement to be enabled within employees, there must also be perceived meaningfulness in the work taking place, a perceived safe environment without negative consequence, and an availability or ability for the individual to mentally and physically harness one's true self at any one time (Kahn, 1990). Employee engagement, therefore, is the degree to which an employee engages or disengages their true selves to their work or organisation physically, cognitively, and emotionally, based on these needs being fulfilled (Kahn, 1990). Interestingly, engagement is a subjective concept in the manner individuals perceive themselves, their work, and how they relate the two, combined with the three associated psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety, and availability (Kahn, 1990). Similar to other needs theories (Maslow, 1943), the fulfillment of certain basic needs leads to motivation, and fulfillment of other needs leads to employee engagement (Harter, Schmidt, Keys, 2003). Arguably, many of these needs can be supplied by the employer.

### **2.5.2 Social Exchange Theory**

Expanding on engagement as it relates to wellbeing is Social Exchange Theory (Saks, 2006), which proposes that the employee and employer have mutual obligations to one another and both parties are consistently exchanging resources (Saks, 2006). This relates to social aspects of wellbeing, as well as the fulfillment of employee needs that support their physical and psychological health. For example, an employer can provide: jobs and tasks that allow for creativity and autonomy, clear and achievable goals, social systems that are non-threatening and supportive, and physical and emotional resources which an employee can utilise to achieve confidence in their performance (Kahn, 1990). By fulfilling these needs, individuals feel valued, secure, and capable, and conversely, not fulfilling these needs individuals will feel, insecure, undervalued, and disengaged (Kahn, 1990). In return for supplying these resources, the employee will choose to engage in work and the organisation (Saks, 2006).

### **2.5.3. Effects of Engagement**

This dissertation seeks to understand the positive effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy and will therefore focus on the benefits associated with engagement. An engaged employee is demonstrated to have the following positive characteristics: reliability, positivity, actively makes improvements, has an identity with the organisation and their work, and works with others effectively (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday, 2004). Other individual benefits include



job satisfaction, positive feelings in the worker, and greater productivity (Harter, Keyes,). This supports the idea that greater satisfaction in one's job combined with positive feelings indicates an increased wellbeing, however, one critical analysis of engagement concluded this was a weaker causal link than more obvious outcomes of motivation and performance (Bailey, et. Al, 2017). A thesis on the 'happy/productive worker' and subsequent research supports the wellbeing link, though, and indicates a correlation between psychological wellbeing and performance (Wright, Cropanzo, Bonett, 2007). Similar to our understanding of hedonic, eudaimonic and social aspects of wellbeing, the three main indicators of job satisfaction are satisfaction with the work itself, satisfaction with coworkers, and satisfaction with supervision. Employees with greater job satisfaction and job performance tends to have higher psychological wellbeing and similarly, employees perform better when their wellbeing and job satisfaction is also high (Aon Hewitt, 2015). When these three factors are high, the individual is said to be engaged. Individual engagement leads to higher emotional and intellectual commitment from employees (Aon Hewitt, 2015) who will therefore invest their thoughts, actions, and attention towards the success of the organisation (Saks, 2006). Other proposed organisational benefits include lower turnover and absenteeism, and increased organisational profitability, satisfaction, and productivity (Harter, Schmidt, Hayes, 2002).

A disengaged employee may be disengaged from their job, or a particular task, or even the organisation for various reasons. Disengagement in an individual does not mean they are incapable of achieving engagement, the task or job is merely not aligned to their strengths and interests (Peterson et al., 2009). It is significant to note that a person's state of engagement is always fluctuating (Sonnetag, 2011), along with their availability to access motivation, resources and actions in order to meet certain demands (Bandura, 1986) and therefore invest one's self in their work (Kahn, 1990). Therefore, the absence of availability can be associated with external factors and personal circumstances outside the control of the organisation or even the individual. Measures should be put in place in the workplace to combat barriers to engagement as much as possible, such as providing resources that support the physical, mental and social health of an individual inside and outside of the workplace. Examples of these resources are wellbeing programmes that include policies for work/life balance, appropriate financial resources through salary and benefits, and employee assistance programmes that promote physical and mental health initiatives.

#### 2.5.4. Measure of Engagement

Understanding both the individual and organisational benefits of engagement is important to promote engagement as a business and HR need. Organisational engagement results, however, are not possible without individual engagement results (Saks, 2006). In fact, Saks (2006) argues there is an important distinction between the two roles individuals play in both their job and as a member of the organisation, which should be measured as such (Saks, 2006).

Two respective scales measuring job and organisation engagement were created as seen below. The scales are widely used in psychology research and are considered both valid and reliable measure of engagement (Rana and Ardichvili, 2015). The instruments provide the following statements:

##### Job Engagement:

1. *I really “throw” myself into my job.*
2. *Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time.*
3. *This job is all consuming; I am totally into it.*
4. *My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my job (R).*
5. *I am highly engaged in this job.*

##### Organisation Engagement:

1. *Being a member of this organization is very captivating.*
2. *One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this organization.*
3. *I am really not into the “goings-on” in this organization (R).*
4. *Being a member of this organization make me come “alive.”*
5. *Being a member of this organization is exhilarating for me.*
6. *I am highly engaged in this organization.*

The statements are related to components of engagement, such as job and organisation commitment, positive interest in work, and self-fulfillment, and which are also associated with positive wellbeing. This supports the idea that to be engaged, an individual must have

positive functioning in emotional, psychological, and social dimensions of their lives, and re-asserts the researcher's rationale for relating engagement and wellbeing.

*Hypothesis 3: There a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures?*

## **2.5 Wellbeing as a HR Strategy and the Individual Effects**

Research into the positive effects of wellbeing exists in various fields, such as psychology, health, and business. Strategic wellbeing is gaining more importance on government and company agendas, and acknowledgment of the link between an individual's environment and their wellbeing continues to grow (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). For example, the HSA states the individual benefits of health at work as greater self-esteem, sense of purpose, and self-worth, which in turn affects the workplace and society (Health & Safety Authority, 2008). The HSA also notes the healthiness of a workplace can have positive or negative effects on an individual (Health & Safety Authority, 2008). This suggests that an organisation must be active and specific in its wellbeing pursuits otherwise there will be negative consequences for both the individual and the organisation. Many workplaces already acknowledge the importance of the wellbeing of their employees, such as the CSO that includes the following line in their Statement of Strategy, 'We value our staff and strive to provide an environment in which staff meet their full potential and flourish at work' (CSO Mandate & Mission - CSO - Central Statistics Office, 2020). There are now companies that profit from evaluating and implementing wellbeing strategy, such as the business lobby group, IBEC, who created 'The Keepwell Mark' (The KeepWell Mark, 2020) which proposes an industry standard of wellbeing and the prioritisation of employee wellbeing in company policy (The KeepWell Mark, 2020). However, not all organisations have structured wellbeing programmes in place. Reportedly, only approximately 45% of companies in the UK provide a comprehensive wellbeing programme (Oppenheim, 2020). Some skepticism still permeates the topic of workplace wellbeing strategy surrounding these key questions:

- who is responsible for implementing wellbeing practices within an organisation;
- what are the individual and workplace benefits; and,
- what does an effective workplace wellbeing programme look like?

Initial research of wellbeing proposes the correlation between individual and organisational wellbeing and aligns the responsibility with the HR function of an organisation. The key areas of wellbeing in the workplace, as defined in multiple wellbeing literature sources, include good physical, mental, and social health, positive values and principles, meaningful relationships and social interactions, financial wellness, and fulfilling work (Bartels, Peterson and Reina, 2019). Fulfillment as it relates to the workplace can be proper line management, satisfying work and goals, personal career development, and fair pay and reward, all of which are associated with the HR function of an organisation (Diener, 2000). Therefore, an integrated approach to wellbeing practices is well suited to sit within the HR function and it is the responsibility of HR to put wellbeing at the forefront of the organisation's agenda. As discussed, individual wellbeing and organisational wellbeing have a symbiotic relationship, and are impacted by various internal and external factors, known as personal and contextual enablers, respectively (Brown, Arnold, Fletcher and Standage, 2017). Personal enablers are related to an individual's perspective, resilience, spirituality, motivation, and social competency, and contextual enablers are related to outside factors such as family support, a challenging environment that offers opportunity to grow, trust, and employer support (Brown, Arnold, Fletcher and Standage, 2017). Similar to human needs motivational theory, in order for individuals to thrive, these needs must be cultivated, supported and actively pursued by both the organisation and the individual. It is the responsibility of the employer to provide the tools and environment in which an individual can thrive through an integrated workplace wellbeing programme.

Wellbeing strategies have demonstrated positive effects for both the individual and the organisation in areas such as motivation, employee engagement and employee satisfaction (Baicker, Cutler and Song, 2010). These are a result of focused HR initiatives in the following areas: employee involvement, work-life balance, employee growth and development, health and safety, and recognition (Grawitch, Gottschalk and Munz, 2006). In a 2013 study, employee engagement was ranked as one of the top three factors most likely to bring business success through financial gains and increased innovation, retention, and productivity, although 75% of executives surveyed said many of their employees are not engaged (Harvard Business Review Analytic Services, 2013). In a more recent study, the CIPD reported an increase in employee morale and engagement, a healthier and inclusive culture,

and lower sickness absence as a result of wellbeing initiatives (CIPD, 2020). Wellbeing as a HR strategy has demonstrated positive effects on the workplace, but more research into organisational benefits is necessary for a substantial analysis. Other individual benefits of wellbeing initiatives seem to be far-reaching both inside and outside of the workplace in the physical, mental, and social aspects of a person's life. A positive wellbeing is attributed to improvements such as better sleep, less financial concerns, and an improved sense of happiness (McAuliffe, 2019). Interestingly, learnings from workplace wellbeing programmes are likely to be applied into the individual's daily life, supporting a continued healthiness outside of the workplace, such as incorporating more physical exercise or breathing practices to relieve stress (McAuliffe, 2019).

In conclusion, it is proposed that workplace wellbeing programmes are a worthwhile endeavor for both the individual and the organisation and are the responsibility of the HR function. Effective wellbeing initiatives offer an integrated approach to wellbeing spanning physical, mental, and social dimensions. The benefits of wellbeing as a HR strategy outweigh the financial costs to the organisation and are re-cooped in savings related to reduced turnover, absenteeism and illness costs, and increased productivity, motivation, and engagement. Individual effects related to wellbeing as a HR strategy are also evident, such as motivation, happiness, and engagement.

*Hypothesis 4: Individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.*

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Wellbeing is an all-encompassing term that includes the integration of several researched theories and ideas, commencing with hedonic and eudaimonic ideas of happiness. Wellbeing is further categorized as the positive emotional, psychological, and social functioning of an individual and is concerned with their physical, mental, and social health. An individual that is said to have positive functioning in these areas is flourishing. Research indicates the positive effects related to flourishing individuals are increased motivation through self-actualisation, improved mental, social, and physical health, and job satisfaction and engagement. The workplace is where people spend 33% of their adult life (World Health Organisation, 1994)

and the positive health and wellbeing of employees is imperative for any organisation to thrive (Van Doorn, 2015). There appears to be a cause and effect relationship between individual wellbeing outside of the workplace and inside of the workplace. It is the employer's social responsibility to provide opportunities for the improvement of the overall wellbeing of its employees as an ethical issue and paramount for a successful and high-achieving organisation (Baicker, Cutler and Song, 2010). Incorporating wellbeing practices that integrate these three dimensions is hypothesised to successfully support the flourishing of individuals, and lead to highly motivated and engaged employees. Companies that do not support structured wellbeing initiatives are likely to experience converse effects. Research also indicated positive effects related to the organisation such as reduced absenteeism and health-related costs, and increased productivity. The organisational effects of individual wellbeing in the workplace is worth researching in future studies as this study primarily focuses on individual effects in the workplace. In conclusion, wellbeing is an interesting topic for further research as it relates to the individual, organisation, and society.

## Chapter 3

### 3. Research Objectives, Questions and Hypotheses

#### 3.1. Research Objectives:

The above literature review of research related to the field of wellbeing helped develop the research question, 'What are the individual effects in the workplace as a result of wellbeing as a HR strategy?'.

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between wellbeing and its potential effects on individuals in the workplace, and to examine the potential correlation between an individual's psychological wellbeing and levels of motivation and engagement. The last objective is to examine the existence and effectiveness of an integrated wellbeing programme on an individual's level of wellbeing.

The following research objectives were examined through exploratory literature research:

- Define and explore the concept of wellbeing and its conceptual evolution
- Explore the concept of the integrated wellbeing approach through research of pre-existing theory
- Explore the concept of flourishing through research of pre-existing theory
- Explore the concept of self-actualisation as it relates to motivation and flourishing through research of pre-existing theory
- Explore job and organisation engagement and wellbeing as it relates to HR strategy through research of pre-existing theory
- Explore wellbeing practices in the workplace and examine its connection with the HR function through research of pre-existing theory, studies, and further research
- Explore and identify the individual effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy and briefly highlight the organisational effects through research of pre-existing theory, studies, and further research

#### 3.2. Research Questions

1. Will an integrated workplace wellbeing programme yield higher individual wellbeing scores?
2. Is there a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels?
3. Is there a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures?
4. Do individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing?

### **3.3. Hypotheses**

The research problem and literature review derived the following hypotheses to be examined through quantitative methods of research:

Hypothesis 1:

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will not yield higher individual wellbeing scores.

H1:  $\mu = 0$ : An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will yield higher individual wellbeing scores.

Hypothesis 2:

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : There is not a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.

H1:  $\mu = 0$ : There is a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.

Hypothesis 3:

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : There is not a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures.



H1:  $\mu=0$ : There is a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement and psychological wellbeing as measures.

Hypothesis 4:

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : Individuals that do not work in companies with wellbeing programmes have lower job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.

H1:  $\mu=0$ : Individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.

## Chapter 4

### 4. Methodology

#### 4.1 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy pertains to how data is gathered, analysed and used (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). It is important to commence a research project by examining your own beliefs and assumptions and exploring various research philosophies as a basis for determining research structure and methodological approach (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). 'The research onion' (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016) in Figure 6 depicts the layered structure of research, indicating research philosophy as its initial foundations.

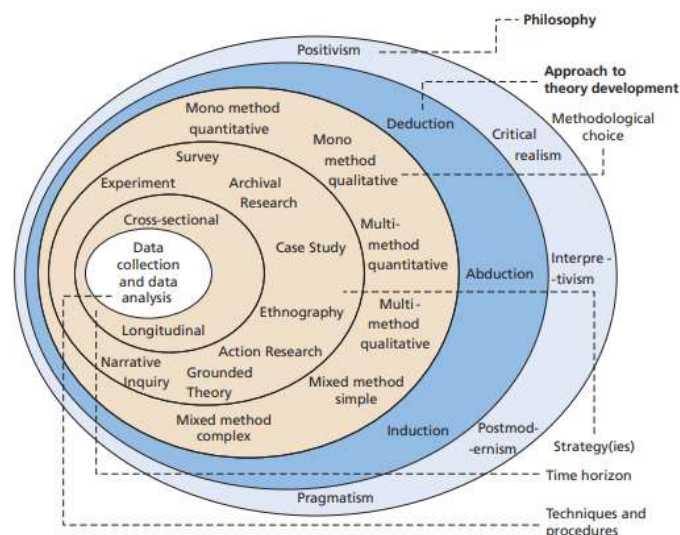


Figure 6: The 'research onion' (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016)

##### 4.1.1. Ontology

A researcher's perspectives and assumptions of the world can be assigned to three types of research philosophies, ontology, epistemology, and axiology which pertain to particular belief systems (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Ontology is concerned with what reality is, epistemology is concerned with how an individual examines reality, and axiology is concerned with values associated with the research (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Research philosophy is also concerned with the nature of reality surrounding what is being researched (Hayley Stainton). The current research seeks to understand, 'What are the individual effects in the workplace as a result of wellbeing as a HR strategy?' An epistemological approach toward this

study would seek to understand if aspects of wellbeing can be accepted legitimately or not (Research Guides: Organizing Academic Research Papers: Types of Research Designs, 2020) while the researcher is actually interested in how we classify and relate the concept of wellbeing and is therefore an ontological approach.

Within ontology are two viewpoints: Objectivism, which separates reality from human perception, and subjectivism, which understands the influence human perception has on social phenomena (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Subjectivism plays a large part in the study of wellbeing and this research study. Wellbeing measures such as life satisfaction and happiness are subjective terms as their personal meaning differs from one individual to the next, and the perspective is even referenced in the well-known theory of Subjective Wellbeing (MacLeod and Conway, 2005). For example, an individual's perception of their wellbeing may influence their actual wellbeing. Conversely, an objectivist approach highlights what 'actual wellbeing' means in this argument and seeks to outline the real activities or facets that lead to positive wellbeing (MacLeod and Conway, 2005). Objectivism holds merit in this research in terms of measuring objective data about wellbeing and how it can be applied practically to a wellbeing programme. This distinction is important in terms of the choice of research methodology and design for this study.

