



Well-being and engagement in home office:

How the personality traits openness and ambiguity intolerance affect the well-being and engagement of employees in home office

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Abstract

Based on the theory of person-environment fit, this master's thesis investigated the influence of the personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness on the subjective well-being and engagement of employees in two different home office models. I assumed that the personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness have a positive effect on the subjective well-being and engagement of employees and that this relationship is moderated by the type of home office. A total sample of $N = 142$ was used to test the hypotheses via multiple regression. Although not all correlations in this study are moderated by home office as assumed, basic correlations emerge that allow us to identify possible starting points for supporting engagement and well-being of employees in home office. In this study, high ambiguity intolerance represents a conducive factor for increasing engagement in working at home office fully, while low ambiguity intolerance represents a conducive factor for increasing engagement in working at home office partially.

Title: Well-being and engagement in home office: How the personality traits openness and ambiguity intolerance affect the well-being and engagement of employees in home office

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Keywords: person-environment fit, openness, ambiguity intolerance, subjective well-being, engagement, remote work.

Sumário

Com base na teoria da adequação pessoa-ambiente, esta tese de mestrado investigou a influência dos traços de personalidade intolerância à ambiguidade e a abertura sobre o bem-estar subjectivo e o envolvimento dos empregados em dois modelos diferentes de escritório em casa. Assumi que a intolerância e abertura dos traços de personalidade ambiguidade têm um efeito positivo sobre o bem-estar subjectivo e o envolvimento dos empregados e que esta relação é moderada pelo tipo de escritório em casa. Uma amostra total de $N = 142$ foi utilizada para testar as hipóteses através de regressão múltipla. Embora nem todas as correlações neste estudo sejam moderadas pelo escritório em casa como se supõe, surgem correlações básicas que nos permitem identificar possíveis pontos de partida para apoiar o compromisso e o bem-estar dos empregados no escritório em casa. Neste estudo, a elevada intolerância à ambiguidade representa um factor conducente ao aumento do envolvimento no trabalho a tempo inteiro no escritório em casa, enquanto a baixa intolerância à ambiguidade representa um factor conducente ao aumento do envolvimento no trabalho no escritório em casa.

Título: Bem-estar e envolvimento no escritório em casa: Como os traços de personalidade abertura e intolerância à ambiguidade afectam o bem-estar e o envolvimento dos empregados no escritório em casa

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Palavras-chave: adequação pessoa-ambiente, abertura, intolerância à ambiguidade, bem-estar subjectivo, envolvimento, teletrabalho.

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Glossary

α = Measure of internal consistence; reliability

& = And

β = Beta coefficient

b = Estimated value of unstandardized regression coefficient

CI = Confidence Interval

Df = Degrees of freedom

H = Hypothesis

F = F distribution

IUS = Intolerance of Uncertainty Short Form

M = Mean value

N = number of participants

p = P-value

PANAS = Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

r = Estimation of the Spearman correlation coefficient

R² = Multiple correlation squared

RQ = Research Question

SD = Standard deviation

SE = Standard error

SWLS = Satisfaction with life Scale

1. Introduction

During the global Covid 19 pandemic, home office has become the new “Normal” for a wide number of workers. Eurofond 2020 estimates the number of employees in the EU who have started to work from home to be as high as 40% (European Commission, 2020).

Especially due to crises and epidemics like the Corona pandemic, home office has become indispensable and an essential part of today's working world (Ipsen, van Veldhoven, Kirchner & Hansen, 2021). The percentage of home-office workers is constantly growing even after the pandemic and home office is becoming increasingly important in society (Song & Gao, 2020). Flexible working arrangements already existed in the past. However, these were considered the exception and were used in particular to reconcile work and family life (Chung & Van der Horst, 2018; Singley & Heynes, 2005). Researchers agree that working from home will continue to expand post-pandemic (Freedman et al., 2020; Xiao, Becerik-Gerber, Lucas & Roll, 2021). Many companies already announced plans of reducing their workplaces on campus and focusing more on home office (Ipsen, van Veldhoven, Kirchner & Hansen, 2021).

Working from home goes along with many disadvantages as well as advantages for both the company and the employees. A positive effect of home office appears for example on job satisfaction, motivation, job retention and on positive emotions (Clark, 2001; Hill & Weiner, 2003; Robelski, Keller, Harth & Mache, 2019). This can be explained by the fact that home-office workers experience a higher degree of autonomy in terms of time, space and content of their work as well as higher productivity, less interruptions and the elimination of travel time (Spurk & Straub, 2020; Hill, Ferris & Mårtinson, 2003; DeFrank, Konopaske & Ivancevich, 2000). From the company's point of view, cost savings are also a positive argument in favor of working from a home office (Wierzchowska, 2021). Conversely, the introduction of home office can lead to a major challenge. Generations Y and Z are making new demands on their employers in terms of flexibility and location-independent working. In most cases, companies still lack a comprehensive concept for this, which considers personality-related, motivational and leadership-related aspects. This is essential for developing a strategy for the introduction of home office in the company (Landes, Steiner, Wittmann & Utz, 2020). In particular, as Bardi, Guerra and Ramdeny (2009) identified, the personality factors openness and ambiguity intolerance have a significant impact on subjective well-being and should be further investigated in this framework. Is the engagement and well-being of employees in home office exactly the same as in the office? What factors and conditions must be fulfilled in order to maintain or even increase effectiveness in home office? Especially since home office is an

increasingly important factor in today's working world, it is even more important for companies to determine how working from home affects the well-being and engagement of their employees.

1.1 Problem Statement

The aim of this study is to gain insights about the relationship between home office and the subjective well-being and engagement of workers. In that process, preceding conditions of subjective well-being and engagement are to be identified to support workers in this context. Since subjective well-being and engagement in home office can vary from employee to employee, in this thesis I investigated how two different personality traits, ambiguity intolerance and openness, affect these two factors. This study aims to answer the question: How do the personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness affect employees' subjective well-being and engagement in home office? The following two main research questions were designed to answer this question:

RQ1: Do the personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness have an impact on the subjective well-being and engagement of the employee in home office?

RQ2: Do the personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness have a higher impact on the subjective well-being and engagement of employees work full-time in home office in contrast to employees who work only partially in home office?

1.2 Relevance

This study contributes to research on well-being and engagement in home office and the personality traits of ambiguity intolerance and openness. Existing studies on the topic of home office explored how home office affects subjective well-being but employee engagement influenced by home office has not yet been investigated (Song & Gao, 2019). Moreover, already existing studies have revealed that engagement and well-being differ from employee to employee (Fana, Milasi, Napierala, Fernandez-Macias & Vázquez 2020). Therefore, the current study will consider the existing research about engagement and well-being in the context of home office, as well as the studies about the personality traits of the employees. In addition, this study provides a contribution for companies by raising awareness of the different personality traits of employees, demonstrating the effects of home office and providing a basis for potential ways in which companies can consider the adequacy of home office, taking into account the personality traits of their employees. As employee engagement and well-being is of enormous importance for companies and leads, among other things, to increased work

performance, productivity, loyalty and lower turnover (Bakker et al., 20014, Schulte et al., 2015), the importance of the current study is significant.

1.3 Structure

In order to get an answer to the problem of this study, a quantitative study was conducted in the form of an online questionnaire. Starting with the theoretical background, the key concepts used in this study will be explained. First, the concept of person-environment fit is explained. This is followed by definitions of the personality variables used in the study: ambiguity intolerance and openness. The environment variable home office is examined in more detail in a next step and the last part of the chapter about the theoretical background provides an explanation of subjective well-being and engagement as outcomes of the person-environment fit. The acquisition of the data is conducted with the help of a quantitative research design that used scales available in the literature to measure subjective well-being, engagement and personality. The detailed explanation of the methodology of this study follows the theory section. Both the descriptive results and the results of the hypotheses are presented after that chapter. The master thesis concludes with the discussion, which includes the critical evaluation of the research findings, academic and managerial relevance, limitations and implications for future research, and the conclusion.

