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The Relationship Between New Ways of Working and Employee Engagement: First and Foremost a Matter of Environment Fit

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Abstract: Working independently of a fixed schedule or specific place while staying connected with colleagues and managers via digital technologies is the cornerstone of new ways of working (NWW). Following the COVID-19 crisis, these have become more popular and more extensively used. The main objective of this article is to find out more about the factors that positively influence the use of NWW and to investigate whether their use can have an impact on employees' work engagement. We employ person–environment fit (P–E fit) theory to link our different variables, emphasizing that a good fit between an individual and their work environment is the driving force linking NWW and work engagement. Our questionnaire survey (n = 2693) demonstrates that NWW does not directly influence work engagement but only does so indirectly through P–E fit. We also prove that a climate of trust, a result-oriented culture, and specific work characteristics can act as positive levers in the deployment of NWW and positively influence P–E fit. This study makes both empirical and theoretical contributions to the NWW literature.

Keywords: new ways of working; work engagement; person–environment fit; trust climate; work characteristics; result-oriented culture

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1. Introduction

New ways of working (NWW) have become a salient topic in recent years (Demerouti et al. 2014; Ten Brummelhuis et al. 2012; Blok et al. 2012). They have been important for much longer because work and its different forms have always been central issues for both employees and employers (Van Der Voordt 2003; Vos and Van der Voordt 2002). However, with new information and communication technologies, accelerated digitalization, and advances in remote working via computer networks and videoconferencing, NWW have witnessed major developments (Hesselbarth et al. 2024). For the purposes of this article, we define NWW as "practices in which employees are able to work independently of time, place, and organization, supported by a flexible work environment that is facilitated by information technologies" (De Leede 2017).

The COVID-19 crisis shone a new light on the issues around NWW (Giovannini and Giauque 2024; Kaltiainen and Hakanen 2023; Ficapal-Cusí et al. 2023), since a significant proportion of the workforce in industrialized countries was forced to experiment with a number of NWW modalities, such as teleworking, which has led to several recent publications (Perego and Belardinelli 2024; Hansen and Pedersen 2024; Rudolph and Zacher 2024) identifying individual, organizational, and managerial facilitators of teleworking (Kwon et al. 2019; Schall and Chen 2022; Hassard and Morris 2024; Dandalt 2021). It is also necessary to better identify the effects of teleworking on the well-being and performance of employees and their organizations (Ficapal-Cusí et al. 2023; Schall and Chen 2022). This article integrates this reflection on telework insofar as it is a constituent part of NWW. However, we also consider three main dimensions of NWW, which may be identified

in the NWW literature (Renard et al. 2021). The first relates to time and is the freedom offered to employees to vary their working hours (i.e., flexible scheduling). The second is a "geographical" dimension, which concerns the possibility offered to employees to vary their place of work (flexible workplace). The third dimension is access to colleagues, or the possibility of employees reaching colleagues and superiors quickly and easily, regardless of where they work. In our view, these three dimensions are the three main characteristics of NWW today. Indeed, the freedom to organize working hours and the workplace while remaining connected to colleagues and company managers are the three main challenges facing organizations in the context of NWW.

Our study has three main objectives. The first objective is to better identify the organizational levers that enable employees to benefit from the opportunities offered by NWW. In particular, we consider three factors that have a significant impact on employees' perceptions of NWW: the specific characteristics of employees' work, the level of trust between members of the organization, and a goal-oriented organizational culture. The second objective is to test whether employees who benefit from NWW-related opportunities report a higher level of work engagement than their non-NWW-benefitting counterparts. The third objective is to understand the mechanism linking the use of NWW and work engagement. We therefore test the relationship between employees' perceptions of NWW and their work engagement. This leads us to propose the following three research questions:

(1) What organizational antecedents can help reinforce employees' positive perceptions of the opportunities offered by NWW?
(2) Do opportunities offered by NWW help impact employees' work engagement?
(3) Is the relationship between NWW and work engagement mediated by a feeling of fit among employees?

To answer these questions, we conducted a quantitative empirical analysis. Using our data collected from a questionnaire survey (n = 2767) of employees working in public organizations (n = 2195), semi-public organizations (n = 209), and private organizations (n = 363), we test our research hypotheses via partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4 software. Due to our sample's imbalance in terms of organizational sectors (public, semi-public, or private), we also consider whether this specific variable matters when it comes to explaining the antecedents and outcomes of NWW use.

This study makes several contributions to the existing literature. First, it identifies facilitating factors that are closely tied to organizational aspects rather than individual or technological ones, which have predominantly been the focus of prior research. This shift in focus provides a novel perspective on how organizational dynamics influence outcomes, offering new insights that extend beyond the traditionally examined domains.

The second major contribution lies in our theoretical exploration of the relationship between NWW and work engagement. While this relationship has been empirically tested in previous studies (Gerards et al. 2018), our approach uniquely examines it through the lens of organizational fit. Our survey, which drew responses from 2767 employees, provides a robust dataset, thus making our findings more representative and generalizable than studies based on smaller sample sizes.

Finally, we assess whether our research model allows us to empirically differentiate between employees working across the three distinct sectors. This cross-sectoral analysis adds another layer of depth to our study, offering insights into how NWW and work engagement manifest in varied organizational contexts.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: we begin by presenting a theoretical framework that informed the development of our literature review on NWW. Following this, we introduce our research hypotheses. Next, we detail our methodological approach, in which we lay out the context of our study, our data collection strategy, and the statistical analyses employed. We then present the key findings, discuss them, and finally conclude by highlighting several limitations of our work, suggesting future research questions, and offering useful recommendations to organizations in relation to our results.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1. The Literature with Respect to NWW

There is now a growing body of literature on NWW, and the concept has been developed mainly since 2010 (Renard et al. 2021), with the exception of two previously published articles (Van Der Voordt 2003; Vos and Van der Voordt 2002). It is, therefore, a relatively new concept that aims to account for recent changes in the world of work. A recent literature review was published in 2021 (Renard et al. 2021) with the aim of identifying articles dealing with the notion of NWW and gaining a better understanding of the different definitions given to this concept. This study also provides an overview of the impact of NWW on several job outcomes, including employee performance and well-being. In this study, 21 articles on NWW were identified. Most of the articles looking at NWW are based on the definition given by de Leede (De Leede 2017): "practices in which employees are able to work independently of time, place, and organization, supported by a flexible work environment that is facilitated by information technologies".

Regarding job outcomes, NWW do not seem to produce similar effects from one study to another. Several studies find no significant impact of NWW on employee well-being (Blok et al. 2012; Nijp et al. 2016). Conversely, several other articles indicate that NWW can have beneficial effects on employee well-being (Ten Brummelhuis et al. 2012; Peters et al. 2014). Other studies have pointed out that NWW can also have negative effects on employees' well-being (Kingma 2019). Other job outcomes that have been studied in relation to NWW are linked to employees' job satisfaction and work engagement. The empirical results regarding job satisfaction are mixed. Some studies have established a positive relationship between job satisfaction and NWW (Vos and Van der Voordt 2002; Brunia et al. 2016). However, others highlight the insignificant effects of NWW on job satisfaction (Blok et al. 2012; Van Der Voordt 2003). Another cluster of studies examined work engagement, a variable that is often considered a proxy for job performance (Borst et al. 2020). Additionally, the results cannot be considered unequivocal. Indeed, some studies, if not most, highlight a positive and significant relationship between NWW and work engagement (Ten Brummelhuis et al. 2012; Gerards et al. 2018; Peters et al. 2014), while other studies find little effect or even mixed effects (Nijp et al. 2016; Van Steenbergen et al. 2018).

