



The Impact of Perceived Value and Culture Alignment on Employee Retention, Engagement, and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Title: The impact of perceived value and culture alignment on employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction

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This master's thesis examines how employee value gaps affect firm performance in terms of employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction in organizational culture. The study employs quantitative analysis with two sets of four hypotheses to investigate the impact of perceived value and culture alignment on turnover intentions, work engagement, and general job satisfaction. The central findings reveal that a low alignment between claimed and perceived values and a low alignment between personal and organizational values contribute to higher turnover intentions among employees. Further, a high level of value and culture alignment in the workplace is associated with increased employee engagement and job satisfaction. Being in a managerial position significantly increases alignment for both cases. Value gaps are not strongly represented in our sample and are thus contrary to the current retention and engagement crisis in the world of work. The thesis emphasizes the significance of building a cohesive organization with a shared value set, particularly in the current business climate characterized by changing work dynamics and increasing employee disengagement. The thesis contributes to understanding the relationship between value gaps and firm performance, providing insights for organizations to improve employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction by addressing value gaps and promoting cultural alignment.

Keywords: Corporate values, corporate culture, culture alignment, value alignment, employee value gap, employee retention, employee (dis)engagement, job satisfaction, Human resources, Quiet Quitting, Great resignation

Resumo

Título: O impacto do valor percebido e do alinhamento cultural na retenção dos trabalhadores, no seu empenho e na sua satisfação profissional

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Esta tese de mestrado examina a forma como as lacunas de valor dos trabalhadores afectam o desempenho da empresa em termos de retenção de trabalhadores, envolvimento e satisfação no trabalho na cultura organizacional. O estudo emprega uma análise quantitativa com dois conjuntos de quatro hipóteses para investigar o impacto do valor percebido e do alinhamento cultural nas intenções de rotatividade, no envolvimento no trabalho e na satisfação no trabalho. As conclusões centrais revelam que um baixo alinhamento entre os valores reivindicados e os valores percebidos e um baixo alinhamento entre os valores pessoais e organizacionais contribuem para intenções de rotação mais elevadas entre os trabalhadores. Além disso, um elevado nível de alinhamento no local de trabalho está associado a um maior empenhamento dos trabalhadores e à satisfação com o trabalho. Estar numa posição de gestão aumenta significativamente o alinhamento. As lacunas de valores não estão fortemente representadas na nossa amostra e são, portanto, contrárias à actual crise de retenção e de envolvimento no mundo do trabalho. A tese enfatiza a importância de construir uma organização coesa com um conjunto de valores partilhados, particularmente no actual clima empresarial caracterizado pela alteração da dinâmica de trabalho e pelo aumento do desinteresse dos trabalhadores. A tese contribui para a compreensão da relação entre as lacunas de valor e o desempenho da empresa, fornecendo informações para as organizações melhorarem a retenção, o empenhamento e a satisfação profissional dos trabalhadores, através da resolução das lacunas de valor e da promoção do alinhamento cultural.

Palavras-chave: Valores empresariais, cultura empresarial, alinhamento da cultura, alinhamento de valores, lacuna de valores dos trabalhadores, retenção de trabalhadores, (des)envolvimento dos trabalhadores, satisfação no trabalho, Recursos Humanos, Despedimento silencioso, Grande demissão

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1 Introduction

Research has shown that an organization's values and culture significantly impact factors such as employee engagement, job satisfaction, and retention (Denison, 1990; Schein, 2017). Peter Drucker's famous saying 'culture eats strategy for breakfast' emphasizes the crucial role of organizational culture in achieving high performance and successful implementation at all levels of the company (Corporate Governance Institute, 2022). It is evident that organizational culture is not a one-time action but a continuous process that greatly impacts the organization's overall success: Two major concepts related to the importance of organizational culture are employees' perceptions of value gaps and cultural alignments. Value gaps refer to the differences between the corporate values declared, and those actually put into practice (Schein, 2017). Cultural alignment deals with how well employees feel their personal values align with their firm's values and beliefs (Chatman, 1989). It seems that those misalignment issues are heavily marked across several organizations. In a LinkedIn survey, only 60% of participants fully agreed that their company lives the values it advocates (LinkedIn, 2017). In addition, executive leadership teams and board members believe that their own organizational cultures are robust, whereas the employees' perceptions of the same may differ from this viewpoint (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2021).

Paradoxically, companies are starting to invest heavily in developing their employees, recognizing them as a vital resource and making them a top priority on their agenda (World Economic Forum, 2020). However, the reality shows that organizations have recently struggled to keep their employees engaged and committed. The contemporary concept of 'Quiet Quitting' with employees gradually reducing their effort and dedication to their work has become more prevalent and has raised concerns (Harvard Business Review, 2022). The disruptive change in the job market affects not only resignations but also disaffected employees in existing jobs who may decide to do only the minimum for their job. The Covid-19 pandemic and changes in work arrangements have exacerbated this trend by emphasizing the importance of meaningful work, social connections, and a balanced work-life (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2021). Many employees are considering leaving their jobs for better opportunities and a healthier work-life balance. As a result, the 'Great Resignation' has been identified as a potential consequence of the pandemic (McKinsey, 2021).

Companies around the world are facing major HR uncertainty. Since corporate performance is directly correlated with employee engagement (Gallup, 2023), it is crucial for organizations to

fully understand the misalignment and perception gap of corporate culture and values between theory and practice. In the face of challenges like Quiet Quitting, firms must consider how perceived cultural alignment and value gaps impact employee engagement, retention, and job satisfaction. The research question is as follows:

RQ: How does the employee value gap impact firm performance in terms of employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction?

In particular, we will determine if employees are likely to quit or search for other job opportunities outside their organization. In addition, this work aims to investigate the extent to which there is a connection to work engagement and general job satisfaction.

To answer the research question, Chapter 2 first outlines the role of corporate values and culture and how they relate to organizational identity and performance. The elaboration on human resource management in this chapter discusses the importance of motivational drivers and their effect on organizational commitment. In addition, the concepts of perceived value and culture alignment are introduced, which are central to this thesis. Chapter 2 draws a closer by examining the relevance of the current disengagement and retention crisis. Chapter 3 describes the methodology of the underlying work. The chapter is devoted to presenting the quantitative analysis and the conducted survey design and structure. The central component of Chapter 4 is the analysis and results of the survey studied. Chapter 5 is focused on the discussion of the results and presents conclusions. The extent to which our theoretical assumptions remain valid is also examined. Finally, the limitations of this thesis and further research possibilities are identified.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Role of corporate values and culture

The fundamental beliefs, principles, and attitudes that direct an organization's behavior and form its decision-making processes are referred to as corporate values. Through this function, they are critical to the formation of the distinct character of the company (Serrat, 2017). Incorporating corporate values into management practices will reinforce behaviors that are advantageous to the institution and to all communities in and outside the company (Booz et al., 2005). They can benefit businesses by increasing innovation, productivity, and credibility, thus contributing to a sustainable competitive advantage (Serrat, 2017). The importance of corporate values becomes particularly evident when the company wants to achieve a clear strategic orientation and needs all employees to work towards the same goal. In the best case, corporate values serve as a compass that defines where the company is heading and what decisions will be made for all stakeholders. They lay the foundation for a common purpose that all employees should understand, work towards, and live by. In this context, mission statements are crucial, as they can act as a powerful tool to align employees to shared values and create a cohesive organization (Klemm et al., 1991).

From various definitions, one can deduce that organizational culture, on the other hand, describes the attitudes, experiences, and shared values and beliefs acquired through social learning that control how individuals and groups in the organization engage with each other and with external groups. Nowadays, corporate culture plays a significant role in building an individual employer brand, meaning establishing a special employee value proposition (Ortega-Parra, 2013). To understand the importance of organizational culture and its impact on business performance, one should understand that organizational culture must be used strategically to improve performance. A strong culture increases an organization's performance by motivating employees and shaping and coordinating their behavior (Chatman et al., 2003). If an organization's values are reflected in its culture and behavior, it is more likely to achieve better performance results, such as higher employee engagement, greater worker satisfaction, and better business outcomes (Denison, 1990). Coordinating executive choices and decisions with the organization's core values can create long-term value for all parties (Koller, 1994).