2. Theoretical background

In the following chapter, the theoretical background as well as the current research status of person-environment fit theory, person variables, environment variables, and outcomes of person-environment fit will be explained.

2.1 Person-environment fit

According to the theories of person-environment fit, a person feels good when his or her personality trait fits the environment in which he or she is situated (Bardi et al. 2009; Jiang & Jiang, 2015; van Vianen, 2018). In this model, well-being and satisfaction are the result of congruence between personality characteristics and environmental conditions. Individuals strive for this congruence, as its opposite results in stress, negative psychological experiences, and a lower sense of well-being (Jiang & Jiang, 2015).

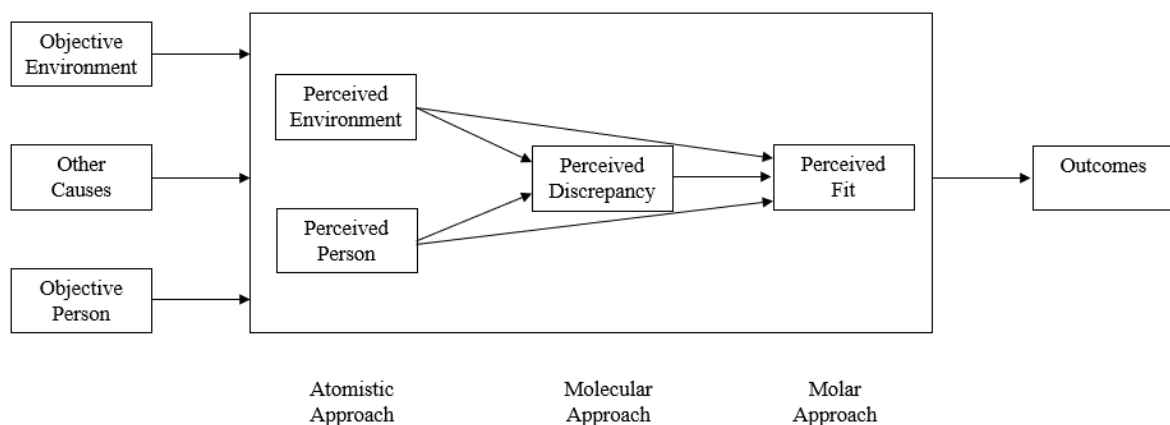
The theory of person-environment fit has its origins in interactionism. Interactionism assumes that the behavior of a person is the result of the interaction between the individual and her or his environment or situation. Therefore, neither the characteristics of a person nor the environmental conditions are solely responsible for differences in perceptual, attitudinal, and behavioral variables of individuals (Ostroff & Schulte, 2007; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). In attempting an explanation of how person, environment, and situation variables must interact to influence a particular response, interactionism reached its limits. Theories of person-environment fit address this issue by providing a way to match the characteristics of a person to those of the environment (Ostroff & Schulte, 2007). Person-environment fit accordingly refers to the extent of the perceived fit or congruence between person and environmental variables in terms of a resulting positive or negative outcome (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert & Shipp, 2006; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987).

In this theory, the person variable includes the biological and psychological needs as well as the values, goals, and abilities of an individual, but also his or her personality (Cable & Edwards, 2004). The environmental variable in the person-environment fit theory can refer to many different aspects of the individual's environment to be studied, depending on the context of the study. For example, intrinsic or extrinsic incentives, physical or psychological demands, cultural values, or environmental conditions can be mentioned here (Cable & Edwards, 2004). Edwards et. al (2006) prove in their empirical study involving about a thousand job-seeking students that the perceived person-environment fit is not simply a systematic interaction of the perceived person and the environment, but also depends on various cognitive and methodological factors.

For the investigation of the perceived person-environment fit, research commonly distinguishes between the following three approaches: the atomistic approach, the molecular approach, and the molar approach (Edwards et al., 2006). Figure 1 illustrates that in the atomistic approach, the perception of the person and the perception of the environment are each considered separately (Edwards et al. 2006, Cable & Judge, 1996). The molecular approach and the molar approach consider the environment and the person in combination. Whereas the molecular approach evaluates the perceived discrepancy of these, the molar approach evaluates the perceived fit. Figure 1 also presents the interrelationships of the three approaches. This theory indicates that the objective environment, objective person, and other causes on the left of the box affect the three approaches of person-environment fit research. The three approaches (atomistic approach, molecular approach and molar approach) represent the phenomenology of the person-environment fit and demonstrate the logical process of how the outcome occurs afterwards. The outcome is represented by criteria such as satisfaction, engagement or well-being (Edwards et al., 2006).

Figure 1

The phenomenology of person-environment fit, adapted from Edwards et al. (2006)



Moreover, the type of fit between a person and his or her environment can be categorized into two types explored in the context of person-environment fit theory: the complementary fit and the supplementary fit (Edwards et al. 2006, Kristof, 1996). Researchers describe the complementary fit as a fit between person and environment that occurs when each strength of the person or the environment compensates the weakness of the other (Edwards, 1991; Wanous, 1992). The characteristics of a person or an environment fulfill exactly what the other entity needs (Edward et al. 2006). The complementary fit is further subdivided into the following

types of fit: the demand-abilities fit and needs-ability fit (Kristof, 1996; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). If an environment, such as a job, demands certain characteristics, skills or competencies of a person, this is called a demands-abilities fit. If an individual's wants and needs are supplied and fulfilled by the environment, this is called a needs-supplies fit. This results in a fit between the needs of the person and the supply made by the environment (Edwards et al. 2006; Cable & Edwards, 2004; Greguras, Diefendorff, Carpenter & Tröster 2014). The complementary fit is distinct from the supplementary fit. Supplementary fit is defined as a situation in which a person has similar or matching characteristics to his or her environment. Frequently, and especially in an organizational context, this is operationalized on the basis of the congruence of values (Kristof, 1996).

A variety of studies focused on the effect of fit between a person and his or her environment and found positive relationships with psychological and physical well-being, happiness, life and job satisfaction, motivation, work performance and a person's engagement to and in an organization (Jiang & Jiang, 2015; Kristof,1996). Considering the perceived discrepancy between the person and the environment, such as psychological, physical, and behavioral stresses that increase a person's likelihood of disease, the positive effects of a person-environment fit gain even greater weight for application in practice and further research (Jiang & Jiang 2015).

Person-environment fit theory considers the interaction of an individual with his or her environment, and therefore the person-environment fit theory is used in almost every context that deals with the effect of this interaction. Nevertheless, it is the fields of management, more specifically human resource management, that have been concerned with the fit of individuals in their work environment for over 100 years (Parsons, 1909). In research concerning the psychological behavior and well-being of employees in the workplace, and in human resource management in general, the person-environment-fit theory is an essential component. It has been studied already in different constructs related to the relationship between employees and their work (Edwards et al. 2006). Studies indicate that the person-environment fit is closely linked to the employee's well-being, job satisfaction and engagement in the organization (Edwards et al. 2006; Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003; Kristof, 1996). Nevertheless, described in many research papers as an ephemeral construct that defies clear definition, it is clear that capturing the fit between a person and their environment is far from a simple process (Edwards & Billsberry, 2010; Edwards & Shipp, 2007; Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006). The problem with operationalizing person-environment fit arises due to the multidimensionality of person and environment. Describing all these aspects and deciphering how they influence people's

behavior is a major challenge for researchers. For this reason, most studies so far only examined the relationship between individual aspects of person and environment (Edwards & Bills-Berry, 2010). In this context, the presumed relationships always apply with respect to a time perspective, since both person and environmental attributes can change over time (Edwards & Billsberry, 2010; Shipp & Jansen, 2011).

In order to provide further contribution in this area, this paper focuses on two personality traits (perceived person), the home-office environment (perceived environment), their interaction with each other and how the fit is perceived (molar approach). In the following chapters, both the person and environmental variables used in this study are examined in more detail.