It should also be noted that other recent articles have emphasized that NWW are positively linked to employee well-being (Renard 2023) and even to in-role performance (Cornu 2022). Mediation effects have been highlighted in these latest studies, particularly the fact that a favorable environment in terms of work–life balance and the support of colleagues are two variables that mediate the relationship between NWW and well-being at work (Renard 2023). Similarly, organizational culture is likely to moderate the relationship between NWW and performance (Cornu 2022), underlining the importance of having an organizational culture that is aligned and compatible with NWW for positive effects. It should be noted that this rapid literature review does not include all recent work on the effects of teleworking on employee health and performance (Almeida et al. 2024; Carrasco-Garrido et al. 2023; Chênevert et al. 2023). Indeed, there are a very large number of studies on telework and its organizational and human consequences, particularly following the COVID-19 crisis; however, given that telework is a very specific topic that does not take into account the various dimensions associated with NWW, we have chosen not to focus on this work, which is important, but not entirely in the line of research of this article.

Following this literature review on the effects of NWW, we highlight several points that underline the importance of continuing research on this subject. First, to date, there is no consensus on the positive or negative effects of NWW on employee performance and well-being. It is therefore perfectly justified to take an interest, as in this article, in the effects of NWW on employees' work engagement. On the other hand, except for a few recent studies (Renard 2023; Cornu 2022), there has been very little research into the mechanisms underlying the relationship between NWW and work engagement or well-being. If NWW impacts work engagement, the mechanisms that explain this link are yet to be uncovered.

Finally, NWW have often been studied as a dependent variable with a legitimate question, which we take up in part in the present study, namely, what factors lead to the emergence of positive perceptions of NWW by employees? However, to our knowledge, NWW have not been studied as a mediating variable in explaining employees' work engagement. This is precisely what we wish to do, that is, to consider NWW as being able to mediate the relationship between certain organizational aspects and work engagement.

2.2. NWW Impacts: A Matter of Person–Environment Fit

Based on the literature at our disposal concerning the antecedents and outcomes of NWW, it appears that employees are more likely to declare that they can benefit from the opportunities offered by NWW if they perceive their working environment as being aligned with the opportunities specific to NWW. In other words, the environment must be conducive to the use of NWW opportunities for employees to perceive NWW as useful and favorable to them. This feeling of fit with the work environment is thus a factor that explains the effects of NWW, particularly on work engagement. If the work environment is perceived as aligned with the possibilities of NWW, positive effects may emerge. In the context of this research, we have based our thinking on the theory of person–environment fit (P–E fit). P–E fit theory is well developed in management literature and is often used to explain employee behavior. It can be broadly defined as follows: "the compatibility between an individual and work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched" (Kristof-Brown et al. 2005). A lack of fit between an individual and their organization or job can lead to negative effects for both the employee and the organization itself. As Vroom (Vroom 1964) mentions, there must be a fit between an employee's characteristics and attitudes on the one hand and aspects of the workplace on the other. The feeling of fit with one's work environment matters, insofar as the literature shows, since the various dimensions of fit make a difference in terms of commitment, job satisfaction, motivation, and intention to stay (Kristof-Brown et al. 2005; Kristof-Brown et al. 2005; Giauque et al. 2013; Bright 2007). In this regard, studies conducted in various contexts have highlighted that the effects of HRM practices on job outcomes are partially or even fully mediated by the degree of fit between individuals and their organization (Chen et al. 2019; Mostafa and Gould-Williams 2014). For example, it has been shown that public service motivation (or PSM) is linked to positive or negative job outcomes, mainly in relation to the degree of fit between individuals and their organization (Bright 2007; Steijn 2008; Wright and Pandey 2008). For instance, studies in several contexts have shown that public service motivation (PSM) is linked to positive and negative job outcomes, mainly in relation to the degree of fit between individuals and their organization (Chen et al. 2019; Mostafa and Gould-Williams 2014; Bright 2008).

Many articles have also emphasized that the concept of P–E fit is, in fact, a complex concept made up of different dimensions (Edwards and Billsberry 2010). Several types of fit have been studied, and specialized literature reveals different dimensions, such as person–organization fit (P–O fit) (Bright 2021; Teo et al. 2016), person–job fit (P–J fit) (Christensen and Wright 2011), person–group fit (P–G fit) (Vogel and Feldman 2009), person–vocation fit (P–V fit) (Vogel and Feldman 2009), and person–reform fit (P–R fit) (Giauque et al. 2013). Of course, there are still theoretical discussions as to what P–E fit really covers, but it is worth mentioning the existence of these different dimensions. For the purpose of our own research, we focus on two dimensions of P–E fit: P–O fit and P–J fit. P–O fit is a well-known and well-studied theoretical concept that refers to the congruence between employees and the organization to which they belong, in terms of values and objectives (Kristof-Brown et al. 2005; Edwards and Billsberry 2010). "The logic here is that individuals prefer to work in environments that reinforce their self-concepts. Thus, since values are a fundamental part of how individuals view situations and judge acceptable behavior, achieving value congruence is fundamental to successful adaptation to the workplace" (Vogel and Feldman 2009). In addition, numerous studies have shown that P–O fit has a positive impact on several job outcomes, such as job satisfaction, commitment, motivation,

and in-role performance (Edwards and Billsberry 2010; Bretz and Judge 1994; Caldwell 2011). P–J fit makes more of a reference to the job and its content. "PJ fit generally relates to the complementary nature of demands or benefits of one's job in relationship with the abilities or needs of the individual employee. PJ fit has been found to relate positively with job satisfaction and performance and negatively with job stress" (Caldwell 2011). The alignment between employees and work is therefore a crucial dimension, especially when discussing new forms of work. New forms of work can have an impact on the content of work, and the effects of NWW will be stronger if job fit is made possible. As part of our study, we therefore measure P–E fit via two dimensions, namely P–O fit and P–J fit, considering that NWW will have more positive impacts on employees' work engagement if these two aspects of fit are combined. These theoretical considerations, as well as the literature review with respect to NWW, lead us to define three initial hypotheses.

H1. *NWW are positively and significantly related to employee work engagement.*

H2. *P–E fit is positively and significantly associated with employees' work engagement.*

H3. *The relationship between NWW and employees' work engagement is mediated by P–E fit.*

2.3. Antecedents of NWW

We focus on three antecedents of NWW that have received little attention in the literature to date. These variables are integral to our theoretical framework of P–E fit. We have deliberately chosen antecedents that we believe could significantly impact the respondents' sense of fit or misfit in our survey. Moreover, these three variables create favorable conditions for the development of NWW. They have been recognized in the literature as key factors in promoting telework (Park et al. 2021), and, similarly, we view them as crucial levers for the advancement and adoption of NWW.

The first antecedent integrated into this study was the climate of trust between employees and their supervisors. Several studies have already highlighted the fact that a climate of trust is likely to lead to greater acceptance of change (Grøn and Salomonsen 2018; Gould-Williams 2007) and that interpersonal trust enables employees to cope with changes in the workplace and adapt more easily (Ficapal-Cusí et al. 2023; Destler 2017; Zienkowski et al. 2019; De Jong et al. 2016). Therefore, we start from the idea that a climate of trust will reinforce employees' perception that they are able to benefit from using NWW. We also postulate that this climate of trust will influence the level of P–E fit perceived by employees (Feitosa et al. 2020). Finally, in relation to the literature on the importance of trust in the processes of motivation and work engagement (Vinarski-Peretz and Kidron 2024; Holland et al. 2016), we propose another hypothesis, according to which the climate of trust is also an antecedent of commitment to work. We formulate these further hypotheses as follows:

H4a. *A climate of trust is positively associated with NWW.*

H4b. *A climate of trust is positively related to P–E fit.*

H4c. *A climate of trust is positively related to employees' work engagement.*

A second antecedent of NWW that we have chosen to include in our analysis relates to organizational culture. Employees will be more comfortable with NWW if their organization's culture aligns with them. Several recent empirical studies, particularly in relation to teleworking and its consequences, have shown that these new forms of work do not sit well within a bureaucratic and controlling organizational culture (Kwon et al. 2019; Hopkins and Bardoel 2023; Kwon and Jeon 2018). Several empirical findings suggest that a culture focused on achieving results, management by objectives, and action rather than compliance with processes is more conducive to the emergence and use of NWW (Chênevert et al. 2023). Taking these various studies seriously, we believe that such a results-oriented culture can

provide a favorable anchor for NWW because of the fit process. We also assume that this type of culture can have positive effects on both P–E fit and employees' commitment to work. These considerations led us to the following three hypotheses:

