THE ROLE OF CONSISTENCY IN EXTRAVERSION IN EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING: AN EXPERIENCE SAMPLING STUDY

by

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Abstract

Several psychological theories suggest that consistency is important for employee well-being. However, the dynamic, intra-individual nature of this link remains poorly understood. This study tests both the between- and the within-individual well-being implications of being consistent with one's trait extraversion, both at home and at work. Instead of the traditional monolithic approach, we propose a multi-faceted approach to consistency, focusing on trait-specific consistency (i.e., extraversion). We hypothesized that: (a) Individuals whose work or home average extraversion level is consistent with their general extraversion will enjoy greater levels of trait-like well-being, and (b) Individuals will experience greater levels of transient well-being at times when their state extraversion is consistent with their trait levels. In an experience sampling study of 84 fully employed married adults, we repeatedly assessed individuals' transient well-being, as well as their state extraversion levels. Our consistency hypothesis was largely supported across domains and roles of analysis. Between-individual analyses further suggested introverts' (compared to extraverts') well-being levels are positively affected by consistency. Within-individual level analyses also suggested that while extroverts' well-being increases when acting extraverted at work, introverts' well-being levels are not affected by acting consistent. We hope our findings stimulate additional intra-individual research investigating consistency–employee well-being links.

The Role of Consistency in Extraversion in Employee Well-being: An Experience Sampling Study

Personality is an important antecedent of well-being in general (Heller, Watson, & Ilies, 2004), and at the workplace (Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002), in particular. However, it remains unclear how being consistent or inconsistent with one's personality traits can influence fluctuations in employees' well-being. Supporting the important positive role of consistency in well-being, philosophers have long advocated that being "true to one self" is not only a moral command but also a prescription for a meaningful and well-lived life (Schelegel, Hicks, Arndt, & King, 2009).

Influenced by these views, in the last few decades personality psychologists and organizational scholars have proposed different constructs for exploring the notion of being "true to one's self" including coherence, consistency, authenticity, trait congruity and (the absence of) emotional dissonance (Donahue, 1994; Gergen, 1991; Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Goldman; 2006; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne & Ilardi, 1997; Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999). In these literatures "being true to oneself" has been typically assumed to be functional for well-being and psychological health (i.e., "the consistency hypothesis").

In this manuscript we examine the implications of being consistent with one's trait extraversion for employees' well-being. We ask two conceptually and statistically distinct questions: (a) Are individuals who are more consistent in their <u>average</u> levels of extraversion displayed at their work or home roles, relative to their trait level of extraversion, happier than their less consistent peers? and (b) Is temporarily acting outside of one's trait extraversion level at work or home associated with higher or lower levels of well-being? The current Experience Sampling (ESM) study of a

community sample of fully employed, married adults in which personality, affect, and attitudinal states are assessed repeatedly overtime examines both the former cross-sectional, between-individual question (via aggregated measures), as well as the latter more novel, dynamic within-individual question. In the following sections we discuss the nature of employee well-being and present various theoretical perspectives to explain the link between consistency and well-being.

Employee Well-being

Employee well-being--traditionally studied using such constructs as job satisfaction, Positive Affect (PA) and Negative Affect (NA), and exhaustion--is a pivotal construct in organizational behavior. It is associated with important outcomes such as job performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001) organizational citizenship behavior (Le Pine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002) absenteeism (Tharenou, 1993), and life satisfaction (Heller et al., 2004). Similar to the concept of general well-being there is empirical evidence supporting both situational (e.g., Fried & Ferris, 1987) and dispositional (Judge et al., 2002) influences on job satisfaction. Although defined as ‘‘a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences’ (Locke, 1976), traditional job satisfaction research[1] has largely ignored this state-like view (Ilies, Schwind, & Heller, 2007) in two ways. First, the investigation of the antecedents of satisfaction has mostly focused on stable work characteristics (e.g., feedback or autonomy; Fried & Ferris, 1987) or job features (e.g., pay) precluding the study of situational, momentary influences on well-being at work. Second, the job satisfaction construct has been conceptualized as relatively stable across time and has been measured with trait-like surveys, virtually ignoring short-term intra-individual fluctuations in job satisfaction. The need for a state approach to the study of job satisfaction has been forwarded by several researchers (Ilies & Judge

,2002; Ilies, Schwind, & Heller, 2007) and indeed empirical findings suggest that up to a third of the total variance in job satisfaction is due to intra-individual variations in discrete job satisfaction (Heller & Watson, 2005; Ilies & Judge, 2002; Judge & Ilies, 2004). As mentioned earlier, with few exceptions, this variation has been treated as error variance rather than systematic meaningful fluctuations in job satisfaction. Importantly, in the current study both state and trait (i.e., aggregated states) conceptualizations of well-being are used enabling the examination of both intra- and inter-individual processes linking consistency in personality with employee well-being.

Consistency in Personality and Well-being

Personality psychologists have long assumed that people have an inner core that is not necessarily reflected in their outer layer (Horney, 1942, 1950; Jung, 1953). That is, that people have a "true self" or a stable true personality that may or may not be expressed in different social roles or situations (McCrae & Costa, 1984). This divergence in enacted behavior from one's global personality begs the question regarding its implications for well-being. That is, is the “social chameleon”—who behaves very different from situation to another—happier than his more consistent peer? Conceptually, a differentiated self could be indicative of high levels of adaptation in response to environmental demands (Funder & Colvin, 1991; Gergen, 1991; Snyder, 1974), or conversely represent a fragmented self and a lack of sense of coherence or unity (Block, 1961; Lecky, 1945; Rogers, 1959).

Recent findings lend support to the fragmentation view by indicating that a more differentiated self is associated with lower levels of well-being. Specifically, findings indicate that people who manifest more inconsistency in trait profiles across different roles were also lower on role satisfaction and self-esteem, and showed

greater levels of psychological distress indices such as depression, loneliness, and dissociation (Donahue et al., 1993; Lutz & Ross, 2003). Furthermore, Donahue, Roberts, Sheldon and their colleagues (Donahue & Harary, 1998; Roberts & Donahue, 1994; Sheldon et al., 1997) showed that the trait-like sense of satisfaction a person feels within a particular role is positively associated with the degree of similarity evidenced between role-based personality (i.e., a person's typical level of extraversion at a role) and ratings made regarding “my self in general” (i.e., global personality ratings). In sum, it appears that when people typically vary away from their general or characteristic personality style within a given role, they tend to feel less content in general, and within that role, in particular.