#### **4.1.2. Paradigms**

Within research philosophies exists a polarised spectrum of research paradigms known as positivism, which is based in realism and objectivism, and interpretivism which is based in idealism and subjectivism, associated with social sciences and natural sciences, respectively (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Research paradigms are sets of assumptions that influence the methodologies and design associated with their studies. For example, positivism is likely to use a large sample population, quantitative data, and is interested in testing hypothesis', whereas interpretivism uses small samples, qualitative data, and produces theories (Collis and Hussey, 2014). A more diverse range of paradigms includes three additional philosophical distinctions: critical realism, postmodernism, and pragmatism (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). A positivist approach is interested in creating more rigid generalisations, or hypotheses, based on theoretical evidence and unbiased, uninfluenced data (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Connecting relationships found within this data is key to the

positivist approach which can then be used to predict future behaviours and findings (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Therefore, the current research will utilise a positivist approach by identifying and expanding on existing wellbeing theory, constructing hypotheses, and testing them through quantitative research methods.

## **4.2 Research Design and Data Collection**

### **4.2.1 Design and Purpose**

Research design aligns the research question and the empirical research (Research Guides: Organizing Academic Research Papers: Types of Research Designs, 2020). The determined purpose of the study contributes to future decisions related to research theory, strategy, collection method, and analysis processes (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Research can be approached through different lenses, such as an exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory perspectives (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Exploratory research focusses on questions that have not been previously studied, such as exploring a phenomenon for interest sake, and typically provides inconclusive results (Collis and Hussey, 2014). The aim of exploratory research is more open-ended, and thus adaptable to change throughout the research process from general to more specific (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Exploratory research seeks to understand a topic in depth and relate it to an existing theory and create hypotheses which may lead to further study (Research Guides: Organizing Academic Research Papers: Types of Research Designs, 2020). Descriptive research is interested in gathering specifics about typically large volumes of data, such as the demographics of a population, simply to describe them, and can be used in tandem with exploratory and explanatory research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016).

The current research seeks to understand and expand on the framework of wellbeing concepts and theories as a foundation for future analysis and answer the research question, 'What are the individual effects in the workplace as a result of wellbeing as a HR strategy?' It also suggests hypotheses relating wellbeing concepts, and other well-known topics such as self-actualisation, motivation, and engagement, into an interrelated model. Therefore, the current research uses descriptive research to collect specific information about the participants and their workplace wellbeing programme and implores explanatory research to explain descriptive variables, test hypotheses and establish the causal relationship between

said variables, in this case wellbeing and motivation, and wellbeing and job and organisation engagement.

#### **4.2.2. Approach to Theory Development**

The current research seeks to understand the potential causal relationships and correlations between individual wellbeing and motivation in the workplace, individual wellbeing and engagement in the workplace, and individual wellbeing and the comprehensiveness of their workplace wellbeing programme. Designating an approach to theory dictates future decisions in research design. Similar to the polarisation of the research paradigms positivism and interpretivism, there are two associated approaches to research theory labeled deduction or induction (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Deduction is concerned with causation and statistical inference, whereas induction is concerned with meaning, and typically associated with qualitative methods. Induction also searches for patterns within the study in order to develop a theory, moving from specific information to general (Collis and Hussey, 2014).

Deduction, however, is concerned with verifying existing theory, testing and analysing it, and inferring certain conclusions. A deductive approach, therefore, is the most appropriate approach for the current research as it aligns with the research question and a positivist perspective.

#### **4.2.3. Research Strategy and Data Collection**

Research strategy is the approach to the process of research, (Collis and Hussey, 2014) and is informed by the research questions, objectives, philosophies, existing knowledge of the topic, and what resources are available to the researcher (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). These strategies collect two distinct types of data, quantitative, numerical data, or qualitative, observational data. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies are typically associated with specific collection techniques and analysis procedures and should be matched with the appropriate approach and purpose of a study to yield effective results (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Quantitative methods are successful in answering specific questions with validated and verified data and are aligned with a deductive and positivist approach.

Previous wellbeing research has utilised both quantitative and qualitative research methods, depending on the researcher's question. Primarily, the most common form of data collection

found in wellbeing research is quantitative research (Diener, 2009; Robertson and Cooper, 2010; Baicker, Cutler and Song, 2010) Quantitative methodology was deemed the most appropriate form of research for this study because the researcher seeks to understand the relationship between variables through measurable statistics, such as wellbeing and employee engagement, and wellbeing and motivation through particular survey scores. A quantitative method also allows a higher level of control over captured data and is likely the collected data will be more objective in nature. The quantitative study also allows for a larger sample size across various business sectors and demographics and fits within the resource parameters of the project. A multi-method study including qualitative interviews, expert opinions, and focus groups, was considered but due to time constraints, was rejected, although the researcher accepts that a qualitative study on this topic would be interesting in relation to employee perceptions of wellbeing programmes in their workplace.

### **4.3 Participants and Sampling**

The research design captured measurable data in relation to psychological wellbeing, motivation, employee engagement, and wellbeing as a HR strategy in participants' current place of work. The overall objective was to use this data to analyse the effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy on individuals.

#### **4.3.1 Sampling**

Convenience sampling was utilised in the current research in order to produce a high response rate across a diverse range of demographics at low cost. The issue of selection bias within convenience sampling was considered by the researcher and every effort was made to distribute the survey to various demographical groups, such as age, gender, and work backgrounds. The inclusion criteria called for participants of working age, between 18-70 years old, and yielded 117 valid responses. Participants who do not meet these requirements were intended to be acknowledged in data results as disqualified, but all participants were valid in this regard. Other exclusion criteria was considered, such as a requirement for the participant to be permanently employed or to have participated in a workplace wellbeing programme for at least 12 months, but it was determined this would limit the sample size, potentially affecting the validity of the study, and also unnecessarily limit opportunities to analyse other comparative data. Limiting the sample population to working individuals with

a wellbeing programme in place would also needlessly exclude valuable data useful to the research. Due to limited time resources and limited exclusion criterion, convenience sampling was the most appropriate sampling approach, as opposed to cluster, or stratified methods. A conscious decision was made not to limit the sampling population by demographic groups, but demographic data was collected for further analysis. Additionally, a cross-sectional survey or longitudinal study with a sample population larger than 100 participants from the same company was considered, but access to a company of this size was not available to the researcher at the time of this study.

### 4.3.2 Participants

#### Descriptive Statistics

Out of 117 valid participants, 35 or 29.9% are male, 79 or 67.5% are female and 2.6% chose another response. Participants were given the opportunity to write an ‘other’ response and one participant wrote, ‘Non-binary’ as seen in Table 1 below.

Standard Attributes	Label	Value	Count	Percent
Valid Values	0	Male	35	29.9%
	1	Female	79	67.5%
	2	Prefer not to say	2	1.7%
	3	Non-binary (Other)	1	0.9%

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics - Gender

The mean ( $M = 37.3$ ) and standard deviation ( $SD = 10.391$ ) of the age distribution is shown in Table 2 below and ranges from 20 to 66 years of age in Table 3. Tables 4 and 5 depict the location demographics of the sample population and how many participants belonged to an organisation with a workplace wellbeing programme in place (70.9%). These descriptive statistics will be explored further in chapter 5.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	117	20	66	37.3	10.391
Valid N (listwise)	117				

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics - Age

		Value	Count	Percent
Standard Attributes	Label	Age range		
Valid Values	0	20-24	4	3.4%
	1	25-29	19	16.2%
	2	30-34	38	32.5%
	3	35-39	19	16.2%
	4	40-44	15	12.8%
	5	45-49	3	2.6%
	6	50-54	6	5.1%
	7	55-59	8	6.8%
	8	60-66	5	4.3%

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics – Age Range

		Value	Count	Percent
Standard Attributes	Label	Location		
Valid Values	0	Ireland	102	87.2%
	1	United States	13	11.1%
	2	Other	2	1.7%

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics – Location

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Do not have a workplace wellbeing programme	34	29.1	29.1	29.1
	Has a workplace wellbeing programme	83	70.9	70.9	100.0
Total		117	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: Existence of a Workplace Wellbeing Programme

#### 4.4. Measures

The research was conducted using a self-administered, cross-sectional survey composed of a general survey developed by the researcher, and the following two pre-existing scales: The Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2009), and two engagement scales (Saks, 2006) found in Appendix 1. The proposed research design intends to capture measurable data in relation to psychological wellbeing, employee engagement, and wellbeing as a HR strategy in participants' current place of work. The overall objective is to use this data to analyse the effects of a wellbeing as a HR strategy on individuals as it relates to work against the researcher's hypotheses.



#### **4.4.1. Researcher's Survey**

A general survey made up of seventeen questions was designed by the researcher to capture the participant's demographic information as well as data related to the participant's current place of employment. The overall objective of the researcher's survey was to capture data personal to the participants that could not be ascertained from the use of other pre-existing scales. For example, the researcher included questions such as, 'What hours are you expected to work on a typical working day?' and, 'Where is your work primarily based? \*pre- COVID-19 lockdown?' The researcher also included questions specifically related to the participant's wellbeing programmes. For example, 'My workplace wellbeing programme addresses the following areas in some capacity: Exercise , nutrition, health checks, ergonomic working arrangements, breaks from screen during normal working day, smoking cessation programme, sleep management, other, none, or do not have a workplace wellbeing programme'. The researcher asked participants to select all options that applied, using examples within physical, mental, and social health parameters, in order to measure the comprehensiveness of the wellbeing programme.

An additional 8-item scale designed by the researcher was included to measure the participant's self-reported overall wellbeing, health, and levels of motivation, engagement, and productivity as it relates to work. The objective of using this scale was to capture the participant's self-perceived levels in these areas to be compared with the psychological wellbeing and engagement scores from other scales, as well as other further analysis.

Items were written as statements, asking the participants to rate their response. For example, 'Rate your overall motivation level as it relates to work'. Participants indicated their response on a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree. A total score for each participant was calculated for comparison analysis. An analysis of the internal consistency of the researcher's scale was also carried out and produced a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.871 indicating a high reliability of the researcher's scale. The mean inter-item correlation is .45, with values ranging from .25 to .79, indicating a strong relationship between the items.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.871	8

Table 6: Internal Consistency – Researcher’s Survey Scale

#### 4.4.2 The Flourishing Scale

A pre-existing 8-item Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2009) was utilised to measure the participant’s self-perceived success in the following areas: relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism (Diener et al., 2009). The objective of using this scale was to capture the participant’s level of psychological flourishing, which is evidenced as a strong indicator of wellbeing, and to measure it as a possible individual effect of wellbeing as a HR strategy.

Items were written as statements, such as, ‘I actively contribute to the happiness and wellbeing of others’, and participants indicated their response on a seven-point Likert-type scale with anchors (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) slightly disagree, (4) neither agree nor disagree, (5) slightly agree, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree. A total score for each participant was calculated to form a single, composite psychological wellbeing score with a possible scale range of 8 to 56. The Flourishing Scale is considered to have good internal consistency, with a reported Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .87 (Pavot, Diener, Colvin and Sandvik, 1991). In the current study, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was .84 indicating good internal consistency. The mean inter-item correlation is .40, with values ranging from .12 to .63, indicating a strong relationship between the items.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.842	8

Table 7: Internal Consistency – The Flourishing Scale

#### 4.4.3 Job Engagement Scale

A pre-existing 5-item job engagement scale was utilised to measure the job engagement levels of each participant (Saks, 2006). The objective of using this scale was to measure the self-perceived psychological presence of participants in their job as an indicator for job

satisfaction (Saks, 2006) to analyse it as a possible individual effect of wellbeing as a HR strategy.

Items were provided as statements, such as, ‘Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time,’ of which participants indicated their response on a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree. A reverse coded item was used in this scale in order to test its validity, stating, ‘My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my job.’ The negative item was subsequently reverse scored before responses were totaled to form a single, job engagement score for each participant with a possible scale range of 5 to 25. According to (Rana and Ardichvili, 2015) the Job Engagement Scale has sufficient internal consistency, with a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient reported of .82. In the current study, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was .78 indicating sufficient internal consistency over .70. The mean inter-item correlation is .41, with values ranging from .15 to .63, indicating a strong relationship between the items.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.776	5

Table 8: Internal Consistency – Job Organisation Scale

#### 4.4.4 Organisation Engagement Scale

A 6-item organisation engagement scale (Saks, 2006) was utilised to measure the organisational engagement levels of each participant. The objective of using this scale was to measure the self-perceived psychological presence of participants in their organisation as an indicator for overall work satisfaction (Saks, 2006) to analyse it as a possible individual effect of wellbeing as a HR strategy.

Items were provided as statements, such as, ‘Being a member of this organization is very captivating,’ of which participants indicated their response on a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree. A reverse coded item was used in this scale in order to test its validity, stating, ‘I am really not into the “goings-on” in this organization.’ The negative item was

subsequently reverse scored before responses were totaled to form a single, organisation engagement score for each participant with a possible scale range of 6 to 30. According to (Rana and Ardichvili, 2015), the Job Engagement Scale has good internal consistency, with a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient reported of .90. In the current study, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was .832 indicating good internal consistency. The mean inter-item correlation is .46, with values ranging from .06 to .70, indicating a strong relationship between the items.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.832	6

Table 9: Internal Consistency – Organisation Engagement Scale

#### 4.5. Procedure

The data for this study was collected by the researcher through an online survey platform, SurveyHero. This platform provided a well-designed and easy-to-use application that was formatted for different types of devices, such as mobile, tablets, and laptops. SurveyHero also assigned each participant with an ID number, preserving their anonymity, and provided both PDF and excel formats of the survey results. An online pilot test was administered to classmates who are representative of the inclusion criteria in order to test the strength of the survey questions (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). One survey error, a mislabeling of a survey scale was discovered which was corrected before distributing to the sampling population.

Participants were recruited based on convenience sampling and the researcher’s access to colleagues, friends, classmates, acquaintances, and family members of the researcher. A link to the online survey was distributed to potential participants via text, email and other various social media applications such as Facebook and Whatsapp with a brief description of the study and the anonymous and voluntary nature of the survey. Participation was voluntary and participants were informed that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. An information and consent section were placed at the beginning of the survey and participants were asked to review the information and decide whether they wanted to take

part by choosing a yes or no consent option. Participants who chose no in this section would have been disqualified from the research.

Subsequently, participants were asked to answer 51 questions in total throughout three clearly marked sections of the survey. The participants were informed they could ask questions of the researcher or their supervisor before the response was submitted and were required to choose a submit option in order for the responses to be considered valid by the researcher. A total of 117 valid responses were collected within a week of distributing the survey. 21 additional participants opened the link to the online survey but did not complete any responses and were therefore disqualified.

The survey can be viewed in Appendix 1 of the research.

#### **4.6 Ethical Considerations**

In any research setting, ethical concerns must be actively considered in order to protect participants, the researcher, and the governing academic body. In the current research project, ethical considerations were made in terms of the participants' consent and anonymity, the processing and storage of participants' personal and general data, and the format of the questionnaire.

##### **4.6.1. Consent and Anonymity**

Participants were made aware that participation in the survey was completely anonymous and voluntary. Participants needed to specifically select their consent to participate and no identifying personal data was requested or stored. Due to the anonymous nature of the survey, once the responses were submitted, the participant's information could no longer be withdrawn. Participants were encouraged to contact the researcher or the researcher's supervisor if they had any questions, although no questions were submitted.

The primary use of an online instrument aided in anonymising participants' personal data and reduced the opportunity for selection bias. Utilising an online research instrument simplified the collection of data and allowed for participants to confidentially submit their response. A

random ID number was assigned to each submission in the online platform to ensure response data was accurately organised.

#### **4.6.2. Data Storage and Security**

Although data collected was anonymous, due care was given to make sure it remained confidential and secure. Results from the survey were exported to an Excel spreadsheet and stored in the researcher's OneDrive and the researcher's account on the online platform, SurveyHero was subsequently deleted.

In addition, the spreadsheet was password protected on a laptop that is also password protected and encrypted and has anti-malware and anti-virus software. The data will be held in this manner until 6 months from the dissertation submission date and subsequently deleted.

#### **4.6.3. Definitions and Participant Care**

Due to the subjective nature surrounding the definition of wellbeing and the potential for using new vocabulary to the participant, it was important that the questionnaire's instructions and questions were adequately defined, clear and in plain English. A pilot study was carried out with the researcher's classmates in order to verify this.

Because of the psychological nature of the scales, participants were encouraged to seek help from a mental health professional if they were affected in any way by the study. All care was given into positioning questions to avoid such an occurrence but cannot be ruled out completely.

### **4.7 Data Analysis**

The planned analysis for the research is to perform both descriptive and inferential analyses of the quantitative data. Microsoft Excel will be used to create a research codebook and categorise nominal data, such as the demographic information of the participants, and ordinal data collected from the Likert scales in the survey. The researcher will run descriptive analyses such as finding the mean, median, mode, average, standard deviation, frequency, range of the appropriate data. The pre-existing Engagement (Saks, 2006) and Flourishing Scale (Diener,

2009) responses will be calculated to determine the respective engagement and psychological wellbeing scores of each participant. In addition, the researcher will calculate the composite average, standard deviation, range, skewness, median, and kurtosis of each of the survey scales. These descriptive statistics provided a foundational understanding of the sampling population and the characteristics of their working life and workplace wellbeing programme as a basis for inferential analysis. The descriptive statistics derived from the survey scales, such as Cronbach's alpha, standard deviation, range, skewness, and kurtosis, established the scale's internal reliability, variability, asymmetry and tail weight of the dataset's distribution, respectively. These were also useful statistics to capture because they helped confirm the validity and reliability of the research to test the hypotheses.