H5a. *A result-oriented culture is positively associated with NWW.*

H5b. *A result-oriented culture is positively related to P–E fit.*

H5c. *A result-oriented culture is positively associated with work engagement.*

The third variable that is here included as an antecedent or lever of NWW is linked to job characteristics. In this case, the job characteristics model (Hackman and Oldham 1975, 1976), developed in the 1970s, has amply demonstrated its validity and importance when it comes to studying job satisfaction, commitment, motivation, and the desire to remain in an organization (Fuchs and Reichel 2023; Giauque and Weissbrodt 2022; Wang et al. 2021). It seems important, in the present study of NWW, to consider these job characteristics. In particular, the possibility for employees to take part in decisions about what their work involves, to take part in decisions about the nature of the work to be done, the sense of being able to influence decisions taken within the department or organization, or even independence, freedom, and the possibility of taking personal initiatives. Intuitively, we realize that these job characteristics are particularly aligned with NWW, which involves carrying out activities independently of a specific place and time based on new technologies available and at a distance from colleagues and supervisors. These different arguments have led us to develop three final research hypotheses, namely, the following:

H6a. *Job characteristics are positively related to NWW.*

H6b. *Job characteristics are positively associated with P–E fit.*

H6c. *Job characteristics are positively related to employee work engagement.*

Figure 1 shows the research model and the main hypotheses of our study.

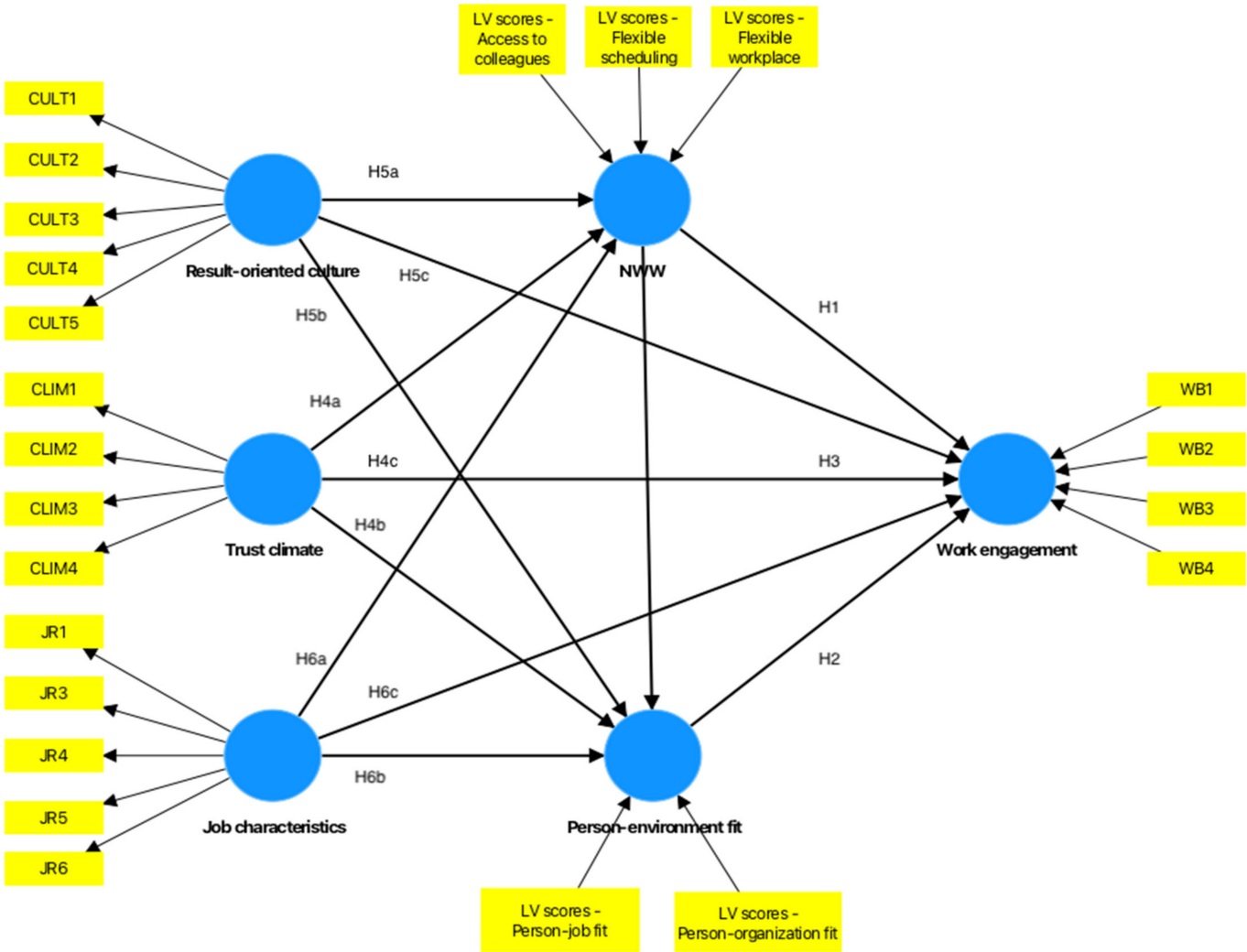

Figure 1. The figure above gives an empirical representation of the objective of our study, with its three related research questions. We want to know whether NWW and P–E fit are significantly related to our respondents' engagement (H1 and H2). But we also want to know whether the use of NWW can lead to an influence on the P–E fit of our respondents (H3). In our model, we also include the independent variables (trust climate, results-oriented culture, and job characteristics) and test the relationships between these three variables and NWW use (H4a, H5a, and H6a), between our three variables and P–E fit (H4b, H5b, and H6b), and finally between our three variables and the engagement of our respondents (H4c, H5c, and H6c).

3. Methods

3.1. Context of the Research and Sample

This study was based on a large-scale self-report survey as part of scientific research funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. To facilitate participation, we contacted numerous public, private, and semi-public organizations, inviting them to partake in our survey on the provision and use of NWW practices. Ultimately, eleven organizations agreed to distribute the questionnaires to their employees, comprising five public, four private, and two semi-public organization entities. The selection of these organizations was influenced by existing connections within their human resources departments, which facilitated their engagement in the survey.

The final sample exhibits some imbalance, as we obtained more responses from public organizations (n = 2131) than from private (n = 358) or semi-public organizations (n = 204). This disparity is attributable to the larger size of the public organizations surveyed, which

typically had significantly more employees. Meanwhile, the private and semi-public organizations involved were smaller in scale, reflecting small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), while the public organizations represented large cantonal or local public institutions in Switzerland with several thousand employees.

This sample imbalance across public, private, and semi-public organizations represents a limitation of the study. However, it is important to note that many quantitative studies have been published with single samples, often containing fewer than 200 valid observations (Camacho and Barrios 2022). In contrast, this study draws on extensive empirical data from three distinct sectors, each with more than 200 valid observations. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that our findings may not be fully representative of all sectors or types of organization, a limitation common to most quantitative research. The organizations that participated in the survey are as follows:

- Public sector organizations: Geneva Cantonal Administration; Vaud Cantonal Administration; Geneva City Administration; Lausanne City Administration; University of Lausanne.
- Private sector organizations: Intuitive (SME active in the medical field); Loyco (SME active in business consulting); Vaudoise Assurance; Romande Energie.
- Organizations from the semi-public sector (or public companies): Services Industriels Genevois (SIG), Loterie Romande.

