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Abstract

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Human Development in Organisations: Operationalising the Capability Approach in the German Manufacturing Industry

This study aims to operationalise the Capability Approach in the German manufacturing industry, thereby extending knowledge surrounding the links between Human Development and organisational studies. To achieve this aim, this study is an explorative piece of research which reviews previous works on capabilities and proposes a capabilities list exploring the individual, organisational, and institutional levels of Human Development in organisations. With this in mind, it answers three main Research Questions (i) does the Human Capabilities Development framework provide a robust framework to assess Human Development in organisations and is the framework applicable in the German manufacturing industry? (ii) what are current organisational conditions that shape Human Development and Human Capabilities Development in organisations and what are their effects on people's perception of the workplace? (iii) is there added value in applying the capabilities perspective to the workplace and can the Capability Approach be operationalised in organisations? Conducting case study research in the German manufacturing industry, this study uses template analysis to evaluate qualitative data from two companies and 58 face-to-face interviews, split into two phases. The findings demonstrate that the Capability Approach provides key insights into the social dimension of organisations and identifies core drivers and barriers of Human Capability Development in the workplace. This study finds that traditional industries – such as the manufacturing industry – continue to be characterised by utilitarian thinking and are shaped by active union representation and worker protection. It concludes that the Capability Approach offers a systematic and holistic perspective of the workplace outside socio-economic and political power imbalances of traditional worker representation. This study finds that the Capability Approach harmonises the social and organisational dimension of organisations and shifts the debate surrounding workplace assessments to include non-utility dimensions.

Durham University Business School

Human Development in Organisations: Operationalising the Capability Approach in the German Manufacturing Industry

Gianna Huhn

PhD Thesis

A study submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management at Durham University

December 2019

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List of Abbreviations

CA	Capability Approach
CSS	Critical Social Science
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ICESC	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
HC	Human Capital
HCA	Human Capital Approach
HCD	Human Capability Development
HD	Human Development
HDA	Human Development Approach
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HRM	Human Resource Management
ILO	International Labour Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WC	Works Council

Declaration

None of the material contained in this study has previously been submitted for a degree at Durham University or any other institution except where due reference has been made in the text. None of the material contained in this study is based on joint research. The content of this study is the author’s original contribution with appropriate recognition of any references being indicated throughout.

Statement of Copyright

The copyright of this study rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without the author's prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

1. Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Chapter Overview

This chapter seeks to introduce the study's overall aim and research questions. For this purpose, the chapter presents its research statement and identifies four main research gaps that inform the research questions. Subsequently, the chapter provides a visual representation of the research approach and structure before concluding with a chapter-by-chapter summary of the study.

1.2. Research Statement

This study is best described as an exploratory piece of research which aims to operationalise the Capability Approach (CA) in the German manufacturing industry, thereby extending knowledge surrounding the links between Human Development (HD) and organisational studies. To achieve this aim, this study applies the capabilities list proposed by the Human Capabilities Development (HCD) framework to assess two companies operating in the German bearings industry. It contributes to the fields of development studies and organisational studies and draws from moral philosophy and meaningful work literature to address changing worker needs in the manufacturing industry. This study identifies workplace characteristics that facilitate or constrain HD in organisations. It contributes to a robust evidence base that informs practitioners and scholars about workplace assessment strategies and interventions that foster conducive environments for HD in organisations.

1.3. The Research Gaps

1.3.1. Section overview

This section introduces the motivation for researching HD in organisations and identifies research gaps in existing literature. Building on these research gaps, each section concludes with a specific research question which guides the study's overall research outcomes and design.

1.3.2. Establishing the research context

Exploring Human Development in organisations

Against the backdrop of technological advances, globalisation, and evolving worker needs, organisations in general and manufacturing organisations in particular are facing long-term organisational changes (Müller, Kiel and Voigt, 2018). To address these changes, organisations are searching for mechanisms that address these changes and inform their long-term organisational strategies. In light of this, the study proposes to operationalise the CA and to investigate HD in organisations.

The study acknowledges a degree of tension with critical social science (CSS) analysis in its aims and methods (Bohman, 1999; Sayer, 2012). However, it argues that CSS delivers a descriptive and explanatory analysis of social phenomena. In contrast, this study seeks to deliver an exploratory piece of research (Reiter, 2017) which addresses whether the CA can and should be applied within the German manufacturing industry. In addition, CSS frequently frames the analysis of HRM practices in their broad socio-political contexts (Watson, 2004, 2010). While elements of the study are concerned with HRM practices, it does not wish to solely analyse HRM practices but seeks to make a theoretical contribution to the operationalisation of the CA, HD in organisations, and the meaning of work in addition to practical HRM implications. Moreover, this study provides an alternative but critical view of contemporary workplace practices in the German manufacturing industry which is grounded in scientific reflections and takes the views of workers into consideration. This suggests that CSS offers a lower compatibility with this study's proposed conceptual basis. With this is in mind, this study proposes in-depth case study research informed by critical realism and interpretivism which will be explored at a more in-depth level in *Chapter 4: Methodology.*

Following explorations into CSS, the following introduces the concept of HD which forms the study's main conceptual context. The concept of HD generally seeks to enlarge people's choices and offers insight into environments in which people can lead long, healthy, and creative lives (Ul-Haq, 1995a). What does this mean in more detail? At the heart of HD's conceptual understanding lies the CA, which establishes that improving people's well-being should be the overarching goal for humans. In light of this, HD explores people's ability to convert options and

resources into real opportunities. HD calls attention to people's quality of life, well-being and freedom of choice (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Sen, 2003b). While the deeper understanding and origins of HD studies will be explored in *Chapter 2: Human Development and the Concept of Work*, this study presently argues that HD is a broad and flexible concept that is applicable in a wide range of contexts (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2003; Hartmann, 2014).

Over the last decades, a growing body of research has been engaging with HD and sought to operationalise the concept across disciplines, geographical contexts and stakeholders (Comim and Nussbaum, 2014; The Human Development Report Office, 2015; Anand, 2016; Robeyns, 2017; Nussbaum, 2019). Despite increasing scholarly interest, there has been limited prominence in investigating HD in organisations with HD studies generally focussing on inequality reduction in organisations, rather than the organisation as a whole. Yet, this study argues that the concept of HD is conducive to organisational studies and may provide deep and holistic insight into organisations beyond inequality reduction. The concept recognizes the complexity and subjectivity of people's preferences in life and acknowledges that people's range of choices in life are potentially unlimited (Ul-Haq, 1995b). Adopting this purposefully general and deliberately open-ended perspective, this study argues that HD may accommodate industry and location-specific contexts that shape organisations and contribute to workplace assessment strategies.

1.3.3. 1st Research Gap

Exploring capabilities in organisations

At the heart of every study that engages with HD and the CA lies the question of operationalising such open-ended frameworks of thought. Acknowledging the challenges arising from this question, this study proposes to operationalise HD and the CA by means of adopting the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework as its primary research framework (see section *4.2.4. Research framework – Human Capability Development*). The HCD framework draws from the concepts of HD and the CA in the applied context of organisations. It suggests a capabilities list of what workers could and should value at work in the context of New Zealand policy. The framework is a result of a pioneering research programme by Jane

Bryson (2010a) who sought to explore capabilities in organisations in New Zealand. The programme was context-specific and provided policy advice to the New Zealand government to illuminate how social arrangements can impact organisations.

The capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework offers valuable insight into New Zealand organisations across different industries and company sizes and serves as a conceptual starting point for this study to establish a relevant capabilities list (Bryson, Mallon and Merritt, 2004; Blackwood, Bryson and Merritt, 2006; Bryson and O'Neil, 2010a, 2010b). Having said that, there is a limited evidence base that operationalises the framework outside the context of New Zealand. Established literature that engages with capabilities list proposed by the HCD generally originates in the New Zealand context, thereby challenging the overall robustness and applicability of the framework. Thus, the limited availability of research surrounding the framework and its capabilities list, gives prominence to a gap in existing research. Building on this gap, this study proposes to assess the capabilities identified by the HCD framework in the applied context of the German manufacturing industry. Thereby, this study contributes to the framework's robustness and explores if the suggested capabilities list delivers valuable findings outside the context of New Zealand.

This study argues that by operationalising HD in organisations by means of the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework, it will be able to identify workplace characteristics that facilitate or constrain HD. In a similar manner, drawing from the framework's capabilities list may deliver findings at the individual, organisational, and institutional level of organisations which enables the evaluation of workplace conditions and the identification of drivers or barriers to capabilities in organisations. Such research endeavour contributes to the debate on HD in organisations by means of analysing what makes work meaningful or meaningless for workers in industries characterised by routine and shift work. This leads to the study's first research question:

> **Research Question 1**: (a.) does the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework provide a robust framework to assess Human Development in

organisations (b.) is the framework applicable in the German manufacturing industry?

1.3.4. 2nd Research Gap

Current approaches addressing worker needs in the manufacturing industry

The first two sections argued that there is a limited amount of research investigating HD and capabilities in organisations and that exploring organisations in such a manner may contribute to the development of workplace assessment strategies. This requires reflections on current approaches to workplace assessments with the objective of addressing evolving worker needs and investigating organisational structures.

This study engages with such approaches in a more in-depth manner in section *2.3.4. Practical Approaches and implementation* but presently argues that such strategies particularly focus on work-life balance schemes and embed skill development programmes as core organisational strategies (Blackwood, Bryson and Merritt, 2006; Dean, 2009; Keep and James, 2012; Michaelson *et al.*, 2014). The advantages of such approaches notwithstanding, this study argues that work-life balance schemes and skill development programmes frequently have limited success in addressing worker needs in the manufacturing industry. Indeed, this study argues that such approaches show an increasing gap between what they theoretically aspire to achieve and real-life economic, social and normative constraints such as industry structures. Considering these constraints, this study suggests that applying the CA to the workplace may address this gap and offer valuable insights into environments that enable people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives in and outside the workplace.

This study identifies its third research gap and argues that there is an imbalance between the objective of current approaches and their ability to address people's needs, desires, and preferences that underpins people's perception of the workplace. Instead, this study proposes to view work as a platform for HD, which provides a perspective of the workplace that seeks to integrate worker needs and organisational goals. This gives way to the study's second research question:

Research Question 2: (a.) what are current organisational conditions that shape Human Development and Human Capability Development in organisations (b.) what are their effects on people's perception of the workplace?

1.3.5. 3rd Research Gap

The capability perspective of the workplace

The CA is understood as an open-ended framework of thought that can be operationalised for a range of evaluative exercises and shifts the attention to public values. Generally, these exercises include the assessment of individuals and their achieved levels of well-being, the evaluation of social arrangements and institutions, and, lastly, evaluating the design of policies and other forms of social change in society (Robeyns, 2017). Against this backdrop, the CA is a theoretical cross-disciplinary framework that finds its scholarly roots in the intellectual terrain between philosophy and economics. While *Chapter 3: The Capability Approach* engages with the CA at a more comprehensive level, this study argues that at its core, the CA seeks to explore people's lives from different perspectives and identifies factors that shape people's lives. As a framework of thought, the CA focuses on people's ability to convert commodities into functionings and capabilities; thus, illuminating how people can realise their freedoms (Sen, 1985a, 1999a).

This study argues that the CA may provide insight into workplaces that stretches beyond income analysis. Instead, operationalising the CA in organisations focuses on what people are able to be, able to do and have the freedom to do. This stands in contrast to current perspectives into organisations that often continue to focus on traditional economic workplace assessments such as income assessment and utility maximisation, which subsequently gives rise to a gap in current literature. Addressing this gap, this study explores whether the CA offers a realist view of organisations that allows for a workplace analysis that includes non-utility dimensions and offers an economic view of organisations that is underpinned by moral philosophy. Thus, the study arrives at its third and final research question:

Research Question 3: (a.) is there added value in applying the Capability Approach to the workplace (b.) can the Capability Approach be operationalised in organisations?

1.3.6. Section Summary

This section sought to outline gaps in current research and presented the study's primary research questions. The research conducted in this study will contribute to the wider debate on HD, apply the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework, promote the debate on current development approaches in industries that are marked by routine and shift work, and add value to the debate on operationalising the CA within organisations.

1.4. The Study's Design and Individual Chapter Outline

This study consists of eight chapters that seek to address HD in organisations and operationalise the CA in the workplace. As noted above, the first chapter begins the conversation by presenting the study's research statement, identifying research gaps, and formulating the research questions. *Chapters 2* and *3* form the study's theoretical element and review relevant existing research. *Chapter 4* identifies the study's methodology and gives prominence to the study's cultural context. *Chapters 5* and *6* form the study's empirical element and present findings from the data collection. Subsequently, *Chapter 7* critically discusses the findings of the theoretical and empirical analysis and gives rise to the study's key findings. The study concludes with *Chapter 8*, which identifies its research contribution, potential for future research, and reflects on its limitations. The chart below provides a visual representation of the study, followed by a short summary and content overview of each chapter.

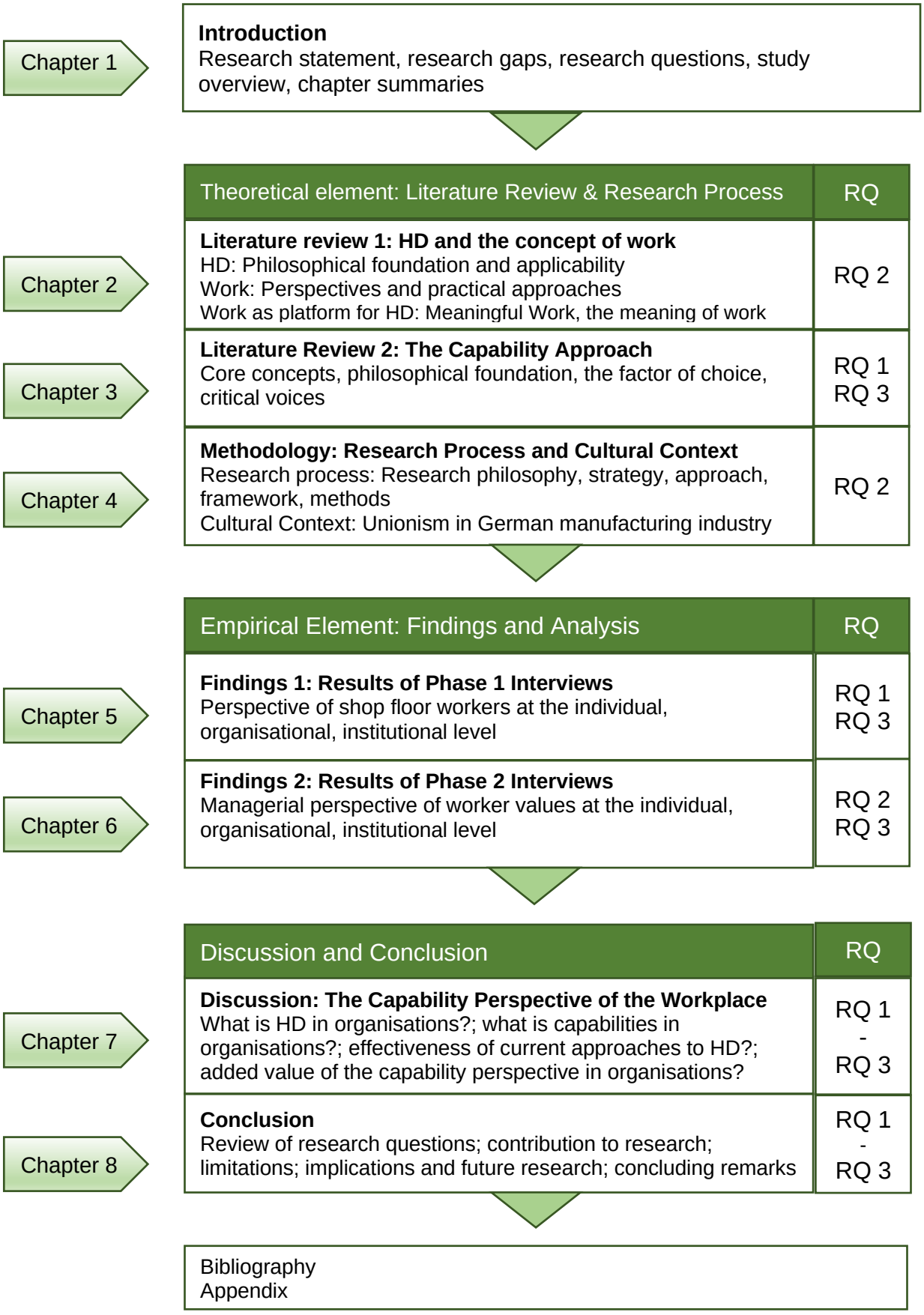

Figure 1.1: Overview of study design and structure

◊ *Chapter 2: Human Development and the Concept of Work*

Chapter 2 introduces the origins of HD before reflecting on its philosophical origins, applicability within the context of organisations, and critical voices. The chapter explores voices that shaped work as a concept, as well as the philosophical, sociological, libertarian perspectives of work which shape perceptions of the contemporary workplace. The chapter concludes with investigations into work as a platform for HD and engages with the question of meaningful work and whether work should mean more than a regular paycheque.

◊ *Chapter 3: The Capability Approach*

Chapter 3 establishes the origins of the CA and explores the framework as the conceptual foundation of HD. The chapter introduces the framework's core concepts: commodities, functionings, capabilities, subjective well-being, and agency. Subsequently, the chapter engages with the CA's philosophical origins and critically discusses the factor of choice. It concludes by examining critical voices that challenge the CA as a normative framework and outlines how this study intends to overcome them.

◊ *Chapter 4: Research Process and Cultural Context*

Chapter 4 is divided into two parts and begins with reflections on the research process. It establishes the research philosophy of critical realism and interpretivism, outlines the research approach as qualitative research, identifies the research strategy as instrumental and multiple case study, introduces the capabilities list proposed by the HCD as the study's research framework, indicates the research methods for data collection and analysis, and reflects on research ethics. The second part introduces the study's cultural context and presents how unionism in Germany continues to shape the German manufacturing industry.

◊ *Chapter 5: Results of Phase 1 interviews*

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the data collection for Phase 1 interviews. It puts forward workplace perceptions from the perspective of the shop floor worker at the individual, organisational, and institutional level. This allows

for the identification of family structures, income structures, shift work patterns, union influence, and the level of job security as dominant drivers or barriers of HD at work.

◊ *Chapter 6: Results of Phase 2 interviews*

Chapter 6 presents findings of the data collection for Phase 2 interviews. The chapter presents findings conducted with managers to inform the managerial perspective of what workers value at work. Akin to Chapter 5, it introduces its findings at the individual, organisational, and institutional level. It identifies a central focus on managers as practitioners, workers showing initiative and independence, high income structures, employee turnover, and work climates as dominant drivers or barriers to workplace development.

◊ *Chapter 7: The Capability Perspective of the Workplace*

Chapter 7 critically analyses and discusses the findings of the literature review and data analysis. It addresses the research questions and discusses the findings' implications for the debate on HD and capabilities in organisations, the efficiency of current approaches to HD in organisations, and whether there is added value in operationalising the CA in organisations. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings.

◊ *Chapter 8: Conclusion*

Chapter 8 reviews the overall aim and contribution research of the study established at the outset of *Chapter 1*. It subsequently reflects on the study's research contribution, limitations, and implications for future research. The chapter concludes the study with final comments and observations.

2. Chapter 2: Literature Review – Investigating Human Development and the Concept of Work

2.1. Chapter Overview

The following chapter forms the first element of the literature review and introduces theories, concepts, and frameworks informing the study's principal context and core understanding. The first section seeks to explore the concept of HD - its definitions, developments and philosophical foundation. This chapter then transitions into an analysis of HD in organisations and defines its key terms - institutions, organisation, economic indicators, and human capital - which stand in direct relation with HD in organisations. It follows with an account of the conceptual basis of work, exploring the historical, cultural and political development of work as a concept and referencing major works that have influenced its development. The third section seeks to illuminate the conception of work as a platform for HD. It engages with the question whether work may enrich human lives and whether work is a moral obligation for individuals, organisations, and/or institutions.

2.2. Human Development

2.2.1. Section overview

The following section seeks to introduce the concept of HD, its origins and inception by Amartya Sen and Mahbub Ul-Haq. It argues for the definition of HD as enlarging people's choices before critically examining the concept's philosophical origins. This section establishes that HD is a combination of distinct processes, objectives, and outcomes, which shape HD and guide its practical application, thereby creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. Building on these findings, this section engages with the critique of open-endedness, challenges of measuring HD, and limitations in centring the concept on the individual person. Acknowledging these challenges, this section argues that the Human Development Approach (HDA) is a broad and flexible concept that is applicable in a wide range of contexts and can be operationalised in organisations.

2.2.2. Introduction

What is human development?

The idea of HD as a concept manifested in the second half of the 20th century, centring on the ideas of quality of life, well-being, and freedom of choice. Even though these ideas formed the nexus of scholarly debates for centuries, it was Amartya Sen and Mahbub Ul-Haq that took inspiration from these debates and developed the HDA. Carrying forward these ideas, HD can be seen as the process of enlarging people's choices defined as creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Sen, 2003b). With this broad definition and objective in mind, this study argues that at its core, HD seeks to reflect on people's quality and dignity of life which enables people to lead a life they value. This reading of HD proposes that enlarging people's choices defined as creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives does not only refer to giving people more options or resources. Rather, it suggests that HD reflects on people's ability to convert these choices into real opportunities, which underpin their quality of life, well-being, and freedom of choice.

Exploring the writings of the HDA, Ul-Haq (1995a) and Sen (2003b) establish that people have different preferences, needs and values that change over time and with generations (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2003; Hartmann, 2014). Considering this, this study argues creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives should be seen as a dynamic process whose requirements also change over time and with generations. This reading suggests that HD is forward-looking but acknowledges that this limitless range poses difficulties for quantifying what exactly constitutes HD in organisations.

Defining HD as of enlarging people's choices by creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives is purposefully general and deliberately open-ended, allowing for the twin recognition that humans can fare better and do more than their current state offers (Sen, 1999a; Alkire, 2002a, 2010b). Despite the simplicity of this definition, it enables HD to be applied in a wide range of contexts and, conversely, accentuates that HD is a highly complex concept with varying interpretations and dimensions. This complexity and variability can be seen

in *Table 2.1.* and *Table 2.2.* which outline comparatively different definitions and dimensions of HD.

1990	a process of enlarging people's choices (p 10)
1991	The real objective of development is to increase people's choices (p 13)
1992	a process of enlarging people's choices. (p 12)
1993	involves widening [people's] choices
1994	to create an environment in which all people can expand their capabilities… (p 13)
1995	a process of enlarging people's choices (p 11).
1996	a process of enlarging people's choices. (p 49)
1997	the process of enlarging people's choices
1998	a process of enlarging people's choices.
1999	the process of enlarging people's choices
2000	a process of enhancing human capabilities
2001	about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value.
2002	about people, about expanding their choices to lead lives they value. (p. 13)
2003	to improve people's lives by expanding their choices, freedom and dignity.
2004	the process of widening choices for people to do and be what they value in life. (p. 6)
2005	about building human capabilities—the range of things that people can do, and what they can be.
2007/8	about expanding people's real choice and the substantive freedoms – the capabilities – that enable them to lead lives that they value. (p 24)
2009	the expansion of people's freedoms to live their lives as they choose (p 14)

Table 2.1: Definitions of HD as outlined in HDR 1990-2009 (Alkire, 2010a, p. 8)

Dimensions mentioned in HDR by year	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	07	09
Long healthy life	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Knowledge	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Resources for decent std of life	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Political freedom	X	X						X							X			X
Guaranteed Human Rts	X					X		X		X	X							
Self Respect	X					X		X		X	X							
Good physical environment		X	X		X													
Freedom of Action & Expression			X															
Participation				X	X								X					
Human Security					X		X											
Political, Social & Econ Freedoms						X		X	X	X								
Being creative						X		X	X	X	X							
Being Productive						X		X	X	X	X							
Freedom							X	X										
Democracy							X											
Dignity & Respect of others								X										
Empowerment									X		X							
A sense of belonging to a community									X	X	X							
Security											X							X
Sustainability											X							
Enjoying political and civil freedoms to participate in the life of one's community.														X				
Cultural liberty															X			
Social & Political Participation																X		
Civil & Political Rights																	X	

Table 2.2: Dimensions of HD as outlined in HDR 1990-2009 (Alkire, 2010a, p. 11)

Table 2.1. and *2.2.* illustrate that between the years 1990 and 2009, Human Development Reports (HDR) had different definitions for HD and proposed the inclusion or exclusion of a variety of different HD dimensions (Alkire, 2010a). Despite the tables only outlining referencing HDRs until 2009, several HDR reports published after 2009 continue in the tradition of defining HD as a context dependent concept and argue for the inclusion or exclusion of different dimensions (UNDP, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2015). Thus, *Table 2.1.* and *Table 2.2.* serve as illustrations of the HDA's complexity, fluidity, and development over the years. While this chapter addresses the differences in dimensions and definitions of HD at a more in-depth level at a later stage, this study presently argues that there is no one definite definition of HD or a defined set of dimensions informing HD. Instead, HD seeks to explore the human condition and to illuminate people's preferences and values as well as how they change over time and with contexts. It identifies what people value in life and how they can lead a life they value.

Origins of Human Development

Following the general introduction to HD, the subsequent section engages with HD's conceptual roots and argues that the CA forms the HDA's conceptual foundation.

Amartya Sen and Mahbub Ul-Haq had an extensive history of collaboration before developing the HDA and conceived this approach as a response to their time's deep debt crisis and policy thinking dominated by stabilisation and adjustment (UNDP, 2010). Against this background, they developed the HDA seeking to propose an alternative perspective to traditional income evaluations with the objective of informing people's quality of life, well-being, and freedom of choice. Thus, the HDA proposes a shift away from economic evaluation of commodities towards a social evaluation of people's capabilities, giving rise to the concept's enormous breadth of application (Sen, 2003b; UNDP, 2010). Put simply, the application of HD concepts shifts the evaluative focus from what people have to what people can be and/or can do. Reflecting on this intellectual shift, this study proposes that applying the HDA in organisations may reveal valuable insights into its social dimension, thereby shifting the focus away from what workers earn to what they can be and do at the workplace.

Tragically, Ul-Haq died in 1998 following an infection with pneumonia (Crossette, 1998) leading to Sen carrying forward the ideas of the HDA on his own. In one of his core publications, *Development as Freedom* (1999a) Sen outlines their ideas for HD, exploring how people require degrees of freedom and how different mechanisms enable people to use this freedom to achieve their full potential. Following Sen's publication in 1999, the concept of the HDA became more widely known as HD and in today's scholarly community the terms HD and HDA are used interchangeably; a tradition that this study is following.

Following Ul-Haq's death, Sen became the main intellectual influence that shaped the HDA, leading to his CA serving as the predominant conceptual foundation for HD. Although this study will address the CA in a more in-depth manner in *Chapter 3: The Capability Approach*, it supports the understating that HD embeds Sen's understanding of well-being. As such, HD draws from the CA and adopts its

intention to assess people's lives from different perspectives by means of analysing people's ability to convert commodities into functionings and capabilities.

Most commonly, HD is known in connection to the UN's Human Development Index (HDI) which originates in the works of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UNDP sought Sen's and Ul-Haq's guidance in developing an inclusive quantitative tool with the objective of measuring a country's HD. The tool draws from GDP figures, economic growth indicators, and indicators for people's quality of life such as life expectancy to create a country based ranking for HD (Anand and Sen, 1992; Robeyns, 2006; UNDP, 2015). From this collaboration, the UNDP inaugurated annual and special issue HDRs in 1990 that aimed to produce annual policy and advocacy reports. In addition, these reports address emerging issues and future concerns for global HD mechanisms at the institutional level (UNDP, 2002, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2015; Jolly, 2003; Alkire, 2010a; The Human Development Report Office, 2015).[1] These reports take a global viewpoint on HD and provide general guidelines for the study and practical application of HD. They generally focus on the expansion of capabilities, the widening of human choices, the enhancement of freedoms, and the fulfilment of human rights at a global institutional level (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003; Jolly, 2003). In light of this, HDRs commonly explore the practical side of HD and aim to translate HD into policy guidelines for decision-makers. These reports are rooted in a deep philosophical understanding of HD and serve as inspiration for studies seeking to operationalise HD.

2.2.3. Philosophical Foundation

Exploring the idea of HD as enlarging people's choices defined as creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives, touches on various schools of thought and carries forward ideas such as quality of life, well-being, agency, and freedom of choice. With this in mind, the following section sets out to explore the philosophical foundation of the HDA and aims to shine a light on the question of whether HD is an objective, a process and/or an outcome.

[1] The list of reference does not represent an exhaustive list of all HDR reports but a selection, which focuses on HDR reports closest aligned to this study's research focus.

Is Human Development an objective, process and/or outcome?

Researching HD, it quickly becomes clear that Sen and Ul-Haq spearheaded the conceptual approach. However, the two scholars drew inspiration from various and sometimes contradicting intellectuals such as Immanuel Kant, Robert Malthus, Karl Marx, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, William Petty, Pope John Paul II, and Aristotle. Grounding their philosophical understanding of HD in such a diverse range of scholars, this study argues that Ul-Haq and Sen carry forward isolated ideas from different schools of thought and re-combine them under the umbrella of HD. In particular, Sen and Ul-Haq take inspiration from the works of Aristotle, Kant, Arrow, and Smith to explore environments in which people can enjoy long, creative, and healthy lives.

While the following seeks to provide an overview of HD and influential ideas shaping the concept, it does not seek to provide a detailed overview of the philosophical foundations shaping the CA. A more in-depth discussion of the CA and works shaping the approach can be found in section *3.4. Foundational Understanding*, particularly in section *3.4.3. Philosophical foundation and comparison*. These discussions include a dialogue on Aristotle, Kant, Smith, Arrow and Social Choice Theorists influencing the CA.

At its core, HD seeks to enlarge people's choices, thereby creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. Inherent in this definition is the twin recognition that people can be more, and fare better than their current state allows based on their ability to convert choices into real freedoms. These reoccurring threads in Ul-Haq's and Sen's work point back to a strong influence from Kant, Smith and Aristotle and their conception of leading a good life or human flourishing. The link becomes clearer if we first take a closer look at Aristotle's understanding of human flourishing. In his writings, Aristotle (340BC) equates the term flourishing with *eudaimonia* which finds various translations such as in the works of MacIntyre (1981):

> *Aristotle has cogent arguments against identifying that good with money, with honor or with pleasure. He gives to it the name of eudaimonia-as so often there is a difficulty in translation:*

> *blessedness, happiness, prosperity. It is the state of being well and doing well in being well, of a man's being well-favored himself and in relation to the divine.*
> (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 148)

Put simply, Aristotle's *eudaimonia* encompasses the state of being well and doing well as a result of leading a good and moral life of virtue (Alkire, 2002a; Fukuda-Parr, 2003; Ransome, 2010). In the context of HD, *eudaimonia* connects to the understanding that in order to be well and do well, people need to live long, healthy and creative lives. But what exactly does this mean for the individual being in organisations?

If we apply the idea of *eudaimonia* as the Aristotelian idea of human flourishing within the context of HD in organisations, it resonates with the HDA's base notion of enlarging people's choices defined as creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. It establishes that human flourishing should be the objective of HD and identifies *eudaimonia* as the overarching goal for humans to achieve. Exploring HD in organisations against the backdrop of human flourishing, we arrive at the understanding that workers should strive to do well and be well. Yet, workers will only do well and be well if they work in an environment that enables them to lead long, healthy, and creative lives.

If the Aristotelian idea of human flourishing corresponds with HD's objective of creating long, healthy, and creative lives, the question remains what are the other key influences shaping HD at the conceptual level?

As established earlier, the HDA seeks to move away from evaluation of people's lives in terms of commodities and income, and towards exploring what people can be and can do. Taking this interpretation into account, HD becomes a concept that is loosely associated with the school of humanism, allowing for the reading that humans generally pursue long, healthy, and creative lives that are valuable beyond material returns (Fukuda-Parr, 2003). This reading shows a strong connection to the writings of Kant who sets out to define humans as ends in themselves instead of means to an end:

> *So, act as to treat humanity, whether in*

> *thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end, never as means only.*
> (Kant, 1785, p. 36)

Showcasing this citation underlines Kant's interesting use of the word 'only'. By including the word 'only', Kant establishes that people can be ends in themselves, but should not be seen as means alone. He allows for the interpretation that human beings have a dual status: as a combination of both an end and means to an end in themselves. One is connected to the other, leading to the understanding that humans as means and ends should not be seen in isolation but share a deeper connection that is grounded in the works of Kant.

If we apply the Kantian distinction of people as means and ends within the context of HD in organisations, we arrive at the understanding that human beings are both beneficiaries and drivers of HD (Sen, 2003a). This reading sees HD as a process that shapes the lives that drive it, providing an opportunity for organisations to view workers as both the drivers and beneficiaries of their organisation. It supports companies by shifting the focus from defining workers as means enabling profitable growth towards focusing on the workers themselves and thereby creating environments that enable people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives.

If the objective of HD resonates with the Aristotelian idea of human flourishing and the process of HD correlates with Kant's distinction of people as means and ends, the question remains: can HD also be an outcome?

If we return to the beginning of this chapter and revisit the works of Sen and Ul-Haq, it becomes apparent that Sen draws inspiration not only from the works of Aristotle and Kant but also from Adam Smith. Sen (2010) frequently re-interprets Smith's major works *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) and *The Theory of Moral Sentiment* (1759) as moral philosophies which describe self-interest as an underlying motivation that shapes people's behaviour (Sen, 2010; Eiffe, 2016). Engaging with Sen's reading of Smith, self-interest becomes a driving factor that determines how people will act and what they will prioritise in life. Consequently, self-interest becomes a central force that determines people's choices and their personal definition of a long, healthy, and creative life.

If we apply Sen's interpretation of Smith within the context of HD in organisations, it suggests that self-interest forms the basis for people's interest in progressing on both a personal and an economic level. While this could be seen as standing in opposition to the objectives of HD, it instead characterises HD as the outcome of conflicting human emotions that require balancing. This reading of Sen and Smith strengthens the understanding that HD's aim to balance people's interests as members of societies, individual beings, and their wider desire for improving one's economic standing.

While this section does not aim to provide an extensive analysis of Aristotle's, Kant's, and Smith's works, it does provide a synopsis of the primary philosophical influences that inform HD at the conceptual level. It argues that HD is a combination of distinct processes, objectives, and outcomes, shaping HD and underpinning academic studies seeking to apply the HDA. Overall, HD does not draw from one particular school of thought or intellectual thinkers but instead seeks to isolate and re-combine a range of scholarly ideas. Specifically, HD as an objective is grounded in the Aristotelian idea of human flourishing, HD as a process reflects on Kant's understanding of people as means and ends, and HD as an outcome carries forward Smith's understanding of self-interest.

2.2.4. Applicability – HD in organisations

The first sections of this chapter set out to define HD as enlarging people's choices defined as creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. In addition, it explores the concept's philosophical foundations, resulting in a purposefully general and deliberately conceptually open-ended interpretation of HD in organisations. While this interpretation is rooted in the traditions of the HDA, it simultaneously allows for range, diversity, and flexibility in its application. This study argues that it is its breadth of application that allows the HDA to become an alternative lens through which we can explore concepts that shape workers' lives, including institutions, organisations, economic indicators, and human capital. In light of this, the following sections set out to shine a light on these concepts and to outline their connection with HD, arguing that the HDA is relevant and applicable within organisational contexts.

Human Development and institutions

In order to illuminate the relationship between institutions and HD and to outline how institutions can shape workers' lives, it seems prudent to first consider the nature of institutions and how they can best be characterised.

The term institution is pluralistic in nature and can take many different forms and definitions. Nonetheless, a commonly accepted definition is that institutions are socially embedded systems of rules, norms, and habits that structure social interactions by offering formal rules and structural consistency (Knight, 1992; Crawford and Ostrom, 1995; Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009). Reflecting on this purposefully wide reading, the notion of institutions becomes an umbrella term that underpins human behaviour and shapes social systems such as languages, customs or norms. Simultaneously, reading institutions as socially embedded systems allows for the interpretation that organisations are a particular form of institution with specific features, a point that will be explored at a more in-depth level in the following section.

If institutions are socially embedded systems, they take a central position in people's lives. By doing so, institutions shape and guide environments in which people act, make decisions, create rules, and define virtues or values, and become regulatory entities that enable or constrain human behaviour. Linking this interpretation to HD in organisations, the institutional context may shape organisations and the behaviour of people working within them. It supports the understanding that HD – in pursuing its objective to create environments in which people can lead long, health and creative lives - seeks to function in harmony with institutions and acknowledges their regulatory role.

Human Development and organisations as institutions

Continuing the conversation about HD and institutions, the following section sets out to define organisations as particular forms of institutions. It argues that organisations as institutions determine the boundaries in between which employees can act, make decisions, create rules, and define virtues or values.

Most commonly, organisations are understood as particular forms of institutions with special features such as distinctions between members and non-members, and individuals or groups of individuals which aim to achieve collective goals (Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2003). Achieving these goals frequently requires individuals or groups of individuals to fulfil a range of functions, coordinated by individuals or groups of individuals in leadership positions. Despite individuals or groups of individuals shaping organisations, organisations themselves exist independently of their employees who may come and go. This reading is best illustrated in the definition offered by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978):

> *The organization is a coalition of groups and interests, each attempting to obtain something from the collectivity by interacting with others, and each with its own preferences and objectives*
> (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 36)

While the study acknowledges that there are multiple forms of organisations, this study focuses on for-profit organisations and equates the term with companies to ensure a higher level of internal consistency between theoretical findings and practical implications. This focus allows the study to explore companies operating in the manufacturing industry and to investigate if work can – in a setting designed for generating growth and financial profit – be more than a means to an end.

Connecting organisations as particular forms of institutions with HD principles suggests that HD may provide an informational starting point to explore environments in which workers act and that shape workers' lives. As a result, HD in organisations becomes a platform for exploring management and employee practices and how they impact workers in their ability to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. In this context, researching into HD in organisations may contribute to the management of long-term organisational change and transitions of management practices such as evolving worker needs, adaptation to globalised industry structures and technological advancements in the manufacturing industry.

Against the setting of organisations as institutions, this study seeks to contextualise HD by considering scholarly ideas drawn from organisational studies, employment practices, leadership, and management practices. While such information provides

the overall framework for HD in organisations within this study, it raises the question: how does HD relate to other organisational concepts like economic indicators?

Human Development and economic indicators

Throughout this chapter, HD has been defined as a concept that seeks to enlarge people's choices with the objective of creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. This reading sets out an interpretation of development that stretches beyond financial resources to include non-monetary values, suggesting that development should not be based on financial indicators alone. Nonetheless, traditional approaches to measure how well people, companies, or countries are doing predominantly focus on financial performance indicators such as the possession of sufficient economic resources or economic growth. These indicators are often accumulative measures that evaluate the amount of goods and services produced over set periods of time (Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2003). While this form of measurement can reveal valuable insight into the financial performance of companies, countries or people, it limits a thorough understanding of the social dimensions surrounding these observations. Reflecting on these shortcomings of traditional economic measurements, this study argues that embedding the notion of economic indicators into the wider understanding of HD may deliver more rounded and holistic observations into how well people, companies, or countries are doing.

In embedding economic indicators into HD, it suggests that economic indicators have the potential to provide resources which enable people to realise their choices and to support the creation of environments in which they can lead long, healthy, and creative lives. As such, economic resources have a complex relationship with HD and can act as an accelerator, catalyser, or basis for HD. Hence, HD and economic indicators should not be seen in isolation or even as equitable but as concepts with a reciprocal relationship. This reading suggests that in combining the two concepts, people become more than a means for economic improvement, and establishes people as ends in themselves. This study argues that stable economic resources complement HD but that the concept of HD stretches beyond the analysis of economic indicators. Rather, HD advocates a shift from focussing

on what people have towards what people can be and can do while acknowledging the value of stable economic resources.

Human Development and Human Capital

Engaging with the conversation surrounding economic indicators, it becomes evident that organisations are often seen as contributors to a country's, region's or global economic growth. As such, a common perception is that companies need to run profitably and that a successful path for measuring a company's accomplishments is to measure its economic performance. Against this backdrop, many organisations opt to view their assets as capital, which includes the notion of the workforce as quantifiable Human Capital (HC):

> *Human capital is the stock of productive skills, talents, health and expertise of the labor force, just as physical capital is the stock of plant, equipment, machines, and tools. (Goldin, 2016, p. 22)*

Interpreting workers as HC potentially allows companies to see their employees as an aggregative economic growth indicator equivalent to a company's physical assets. Accordingly, companies may assess their workforce's development based on an accumulation of skill, knowledge and efforts and identify skill developments programmes as primary strategies to improve their HC.

This reading of HC takes a rather narrow view of people with a focus on people as means and offers only a limited perspective on people as ends in themselves. Despite this understanding of HC initially conflicting with the underlying assumptions of HD outlined in previous sections, this study adopts Sen's view that the HC perspective fits into a broader reading of HD and that the notions can be mutually reinforcing (Sen, 2003c). In other words, HC can become an enabler of HD and facilitate a wider reader of people as means and ends. This connection becomes clearer if we look towards skill development in the workplace. It serves as an example of a process that simultaneously enhances HC and HD in organisations. Investment in employee education is an investment into HC by means of advancing the skills and knowledge of employees. Nonetheless, education benefits exceed the limits of HC, contributing to an enlargement of

people's choices by virtue of transferring enhanced workplace skills to people's private lives (Keep and James, 2012). For example, Worker A may participate in a skill development programme that advances their mechanical skills. This may serve as an expansion of his HC within the organisation, however, it may also benefit the worker when applying mechanics skills in their private life.

Overall, this section argues that integrating HC as a means for economic growth and linking it to the wider context of HD in organisations illustrates how material prosperity is connected to other capability dimensions such as social, political, and cultural dimensions. It shapes organisations and how organisations view their employees. Against this backdrop, this study proposes that combining HC with the underlying assumptions of HD may provide a platform that reveals insight into how management and employee practices can impact workers' capabilities in and outside the workplace. In addition, this reading acknowledges people's dual status: as a combination of both an end and means to an end in themselves.

2.2.5. Reviewing the challenges of Human Development

Challenges of an open-ended concept

Presenting people as ends in themselves allows us to shift the focus from what people have to what people can do or can be. Nonetheless, there are arguments that this understanding is constrained by a seemingly limitless range of possible choices of what people can be or can do (Alkire, 2010a). Interpreting HD as conceptually open-ended means that HD could be applied to a range of themes, sometimes contrasting, that include the environment, gender, poverty, globalization, and migration (Alkire, 2010a). Such an interpretation has resulted in multiple practical HD approaches in the fields of income, basic needs, and well-being. Engaging with these existing approaches serves as general guideline for how to overcome the concept's open-endedness and illustrates how this same quality can be seen as a strength in its application. Examples of these approaches include the International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s or World Bank's *Basic Needs Approach,* the concept of social development in the form of health, improving well-being through education or nutrition investments, the idea of human resource development, and the concept of human capital investment in business (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003; Jolly, 2003; Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2003). This

illustrative selection of HD applications draws inspiration from HD as its conceptual foundation, but differs in methodology, intended outcomes, and perspectives. In light of this, this study argues that HD cannot be ranged within one single discipline or corresponds to one single methodological, epistemological, or ontological reading. Instead, Ul-Haq himself acknowledges that the concept is open-ended and that HD's normative requirements are context-dependent, leading to a subjective inclusion or exclusion of HD dimensions (Ul-Haq, 1995a).

Acknowledging that HD is conceptually open-ended finds support in *Table 2.2.: Dimensions of HD as mentioned in HDR from 1990-2009* (as above). This overview demonstrates that the inclusion or exclusion of HD dimensions is specific to each study's context, aims, and objectives with corresponding methodological, epistemological, and ontological considerations. Taking these accounts into consideration, this study sets out to bind HD to the normative context of organisational studies and to contribute to the debate surrounding HD in organisations.

Challenges of measuring Human Development

Considering HD's conceptual open-endedness, the absence of methodological consensus, and focus on individual human beings whose preferences are in constant flux, one might well ask how we should measure HD, whether there is methodological consistency across HD studies, and its implications for the study of HD in organisations?

A common approach - and the most widely broadcasted measure for HD - remains the HDI. The HDI resulted from advice provided by Ul-Haq and Sen to the UNDP during the development of an inclusive quantitative tool that measures a country's HD (Ul-Haq, 1995a). The tool is based on GDP figures, economic growth indicators, and measurements for people's quality of life such as life expectancy (*ibid*.). However, the HDI remains an aggregative quantitative measure that mostly uses economic indicators to compare the levels of development between countries. This leads to the common misconception that HD is equivalent to social development that reflects on changes of social structures and norms to review these in connection to economic growth (Fukuda-Parr, 2003). Indeed, this narrow

reading of HD and economic growth indicators raises concerns about consistent HD measurement when operationalising the concept. As such, it advocates the use of established conceptualisations of HD in organisations such as the ILO's Basic Needs Approach (Jolly, 1976), the Human Resource Approach (Blake and Mouton, 1964), or the Human Capital Approach (Becker, 1975). Conversely, this study argues that the initial aim of the HDA was not narrow standardization and one-dimensional measurement, but instead to broaden the conversation. Building on this argument, this study rather advocates the inclusion of multiple monetary and non-monetary values and dimensions in the organisational development debate. Thus, this study promotes a wide reading of HD that explores complex organisational systems and reflects on people's ability to enlarge their choices and on environments by which they can lead long, healthy, and creative lives.

Presenting a wide reading of HD, this study acknowledges that the HDA as a broad and multi-dimensional approach requires pairing with established methodological, ontological, and epistemological readings that have enjoyed previous successes in organisational studies. By underpinning HD with established methodological approaches, this study seeks to avoid a narrow conceptual reading of HD in organisations as social development linked to economic growth or financial performance. Simultaneously, it seeks to provide a methodologically robust reading of HD in organisations. Against this backdrop, this study is designed as an instrumental case study and follows the epistemology of interpretivism and ontology of critical realism. Accordingly, it takes an inductive approach to face-to-face interviews from two phases conducted with two German manufacturing companies. Based on this reading, the study examines qualitative data using thematic and template analysis. The analysis seeks to develop *a priori* themes that draw from a pre-defined capability list, offering internal consistency and comparability of results, an understanding that is explored in more depth in *Chapter 4: Research Process and Cultural Context*. Using existing methodological approaches allows this study to overcome the methodological shortcomings of measuring HD as an individualist concept and supports the operationalisation of HD in organisations.

2.2.6. Section summary

This section sets out to introduce HD, explore its philosophical foundations, outline its practical applications, and to consider critical voices challenging the concepts' operationalisation. In light of this, HD draws inspiration from various scholars such as Kant, Smith, and Aristotle, and defines HD as simultaneously an objective, outcome, and process which aims to enlarge people's choices, and create environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives.

In conformity with HD traditions, this study qualifies HD as deliberately conceptually open-ended and sets out to explore HD in organisations, binding the study to the analytical normative context of organisational studies and work. Analysing organisations through the lens of the HDA may contribute to the conversation on how to improve a person's quality and dignity in life, not just by providing more options, but also in ensuring that people are able to use available resources and convert them into real opportunities. Thus, including monetary and non-monetary dimensions when assessing the workplace may illuminate what shapes workers' lives and what constitutes conducive environments for HD in organisations. With the intention of exploring these points further, the following section seeks to outline the concept of work; it's history, practical approaches, and the different perspectives shaping its conceptualisation.

2.3. Work as a Concept

2.3.1. Section overview

At the heart of HD and of organisations lie people. If people are simultaneously at the centre of organisations and of HD, the question then arises: is there a deeper connection between organisations and HD? The answer to this question is rooted in the concept of work, which has evolved throughout centuries. Work as an activity in which people perform a task in exchange for financial remuneration dates back to the beginning of civil society, forming the nexus of organisations and HD alike. Work is at the core of human activity, and work activities influence levels of well-being, social structures, and self-perceptions, thereby offering humans a platform for self-realisation (Yeoman, 2014). On that account, by showcasing the conceptual and philosophical foundations of work, how the concept evolved, and

practical approaches to work, we can inform people's understanding of work which may reveal beneficial insights into the links between HD and organisations.

2.3.2. Introduction

The evolution of work as a concept

What is work and how can we define it? The answer to this question is intricately interwoven with human history and its debate frequently rests on contradicting viewpoints such as philosophical, sociological, or economical perspectives on work (Geisen, 2011). For example, scholars in ancient Greece defined work as the lowest form of human activity with direct links to slavery, with 14th-century Europeans associating work with the toil and affliction that was reserved for the lower classes. Meanwhile in 16th-century Europe, with the Renaissance in full flow, work became a means for humans to liken themselves to the divine (Dik and Duffy, 2009). The meaning and interpretation of work received further debate during and after the industrial revolution of the 19th century. Philosophers such as Marx (1887) saw work as a means for self-realisation or alienation and Freud (1977) defined work as an act of self-denial. In the 21st century, work often closely relates to a human's sense of self-esteem, social standing or to a platform for self-realisation (Yeoman, 2014). At the same time, the reverse is also possible, leading to unemployment causing social stigma and social exclusion (Ezzy, 1993; Dik and Duffy, 2009; Geisen, 2011). In this context, changing understandings of work are rooted in historical and cultural presuppositions, and belief systems in the form of emotions, attitudes and identity towards work (Geisen, 2011; McIvor, 2013). Frequently, these influences draw on mythology, pop culture, management theory, and a person's own practical work experiences, shaping their understanding and perception of work (Ciulla, 2000). In other words, the comprehension and perception of work can be summarised and categorised from having evolved from a curse, to a calling, to a vocation (Ciulla, 2000; Beadle and Knight, 2012). In view of these historical, cultural, and societal developments, work evolved to be a reflection of people's values, needs, and desires, which change over time, a person's lifespan, and generations.

Overall, this section argues that work as a concept has been shaped by its historic, cultural and technological developments; thus, evolving into a concept reflecting

the technological and cultural advancements and values of the times. Taking this into consideration, investigating these influences may reveal valuable insights into how changing value systems can shape different work forms and activities. In today's workforce, there is a plethora of industry and person-specific work forms that reflect on an individual's desires, needs, and preferences in life (Bowie, 1998). For example, a person that works shifts in the steel manufacturing industry will have vastly different needs from someone working in an office, a person with several employment positions, or someone who works in the form of volunteering services. While all of these work forms forge their own individual relations with HD, this study predominantly focuses on the paid employment of shop floor workers in the German manufacturing industry, a point that the following section will explore at a more in-depth level.

2.3.3. Perspectives and influences shaping how we understand work

The plurality of work

What work is - and how people perceive it - frequently draws inspiration from emotional and cultural changes towards work. In addition, work is underpinned by technological transitions such as the computerization of work, the introduction of flexible work systems, the strengthening of scientific work management practices, and the replacement of routine jobs by Artificial Intelligence (McIvor, 2013). These developments shape the feelings, thoughts and behaviours of workers and often define how people enact, approach, and experience their work and workplaces (Rosso, Dekas and Wrzesniewski, 2010). In other words, there is no universal definition of what work means to the individual and how the individual perceives work but a distinctive instrumental and intrinsic understanding of work. From this perspective, this study proposes that work in its instrumental form is a pluralistic concept that reflects on a person's psychological, social, and economic needs, shaping people's comprehension and perception of work. On the other hand, the intrinsic value of work may stretch from enjoying the work activity or deriving satisfaction from work to identifying work as a platform for self-expression or self-realisation. In light of this, analysing work in organisations can give insight into a person's individual work requirements and the opportunities that enable them to lead a life they value.