2.2 Person variables

As mentioned in the previous section, within the person-environment fit theory, person variables are characteristics of a person, such as his or her psychological needs or personality factors (Cable & Edwards, 2004).

A number of studies already focused on different personality traits in the context of person-environment fit. For example, Bardi and collaborators (2009), examining the relationship between openness and ambiguity intolerance on well-being in an academic context at different points in time, demonstrated the important impact of these personality traits on well-being in their study. According to Bardi and collaborators (2009), students with high levels of ambiguity intolerance and low levels of openness experience less well-being in their first semester than peers who have low levels of ambiguity intolerance and high levels of openness. The reason for this seems to be their tendency to evaluate the new stage of life as a threat instead of a challenge. With openness and ambiguity intolerance, Bardi and collaborators (2009) identified two personality traits which, under favorable conditions, provide a very high value for people in new situations. These two personality traits thus represent decisive factors influencing well-being in new life stages or life changes (Bardi et al., 2009). For this reason, the two personality traits openness and ambiguity tolerance are considered in this study and placed in the context of well-being and engagement in home office. A detailed definition of these two factors follows in the next two subsections.

2.2.1 Ambiguity intolerance

The term ambiguity has its origin in the Latin language and derives from the word *ambiguitas* (Duden, 2021). This is translated with the words *ambiguity*, *double meaning* (Pons, 2021). The concept of tolerance and intolerance of ambiguity, dates back to psychologist Else

Frenkel-Brunswick (1949) and it has been of interest in various areas of psychological research since then (Ma & Kay, 2017). Frenkel-Brunswick (1949) identified the concept of intolerance of ambiguity as a fundamental dimension of a person's emotional and cognitive attitude of life.

Persons with the character trait ambiguity intolerance perceive unstructured, incomplete, contrary to expectations, self-contradictory, or ambiguous information or situations as a threat or a cause of psychological discomfort (Budner, 1962). According to McLain (2009), these include situations in which it is not immediately apparent how to behave or which are contradictory to expected behavior. According to Frenkel-Brunswick (1949), individuals with ambiguity intolerance in such situations then tend to adopt a black-and-white solution and rush to conclusions. Based on the fact that individuals with high ambiguity intolerance perceive unstructured and constantly changing situations as a threat or psychological discomfort, I formulated the following hypotheses:

H1: The impact of ambiguity intolerance on subjective well-being will be moderated by working fully from home vs. working partially from home, such that, when working fully from home, high ambiguity intolerance will lead to higher subjective-wellbeing, but when working partially from home, low ambiguity intolerance will lead to higher subjective well-being.

H2: The impact of ambiguity intolerance on engagement will be moderated by working fully from home vs. working partially from home, such that, when working fully from home, high ambiguity intolerance will lead to higher engagement, but when working partially from home, low ambiguity intolerance will lead to higher engagement.

Whereas the personality trait ambiguity tolerance is defined as the ability to tolerate contradictory, inconclusive, and still confusing information (Grube, 2002), research approaches show that ambiguity-tolerant persons do not simply tolerate ambiguous situations, but even exhibit a proper need for them, as they interpret such situations as a challenge. Individuals with high ambiguity tolerance enjoy these situations and perform them excellently. Overall, the term ambiguity tolerance encompasses emotional, as well as cognitive aspects, has an impact on our attitudes and problem-solving behavior, and therefore has the potential to be considered a stable personality trait (Reis, 1997). If one has ambiguity intolerance or low ambiguity tolerance, this leads to aversive reactions because we lack the appropriate information to make a correct choice for our decision or behavior (Budner 1962; McLain, Kefallonitis & Armani, 2015). According

to Hirsh, Mar and Peterson (2012), in an ambivalent situation we often do not know whether it may contain a potential harm or what consequences it entails, because we lack the correspondingly necessary information for appropriate possibilities of action. This leads us to perceive these situations as unpleasant, which is manifested by an increased psychological tension. Individuals with ambiguity intolerance or low ambiguity tolerance are less able to withstand this tension and tend to want to quickly reduce and avert it (Hirsh et al. 2012).

2.2.2 Openness

The five-factor model of personality, also known as the "big five", includes, besides the four other dimensions conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism, the personality trait openness. This personality model is the most widely used approach for a general psychometric description of a person's personality (Rammstedt, Koch, Borg & Reitz, 2004). This model is based on a lexical approach, which assumes that all significant interindividual differences are represented in the dictionary of a language by corresponding terms (Ashton & Lee, 2005). The big five was developed, among other methods, by analyzing adjectives describing characteristics and by factor analytic studies, which demonstrated that the assessment of individuals on these personality-describing terms can be reduced at the most global level to five bipolar dimensions, of which openness represents factor five (McCrae & John, 1992; Borgotta, 1964; Digman & TakemotoChock, 1981). The elusive fifth factor, which has been called intellect, intelligence, culture, and intellectual interest over the years and among various researchers (Goldberg, 1990; John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae, 1993), is a fundamental component of personality and is defined under the term openness as the breadth, depth, originality, and complexity of consciousness and experience (John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1997). An individual with a high degree of openness has a high level of cognitive complexity and imagination, has a high interest in new experiments, experiences and impressions (Morawetz, Alexandrowicz & Heekeren, 2017). In addition, the person is creative, imaginative, artistic and inventive, and has a wide and ever-evolving range of interests that extend beyond purely intellectual interests (Neyer & Asendorpf, 2018; Herzberg & Roth, 2014; Leger, Charles, Turiano & Almeida, 2016; Rammstedt, Koch, Borg & Reitz, 2004). The individual is able to handle ambiguity and demonstrates a need and preference for diversity and multifacetedness (McCrae & Costa, 1997; McCrae & John, 1992), as evidenced by nontraditional and nonconforming attitudes. Based on the fact that people with a high degree of openness enjoy new impressions, new experiences and diversity, I formulate the following two hypotheses:

H3: The impact of openness on subjective well-being will be moderated by working fully from home vs. working partially from home, such that, when working fully from home, low openness will lead to higher subjective-wellbeing, but when working partially from home, high openness will lead to higher subjective well-being.

H4: The impact of openness on engagement will be moderated by working fully from home vs. working partially from home, such that, when working fully from home, low openness will lead to higher engagement, but when working partially from home, high openness will lead to higher engagement.

People with high level of openness have easier access to their thoughts and feelings and experiences them with greater intensity (McCrae & Costa, 1997; Morawetz et al., 2017). Some studies have also identified links from openness to positive affect (Schneider, Rench, Lyons & Riffle, 2012; Steel, Schmidt, & Shultz, 2008), lower negative affect (Leger et al., 2016), and satisfaction and quality of life (Steel et al., 2008).

2.3 Environment variables

As mentioned in chapter 2.1, within the person-environment fit theory, environmental variables are different aspects of the individual's environment, such as physical demands or environmental conditions (Cable & Edwards, 2004). In this thesis, as mentioned above, home office was selected as environmental variable. This variable is addressed in the following subsection.

2.3.1 Home office

Home office is associated with office at home or domestic workroom (Elert & Raspels, 2013). Home office belongs to the category of telecommuting. The prefix *tele* describes the use of information and communication tools to complete work tasks (Brandes, 1999). Telework includes all activities that are not directly performed in the company. The results are sent to the client via various data lines (Ulich & Wiese 2011). A distinction is made between alternating teleworking and permanent teleworking. While in permanent teleworking, work is performed exclusively from home, in alternating teleworking, work is performed alternately at the telecommuting workplace at home and at the workplace in the company (Deutscher Bundestag, 2017). Telework places are computer workstations permanently set up by the employer in the private sphere of the employees, for which the employer has specified a weekly working time

agreed with the employees and the duration of the set-up. In simple terms, home office is a fixed work location that is located at the employee's home (Ferris, 2001).