To optimize the response rate in our online survey, we contacted the HR departments of the participating organizations, whereupon their executive members gave their official approval for the study. After the test phase, a link to the online questionnaire was sent to the HR departments, who invited employees to complete the survey within three weeks. A reminder was sent after 1.5 weeks, prompting all employees to complete the questionnaire. As we had several participating organizations in different sectors, the collection of questionnaires was completed over a relatively long period (October 2021 to February 2022) to accommodate each organization's schedule. Furthermore, to ensure complete privacy, the answers were saved directly on a university server. Thus, employees did not have access to the data, and the respondents were completely and transparently informed about the research procedure. This served two purposes: increasing the participation rate and functioning as a baseline requirement to reduce common method bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003).

To ensure that our research was ethical, we guaranteed to participating organizations that their employees data would be anonymized. We also assured them that their data would not be used for competitive or benchmarking purposes. On the other hand, we committed ourselves to providing them with an individual report of their own results and giving them a perspective as to their relation to the averages of all other organizations. Thus, we guaranteed the ethical use of our data. Out of 11,675 questionnaires sent to public organizations, 2131 valid and usable responses were received, representing a return rate of 18.25%. This modest return rate can be explained, though this is a matter of conjecture, by the fatigue of public employees regarding the questionnaires to which they are often subjected, either due to academic solicitations or the proliferation of internal surveys within the organizations themselves. As for private organizations, 1101 questionnaires were sent out, and 358 usable responses were received, representing a return rate of 32.51%. Finally, 693 questionnaires were sent to the two semi-public organizations that participated in our survey, and 204 usable questionnaires were obtained, representing a return rate of 29.43%. However, there is another limitation to our study: we cannot be certain that our samples are representative of the populations of the organizations studied. For reasons of confidentiality, we were unable to access information specific to each of the organizations we studied concerning the socio-demographic characteristics of their employees. This is often the case for this type of study. Therefore, we cannot be certain that our data are representative of the actual population of the organizations. That said, the samples we worked with are large and can therefore be considered important. In the overall sample of 2693 respondents, 51.5% were women, the average age was 48 years, and 49% had

children in their care. The level of education was relatively high: 24.9% had been in a vocational track (elementary schools to professional baccalaureate), whereas 69.8% had received higher education (college degree to university diploma). Regarding organizational tenure, 33.3% had been with their current organization for up to 5 years, whereas 66.7% had been with the organization for more than 5 years.

3.2. Measures

All variables, items, and Cronbach's alphas (measuring the internal consistency of our different variables) are presented in Table A1 (see Appendix A at the end of the article) and described in detail below. Most variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). Our research model incorporates both reflective and formative variables. For this reason, we report here Cronbach's alpha only for the reflective variables. Table 1 lists the correlations between the latent variables in our analysis model as well as the means and standard errors.

Table 1. Latent variable correlations—Mean, STDEV, T values, *p* values.

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	*p* Values
NWW <-> Job characteristics	0.386	0.385	0.018	21.483	0.000
Person–environment fit <-> Job characteristics	0.541	0.541	0.016	33.789	0.000
Person–environment fit <-> NWW	0.389	0.389	0.018	21.979	0.000
Result-oriented culture <-> Job characteristics	0.316	0.316	0.019	16.584	0.000
Result-oriented culture <-> NWW	0.303	0.303	0.019	15.984	0.000
Result-oriented culture <-> Person–environment fit	0.422	0.422	0.018	23.504	0.000
Trust climate <-> Job characteristics	0.512	0.512	0.016	31.277	0.000
Trust climate <-> NWW	0.446	0.446	0.017	26.233	0.000
Trust climate <-> Person–environment fit	0.623	0.623	0.013	46.678	0.000
Trust climate <-> Result-oriented culture	0.468	0.468	0.017	27.074	0.000
Work engagement <-> Job characteristics	0.459	0.460	0.017	26.799	0.000
Work engagement <-> NWW	0.278	0.278	0.019	14.348	0.000
Work engagement <-> Person–environment fit	0.611	0.612	0.015	40.096	0.000
Work engagement <-> Result-oriented culture	0.305	0.305	0.019	15.624	0.000
Work engagement <-> Trust climate	0.429	0.429	0.019	22.568	0.000

3.2.1. Dependent Variable

Work engagement is our research model's dependent variable, a formative construct built with four items. We drew on the short version of the engagement measurement scale developed by Utrecht University (Schaufeli et al. 2019; Zecca et al. 2015). Our dependent variable is our only formative construct.

3.2.2. Mediating Variables

New Ways of Working (NWW), for which we relied on eight items already tested in previous research (Gerards et al. 2018; Gerards et al. 2020). We first conducted an exploratory factor analysis to identify factors associated with the eight items used to measure NWW and identified three factors that correspond to three dimensions of NWW: (1) flexible scheduling, (2) flexible workplace, and (3) access to colleagues. These three variables reflected the latent variable NWW, which was used in our subsequent statistical analyses. Respondents were asked about their perceptions of opportunities to use certain new work arrangements (NWW practices). We did not measure the actual use of NWW practices, which are difficult to do in such a study. This variable is a reflective-formative higher-order construct.

P–E fit was measured using two different dimensions: P–O fit and P–J fit. The items used in these two constructs are borrowed from previous research (Giauque et al. 2013),

which has the advantage of being available in French translations. This variable is a reflective-formative higher-order construct.

3.2.3. Independent Variables

The climate of trust was measured using four items. To develop these items, we drew on the instrument developed by Huff and Kelley (Huff and Kelley 2003). The Cronbach's alpha of this measure was 0.859.

The result-oriented culture is a 5-item measurement scale. We drew inspiration for these items from Harrison and Baird (Harrison and Baird 2014). The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.881.

Job characteristics are measured using five items based on Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model (Hackman and Oldham 1975). However, since we had an article that validated a job characteristics scale in French (Lequeurre et al. 2013), we chose to draw on this particular work. Cronbach's alpha for this measure was 0.871.

3.3. Statistical Procedures

To test our hypotheses, we used SmartPLS 4 software to perform partial least-squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). This type of software and structural equation is particularly suitable when the research model includes variables of different types, particularly formative variables. To test our various research hypotheses, we created a model that enables efficient partial least squares (PLS-SEM) modeling of structural equations. The construction of analysis models via PLS-SEM is recommended under several conditions (Hair et al. 2024; Sarstedt et al. 2017). The construction of analysis models via PLS-SEM is recommended under several conditions, including the following:

(1) When researchers wish to test a theoretical model from a predictive point of view.
(2) When the structural model to be tested is complex and includes several variables, indicators and relationships between variables.
(3) When the objective of the research is to understand a phenomenon by exploring theoretical developments or extensions of established theories.
(4) When the statistical model includes a formative variable (NWW, person–environment fit, and work engagement in this research).

For the above reasons, we have created an analytical model to test our theoretical thinking in an exploratory way.

To validate the nature, reliability, and validity of our variables as well as our research model, we followed the procedures proposed by PLS-SEM specialists (Hair et al. 2024; Sarstedt et al. 2017).