Diverging definitions and perceptions of work draw from the concept's inherent plurality of meaning, complexity, and multiple layers to inform a person's attitude towards work. Often, these attitudes are contingent on a person's life cycle stage and change over time (McIvor, 2013). This leads to the underlying implication that at its core work is adaptable, flexible and reflects on a person's developments in life. Within the changes of their attitude to work, humans show a tendency to see work as a trade-off between interesting or challenging work, job security, time spent at the workplace, and corresponding pay (Martin, 2000; UNDP, 2015). However, their perception of what constitutes justified trade-offs often changes throughout life cycles and in accordance with changes within and outside the workplace. This can inform a person's needs, desires, and interests, which in turn may shape people's understanding and perception of work. For example, workers in their prime working age exhibit a preference for high economic returns to provide for their families, their future financial security, or to engage in society. At the same time, workers in later life stages indicate a higher desire for intrinsic values attached to their work activity e.g. high levels of happiness, contentment, and life satisfaction outside the workplace. This point will be explored in greater depth during *Chapter 5: Results Phase 1 Interviews* and *Chapter: 6 Results Phase 2 Interviews* and is supported in the writings of Ranis *et.al.* (2003).

In addition to changing needs, desires, and preferences, there are two main aspects that underpin people's understanding of work. First, the level of financial benefits work provides. Financial benefits, such as salaries, provide people with the means to sustain their livelihood and secure basic needs like housing, clothing or food for themselves and their dependents. Second, that work has a moral dimension that underlies the work activity. This category expresses predominantly intrinsic values that contribute to workers' sense of purpose, autonomy, independence, and self-fulfilment through challenging or interesting work activities (McIvor, 2013). In other words, while the concept of work is in constant flux and reflects a person's needs, desires, and preferences, there are common denominators of work, which shape a person's understanding and perception of workplace activities and the workplace itself.

Understanding the concept's plurality supports the interpretation that work is at the centre of human lives and of organisations. For example, according to the British Office for National Statistics (2018), the average full-time worker spends approximately 37 hours per week at work. With these numbers in mind, work and the workplace become dominating factors in human lives and limit available time for activities outside the workplace such as community engagement. Consequentially, some people spend most of their waking hours at the workplace. With the workplace often, and over extended periods, taking the central stage in a person's life, it leads to the rationale that the main advances of a person's HD may also happen in the workplace. In other words, the plurality of the concept supports the notion that work represents one of the primary platforms for HD. However, some questions - like as what drives or hinders a person's HD in the workplace and what is a person's primary goal in work - remain. These questions and many more, continue to spark debate between modern scholars. From concepts such as meaningful work (Chalofsky, 2003; Yeoman, 2014; Veltman, 2016), dignity work (Ryan, 1977; Hodson, 2004; Mele and Dierksmeier, 2012), or even dirty work (Ashforth, B., E. and Kreiner, G., 1999; Kreiner, G., Ashforth, B. and Sluss, D., 2006), academics try to capture the intricacies and plurality of work in common frameworks. Reflecting on these concepts, the following section sets out to engage with the philosophical foundation of understanding work.

The philosophy of work

The foundation of how we understand work today and how people perceive their workplace takes inspiration not only from historical debate or sociological perspectives but also draws on ideas that are deeply rooted in the works of philosophers and theologians. To understand why the workplace could offer a primary platform for HD, the following section aims to explore selected philosophical works and their relation to work and HD in organisations.

Most prominently, Karl Marx (1887) explored how the term 'work' relates to the broader society. He differentiates between work as a commodity and work as earning your livelihood. He critiques work predominantly as a production process that workers should only execute if it provides economic benefits to the wider society (Marx, 1887; Geisen, 2011). His works centre on citizenship in the

workplace, control, autonomy, and agency. To discuss these topics in the context of capitalist production systems, he frequently draws on the imagery of work as slavery, hell, or imprisonment (Marx, 1887; McIvor, 2013). This means that Marx predominantly defined work as a curse and critiques material inequalities. His conception of work continues to shape our understanding of work and is a leading influence on how people perceive routine and shift work in relation to their emotional attitude towards work.

A sharp contrast to Marx's discussion of work lies in the works of Albert Schweitzer. Schweitzer (1929) investigates attitudes towards and the meanings of work. He states that personal and moral commitments of workers to their work are at its core and stretches the value of work beyond financial remunerations. Schweitzer bases his writings on the inner connectedness of every living thing that enables people to reach self-fulfilment (Schweitzer, 1929; Martin, 2000). Throughout his writings, Schweitzer anchors his thoughts in notions of religion, reverence, and gratitude. While these factors are not directly carried forward in this study, the idea that humans need more than material things to prosper, forms a fundamental philosophical assumption of this research and continues to influence people's perception and understanding of work.

Another prominent voice in the study of work is Hannah Arendt. She sees work as central to human society and explores the consequences of a work-centred society. She points out the dangers of labelling all human activity as work and the consequential impact on people's ability for self-realisation and self-actualisation (Arendt, 1958). In her works, she draws on human action and human production as an image to differentiate between work and other activities (Geisen, 2011). Arendt's idea that work should be a platform for both self-realisation and self-actualization is intricately connected to HD's aim to enable people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. It is a notion that underpins the foundation of work and its conceptual evolution.

Additional voices that have shaped the debate around work as a concept include scholars such as: Samuel Smiles (1859), who identifies work as a prime source of meaning and personal identity; Max Weber (1963), who examines if different wage

packets are the most important factor in liking or disliking your employment and explores the meaning of financial remuneration at work. Hobbes (1651), who investigates work and its relation to power and dominance in a competition centred environment; and Locke (1689b), who defines work as a commodity that enables people to buy property (Weber, 1963; McIvor, 2013). To explore these works in greater detail exceeds the scope of this research. Nonetheless, the outline of the afore-mentioned scholars seeks to provide a narrow but representative selection of prominent ideas that characterise how we see work, underlining the concept's plurality. Indeed, it is important to acknowledge here that fundamental influences of work are sometimes diverging and underpin the individuality and subjectivity in how people perceive their workplace and the meaning of work. While these works reflect the cultural context and technological advancements of their time, they are also grounded in emotional attitudes to work and each person's own desires, needs, and preferences.

The sociology of work

The previous sections set out to explore answers to the question of what is work and to give insight into what shaped work as a concept. Continuing this conversation, work does not only take inspiration from technological, cultural and philosophical developments but also from its underlying sociology, a point that the following section seeks to examine in a more comprehensive fashion.

The study of sociology seeks to provide insight into how societies function and how they are structured, and aims to identify how to overcome social problems (Calhoun, 2002). Thus, the sociological perspective of work aids the analysis of worker interactions and what underpins changing needs, desires and preferences for employees (Caplow, 1954; Perlow, 1999; Grint, 2005; Smelser and Swedeberg, 2005). Within the context of work and organisational studies, one of the most prominent sociological voices is the work of Bellah *et. al.* (1985). Their work links both the perception and understanding of work or the workplace to the emotional interpretation of work activities, which supports the notion of being subjective and individualistic. This study argues that the subjectivity of work is at its core and forms a link with the people-centred perspective of the HDA. It is only if we acknowledge that individual workers can have convergent and divergent perceptions of the same

work activity and workplace that we can identify conditions that enable workers to lead long, healthy, and creative lives.

If work is subjective and individualistic, the question remains: how can we analyse work, and can how can we capture the seemingly limitless range of possible individual interpretations of work? The answer to these questions is rooted in the broad emotional categorisation of work. Work functions as different emotional outlets for different people (Bellah *et al.*, 1985; Martin, 2000). First, work can be a job. 'Work as a job' describes a work activity that's sole purpose is to generate income. Income then provides a means of financial security and success, and finances meaningful activities outside the workplace. Second, work can be a career. 'Work as a career' reflects and traces a person's self-defined achievements and advancements. These achievements influence how people perceive their social standing, skills and knowledge and prestige, and, by extension renders work a source of income and self-esteem. In other words, careers are pathways to achievements, power, and social recognition. Last, work can be a calling or a vocation. 'Work as a vocation' is interwoven with a person's character and is morally inseparable from his or her life. A vocation is a work activity that has value to the worker in itself regardless of its economic output. It is a valuable and morally positive activity that contributes towards the public good and by definition links one's identity to social practices and communities (ibid.). In summary, workers show the tendency to perceive their work either as a job, career, or as calling/vocation. While this represents the emotional structure and sociological interpretation of work, it is important to note that these structures are contingent on a person's life cycle stage and change over time. For example, a worker could enter employment and interpret his or her work as a job. In this scenario, work is a means to provide an income. However, over time the worker might come to emotionally connect with his or her work and identify it as a career or vice versa. Drivers of such developments might include starting a family or increased financial commitments such as mortgages. It illustrates that the understanding and perception of work is subjective, fluid and interwoven with a person's development in and outside the workplace.

If the perception and understanding of work is in flux and its emotional categorisation evolves, it indicates that - from the sociological perspective - workers may link the interpretation of work with their sense of self. In light of this, prominent sociological scholars such as Bellah *et al.* (1985) argue that emotional categories of work should be seen in isolation and are mutually exclusive, leading individual work activities to be categorised either a job, career, or calling/vocation. Diverging from this traditional sociological interpretation of work, this study argues that the same activity can be simultaneously interpreted as a job, career, or calling/vocation by other workers. This view is supported by the work of Ryan (1977) and made clearer by the following quotation:

> *Maybe I can expedite matters by starting out with a story about three workers breaking up rocks. When the first was asked what he was doing, he replied, "Making little ones out of big ones"; the second one said, "Making a living"; and the third, "Building a cathedral."*
> (Ryan, 1977, p. 11)

The story of three workers breaking up rocks suggests that the same work activity can have different meaning to individual workers. It acknowledges that work remains subjective, is individualistic and that people can interpret the same work activity differently and in connection with their own changing needs, desires, and perspectives. Reflecting on this discussion, the question remains: how is the sociological perspective of work related to HD in organisations? This study argues that the delineation of work into three emotional categories aids the study of HD in organisations and establishes the subjectivity of each study's participants' replies. This sociological perspective on work supports the interpretation that workers can subjectively define the same routine activity differently and therefore have different requirements that facilitate HD in organisations. It underlines that the understanding and meaning of work is dependent on a worker's evolving desires, needs, and preferences, which in return influences what drives or hinders their HD at the workplace.

The libertarian concept of work

Beside sociological and philosophical voices influencing the debate around work, it is of equal importance to consider the views of the libertarian school of thought

that has most prominently shaped conceptions and interpretations of work (Martin, 2000). In traditional libertarian views, work and private life are considered as two separate spheres. The doctrine of separate spheres is rooted in the idea that the individual should be free to pursuit their own economic self-interest and generate income without interference from social obligations (Martin, 2000; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012). It therefore follows that the professional sphere should be guided by economic values while the private sphere should be focused on moral values. While this perspective acknowledges the subjectivity and individuality of work, it lies in contrast to the view that work transcends the professional sphere into the private sphere, reflecting a person's needs, desires, and preferences that can consequently be seen as a platform for self-realisation and HD.

Libertarianism in the context of work and the doctrine of separate spheres draws upon the ideas of Smith (1759, 1776); namely, that a person may pursuit economic self-interest that enhances their financial security but that a truly virtuous person embodies the qualities of prudence, justice, beneficence and self-command. However, this study argues that such narrow interpretation of work – one solely rooted in libertarianism - potentially limits the opportunities for workers to lead a life they value and to realise their full potential in and outside of the workplace. Furthermore, such narrow interpretation would restrict moral ideals to the private sphere and contests the interpretation of work as a moral obligation that will be discussed in the last section of this chapter. This study supports the interpretation of work and private life as intricately connected and that a person's work activity, based on a reciprocal relationship, transcends into the private sphere. There is an extensive body of research available, including Hobson and Fahlén (2009) who analyse the impacts of workplace stress on family life, and the works of Knutsson (2003), who explores the relationship between health disorders and shift work. These works support the view that work cannot be seen in isolation but should always be analysed within the context of a person's life stage, their situation outside the workplace, and their dependents.

2.3.4. Practical approaches to work and how they shape the contemporary workplace

The previous section explored various perspectives that have influenced how we understand work and established the core view that work and private spheres, based on a reciprocal relationship, are intricately connected. While it is important to investigate viewpoints that have shaped 21st-century perceptions of work, it is equally vital to understand what relevant, practical implications they have for the contemporary workforce. In light of this, the following aims to explore how work guides current work practices, how organisations are currently supporting the development of their employees, and the nature of work structures in a globalised world.

Insights into work-life balance schemes

During the last decades, rapid technological developments, generational value shifts, and a globalised workforce have extensively affected how workers feel about their work and how they understand the contemporary workplace (Munoz de Bustillo *et al.*, 2011). As a consequence, changing emotional attitudes, needs, and desires require organisations to adapt current work forms and to integrate changing needs into work schemes. Often, this can pose challenges for an organisation that consists of multigenerational workforces with diverging attitudes and needs. In this context, one of the most common forms of accommodating the needs of a diverse workforce is to establish so-called work-life balance schemes. Assessing a workplace according to its work-life balance opportunities is of increasing importance for workers when choosing employment (Hobson and Fahlen, 2009; Hobson, 2014; UNDP, 2015). It is important to note here that institutional policies and conventions often regulate various aspects of work-life balance schemes such as parental leave, rights to care leave or maximum working hours per week. However, many organisations supplement legally required work-life balance schemes and offer benefits like flexible working hours, gym memberships or increased home office opportunities to accommodate evolving worker needs.

Considerations for work-life balance schemes are often rooted in the doctrine of separate spheres and express the traditional underlying assumption that work and private life are separate and competing spheres (Hobson, 2014). As noted above,

this view resonates with the libertarian perspective of work and offers its own benefits. Nonetheless, this study argues that the lack of clearly defined boundaries between what is work and what is private life often obstructs a clear separation between the two spheres (Clark, S., 2000). This reading suggests that concepts aiming to establish a work-life balance should reflect on the idea that private and work life may have a reciprocal relationship and should not be seen in isolation. Indeed, the rationale for work-life balance schemes often connects work and private life, ensuring that workers' needs, desires and preferences are fulfilled. It supports the notion that the two spheres are interwoven. Thus, having a work environment that offers meaningful opportunities, not just employment, lies at the core of the concept of work and should be taken into consideration when designing work-life balance schemes.

If industries offer an increasing number of work-life balance schemes and, as noted earlier, institutions offer frameworks that regulate aspects of the contemporary workplace, both aiming to address evolving worker needs (see section *2.2.4. Applicability – HD in organisations*), the question arises: why should we explore HD in organisations and is this exercise beneficial? The answers to these questions reflect on the nature of different industries and their inherent structures. Many work-life balance schemes may aim to address evolving worker needs, however, they show an increasing gap between what they theoretically aspire to achieve and real-life economic, social and normative constraints such as industry structures, sectoral constraints or technological challenges. For example, many of the work-life balance schemes, e.g. working from home, do not apply to shift workers in the manufacturing industry but accommodate the changing needs of workers in the service industry. A person working on the shop floor will not be able to work flexi-hours but will be required to work in allocated shifts that ensure a constant production output. In light of this, traditional industries that continue to be defined by routine and shift work often struggle to offer meaningful work-life balance schemes for workers. In light of this, this study argues that analysing work through the lens of the HDA may reveal valuable insight into organisations that are characterised by routine and shift work and show limited efficiency in adopting work-life balance schemes. This exercise could allow us to draw conclusions as to

whether work can act as a platform for HD and which environments in organisations support people to live long, healthy and creative lives.

Adult learning – The era of skill development programmes

In times of rapid technological change, increasing interconnectivity, and the replacement of unskilled labour by Artificial Intelligence, it comes as no surprise that traditional work forms such as unskilled routine work and people spending their career working for only one organisation are decreasing. This decrease of traditional work designs is reflected in the increase of irregular contracts, short-term employment, part-time employment, multiple employment, and insecure employment as recorded by the UNDP (2015). Simultaneously, examples of job loss and modifications due to Artificial Intelligence in the form of machine and deep learning include developments in quality control, robotics in automated production processes, and other reactive machines.

Organisations showing an increase in irregular contracts often aim not only to offset challenges arising from these contracts with work-life balance schemes but are also turning their eye towards increased offers in skill development programmes. Such programmes seek to enable people with low formal education backgrounds to increase their productivity and by extension their social mobility (Keep and James, 2012). In other words, skill development programmes aim to offer adult learning opportunities that subsequently increase the HC of participating workers. In light of this, many adult learning programmes are supported by government initiatives and encourage companies to offer workshops that can range from technical skill improvement to management and leadership courses.

Despite government initiatives supporting adult learning programmes and their intended benefits, organisations often limit the range and depth of skill development programmes due to high costs and a frequent lack of worker interest (Becker, 1975; Keep and James, 2012). Workers often experience weak incentives to enrol in such programmes, due to the low transferability of skills and high time commitments that impact their private lives. It leads to the majority of skill development programmes being both ineffective and too general to offer real incentives for workers to continue their education (Becker, 1975). In other words,

many government-incentivised adult learning programmes tend to be too broad, and subsequently inapplicable to the workplace, or so tailored to the workplace that they do not aid career advancement outside the organisation (Keep and James, 2012). Thus, skill development programmes often have reduced scope to address workers' needs, desires, and preferences and only have limited effectiveness in offering opportunities for development.

Adult learning programmes and so-called 'up-skilling' policies have an extensive history and tradition within the Human Capital Approach (HCA) (Goldin, 2016). They are frequently used by the manufacturing industry to increase mobility within the organisation and to tap into worker potential for workers with technological skill and knowledge. There is an extensive body of research exploring the effectiveness of skill development programmes, including the works of Reich (1991) and Florida *et. al.* (2008). They establish that investments into adult learning programmes can be sources of competitive advantage but require balancing trade-offs between the company's financial investments and financial gain in form of increased HC. While offering skill development programmes bears benefits for employees and organisations alike, it is important to note that studies such as the work of Keep and James (2012) indicate that HC investments are most effective in sectors and for positions that are knowledge-driven, e.g. the technology sector and for high skilled labour. As a consequence, a substantial portion of paid employment that consists of low skilled labour and routine jobs remains on the margins of skill development programmes. Often, the trade-off between financial investments and gained HC does not justify investing into the development of routine workers. In light of this, a substantial amount of worker potential - particularly in shift and routine work - is not covered by adult learning programmes and remains untapped by workers and organisations alike, creating a barrier to HD in organisations.

2.3.5. Section summary

In exploring the historical development of work, perspectives and influences of work, and practical approaches to work, it becomes clear that work is a multi-faceted concept in constant flux. Its reception changes in accordance with technological developments and generational value shifts. While it is a dynamic concept, at its core remains the subjectivity and individuality of work. It is only if we

acknowledge that the same work activity addresses different needs, preferences, and desires for individual workers, that we can see the full scope of what work is and how it influences workers.

This section set out to explore how we understand work and how the concept of work connects people with organisations and HD. At the root of this view lies the interconnectedness of work and private life that is contingent on a person's life stage, reflecting on their changing needs, desires, and preferences. While organisations have started to adapt to changing worker needs through the implementation of work-balance schemes and adult learning programmes, many of these approaches remain limited in their applicability to the manufacturing industry and disregard the need to integrate individual preferences of workers (Keep and James, 2012). As a consequence, there is a gap between people's needs, desire, and preferences that underpin their understanding of work, and how organisations address these needs. This gap could be addressed by viewing work as a platform for HD that allows for worker needs to be addressed and incorporated in the workplace. This signifies an alternative perspective on work and HD that facilitates opportunities for people to lead a life they value. In light of this, the following section sets out to explore if work can act as a platform for HD and enrich human lives, providing insight into its perception. It engages with the question whether meaningful work should be a moral obligation.

2.4. Work as a Platform for Human Development

2.4.1. Section overview

The previous sections introduced the HDA and sought to shine a light on work as a concept, and the influences, perspectives, and applications that form people's understanding of work. This debate not only serves as an introduction to the individual concepts at play, but also acts as a preamble to more detailed discussions of whether work can also function as a platform for HD and what characterises this relationship. With this objective in mind, the following sections seek to explore what work means to the individual; if there is a relation between meaningful work and organisational outcomes; if work can mean more than a pay cheque; if work is a moral obligation; and, if yes, who is responsible for providing

meaningful work. It will then conclude by addressing critical voices that challenge the possibility of work functioning as a platform for HD.

2.4.2. Introduction to meaningful work as a concept

Work that is meaningful to the individual

Previous sections establish that work is a subjective and individualistic concept in constant flux. Acknowledging the individuality and subjectivity of work, it gives rise to the question: what does work mean to the individual and what mechanisms determine the meaningfulness of work? Answers to these questions draw deeply from the concept of meaningful work, which aims to capture what work means to the individual. The notion of meaningful work roughly translates to work experiences that have inherent meaning to the individual. It can reflect on workers' sense of self, performed activities and the sense of balance in the workplace (Chalofsky, 2003; Hardering, 2015). Within the meaningful work debate, scholars such as Joanne Ciulla (2000) and Ruth Yeoman (2014) set out to explore whether meaningfulness can be described in objective and subjective terms and offer a conceptual debate on what constitutes meaningful or meaningless work. For example, Ciulla (2000) proposes that different things will be valuable to different people at different times, driven by social meanings and moral values that vary over time for cultures and individuals.

> *[…] meaningful work, like a meaningful life, is morally worthy work undertaken in a morally worthy organisation. (Ciulla, 2000, 225)*

She states that the objective element of meaningful work consists of the moral conditions of the job itself, concluding that all employees must be treated with respect and dignity. On the other hand, she argues that the subjective dimension is comprised of the people's personal outlooks and attitudes, resulting from personality, experiences, and things that they value (Ciulla, 2000). In a similar manner, Yeoman (2014) grounds her works in Susanne Wolf (2010) and argues that work should first be objectively meaningful before considering whether it is subjectively meaningful to the individual. She believes that the objective dimension of meaningful work finds its base in people's autonomy, degree of freedom, and dignity within the workplace (Yeoman, 2014). This particular interpretation of meaningful work resonates with Sen's concern with agency and the individual's

freedom to choose and lead a life they find valuable, a notion that is explored at a more in-depth level in section *3.3.7. Agency.*

Contrasting the above readings of meaningful work, Christopher Michaelson (2005) argues that the objective criteria of meaningful work are to preserve the moral autonomy of workers and range from the free choice to enter work to the democratic participation in decision-making processes. In addition, Norman Bowie (1998) provides a Kantian reading of meaningful work and argues that work can only be meaningful if it is entered freely, offers degrees of autonomy and independence, enables workers to develop their rational capacities, provides sufficient wages, supports the worker's moral development, and does not interfere with the worker's pursuit of happiness. Engaging with these different views showcases the complexity of the meaningful work debate. It highlights the challenges of characterising what work means to the individual as a moral agent, particularly when looking at the objective and subjective dimension of work. Indeed, it remains a challenge to integrate organisational parameters such as wages with people's personal value preferences and experiences in the workplace. Against this reading, this study offers an interpretation of meaningful work as an individualistic concept, one which reflects those work experiences that have inherent meaning to the individual.

The debate on meaningful work shows similarity with readings of decent work promoted by the ILO (International Labour Organisation, 2020). The ILO defines decent work as

> *work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.*
> *(International Labour Organisation, 2020)*

The concept of decent work was launched in 1999 with a broad and high level definition which led to little impact on the international development or labour market literature and to no institutions dedicated to the study of the concept independent of the ILO (Sehnbruch *et al.*, 2015). Nonetheless, the ILO's concept

of decent work is frequenlty compared to the UNDP's work on HD and offers an insitituional reading of labour rather than meaningful work in organisations. It is closely related with job quality in Erupean employment policy and frequently informs the social policy and the institutional context of labour (Piasna, Burchell and Sehnbruch, 2019). At its core, it promotes good working conditions and the provision of social security to workers at the instituional level and often addresses employment conditions such as wages, job stability and career prospects (Burchell *et al.*, 2014). While a more detailed study of decent work in the context of institutions lies outside this study's scope, it acknowledges the importance of decent work and provides a more in -depth review of institions and meaningful work in section *2.4.4. Meaningful work as moral obligation*.

Returning to meaningful work in organisations, interpreting meaningful work as a concept which reflects on experiences that have inherent meaning to the individual allows for the dual recognition that work can be both meaningful or meaningless to the individual (Kreiner, G., Ashforth, B. and Sluss, D., 2006; Beadle and Knight, 2012). This interpretation begs the questions: who determines meaningful or meaningless work experiences and what conditions cause them? The answer to these questions is rooted in organisations and their ability to shape the workplace, using policies, processes, and management practices to create meaningful or meaningless work experiences. On one hand, organisations can create environments in which people can lead long, healthy, and creative lives, but they can also produce negative and alienating work experiences. A common perception of alienating or dissociative working conditions includes irregular work hours, lock-ins, unsafe or unsanitary surroundings, discrimination and other forms of abuse (Michaelson, 2011). Conversely, meaningful work experiences often relate to theories such as Herzberg's (1993) motivation theory, which identifies high levels of achievement, recognition, enjoyable work activities, high levels of responsibility, and advancement opportunities as factors that invoke perceptions of work as meaningful (Michaelson, 2011). While all these factors influence how workers will perceive their workplace, it is the organisation itself that significantly shapes and influences how people perceive their workplace and - in turn - what work means to the individual.

Do meaningful work experiences relate to organisational outcomes?

The previous section undertook a brief inquiry into what work means to the individual and what constitutes meaningful work, subsequently concluding that organisations have the capability to shape the workplace. While this outline serves as an introduction to the concept of meaningful work and whether work may act as a platform for HD, it may also raise the following question: is there a correlation between meaningful work experiences and higher organisational outcomes? The answer to this question is rooted in a vast body of research that engages with how people think about their work, how it affects their work motivation, and its ultimate influence on workplace performance.

Literature seeking to establish a direct link between meaningful work and organisational outcome includes examples such as needs theories (McClelland, D., 1961), which explore meaningful work as an intrinsic human need that people strive to fulfil; environmental reinforcement theories (Nord, W., 1969; Skinner, B., 1969), which investigate how steering a person's work environment causes reactions that allow for more meaningful work, and person-environment interaction theories (Holland, 1959), which combine needs and environmental reinforcement theories (Chalofsky, 2003). Other scholars have set out to discover if higher levels of meaningful work show a positive influence on work-related outcomes such as job satisfaction (Dik and Duffy, 2009), job performance (Fried and Ferris, 1987), job engagement (May, D., Gilson, R. and Harter, L., 2004), longer tenure (Dik and Duffy, 2009), employee well-being (Campbell, Converse, P. and Rodgers, W., 1976), psychological health (Dik and Duffy, 2009), organisational citizenship behaviour (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006), organisational commitment (Cardador, Dane and Pratt, 2011), occupational identification (Bunderson and Thompson, 2009), and customer satisfaction (Leiter, Harvie and Frizzell, 1998). These examples support the interpretation that meaningful work has the potential to contribute to organisational outcomes in a positive way. Despite this positive correlation, many of the afore-mentioned studies focus on the service and integrated service industries and only allow for limited transference to the manufacturing industry, potentially leaving a gap in existing literature.

The available literature on organisational outcomes and meaningful work suggests that the workplace and how people understand and perceive work may influence organisations and workers alike. This reciprocal relationship enables work to transcend from the private into the professional sphere, thereby becoming a platform for HD. It addresses the reciprocal relationships between people's personal preferences, meaningful work experiences, and incentives for organisations to create enabling conditions for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives.

2.4.3. Can work mean more than a pay cheque?

Purpose, identity, belonging: work beyond salaries

If interpreting work as a platform for HD potentially offers insight into how workplace environments can contribute to people leading long, healthy, and creative lives, we could also ask whether work has the ability to contribute to people's sense of purpose, identity and belonging. It feeds into the idea that humans traditionally subscribe to the search of a higher power, purpose or greater meaning to their activities (Chalofsky, 2003). In light of this, humans often derive their subjective meaning and purpose in life from their network of social, professional, domestic, economic, and personal relations and how these relations are seen (Ryan, 1977). Having previously established that work can be central to human lives and that most people spending a large part of their waking hours at work, work experiences may have the potential to become intrinsic to people's search for a life endowed with meaning beyond financial rewards.

If work is more than a means to the end of financial remuneration, the question arises what do people seek at the workplace beyond its economic benefits? An answer can be found in the notion of work as a platform for self-expression, and self-realisation, explored in earlier sections of this chapter. The idea that people use work to express themselves, and to develop a sense of purpose, belonging, and identity, can be linked to the notion that work has become one of the primary sources of identity, self-esteem, and happiness for many workers in the 21st-century (Ciulla, 2000; Michaelson *et al.*, 2014). In this context, work can contribute to the enrichment of human lives by fulfilling various psychological needs such as discipline, connectedness, regularity and self-efficacy (Ciulla, 2000; Yeoman,

2014). It subsequently follows that people can derive positive fulfilment from work, interactions with family, friends, religions, or wider community engagement. Indeed, this supports the idea that work can mean more than a pay cheque at the end of the month in contributing to a person's sense of purpose, belonging, and identity that transcends from the professional into the private sphere.

If finding a higher purpose or meaning in work contributes to a person's sense of purpose, belonging, and identity within and outside the workplace, it raises the question: what happens if a person loses their work. Recognising work as a primary source for identity and self-esteem elevates the importance of work to a central role in human life, while simultaneously increasing the risk of permanently disturbing a person's sense of him or herself if they lose their work. This study acknowledges the potential dangers and risks that stem from identifying work as a source of purpose, identity, and belonging. However, it focuses on how meaningful work experiences can be harnessed to create environments in which people can lead healthy, long and creative lives, reserving judgement on the reverse effects of negative work experience to future scholarly studies.

Economic vs. Meaningful Dimension

Despite beneficial investigations into what work means to the individual and whether its meaning stretches beyond economic benefits, it is equally vital to acknowledge that the economic dimension of work remains a central driver for many people to seek employment. Against this backdrop, the following section seeks to present arguments outlining that economic and meaningful dimensions of work are by no means exclusive but often intricately interwoven.

Scholars such as Yeoman (2014) argue that salaries provide financial security and resources to workers and their dependents, which can contribute to a worker's self-respect and underwrites his or her psychological needs satisfaction or desire fulfilment in the private or professional sphere. Similarly, Bowie (1998) argues that salaries endow work with meaning by definition and enable the worker to act in and outside their work context. Thus, linking the economic and meaningful dimension of work directly supports the notion that financial benefits can act as base or driver for humans to find meaning in their work outside volunteering. This underpins the

idea that salaries secure workers' lives outside the workplace by providing financial stability. It promotes the understanding that the economic and moral dimensions of work are interwoven, and one should not be seen in isolation to the other, but instead as dimensions with a reciprocal relationship that allows workers to seek meaning beyond pay.

2.4.4. Meaningful work as a moral obligation

Following our discussion about what work means to the individual and whether work can and should mean more than a pay cheque, the subsequent section seeks to contribute to the debate on work as a moral issue. Within the meaningful work debate, further questions emerge: can and should workers have a moral right to positive work experience; and if yes, who is responsible for providing such experiences? The answers for and against work being a moral obligation find arguments in various schools of thought such as utilitarianism and deontological perspectives such as contractarianism (Hobbes, 1651) and Kantianism (Kant, 1785) but further resonates with the CA and evaluating people's individual well-being and agency. If meaningful work is seen as a moral obligation, the question arises on whose responsibility it is to offer meaningful work opportunities and whether workers are entitled to meaningful work opportunities, which is explores at a more in-depth level at the end of this section.

While each school takes a different approach to the examination of work as a moral issue, a common point of contention is whether work can and should be the moral obligation of individuals, organisations, or institutions. The debate commonly seeks to compare and contrast whether institutions have a moral obligation to guarantee meaningful work opportunities, whether organisations have a moral duty towards societies and should be providing meaningful work opportunities, or whether individuals have a moral right and duty to seek meaningful employment that should not be given up in favour of financial compensation (Michaelson *et al.*, 2014). Despite an in-depth analysis of each of these perspectives being beyond the scope of this study, the following section now seeks to provide a representative overview of the arguments for and against meaningful work as a moral obligation and further details on agency in the context of the CA can be found in section *3.3.7. Agency*.

Institutional obligation and individual choice

The debate around meaningful work as an institutional obligation reaches back to the beginning of this chapter, which offered a reading of institutions as socially embedded systems with the ability to shape environments in which people act, make decisions, create rules, and define virtues or values. However, the notion of institutional obligation to meaningful work remains contentious. Scholars such as Adrian Walsh (1994) or Andrew Sayer (2009) present arguments for meaningful work as a moral obligation of institutions. Walsh (1994) states that meaningful work should be a distributive good and falls under the principle of distributive justice. He deems meaningful work opportunities to be as important to humans as money, honour, or commodities and it should, therefore, be the obligation of institutions to distribute and allocate them fairly amongst society. In a similar way, Sayer (2009) supports the argument that meaningful work falls under the umbrella of contributive justice, and that people have the moral right to seek meaningful work opportunities. However, Richard Arneson (1987) argues against that notion, stating that institutions should only intervene if there is a clear case for market failure and that the supply of meaningful work opportunities does not fall under this category. Weighing arguments for and against the notion of meaningful work as institutional obligation, this study acknowledges that institutions are regulatory entities with the ability to enable or constrain people's behaviours. That said, meaningful work should not become the sole responsibility of institutions, but they do have the capacity to shape meaningful work opportunities.

Within the context of institutions as shapers of meaningful work opportunities, it becomes important to highlight the role of the individual - and their freedom of choice - in the process. While the individual's freedom of choice will be explored in a more in-depth manner during the following section and in *Chapter: 3 The Capability Approach*, this concept serves to illustrate the relationship between institutions' capacity to provide meaningful work opportunities and the individual's freedom to realise or reject them. Against this reading, the individual's freedom of choice can be seen as an important driver in shaping meaningful work opportunities. Workers should generally aspire to realise meaningful work opportunities but have the right to reject them and take up meaningless employment if they wish to do so.

The organisational perspective

Building on the conversation about institutional obligations to provide meaningful work opportunities and the individual's freedom of choice to realise or reject them, we should ask if organisations have a moral duty towards societies and should be providing meaningful work opportunities for their workforce. This perspective reaches back to the understanding established earlier in this chapter; namely, that organisations are particular forms of institutions that sketch the boundaries between which employees can act, make decisions, create rules, and define virtues or values.

The debate surrounding organisations and their moral duty or obligation to provide meaningful work opportunities often finds traction in deontological thinking. Contractarianism, for example, argues for work to be more than an agreement of labour exchanged for pay, but insists that workers - as moral agents - should have the moral right to be treated as ends in themselves rather than a means to an end (Hobbes, 1651; Bowie, 1998). Within contractarianism, workers as moral agents enter agreements with organisation based on social contracts in which the organisation is morally obliged to provide meaningful work experiences for its employees (Dunfee, and Donaldson, 1995). This viewpoint finds further support in Kant's (1785) second categorical imperative, which endorses the understanding that one should always treat a person's humanity as an end and not as a means to an end. With this objective in mind, deontological scholars commonly argue that work is the moral obligation of organisations, which have a moral duty to further the well-being of societies and actors within them.

The debate on work as the moral obligation of organisations finds further ground in utilitarian readings of work. Utilitarians, for example, frequently regard the sacrifices made by one person as necessary and justifiable if they advance the greater good of a society (Bennett, 2010). It consequently follows that it would be justifiable for organisations to employ demeaning, alienating, or dirty work practices if these practices were counteracted by pay, contributed to the company's overall financial success, and facilitated - by extension - the company's economic contribution to society (Yeoman, 2014). This stands in direct contrast to the works

of Sen. The idea of an individual sacrificing their own needs and desires for meaningful work contradicts the notion that the needs of the individual are equal to those of the society and that one should not, therefore, supersede the other (Sen, 1982b, 1984, 1999a; Sen and Williams, 1982). It is only when an individual has the opportunity to fully satisfy their needs that the person can be a contributing member of society and aid the advancement of societal progress, lending support to the argument that meaningful work experiences can be significant contributors to HD.

Further arguments against work being a moral obligation of organisations can be found in works such as Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1974), which link with the understanding that individuals need to fully satisfy their desires to become contributing members of society. The argument here is that meaningful work is not a moral obligation and that its interpretation as such infringes upon the autonomous right of organisations to set their own terms and conditions of work (Maitland, 1989). As a consequence, entering or refusing a proposed work agreement, or engaging in work activities, would – as long as it does not violate human rights - become the workers' free choice, regardless of it being meaningful or meaningless to the individual. Taking this stance allows for the interpretation that work as a moral obligation of the organisation would devalue the worker's freedom of choice. They should be allowed to enter work agreements that are not intrinsically rewarding but serve to satisfy desires outside the workplace if they wish to do so. Despite this viewpoint providing valuable insights into workers' freedom of choice and autonomy, it ties in with the contentious understanding that an organisation's primary purpose should be its economic advancement, and not its contributions to society (Mcguire and Hutchings, 2006). While this view draws on the works of philosophers such as Machiavelli (1532), it stands in contrast to the idea that the ultimate goal of economic advancement should be to contribute to the advancement of societies, as established throughout this chapter, and limits the scope of an organisation's purpose. This study offers an alternative interpretation; namely, that the economic advancement of organisations should serve as a catalyst for conditions in which people can lead long, healthy, and valuable lives, while simultaneously providing space for work's moral dimension, where people have the free choice to realise or reject meaningful work opportunities.

The Question of Entitlement

The previous sections set out to explore whether meaningful work is the moral obligation of organisations, institutions, or individuals, outlining arguments for and against each of those notions. However, the question of work as moral obligation, can be countered with the question of work as entitlement and whether workers are entitled to receive meaningful work opportunities. The answer to the latter is rooted in the debate on the term 'entitlement'. Libertarian scholars such as Nozick (1974) ground their works in the ideas of Locke (1689a) and Kant (1785) and argue that entitlements are situated within the legal sphere, encompassing individual rights within the space of rights of life, liberty, and contracts. Nozick (1974) presents supporting evidence that individual rights should be the key standard for assessing state action. The debate resonates with the CA's understanding of individuals as moral agents who are capable of moral reasoning and should have the freedom to choose a life they value. While this perspective offers valuable insight into individual rights and the centrality of people's agency, it raises a question on whether entitlements are enforceable. Often, entitlements are separate to legal rights which are enforceable by state power and refer to a person's command over ownership of commodities (Sen, 1982c; Gore, 1993).

> *It is usual to characterize rights as relationships that hold between distinct agents e.g. between one person and another, or between one person and the state. In contrast, a person's entitlements are the totality of things he can have by virtue of his rights […] In the social context, a person's entitlements would depend, among other things, on all the rights he has vis-a-vis others and others have vis-a-vis him. If a right is best thought of as a relationship of one agent to another, entitlements represent a relationship between an agent and things - based on the set of all rights relevant to him.*
> (Sen, 1982d, pp. 347–8)

Despite the arguments above being an illustrative but ultimately narrow representation of the entitlement debate in various schools of thought, it suggests that there are opposing viewpoints on the term 'entitlement' and the question of whether people are entitled to receive meaningful work opportunities. The debate finds further ground in the legal sphere. Documents such as the UN Declaration on Human Rights (General-Assembly, 1948) and other rights to work often seek to

include objective parameters that facilitate meaningful work opportunities. Similarly, Nussbaum's list of basic capabilities emphasises ten capabilities people are entitled to in order to lead a life with dignity (Nussbaum, 2019). However, they are contrasted by the continuous legal existence of meaningless, demeaning, or alienating work practices across countries and industries. In light of this contrast, this study reaches back to earlier sections of this chapter, pointing towards the individual's freedom of choice and confirming that the same work activity can have different meaning to different workers; what may be demeaning to one person may be meaningful to another. It is the concept's inherent subjectivity that makes it challenging to find a clear answer to the question of entitlement and reflects on how people perceive their own work activity and what shapes their work experiences or preferences.

2.4.5. Critique of work as a platform for Human Development

Challenges of integrating subjectivity and measurability

Continuing on from the conversation about the moral dimension of work, it is evident that work is a highly subjective concept and that the same work activity can mean different things to various people. While this represents one of the concept's core strengths and lends itself to studying work from varying perspectives, it also represents one of its greatest challenges. Earlier sections of this chapter explored how workers will understand and perceive work in accordance with their own value system, making work a derivative of their own subjective values and what they themselves find important in life (Beadle and Knight, 2012; Dewe and Cooper, 2012). This reading provides the basis for work to reflect the workers' sense of identity, purpose and belonging, and to transcend from the organisational into the private sphere, thereby allowing for work to take a centre stage in human life. Against this backdrop, a common challenge of studying work at the individual level is the apparent juxtaposition of subjectivity and measurability. With this challenge in mind, this study proposes to conduct the data collection and subsequent discussion at the individual, organisational, and institutional level, providing aggregated results to contribute to the question of whether work can serve as a platform for HD in organisations.

Simultaneous to work being a subjective and individualistic notion, HD is a concept that relies on the individual's values, needs, and desires. The study of HD in organisations is consequently subjected not to only the individuality of work, but also to the individuality of HD and what constitutes a long, healthy, and creative life for the individual. The ambivalence and multi-dimensionality of both concepts creates a unique challenge for its measurability and assessment. Both concepts show an insufficiently established consensus on what they are and how to operationalise either concept. As a consequence, there is a large body of research that proposes different ways to assess work and HD from different and sometimes contrasting perspectives, presenting arguments for including or excluding certain dimensions of work or HD, and promoting different methodological approaches (Gore, 1993; Ciulla, 2000; Bunderson and Thompson, 2009; Dik and Duffy, 2009; Michaelson, 2011; Dewe and Cooper, 2012; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012; Yeoman, 2014). Against this complex research background, it becomes central for any HD study to pair theoretical concepts - such as organisations - with established methodological approaches that ensure internal consistency and comparable results. In light of this and as established earlier, this study proposes to explore HD in organisations based on case study research analysing two German manufacturing companies. It is underpinned by thematic and template analysis drawing from capability lists grounded in the works of Bryson (2010a) and Vizard and Burchardt (2007) to ensure that conclusions will be relevant and meaningful beyond the study's confines, a point that will be explored in greater depth *Chapter 4: Research Process and Cultural Context*.

2.4.6. Section summary

This section set out to explore if work could act as a platform for HD and sought to address the questions of whether work can mean more than a pay cheque and whether work can be or should be a moral obligation or entitlement. Each of these notions is underpinned by the idea that work is a subjective notion, meaning different things to different people and raising challenges to those trying to reliably measure work at the individual level. Despite these challenges, this study establishes that work as a concept can be contextualised and defined by subjectively or objectively meaningful or meaningless experiences. This thesis acknowledges the concept's subjective nature which challenges its measurability

due the limitations of subjective informational spaces. However, this thesis argues that in framing the concept as a platform for HD based on objectively or subjectively meaningful and meaningless experiences, it provides a normative reading of work which is conducive to the application of the CA. It offers an interpretation of work as more than the accumulation of material things, stretching beyond financial remuneration, and framing conditions in organisations that enable people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives in and outside the workplace.

2.5. Chapter Conclusion

This chapter began with an exploration of what HD is and what the origins of the HDA are, and sought to introduce the debate on HD - where the concept finds its roots, the concept's history, philosophical foundations and modern application - before outlining critical voices in the field and examining how the challenges of an open-ended concept and measuring HD at the individual level can be overcome. Throughout this debate, this study offers an interpretation of HD, aiming to create conditions that enable people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. This reading serves as the study's conceptual backdrop, framing the debate on HD in organisations. This debate stretches to include investigations into how employment transforms from a job, to a career, to a vocation and seeks to address how the same work activity can mean different things to different people.

In the second part of this chapter, the study shone a light on the historical, cultural, and technological understanding of work, outlining how work can contribute to HD and may subsequently act as a platform for HD. At its core, this chapter presents arguments for and against the understanding that the professional and private spheres of human life are intricately interwoven and uses a diverse range of practical approaches such as adult learning or work-life balance schemes to illustrate this debate. In analysing work-balance schemes and adult learning programmes, this chapter identified that current approaches to work frequently address challenges in the service industry, leaving a gap in the current literature for addressing changing worker needs in the manufacturing industry. It concludes that current approaches show only limited capacity to explore the social dimension of organisations that are marked by routine and shift work, proposing that viewing

organisations from a HD perspective might contribute to addressing this research gap.

Following the theoretical explorations of HD and work, the last section seeks to explore whether work could act as a platform for HD. It argues that work can act as a facilitator for HD in organisations by means of providing meaningful work experiences. Against this backdrop, this chapter proposes that work can act as a platform for HD, based on the idea of meaningful work as a moral obligation for institutions, organisations, or individuals and on the notion of work as entitlement. These reflections allow for the reading that HD and work are inherently subjective concepts and that the same work activity can have different meanings to different workers. It supports the understanding that workers should have the freedom of choice to take up or reject work arrangements that are meaningful or meaningless to the individual.

This study contends that work can be a key contributor or a key barrier to the shaping of people's HD and vice versa. It argues that work plays a central role in human lives and sets out to explore if positive work experience can act as drivers for HD and to illuminate if negative work experiences form barriers to HD in organisations. Expanding the debate from a theoretical literature review, this study proposes to use interviews with shop floor workers and interviews with managers from two manufacturing companies in Germany to explore if positive and negative work experiences can cause shifts in how workers perceive their job and if they draw personal meaning from within or outside their workplace.

Following the debate within this chapter, the question may arise: what distinguishes the HD perspective from other frameworks that analyse meaningful work and why is the HD perspective beneficial to the wider debate on organisations? The answer to this question draws from an extensive body of research as introduced throughout this chapter. This chapter argues that many scholars, political philosophers, business ethicists, and multilateral institutions such as the UNDP focus on objective and measurable dimensions of organisations; thus, creating the robust evidence base this study draws upon. Analysing the subjective dimension of what people value at work may provide a more holistic insight into workers' needs,

desires, and how it relates to people's understanding of work. As a result, this chapter defines itself as a contribution to an intellectual terrain between economics, ethics, and organisational studies that draws inspiration from the works of Sen.

Drawing from the works of Sen provides the foundation for this study's analysis and for the wider debate on HD in organisations. Despite Sen extensively shaping and influencing the intellectual legacy of HD, he formally anchors the HDA in his CA, highlighting the need not only to engage with HD literature but to understand the intellectual roots of Sen and how his CA came to be. With this in mind, the following chapter explores the CA at a more in-depth level, establishing the approach as the conceptual foundation for HD, and by extension, for this study.

3. Chapter 3: Literature Review – The Capability Approach

3.1. Chapter Overview

The previous chapter explored the conceptual foundation of HD, its relation to the concept of work and enquired into the understanding of work as a platform for HD. This debate included Sen's influence in shaping the concept of HD and his contributions to the concept's development. In light of this, *Chapter 2* supports the understanding that the CA acts as a conceptual foundation for HD and acknowledges Sen's primary influence in defining the concept. *Chapter 3* continues this conversation and sets out to explore Sen's works at a more in-depth level. It seeks to shed light on the inception of the CA, its core concepts of commodities, functionings, capabilities, subjective well-being, and the question of agency. The chapter follows with an analysis of the CA's foundational understanding and explores Sen's philosophical influences, the factor of choice, and the open-endedness of the CA in relation to Nussbaum's universal capability list. It then moves on to give an overview of critical voices and how this study aims to overcome challenges of operationalising the CA. The chapter concludes with insights into the applications of the CA and establishes the CA as dominant driver for understanding HD in organisations.

3.2. Introduction

The Capability Approach – Overview

The Indian economic philosopher Amartya Sen finds his scholarly roots in development economics, social choice theory, and philosophy, prompting Sen to establish himself in the intellectual terrain between economics and philosophy. This challenging intellectual space allows Sen to frequently cross disciplinary boundaries and to pursue answers to questions that may not traditionally stand in direct relation to one another. With this in mind, Sen shows a keen interest throughout his works to explore people's well-being and to identify factors shaping people's lives. His formal training and unconventional way of thinking led Sen to collaborate with Martha Nussbaum in the 1980s and to establish a framework known as the Capability Approach.

The CA has several core concepts - commodities, functionings, capabilities, subjective well-being, and agency - and was developed as an alternative approach to traditional development economics such as welfare economics, income expansion, and GDP measurement as indicators for well-being. The approach takes into consideration the distribution of welfare measures and accounts for adaptive preferences, which refer to people adjusting their living standards to what they think they can reasonably achieve (Nussbaum, 2019). To generate these comparisons, the approach focuses on people's agency and freedoms to enable people to choose and to lead a life they value. It highlights people's ability for moral reasoning, people's capacity for choice and emphasises that people are ends in themselves and not means to an end (see *3.3. Core Concepts*). The approach focuses on what people are able to do, are able to be and people's respective freedoms to be and do so, as individuals and as part of the society they live in (Robeyns, 2005, 2017). In other words, the approach aims to look at people's lives and how to create environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives.

Sen and Nussbaum experienced a conceptual divergence concerning the CA's evaluative space and how different informational spaces should be combined. At the root of this divergence lies the importance of process and how to evaluate people's capabilities. While Sen advocates for the approach to remain open and rejects the notion of a specified capability list, Nussbaum developed a definite list of ten capabilities that she suggests is applicable for all human beings (Nussbaum, 2001, 2019). Nussbaum's ten capabilities serve as an abstract template that can be modified in accordance with a study's context but, at its core, describe what people should be entitled to, to lead a life of dignity (Nussbaum, 2019). In light of this, Nussbaum expanded the CA to a partial theory of justice exploring fields outside economics like gender studies and human rights (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993; Sen, 2004; Nussbaum, 2011a). Nussbaum derives her vision of the CA from a philosophical background grounded in Marx and Aristotle, rejecting cultural relativism and drawing from her list of ten central basic capabilities. In contrast, Sen sees a person's capabilities as leading to human functioning and as an expression of human freedom that should be evaluated through the process of public reasoning. He focuses more on the question of how people convert commodities into functionings and capabilities and how people can realise their

freedoms. Against this backdrop, the range of fields and contexts in which the CA has been applied is diverse and includes, for example, global public health (Grewal *et al.*, 2006), development economics (Alkire, 2002b; Clark, 2005b), environmental protection and ecological sustainability (Anand and Sen, 2000), education (Wilson-Strydom, 2015), technology (Oosterlaken, 2009), welfare state policies (Dreze and Sen, 2013), disability studies (Mitra, 2006), gender (Nussbaum, 2001; Robyens, 2003), justice (Nussbaum, 2000), wealth creation (Robeyns, 2019).

The Capability Approach – A foundation for HD?

Establishing this study's use of capability lists, the question may arise, what is the CA's relation to the HDA and are there any direct convergence points? The answer to these questions can be found the previous chapter, which presented HD as enlarging people's choices defined as creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. Analogous to this definition, the CA strives to facilitate capability expansion, allowing insights into people's lives. Both approaches acknowledge that capability expansion cannot be achieved by increasing people's utility alone. Rather, the expansion needs to be subjectively meaningful to the individual, which requires people to have the freedom to choose and to realise their choices. But what does that mean for HD in organisations? The answer to this question is best illustrated by using an example. Let us first take the process of adult learning. If a company aims to enlarge their workers' choices or to expand their capabilities in the form of improving their knowledge, they might opt for offering an increased number of adult learning programmes. In this scenario, however, a worker's capability to learn and participate in society would not improve if a company simply increased the number of available adult learning programmes. The worker must also have the freedom to participate in these programmes, and that participation must be valuable to the individual, enabling them to apply learned skills outside of their workplace.

This interpretation suggests that the CA has made a crucial and foundational contribution to the growth of the human development paradigm (Robeyns, 2017). In this context, if capability expansion stretches beyond utility extension, it suggests that evaluating what people can be and do, and their respective freedoms to do so in the workplace should also stretch beyond income expansion to include non-

monetary values. While this chapter offers a more in-depth comparison between the CA and utilitarianism at a later stage, at this point, it merely argues that - despite aiming to expand traditional economic income assessments to include non-monetary values - the CA acknowledges the importance of economic indicators like income as the basis for people's lives. It allows for space within the debate and argues that income generation and the ability to convert income are fundamental needs within society (Sen, 1984). People earning and spending money is a key economic concept that contributes extensively to a person's well-being. However, this reading supports the understanding that income should never be the sole contributor to well-being, and but promotes income as a facilitator for capability expansion beyond a simple increase in available choices (Comim, 2001; Clark, 2005b). This reading becomes clearer if we turn to another example in the context of work. A worker's salary may offer the opportunity to achieve financial security and resources for the individual and their dependents, enabling them to sustain their livelihoods and secure basic needs such as housing clothing or food; yet, a salary increase would not contribute to capabilities such as *being able to live without harassment*, leading to the understanding that income expansion alone does not strengthen non-monetary capabilities such as states of mind. In light of this, this chapter argues that the CA as a framework stretches beyond a traditional economic income assessment. Rather, it engages with what people can be and do, and their respective freedom to do so, with its core concepts informing the wider basis of the HDA.