Both culture and values should be interrelated and work harmoniously to create a shared identity and build a healthy and well-performing organization. Building a thriving organization connecting them is crucial. While corporate culture serves as a set of guidelines by which individuals act in their workplace on a daily basis, corporate values are the guiding ideas and principles that support the organization's vision and identity (Schuh & Miller, 2006). Winning companies found ways to link their values to their culture and ensure they shine through everything the company does. It is critical to clearly communicate the values and anchor them across the organization to ensure they are incorporated into all decision-making processes. When they are not only conveyed but lived out in daily operations, this not only reinforces valuable behaviors and builds credibility among the whole workforce but also influences employees' work ethic and mental well-being (Quinn, 2011).

2.2 The impact of human resource management

The effective integration of a company's culture and values hinges on the proper management of human resources (Huselid, 1995). The strategist Michael Porter highlights the importance of managing human resources to gain a competitive edge (Porter & Kramer, 1985). Traditional human resource practices have historically focused on tasks such as administration, performance evaluations, and compliance systems (Duke and Udono, 2012). Modern human resource management prioritizes enhancing the employee experience, fostering development, and encouraging involvement in the company. The idea that a company's people are its main source of success has become well-accepted as businesses recognize the competitive advantage of utilizing internal resources effectively (Wright et al., 2001). With employees as a valuable investment and a key driver for success, the connection between businesses' overall strategies and their human resource practices is becoming more widely acknowledged (Pfeffer, 1994; Greer, 2021).

Over time, strategic management has developed into a perspective prioritizing a company's resources and knowledge. In this context, people become essential for value creation (Conner & Prahalad, 1996). As stated in Chapter 2.1, a strong corporate culture is a key lever for employee engagement and, thus, a driving force for organizational performance. Thriving companies prioritize investing resources in both their organization and individuals, resulting in superior performance compared to their competitors. Instead of solely focusing on profits, they prioritize overall growth and development. According to a study conducted by McKinsey, companies that

prioritize the performance and well-being of both their employees and the organization itself tend to yield higher returns for shareholders compared to their competitors (McKinsey, 2020).

In order to maximize employee performance, it is essential to recognize the factors that motivate individuals and the impact of their commitment to the organization. Mowday et al. (2013) identified several factors contributing to employees' organizational commitment, including a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's values and goals, a willingness to devote substantial effort, and a strong desire to remain in the organization. The commitment can also be seen as the identity of the person linked to the organization, respectively, when the organization's goals are very similar to those of the individual (Mowday et al., 2013). The higher the degree of organizational commitment, the more an employee identifies with a particular organization. Therefore, organizational identification is directly affected by variables such as the declared values, goals, and corporate culture of the respective firm.

Employee retention and engagement are heavily influenced by motivation drivers, which can be either intrinsic or extrinsic factors. Intrinsically motivated employees are eager to learn new things, acquire new skills, and progress in their careers. They are contoured by personal fulfillment, which can come from mastery, independence, and a clear purpose. External factors such as salary, benefits, bonuses, or other rewards can lead to extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In today's workplace, employees are driven by autonomy, mastery, and purpose. Therefore, companies must prioritize motivating their workforce to enhance performance (Pink, 2009). Employees who are engaged are more committed to their work and are more likely to stay with the company, increasing employee retention. On the other hand, disengaged employees are less dedicated, less productive, and more inclined to leave the organization. High employee engagement refers to a strong people-organization fit and enhanced employee well-being (Saks, 2006). Employee engagement is further strengthened through a positive work culture and alignment with the organization's values (Schneider et al., 2013). Furthermore, this facilitates the ability of employees to perceive their work as valuable and imbues them with a sense of purpose in carrying out their daily responsibilities (Veltman, 2016).

2.3 Perceived value and culture alignment

Values that organizations claim or promote may differ from the values employees perceive in the workplace. This occurs when their execution in day-to-day activities fails. Thus, there may be a discrepancy between stated and practiced corporate values. (Bacal, 2020; Harkn, 2021). In the course of this thesis, this discrepancy in perceived value alignment will also be referred to as the ‘value gap’. The reasons for this gap may arise from companies formulating a set of well-intentioned value and mission statements that characterize the organization. However, employees may perceive a discrepancy with lived values due to inconsistent communication, lack of prioritization, or incorrect role modeling. In addition, there may be a lack of involvement in or definition of values or cultural differences. Employees may perceive a disconnect if values are only communicated formally instead of practiced (Schein, 2017).

As described in Chapter 2.1, corporate values asserted are directly related to the concept of organizational culture. To investigate the harmony between the values advocated by organizations and the values expected by employees, the concept of ‘perceived cultural alignment’ is introduced throughout this thesis. Perceived cultural alignment reflects how well employees believe their personal beliefs and their organization’s values are compatible (Chatman, 1989). It can be high when employees and managers are equally committed to the purpose and core values of the organization and low when there is a mismatch between their beliefs and avowed firm values. Thus, employees are more likely to feel connected to their organization when they perceive a high level of cultural alignment. Employees who perceive low levels of cultural alignment do not feel connected to the organization. In this context, the term ‘person-organization fit’ refers to the extent to which an individual’s personal goals and ideas align with the principles and culture of the organization (O’Reilly et al., 2017; Chatman, 1989). Therefore, individuals are more likely to be attracted to companies that fit their own qualities and attributes (Schneider, 1987; Pratt, 1998).

Creating alignment inside a company requires a shared purpose and value system (Garelli, 2006). According to O’Reilly (2017), strong cultures are defined by a shared understanding among employees about the company’s values and a strong drive to pursue them actively. A LinkedIn study revealed that despite executives’ emphasis on the significance of company culture, a disconnect often exists between their verbal commitments and actual actions (LinkedIn,

2017). Leadership teams often struggle to turn their cultural goals into practical actions. According to the Global Culture Survey by the Katzenbach Center, 63% of the C-suite and leaders are convinced that the advocated culture is consistent with practice (Strategy&, 2018). In comparison, only 41% of employees confirm this. According to a study conducted by Kienbaum and Harvard Business Manager, there are significant differences in the German market. Only 40% of the respondents claim that the company's defined culture is actually put into practice. Similar to previous studies, top management received a higher assessment compared to middle management and HR managers. Only 2% of respondents fully agree with this statement (Kienbaum Management Consultants, 2011).

2.4 Retention and engagement crisis

The world of work is changing for various reasons, not least of which is the massive impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and many employees contemplate leaving their current jobs. The real problem, often not properly diagnosed and only tackled in the short term through financial incentives, is not solved unless we address the real needs of today's workforce (McKinsey, 2019). The phenomenon, called the Great Resignation, is reaching a peak with a massive rate of quitting in the United States at the end of 2021 (Statista, 2022). As a McKinsey study on the Great Resignation illustrates, this problem is apparent across all industries, with 40% of employees indicating they are somewhat likely to leave their current job in the next 3-6 months (De Smet et al., 2021). Employers are facing an existential crisis that must be addressed. Due to recent rounds of layoffs, employees are further re-evaluating their priorities and reflecting on what is meaningful for themselves. Sectors particularly affected include service and retail (Statista, 2022). According to Graeber (2018) there are jobs that are increasingly seen as pointless or unnecessary by employees. These occupations, known as 'bullshit jobs,' have become a source of discontentment for many employees, leading to a rise in disengagement. Individuals may feel a sense of frustration and resentment towards their work, believing that their roles lack purpose. Graeber asserts that these jobs represent a waste of valuable human potential and contribute to the larger societal issue of work being disconnected from meaningful contributions to society.

Disruptive changes in the job market not only impact resignations but can also lead to disengaged employees who may only perform the bare minimum at work. This phenomenon is known as 'Quiet Quitting' (Harvard Business Review, 2022) and is characterized by the fact

that employees may disengage from an organization without formally quitting or voicing frustration or discomfort. It specifically refers to employees who put the lowest effort and excitement into their daily work, only fulfilling the minimum requirements in their tasks. Quiet Quitting pertains to employees feeling uncommitted and disinterested in organizational roles, arising from a sense that work is unfulfilling or lacks purpose. Besides this, a corporate environment that fails to resonate with employees or neglects to recognize their worth can contribute to Quiet Quitting (Harter, 2022).