Regarding telecommuting, typical advantages and disadvantages of this form of work have already been identified. As for disadvantages, the main ones identified are two. First, Rupiotta and Beckmann (2016) identified the extent of extra work is stronger the more frequently employees work in home office. Second, there is a tension in the area of work-life balance. Many employees complain that working from home makes it more difficult to separate their private life from their work (Arnold, Steffes & Wolter, 2015). Results from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research demonstrate that a lack of separation between areas of life has an impact on health. Psychological stress, such as emotional exhaustion, is lower the better the separation between work and private life. In addition, satisfaction with one's own work-life balance increases with better segmentation (Rexroth, Peters & Sonntag, 2012). In contrast, a lack of segmentation of life spheres leads to a prevention of distancing from work, and work thus becomes present in leisure and family time as well. As a result, important recreational breaks are missed and used resources cannot be restored, which in turn is experienced as stress (Rexroth et al., 2012).

In contrast, other studies prove that home office has a positive impact on aspects of both work and personal life, while working in an office even affects those negatively. The main factor for individuals in this context is that spatial independence saves time from commuting to work and makes it easier to reconcile parenthood and work. This is because working from home allows them to act flexibly (Brenke, 2016; Landes et al., 2020). In addition, studies revealed that employees are generally more satisfied when they have the opportunity to telework from home. In particular, the unfulfilled desire to work from home has a negative impact on employee satisfaction (Brenke, 2016). Moreover, employees who work in home office demonstrated, for example, higher job motivation, job retention, job performance and a better work-life balance (DiMartino & Wirth, 1990; Hill, Ferris & Mårtinson, 2003).

As can be seen from the previous review, there is disagreement in the literature on whether home office is beneficial or detrimental to workers. That is one of the reasons this paper takes a closer look at the impact of home office on well-being and engagement.

2.4 Outcomes of person-environment fit

2.4.1 Subjective well-being

An individual's well-being is an important factor for his or her state of health (Schlicht & Brand, 2007). Well-being is defined not only as the absence of well-being impairments, but

also as a new level of quality of life (Huppert & Whittington, 2003). Based on the time component, well-being is divided into present well-being and habitual well-being. Present well-being refers to a person's current state of well-being, which includes feelings, moods, and physical sensations. In contrast, habitual well-being expresses a person's state of mind over a longer period of time. Habitual well-being is considered a stable characteristic of a person and includes judgments about aggregate emotional experiences (Becker, 1991). This work measures the present well-being of a person in different forms of home office.

There are a variety of definitions of subjective well-being in the literature. These are assigned to one of the following two perspectives: the hedonic perspective or the eudaemonic perspective (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The hedonic perspective describes subjective well-being as pleasure and happiness, whereas the eudaemonic perspective sees the fulfillment of one's true "nature" at the center of the definitions (Ryan & Deci, 2001). However, especially in recent publications, this dichotomy is viewed critically by some authors. They claim that both positions should be included (Huppert & So, 2013). Consistently, subjective well-being is conceptualized in research as a multidimensional construct (Diener, Lucas & Oishi, 2005; Librán, 2006; Eid & Larsen, 2008). The definitions and terminology differ significantly between authors (Steel & Shultz, 2008). In the present dissertation, an individual's subjective well-being is conceptualized across three dimensions, following Bardi and collaborators (2009): positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction. Positive and negative affect measures an individual's happiness and focuses on the occurrence of specific positive and negative emotions without the inclusion of cognitive appraisals (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998). In this context, life satisfaction describes a cognitive evaluation of quality of life based on an individual's own standards (Pavot & Diener, 1993).

Subjective well-being has a positive impact on many areas of life. For example, it is associated with lower divorce rates, greater success at work, and higher physical health (Diener & Chan, 2011; Huppert, 2009; Lyubomirsky, King & Diener, 2005). In an organizational context, psychological well-being can have numerous positive effects both for employees themselves and at the organizational level. Investing in people's well-being has been a successful tool in the work environment for a long time. In this environment, the well-being of employees is considered, among other things, to be a factor that promotes motivation and productivity, as well as employee loyalty and the reduction of absenteeism. These factors are considered to be framework conditions that describe a healthy working relationship (Ihmels, 2014; Schulte et al. 2015).

2.4.2 Engagement

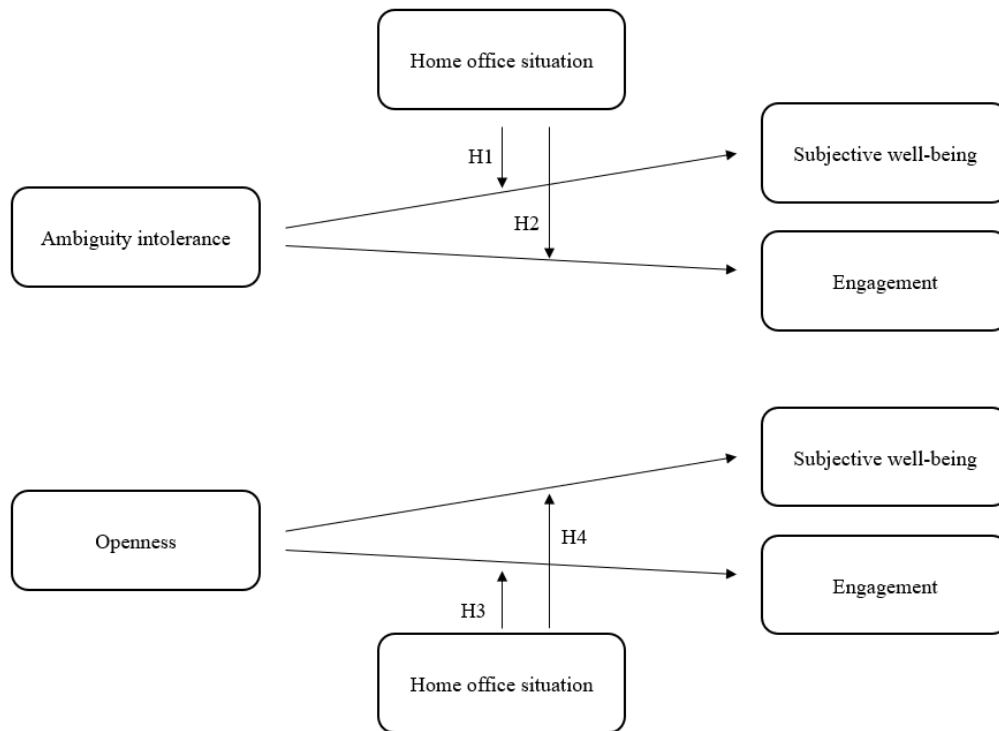
The construct of engagement has received particular attention in the context of work (Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004; Frese, Fay, Hilhuber, Leng & Tag, 1997; Mills, Culbertson & Fullagar, 2012) based on its observed associations with performance (Fredricks et al., 2004; Putwain, Symes & Wilkinson 2017), positive work experience (Mills et al., 2012), as well as social and psychological well-being (Goldspink & Foster, 2013).

As in the case of well-being, there are a variety of definitions of the term engagement in the literature. Leiter and Maslach (2017) placed engagement synonymously with words such as energy and efficiency. Engagement is defined and conceptualized in different ways, but has three dimensions, cognitive, emotional (also affective) and behavioral, that demonstrate some consistency in research and thus support a multidimensional coverage of the construct (Fredricks et al., 2004). Behavioral engagement is well captured via observation and self-report data, and is also the most commonly collected compared to cognitive and emotional engagement (Goldspink & Foster, 2013). This component includes actions like focused and attentive attendance (Fredricks et al., 2004; Frese et al., 1997; Goldspink & Foster, 2013; Sinatra et al., 2015). Emotional (also affective) engagement describes motivation and reasons for exhibited behavior, as well as affective response to the work environment (Goldspink & Foster, 2013). Cognitive engagement refers to psychological investment: the willingness to deal with the situation, to choose and cope with challenging tasks, to use strategies and flexible problem solving, and self-regulation. It should be noted that the three dimensions exhibit strong parallels to each other in terms of content, and engagement itself shares strong similarities to constructs from the fields of motivation and self-regulation theories (Fredricks et al., 2004; Meyer & Gagne, 2008; Sinatra et al., 2015). This paper measures behavioral engagement and emotional engagement.