3.3. Core Concepts

3.3.1. Section overview

Building on the conversation about how the CA came to be and outlining its wider purpose, this dialogue is underpinned by the frameworks' use and definition of its core concepts such as commodities, functionings, capabilities, subjective well-being, and agency. By exploring these concepts, we can highlight the frameworks' abstract terminology and complexity. This subsequently underlines the need to begin the debate by introducing CA's core notions and exploring the relationship between the concepts' individual elements.

3.3.2. Conceptualising the Capability Approach

As noted above, the CA consists of five core concepts that stand in direct relation with each other and allow an assessment of people's lives from different perspectives. With this objective in mind, the framework is best conceptualised as mapping the process of converting and selecting commodities, functionings and capabilities to achieve subjective well-being which is driven by agency and a person's freedom of choice. Generally, conceptualising the CA serves different purposes which include conceptual analysis of concepts such as freedom, providing an empirical understanding of phenomenon, allowing explanatory analysis of what mechanisms are causing certain phenomenon, and evaluative analysis of states of affairs or normative analysis which prescribe what we ought to do (Robeyns, 2017).

Taking the above into consideration, the CA incorporates individual elements and dynamically links each element to emphasise the priority of individual entitlements. Considering the framework as an analytic tool, the process begins with people attempting to acquire desired commodities in the form of utilities, resources, goods, services, or states of mind. People subsequently aim to convert these commodities into functionings according to their command, ability, and freedom to access them. This process is known as commodity conversion and is underpinned by a person's agency to select and convert commodities into functionings defined as beings and doings a person can undertake and achieve. Reflecting on people's agency in the context of commodities, people select and convert possible functionings into individual capabilities or capability sets. In this scenario, capabilities are best understood as combinations of functionings, suggesting a person's preferred lifestyle and value preference. This process is followed by people achieving selected functionings and effectively realising valuable capabilities. Realising valuable capabilities can then facilitate subjective well-being, defined as a psychological state that informs how people assess their lives.

Exploring the conceptualisation of the CA showcases the framework's complexity and its abstract terminology, yet, the concept becomes clearer if we turn towards an example. A common analogy used to illustrate the CA in practice is that of a person purchasing a bicycle (Clark, 2005a). The example begins with a person as

a human being with agency, who is able to decide to buy a bicycle or not. In this scenario, the bicycle becomes a commodity that can be acquired in exchange for money. The functioning of a bicycle would be to enable a person to move around more freely; however, whether a person can convert a commodity into a functioning would be highly dependent on a person's conversion factors. If the person wants to use the bicycle as a means of transport, it would require the person to be both able-bodied and to have learned how to ride a bike. The functioning of *being able to move around freely* is then converted into capability sets, allowing insights into a person's preferred lifestyle. With this in mind, the capability set reflects on a person's intentions and expresses what a person would like to use the bike for. For example, a person could use a bike to visit friends, visit family, commute to work, or to exercise. Whether a person can realise and achieve their capability sets depends, in turn, on their freedom of choice. A person would only be able to use a bicycle as a means of transport to commute to work if they are legally allowed to ride a bicycle in public, have the freedom to choose between different means of transport, and have a workplace, friends, or family that they can visit. In light of this, having a bike and being able to ride a bike become distinct functionings and capabilities and their realisation influences a person's subjective level of well-being, giving insight into their quality of life and distinguishes from their agency. Against this backdrop, the following sections set out to discuss each of its elements in a more comprehensive manner.

3.3.3. Commodities

Goods, services, resources, utilities, states of mind - What are commodities?

Subsequent to exploring how individual concepts of the CA interact with each other and mapping the general process of applying the CA in action, the question may arise what exactly are commodities and how can people convert them into functionings? With these questions in mind, the following section sets out to shed light on the concept of commodities and to present arguments that outline how 'commodities' is an umbrella term that forms the base of the CA.

Throughout their lives, people strive to acquire commodities that they perceive as valuable, express their preferred lifestyles, and that they see as contributing to their overall quality of life (Robeyns, 2005). In light of this, and within the context of the

CA, the term ‘commodities’ encompasses goods, services, resources, states of mind, and utilities. Taking this into account, commodities are simultaneously goods, services, or resources that can be bought and sold, and non-monetary items in the form of utilities or states of mind that have intrinsic and instrumental value to human beings, such as charitable actions (Sen, 1985a, 2004, 2008). Understanding commodities as an umbrella term supports the interpretation that there are monetary and non-monetary commodities. Firstly, monetary commodities are generally measurable, comparable and can frequently be bought or sold by individuals. In contrast, non-monetary commodities - like receiving an education, experiencing art and culture, volunteering, and experiences while travelling - are often provided by institutions, are frequently regulated by governments, and cannot be bought or sold but only acquired. This reading suggests that commodities are not solely material belongings but stretch to simultaneously include goods, services, resources, utilities, and states of minds with instrumental or intrinsic value to a person.

The previous paragraph presented arguments for distinguishing between monetary and non-monetary resources; nonetheless, this study also acknowledges the importance of financial resources that enable the acquisition of monetary or non-monetary commodities. It is with financial resources that a person will be able to purchase commodities that will enable them to convert commodities into functionings (Sen, 1985a). With this acknowledgement in mind, financial means like income become facilitators that enable the process of converting commodities into functionings and reflecting on a person’s ability to create valuable achievements, but do not become commodities in and of themselves.

If commodities include goods, resources, services, utilities, and states of mind, translating to monetary and non-monetary commodities with intrinsic or instrumental value to human beings, it begs the question: How do people use commodities to reach functionings and capabilities, and how do commodities influence a person’s subjective well-being? Answers to these questions lie in a person’s ability to convert commodities into functionings and capabilities. This process is most frequently referred to as commodity conversion and is heavily influenced by a person’s socio-economic setting, general physical ability and ability

to reason (Gandjour, 2008). Sen himself argues that a person's ability to convert commodities into functionings expresses their level of freedom (Sen, 2004). Interpreting the process of converting commodities into valuable functionings as an expression of freedom allows for the understanding that the process is dependent on a person's command over commodities. Against this backdrop, this section argues that people will only be able to successfully convert commodities into valuable functionings if they are allowed to act freely and choose commodities that they themselves perceive as inherently meaningful to them.

Continuing the debate on commodities, Sen reasons that converting commodities into functionings depends on the individual's command, ability, and freedom to access desired goods and services (Sen, 1985a, 1999b). This leads to a differentiation between a person possessing a commodity and a person's ability to use the respective commodity (Sen, 1985a). It is only if a person is able to use a commodity effectively and not merely take possession of it, that a person can convert the commodity into functionings and positively influence their well-being. This distinction becomes clearer if we turn towards a common example used to illustrate a person's ability to convert a commodity into a functioning is the act of purchasing a loaf of bread. A person might purchase a loaf of bread and take possession of it, but it is only if the person has the physical ability and freedom to eat, digest, and absorb nutrients that they are able to convert bread into the achieved functioning of *being well nourished*. By doing so, they thereby realise a valuable functioning instead of solely taking possession of a commodity.

This section sets out to present an outline of what commodities are and how people can convert them into functionings, prompting the question: how does the debate on commodities relate to the context of work? With this question in mind and based on the debate outlined above, this study proposes that the term 'commodities' is an umbrella term with intrinsic or instrumental value to the individual, stretching from resources such as learning materials, goods such as work equipment, services such as work support structures, to utilities and states of mind such as *being employed* or *being able to express yourself at work*. In light of this, workers' abilities to convert commodities into valuable functionings is influenced by the degree of autonomy and freedom that each participating organisation grants its

employees. It stands in conjunction with a worker's personal values and what they find important in life. A person's commodity conversion process will depend on what the company allows them to do. Standards and regulations will define work patterns and hierarchical structures, influencing the person's autonomy at work. Simultaneously, the person's point in life, emotional attitudes, and their level of commitments outside the workplace will often determine a worker's command over commodities and freedom to convert commodities into valuable functionings. Against this backdrop, commodity conversion rates in a work context indicate what a person is able to be or do at the workplace and whether they have the respective freedom to do so within their respective value and belief systems. In other words, commodities and their conversion rates facilitate what a person perceives as valuable achievements in the workplace, ultimately impacting their level of subjective well-being in and outside the workplace.

3.3.4. Functionings

Beings and Doings - What are Functionings?

Following the debate on commodities, this section seeks to explore the concept of functionings in greater depth, arguing that functionings are beings and doings that a person can undertake and achieve. While commodities form the base of the CA, functionings are seen as the result of the commodity conversion process (Sen, 1985b, 1985a). Recognising that functionings result from people's command over commodities identifies what is valuable to a person and their preferred lifestyle (Sen, 1985a, 1985b). It is grounded in the idea that people will choose commodities according to what they perceive as valuable and what will positively impact their subjective well-being. This reading suggests that functionings are the foundation of what we are, who we are, and what we can do. In light of this, functionings can vary from elementary activities such as being employed, to more complex states of mind as like being happy (Sen, 1985a).

The reading of functionings as beings and doings a person can undertake and achieve is underpinned by the understanding that functionings provide insight into the socio-economic setting of people, their belief systems, and their realistic opportunities to convert commodities into valuable functionings (Sen, 1985a). However, functionings do not reflect on the number of commodities available to

each person, but instead focus on a person's ability to convert relevant commodities into achieved functionings. This process becomes more straightforward if we look at an example in the context of organisations; namely, a company offering skill development programmes. Let us assume that every member of this organisation has equal access to these programmes and that they offer the same information to each participant. Person A might live in a single household with no dependents while Person B might have a family with young children. In this scenario, Person A might have more time to study and focus on their skill development after work while Person B might have to focus on their family after work, effectively reducing Person B's ability to convert a selected commodity into achieved functionings. Nonetheless, Person B's ability to realise the functioning is independent of and would remain unchanged by the number of programmes the company might offer. It supports the argument that functionings engage with a person's realistic opportunities to convert commodities into valuable functionings.

At this point, it is important to note that functionings can also provide insight into their functionings have instrumental or intrinsic value to the individual (Sen, 1985a; Gandjour, 2008). Simply put, one functioning can have different meanings and purposes for different people. This notion becomes clearer if we return to the example of skill development programmes. For Person A adult learning and developing their skill set could bear the intrinsic value of learning something new. Meanwhile, Person B might choose to partake in a skill development programme to advance their career, thereby supporting their family. In this scenario, the functioning of adult learning has different instrumental and intrinsic values to Person A and B, reflecting on their personal preferences and freedom of choice.

If functionings are beings and doings that a person can undertake and achieve, the question emerges: how does a person select relevant functionings? The answer to this question is rooted in the elements of choice, preference and a person's freedom of choice (Robeyns, 2005). Whether a person can achieve their selected functions is often dictated by a person's character, social context, life goal, and mental state of mind (Sen, 1985a; Sugden, 1986). Against this background, the CA argues that a person's ability to select functionings does not only reflect on their

personal choices but also on what a person is legally allowed to do and has the freedom to enjoy. In other words, different people will be able to convert different commodities into different functions that lead to different capability sets. The process becomes clearer if we look at another illustration. Let us take the example of a woman working as a carpenter. A woman could identify the functioning *being a carpenter* as a valuable functioning. However, she will only be able to take up employment and realise the functioning if she is legally allowed to work as a female carpenter, if she is physically able to work, if she has the freedom to choose the profession, and if she perceives the functioning *being a carpenter* as inherently meaningful to her.

In context of this research, functionings reflect on what an organisation offers to its employees and what employees are able to be or do and have the respective freedom to do so. Functionings can range from simple beings such as *being employed* to more complex states of mind as *being able to express yourself at work.* In light of this, functionings reflect on the boundaries in which employees operate, supporting the interpretation that organisations do not only influence what a person is allowed to be and do within the organisation, but also influence what we are, who we are, and what we are able to do.

3.3.5. Capabilities

Combinations of Beings and Doings – What are Capabilities?

Previous sections sought to present arguments for commodities as an umbrella term that encompasses goods, services, resources, utilities, and states of mind, before offering an outline of functionings as beings and doings a person can undertake and achieve. This begs the question: what are capabilities? If functionings are beings and doings a person can undertake and achieve, capabilities are the combinations of beings and doings that form capability sets (Sen, 1985b; Mitra, 2006). Even though functionings and capabilities are intricately interwoven, they represent different spheres of life. For example, Person A may identify the functioning *being well nourished* as important and select it as a valuable functioning. However, it is only if Person A is physically able to absorb nutrients and has access to food that they might achieve the capability *well nourished.* This means that a person might choose different possible functionings to compile a

capability set that is important to them, but may not have the ability or freedom to convert functionings into capabilities. In other words, functionings can be converted into relevant capabilities based on a person's ability to do or be something (Sen, 1985a). With this definition in mind, this study argues that capabilities are combinations of beings and doings, building on a person's achieved functionings.

Understanding capabilities as combinations of beings and doings suggests that capabilities correspond to a person's freedom and build on people's opportunities to achieve their selected functionings (Robeyns, 2005, 2006). Taking this into account, capabilities become a space of comparison which allow for interpersonal comparisons and inform a person's freedom of choice and wider quality of life. This may lead us to ask the question of how does Sen define a good life or quality of life? Despite the fact that Sen has fundamentally shaped the CA's individual elements, he does not offer a clear definition or guidelines for his interpretation of a high quality of life or his concept of leading a good life (Sen, 1999b). This results in the broad understanding that a person's life is good or qualitatively high, if it is a life they value.

The reading of capabilities as combinations of beings and suggests that people can select different functionings and realise their selected capabilities to create capabilities lists that are valuable to the individual. Scholars such as Nussbaum (2011b) argue for the application of fixed and universal capabilities lists applicable to every human. Sen, however, rejects the notion of universal capabilities lists or capabilities rankings and instead argues that every study requires an individualised capabilities list appropriate for the study's purpose (Sen, 2004). This argument stands in direct relation to the works of Robeyns, who argues that every individual person subconsciously compiles their own list of relevant capabilities and that one person's list should not be deemed more or less important than another's (Robeyns, 2006). Against this backdrop, the question may arise: what does such an interpretation mean for this study and the context of HD in organisation? The answer to these questions comes from the understanding that within the context of organisations, each worker attaches their own value to available functionings and chooses which functionings they will realise, resulting in capability sets that are specific to the individual and shaped by the organisation and the wider industrial

context. This allows for an interpersonal comparison of what functionings workers think are valuable and what could advance or hinder the realisation of selected capabilities.

Within the context of this study, it is important to note that the research presupposes that every individual worker should have similar freedom to choose from an equal set of available functionings (Sen, 1999b). This reading reflects that the CA seeks to treat every person as equal and for every person to enjoy equal social opportunities, resting on the background idea that all humans are equal in fundamental worth or moral status (Anand and Sen, 1992). With this in mind, Sen suggests that the evaluative space should shift towards people's capabilities, reflecting on equal real freedoms and promoting capability equality (ibid.). What does that mean for the context of evaluating organisations from a capability perspective? To answer to this question, the study examines organisations as particular forms of institutions that have the ability to regulate access to available functionings for workers via conventions, norms and legal systems.

The notion of similar access rights to functionings and capabilities reflects on the right of workers – as defined by labour laws - to be treated equally and without indiscrimination and equally within organisations. Despite this notion of equality, the concept of capabilities acknowledges that workers are independent agents and that each person is accountable for the consequences of their own freedom of choice. The concepts of capabilities and equal access to capabilities become clearer if we return to the example of adult learning. In this scenario, Person A and Person B both have equal access to skill development programmes, and it is their free choice to partake or not. Despite both workers having the same access, freedom, and opportunity to complete the programme, Person A as an independent agent might not find the course valuable or interesting and decide to drop out. In this instance, Person A can act independently of Person B, but needs to accept the consequences of their actions. For example, if Person B receives a promotion upon completion of the programme, both workers would have to accept the consequences of their choices and both of their choices should be seen as equally legitimate.

In summary, capabilities are combinations of beings and doings building on a person's achieved functionings. They provide insight into a person's value preference and take into account a person's freedom of choice. While this study presents arguments for a list of capabilities relevant for the German manufacturing industry, there is no value ranking within the capability list. Ranking all capabilities as equally important allows workers to express their own perception of each capability set without prior influence, a point that will be explored in a more comprehensive manner in *Chapter 4: Research Process and Cultural Context*.

3.3.6. Subjective well-being

The Sum of it All – What is Subjective Well-Being?

Before engaging with the question of what is subjective well-being, this study acknowledges that well-being is a complex concept. Further, it acknowledges that its specific interpretation often depends on applied conceptual approaches that reflect on well-being as a process, a system, or other aspects of human live (Alatartseva and Barysheva, 2015). The detailed study of well-being exceeds the scope of this research, but it is nevertheless underpinned by the understanding that well-being encompasses a subjective and an objective dimension. With this in mind, the study argues that subjective well-being focuses on the internal and individual perspective of well-being while objective well-being focuses on the measurable external factors shaped by the definitions of human society (ibid.). Despite the valuable insights an in-depth debate on objective versus subjective dimensions of well-being might reveal, this study follows the tradition of the CA and sets out to explore Sen's wider understanding and focus of subjective well-being.

Within the context of the CA, the rather amorphous concept of subjective well-being is a psychological state that provides insight into how people assess their lives (Sen, 1985b, 1985a; Robeyns, 2005). This reading promotes the idea that subjective well-being reflects the commodities, functionings, and capabilities a person values and which they have the freedom to choose and ability to realise. Simultaneously, it allows space for acknowledging that these values, freedoms, and abilities may change over time, generations or within a person's life cycle. In view of this definition, subjective well-being becomes the overarching goal for

human beings, and is a result of what people are able to do, are able to be and their respective freedoms to be and do so.

Understanding subjective well-being as a psychological state that allows insight into how people assess their lives suggests that subjective well-being can also provide insight into what people find valuable and their understanding of what it means to lead a good life (Sen, 1985a). It follows that subjective well-being reflects a person's quality of life and allows humans to assess their lives according to what they themselves value. This suggests that subjective well-being is a psychological state that can be enhanced, hindered, and expressed by a person's choices. Yet, this prompts the question: how this reading of subjective well-being relates to HD in organisation? The answer to this question is rooted in the underlying assumption that studying workers' subjective well-being in the workplace may provide insight into the worker's well-being outside the workplace. As such, engaging with people's subjective well-being draws from the previously established understanding that work transcends from the professional into the private sphere, thereby lending itself to become a platform for HD.

3.3.7. Agency

Selection, preference, freedom of choice, conversion process – What is Agency?

Following explorations into Sen's core concepts of commodities, functionings, capabilities, and subjective well-being, the question may arise: How are all these concepts connected? The answer to this question finds its roots in Sen's understanding of agency. Despite addressing the complexity of agency on multiple occasions (1982a, 1982c, 2008, 1982b, 1983, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1999a, 1999b, 2004), Sen does not offer a clear vision for many forms of agency such as institutional agency but focuses on agency from the perspective of the individual. He argues that it is the process of acting on and bringing about change, thereby assessing what people find valuable in their lives (Sen, 1985b, 1995, 1996). In contrast, the common economic definition of agency presents agency or agents as people acting on other people's behalf (Clark, 2005). Considering these interpretations, this study points towards agency - within the context of the CA – as an expression of humans using their freedom of choice to select and convert

preferred commodities, functionings, and capabilities to achieve subjective well-being.

Reading agency as the process of people selecting and converting preferred commodities, functionings and capabilities indicates an intricate connection with people's freedom of choice. People are responsible agents whose concern and responsibility is their well-being in life. It connects to the way each individual selects and values their own freedoms (Nebel and Teresa, 2018). By means of embedding agency within social relations, agency becomes a responsibility referring to the relationship with oneself, towards others, and with one acts which drives people's behaviours (*ibid.*). Against this notion, the CA carries forward the idea that humans as individual agents have different value systems and acknowledges that people's freedom of choice allows humans to have different concepts of what they can be and do, and their respective freedoms to do so. Sen himself states that the purpose of the CA is to assess

> *[…] what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important. (Sen, 1985b, p. 203)*

Against this backdrop, Sen establishes a direct relation between a person's freedom of choice and their agency, supporting the understanding that each individual may choose to pursue different goals or values in life. Subject to a person's freedom to choose, preference, selection, and conversion of valuable commodities, functionings, and capabilities, therefore, a person will experience changes in their subjective well-being. This notion of freedom forms an underpinning nexus in the CA and highlights that the freedom of choice is central for people to lead a good life. While the study provides an in-depth analysis of Sen's understanding of choice in section *3.4.3 The factor of choice,* it merely argues at this point that Sen draws from a range of scholars to formulate his idea of freedom of choice. This influence results in a strong connection between agency and freedom of choice. In light of this, the notion of agency is underpinned by people's individuality and subjectivity, which creates an open framework that centres around a person's freedom of choice as an integral part of people's agency. It is the driving force that allows people to use their agency to convert and select relevant commodities, functionings, and capabilities.

3.3.8. Section summary

Exploring the core concepts of the CA at an in-depth level highlights the framework's complexity and abstract terminology. These concepts form the core of a dynamic approach, which seeks to illuminate people's lives and what a person is able to be or do and has the freedom to do so. Taking this into consideration, this section offers an interpretation of commodities as an umbrella term encompassing monetary and non-monetary items that can be converted into functionings. Subsequently, functionings are the results of the commodity conversion process, reflecting on beings and doings a person can undertake and achieve. The following section consequently suggests a reading of capabilities as combinations of beings and doings which form capability sets, highlighting that functionings and capabilities are intricately interwoven but represent different spheres of life. In addition, this section proposes that subjective well-being provides insight into which commodities, functionings, and capabilities a person values, has the freedom to choose and ability to realise; thus, forming the overarching goal for humans to achieve in life. Furthermore, this section aimed to present a reading of agency as the process by which human beings use their freedom of choice to select and convert preferred commodities, functionings, and capabilities to achieve subjective well-being. Connecting the CA with the study of organisations, this study proposes that commodities, functionings, capabilities, subjective well-being, and agency allow insights into the social dimension of organisations. In doing so, it seeks to illuminate worker needs and showcases what workers find valuable, how work may impact worker's subjective well-being, and the wider consequences for organisations.

3.4. Foundational Understanding

3.4.1. Section overview

Continuing the conversation from core concepts of the CA, the following section sets out to expand the debate and to shed light on the CA's foundational understanding. With this objective in mind, it aims to outline the intellectual roots of the CA by reviewing its primary scholarly influences and reflect on its relationship with utilitarianism. Subsequently, the section promotes the centrality of choice and offers a reading of choice as something that shapes human interactions and guides

the selection or conversation of commodities, functionings, and capabilities. Freedom of choice thus stretches beyond instrumental commodity command allowing insight into what a person values and is free to be or do. Lastly, the section addresses critical voices raising concerns about how to operationalise the CA, highlights challenges based on its focus on individualism and normative open-endedness, and provides solutions as to how to overcome them.

3.4.2. Philosophical foundation and comparison

Aristotle, Adam Smith and Karl Marx – Who influenced the CA?

The CA offers an amalgamation of isolated ideas that are grounded in the general area of economics and philosophy. While it takes inspiration from various economists and philosophers such as Rawls (1971), Kant (1785), Hume (1739) and Arrow (1951),[2] the most prominent influences find their origin in the writings of Aristotle (340BC), Adam Smith (1759, 1776), and Karl Marx (1887), a point that the following section seeks to explore in greater depth.

Before exploring the philosophical foundation of the CA at a more in-depth level, attention should be drawn to the influence of Kenneth Arrow and Social Choice Theorists. This study acknowledges the profound influence of Social Choice Theory on Sen's work and vice versa (Sen, 2012b). However, an in-depth discussion of Social Choice Theory remains outside this study's scope. Instead, it points in section *8.4. Potential for Future Research* to the potential of exploring work and HD in the context of organisations through the lens of Social Choice Theory. Such a discussion could explore potential mechanisms in organisations that function as social choice mechanisms such as trade unions and WC.

Despite a more in-depth review of Social Choice Theory being outside this study's scope, it is important to acknowledge the fundamental influences of Arrow and his impossibility theorem on Sen (Arrow, 1951; Sen, 1970; Sen and Maskin, 2014). Arrow's reflections on social orderings to inform modern welfare economics,

[2] A moral evaluation of the prisoner's dilemma as well as considerations for the moral criteria of Kant's works and Rawls' Pareto principle can be found in (Sen, 1974a) and (Sen, 1974b) and a discussion of David Hume's works can be found in (Sen, 2011).

aggregating preferences and group decision making aim to interpret the formation of individual preferences that draw from a set of alternatives and a finite number of basic criteria (Martinetti *et al.*, 2014). How does this relate to the CA? Sen expanded Arrow's framework from preference rankings to include information on how much utility a person derives from their preference. By extending the framework to represent the preferences of individuals as utility functions, Sen's work allows for more precise measuring and interpersonal comparability of utilities. It forms a key parameter for the factor of choice which is further explored in section *4.4.3. The factor of choice*.

Beyond the works of Arrow, a primary but implicit influence of Sen's works and his understanding of functionings and well-being is Aristotle. When comparing the works of Aristotle (340BC) and Sen (Sen *et al.*, 1987; Sen, 1992, 1993, 1999a, 2004, 2012a), there are several noticeable similarities. Akin to Aristotle's writings, Sen centres his views in the realm between politics, philosophy, and economics. Moreover, Sen and Aristotle overlap in their understanding that wealth alone is insufficient to provide a good life and that wealth should be seen as a means to realise freedom and not as an end in itself (Sen, 1999a). Additional agreement between the authors lie in Aristotle's definition of *Eudaemonia* or human flourishing and freedom of choice, giving inspiration to Sen's understanding of functionings, capabilities, and subjective well-being. It carries forward the idea of principal human good or well-being as the overarching goal for humans and that there is a large range of ways for people to achieve it. There is a slight departure here in Sen's reading of Aristotle when referring to well-being. While Aristotle often equates well-being with excellence and happiness, Sen interprets human well-being as a person's ability to function and an all-inclusive range of goods, services, and mental states (Sen, 1985b; Ransome, 2010). Despite numerous similarities, the main departure point between the two scholars lies in Sen's understanding that there is no fixed list of possible functionings and capabilities expressing well-being. In contrast, Aristotle (340BC) argues that there are basic needs applicable to all humans and forming the basis for human flourishing, an argument that resonates within the works of Nussbaum (2011a, 2011b) and her universal capabilities list. With this in mind, the CA carries forward the idea that there is a wide range of possible combinations of functionings and capabilities that people value and which

enable them to flourish but that these cannot be captured by one single, fixed list. Against this backdrop, this study argues that Sen's departure from Aristotle supports the reading of the CA as a deliberately incomplete, open-ended, and underspecified framework; an important feature of the CA that will be discussed in greater detail later on in this chapter. While the purpose of this study is not to provide an Aristotelian account of the CA, it acknowledges the influence of Aristotle's works on the conceptualisation of the CA. However, a more detailed Aristotelian analysis and defence of the CA can be found in (Sen *et al.*, 1987; Sen, 1992, 1993, 1999a, 2004, 2012a), (Nussbaum, 1988, 1992, 1993, 2003) and (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993).

Following the short account of the implicit Aristotelian influence shaping Sen's understanding of functionings and well-being, this section next explores the more explicit links between Sen and the writings of Adam Smith (1759, 1776). It seeks to outline how Sen takes inspiration from the writings of Smith, establishing alignment between classic economic theory and moral philosophy. With such an objective in mind, Sen offers a re-interpretation of Smith's classic economic theory that includes a close examination of the reproduction of surplus, markets, political economy and their consequences for moral philosophy (Smith, 1759, 1776; Sen, 2010). In light of this, Sen promotes the perspective that economics contains ethical components and should be seen as underpinned by moral philosophy. This becomes clearer if we turn towards Sen's and Smith's reading of famines as an example. Sen (1981) argues that people starving during famines is not necessarily related to a lack of food but people's lack of entitlement to food, equating poverty to capability failure. He uses Smith's economic analysis to demonstrate how public policy should focus on creating entitlements for deprived groups, leading to markets responding positively to the newly generated income. In a similar fashion, Smith's works (1759, 1776) acknowledge the dual role of public policy and markets in creating inclusive systems (Sen, 1982c; Gore, 1993; Walsh, 2000; Nussbaum, 2003). Sen's use and re-interpretation of Smith underpins his understanding that political economy and moral philosophy are intricately linked and should not be seen in isolation. In other words, Sen offers a reading of Smith that departs from a neo-liberal interpretation, instead he aims to explore moral philosophy based on

Smith's understanding of markets, positive freedom, *homo economicus*, capitalism, and logical reasoning.

The third major influence in Sen's work is Karl Marx (1887). Like Marx, Sen roots his framework in the notion of freedom or lack thereof by looking at inequality and deprivation, focusing on a person's freedom of choice. Sen defines competitive capitalism as a catalyst for positive changes in the world, overlapping with Marx when focusing on the necessary goods and emancipation mechanisms that constitute a valuable human life (Sen, 1993, 1999a). He follows in Marx's footsteps by shifting and widening the economic debate from efficiency mechanisms to include concerns about equity. For example, Sen moves away from classic economic analysis of income inequality to also look at other variables such as unemployment, health, education, and social exclusion to explore people's freedoms (Sen, 1992). In light of this, Sen builds on Marx's understanding of freedom and how it relates to ownership or property to offer a more nuanced view on the exploitation, unfairness, and inequality of all people regardless of their social standing.

While this section does not aim to provide an extensive analysis of philosophical scholars, it does provide a synopsis of Sen's primary influences that are crucial for understanding the CA as an evaluative framework. In particular, the CA takes inspiration from Aristotle's definition of functioning and perception of well-being, Smith's connection between markets and their implications for morals, and Marx's conception of freedom to formulate his CA and offer an alternative framework to evaluate people's well-being in contemporary economies.

Sen rejecting utilitarianism?

Following the exploration of who influenced Sen's writings, this section sets out to investigate Sen's relationship with utilitarianism. This section serves to illustrate the philosophical and foundational understanding that underpins the CA, shaping its core concepts and influencing its application in organisations.

Sen first developed his CA as a critique of mainstream welfare economics, seeking to rectify what he saw as major short comings of classic utilitarianism. He

established his framework as an alternative perspective on welfare economics and continued a critical dialogue with utilitarian welfare assessment throughout his works (Sen, 1999a, 2000). This leads to the common underlying assumption that Sen rejects utilitarianism which leads to the CA providing a counter point to classic utilitarianism. In light of this, the following section seeks to illuminate the relationship between utilitarianism and the CA and suggests that Sen does not categorically reject utilitarianism but fundamentally criticises its focus on utilities as the primary source for assessing people's lives.

Before engaging with the question of Sen and his rejection of utilitarianism, this section begins with a short overview of classic utilitarianism, providing a base upon which to explore Sen's relation to utilitarianism. Utilitarianism in its most traditional sense defines utility as happiness, satisfaction, or pleasure and seeks the maximisation of the total sum of utility for society (Bentham, 1996). While classic utilitarianism remains prominent in utilitarian debates, more modern forms of utilitarianism expand their definition for utility from happiness to include desire-fulfilment and mental states. This expansion of utility generally finds support in the writings of philosopher economists such as J.S. Mill (1861) and Henry Sidgwick (1874). Nonetheless, at its core, utilitarianism remains an aggregative framework that concentrates on maximising utility to evaluate people's well-being, regardless of distributional differences between individual people (Sen, 1999a). Despite its insensitivity for distributional differences, utilitarianism has prominently shaped traditional welfare economics over the last decades and influenced public policy thinking. This leading influence of utilitarianism in welfare economics and public policy thinking resulted in Sen developing his framework in response to mainstream welfare economics. He developed the CA as an alternative way to assess people's lives that sought to rectify what Sen sees as the three main short-comings of utilitarianism: distributional indifference; insensitivity to rights, freedoms and other non-utility concerns; and unresponsiveness to people's ability to adapt or mental conditioning (Sen, 1999a).

Within the context of utilitarianism, utilitarianism predominantly focuses on mental states such as happiness, satisfaction, or pleasure as primary evaluative space for people's well-being. This focus on mental states such as desire-fulfilment provides

valuable insights into a person's quality of life (Comim, Qizilbash and Alkire, 2008). However, this form of assessment is often based on a numerical representation of choice and consequently does not account for a person's ability to adapt and mentally condition themselves to accept a situation as a new normal. Choice becomes a binary selection process that aims to maximise a person's opportunity (Sen and Williams, 1982). The process often finds grounds in traditional customs or religious believes such as the understanding of the role of women and entitlements defined by religion, sex, gender, or caste as a source of people's mental states and adapting their preferences (Nussbaum, 2001). This criticism becomes clearer if we look at the following example. A person who has lived his or her entire life in poverty or captivity might accept their circumstances as the normal standard of living. In accepting poverty or captivity as normal, the person might still show a high utility valuation despite their deprivation. Therefore, it becomes important to expand the analysis from utility information to account for mental conditioning and a person's ability to adapt. With this in mind, the CA aims to also include non-utility information - such as command, ability and freedom to access desired commodities - to give a more varied and nuanced view of a person's well-being.

When developing his framework, a primary objective for Sen was to provide a deliberately open and alternative way of assessing people's well-being and thinking about interrelated subjects such as quality of life, justice, and development. In light of this, he attaches extensive values to people's rights, freedoms, and other non-utility information which will be explored at a more in-depth level later on in this chapter. This stands in contrast to classic utilitarianism which does not allow for an extensive valuation of rights, freedoms or other non-utility information to assess people's quality of life. Its primary objective remains the maximisation of the sum total utility, irrespective of people's freedoms. In its most extreme case, this can lead to utilitarianism justifying morally disputable practices. This criticism of utilitarianism becomes clearer if we return to the example of people accepting captivity as the new normal and the image of a happy slave. Utilitarianism does not show sensitivity to human rights like freedom, leading to the general understanding that captivity or slavery would be acceptable if it advances the aggregative utility of

society and the person living in captivity or as slave exhibits a positive mental state in form of high utility valuation (Comim, Qizilbash and Alkire, 2008).

While this section sets out to explore Sen's criticisms of utilitarianism and how the CA responds to them, it is important to note here that there are also inherent merits of a utilitarian well-being assessment. For example, utilitarianism takes into account the results of social arrangements and evaluates consequences of actions. Furthermore, utilitarianism emphasises the value of considering people's overall well-being when assessing a person's quality of life and judging social arrangements. This sensitivity to consequences allows for systems to be evaluated in a consistent form and generally characterises people's actions, motives according to society's rules (Sen, 1999a). Despite these advantages, Sen criticises utilitarianism on multiple occasions (Sen and Williams, 1982; Nussbaum, 2003; Sen, 2003a, 2012a), developing his own alternative framework in response to what he sees as utilitarian shortcomings. That said, there are notable similarities between utilitarianism and the CA. For example, a focus on happiness and pleasure is central for utilitarian assessment and Sen acknowledges that the mental state of *being happy* is a valuable functioning that should be considered when evaluating a person's subjective well-being (Sen, 1983, 1993). However, Sen departs from utilitarianism's singular focus on *being happy* and expands the debate to include additional relevant valuable functionings such as *being well nourished*. The similarities become more apparent if we turn away from Sen's assessment of classic utilitarianism and compare his works with more modern utilitarian interpretations such as the works of J.S. Mill (1861). Mill can be considered a hybrid between classic utilitarianism and liberalism despite being seen as a primary advocate of utilitarianism. He developed classic utilitarianism into a more modern form that also aims to capture freedoms (Comim, Qizilbash and Alkire, 2008).

When comparing the works of Mill (1861) and Sen (Sen, 1985b, 1988, 1990, 1991), this study concurs with Quizilbash (2006) that several similarities emerge from the literature. For example, he states that one comparable point of view is Mill's use of the terms 'old' and 'new world' and Sen's use of the terms 'developed' and 'underdeveloped'. In both cases, the authors discuss the challenges of people living under social and institutional constraints and how deprivation of freedom

influences a person's well-being. Furthermore, Mill (1861) discusses the importance of equal opportunities when exploring the social standing of women in his time (Qizilbash, 2006). With this in mind, Mill writes about people's capabilities in terms of capacities and skills while acknowledging that mental states such as happiness or desire can be distorted by adaptation (*ibid.*). This leads to the interpretation that although Mill's use of the word capabilities and his concern for injustice and equality in opportunities does not translate directly to the CA, they nevertheless show significant similarities (Sen, 1980; Doessel and Williams, 2011). Another prominent similarity is Sen's concern about poverty and people leading valuable lives (Qizilbash, 2006). Both promote the idea that people should be able to lead valuable lives and that this should be achieved by carrying out rational discussions to adjust social systems. While they suggest different ways of evaluating people's well-being and different suggestions as to how to adjust societal arrangements, both Sen and Mill define well-being as the overarching goal for humans and show notable similarities in doing so.

After exploring both Sen's criticism of utilitarianism and concurring with Qizilbash (2006) on the similarities between his works and the writings of Mill as a prominent utilitarian, the question emerges: is Sen really rejecting utilitarianism or is his criticism distorted and overextended? While it is not the aim of this study to provide a detailed account of utilitarianism in comparison to the CA, this study does acknowledge that there are some similarities between the CA and Mill's interpretation of utilitarianism. Against this backdrop, this study argues that Sen does not categorically reject utilitarianism but fundamentally criticises its singular focus on utilities as primary evaluative space. It supports the reading that a singular focus on a person's utility might misrepresent a person's well-being and ability to lead a valuable life. With this criticism in mind, utilities become an inadequate evaluative space to assess a person's quality of life, justice, and development. Instead, this study carries forward Sen's understanding to expand the utility view, including functioning and capabilities that allow a more nuanced view of people's subjective well-being and account for distributional differences between individuals.

3.4.3. The factor of choice

An alternative perspective of freedom

Throughout this chapter, this study touches on choice and freedom of choice on multiple occasions, highlighting its importance when exploring the CA. From the conversion and selection of commodities, functionings, and capabilities to a person's individual value preferences, choice becomes a deciding factor.

Within the context of the CA, choice is often determined by underlying human motivations, individual goals, obligations, and a person's social context, recognizing choice as the underlying factor driving human interaction (Sen, 1985a). These choices can take place at a conscious or subconscious level but are omnipresent in human life and can often have intrinsic or instrumental values (Sen, 1985a, 1985b). With these objectives in mind, this study argues that the freedom of choice stretches beyond instrumental commodity command, engaging with what a person values and is free to be or do, and underscoring human agency.

As established in section *3.3.7 Agency*, the notion of freedom of choice forms a nexus of the CA, allowing people to select, prefer, and convert commodities into functioning, capabilities, and subjective well-being. It is strongly linked to the core concept of agency, shaping and informing all underlying processes at a conscious or subconscious level. This interpretation suggests that the notion of freedom of choice is vital for people to lead a good life and corresponds to the works of various scholars throughout the ages, many of whom influenced Sen when he first conceived his approach.

At the centre of this debate are scholars such as Aristotle (340BC) who analyses the role of freedom of choice in political decision-making and Marx (1887) who sees freedom as humans' ability to have rational control free of interference from others. Sen also takes inspiration from Milton Friedman (1980), who equates economic freedom with political freedom, Isaiah Berlin's (1958) distinction between positive and negative freedoms, and Hobbes' (1651) views that differentiate between freedom and power. Hobbes states that freedom based on the absence of external constraints is distinctly different from a person's lack of power which is a person's inability to do something. Equally, Sen's formal education introduced him to the

writings of Locke (1689a), who states that people are free within the constraints of laws of nature and society, and Mill's (1861) works that contrast the notion of freedom to act with freedom as the absence of coercion, both arguing that freedom is a pre-requisite for happiness. Sen's debate on freedom of choice also resonates within the works of Robert Nozick's Entitlement Theory in *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1974), which sees freedom of choice as a requirement to prevent interferences, and Rawls' (1971) *Theory of Justice*, which encompasses the idea that people have an equal right to freedom and that the freedom of choice reflects a person's rationality. Despite the influence of these scholars on Sen's conception of freedom of choice, an in-depth analysis of freedom of choice would exceed this study's scope. That said, it nevertheless highlights the topic's complexity and heterogeneity, providing insight into what people value and what they have the freedom to be or do.

Sen makes an important distinction between positive and negative freedom of choice. Within the context of the CA, positive freedom reflects on what a person can do or achieve, and is contrasted with the idea of negative freedom, which describes the absence of restraints enabling people to be or do (Sen, 1988). Despite his distinction between positive and negative freedoms showing some alignment with the works of Berlin (1958), Sen does not treat positive or negative freedoms as separate doctrines. Instead, he argues that freedom of choice is one complex, multi-faceted and coherent concept, that provides insight into what an individual person values and is free to be or do. This argument resonates within the debate on freedom of choice, in relation to ownership and a person's freedom to choose from different commodities. Sen posits not only that freedom of choice stretches beyond questions of ownership constraints but that it can also have an intrinsic value (Sen, 1988). With this in mind, this study argues that Sen expands the scope of the debate on freedom, establishing links between a person's freedom of choice, their commodity command, ownership and intrinsic values. A commonly accepted perspective on freedom is to focus on commodity command and ownership within a singular frame, which only offers a narrow view of freedom (Sen, 2003b). In contrast, Sen's notion of freedom of choice aims to take a more holistic view, exploring how freedom interlinks with what a person values and is free to be and do, stretching beyond commodity command.

If we hold with Sen's perspective and see freedom of choice as stretching beyond commodity space, thus, engaging with what a person values and is free to be or do, it introduces the notion that exploring freedom of choice may reveal interpersonal difference between people's individual freedoms (Sen, 1988). Since people place individual preference on what they deem to be a valuable life, the freedom of choice in the context of the CA reflects the widespread interpersonal variations of actual freedoms. While this view shifts the focus from traditional commodity spaces to people's actual freedoms, it also creates an open-ended framework that challenges how people measure and compare their actual freedom. It is important to acknowledge that this level of open-endedness is simultaneously one of the greatest advantages and challenges of the capabilities framework; a vital aspect that will be explored in more detail during the following section of this chapter.

Considering the factor of choice in the context of CA, it becomes clear that there are also practical implications to Sen's notion of freedom when seeking to apply the CA in practice. The factor of choice does not only stretch beyond the commodity space and reflects people's ability to choose valuable functionings and capabilities, but also determines if a particular set of valuable functionings and capabilities is available to a person (Sen, 1984, 1985a). It is only when institutions and other decision-making bodies - such as organisations - create favourable conditions that enable people to freely choose from a relevant set of commodities, functionings, and capabilities, that humans can reach the over-arching goal of subjective well-being and live up to their full potential. This interpretation of choice seeks to reflect the strong connection between freedom of choice and the CA's core concept: agency. Freedom of choice enables people to use their agency to then convert and select relevant commodities, functionings, and capabilities. This supports the understanding that freedom of choice reflects what people value and are free to be or do; an idea that stretches beyond commodity command.

3.4.4. Reviewing the challenges of the Capability Approach

When Sen first conceived his approach, he set out to create a framework that allowed scholars to assess people's lives from different perspectives; thus, creating

an approach that is highly complex, abstract, and open ended. In light of this, critical voices have identified three main challenges hindering its successful application: the CA's open-endedness and under-specification, its abstract terminology challenging operationalisation, and that carrying forward isolated ideas from numerous schools of thought may lead to contradicting perspectives, challenging the framework's logical consistency. Taking these critiques into consideration, the following sections seeks to address these concerns and proposes how to overcome them.

Open-endedness and under-specification: A case for capability lists?

A central aspect to the CA is that it is open-ended and under-specified. This facilitates the CA's use in a multitude of different academic disciplines such as economics and development studies. It further allows scholars to link the CA with normative ethical theories and ontological views of human nature and society that otherwise might be neglected in other development or well-being disciplines. Nonetheless, Sen himself does not endorse one specific world-view, but positions his approach as a framework of thought between philosophy and economics, providing an alternative to traditional welfare economics based on income assessment (Robyens, 2003; Gandjour, 2008). As a consequence, Sen does not specify which capabilities should be taken into account when analysing well-being or how they should be weighted, but rather advocates that well-being should be evaluated within the general space of capabilities (Sen, 1985b, 1985a, 2004). Without providing any further specifications, Sen creates an open-ended and under-specified framework with only limited guidelines on how to select relevant capabilities or what constitutes valuable functionings, a point that frequently challenges its application in practice.

In advocating capabilities as the primary evaluative space for well-being assessment, but not specifying capabilities or endorsing capability lists (Sen, 1993), Sen encourages his framework to be paired with other normative theories and does not focus on specific ontological questions such as 'human nature' or 'being good'. Notwithstanding the advantages that such pairings may deliver, critical voices such as Robeyns (2000) point out that this open-endedness and under-specification may lead to each capabilities study using different capabilities

lists; hence, providing diverging normative results and challenging the framework's replicability and critical assessment of capability studies. Simultaneously, each analysis will depend on its pairing with other social theories or choice theories to define relevant capabilities and their context, allowing the CA to be applied with biased or unestablished normative theories. Furthermore, Sen allows each researcher to decide the weighting of their capability list and to define what they understand to be valuable functionings (Sen, 1995, 1999b; Robeyns, 2000). Against this backdrop, the research becomes fully dependent on the researcher's integrity, positional objectivity, and background, challenging any study's reliability, validity, and potentially leading to an overemphasis of one dimension in the capability list.

Following these criticisms, and to overcome the challenge of open-endedness and under-specification, scholars such as Nussbaum responded by developing a capability lists applicable for all human beings. Her list of ten basic capabilities serves as an abstract template that can be further specified within the context of its application and centres on the notions of dignity and human welfare (Nussbaum, 2019). It forms part of the conception of human welfare and suggests that each human being is entitled to the set of capabilities below. The list comprises of material and immaterial entitlements which are ranked equally and each capability containing a social and economic dimension. Taking this into consideration, Nussbaum created a weighted framework that interprets capabilities as fundamental entitlements and reads human nature in the context of social policy analysis (Nussbaum, 2003, 2011b, 2019; Robeyns, 2006). In her list of capabilities, she specifies the following ten hierarchical capabilities as universal moral entitlements that cover basic human needs:

Life *Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living*	Bodily Health *Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter.*
Bodily Integrity *Being able to move freely from place to place; to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault and domestic violence; having*	Senses, Imagination, Thought *Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason—and to do these things in a "truly human" way, a way informed and cultivated by*

opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.	*an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training. Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. Being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech, and freedom of religious exercise. Being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid non-beneficial pain*
Emotions *Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger.2 Not having one's emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety. (Supporting this capability means supporting forms of human association that can be shown to be crucial in their development.)*	Practical Reason *Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life. (This entails protection for the liberty of conscience and religious observance.)*
Affiliation *A. Being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another. (Protecting this capability means protecting institutions that constitute and nourish such forms of affiliation, and also protecting the freedom of assembly and political speech.) B. Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. This entails provisions of non-discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion, national origin.*	Other Species *Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.*

Play *Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities*	Control over one's environment *A. Political. Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association. B. Material. Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods), and having property rights on an equal basis with others; having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; having the freedom from unwarranted search and seizure. In work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.*

Table 3.1: Nussbaum's universal list of capabilities (Nussbaum, 2019)

Overall, the open-endedness and under-specification of the CA is deliberate and represents simultaneously an advantage and a prominent shortcoming of the capability framework. The CA does not aim to provide a blueprint for social analysis but rather seeks to be a general framework of thought applicable in any economic, political or social context. As a consequence, the approach relies on the researcher's integrity and requires careful pairing with relevant theories to arrive at a list of capabilities relevant to the study's context. With this in mind, the question may arise what does this mean for its application in organisations and this study? To avoid the overemphasis of a particular dimension in organisations or relating the CA to unsuitable normative theories such as desire fulfilment or income assessment, this study seeks to explore the needs of shop floor workers within the context of established organisational and human development theories as established in *Chapter 2: Human Development and the Concept of Work*. Furthermore, the study is guided by clear ontological and epistemological views supporting the methodological choices outlined in *Chapter 4: Research Process and Cultural Context.* On this basis, it aims to ensure a balanced reflection of worker needs and relevant capabilities within the workplace, contributing to the conversation around HD in organisations. Taking everything into consideration, this study argues that the challenge of open-endedness and under-specification needs to be acknowledged but does not limit the study's validity, reliability, or replicability,

but rather contributes to the debate on organisations and how to assess their social dimension.

The CA in action – The challenge of operationalisation

From functionings as beings and doings, capabilities as combinations of beings and doings to achieved functionings and the freedom of choice, Sen defines his framework in abstract and complex terms. This abstract formulation of core concepts and the framework's deliberate open-endedness and under-specification prompt questions about the framework's operationalisation capacity. Nonetheless, there is a growing body of literature applying interdisciplinary approaches grounded in economic or sociological research practices to overcome these challenges and applying the CA on a micro-and macro-economic level. Examples of such studies include exploration in the fields of development studies (Alkire, 2002a), human rights (Vizard and Burchardt, 2007), political philosophy (Ransome, 2010), education (Raynor, 2007), public health (Adams, 2004), and gender studies (Nussbaum, 2001; Robyens, 2003; Ardeni and Adrachio, 2008). A comprehensive review of all these studies exceeds the scope of this research, but the following section aims to introduce an illustrative selection of studies that overcome these challenges and serve as models for future studies seeking to operationalise the CA.

First, Sabina Alkire (2002b) operationalises the CA at an organisational level for an Oxfam study of the Women's Organisation in Pakistan. She uses the CA to conduct an economic analysis of a rose plantation to show that the value of meaningful work stretches beyond income generation and facilitates capability expansion. Her list of capabilities allows participants to develop a ranking of the following capabilities that differentiate between material and immaterial capabilities.

1. Religion *Being able to practice religion (immaterial)*	2. Health *Being physically healthy (immaterial)*
3. Unity *Being able to participate in a community and to be respected (immaterial)*	4. Savings *Being able to save money and to be in a comfortable economic position (material)*
5. Helping others *Being able to aid others (immaterial)*	6. Girl's education *Being able to receive education (material)*

Table 3.2: Alkire's capabilities list (Alkire, 2002)

Her study seeks to confirm if intangible variables such as states of mind, friendships, and mental health are essential for well-being and personal development assessments (Alkire, 2002). Her project aims to facilitate women's empowerment in Pakistan by reducing poverty. In this context, her work shows significant links between meaningful work and improving meaning in the women's lives, improving their knowledge, autonomy and economic position. Alkire measures her results through face-to-face interviews and observations to establish whether increasing income is sufficient to improve well-being and quality of life or whether additional factors of work contribute to improving the women's subjective well-being. She concludes that the CA can be operationalised to analyse activities that aim to reduce poverty in pre-defined communities.

Second, Ingrid Robeyns (2003) operationalises the CA to assess gender equality in Western cultures. Her study is a macro-economic analysis that evaluates the following capabilities:

Life and Physical Health *Being able to enjoy a normal length life and to be healthy*	Mental Well-Being *Being able to be mentally healthy*
Bodily Integrity and Safety *Being able to be protected from violence*	Social Relations *Being able to be part of social networks*
Political empowerment *Being able to participate in political decisions*	Education and Knowledge *Being able to receive an education*
Domestic Work and Non-market Care *Being able to have a family*	Shelter and Environment *Being able to be sheltered and to be safe*
Mobility *Being able to be mobile*	Leisure Activities *Being able to engage in leasure activities*
Time-autonomy *Being able to allocate time freely*	Respect *Being respected and treated with dignity*
Religion *Being able to choose a religion or none at all*	Paid Work and Other Projects *Being able to work and to receive payment*

Table 3.3: Robeyn's study of gender inequality (Robyens, 2003)

Robeyns operationalises the CA by proposing a set of relevant functionings from which people compile their own capability sets. She proposes to follow five criteria

for the selection of capability sets including explicit formulation, methodological justification, sensitivity to context, different levels of generality, and exhaustion and non-reduction. Within her study, Robeyns provides a ranking for capabilities according to their potential for realisation and offers an analysis of achieved functionings that impact a person's subjective well-being. She argues that the CA does not require one definite list of capabilities but should seek to formulate a relevant list of capabilities, grounded in each study's context.