The descriptive analysis of the data was as follows:

- Find the frequencies and ratio percentages of nominal data categories such as age, gender, location, nature of employment, organisation size, sector, work type, and hours of work;
- Calculate job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and general survey scores of each participant;
- Find the individual and composite mean, median, mode, average, standard deviation, frequency, range, Cronbach's alpha, kurtosis, and skewness of the survey scales;
- Analyse frequencies related to the existence of workplace wellbeing programmes; and,
- Analyse frequencies related to the components of each participant's workplace wellbeing programme to establish its comprehensiveness.

The codebook data was transferred from Excel to the data package SPSS to verify the descriptive statistics and for further inferential analysis such as correlations, and variance analysis. Inferential statistics helped the researcher observe patterns within the dataset and test hypothesised relationships relating to individual wellbeing, motivation, and engagement, and wellbeing as a HR strategy.

The inferential analysis of the data tested the four hypotheses of the research using the tests below:

- Test for validity and reliability of each scale to determine the distribution of responses and whether parametric or non-parametric analysis is appropriate;
- Test for correlation between existence of an integrated workplace wellbeing programme and psychological wellbeing score;
- Test for correlation between self-reported motivation scores and psychological wellbeing scores;
- Test for correlation between job and organisation engagement scores and psychological wellbeing score; and,
- Test for differences in job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing scores between individuals with a workplace wellbeing and those without a programme.

#### **4.8 Limitations**

The global pandemic, COVID-19, has placed unforeseen limitations on the current research, such as changes in the method of communication between the researcher and supervisor and access to research materials was strictly online-based. The use of an online platform to distribute and collect quantitative data did not pose many limitations on the research, although the research design was guided because of these circumstances. The principle limitation of the study were unanticipated demands and conditions surrounding the researcher due to the pandemic. The researcher is also aware of issues surrounding external reliability of the study and the effects COVID-19 may have had on participant responses regarding the state of their personal wellbeing.

Practical constraints for the research include a limitation in accessing a larger sample size for conclusive results, although the objective of receiving over 100 valid responses was achieved. Convenience sampling also limits some control over the distribution of the instrument. The study used cross-sectional and self-reported data which limits the conclusions the researcher can make about causality.



Another considered limitation is the layperson's perspective of the term wellbeing (McMahan and Estes, 2010), and therefore steps were taken to clearly define key terms in the forefront of the questionnaire. The concept of wellbeing is complex with several variables that may affect research analysis and outcomes, such as social, economic, and physical variances between individuals, and individual and cultural perceptions of wellbeing, and considerations were made in light of this in the study's design and analysis.

Lastly, the researcher acknowledges the potential for unintentional researcher bias, particularly in the area of the benefits of wellbeing in HR strategy. Effort was made in the literature review to avoid assumptions and critically analyse points made in other research. Effort was also made in the use of persuasive language throughout the dissertation, as well as in the design and distribution of the survey. The researcher collected, analysed, and reported the data set objectively, without known bias.

## Chapter 5

### 5. Analysis and Findings

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter focusses on research findings and exploratory data analysis of the planned quantitative research. The research is based on the question, 'What are the individual effects in the workplace as a result of wellbeing as a HR strategy?' and the following hypotheses were formed as a result:

1. Hypothesis 1: An integrated workplace wellbeing programme yield higher individual wellbeing scores.
2. Hypothesis 2: There a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.
3. Hypothesis 3: There a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures.
4. Hypothesis 4: Individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.

The following descriptive and inferential statistics were observed by the researcher and presented below:

#### 5.2. Descriptive Statistics

##### 5.2.1 Participant Profile - Demographics

An online survey distributed using convenience sampling yielded 117 participant survey results. Out of 117 valid responses (n=117), the majority of respondents were female at 79 (67.5%), 35 (29.9%) were male, and 3 individuals (2.6%) chose another response. Most participants were located in Ireland (87.2%) and the rest in the United States (11.1%) or provided another response (1.7%). The only criterion was for respondents to be of working

age, between 18-70 years old. The age range of the sample was 20 to 66 years old with a majority of respondents in the 30-34 age group (32.5%), followed by age groups 25-29 (16.2%) and 35-39 (16.2%, M=37.27, SD=10.39).

Tables 1-4 in Chapter 4 depict the demographic information above.

### 5.2.2. Participant Profile – Work Demographics

The majority of respondents, 64 out of 117 (54.7%) work for organisations with 500+ employees, and 94 (80.3%) of the total sample are permanent, full-time employees. An overwhelming majority of participants, 82 (70.1%) worked in office environments pre-COVID-19, and 105 (89.7%) work 9am to 5pm or similar hours.

Tables 10-13 below depict a full summary of the responses.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-25 Employees	17	14.5	14.5	14.5
	25-50 Employees	5	4.3	4.3	18.8
	50-100 Employees	9	7.7	7.7	26.5
	100-150 Employees	6	5.1	5.1	31.6
	150-200 Employees	5	4.3	4.3	35.9
	200-500 Employees	11	9.4	9.4	45.3
	500+ Employees	64	54.7	54.7	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics - Organisation Size

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Permanent full-time	94	80.3	80.3	80.3
	Permanent part-time	10	8.5	8.5	88.9
	Temporary	4	3.4	3.4	92.3
	Fixed-term or specified-purpose contract	5	4.3	4.3	96.6
	Self Employed	4	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics - Nature of Employment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Factory or similar	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Office	82	70.1	70.1	72.6
	Travel (Domestic)	6	5.1	5.1	77.8
	Home	2	1.7	1.7	79.5
	Retail setting	7	6.0	6.0	85.5
	School (Other)	2	1.7	1.7	87.2
	Healthcare (other)	4	3.4	3.4	90.6
	Library or local government building (other)	6	5.1	5.1	95.7
	Vesel/Rig (other)	1	.9	.9	96.6
	Restaurant (Other)	1	.9	.9	97.4
	Hotel (other)	1	.9	.9	98.3
	Residential Services (Other)	2	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics - Work Based pre-COVID-19

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	9-5 or similar	105	89.7	89.7	89.7
	Afternoon (12pm to 7pm)	1	.9	.9	90.6
	Night (midnight to 7am)	1	.9	.9	91.5
	Other (other)	1	.9	.9	92.3
	Flexible Hours (other)	2	1.7	1.7	94.0
	Shifts or hours that vary on a regular basis (other)	7	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Table 13: Descriptive Statistics - Hours of Work

### 5.2.3. Participant Profile - Wellbeing Programme

An important aspect of the research was to determine the existence of workplace wellbeing programmes amongst the sample population. Information regarding programme comprehensiveness is positioned in the inferential statistics section of this chapter.

78 respondents (66.7%) had a wellbeing programme provided by their employer and 39 (33.3%) did not. Of the participants who responded yes to having a workplace wellbeing programme, 76 (93.6%) responded that the wellbeing programme was not mandatory and 17

(21.8%) reported they did not participate in their programme. Length of participation in said programmes varied from less than a year to five or more years, with a majority of responses in the 1 to 2-year range at 24 (30.8%).

Tables 14-16 below depict a full summary of the responses.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	39	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Yes	78	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Table 14: Descriptive Statistics - Wellbeing Programme Provided by Employer

		Wellbeing Programme provided by employer?	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	Valid	No	73	93.6	93.6	93.6
		Yes	5	6.4	6.4	100.0
		Total	78	100.0	100.0	

Table 15: Descriptive Statistics - Mandatory Participation in Wellbeing Programme

		Wellbeing Programme provided by employer?	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	Valid	No wellbeing programme or N/A	3	3.8	3.8	3.8
		Did not Participate	17	21.8	21.8	25.6
		<1 year	14	17.9	17.9	43.6
		1-2 years	24	30.8	30.8	74.4
		3-4 years	11	14.1	14.1	88.5
		5+ years	7	9.0	9.0	97.4
		Other	2	2.6	2.6	100.0
		Total	78	100.0	100.0	

Table 16: Descriptive Statistics - Length of Participation in Wellbeing Programme

The researcher totaled components of each participant's wellbeing programme where reported, using 8 items in three respective physical, mental, and social health categories, as seen in Figure 7. If the component existed in the participant's programme they received a score of 1, or 0 if it did not. Scores could range from 0-24 to form a composite Comprehensive Wellbeing Score. The responses were also categorised into ranges as depicted in Figure 8. The

highest frequency was for individuals with zero components (29%) and the group with the largest number of components (16-20) made up 15% of the sample population.

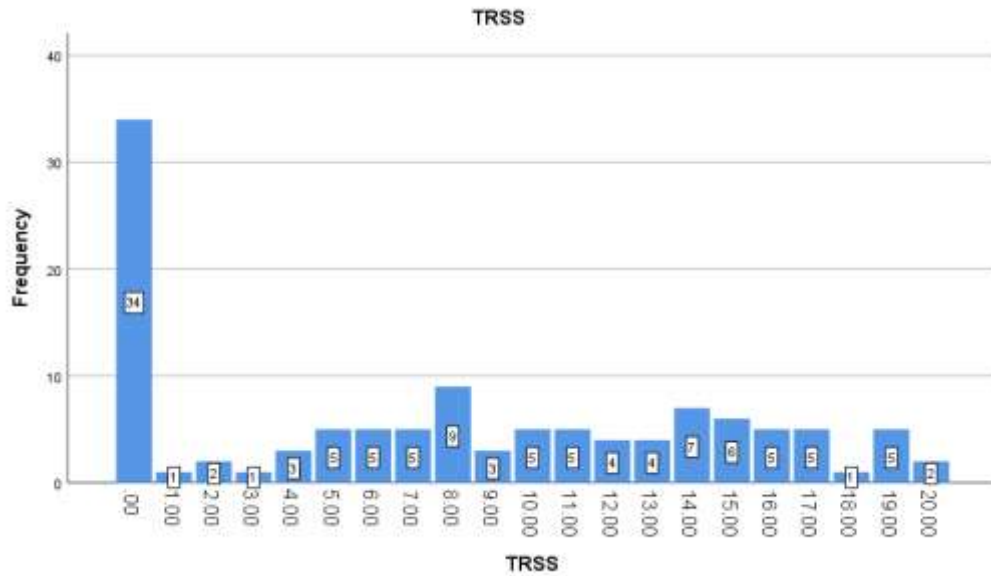


Figure 7: Frequencies Associated with Comprehensiveness of Wellbeing Programme

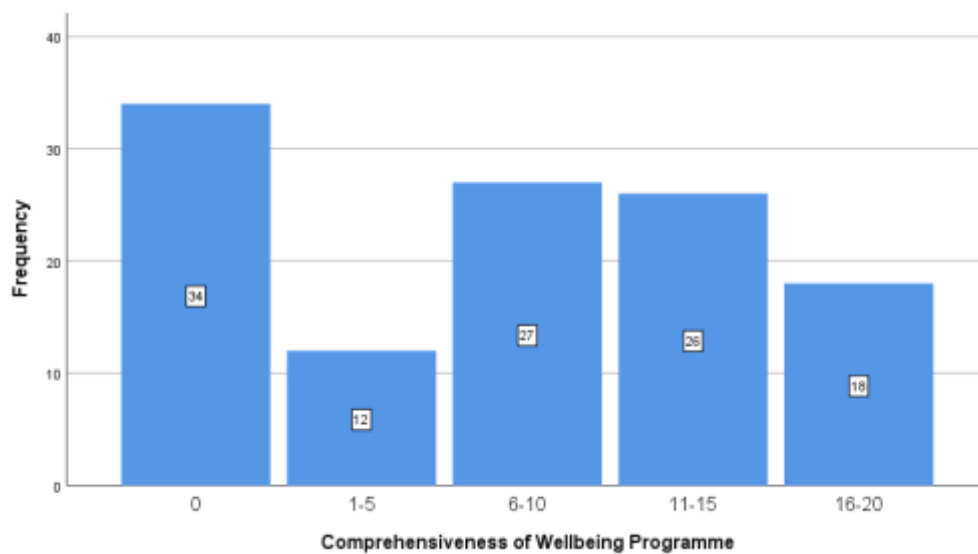


Figure 8: Ranges Associated with Comprehensiveness of Wellbeing Programme

#### 5.2.4. Scale Descriptive Statistics

Table 17 below depicts a full summary of descriptive statistics associated with the composite scores of the four scales used in the online survey. The composite scores are also included in Tables 18-21 for reference.

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
								Stat	Std. Error	Stat	Std. Error
<b>Composite Researcher Survey Scale</b>	117	28.00	12.00	40.00	29.606	29.00	4.96	-.230	.224	.609	.444
<b>Composite Flourishing Scale</b>	117	32.00	24.00	56.00	45.923	47.00	5.22	-1.039	.224	2.048	.444
<b>Composite Job Engagement Scale</b>	117	14.00	10.00	24.00	16.923	18.00	3.44	-.326	.224	-.871	.444
<b>Composite Organisation Engagement Scale</b>	117	22.00	6.00	28.00	18.307	18.00	4.02	-.369	.224	.163	.444
Valid N (listwise)	117										

Table 17: Summary Report of All Survey Scale Descriptive Statistics

#### 5.2.4.1 Researcher Survey Scale

The 8-item Researcher Survey Scale collected data related to each participant’s self-reported levels of overall: wellbeing, physical health, mental health, social health, motivation, engagement, productivity, and working relationships as they related to work. Ratings were based on a 5-point Likert-like scale with a possible score range of 8-40. The total composite score average was 74.01% ( $M = 29.61$ ,  $SD = 4.96$ ) with a 95% confidence interval ( $CI$  28.41-30.81). The mean score was highest for the ‘overall working relationships as it relates to work’ variable (3.97) and lowest for ‘overall mental health as it relates to work’ (3.55).

Scale reliability and validity were determined by finding the average variance extracted ( $AVE = .61$ ) and composite reliability ( $CR = .86$ ) of the observed variables. Cronbach’s Alpha was also calculated and confirmed reliability and is reported in the Methodology chapter of this dissertation.

Table 18 below depicts a full summary of statistics related to each response in the Researcher Survey Scale.

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness Stat	Std. Error	Kurtosis Stat	Std. Error
Overall wellbeing as it relates to work	117	4	1	5	3.58	4.00	.833	-.627	.224	1.061	.444
Overall physical health as it relates to work	117	4	1	5	3.59	4.00	.842	-.508	.224	.505	.444
Overall mental health as it relates to work	117	4	1	5	3.55	4.00	.933	-.528	.224	.408	.444
Overall social health as it relates to work	117	4	1	5	3.65	4.00	1.045	-.637	.224	.043	.444
Overall level of motivation as it relates to work	117	4	1	5	3.56	4.00	.895	-.170	.224	-.012	.444
Overall level of engagement as it relates to work	117	4	1	5	3.79	4.00	.808	-.389	.224	.337	.444
Overall level of productivity as it relates to work	117	3	2	5	3.97	4.00	.742	-.203	.224	-.496	.444
Overall working relationships as it relates to work	117	3	2	5	3.93	4.00	.751	-.384	.224	-.026	.444
<b>Composite Researcher Survey Score</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>28.00</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>40.00</b>	<b>29.6068</b>	<b>29.00</b>	<b>4.96359</b>	<b>-.230</b>	<b>.224</b>	<b>.609</b>	<b>.444</b>
Valid N (listwise)	117										

Table 18: Summary Report of Researcher Survey Scale Descriptive Statistics

Normality of the scale was assessed in two ways, through the Shapiro-Wilke test and by assessing numerical kurtosis and skewness data. The results of the Shapiro-Wike test find that the Researcher’s Survey Scale data is normally distributed ( $p = .12$ ). The distribution is also represented in the histogram in Figure 9. There is a clear outlier in the data set seen in the box plot in Figure 10 but it was established not to affect findings to a great extent since the difference between the 5% trim mean ( $M = 29.6648$ ) and mean value ( $M = 29.6068$ ) was very small (0.06). The distribution is also considered normal with a skewness of  $-.23$  ( $SE = .22$ ) and kurtosis of  $.61$  ( $SE = .44$ ).