Chapter 2.3 argued that employees may feel more connected to their organization and express greater job satisfaction when there is a high level of cultural alignment and could feel disengaged if there is a low level of cultural alignment. The relevance of this is evident in current realities, revealed in many contexts where there is a significant disparity or value gap between the firm's avowed values and culture and what employees assert the reality in the workplace actually is. It is worth considering whether this misalignment between organizational values and company culture has a discernible impact on firm performance relative to employee retention and engagement metrics. In the context of workplace issues such as Quiet Quitting, organizations must consider the potential influence of value and culture alignment on employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction. To gain a deeper understanding of these factors and their impact we investigate the influence of value and culture alignments on employee retention intents, on engagement, and on job satisfaction. The following Research Question arises: **'How does the employee value gap impact firm performance in terms of employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction?'**

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study used a quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between perceived value and culture alignment on employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction. Specifically, this study tested two sets of four Hypotheses (see Tables 1 and 2) about the impact of the value gap and the impact of perceived culture alignment on employees' intention to leave the organization, the likelihood of actively searching for job opportunities outside the organization, work engagement in the organization, and the level of general job satisfaction in the respective organization. A quantitative approach was used to obtain opinions about the impact of perceived cultural alignment on employee retention and engagement. This focused on obtaining objective and generalizable results (Woodside, 2010). The approach was deductive where a Hypothesis was derived from existing theory, after which a research question was created to test the Hypothesis (Wilson, 2014). For this thesis, we utilized deductive design to determine the level to which a relationship or context existed in broader situations (Gulati, 2009). Comparing the Hypotheses to the findings led to either a confirmation or rejection of the Hypothesis (Snieder & Larner, 2009).

Primary data was collected through an online survey via Qualtrics to reach a diverse group of individuals with varying demographic backgrounds. The survey offered the advantages of low cost, control of the sample population, and simplified data collection (Mc Peake et al., 2014; Evans & Mathur, 2005). The chosen method also guaranteed all participants complete anonymity and confidentiality of the information submitted. The responses received from the online survey were analyzed using R statistic software.

One Hypothesis of this study relating to perceived culture alignment (See Table 2), as defined in Chapter 2.2, indicated that high alignment had a negative effect on the intention to leave the organization. In other words, it suggested that if employees felt that their personal values and beliefs aligned with those promoted within their organization's culture and there was a complete person-organization fit, they were less likely to want to leave the organization. The purpose of this Hypothesis was to examine whether a high level of perceived cultural alignment decreased an employee's intention to leave the company. In contrast, a low level of perceived cultural alignment increased it. Perceived cultural alignment was the independent variable, while intention to leave was the dependent variable in this case. The second Hypothesis aimed to determine

whether the perceived cultural alignment was a significant factor in influencing employees' job search behavior, meaning with a high alignment, the respective employee was less likely to search for job opportunities outside the organization. The third and fourth Hypotheses tested whether a high level of perceived cultural alignment positively affected work engagement and general job satisfaction. Another set of 4 Hypotheses investigated the value gap introduced in Chapter 2.2, for the same dependent variables as in the first set (see Table 1). It was reasonable to assume that different outcomes could be expected for these results since the value gap was distinct from cultural alignment by definition.

Table 1: Hypotheses relating to the value gap

	Hypothesis
1	The value gap positively affects the intention to leave the organization.
2	The value gap positively affects employee likelihood of actively searching for job opportunities outside the organization.
3	The value gap negatively affects employee work engagement in the organization.
4	The value gap negatively affects the level of employee general job satisfaction in the organization.

Table 1: Hypotheses derived based on research question in chapter 2.4

Table 2: Hypotheses relating to perceived culture alignment

	Hypothesis
1	Perceived culture alignment negatively affects the intention to leave the organization.
2	Perceived culture alignment negatively affects employee likelihood of actively searching for job opportunities outside the organization.
3	Perceived culture alignment positively affects employee work engagement in the organization.
4	Perceived culture alignment positively affects the level of employee general job satisfaction in the organization.

Table 2: Hypotheses derived based on research question in chapter 2.4

The survey structure was in six parts, which the respondent did not necessarily have to perceive as separate elements. The logic behind was to create statements as free of errors as possible and for everything to be adequately understood by respondents and sensibly structured for later analysis. The survey comprised of 33 statements and 10 demographic questions (See Appendix). In section 1, the survey began by enquiring about the general understanding of organizational values, mission statements, or corporate culture (S1-S9). To this end, we ensured that participants were generally aware of a specific organizational rule book. This was done to prevent question order bias, which can affect answers in cases of a misunderstanding of values. All statements were formulated differently to ensure respondents understood the subject matter and interpreted the statements similarly. In the first part of the questions, the word 'value' was replaced with the definition given in Chapter 2.1 to observe respondents' reactions. Section 2 contained four statements about how the respondent perceived a value gap (S10-S14). These statements asked if the culture and values promised differed from what is practiced. Section 3 of the survey referred to perceived culture alignment (S15-S18). Here, the definition elaborated in Chapter 2.2 was used to express multiple statements, by which the respondent indicated levels of agreement. Section 4 asked about the degree of engagement (S19-S24) and satisfaction (S22), forming a tie to Hypotheses 3 and 4. To avoid response bias, statements were phrased positively. Section 5 pertained to the likelihood of seeking job opportunities outside the organization (S27-29) and the intention to leave the organization (S25 & S26), which connects to Hypotheses 1 and 2.

The sampling audience was young professionals from Generation Y and Z who were currently employed. Since employees' perceptions are the core investigation of this thesis, respondents were also considered employees when they evaluated their experiences from their last employment. People in internships or work-study contracts were also considered as employees. To ensure accurate research outcomes, we asked for demographic details to be filled out in the survey, such as company size, industry, time with the organization, and income, among others. These factors may influence the research findings (See Section 6).

To introduce a measure for the 'value gap' and for 'culture alignment,' a 7-point Likert scale asked respondents to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements describing the organization's culture and their values and beliefs. A distinct threshold was set for each category to differentiate between high and low alignment. This thesis categorized score of 6 or 7 as high perceived culture alignment, 3-5 as moderate perceived culture alignment, and 1 or 2

as low perceived culture alignment. The scale was inversely interpreted for the value gap since the respective survey statement S10 (*'The stated values of the organization I work for match the values I observe in the workplace'*) was positively framed. Therefore, a value gap was considered as high when respondents clicked 1 or 2, as moderate (3-5), and low (6,7).

Value gap		Culture alignment	
H1	S10 → S28	H1	S14 → S28
H2	S10 → S31	H2	S14 → S31
H3	S10 → S27	H3	S14 → S27
H4	S10 → S24	H4	S14 → S24

Table 3: Analysis of Hypotheses

To refine the scope of this thesis, S10 was identified as a key metric for measuring the value gap, and S14 was an indicator for assessing culture alignment. Given that other related survey statements did not exhibit significant differences, we prioritized analyzing these two statements in greater detail. Since we introduced a measure of the value gap and culture alignment, it was appropriate to transfer these with corresponding selected survey statements on retention (S28 & S31), engagement (S27), and job satisfaction (S24). This containment allowed for unification across the analysis of all Hypotheses and, in particular, enabled us to statistically test the relationship of two Likert-scale statements made by the same individual (See Table 3).

To analyze the data, we looked at the general output of various survey results from Qualtrics Software. Further, we focused on the underlying data for our defined statements (See Table 3) that related to the Hypotheses (Table 1 & 2) through analysis with R Studio. In order to determine if there was a significant relationship between the two categorical variables, we performed a Pearson chi-square test for each Hypothesis. Furthermore, a paired t-test appeared logical since we used the same Likert scale to compare two survey statements from the same individual. We could determine a potential relationship or the average difference by calculating the mean difference between the two observations. By using linear regression, we could further estimate the regression coefficients and determined how much of the variance in the dependent variables was explained by the independent variable.

3.2 Data Collection

The web-based survey was conducted over an 8-day period from May 06 to May 13, 2023, through Qualtrics software. Participants were recruited through social media platforms and professional networks, and the survey link was shared via email or phone. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose and confidentiality before participating. It was sent to 400 persons, generating 245 participants who finished the survey. Out of 301 participants who started the survey, those who did not complete it were sorted out. These numbers showed an average response rate of approximately 60%, even without reminder messages. This reduced the risk of bias (Mc Peake et al., 2014). The high response rate was likely due to the benefit of using online surveys as a quick and efficient method.