A third example is the work of Polly Vizard and Tanya Burchard (2007). Vizard and Burchardt developed a methodological framework for the equalities review in the UK, which served as the precursor to the Equality and Human Rights Commission. They take inspiration from the works of Alkire (2002a) and bind their capabilities list to the UN Declaration of Human Rights (General-Assembly, 1948) as a normative base. In light of this, the nature and scope of their capabilities list draws from an:

> *[…] established process of international consensus building around central and basic freedoms that are of value in human life and that are at least in part deliberative and democratic* (Vizard and Burchardt, 2007, p. 11).

They then subject their capabilities to a deliberative consultation with affected parties and derive the following list of capabilities:

Capabilty to be alive *Example: avoid premature mortality through disease, neglect, injury or suicide; be protected from arbitrary denial of life*	Capability to live in physical security *Example: be free from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; be protected from physical or sexual abuse*
Capability to be healthy *Example: attain the highest possible standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health; access to timely and impartial information about health and healthcare options*	Capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society *Example: attain the highest possible standard of knowledge, understanding and reasoning; be creative be fulfilled intellectually*

Capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security *Example: enjoy an adequate and secure standard of living including nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, social security, social services and utilities*	Capability to engage in productive and valued activities *Example: choose a balance between paid work, care and leisure on an equal basis with others; work in just and favourable conditions, including health and safety, fair treatment during pregnancy and maternity, and fair remuneration*
Capability to enjoy individual, family and social life *Example: have a private life, including protection of personal data; access emotional support from intimate relationships, friendships and a family*	Capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence *Example: participate in decision-making; participate in the formulation of government policy, locally and nationally*
Capability of being and expressing yourself, and having self-respect *Example: have freedom of conscience, belief and religion; have freedom of cultural identity have freedom of expression*	Capability of knowing you will be protected and treated fairly by the law *Example: be free from arbitrary arrest and detention; have fair conditions of detention*

Table 3.4: 10 Domains of central and valuable capabilities (Vizard and Burchardt, 2007)

Following the recommendations of Vizard and Burchardt (2007), the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission adopted the CA as its measurement framework and further recommended that all public bodies should use the CA to agree priorities, set targets, and evaluate progress towards equality (Vizard and Burchardt, 2007). It is one of the most established and pioneering works of operationalising the CA, and frequently serves as a starting point for other studies seeking to apply the CA such as Jane Bryson (2010a). In consideration of this list's wide acceptance, validity, and relevance, this study carries forward Vizard and Burchardt's ten domains as a normative base to build a relevant capabilities list upon, combining it with the works of Bryson (2010a) which will be explored in greater detail during the following chapter.

Further examples of how to operationalise the CA can be found in the works of Wiebke Kuklys (2005), who explores empirical applications to explore poverty and

inequality in affluent societies; Sophie Mitra (2006), who focuses on disability studies; and Flavio Comim (2001), who applies the CA in the field of poverty and justice. For each study, the authors produce basic capability lists using qualitative or quantitative methods, pairing their studies with normative social and choice theories. This supports the interpretation that each capability study needs to be context dependent to be operationalised. Moreover, it signifies that the CA's application is diverse and can range from policy-oriented, theoretical studies to the dimensions of social, political, economic, or legal studies of well-being. Against this backdrop, this study argues that the CA can be operationalised but requires careful pairing with normative social and choice theories. In the context of this study, the study proposes to carry forward the works of Bryson (2010a) who in turn bases her work on Vizard and Burchardt (2007). Thus, it suggests overcoming the challenges of the HDA and CA in evaluating its findings by means of applying the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework to assess what workers value, and what they are free to be and do within the workplace.

The individualism of an egalitarian approach

Following on from the question of operationalisation, the subsequent section addresses a third point of criticism: the CA's focus on individual freedom despite being an egalitarian approach. Sen carries forward diverging notions from different schools of thought, thereby creating a framework that is normatively bound together by its focus on the individual's freedom (Gasper and van Staveren, 2003; Marin and Davis, 2008). From the individual's freedom of choice, to achieved freedoms and the individual's freedom to lead a life the value, Sen focuses on the individual and their freedom as the dominant moral value to evaluate subjective well-being. Notwithstanding the valuable insights this focus may reveal, centring the debate on the individual's subjective freedom is contentious. Scholars such as Hartley Dean (2009) argue that the CA focus on individuals informs a liberal-individualistic concept that obscures the constitutive nature of human interdependency. This focus may be neglecting how individuals as human beings are naturally embedded within their social and political contexts and are subject to their contexts' power and structural inequalities (Egdell and Mcquaid, 2016). However, Sen (Sen, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1999a, 2008) addresses this critique on multiple occasions and defends his focus on individual freedom. He states that his

works aim to operationalise freedom, and to provide a flexible approach that is guided by freedom and paired with ethical or economical dimensions of well-being assessment but does not aim to assess the individual's freedom itself.

Placing the individual at the centre of the debate may generate tension between analysing individual and group capabilities. Individual capabilities inform each person's individual freedom but within the wider understanding of the CA, group capabilities reflect public goods that cannot be delivered by individuals pursuing their rational self-interest (Robeyns, 2005; Carpenter, 2009). In light of this, the CA may neglect to capture social or personal relations when assessing people's lives, instead delivering an assessment of outcomes instead of capabilities (Robeyns, 2000; Hollywood *et al.*, 2012). Acknowledging these critical voices, this study concurs with Robeyns (2000) and argues that the CA's focus on the individual does not seek to assess the individual as a singular unit but rather as a human being that is socially embedded and connected to others. This understanding allows for the interpretation that the framework is equally sensitive to the attributes of individuals and societies; thus, positioning the CA as ethically individualistic but not ontologically individualistic (Iversen, 2003; Robeyns, 2003; Hollywood *et al.*, 2012).

While Sen does not raise any ontological questions concerning how we define the individual's freedom, focusing instead on practical reasoning and rational thinking, he does adopt the individual and their respective subjective freedom as the centre of the CA. In light of this, Sen focuses on a very broad informational space that is, as noted on several occasions above, open-ended and under-specified. He defines all freedoms as equally important as long as they have inherent value to the individual (Sen, 1977, 1988; Nussbaum, 2003). In the first instance, this definition of individual freedoms and an egalitarian perspective on capabilities appears to be a paradox (Comim, Qizilbash and Alkire, 2008). However, this study supports the understanding that Sen's focal points do not contradict each other if we see freedom as a general good that economically and ethically guides the CA but does not aim to prescribe what freedom should be. In light of this, the CA's focus on the individual's freedom in an egalitarian framework becomes an advantage rather than a paradox. If we see freedom as a common good that economically and ethically guides people towards subjective well-being, the CA becomes an open

and incomplete approach providing an alternative perspective on people's well-being, thereby serving as an expanded economic analysis that aims to re-focus the conversation on humans as ends and not as means to an end.

3.4.5. Section summary

Engaging with the foundational basis of the CA highlights that the CA is a multi-faceted approach with links to a range of academic disciplines like philosophy and economics, thereby grounding itself in the works of Aristotle, Kant, and Smith. Furthermore, the literature highlights the centrality of choice, outlining how freedom of choice is intricately interwoven with the conception of agency and guiding people's understanding of leading a good life. Nonetheless, several critical voices emphasise that the challenges of the CA are multiple. These challenges range from exploring notions of freedom of choice or attempting to operationalise an open-ended and under-specified framework of thought to focusing on freedom and capabilities as the predominant evaluative space without providing guidelines on how to select relevant functionings. Taking these critical voices into consideration, this section acknowledges these challenges but argues that the CA's strengths outweigh its shortcomings. It proposes that through carefully defining core concepts, rational reasoning of logical arguments, reviewing established bodies of work, and pairing the CA with relevant normative theories grounded in organisational studies, the capabilities perspective of the workplace may deliver a robust evidence base that contributes to the debate surrounding HD in organisations.

3.5. Chapter Conclusion

The chapter set out to explore the CA at a deeper level, illuminating the approach's core concepts and Sen's foundational understanding of the CA, and ultimately shaping the conceptual base of the HDA. The CA itself was first developed as an alternative for mainstream welfare economics, and in direct opposition to traditional utilitarian public policy thinking of the 20th century. With this objective in mind, it becomes crucial to understand that Sen's interpretation of subjective well-being was inspired by various scholars, Sen carries forward isolated ideas to illuminate people's well-being and offers a tool to assess people's lives from different perspectives. At the core of the CA lies the desire to provide an alternative

analytical tool to assess people's lives, stretching beyond a pure income analysis to provide insight into what people are freely able to be or do. In other words, it focuses on people's freedom and ability to convert and select commodities, functionings, and capabilities into subjective well-being. This supports the interpretation that development is - in its essence - an expansion of people's capabilities, an understanding that is echoed in the definition of HD as expanding people's choices.

Despite Sen's desire to build an analytical tool, this chapter establishes that the CA is not a fully developed normative theory but rather a deliberately open-ended and under-specified framework that requires pairing with normative theories prior to its application. With this objective in mind, the chapter acknowledges that the framework's open-endedness can challenge its operationalisation but points towards a growing body of literature that underwrites how the CA's challenges can be overcome. Within the context of this research, the chapter proposes overcoming these challenges by binding the CA to the normative context of work and HD. In light of this, the chapter offers a reading of the CA as an analytical framework that sustains a systematic analysis of organisations, while taking into account what people value at work beyond income generation.

In conclusion, the CA is best understood as an analytical framework that moves between the areas of philosophy and economics, offering insight into a person's freedom of choice. This signifies that the CA - in its most fundamental form - is complex and uses broad and abstract terminology, highlighting the need to contextualise the approach prior to its application. While its open-endedness, under-specification, and abstract formulation often count as the CA's primary criticism, it also enables the approach to be applied in an array of contexts. This reading suggests that the CA has the potential to expand the discussion on organisations from traditional economic assessments to include organisations' social dimension.

3.6. Summary Literature Review Chapters

Chapters 2 and *3* set out to explore definitions of HD, offer readings of work as a concept, and discuss if work can act as a platform for HD. Subsequently, the

discussion transitioned to an in-depth introduction of the CA, highlighting its origins, core concepts, and challenges; thus, proposing the CA as the conceptual foundation of HD. With these objectives in mind, the two literature review chapters form the theoretical base of this study and outline its theoretical context. Based on the literature review, this study now moves forward in its analysis, seeking to contribute to the debate on HD in organisations. To achieve this aim, it investigates whether the capabilities perspective of the workplace may provide added value when analysing organisations. With this in mind, *Chapter 2* sought to contribute to the definition of HD in organisations and to support understandings of current approaches to HD in organisations (Research Question 2). *Chapter 3* aimed to add value to the question whether the CA offers an alternative lens through which we can analyse organisations (Research Question 3) and sets the backdrop to investigations into Human Capability Development in organisations (Research Question 1).

This study's literature review emphasises that the CA and the HDA require careful contextualisation and methodological pairing prior to their application. In light of this, the following chapter aims to address the study's underlying methodological considerations and the cultural contextualisation guiding its application in the German manufacturing industry.

4. Chapter 4: Methodology - Research Process and Cultural Context

4.1. Chapter Overview

The previous literature review chapters established the study's theoretical perspectives and foundational understanding that will inform the research process and guide its methodological consistency. With these concepts in mind, the following chapter introduces the study's research process and cultural context; hence, outlining its methodological considerations. Beginning the conversation, this chapter describes the study's underpinning research philosophy, exploring the epistemology of interpretivism and ontology of critical realism. It then introduces the study's research strategy as multiple instrumental case study design, before highlighting the research approach as inductive qualitative research. The chapter continues with an in-depth overview of its research framework, introducing the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework. Following this, the third section seeks to investigate the study's methodological fit before reflecting on its research ethics. The chapter concludes with an outline of the study's cultural context and the impact of unionism in the German manufacturing industry which contextualises the research outcome.

4.2. Research Process

4.2.1. Research philosophy

Section Summary

Beginning with the research philosophy, the following section aims to describe the study's understanding of how data should be gathered, used, and analysed. It guides the study's methodological choices and underpins the research process. With this objective in mind, the following sections introduce the ontology of critical realism and epistemology of interpretivism which inform the research's perspective on the study of reality and knowledge.

Ontology and the study of reality – A case for critical realism

The first section seeks to outline the study of reality, highlighting the study's ontological considerations and presenting arguments for the ontology of critical realism.

Broadly speaking, ontology is the study of being, which aims to define what constitutes reality and how things work (Crotty, 1998). Simply put, ontology addresses what is considered real and highlights the researcher's relationship with the reality of their study. But why are these considerations important and why should researchers reflect on their ontological standpoints? The answer to these questions is grounded in the underlying assumption that ontological considerations guide choices for research strategies and methods, informing how data will be collected, analysed, and interpreted (Archer, 1998). In light of this, there are generally two opposing positions within ontology that can be seen as umbrella positions, each guiding the research process: realism and relativism. The term relativism – in its broadest sense - argues that all facts and objects are subjective. It stands in direct opposition to the concept of realism, arguing that facts are not subjective but exist independent of the human mind (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). Continuing the argument from a realist point of view, Roy Bhaskar (1975) shaped the ontology of critical realism by arguing that knowledge in the social sciences does not only exist independent of the human mind but stands in direct relation to it and can be tested. This process is best illustrated in the following:

> *At the risk of over-simplification critical realism can be characterised as an approach which maintains the existence of an objective reality (hence exhibits a realist ontology) while being sceptical toward our ability to understand it (hence a critical epistemology)*
> (Beadle and Moore, 2006, p. 325)

This reading suggests that critical realism is a philosophical stance in the social sciences concerned with providing a philosophically informed account of reality that guides the research process.

If ontology informs how the researcher sees reality and ontological considerations guide the research process, what exactly does that means for the study? The rather

broad definition of critical realism does not provide guidelines or advocates for research within one specific unitary framework, set of beliefs, methodology, or dogma, but instead seeks to understand how knowledge exists, how it operates independently of our knowledge of it, and how it informs reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Williams, 2000; Yvonna, Lynham and Egon, 2018). With this objective in mind, critical realism engages with the nature of social worlds by investigating the relationship between social entities and reality, thereby illustrating how and if social entities influence human interaction (Archer, 1998). While an in-depth discussion of ontological considerations across academic disciplines exceeds the scope of this study, the above intends to give an illustrate review of ontology. It supports the interpretation that - within social sciences - reality exists independently of human knowledge of it. However, reality can be interpreted by means of exploring the social worlds surrounding people. Against this background, this study supports the reading that organisations form part of people's social worlds; thus, their study provides insight into the nature of structures, processes, and how people shape organisations, and what affects human action or interaction in the workplace. In light of this, the ontology of critical realism is best seen as a representation of reality that informs this study's subsequent research strategy and methods, ensuring internal consistency, methodological fit, and overall validity of its results.

Epistemology and the study of knowledge – A case for interpretivism

Epistemological considerations are reflections on how we define knowledge and how we can justify our beliefs. It engages with the question: what constitutes knowledge in the social world and how we can obtain it. With this objective in mind, the following section endeavours to present arguments that outline how this study follows the epistemology of interpretivism.

Broadly speaking, epistemology focuses on the question of what it means to know. It is concerned with the question of how we create, acquire, and communicate knowledge (Cohen, 2007). Within the study of knowledge, there are four main research philosophies applied in business research: pragmatism, positivism, realism, and interpretivism. Pragmatism argues that both observable phenomena and their subjective meaning should inform what we know. It focuses on applied

research aiming to generate practical insights into observable phenomena (Morgan, 2014). Positivism focuses on observable phenomena only and argues that in its simplest elements, phenomena can inform causality and knowledge based on data and facts (Kapitzke, 2003). Realism centres on explaining observable phenomena within specific contexts and argues that it is possible to obtain knowledge independent of the human mind (Madill, Jordan and Shirley, 2000). Interpretivism argues that knowledge can be derived from interpreting subjective meaning and social phenomena, obtaining knowledge by exploring underlying motivations of human interactions (Williams, 2008). While a detailed analysis and comparison of each epistemological position would exceed the scope of this study, this study argues for the epistemology of interpretivism.

Interpretivism is grounded in the works of Max Weber's *Verstehen* approach, which defines it as the

> *[…] science which attempts the interpretive understanding of its causes and effects (Weber, 1947, p. 88).*

Based on this interpretation, this study supports the viewpoint that the world does not exist independent of knowledge but is instead constructed by it. In light of this, interpretivism reflects on people's interactions with their social world and informs how our social contexts, cultures, and ideologies shape our understanding of the world (Crotty, 1998). This reading suggests that knowledge is a constructed derivative of human interactions and that the same occurrence can have different meaning to different people, depending on their social context. Against this backdrop, this study proposes to explore social structures and social forces within the context of organisations, investigating how people have shaped organisations while being shaped by them. Further, it seeks to highlight the individual's perspective of the workplace that may otherwise be buried within the epistemology of pragmatism, positivism, or realism.

Focusing on the individual and their interactions illustrates how organisations can be derivatives of their employees' interactions, shaping organisational contexts, cultures, and ideologies. Despite this viewpoint supporting the epistemology of interpretivism and revealing valuable insight into the individual's role for shaping

organisations, it also highlights several challenges for its application. First, interpretivism does not allow for a universal base for knowledge and relies on the researcher's trustworthiness and objectivity when analysing or collecting data, potentially challenging a study's validity. Simultaneously, interpretivist studies often produce highly contextualised, qualitative data, following subjective criteria derived from pre-defined concepts imposed on participants (Mantere and Ketokivi, 2013). Against this backdrop, this study argues that interpretivism does not seek to impose a pre-defined concept on the individual but rather seeks to yield understanding of the individual, explaining people's actions or choices. With this objective in mind, this study argues that shortcomings of interpretivism can be overcome in pairing the philosophy with compatible research strategies and approaches such as qualitative research. In light of this, this study proposes to engage with rich and descriptive qualitative data, illuminating how employees interact with their workplace and what shapes their individual perspective; thus, informing the social dimension of organisations and supporting the epistemology of interpretivism.

Beside concerns about validity and subjectivity, interpretivist studies also face several ethical concerns. This study acknowledges that in studying the individual's perspective, the participant's autonomy and privacy during interviews could be compromised and that participants only have limited control over what will happen with their answers. This exposes them to the researcher's subjective interpretations and sociological understanding, a point that is acknowledged and will be addressed in greater depth during the section *4.4. Research Ethics*.

4.2.2. Research strategy

Section Summary

Building on the conversation about research philosophy, the following sections reflect on the study's research strategies. They introduce the research strategy of case studies and present justification for designing the study as an instrumental and multiple case study with the objective of contributing to theory building.

Case Study – Instrumental

As an umbrella term, case studies are research strategies in social sciences that investigate underlying complex social issues illustrated by individuals, groups, or

events in real-life contexts (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Under this umbrella term, there are six widely recognised types of case studies, which can take the form of single or multiple case studies. These types comprise of explanatory, exploratory, descriptive, intrinsic, instrumental, and collective case study designs (Yin, 2009). While this study acknowledges the wide variety of possible case study designs, an in-depth discussion of potential merits or shortcomings of each of these types lies outside the study's objectives. Nonetheless, the following seeks to present arguments outlining why the design of instrumental case study is the most appropriate research strategy in the context of this research.

The American scholar Robert Stake (1995) first coined the term of 'instrumental case study', arguing that it not only endeavours to investigate complex social issues illustrated by individuals, groups, or events in real-life contexts, but more specifically aims to examine patterns of behaviour that could aid the generation of new theories or aid in the refinement of existing theories. This study argues that such instrumental case studies allow us to better understand the complex social dimensions of organisations. It draws from the experiences of shop floor workers and managers, which may subsequently extend the theory underpinning HD and work in organisations. It allows us to explore organisations from the perspective of the individual, generating practical insights by ascertaining how workers as individuals and groups of individuals perceive and shape real-life workplaces.

Case study research bears several advantages. For example, instrumental case studies have the valuable ability to capture information that might be obscured by other methods, offering a detailed account of the individual's perspective of the workplace (Stake, 1995). Moreover, instrumental case studies allow data to be collected and analysed within the context of its use, enabling interpretations about real-life contexts such as organisations. In producing in-depth accounts of real-life contexts, instrumental case studies also operate at the micro level; thereby contributing to practical accounts of research that may inform our understanding of the social dimension of organisations. With this notion in mind, this study seeks to generate a rich description of the organisation that reflects on both the individual and managerial perspectives of the workplace.

Despite highlighting several advantages of instrumental case studies, this study acknowledges potential disadvantages. Notwithstanding the valuable information in-depth instrumental case studies may reveal, they often only look at a limited number of cases, which potentially obscures the generalisation of results outside the study's parameters; thus, potentially challenging the strategy's methodological rigour (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Yin, 2009). Further critique surrounds the role of the researcher and their influence over data collection and analysis (Yin, 2009). Akin to quantitative research, the researcher takes a central stage in instrumental case studies. They influence the subjective interpretation of data sets as well as influence the process for data collection. Acknowledging these shortcomings, this study argues that the challenges of the researcher as central figure can be overcome. It suggests that by carefully pairing research strategies with consistent reflections on underpinning research philosophies, and subsequent reflections on research methods guiding the data collection and analysis, this study ensures a robust application of the instrumental case study design.

Establishing advantages and disadvantages of instrumental case study research, questions may arise how this strategy is compatible with the CA and whether there is any precedent of operationalising the approach through case study research? The answer to these questions finds foothold in a growing body of case study research that uses the CA to provide context-dependent valuational assessments. Examples of such research include the assessment of social inclusion in sports organisations (Suzuki, 2017), participatory action research assessing the case of Quart de Poblet in Spain (Boni *et al.*, 2020) and a case study of the wind energy sector in Mexico (Velasco-Herrejon and Bauwens, 2020). Drawing from these examples, this thesis argues that the use of case study research is compatible with the CA. It serves this study's purpose of assessing HD in organisations and is reflected in the nature of organisations as closed systems that require context specific evaluations. In addition, case study research acknowledges the available data around HD in organisations.

Case Study – Multiple

Following explorations into the nature of case studies and the potential advantages or disadvantages of using instrumental case study designs, questions may arise

about the research strategy's form. Commonly, case studies take the form of single or multiple case study designs. Single case studies provide knowledge into one particular or exemplary case, diverging from multiple case studies by focusing in depth on one subject (Stake, 1995). In contrast, multiple case studies seek to analyse complex social issues within and across several cases, allowing for a higher level of generalisability compared with single case study designs (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Yin, 2009). Throughout chapters, this study references two different participating companies operating within the German manufacturing industry and proposes to adopt the research strategy of multiple case study design.

Having discussed the advantages and disadvantages of applying multiple case study research, we might now consider the nature of case study research and its ability to contribute to the debate on HD in organisations. The answers to these questions are grounded in the notion of using cases as the foundation to inductive theory building (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Put simply, the study explores reoccurring patterns within one specific industry. This approach generates rich data that draws from and informs real-life contexts of organisations that underpin the theoretical understanding of HD in organisations. In light of this, using the iterative research strategy of multiple case study design supports the study's logical coherence and replication logic (Eisenhardt, 1989). It draws from comparing and contrasting several organisations that operate in the same industry. Against this background, this study adopts the form of multiple case study design by using two cases. Using two cases offers more comprehensive insight into HD in organisations. It enables comparisons of similarities and differences of two companies operating in the same industry, both under the same legal requirements and in the same cultural context. Interpreting the study's research strategy in such manner allows for a robust and reliable application of the multiple case study design, thereby generating practical insights into organisations that can contribute to the debate on HD in organisations.

Exploring the justification for instrumental and multiple case study design may beg the following questions: what was the rationale behind focusing on the German manufacturing industry and on shift workers; why choose to look at two companies instead of three or even more? The answer to these questions is rooted in the

nature of the two participating companies and the market that they operate in. For the purpose of anonymity, the study will refer to the participating companies as Company 1 and Company 2 and provides further details about both companies in section *4.2.5. Research methods* and *Appendix A.1.*. Having said this, both companies operate in the bearings market, and belong to the mining, steel and iron industry. This market is of particular interest given that it is a highly specialised, niche but global market dominated by only four main competitors. The industry is characterised by a high degree of industrial standardisation and worker representation that lends itself to case study research. The bearings industry requires shop floor workers to have specialised product knowledge which causes a large number of workers to transfer from one competitor to another but rarely incentivises workers to seek employment in a different industry context; a point that *Chapter 6: Results of Phase 2 Interviews* explores in a more detailed manner. In addition, the bearings industry shows a high level of homogeneity which creates similarities between company structures, work standards and work requirements which form a conducive environment for the study of HD in organisations. This study argues that generating practical insights from the bearings industry and combining these with the conceptual understanding of HD allows for a high degree of consistency and internal logic that guides this case study research. Applying the case study design in such a manner finds support in the works of Siggelkow (2007) who argues that the internal logic of the conceptual arguments determines if case study findings can contribute to theory building. Against this backdrop, this study argues that the chosen companies are representative companies of their industry and that data generated from these companies offers a credible evidence base from which to form conclusions about HD in organisations.

4.2.3. Research approach

Section Summary

Drawing from previous discussions about research philosophy and strategy, the following section introduces the research approach. It presents arguments for an inductive approach to qualitative research, reflecting on the study's objectives.

Qualitative Research – Inductive Approach

Commonly there are two collective terms which describe approaches to research: quantitative and qualitative. These approaches draw from contrasting epistemological and ontological reflections. Quantitative research strives to generate numerical data, thereby leading to statistically significant interpretations of research areas or hypotheses. In contrast, qualitative data generates unstructured and non-numeric data from comparatively smaller sample sizes and examines underlying ideas or motivations (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Based on its goal to contribute to the debate on HD in organisations, this study argues for a qualitative research approach, resulting in the generation of non-numerical data from semi-structured face-to face interviews.

Within the approach of qualitative research, there are further forms: deductive, inductive, abductive, and reductive. Commonly, deductive approaches aim to test pre-defined theories or hypotheses. They stand in direct contrast to inductive approaches, which seek to generate new theory or refine existing theory emerging from the data, often focusing on the analysis of the spoken word based on interview scripts (Pettigrew, 1997; Brinkmann, Jacobson and Kristiansen, 2015). Meanwhile, abduction seeks to interpret individual phenomena within pre-determined conceptual frameworks or sets of ideas with the aim of re-contextualising them (Modell, 2009). Retroduction is commonly advocated within the context of critical realism and seeks to reconstruct the basic conditions for phenomena to derive at concrete descriptions and analysis for these experiences (Eastwood, Jalaludin and Kemp, 2014). Acknowledging the advocacy of retroduction, this thesis argues that the CA is not particularly focused within this approach. Instead, it argues for the use of an inductive approach to qualitative research to establish similarities in several observations of HD in organisations and to draw conclusions from these observations. Despite this being a less common approach within the context of critical realism, critical realists have been both critical and accepting of inductive and deductive forms of inference (Downward, Finch and Ramsay, 2002; Downward and Mearman, 2007). With this in mind, this thesis advocates that the inductive approach will allow insight into varied interview data to establish links about underlying structures and experiences or processes as they emerge from the raw data.

With these differences in mind and following the tradition of epistemological interpretivism, ontological critical realism, and the instrumental case study design, this study proposes the application of an inductive approach to qualitative research. It allows the analysis of the individual's perspective of the workplace based on semi-structured face-to-face interviews. The analysis of qualitative data generated from interview scripts may reveal valuable information about complex underlying social interactions in organisations; thus, identifying working conditions that may drive or hinder HD in organisations.

Although qualitative research can provide valuable insight into organisations, there are several concerns about the approach's validity, reliability, generalisability, and reflexivity, potentially challenging the overall robustness of inductive qualitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Particularly pressing is the notion of validity, which questions if the study applies suitable processes, addresses the research questions and delivers answers that are relevant to the research premise (ibid). That said, the challenge of validity can arguably be overcome by underlining this study's logical consistency, demonstrating that its research philosophy, strategy, approach, and methods are compatible with and appropriate for addressing the research questions.

The next concern refers to the study's reliability. In other words, can the study be replicated? In contrast to quantitative studies, which rely on statistical evaluations, qualitative studies commonly rely on the researcher's skill to formulate research questions, conduct the study, select participants, and define the context of the study. This raises concerns as to whether qualitative studies can be truly replicated or their results generalised (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Bhavnani, Chua and Collins, 2015) . To overcome this challenge, this study focuses on the cogency of the theoretical reasoning and consistency of the research process, thereby guiding the study's design, analysis, and interpretations.

Further concerns focus on the study's generalisability. A common critique is that qualitative studies explore a limited number of cases, providing deep level but ultimately narrow insight into specific examples. This makes it possible to challenge

the generalisability of its results on a macro level (Brinkmann, Jacobson and Kristiansen, 2015). This concern is interlinked with those of validity and reliability, and suggests that - within the context of qualitative research - there is a higher potential for idiosyncrasies to influence the research process (ibid). In response, this study argues that these concerns can be addressed by refining the purpose of the study and outlining what the study aims to accomplish. Indeed, this study does not aim to provide one definite, general, and holistic interpretation for HD in organisations that is applicable at a global level and across industries, but rather seeks to build a reliable evidence base to generate analytical insight into a capabilities perspective of the workplace.

The last challenge refers to the study's reflexivity. Reflexivity addresses the need for clear and transparent formulations of the research process that corresponds to the study's aims and purpose (Yardley, 2000). To address this final concern of reflexivity, this study aims to establish a coherent design and methodological fit by providing clear outlines of the research process; thus, taking a reflexive stand on qualitative research that acknowledges various concerns and proposes how to overcome them.

Following discussions on this study's approach's validity, reliability, generalisability, and reflexivity, the questions may arise on how this study avoided selective data representation and anecdotalism during the analysis of qualitative data? This study argues that by providing a detailed account of its methodological processes and providing sample interviews (see *Appendix A.3.* and *A.4.*), this study is presenting its analytical process and reporting practices in a transparent way. Transparency in research reporting forms a key step in avoiding selective data representation (O'Keeffe *et al.*, 2016). To adhere to the criteria of transparency in data representation, each of the interviews was transcribed fully and verbatim with more details about the transcription process to be found in section *4.2.5. Research methods.* Following the transcription, the data remains available for further analysis and future research (see section *8.4. Potential for future research*) rather than being limited to the purpose of this study. In addition, by applying the method of template analysis, the analysed themes emerged through an iterative process during the analysis which establishes commonality between the themes and is

further detailed in section *4.2.5. Research methods.* Lastly, this study utilises Computer Assisted Data Analysis software to ensure the appropriate storage and management of qualitative data to establish the frequency and relationship between each emerging theme or topic. With this in mind, this study addresses the risk of selective data representation and anecdotalism by presenting its findings in a transparent and systematic way.

Overall, this section has presented arguments for adopting an inductive approach to qualitative research, addressing several challenges of qualitative research and how this study aims to meet the criteria for a robust research approach. Against this backdrop, this study argues that an inductive approach supports the generation of evidence that addresses how the individual perceives their workplace and informing the debate surrounding HD in organisations.

4.2.4. Research framework - Human Capability Development

Section Summary

Throughout this chapter, we have explored the study's research philosophy, strategy, and approach, establishing the epistemology of interpretivism, ontology of critical realism, the design of a multiple instrumental case study, and inductive qualitative research. But how do these considerations relate to the concept of HD and address the question of operationalising the CA in organisations? To answer these questions, the following section aims to outline the study's research framework. Reaching back to the theory base laid in *Chapters 2 and 3*, it introduces the framework of Human Capability Development.

The HCD framework draws from the concept of HD and the CA to explore what people may value in organisations. It is a result of the works of Jane Bryson (2010a) who was the first scholar to use a multiple case study design to operationalise the CA in New Zealand organisations and forms this study's research framework. There is only limited research that applies the CA to work and employment in developed nations as the majority of available studies, such as those of Robeyns (2003) or Mitra (2006), focus on inequality reduction in work settings and find limited applicability for the application of the CA in organisations. In light of this, Bryson's work is a pioneering study that aims to provide policy advice to the New

Zealand government and explores social arrangements in organisations. With this in mind, Bryson's work provides a valuable platform for this study's research framework and uses its established capabilities list as a starting point to further explore the CA in organisations. To explore how the HCD framework may inform this study's process for list finding, it is important to assess Bryson's underlying methodology, terminology, dimensions, and results that informed her understanding of what people may value in organisations.

The Methodology: "Developing Human Capability Programme" in New Zealand

The 'Developing Human Capability Programme' was established in 2008 in New Zealand and focused on alternative ways for managers and policymakers to shape organisations. It proposed to re-orient work policies and practices away from skill-development programmes and towards a capability perspective. The project's vision was to develop a framework that could be used to harmonise social and economic policies in New Zealand while incorporating relevant organisational, individual, and institutional perspectives. The HCD framework offered a holistic view of workplaces in New Zealand, pointing towards a path that integrates multiple workplace dimensions (Bryson, 2010b). It was a context-dependent project that represented a systemic view of what influences work and employment, and aimed to inform practitioners and policymakers in the fields of industrial relations, HRM, and general management practices (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010a).

The project was grounded in the context of high-performance literature, built its framework on qualitative research, and drew inspiration from the works of Vizard and Burchardt (2007) to formulate its capabilities list (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010a). For example, it aimed to analyse the structures and operations of existing labour market institutions and how they influence capability development. Further, it investigated associations between workplace practices and organisational outcomes related to capability as well as aiming to examine how institutional structures and organisational practices shape the development of individual capability (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010b). With these objectives in mind, the study included case study interviews with workers, managers, and owners in organisations across New Zealand's wine production industry, furniture manufacturing, mental health services, and Maori businesses. As part of the

research, the consortium (Blackwood, Bryson and Merritt, 2006; Bryson *et al.*, 2006; O'Neil *et al.*, 2008; Bryson and O'Neil, 2009) conducted approximately 200 interviews in over 30 organisations.

Following the initial data collection, the consortium applied the CA and used the work of Vizard and Burchardt (2007) as a normative base to create a relevant capability list, whose work was discussed in *Chapter 3: The Capability Approach*. Using an established capabilities list that was grounded in the UN Declaration of Human Rights allowed for a robust normative base of their capabilities list, and defined what could be seen as a reasonable list of capabilities that people could and should expect to achieve at their workplace. This understanding is carried forward throughout this study and informs the reasoning behind establishing a capabilities lists that informs this study's interviews. Here, it is important to note that all capabilities were given equal value and that the defined list of relevant capabilities did not include a preference ranking (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010b). Following an initial analysis, the consortium (Blackwood, Bryson and Merritt, 2006; Bryson *et al.*, 2006; O'Neil *et al.*, 2008; Bryson and O'Neil, 2009) analysed their data using an analytical framework of drivers and barriers influencing HCD that focuses on the institutional, organisational, and individual level. Drivers were seen as factors that actively contributed to a person's capability, while barriers were factors that actively stopped or constrained people's capabilities. This was followed by discussions in focus groups to finalise the HCD framework, which was subsequently tested using additional sets of focus group discussions with both employers and workers (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010a).

The HCD framework that resulted from this extensive research project was the first study to operationalise the CA in the large-scale work and employment environment of a developed nation. Its focus on workplace capabilities beyond inequality in employment was pioneering, and the successful operationalisation of the CA assisted workplace practitioners in shaping social arrangements within organisations. Against this backdrop, this study proposes to adopt elements of Bryson's HCD framework to arrive at a capabilities list. This understanding forms the basis of analysing HD in organisations contextualised by the German

manufacturing industry and arrive at understandings to illustrate the social dimension of organisations.

In summary, the HCD framework appears to be provide an established and robust capabilities list that forms the starting point for operationalising the CA in organisations. In light of this, this study takes inspiration from the HCD framework and grounds its list of relevant capabilities in the works of Bryson (2010a) and Vizard and Burchard (2007). It applies a normatively relevant list of capabilities within the context of the German manufacturing industry, thereby contributing to a credible evidence base for understanding drivers and barriers of HD in organisations.

The Terminology: Capabilities in organisations

This section of the chapter sets out to explore the terminology behind the works of Bryson (2010a) and to illuminate the terminological base of the HDC framework. While it is insightful to establish the framework's context and methodological validity, it is of equal importance to further investigate the framework's terminology and core concepts to illustrate how Bryson arrived at her relevant list of capabilities. Reaching back to *Chapter 3*: *The CA,* the CA represents an inherently under-specified and open-ended approach that is formulated in broad and abstract terms; thus, making it central for any project seeking to define its core understanding when attempting to operationalise the CA.

If the HCD aims to operationalise the CA, this begs the question: how does it define capability and addresses the challenge of adaptive preferences when arriving at its capabilities list? The answer to this question lies within the CA's focus on capability expansion and creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. The CA carries forward the notion that the purpose of development lies in expanding people's choices and Bryson defines capability as

> *the freedom to achieve things […]*
> *the capability to choose a set of*
> *beings and doings that an individual values.*
> (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010b, 2010a).

In this context, the term 'human capability' is seen as equal and interchangeable with the term capability, seeking to provide an evaluation of organisations and

individual workers alike (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010b). It aims to establish what enables workers to perform in their job and reflects on the diversity and complexity of elements that influence the contemporary workplace (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010a). In addition, it allows for the premise that organisations are able to expand or limit a person's capabilities and take a central role in shaping their capability sets. With this in mind, Bryson (2010b) grounds her list in the works of Vizard and Burchardt (2007) and engages with a broad spectrum of industries to arrive at a capabilities list that reflects capabilities all workers should be entitled to, rather than a reflection of which capabilities workers were satisfied with. By taking inspiration from central capabilities lists and building her list on 200 interviews with over 30 organisations, Bryson establishes an overlapping consensus on the necessary conditions for a positive workplace environment, which all individuals should be entitled to. This forms the starting point for this study to contextualise HD in organisations and explore the CA in the wider context of meaningful work.

While this study departs from the HCD's definition of capabilities and discusses its understanding of the CA's core concepts in *Chapter 3: The Capability Approach*, this study overlaps with the HCD framework in its understanding of the purpose of capabilities. Human capabilities in organisations should aim to improve the worker's quality of life and create conditions for workers to lead long, healthy and creative lives. It reflects on earlier discussion on work and its inherent intrinsic and instrumental meaning to the worker that can change over time, generations, and cultural contexts. It suggests that work in itself should not only be assessed using a means-based approach or a comparison of income levels, but that the debate should include a wider range of dimensions to include a range of capabilities such as the capabilities list suggested by the works of Bryson.

The Dimensions: The Individual, Organisational, and Institutional Level

Having explored the HCD's underlying methodology and terminology, it becomes essential to further investigate the various dimensions in which the HCD framework operates. The 'Developing Human Capability Programme' aimed to inform practitioners and policy makers as to how they should design appropriate people management practices that were specifically tailored to the New Zealand institutional, organisational, social and cultural environments (Bryson and O'Neil,

2010a) which is one of the primary points of departure from this study's aims. This framework operated on three different levels that each evaluated drivers and barriers influencing the workplace as a whole and specific workplace practices. These levels were categorised as the institutional, organisational, and individual level. Despite the 'Developing Human Capability Programme's' aim to develop a New Zealand-specific framework, its dimensions have the potential to be widely applicable in organisations and this study proposes that these dimensions can serve as a blueprint for other studies seeking to operationalise the CA for organisations. As a result, this study grounds itself in the works of the HCD and suggests adapting its three dimensions to evaluate drivers and barriers to HD in organisations within the specific context of the German manufacturing industry. In light of this, the following section explores how this study takes inspiration from the HCD framework and adapts the individual, organisational, and institutional dimension to the context of the German manufacturing industry.

First, the individual dimension. The individual level seeks to explore the values and preferences of individual workers. It consists of questions that determine the personal make-up of the individual and is close to their subjective perceptions. Simultaneously, it stretches beyond the preferences, ambitions, and motivations of individuals, aiming to reflect on a person's life cycle, situation in life, and what determines a valuable life for them. For example, a worker in their mid-thirties with two children might have a very different perception of what constitutes a good life to a colleague who is in their sixties with no dependents. Therefore, the individual dimension aims to capture conditions that reflect a person's subjective life cycle stage and value preferences. In turn, these conditions provide insight into what drives or undermines a person's capabilities and general HD in organisations.

Second, the organisational dimension. The organisational level aims to identify practices, regulations, and structures of the workplace. It sets out to explore standard structures, procedures, and mechanisms that are specific to the organisation and evaluate their impact on the individual's capabilities. Therefore, the organisational dimension is best thought of as a reflection on organisational structures that are specific to a company's industrial context. Within the context of this study, the organisational level seeks to evaluate what organisational

mechanisms of the German manufacturing industry drive or undermine workers' capabilities and level of HD in organisations.

Third, the institutional dimension. The institutional level aims to illuminate the systematic arrangements in which organisations and individuals operate. This dimension reflects the policies, social attitudes, traditions, and legislation that define the parameters for organisations. While Bryson's HCD framework sought to explore New Zealand-specific information, this study sets out to explore the institutional parameters that define the German manufacturing industry. Aiming to reflect on relevant institutional parameters, this level seeks to report on factors such as German legislature, traditional unionism, and the structures of the education systems to identify what might drive or undermine a person's capabilities and general HD in organisations. An introduction to the study's industrial context highlighting the influence worker representation can be found at the end of this chapter in section *4.6. The Study's Cultural Context.*

By defining relevant HCD dimensions in organisations, this section contextualises the research framework and sets its parameters. While Bryson's HCD framework first sought to evaluate the institutional, organisational, and individual factors influencing HCD in New Zealand organisations, this study proposes that these dimensions are widely relevant for other organisations. Despite this wide applicability, however, it is essential to tailor each dimension to the research, and this section offers a roadmap for adapting Bryson's dimensions for the German manufacturing industry. Against this background, it can be said that this study carries forward the general frame of the HCD but shifts its objectives, context, and discussion to identifying drivers and barriers for HD in organisations in the German manufacturing industry.

The Results: The need for an analysis beyond income

Previous sections set out to explore the methodology, terminology, and dimensions of the HCD framework. Following this analysis, the question remains: what were the programme's results and what are the added benefits of applying it? The answer to this question lies in the complex nature of work, the plethora of factors influencing the perception of work, and the resulting need for a workplace analysis

beyond income assessment. Within the context of the ‘Developing Human Capability Programme’, applying a capability perspective to organisations moves beyond traditional economic assessment methods and into potential connections between policies, institutions, organisational practices, and the individual experiences that shape the workplace. With this objective in mind, this study argues that as an analytical tool the HCD framework may provide valuable insight into the social dimension of organisations, thereby illuminating what defines HD in organisations.

Exploring the HCD framework illustrates how its application provides valuable insight into organisations in New Zealand, offering an industry- and context-specific analysis (Bryson, Mallon and Merritt, 2004). This study proposes that analysing organisations using the HCD framework adds value to the debate in organisational studies and aids practitioners and policymakers in shaping organisations. It supports a transition from analysing work from a traditional economic cost perspective such as human capital to a more holistic perspective that embeds the institutional, organisational, and individual perspectives of the workplace.

The ‘Developing Human Capability Programme’ first pioneered a systematic analysis of what drives or hinders capability development in organisations, providing insight into work that enables people to lead lives that they value. In light of this, this study proposes that operationalising the CA and applying the HCD framework in the German manufacturing industry may reveal valuable insight into HD in organisations and contribute to a robust evidence base informing the HCD framework.

4.2.5. Research methods

Section Summary

Having outlined the research philosophy, research strategy, and the research framework of this study, the subsequent section seeks to establish its research methods. This section begins with methods for data collection based on semi-structured interviews, shaping two subsequent phases of data collection. Next, this section addresses methods and underlying rational for interviewee and case selection, the process of transcribing and translating audio material from German

to English, and methods for data analysis that draw from thematic and template analysis. The section closes with reflections on computer assisted data analysis, proposing the use of the qualitative data analysis software 'NVivo'.

Data Collection - Structured interviews

This study supports the understanding that employees can attribute meaning to their social and professional surroundings and that they influence and are influenced by them (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Based on this premise, this study aims to interpret the social reality of organisations from the perspective of employees rather than discounting their ability to reflect on their own surroundings. Therefore, face-to-face interactions between the researcher and interview participants form the main method of data collection. Thus, the study generates a robust evidence base that provides in-depth accounts of how employees perceive, experience, and reflect on their workplace.

Interviews are a commonly employed method in qualitative research. It is the flexibility and context-sensitivity of interviews that make this method so attractive. This means of data collection allows the researcher to explore the interviewee's point of view and to establish valuable connections between the data and its wider context (King, 2004a). Interviews show what the interviewee regards as relevant and important, offering a detailed account of first-hand experiences. In reference to the interview's context-sensitive nature, this study proposes to apply semi-structured interviews to explore a capability perspective of the workplace. While structured interviews strictly follow rigorous sets of questions, the semi-structured interview takes guidance from prepared interview guides and topics but follows a more flexible structure (ibid.). This suggests that semi-structured interviews allow for a more conversational style of interviews, generating detailed accounts of personal beliefs, opinions, and experiences that allow the researcher to establish connections between underlying theoretical frameworks and the participants' own experiences.

During the interviews, the interviewer was alone in a room with the interviewee; thereby allowing the respondents to speak freely in an uninterrupted manner and

in privacy (King, 2004a). The interviews are separated into two different phases that follow two separate interview guides.

	Semi-structured face-to-face interviews					
	Phase 1		Phase 2		Total	
	Pilot	Shop floor worker	Pilot	Managers	Pilot	All Participants
Number	5	34	1	18	6	52
Time in hours	2	9	0.2	6	2.2	15

Table 4.1: Overview interviews

Phase 1 began with five pilot interviews, testing the feasibility and validity of the interview schedule before conducting 22 interviews with shop floor workers from Company 1 and 12 interviews with shop floor workers from Company 2. Analysing data collected during Phase 1 informed the development and design of the interview schedule for Phase 2, informing the managerial perspective on what shop floor workers had said. During Phase 1, workers were asked about their perception, feelings, and experiences in the organisation which then informed the design of the interview schedule for Phase 2. It aims to generate unique insight into the worker's experiences with no direct questions about the management structure of the organisation. Instead, the interviews focus on what the workers value and whether work influence their lives in and outside the workplace. In contrast, managers were presented with the results of Phase 1 interviews and invited to present their reactions to what workers value. In managers talking about employees, the study seeks to highlight potential discrepancies and gaps of perception in what is meaningful to the individual worker. Phase 2 began after the completion of Phase 1 interviews. It included one pilot interview and 12 interviews with managers from Company 1 and six managers from Company 2. Both phases combined resulted in a total of 52 interviews producing 15 hours of audio recording.

Both interview phases used different interview schedules drawing from the theoretical underpinnings outlined in Chapter 2 and 3 as well as the HCD framework. Following each pilot study, critical issues such as translation barriers, schedule length and consistency of questions emerged, requiring further refinement of the interview guide. The following table seeks to give an overview of the applied capabilities list with corresponding interview questions and levels of analysis for Phase 1 and Phase 2. It serves as a methodological roadmap for this

study, contributing to a credible evidence base and addressing the research questions.

Overview research methods									
Prior Work (Literature Review)		Phase 1 (Worker)				Phase 2 (Manager)			
Capability List (Adapted from Vizard & Burchardt 2007)	Worker Capability - What makes work valuable and meaningful? (Adapted from Bryson & O'Neil, 2010)	Interview Questions for Shop Floor Workers	Level of Analysis	Research Question Addressed	Interview Results Phase 1 - Emerging Themes	Interview Questions for Shop Floor Workers	Level of Analysis	Research Question Addressed	Interview Results Phase 2 - Emerging Themes
Introduction		How long have you been working for the company?	Individual	RQ I	Range from apprenticeship to retirement age	For how long have you been holding a managerial post?	Individual	RQ I	Range from 2-35 years
		Could you describe your job for me?	Individual	RQ I	Production worker & Administration of production area	Could you describe your job for me?	Individual	RQ I	Range from Masters' to plant managers
		What do you like or dislike about your job?	Individual	RQ II	Like: Varies from person to person (family, age, motivation, ambitions) Dislike: Varies from person to person (family, age, motivation, ambitions)				
Capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy	Work that is hazard, and harassment free	Do you feel mentally and physically healthy and how has your work impacted your health?	Individual	RQ III	Healthy due to high regulations, personal coping mechanisms, high impact due to shift work	In what ways does your company attempt to avoid mental or physical health hazards?	Organisational	RQ III	Compliance with health and safety regulations, preventative training measures
		Do you feel mentally and physically safe at work?	Individual & organisational	RQ III	People feel safe, high competition & distrust between colleagues, high value for job safety (guaranteed by law)	In what ways does your company attempt to build trust between colleagues and avoid harassment?	Organisational	RQ III	Focus on direct communication between workers and managers, formal events, responsibility lies with workers
Capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society	Skill development, workplace communication, general adult education at the workplace	Have you been able to develop your skill set since joining company?	Organisational	RQ III	People have inadvertently developed their skills, focus on technical development instead of soft skills, lack of support in formal structures	In what ways does your company value worker skill development both technical and personal and how is it facilitated?	Organisational	RQ III	Initiative lies with workers, focus on internal and informal training sessions, reactive support if worker pursue formal qualifications
		What educational programs have you taken part in?	Organisational	RQ II	High unawareness of offered support, feeling of lacking support and motivation from company, high emphasis on self-motivation, motivation for further education is highly age dependent, high desire to develop skills	In what ways is your company offering support for further education and in what ways do you think it could be improved?	Organisational	RQ III	Adjustment of shift schedules, financial incentives and rewards, lack of formal training opportunities
		Has your job helped you to participate in society?	Individual	RQ IV	Negative impact due to shift work, people show tendency to divide their time between family and work only, private life/societal work are reduced with increasing family & debt commitments	In what ways do you think work in general and your company in particular helps employees to participate in society?	Individual	RQ II	Transferability of skills, negative impact of shift work balanced by high pay and 35-hour week, responsibility lies with worker

Prior Work (Literature Review)		Phase 1 (Worker)				Phase 2 (Manager)			
Capability List (Adapted from Vizard & Burchardt 2007)	**Worker Capability - What makes work valuable and meaningful? (Adapted from Bryson & O'Neil, 2010)**	**Interview Questions for Shop Floor Workers**	**Level of Analysis**	**Research Question Addressed**	**Interview Results Phase 1 - Emerging Themes**	**Interview Questions Phase 2 (Managers)**	**Level of Analysis**	**Research Question Addressed**	**Interview Results Phase 2 - Emerging Themes**
Capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security	**Income, job security**	Does your income enable you to have a comfortable standard of living?	Individual	RQ III	Above average pay, people are aware of the high pay level and value it	Do you think shop floor wages allow workers a comfortable standard of living	Organisational	RQ III	Companies offer pay above national average, some managers reported pay as too high
		Would you describe your job as secure and how does job security impact your life?	Organisational	RQ III	People are aware of their company's economic situation, in relation to their company's performance high or low impact of job security	In what ways does your company enable workers to be independent and feel secure?	Organisational	RQ III	Transparent communication, formal structures including staff assemblies, notice boards, general awareness of strategic decisions
Capability to engage in productive and valued [meaningful] activities	**Interesting, sense of accomplishment, self-realization, greater good, career advancement**	What do you value most about your job?	Individual	RQ IV	Salary, enjoyable work activity, good relation with colleagues, good working climate, being challenged, diverse work activity, job security	What do you think your employees value most about their job?	Individual	RQ IV	Reliability, stability, a good working climate, independent working
		In what ways is your job meaningful to you?	Individual	RQ IV	High priority after family and health, means to finance your life, high time commitment leads to desire for enjoyable work activity	Do you think it is important that your employees engage in meaningful activities?	Individual	RQ IV	Important for workplace motivation, influences work climate, enhances worker productivity
		Do feel like you have accomplished your career goals or is there anything that you would like to do?	Organisational	RQ IV	Depending on family status, worker age, motivation and ambition	In what ways does your company support your employees' career advancement?	Organisational	RQ IV	Central focus on management to identify and approach people, thereby encouraging them to pursue formal training
Capability to enjoy individual, family and social life	**Work-life balance, work hours, shift work, shift patterns**	How does work influence your life in terms of social, family and individual aspects?	Individual	RQ IV	High impact due to shift work, family and social life become second priority, high impact depending on working hours, high impact depending on personal coping mechanism	How does your company define a healthy work-life balance for workers and how is it ensured?	Organisational	RQ III	Formal events, initiative lies with the workers, balance is regulated under collective agreements
		How many hours do you normally work and how many hours are you contracted to work?	Organisational	RQ III	Acceptance of overtime as dependent of economic situation, acceptance of overtime as integral to contractual employment, overtime needs to be balanced	How do you structure your workers' shift/work patterns?	Organisational	RQ III	Work hours, shift patterns, and overtime are regulated by WC under collective agreements

Prior Work (Literature Review)		Phase 1 (Worker)				Phase 2 (Manager)			
Capability List (Adapted from Vizard & Burchardt 2007)	**Worker Capability - What makes work valuable and meaningful? (Adapted from Bryson & O'Neil, 2010)**	**Interview Questions for Shop Floor Workers**	**Level of Analysis**	**Research Question Addressed**	**Interview Results Phase 1 - Emerging Themes**	**Interview Questions Phase 2 (Managers)**	**Level of Analysis**	**Research Question Addressed**	**Interview Results Phase 2 - Emerging Themes**
Capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence	**Decision-making processes, involvement**	Do you feel like your voice is being heard in the company and if yes, how?	Organisational	RQ III	People feel that their voice is being heard but often not implemented or credited, depending on their primary supervisor and team leader	What are your company's mechanisms to evaluate employee suggestions for work improvement?	Organisational	RQ III	Evaluation and suggestion systems designed for financial rewards
		Do you have the capability to make any decisions that directly influence your job?	Organisational	RQ III	People feel like they are able to make decisions but recognize the constraints and limits based on their line of work	In what ways do you involve your employees in decision-making processes and why?	Organisational	RQ III	Worker influence their immediate surroundings, responsibility lies with worker, worker needs to approach managers
Capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect	**Respect, self-realisation, self-fulfilment**	Do you feel as if you are able to express yourself at work?	Individual	RQ III	Creativity is not viewed as important due to the line of work and industry, expressing yourself is related to job design	In what ways do you think your employees can express themselves about work concerns?	Individual	RQ III	Direct communication with managers, during formal assemblies, as part of union or WC
		How is your job perceived by family members and peers?	Individual	RQ IV	Work activity unknown due to industry, positive reception amongst friends/ family / colleagues, no conscious perception, negative impact due to shift work	How do you think jobs in this company are perceived by society, families and peer?	Organisational	RQ IV	Organisation is unknown due to nature of industry, lower perception of prestige
		Do you feel as if your job provides you with self-respect?	Individual	RQ IV	Self-respect equated to being proud, many perceive words "proud" or "self-respect" as too strong but have an overall positive perception of their work life	In what ways do you think workers take pride/feel self-respect in their work and what influences that?	Individual	RQ IV	Workers are proud of the products that they are making, subjective interpretation of pride
Capability of knowing you will be protected and treated fairly by the law	**Justice, equality, freedom of choice**	Additional material: European, federal and German labour laws, tariff agreements and union influence	Institutional	RQ I	Additional material: European, federal and German labour laws, collective agreements and union influence		Institutional	RQ I	Additional material: European, federal and German labour laws, collective agreements and union influence
Additional Questions						Do you feel like this form of evaluation is potentially beneficial to your workers and your company? Why?	Individual	RQ IV	Positive perception based on broader insights, platform for exchange, face-to-face interviews offer deeper level of understanding
						Do you think this form of evaluation provides additional insights in comparison to other surveys? Why?	Individual	RQ IV	Majority of studies are IG Metall surveys, preference for conversational form of evaluation

Table 4.2: Overview data collection

Participant Selection – Shop floor workers and managers

In every qualitative study, the means of selecting participants for a project is a core consideration (King, 2004a). This study primarily focuses on shop floor workers and their managers in the German manufacturing industry. Therefore, it was important to provide each participating organisation with a credible rationale as to why they should participate, emphasising how case study research may generate deep knowledge of their organisation. Due to workload and capacity pressures, it is costly for companies to grant their production workers time away from their workstations and for managers to reserve extended timeslots in their own diaries to participate in an academic study. Based on these challenges, a time constraint for the interviews and a limit on the number of shop floor workers allowed to participate in the interviews was pre-imposed by the management of each organisation. Despite the challenges of time limits and participation numbers, this study argues that condensing the interview schedule and supplementing primary data with secondary data allowed it to overcome these challenges, producing short but revealing interviews that provided a robust evidence base for addressing the research questions.