A related, but less rigid approach to consistency can be found in the authenticity literature, a concept rooted in Greek philosophy (Kernis & Goldman, 2002). In this perspective "being true to one self" is about a sense of self expression and choice underlying behavior. Whether it is “expressing oneself in ways that are consistent with inner thoughts and feelings" (Harter, 2002) or reflecting the "unobstructed operation of one's true, or core, self in one's daily enterprise" (Kernis, 2003), according to this line of theory people need to feel authentic, that is, preserve a sense of self expression and choice to maintain their well-being. In other words, to feel fully functioning people need to experience their behavior as “authored” or “owned” by the self (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Kernis, 2003; Rogers,1963). It is important to note though, that whereas consistency researches still debate whether it is beneficial or harmful to the individual's well-being such debate does not occur among authenticity researchers who view authenticity as a critical and crucial element of well-being (Deci & Ryan, 1991; Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Thus, the

authenticity literature provides further support for our claim that consistency is positively linked to employee well-being.

Organizational research has studied consistency in the contexts of leadership and emotions. First, leadership scholars have suggested that authentic leaders who conduct their daily life according to their deeply held values can positively influence leader's well-being, as well as follower's eudaemonic well-being (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumba, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005). Second, more pertinent to our purposes here, the emotional labor construct (Hochschild, 1983) addresses situations in which the in-consistency, or the gap between the true self and the behavior is imposed on the employee by organizational or occupational norms that provide a general frame for emotions that should be expressed during a service providing encounter (i.e., display rules; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). While Hochschild (1983) argues that emotional labor is detrimental to well-being, the accumulating body of empirical research provides only mixed support for these assertions (Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Zapf et al., 1999).

To conclude, despite somewhat different theoretical conceptions consistency is generally considered in these diverse literatures an important antecedent of well-being.

Current Study

Previous research has provided some support for the "consistency hypothesis" namely the influence of consistency between role-based personality and global personality on various positive personal outcomes. The current study extends this investigation to a broader examination of the effect of consistency for employees' well-being in several important ways.

First, we examine various indices of well-being both at home and work including PA, NA, job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and emotional exhaustion. Moreover, while previous consistency and authenticity research has treated consistency as a monolithic concept—either examining whether one's role personality as a whole is consistent with global personality (e.g., Donahue & Harary, 1998; Roberts & Donahue, 1994) or examining consistency across several different role personalities as a whole (Donahue et al., 1993; Sheldon et al., 1997)—we take a more fine-tuned approach to consistency. That is, we propose a multi faceted conception of consistency, arguing that one can behave in a role consistent with certain traits (e.g., extraversion) but inconsistent relative to others (e.g., agreeableness). Thus, we will test consistency using only one of the big-5 personality dimensions, namely, extraversion.

We chose to focus on extraversion for several reasons. First, the link between extraversion and well-being has been established in numerous studies (Heller et al., 2004) and correlations between extraversion and PA, usually yield the highest values among the big-5 personality dimensions (Diener & Lucas, 1999; Lucas, Diener, Grob, Sue, & Shao, 2000). Second, due to our focus on within-individual processes of consistency, we selected the big-5 dimension (extraversion) which shows repeatedly the greatest proportion of within-individual variance in states (Fleeson, 2001, 2007; Heller, Komar, & Lee, 2007). Third, given this close link between extraversion and well-being it is especially interesting to examine whether introverts acting in an extraverted manner will experience well-being benefits from acting extraverted (Fleeson, Malanos, & Achille, 2002) or rather they will experience less well-being due to acting outside of character?

Second, and perhaps most importantly, we will examine the transient well-being implications of *temporarily* acting within or outside of one's extraversion levels. In doing so, we draw from recent conceptualizations of contextualized personality states which are defined as one's short-term, concrete conceptions of acting, feeling, and thinking, or, more simply, syndromes that indicate what the person as a whole perceives he or she is doing at present (Fleeson, 2001; Heller et al., 2007). Acknowledging the substantive variability in behavior within-person over short periods of time in addition to between-individual variability , personality researchers are turning their attention to the study of personality states (e.g., Heller, Perunovic, & Reichman, 2009). Indeed, when personality states are assessed using the big-5 dimensions, a considerable amount of within-individual variability can be observed that is equal or larger than that observed between-individuals (Fleeson, 2001; Heller et al., 2007).

Thus, we will conduct a unique test of the novel, intra-individual link between state-trait consistency in personality and momentary assessments of employee well-being. That is, in addition to the aforementioned between-subject analyses that average both personality states and satisfaction across multiple situations and time periods, we will conduct an analysis at the within-individual level that tracks this effect as it unfolds naturally over time in the ongoing lives of individuals.

Finally, we extend previous research by examining these consistency-well-being associations at both work and home, exploring the generalizability of the findings.

In sum, the purpose of this ESM study is to provide a comprehensive test of the association between consistency and employee well-being broadly defined. We examine the implications of consistency in extraversion at work and home at both the

between- and within-individual levels. Based on the above discussion, we first hypothesize a positive link between consistency and well-being at the between-individual level.

H-1: Individuals whose average extraversion levels at work are consistent with their global extraversion will show higher levels of average job satisfaction (H-1a) and PA (H-1b), as well as lower levels of NA (H-1c) and emotional exhaustion (H-1d), relative to their less consistent peers.

H-2: Individuals whose average extraversion levels at home are consistent with their global extraversion will show higher level of average marital satisfaction (H-2a) and PA (H-2b), as well as lower levels of NA (H-2c) and emotional exhaustion (H-2d), relative to their less consistent peers.