4 Results

4.1 Hypotheses relating to the value gap

The survey statement S10 (*'The stated values of the organization I work for match the values I observe in the workplace'*) was referred to observe the value gap. S10 in general indicated a mean of 5.07 on the 7-point Likert scale. As defined in Chapter 3, scores of 6 and 7 indicated a high level of value alignment and, respectively, a low value gap, and scores of 1 and 2 indicated a low value alignment and a high value gap. Of all respondents, 42.22% agreed or strongly agreed that the stated values of the respective organization matched values they observed in the workplace. Only 4.92% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with that (See Table 4). The variance of 1.54 was low, implying that the responses were relatively close to the mean and there was a moderate level of agreement among the participants.

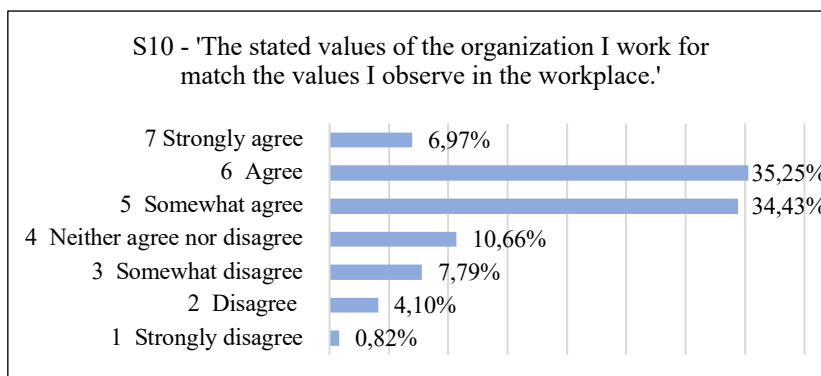


Table 4: Responses relating to the value gap, obtained from Qualtrics

Hypothesis 1 aimed to test if the value gap positively affected the intention to leave the organization. As described in Chapter 3, the survey statement S28 (*'I have considered leaving my current organization'*) was consulted for this purpose. Our corresponding Null-Hypothesis was 'The value gap does not affect the intention to leave the organization'. By changing the levels into factor forms, we allowed the categorization as low, moderate, and high, as described in Chapter 3.1. When now plotting both variables, we saw that a high value gap resulted in high intentions to leave, whereas a low value gap, resulted in low intentions to leave the organization (See Table 5). The distinction between possessing a high or moderate degree of value alignment (low value gap) versus having a low value alignment (high value gap) was significantly more apparent in the context of the value gap.

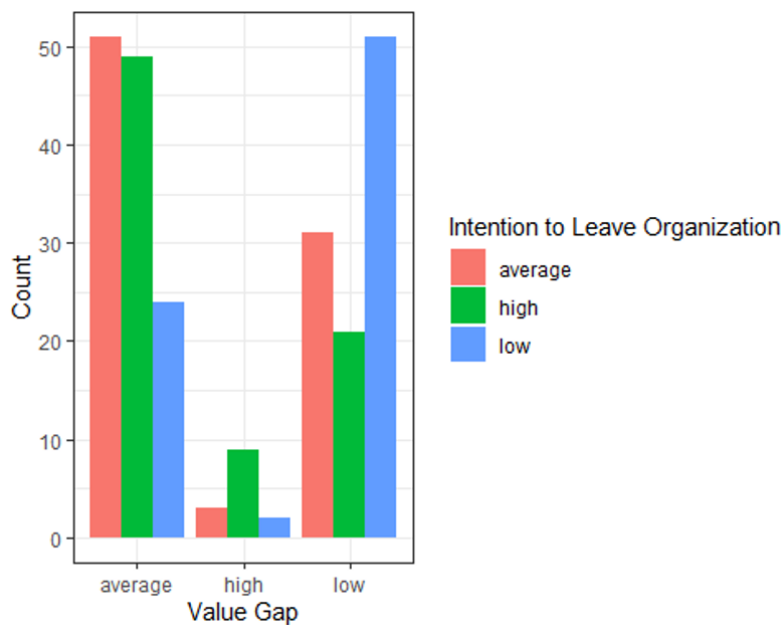


Table 5: Plot related to the variables from H1, obtained from R

The Pearson chi-squared test showed a p-value of 3.062e-06, which proved to be small. The p-value showed a very high significance level, indicating strong evidence against the Null-Hypothesis (See Table 6). Through data cleaning, a sample size of 239 was used to run a paired t-test further. The test showed a mean difference of -1.021, indicating that participants who reported a high perceived value gap had strong intentions to leave the organization, compared to those who reported low perceived value gaps. The negative mean difference suggested that, on average, the values in data from S28 tended to be lower than the corresponding values in data from S10. This showed that as the size of the value gap decreased (moving from high to low alignment), the intention to leave the organization increased. We can reject the Null-Hypothesis

since the chi-square p-value was less than 0.05 and conclude that a high value gap positively affected the intention to leave the organization.

Test statistic	df	P value
31	4	3.062e-06 * * *

Table 6: H1 Pearson Chi-squared test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
-5.786	238	2.258e-08 * * *	two.sided	-1.021

Table 7: H1 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S28 ~ S10	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	7.226	0.5064	14.27	9.347e-34
S10	-0.6182	0.09656	-6.402	8.151e-10

Table 8: H1 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
239	1.849	0.1474	0.1438

Table 9: H1 Linear Model, obtained from R

The regression slope coefficient of -0.6182 indicated that for every unit by which the value gap increased (smaller alignment), the intention to leave decreased by 0.6182 units. Based on the inverse interpretation of statement S10, the result of the linear regression suggested that a higher value gap was associated with a stronger intention to leave the organization. The R-square value showed that the independent variable explained approximately 14.74% of the variance (See Tables 8 & 9).

According to **Hypothesis 2**, employees were more likely to actively search for job opportunities outside their organization if there was a higher value gap. In this case, survey statement S10 was referred to so as to observe the value gap, and survey statement S31 (*'I am actively searching for job opportunities outside my organization'*) was used to examine the likelihood of actively searching for job opportunities outside the organization. S31 showed a general mean of 3.63. Scores below this scale's midpoint (4) indicated a lower tendency to actively search for job opportunities and 3.63 could be seen as a neutral position. As survey statement S32 (*'I have actively searched for job opportunities outside my organization in the past 3 months'*) showed the same mean of 3.63 as the outcome of S31, it was reasonable to proceed only with S31. The respondents' behavior was consistent in both current and past search experiences, indicating stable behavior over time. S31 and S32 both showed a relatively high variance (3.90, 4.31), which indicated a high level of dispersion in the responses. To provide statistical significance

of the relationship, a chi-square test, paired t-test, and linear regression were performed. We observed a p-value <0.05 and can reject the Null-Hypothesis. We concluded that a high value gap positively affected employee likelihood of actively searching for job opportunities outside the organization. We found a statistically significant relationship between S10 and S31 with a negative slope coefficient of -0.5206 (See Tables 10-13 in Appendix).

Hypothesis 3 aimed to investigate whether the value gap had a negative impact on employee work engagement in organizations. This was done by analyzing statement S27, which asked respondents about their daily work engagement (*'I feel engaged with my work on a daily basis'*). The results showed that 46.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statement S27, which had a mean score of 5.00. For Hypothesis 3, we obtained a chi-square p-value less than 0.05. The mean difference of the paired t-test was -0.08787 , indicating that respondents who reported a high perceived value gap had lower employee work engagement. We saw a statistically significant relationship and a positive slope coefficient of 0.5202 . We could reject the Null-Hypothesis and concluded that there was a negative relationship between the variables (See Tables 14-17 in Appendix).