To validate our reflective constructs, we ran a PLS-SEM algorithm and checked whether the loadings of our reflective indicators were well above the 0.708 limit. We also ensured that these constructs met the criteria for reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (HTMT < 0.85). All these steps were validated by the results of our statistical tests. Turning now to formative measures, we ensured that there were no collinearity problems (VIF < 3) between our variables (either at the outer or inner level of our model). The weights of the different items were statistically significant and relevant. Therefore, our statistical tests validate our formative constructs. It should be noted that two of our formative variables are higher-order variables. To construct these, we used the recommended Disjoint Two-Stage Approach (Sarstedt et al. 2019). This approach offers researchers greater modeling flexibility than the indicator repetition approach. This approach makes it possible to evaluate higher-order constructs more comprehensively and then to test, via confirmatory tetrad analysis (CTA-PLS), whether second-order constructs should be specified as formative or reflective constructs. Such an evaluation is not possible with the repeated indicators approach. This technique is recommended because it enables validation of the analysis model based on original construct measures at both stages of the construction of the higher-order variable. In fact, this technique allows the use of original items during both stages of the procedure, enabling the application of all structural

model validation criteria. In addition, the use of this technique makes it easier to determine whether the use of a higher-order variable is more effective than not. Comparison is easier this way. Further details on the advantages of this procedure can be found in Hair et al. (2024). This allowed us, in stage 1, to ensure that the lower-order (reflective) variables met the criteria in terms of outer loadings, reliability, validity, discriminant validity, as well as collinearity. In stage 2, we were able to assess whether our higher-order (formative) variable also met the minimum scientific criteria for outer weights and collinearity (VIF). All these steps indicate that we have reliable and valid measurements. We validated our reflective and formative constructs using confirmatory tetrad analyses with 10,000 subsamples, a two-tailed test at a 0.10 significance level, and a fixed-seed random-number generator. The results indicate that several variables are better specified as formative (two higher-order constructs: NWW and P–E fit and work engagement), whereas others are better specified as reflective (result-oriented culture, trust climate, and job characteristics).

We evaluated the structural model using the recommended steps. First, the PLS-SEM algorithm was applied to check collinearity, with variance inflation factor (VIF) values below three, indicating no collinearity issues (Table 2, inner model).

Table 2. Collinearity statistics (VIF)—Inner model.

	VIF
Job characteristics -> NWW	1.369
Job characteristics -> Person–environment fit	1.423
Job characteristics -> Work engagement	1.565
NWW -> Person–environment fit	1.316
NWW -> Work engagement	1.325
Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	1.899
Result-oriented culture -> NWW	1.293
Result-oriented culture -> Person–environment fit	1.306
Result-oriented culture -> Work engagement	1.339
Trust climate -> NWW	1.578
Trust climate -> Person–environment fit	1.692
Trust climate -> Work engagement	1.982

Bootstrapping (5% significance level, bias-corrected, and accelerated (BCa) method—a bootstrapping method recommended in the literature (Streukens and Leroi-Werelds 2016) was used to assess the path coefficients between the variables in the PLS-SEM model, with most relationships being statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) (Table 3 and Figure 2). The independent variables explained substantial variance in work engagement (39.8%; R-square = 0.398), P–E fit (47.3%; R-square = 0.473), and NWW (24.0%; R-square = 0.240).

We controlled for effect sizes (f-square), finding many weak ($0.02 \leq$ f-square < 0.15) effect sizes between our variables, with two moderate effect sizes ($0.15 \leq$ f-square < 0.35). These results (Table 4) suggest that our SEM model is robust, but it could benefit from additional variables to explain more variance in work engagement, NWW, and P–E fit.

Table 3. Path coefficients—Mean, STDEV, T values, *p* values.

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	*p* Values
Job characteristics -> NWW	0.203	0.202	0.021	9.631	0.000
Job characteristics -> Person–environment fit	0.273	0.273	0.019	14.431	0.000
Job characteristics -> Work engagement	0.173	0.173	0.022	7.738	0.000
NWW -> Person–environment fit	0.069	0.070	0.017	4.106	0.000
NWW -> Work engagement	0.002	0.002	0.018	0.135	0.893
Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.492	0.493	0.025	19.398	0.000
Results-oriented culture -> NWW	0.101	0.101	0.020	5.116	0.000
Results-oriented culture -> Person–environment fit	0.132	0.133	0.018	7.414	0.000
Results-oriented culture -> Work engagement	0.034	0.034	0.019	1.754	0.080
Trust climate -> NWW	0.295	0.295	0.022	13.670	0.000
Trust climate -> Person–environment fit	0.390	0.390	0.020	19.907	0.000
Trust climate -> Work engagement	0.016	0.016	0.026	0.639	0.523

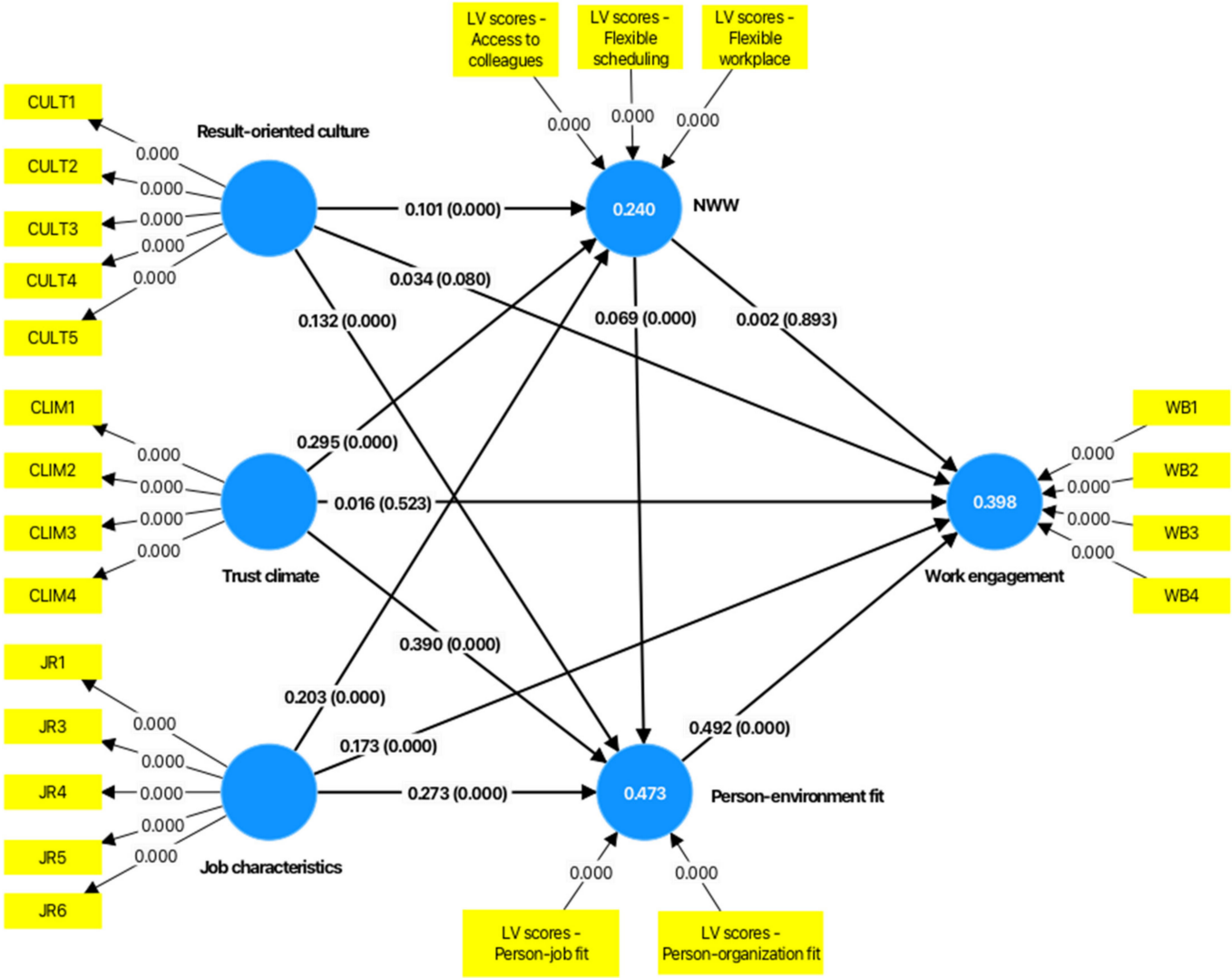

Figure 2. Path coefficients and *p*–values after bootstrapping procedure.

Table 4. f-square—Mean, STDEV, T values, *p* values.