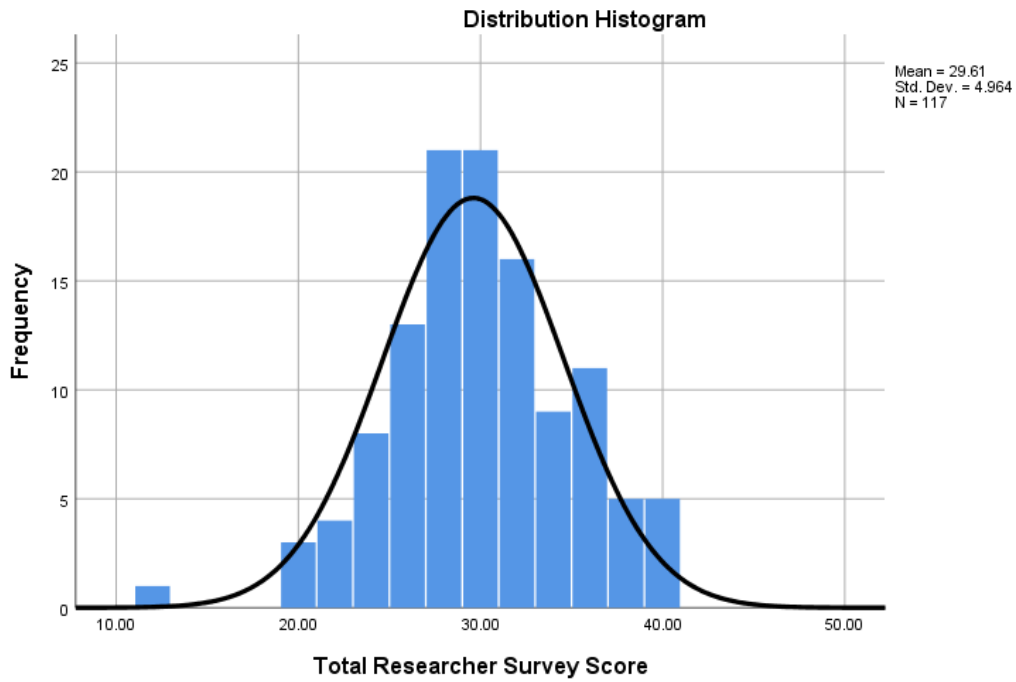


Figure 9: Distribution Histogram of Researcher Survey Scale

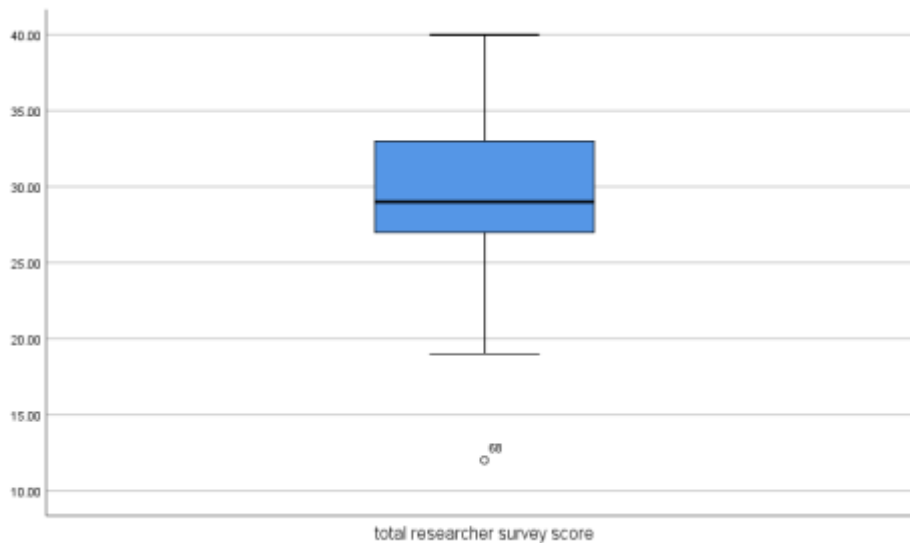


Figure 10: Boxplot of Researcher Survey Scale

#### 5.2.4.2 The Flourishing Scale

The pre-existing 8-item Flourishing Scale collected data related to the psychological wellbeing of participants. Ratings were based on a 7-point Likert-like scale with a possible score range of 8-56. The total composite score average was 82% ( $M = 45.92$ ,  $SD = 4.96$ ) with a 95% confidence interval ( $CI 44.97-46.88$ ). The mean score was highest for the variable, 'I am a good

person and live a good life' (6.05) and lowest for 'I am engaged and interested in my daily activities' (5.47).

Scale reliability and convergent validity were explored by finding the average variance extracted ( $AVE = .49$ ) and composite reliability ( $CR = .88$ ) of the observed variables. In this case,  $AVE \leq .50$  indicating unreliability, although the  $CR \geq .70$  and is considered very good. When the item 'My social relationships are supportive and rewarding' with a factor loading of .43 was removed, the revised AVE score was .57 and CR was .83, indicating reliability. Cronbach's Alpha was also calculated and confirmed internal consistency and is reported in the Methodology chapter of this dissertation.

Table 19 below depicts a full summary of statistics related to each response in the Flourishing Scale.

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness Stat	Std. Error	Kurtosis Stat	Std. Error
I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.	117	5	2	7	5.52	6.00	1.149	-1.059	.224	.900	.444
My social relationships are supportive and rewarding.	117	4	3	7	5.76	6.00	.925	-1.097	.224	1.686	.444
I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.	117	5	2	7	5.47	6.00	1.079	-1.156	.224	1.012	.444
I actively contribute to the happiness and wellbeing of others.	117	3	4	7	5.79	6.00	.752	-.242	.224	-.169	.444
I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me.	117	5	2	7	5.98	6.00	.890	-1.755	.224	5.734	.444
I am a good person and live a good life.	117	5	2	7	6.05	6.00	.764	-1.622	.224	6.514	.444
I am optimistic about my future.	117	5	2	7	5.72	6.00	1.024	-1.268	.224	2.207	.444
People respect me.	117	5	2	7	5.63	6.00	.915	-1.738	.224	4.222	.444

<b>Composite Flourishing Scale</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>32.00</b>	<b>24.00</b>	<b>56.00</b>	<b>45.92</b>	<b>47.00</b>	<b>5.21958</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>.224</b>	<b>2.048</b>	<b>.444</b>
					<b>31</b>			<b>1.039</b>			
Valid N (listwise)	117										

Table 19: Summary Report of The Flourishing Scale Descriptive Statistics

Normality was assessed in two ways through the Shapiro-Wilke test and by assessing numerical kurtosis and skewness data. The results of the Shapiro-Wilke test find that the Flourishing Scale data is not normally distributed ( $p = .000$ ). The distribution is also represented in the histogram in Figure 11 and the Q-Q plot in Figure 12. There are two clear outliers in the dataset seen in the box plot in Figure 13, but it was established not to affect findings to a great extent since the difference between the 5% trim mean ( $M=46.20$ ) and mean value ( $M=45.92$ ) was very small (0.27). The distribution is also considered highly skewed with a value  $< -1$  of  $-1.04$  ( $SE=.22$ ) and kurtosis of  $2.05$  ( $SE=.44$ ).

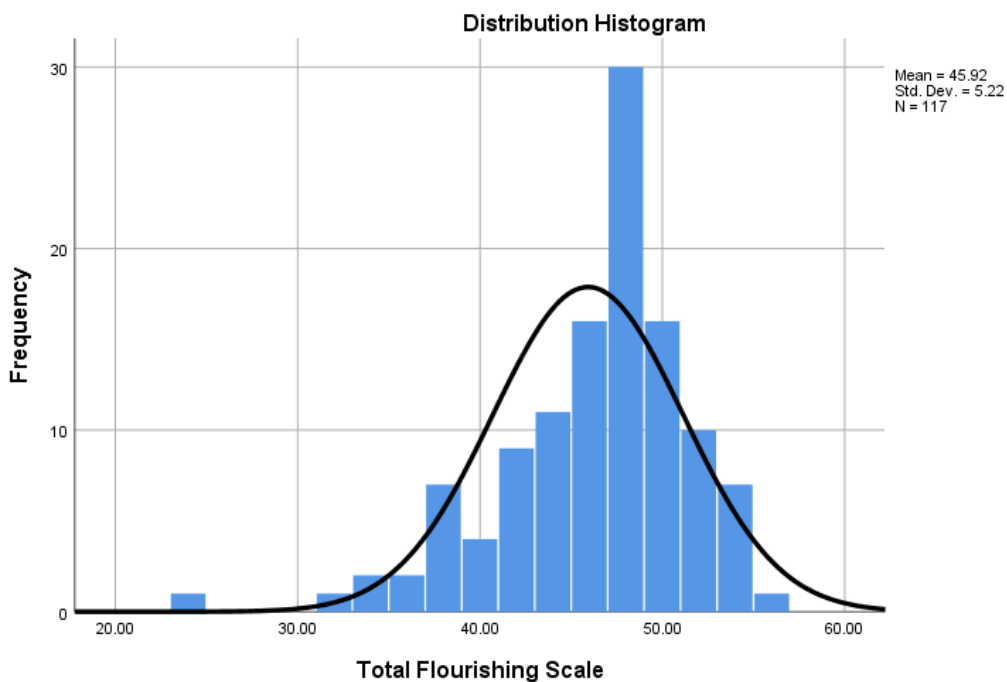


Figure 11: Distribution Histogram of The Flourishing Scale

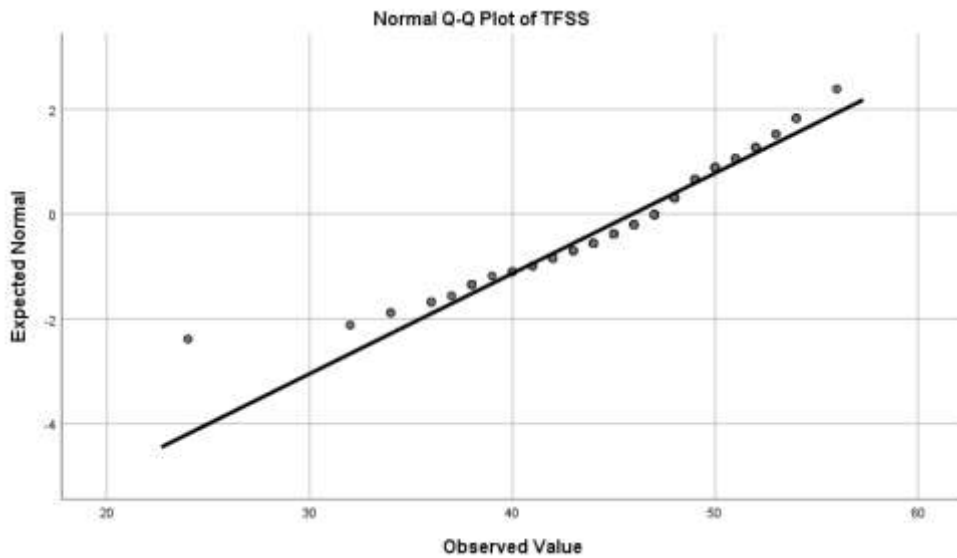


Figure 12: Normal Q-Q Plot of The Flourishing Scale

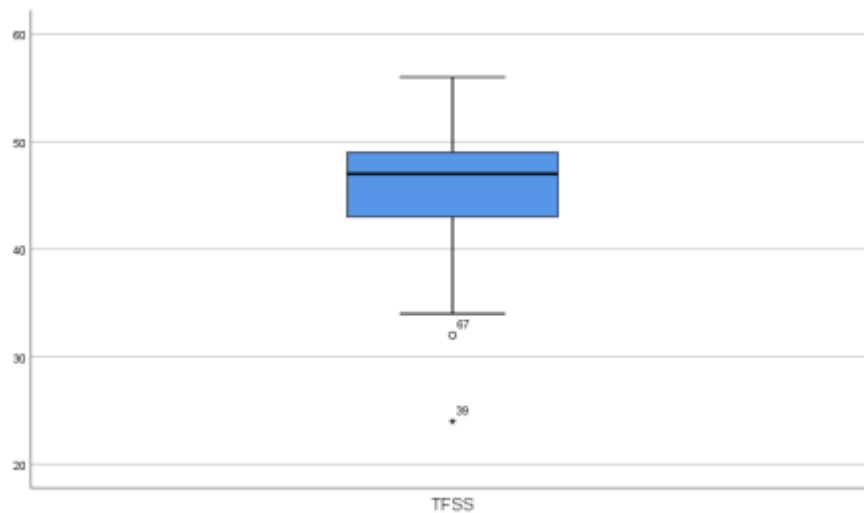


Figure 13: Distribution Boxplot of The Flourishing Scale

### 5.2.4.3 Job Engagement Scale

The pre-existing 5-item Job Engagement Scale collected data related to the level of job engagement of each participant. Ratings were based on a 5-point Likert-like scale with a possible score range of 5-25. The total composite score average was 68% ( $M = 16.92$ ,  $SD = 3.44$ ) with a 95% confidence interval ( $CI 16.2933 - 17.5529$ ). The mean score was highest for the variable, 'I really throw myself into my job' (3.98) and lowest for 'My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my job (R)' which was a reverse-scored item (2.68).

Scale reliability and validity were determined by finding the average variance extracted ( $AVE = .54$ ) and composite reliability ( $CR = .85$ ) of the observed variables. Cronbach's Alpha was also calculated and confirmed reliability and is reported in the Methodology chapter of this dissertation.

Table 20 below depicts a full summary of statistics related to each response in the Job Engagement Scale.

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness Stat	Std. Error	Kurtosis Stat	Std. Error
I really "throw myself into my job.	117	3	2	5	3.98	4.00	.851	-.480	.224	-.419	.444
Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time.	117	4	1	5	3.57	4.00	1.140	-.413	.224	-.927	.444
This job is all consuming; I am totally into it.	117	4	1	5	3.05	3.00	.999	-.263	.224	-.777	.444
My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my job. (R)	117	3	1	4	2.68	2.00	.916	.263	.224	-1.137	.444
I am highly engaged in this job.	117	3	2	5	3.63	4.00	.794	-.393	.224	-.195	.444
<b>Composite Job Engagement Score</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>14.00</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>24.00</b>	<b>16.9231</b>	<b>18.00</b>	<b>3.43951</b>	<b>-.326</b>	<b>.224</b>	<b>-.871</b>	<b>.444</b>
Valid N (listwise)	117										

Table 20: Summary Report of Job Engagement Scale Descriptive Statistics

Normality was assessed in two ways through the Shapiro-Wilke test and by assessing numerical kurtosis and skewness data. The results of the Shapiro-Wike test find that the Job Engagement Scale data is not normally distributed ( $p = .000$ ). The distribution is also represented in the histogram in Figure 14 and the Q-Q plot in Figure 15. There is a clear outlier in the data set seen in the box plot in Figure 16, but it was established not to affect findings to a great extent since the difference between the 5% trim mean ( $M = 16.98$ ) and mean value ( $M = 16.92$ ) was very small (0.06). The distribution is also considered negatively skewed with a skewness of  $-.33$  ( $SE = .22$ ) and kurtosis of  $-.87$  ( $SE = .44$ ).