Hypothesis 4 attempted to investigate whether a high value gap had a negative impact on employee job satisfaction. Statement S24 was used for this (*'Overall, I am satisfied with my job.'*). Of all respondents, 54.51% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. The average level of satisfaction among individuals was relatively positive, with a mean value of 5.15. The variance of 2.09 was moderate. Plotting both variables showed that a low value gap would result in high job satisfaction (See Table 18). To assess the statistical significance, strength, and direction of the relationship for S24 and S10, a chi-square test, paired t-test, and linear regression (See Tables 19-22 in Appendix) were conducted. For H4, we observed a chi-square p-value less than 0.05. Therefore, we could reject the Null-Hypothesis that the value gap did not affect employee job satisfaction. The mean difference of 0.05021 suggested that if the value gap decreased, job satisfaction would increase, as the value gap was interpreted inversely. With the value gap as the independent variable and job satisfaction as the dependent variable, the slope coefficient of 0.06506 showed that as the value gap decreased (from high to low alignment, inverse scale), job satisfaction was expected to increase by 0.06506 units. The R-squared of 0.3057 indicated that about 30% of the variance in job satisfaction could be explained by the variation in the value gap.

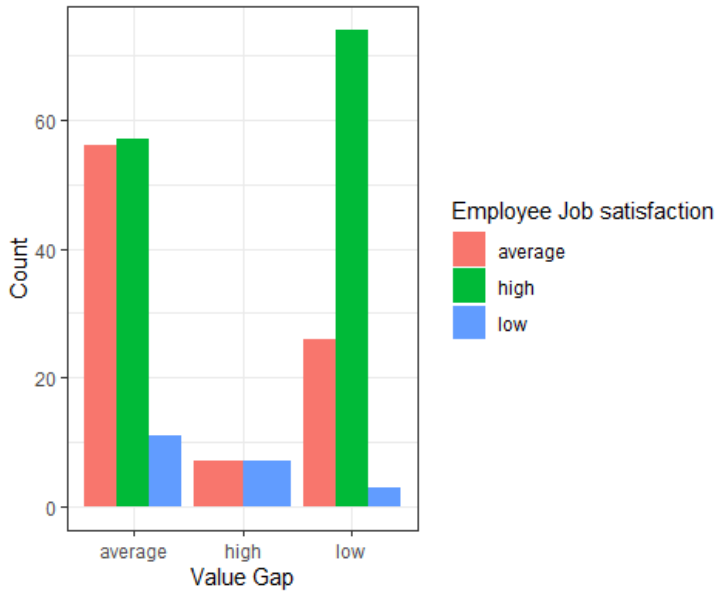


Table 18: Plot related to the variables from H4, obtained from R

4.2 Hypotheses relating to perceived culture alignment

The survey statement S14 (*'The values of the organization I work for are in line with my personal values'*) mainly referred to observing perceived culture alignment, meaning how well employees believed their personal beliefs and their organization's values were compatible. The findings showed that 52.67% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statement S14.

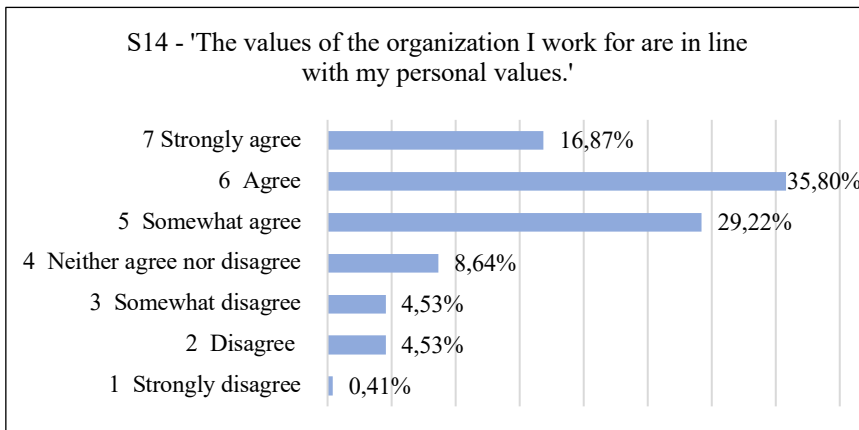


Table 23: Responses relating to the perceived culture alignment, obtained from Qualtrics

This revealed that a significant part of the sample perceived a match between their personal values and those promoted by their organization. Here 5% of respondents said they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating a misalignment of personal values and company values. This figure could be considered as relatively low. As 8% of respondents chose a

neutral point on the scale, this indicated a lack of clear agreement or disagreement on the alignment of values.

Hypothesis 1 was designed to test whether perceived culture alignment negatively affected the intention to leave the organization. Besides statement S14 on perceived culture alignment, we were using statement S28 (*'I have considered leaving my current organization'*) to investigate this relationship. For S28, 31.15% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, and 32.79% agreed or strongly agreed. The quantitative analysis showed a correlation value of -0.30 for S14 and S28, demonstrating a negative relationship between them. Through further tests, we received a chi-square p-value of 6.522e-06, therefore significantly smaller than 0.05. As a result, we had strong reasons to reject the Null-Hypothesis that perceived culture alignment had no effect on the intention to leave the organization. The paired t-test revealed a significant relationship between the two variables. The mean difference of -1.31 indicated that respondents who indicated high perceived culture alignment had lower intention to leave scores (See Tables 24-27 in Appendix).

According to **Hypothesis 2**, perceived cultural alignment had a negative impact on employees' likelihood of actively seeking job opportunities outside of their current organization, meaning the higher an employee perceived a misalignment of their own values and corporate values, the chances of an employee searching for other job opportunities increased. Survey statements S14 and S31 (*'I am actively searching for job opportunities outside my organization'*) were used to examine this relation. The correlation value of -0.37 showed a similar indication of a negative relationship between both variables. A Chi-square test resulted in a p-value of 3.068e-05, therefore significantly smaller than 0.05. We rejected the Null-Hypothesis that perceived culture alignment did not affect actively looking for jobs outside the organization. The paired t-test found a significant relationship between the two variables. The mean difference of -1.778 indicated that respondents who indicated high perceived culture alignment had lower intention to actively search for jobs outside the organization (See Tables 23-26). Also, the regression analysis showed a statistically significant relationship between S31 and S14, with a negative slope coefficient of -0.57896. We could conclude that if perceived culture alignment (S14) increased, the intention to actively search for job opportunities outside the organization decreased (See Tables 28-31 in the Appendix).

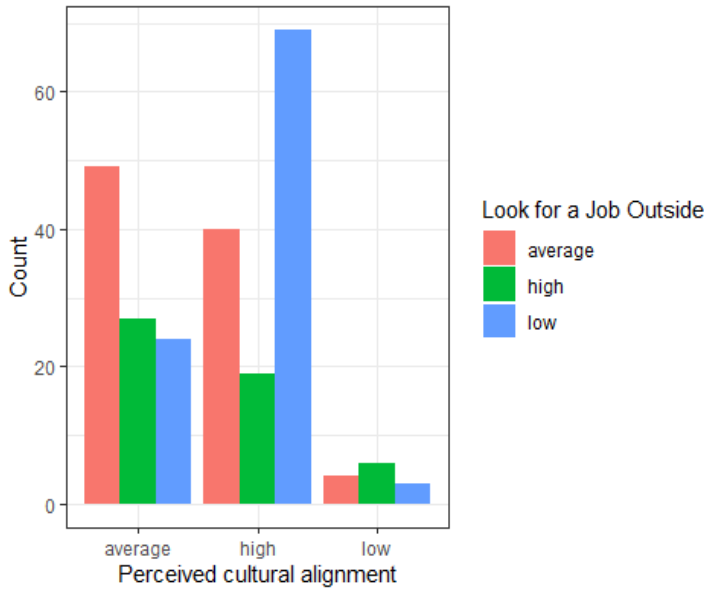


Table 32: Plot related to the variables from H2, obtained from R

From the plot (See Table 32), it was evident that high cultural alignment resulted in low intentions of looking for a job outside the organization.

The goal of **Hypothesis 3** was to explore how perceived culture alignment affected employee engagement. To achieve this, Statement S27 (*'I feel engaged in my work every day'*) was utilized. Besides our findings in Chapter 4.1 about S27, we wanted to prove a positive relationship between culture alignment and employee work engagement in general. Our goal was to reject the Null-Hypothesis that perceived culture alignment did not affect employee work engagement. For Hypothesis 3, we obtained a chi-square p-value < 0.05 . Analyzing the data showed a statistically significant relationship and a positive slope coefficient of 0.6861. This indicated that as perceived culture alignment rose, employee work engagement increased. We could reject the Null-Hypothesis. The negative mean difference in the paired t-test suggested that, on average, work engagement scores were lower than the perceived culture alignment scores. As the slope coefficient was positive, we could still conclude that an increase in work engagement was expected for each unit by which perceived cultural fit increased (See Tables 33-36 in Appendix).