First, this study approached three out of four major companies that operate in the German bearings industry and, more specifically, have an extended tradition of shift work. The German bearings industry was identified as target industry due to its rich history of unionism, expressed by Works Councils (WC) that have the right to co-determine workplace structures. There is also a limited availability of qualitative case studies focusing on industries characterised by shift work, a point that will be explored in greater depth at the end of this chapter. Following these initial considerations and based on the researcher's personal contacts and prior work experiences with one of the companies, the three organisations agreed to participate under the conditions of anonymity. After the companies agreed to participate, the research premise, aim, and interview schedules were presented to the respective WCs and HR teams, ensuring ethical approval under the right of co-determination. Once the respective WCs and HR teams approved the interview schedule, the researcher disseminated a call to all shop floor workers asking for voluntary participation in the interviews, before conducting Phase 1 interviews over the course of two weeks per company.

Unfortunately, following the completion of Phase 1 interviews with the first organisation, the company withdrew its consent to use any of the data. This development severely decreased the number of participants and resulted in less data than originally anticipated. The decision followed personnel changes in the HR management structures of the organisation and the new HR manager's concerns that the results of this study may not cast the organisation in a favourable light. Despite the offer of anonymity, the organisation remained firm their decision not to participate or allow access to the already collected data sets.

Following the completion of Phase 1 interviews with Company 1 and 2, the researcher spent the following 10 months translating, transcribing, and analysing the datasets. Based on preliminary findings of Phase 1 interviews, a second interview itinerary was designed. The second interview itinerary aimed to present questions to managers about their perception of shop floor workers which was grounded in the data collected during Phase 1. The process of identifying participants was repeated for Phase 2 interviews, inviting voluntary participation at the managerial level. However, managers operate outside the collective agreement structure, which means that the WC did not need to approve any research conducted at the managerial level. Following the completion of Phase 2 interviews (1 week per company), the researcher repeated the process of translating, transcribing, and analysing the interviews before combining both datasets and analysing them jointly. A more in-depth account of the findings can be found in *Chapter 5: Findings 1, Chapter 6: Findings 2,* and *Chapter 7: Discussion*.

Discussing the process for participant selection may raise questions on how this study avoided selection bias and arrived at a balanced range of participants? Generally, selection bias refers to the deliberate selection or of cases by the investigator, the concentration on a narrow range of participants that with the outcome of interest, or that, during voluntary participation, only a narrow range of participants will step forward (Collier, James Mahoney and Seawright, 2010). This study acknowledges the risk of selection bias but argues that by selecting participants from cases within the same industry and the high level of work standardisation and strong influence from unions within the industry, allows to see the participants from both companies as one sample.

Avoiding risks of self-selection bias reaches back to this study's earlier reflections of sample representativeness and generalizability in case study research (Costigan and Cox, 2001). Despite participation being voluntary and the risk of self-selection bias, this study argues that the case classifications show a satisfactory range of participant characteristics, such as age and union membership, to suggest that the study avoids the association with selection bias. In addition, for each company, the investigator interviewed more than half of the workers that were working on the shop floor and met the participant selection criteria. In light of this, this study concurs with Robinson (2014) that the risk of self-selection bias in interview based research remains, particularly as the research only has limited insight into the non-participants' characteristics. Nonetheless, it argues that voluntary participation is central to ethical good practice and forms a legal pre-requisite for interviewing shopfloor workers that fall within the responsibility of WCs and union representation. Overall, this study acknowledges the risk of self-selection bias but argues that its methodological design and the collected sample represent a satisfactory range of participants to allow the analysis to arrive at meaningful results.

Data saturation and quality of data

The total data collection yielded 52 interviews with 15 hours of audio-recording with an average length just over 17 minutes. Reflections on the amount of data may raise the question: does the data give sufficient insight into the participating organisations to allow conclusions about operationalising the CA in the German manufacturing industry? This study acknowledges the limitations of its data collection but argues that it nonetheless makes valuable contributions to the study of HD in organisations.

This study follows the tradition of small scale samples for interview based studies in the social sciences (Crouch and McKenzie, 2006). With this notion in mind, it suggests that by immersing the researcher in the field, building trust with the interviewees, and conducting the interviews in a natural environment – the workplace – the data offers a rich account of workers' perspective of the workplace in the German manufacturing industry. The data offers an account of people's perceptions and feelings of their workplace which is guided by their experiences. The approach resonates with this study's exploratory nature (Reiter, 2013, 2017; Ponelis, 2015) which intends to

contribute to the conceptual and theoretical understanding of HD on organisations that is grounded in the CA.

Considering the nature of exploratory research, this study argues that analysing the limited data is safeguarded by this study's epistemological and ontological considerations. Applying critical realism combined with interpretivism to guide the analysis allows a critical interpretation of an objective reality to inform this study's findings. In doing so, this study suggests that the sample size is large enough to support generalizations from the analysis that are of relevance to the study of HD in organisations. Within this context, this study seeks to uncover dynamic patterns within the datasets which allows indicative interpretations rather than firm conclusions (Reiter, 2013). Simply put, this study sets out to convincingly demonstrate a path to operationalising the CA in the German manufacturing industry which is guided by its research methodology.

Addressing the quality of the data may raise the question: how did this study ensure data saturation? The answer to this question is grounded in the notion that – in qualitative research – data saturation serves as indicator to discontinue data collection (Saunders *et al.*, 2018). With this notion in mind, data saturation reflects on characteristics within categories that emerge in the process of data collection and analysis, thereby ensuring qualitative rigour (Morse, 2015). In the first instance, this study sought to interview all workers and managers that volunteered to participate. One interviewee withdrew their consent to participate after stating that they would not agree to being recorded. Following an initial review of the data, the researcher decided to discontinue data collection after participants provided similar descriptions of their workplace, indicating that new data would be redundant (Grady, 1998). This process was supported by virtue of the German bearings industry being a global, yet niche market with highly structured processes and similar organisational structures. While this chapter offers a more detailed account of the bearings industry at a later stage, at this point, it merely argues that organisations in the German bearings industry are marked by a high level of standardization, similar organisational structures, and high levels of worker representation. This allows for a high level of comparison between the organisations and supports a meaningful interpretation of small interview-based

samples. Taking this into consideration, data saturation was reached following interviews characterised by repetitive information, and additional interviews did not reveal supplementary information that illuminated the worker or managerial perspective of the workplace. This supports the understanding that this study's methodology is consistent and coherent which addresses its research questions, this study's objectives, and the wider theoretical position within the HD debate.

Country of choice – Germany as case study

Beyond considerations of methodology, it is of equal importance to reflect on the reasonings behind choosing Germany as the cultural context for this study. Since the CA has been frequently applied to and originates in development economics, the question arises whether operationalising the CA in a high-income context may offer any additional insight. The OECD defines Germany as a high-income economy with high levels of welfare and as one of the top 10 performing economies globally (The World Bank, 2019). However, the World Inequality Database shows that over the last decade, income inequality increased significantly in Germany and confronting inequalities has moved to the forefront of many global policy debates, including in Germany (WID, 2020). Arguably, the concept of distributive inequalities lies at the heart of the CA. Simultaneously, at the heart of the debate about inequalities lies people's access to opportunity and how to expand people's choices to realise their opportunities. This is echoed int the CA and this study suggests that this debate can be extended to inequalities in the workplace, in developing or developed economies alike. With this notion in mind, this study suggests that the perception of inequalities influences people's feelings about the workplace which may, in turn, impact their lives in and outside the workplace (United Nations, 2020). It suggests that exploring developed economies and identifying practices which work, and which ones may not work as effectively can serve to inform future business practices in other economies such as economies in the developing world. Studying developed economies such as Germany that have experienced increasing levels of income inequality, allows for identifying best practice setting in mature economies and may inform adjustments to future workplace regulations that are grounded in common practice.

Participating Companies – The bearings market

This chapter has established the design of this study as a multiple case study. But who are the participating companies and why were they selected? The answers to these questions are rooted in the participating companies' extensive tradition of working in shift patterns and the very nature of the industry they operate in. Both organisations operate in the bushings and bearings market, producing heat shields, bearings, pistons, and seals as part of the global supplier industry for manufacturing industries. Their products are primarily used in automobile manufacturing, with growing segments for farm equipment, household appliances, wind turbines, ship engines or defence and aerospace equipment (Grand View Research, 2018; Research and Markets, 2019). As of 2018, the global bearings market was valued at 102.2 billion USD. Approximately three quarters of the industry's output is sold to Original Equipment Manufacturers with the remaining quarter sold to aftermarket and wholesale distributor demands.

The German bearings market encompasses four main competitors, all competing within this highly specialised yet global market (Grand View Research, 2018; Research and Markets, 2019). The majority of German production sites were founded in the mid-20th century as independent metal works producers before being absorbed by international conglomerates, and continue to operate under similar organisational structures and designs (Guide, 2000; Böhringer *et al.*, 2012). In combination with the limited pre-existing research into the bearings industry, its high level of work standardisation, long tradition of worker representation, and engrained organisational values all create a conducive environment for this study by enabling high level comparison between competitors.

Although this case study focuses on one production site per participating organisation, it acknowledges that each organisation forms part of a multi-national company that is, in turn, owned by global conglomerates. Each participating organisation operates autonomously under the management of a plant manager, who reports to their respective parent company. However, both production sites have been bought and sold by parent companies on multiple occasions without experiencing extensive restructuring on the shop floor, managerial changes, or staff turnovers. Company 1 experienced economic difficulties resulting in being acquired by a competitor in 2018.

At the time of the Phase 1 interviews, the companies had entered late stage negotiations without conclusive results. During Phase 2 interviews, the takeover was concluded, and Company 1 was operating under a different parent company name but without any substantial changes to the production site, the product portfolio, number of staff, organisational designs, and managerial structures.

Company 1 was founded in 1919 with an average of 300 employees at the production site. With reference to the 2018 financial year, its parent company employed 3,000 people and reported a revenue of 500 Mil €. Company 2 was founded in 1948 with an average number of 100 employees. With reference to the same financial year, its parent company employed 6,860 people with a global revenue of 887 Mil €. A comprehensive overview of company characteristics can be found in *Appendix A.1.*

Language – Transcribing and translating rich conversations

Language is one of the primary communication channels between human beings. It is the basis on which everyday business is accomplished, exchanging information, skills, services, and resources in an organisational context. Language, for human beings, is how we make sense of the world around us and of our interactions with other people (Bryman and Bell, 2011). While some case studies focus on the linguistic aspects of qualitative research, this project looks at the content of the data collection and how content is used as a vehicle to express individual experiences, focusing on the language as a vehicle itself.

As highlighted in the sections on research strategy and approach, this study is an instrumental case study that focuses on the German manufacturing industry, collecting data by means of semi-structured face-to face interviews. These interviews were conducted in German; thus, careful transcription and translation was required before analysis of the evidence base could take place. The process of translating can be seen as making sense of the spoken word based on the translator's knowledge, social background and personal experience (Xian, 2008). Based on this understanding, the translation and transcription of audio material was a single stage process, conducted by the researcher and relying on the researcher's knowledge of both language and industry context. Namely, the researcher's mother tongue is German, and they had

worked part-time for three years in the bearings industry for a competitor of Company 1 and 2.

Given that the interviews were translated and transcribed from German into English, could language differences have impacted the research outcomes? This study argues that – in this research context - the translation process is a purely mechanical and technical exercise that has not influenced the meaning of what was said and does not contribute to the interpretive process of the analysis (Temple and Young, 2004; Xian, 2008). That said, this thesis acknowledges that cultural differences between interviewee and translator generally have the ability to obscure the true meaning of what was said when translating interviews. Recognizing this challenge, this study proposes to overcome the challenge of translation bias by means of the interviewer and the interviewee having the same cultural background and similar work experiences. The translation process can thus be understood as a reconstruction of first-hand accounts from one language into another without contributing to the data interpretation.

Despite viewing the translation process as a mechanical exercise which does not aim to influence what interviewees said, some problems were encountered while translating the interviews from German into English. To begin with, there are linguistic differences between German and English in which interviewees used words and grammatical structures that have no immediate equivalent in English. Where this was the case, a proxy translation was used that focuses on the content of the interview and not the linguistic context in which it was said. Moreover, the study encountered some socio-cultural difficulties in which respondents used idioms and proverbs that had to be translated from German into English (Squires, 2009). In these cases, the literal translation of the spoken word would not have made any sense and a contextual approach to translating from the source language was applied. This approach relies on the translator's socio-historical knowledge of the German language and its culture in order to generate a translation that conveys the meaning of what was said. Lastly, there are methodological difficulties associated with translating data (ibid.). Since the process involves the translator imposing authority on the data set, this study overcame

this challenge by acknowledging and reflecting upon the difficulties associated with data translation and by the researcher and translator being the same person.

Beside translation, the transcription of rich audio material into written transcripts formed an integral part of the research process. In reference to this study, all interviews were first audiotaped at the workplace and in the worker's real-life context. The data was transcribed and translated at a later stage, focusing on what was said instead of how the interviewee said it. Interviewees in qualitative research have been known to be self-conscious or even alarmed when being recorded, resulting in data that may not reflect their true experiences or opinions. To overcome this challenge, all respondents were asked for consent to record the interview prior to agreeing to participate in the study and were given the option to stop the interview or the recording at any stage. Furthermore, all recordings were made on a phone in order to minimise the potential discomfort to the interviewee, enabling interviewees to give a true account of their experiences and opinions.

Data Analysis –Thematic Template Analysis

While there is a variety of data analysis strategies and methodologies available for qualitative researchers, the following section argues for analysing data using thematic analysis in the form of template analysis.

Thematic analysis is an umbrella term referring to a set of research methods in qualitative analysis compatible with a range of epistemological and ontological positions such as critical realism and interpretivism. More specifically, thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting themes within a body of collected information (King, 2004b, 2012; Braun and Clarke, 2006). At its core, thematic analysis actively searches for themes emerging from the data. In this context, themes can be individual codes or groups of codes which highlight patterned responses in the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Bryman and Bell, 2011). This suggests that themes can be considered as patterns if they are common and recurring responses across interview transcripts. Common or recurring themes are then constructed into a hierarchical index of central themes and subthemes with the aim of addressing the research questions. This study argues that despite its data driven

nature, template analysis is a suitable form of analysis in the context of the CA. The term data refers to qualitative information in a spoken narrative form that was gathered during the interview process, rather than statistical or numerical data. Its suitability draws from the iterative and emerging process applied during the analysis process which is explored at in-depth level in this section. The analysis is strengthened by the use of *a priori* themes that draw from this study's capabilities list and is grounded within the CA literature.

Prior to exploring thematic analysis at an in-depth level, the question may arise: how was a fait accompli avoided to allow for the result that the CA may not be applicable in organisations? The answer to this question draws from the study's conceptual positioning and detailed review of existing literature operationalising the approach. As detailed in previous chapters, this study seeks to operationalise the CA in organisations which is grounded in the concepts of HD, the meaning of work, and the CA. Pairing the CA with HD and the meaning of work enables this study to provide meaningful results to each of the study's conceptual foundations. With this notion in mind, this study argues that the analysis draws from three distinct but interrelated areas of research which can be interpreted separately. Based on this notion, this study is able to critically evaluate whether applying the CA in the German manufacturing industry is operationalizable and whether the results have meaning or not. Should the CA be considered not applicable, the study's finding would nonetheless allow for contributions in the field of work and HD.

If thematic analysis represents an umbrella term for a set of research methods, which analytical method this study proposes to apply? The answer to this question is grounded in its philosophical, strategic, approach, and framework choices which all support the application of template analysis. Template analysis seeks to analyse textual data by developing a coding template, emphasising hierarchical coding and using *a priori* themes (King, 2004b; King and Brooks, 2012). *A priori* themes are pre-defined but tentative themes grounded in literature, informing and shaping the coding template during the analytical process (King, 2004b). This study proposes a preliminary coding template (*Table 4.3.),* which seeks to explore the data on an

individual, organisational, and institutional level. It is derived from the HCD framework and grounded in the theoretical context of work, HD, and the CA.

Individual Factor	**Institutional Factor**
Attitude, self-efficacy	Cultural-ideological legacies
Educational experiences	Economic setting
Life, capability and experience beyond work	Educational arrangements and infrastructure
Motivation to work	Geographic setting
Perception of meaningfulness in work	Integration of different elements
Perception of work arrangements and culture	Nature and state of the product market, globalised competition
	Nature of the labour market
Organisational Factor	Nature of the legal form of employment
Key structures and opertions	Public funding
Philosophy of economic and working life	Public policy and role of state
Skill formation and arrangement	Sensitivity - Engagement with local conditions
Work organisation and design	
Workplace relations and culture	

Table 4.3: Preliminary coding template

Coding templates have a relatively high degree of structure and each high order theme will have sub-themes which are continuously expanded, revised, and refined during the analytical process before arriving at a final template (King and Brooks, 2012). In light of this, each theme in *Table 4.3.* represents a descriptive high order *a priori* theme containing sub-categories that emerged during the analysis. An example of the development of such sub-categories can be seen in *Appendix A.7. Example of Node Development* and a discussion of emerging low order codes can be found in *Chapter 5: Results Phase 1 Interviews* and *Chapter 6: Results of Phase 2 Interviews*.

Template analysis emphasises the flexible and practical use of hierarchical coding to generate a flexible structure that can be applied to the main data set and does not differentiate between descriptive and interpretive themes (King, 2004b; Brooks *et al.*, 2015). With this process in mind, the template itself is flexible and uses hierarchical codes that can be continuously adjusted throughout the analytical process. This emphasis on hierarchical but flexible structures that shape the coding template supports the method of exploring the data set at the individual, organisational, and institutional levels. In this context, high order codes represent the different levels while the detailed low order codes are topics that express different capabilities emerging from the data set. Beside the technique of hierarchical coding, template analysis also facilitates parallel coding: a process by which one sequence of the interviews was coded to more than one high or low order theme.

Meaningful themes can emerge only if the coded data captures a wide spectrum of worker experiences and capabilities that are represented in the overall answers to the interviews. In order to ensure correct and concise representation of the data in themes and topics, the initial template needs to be continuously revised, and some themes have been inserted, redefined and even deemed redundant at a later stage of the analysis (Brooks *et al.*, 2015). For example, the *a priori* theme 'Educational arrangements and their infrastructure' are incorporated in the results of 'Nature of the labour market'. In addition, influences of 'Geographic setting' and the 'Role of publicly defined standards' are reflected in the themes 'Economic setting' and 'Nature of the labour market', 'Nature of the legal form of employment'. However, the *a priori* themes, 'Integration of different elements', 'Public funding' and 'Engagement with local conditions' were initially incorporated in the analysis but through the process of template analysis were deemed redundant to the themes outlined in *Table 4.4.*

As established earlier, template analysis does not require individual steps to define a preliminary template. Rather, it is an iterative process whereby the initial template is modified, applied and revised to achieve a final template that is ordered after higher and lower hierarchical codes, representing horizontal and lateral links between themes (King, 2012). This suggests that the process from defining an initial template and developing a finalized version is a dynamic process reflecting on patterned responses in the data set. Against this reading, the analysis supports the following design of the final coding template:

Individual Factor	**Institutional Factor**
Attitude, self-efficacy	Cultural-ideological legacies
Educational experiences	Economic setting
Life, capability and experience beyond work	Nature and state of the product market, globalised competition
Motivation to work	Nature of the labour market
Perception of meaningfulness in work	Nature of the legal form of employment
Perception of work arrangements and culture	
Organisational Factor	
Key structures and opertions	
Philosophy of economic and working life	
Skill formation and arrangement	
Work organisation and design	
Workplace relations and culture	

Table 4.4: Final coding template

When considering the core features of template analysis, questions about potential advantages or disadvantages of using template analysis over other analytical approaches - such as grounded theory, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), or Framework Analysis - should not be ignored. Grounded theory seeks to construct theory from data, while IPA looks at how a specific person derives meaning from a particular event in a given circumstance (Glaser and Strauss, 2008; Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012). Meanwhile, Framework Analysis seeks to construct a matrix from the data set to inform a wider framework (Gale *et al.*, 2013). As such, the following paragraph discusses the suitability of the aforementioned approaches.

Comparing template analysis to grounded theory, it becomes apparent that grounded theory as a method was first conceived by Glaser and Strauss (2008) but experienced a divergence between its original authors and developed into various different approaches like social constructivist interpretations (Charmaz, 1995; Corbin and Strauss, 2015). This study acknowledges that grounded theory is a foundational method under the umbrella of thematic analysis. It encourages the researcher to follow a rigorous pre-defined set of processes that are rooted in ontological critical realism and epistemological objectivity (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). Although this method may potentially reveal valuable insight into organisations, it has limited compatibility with the epistemology of interpretivism, which makes grounded theory an unsuitable methodological choice within the context of this study.

Much like IPA, template analysis uses themes emerging from the data set to provide context-dependent first-hand accounts of personal experiences. However, IPA stand in contrast to template analysis by examining individual cases at an in-depth level before integrating each case into a full and comprehensive data set (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012). Against this backdrop, this study does not to treat each transcript as an individual case, but instead sees all the interviews of Phase 1 and all the interviews of Phase 2 as comprehensive data sets. This allows for the development of a high order coding template grounded in the HCD framework, work, the HDA and CA before in-depth analysis of the data sets takes place. With this in mind, template analysis was deemed the most appropriate analytical method for addressing the research aim of this study.

In comparing IPA and grounded theory, this study suggests that IPA and grounded theory stand in contrast to template analysis by avoiding pre-conceived theoretical or practical commitments such as pre-defined *a priori* themes before the analysis. Instead, grounded theory and IPA seek for themes to emerge from the data set without any theoretical prepositions and as unbiased as possible. However, template analysis can be situated between those two approaches, defining a limited number of themes as an initial template, and modifying the template as an iterative process during the data analysis. Hence, this study argues that the flexibility and tentative use of *a priori* themes within template analysis facilitates the most efficient, robust, and consistent form of analysing the data set.

It is important to note here that template analysis bears most similarity to the so-called framework analysis developed by Gale *et.al* (2013). Framework analysis aims to build a matrix to order and merge coded data sequences into a defined framework (Gale *et al.*, 2013). This method is frequently applied by health services and research projects aiming to inform policy makers or to produce practical guidelines. Since this study seeks to contribute to the theoretical understanding of organisational research, specifically that of the CA in business, and despite many similarities to template analysis, Framework analysis would offer only a limited methodological fit.

Despite the potentially valuable insight that template analysis may reveal, there are several challenges that may obstruct the successful application of this method. First, the research method bears the inherent danger of over-subscribing pre-defined codes onto the data set (King, 2012). Addressing this challenge, this study only pre-defines high order codes of the coding template, allowing all subcategories to emerge from the data without following any pre-defined thematic ordering. A further disadvantage of using template analysis is the limited amount of substantial and in-depth literature on the method. In 2012, however, more than 200 academic publications could be found that applied template analysis as an analytical process, supporting the understanding that template analysis is a robust and valid research method for analysing qualitative data such as interview transcripts and corresponding secondary data.

Overall, this study argues that template analysis - under the umbrella of thematic analysis - offers a high degree of methodological fit within this study's research philosophy, strategy, approach, and framework. With this argument in mind, a later section of this chapter will address the question of methodological fit in greater depth.

Computer Assisted Data Analysis - NVivo

Computer assisted data analysis, commonly abbreviated to CAQDAS, is a way to use computer software as a tool for data analysis. Generally, it describes the process of using software to find and retrieve codes from qualitative data sets (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In this context, coding refers to the marking of relevant text sequences and summarising these sequences within relevant categories, allowing software programmes such as NVivo to facilitate a comprehensive way of coding and retrieving qualitative data. However, as a mechanical tool of analysis, CAQDAS does not have the capacity to replace the interpretation or theoretical evaluation of data sets. With this in mind, the following section outlines the potential advantage and disadvantages of data analysis using CAQDAS in general, and NVivo in particular.

The first disadvantage of CAQDAS lies in the temptation to quantify qualitative data, and to look for the frequency in which codes occur instead of focusing on their relevancy to the research questions. Furthermore, the process of coding and retrieving results in sequences produces a fragmentation of the interview material, and may take the sequence out of its narrative flow and speech context. As a consequence, data might be decontextualised and has to always be seen in its research and interview context (Brinkmann, Jacobson and Kristiansen, 2015). With this in mind, this study acknowledges the potential shortcomings of CAQDAS but argues that these challenges can be overcome. For example, the process of coding and retrieving sequences has the tendency to be more efficient when conducted through a programme like NVivo; thereby, enhancing the transparency of the analytical process and providing details of what each interviewee said. This argument is supported by reflecting on case classification sheets that give a general overview of attributes of participants, ensuring that data fragmentation can be overcome by means of linking each sequence back to its respective participants.

Overall, this study argues that using the software tool NVivo to conduct thematic template analysis aids the refinement of the coding template. It highlights each relevant sequence within the larger data set by breaking down the material into different sequences and components with corresponding labels. In light of this, this study argues that the application of CAQDAS is preferable to manual data analysis as it allows a more structured, transparent, and robust analysis of sequences within interview scripts and across the data set.

4.3. Methodological Fit

Throughout the first part of this chapter, this study has highlighted the importance of methodological fit and the significance of ensuring that research philosophy, strategy, approach, frameworks, and methods are interlinked to produce valuable and meaningful research outcomes. But what exactly is methodological fit and how does this study adhere to its criteria? The answers draw from the nature of organisational research. Organisational research requires the management of complex relationships between research participants, coping with constraints on data collection, scheduling difficulties when collecting data, and often encounters mid-project changes to planned research designs (Edmondson and McManus, 2007). In light of this, methodological fit refers to the study's internal consistency among all elements which ensures that the research outcome can be meaningful and relevant. Simply put, methodological fit is concerned with why, what, from where, when and how data is collected and analysed. With this objective in mind, the following section addresses the study's methodological fit and outlines how this study adheres to the criteria developed by Edmondson and McManus (2007).

Edmondson and McManus (2007) developed a contingency framework addressing internal consistency of research projects that sought to explore organisations. Their work contributes to the understanding of research processes in management literature and argues that research investigating real-life organisations should reflect on four elements: Research question, prior work, research design, and contribution to literature. Adhering to these criteria enables organisational research to integrate each key element of the study and to ensure that each element is congruent and mutually re-enforcing; thus, improving the project's overall research quality. With this objective

in mind, the following table seeks to explore the four key elements of methodological fit, arguing that the proposed research process allows for a robust degree of internal consistency and methodological fit between each key element.

Key Element	Archetype of Methodological Fit: Nascent	Methodological fit in organisational research Description	Application
Research Question	**Open-ended inquiry about a phenomenon of interest**	Focuses a study	**I:** What is Human Development in an organisational context?
		Narrows the topic area to a manageable size	**II:** What is Human Capability Development in an organisational context?
		Addresses issues of theoretical and practical significance	**III:** What are the current approaches to Human Development and Human Capability Development in organisations and are they effective?
		Points towards a viable research project - that is, the question can be answered	**IV:** Does Sen's CA offer an alternative perspective through which we can analyse organisations?
Prior Work	**Nascent**	The state of the literature	**Sen's Capability Approach:** The CA forms the basis for the HDA and seeks to analyse people's lives from different perspectives. It consists of commodities, functionings, capabilities, and agency facilitating subjective well-being. It is an open-ended framework situated between economics and philosophy.
		Existing theoretical and empirical research papers that pertain to the topic of the current study	**Human Development:** Human Development (HD) is defined as expanding people's choices with the corresponding objective of creating environments in which people can enjoy long, healthy, and creative lives.
			Work: Work is at the core of human activity and work activities influence levels of well-being, social structures, self-perceptions, and can act as a platform for HD.
		An aid in identifying unanswered questions, unexplored areas, relevant constructs, and areas of low agreement	**Human Capability Development:** It is an analytical framework showcasing the application of Sen's CA in New Zealand organisations informing policy design. HCD is defined as an organisation's ability to attract, retain and develop people's skill and knowledge in organisations. The framework operates at the individual organisational, and institutional level.
Research Design	**Qualitative, initially open ended data that need to be interpreted for meaning Interviews; observations, obtaining documents, or other relevant material from the site**	Type of data to be collected	**Qualitative interview data:** Inductive approach to generate non-numerical data in two phases. During Phase 1 interviews with production workers were conducted, during Phase 2 managers were interviewed, allowing insights into the organisational perspective on HD.
		Data collection tools and procedures	**Data Collection:** Semi-structured face-to face interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and translated from German to English to generate rich first-hand accounts of real-life workplaces.
	Typically new constructs, few formal measures	Constructs and Measures	**Formal measure:** A priori themes were developed grounded in the HCD framework, HD, CA and work theories to build a coding template.
	Pattern identification	Goal of data analysis	**Goal:** To identify drivers and barriers of HD in the German manufacturing industry.
	Thematic content analysis, coding for evidence of constructs	Type of analysis planned	**Thematic template analysis:** Thematic analysis can be seen as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting themes within a body of data. Template analysis is a variation of thematic analysis and uses a priori themes to define a coding template consisting of high order themes and sub-categories.
		Finding/Selection of sites for collecting data	**German Manufacturing Industry:** The German manufacturing industry was identified as target industry due to its rich history in unionism, it's application of shift work, and context of routine work patterns as well as a limited availability of studies focusing on shop floor workers. There are two participating companies. Company 1 and 2 both operate in the market for engineered bearings which is a niche but global market with four main competitors.
Contribution to literature	**A suggestive theory, often an invitation for further work on the issue or set of issues opened by the study**	The theory developed as an outcome of the study	**Contribution: The capability perspective may reveal key insights into the social dimension of organisations and the findings articulate core drivers and barriers on long-term organisational changes, transitioning management practices, adaptation strategies for globalised industry structures, and technological+A1:D19 advancements in traditional manufacturing sectors.**
		New ideas hat contest conventional wisdom, challenge prior assumptions, integrate prior streams of research to produce a new model, or refine understanding of a phenomenon	
		Any practical insights drawn from the findings that may be suggested by the researcher	

Table 4.5: Four key areas of methodological fit (Edmondson and McManus, 2007)

Table 4.5. outlines how the project interacts with prior work and fits within the archetype of *nascent*. Akin to exploratory studies, nascent theory research seeks to investigate topics that have previously attracted little research attention or formal theorising, with the overarching goal of contributing to theory-building (Edmondson and McManus, 2007). This study acknowledges that only limited research has been conducted into the application of the CA in business, and argues for the use of nascent theory research to build a credible evidence base that will ultimately contribute to the debate on HD in organisations, informing a capability perspective of the workplace.

Adhering to nascent theory research, the methodological fit supports the application of an inductive approach (Edmondson and McManus, 2007). Taking inductive qualitative research as its research approach allows this study to gain first-hand insight into underlying processes of how workers perceive their workplace and what shapes those experiences. In light of this, the study collects data via semi-structured face-to face interviews with shop floor workers and managers, generating a rich and detailed account that informs the debate on HD in organisations. With these objectives in mind, this study argues that the methodological composition outlined in *Table 4.5.* supports the study's aim to contribute to the debate on HD in organisations, establishing whether the capability perspective of the workplace might offer alternative insight into organisations.

Having considered the methodological fit and how to formalise research processes in organisational research, this section highlights the importance of logically pairing prior research and analytical approaches. By ensuring that each key element is congruent and mutually re-enforcing, this study aims to produce well-integrated research designs. Although the framework devised by Edmondson and Mcmanus (2007) offers valuable insight, this study acknowledges that their framework is only one of several possible ways to evaluate methodological fit and that every project requires its own detailed reflections. Nonetheless, adherence to the criteria for methodological fit - research question, prior work, research design, and contribution to literature - ensures that conclusions drawn from the evidence base are robust and follow a consistent process of data analysis and interpretation.

4.4. Research Ethics

Research projects collecting data from real-life participants and in real-life contexts face several ethical challenges concerning the relationship between the researcher and research participants. In light of this, the following seeks to address these concerns and outlines how this study adheres to and upholds ethical standards.

First of all, it is important to ensure that no participant was physically or mentally harmed, and no negative career repercussions arose out of the interviews (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In order to adhere to this criterion and to avoid adverse effects for participants, the study ensured that all interviews were conducted under a confidentiality agreement and that all data was anonymised and cannot be traced back to the individual participants.

The second area highlights the importance of informed consent (Bryman and Bell, 2011). To ensure that participants can make an informed decision about their participation in the study, the project and the interview schedule were presented to the management of the organisations as well as the WCs, respecting their right to co-determination. Participants were informed about the academic purpose of the study, the process of analysing the data, the length of the interview, and that all interviews were being recorded before the start of the interview, and each participant was asked for their consent to be interviewed. Following this information, three respondents decided not to participate in the study.

Lastly, qualitative research projects often have to manage concerns regarding the invasion of privacy (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This area is closely linked to informed consent and requires that during the study all participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any point, and that participants can further refuse to answer individual questions without having to give any reason. In light of this, some respondents did not feel comfortable answering the question regarding their feeling of safety in the organisation and chose not to answer.

To ensure that all ethical standards were adhered to, all information to respondents was communicated through their elected WCs, and participation in the study was voluntary during their active work hours. Since the interviews were conducted

during work hours, the management of the organisation imposed a time limit on how long the interviews should last and how many participants were allowed to be interviewed. In addition, the research was formally approved by DUBS and completed ethics forms can be found in *Appendix A.8.* and *Appendix A.9*.

4.5. Conclusion Research Process

The first part of this chapter set out to explore the research process underpinning this research project, reflecting on its research philosophy, strategy, approach, framework, and methods before addressing concerns of methodological fit and research ethics. In doing so, the study reflects on each research method's appropriateness to address the research questions 1a.-3b. In light of this, this study argues that the proposed research methodology offers a high degree of internal consistency and logical pairing, ensuring that all key elements are mutually re-enforcing and are suitable to each research question introduced in *Chapter 1: Introduction*. Thus, the study argues that the methodological design addresses the research questions and contributes to a rich evidence base that provides a credible and justifiable account of HD in organisations.

The use of primary and secondary data collected from organisations operating in the German manufacturing industry provides insight into first-hand accounts of how workers perceive their workplace and what shapes their experiences. This research suggests that these accounts offer a dependable and valid account of organisations, ensuring that conclusions drawn from the data sets are grounded in a robust evidence base. Taking this into account, the research could inform the design of other academic studies which seek to explore organisations from a capability perspective. This would suggest that the research process and findings are consistent and can be transferred to and replicated in other contexts. That said, this project is set in the German manufacturing industry and its outcomes are specifically relevant to its context. With this knowledge in mind, the following section introduces the cultural context of the study, reflecting on how unionism in Germany has shaped the German manufacturing industry and how the study's cultural context may influence its results.

4.6. The Study's Cultural Context

4.6.1. Section overview

The first part of this chapter outlines the study's research context and methodological choices, demonstrating how the underpinning methodological choices shape and influence the research process. With this in mind, this study argues that highlighting the study's cultural context is of equal importance to its reflections on the formal research process in shaping academic studies. Like the research context, the cultural context of qualitative case study research has the capacity to influence the research process and its outcomes. Taking this influence into consideration, the following section seeks to outline the study's cultural context, addressing how unionism shaped the German manufacturing industry and created an industry with high levels of workplace standardisation, employee representation, and worker protection.

4.6.2. Unionism in Germany

Influence and Tradition: A historical perspective of unions in Germany

This study acknowledges that case studies analysing qualitative data derived from first-hand accounts such as interviews need to be aware of any socio-economic or political particularisations of their study. In Germany, one of these particularisations is the strong influence of trade unions in shaping industrial thinking and policies. Acknowledging the deep history and tradition of German unionism, the following section aims to elucidate the development of unions in Germany and how it shaped their modern-day purpose.

Unionism and worker representation are deeply rooted within German history. Unions first started to develop in the 1860s and sought to improve living and working conditions for low-skill workers. Throughout the 19th century worker representation saw a slow but continuous expansion of their rights and freedoms under German imperial law akin to a social movement. This catalysed the introduction of a social security system, and the first creation of a modern welfare state in Europe under Otto von Bismarck (Däubler, 2000). Developments in the 19th-century suggest that even during the early onset of unions in Germany, unions sought to provide defence against concentrated and unaccountable economic and political powers. Rooted in this fundamental understanding of unions – as

illustrated by their right to negotiate collective bargaining agreements on behalf of their members – they continue to fulfil their representative role of balancing economic powers between employers, governments and workers in contemporary Germany.

The early onset of unions as a social movement resulted in the creation of mandatory WCs for organisations with more than 20 workers. During the Weimarer Republic (1918-1933), WCs subsequently became independent consultation organs that represented worker interests; a tradition that continues to exist today (Däubler, 2000). Expanding their role of formal workplace representation, trade unions began to explore opportunities to improve employee welfare within and outside the workplace, encouraging the vertical structure of unions across organisations (Rüb, 2009). This expansion shifted unions toward the inner workings of organisations, where they addressed concerns about workplace design and participation rights. This shift continues to define contemporary unions and provides a platform upon which unions enter negotiations for collective agreements, thereby actively shaping policies and power structures within organisations, workplace relations, and the wider work environment of the industry.

Following World War 2, the German parliamentary council consolidated the rights and duties of unions, including the right of co-determination and participation as a fundamental right in the German constitution. Defined by law, WCs are organisation-specific and seek to preserve and improve working conditions in organisations from an employee perspective (Addison, 2001). Their primary purpose is that of an advocacy group within an organisation that is representative of all non-executive employees. As a secondary purpose, WCs frequently adopt counselling functions, seeking to monitor and maintain physical and mental safety amongst the workforce. Meanwhile, unions are industry-specific and can represent employee interests on a cross-organisational level (Däubler, 2000; Benassi and Dorigatti, 2015). With the establishment of the Co-Determination Act (1977) and the Works Constitution Act (1972), the German government sought to establish a legal framework that cemented the rights for unions and WCs in the German manufacturing industry. These acts continue to form the legal basis for union representation for contemporary Germany. In light of this, unionism in Germany

seeks to ensure a high level of employee representation and protection rooted in the onset of Germany's industrial revolution, and forms a cornerstone contemporary employee-employer interactions in Germany.

One example which illustrates the influence that German unions continue to exert is the collective bargaining negotiations between the IG Metall and employers of the metal-working industry from January to February 2018, resulting in national strike action. Participants working on the shop floor for Company 1 and 2 are largely members of the IG Metall and participated in the strike action. During the 24-hour strikes, more than half a million workers across 275 companies went on strike and caused millions of Euro of lost profits (Diekmann, 2018). During negotiations, the IG Metall successfully negotiated a pay raise for shift workers and the introduction of a 28-hour work week. This agreement allowed shop floor workers to reduce their 35-hour work week to 28-hours per week for a short amount of time without having to terminate their contracts, actively shaping and influencing organisational policies within organisations and across the manufacturing industry.

Exploring the historic development of unionism in Germany may beg the question: why it is important to consider these developments and what does it mean for this study? The answers are deeply rooted in the longstanding history and tradition of unions in Germany. Their influence has shaped forms of employee representation, company structures, and industry characteristics since the late 19th century and has not been significantly revised since 1977. Accordingly, unions and WCs create stable and predictable working conditions regulated by collective bargaining and representation mechanisms at the regional and national level. In light of this, this study argues that the industry's stability, predictability, and high level of regulation, shaped by unions, presents an insightful platform and favourable starting point for academic case studies seeking to explore HD in organisations.

Legal framework regulating union activities in Germany

Examination of the influence and tradition of unions highlights that unions in Germany seek to guarantee a high level of worker protection and employee representations. With this objective in mind, unions require a rigorous and clear legal framework which underpins their right to co-determination and outlines the

rights and duties of both unions and WCs. Thus, the following section seeks to introduces international and national legal documents regulating union activities.

Germany as a sovereign state is a member of various international organisations such as the European Union (EU), the UN, and the ILO. In light of this, the German government has pledged itself to uphold international conventions and ratified the following conventions as governing laws for the Federal Republic of Germany (Däubler, 2000).

The first of the adopted conventions is the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Art.11 para. 1 of the ECHR guarantees the freedom of collective action, peaceful assembly and includes the right to form and or join trade unions to protect the interest of workers against employers. These are the pillars for union action and offer protection for unions and their members (Council of Europe, 1953). The second convention is the UN's International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESC). Art. 8 paras. 1a-1d of the ICESC states that every worker has the right to form or join trade unions of their choice, and that trade unions have the right to form national federations and function freely (United Nations, 1976). It further emphasises trade unions' right to strike (ibid.). These conventions guarantee worker protection from repercussions of strike actions and their freedom of expression, and strengthen their ability to act on an international platform. Lastly, Germany is a signatory of Convention 87, Convention 98 and Convention C135 of the ILO (International Labour Organisation, 1948, 1949, 1971; Däubler, 2000). These conventions take particular interest in protecting union rights, assuring workers' rights to organise in unions, to form associations between different unions, and to bargain collectively. This ensures that work councils and unions can function at an international level.

Beside international law, German national law also defines the freedoms and responsibilities of worker representatives and union activities at the national level. Unlike other European countries such as Italy and Spain, Germany does not have one legal framework that regulates union activities at the national level but instead operates under the guidance of several overlapping agreements (Däubler, 2000). More specifically, rights and responsibilities are outlined in the German constitution

in Art 9, 5, and 14 (The Federal Republic of Germany, 1949), the Works Constitution Act (The Federal Republic of Germany, 1972), and the Co-Determination Act (The Federal Republic of Germany, 1976). These agreements outline the right to join and be represented at executive meetings of the organisation, the right to influence organisational policies, and the right to exert control of due process over executive staff of the organisation. Moreover, unions have the right to access company property, the right to form union and speaker committees, the right to use and organise labour conflict mechanisms such as strikes, the right to elect representatives as organisational confidants, and the right to form coalitions with other international or national unions. Furthermore, these agreements define WCs as institutions for collective labour law with the purpose of safeguarding employee interests in dealings with the employer.

Engaging with the international and national legal context for union activity in Germany highlights the extent to which union activities are regulated. Nonetheless, the question may arise what is the added value of this review and does this study benefit from such an exercise? The answer is directly related to the mining, iron, and steel manufacturing industry having the most defined and clearly regulated framework for co-determination and union representation. It suggests that WCs and trade unions have strong influence within and outside organisations. They act as representative and advisory bodies and actively shape and participating in the internal decision-making processes of manufacturing organisations. Against this backdrop, this study argues that the legal framework informs how interactions between unions and organisations are organised and reflects the power balances between employers, employees, and government representatives. The legal context subsequently ensures a high level of employee representation and employee protection in the manufacturing industry, thereby incentivising standardised working conditions and supporting the validity and generalisability of this study's evidence base.

WCs – Duties, responsibilities and challenges

Like unions, WCs have the capacity to actively shape organisational policies from within an organisation. In light of this, the following section seeks to outline the rights and responsibilities of WC and argues that WC – as a result of their ability to

shape work structures and designs from an employee perspective- may inform the debate on HD in organisations.

The term WC relates to worker organisation at the shop-floor level. Generally, WCs consist of non-managerial staff and non-executive employees and are democratically elected by the workforce for a term of office. The WC has to inform employees about managerial decisions and the strategic targets that the organisation is pursuing (McKitterick and Roberts, 1953; Gorton and Schmid, 2004). In addition, WCs are directly involved in decisions concerning the introduction of short-time work, the fixing of job rates and comparable performance related remuneration, the assignment and notice to vacate company-owned accommodation, and the introduction and use of technical devices to monitor employee behaviour or performance (The Federal Republic of Germany, 1976). In matters of hiring, grading, re-grading, transfers or dismissals, managerial decisions require consent from the WC. Consequentially, WCs in the German manufacturing industry have far reaching rights of participation and co-determination in decisions concerning organisational structure, job design, operations, working environment, personnel management, and in-plant training. Moreover, members of the WC, trade union election board and trade union election candidates are protected from dismissal during their term of office.

Exploring the rights and duties of WCs highlights the extent of their influence in managerial decision-making processes. It is important to note here that almost all interviewees in Phase 1 were members of the trade union IG Metall and several participants were simultaneously production workers and members of the WC, meaning they had a thorough understanding of their organisational structure and strategic direction of the participating companies. In light of this, this study argues that indirectly engaging with the WCs allows for greater insight into employee-employer relationships. As such, industries with high levels of worker representation and involvement have the potential to create a conducive environment for academic studies seeking to explore HD in organisations.

4.6.3. Section summary

Engaging with the deep history, legal framework, and rights and responsibilities of unions and WCs in Germany illustrates the cultural context of this study. It demonstrates how unions and WCs actively shape the manufacturing industry, creating a research context in which employee representation and protection are at a high level. Both participating companies, Company 1 and Company 2, operate within an industry that is marked by union activity and more than 90% of their respective workforces are members of the IG Metall. Against this backdrop, this study argues that the long standing tradition, detailed level of legal regulation at a national and international level, and far reaching rights and duties of WCs and unions create a supportive environment for academic studies seeking to operationalise the CA in organisations.

The cultural context of this study allows for systematic insight into what characterises the wider context of this study and what factors may influence the research outcome. With this objective in mind, this study argues that the German manufacturing industry has a long-standing tradition of reflecting on their employee's well-being; thus, allowing unions to speak with one voice for their members. This high level of representation allows for first-hand representational insights into the employees' perspective of the workplace, enabling the research to build a robust evidence base and to contribute to the debate on HD in organisations.

Unionism and co-determination have been historic catalysts that continue to shape contemporary Germany and its foundation as a social welfare state. The legal framework defines autonomous collective bargaining agreements, social security systems and organisational participation mechanisms as the foundation for worker representation, enabling continuous union influence on workplace designs in Germany. However, employee, employer and government representatives continue to seek alternative insights into organisations, illuminating work conditions, values, and needs. Consequently, this study aims to contribute to the debate on alternative perspectives for organisations, proposing that the capability perspective of the workplace allows for insights that may otherwise be obscured by other research processes or research conducted in less conducive

environments. In light of this, this study suggests that looking at organisations from a capability perspective may contribute to the improvement of employee's working conditions outside the socio-economic and political power imbalances of traditional union and worker representation.

4.7. Summary Methodology Chapter

The first two chapters set out to introduce the study's theory base, offering an interpretation of HD, work, work as platform for HD, and the CA with its core concepts and foundational understanding. Continuing the conversation, this chapter aimed to present the research process and cultural context that have influenced the study's methodological choices and underpins the research outcome. Grounded in case study research and template analysis, the research shows internal consistency and methodological coherence that provides the appropriate tools for addressing Research Question 1a-3b. In light of this, the following chapters seeks to introduce the study's empirical elements and present the findings of the data analysis, offering insights into the individual and managerial perspective of the workplace.

5. Chapter 5: Findings 1 - Results of Phase 1 Interviews

5.1. Chapter Overview

Subsequent to the theoretical and methodological explorations that underpin this study, the following chapter sets out to present findings of the first interview phase. The first phase of interviews sets out to report on the perspective of shop floor workers and how they perceive their workplace. It is followed by a second phase of interviews conducted with managers to explore the organisational perspective of the workplace and whose findings can be found in *Chapter 6: Results of Phase 2 Interviews*. *Chapter 5* provides a detailed account of interviews conducted with shop floor workers from two different German manufacturing companies and investigates *a priori* themes informing drivers and barriers for HD in organisations. Beginning the conversation, the chapter provides an overview of case classifications before discussing the relevant list of capabilities. Taking this into account, the chapter follows on and presents findings on the individual, organisational, and institutional level, drawing from the pre-defined list of capabilities and guiding the capabilities perspective of the workplace. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the findings of the Phase 1 interviews; an in-depth discussion and analysis of the results can be found in *Chapter 7: Discussion.*

5.2. General Information

5.2.1. Case Classifications

This study' empirical component draws from two separate interview phases. For Phase 1 of the interviews, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 34 participants from two different companies. Interview participation was voluntary amongst shop floor workers and participant selection was random amongst the production workforce. Further details around participant selection, data saturation and data quality are provided in section *4.2.5. Research Methods.* Data from both companies is collated into one group labelled as 'workers' and suggests a wider view of shop floor workers across the German manufacturing industry, beyond the constraints of one specific company. Nonetheless, companies as employers shape the workplace and the chapter aims to highlight differences or commonalities between the companies when appropriate and useful. Presenting data in these forms seeks to generalise the results across the German bearings manufacturing industry and to increase the workplace representation of shop floor workers. The

bearings industry in Germany is a global industry that occupies a niche market, is dominated by four medium and large companies, and adheres to IG Metall's collective agreements. As a consequence, looking at two of the main competitors of the German bearings industry allows for comparative insights that are industry specific and their adherence to collective agreements ensures a comparability of working and employment conditions across participating companies.