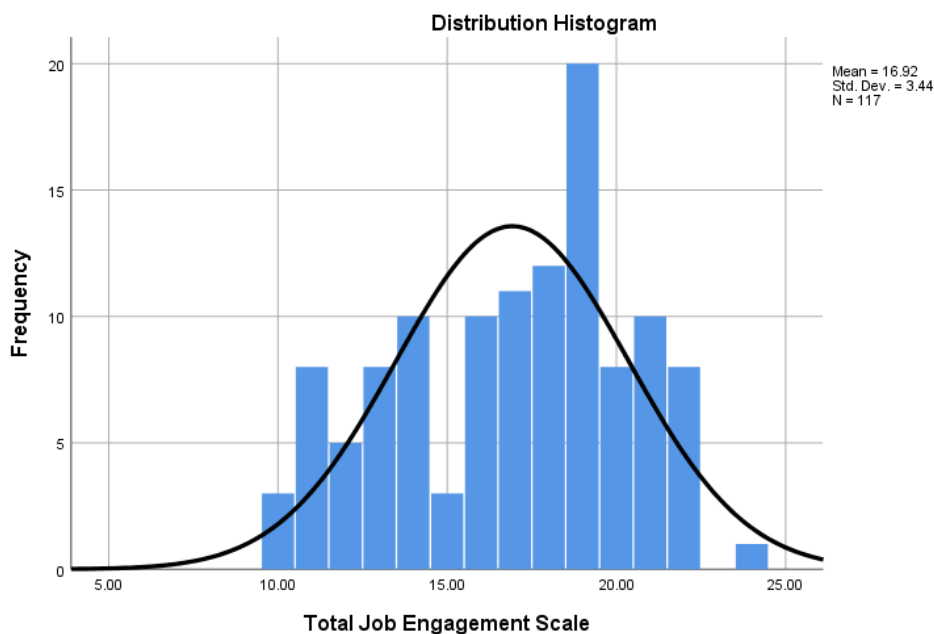


Figure 14: Distribution Histogram of Total Job Engagement Scale

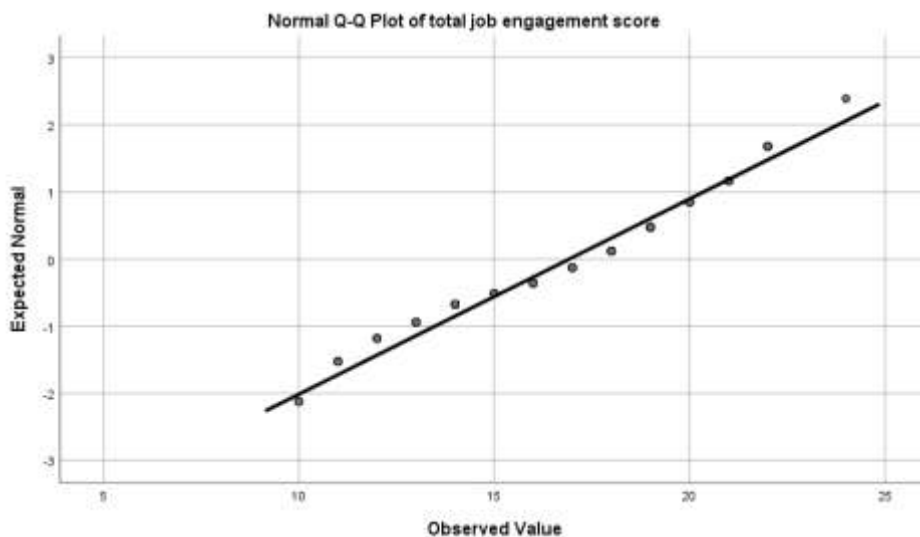


Figure 15: Normal Q-Q Plot of Total Job Engagement Scale

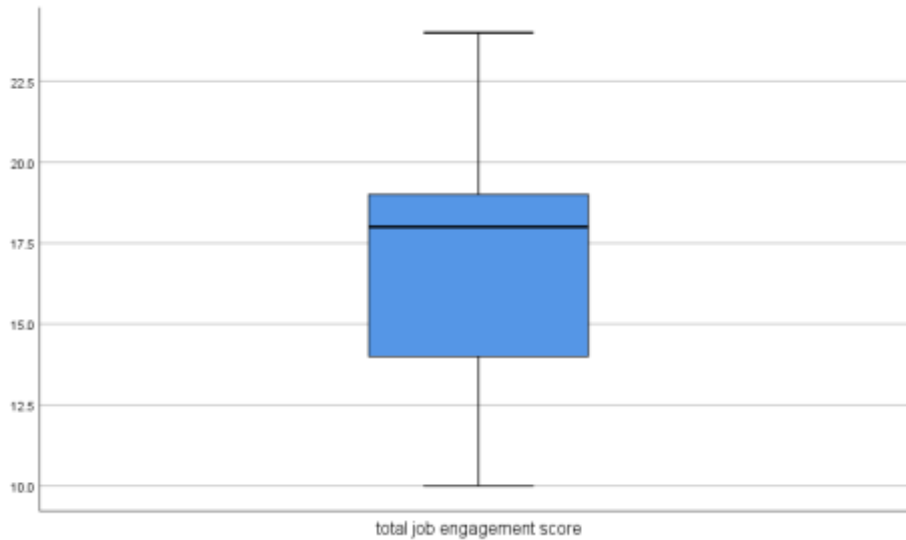


Figure 16: Distribution Box Plot of Total Job Engagement Scale

#### 5.2.4.4 Organisation Engagement Scale

The pre-existing 6-item Organisation Engagement Scale collected data related to the level of engagement each participant had to their organisation. Ratings were based on a 5-point Likert-like scale with a possible score range of 6-36. The total composite score average was 51% ( $M = 18.31$ ,  $SD = 4.02$ ) with a 95% confidence interval ( $CI$  17.57 - 19.04). The mean score was highest for the variable, 'I am highly engaged in this organisation' (3.29) and lowest for 'Being a member of this organisation make me come alive' (2.73).

Scale reliability and validity were determined by finding the average variance extracted ( $AVE = .66$ ) and composite reliability ( $CR = .90$ ) of the observed variables. Cronbach's Alpha was also calculated and confirmed reliability and is reported in the Methodology chapter of this dissertation.

Table 21 below depicts a full summary of statistics related to each response in the Organisation Engagement Scale.

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
								Stat	Std. Error	Stat	Std. Error
Being a member of this organisation is very captivating.	117	4	1	5	3.28	3.00	.849	-.321	.224	-.260	.444
One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this organisation.	117	4	1	5	3.20	3.00	.967	-.290	.224	-.680	.444
I am really not into the “goings-on” in this organisation. (R)	117	3	1	4	3.05	3.00	.936	-.488	.224	-.932	.444
Being a member of this organisation make me come “alive.”	117	4	1	5	2.73	3.00	.877	-.057	.224	-.434	.444
Being a member of this organisation is exhilarating for me.	117	4	1	5	2.76	3.00	.858	-.183	.224	-.230	.444
I am highly engaged in this organisation.	117	4	1	5	3.29	3.00	.956	-.555	.224	-.283	.444
<b>Composite Organisation Engagement Score</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>22.00</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>28.00</b>	<b>18.3077</b>	<b>18.00</b>	<b>4.01819</b>	<b>-.369</b>	<b>.224</b>	<b>.163</b>	<b>.444</b>
Valid N (listwise)	117										

Table 21: Summary Report of Organisation Engagement Scale Statistics

Normality was assessed in two ways through the Shapiro-Wilke test and by assessing numerical kurtosis and skewness data. The results of the Shapiro-Wike test find that the Organisation Engagement Scale data is normally distributed ( $p = .13$ ). The distribution is also represented in the histogram in Figure 17 and the Q-Q plot in Figure 18. There are three clear outliers in the data set seen in the box plot in Figure 19, but it was established not to affect findings to a great extent since the difference between the 5% trim mean ( $M = 18.40$ ) and



mean value ( $M = 18.31$ ) was very small (0.09). The distribution is negatively skewed with a skewness of  $-.37$  ( $SE = .22$ ) and kurtosis of  $.16$  ( $SE = .44$ ).

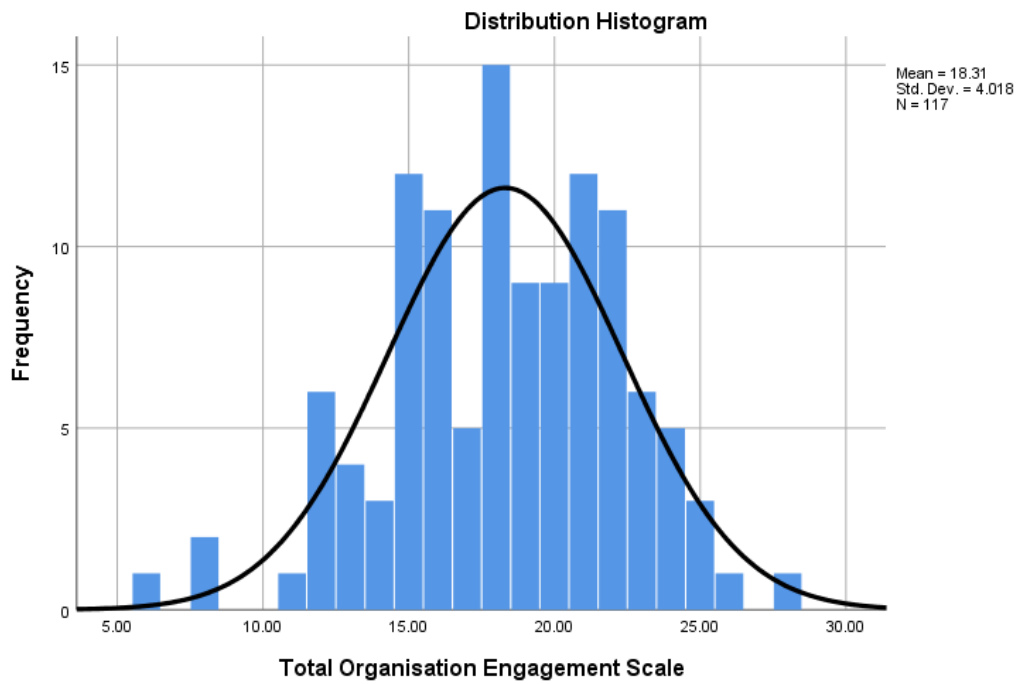


Figure 17: Distribution Histogram of Total Organisation Engagement Scale

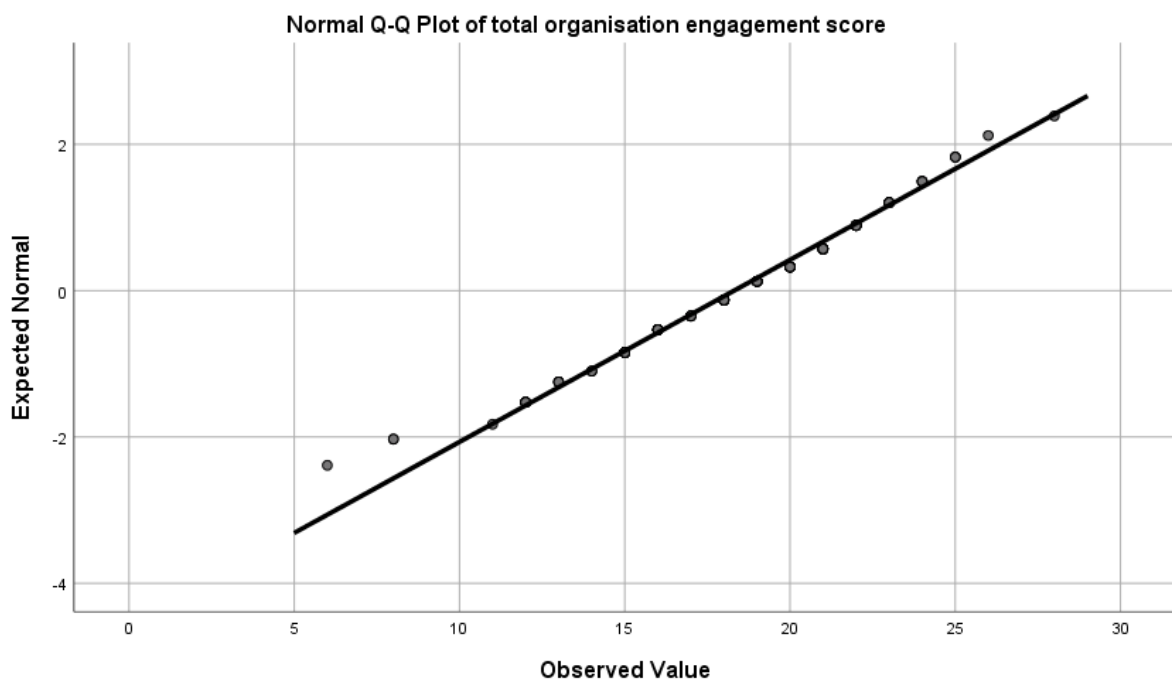


Figure 18: Normal Q-Q Plot of Total Organisation Engagement Scale

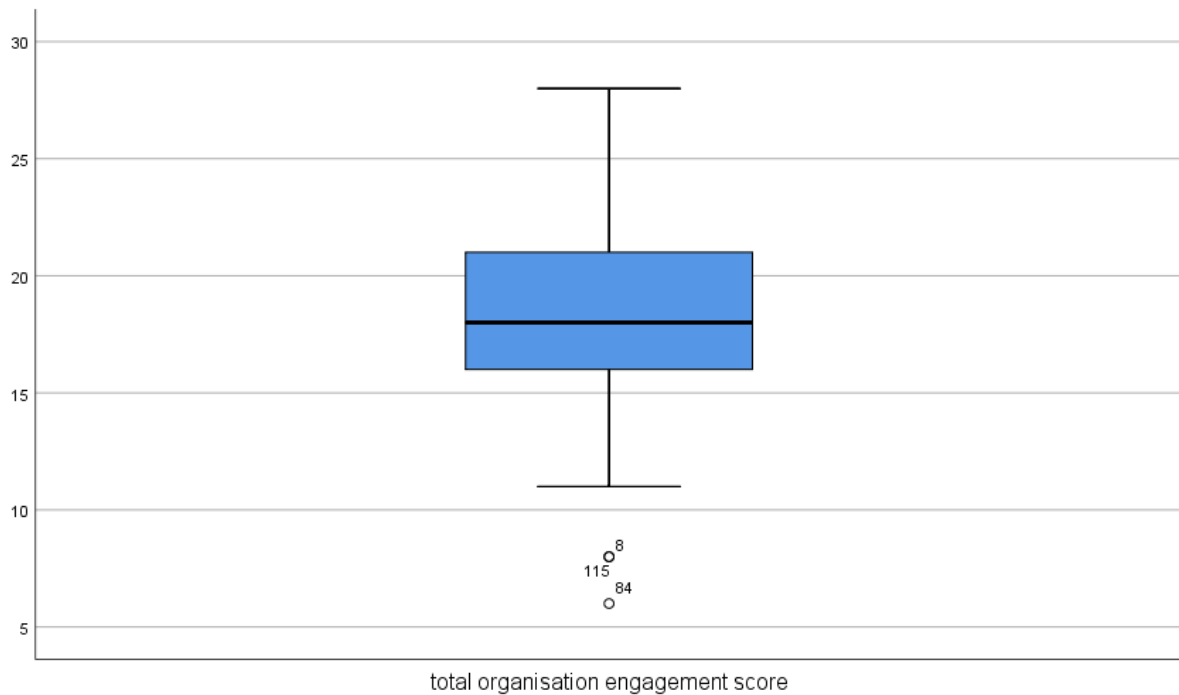


Figure 19: Distribution Box Plot of Total Organisation Engagement Scale

### 5.3 Inferential Statistics

#### 5.3.1. Hypothesis 1:

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will not yield higher individual wellbeing scores.

H1:  $\mu = 0$ : An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will yield higher individual wellbeing scores.

To answer the research question, 'Will an integrated workplace wellbeing programme yield higher individual wellbeing scores?' the following variables were assigned:

1. Comprehensiveness of wellbeing programme score (continuous dependent variable)
2. Comprehensiveness of wellbeing programme range (categorical independent variable with three or more categories, i.e. 0,1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20)
3. Psychological wellbeing score (continuous dependent variable)

The researcher seeks to examine the strength of the relationship between wellbeing and integrated wellbeing programmes two tests to establish the following:

- A. The correlation between comprehensive wellbeing programme scores and psychological wellbeing scores; and

- B. Whether there are significant differences between psychological wellbeing scores and the range associated with the comprehensiveness score of individuals.

**Test A: Correlation**

Since the Flourishing scale responses were not normally distributed, the non-parametric Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation (*rho*) was utilised instead of a Pearson correlation. Assumptions were tested based on variable criteria, if the variables represented paired observations, and if there is a monotonic relationship between the variables. The scatterplot in Figure 20 suggests a low correlation between psychological wellbeing scores and wellbeing programme items and several outliers are identified in the data set. Spearman’s rank order correlation can be used when these assumptions are violated and was carried out below in Table 22.

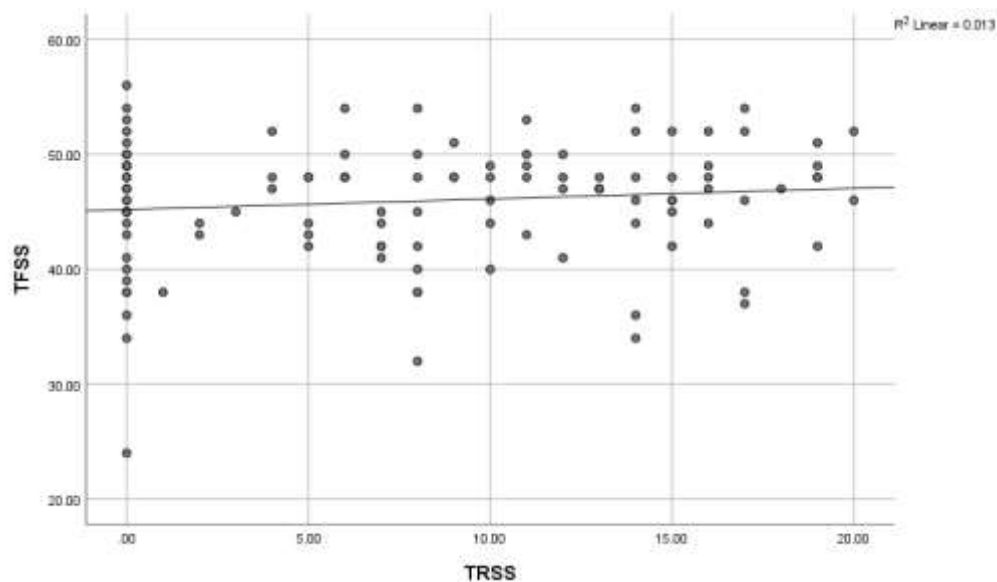


Figure 20: Scatterplot of Spearman’s Correlation (*rho*) Findings TFSS and TCWS

		Total Flourishing Scale Score (TFSS)	Total Programme Comprehension Score (TCWS)
Spearman's rho	TFSS	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.
		N	117
	TCWS	Correlation Coefficient	.083
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.373
		N	117

Table 22: Spearman’s Correlation (*rho*) Findings TFSS and TCWS

The relationship between psychological wellbeing and total wellbeing programme comprehension score was investigated using Spearman rank order correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to test the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was no correlation between the two variables,  $\rho = .08$ ,  $n = 117$ ,  $p < .37$  is statistically insignificant between psychological wellbeing scores and wellbeing programme comprehension scores.

### Test B: Differences

Kruskal-Willis test was utilised as a non-parametric test to determine if there is a difference between mean ranks and medians associated with psychological wellbeing scores and comprehensive wellbeing programme groups (1-5 6-10, 11-15, 16-20 components).