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	*p* Values
Job characteristics -> NWW	0.039	0.040	0.008	4.642	0.000
Job characteristics -> Person–environment fit	0.099	0.100	0.015	6.700	0.000
Job characteristics -> Work engagement	0.032	0.032	0.008	3.781	0.000
NWW -> Person–environment fit	0.007	0.007	0.003	2.015	0.044
NWW -> Work engagement	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.013	0.990
Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.212	0.214	0.025	8.415	0.000
Results-oriented culture -> NWW	0.010	0.011	0.004	2.494	0.013
Results-oriented culture -> Person–environment fit	0.025	0.026	0.007	3.555	0.000
Results-oriented culture -> Work engagement	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.812	0.417
Trust climate -> NWW	0.073	0.073	0.012	6.311	0.000
Trust climate -> Person–environment fit	0.171	0.172	0.020	8.721	0.000
Trust climate -> Work engagement	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.209	0.835

We aimed to assess the predictive capacity of the PLS-SEM model (Legate et al. 2021; Sharma et al. 2023) using the PLSpredict/CVPAT command in SmartPLS 4 software. The PLSpredict analysis leads to $Q^2_{predict}$ values that are all greater than zero, indicating that our model outperforms the most naïve benchmark (Table 5).

Table 5. PLSpredict LV summary—Overview.

	Q^2 Predict	RMSE	MAE
NWW	0.237	0.874	0.688
Person–environment fit	0.468	0.730	0.559
Work engagement	0.266	0.858	0.659

We also tested the predictive power of our research model by performing a cross-validated predictive ability test (CVPAT) procedure. The results indicate that our PLS path model has higher predictive power than the naïve indicator average (Table 6). All these results support the high predictive power of the PLS-SEM results for the work engagement model.

Table 6. CVPAT LV summary—PLS-SEM vs. Indicator average (IA).

	PLS Loss	IA Loss	Average Loss Difference	t Value	*p* Value
NWW	0.880	1.001	−0.121	12.314	0.000
Person–environment fit	0.593	1.001	−0.408	18.071	0.000
Work engagement	0.715	0.872	−0.156	12.058	0.000
Overall	0.743	0.943	−0.201	19.119	0.000

We also examined statistical differences within our sample to detect heterogeneity by performing measurement invariance of the composite model (MICOM) analysis (Hair et al. 2024) to confirm model invariance. Our analysis showed partial invariance, enabling multi-group analysis. This analysis revealed a few significant differences in variable relationships based on respondents working in private, public, or semi-public organizations through bootstrap multigroup analyses.

PLS-SEM models were not designed to develop goodness-of-fit indices, but we derived two significant ones, SRMR and NFI, indicating a good fit. The SRMR was 0.047, below the threshold of 0.05, and the NFI was 0.920, above the 0.9 threshold, confirming a good model–data fit.

4. Results

4.1. Antecedents of Work Engagement

Using bootstrapping, we updated the correlation coefficients between independent and dependent variables in the model (Table 3). Based on the path coefficients, we can see, firstly, that NWW are not statistically correlated with our respondents' work engagement (β = 0.002; $p < 0.893$), invalidating H1. On the other hand, P–E fit is strongly correlated with work engagement, which validates H2 (β = 0.492; $p < 0.000$). The climate of trust was not statistically related to work engagement (β = 0.016; $p < 0.523$). Consequently, H4c could not be verified in this study. The same applies to result-oriented culture, which was not significantly linked to work engagement (β = 0.034; $p < 0.080$). This did not allow H5c to be validated in the present study. On the other hand, our job characteristics variable proves to be an important antecedent, insofar as it is statistically associated with our respondents' work engagement (β = 0.173; $p < 0.000$). This allowed us to validate H6c in this study.

4.2. Antecedents of NWW

Climate of trust (β = 0.295; $p < 0.000$), result-oriented culture (β = 0.101; $p < 0.000$), and job characteristics (β = 0.203; $p < 0.000$) were all positively and statistically significantly related to NWW and explained 24% of the variance in our research model. Therefore, H4a, H5a, and H6a are supported by our data.

4.3. Antecedents of P–E Fit

H3 was validated, while NWW were positively and statistically significantly associated with P–E fit (β = 0.069; $p < 0.000$). Trust climate was strongly associated with P–E fit (β = 0.390; $p < 0.000$). This result supports hypothesis H4b. The result-oriented culture was also positively and statistically significantly related to P–E fit, supporting H5b (β = 0.132; $p < 0.000$). Finally, job characteristics were also statistically significantly related to P–E fit, validating H6b (β = 0.273; $p < 0.000$). These four antecedents explain 47.3% of the variance in P–E fit in our research model.

4.4. P–E Fit as Mediator Mechanism

Interestingly, our specific research shows that the P–E fit variable acts as a mediator between the three variables and work engagement (Table 7). In particular, the relationship between NWW and work engagement becomes statistically significant when it passes through P–E fit (β = 0.034; $p < 0.000$). This is an indirect or full mediation. This result is also highlighted when the other two variables, trust climate and result-oriented culture, are considered. The relationships between these two variables and our respondents' commitment to work become significant if we include P–E fit as a mediating variable. This means that P–E fit completely mediates the relationship between trust climate and work engagement (β = 0.192; $p < 0.000$) as well as the relationship between results-oriented culture and work engagement (β = 0.065; $p < 0.000$).

Table 7. Specific indirect effects—Mean, STDEV, T values, *p* values.

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	*p* Values
Job characteristics -> NWW -> Person–environment fit	0.014	0.014	0.004	3.718	0.000
Job characteristics -> Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.134	0.135	0.012	11.150	0.000
Job characteristics -> NWW -> Work engagement	0.001	0.000	0.004	0.134	0.893
NWW -> Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.034	0.034	0.009	3.979	0.000
Results-oriented culture -> NWW -> Person–environment fit	0.007	0.007	0.002	3.156	0.002
Trust climate -> NWW -> Person–environment fit	0.020	0.021	0.005	3.886	0.000
Results-oriented culture -> Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.065	0.065	0.010	6.831	0.000

Table 7. *Cont.*

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	*p* Values
Results-oriented culture -> NWW -> Work engagement	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.133	0.894
Trust climate -> Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.192	0.192	0.014	13.891	0.000
Trust climate -> NWW -> Work engagement	0.001	0.001	0.005	0.135	0.893
Job characteristics -> NWW -> Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.007	0.007	0.002	3.631	0.000
Results-oriented culture -> NWW -> Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.003	0.003	0.001	3.076	0.002
Trust climate -> NWW -> Person–environment fit -> Work engagement	0.010	0.010	0.003	3.774	0.000

4.5. Multi-Group Analyses

By comparing our respondents' answers according to their sector affiliation, in this case, whether they work for a public, private, or semi-public sector organization, we can uncover some differences in the relationships between variables. Thus, the relationship between NWW and work engagement is statistically significantly higher in the responses of employees working in the public sector than in the responses of employees in the private sector. In other words, the lever that NWW represent for work engagement (which in our general analysis model is not statistically significant) is stronger for public-sector employees than for private-sector employees. No significant differences can be highlighted regarding semi-public sector employees.

Another statistically significant difference can be reported in relation to the relationship between P–E fit and work engagement. This relationship is much stronger in the public sector than it is in the semi-public sector. In other words, the correlation between P–E fit and work engagement is statistically and significantly greater in the responses of public-sector employees than in the responses of semi-public-sector employees. On the other hand, there was no statistically significant difference between private sector employees at this point.

These are the only sectoral differences identified in our study.