In relation to the work environment, workers with a high level of engagement have "(...) a sense of energetic and effective connection with their work activities" (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006, p. 702). They feel comfortable with their work and its conditions and are able to perform it excellently (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Furthermore, employee engagement is associated with a high degree of creativity, enthusiasm and task performance. Moreover, the social behavior is clearly pronounced. Thus, engagement represents an important factor for any organization (Bakker et. al., 2014). Most studies differentiate job engagement among individuals and identify working conditions, personality traits, and behavioral strategies as factors that influence job engagement. In recent years, researchers demonstrated that career

engagement can also differ within an individual depending on time and in different situations (Reina-Tamayo et al., 2017).

2.5 Conceptual Model



3. Methodology

In the following chapter, the methodology of this study is explained. In addition to a description of the sample, the study design is presented. This is followed by an examination of the measurement instruments used. At the end of the chapter, the structure and implementation of this empirical study is described.

3.1 Research Strategy and design

A written, structured and standardized online questionnaire was used to collect data on employees' personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness, as well as their subjective well-being and engagement in home office. Well-being and engagement in home office represent the dependent variables, the personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness represent the independent variables and home office represents the moderator. The form of written online survey was chosen because it offers the possibility to be independent in time and space. Therefore, contacting of the participants can take place simultaneously over large

distances (Wagner & Hering, 2014). Additionally, the method is quick and easy to conduct (Berekoven, Eckert & Ellenrieder, 2009). All participants responded to the same questionnaire.

3.2 Participants

3.2.1 Participants exclusions

Overall 201 people accessed the survey via the link and 89.6% completed the online questionnaire. After initial analysis of the data set, the total of 180 participants who completed the study was reduced to a total sample of $N = 142$. Participants who could not be grouped due to not working in home office had to be excluded. Therefore, this empirical study's sample was composed of a total of 74 people working in home office partially and 68 people working in home office every day.

3.2.2 Demographic description of the sample

The sample included 63 individuals (44.4%) of the male gender and 79 individuals (55.6%) of the female gender who participated in the survey on a voluntary basis. The average age of the participants was 30 years old ($SD = 8,0$). The youngest respondent was 18 years old at the time of the questionnaire and the oldest respondent was 59 years old. Whereas 49,3 % came from Germany, 9,9 % indicated Portugal as their nationality. The other participants (40.8%) came from different countries, for example from Italy (5.6%), South Africa (4.9%) or Great Britain (3.5%). Most of the participants answered that they were employees in profit or non-profit organizations ($N = 89$; 62.7%). Just 7.7 % of the participants stated that they were self-employed and 29,6% that they were worker and students. A total of 69 participants (48.6%) had a Master's degree and 46 participants (32.4%) a Bachelor's degree. The remaining 19% of the sample entered primary, secondary, further or higher education as their educational status, as well as doctoral degree or other.

3.3 Data collection

This study was conducted using a quantitative online survey. The survey was created and published using the web-based software for online surveys called Qualtrics. The target group was given access to the survey via a link generated by Qualtrics. The link was shared on the social networks Facebook and Instagram via various profiles and in diverse study-related groups and sent to personal contacts through the communication app "WhatsApp". In addition, 80 participants were generated via the platform Prolific to provide diversity in terms of demographic characteristics. Prolific is an online recruitment platform that provides high quality responses and achieves a high level of honesty (Palan & Schnitter, 2018). The survey

was promoted under the survey title "Well-being and engagement in home office" and with a short invitation text (see Appendix A). After accessing the link, the participants were informed about the background of the survey and received a brief introduction to the procedure as well as information regarding the confidential and anonymous handling of the generated data. The completion time of the survey was approximately 5 minutes. The participants were able to participate in the study online during the period from 24/10/2021 to 04/12/2021.

3.4 Measurement instruments

The relevant constructs of this study were operationalized exclusively using questionnaires that already existed and were established in empirical research. The overall questionnaire therefore comprised a collection of five scales and, including the sociodemographic information, a total of 13 items. The applied scales to determine openness and well-being are consistent with the instruments used in the study by Bardi and collaborators (2009). A detailed description of the measurement instruments is presented in the following sections. The complete survey, can be viewed in Appendix A.

3.4.1 Instrument for the assessment of ambiguity intolerance

The Intolerance of Uncertainty Short Form (IUS-12) by Carleton, Norton and Asmundson (2007) was used to assess the personality trait ambiguity intolerance. The scale includes 12 items (e.g., "Unforeseen events upset me greatly"; "I always want to know what the future has in store for me"). The participants were asked to give their assessment, "Please choose the answer that best corresponds to how much you agree with...", on a five-point scale from "not at all characteristic of me" to "entirely characteristic of me". With an internal consistency of $\alpha = .96$, this instrument has been found to have high and thus good reliability values (Carleton et al., 2007). This was confirmed in this study ($\alpha = .92$).

3.4.2 Instrument for the assessment of openness

The personality trait Openness was measured with the ten-item scale from the big five inventory (Rammstedt & John, 2007). The participants answered statements about their personality, such as "I see myself as someone who... ..is reserved" or "...is outgoing, sociable" on a five-point scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree". This measurement method of openness already proved good reliability as well as validity in several studies (John & Srivasta, 1999; Bardi et al. 2009). In this study, the reliability is equally good with $\alpha = .8$.

3.4.3 Instrument for the assessment of subjective well-being

An individual's subjective well-being can be conceptualized through three dimensions: Positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction (Bardi et al., 2009; Heffner & Antaramian, 2016). For this reason, these three dimensions are assessed with the following two scales in the present study.

3.4.3.1 Life satisfaction

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985) was used to measure the participants' satisfaction with life. The SWLS includes five items (e.g., "In most ways my life is close to my ideal") that participants rated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly agree*). The participants were asked to relate the assessment to their situation at work ("For each statement, please indicate how strongly it applies to you personally at the moment in your current situation at work"). According to the study by Bardi and collaborators (2009), the scale has good reliability with $\alpha=0.82$. The observed value in the present study was $\alpha = .92$.

3.4.3.2 Positive and negative affect

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1998) was used to assess positive and negative affect. The PANAS includes 10 items of positive affect (e.g., "strong", "proud") and 10 items of negative affect (e.g., "ashamed", "afraid"). These 20 items are rated by the participants on a scale from 1 (*very slightly or not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). Participants should rate the items with reference to how they have felt lately ("Lately I have felt..."; Bardi et al., 2009). In research, PANAS is one of the scales that is most often used to assess people's mood (Tran, 2013). With a Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$ and an additional Raykov's ρ of .93 (added due to the different factor loadings of the scales), the reliability of the instrument is ensured (Bardi et al., 2009; Breyer & Bluemke, 2016; Cortina, 1993). In the current study, the positive affect scale had an $\alpha = .9$ and a value of the negative affect scale $\alpha = .88$. Since the reliability for the two scales, negative effect scale and positive effect scale together are too weak, they are considered separately in this study.

3.4.4 Instrument for the assessment of engagement

Engagement was determined using the ISA Engagement Scale by Soane, Truss, Alfes, Schantz, Rees and Gatenby (2012). This scale measures intellectual engagement (e.g., "I concentrate on my work"), social engagement (e.g., "I share the same work values as my colleagues"), and affective engagement (e.g., "I feel energetic about my work") with three items

each. Participants rate each item on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) in relation to their work. In addition, the participants in this study were asked to relate their assessment of their engagement specifically to their work (“For each statement, please indicate how strongly it applies to you personally at the moment in your current situation at work”). In the original study, internal consistency was measured as $\alpha = .88$, thus demonstrating good reliability. Similarly, this study indicates good reliability ($\alpha = .95$).