We further expected to find a within-individual effect such that individuals will experience greater level well-being at times when their personality states are consistent with their global extraversion levels relative to times when they are less consistent. Therefore:

H-3: At work, when state extraversion is consistent with global extraversion individuals will feel higher levels of job satisfaction (H-3a), and PA (H-3b), as well as lower levels of NA (H-3c) and emotional exhaustion (H-3d), relative to less consistent times.

H-4: At home, when state extraversion is consistent with global extraversion individuals will feel higher levels of marital satisfaction (H-4a), and PA (H-4b), and lower levels of NA (H-4c) and emotional exhaustion (H-4d), relative to less consistent times.

Method

Participants

Eighty four fully-employed, married Israelis (21% male) were recruited via a diverse set of methods: (a) advertisements and flyers, (b) an email solicitation letter that was sent to acquaintances of our research team, and (c) word of mouth. Participants varied considerably in age (M=39.54, SD=10.82), profession (e.g., employees from the high tech industry, finance, telecom, academia, and government sectors), and seniority. Participants were compensated up to $50, depending on the number of surveys they completed.

Procedure

First, participants responded to a preliminary assessment battery. This battery included demographics and work characteristic's questionnaires. Next, participants were issued a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA; Palm Z22) which audibly signaled 3 times a day, for a period of two weeks (excluding weekends). Participants could only log on to the PDA within one hour from the time the device signaled. The electronic diaries included: state measures of extraversion, job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, and mood scales. Participants were instructed to answer these questionnaires based on their feelings at the present moment or at the past hour (e.g., Ilies & Judge, 2002).

In order to ensure that participants complete the diaries in a variety of situations and contexts, the PDA was set to signal at random times within each of three defined time zones [11:00AM-2:30PM, 2:30PM-6:00PM, 6:00PM-9:30 PM]. Following recommendations made by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003), we counterbalanced the presentation of questionnaires, the presentation of items within the questionnaires, and included negatively worded items. These steps

were taken to reduce biases such as social desirability, leniency, acquiescence, and demand characteristics (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

The PDAs recorded the exact data submission time and the response time for each item in the survey. Diary recordings with more than five response times lower than 70 milliseconds were removed. A total of 175 surveys were removed from the sample using this procedure. The 84 participants completed a total of 2,227 diary recordings (an average of 26.5 recordings per person), which is equivalent to an overall response rate of approximately 88%. The overall response rate was computed as the ratio of the number of recordings received [2,227] to the maximum number of possible ratings (10 [days] X 3 [recordings per day] X 84 =2,520).

Diary Measures

Extraversion States. Participants completed the Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI; Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003). Participants were instructed to rate the degree to which each item described them during the past hour (for similar instructions, see Fleeson, 2001; Heller et.al., 2007). Ratings were made on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Extraversion was represented by two items and each item included two words (extraversion: extraverted and enthusiastic, reserved and quiet). Extraversion states were associated with work or home depending on the role participants reported occupying at the time they completed the personality questionnaire (i.e., work, family, or other).

Work and Home Role-Based Extraversion. Work and home role-based extraversion was assessed for each participant by aggregating his or her extraversion states in a bottom-up fashion within a context (i.e., work and home; see also Heller, Watson, Komar, Min, & Perunovic, 2007). Put simply, work and home extraversion scores were calculated for each participant as the mean of their work extraversion

states and home extraversion states, respectively. The reliability of work extraversion was calculated across all work diary reports, whereas the reliability of home extraversion was calculated across all home diary reports. Coefficient alphas for work and home extraversion were $\alpha = .38$ and $\alpha = .33$ respectively. The modest reliabilities reflect in part the fact that only two indicators were used to assess each big-5 dimension.

Global Extraversion. Global extraversion was assessed for each participant by aggregating all his or her extraversion states in a bottom-up fashion. The reliability for global extraversion, was $\alpha = .33$.

State Job Satisfaction and Marital Satisfaction. Job satisfaction and marital satisfaction were measured with the 6-item Edwards and Rothbard (1999) scale. Participants were requested to indicate their agreement with statements (e.g., “I am satisfied with my job" and "My family life is very enjoyable") using a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). They were instructed to complete these items based on their current momentary thoughts and feelings. Consequently, the wording of the items was slightly modified to be more congruent with momentary instructions (see also Judge & Ilies, 2004). The coefficients alpha for job satisfaction and marital satisfaction were $\alpha = .88$ and $\alpha = .87$, respectively.

Current Mood. Participants completed the 20-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The PANAS assesses both PA and NA by asking participants to indicate “to what extent you feel this way right now, that is, at the present moment” on a 5-point scale (1 = very slightly or not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = extremely) for 10 positive (e.g., exited, inspired) and 10 negative (e.g., nervous, afraid) emotions. The coefficients alpha for the scales were $\alpha = .91$ (NA) and $\alpha = .85$ (PA).

Current Emotional Exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion was assessed with the Maslach Emotional Exhaustion Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Participants were asked to rate the degree to which the following items described them during the past hour: "I have been feeling burned out", "I have been feeling frustrated" and "I have been feeling like I'm at the end of my rope". This 3-item measure had a coefficient alpha of .83.

Data Analyses

The diary data in this study have a multi-level structure in that each diary recording (e.g., momentary personality assessments) can be considered a lower level unit nested under the upper level unit of persons. Consequently, we analyzed our data using multi-level modeling techniques. Multi-level modeling can be understood intuitively as a two-stage series of iterative regressions (Byrk & Raudenbush, 1992). At the first level of analysis (level 1), the relationship between the within person variables is investigated by regressing the criterion (e.g., state job satisfaction) on the predictor (e.g., state extraversion) for each person in the study. At the second level (Level 2), the parameters estimated at Level 1 (intercepts and slopes) are regressed on Level 2 variables (e.g., global extraversion). Importantly, a random error term is introduced in the Level 2 equations for both intercept and slope; this represents the random effect component of the model that will enable generalizations beyond the sample of this study. We used Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM; Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992) to test H-3 and H-4.