5. Discussion

Our results reveal several important findings. First, NWW are not a direct antecedent of work engagement. On the other hand, we found that NWW can act as a lever of work engagement insofar as employees feel that NWW help create a fit with their work environment. In our research, we find that NWW play a favorable role in terms of fit; therefore, NWW are indirectly linked to work engagement via the perception of fit. In other words, NWW can play a role in the work engagement equation but only indirectly. This result represents a first important theoretical contribution to the debate on the impact of NWW on employees. In our study, we show that NWW can have an impact on employee engagement, but mainly through environment fit. To our knowledge, this is the first article to highlight this mediating effect between NWW on the one hand and organizational engagement on the other. This means that the impact of NWW on employee engagement will be all the greater if employees perceive an alignment, or fit, between NWW and the specificities and objectives of their job (person–job fit), as well as between NWW and the objectives and values of their organization (person–organization fit). On the other hand, when this alignment between new working conditions and person–environment fit fails to materialize, situations of organizational disengagement may arise. The interest of our article lies precisely in our ability to test this theoretical relationship empirically and to demonstrate that the person–environment fit mechanism is particularly important in explaining the effects of NWW on employee engagement. As a result, our empirical investigation is helping to extend knowledge of the effects of NWW.

Second, our survey confirms that work engagement is largely dependent on a sense of fit with one's organization and job. Our study validates a theoretical proposition that explains

engagement by the degree of fit perceived by employees (Bright 2021; Steijn and Giauque 2021). However, this theoretical argument has been highlighted in other studies, and our research confirms the importance of this fit mechanism for understanding employee attitudes and behaviors (Edwards and Billsberry 2010; Giauque et al. 2015; Abbasi et al. 2021).

Third, a climate of trust, a goal-oriented culture, and work characteristics are three factors that can be seen as levers to support a positive view by employees of the opportunities for using NWW within their own organization. These are also factors that foster the perception of P–E fit. Trust between employees in an organization, a culture of objectives-based management, and jobs giving employees autonomy, freedom of action, and the feeling of being able to influence decisions affecting their tasks are particularly important factors. These three variables relate to organizational and work-related characteristics and are not individual or psychological characteristics. In other words, the antecedents of NWW and P–E fit can be activated to promote a positive image of new opportunities and forms of work but also to act positively on the fit between employees and their work environment (Fuchs and Reichel 2023; Giauque and Weissbrodt 2022; Wang et al. 2021; Kim 2017).

Finally, our study invites us to consider new forms of work (NWW) not as direct factors in work engagement but as potential levers favoring a fit with one's work environment. Let us not lose sight of the fact that NWW have little impact on the sense of fit compared with other variables such as a climate of trust, goal-oriented management, and job characteristics. That said, these three organizational factors are also favorable conditions for the development of NWW. Our study confirms that positive perceptions regarding the use of opportunities offered by NWW can be fostered, provided that employees feel they operate in a climate of trust (Ficapal-Cusí et al. 2023; Feitosa et al. 2020; Vigoda-Gadot et al. 2022) and in a results-oriented culture (Kingma 2019; Spicer 2020) while enjoying autonomy and freedom of action in their jobs.

NWW alone do not impact commitment to work. If a positive sense of fit is created, this feeling certainly depends on new forms of work, or NWW, but above all, on perceptions linked to work climate, organizational culture, and job conditions.

5.1. Recommendations

These findings lead us to make several recommendations for developing a positive feeling towards NWW, a sense of P–E fit, and, mainly indirectly, a favorable effect on work engagement.

First of all, of course, it is practically difficult to influence employees' person–job fit and person–organization fit. However, organizational and human resources management tools do exist to try and influence employees' sense of fit. For example, organizational climate surveys can be set up to question and monitor the development and evolution of the feeling of fit. Most of the time, however, organizations fail to measure this fit, which is a mistake insofar as the person–environment fit conditions many outcomes at work (Giauque et al. 2013). Another useful tool is to integrate this reflection on individual fit into annual appraisal interviews. This allows for a more individual approach and can then lead to more specific measures for each employee, particularly to take into account the characteristics of their job. In terms of human resources management, these two measures offer the advantage of being inexpensive while probably being effective in terms of working concretely towards a better fit between employees and their organizational and work environment.

Secondly, it is useful to foster a work climate based on trust between employees and their supervisors (Gould-Williams 2007; Destler 2017). This recommendation, which is very broad and general, is in line with concerns raised in the literature in connection with psychological safety and other studies that have highlighted the importance of trust in employee engagement (Peters et al. 2014; Holland et al. 2016). To create a climate of trust within the organization, it is particularly important to ensure that employees feel free to speak up, in particular to suggest improvements to the way the organization works or to improve their personal tasks. That this is not prevented by toxic or disrespectful leadership (Hetrick 2023) or by poor working relationships between colleagues. In fact, trust depends

not only on good working relationships between employees themselves, but also between them and middle and senior managers within the organization. Establishing a climate of trust also means giving the various members of the organization the opportunity to express their opinions and even to be consulted during organizational reforms and/or strategic reorientation (Giauque 2015). Giving employees a voice increases the degree of legitimacy of decisions taken by management and builds greater trust between different levels of the organization.

Thirdly, it is advisable to offer jobs that correspond to a few simple principles that are considered rather effective: letting employees determine how to do the job, including them in decision-making that may affect their tasks, allowing them independence and autonomy, and including space for personal initiative. This means that employees' work must be managed differently by managers. In the age of telecommuting and the development of hybrid working conditions, it is simply no longer feasible to have tight control over how employees do their work or even where they do it (Hopkins and Bardoel 2023). It is probably more useful to propose a general framework of conduct and let employees organize themselves within this framework. In connection with NWW, the way in which organizational leadership is provided needs to be rethought (Metselaar et al. 2023), in particular by allowing employees more freedom and autonomy in carrying out their jobs, with the hierarchy intervening more supportively and through feedback to provide the resources necessary for the full realization of organizational missions. Finally, it is also important to encourage the practice of management by objectives, valuing individual and collective success, and setting expectations in terms of the results to be achieved (Assarlind et al. 2013). Management by objectives can be implemented through relatively simple measures, such as integrating it into the setting of annual objectives, offering regular feedback to employees, and creating more opportunities for exchanges on missions and deadlines within organizations (Van Diermen and Beltman 2016). These various management-by-objectives techniques are well known, especially in the literature on project management.

However, it is also important to encourage the development of an action-oriented culture. In fact, all the measures just mentioned before probably require an organizational cultural change. It is important to build organizations around less control, more deliberation, and accountability. This probably also means thinking about other ways of steering organizations, establishing more direct channels of communication between employees and managers, and rethinking organizational structures and silos. Implementing the various recommendations proposed in this section amounts, in effect, to an organizational cultural change (Hopkins and Bardoel 2023) that can only be achieved in the medium or long term, but not easily in the short term.

All these recommendations are in line with our views on the importance of defining clear, ambitious goals in organizational motivation and commitment processes. That said, we are also well aware that our recommendations are fairly general. They will have to be adapted to the concrete realities of each organization. In particular, we believe that there are significant differences in the organizational specificities and constraints weighing on organizations, whether public, private, or parapublic. In other words, taking into account the characteristics of each organization's institutional environment is essential for adapting tools and procedures to achieve the recommendations presented above. However, to present these differences in detail goes well beyond the objectives of our article. In any case, one-size-fits-all solutions do not exist in management.

5.2. Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that we rely on a self-administered cross-sectional questionnaire. Therefore, we are unable to identify causal links between the different variables. We can only identify statistical correlations, which would need to be challenged by other surveys, particularly longitudinal ones, the only ones that can bring us closer to establishing causal assurance. On the other hand, questionnaire surveys in which independent and dependent variables are measured simultaneously are likely to be confronted

with common method biases. We ensured that we were not confronted with these biases by carrying out a test of common method bias with random dependent variables. This test showed that the VIF measurements were well below the limit of three, indicating that our model does not face this common method bias problem. On the other hand, it is important to note that our sample is not balanced, in that we obtained more responses to our questionnaire from employees working in the public sector than from employees in the private sector or parapublic organizations. This may be a limitation of our study, as we are working with samples that are in any case not very representative of employees in public, private, and parapublic organizations in Switzerland. In any case, it is very difficult to generalize our results to the whole country, or even to all public, private, and parapublic organizations. In the future, it would therefore be interesting to conduct larger-scale surveys of organizations in all three sectors to challenge the results presented in this study. That said, it should be noted that we did carry out multi-group analyses, and that these did not reveal any significant differences in perceptions between employees in the three sectors included in our survey. This alleviates the fears associated with the imbalance of the samples between the different sectors.