3.4.5 Further data collected

In addition to sociodemographic information on age and gender, the participants provided information on their nationality, educational level and employment status. Moreover, at the beginning of the questionnaire, directly after the introductory text, they indicated whether they worked in home office every day, a few days or not at all. These data were collected as possible control variables and to group the data set.

3.5 Pretest

Before I sent the questionnaire finally around and uploaded it on the different platforms, I conducted a pretest with 14 participants. The participants were recruited through personal contacts via the social media platform WhatsApp. Among them, 6 participants belonged to the male gender and 8 participants belonged to the female gender with an age range from 24 to 56 years. All participants were from Germany. Through the pretest, I discovered individual technical improvement possibilities, for instance that the participant could only move on to the next question after answering all points of the previous question. Moreover, some of the wording in the general instruction was improved for better comprehension.

4. Results

This results section begins with the presentation of the data preparation. Thereafter, the descriptive results of this study are provided in terms of subjective well-being and engagement related to work, as well as the personality traits of openness and ambiguity intolerance. Finally, the hypotheses tests are presented.

4.1 Data preparation and cleaning

The statistical program IBM SPSS Statistics was chosen for data transformation and statistical analysis. An automatic data export from the online tool Qualtrics transferred the survey data to SPSS, where the data were processed. The interval scale level was adopted for the previously described scales recording openness, ambiguity intolerance, life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, and engagement. This was done based on the fact that numerical

values from one to seven were assigned to the response options of the five- to seven-point Likert scale used and the differences between these values can be interpreted (Eid, Gollwitzer & Schmitt, 2013). After re-coding the reverse-coded items, the numerical values of the individual items were summed for each scale and a mean value was calculated in relation to the respective scale. These mean or total scores of the individual scales represent the operationalization of the variables under investigation (Bardi et al., 2009).

4.2 Descriptive statistics

Table 1 provides an overview of the number of items, mean values (M) and standard deviations (SD), as well as the range of response options for the examined variables of the overall data set. In Table 2, the means and standard deviations of the examined variables of the two groups "home office every day" and "home office partially" are presented separately. The mean values are relatively in the middle of the possible values for most scales and demonstrate the same tendency in the comparison between the overall data set and the two groups, "home office every day" and "home office partially". This also applies to the standard deviations. Engagement, with a mean value of $M = 5$ ($SD = 1.4$) for the entire sample, as well as life satisfaction, with a mean value of $M = 4.6$ ($SD = 1.5$) on a scale of 1-7, have a conspicuous tendency to the maximum extreme. These two extremes are more prominent in the "home office partially" group than in the "home office every day" group. In contrast, the mean value of the negative affect shows a tendency to the minimum extremum. The standard deviations are less significant for the "home office partially" group than the "home office every day" group, especially for the variables ambiguity intolerance, life satisfaction and engagement.

Table 1

Mean values and standard deviations of the examined variables included the total data set

	Items	M	SD	Range
Openness	10	3.35	.71	1-5
Ambiguity intolerance	12	2.77	.86	1-5
Life satisfaction	5	4.6	1.49	1-7
Positive Affect	10	3.25	.85	1-5
Negative Affect	10	2.23	.78	1-5
Engagement	9	5.0	1.35	1-7

Note. N=142

Table 2

Mean values (and standard deviations) of the examined variables per group

	home office every day (n = 68)	home office partially (n = 74)	Range
--	--------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------

Openness	3.32 (.71)	3.38 (.72)	1-5
Ambiguity intolerance	2.77 (1.02)	2.78 (.69)	1-5
Life satisfaction	4.47 (1.77)	4.71 (1.19)	1-7
Positive Affect	3.18 (.91)	3.3 (.8)	1-5
Negative Affect	2.26 (.84)	2.2 (.71)	1-5
Engagement	4.92 (1.61)	5.08 (1.06)	1-7

The intercorrelations of the variables of the total data set are presented in Table 3. Based on the metric level of measurement, Pearson's correlation was performed. It was verified that the variables had roughly normal distributions.

Consistent with the theoretical assumptions, there is a highly significant negative relationship between ambiguity intolerance and the variables life satisfaction $r(141) = -.39, p < .001$, positive affect $r(141) = -.32, p < .001$, and engagement $r(141) = -.32, p < .001$. There are slight positive correlations between openness and the variables life satisfaction, positive affect and engagement. Nevertheless, these correlations are not statistically significant. Similarly, the correlations between openness and ambiguity intolerance $r(141) = .07, p = .41$ have a positive, but not statistically significant value. Based on the low correlation of the two variables, openness and ambiguity intolerance, they are considered together in the regression in the next chapter "hypothesis testing".

Table 3

Intercorrelations of the studied variables in the total data set

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Openness	1	.07	.01	.13	-.06	.03	-.04
2 Ambiguity intolerance	.07	1	-.39*	-.32*	.61*	-.32*	-.01
3 Life satisfaction	.01	-.39*	1	.61*	-.38*	.71*	-.08
4 Positive Affect	.13	-.32*	.61*	1	-.42*	.65*	-.07
5 Negative Affect	-.06	.61*	-.38*	-.42*	1	-.4*	.04
6 Engagement	.03	-.32*	.71*	.65*	-.4*	1	-.06
7 Dummy Home Office	-.04	-.01	-.08	-.07	.04	-.06	1

*Note. N = 142, * p < .001 (two-sided significance level)*

4.3 Hypotheses testing

This chapter presents the results of the hypotheses stated in Chapter 3. As described in the previous chapter, the two variables *openness* and *ambiguity intolerance* were tested together in the multiple regressions. In the present study, I assume that the relationship between the personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness to subjective well-being (measured by life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect) and engagement among employees, is moderated by whether employees work in home office every day or just partially. For hypothesis testing, I performed four multiple regressions, one with engagement as dependent

variable and the other one with the three factors, positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction measuring the subjective well-being. The moderator was effect coded in advance (-1 = working in home office partially, 1 = working in home office every day). Finally, to assess whether working in home office partially vs. every day moderates the influence of ambiguity intolerance and openness on the four dependent variables, I added two-way interactions between openness, ambiguity intolerance and the effect-coded variable of working in home office partially vs. working in home office every day, for a total of six parameters.

The overall model of the first multiple regression, in which engagement forms the dependent variable, is statistically significant ($R^2 = .199$, $F(6, 135) = 5.6$, $p < .001$). Examining Table 5 that presents the results of the multiple regressions, it is evident that the interaction between ambiguity intolerance and the home office variable on engagement was significant at a significance level of .05 ($b = -.31$, $SE = .13$, 95% CI [-0.56, -0.05], $p = .018$). This confirms that the effects of the personality trait ambiguity intolerance on engagement are moderated by home office conditions, such that people with a high level of ambiguity intolerance will have higher engagement when working fully from home and people with a low level of ambiguity intolerance will have higher engagement when working partially from home. Thus Hypothesis 2 can be confirmed. The other interactions in which engagement forms the dependent variable were not significant (see Table 5), therefore, home office did not interact with openness and Hypothesis 4 can be rejected.