Hypothesis 4 sought to investigate whether a high culture alignment has a positive impact on employee job satisfaction. Statement S24 was used for this (*'Overall, I am satisfied with my job.'*). Besides our findings about S24 in Chapter 4.1, a quantitative analysis was made for the relationship between S14 and S24. Our Null-Hypothesis was that 'perceived culture alignment does not affect employee general job satisfaction in the organization'. Plotting the two variables

with their defined categories (See Table 37) showed that high culture alignment was heavily linked to high employee job satisfaction. Further findings showed a p-value <0.05 and a positive slope coefficient of 0.7153, indicating that as culture alignment increased, employee job satisfaction grew. We observed a statistically significant relationship between S14 and S24 (See Tables 38-41 in Appendix).

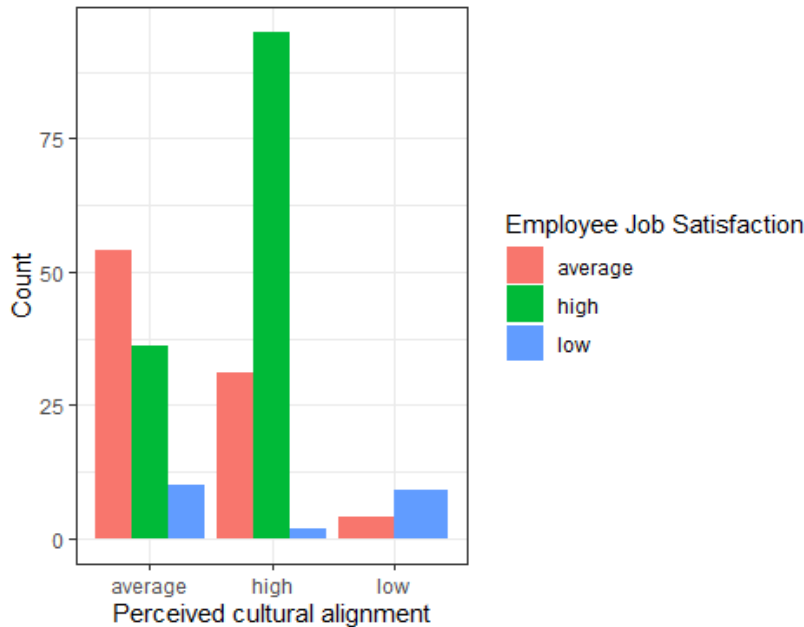


Table 36: Plot related to the variables from H4, obtained from R

Regarding demographic characteristics (D01-D10), we looked at a limited sample of 239 respondents, most of whom had similar demographic characteristics with less variance. Within our sample, people had an average age of 27.4. Of all respondents, 58.58% were female, and 40.00% male. Half of the sample had obtained a master's degree (50.00%), followed by a bachelor's degree (41.08%). Household incomes were mainly between 10.000-50.000€ or less. We further asked respondents for their last employment location. Here Germany formed the clear majority. Dominant industries in our sample were: Consulting (21.72%) and Technology (21.72%). Concerning company size, 43.03% of respondents worked in larger organizations with 1000+ employees; 89.75% of respondents worked in organizations for less than 3 years. The majority were in non-managerial positions (86.48%). The goal of this work was to determine certain relationships. For this, the scope was to form Hypotheses for specific survey statements. We incorporated the effect of being in a managerial position (See Appendix), as we assumed different outcomes for this group. We point out further research needed in Chapter 5.2.

5 Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of the results

Based on the **value gap** findings, a significant portion of respondents believed that the organization's stated values align with the values they encountered in their workplace. The relatively high mean score could show evidence of a growing tendency in the workplace toward close value alignment. The findings within our sample group yielded positive results. However, our attention was directed toward the broader context and the relationships between the variables under investigation, which are linked to the value gap. According to the Katzenbach Center, a perception gap occurs when employees' expectations do not align with the company's and its leaders' strategic priorities (Strategy&, 2018). In the scope of this work, we also analyzed the demographics to see if the respondent held a managerial position (Statement D10; See Appendix). Our findings showed that managers and leaders in our sample reported almost no value gap, which aligns with the findings of the Katzenbach Center (See Chapter 2.3). If managers failed to evaluate the gap properly, they may not realize the discrepancies between what is claimed and what is practiced. This could result in reduced trust and credibility among their employees. The organization is at risk, given the divergent perspectives of employees and executives regarding implementing the company culture. However, to understand which cultural variables are at play, organizations should start to deconstruct the value gap.

Concerning employee retention, S31, and S32 had a mean of 3.63. As this is very close to the midpoint, it reflected a relatively neutral position. It demonstrated that, on average, employees in our sample did not heavily lean towards actively searching for job opportunities outside the organization. We observed a relatively high variance (3.90, 4.31), indicating a large response spread. This suggested a wide range in how respondents perceived their respective organizations and their intention to search for outside job opportunities. The even distribution of stronger agreement and disagreement for survey statement S31 suggested that respondents held diverse perspectives. While some had contemplated leaving, others had not considered it at all. At this point, further research is needed to determine reasons (See also Chapter 5.2). The analysis demonstrated that a high value gap resulted in high intentions to leave, whereas a low value gap, resulted in low intentions to leave the organization. Also, employees were more likely to actively search for job opportunities outside their organization if there was a higher value gap. We see that the value gap significantly impacted the intention to leave the organization. While our results provided evidence for our Hypotheses (H1 & H2) at this point, our sample showed

relatively high overall value alignments and mixed results for leave intentions. Hence, this did not strongly support the crisis described in the preliminary part of this work. Although the sample of respondents tended to report higher value alignment than assumed, our analysis shed light on the urgent need for organizations to address large value gaps to retain employees and reduce turnover rates. With more and more people being disconnected from work and thinking about leaving or resigning from their jobs (See Chapter 2.4), organizations should aim to bridge the gap between claimed and perceived values. Establishing a company culture that consistently upholds a set of clear values is fundamental for ensuring that employees understand and embrace them in their day-to-day work.

Our research found that 46.5% of individuals agreed or strongly agreed on a high level of engagement, while only 9.02% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The results of this study differed from the more robust findings reported in a 2022 Gallup survey, which found that 18% of Gen Y and Z in the US exhibited active disengagement (Harter, 2022). However, this indicates that our more positive results were not solely due to surveying younger individuals (27.4 as the average age) but that disengagement was also increasing significantly among them. Further research on these two young generations could be an interesting approach. Our findings concerning the influence of the value gap on employee engagement (H3) revealed a significant negative relationship between the two variables. It can be inferred that employees who perceived a smaller value gap, meaning they perceive higher value alignment, tended to display higher levels of commitment. Our research confirmed the findings of Denison (1990) who suggested that an organization's values should be reflected in its culture and behavior to keep the workforce engaged. Aligning stated company values with perceived values by employees is therefore crucial. It is apparent that an organization's primary objective should not only entail sustaining engagement but also elevating it for the long-term benefit of the organization.

Research has demonstrated that company culture positively impacts employee engagement (Saks, 2006; Schneider, 2013; Evangeline & Ragavan, 2016). According to Macey et al. (2009) and Gruman & Saks (2011), having engaged employees can give organizations a competitive edge. The impact of employee engagement on a company's overall performance is significant. Our findings indicated that one driver is the gap between stated and practiced values. Organizations face challenges overcoming this gap. Regular assessment and addressing discrepancies can therefore avoid disengagement. The reasons for the value gap need to be addressed. Furthermore, it is vital for companies to explore methods of transforming themselves into value-

based organizations. In an article published in Forbes Magazine, Jaffe asserted that values should not only be declared but also demonstrated in a transparent, visible, and explicit manner to effectively guide employees in making informed decisions. It is essential for executives and employees to constantly discuss company values and to share and challenge their meaning (Forbes, 2022).