Results

Initial Analyses

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for all the study variables across individuals are presented in Table 1. Consistent with previous studies

(Donahue & Harary, 1998) large correlations were found between work and home role-based extraversion (r=.63) and between global extraversion and role extraversion (i.e., rs= .84 - .90). It is also important to note that, across individuals, the average daily PA scores were strongly correlated with work, home and global extraversion. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing a positive relation between extraversion and PA (e.g., Diener & Lucas, 1999; Lucas & Fujita, 2000).

Between-Individual Analyses of the Well-being Implications of Consistency

To test the between-individual hypotheses (H-1 and H-2), moderated multiple regression analyses were conducted to check how consistency in role-based (i.e., work and home) extraversion and global extraversion is linked to various well-being indicators including: job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, PA, NA, and emotional exhaustion (see Table 2). In all analyses the well-being variable served as the criterion measure and the two predictors (i.e., role-based and global extraversion) were entered in Step 1, followed by their interaction term in Step 2. For example, in the analysis predicting a positive link between consistency and job satisfaction, work extraversion and global extraversion were entered in Step 1, followed by the interaction term (i.e., the product of the two main effects) in Step 2. Following Aiken and West's (1991) recommendations, the two interaction components were standardized to reduce multi-collinearity. In addition, to determine the pattern of significant interactions, we plotted the interaction at one standard deviation above and below the mean on the two predictors, and tested the significance of the simple effects (Aiken & West, 1991) [2].

H-1 predicted that consistency in work and global extraversion levels will be positively related to well-being. Of the four regression analyses assessing this association, one was significant and two were marginally significant (both were in the

predicted direction). Specifically, H-1a was not supported in that the interaction of work extraversion and global extraversion predicting job satisfaction (b= .03, *ns*), was not significant. However, in support of H-1b, consistency of work extraversion and global extraversion predicted an increase in PA as evident in a significant interaction (b= .07, p <.01). Probing this interaction reveals a significant negative simple slope for introverts (b= -.25, p <.05) and a non-significant simple slope for extraverts (b= .04, *ns*). Put simply, introverts who act extrovertly at work are lower on PA compared to their peers who act introverted. As for extraverts, their PA is not affected by their work extraversion. Next, supporting H-1c, the interaction of work extraversion and global extraversion predicting NA (b = -.06, p =.08) was found to be marginally significant. This interaction reveals a significant negative simple slope for extraverts (b= -.19, p= .05) and a non-significant simple slope for introverts (b= -.07, *ns*). That is, extraverts who act extroverted at work (i.e., consistent with their trait level) are lower on NA compared to their peers who act introverted at work. As for H-1d, the interaction of work extraversion and global extraversion predicting emotional exhaustion (b= -.08, p =.06) was found to be marginally significant. This interaction portrays a non-significant negative simple slope for extraverts (b= -.07, *ns*) and a non-significant positive simple slope for introverts (b= .08, *ns*).

In H-2 we predicted that consistency of <u>home</u> extraversion and global extraversion will be positively related to well-being. Of the four regression analyses testing this association, three were significant. First, inconsistent with H-2a, the association between marital satisfaction and consistency of home extraversion and global extraversion (b= .06, *ns*), was not significant. Second, in support of H-2b, the consistency of home extraversion and global extraversion predicted an increase in PA (b= .07, p <.05). Probing this interaction revealed a significant negative simple slope

for introverts (b= -.24, p <.05) and a non-significant slope for extraverts (b= .18, *ns*). That is, among introverts, those who act introverted at home (i.e., consistent with their trait) report being higher on PA compared to those introverts who act extroverted at home. Extraverts' PA, however, is not affected by their level of home extraversion.

Next, supporting H-2c, the consistency of home and global extraversion predicted a decrease in NA (b= -.13, p <.01). Probing this interaction reveals a significant positive simple slope for introverts (b= .18, p< .05), and a non-significant simple slope for extraverts (b= -.06, *ns*). Put simply, introverts who act extrovertly at home are higher on NA compared to their peers that behave at home consistent with their trait levels (i.e., are introverted). As for extraverts, their NA is not affected by their home extraversion.

Finally, in support of H-2d, consistency of home and global extraversion predicted a decrease in emotional exhaustion (b=-.11, p<.05). An examination of this interaction indicates that while for introverts there is a positive association between home extraversion and emotional exhaustion (b=.24, p<.05), extraverts do not show this association (b= .02, *ns*). Introverts who act extrovertly at home are higher on emotional exhaustion compared to their peers that act introverted. As for extraverts, their emotional exhaustion is not affected by their level of home extraversion.

In sum, we found the following pattern of simple effects: introverts whose average extraversion at work or at home is consistent with their global extraversion levels show higher levels of PA, as well as lower levels of NA (at home) and emotional exhaustion, relative to their less consistent peers. Conversely, extraverts do not show a significant association between consistency and well-being (with the exception of the link between consistency and NA at work).

Within-Individual Analyses of the Well-being Implications of Consistency

Before testing the within-individual hypotheses (H3 and H4), we investigated whether there was sufficient within-individual variance in the measured variables. Table 3 presents the results from null HLM models partitioning the within and between variance in each variable that was assessed daily. A considerable proportion of the total variance in job satisfaction (21%) and marital satisfaction (29%) was due to day-to-day variation (for similar estimates see also Heller & Watson, 2005; Ilies & Judge, 2002; Judge & Ilies, 2004). Again, similar to previous estimates of proportions ranging between 40% and 55% (Heller et al., 2007), an even larger proportion of within-individual variance was found for PA at home (44.2%) and at work (46.7%), as well as NA at home (48.1) and at work (50.6).Within-individual variance of emotional exhaustion at home and work was 33.8%, and 56.4%, respectively. The largest proportion of within-individual variance in our study was found for work extraversion states (63.6%), and home extraversion states (70.2%) [for similar findings see also Fleeson et al., 2002; Heller et al., 2007]. Thus, it is meaningful and appropriate to explain the patterns of within-individual variation in all of these variables. Consequently, we proceed next to examine our substantive within-individual hypotheses.