Table 4

Results of multiple regression analysis testing the relations with engagement

	Engagement				
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	95% CI	<i>p</i>
Openness	-1.54	.59	-.81	[-2.71, -.37]	.01
Ambiguity intolerance	-2.36	.68	-1.5	[-3.69, -1.02]	< .001
Interaction WO	.22	.15	.56	[-.73, .51]	.141
Interaction WA	-.31	.13	-.67	[-.56, -.05]	.018
Interaction OA	.6	.21	1.58	[-.19, 1.00]	.004
Intensity home office	.01	.61	.01	[-1.19, 1.21]	.984

*Note. WO=home office fully vs. partially * openness; WA= home office fully vs. partially *ambiguity intolerance; OA= openness * ambiguity intolerance*

The overall models of life satisfaction, $R^2 = .23$, $F(6, 135) = 6.751$, $p < .001$, positive affect, $R^2 = .15$, $F(6, 135) = 4.06$, $p < .001$, as well as negative affect, $R^2 = .39$, $F(6, 135) = 14.426$, $p < .001$, were also each significant. Openness ($b = -1.49$, $SE = 0.64$, 95% CI [-2.76, -0.22], $p = 0.022$) and ambiguity intolerance ($b = -2.47$, $SE = 0.73$, 95% CI [-3.91, -1.02], $p < .001$) as the main effect both revealed a significant effect on life satisfaction in the multiple

regression, such that a high level of the personality trait openness as well as ambiguity intolerance is associated with a lower life satisfaction. For the three factors measuring subjective well-being, no interaction was significant. Due to this lack of statistical significance (see Tables 6-8), Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3 were not supported.

Table 5

Results of multiple regression analysis testing the relations with life satisfaction

	Life satisfaction				
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	95% CI	<i>p</i>
Openness	-1.49	.64	-.71	[-2.76, -.22]	.022
Ambiguity intolerance	-2.47	.73	-1.4	[-3.91, -1.02]	< .001
Interaction WO	.26	.16	.59	[-.06, .57]	.111
Interaction WA	-.26	.14	-.51	[-.54, -.01]	.063
Interaction OA	.57	.22	1.36	[.13, 1.01]	.012
Intensity home office	-.29	.66	.19	[-1.59, 1.01]	.660

*Note. WO = home office fully vs. partially * openness; WA = home office fully vs. partially * ambiguity intolerance; OA = openness * ambiguity intolerance*

Table 6

Results of multiple regression analysis testing the relations with positive affect

	Positive affect				
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	95% CI	<i>p</i>
Openness	-.24	.39	-.2	[-1.00, .52]	.532
Ambiguity intolerance	-.79	.44	-.8	[-1.66, .08]	.073
Interaction WO	.05	.1	.21	[-.14, .24]	.581
Interaction WA	-.12	.08	-.42	[-.29, .04]	.141
Interaction OA	.16	.13	.65	[-.11, .42]	.247
Intensity home office	.10	.39	.12	[-.68, .88]	.797

*Note. WO = home office fully vs. partially * openness; WA = home office fully vs. partially * ambiguity intolerance; OA = openness * ambiguity intolerance*

Table 7

Results of multiple regression analysis testing the relations with negative affect

	Negative affect				
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	95% CI	<i>p</i>
Openness	-.13	.3	-.12	[-.72, .46]	.669
Ambiguity intolerance	.52	.34	.58	[-.15, 1.19]	.128
Interaction WO	.00	.07	-.00	[-.15, .15]	.997
Interaction WA	.06	.07	.24	[-.07, .19]	.333
Interaction OA	.01	.1	.03	[-.20, .21]	.956
Intensity home office	-.14	.3	-.18	[-.74, .46]	.640

*Note: WO = home office fully vs. partially * openness; WA = home office fully vs. partially * ambiguity intolerance; OA = openness * ambiguity intolerance*

5. Discussion

The final chapter of this study contains the research findings and main conclusions. It is followed by a presentation of the strengths as well as the limitations and weaknesses of the study. Implications for future research are presented afterwards. The final part of this chapter presents the conclusion.

5.1 Research findings and main conclusion

This study aimed to answer the question: How do the personality traits ambiguity intolerance and openness affect employees' subjective well-being and engagement in home office?

Hypothesis 1 of this study, which was tested with a multiple linear regression, was not confirmed. Therefore, the personality trait ambiguity intolerance appears not to have an impact on subjective well-being moderated by the extent of home office hours worked, such that when working fully from home, high ambiguity intolerance will lead to higher subjective well-being, but when working partially from home, low ambiguity intolerance will lead to higher subjective well-being. There is no statistically significant interaction in this multiple analysis. Nevertheless, a statistically significant negative effect between ambiguity intolerance and subjective well-being (life satisfaction) was identified in the multiple regression. Accordingly, the personality trait ambiguity intolerance negatively influences subjective well-being, such that, the higher the degree of ambiguity intolerance, the lower the subjective well-being. The statistically significant negative influence of ambiguity intolerance on subjective well-being was also revealed in the correlation analysis. In summary, there is a negative correlation between ambiguity intolerance and subjective well-being. However, this is not moderated by working in home office fully or partially.

Hypothesis 2 was confirmed and the following findings apply: Persons who work fully in home office have higher subjective well-being if they have a high level of ambiguity intolerance, while persons who work partially in home office have higher subjective well-being if they have a low level ambiguity intolerance. Accordingly, the intensity of home office appears to moderate in this relationship. The correlation analysis (see Table 4) indicates a negative correlation between ambiguity intolerance and engagement at work. This negative correlation was confirmed with the multiple regression analysis and the moderating factor home office fully vs. partially.

Hypothesis 3 was not confirmed, and thus neither was the assumption that the impact of the personality trait openness on subjective well-being is moderated by the intensity of working in home office in such a way that a low level of openness leads to higher subjective well-being when the person works fully in home office as well as that a high level of openness leads to high subjective well-being when the person works partially in home office.

Hypothesis 4 was also not confirmed. Consequently, personality trait openness on engagement is not moderated by the intensity of working in home office in the way that when working completely in home office a low level of the personality trait openness leads to higher engagement and that when working partially in home office a high level of the personality trait openness leads to higher engagement.

Nevertheless, the multiple regression showed a significant negative effect between the personality trait openness and life satisfaction (see Table 5) as well as between openness and engagement (see Table 4). These findings suggest that a high level of openness may have a negative effect on life satisfaction and engagement. These results are questionable and inconsistent with both the intercorrelations (see Table 3) and the results of the literature (see Chapter 2.2.2). In addition, multiple regression testing the relationship with engagement (table 4) as well as multiple regression testing the relationship with life satisfaction (Table 5) showed a significant positive effect of the interaction between openness and ambiguity intolerance. These results are also questionable and inconsistent with the results of the intercorrelation (see Table 3).

5.2 Strength and Limitations

In the following subsection, the strengths and limitations of the study conducted as part of this master's thesis are considered.

In terms of sample, its questionable representativeness should be pointed out, as the group of people working in home office on a daily basis consists of only 68 people. In total, only 142 participants took part in the study. Accordingly, the entire thesis consists of a relatively small sample size. Moreover, almost half of the respondents (49.3%) came from Germany and only 49.7% from other countries. These unbalances of the sample may be due to the following reason: In order to acquire a significant number of participants, I relied on my personal network. This procedure prevents obtaining a complete random sample and may ultimately lead to a systematic bias. Therefore, the generalizability of the results must be considered with caution. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there is some balance due to the survey of 80 participants

recruited via Profilic. Although the sample as a whole includes many German respondents, it also includes participants from countries all over the world.

In terms of data collection, the respondents were able to participate in the online survey within six weeks. A positive aspect of the online survey was the simultaneous contacting of several participants over a large distance (Wagner & Hering, 2014). Additionally, all participants received the exact same online questionnaire. Accordingly, the participants all received the same information and objectivity is given. On the other hand, representativeness is limited by the online survey. Directly excluded were population groups that have neither internet access nor the media WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook or Profilic or rarely use them. Moreover, the online survey does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about the respondents' response situation. Accordingly, exogenous influences cannot be ruled out and systematic bias is possible.

In terms of measures, a strength of the study is the use of established measurement procedures, for example the PANAS questionnaire by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1998). The questionnaire provides a valid measurement tool and has been used in several studies (Bardi et al. 2006). An analysis of the reliability of the questionnaire exists as well and was also calculated in this study. In contrast, the satisfaction with life scale questionnaire by Diener and collaborators (1985) is a very old scale. Nevertheless, the value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.82. Consequently, the scale is reliable and could be used in the study without any concerns (Bardi et al. 2006). The questionnaire for measuring openness, the big five inventory 10 is a short, very established questionnaire and very well suited for online surveys (Rammstedt & John, 2007). Nevertheless, a questionnaire in such a short form cannot highlight the personality trait as well as the full-length big five measurements. In contrast to the latter's questionnaire, the BFI-10 loses considerable expressiveness (Rammstedt & John, 2007, Gosling et al. 2003).