The following table provides a full overview of the individual case classifications for interviews conducted with shop floor workers. A similar table in the following chapter outlines the case classifications for interviews conducted with managers. Column A describes the participant identifiers and outlines that participants were shop floor workers (W), the order of the interviews (1-34) and if the participant was employed by Company 1 or 2 (C1-C2). Information outlined in Column A is repeated throughout the chapter to identify the source material of selected quotes illustrating und supporting the findings.

Participant	Age	Length of Employment (years)	Family Status	Gender	Member IG Metall	Member of Works Council
W1 C1	60-70	30	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	Yes
W2 C1	50-60	27	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	Yes
W3 C1	40-50	10	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W4 C1	30-40	12	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	Yes
W5 C1	40-50	10	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W6 C1	50-60	37	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W7 C1	50-60	35	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	Yes
W8 C1	30-40	10	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W9 C1	50-60	34	Married (no children)	Male	Yes	Yes
W10 C1	40-50	11	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W11 C1	40-50	4	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W12 C1	50-60	1	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Female	Yes	No
W13 C1	40-50	25	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W14 C1	40-50	17	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	Yes
W15 C1	30-40	17	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Female	Yes	No
W16 C1	40-50	4	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W17 C1	40-50	7	Married (no children)	Male	Yes	Yes
W18 C1	60-70	29	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W19 C1	60-70	12	Married (no children)	Male	Yes	No
W20 C1	40-50	17	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W21 C1	50-60	17	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W22 C1	40-50	20	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	Yes
W23 C2	40-50	15	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W24 C2	20-30	6	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W25 C2	20-30	5	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W26 C2	30-40	7	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W27 C2	40-50	11	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	No	No
W28 C2	30-40	8	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W29 C2	30-40	7	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W30 C2	20-30	12	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W31 C2	40-50	5	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W32 C2	30-40	21	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No
W33 C2	20-30	6	Single or Separated	Male	Yes	No
W34 C2	40-50	8	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Male	Yes	No

Table 5.1: Case classification worker interviews

Collating the initial data, it becomes clear that participants were pre-dominantly male with only 2 out of 34 interviewees being female. While this could be seen as an underrepresentation of the female workforce, it accurately reflects on the proportion of male to female worker ratio on the shop floor in German manufacturing industries and within both of the companies (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2019). All findings are informed by workplace conditions, organisational

performance, industry standards, and worker perceptions that were present during the data collection in 2018.

Participants had an average length of employment of 15 years with a standard deviation of 10, the earliest start date was 1981 and the most recent start of employment was in 2017. The length of employment allows for the interpretation that many of the participants had extensive knowledge of working in the manufacturing industry as well as detailed knowledge of their organisation. This in-depth level of knowledge and expertise did not only allow for insights into participating companies themselves and how they evolved, but it further allowed a deeper understanding of values and preferences of individual workers that changed in line with their life cycle developments.

Beyond length of employment and gender, the study further considers age as a vital and influential factor. While this study did not aim to evaluate one particular age group, considerations of participants' age does allow for meaningful conclusions about people's values and preference and how they might have changed and what may influence these changes at the workplace. The following table gives an overview of participants' age:

Age				
20-30	**30-40**	**40-50**	**50-60**	**60-70**
4	7	14	6	3

Table 5.2: Participant age distribution

This table shows that there is a representation of shop floor workers on both ends of the spectrum, but with a higher concentration of workers between 40-50 years of age. While this could be seen as an underrepresentation of age groups at each end of the spectrum, it does accurately reflect on the general age distribution of the shop floor workforce of the German manufacturing industries and of the participating firms (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2019). In light of this, Company A exhibited an average age of low 40s across their production workforce and shop floor workers employed by Company B averaged at 49 years of age.

If age informs people's shifting value preferences, comparable insights can be gained from considering people's family status. Being married/divorced, single or

having children can influence priorities and value preferences throughout people' life cycles.

Family Status		
Married (no Children)	Married/Divorced (with Children)	Single or Seperated
3	18	13

Table 5.4: Participants' family status

Although this study does not aim to focus on one particular life cycle group, this table shows that there is a balance between participants that were married or divorced (with children), and participants that were single or married with no children. None of the single or separated participants indicated that they had children from previous relationship. This case classification informs how having children may change what people value at work. It seeks to draw comparisons between people's value preferences at different life stages and how their private life might influence what they perceive as drivers and barriers of their HD at work.

Union Membership	
Yes	No
33	1

Table 5.5: Participant's union

Additional case classifications are if participants were holding union membership at the time of the interview and if they were elected representatives of their company's WC. With the participating companies operating in the metal working industry, it is common for workers to be part of the union IG Metall that exerts a right of co-determination. In light if this, 33 out of 34 participants were union members and therefore their employment structure was subject to collective agreements guiding work hours, work structures, and pay grades at the regional and national level.

Member of Works Council	
Yes	No
8	26

Table 5.6: Participant's WC membership

Eight out 34 participants were elected members of the WC. Despite these workers having the same work structures as employees without WC membership, members of the WC generally exhibited higher levels of awareness and deeper levels of reflection regarding what could constitute drivers and barriers at the workplace. Participants holding WC membership allowed more in-depth reflections on the organisational level of

participating companies and reflected on changes on the workplace in addition to their personal value preferences.

Overall, the case classification shows that participants for Phase I interviews can be seen as representative for a traditional workforce in the German manufacturing industry. Analysing this data informs value preferences for shop floor workers from their subjective perspective and enables possible conclusions on what constitutes drivers and barriers for HD in organisations. It particularly seeks to address Research Question 2 that aims to illuminate current approaches to HD in organisations and their effectiveness, as well as Research Question 3 aiming to identify if the CA offers an alternative perspective for evaluating the workplace and if there are potential benefits.

5.2.2. Relevant List of Capabilities

The analysis is underpinned by a pre-defined list of capabilities that was used to guide the interviews with shop floor workers which also uses pre-defined *a priori* themes as part of template analysis to analyse the data. The composition and development of the capability list and methodological fit of template analysis is detailed in *Chapter 3: The Capability Approach* and *Chapter 4: Research Process and Cultural Context*. Each capability stands in direct relation with work contexts and expresses workers' values and preferences at work. The analysis then identifies valuable capabilities and translates them into themes that engage with the individual's perception of work at an individual, organisational, and institutional level. The following section re-introduces the relevant list of capabilities and outlines how each capability relates to the workplace with focus on shop floor work in the manufacturing industry. Throughout the chapter, each *a priori* theme is linked back to the capability list below:

Capability list (Adapted from Vizard and Burchardt 2007)	**Worker capability - What makes work valuable and meaningful?** (Adapted from Bryson and O'Neil, 2010)
Capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy	Work that is hazard, and harassment free

Capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society	Skill development, workplace communication, general adult education at the workplace
Capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security	Income, job security
Capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities	Interesting work, sense of accomplishment, self-realization, greater good, career advancement
Capability to enjoy individual, social and family life	Work-life balance, work hours, shift work, shift patterns
Capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence	Decision-making processes, involvement in company decision-making
Capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect	Respect, self-realisation, self-fulfilment
Capability of knowing you will be protected and treated fairly by the law	Justice, equality, freedom of choice

Table 5.7: List of relevant capabilities

The capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy relates to work that is hazard and harassment free. It explores if workers feel physically and mentally healthy at work and if work impacts their health. In addition, it outlines if people feel mentally and physically safe at work or experience any form of harassment, bullying, discrimination, or physical dangers at their immediate workplace and within the wider culture of the company.

The capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society translate to skill development practices at the workplace, communication structures, and the educational infrastructure for general adult learning at the workplace. It explores the worker's perspective, reflecting on if they have been able to formally or informally develop their skill sets since joining their company. In addition, it outlines if workers perceive skill development and participating in society as important for their personal well-being and if they could identify areas of improvement.

The capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living with independence and security refers to the level of income and perceived levels of job security. Despite each of the participating companies exhibiting diverging levels of economic

performance and success, both companies operate in the metal working industry, thereby adhering to national and regional collective agreements with the IG Metall, ensuring comparable pay grades across organisations. Themes relating to this capability engage with the perception of wages and whether job security can impact workers' perception of their job or organisation.

The capability to engage in productive and meaningful or valued activities refers to workers' sense of accomplishment and career advancement opportunities. It reflects on people's ability for self-realisation at work and if their motivation to work stands in any relation to their sense of contributing to a greater good beyond work activity and income. Themes relating to this capability seek to shed light on people's career goals and their future career plans as well as it seeks to explore what workers value about their job and if it is meaningful to them.

The capability to enjoy individual, social and family life translates to perceptions of work-life balance, general work hours, impacts of shift work, and applicable shift patterns. It explores if people think that their work positively or negatively impacts their private life, if rotating shift patterns influence their lives outside the workplace, and their perceived impact of working overtime or on Saturdays.

The capability to participate in decision-making, to have a voice and influence aims to investigate decision-making processes and worker involvement in the wider strategic positioning of each participating company. It explores formal and informal mechanisms for workers to shape their workplace, the wider company, or even the industry. Further, it seeks to illuminate if workers feel their voice is sufficiently heard and if it is important to them.

The capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect relates to workers experiencing respect from colleagues, superiors and from themselves, their level of self-realisation, and self-fulfilment at their workplace. It explores if workers feel they can express themselves at work and if their work provides them with self-respect. While this study acknowledges that there is a range of facets and definitions of self-respect, the analysis follows legal definitions for self-respect at the workplace defined by as defined in *Chapter 4: Research Process and Cultural*

Context; hence, interpreting self-respect as an umbrella term encompassing dignity, honour, pride. Moreover, themes relating to this capability aim to outline how family members and peers may perceive what workers do on the shop floor and how it may impact their perception of work.

Lastly, the capability of being protected and treated fairly by the law explores levels of justice, equality, and workers' freedom of choice. While this capability was not directly explored in the interviews but primarily draws from national and international laws and conventions, it informs how union and labour influences shape the workplace in the manufacturing industry. Against this backdrop, the legal framework of employment forms the base for workplace engagement, equally shaping the professional and private lives of shop floor workers.

5.3. Individual Level

5.3.1. Section overview

The previous section introduces case classifications and outlines participants' characteristics that influence people's personal value preferences. With these classifications in mind, the following section seeks to outline six *a priori* themes and presents participant responses that identify subjective value preferences on the individual level. Following a visual representation of relevant themes, the section introduces participants' responses illustrating their attitude and self-efficacy, educational experiences, life capability and experience beyond work, their motivation to work, and their perception of work arrangements and cultures.

5.3.2. Visual representation at the individual level (worker)

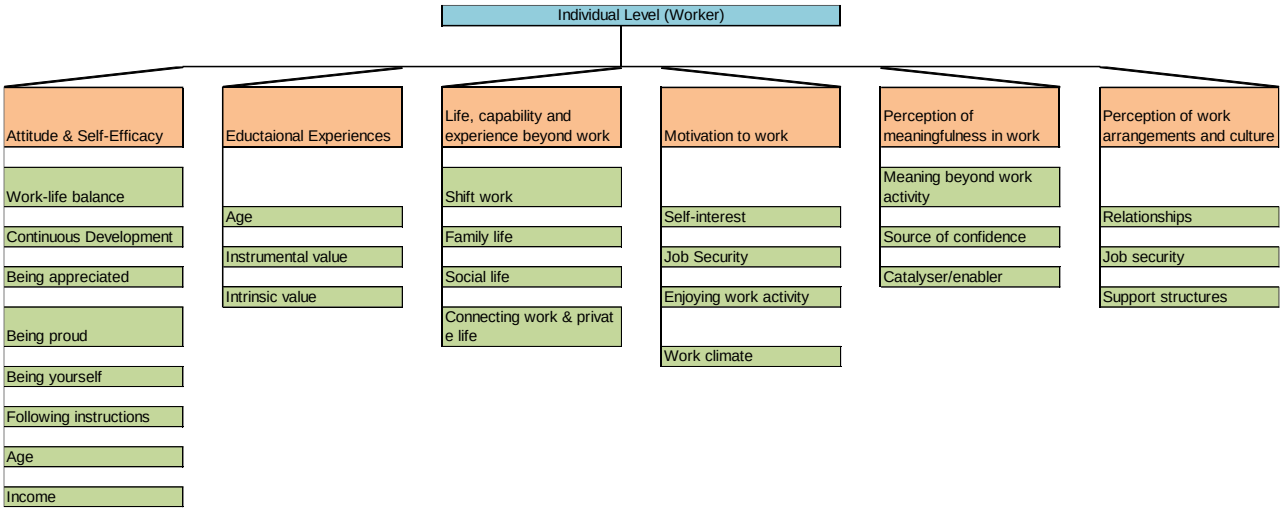

Figure 5.1: Visual representation at the individual level (worker)

5.3.3. Attitude and Self-Efficacy

Past and present experiences – What influences people's thoughts and actions?

The *a priori* theme *Attitude and Self-Efficacy* is deliberately broad and non-prescriptive. It reflects on people's personal experiences and what shapes their general emotional perception of work and their potential goals. In other words, this category outlines candidate's emotional responses to events, places, or changes within their performed work activities. In total, there are 478 references during the interviews that suggest people's states of mind that in turn influence their personal value preferences.

One of the most frequently referenced factors are concerns about people's work-life balance and their ability to separate work from private life; reflecting on people's capability to enjoy individual, social, and family lives. As illustrated by the quotations below, there is an influence between shift work and being able to participate in activities outside work. At the same time, people's thoughts and behaviours towards work were influenced by their private life and their desire to limit either sphere impacting the other.

Some participants saw their private and work lives as separate entities:

> *I mean, this is my private life, and this is my work. These are my colleagues, and this is my home. It's separate and I think it's always better like that. (W01\|C1)*

Others described how they prioritised their private life:

> *These are all things that are rather personal, and it is just that the company simply isn't my first priority anymore. At my age, my private life just comes first. (W24|C2)*

Some workers worked from weekend to weekend:

> *We do have early Friday finishes here. We work longer hours during the week so that we can finish early on a Friday and go into our weekends. That makes it bearable. (W03|C1)*

Others established a direct connection between shift work and their ability to live a full social life:

> *Well, if you work shift there isn't much possibility to have a private life, social life or time for clubs and societies. I mean, you get out of the night shift early in the morning, so you have to sleep and go back to work. (W32|C2)*

Other individual factors influencing how people perceived their work and shaping their attitudes towards work were opportunities for continuous development. For many workers, being able to progress and experiencing support from their organisation created a positive work attitude; hence, instilling a feeling of self-efficacy in workers. In accordance with people's positive perceptions of work development opportunities, people reflected positively on feeling instrumental to the work process or receiving appreciation of their work. These influences on people's attitudes generally resulted in a mind-set of being committed to work and being satisfied with their current work experiences. This often led to an expression of feeling proud and fulfilled by work; relating to the capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities as illustrated by the following quotations.

Some workers highlighted that being proud was a motivating factor to work more:

> *That's what is reflected in everything that I said. I am proud to work here. I can honestly say that. I think it has a positive influence. I think you work more because of it. (W01|C1)*

Others established a connection between their perception and work and the products themselves:

I'm proud of my work. I think what we do here is a high-quality product and the technology on our machines gives us opportunities and the bearings we build here are high quality. (W16|C1)

Some workers took pride in wearing their company logo and associating with their organisation as employer:

They were always very attractive employer and to a certain extent you are proud to wear the company logo. I think it has a very good reputation and is well known, but mostly in our region here. […] I think it is very important to me that you are proud of your work. (W28|C2)

Nonetheless, some participants reported that they used to be proud but following negative experiences with their employer, they struggled to establish a positive connection between themselves, their work, and their employer:

I used to be proud. What changed is that the company makes it quite difficult to identify yourself with it and I think that counts towards self-respect. Everything has become very anonymous. (W15|C1)

Despite expressing positive mind-sets, some workers indicated that their perception of work often related to their attitude best expressed as "doing what you are told" and a general apathy towards their work activities. These perceptions were further related to participants feeling more pressure while losing motivation and actively searching for coping mechanisms such as sports, balancing negative experiences at their workplace. This reflects on workers' capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence, as well as workers' capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

Some participants referred to following instruction as an outcome of relying on managerial decision-making processes:

We have some clever people here that spend all day thinking about how to improve things. I think it is better that other people think about it and I do what I am being told to do at work. (W10|C1)

One of the few female participants highlighted that she followed instructions and offered limited engagement due to a limited sense of belonging:

I don't try to voice my opinion. It is always difficult. I see a lot of things where I'm thinking, you could improve those structures but then I have to remind myself that I actually don't belong here. (W12|C1)

Minor comments from a smaller number of respondents included references to age as a barrier to development, disliking shift work, and people seeking positive work environments between colleagues. It is important to note here that participants over 40 made reference to age as a barrier to their development while participants between 20 and 40 years old showed a tendency to define age as a driver and motivator to see further development opportunities, a point that will be explored at a more in-depth level in relation to the theme educational experiences.

Overall, the *a priori* theme of *Attitude and Self-Efficacy* illustrates how people perceive their work-life balance, if there is a connection between private and personal lives, if people are able to identify work as a source of pride, and their active involvement in shaping the workplace. People's attitudes and sense of self-efficacy suggest people's emotional responses to changes or workplace structures thereby, engaging with how people perceive their work and what may shape their perceptions.

5.3.4. Educational Experiences

Acquiring knowledge and habits based on education

The second *a priori* theme reflects on people's educational experiences. As introduced in the literature review, this theme encompasses people's perception of developing their skills, learning, and the general acquisition of knowledge and habits that influence people's values and beliefs. While educational experiences can take place in formal or informal settings, this theme does not reflect on educational infrastructures at the institutional level but focuses on people's personal educational experiences. Nonetheless, this theme seeks to include formal educational experiences such as completing another degree or informal education and learning experiences such as learning from colleagues. Such educational or learning experiences can have formative effects for people and influence how people think, feel, and act at their workplace.

Throughout the interviews, participants outlined their experiences with taking extra classes to deepen their knowledge. Frequently, workers participated in classes to challenge themselves and to seek additional opportunities to advance their careers. However, even participants that did not seek any further education to advance their careers mentioned the importance of continuous learning. Against this background, participants over the age of 40 frequently referenced to their age and pointed out that their age was a barrier for further development and that they did not perceive educational experiences as valuable to acquire knowledge or shape habits. This reflects on workers' capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

One participant described his age as a barrier and did not see any further benefit or positive opportunity in deepening his educational experiences:

> *I always have my regular work here, but I am kind of stuck in the direction that I am in now. I think I have reached the end of the line and there is no opportunity for me to go any further. I would like to do more, but then again at my age there isn't much of a point. (W05\|C1)*

Other workers outlined how youngers workers tend to have more opportunities to develop skill sets:

> *I mean, I will be retiring soon, and young people always have more opportunities to develop their skill sets. I mean, 58 years old now, that part of my life is done. (W07\|C1)*

Some participants displayed a certain level of regret and that they wished to have taken up more educational opportunities at an earlier point in their career:

> *Maybe I made some mistakes earlier on, where I should have gone back to school or maybe done a Masters'. I don't think I should be climbing the career ladder at 46 years of age. (W10\|C1)*

In contrast, workers in their 20s displayed a higher level of enthusiasm and expressed a desire to take up additional learning opportunities as a means to advance their career:

> *I definitely want to do more. I would like to do my Masters'. Also, so that I could stop working in the three-shift system. (W30\|C2)*

While age did not only influence how participants perceived educational experiences, some participants also expressed regret about not having taken up more educational experiences at an earlier stage in their life. Exploring people's educational choices and their motivation in taking up development opportunities or not, allows for the interpretation that educational experiences may have the potential to influence how people perceive their own work and inform how people perceive their careers as a whole.

In speaking to shop floor workers, it also became clear that if workers did not seek any formal educational opportunities to advance their career, many sought to informally continue their learning experiences in taking up additional responsibilities or learning from colleagues, one example being becoming the company's health and safety representative. This observation is in line with other participants pointing out that being a member of the union offers to them an additional avenue of learning and progressing. In contrast, other participants that did not experience a continuous form of learning frequently underlined that while educational experiences are important to them, they perceived a lack of formal support structures and experienced difficulties in balancing shift work with evening or weekend classes. It is important to acknowledge at this point that this lack of formal support structures may influence how workers perceive their organisation, a point that will be explored at an in-depth level in the section addressing the organisational level.

Other factors influencing how people perceive their educational experiences were if their efforts led to a consequential increase in pay or career progression. Nonetheless, participants with children in the age groups 30-40 and 40-50 often underlined that they sought educational experiences to challenge themselves and to prove to themselves that they could accomplish a task but did not presuppose a pay increase or career advancement. With this in mind, participant answers show that educational experiences provided workers with intrinsic and instrumental values in relation to their capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society; hence, supported their perception of work as a platform for self-realisation as was introduced in *Chapter 2: Human Development and the Concept of Work.*

Some participants indicated that they would wish for their employer to appreciate and acknowledge their work to create motivational incentives:

> *The company does support you and is lenient with a lot of things, but it would be nice if they would acknowledge you and express that they value you through small things like that. Small motivational things. (W32|C2)*

Others related their experiences to challenges and how challenges offered learning opportunities:

> *You learn by asking your colleagues and every day you have new things, new orders you are working on and that's a challenge and that's how you learn. (W08|C1)*

Some participants highlighted that skill development was necessary in response to rising expectations and that there is continuous potential for improvement:

> *With rising expectations, you do develop your skills. I mean, it's always more expected of you and in the area that I work in, I have developed my skills over the years. I think there is always room for more and I have always said that. (W14 C1)*

The instrumental and intrinsic value for workers to seek educational experiences underlines that these experiences influence how workers develop their skills, knowledge and transform habits that can shape how people think, feel, and act at their workplace. Overall, this theme shows that people performing the same work activities exhibit different value preferences for their education. While their perceptions are highly influenced by their life cycle stage, participants frequently exhibited individual ways to learn, improve, and challenge themselves beyond their work activities; hence, formal and informal educational experiences form an integral part of people's work experience and actively shape how workers perceive their workplace.

5.3.5. Life, Capability and Experiences Beyond Work

A life outside the workplace

This theme reflects on people's private lives that contribute to people's sense of identity and often shapes people's order preferences. In light of this, this theme aims to explore what influences people's private, family and social lives. Further, it outlines the reciprocal influences between work and people's lives outside the

workplace. As noted in the literature review, reflecting on people's life outside the workplace and seeking to explore potentially connections or impacts between private and professional lives, may allow for deeper insights into people's behaviour at work, their choices and preferences shaping people's identities and determining people's professional and private lives. These themes encompass people's hobbies, cultural interests and family status to illuminate what activities people engage in during their leisure-time and if they perceive their work to be an influencing factor on their private life or even a factor shaping their lives outside the workplace.

Many participants referred to a perceived connection between their work structure and their leisure time. The work activity itself or heightened stress from work showed a negative impact on workers indicating that they found it challenging to separate their work lives from their private lives. These workers reported that their private lives occasionally impacted their work lives. Participants that were able to separate each sphere of their lives reported a heightened influence of their work structure on their private life such as work weekends or late shifts. With this mind, there is a frequent reference to shift work impacting people's availability for outside work activities. This relates to workers' capability to enjoy individual, social and family life.

One of the most frequently referenced factors impacting life outside work was working in a shift pattern. Some participants highlighted how it could impact their family life and lead to their partners taking on more responsibilities:

> *Working late shifts has a negative influence. Especially when my wife has to go to parent teacher meetings on her home with the two kids. She has to handle everything on her own. (W03\|C1)*

Beside impacting family life, some participants also saw a negative influence between shift work and their social lives:

> *Due to working a three-shift pattern, meeting friends reduced immensely. For me personally, there is a strongly negative influence. (W31\|C2)*

Others outlined that working shifts challenged social and volunteering activities while acknowledging that it was a known factor before entering the work agreement:

> *Because of the late and night shift, it is more difficult to do anything for clubs and societies. There is a negative influence, but you know that beforehand and we all knew what the job would entail. (W34|C2)*

In addition, participants experienced difficulties in combining work, family life, and opportunities to have social contacts outside the workplace:

> *Maybe it is also because we work in production and there isn't a lot of motivation for drinks after work. I mean, the early shift finishes at 2pm, the late on at 10pm, and the night shift at 6am. Especially if you have a family, there isn't much you can do outside of that. (W31|C2)*

Despite a negative influence of shift work limiting people's ability to fully engage in out of work activities, many participants underlined that shift working often offers extra pay, offsetting the negative effects of working shift. However, interviewees reported on a clear negative impact between working shift and engaging in volunteering or outreach activities. Some participants offset negative impacts on their social lives with a stronger connection between colleagues and engaging in social activities with their colleagues in and outside the workplace.

Beside shift work, many interviewees referred to a connection between their family life and their work life. Similar to leisure activities, shift work limits the time that workers can spend with their families. However, many participants underlined that their family life takes first priority within their private lives and that there was a clear preference ordering relating to their capability to enjoy individual, social and family life.

These connections became especially apparent when participants described how work and private life put pressure on each other:

> *I can't really just flick a switch and leave everything at work. I am taking things home and it puts pressure on your family life. (W01|C1)*

Others supported this connection and highlighted how work limited available family time:

> *People that work the late or night shifts don't tend to see their family that often. If the family leaves the house early in morning, just as an example. (W26\|C2)*

Others clearly stated that family life took priority over private life, thereby reducing work activities as means to enable family life:

> *But that has always been the case. Family comes first and the job is just a means to pay the bills at the end. (W12\|C1)*

Workers did acknowledge work adding pressure to their family lives causing a limiting effect on their capabilities beyond work. Overall, a common reference amongst participants was the tendency to prioritise either their work life, family life, or social activities but that there was a clear prioritisation of one of these areas over the others.

Overall, investigating how work activities and work structures influence people's lives outside the workplace contributes to the understanding that work and private spheres are interconnected and based on a reciprocal relationship. Further, it outlines what shapes people's order preferences take and underlines challenges of integrating work, social, and family lives.

5.3.6. Motivation to Work

The underlying drive to act

The *a priori* theme of *Motivation to Work* reflects on a person's action, willingness, and goals when working. As highlighted in the literature review, it is important to acknowledge that motivation is often shaped by a person's surroundings and societal or cultural contexts. With this in mind, motivation becomes an underlying factor that drives people to act at a conscious or subconscious level. Reflecting on motivations to work allows deeper insights into what inspires people to work and what mechanisms change people's perceptions of work.

Many participants underlined that one of the driving factors for them to work was to generate income, allowing for realising their self-interest. The use and purpose of having a regular salary varied and included financially supporting dependents or

financing social lives. However, participants frequently identified that their motivation to work stood in direct relation with their income and their capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

Some participants highlighted how their salary was the primary motivation to work, identifying their salary as mean to fulfil needs outside work:

> *The salary. That's the most important part. It is there so you can feed your family and finance your private life and to secure it. It is all about how much you earn and the job itself is a secondary concern. (W13|C1)*

Other established a link between their salary and fulfilling their self-interest:

> *Well, of course the financial aspect is the first, because you have certain material goals in life. It is how you finance your living. I think that's pretty much it. (W32|C2)*

But participants did not only see income as a facilitator for financing material goals but identified regular salaries as a means enabling their family life:

> *I value most that I have regular salary and that I can feed my family. That's the most important part. (W03|C1)*

This result supports the understanding that for some workers the motivation to work is connected to their self-interest by means of fulfilling their desires. These desires can range from receiving a high salary, to supporting their families, and to financing their social lives which allows for the reading that the motivation to work could be linked to salaries benefiting workers' lives in the workplace. Despite many participants highlighting that income formed an integral part of their motivation to work, some participants outlined that factors such as job security are underlying drivers shaping people's motivation to work. Participants working for Company 1 frequently referred to their company's economic struggles posing a significant risk for job security; hence negatively influencing their motivation to work. They further outlined that an unknown job future could have negative impacts on how they perceive their job and perform their tasks. This stands in relation to their capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

Some workers established a direct link between their happiness, income, and job security:

What would make me happier than a higher salary would be job security. Just so you can tell other people: The company likes to give to its employees, and I can grow old here. (W14|C1)

Others outlined how concerns about job security were present as underlying factors:

Well, I do have a certain level of dismissal protection because I want to retire soon. But you can never be absolutely certain. It's more in the back of your mind. (W19|C1)

In contrast, workers with a permanent contract showed a higher level of confidence in their job security, dismissing the idea that there was an impact:

Luckily, I have a permanent contract, so I don't have to worry at all. (W33|C2)

And workers employed by Company 2 frequently outlined how job security was a motivating factor to continue in their employment, despite negative factors such as working nights:

Let me say it like this: Job security is one of the reasons why a lot of people still work here, despite the night shift. Many of the people working here struggle with the night shift, but they know what the job here gives to them. They know what they have. (W34|C2)

Participants working for Company 2 recurrently described their job as secure and that the company was financially stable. They frequently referred to job security as factor that motivates them to stay in their profession and to continue employment within their organisation. Therefore, the dimensions of what influences people's motivation to work does not only allow insights into people's conscious or subconscious motivations, but further allows insights into how organisations' overall economic performance influences how people perceive their work activity.

Expanding the debate from income levels and job security, participants frequently outlined that enjoying their work activities was of equal importance. This stands in relation to their capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

Some participants described their work activity as fun, establishing a relation between enjoying their work activity and having a varied range of work tasks:

Everything is fun. Because I am the stand-in for many machines, it is very varied. It means you don't do the same thing every day. There is always something new. It makes it varied and it makes it fun. It is not as monotonous. (W16|C1)

Others underlined that their work activity should be satisfying, indicating that their primary motivation for work was the work activity in itself:

It needs to satisfy me. For me personally, the priority isn't that you get you pay cheque at the end of the month, but your work needs to be acknowledged and you need to be content. (W17|C1)

Some participants indicated that enjoying their work activity had a high priority in their life and that they regarded as essential in performing their work duties:

That I enjoy what I do. That every morning I like coming into work. That is something that is very, very important to me and if I ever stop enjoying coming here, that is when I would start to worry. (W27|C2)

One participant highlighted that enjoying their work activities allowed him to deepen his understanding of work processes:

That's especially important for when you are trying to optimize something, […] you need to know what happens before and after each process and that is something that I do now, and I enjoy it. (W26|C2)

Additional participants established a relation between a feeling of pride and enjoying their work activity, indicating this perception shaped their underlying motivation to work:

That's reflected in everything that I have said, the motivation with which I go to work, I am proud to work here. I can honestly say that. I think that it has a positive influence. I think you work more because of it. I think you are more productive. (W14|C1)

Looking at further evidence from the interview data, it becomes clear that there was not one factor determining if workers enjoyed their work activities, but that each individual worker highlighted how their experiences determined if they enjoyed the work or not. These drivers were shaped by the individual's value preferences, life outside the workplace and by what they perceived as their highest priority in life.

In addition to income, job security, and an enjoyable work activity, participants underlined that their working environment was equally influential for their motivation. This stands in relation with their capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities and their capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect

Having a positive working environment often influenced how sociable people were at work and if they preferred to keep their work life and private life separate. Participants often mentioned that the working climate determined their overall perception of their job and organisation. With this in mind, evaluating people's motivation to work allows for valuable interpersonal comparisons of why people feel motivated to work and what might hinder their motivation.

Some interviewees outlined the importance of a positive working climate and portrayed their perspective as generally accepted standard amongst workers:

> *It's quite clear, what is important to me is the salary and then the working climate. Classic. (W28|C2)*

Others equated a positive working climate with positive working relationships between colleagues:

> *What do I value most? For me personally, that you get on with your colleagues. That the work climate is right and that you enjoy what you're doing. (W05|C1)*

One participant highlighted how working climates can impact life outside work, influencing their mood and behaviour in their private life:

> *A good working climate. So that you don't get up in the morning and you start sulking because you need to go to work. So that you don't have to say: urgh, I've got to go there again. (W16|C1)*

Overall, the motivation to work is a reflection on each worker's underlying drive to act and to successfully perform their work activities. Despite this theme allowing valuable insights into workers' experiences, the supporting evidence from the interview data highlights the theme's subjectivity, allowing for the thematic grouping into self-interest, job security, enjoying the work activity, and having a positive working climate.

5.3.7. Perception of Meaningfulness in Work

Is there meaning in work beyond income?

The *a priori* theme *Perception of Meaningfulness in Work* reflects on how workers perceive their work. Akin to the review in chapters 2 and 3, it aims to allow insights into how workers determine the purpose or significance of their work and if they perceive a connection between meaningfulness at work and general life satisfaction. With this in mind, workers can either find meaning in their work itself or attach meaning to what work enables them to do. The perception of meaningfulness in work takes into account that people can establish individual links between meaning in work and their private lives. As a consequence, exploring the meaningfulness in work enables people to outline if work can be meaningful beyond income generation and if people's perception of meaningfulness at work changes with their experiences and life cycle stages.

Participants described that meaningfulness in work often relates to work becoming a source for self-identification and self-confidence. It connects work with how people think about themselves and how satisfied or fulfilled they are in life. It shows that meaningfulness in work often stretches beyond the work activity itself and influences how people feel; hence, reflecting on workers' capability to enjoy individual, social and family life.

Some participants highlighted that the meaning beyond their performed work activity and income were important factors for their overall perception of work:

> *It means a lot to me. It's not like I'm dreaming of this at night or during my free time, but it means a lot to me. I'd say it is important that you feel fulfilled. How much you earn is important too but it's not the primary factor for me. Maybe that's connected with me earning quite a lot here. (W11\|C1)*

Others indicated that work and its meaning was important to them due to its centrality in their lives:

> *I think it has a lot of meaning to me. At the end of the day, you spend more time with your colleagues at work than with your friends or family. Especially because we are working on Saturdays and we're working shift. (W33\|C2)*

Some participants established that work impacted their lives outside the workplace, underlining the importance of a positive perception of work:

> *Work is important and it influences your entire environment. I mean, if you don't have a job, you are unsatisfied, and it reflects negatively on your family and probably also on your social circle. (W09|C1)*

The evidence from the interview data shows that workers who did not see income as their primary source for meaningfulness but also often reported their income as high and sufficient. Additionally, the interview scripts underscored that perceived meaningfulness in work is not a static construct but evolving and may be shaped by the individual's experiences in and outside the workplace; thereby shaping what workers perceived as meaningful in their private and work lives.

In addition, some workers reported how the work activity itself provided them with meaning and became a source of confidence or pride, allowing valuable insights into how the work activity may contribute to workers' capability of being themselves, expressing yourself, and having self-respect.

Several interviewees noted that their work activity was a source of appreciation and indicated a desire to be acknowledged and appreciated:

> *It would be nice to hear if they are happy with the work you are doing here. That you are reliable, and they give you some good feedback. Just being acknowledged and appreciated would be nice. (W10|C1)*

Additional participants established a connection between being appreciated and feeling proud:

> *I think you should always be proud of your work. To be honest, I never really thought about something like that. I work, I've got my income and that's it and that's good. The products I make are always needed. I think you should be able to be proud of your work, regardless if you are doing things that I do or if you are in management. You should always be proud. (W03|C1)*

Others had a more neutral point of view:

> *I like working here, my work is being appreciated, I have great colleagues, but I think [the term] pride or self-respect is too strong. (W26|C2)*

Further interviewees identified their work activity as a source of appreciation and established a connection to their sense of purpose:

> *What I value most about my job is that I am having fun. That you can see your success, that you are appreciated and that what you do makes sense and has purpose. (W20|C1)*

Participants outlined that meaningfulness in work is related to workers being acknowledged and perceiving their work activity not only as a source for self-confidence but as a source of purpose. This sense of purpose and self was often related to people enjoying their work and expressing a sense of pride in their work. In light of this, participants underlined that meaningfulness in work reflects directly on performed work activities and centres on people's perception of purpose.

The theme underlines the importance of fair compensation. Workers frequently referred to income being a primary source for meaningfulness in work. This source for meaningfulness often reflects on a link between people's work lives and private lives as well as their capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

Several participants underscored a connection between age, income, and prioritising family life, indicating that perceptions can change over time and with life cycle stages:

> *At my age, my private life just takes a higher priority. I mean, 20-25 years ago, you went to work because you needed the income and you had a different vision. You knew that you had to keep developing your skills and that it will take some time. Today, I focus on other things. (W18|C1)*

Some workers acknowledged that income was a primary motivator and that they perceived their work as a means to an end:

> *Because I can finance my life with my job. It's rather a means to an end. (W13|C1)*

Others identified their income as their primary objective and showcased their perception as standard perception amongst workers:

> *Principally, I like my job, but you do go to work primarily to earn money and that is obviously everyone's priority. (W09|C1)*

One participant highlighted that the manufacturing industry was offering comparatively high wages:

> *We do complain at a very high level, especially regarding our salary. They pay you well here, it doesn't matter if it's on the shop floor or on the administrative side. (W29|C2)*

Evidence from the interview data shows several participants outlining how income generation and receiving a fair salary at the end of the month is one of highest sources of meaningfulness in work. It reflects on people perceiving their job as a means to an end and underlines that workers continue to place high value on income generation when looking for meaningfulness in work.

Continuing the conversation from meaningfulness through income generation, many interviewees outlined that they saw meaningfulness in work in what enabled them to do beyond the performed work activity. It relates to their capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities and their capability to enjoy individual, social and family life.

Several workers saw work as a means and catalyser to support their families:

> *Which means that this is how I take care of my family. It is very important to me, mostly financially. (W10|C1)*

Others described work as a means to support a life outside the workplace:

> *It means a lot to me. Not just because I can finance my life with it. I work a lot and I like my work. I enjoy it and it means a lot to me. (W02|C1)*

Some participants highlighted that they perceived work as their basis for their life in and outside the workplace:

> *It means a lot to me. It's how I earn money. It's how I afford to live, and it's how I'm able to feed my family. I mean family is my first priority, that's clear. But the job means a lot to me. It's the basis for your life. (W09|C1)*

Others identified work as a catalyser to finance their lifestyles, highlighting that their line of work and employer is providing them with an appropriate salary:

> *On the one hand, work is how you earn money, especially when you're earning good money such as they pay you here. You can*

afford some things that you couldn't afford otherwise or in a different line of work. (W29|C2)

The supporting evidence shows that workers often saw meaning in their work as the financial base for their private lives. Work and the subsequent income enabled workers to take care of their families, finance hobbies, and define their standard of living. In light of this, meaningfulness in work is often related with income generation that forms the basis for people's private lives. It underlines that workers see their work as an important part of their lives, allowing a snapshot of their level of overall life satisfaction.

In reviewing the data, it becomes clear that workers had varying perceptions of meaningfulness in work; hence the same work activity can have different meaning to individual workers. It outlines that there are no singular drivers that determine meaningfulness in work and that they should not be seen in isolation but rather as an interrelated and complex system of value preference connecting and forming the basis for people's work lives and private lives.

5.3.8. Perception of Work Arrangements and Culture

How organisations define the perception of work

The last *a priori* theme is *Perception of Work Arrangements and Culture.* As noted in the literature review, this theme reflects on how workers perceive their organisation's structures, working climate, regulations, and guidelines. It aims to present findings outlining if workers perceived a contrast between their personal attitudes and values and their organisation's values, ideologies, and principles. For example, it evaluates if workers who place a high priority on their family life perceived their workplace as supportive and welcoming or rather as a hindrance to what workers perceived as important in their lives. The theme evaluates how worker's reflected on workplace structures such as shift work or workplace culture such as offering family summer festivals, and if they identified these factors as important for their work life. Against this backdrop, the perception of work arrangements and culture allows valuable insights into the compatibility of people's personal and organisational values, traditions, and interactions on a conscious or subconscious level.

In looking at the participants' answers, it becomes clear that participants frequently mentioned the importance of having a positive working climate. This relationship reflects on workers' personal relationships between colleagues as well as how comfortable people felt in approaching their superiors and voicing their opinion. It stands in connection with their capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect.

Several interviewees highlighted that they especially valued their relationship with other colleagues:

> *Some people you get on with better, some people you get on with worse. I don't think, personally, I have bigger arguments with people. It's always important to have nice colleagues. (W03\|C1)*

Some workers outlined that they valued being able to express themselves freely without fearing repercussions:

> *You can always voice your opinion here. If someone takes you up on your advice, well that's a different story. No. You can say what you want, and I appreciate it. (W11\|C1)*

Others indicated that being part of a team formed an integral part of their workplace perception:

> *Being part of a team and thinking for yourself is a requirement for working here. (W27\|C2)*

Another participant highlighted that he valued his relationship with his colleagues and characterised it as working together:

> *I am a very helpful person and if I see a colleague that needs an extra hand, I will try to help them and that is something that my colleagues appreciate here, and I expect it vice versa. (W22\|C1)*

The supporting evidence shows that the relationship between colleagues and workers and superiors impacted how participants perceived their workplace. The perception of workplace cultures and arrangements often followed people's attitude and values determining the level of interconnection between their private and work lives. Participants further outlined that their relationship with colleagues and superiors influenced their overall motivation and attitudes towards work. Based on the interview data above, exploring relationships between colleagues allowed noteworthy insights into the deeper perception of workplace culture and

arrangements, highlighting that workplace culture and relations should not be seen in isolation but as factors influencing workers' overall motivation and general attitude to work.

Expanding the conversation from relationships between colleagues, the interview data underscores that people's perception of the workplace changed depending on their perceived level of job security; standing in relation to their capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

Some people underscored how working in a globalised industry can undermine a feeling of job security, impacting their perception of workplace culture:

> *You never know what is going to happen next month. We've seen it here. Dismantling an entire workstation only takes one and a half days and within three days it's set up in the Czech Republic. It shows you how quickly things can happen here and that you can't rely on anything these days. (W01\|C1)*

Others established a relation between job security and their immediate perception of workplace arrangements:

> *It's the company itself, the way it is being run, and because you don't have a clear statement regarding the direction we're heading into. That is something I struggle with very much. (W22\|C1)*

In contrast, workers employed by Company 2 frequently negated the importance of job security in their perception of work:

> *I have never thought about job security. It's not even something that is in the back of my mind. (W33\|C2)*

The interview data shows that job security does not only influence people's motivation to work, but also shapes perception of work arrangements and work culture; thereby interlinking people's perception of organisational structures with a company's economic performance. Therefore, the perception of work arrangements and culture should not be seen in isolation but allows valuable insights in how organisations can influence individual people's values and attitudes toward work, a point that will be explored at a deeper level in the following section exploring the organisational level.

Widening the analysis from relationships with colleagues and levels of job security, another emerging theme influencing the perception of workplace arrangements and culture is a company's support structures. This theme does not refer to formal support structures that organisations may offer but focuses on how people perceive these structures and if they influence people's overall perception of organisational values and interactions. This stands in connection with their capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

Several workers identified wider supporting structures within their organisation as influencing factors:

> *If we go back to doing your Masters', you do get some support from the company. For example, they sometimes free you from working the three-shift system. Otherwise it would be really difficult to go back to school. (W26\|C2)*

Others highlighted that despite a lack of financial support structures, their organisation did offer support when employees were seeking to continue their education:

> *I see a lot of people here going back to school and as far as I know, the company does not support you financially, but is accommodating. You can always find a compromise or arrangement that works. (W33\|C2)*

In contrast, some participants highlighted a lack of established support structures, that they would like more support, and how this negatively impacted their perception of workplace arrangements:

> *It would be nice if the company would support you a bit more and it would be nice if you could do more things. (W12\|C1)*

The interview data shows that organisational structures influence how people perceive their workplace arrangements and cultures. Participants outlined that supporting structures made them feel more connected to the company and there was a more positive overall perception of companies if workers felt supported in endeavours such as learning.

Overall, the perception of workplace arrangements and culture shows that employee attitudes and outlooks can be influenced by relationships between colleagues and superiors, perceived levels of job security, and overall supporting

structures. It allows insights into how people's personal attitudes connect with organisational values and how it impacts people's subjective understanding of their work activities and expectations.

5.3.9. Section summary

Presenting participant results at the individual level allows for noteworthy insights into what people value. It highlights how their perspectives, desires or beliefs change in accordance with their value preferences, and how these might affect people's capabilities in and outside the workplace. In addition to these insights, the individual level enables the analysis to identify what shapes people's goals or needs and how they connect with organisational structures, allowing interpretations about how to expand people's choices and create real opportunities at the workplace. Taking the findings into consideration, outlining results at an individual level reflects on the breadth and depth of factors influencing HD in organisations and underlines that many themes such as *Attitude and Self-Efficacy* and *Motivation to Work* are connected; thus, underscoring how emerging themes at the individual level should not be seen in isolation but in association with each other.

5.4. Organisational Level

5.4.1. Section Overview

The second level of analysis is the organisational level. The organisational level aims to illuminate formal and informal structures and arrangements within the workplace, as illustrated by participating organisations. It seeks to reflect on how these structures influence workers' capabilities and impact HD in organisations. With this objective in mind, the following section seeks to present finding at the organisational level from the perspective of the workforce, informing potential connections between the individual workers and their workplace structures. In contrast, *Chapter 6: Results of Phase 2 Interviews* explores similar themes but explores the organisational level and their impact on the workforce from a managerial and organisational point of view. Taking this objective into consideration, the following level encompasses views on key structures and operations, the underlying philosophy of economic and working life, skill formation and arrangement structures, work organisation and design, as well as workplace relations and cultures. A visual representation of the results on the organisational

level can be found at the beginning of this section, followed by a detailed outline of the findings.

5.4.2. Visual representation at the organisational level (worker)

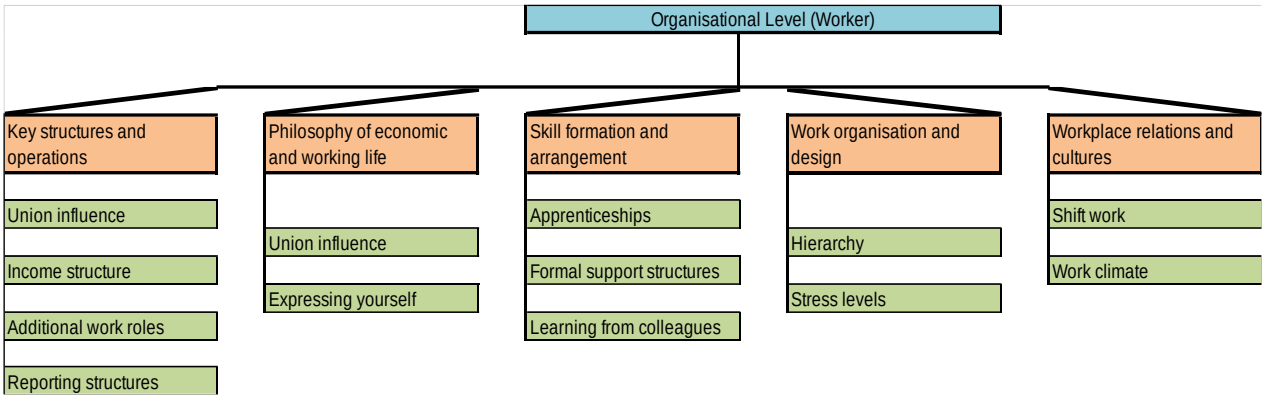

Figure 5.2: Visual representation at the organisational level (worker)

5.4.3. Key Structures and Operations

Setting the context for work

The first *a priori* theme at the organisational level is *Key Structures and Operations*. This theme reflects on how shop floor workers perceive hierarchies, networks, and structures of Company 1 and 2 and aims to identify commonalities and differences between the participating companies. With this in mind, it seeks to illuminate how individual parts of each participating organisation interrelate with each other. Despite some of the findings being interrelated with findings at the individual level, the following sections seeks to present how people's experiences may shape organisational structures. Nonetheless, the study acknowledges that key structures and operations are traditionally formal or informal structures that workers are not able to actively shape but have to operate within its set boundaries.

One of the most influencing factors that determine key structures and operations are binding union agreements that are valid throughout the metal working industry. Agreements between the union and employers outline the majority of key structures and standardise shift work agreements, pay grades, and decision-making mechanisms for shop floor workers. This stands in relation to their capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

A component of collective agreements is the establishment of maximum work hours, resulting in the IG Metall agreeing to a 35-hour work week for shop floor

workers; hence, some workers indicated their appreciation and positive valuation of such work arrangements:

> *I mean, we have a 35-hour work week. Everyone needs to remember that. I mean, yes, the IG Metall advertised for a 35-hour week, but I mean you have to think about it, who is still able to only work 35 hour a week? (W17|C1)*

Collective agreements further set out shift structures and organisations seek to implement shift schedules based on these agreements. This formalised work context allows for each shop floor worker to experience similar working conditions across organisations:

> *This week I have an early shift from 6am-2pm and then next week we go into night shift from 10pm-6am and then there is your late shift from 2pm-10pm. It means that every day, you are at work for 8 hours, but we are only contracted for 35. It means that every week they credit your account with 5 extra hours, it's 20 hours over month which means 3 additional days of annual leave per month so an extra 30 days a year. (W23|C2)*

Other participants highlighted that agreements further regulate overtime and that working overtime was voluntary:

> *Working overtime is always on a voluntary basis. I choose it. You don't have to. I mean, sometimes they say you do, but not really. (W24|C2)*

Some participants underscored that collective agreements and unions do not only regulate work hours but also regulate weekend work and strengthen the worker's autonomy in choosing his or her overtime structure:

> *We do work Saturdays, at least twice a month. You can also start work on Sundays on a voluntary basis. It is voluntary but Saturdays at least once or twice a month. (W30|C2)*

The results show that shift work is regulated in a three-shift system with a 21-week rotation. The 35-hour work week can be expanded to a 40-hour work in working additional Saturday shifts that in turn can be converted into overtime leading to additional annual leave. The supporting evidence shows that there are industry-wide standards guiding organisation's key structures and operations. It outlines the centrality of shift work in the German manufacturing industry and how they are formed by unions, WCs consisting of union members, and collective agreements between unions and employers of the metal working industry in Germany.

Following on from the union's influence in shaping work structures, unions also have the power to determine the level of pay each worker receives. This ensures that each worker across the industry is paid at a comparable level with comparable working conditions, work patterns, and work hours. This stands in connection with their capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

Some participants identified how unions shaped income structures and that pay grades in the metal-working industry are high in comparison with other industries:

> *ERA[3] 8,9 or even 10. People are 4 grades higher than they would be anywhere else. (W17|C1)*

Others highlighted that despite the formal structures guided by collective agreements, organisations had the flexibility to adapt their income structures:

> *We also get the work on Saturdays credited. It is overtime but we get the hours credited onto our accounts. You can take them as flexitime or get paid for them. (W34|C2)*

Some participants highlighted the individuality of income structures and that their perception may differ from others:

> *The pay is decent and justified. Comfortable always depends on your own definition. I don't live badly; it would be wrong to say that, but it could always be more. (W20|C1)*

Evidence from the interviews shows that standardized payment structures allow people a clearer reflection on their income levels and comparability between work salaries; hence, allowing for a higher level of transparency and supporting a communal feeling across the workforce. 33 out of 34 participants outlined that they perceived their level of income either as high or justified and that the majority of workers see the comparatively high ERA grades as a form of compensation for negative key structures such as having to work shift.

[3] ERA is the salary grade scale and spine point structure in the metal working industry as outlined in the collective agreement between the IG Metall and the employer's union. It can have regional differences but always consists of a base salary, performance salary and additional stress allowance for work forms such as shift work or hot working environments such as electroplating.