We tested the cross-level interaction between global extraversion and state levels of extraversion at work (H-3) and home (H-4) in predicting the various indicators of well-being states. A multi-level model was examined in which well-being states (i.e., job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, NA, PA, and emotional exhaustion) were predicted from extraversion states, global extraversion, and their product. Global extraversion was centered at each individual's mean to eliminate

between-individual variance (see Table 4). To determine the pattern of significant interactions, we plotted each interaction at one standard deviation above and below the mean on trait and state extraversion (Aiken & West, 1991). We also tested the simple effects at one standard deviation above and below the mean on trait extraversion (Aiken & West, 1991).

H-3 predicted that people would experience greater well-being at work depending on the extent to which their extraversion states are consistent with their global extraversion levels. Of the four regression analyses assessing this association, one was significant and three were marginally significant (all three were in the predicted direction).

First, in support of H-3a, consistency between extraversion states at work and global extraversion predicted an increase in job satisfaction as evident in the marginally significant interaction term (b= .03, p= .06). As shown in Figure 1 this interaction reveals a significant positive simple slope for extraverts (b= .06, p< .05) and a non-significant simple slope for introverts (b= -.03, *ns*)[3]. Put simply, extraverts are more satisfied at work at times when they act extrovertly (i.e., when they are consistent with their trait levels). As for introverts, their state job satisfaction is not affected by their level of extraversion at work.

Second, consistency of extraversion states at work and global extraversion predicted a significant increase in PA (b= .05, p< .05). As depicted in Figure 2, this interaction reveals a marginally significant positive simple slope for extraverts (b= .13, p= .06) and a non-significant simple slope for introverts (b= .02, *ns*). That is, extraverts are higher on PA at times when they act extrovertly, compared to times when they act introverted at work. As for introverts, their current PA at work is not affected by their extraversion states.

Next, supporting H-3c, consistency of extraversion states at work and global extraversion predicted a marginally significant decrease in NA (b= -.03, p= .07). Further examination of this cross-level interaction reveals a significant positive simple slope for introverts (b= .05, p< .05) and a non-significant simple slope for extraverts (b= -.01, *ns*). That is, introverts are lower on NA at work at times when they are consistent with their global extraversion levels (i.e., act introverted), compared to times when they act extroverted. As for extraverts, their current NA at work is not affected by their extraversion states at work.

Finally, supporting H-3d, consistency between extraversion states at work and global extraversion predicted a significant decrease in emotional exhaustion (b = -.05, p =.05). As shown in Figure 3, this interaction reveals a significant negative simple slope for extraverts (b= -.07, p< .05) and a non-significant positive slope for introverts (b= .04, *ns*). Put simply, extraverts, are lower on emotional exhaustion at work at times when they are consistent with their global extraversion trait (i.e., act extroverted), compared to times when they act introverted. As for introverts, their current emotional exhaustion is not affected by their extraversion states at work.

Next, we tested H-4 that predicted people would experience greater well-being at home depending on the extent that their extraversion states are consistent with their global extraversion levels. Of the four regression analyses assessing this association, only one was marginally significant. In support of H-4a, the consistency between extraversion states and global extraversion predicted an increase in marital satisfaction (b= .04, p =.07). Examination of this cross-level interaction reveals a marginally significant positive simple slope for extraverts (b= .10, p= .06) and a non-significant simple slope for introverts (b= -.06, *ns*)[4]. That is, extraverts, are higher on marital satisfaction at home when they act extroverted (i.e., act consistent with their

global extraversion level), compared to times at home when they act introverted. As for introverts, their state marital satisfaction is not affected by their extraversion states at home. Finally, no support was found for H-4b, H-4c and H-4d: consistency between extraversion states at home and global extraversion was not linked to PA (b= .01, *ns*), NA (b= -.03, *ns*), or emotional exhaustion (b= -.05, *ns*).

In conclusion, consistent with predictions, all four multi-level regressions assessing the within-individual associations between well-being and consistency of extraversion states at work and global extraversion were found significant or marginally significant. Of the four regressions assessing the association between well-being and consistency of extraversion states at home and global extraversion, only one analysis was (marginally) significant. We found a very different pattern for the simple effects than the one reported earlier for the between-individual analyses: extraverts were higher on job satisfaction and PA and lower on emotional exhaustion, when they acted more extroverted at work as well as higher on marital satisfaction when they acted more extroverted at home (i.e., consistent with their global extraversion level). Conversely, introverts did not show a significant association between extraversion states and well-being (with the exception of the positive link between extraversion at work and NA found for introverts).

Discussion

In this study we provide a comprehensive examination of the link between employee well-being and consistency with one's trait extraversion level. We asked: (a) whether individuals who are more consistent in their <u>average</u> levels of extraversion displayed at their work or home roles, relative to their trait level of extraversion, are happier? and (b) whether temporarily acting outside of one's trait extraversion level at work or home is associated with higher or lower levels of well-being? These two

general conceptual questions—corresponding to between- and within-subject levels of analysis, respectively—were addressed in our ESM study.

Are People Consistent with their Trait Extraversion Happier?

First, the between-individual moderation analyses showed that individuals who are consistent in their average extraversion levels at work with their global extraversion, displayed increased levels of PA, as well as decreased levels of NA and emotional exhaustion, relative to their less consistent peers. Similar findings were also revealed at the home domain: consistency was associated with increased levels of PA, as well as decreased levels of NA and emotional exhaustion. These findings generally converge with previous research (Donahue & Harary, 1998; Roberts & Donahue, 1994; Sheldon et al., 1997) showing that self-concept consistency or "being true to oneself" is functional for well-being and psychological health. Somewhat surprisingly, we did not replicate previous findings (Roberts & Donahue, 1994; Sheldon et al., 1997) showing the association between self-concept consistency and role satisfaction. However, as discussed below in detail, it should be noted that these authors did not examine consistency in extraversion as we did, focusing instead on the consistency in the person as whole across all big-5 dimensions.

The aforementioned findings expand on previous research in several ways. First, unlike previous studies using 'single time measures', our measures of global and role-based personality were based on repeated measurements collected via ESM methodology potentially providing more reliable and robust measures (Heller, Watson et al., 2007). Second, and more importantly, unlike prior research examining personality consistency as a monolithic personality construct, we focused on consistency on a specific personality dimension (i.e., extraversion).