Another limitation for the validity of the study is the design of the study. Due to time constraints, it was not possible to conduct a longitudinal study. Therefore, a cross-sectional study was conducted. This prevents precise causal statements from being made when interpreting the results. In addition, the willingness to complete the questionnaire honestly is both person-dependent and situation-dependent and could therefore not be tested in this study. There is a possibility that participants in this sample did not take enough time to answer the questionnaire or answered individual items under the influence of social desirability. The high social attention of engagement at work and subjective well-being might have biased the data.

Finally, the relationship between personality traits, home office and engagement and subjective well-being is still a very unexplored area. The limitations and strengths mentioned

above hold clues for implications of further research in this topic area. Specific implications for future research follow in the next subsection.

5.3 Implications for future research and praxis

The present study was already able to provide individual findings on the relationship between personality traits, working in home office, subjective well-being and engagement at work. Nevertheless, the data on this relationship is insufficient to date and continued research is needed to make a meaningful contribution. The limitations of the study outlined in the previous section provide resources that can be considered in future research of this topic area. The following research opportunities can be derived from the results of this study.

A renewed but revised version of the present study is recommended for future research. In revising the study, the following point should be addressed from the limitations: It is advised to use the full-length instrument of the Big-Five to survey the personality trait openness in order to avoid losses (Rammstedt & John, 2007, Gosling et al. 2003). Furthermore, the sample size, which is of central importance for the representativeness of an empirical study, should be increased significantly. In addition, attention should be paid to the composition of the sample so that there are no imbalances, for example, in terms of age or nationality. With regard to the recruitment of subjects, an alternative form to the online procedure would be conceivable. This would mean that people without Internet access or the social media platform WhatsApp, etc., could also participate in the study.

Despite the limitations and a large number of rejected hypotheses, it was possible to obtain findings from the present study that can contribute to approaches for increasing the subjective well-being and engagement of employees. It was evident that personality traits have an influence on the previously mentioned variables. One possible practical implication would be to offer people with a high level of ambiguity intolerance the option of working fully in home office and to suggest people with a low level of ambiguity intolerance the option of working partially in home office. Furthermore, the employer may consider the degree of ambiguity intolerance when searching for employees depending on the time the employee has to work from home.

5.4 Conclusion

Based on the results of this practical study, a negative correlation between the personality trait ambiguity intolerance and subjective well-being as well as work engagement could be established in a first step. Furthermore, working in a home office has a positive or

negative effect on work engagement depending on the level of ambiguity intolerance. Overall the conducted study was able to expand the still very limited knowledge on the relationship between personality traits and well-being and engagement in home office. Nevertheless, the limitations of the study underscore the need for further research to explore these relationships in more detail. The topic area lends itself to subsequent research with great potential given the importance of personality traits on subjective well-being and engagement at work and the increasingly growing topic of the home office.

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7. Appendix

Appendix A: Online Survey

Beginning:

Dear participant,
in the context of my master's thesis in management with a specialization in strategic marketing at Catolica in Lisbon, I am studying the well-being and engagement of working at home.

With your participation you support me in gaining new insights in this field - thank you very much already!

In total, it takes around **5 minutes** to complete this study.

The data collected in this study will only be used for research purposes and will therefore be treated **anonymously and strictly confidential**. It is not possible to make any conclusions about your person!

Please answer all questions completely, without interruptions and as honestly as possible.

There are neither right nor wrong answers. Read each question carefully and then choose the answer that corresponds to your initial assessment. If you are not sure, choose the answer that works best for you.

If you have any questions regarding the study, please feel free to contact me:
Katharina Engels (katha.engels@web.de).

Thank you very much for your participation and your support of my master thesis!

Q1: Do you agree to participate in this study?

- I agree to participate in this study. (1)
- I do not agree to participate in this study. (2)

Q2: Do you currently work in home office?

- Yes, every working day. (1)
- Yes, a few days a week. (2)
- No. (3)

Q3: How well do the following statements describe your personality?

The following questions are related to the description of yourself. Please mark the answer option that matches your assessment most closely in each case.

I see myself as someone who...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree a little (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree a little (4)	Strongly agree (5)
... is reserved (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... is generally trusting (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... tends to be lazy (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... is relaxed, handles stress well (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... has few artistic interest (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... is outgoing, sociable (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... tends to find fault with others (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... does a thorough job (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... gets nervous easily (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... has an active imagination (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4: How well do the following statements describe your personality? Please chose the answer that best corresponds to how much you agree with...

	Not at all characteristic of me (1)	A little characteristic of me (2)	Somewhat characteristic of me (3)	Very characterisitic of me (4)	Entirely characterisitic of me (5)
Unforeseen events upset me greatly. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It frustrates me not having all the information I need. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uncertainty keeps me from living a full life. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
One should always look ahead so as to avoid surprises. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A small unforeseen event can spoil everything, even with the best of planning. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When it's time to act, uncertainty paralyses me. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I am uncertain I can't function	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

very well. (7)						
I always want to know what the future has in store for me. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can't stand being taken by surprise. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The smallest doubt can stop me from acting. (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I should be able to organize everything in advance. (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I must get away from all uncertain situations. (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5: In the following there are five statements you can agree or disagree with. For each statement, please indicate how strongly it applies to you personally at the moment in your current situation **at work**.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
In most ways my life is close to my ideal. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The conditions of my life are excellent. (2)

I am satisfied with my life. (3)

So far I have gotten the important things I want in life. (4)

If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing. (5)

Q6: Indicate to what extent you have felt this way over the past week

Below you will see a series of words that describe different feelings and sensations. Please read each word and enter the intensity in the scale.

Lately I have been feeling...

	Very slightly or not at all (1)	A little (2)	Moderately (3)	Quite a bit (4)	Extremely (5)
Interested (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Distressed (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excited (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Upset (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guilty (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scared (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hostile (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enthusiastic (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proud (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Irritable (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Alert (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ashamed (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inspired (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nervous (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Determined (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attentive (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jittery (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Active (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Afraid (20)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7: The following statements refer to your current situation at work.

For each statement, please indicate how strongly it applies to you personally at the moment in your current situation **at work**.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
I focus hard on my work (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I concentrate on my work (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I pay a lot of attention to my work (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I share the same work values as my colleagues (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I share the same work goals as my colleagues (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I share the same work attitudes as my colleagues (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel positive about my work (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel energetic in my work (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am enthusiastic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

in my work |
(9)

In order to end this survey, please answer the following demographic questions:

Q8: Gender

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Non-binary / third gender (3)
 - Prefer not to say (4)
-

Q9: Age

Q10: Nationality

Q11: Educational level

- Primary education (1)
- Secondary education (2)
- Further education (3)
- High education (4)
- Bachelor's degree (5)
- Master's degree (6)
- Doctoral degree (7)
- Other (8)

Q12: Employment status

- Employee in profit or non-profit organization (1)
- Self-employed (2)
- Unemployed (3)
- Worker & Student (4)
- Student (5)
- Retired (6)
- Other (7)

End: Thank you very much for your participation :-)

As mentioned in the beginning if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me: Katharina Engels (katha.engels@web.de)

Appendix B: Multiple Regression – Model Summary

Table 8

Model Summary Multiple Regression

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
Life satisfaction	0.480	0.231	1.793	6.751	6	135	<0.001
Positive Affect	0.391	0.153	0.642	4.060	6	135	<0.001
Negative Affect	0.625	0.391	0.383	14.426	6	135	<0.001
Engagement	0.446	0.199	1.524	5.600	6	135	<0.001