Drawing on the results of employee general job satisfaction (S24), we saw that the average level of job satisfaction is relatively positive. This indicated that more than half of the respondents were satisfied with their work and implied a moderate level of job satisfaction among all respondents. The findings for Hypothesis 4 showed that a smaller value gap is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction within the sample group. Based on our survey results, only 7.79% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction (strongly disagreed or disagreed with S24) with their jobs. This indicated that our sample group did not align with the larger population of individuals who tended to feel increasingly dissatisfied and frustrated with their jobs, as elaborated in Chapter 2.4. The same applied to statements S21-23 relating to work motivation. Nevertheless, one should point out the urgent need to recognize value alignment as a driver for job satisfaction.

Based on the findings on **perceived culture alignment**, many respondents saw a fit between their personal values and those espoused by their organizations. Several implications could be derived from this. The strong cultural alignment could indicate that respondents found themselves in organizations where there was symmetry with their personal values and beliefs. It is worth noting, at this point, that the survey statement S16 (*'I feel a sense of shared identity for the organization I work for'*) had a lower mean than S14. One possible reason for this outcome was that the respondents might weaken the statement's strength with their answers. Further research is necessary to determine this. As elaborated in the theoretical part of this thesis, individuals who strongly aligned with an organization's culture could be identified as having a strong person-organization fit (O'Reilly et al., 2017; Chatman, 1989; Schneider, 1987; Pratt, 1998). With regard to the distinction between individuals being in managerial positions or not (D10), we saw that managers were more culturally aligned than non-managers. This supported our findings related to the value gap, as elaborated above.

Through analysis of Hypotheses 1 and 2, we found that perceived culture alignment negatively affected the intention to leave the organization, just as employees' likelihood of actively seeking

job opportunities outside of their current organization. In practice, this meant that people who identified more with their company were less inclined to leave. At first glance, the significance of this matter might not be particularly surprising. However, it held great importance for companies nowadays which are experiencing a rise in employee turnover and facing trends like Quiet Quitting (See Chapter 2.4). Enhancing employees' sense of connection to their organization would have a significant impact on employee retention.

In light of the insights gained from Hypothesis 3, we saw that as perceived culture alignment increased, employee work engagement rose. We concluded that an increase in work engagement was expected for each unit by which alignment increased. Studies have found that individuals tended to invest more in roles that held personal significance, as these offer a means of achieving personal fulfillment and self-esteem (Brown, 1996). The fact that a high identification with an organization was linked to having a high degree of organizational commitment, as elaborated in Chapter 2.2, remains valid (Mowday et al., 2013). The findings of this thesis aligned with the study conducted by Cardador et al. (2011) indicating that individuals with a sense of calling have fewer turnover intentions. For organizations to promote employee attachment, it is critical to hire individuals whose values align with the organization's mission and culture. Likewise, it is equally important for employees to consider the values and ethos of firms where they intend to work.

The investigation of Hypothesis 4 showed a statistically significant relationship between culture alignment and employee job satisfaction, indicating that as alignment increased, employee job satisfaction also grew. We saw that high culture alignment was heavily linked to high employee job satisfaction. We could infer from this that employees were more likely to perceive work as valuable when their personal beliefs and principles matched the organization's values and mission. Achieving this harmony would positively impact job satisfaction among employees, by creating a shared sense of purpose in the workplace.

5.2 Limitation and future research

The underlying thesis used a survey approach that examined gaps in perceived value and culture alignment and their impact on employee retention and engagement. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of this study. These highlight the need for further investigation and improved planning and execution for future research. Limited generalizability is one of the most

critical limitations that should be acknowledged. The survey was conducted with a narrow sample of respondents, such as students or young workers mainly from Generation Y or Z. Although our results revealed significant relationships, they did not reflect the widespread disengagement and dissatisfaction in the current job market. For the purposes of this work persons doing internships were considered full-time employees. This assumption meant that results for this group could only be interpreted to a limited extent. To allow for a better understanding of employees' perception of value and culture alignment, one needs to capture a broader and more diverse set of employees in future studies. Therefore, findings are based on participants who might not accurately reflect the underlying demographic we sought to study (Mutz, 2011).

In the scope of this thesis, we have investigated the impact of perceived value and culture alignment on employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction. We also discovered the impact of holding a management or leadership position on the outcome. Additional demographic data could be considered, such as the impact company size, duration of employment with the organization, education, and income. One could also focus on specific countries in this regard. After analyzing our data, we found that consulting and technology industries comprised a significant percentage (21.72%) of the sample. It is important to note that this does not represent the entire population and might skew the results. According to Vaarning (2023) promoting an enjoyable work environment is especially cultivated in the technology sector and other innovation businesses. Employers in these industries often provide benefits and rewards such as flexible work arrangements, wellness programs, and other facilities to support the overall well-being of employees. In addition, they prioritize the growth and education. To better understand this, conducting a detailed quantitative analysis with moderator variables across various demographics, especially industries, would provide deeper insights.

The research question was investigated using a quantitative approach, which proved effective for data analysis. However, using qualitative research methods such as interviews can be a valuable addition to the quantitative approach. Qualitative data enables more comprehensive exploration of a phenomenon as it can capture subtle aspects that may not be entirely represented by numerical assessments (Mayring, 2014). Qualitative interviews can be deployed, for instance, when we want to gain deeper insights into employees' comprehension of values. They can help us understand how values are communicated, conveyed, and embodied. These would relate specifically to the first block of statements, which asked participants if they were familiar with their organization's values, mission statements, etc. (Statements S1-S9).

According to Lencioni (2022) and Bacal (2020), most organizations hold only empty and meaningless value statements, which can result in employees feeling cynical and frustrated while undermining the credibility of managers. For future research, this implies that it is possible to conduct focused research by analyzing particular value statements or mission statements (See Chapter 2.1) and their impact on the workforce. In addition, this would tie in with our questions about how employees understood values (Statements S1-S9) and how mission statements could act as a tool to align employees to shared values (See Chapter 2.1 & Statements S5-S6).

Furthermore, the question arises of how the gap between proclaimed firm values and perceived values can be closed. Firms should analyze the value gap to understand reasons and find practical ways to redress it. Future research could offer actionable steps to help organizations benefit from making shared values work for them.

5.3 Conclusion

In the context of this work, a quantitative analysis was conducted on how perceived value and culture alignment affects employee retention, engagement, and job satisfaction. Two sets of previously defined Hypotheses formed the basis for this. Central findings showed that a low alignment between claimed and perceived values and a low alignment between personal and organizational values led to higher turnover intentions from employees. When there was high alignment in the workplace, employees also tended to be more engaged and satisfied with their jobs. We found that being in a managerial position significantly increased perceived alignment for both cases. The findings were placed in the context of theory and practice and emphasized the crucial role of building a cohesive organization with a shared value set, particularly in the current business climate. We also pointed out limitations and identified areas for further research, such as conducting qualitative interviews or focused research on specific industries to better understand and address value gaps.

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Appendices

Survey structure

Respondents note:

Please use ‘my organization’ to refer to either the company where you are currently working or, if not applicable, the company where you were most recently employed.

Here is a set of questions that may or may not apply to you. For each statement, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

Survey Statements

S1: I am familiar with my organization’s core values.

S2: I can name my organization’s stated core values.

S3: The core values of my organization are often mentioned or discussed in the workplace.

S4: My organization has established guiding principles that support the overall vision or identity of the company.

S5: I am familiar with the mission statement of my organization.

S6: I often refer to or think about my organization's mission statement.

S7: I believe that creating a cohesive culture is a priority for the leaders in my organization.

S8: In my opinion, it is important for the leadership of my organization to maintain and promote a strong corporate culture.

S9: My organization provides a set of guidelines by which employees should act in the workplace.

S10: The stated values of the organization I work for match the values I observe in the workplace.

S11: I notice that my organization's core values are incorporated into management practices.

S12: My daily work is aligned with the mission and purpose of the organization I work for.

S13: The culture being promoted by the organization is consistent with actual practices.

S14: The values of the organization are in line with my personal values.

S15: My personal values and beliefs are not compatible with the culture of my organization.

S16: I feel a sense of shared identity with the organization I work for.

S17 - I am inspired by the vision and values of my organization.

S18: The culture of my organization supports and encourages the way I work.