This unique perspective further enabled us to examine and compare extraversion's consistency's effects on well-being at different levels of trait extraversion. Indeed, examination of the simple effects revealed differential effects for introverts and extraverts. Whereas introvert's well-being was influenced by trait consistency, extraverts' well-being was not. Of the six significant or marginally significant interactions, four simple effects analyses revealed significant findings for introverts, but not for extraverts. Only one simple effect analysis revealed the opposite pattern, a significant slope for extraverts and not for introverts. These findings suggest a shift in focus from "should one be true to oneself?" "to "who should be true to one's self?" Thus, the question we posed whether trait consistent people are happier is a complex one, and the answer to it may depend also on one's trait levels. Our findings show that the association between well-being and consistency of average extraversion levels and global extraversion is especially meaningful for introverts compared to extraverts.

A possible explanation for these findings can be found in the self-monitoring literature showing important links between extraversion and self-monitoring (for a review see Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). That is, intorverts may be characterized as low self-monitors who adapt poorly to changing environments, and thus display a decrease in well-being when occupying roles in which they act outside of their introverted character. Extraverts, in turn, are similar to high self-monitors and, thus, do not incur any well-being costs for acting introverted.

These findings may have important implications for selection and promotion processes in organizations. They suggest that while extraverts can perform a wide range positions varying greatly in their extraversion requirements (e.g., ranging from laboratory researcher to a sales-person), introverts, in turn, may be more restricted in

their occupational possibilities, and at least in terms of their well-being levels, are better-off in jobs with less requirements for extraverted behavior.

Does temporarily acting outside character reduce happiness?

Recent developments in personality psychology have highlighted the need to supplement traditional discourse with a relatively new approach focusing on personality states (Fleeson, 2001). Drawing from this perspective we examined whether temporarily acting outside character reduces transient well-being. In support of consistency theory, we found that at work, when people acted consistent with their global extraversion, they felt increased levels of job satisfaction, and PA, as well as decreased levels of NA and emotional exhaustion, relative to less consistent times. At home, when people acted consistent with their global extraversion, they felt increased levels of marital satisfaction, relative to less consistent times. However, acting consistent with global extraversion at home was not associated with PA, NA, or emotional exhaustion. Thus, our findings indicate a pattern in which variations in extraversion consistency at work affect well-being fluctuations more than at home.

Examination of the simple effects revealed a differential association between within-individual variations in consistency and well-being for varying levels of trait extraversion. Interestingly, this pattern was very different than the one we found in the between-individual analyses which showed that consistency mattered most for introverts. That is, the within-individual analyses showed that whereas extraverts' well-being was strongly influenced by consistency in state and global extraversion especially at the workplace, introverts' well-being was not. For the five significant or marginally significant cross-level interactions, four simple effects analyses revealed significant findings for extraverts, but not for introverts. A possible account for these findings is that extraverts find the expression of state extraversion to be important and

pleasurable, and therefore there is a positive association between their state well-being and their extraversion states. Conversely, introverts do not find the expression of extraveted or introverted states to be vital or pleasant, thus their extraversion states are generally unrelated to their state well-being.

This divergence between within- and between-individual analyses represents a puzzling and intriguing finding which clearly should be addressed in future research. Whereas introverts are unhappy in an in-consistent extraverted home role, extraverts do not mind an in-consistency. However, extraverts appear happier in moments when acting more extraverted at work, whereas for introverts inconsistent moments do not seem to matter.

What aspects of the self should one be true to?

This study is a first attempt to explore a model of "trait specific consistency" thus replacing the current monolithic conception of consistency with a more multi-faceted one. Indeed, the current study focused on extraversion, showing that within-individual consistency in state and global extraversion leads to increased well-being. However, we also examined the associations between consistency in the four remaining big-5 personality dimensions and well-being. That is, we looked at how consistency in openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness and neuroticism states and their corresponding global traits is associated with transient employee well-being (i.e., role satisfaction, PA, NA and emotional exhaustion) both at work and at home domains. Indeed, of the 32 multi-level regression analyses (4 personality dimensions x 2 domains x 4 well-being indices) only one was significant and two were marginally significant, indicating a weak or chance association between consistency and well-being in these personality dimensions. Therefore, we propose an additional shift in focus from

viewing consistency as a monolithic-construct to examining consistency in trait extraversion specifically.

Limitations and Future Research

Our study is potentially limited by its small sample size (N = 84). However, it should be noted that we used an ESM design involving a large effective sample size at the within-individual level (Level 1 Sample size N=2,227). Moreover, even at the between-individual-level, our sample size is substantial for a diary study of a non-student, community sample. Finally, the significant findings obtained in the current study suggest that power was not a problem in the current study.

Another potential limitation is the exclusive reliance on self report and the related concern of common method variance. Specifically, having a single rater provide all the ratings and collecting all measures at the same point in time may have artificially inflated the associations. However, this reliance is justified given our interest in the subjective aspects of well-being. In addition, since our interest was in the rapid, contemporaneous associations between consistency and well-being as they unfold over time within the person, the ESM approach was especially useful for our purpose as measurements are provided close in time to the occurrence of the phenomena. As described earlier, we took several steps to reduce the potential for common method variance according to recommendations made by Podsakoff et al. (2003). However, future research should further examine these associations, employing additional methodologies such as informant reports, observational methods, or more objective physiological measures of well-being.

In addition, our correlational design does not enable strong causal inferences from our findings regarding the associations between consistency and well-being. This is because there may be confounding third variables such as self-confidence that

may account for both these associations. For instance, at the between-individual level people with high self confidence may tend to be more consistent with their traits, as well as experience greater levels of well-being, relative to their less confident peers. Furthermore, the reverse causality is also plausible; for instance, at the within-individual level it is unclear whether it is inconsistency that negatively affects well-being, or whether it is the case that people tend to act in-consistently when their well-being levels are low. In fact, it could be the case that both casual directions linking consistency and well-being states are operating simultaneously and thereby mutually reinforcing each other. This intriguing possibility should be examined by future research employing experimental designs.