As part of the P–E fit measurement used in the present study, we integrated the P–O fit and P–J fit. However, the literature on the subject clearly shows that there are other dimensions of fit that would also be interesting to consider. In particular, we might have considered P–V fit, P–G fit, and P–R fit. A measure of P–E fit that also incorporates these dimensions would allow us to further account for employees' environmental perceptions.

In addition, our model includes a limited number of NWW antecedents. It would therefore be interesting to integrate other aspects linked to individuals and their characteristics or to carry out studies differentiated by profession or occupation to identify differences in terms of NWW perception, fit, or commitment to work.

In order to challenge our research results, it would be interesting to carry out comparative surveys, based on the same questionnaire, in different countries. In other words, to investigate the effects of NWW on employees in the public, private, and parapublic sectors, but in different national contexts. If identical results are identified, which is not impossible, it will be easier to generalize certain recommendations. If different results are obtained, then explanations in terms of national and organizational cultures can be attempted.

On the other hand, it would be very interesting to integrate other variables into our analysis models. In particular, it would be interesting to see whether specific organizational structures can lead to favoring or disfavoring the impacts of NWW on employees. It would also be very interesting to integrate specific management tools into our research design. For example, to see whether certain human resources and/or management practices can lead to a strengthening or weakening of the impacts of NWW on employees.

Furthermore, in our article, we investigated the effects of NWW on employee commitment. But it would also be very useful and interesting to carry out the same type of survey, but on less positive outcomes, such as stress at work or employee burnout.

Finally, we suggest supplementing our quantitative study with a qualitative approach to give more "meaning" to the relationships between our different variables.

6. Conclusions

This study has one main objective, which is to identify the levers of NWW use and the impact of this use on employee engagement. From this objective we developed three research questions. The first was to identify organizational antecedents that could play a positive role in employees' perceptions of the opportunity to use NWW in their organization. In this respect, we have been able to identify that a climate of trust, a result-oriented culture, and specific job characteristics (offering autonomy in work, freedom of action, and opportunities to influence decisions related to work content) are important factors for fostering positive individual dispositions towards the use of NWW. A second question tackles whether benefiting from NWW could have a positive impact on our respondents' work engagement. Our results show no direct relationship between new forms of work,

NWW, and work engagement. Then, investigating a third research question, we were able to update whether the possible association between NWW and work engagement could be indirect via the perception of environmental fit expressed by our respondents. The findings of our study are also relatively clear. The opportunity to use NWW appears to be indirectly linked to work engagement via our respondents' P–E fit. Enjoying the opportunity to use NWW contributes to the emergence of a feeling of P–E fit, and it is this feeling that will have a strong positive impact on work engagement. It is important to note, however, that NWW have only a weak impact on P–E fit in our study, and that it is above all the other independent variables (climate of trust, results-oriented culture, and work characteristics) that have the greatest impact on the feeling of P–E fit. As a result, we can indeed assert here, following our study, that the relationship between NWW and work engagement is above all a question of environment fit. The novelty of this article lies in the consideration of environmental factors to explain employees' willingness to use NWW. To date, previous studies have paid little attention to the organizational factors that make up employees' work environment and which may be conducive to employees' effective use of NWW. We thus show that a feeling of P–E fit, via a climate of trust, a results-oriented culture, and work characteristics, is a powerful factor contributing to a positive perception of NWW by employees but also contributing to their work engagement.

Turning now to the practical implications of our research, several avenues can be explored. The first is reassuring insofar as the levers contributing to a better use of NWW are above all collective and organizational. Thus, managers must take care to develop relationships of trust, rather than control, with their staff. Similarly, our study underlines the fact that management geared to achieving specific objectives, as opposed to ensuring that procedures and processes are respected, is more conducive to the use of NWW and to employee engagement. Finally, specific working conditions must also be offered to enable the development of mutual trust and management by objectives. Indeed, employees must be able to enjoy autonomy at work, a form of freedom in carrying out their tasks. But they must also be able to consider themselves in a position to influence important managerial decisions that affect their work activities. Without the presence of these factors, a climate of fit with the environment is difficult to create, and this can have negative consequences on the use of NWW and employee engagement.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Variables, items, and Cronbach's alphas.

Variables:	Items Used:	Factors and Cronbach's Alphas
Work engagement	Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following proposals (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree): 1. I'm full of energy for my work. 2. I am passionate about my work. 3. When I get up, I feel like going to work. 4. I'm proud of the work I do.	Work engagement is measured as a formative variable in our study. We have tested this formative construct according to the standards proposed in the literature.
New Ways of Working (NWW)	Your organization offers flexible work arrangements. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following proposals (1 = I do not agree; 5 = I completely agree): 1. I am free to determine my own work schedule. 2. I am free to change my hours to choose when I start and finish my work. 3. I am free to determine where I work, at home or at work. 4. I am free to change where I work. 5. At work, I am free to choose my place according to the tasks to be done. 6. I can reach my teammates quickly. 7. I can reach my supervisors quickly. 8. I can quickly reach colleagues who are not part of my team.	3 factors: 1. Flexible scheduling: items 1 and 2. Cronbach's Alpha = 0.870. 2. Flexible workplace: items 3, 4, and 5. Cronbach's Alpha = 0.755. 3. Access to colleagues: items 6, 7, and 8. Cronbach's Alpha = 0.773. NWW are used as a reflective-formative higher-order model in our study. We have tested this higher-order construct according to the standards proposed in the literature.
Person–environment fit	Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following proposals (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree): 1. My personal objectives and those of my organization are very similar. 2. The elements I look for in a job are also present in my current job. 3. The match between my job requirements and my personal skills is very good. 4. I identify with my organization's objectives. 5. The things I value in life are very similar to the things my organization values. 6. My personal values match my organization's values.	2 factors: 1. Person–job fit: items 1, 2, ad 3. Cronbach's Alpha = 0.760. 2. Person–organization fit: items 4, 5, and 6. Cronbach's Alpha = 0.871. Person–environment fit is used as a reflective-formative higher-order model in our study. We have tested this higher-order construct according to the standards proposed in the literature.
Trust climate	Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following proposals. Within my organization (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree): 1. There is a very high level of trust 2. Employees have a high level of trust in their superiors 3. Promises are generally kept 4. Managers trust subordinates to make good decisions	Cronbach's Alpha = 0.859.

Table A1. *Cont.*

Variables:	Items Used:	Factors and Cronbach's Alphas
Result-oriented culture	Please let us know if you agree or disagree with the following proposals. In general in my organization (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree): 1. Being competitive is valued. 2. Being success-oriented is valued. 3. Having high performance expectations is valued. 4. Being results-oriented is valued. 5. Being action-oriented is valued.	Cronbach's Alpha = 0.881.
Job characteristics	Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following proposals (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree): 1. I take part in decisions about what my work involves. 2. I take part in decisions about the nature of my work. 3. I have a direct influence on decisions taken in my department/organization. 4. My job gives me a lot of independence and freedom 5. My job allows me to take personal initiative.	Cronbach's Alpha = 0.871.
Autonomy	This section seeks to identify the main characteristics of your work, such as the level of skills required or the degree of independence. Please let us know if you agree with the following suggestions: (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree): I take part in decisions about what my job entails. I can participate in decisions that affect my work. I am involved in decisions about the nature of my work. I have direct influence on decisions made in my department/organization. My job gives me a lot of independence and freedom. My job allows me to take personal initiative.	Cronbach's Alpha = 0.90.

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