The Kruskal-Willis Test revealed a statistically insignificant difference in psychological wellbeing levels across five different comprehensive wellbeing programme groups (Gp1,  $n = 34$ : 0 components, Gp2,  $n = 12$ : 1-5 components, Gp3,  $n = 27$ : 6-10 components, Gp4,  $n = 26$ : 11-15 components, Gp5,  $n = 18$ : 16-20 components),  $X^2 (2, n = 117) = 3.08$ ,  $p = .54$ . The highest median score was for participants with the most wellbeing programme components ( $Md = 48$ ), and the median score for individuals with zero components of a wellbeing programmes was similar ( $Md = 47$ ).

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of TFSS is the same across categories of Comprehensiveness of Programme.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.544	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .050.

Table 23: Kruskal-Willis Hypothesis Test Findings TFSS and Self-Reported Motivation

Total N	117
Test Statistic	3.082 <sup>a,b</sup>
Degree Of Freedom	4
Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test)	.544

a. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.

b. Multiple comparisons are not performed because the overall test does not show significant differences across samples.

Table 24: Independent-Samples Test Kruskal-Willis Summary TFSS and Self-Reported Motivation

TFSS		
Comprehensiveness of Programme	N	Median
0	34	47.0000
1-5	12	44.5000
6-10	27	46.0000
11-15	26	47.0000
16-20	18	48.0000
Total	117	47.0000

Table 25: TFSS and Self-Reported Motivation Median Report

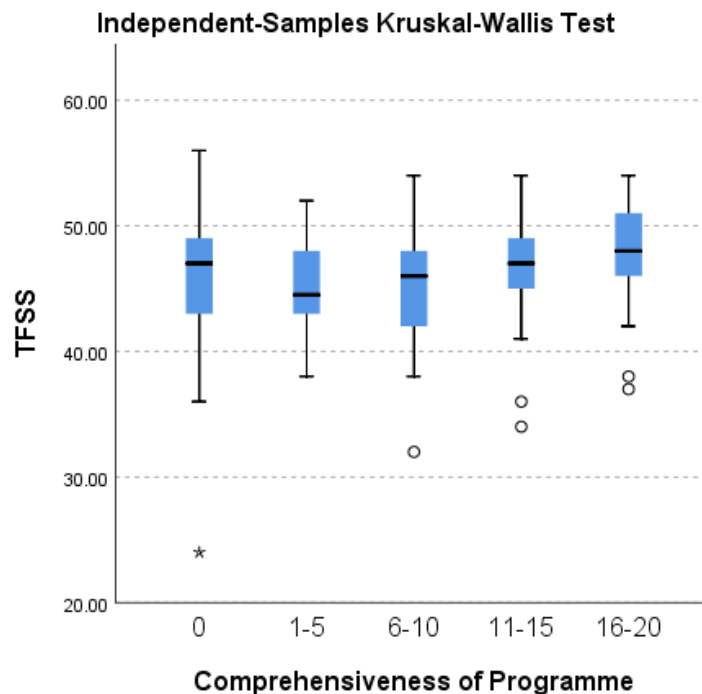


Figure 21: Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test Box Plot

The findings of hypothesis 1 demonstrate there is no correlation or statistical difference between the comprehensiveness of a wellbeing programme and psychological wellbeing and therefore, null hypothesis 1 is retained.

### 5.3.2. Hypothesis 2:

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : There is not a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.

H1:  $\mu = 0$ : There is a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.

To answer the research question, 'Is there a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels?' the following variables were assigned:

1. Psychological wellbeing score (continuous variable)
2. Self-reported motivation levels (continuous variable)

The researcher seeks to examine the strength of the relationship between wellbeing and motivation with a correlation test to establish the following:

- A. The relationship between psychological wellbeing scores and self-reported motivation levels.

### Test A: Correlation

Since the Flourishing scale responses were not normally distributed, the non-parametric Spearman Rank Order Correlation ( $\rho$ ) was utilised instead of a Pearson correlation. Assumptions were tested based on variable criteria, if the variables represented paired observations, and if there is a monotonic relationship between the variables. The scatterplot in Figure 22 suggests a positive correlation between psychological wellbeing scores and self-reported motivation items although outliers are identified in the data set.

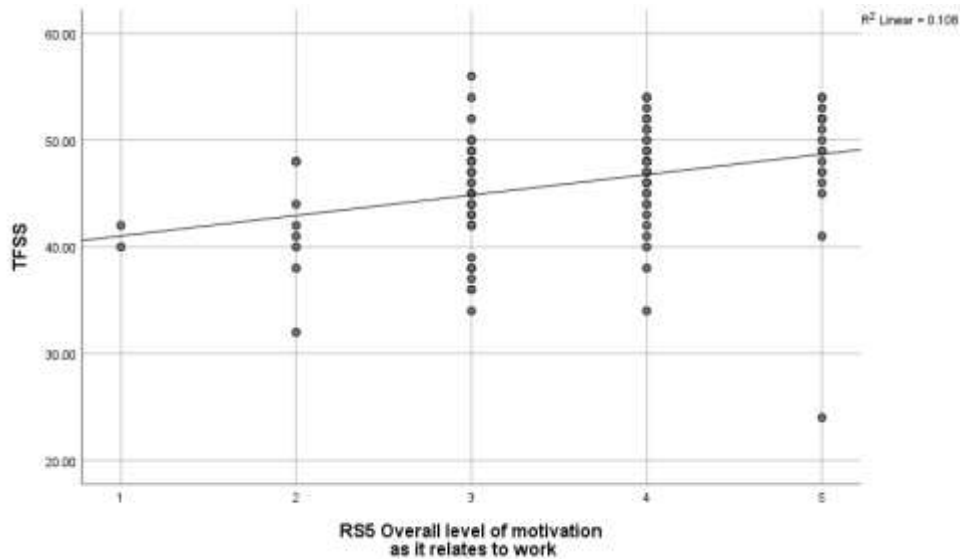


Figure 22: Scatterplot of Spearman’s Correlation ( $\rho$ ) Scatterplot Findings TFSS and Self-reported Motivation

		TFSS	RS5 Overall level of motivation as it relates to work
Spearman's rho	TFSS	Correlation Coefficient	1.00
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	117
		Correlation Coefficient	.384**
RS5 Overall level of motivation as it relates to work	RS5 Overall level of motivation as it relates to work	Correlation Coefficient	.384**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	117
		N	117

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

Table 26: Spearman’s Correlation ( $\rho$ ) Findings TFSS and Self-reported Motivation

The relationship between psychological wellbeing and self-reported motivation levels was investigated using Spearman’s rank order correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to test the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was medium correlation between the two variables,  $\rho = .38$ ,  $n = 117$ ,  $p < .000$  is statistically significant between psychological wellbeing scores and wellbeing programme comprehension scores. The ‘goodness of fit’ or coefficient of determination indicates a shared variance of 12% ( $\rho^2 = .12$ ).

The findings of hypothesis 2 demonstrate there is correlation between psychological wellbeing scores and self-reported motivation levels and therefore, null hypothesis 2 is rejected.

### **5.3.3. Hypothesis 3:**

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : There is not a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures.

H1:  $\mu = 0$ : There is a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement and psychological wellbeing as measures.

#### **Job engagement**

To answer the research question, 'Is there a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures?' the following variables were assigned:

1. Psychological wellbeing score (continuous dependent variable)
2. Job engagement score (continuous dependent variable)
3. Organisation engagement score (continuous dependent variable)

The researcher seeks to examine the strength of the relationship between wellbeing and engagement with two tests to establish the following:

- A. The correlation between psychological wellbeing scores and job engagement scores; and,
- B. The correlation between psychological wellbeing scores and organisation engagement scores.

#### **Test A: Job Engagement**

Since the Flourishing Scale and job engagement scale responses were not normally distributed, the non-parametric Spearman Rank Order Correlation ( $\rho$ ) was utilised instead of a Pearson correlation. Assumptions were tested based on variable criteria, if the variables represented paired observations, and if there is a monotonic relationship between the variables. The scatterplot in Figure 23 suggests a low correlation between psychological



wellbeing scores and wellbeing programme items and several outliers are identified in the data set. Spearman’s rank order correlation can be used when these assumptions are violated and are carried out below.

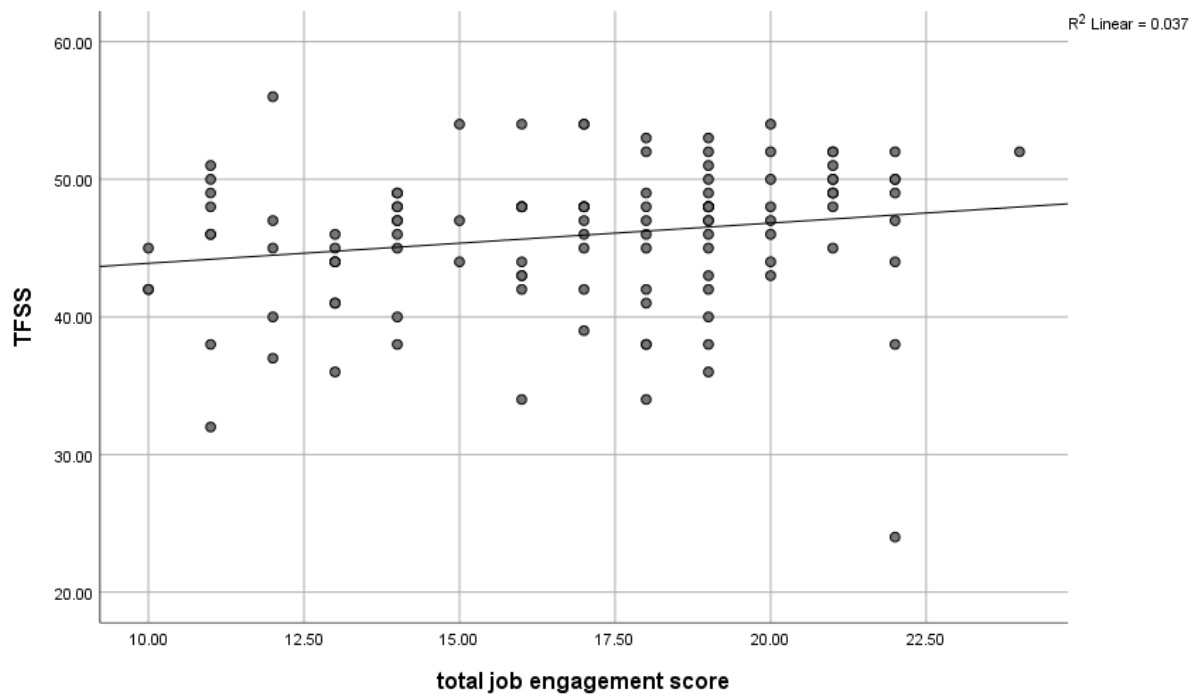


Figure 23: Scatterplot of Spearman’s Correlation (rho) Scatterplot Findings TFSS and Job Engagement

			TFSS	Total Job Engagement Score
Spearman's rho	TFSS	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.288**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.002
		N	117	117
Total Job Engagement Score	Total Job Engagement Score	Correlation Coefficient	.288**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.
		N	117	117

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

Table 27: Spearman’s Correlation (rho) Findings TFSS and Job Engagement

The relationship between psychological wellbeing and job engagement was investigated using Spearman’s rank order correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to test the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was moderate correlation between the two variables,  $\rho = .29$ ,  $n = 117$ ,  $p = .002$  is statistically significant

between psychological wellbeing scores and job engagement scores. The ‘goodness of fit’ or coefficient of determination indicates a shared variance of 8% ( $\rho^2 = .08$ ).

### Test B: Organisation Engagement

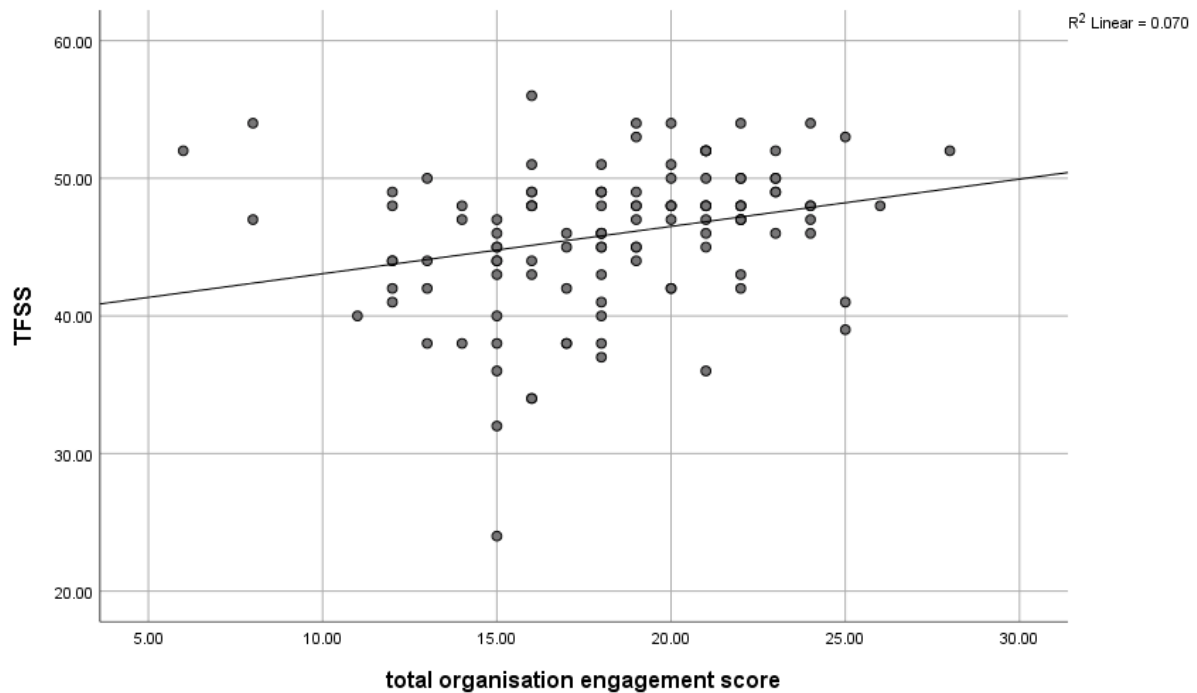


Figure 24: Scatterplot of Spearman’s Correlation ( $\rho$ ) Scatterplot Findings TFSS and Organisation Engagement

TFSS	Pearson Correlation	1	.265**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	117	117
Total Organisation Engagement Score	Pearson Correlation	.265**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	117	117

Table 28: Spearman’s Correlation ( $\rho$ ) Findings TFSS and Organisation Engagement

The relationship between psychological wellbeing and organisation engagement was investigated using Spearman’s rank order correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to test the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was moderate correlation between the two variables,  $\rho = .27$ ,  $n = 117$ ,  $p = .004$  is statistically significant between psychological wellbeing scores and organisation engagement scores. The ‘goodness of fit’ or coefficient of determination indicates a shared variance of 7% ( $\rho^2 = .07$ ).

#### 5.3.4. Hypothesis 4:

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : Individuals that do not work in companies with wellbeing programmes have lower job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.

H1:  $\mu = 0$ : Individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.

To answer the research question, 'Do individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing?' the following variables were assigned:

1. Existence of wellbeing programme (categorical independent variable)
2. Psychological wellbeing score (continuous dependent variable)
3. Job engagement score (continuous dependent variable)
4. Organisation engagement score (continuous dependent variable)
5. Self-reported total researcher survey score (continuous dependent variable)

The research seeks to test differences in results between individuals that have workplace wellbeing programmes and those that do not to establish the following:

- A. Differences between the two groups in psychological wellbeing scores;
- B. Differences between the two groups in job engagement scores;
- C. Differences between the two groups in organisation engagement scores; and
- D. Differences between the two groups in self-reported overall researcher survey scores (overall wellbeing).

#### Test A: Psychological Wellbeing Score (TFSS)

A Mann-Whitney U Test revealed no significant difference in the psychological wellbeing scores of participants with a wellbeing programme ( $Md = 47, n = 39$ ) and without a wellbeing programme ( $Md = 47, n = 78$ ),  $U = 1563.5, z = .247, p = .81, r = .02$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis that the distribution of psychological wellbeing is the same across categories of participants with or without wellbeing programmes was retained.

**Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test  
Summary**

Total N	117
Mann-Whitney U	1563.500
Wilcoxon W	4644.500
Test Statistic	1563.500
Standard Error	172.283
Standardized Test Statistic	.247
Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test)	.805

Table 29: Mann-Whitney U Test Summary – Psychological Wellbeing

**Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test**

**Wellbeing Programme  
provided by employer?**

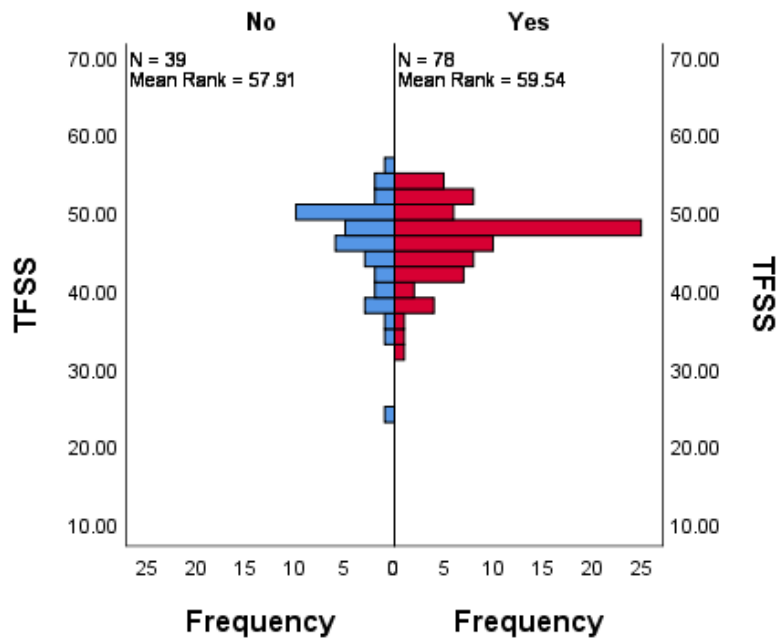


Figure 25: Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Findings – Psychological Wellbeing

**Test B: Job Engagement Score**

A Mann-Whitney U Test revealed no significant difference in the job engagement scores of participants with a wellbeing programme ( $Md = 18, n = 39$ ) and without a wellbeing programme ( $Md = 17.5, n = 78$ ),  $U = 1475.5, z = -.264, p = .79, r = .07$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis that the distribution of job organisation is the same across categories of participants with or without wellbeing programmes was retained.

### Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test

#### Summary

Total N	117
Mann-Whitney U	1475.500
Wilcoxon W	4556.500
Test Statistic	1475.500
Standard Error	172.078
Standardized Test Statistic	-.264
Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test)	.791

Table 30: Mann-Whitney U Test Summary – Total Job Engagement

### Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test

#### Wellbeing Programme provided by employer?

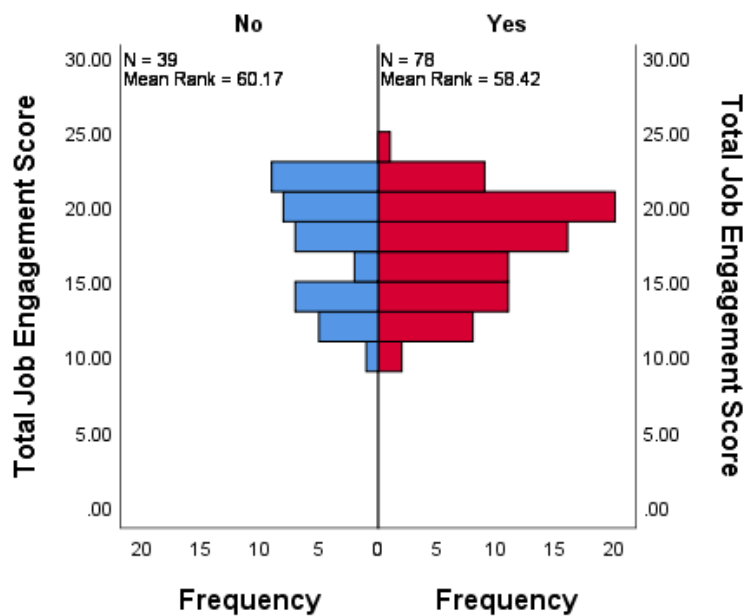


Figure 26: Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Findings – Job engagement

### Test C: Organisation Engagement Score

A Mann-Whitney U Test revealed a significant difference in the organisation engagement scores of participants with a wellbeing programme ( $Md = 19$ ,  $n = 39$ ) and without a wellbeing programme ( $Md = 18$ ,  $n = 78$ ),  $U = 1883.5$ ,  $z = 2.10$ ,  $p = .04$ ,  $r = .003$ . The mean rank for participants with wellbeing programmes was higher ( $M = 63.65$ ) than individuals without a wellbeing programme ( $M = 49.71$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis that the distribution of

organisation engagement is the same across categories of participants with or without wellbeing programmes was rejected.

**Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test**  
**Summary**

Total N	117
Mann-Whitney U	1883.500
Wilcoxon W	4964.500
Test Statistic	1883.500
Standard Error	172.324
Standardized Test Statistic	2.104
Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test)	.035

Table 31: Mann-Whitney U Test Summary – Organisation Engagement

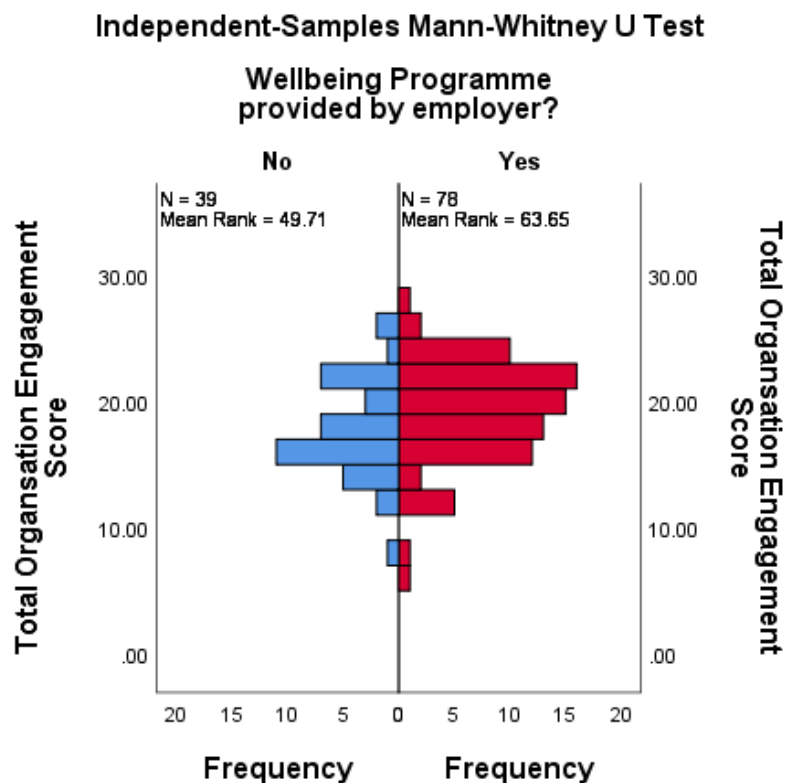


Figure 27: Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Findings – Organisation Engagement

#### Test D: Total Researcher Survey Score

A Mann-Whitney U Test revealed no significant difference in the researcher survey (overall wellbeing) scores of participants with a wellbeing programme ( $Md = 11.5$ ,  $n = 39$ ) and without a wellbeing programme ( $Md = 0$ ,  $n = 78$ ),  $U = 1555$ ,  $z = .197$ ,  $p = .84$ ,  $r = .02$ . Therefore, the

null hypothesis that the distribution of overall wellbeing (researcher’s survey score) is the same across categories of participants with or without wellbeing programmes was retained.

**Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test**  
**Summary**

Total N	117
Mann-Whitney U	1555.000
Wilcoxon W	4636.000
Test Statistic	1555.000
Standard Error	172.413
Standardized Test Statistic	.197
Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test)	.844

Table 32: Mann-Whitney U Test Summary – Overall wellbeing (Researcher Survey)

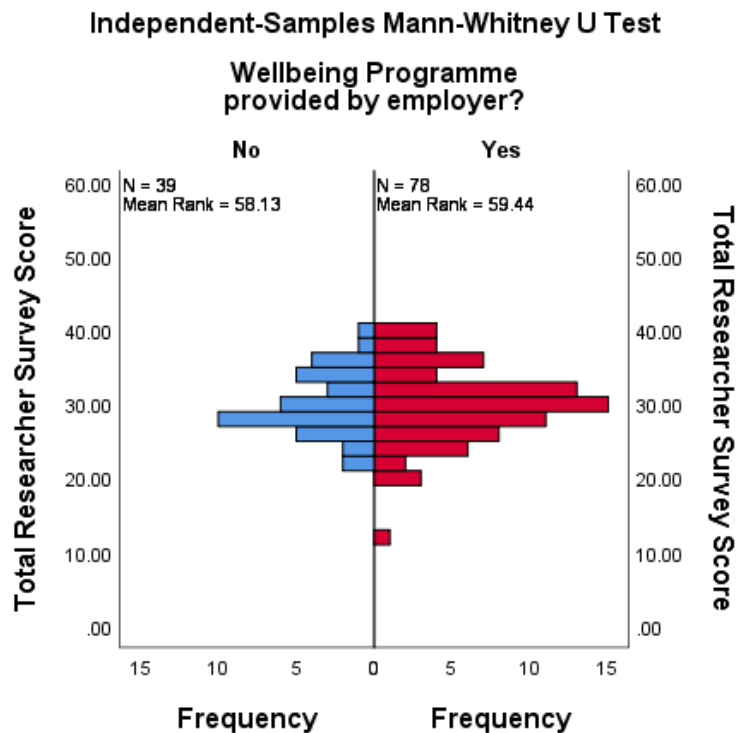


Figure 28: Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Findings – Overall Wellbeing (Researcher Survey Score)

Wellbeing Programme provided by employer?		TFSS	TRSS	Total Job Engagement Score	Total Organisation Engagement Score
No	N	39	39	39	39
	Median	47.0000	.0000	18.0000	18.0000
Yes	N	78	78	78	78

	Median	47.0000	11.5000	17.5000	19.0000
Total	N	117	117	117	117
	Median	47.0000	8.0000	18.0000	18.0000

Table 33: Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Findings – Median Summary

## 5.4 Conclusion

The following Table 34 indicates the test results of the study's hypotheses:

<b>Hypotheses Results</b>			
	<b>Spearman's Rank Order Correlation (rho)</b>	<b>Kruskall-Wallace Test</b>	<b>Mann-Whitney U Test</b>
<p><b>Hypothesis 1:</b> H0: <math>\mu \neq 0</math>: An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will not yield higher individual wellbeing scores. H1: <math>\mu = 0</math>: An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will yield higher individual wellbeing scores.</p>	<p>Test A: Null hypothesis <b>retained</b></p>	<p>Test B: Null hypothesis <b>retained</b></p>	
<p><b>Hypothesis 2:</b> H0: <math>\mu \neq 0</math>: There is not a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels. H1: <math>\mu = 0</math>: There is a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.</p>	<p>Test A: Null hypothesis <b>rejected</b></p>		
<p><b>Hypothesis 3:</b></p>	<p>Test A:</p>		



<p>H0: <math>\mu \neq 0</math>: There is not a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures.</p> <p>H1: <math>\mu = 0</math>: There is a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement and psychological wellbeing as measures.</p> <p>Job engagement</p>	<p>Null hypothesis <b>rejected</b></p> <p>Test B: Null hypothesis <b>rejected</b></p>		
<p><b>Hypothesis 4:</b></p> <p>H0: <math>\mu \neq 0</math>: Individuals that do not work in companies with wellbeing programmes have lower job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.</p> <p>H1: <math>\mu = 0</math>: Individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.</p>			<p>Test A: Null hypothesis <b>retained</b></p> <p>Test B: Null hypothesis <b>retained</b></p> <p>Test C: Null hypothesis <b>rejected</b></p> <p>Test D: Null hypothesis <b>retained</b></p>

Table 34: Summary Table of Hypothesis Test Results

## Chapter 6

### 6. Discussion

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on interpreting and explaining results found in chapter 5 of the dissertation in relation to each research question and associated hypothesis. Previous review of the literature will also be discussed, as well as limitations and implications of the study in order to further examine the research question, 'What are the individual effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy in the workplace?'

#### 6.2 Discussion of Findings and Limitations:

##### 6.2.1. Research Question 1

Stemming from a literature review of wellbeing, the research question, '*Will an integrated workplace wellbeing programme yield higher individual wellbeing scores?*' was created. The conceptual framework of the topic of wellbeing depicts an evolution of the approach towards wellbeing from focusing on the negative effects of poor wellbeing, such as the presence of disease, to the promotion of proactive, positive wellbeing. This evolution is also paralleled in business practices. Concepts of eudaimonia, hedonia, and social wellbeing permeate several wellbeing theories and models, as well as motivation and engagement theory. The definition of wellbeing includes physical, mental, and social aspects of health (Robertson and Cooper, 2010), which can be likened to hedonic, eudaimonic, and social wellbeing as measurement parameters of a wellbeing programme. An integrated wellbeing approach is supported by many psychologists and researchers, and as a model for wellbeing in many business sectors. This supports the following hypothesis:

##### **Hypothesis 1:**

*H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will not yield higher individual wellbeing scores.*

*H1:  $\mu = 0$ : An integrated workplace wellbeing programme will yield higher individual wellbeing scores.*

The null hypothesis was retained in this case as the quantitative analysis did not prove that number of components in a wellbeing programme affects an individual's psychological wellbeing. The researcher accepts this could be due to many reasons, such as a relatively limited sample size that relied on convenience sampling, an uneven distribution of the number of participants with or without a wellbeing programme, and the limitations surrounding the researcher's choice of components of an integrated wellbeing programme. The researcher also acknowledges that because a wellbeing programme is provided by an employer, it does not mean the employee participates, nor is interested. In fact, 21.8% of employees did not participate in their work's programme in this study. Subjectivity surrounding whether wellbeing was a formalised programme may have affected responses.

Further analysis and changes in research design and instrument may yield a more positive association between wellbeing programmes and psychological wellbeing variables. Future research may consider using a different measure of wellbeing other than the Flourishing Scale, such as a specific measure of workplace wellbeing. Focusing the questions to workplace wellbeing may help to eliminate issues with subjectivity. The nature of self-reported, anonymous responses will always leave room for subjectivity, though.

Nevertheless, the study of hypothesis 1 highlights interesting points that validate the purpose of the study. Only 33% of employees that participated in the study did not have a workplace wellbeing programme, however the average psychological wellbeing based on the Flourishing Scale was 82% during a global pandemic. Although the specific correlation was not confirmed, we learned wellbeing practices are in place in many organisations, and separately, the sample population possesses a good wellbeing overall.

#### **6.2.2. Research Question 2:**

Based on a literature review of wellbeing and motivation theory, the research question, *'Is there a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels?'* was constructed.

Initial research into the potential relationship between motivation and wellbeing demonstrated interesting parallels between the wellbeing idea of flourishing and the

motivation concept of self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943). The two terms have similar dimensions and purpose and relate to wellbeing concepts of self-fulfilment and eudaimonia. Therefore, flourishing was proposed as an interchangeable term with self-actualisation and tied to motivational effects. Exploring Self Determination Theory and its dimensions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, also lead the researcher to propose a relationship between wellbeing and motivation because of its correlation with eudaimonic concepts of autonomy and mastery. Motivated employees are also shown to benefit the workplace and similarly, have positive individual effects such as higher levels of self-esteem and happiness (Keyes, 2007). This demonstrates the business and research need to explore the relationship further and supports the following hypothesis:

***Hypothesis 2:***

*H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : There is not a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.*

*H1:  $\mu = 0$ : There is a positive relationship between wellbeing and motivation using psychological wellbeing, or flourishing, as a measure compared with self-reported motivation levels.*

The null hypothesis was rejected in this case as the quantitative analysis proved a slight positive correlation between psychological wellbeing and self-reported levels of motivation. Because the motivation data was self-reported, an in-depth study could possibly confirm more conclusive results. The researcher accepts the limitations associated with this particular study and would consider using a dedicated motivation measure instead of a self-reported scale in the future. The abnormal distribution of data regarding responses to the Flourishing Scale also limited the research to non-parametric statistical analysis. Realistically, this was the best approach available to the researcher due to resource constraints, although transformations of data were considered.

This study of hypothesis 2 brought forth several positive outcomes. Not only was the correlation significant, but self-perceived motivation levels were reportedly high on average at 71% ( $M = 3.56$ ), indicating positive motivation levels of the sample population.

### **6.2.3. Research Question 3:**

According to a literature review of engagement and wellbeing theory, *'Is there a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures?'* was constructed.

Engagement as it relates to 'the self' demonstrated parallels with the eudaimonic ideals of self and supports a relationship between wellbeing and engagement. Self-actualising plays a large part of an individual's capacity to achieve a flow state and fully engage in a task, job or organisation. Social exchange theory also explored the role both employees and employers play in the engagement process, providing the needs necessary for individuals to thrive in the workplace. The effects of engagement on the workplace are reported to be increased productivity, commitment, and motivation, linking these workplace effects and psychological aspects of wellbeing. Positive effects for the individual are increased job satisfaction and positive feelings of accomplishment which supports the following hypothesis:

#### ***Hypothesis 3:***

*H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : There is not a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement, and psychological wellbeing as measures.*

*H1:  $\mu = 0$ : There is a positive relationship between wellbeing and engagement using job engagement, organisation engagement and psychological wellbeing as measures.*

#### ***Job engagement***

The null hypothesis was rejected in both cases of job and organisation engagement as the quantitative analysis proved a moderate positive correlation between these variables and psychological wellbeing.

The researcher recognises the limitations of this study, however, in particular the use of reverse-items such as, 'My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my

job', and 'I am really not into the "goings-on" in this organization.' This potentially affected responses negatively by confusing participants. The subjectivity related to the topic of engagement and the items used in the instrument may have impacted the responses, as well as the self-reported nature of the survey.