In addition to income structures and shift work, participants frequently referenced to other work roles in addition to their standard employment when reflecting on key structures. This related to their capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

Some participants outlined that in addition to their contracted work activities, they were members of the WC, actively shaping company policies and strategy decisions:

> *I have been part of the WC for 12 years and it forms you. (W01|C1)*

Several workers supplemented their work by means of volunteering for representative roles such as safety officer:

> *I mean, I am also one of the safety officers here, which means that you have totally different areas in which you have to look at the entirety of the production area and if I notice something, I have to mention it in the committee meeting and they listen to you here. (W14|C1)*

Other workers highlighted that their engagement outside their regular work activity formed part of their career development:

> *The way I have structured my own career is with being on the WC and being a trust emissary, I had to go to a lot of seminars. (W22|C1)*

In addition, participants outlined that accepting additional work roles supported by the trade associations such as safety officers, further offered opportunities of deepening one's knowledge and expanding skill sets outside the workplace:

> *Not only on a professional level. I have also been asked to step up as work safety commissioner. That normally entails several workshops and seminars per year as well, but that is all managed through the trade association. (W02|C1)*

Seeking additional representative roles often determined if workers felt challenged in their work and enjoyed their work activities. It forms an integral role of working structures and operations within the German manufacturing industry and guides key structures for employees in production. From this perspective, many participants experienced a higher level of exposure to the company supporting a heightened feeling of participation and belonging.

During the interviews of Phase I, participants frequently referred to the importance of reporting structures. Organisations within the manufacturing industry are able to design individual reporting structures that in turn define the level of engagement between the organisation as an entity and the worker as an individual. This relates to their capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

Some participants highlighted the importance of cohesiveness amongst the workforce:

> *We are more compact now and I hope that we have finally reached the stage win which we can look safely towards the future and that our parent company is under the same impression. (W14|C1)*

Others outlined how transparent workplace communication may contribute to their motivation to work:

> *Now in my new team, it is a bit different and it is more motivating. For example, your superiors are talking to you at the same level and don't look down on you. (W32|C2)*

In contrast, participants highlighted how reporting and communication methods may be perceived as ineffective if there is no perceived impact:

> *I liked that, he told us in a smaller circle, because we have round table meetings now. That's something new that the management loves but it is trash because no one lives by it. (W17 C1)*

Others indicates that they questioned the effectiveness of such formal structures:

> *You will be heard if you can backup and justify your opinion, that's ok, but if you can actually change something with what you have said, because we are part of a bigger corporation, is always questionable. (W20|C1)*

Another participant indicated that a key structure in workplace communication was their relation to their managers and how the lack of such relations may impact them:

> *I mean, we are currently not reporting directly to anyone since we don't have a production manager since the old one left. (W06|C1)*

Exploring the interview data outlines how interviewees often spoke positively about their organisation if they defined the reporting structures as clear and direct. Many

participants underlined a positive perception of reporting structures if they could speak to supervisors directly and if it was possible for them to voice their opinion. Nonetheless, participants that had negative experiences with reporting structures if they felt like their opinions were not acknowledged, often dismissing that their participation appeared to have value. Taking this into consideration, participants with negative perceptions frequently defined income generation as their primary work motivation, had a strong appreciation for following clear instructions, and did not see value in engaging with key structures at a deeper level.

Overall, key structures and operations have a direct influence in how workers perceive their work activities and their level of engagement. The interviews support the interpretation that work structures, payment structures, additional roles within the organisation, and workplace communication determine how shop floor workers perceived their organisation' key structures. In light of this, the first *a priori* theme reflects on the boundaries in which workers operate, how workers can actively engage and shape their workplace; hence, allowing insights into the mechanisms through which the organisation can impact the individual worker.

5.4.4. Philosophy of Economic and Working Life

Traditions, institutions, conventions – What shapes people's perception?

The *a priori* theme *Philosophy of Economic and Working Life* aims to reflect on people's perspectives, behaviours or values that are not shaped by the work activity itself, but by its wider context. As outlined in the *Chapter 2: Human Development and the Concept of Work*, traditions, institutions, or industrial conventions can influence how people perceive their work and what subsequently defines standards and norms within their work life. Against this backdrop, this section seeks to present the workers' perspective on institutions and processes shaping organisations and how they shape the underlying behaviour of people within the workplace. The underlying philosophy of economic and working life influences people's perceptions and outlines the operational context for organisations.

One of the strongest underlying influences for the economic and working life was the continuous and long-established influence of unions such as the IG Metall.

Participants outlined how being part of a union strengthened the feeling of belonging amongst shop floor workers. At the same time, being part of a union allows workers to rely on established structures that define the context of each work activity. This relates to their capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence and their capability of being protected and treated fairly by the law.

Several participants referenced their particular role within the WC, influencing internal structures:

> *I'm a union workplace representative of the IG Metall lower Saxony. My colleagues and the WC here in this company asked me if I would be interested so I started on the WC and then switched to the union. (W04|C1)*

Others outlined how their professional and personal skill sets were positively shaped by their union membership:

> *On a personal level, I progressed because of my work as trust emissary with the IG Metall and the WC. I definitely progressed a lot and I am more confident than I used to be. (W22|C1)*

Some interviewees highlighted their perception of unions and how they are able to shape key organisational structures such as income structures:

> *I mean there are a lot of companies that will pay you significantly less. I mean this is the metal working industry after all and we're part of the collective agreements. (W10|C1)*

Taking the above into consideration, union membership influences and shapes the underlying philosophy of economic and working life and outlines how people think, their traditions, and habits that go beyond the organisation itself but are common within the industry and geographic setting as a whole.

The interview data underlines that participants either defined their work and private lives as clearly separate, mixed by necessity, or saw that there was a connection, frequently resulting in colleagues socialising with each other outside the workplace. Despite these perceptions often being informed by people's personal experiences and contexts outside the workplace, many participants established connections between their private and professional lives as shaped by the organisation itself. Underlying organisational factors shaping the philosophy of economic and working

life included to what extent employees identified with the organisation which may be shaped by engaging with union structures, and to what extent organisations enabled opportunities for the workforce to socialise in the workplace such as workplace football teams. These reflections support the interpretation that engaging with the philosophy of economic and working life at the organisational level may offer valuable insights into underlying social norms driving the behaviour of the workforce, shaping the organisation as a workplace.

5.4.5. Skill Formation and Arrangement

From apprenticeship to Masters' – the process of acquiring skills

The *a priori* theme *Skill Formation and Arrangement* reflects on how people learn, acquire skills and deepen their knowledge. As highlighted in the literature review, it presents workers' perspectives on the process of obtaining new skills or modifying existing skills and what influences their learning process. It is important to acknowledge here that skill formation and arrangement can happen under formal structures and guidelines such as completing vocational certifications or are subject to informal guidelines such as colleagues learning from each other without acquiring a formal certificate. In light of this, skill formation and arrangement encompass learning from a single event or experiences as well as skill formation as a continuous process that draws from repeated experiences over time. Presenting workers' perspectives on skill formation and arrangements allows valuable insights into what people think influences them and how people perceive formal learning structures as provided by the participating organisations.

In contrast to Company 1, Company 2 had a long-established history of offering apprenticeship programmes. This resulted in four out of 12 participants employed by Company 2 having completed their first vocational degree at Company 2 before entering permanent employment at Company 2. In light of this, skill formation in Company 2 showed a deep connection with formal vocational training at the workplace and several participants outlined that they perceived their apprenticeships as primary continuous platform for their skill formation. During their apprenticeships, participants positively acknowledged a high level of company support in acquiring skills and knowledge relevant to their work activity; thus, allowing for reflections on formal learning structures. In comparison, participants

employed by Company 1 reported a high level of dependence on informal learning structures such as observing other workstations or exchanging ideas with other colleagues. Overall, the *a priori* theme reflects on worker's capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society and their capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

Some participants underlined that especially younger workers received an increased level of educational support, deepening their skill levels:

> *We went on educational trips and even today, the company still does a lot to support young people in this company. (W32|C2)*

Others indicated that their apprenticeship offered them a platform for career progression:

> *I first did my apprenticeship here and then last year started on a regular contract. (W25|C2)*

By contrast, some workers noted that their skill formation may have increased during their apprenticeship, but that some of their acquired skill only have limited applicability in their daily work:

> *If I am looking back at what I learned during my apprenticeship, most of it I don't really need any more for the work that I am doing now. (W33|C2)*

The supporting evidence shows that participants showed a positive appreciation of skill formation structures and a heightened learning environment during their apprenticeship. However, participants further underlined that past their apprenticeship they experienced a reduced level of organisational support in skill formation and arrangement structures. Despite several participants identifying their apprenticeship as a platform for their knowledge development, some participants highlighted that their motivation to engage with skill formation opportunities may decrease if they did not perceive acquired skills as useful and beneficial. It supports the understanding that many participants only sought to explore additional learning opportunities if there was organisational support, a clearly defined goal, and workers could identify benefits of their skill development.

Some workers indicated that their progress depended on self-initiative:

Everyone has to keep going and sometimes I have to ask someone above me for expert advice. (W12|C1)

Others would welcome stronger and formalised support from their organisations:

There is definitely room to improve. It would be nice if the company would push you a bit more and support you. (W13|C1)

Several workers outlined that they sought out ongoing education opportunities and completed various educational programmes, independently of their organisation:

I went back to school and did my Masters' but that was already 10 years ago. Unfortunately, it didn't help me progress my career due to whatever reason. (W32|C2)

Interviewee's answers underline that workers were willing to seek additional learning opportunities but often did not know where to find them. A lack of formal learning opportunities was consistent in both participating companies; thus, many participants saw the role of an organisation to provide more skill formation opportunities and to actively encourage workers to continue their education, a viewpoint that will be contrasted by the results of the managerial interviews.

In contrast to the organisations' formal learning structures, interviewees placed a heightened emphasis on informal support structures such as learning from their colleagues and their respective experiences within the industry and the organisation. This stands in relation to their capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society, and their capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

Several workers underscored that informal learning arrangements formed key organisational structures:

Everyone can get involved. It links to all the improvement suggestions you can make. People then get together and talk about it as well. I think everyone has that option. (W14|C1)

Others indicated a limited range of formal support and a close alignment of colleagues teaching each other:

If you show interest and express some curiosity, the colleagues here will explain a lot to you. […] The company didn't help at all. (W17|C1)

Several participants outlined how colleagues worked together and how skill arrangements can impact teamwork:

> *If you have several people saying the same thing […] your voice is being heard and things are put into motion. You just need to talk to your colleagues. Of course, there can be different opinions amongst colleagues. […] That's when you have to see and compromise. (W26\|C2)*

Further, interviewees noted how the lack of formal structures may impact their overall work performance:

> *I mean, I mostly learned from my colleagues. In the beginning I had one seminar but that's about it […] We have to make all the decisions, but we don't know if they are right or wrong, and for a lot of them we don't have the educational background. (W15\|C1)*

The interview data shows that organisations frequently rely on an informal learning environment between workers to deepen their level of experience and to acquire new knowledge. Despite informal skill formation structures having the potential to strengthen a positive working climate and encourage workers to socialise with each other, informal learning environments are not controlled by organisations and the experiences that one worker passes on to another draw exclusively from people's experiences; thereby bearing the inherent risk of passing on incorrect information or negative habits from one generation to the next or being subject to adaptive preferences. These risks will be further explored in relation to the managerial perspective on the workplace and how informal structures impact the overall working climate and workforce performance.

Overall, skill formation and arrangement are an important feature in determining workers' perspectives on their learning process and environment. The results show that formal learning structures can form the base level of knowledge and skill but that a lack of formal organisational support can lead to a heightened importance of informal learning between colleagues, subject to the individual's experience, motivation, and goal.

5.4.6. Work Organisation and Design

Formal and informal structures

The *a priori* theme *Work Organisation and Design* reflects on how workers perceive the formal work design structures within participating organisations. As noted in the literature review, it takes a systemic view on how work activities are compartmentalised and how the individual components interact. These interactions may become apparent in exploring how work and workers needs may have shifted over time, influencing the creation of new positions and the long-term development of work structures. Exploring these structures allows for additional insights into the worker perception and potential impact of formal and informal workplace structures.

Interviewees underlined that the *a priori* theme *Work Organisation and Design* is often influenced by a strict hierarchical order within the organisations. While there are opportunities for employees to voice their opinion via roundtable discussions or suggestion boxes, the extent of these opportunities is often not regulated by the wider organisation but by the management level. With this in mind, the management level defines work structures and work design for shop floor workers which can often shape workers' perceptions of their role within the organisation. This relates to their capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy as well as their capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect.

Some workers highlighted how formal structures offered opportunities for the workforce to voice their opinion, but further acknowledged the limitations of such methods:

> *There are some formal structures like round table discussions and writing minutes, but your options are always rather limited, because like I said, we are only few people. It's ok as it is. The potential for success though is rather limited, you have to be realistic here. (W20\|C1)*

Others indicated that a lack of a formal HR department and general HR management duties forming part of line managers might have a negative effect on workplace performance:

I think it could be a bit more intense. Due to the fact that we don't really have employee development programme here. That is connected to the issue that we don't have our own HR team here. So, there is a lot of space to improve in terms of what they could offer. (W11|C1)

Several participants indicated that work organisation and design were closely related to the product range and prescribed by the wider industry context:

Of course, your workstation is dependent on the product you're making and the team you are in. You can't go completely crazy with that. We do have to follow certain specifications. […] To be honest I wouldn't have a problem if all of my tasks were prescribed and instructed. To be fair, I'm not really familiar with other structures, here is what I'm used to. (W29|C2)

In contrast, some participants highlighted the importance of engaging with their workplace and their appreciation for actively shaping the design of their workplace:

If I say I want to move my table to this side, I can. I'm quite free when it comes to that and no one would be blocking such things. This is quite important to me. (W07|C1)

Taking the evidence above into account, exploring work organisation and designs enables insights into how formal or informal structures have the potential to shape the workplace and where workers perceive a lack of formal support. In light of this, many workers indicated a preference for a formalised work context. The responses above further highlight that employees identified opportunities to voice their opinion or to engage with work organisation and design as beneficial exercises, if there was a visible influence between formal and informal structures and workers felt that their perspective was seen as active contributions by the organisation.

5.4.7. Workplace Relations and Cultures

Organisational dimensions influencing work climate

The *a priori* theme *Workplace Relations and Cultures* reflects on how organisations aim to foster a positive working climate amongst workers. Akin to explorations in the literature review, it encompasses a variety of dimensions such as workload, job security, shift work, and perception of colleagues. At the same time, the theme reflects on how people perceive their workplace relations and cultures and if there is a potential aggregative impact on people's motivation, effectiveness, and willingness to cooperate with others in relation with formal and informal

organisational structures fostering a supportive workplace structure within organisations.

Evaluating the theme, participants frequently referred to shift work as having a high impact on morale amongst the workforce and the subsequent working climate. Interviewees outlined that a 5-6-day work week with a 21-week, three shift rotation defined the level of sociability amongst the workforce. This relates to their capability to enjoy individual, social and family life and their capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy.

Some interviewees paralleled the 21-shift rotation with having to be constantly available at work:

> *Another problem might be that you have to be available here all the time. It is not only because of early, late and night shift. Working a 21-shift rotation is awful especially for your family. I don't really know where this is going. (W17|C1)*

Beyond family life, several workers noted that their workplace cultures impacted their life outside the workplace:

> *I don't really have a time anymore to meet up with friends. […] My private life had to take a step back and work has taken over. Due to our Saturdays work and that they ask us to do more and more and we're getting more orders, work has taken over. (W31|C2)*

Others outlined that shift work had positive and negative impacts on their private lives:

> *I mean, we do work shift here which is something that I don't particularly like, but it is something that has a lot of positive and negative aspects. I mean, I have a lot of free time because I only work 8 hours here in three shifts. (W24|C2)*

The supporting evidence shows that participating organisations did not provide any formal structures to influence the shift work itself, but that participants outlined the negative consequences of shift work on people's perception of their work activity and the level of engagement between colleagues. Despite this theme resonating with experiences of shift work at the individual level, shift work in the manufacturing industry is a key organisational structure and primary influence shaping the daily work life of shop floor workers. Expanding the debate from shift work as

organisational structure, many participants highlighted how shift work is one of the primary influencing factors shaping the work climate and workplace relations; thus, shift allocations, shift structures, overtime and Saturday work shape the level of engagement in and outside the workplace.

Beyond shift work, the interview data underscored that workplace relations and climate served as a reflection of aggregate experiences and highlighted that many workers established a connection between their perception of the workplace and their years of employment. This stands in connection with their capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society and their capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect.

Some participants expressed their perception of workplace relations as a source for respect and recognition:

> *With the company, I've been here for such a long time that I do believe that people also respect and recognise what I do here. (W02|C1)*

In contrast, some participants described their workplace as challenging and with limited ability to freely expressing one's opinion:

> *You definitely have to be careful in what you say. Definitely. It is a very sensitive topic and you can't say everything too loudly and there are always cases in which colleagues leak information and even if you have only said something in jest, it can come back around. (W32|C2)*

Several workers identified their organisation as a primary driver in shaping workplace relations:

> *There are always some people where you have to be careful in what you say, but that's not a problem for me. If you know it beforehand, I have my own thoughts about them and it's ok. If something happens, you just have to say something. There is support from the company, personally, I never really had any problems. (W31|C2)*

Many participants described their interpersonal relations between colleagues as positive and continuously positive over a long period. Nonetheless, several participants contradicted these views and highlighted the need of being careful and censoring their opinion at the workplace. In light of this, outlining the organisational

level of workplace relations and culture allows noteworthy insights into what shapes workers experiences at work and how organisational structures shape working climates for shop floor workers. Exploring how organisational dimensions such as working in allocated shift groups, reporting structures, and wider engagement with the management of the organisation outlines how these relations can influence the work climate and shape the workforce perception of organisations.

5.4.8. Section summary

The section set out to present the results of interviews with shop floor workers, informing how the workforce perceives organisational structures. Organisational structures and designs define the formal context of people's work activities and impact people's experiences at the workplace. While this section outlines the organisational level from the employee perspective, it is important to note here that employee perspectives are subjective and draw from their own personal work experiences. Therefore, the organisational level from the employee perspective allows noteworthy insights into the impact of formal structures on work perceptions, employee motivation, and what individual employees value about their workplace.

5.5. Institutional Level

5.5.1. Section overview

Following the results of the individual and organisational level, it becomes clear that work is shaped by formal and informal structures. While these structures are often defined by individuals and organisations, institutions have an equal influence on people's work; thus, guiding HD in organisations. The institutional level reflects on systems and rules that structure interactions at the workplace and allow insights into the abstract and underlying context of work as defined by public standards and norms. Against this backdrop, the following section aims to outline how institutions influence people's capabilities and seeks to present the institutional level from an employee perspective. The section presents findings addressing cultural and ideological legacies, nature and state of the product market (incl. global competition), economic setting, nature of the labour market, and nature of the legal form of employment.

5.5.2. Visual representation at the institutional level (worker)

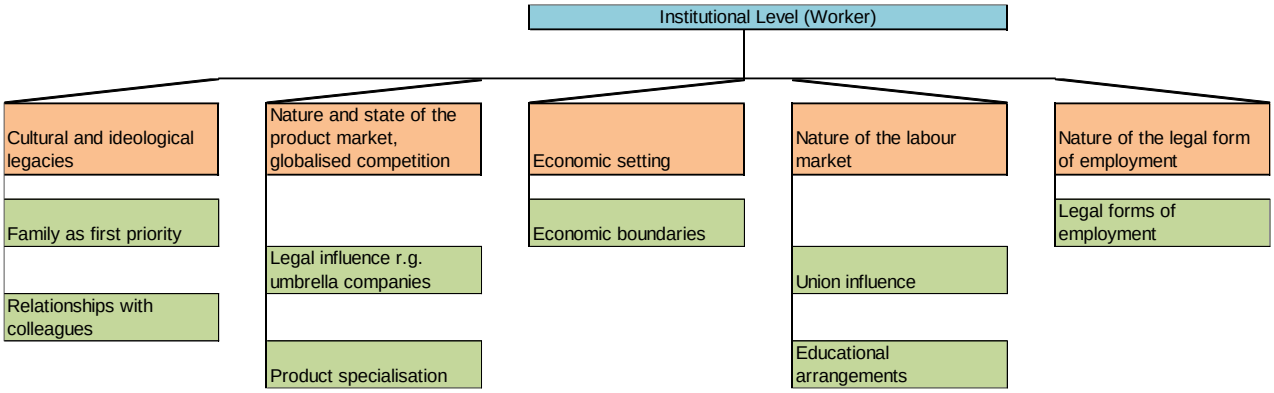

Figure 5.3: Visual representation at the institutional level (worker)

5.5.3. Cultural and ideological legacies

Traditions, norms, standards, values – A people specific context

The *a priori* theme "Culture and ideological legacies" seeks to reflect on underlying rituals or patterns that shape people's behaviour and define cultural norms. In light of this, the theme presents the workers' perspective on social learning and addresses the question: what shapes workers' normative beliefs and values. As outlined in *Chapter 2: Human Development and the Concept of Work*, cultural and ideological legacies do not only shape how individuals act but can also have influence on the organisational level in enabling individuals to act as a group that holds similar values, beliefs and goals.

Beginning the conversation with "family as first priority", participants in the age bracket 40-50 with children underlined the importance of family and that their employment takes second priority to family commitments. Interviewees outside that age bracket and without dependents also referred to their job as meaningful and important in their lives but secondary to health, or social lives, indicating that there is an overall tendency to place a high value on work life but not to prioritise it above everything else. This stands in relation to their capability to enjoy individual, social and family life.

Several workers identified work as their second priority in life:

I would say that it is at the 2nd position in my life. After my family. Because I can finance my living with my job. It is rather a means to an end. (W32|C2)

Some participants acknowledged differences between workers and how to prioritise work or family life:

It has a high value to me but it's not my first priority. There are people like this, where work comes first and then your family and health, but not for me. (W23|C2)

Others provided a ranking of priorities in their lives:

Well, first there is family, then your health and then your job. So, I value it a lot, but it is not my first priority. (W24|C2)

Despite the findings above resonating with findings at the individual level, evidence from the interview data highlights that value rankings of family life, social life, and work life underscore long-term cultural determinants of workers in the German manufacturing industry. In reference to work and family life, the data indicates that with an increasing importance of private life in general and family life in particular, the priority of work decreases and is often reduced to its ability of income generation. This shift stands in connection with cultural norms; thus, awareness of shifting value preferences amongst the workforce may enable organisations to adapt more easily to these shifts and behavioural patterns.

Another cultural and ideological legacy was that workers expressed an eminent level of distrust between colleagues and between the workforce and management structures. It forms part of people's underlying cultural ideology and legacy of the German manufacturing industry which is shaping workplace interactions and people's ability to freely express themselves at work. This stands in relation to their capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect within the context of institutional boundaries.

Various workers outlined challenges in freely expressing yourself at the workplace:

That's why I say you should always keep everything to yourself. […] I mean, it always depends on what you say but let's say for example that you said something about your line manager because you don't get along with him and the all of a sudden everyone knows what you said. (W10|C1)

Other indicated that there may be repercussions when freely expressing their opinion:

> *You definitely have to be careful in what you say. Definitely. It is a very sensitive topic and you can't just say everything too loudly and there are always cases in which colleagues leak information and even if you have only said something in jest, it can come back around. (W32\|C2)*

Some expressed a high level of distrust between colleagues, impacting their workplace perception:

> *I think you always have to be careful in what you tell people and it's the same thing in every company. You can't just say everything to anyone. (W14\|C1)*

While participants often referred to avoiding expressing their opinions and worrying about colleagues gossiping, the inherent distrust between colleagues often lead to participants mentioning that they prefer to keep their private and work live separate. In light of this, there is a legacy of distrust between colleagues that can lead to the cultural norm of separating professional and private lives.

Overall, outlining cultural and ideological legacies that shape the context of workers and organisations allows a deeper insight into why people act and what influences them at the workplace; thereby, illuminating the context in which each organisation operates in and highlighting contextual variables of this study. Continuing from this point, the data highlights that for the study of the German manufacturing industry, strict working patterns, a trade-off between family and working life, and the overall work climate are deciding factors influencing the cultural and ideological legacy of participants.

5.5.4. Nature and State of the Product Market, Globalised Competition

Organisations operating in global markets

The *a priori* theme "Nature and state of the product market, globalised competitions" seeks to outline how working in a globalised market may influence the workforce and shape the perception of the workplace. It seeks to identify particularities of the bearings market, illuminating if operating within a globalised but niche market and market developments impact workers in or outside the workplace. In addition, the following themes seeks to clarify if the market being

dominated by four main competitors and little employee fluctuation outside these competitors shows significant influence.

One of the primary influences shaping the nature and state of the product market is that it is a globalised market. Despite each participating production site being autonomous but operating under the wider guidance of a parent company, each company is required to follow the same legal guidelines regulating the nature and state of the product market in Germany. This stands in connection with people's capability of being protected and treated fairly by the law.

One participant reflected on the legal challenges of operating in a globalised market:

> *What I don't like is the American influence. They like to ignore or undermine German labour laws. (W02|C1)*

Others identified WCs and the influence of unions in shaping the nature and state of the product market:

> *Members of the WC have the right to further education measures and its organised by the IG Metall so that the company has to cover the costs based on paragraphs 37.6 and 37.7[4]. In Germany, things like that are set by the union. (W22|C1)*

The supporting evidence shows that employees often saw a clash with work traditions, cultures, and legal context between their production site and their respective parent company. With this in mind, it is important to note here that operating in a globalised market but producing a highly specialised product does not directly shape how employees work but defines the underlying parameters of the organisation and by extension, of the individual.

Participating companies both operate within the supplier market for the automotive industry and produce products such as pistons, bearings, and heat shields. This leads to all companies producing a highly specialised product in a global market

[4] §37.6 and §37.7 of the Works Constitution Act state that every member of the WC has the right to attend additional training and seminars during which the employer has to grant them paid educational leave.

that is dominated by conglomerates. For example, in Germany there are only four companies operating in that market, but all consist of several production sites. Taking this into consideration, operating within a global but specialised niche market defines which products each company manufactures; thus, influencing the production process and reflecting on people's capability of engaging in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

Some participants described their work as highly specialised but producing niche products on a global market:

> *What we do here is highly specialised and the products are very niche. (W08|C1)*

Others indicated their appreciation for the product itself:

> *The product itself is fascinating. That is also why I am happy to be here, in this company. (W22|C1)*

In contrast, various workers identified their work as prescriptive, impacting their work efficiency:

> *If for example, I have to produce similar parts several times, but the orders are spaced out by three weeks or more, I can't just produce all the parts at once and store them. You have to do them as the orders come in. (W21|C1)*

The interview data outlines that workers highlighted that the production method for each component followed specific guidelines; thus, creating a highly formalised product market and production method. It reflects on both companies operating in a niche and highly specialised market that manufactures product at a local level, is governed at a global level, and is shaped by unions and legal requirements at the national and international level. Overall, the theme underscores that particularities of the state and nature of the product market shape the wider parameters in which each participating organisation operates and requires reflection when seeking to replicate the study.

5.5.5. Economic Setting

Employee Perspectives on industrial contexts

The *a priori* theme "Economic setting" reflects on the underlying economic opportunities and challenges of the German manufacturing industry. As noted in

the literature review, the theme moves away from the globalised market or competition between companies and seeks to illuminate the immediate economic context of participating organisations at the local level. Outlining practices, labour, capital and the general advances within the industry can determine how employees perceive their workplace and if an organisation's economic setting might impact workers' experiences at the workplace. Against this backdrop, the following theme seeks to present a snapshot of the economic setting of the iron-and metal working trade industry in Germany, shaping the economic context of participating companies.

The economic setting is defined by institutional boundaries defining the parameters of the industry. These boundaries underpin industry specific regulations; thereby, influencing standards and norms within organisations. It illuminates what people are able to do and which economic guidelines they have to adhere to; hence, reflecting on people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

Some workers underlined the high level of regulation within the metal working industry, expressing levels of frustration and a feeling of being limited by institutional boundaries:

> *Well, we do work within the boundaries of our industry and people in quality management. We have to adhere to the set standards and norms. (W11\|C1)*

Others highlighted that the prescriptive nature of their employment negatively impacted their perception of work:

> *I'm quite frequently frustrated. Especially if it is something related to the industry and circumstances you can't influence or change. (W02\|C1)*

The interview data emphasises that some participants expressed a negative feeling about the industry's prescriptive nature and noted a negative impact on their motivation to work. Taking this into consideration, the economic setting of each organisation is defined by institutional boundaries such as standards and norms, defining the industry's context and guiding work activities. It is a formal structure that can be influenced by organisations and actively shapes the boundaries in

which each organisation or workforce operates in. Despite these boundaries offering stability and predictability within the industry, they are not permanently fixed but dynamic structures that change in accordance to new collective agreements or wider legal developments, shaping the industry's economic setting.

Overall, the economic setting outlines the industry-specific context in which organisations and individuals operate in. While these boundaries shape the industry, they are formal structures that are regulated at the institutional level and influence the workforce but are traditionally not directly influenced by individual workers.

5.5.6. Nature of the Labour Market

The labour market as a product of institutions, organisations and individuals

The *a priori* theme "Nature of the labour market" reflects on the formal structures that shape the wage, employment, and income systems within the iron and metal working trade industry. As noted in the literature review, it seeks to illuminate the relationship and interactions between institutions, organisations, and individuals that influence the general labour market and outline institutional boundaries guiding the labour market in the industry. Taking this into account, it aims to reflect on the labour demand and labour supply side to identify the underlying nature of the labour market in the German manufacturing industry.

In accordance with themes explored previously in this chapter, the nature of the labour market is primarily shaped by a strong union influence, skill learning structures such as apprenticeships, and industry parameters such as pay structures. These structures generally define the nature of the labour market and influence how workers perceived their work, but employees only have limited influence in actively shaping these parameters. In light of this, the theme reflects on people's capability participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

Some workers expressed their reliance on unions to shape the labour market through collective agreements:

> *The union regulates everything by collective agreements.*
> *(W22|C1)*

Others outlined how unions influenced and shaped the labour market in defining industry standards such as work hours:

> *We have a 35-hour work week and I only work my contracted hours. The 35-hours are regulated by union and our collective agreement. I get around with it and I don't really want to work more hours. (W05|C1)*

Similarly, several workers highlighted how unions positively influenced pay structures across organisations:

> *Outside work, I mean, because of three-shift system I earn quite well here. A lot of my friends don't earn as much, and I think they would like to have a job like this. (W25|C2)*

The interview data outlines how industrial parameters are shaping the nature of the labour market and influence the perception of the workforce. The right of co-determination, and pay structures define standards and norms across the industry, guiding expectations and behavioural patterns of the workforce as required by work structures, wage systems, and work patterns. In light of this, individual workers depend on the nature of the labour market as guidelines at the workplace but acknowledge the role of organisations in operationalising any agreements or developments achieved at the institutional level such as collective agreements.

Expanding the conversation from standards and norms across the industry, the "Nature of the labour market" is further defined by educational arrangements and infrastructures. This stands in connection with their capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

Several workers indicated that there was a low level of employee turnover and that a high number of workers remained within the automotive industry throughout their careers:

> *My first apprenticeship ended about 40 years ago as a wholesale, export and import clerk. That was pretty much it for me and then I went into the automotive industry here. (W18|C1)*

Some interviewees established a relation between long tenures in the automotive industry and corresponding high pay structures:

> *People complain at a very high level and they complain a lot, but there is hardly any willingness for voluntary redundancy or to*

look for other jobs. Of course, people always look for other jobs, but they never take them. I mean, the jobs here are very well paid. (W11|C1)

Others highlighted that remaining within one industry and organisation may limit their professional knowledge:

But I also did my apprenticeship here which means that everything I know; I have learned here. (W25|C2)

Some workers highlighted how their job was defined by their apprenticeship and the skills they acquired during that time:

First, I did my three years of apprenticeship here and now I've been working here for 2 years. During that time, I have learned a lot, but that's part of the job. (W24|C2)

The interview data shows that the labour market follows strict and institutionalised structures that form the base for any educational experiences. Participants outlined that after completing school at 16, workers underwent nationally accredited apprenticeships that are regulated by the German Ministry for Education and part of the public education curriculum. This process of education can be followed by workers continuing their education and completing a Masters' programme that builds upon the foundation knowledge gained during their apprenticeship. The apprenticeship itself forms the knowledge base of the labour market and influences how people see their role and define their place within an organisation. It is important to note here, that the apprenticeships are paid positions and their pay is also regulated by collective agreements between unions and employers. On the other hand, the Masters' education is regulated by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and is generally seen as private education that requires tuition fees and is financed by workers themselves instead of organisations or the public.

In summary, the nature of the labour market allows insights into the underlying institutional factors that shape organisations and define the context in which workers operate. Further, it reflects on publicly defined standards, outlines traditions, and emphasises norms shaping the workforce and organisations alike. While shop floor workers themselves are unable to influence the institutional setting of their workplace, it forms part of an interrelated and interconnected system that shapes their workplace. Despite the lack of direct influence, the institutional factor

can form the basis for HD in organisations and can set the wider parameters of the industry. Moreover, it can influence how people perceive their workplace and progress or hinder HD in organisations.

5.5.7. Nature of the Legal Form of Employment

Contracts and publicly defined standards

The *a priori* theme "Nature of the legal form of employment" reflects on contracts, regulations and norms that define the employment relationship between employees and organisations. It seeks to illuminate the publicly defined and accepted standards of employment contracts and aims to outline the relationship between the legal form of employment and people's work structures.

The most dominant factor that outlines the nature of the legal form of employment are the different types of employment that are accepted as standard employment within the workforce. This stands in connection with their capability of being protected and treated fairly by the law.

Others indicated how their perception of their legal form of employment evolved, highlighting changing perceptions of shift work:

> *I mean, I did sign a contract that states that I am willing to work in a three-shift system, but I can tell you 100% that I would not work night shifts anymore. I would not do that to myself again. Not for all the money in the world. (W18\|C1)*

Some workers highlighted the union's influence in shaping the legal sphere of their employment contracts:

> *Well, there are always contractually binding collective agreements, you have to be aware of that if you want to work in this industry. I was a member of the union before I even started working for this company. […] I think I'm being justly paid. But that's also because our pay rate is fixed in the union's collective agreements. (W22\|C1)*

In contrast, some workers outlined how organisations are able to personalise the legal form of employment despite operating in a highly regulated industry:

> *We have a 35-hour work week and I only work my contracted hours. It's 35 hours per collective agreement but technically we work overtime every day. We all work one more hour than we are contracted to work. Plus, working on Saturdays is mandatory in*

my personal opinion. There are only very few Saturdays where we don't work. (W31|C2)

The supporting evidence shows that the most common legal form of employment is employment within the context of collective agreements that regulate pay levels, working conditions, work hours, and work patterns. Since collective agreements regulate work hours, pay structures, and shift work patterns, unions influence the nature of the legal form of employment and shape work contracts at an institutional level.

5.5.8. Section summary

The institutional level allows for insights into formal and informal structures defining norms and standards that contextualise work in the German manufacturing industry. The findings highlight that the emotional perception of work is shaped by underlying cultural norms and traditions that from the backdrop for work behaviours, customs, and patterns on a conscious and subconscious level. In addition, worker outlined that the nature of the industry has the ability to shape how people perceive their workplace and outlined underlying work parameters such as required skills and applied production methods. Taking these parameters into consideration, the findings showcase how institutional boundaries shape industry-wide standards and norms that influence organisational designs and the economic setting of the workplace. Lastly, the section presents findings addressing the legal sphere. At the institutional level, the findings highlight the centrality of collective agreements regulating industry-wide pay structures, work standards and organisational norms, thereby impacting behavioural patterns of the workforce. Overall, the institutional level outlines boundaries that shape the workplace but are beyond the control or influence of the individual worker.

5.6. Chapter Conclusion

The chapter set out to explore the results of the Phase I interviews with shop floor workers; thus, presenting findings in form of *a priori* themes at the individual, organisational, and institutional level. Each theme is explored from the perspective of the workforce, aiming to outline what influences people experiences at the workplace and establishing connections to relevant capabilities.

Exploring the results on all three levels, it becomes clear that there are five major and reoccurring themes informing the perspective of the shop floor workers: family, income structures, shift work patterns, union influence, and the level of job security. These themes are present in almost all levels and emerge as overarching factors that influence each facet of work from an employee perspective. With this in mind, exploring work on different levels from an employee perspective allows noteworthy insights into employees' perception of work and what could be potential drivers or barriers for HD in organisations. Moreover, it enables us to explore what constitutes capabilities and functionings in the workplace and how they relate to workers' subjective well-being; a viewpoint that is explored at a more in-depth level in *Chapter 7: Discussion.* While this chapter aims to present results from an employee perspective, the following chapter will outline similar themes from an organisational perspective as informed by interviews with managers. Both perspectives will then be contrasted and compared in the discussion chapter to draw conclusion on what constitutes drivers or barriers for HD in organisations and if the CA provides an alternative perspective for organisations to evaluate the workforce's subjective well-being.

6. Chapter 6: Findings 2 - Results of Phase 2 Interviews

6.1. Chapter Overview

Following explorations into the individual worker's perspective of the workplace and what shaped their experiences, the following chapter seeks to report on the results of the second interview phase. The second interview phase focuses on interviewing mid and upper level managers from each participating organisation; thus, informing the organisational perspective of the workplace. Akin to the previous chapter, it presents the findings on the individual, organisational, and institutional level, drawing from a pre-defined list of capabilities but seeking to take a managerial perspective of the workplace. An in-depth discussion of the findings of both interview phases and how they address the research questions can be found in *Chapter 7: Discussion*.

6.2. General Information

6.2.1. Case Classifications

The second findings chapter reports on the findings of the second interview phase. This phase aims to illuminate the organisational perspective of what workers' value and focuses on the managerial perspective. With this objective in mind, 18 mangers were interviewed resulting in the following case classification:

Participant	Gender	Managerial experience	Management level	Line Management for shop floor	Master Qualification
M1C2	Male	10	Upper	No	Yes
M2C2	Male	5	Middle	Yes	Yes
M3C2	Male	6	Middle	Yes	No
M4C2	Male	5	Middle	Yes	Yes
M5C2	Male	5	Upper	No	No
M6C2	Male	35	Upper	No	No
M7C1	Male	6	Middle	Yes	Yes
M8C1	Male	2	Middle	Yes	Yes
M9C1	Male	16	Middle	Yes	Yes
M10C1	Male	20	Middle	Yes	Yes
M11C1	Male	2	Upper	No	Yes
M12C1	Male	8	Middle	Yes	Yes
M13C1	Male	5	Middle	Yes	No
M14C1	Male	3	Middle	Yes	No
M15C1	Male	27	Upper	No	No
M16C1	Male	20	Upper	No	Yes
M17C1	Male	20	Upper	No	Yes
M18C1	Male	18	Upper	No	Yes

Table 6.1: Case classification manger interviews

The classification sheet above highlights that all interviewees were male. Despite this potentially indicating an overrepresentation of male interviewees, the demographic distribution is in line with the gender representation of the manufacturing industry in Germany; a heightened dominance of male manager and employees (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2019). Nonetheless, this study acknowledges the predominantly male perspective of the interviewees but an extensive discussion of potential implications of gender distribution would exceed the scope of this study; thus, this study does not seek to establish connections between gender representation and HD opportunities in organisations but explores the managerial perspective regardless of gender.

Collating the data, participants had an average managerial experience of 12 years with a standard deviation of 9.3. The highest level of managerial experience is 35 years with the lowest level of experience being 2 years. In light of this, this study defines managerial experience as the earliest leadership position in which participants became team leaders, assumed line management responsibilities for workers, and took on a role that involved decision making for the production site. The wide range of managerial experiences allows achievement of a balanced view

between people who have been working in managerial positions for a significant amount of time and people with limited managerial experience. Several managers started their career at the shop floor and resumed a leadership position following the completion of a Masters' degree. Taking this into consideration, the average experience of 12 years enables valuable insights into the perspective of managers who have been working in such positions in the manufacturing industry for a significant amount of time; thus, acquiring a robust level of expertise. All data presented above and below seeks to present a snapshot of each organisation, organisational standards, and industry standards as informed by the second phase of the data collection in 2019.

Management level	
Middle	Upper
10	8

Table 6.2: Management level

All participants either belonged to the middle or upper management level with 10 participants being middle managers and 8 participants being upper managers. For the purpose of this study, middle managers are junior managerial staff with direct line management duties for shop floor workers and direct engagement with day-to-day activities of the shop floor. These positions ranged from Masters' levels to production planning managers. Upper managers are senior managers with no direct engagement with the shop floor but with a comparatively higher level of engagement and responsibility in determining the strategic direction and structural development of the organisation. These positions ranged from department managers such as the director for electroplating to the general manager of the production site. Exploring the perspective of middle and upper management allows for a balanced and detailed view of each management level directly and indirectly shaping the shop floor.

Masters' qualification	
Yes	No
12	6

Table 6.3: Masters' qualification

Within the German education system, the Masters' qualification is a vocational training certificate. It is the highest state approved professional qualification in crafts and pre-requisite for training apprentices. Further, the term is symbiotic to the junior managerial position Masters' and allows for shop floor workers to further their education; thus, potentially entering the junior management level of an organisation. Out of all participants, 12 managers had a formal Masters' education with five out of 18 managers working in the junior

management position of Masters'. It may seem contradictory that some managerial staff did not hold a Masters' degree. However, within the German education system, a Masters' certificate is equivalent to a University degree and only a formal requirement when line managing shop floor workers and to progress from the shop floor into a managerial position. Managers who did not hold a Masters' degree normally had different academic backgrounds and professional experiences qualifying them to work as managers. Taking into consideration the professional degree qualification of managerial staff highlights that the majority of managerial staff began their career at the shop floor and progressed their career into higher leadership positions. This progression allows for managers in junior and senior positions to have extensive knowledge of the shop floor, worker needs or values, workplace structures such as shift work, and practical experiences of the German manufacturing industry shaped by unionism and guided by educational infrastructures.

Overall, interviewees of the Phase 2 data collection allow for a broad representation of managerial staff in the German manufacturing industry in general and the participating companies in particular; thus, potentially offering valuable insights into the organisational perspective of the shop floor. These insights inform the underlying reasoning of organisational structures and offer a platform for comparing and contrasting the worker's perspective with the perspective of the organisation. Comparing these insights may allow for a deeper understanding of the workplace, contributing to the debate on HD in organisations. Against this backdrop, the following sections seek to present findings of the managerial perspective at the individual, organisational, and institutional level in relation to the capability list outlined in section *5.2.2 Relevant List of Capabilities*.

6.3. Individual Level

6.3.1. Section overview

The previous section introduces case classifications, contextualising the findings of the Phase 2 interviews. Following on and taking these attributes into consideration, the subsequent section aims to present the managerial perspective of the *a priori* themes attitude and self-efficacy, educational experiences, life, capability and experiences beyond work, motivation to work, perception of

meaningfulness in work, and perception of work arrangements and culture. The section reports on findings of the Phase 2 interviews, presenting how managers responded in relation to shop floor workers. The section begins with a visual representation of relevant themes before presenting a detailed analysis of each *a priori* theme at the individual level.

6.3.2. Visual representation at the individual level (manager)

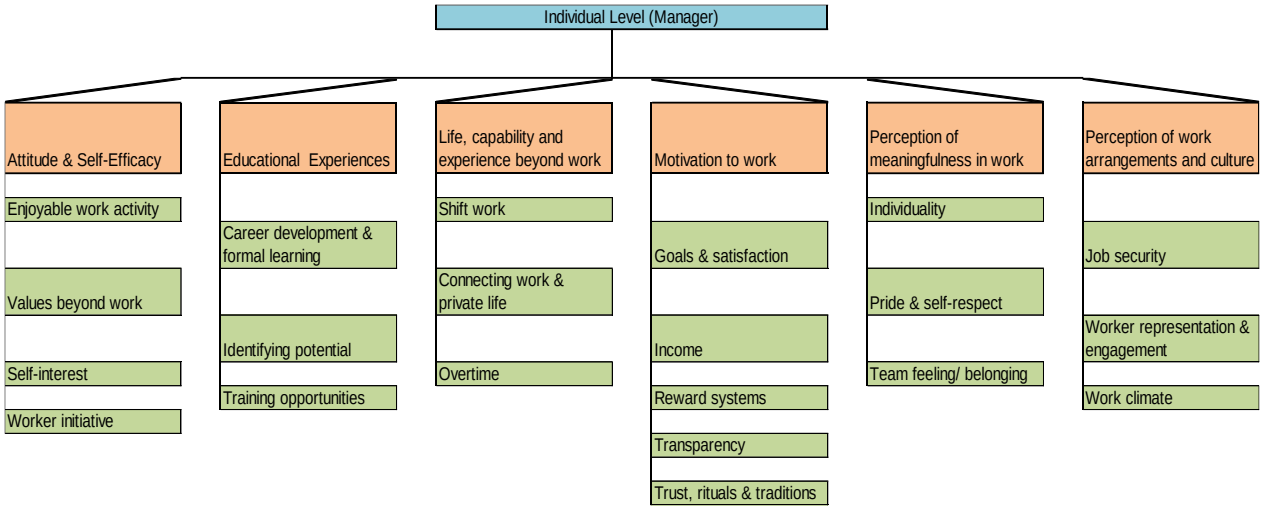

Figure 6.1: Visual representation at the individual level (manager)

6.3.3. Attitude and Self-Efficacy

How do organisations influence people's emotional perception of work?

As noted in the literature review and in expansion to the debate from the worker perspective, the following reports on the *a priori* theme "Attitude and self-efficacy" from the managerial perspective. It seeks to reflect on organisational mechanisms that may shape workers' emotional perception of work. It takes into consideration underlying considerations that might drive emotional responses to events, places, or strategic changes within the organisation; thus, highlighting how organisations may shape people's state of mind and may influence worker's personal value preferences.

One of the factors influencing people's attitudes was having exciting or enjoyable work activities. Many managers highlighted that they perceived a connection between people having a positive emotional perception of work if they enjoyed the work activity itself; hence, deriving a sense of satisfaction and success from their

daily routine. This perception may establish a connection between people having a positive emotional response to their workplace and management actively encouraging workers to enable a supportive state of mind. This theme reflects on people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

During the interviews, it emerged that having a positive emotional perception of work did not only have a positive impact on the worker but may also positively influence the management of the organisation:

> *I don't think work pressure has increased over the last 20 years, but there is an attitude problem. […] that makes work look like something that you just do to earn money and that's it. It suggests to people that work is nothing but a means to an end and that's just wrong. (M06|C2)*

There was further evidence that showing appreciation and enabling workers to enjoy their work activity could foster meaningful work experiences. There also evidence that a reciprocal relationship between worker attitudes and their interactions with management could have a positive influence on the perception of the workplace:

> *The base line is that you need to be happy and know the importance of your work. That is something that the manager needs to appreciate and be able to show appreciation for every worker and for what they do. […] The only thing that I'm very unhappy with is people that just come here and try to waste their time. We do have some of those here, but I have very little patience for them and that's when it gets complicated with showing them appreciation. (M04|C2)*

During the interviews, it emerged that interviewees saw a connection between their own work experience or attitudes, their perception of current workers, and the individuality of the workforce:

> *For me personally it [enjoyable work activity] was always very important. But if it is important for the worker now, I think that depends on the person. One person likes to come here to produce 200 parts in one go, the next person would like to change the machines six times a day because he enjoys it so much. They enjoy the one thing but not the other, you get all these people. (M08|C1)*

Another aspect influencing “Attitude and self-efficacy” was people’s situation outside the workplace and if they established a connection between their work and private lives; thus, reflecting on people’s capability to enjoy individual, social, and family life. There was a common perception amongst managers that people’s attitudes were their own and that there was a distinct separation between workers, their individual attitudes, and the organisation or management potentially influencing worker’s attitudes. Despite this separation and perception as two different entities, managers did acknowledge that work can have impacts on worker’s private lives and that both spheres are connected.

Akin to the previous theme, some managers linked the connection between private and professional lives to workers’ level of enjoying the work activity.

> *Of course, if you hate going to work every morning and you feel bad about it, then you will only ever do your job to earn money and if that’s your only goal, you will never enjoy your job. (M06|C2)*

There was a disconnection between the worker’s private life and the organisational perspective:

> *If you let stress get to you and take it home with you. In those cases, you will have a strong impact. If you can switch off until the next day, you will have a great life. […] I don’t think that there is much that the company can do. I think most of it comes down to the individual’s attitude. (M18|C1)*

Further, the individual worker emerge as the main driver of their attitude and self-efficacy, identifying only a limited connection between organisational structures and worker’s emotional perception of the workplace:

> *I think it depends on the person. We do have some people here that take things back home with them. If things go badly or if they go well, especially if things go badly, people take it home with them. (M16|C1)*

Establishing a connection between private and professional lives as a platform to inform worker’s attitudes offers valuable insights into how managers connect their own attitudes with their perception of the workplace. The reciprocal relationships underscore the connection between worker, management, and people’s private lives.

Managers also established a direct link between workers' attitudes and their perception of self-interest. People's drive to act in a manner that benefits themselves stands in direct relation with people's emotional perceptions of the workplace. Despite it influencing emotional responses from workers to changes within the organisation, several participants established that workers acting out of self-interest may impact the overall performance of the organisation. This topic reflects on people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued activities).

There was a negative perception of people acting to fulfil their own self-interest:

> *People like to use their freedom to push for things that they like. If it is something that may have a negative impact on their life, people like to ignore you. […] Sometimes you have to put in a lot of effort into convincing people that you need them to do something. (M16|C1)*

The interviews showed that further, it may have a negative impact on the overall performance of the organisation:

> *Our employees know all of their rights but like to gloss over their duties. Even if it is just a moral duty, not a legal one. […] It has financial implications for the company, but most workers don't see it that way. (M02|C2)*

A contributing factor was the attitude amongst the workforce which may limit the organisation's ability to adapt and challenge the status quo:

> *There is always someone who doesn't like something or doesn't want to work with someone else because it might be "exhausting" for them. Honestly, they just don't want to put the effort into it. You face opposition if you want to change the status quo. (M06|C2)*

Exploring the organisational perspective as outlined by managers of participating companies, there was an overall negative sentiment underscoring the perception of workers' attitudes; hence, outlining that worker's emotional perceptions of the workplace may influence the overall organisational performance of manufacturing companies.

Lastly, workers taking initiative emerged as a common topic amongst managers. This topic highlights that most managers identified workers carrying responsibility

to engage with the organisation, their work activity, or wider career development as informing people's attitudes. Despite many participants outlining that the organisation was supportive of the workforce and open to engage with workers in a range of situations, managers underscored their expectations that any principal initiative should come from the workforce; thus, identifying the worker as primary driver with the organisation taking a reactive perspective. This topic reflects on people's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

It emerged that the initiative originates within the workforce, but that management overall should be supportive:

> *First of all, I do think that it is up to everyone individually to show initiative. If someone says that they have particular goals and could imagine working a particular job, we can always talk about it. (M05|C2)*

In addition, the interviews showed that the company could become more proactive, thus, engaging with the workers at a deeper level:

> *The initiative does normally come from the individual worker. I think it could be improved in reminding people that we support them and welcome their initiative if they would like to do more. (M04|C2)*

At the same time, the company was relying on workers to take initiative and that the main responsibility to engage with the company should lie with the individual worker:

> *It's a company whose first priority is to earn money, just like any other company in the world. […] Every single person needs to understand this. Every person in this company is responsible for themselves and their own fortunes. (M09|C1)*

Overall, the managerial perspective addressing "Attitude and self-efficacy", identifies that managers actively promoting positive states of mind about the workplace may influence whether workers were able to derive a sense of satisfaction and success from their work activities. In addition, the findings indicate that managers frequently reported a distinction between the organisation's ability to influence people's attitudes; hence, underscoring that the subjectivity of work and that the responsibility of having positive attitudes to work or taking initiative lie with the workers themselves. Nonetheless, managers acknowledged a connection

between worker attitudes and their overall impact on workplace performance, thereby allowing for the understanding that there is a reciprocal relationship between worker attitudes and their emotional perception of the workplace.

6.3.4. Educational Experiences

Shaping people's perspective of learning

From the managerial perspective, the second *a priori* theme reflecting on educational experiences seeks to outline mechanisms and structures within the organisation that may influence people's perceptions of skill development, learning, and acquiring knowledge. It aims to explore informal or formal settings that may enable the workforce to expand or limit their educational experiences; thus, shaping how people think, feel, and act at their workplace.