S19 - I am proud to work for my organization.

S20: Other employees in my organization are connected to the culture of the company.

S21: I feel motivated to complete tasks at work.

S22: I am generally motivated to put my best efforts into the work I do.

S23: Overall, I find my work motivating.

S24: Overall, I am satisfied with my job.

S25: I feel that my skills and expertise are being fully utilized.

S26 - I find the work I do for my organization meaningful.

S27: I feel engaged with my work on a daily basis.

S28: I have considered leaving my current organization.

S29: I have considered leaving my current organization in the past 3 months.

S30: Please select "Somewhat agree" for this question.

S31: I am actively searching for job opportunities outside my organization.

S32: I have actively searched for job opportunities outside my organization in the past 3 months.

S33: In the past, I have considered positions outside my current organization.

Demographic questions

D1: What is your age?

()

D2: What is your gender?

Male / female / non-binary / prefer not to say / Other

D3: What is the highest level or degree of education you obtained?

Less than high school/ high school / apprenticeship / bachelor's degree / master's degree / Ph.D.
/ Other () / prefer not to say

D4: What is your annual household income? (in €)

<10.000 / 10.000-50.000 / 50.000-100.000 / 100.000+ / prefer not to say

D5: What is your employment status?

Student / employed full-time (also internship) / employed part-time / working student / self-employed / retired / other () / prefer not to say

D6: Where was your last place of employment? (Country)

()

D7: To which industry does your organization belong?

Technology / Marketing / Finance / Consulting / Healthcare / Retail / Manufacturing / Education / Nonprofit / prefer not to say / Other ()

D8: How many employees work for your organization?

<50 / 50-250 / 250-1000 / 1000+ / prefer not to say

D9: How long have you been in your organization?

< 1 year / 1-3 years / 4-6 years / 7-10 years / >10 years / prefer not to say

D10: Are you in a management/leadership position?

Yes () / No () / prefer not to say

Findings related to the value gap: Hypotheses 1-4

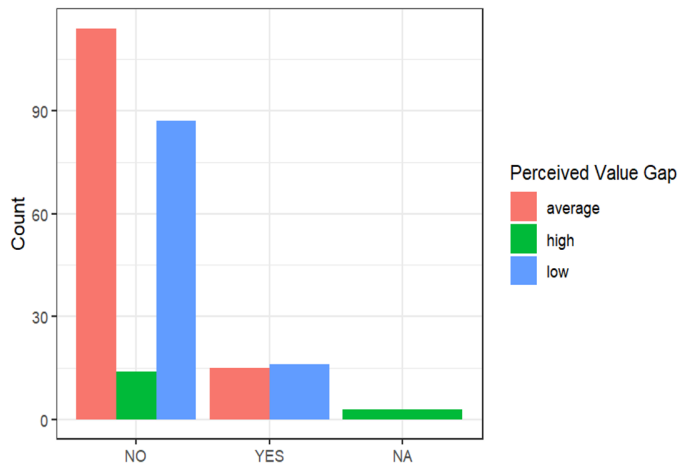


Table: Managerial position related to D10, obtained from R

H1

Test statistic	df	P value
31	4	3.062e-06 * * *

Table 6: H1 Pearson Chi-squared test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
-5.786	238	2.258e-08 * * *	two.sided	-1.021

Table 7: H1 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S28 ~ S10	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	7.226	0.5064	14.27	9.347e-34
S10	-0.6182	0.09656	-6.402	8.151e-10

Table 8: H1 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
239	1.849	0.1474	0.1438

Table 9: H1 Linear Model, obtained from R

H2

Test statistic	df	P value
19.46	4	0.0006372 * * *

Table 10: H2 Pearson Chi-squared test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
-8.673	238	6.656e-16 * * *	two.sided	-1.49

Table 11: H2 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S31 ~ S10	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	6.26	0.5124	12.22	6.003e-27
S10	-0.5206	0.09769	-5.329	2.295e-07

Table 12: H2 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
239	1.871	0.107	0.1032

Table 13: H2 Linear Model, obtained from R

H3

Test statistic	df	P value
81.81	4	7.19e-17 * * *

Table 14: H3 Pearson Chi-squared test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
-0.9696	238	0.3332	two.sided	-0.08787

Table 15: H3 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S27 ~ S10	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	2.357	0.348	6.774	9.827e-11
S10	0.5202	0.06635	7.84	1.524e-13

Table 16: H3 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
239	1.271	0.2059	0.2026

Table 17: H3 Linear Model, obtained from R

H4

Test statistic	df	P value
53.11	4	8.079e-11 * * *

Table 19: H4 Pearson Chi-squared test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
0.6007	238	0.5486	two.sided	0.05021

Table 20: H4 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S24 ~ S10	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	1.831	0.334	5.481	1.08e-07
S10	0.6506	0.06369	10.22	1.553e-20

Table 21: H4 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
239	1.22	0.3057	0.3028

Table 22: H4 Linear Model, obtained from R

Findings related to the culture alignment: Hypotheses 1-4

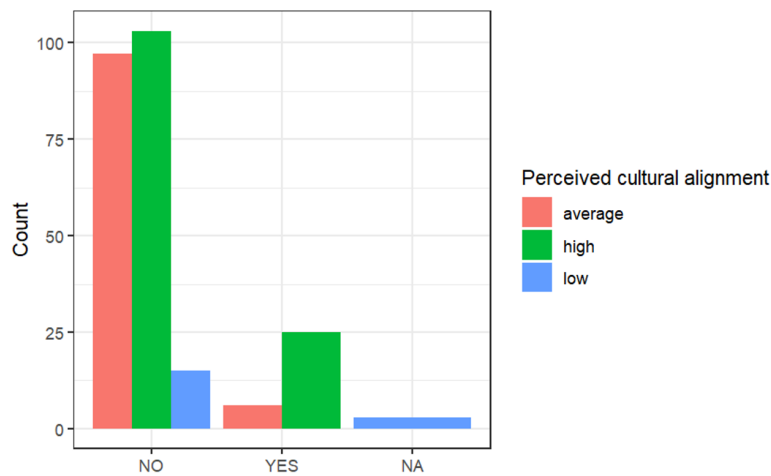


Table: Managerial position related to D10, obtained from R

H1

Test statistic	df	P value
29.387	4	6.522e-06***

Table 24: H1 Pearson Chi-square test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
-7.397	238	2.376e-12 * * *	two.sided	-1.31

Table 25: H1 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S28 ~ S14	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	7.18060	0.52412	13.700	2e-16
S14	-0.5766	0.09472	-6.088	4.58e-09

Table 26: H1 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
237	1.862	0.1352	0.1316

Table 27: H1 Linear Model, obtained from R

H2

Test statistic	df	P value
26.067	4	3.068e-05***

Table 28: H2 Pearson Chi-square test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
-10.1	238	3.432e-20 * * *	two.sided	-1.778

Table 29: H2 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S31 ~ S14	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	6.72433	0.51685	13.010	2e-16
S14	-0.57896	0.09341	-6.198	2.52e-09

Table 30: H2 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
237	1.837	0.1395	0.1358

Table 31: H2 Linear Model, obtained from R

H3

Test statistic	df	P value
135.4	4	2.714e-28 * * *

Table 33: H3 Pearson Chi-square test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
-4.884	238	1.906e-06 * * *	two.sided	-0.3766

Table 34: H3 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S27 ~ S14	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	1.314	0.3166	4.15	4.646e-05
S14	0.6861	0.05722	11.99	3.346e-26

Table 35: H3 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
239	1.125	0.3775	0.3749

Table 36: H3 Linear Model, obtained from R

H4

Test statistic	df	P value
98.52	4	2.032e-20 * * *

Table 38: H4 Pearson Chi-square test, obtained from R

Test statistic	df	P value	Alternative hypothesis	mean difference
-3.078	238	0.002325 * *	two.sided	-0.2385

Table 39: H4 Paired t-test, obtained from R

S24 ~ S14	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	1.295	0.3219	4.022	7.767e-05
S14	0.7153	0.05817	12.3	3.33e-27

Table 40: H4 Linear Regression, obtained from R

Observations	Residual Std. Error	R ²	Adjusted R ²
239	1.144	0.3895	0.3869

Table 41: H4 Linear Model, obtained from R