This study was limited to non-parametric testing because of the abnormality of the job engagement scale distribution, although Pearson's coefficient was considered, and future research could gain more conclusive data. The study of hypothesis 3 also highlighted interesting points that validate the purpose of the study. 65% (77) of participants scored a 4 or 5 out of 5 in self-perceived engagement levels, and over half the sample population (51%) are considered at least 72% engaged in their jobs and organisation.

#### **6.2.4. Research Question 4:**

A literature review and exploratory analysis of current research and related reports lead to the creation of the following research question, '*Do individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing?*'.

As discussed, the conceptual parallels between psychological wellbeing, overall wellbeing, and job and organisation engagement demonstrated a strong relationship existed between the variables. Exploration into the reported effects in the workplace and for the individual highlighted a business need for the research, as well as a moral need based on the positive effects for individual physical, mental, and social health as a societal concern. The lack of specific data surrounding wellbeing programme effects lead to the following hypothesis:

#### **Hypothesis 4:**

H0:  $\mu \neq 0$ : Individuals that do not work in companies with wellbeing programmes have lower job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.

H1:  $\mu = 0$ : Individuals that work in companies with wellbeing programmes have higher job and organisation engagement, psychological wellbeing, and overall wellbeing.

The null hypothesis was retained for three out of four tests as the quantitative analysis did not prove that psychological wellbeing, overall wellbeing, and job engagement scores between individuals with workplace wellbeing programme and without programmes. There was statistical significance demonstrating differences in the groups associated organisation engagement with higher results for people with wellbeing programmes.

The researcher accepts that the existence of wellbeing programmes is not the only contributing factor to the wellbeing of employees and this is a very limited study. Several factors impact the individual inside and outside of workplace both positively and negatively. The idea of the subjectivity of self-reported data, coinciding with subjectivity of participant's perspectives of these topics plays an interesting role in psychology data and this study. In future research of this topic, great care should be taken into getting more specific information about the wellbeing programmes themselves.

Nevertheless, the study of hypothesis 4 highlights interesting points that validate the purpose of the study. The literature review also demonstrated the importance of the topic in society at large and in organisations, and still suggests a theoretical relationship between the variables.

### **6.3 Future Research Implications**

In tandem with suggestions made previously in this section, several key areas of interest for future research are identified below:

- The relationship between flourishing and self-actualisation in an independent study;
- A longitudinal wellbeing study with access to a large set of employees at one company;
- Research into the demotivation and amotivation of individuals as it relates to workplace wellbeing programmes would be interesting to explore in further research.
- Exploring the affects an employee's perspective on wellbeing influences their actual wellbeing;
- Exploring the internal and external factors that contribute to an employee's perspective of their working environment and workplace wellbeing strategy; and,

- A qualitative, multi-method wellbeing study including interviews, expert opinions, and focus groups to gain insight into more subjective aspects of wellbeing in the workplace.



## Chapter 7

### 7. Conclusion & Recommendations

#### 7.1 Conclusion

Research related to the field of wellbeing is vast and explored through many perspectives, such as in social sciences and business research, and from a health perspective. A literature review of the topic of wellbeing proposed the research question, 'What are the individual effects of wellbeing as a HR strategy in the workplace'. The question was supported by key learnings related to the evolution of the study of wellbeing from an ill-health perspective, to an integrated approach towards wellbeing which incorporates hedonic, eudaimonic and social health dimensions. For practical purposes, the researcher proposed these wellbeing labels can be viewed through physical, mental, and social wellbeing parameters for application in the real world, such as the workplace. The concept of flourishing as a measure of wellbeing was established, as well as its relation to the idea of self-actualisation and self-fulfillment. This concept permeates wellbeing, motivation, and engagement theory and concepts and therefore interconnects the topics. The individual and organisational effects of the three topics are similar surrounding increased happiness, job and life satisfaction and productivity, and decreased poor health. These positive effects for both the individual and businesses give rise to further research and application of wellbeing practices in the real world. Quantitative research proved some correlation between psychological wellbeing and self-reported motivation levels, as well as a moderate positive correlation between psychological wellbeing and job and organisation engagement. Further research into the topic of wellbeing and the associated positive effects on the individual must be explored in future research for a more comprehensive analysis, as the conceptual framework outlined in the literature review makes a compelling argument for the relationship of the variables.

#### 7.2 Recommendations

Exploratory research through the literature review has indicated the effectiveness of integrated wellbeing approaches, incorporating hedonic and eudaimonic ideas of happiness, and flourishing and self-actualisation through emotional, psychological, and social dimensions of positive functioning. Effective workplace wellbeing strategies that support this integrated approach by applying physical, mental, and social health initiatives, are

hypothesised to be the most effective in increasing employee wellbeing. In a survey of 700 Irish employees, 78% of companies reportedly used an integrated approach towards wellbeing that included fitness, mental health, and nutrition dimensions (Irish examiner, 2020). Examples of physical health initiatives are smoking cessation programmes, ergonomic working arrangements, and physical exercising. Activities that support positive mental health include effective performance reviews, career development opportunities, and stress management tools. Social health initiatives include components like mentoring programmes, policies that support work/life balance, and teambuilding activities. The design of a wellbeing programme is pertinent to its success in that it must be relevant and cohesive and take into account various factors such as the diversity, age, and interests of all participants (Irish Examiner). It will be interesting to investigate any correlation between other company and employee demographic factors, such as the size of an organisation, its sector, and the location and working hours of employees, and their effects on the effectiveness of the programme. The implementation of wellbeing strategy within an organisation also impacts its effectiveness, such as the way line managers and senior management apply wellbeing practices fairly and genuinely, and how their approach is perceived by employees. There is an evidenced link between poor management styles and workplace stress (CPID, 2020). Therefore, it is important that wellbeing initiatives are carefully crafted, carried out, and communicated.

The costs associated with wellbeing practices is a bilateral topic. Of course, there are financial costs associated with any workplace practice, but interestingly there are many savings associated with wellbeing, such as reduced absenteeism and expenditure on medical costs, and increased job and life satisfaction, benefiting both the employer and employee (Baicker, Cutler and Song, 2010). As discussed, the physical, mental, and social health of an individual are interrelated and impact each other both positively and negatively. There is also a shift in expectations of the changing workforce and the increased importance placed on wellbeing in the workplace, and it is becoming increasingly important for companies to include wellbeing strategy as part of their recruitment package in order to stay competitive in the labour market (Oppenheim, 2020. Forbes reports that employees that are more engaged, empowered, and heard are more likely to stay in their company and be more productive, reducing turnover and presenteeism rates and their associated costs (Oppenheim, 2020). Conversely,

companies that are not empathetic to employees, and do not support an engaged workforce can cost U.S. companies up to \$550 billion a year, (Oppenheim, 2020), and costs attributed to absenteeism alone are estimated at €1.5 billion in Ireland, or €818 per person per annum (McAuliffe, 2019). Cost savings also effect individuals in terms of decreased medical costs related to poor health and less likelihood for workplace stress, depression, burnout and life dissatisfaction related to poor mental health and their associated costs.

In order to implement an integrated wellbeing strategy, resources need to be applied to reap the benefits associated with positive wellbeing in the workplace. Depending on the size of an organisation and available resources, wellbeing practices typically cost €100 per annum per employee, although costs vary depending on the comprehensiveness of a programme. Free resources are available to implement depending on the creativity of the HR department, but it is important to designate a specific budget and time resources to create a comprehensive programme.

It is important that any strategy is taken on board by senior management and communicated about positively, so as not to negatively affect employees. The organisational and individual benefits as indicated in the literature review suggest an integrated wellbeing programme is a worthwhile endeavor both for the business and society.

### **Costs**

Realistic costs range from €100-€500 per annum per employee depending on the organisation size and the components of the programme. For example, if this budget includes rewards associated with wellbeing practices, the budget will increase.

### **Timescale**

Approximately three months devoted to researching and organising the most effective programme that fits your organisation's and employees' needs. A wellbeing strategy should be implemented throughout the year at regular intervals.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Research Survey

#### Wellbeing Research Survey

##### Exploring the Individual Effects of Wellbeing as a HR Strategy

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

##### **WHO I AM AND WHAT THIS STUDY IS ABOUT**

I am Adrienne Sundquist, a student at the National College of Ireland pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Human Resource Management. This study will be used as part of my dissertation research which aims to explore the effects of a workplace wellbeing programme on individual employees.

##### **WHAT WILL TAKING PART INVOLVE?**

The online survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and is broken down into three short sections. The three sections involve 25 general questions about your workplace wellbeing programme, 8 questions from an existing Flourishing Scale which ultimately provides an individual's psychological wellbeing score, and 11 questions from two existing Engagement Scales, respectively.

##### **WHY HAVE YOU BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?**

You have been invited to take part in the survey as I seek to gather a varied set of data through convenience sampling to use in my research.

##### **DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART?**

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you have the right to refuse participation or any question without any consequence whatsoever. You may stop participating in the survey at any time. You may amend previous responses at any point during the completion of this survey prior to submission. Due to the anonymous nature of the survey, once the survey results are submitted, they can no longer be withdrawn.

##### **WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?**

There are no direct foreseen risks or benefits as a result of taking part in this study. Because some survey questions are psychologically based, some participants may seek to learn more about their company's wellbeing programme, their own psychological wellbeing score, or their own level of engagement as a result of this survey. You should contact a mental health professional if you feel your psychological health or wellbeing has been affected negatively.

##### **WILL TAKING PART BE CONFIDENTIAL?**

The survey is completely anonymous and there are no personal identifying questions within the survey. If any personal and identifiable details are indirectly submitted, they will be deleted immediately and not published in the research.

##### **HOW WILL INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE BE RECORDED, STORED AND PROTECTED?**

Information provided by the participant will be automatically and anonymously stored on SurveyHero's online platform. The files will be extracted from the online survey platform and stored securely in the researcher's personal OneDrive. The files will be encrypted and secured through Microsoft's O365 environment. Once the files are sufficiently extracted from the online survey platform, the SurveyHero account will be deleted. The researcher will be the only person with access to these files, which will be deleted at most, 6 months after the Dissertation is submitted on 17th August 2020.

#### WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

Results from this study will be used as part of a dissertation to fulfil the requirements of a MA HRM Degree from NCI. The dissertation will be stored in the NCI library and online repository.

#### WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

For further information, please contact the researcher directly at [Adrienne.sundquist@gmail.com](mailto:Adrienne.sundquist@gmail.com) or her supervisor at the National College of Ireland, Conor Nolan, at [conor.nolan@ncirl.ie](mailto:conor.nolan@ncirl.ie).

**Thank you for considering taking part in this survey.**

#### CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN RESEARCH

**I voluntarily agree to participate in this anonymous research survey. \***

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
---------------------------	--------------------------

**I agree that I have read the information above relating to the study. \***

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
---------------------------	--------------------------

**I understand that I can amend answers, refuse to answer any question, or stop taking the survey at any time prior to submission without any consequences. \***

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
---------------------------	--------------------------

**I understand that due to the anonymous nature of the survey, once the survey results are submitted, they can no longer be withdrawn. \***

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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#### Definitions for the purposes of this survey:

- **Wellbeing** is defined as a person's positive physical, mental, and social state.
- **Physical health** is defined as the condition of your body, taking into consideration everything from the absence of disease to fitness level.

- **Mental health** is defined as a person's cognitive, behavioural, and emotional wellbeing.
- **Social health** is defined as a person's ability to interact and form meaningful relationships with others.
- **Motivation** is defined as a desire or willingness to do something.
- **Productivity** is defined as the effectiveness of productive effort in terms of the rate of output per unit of input of work.
- **Engagement** is defined as emotional involvement or commitment.

## Survey Part 1: Workplace Wellbeing Programme (25 questions)

You do not need to have a workplace wellbeing programme to complete the survey.

### Demographic Data:

#### 1. Age: \*

#### 2. Gender \*

 Male Female Prefer not to say Other

#### 3. Location \*

 Ireland Other

#### 4. Which label best describes the nature of your employment? \*

 Permanent full-time Permanent part-time Temporary

Unemployed

Self-employed

Other

Fixed-term or specified-purpose contract

**5. What is the size of the current company you work for? \***

1-25 employees

25-50 employees

50-100 employees

100-150 employees

150-200 employees

200-500 employees

500+ employees

**6. What sector do you work in? \***

Private sector

Public sector

Non-Profit

Self-employed

Other

**7. Where is your work primarily based? \*pre- COVID-19 lockdown \***

Factory or similar

Office

Travel (Domestic)

Travel (International)

Home

Retail setting

Other

**8. What hours are you expected to work on a typical working day? \***



9-5 or similar

Afternoon (12pm to 7pm)

Evening (5pm to midnight)

Night (midnight to 7am)

Other

**9. Do you currently work in a company that provides a wellbeing programme? \***

Yes

No

**10. How long have you participated in your work's wellbeing programme? (e.g. 1 year 3 months) \***

If your company does not have a workplace wellbeing programme write that below.

**11. Is participation in your workplace wellbeing programme mandatory? \***

Yes

No

Do not have a workplace wellbeing programme

**12. When are programmes or activities related to your wellbeing programme made available to employees? \***

Primarily during normal working hours

Primarily outside of normal working hours

Both during working hours and outside of normal working hours

Do not have a workplace wellbeing programme

**13. How was your workplace wellbeing programme delivered pre-covid-19 lockdown? \***

Online

In person

Both online and in person

Do not have a workplace wellbeing programme

**14. How was your workplace wellbeing programme delivered post covid-19 lockdown? \***

Online

In person

Both online and in person

Do not have a workplace wellbeing programme

## 15. Physical Health:

**My company's wellbeing programme addresses the following areas of physical health in some capacity: \***

Select all that apply.

Exercise

Nutrition

Health Checks

Ergonomic working arrangements

Breaks from screen during normal working day

Smoking cessation programme

Sleep management

None

Do not have a workplace wellbeing programme

Other

## 16. Mental Health:

**My company's wellbeing programme addresses the following areas of mental health in some capacity: \***

Select all that apply.

Employee assistance programme/counselling service

Promotional opportunities

Performance reviews

Work/Life balance

Stress management

Activities related to mental health (e.g. yoga, meditation)

Learning new things

None

Do not have a workplace wellbeing programme

Other

## 17. Social Health:

**My company's wellbeing programme addresses the following areas of social health in some capacity: \***

Teambuilding activities

Social activities during normal working hours

Social activities outside of normal working hours

Mentoring programme

Flexible work arrangements

Volunteer programme

Buddy programme with colleagues

None

Do not have a workplace wellbeing programme

Other

**Rate your answers to the following 8 questions on the 1-5 Likert scale (1 being very poor and 5 being excellent) \* 1 Very Poor      2      3      4      5  
Excellent**

**18.** How would you rate your **overall wellbeing** as it relates to work?

**19.** How would you rate your **overall physical health** as it relates to work?

**20.** How would you rate your **overall mental health** as it relates to work?

**21.** How would you rate your **overall social health** as it relates to work?

**22.** How would you rate your **overall level of motivation** as it relates to work?

**23.** How would you rate your **overall level of engagement** as it relates to work?

**24.** How would you rate your **overall level of productivity** as it relates to work?

25. How would you rate your **overall working relationships** as they relate to work?

**Survey Part 2: The Flourishing Scale (8 questions)**

**Choose the option that best fits your response to the statements below using the 1-7**

**Likert scale below. \***

**1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Slightly Disagree 4 Neither agree nor disagree 5 Slightly Agree 6 Agree 7 Strongly agree**

26. I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.

27. My social relationships are supportive and rewarding.

28. I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.

29. I actively contribute to the happiness and wellbeing of others.

30. I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me.

31. I am a good person and live a good life.

32. I am optimistic about my future

33. People respect me.

**Survey Part 3: Engagement (11 questions)**

**Job Engagement (5 questions):\***

**Choose the option that best fits your response to the statements below using the 1-5 Likert**

**scale below. 1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Neither agree nor disagree 4 Agree**

**5 Strongly agree**

34. I really "throw myself into my job.

35. Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time.

36. This job is all consuming; I am totally into it.

37. My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my job.

38. I am highly engaged in this job.

**Organisation Engagement (6 questions): \***

**Choose the option that best fits your response to the statements below using the 1-5 Likert scale below.**

**1 Strongly disagree   2 Disagree   3 Neither agree nor disagree   4 Agree   5 Strongly agree**

**39.** Being a member of this organisation is very captivating.

**40.** One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this organisation.

**41.** I am really not into the “goings on” in this organization.

**42.** Being a member of this organization makes me come “alive.”

**43.** Being a member of this organization is exhilarating for me.

**44.** I am highly engaged in this organization.

## Appendix 2 - Personal Learning Statement

The past two years of the Master's in Human Resource Management programme have been challenging but fulfilling, especially as a part-time student with a full-time career and other commitments. The dissertation has been an all-encompassing endeavor, one which I will look back on proudly for accomplishing. I am appreciative to my organisation for affording me the opportunity to further my education, and am grateful to the National College of Ireland, for offering such an expansive programme. Not only have I learned about the many facets related to HRM, but I have also been able to apply my learnings into my daily work. I have also started to apply wellbeing practices and policies associated with the learnings from this research and hope to continue to contribute positively to wellbeing research in the future within my organisation and throughout my career development.