This line of research can be extended in several additional ways. First, the psychological process through which consistency positively affects well-being at both the intra- and inter-individual levels can be explored. For instance, is it due to a diffuse aversive feeling or perhaps to an unpleasant experience of "in-authenticity"? Alternatively, is it due to the exertion of considerable effort in behaving outside of one's character or perhaps to the subjective experience of a "poor performance" and its likely associated negative feedback or self-evaluation? Investigation of these affective and cognitive mediators is clearly a deserving area for future research.

Second, moving beyond well-being as the outcome, we suspect that there are negative performance implications for "acting outside of character", for instance, is an introvert less proficient as an actor or as a sales-person? Third, we expect other types of in-consistency such as temporarily behaving inconsistent with one's values or life goals to have important implications as well.

Conclusion

Despite the aforementioned limitations and the obvious need for additional research, we feel the current study significantly contributes to the consistency literature. Indeed, this study supports previous research showing a positive association between consistency and well-being; however we propose several significant novelties as well as shifts in conceptions in the understanding of this association. First, this study reveals the association between consistency and well-being in the within-individual level showing that individuals are higher on well-being at times they are consistent with their global traits. Second, we propose a shift in focus from "should one be true to oneself?" to “who should be true to one's self”. Both, between-individual and within-individual analyses, indicated a differential effect of consistency on well-being for introverts and extraverts showing that acting true to oneself is not beneficial for everyone. Third, we propose an additional shift in focus from viewing consistency as a monolithic construct to examining it as a multi faceted construct. Our within-individual findings show that the association between consistency and well-being is especially meaningful in extraversion while insignificant in openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism. Our hope is that these findings will stimulate new work that further explicates the nature of this intriguing association between consistency and well-being.

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Footnotes

[1] Interestingly, this oversight is with few exceptions also true of the life satisfaction literature (see also Heller, Watson, & Ilies, 2006).

[2] We do not report main-effect analyses given our focus on consistency that is examined via the interaction terms in the regressions. These analyses both at the between-and within- individual levels are available upon request from the first author

[3] We tested these simple effects at one and a half standard deviation above and below the mean on trait extraversion.

[4] Again, these simple effects were computed at one and a half standard deviation above and below the mean on trait extraversion.

Table 1

Between-Individual Correlations among Study Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Emotional Exhaustion	2.02	.48	--							
2. Job Satisfaction	3.76	.67	-.55**	--						
3. Marital Satisfaction	4.26	.47	-.27*	.26*	--					
4. Positive Affect	3.25	.40	-.43**	.40**	.15	--				
5.Negative Affect	1.77	.41	.79**	-.38**	-.28**	-.23*	--			
6.Home Extraversion	2.64	.51	-.09	.04	.14	.40**	-.07	--		
7 Work Extraversion	2.59	.48	-.20	.32**	.07	.44**	-.19	.63**	--	
8. Global Extraversion	2.60	.45	-.19	.23*	.14	.50**	-.12	.84**	.90**	--

Note. For all diary based measures (i.e., emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, positive affect, negative affect, home extraversion, work extraversion, global extraversion) the correlations were computed using individuals' aggregated scores. $N = 84$ * $p < .05$ (two-tailed). ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed).

Table 2
Predicting Emotional exhaustion, Job Satisfaction, Marital Satisfaction, Positive Affect, and Negative Affect: Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses of Between-Individual Models

	Criterion Variable	B	SE	T	β
Work	Job Satisfaction Work E Consistency	.03	.06	0.47	.06
	Positive Affect Work E Consistency	.07	.03	2.50***	.26
	Negative Affect Work E Consistency	-.06	.03	-1.75*	-.21
	Emotional exhaustion Work E Consistency	-.08	.04	-1.91*	-.23
Home	Marital Satisfaction Home E Consistency	.06	.05	1.29	.15
	Positive Affect Home E Consistency	.07	.03	2.04**	.20
	Negative Affect Home E Consistency	-.13	.04	-3.23***	-.35
	Emotional exhaustion Home E Consistency	-.11	.05	-2.45**	-.27

Note. b = unstandardized hierarchical linear modeling coefficient. β=standardized hierarchical linear. *SE*=Standard Error. Work E Consistency= consistency between work and global extraversion. Home E Consistency= consistency between home and global extraversion. *N*=84 *ρ<.1** ρ<.05 *** ρ<.01.

Table 3
Parameter Estimates and Variance Components of Null Models for Level 1 Variables

Criterion Variable	Intercept (γ_{00})	Within-individual variance (ρ^2)	Between-individual variance (τ_{00})	Percent variability within individual
Job Satisfaction at Work	3.76**	0.12	0.45	21.0
Marital Satisfaction at Home	4.27**	0.09	0.22	29.0
Positive Affect At Work	3.32**	0.14	0.16	46.7
Positive Affect At Home	3.17**	0.19	0.24	44.2
Negative Affect at Work	1.78**	0.40	0.39	50.6
Negative Affect at Home	1.77**	0.39	0.42	48.1
Emotional Exhaustion at Work	1.99**	0.35	0.27	56.4
Emotional Exhaustion at Home	2.08**	0.24	0.47	33.8
Work Extraversion	2.61**	0.35	0.20	63.6
Home Extraversion	2.62**	0.40	0.17	70.2

Note. N = 84. γ_{00}= pooled intercept representing average level of dependent variable across individuals; ρ^2=within-individual variance in dependent variable; τ_{00}=between-individual variance in dependent variable. Percent variability within individuals was computed as $\rho^2 \div (\rho^2 + \sigma)$. **$\rho$<.01

Table 4
Hierarchical Linear Modeling Results of Within-Individual Models

	Criterion Variable (Level 1 predictor)	B	SE	T
Work	Job Satisfaction at Work Work-Global Extraversion Consistency	.03	.02	1.91*
	Positive Affect at Work Work E Consistency	.05	.02	2.58**
	Negative Affect at Work Work E Consistency	-.03	.01	-1.84*
	Emotional Exhaustion at Work Work E Consistency	-.05	.02	-1.96*
Home	Marital Satisfaction at Home Home E Consistency	.03	.02	1.86*
	Positive Affect at Home Home E Consistency	.01	.03	.53
	Negative Affect at Home Home E Consistency	-.03	.02	-1.47
	Emotional Exhaustion at Home Home E Consistency	-.05	.07	-1.03

Note. B= unstandardized hierarchical linear modeling coefficient. All level 2 predictors were centered at individuals' means to eliminate between-individual variance. *SE*=Standard Error. Work E Consistency= consistency between extraversion states at work and global extraversion. Home E Consistency= consistency between extraversion states at home and global extraversion. *N*=865. *ρ<.1, ** ρ<.05, *** ρ<.01.

Figure 1

The Moderating Effect of Global Extraversion on the Intra-individual Effect of Extraversion States at Work on State Job Satisfaction

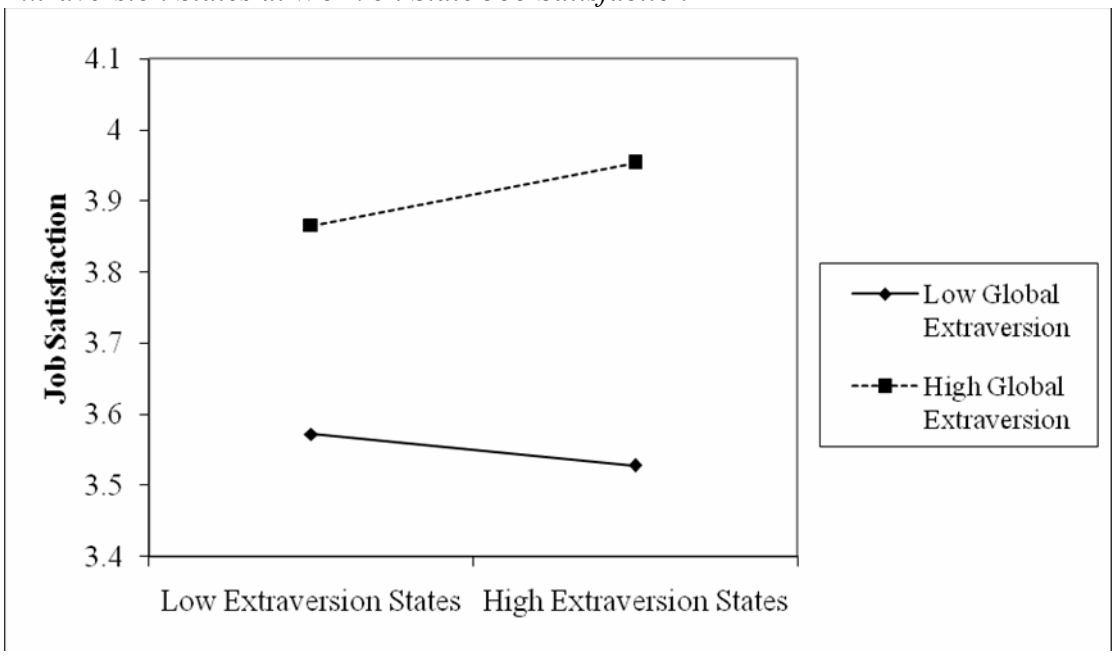

Figure 2

The Moderating Effect of Global Extraversion on the Intra-individual Effect of Extraversion States at Work on Current Positive Affect

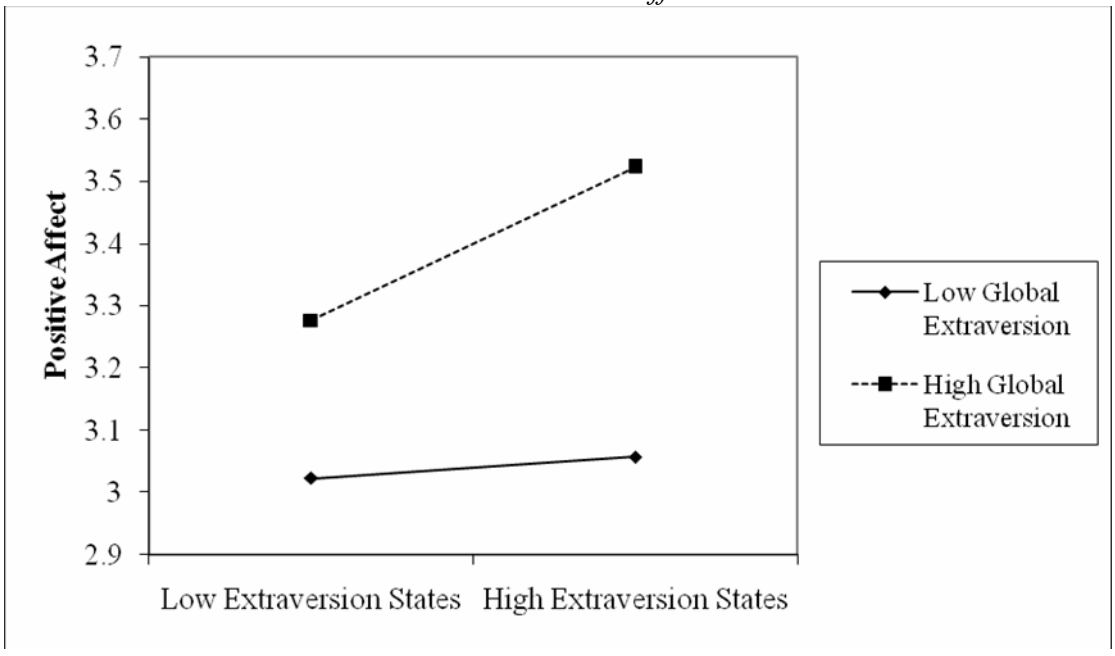

Figure 3

The Moderating Effect of Global Extraversion on the Intra-individual Effect of Extraversion States at Work on Current Emotional Exhaustion