The first topic characterising the workforce's educational experiences are career development opportunities and formal learning structures. Recurrently, managers linked career development opportunities to formal learning structures, referring to the acquisition of certificates, vocational degrees such as a Masters', or completing training programmes for representational roles such as safety officers to advance people's educational foundation. From a managerial perspective, participants voiced a positive perception of the company's support systems, the strategic value of career opportunities and formal learning structures, and their overall impact on the organisation. It reflects on people's capability to engage in meaningful (valuable) activities.

The interviews highlighted the strategic value of educational experiences:

> *For me, it has a very high value. If you don't have the right people, the company goes under and stops existing. People is how you measure a company's success. (M11\|C1)*

Further, the analysis established a connection with their personal experiences, underscoring an informal support system across the organisation:

> *If someone wants something, they can say so and we try to accommodate it. I think there is a lot of opportunity here. I'm a perfect example, I started here as an intern and now I work as Masters'. There is a lot of support here especially since we have changed management. (M02\|C2)*

Further, there is evidence that most workers will experience career development internal to the organisation:

> *Most people are internal and worked their way up within the company. Only this morning we had two anniversaries. One was for 45 years and one for 40 years. (M15|C1)*

The workers' individuality and that people may define career development differently may play a key role:

> *At the end of the day you also need warriors, you can't only have chieftains. Career is something that everyone defines in a different way. For one-person career advancement is becoming CEO, for others it's working a second machine. (M01|C2)*

The interview data showcases that managers acknowledged the importance and strategic value of career development opportunities but further highlighted that most career development opportunities were internal to the organisation; thus, supporting a low employee turnover and establishing a long-term connection with their company. Managers indicated that their organisations offer varying degrees of flexibility and support for formal learning opportunities, but that these support structures did not follow any formalised structures or guidelines across the company but were shaped by the managers' own attitudes.

An additional topic emerging under the theme *educational experiences* reflects on how organisations identified potential across the workforce. Identifying underlying formal structures and approaches of shaping workers' individual educational experience may allow valuable insights into how workers perceive their educational experiences and what may shape their sensitivity towards skill development and learning at the workplace. The topic reflects on worker's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

The analysis showed that there is no formal way of identifying potential within an individual but a heightened dependence on the relationship between individual workers and managers:

> *My former boss approached me and told me that he was going to retire. He told me that he saw potential and that he thought I could do it all. He encouraged me to go back to school and that's what I did. It all comes from the individual; nothing ever comes*

from HR or something. It depends on yourself and your boss. (M12|C1)

Further contributor is a lack of cross-departmental collaboration as one driver for focusing on informal learning structures:

You have to see who has potential and what you can do to support their development. So, you can target specific skills and people. However, there isn't really a cross-departmental connection. We all tend to operate in silos. (M13|C1)

Educational experiences and identifying which workers will receive higher levels of support formed a key element of their profile as managers:

We have a look in which areas the company could make improvements and then talk to appropriate candidates to explore if they would be interested and then we help them. That's something we do and decide as managers. (M02|C2)

Evidence from the interview data outlines that most educational experiences for the workforce are being enabled and defined by the worker's relationship with their line manager in particular, and the management in general.

Further to the themes above, training opportunities and the prospect of learning may shape educational experience of the workforce in the manufacturing industry. The topic reflects on formal and informal opportunities to deepen the worker's knowledge base in and outside the workplace; hence, it reflects on people's capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

The interviews underlined the importance of internal training:

It is very important. First of all, we train a lot. We have to consider the average age of our workforce in any of our teams. You have to consider who might be leaving the company and who could replace them. You need to talk to them, train, and qualify them (M10|C1)

The perception of training opportunities emerged as key evidence and may be shaped by workers' attitudes and transparently communicating the goal of such training programmes:

For a while, I did a knowledge evaluation for my guys. 50% of people liked it, 50% were terrified and didn't know what I wanted

them to do. […] This is just in case someone has a knowledge gap; we can address it […] There is no pass or fail. (M11|C1)

Overall, career development and formal learning, structures underlying how managers identify potential amongst the workforce, and internal training opportunities shape the educational experience of the workforce from a managerial perspective. These themes highlight the dependence and centrality of the relationship between the workers and their line managers; thus, guiding how people will develop their skills, learn, and acquire knowledge.

6.3.5. Life, Capability and Experiences Beyond Work

A life outside the workplace

From the managerial perspective, the *a priori* theme *Life, capability and experience beyond work* seeks to provide insights if people's life outside work may influence work and if organisations define these connections as valuable. As noted in the literature review focuses on work influencing people's private, family or social lives; thus, illuminating if mangers are able to consider how work may impact workers' lives outside the workplace or how people's order preferences may influence their performance at the workplace. It encompasses the managerial perspective on work structures and informs the reciprocal relationship between work and private lives.

The first topic emerging under this theme is the connection between people's life outside the workplace and regular overtime. It seeks to identify a connection or impact between working overtime and workers' private lives, allowing for insights into how organisations seek to regulate impacts of work on people's lives outside the workplace. In light of this, overtime refers to working a sixth shift on Saturdays in addition to regular 35-hour shift work from Monday to Friday. Despite workers reporting that overtime is in effect compulsory, collective agreements with the union prohibit mandatory overtime work, only allowing for voluntary overtime on Saturdays and in the form of early shifts; a point that will be explored more extensively in the following chapter. This theme reflects on people's capability to enjoy individual, social, and family life.

Throughout the interviews, workers acknowledged that working overtime may have an impact beyond the workplace itself:

Well. That's difficult. We work a lot of overtime which normally has a negative impact. I couldn't really tell. The overtime impacts. I don't think the company is really concerned with this. (M11|C1)

In addition, a connection with people's value preferences and that each individual worker may experience a different level of impact came to light:

It depends on who you ask. I'm sure you have some people here that say they have a good balance and get to see their families, others don't. […] For some people it may be important for others it doesn't matter. Of course, it's not easy to handle a 3-shift system but then again, we only work 35 hours. (M15|C1)

The interviews evidenced that the role of the manager to limit strain or negative impacts outside the workplace, guiding workload distribution:

Normally it's up to us managers to identify if it [overtime] is necessary and if yes, who we need to work what machine. It's so that we can identify who does and doesn't need to work overtime to limit strain. (M02|C2)

Data from the interviews highlights that managers and shift structures are key drivers in shaping overtime structures. Despite some managers acknowledging that overtime might impact workers outside the workplace, many participants highlighted that working overtime was necessary for the organisation to satisfy demand and that impacts on workers' private lives were of secondary concern to the organisation.

In addition to overtime, managers outlined that there may be a reciprocal relationship between worker's private and professional lives. Exploring how the organisation in particular and work life in general influences people's life outside the workplace. It may provide valuable insights into what manager recognize as key drivers or barriers in shaping people's capability of being and expressing yourself and having self-respect.

Supplementary evidence emerged that private and personal lives may be interrelated:

Well, if you are happy and satisfied at work, it will probably have a positive impact at home. If you don't like your work and you always come home with a long face, well that's not good. Your work and private lives need to fit well together. One influences the other. (M14|C1)

Interrelatedly, the interviews showed that work formed part of life and that there should not be a distinction but rather a symbiotic relationship:

> *Work has to impact your private life. If you are working, you are not enjoying time off, you're at work. However, work is a part of your life and depends on how you are able to organise yourself. (M06|C2)*

Notwithstanding the connection between professional and private lives, several managers indicated that the impact of work on private life or vice versa was a secondary concern to the organisation. In light of this, several managers did not engage with their employees on a personal level; thus, may not have insights into people's value preferences which may prevent people's lives outside work from becoming a recognized driver shaping perception of the workplace:

> *In all honesty, I don't know. I'm not involved enough in any of my employee's private lives to know how work influences them. No clue. I know it influences me but that's a different story. (M09|C1)*

The last topic emerging under the theme *Life, Capability and Experience Beyond Work* reflects on shift work and how it may impact the workforce's lives outside the workplace. Illuminating the managerial perspective on shift work may support a deeper level of understanding of how shift work influences workers and if potential impacts factor into the design of work patterns, attitudes, and emotional perceptions of the workplace. It stands in connection to people's capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

The analysis provided insight into how work structures may influence people's private lives and established a connection with their personal experiences:

> *Overall, it is exhausting and impacts your life. If you want to enjoy your social life and join clubs and societies, it'll be difficult. For example, I built a house for my family and I wouldn't have been able to do that alongside shift work. It causes extreme pressures. (M12|C1)*

Participants further noted that social activities were highly limited due to their shift patterns, and shift work in general:

> *Well, yes. I mean, it's shift work. Of course, that means that participation outside work is limited in comparison with someone*

who works flexitime. […] There is a limitation because of shift work. (M03|C2)

Simultaneously, managers pointed out that any employment conditions, including shift work patterns were a known pre-condition of the job; thus, normalising the impacts of shift work and highlighting that managers prioritised the design of successful operational processes:

We do have this system and people know that beforehand. Only because someone would like to play football on Thursday nights, we can't let him finish early every Thursday. (M04|C2)

Overall, overtime structures, shift work, and work lives impacting people's private lives are determining factors when exploring the theme *Life, Capability, and Experience Beyond Work.* Evidence from the interviews suggests that while managers acknowledge potential impacts on people's private lives arising from work structures, there is a consensus that these impacts are inherent to the work activity and are of secondary concern to the organisation as a whole.

6.3.6. Motivation to Work

Actions, willingness, and goals – What motivates people to work?

As noted in the literature review, the *a priori* theme *Motivation to Work* from the organisational perspective seeks to identify formal or informal structures, underlying behavioural patterns, or relationships between managers and workers that may guide people's motivation to work. This perspective may allow for a deeper understanding of what might drive or hinder people at the workplace and if organisations exhibit a proactive or reactive approach to evaluate mechanisms guiding people's perceptions of work.

Beginning the debate on people's motivation to work, people's ability to draw satisfaction from their work activity and a high degree of alignment between their personal goals and goals of the organisation shaped people's motivation to work. This theme encompasses elements such as enjoying varied work activities and receiving recognition at work, as well as how a high degree of alignment may positively impact people's lives outside the workplace. This reflects on people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful activities.

Evidence points towards people's goals and satisfactions being interrelated with people's perception of success:

> *To see the entire production line and be part of it, that is something people take pride in. […] I think it's important to people. You need to be excited about your job and you need to enjoy it so that you can experience success on whatever scale. You set your goal and work towards it. (M12|C1)*

The interviews provided insight into the importance of experiencing success in the workplace in order to increase people's motivation to work:

> *People enjoy what they're doing here. They like coming here. If people are successful here, they earn a decent amount of money and I think that's when they also go home and are satisfied with what they're doing. […] Do we show enough appreciation? No. […] But of course, success is the best motivational force there is. (M15|C1)*

In contrast, there was further evidence that people's motivation to work was not linked to any particular factor but was driven by human nature:

> *Satisfaction does not some from money or from being told that you have a good job. Humans will always look for what they don't have, look for a way to earn more and at how other people are doing. […] It's human nature. (M06|C2)*

Following explorations of goals and satisfaction and how it may impact people's motivation to work, managers frequently referenced the importance of income as motivational force. However, managers did not only reflect on income as a personal motivator for people to work but outlined the wider effectiveness of using pay as an incentive for people to increase their motivation at work; thus, establishing a connection with people's capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living with security and independence.

The interviews highlighted that income and a high pay system may incentivise people and increase their motivation:

> *[…] I used to work in other companies, and I know what my guys earn here, that's definitely a decent pay. Definitely not bad. I think it's also an incentive for people, to be motivated and maybe even to start a career. (M10|C1)*

However, one manager pointed out that due to an increasingly high pay system across their organisation, workers were used to receiving high salaries; thus, making pay as a tool to increase people's motivation ineffective:

> *We are on a high pay scale here and it creates a lot of problems. Small [pay] increases do not motivate people here. At least not everyone, the younger ones, yes, they're still excited about it but the older generation can't be motivated with money. Especially when it comes to working overtime. (M16|C1)*

In addition, interviewees showed that high incomes formed part of a wider system aiming to increase people's motivation and should not be seen as an isolated mechanism:

> *Well paid, good working climate. I think that's important to them. There are always people that complain but especially the people that we hired recently, they are incredibly happy, they're all used to worse conditions. (M02|C2)*

Akin to the previous theme, data from the interviews emphasised that managers frequently identified reward systems as potential contributor for people's motivation to work. This focus on financial rewards is embedded in organisational structures such as suggestion systems that allow workers to receive a financial reward and contribution if they actively engaged with the workplace. This topic further reflects on people's capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living with security and independence.

Further evidence emerged that financial rewards were a main drivers that contributed to people's motivation:

> *Once a year, we have performance reviews and we have seven different performance categories that are being added on to the standard pay. It's a points system that we adjust once a year. The worker has the opportunity to show that they're motivated, and care and we can then decide if we want to give them points. (M10|C1)*

There was a connection between managers and their own attitudes to work as a driver to maintain motivation amongst the workforce:

> *Sometimes even if we don't implement them [suggestions], we do award an acknowledgement bonus. Normally that's 50€, it's a full tank of gas and people are happy. That then also motivates*

the employees to continue to do what they're doing. There is only one thing in the world that motivates people [money] and that's the reason why we are all here. (M09|C1)

The interviews evidenced that financial rewards were not only motivators but that the participating companies uses reward systems to express appreciation and acknowledgement:

Every suggestion receives points and depending on how many points the suggestion receives the employee can earn up to 150€ for his suggestion if it's rejected. It is more of an appreciation that the employee tried to get involved. (M02|C2)

Data from the interviews shows that there is a primary focus on financial incentives to motivate the workforce. Exploring the organisational perspective on what managers think motivates the workforce may allow for a deeper level of understanding of the effectiveness of such mechanisms and their alignment with what the workforce perceives as motivational factors.

The next emerging topic addresses the importance of transparency and informing the workforce about the state of the company, its performance, and strategic direction, with the objective of emotionally engaging the employees. It reflects on people's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

Transparency in the workplace and keeping the workforce informed emerged as a key role that influences the motivation to work amongst the workforce:

We try to motivate our workers. We organise things like department meetings during which we tell everyone how the company did during a specific month or across the year, where we are planning to invest. These are all things we tell our employees. (M10|C1)

Further evidence pointed towards people identifying formal arrangements such as staff meetings as key drivers that influence emotional responsiveness at work:

Well, the company informs everyone about the company's economic situation, how many orders we have, everything that's necessary and important. Every person can interpret those numbers and that will influence how they feel. (M12|C1)

The interviews further established a connection between transparency and a perception of open communication systems as motivational drivers for the workforce:

> *You can always approach your line manager and talk to them. You can mention any concerns or talk about what is important to you. You need to have an open communication (M05|C2)*

Evidence from the interview transcripts highlights that managers focused on transparency and open communication systems as underlying drivers to motivate the workforce. Illuminating the justification for managers to focus on transparent and engaging systems seeks to inform what shapes the emotional responses of the workforce.

Lastly, the topic of trust, rituals, and traditions was identified by managers to shape people's motivation to work. Managers reflected on specific social or behavioural patterns characterising each person's motivation and established a direct connection of these rituals and traditions guiding people's motivation to work; thus, establishing a connection with people's capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect.

The act of building trust and engaging with rituals strengthened the level of engagement and coherence amongst the workforce; hence, aligning people's motivation to work with the company's overall performance:

> *I think so. It's something that motivates them. If they know that you trust them and give them some responsibility, it motivates them. You can support and engage them better, and ultimately you can ask them to work more. (M11|C1)*

In contrast, evidence emerged that the meaning of rituals and traditions may vary and evolve with the age of the workforce. In light of this, there was also evidence of a negative perception of such traditions that could be identified as potential barriers for change within organisations:

> *But these are all things, if you want to change them you are making your life very difficult. If you have a young workforce, it's not a problem [to change rituals]. If you tell them that their cappuccino machine is going to be on a different floor, they don't really care. But the older generations, they have experienced the same rituals for the last 20 or 30 years, they live for them. (M15|C1)*

Overall, the organisational perspective highlights the importance of people's goals and satisfaction from work, the level of income, financial reward systems, transparent and open communication systems, as well as trust, rituals, and traditions as dominant drivers to strengthen people's motivation to work. Exploring the interview transcripts, participants highlighted that the organisation has the ability to influence people's underlying behavioural patterns and workplace relationships; thus, guiding people's underlying reason to act.

6.3.7. Perception of Meaningfulness in Work

What do workers value?

Taking the organisational perspective, the *a priori* theme *Perception of Meaningfulness in Work* seeks to identify what people value about their work. Against this backdrop, the following section aims to explore if the organisation may attach value to the work activity itself or prioritises what work enables the workforce to do. The theme moves away from income generation as primary motivator to work and aims to illuminate the perception of meaningfulness in work beyond income generation; thus, reflecting on the organisational perspective of purpose and significance of work on the shop floor.

The first topic reflects on people's individuality. It identifies that managers frequently highlighted people's individuality and subjectivity as underlying drivers or barriers shaping people's perception of meaningfulness. In light of this, there was a reduced sense of influence between the organisation and perceived meaningfulness, underlining that from an organisational perspective the connection between meaningfulness on the individual level and the company had limited visibility to managers. It reflects on people's capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect.

The interviews highlighted people's subjectivity in finding meaning in work:

> *Everyone is responsible for their own lives. […] Some people want to do more; others are happy to spend 40 years working on the same machine. That's ok. We need both. (M12\|C1)*

In addition, there is evidence that regardless of perception, organisational boundaries were guiding influences of individuality:

> *Not everyone can come up and request that they would like to have a plant on their desk because it makes them feel better. That doesn't work. It needs to be useful for both sides. (M05|C2)*

Akin to the evidence above, a dissociative perspective on the relationship between the perception of meaningfulness of work amongst the workforce and the wider organisation emerged as a central topic:

> *Of course, you have different types of people here. If you tell some people that all they're going to do is take part a and put it in box b, for person x that's exactly what they want to do. It's quite a sensitive topic. I think everyone here should do what they've been hired to do. That's why we pay them. (M07|C1)*

The second topic stands in contrast to the evidence above and addresses people's sense of pride and self-respect. Further evidence from the interview transcripts underscores that some managers identified the work activity or the product as a source of pride and self-respect for the workforce. Similar to the first topic, the following reflects on people's capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect.

The analysis showed that a feeling of pride and self-respect may be an initial driver for people to engage in their chosen line of work:

> *The majority of people do. Well, you have to bear in mind that a long time ago, they all chose to apprentice in this line of work. They all had the option to do something else, but they didn't. That's why I think they take pride in their work. They stand by what they do […] (M15|C1)*

In addition, it came to light meaningfulness in work can influence people's level of engagement with their work:

> *Definitely. I think that's [having meaning in work] what gives them motivation and self-respect. You can tell based on how interested people are. (M16|C1)*

Knowledge about the centrality of the work activity for the success of the wider company may instil a sense of pride and self-respect in each worker:

> *[…] the employee was aware of how important his job was for the overall success of the company. He said that he knew if he was*

doing a bad job, that one mistake on his side could destroy the entire product. […] That showed me how a person who is not doing a complex job looks at what they're doing. (M01|C2)

The topic supports the understanding that the perception of meaningfulness may stretch beyond income generation alone, identifying the work activity itself as a potential source of pride and self-respect; thus, linking the perception of meaningfulness to the level of satisfaction and fulfilment people may derive from their own achievements.

The last topic emerging from the interview data and reflecting the individual's perception of meaningfulness in work is workforce cohesion. From an organisational perspective, people's sense of belonging, identifying with the company and the workers' ability to form a team are underlying factors shaping people's perception of meaningfulness in work. It is important to note here that the majority of managers offered a negative perception of workforce cohesion, highlighting that people had a reduced sense of belonging or identification with the company, impacting the overall performance of each organisation. This topic reflects on people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

The interviews showed that the majority of teams were operating in silos, limiting the sense of belonging to the organisation as a whole:

Thinking about the company and your job as one interconnected flow is not too strong here. The thought that we as a company have to deliver is not really prevalent. (M13|C1)

Additional factors were low levels of workforce cohesion, impacting the performance and sense of belonging for of each individual:

To be very direct: If you have someone working here and he's part of a team but his performance is a lot better in comparison to others in the same group. […] They [colleagues] will try everything to slow down his performance. They will actually approach him and directly tell him to slow down because he'd be screwing up everyone else's performance. […] And imagine, all of a sudden you are surrounded by two or three elderly men who all tell you to slow down. They will tell you that they would rather have you come over and help them instead of starting a new order just to keep the timings at a certain level. (M16|C1)

Simultaneously, dissatisfaction amongst the workforce impacted people's perception of meaningfulness of work.

> *We are all winners here. When people complain, they're complaining at a very high level. Some people tend to forget that. (M01|C2)*

Overall, the *a priori* theme *Perception of Meaningfulness in Work* from the organisational perspective identified the subjectivity of work, people's ability of pride and self-respect, and the overall workforce cohesion and sense of belonging as primary drivers or barriers shaping and guiding people's perception of meaningfulness. With this in mind, evidence from the interview data allows valuable insights into the organisation's evaluation of meaningfulness in work beyond income generation; thus, illuminating workers' sense of purpose and value of work.

6.3.8. Perception of Work Arrangements and Culture

Working together – Social behaviour at the workplace

Expanding the conversation, the following section aims to introduce the organisational perspective of the *a priori* theme *Perception of Work Arrangements and Culture.* As noted in the literature review, it seeks to outline organisational drivers or barriers shaping how people perceive their company. With this objective in mind, the theme reflects on organisational structures, the wider working climate, regulations, and guidelines that may shape the emotional responses of the workforce on a conscious or subconscious level; thus, allowing valuable insights into the alignment between workforce values and organisational values, traditions, and interactions.

Beginning the conversation, one of the emerging topics reflects on people's sense of job security. It seeks to illuminate how people perceive their work activity and if working in a secure environment may contribute to shaping people's perception of the workplace. With this objective in mind, job security encompasses people's ability to remain within the company for a prolonged time, people's perception of advancing within their position and if a stable environment contributed to shaping the workforce's perception of the organisation as a whole and their work in

particular. This topic reflects on people's capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living with independence and security.

The interviews showed highlighted that the perception of workplace culture or arrangements was defined at the subconscious level; thus, allowing people to feel safe in their organisation:

> *Let me say it like this, this place is almost like a family company. Once you are in, it is quite difficult to get anyone to leave and of course, we try to keep as many good people as we can. […] The jobs we have are quite secure. It's part of the company's image. People know. I have never seen that it has been actively promoted but people know. (M11\|C1)*

Further analysis pointed towards the workforce's high average age and low staff turnover as a contributing factor to a limited perception of the organisation with limited scope for development:

> *[…] I'm sure not that many people are aware of how safe their jobs are. Especially the ones that have been with us for a very long time. They know that their job is safe, so they don't value it any longer. (M15\|C1)*

In addition, the interviews indicated the need to differentiate between the level of job security and the workforce's subjective interpretation:

> *It's quite challenging to manage the inside and outside perspective people have of this company. Some people are here for a very long time and some of them are not able to put what they have into perspective. (M06\|C2)*

Exploring the interview data, despite one of the organisations experiencing economic difficulties resulting in the strategic acquisition by a competitor, managers from both organisations offered the perspective that jobs in their company were secure; thus, contrasting the findings of the previous chapter. Nonetheless, the data highlights a distinctly different perspective of job security and how it may shape the perception of work cultures and arrangements from the shop floor and managerial perspective.

Following on from job security, the topic of workforce representation and engagement emerged as a driving factor shaping the perception of the workplace cultures and arrangements. Exploring this topic, managers frequently identified

additional work roles and the relationship between the workforce and the management as guiding the level of worker involvement and engagement with the organisation as a whole and their job activities in particular; thus, offering insights into people's capability to participate in decision-making, to have a voice and influence.

Several participants highlighted the importance of involving the worker during decision-making processes in order to create a positive perception of workplace arrangements and cultures:

> *I mean, I can obviously make a decision, but I never know if it is going to be the right decision. There is always a criterion that I am missing and that is the employee. As long as I don't have the employee on my side, I can decide whatever I want but if the worker says no, that's that. (M11\|C1)*

The interviews highlighted that focussing on worker representation may ensure transparent communication processes, influencing people's emotional engagement:

> *We have elected trust people and they have their meetings. They then go into the various department and inform people about what's been happening. […] It is important to us that our employees are kept in the loop and know what's going on. (M10\|C1)*

Further evidence emerged that direct contact between line managers and their employees provided opportunities for creating platforms of exchange:

> *We try to create low contact barriers between employees and their line managers. The line managers are supposed to listen to their employees. […] That's how we encourage an honest exchange of ideas. (M01\|C2)*

Exploring data from the interviews outlines the focus of organisations on support systems and worker engagement as driving forces shaping worker engagement. In light of this, illuminating worker representation may allow for insights into what guides and shapes the subjective perception of workplace cultures and arrangements.

Lastly, managers identified the respective work climates as emerging topics; hence, reflecting on the relationship between the workers and the relationship

between managers and the wider workforce. This topic reflects on people's capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect.

The analysis provided evidence that an amicable work climate amongst the workforce played a key role:

> *The atmosphere. It's just the way how everyone is treating each other. I'd say that's something they value. I'd describe the atmosphere here as very amicable. (M10|C1)*

The importance of the manager as an individual in leadership positions emerged as a key driver which could indicate a limited amount of formal structures guiding the work climate:

> *[…] sometimes you just have to stop and have a chat with people about how they're doing and if they like their work. That does contribute to a good work climate. It makes people feel like they're part of something and not just a number. Although it does depend on the manager. (M04|C2)*

In contrast, there is evidence that the limited amount of formal structures can create barriers to developing a positive working climate:

> *It's mostly, what happens will happen. There aren't any formal structures and the company isn't really involved. Either colleagues get on or they don't. (M13|C1)*

Engaging with data from the interviews enables insights into the recurring patterns of behaviour at the workplace and how each participating organisation seeks to shape the attitudes and feelings of the workforce. In light of this, the topic reflects on how workers may experience shared assumptions, values, and beliefs across the organisation shaping their perception of workplace arrangements and culture.

Overall, taking the organisational perspective, managers identified that the perception of workplace arrangements and cultures may be shaped and guided by perceptions of job security, worker representation and engagements as well as the overall experience of workplace climates. Against this backdrop, investigating the organisational perspective offers valuable insights into organisational structures and values informing social behaviour at the workplace and determining the relationship between workers as well as workers and their managers.

6.3.9. Section summary

Introducing the results for the second interview phase outlines the managerial perspective of the individual level. In accordance with this objective, data from the interview scripts allows insights into organisational values and mechanisms informing what workers value, their capabilities, and what may determine the emotional responses of workers to workplace characteristics. Taking these findings into consideration, it highlights that the managerial perspective overlaps, diverges, and concurs at several points with the worker perspective, underscoring that exploring both perspectives offers noteworthy insights into underlying factors driving or hindering HD in organisations. These contrasts and convergence points of both perspectives will be explored at a more in-depth level in *Chapter 7:* Discussion. While this section seeks to present findings informing the capabilities perspective of the workplace at the individual level, the following section aims to present results at the organisational level.

6.4. Organisational Level

6.4.1. Section Overview

Expanding the conversation from the individual level, the following section seeks to outline the organisational level as informed by interviews with managerial staff. With this objective in mind, it aims to reflect on both participating organisations, highlighting their key structures and operations, their underlying philosophy of economic and working life, skill formation and arrangement structures, work organisation and design, as well as workplace relations and cultures. Akin to the previous sections, the level begins with a visual representation of emerging themes and topics, followed by a detailed account of the interview data.

6.4.2. Visual representation at the organisational level (manager)

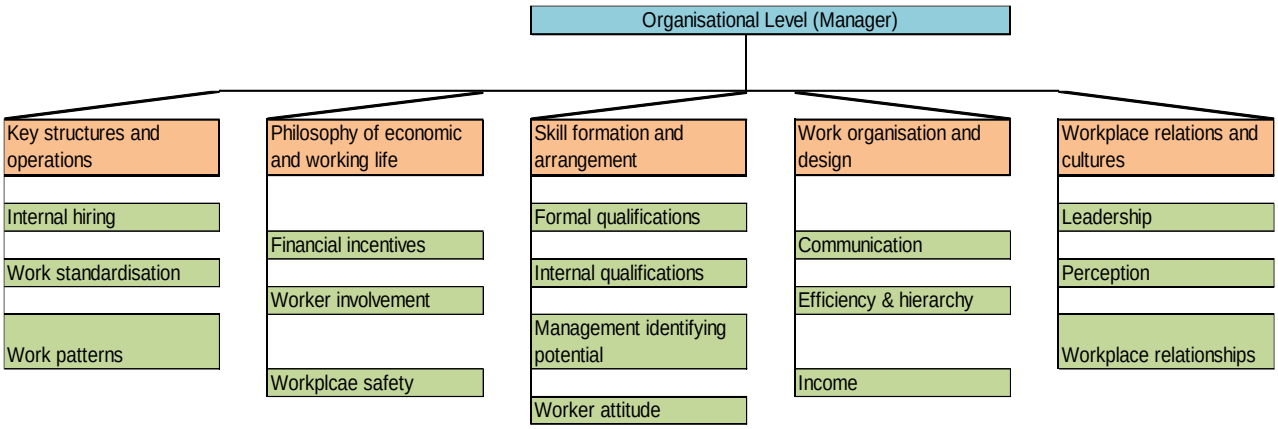

Figure 6.2: Visual representation at the organisational level (manager)

6.4.3. Key Structures and Operations

The interaction of organisational arrangements

Following the visual representation, the first *a priori* theme informing the organisational level is *Key structures and Operations.* As noted in the literature review, the theme seeks to outline formal and informal structures shaping organisational boundaries in which workers can operate in. Taking this objective into consideration, the theme aims to illuminate the underlying reasoning behind these structures and to inform their added value from the managerial perspective; thus, showcasing how companies arrange organisational elements and networks to guide interactions between the workforce and the organisation.

The first topic identifies internal hiring processes as a key structure. Embedded in this theme are career development opportunities, outlining that both organisations give preference to filling new positions, particularly managerial positions, with members already employed by the organisation. Reflecting on internal hiring processes does not only allow insights into people's career development opportunities, but it may also enable a deeper understanding of the relationship between the workforce and managers shaping behavioural patterns and value preferences. It reflects on people's capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

The interviews highlighted a focus on internal applicants when recruiting for new positions:

> *Most people are internal and worked their way up within the company. […] And of course, new vacancies are first published internally. For example, last year we were looking for new foremen, so middle management, we got 30 internal applications for those positions and we talked to all of them. Normally we fill all vacancies with internal candidates. (M15|C1)*

There was further evidence to establishing a connection with their own experiences, highlighting that they themselves started on the shop floor before internally progressing towards a management position:

> *If someone wants to do something, they can say so and then we will see. I think there is a lot of opportunity here. I'm a perfect example. I started here as an intern and now work as a Masters'. (M02|C2)*

The analysis pointed towards that frequently the prioritization of internal hiring processes allowed for career opportunities and progress amongst their workforce:

> *Most positions we recruit for are posted internally. Of course, people need to show initiative. […] We only recruit externally if we absolutely have to and only if people are the right fit. […] There are people here that managed to make a career and from ERA 6 to ERA 11 within 3 years. We are talking roughly 80% increase in earnings. No one just gets a chicken; they all had to work for it. (M06|C2)*

Reviewing the interview data, focussing on internal hiring processes forms a key driver in determining people's success within the company. This focus may ensure that each manager acquired first-hand understanding and experience of the shop floor prior to taking up a managerial role; hence, allowing for an increased knowledge and insight into key operations shaping the emotional responses of the workforce to their organisation. Simultaneously, this focus may amplify social values and behavioural patterns originating from the workforce, thereby continuing to shape the managerial perspective of the workforce.

In addition to internal hiring processes, both organisations emphasised standardisation processes within each department based on a worker and machine matrix. Within each organisation, departments are organised in teams according to production steps with corresponding working plans and machine distributions, allowing for insights into key organisational structures and operations. The topic

seeks to illuminate people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

The analysis pointed towards the centrality of planning processes based on planning matrices:

> *Sometimes, I have meetings with my boss, and we create a qualifications plan.[5] It's a matrix. On the matrix you can even see if we're behind on orders for every machine. (M10|C1)*

Further evidence highlighted the influence of companies focusing on formal structures to standardise and evaluate the efficiency of workstations:

> *In addition, for the workstations themselves, we have evaluated all stations using a key indicator method. We analysed the workstations based on this formal method. So, you evaluate what people do, what is within their parameters […] That means we can use people on a lot more flexible basis and depending on our needs. […] The Masters' design a matrix. (M15|C1)*

In addition, the interviews showed that the organisation operated based on systems flows and coordinated workflows:

> *Sometimes it can be difficult to change things within the production area because we have systematic workflows. Often people don't really have a helicopter view and try to change things that would create chaos at other points of the production chain. (M06|C2)*

Insights into key organisational structures and operations indicate the centrality of standardised work processes and long-term planning based on matrices outlining workers' abilities and current workloads; thus, allowing insights into underlying structures determining the organisational boundaries in which workers operate in.

The last emerging topic under the *a priori* theme reflects on work patterns, effectively organising and structuring people's abilities. While the dominant driver is operating in shift work patterns, it may inform the underlying intention and value

[5] In German, a qualification plan or matrix refers to a visual representation of each employee's formal qualifications and skills. Generally, it is compiled at the team, departmental, or general level of the production site.

of shift work, it's structures, and wider impact on the workforce. It reflects on people's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

The analysis pointed towards that organising work in shift patterns may increase pressure amongst the workforce:

> *Well, shift work is always exhausting. A two-shift system puts you under pressure and of course, a three-shift system increases the pressure. (M12|C1)*

Nonetheless, there was equal evidence that despite shift work impacting the workforce, working in shift patterns constitutes a known condition of the work activity:

> *I mean, we work in a shift system. Of course, that makes things a little bit more difficult for them. Sometimes we can't accommodate what people want. We do have this system and people know that beforehand. (M04|C2)*

Overall, exploring the interview data outlines an organisational focus on internal hiring policies, the centrality of standardised work systems, and the impact of organising work in shift patterns. These topics characterising the *a priori* theme *Key Structures and Organisation* allow valuable insights into the formal structures defining the context and boundaries in which workers operate. Taking this into consideration, the theme reflects on the interaction of the management with the workforce, thereby offering insights into the underlying reasoning of designing key operational structures.

6.4.4. Philosophy of Economic and Working Life

Underlying customs, beliefs and agreements shaping the perception of the workplace

Taking the organisational perspective, the *a priori* theme *Philosophy of Economic and Working Life* aims to address underlying customs, beliefs and arrangements characterising organisational boundaries and values. As noted in the literature review and with this objective in mind, the theme may allow insights into what shapes people's behaviour at the workplace; thus, informing underlying values, traditions, and conditions shaping organisations in the manufacturing industry. Exploring conventions guiding standards and norms across organisations offers noteworthy insights into what shapes people's perceptions of the workplace.

The first emerging topic addresses a dominant focus on financial incentives and rewards as mechanisms seeking to shape and guide people's behaviour. These mechanisms are embedded in remunerating workers for engaging with the workplace and range from payments to workers for submitting suggested improvements, bonus payments following performance reviews, to incentivising overtime through financial rewards. The topic echoes the findings at the individual level, identifying financial incentives as factors contributing to people's motivation to work. At the organisational level, financial reward systems form central designs to foster workplace engagement driving underlying customs, beliefs, and arrangements in the manufacturing industry. It reflects on people's capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

The analysis showed that the company's primary mechanism to incentivise worker engagement focuses on financial rewards for improvement suggestions:

> *We do have a suggestion system. With this system we pay people for their suggestions as a way to show appreciation. […] Sometimes you get suggestions that have an economic impact, not always but sometimes. In those cases, we calculate that impact and a percentage goes to the worker suggesting it. (M06|C2)*

There was further evidence that a focus on financial incentives forms part of the organisations underlying philosophy and is mutually beneficial for the workers in particular and the organisation in general:

> *Some of the suggestions are being completed quite quickly and we do pay for them. It's another company philosophy or strategy. It's in the company's interest […] (M13|C1)*

One manager reflected on union regulations agreed in the 2018 collective agreement. The agreement outlines that workers engaged in shift work patterns, workers with small children, or workers giving care to dependents have to right to request 8 days of annual leave in addition to the standardised 30 days of annual leave, or worker may request a financial payment equivalent to 8 days of leave. Contrasting the company's strategy on focusing of financial incentives, he indicated that the majority of the workforce showed preference for time off in comparison to a financial payment:

> *We all predicted that our workforce, which is quite money focused, would opt for the money. We were all very surprised that in some areas more than 70% of our employees rather opted for time off. We then actually struggled to give them time off. 8 extra days per person is a lot. (M16|C1)*

While this could be interpreted as a singular occurrence, data reported by the IG Metall highlights that across all organisations represented by the IG Metall, 70-80% of workers entitled to choose additional leave or pay, have opted to request time off in lieu of money (Handelsblatt, 2018); thus, raising concerns about the efficiency of focusing on monetary incentives as an underlying strategy of economic and working life.

Following the focus on financial reward systems incentivising worker engagement, the interview scripts showed a general focus of worker involvement and participation in core processes guiding organisational customs and arrangements. Exploring the data, managers outlined that the underlying philosophy was a close reflection on the shop floor being the organisational centre of each company, highlighting the importance of a belief and value systems acknowledging the centrality of the shop floor. This topic reflects on people's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

During the analysis, it came to light that participants valued an engaged workforce which contributed to the overall success of the organisation:

> *For me it has a very high value. If you don't have the right people, the company goes under and stops existing. People is how you measure a company's success. I know. I have been working for the company for 15 years. I worked the machines for 13 so I know. (M11|C1)*

The analysis further showed that interactions between the managers and workers may shape the behaviour and value system of the workforce:

> *If you want to change something and you haven't involved your employees, you don't even have to try and change it. It's the worker that's responsible and has to work on his station. […] the employee has as much to decide as anyone else, but it does depend on your manager. The managers decide to handle decision-making processes. (M12|C1)*

Simultaneously, the shop floor offered opportunities for worker engagement; thus, focusing on workers as primary drivers to initiate changes:

> *Overall, they are involved on a deep level. Of course, you need to involve your employees because at the end of the day, they are the ones that will have to work with the changes. So, often they are the ones who have to get involved. (M01|C2)*

Discussing the findings, worker involvement and a focus on the workface as central to the organisation's performance allows for the understanding that participating organisations exhibited organisational boundaries characterised by people-centred philosophies resulting in organisational boundaries shaped by the interactions between workers and managers.

Lastly, the interviews highlighted that organisations across the manufacturing industry emphasised their ability to quantify underlying conventions, arrangements and traditions shaping people's perception of the workplace. Against this backdrop, managers underscored the centrality of formalised regulations and procedures such as health and safety directives and codes of conduct informing the underlying philosophy of economic and working life in the manufacturing industry. It reflects on people's capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy.

The analysis underscored the centrality of quantifiable regulations:

> *Workplace safety is something that is very important to us. We always keep everything up to date and have inspections. (M03|C2)*

The interviews showed he organisation's engagement with preventive measures to ensure a safe and healthy environment:

> *Well, the employees here get a lot of support. If they need any support tools, we will get them for them. As I said, we also do a lot of preventative measures, things like back training and general health and safety. (M10|C1)*

More evidence emerged for the centrality of formalised structures and recording of health and safety measures:

> *Well, we do quite a lot. Every person receives their personal safety equipment […] Gloves, shoes, ventilators, goggles, clothes, anything and everything. From a mental health point of*

view, we have training once a year and people need to sign that they have received mental health and safety training (M12|C1)

Interpreting the focus on quantifiable measures guiding workplace arrangements and processes allows for the understanding that organisations often employ formal and standardised mechanisms across industries; thereby, supporting the creation of a supportive and encouraging organisational context.

Overall, inquiring into the organisational perspective of underlying philosophies of economic and working life outlines that customs, beliefs, and arrangements in the manufacturing industry are shaped by a focus on financial incentives and reward systems, the aim of worker involvement on the shop floor, and a heightened focus on quantifiable measures such as workplace safety regulations. Taking these topics into consideration, the *a priori* theme reflects on values, traditions, and conditions at the workplace and may inform organisational boundaries and values shaping the workforce's perception of the workplace.

6.4.5. Skill Formation and Arrangement

The process of learning and skill set development

As noted in the literature review, the *a priori* theme *Skill formation and Arrangement* from the managerial point of view seeks to illuminate formal or informal structures characterising how people learn, develop their skills, or expand their expertise. Taking this into consideration, the theme seeks to present findings informing the process of learning based on single events such as interactions between managers and workers or learning as a continuous process such as completing additional formal qualifications.

Beginning the conversation, the first emerging theme reflects on formal learning structures and opportunities to acquire additional qualifications. Reflecting on this topic allows insights into how workers develop formal competencies and acquire expertise, shaping the organisational context of the workplace. It reflects on people's capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

The interviews highlighted that the company did not offer degree qualifications but that work arrangements included support systems designed to enable people to voluntarily continue their education outside the workplace:

> *I think the company values it a quite lot. We do have support structures for people that want to go back to school. For example, if people have been here for a while […] and would like to go back to school full-time, they can take unpaid leave. (M15|C1)*

The analysis produced indication that the dominant factors driving people's skill formation are attending external seminars or completing formal degree structures:

> *We sometimes send people to continue their education or to finish their Masters' or work on their technical degree. We also sometimes send people on external seminars. We are flexible and accommodating if workers ask us to change their shift patterns because they want to go back to school. (M01|C2)*

Simultaneously, the analysis pointe towards managers establishing connections with their own educational experiences and career advancement based on skill formation:

> *We offer special leave, such as educational leave, we also offer financial support for people. For example, when I was still on the shop floor, I completed a certificate and the company paid for it. (M03|C2)*

Insights into formal learning structures contribute to a deeper understanding of industry-wide skill development and learning conventions contextualising educational experiences of the workforce.

Contrasting formal learning structures such as external qualifications, the interview data further highlighted the importance of ensuring a high level of skill flexibility and versatility amongst the workforce. With this objective in mind, both organisations frequently referenced the centrality of internal training opportunities. While formal qualifications aim to provide the worker with official accreditation or certification, informal and internal training opportunities are designed by the organisation and are key drivers in shaping skill formation and arrangements. Akin to the previous topic, it reflects on people's capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

The analysis points towards how internal training opportunities encompass arrangements for colleagues to learn from each other; thus, impacting the wider work climate:

> *We don't train our people externally, but have other colleagues teach them how to work the machines. It's all internal and between colleagues. I think that also impacts the work climate. The better people get along, the better the work climate. (M11|C1)*

Moreover, the evidence points towards supporting the workforce in acquiring a broad spectrum of skill sets within the company may impact work distribution and reduce pressure spikes:

> *I think the company places a high value on worker development. That brings us back to pressure. We do try to ensure that in all of our areas, […] all of our employees have a certain breadth in their skills. That ensures that we don't have pressure spikes and we can distribute the workload across more areas. (M05|C2)*

The interviews indicated that the organisation actively promoted internal learning opportunities and that external learning was of secondary concern to the organisation:

> *I wouldn't say that we put everything into education, but what we do a lot is qualification. That means we have colleagues train each other at different workstations. […] We do a lot internally and I think that's the core of our training programme. We will only send people externally if we don't have internal competencies or capacities. (M07|C1)*

Exploring the interview transcripts emphasises a distinction between formal learning such as external and informal learning such as internal opportunities. It amplifies that participating organisations actively engaged and designed internal learning opportunities with limited prioritisation of external qualification. External qualifications such as voluntarily beginning a technical degree, was frequently linked to worker attitudes and the workforce showing initiative; hence, allowing organisations to passively support external learning and actively promote internal skill formation.

Expanding the conversation from internal or external skill formation processes, engaging with the managerial perspective accentuated the centrality of the management system in shaping learning structures. Against this backdrop,

managers emerged as key drivers in identifying learning potential amongst the workforce and encouraging individual workers to expand their knowledge base. It reflects on people's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

During the analysis it emerged that skill formation contributed to long-term planning and HR strategies:

> *For example, if I know I am going to retire soon, it is important that I start finding a replacement early. That's why I think it's important for the company to qualify and train people. If someone is leaving the company, you need to start finding a replacement early on. (M10\|C1)*

At the same time, the interviews showed the centrality of people acquiring formal skills as a starting point for their career development:

> *But here we focus on people showing initiative or we sometimes approach employees because we see a lot of potential in them. And in those cases, there are always more ways of supporting their careers. (M01\|C2)*

Interestingly, it came to light that limited cross-departmental planning structures may have negative impacts on skill formation:

> *It depends on people. You have to see who has potential and what you can do to support their development. So, you can target specific skills and specific people. However, there isn't really a cross-departmental connection. We all tend to operate more in silos. (M13\|C1)*

Lastly, data from the interviews established a connection between worker's attitude and the efficiency of skill development structures. The topic spotlights contrasting perspectives of organisational values such as flexible working and worker attitudes; thus, impacting the overall competency and outcome of skill formation patterns. This topic engages with people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

The interviews pointed towards a connection between age distribution and worker attitudes shaping formal or informal skill development structures:

> *They tend to be older colleagues, they essentially follow the motto: my machine, my shift, my work. Whenever I approach them and suggest to them to go for another qualification, the*

> *answer is always the same: I'm going to stay here. Younger colleagues are different, they want to do things and develop. (M10|C1)*

Further, there is evidence of resistance when introducing new learning pathways:

> *It used to be the case that on the shop floor, people were married to their machines. They only wanted to work the one machine and nothing else. Training people to be more flexible is meeting a lot of resistance within the workforce. […] People used to call in sick on training days just to avoid it until they realised that this kind of training was mandatory. (M16|C1)*

In addition, it emerged that workers' attitudes may negatively impact the efficiency of learning structures:

> *It is always difficult to make long-term plans and pair different people with different machines. There is always someone who doesn't like something or doesn't like working with someone else because it might be "exhausting". They just don't want to put the effort into it. You do face opposition if you want to change things. (M06|C2)*

Reviewing evidence from the interview transcripts allows for the understanding that the organisational perspective of skill formation and arrangements is interlinked with the individual level reflecting on worker attitudes and self-efficacy. In light of this, each level of analysis should not be seen in isolation but as a part of an interrelated network operating on different levels and offering insights into the organisation and the individual alike.

6.4.6. Work Organisation and Design

The interaction of elements

Engaging with the organisational perspective, the *a priori* theme *Work Organisation and Design* seeks to identify how individual elements may interact and impact each other. As noted in the literature review and taking this into consideration, the theme reflects on formal and informal structures guiding individual components of the organisation and outlining the overall distribution and coordination of tasks, structures, and interactions between the workforce and the managerial level. Exploring work organisation and design structures may contribute to a deeper understanding of what managers may perceive as key organisational structures and designs potentially impacting workers' perception of the workplace.

Beginning the conversation, the first element shaping work organisation and design is communication systems. Exploring the managerial perspective of communications system outlines a focus on open systems with low contact barriers, encouraging workers to take initiative and approach their line managers. Further, communication between managers to transparently convey strategic decision to the workforce formed a key element shaping workplace communication. The theme informs people's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

The interview data highlights that for several managers, transparent communication systems were grounded in formal structures:

> *The company does try to be very transparent with what we do here. For example, in our biannual staff assemblies. (M12|C1)*

In addition, the data indicates that formal structures such as meetings and assemblies serve as platforms for exchange:

> *We have meetings every Friday and they are central to improving communication between the worker and the line managers. To get different perspectives and to raise awareness. We mostly have our Friday meetings and then other meetings amongst managers. (M01|C2)*

In contrast, there is evidence that managers with direct line management duties focused on informal settings to communicate with employees based on informal conversations:

> *They [the workforce] can always outline what they don't like and can approach us directly. […] We just talk. There is not much formality. (M04|C2)*

Open communication system fostering an informal environment between the workforce and line managers in conjunction with a focus on formal structures contributing to transparency in communicating strategic decisions emerged as a driving factor in shaping people's perception of the workplace and awareness of organisational processes.

Following on from communication systems, participants frequently underlined organisational designs aiming to improve efficiency across systematic workflows.

In light of this, standardised work processes with a flat hierarchy informed organisational designs. Moreover, participants noted that these designs are grounded in the nature of the organisation, reflecting on shift work patterns in an industrial setting. The theme contributes to people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

The interviews showcased the importance of pre-designed workstations, reflecting on the interconnectedness of an organisational structure focused on shift work:

> *We are bound to some things. For example, we have shadow walls with exact location for the individual tools. Those are things workers can't change because the design affects several shifts. The main purpose of those walls is that everyone knows where everything is. But people can influence their workstations on a very small scale. (M12\|C1)*

Moreover, there was evidence of how standardised work processes may have a positive impact on the company's overall efficiency:

> *If a worker cuts his pieces using two steps and someone else cuts it with only one cut; there is a problem of timing and planning. In order to make our work flows as efficient and effective as possible, we need to review and standardise our processes. (M07\|C1)*

In contrast to the previous quotations, one manager raised concerns about the overall effectiveness of formalised structures, establishing a diverging perception of the strategic implementation of work designs and their potential impact on the perception of the workplace:

> *We didn't always have a clear strategy that we could all follow and rally behind. I think that's one of our biggest issues. We had a lot of meetings identifying problems but no solutions. Even if we agreed on solutions, no one implemented them. We still don't know where we are going. The individual area, they all do their own thing. (M13\|C1)*

Data from the interview scripts suggests diverging perceptions of workplace designs and their consequential impact on workplace efficiency. Taking this into consideration, the data supports the understanding that work organisation and design aiming at improving workplace efficiency may equally impact the workforce and managers, shaping the overall perception of company performance.

Lastly, the perception of income structures and pay scales emerged as a re-occurring theme defining workplace organisation and design. The overall indication of the managerial perspective was that the workforce either received a sufficient salary, above average pay, while some mangers interpreted pay scales as too high. It supports the capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

The analysis pointed to a connection between people's performance and their remuneration:

> *It's definitely a company that pays a lot. Honest answer? I think sometimes they're overpaid. Of course, they will probably think that they're underpaid. That's self-perception. But in all honesty, I wouldn't mind them being paid that much if they would deliver a performance to match the pay cheque. (M09\|C1)*

The data further suggests that pay structures may contribute to people remaining with the company for a prolonged period of time, reducing staff turnover:

> *I do know that we pay approximately 10-15% above average. We do have people who want to leave the company, but they often don't because they realise that they would earn a lot less than what they earn here. (M06\|C2)*

Reflecting on pay structures, the data points towards how collective agreements defining pay structures are shaping the overall income of the workforce:

> *People that have been working for this company for decades, they probably maxed out their structure. You can really progress. That's also related to the ERA categories correlating to their job description. (M11\|C1)*

Exploring income structures and financial remuneration in industrial organisations defined by shift work and collective agreements supports the understanding that the manufacturing industry is characterised by high pay scales for shop floor workers. Illuminating these structures may inform the effectiveness of income as a motivation to work and if financial incentives contribute to an overall positive perception of the workplace; thus, potentially contributing to the debate on if there is meaning in work beyond financial remuneration.

The *a priori* theme *Workplace Organisation and Design* from the organisational perspective focuses on communication systems, standardised work processes

aiming to increase work efficiency, and a high-income structure characterising companies in the manufacturing industry. The findings outline that each individual element at the workplace is shaped by formal and informal structures determining interactions between the workers and managers, thereby shaping underlying social behaviours and patterns.

6.4.7. Workplace Relations and Cultures

Connecting the organisation with its employees

The last *a priori* theme in this section informs *Workplace Relations and Cultures.* As noted in the literature review, the theme seeks to illuminate organisational dimensions guiding people's values and behaviour in the organisation. With this purpose in mind, the theme informs the social dimension of the organisation, focussing on how organisations may shape interpersonal relationships between workers and foster multifaceted relations impacting people's lives in and outside the workplace.

The first theme highlights that leadership structures and a dependence on the manager as an individual are key drivers in shaping workplace relations of the participating organisations. Exploring the interview data, managers outlined how leadership structures were shaped by the managerial staff with limited formal guidelines, depending on the managers' attitudes, expectations, and preferences. It reflects on people's capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities.

The data points towards a connection between leadership structures and staff turnover, potentially negatively impacting the emotional perception of the workplace:

> *People have been with this company for so long, they are one with their work, body and soul. However, because we have lost all visible leadership strategy and leadership culture, because management has changed so frequently, it made workers become cynical and sceptical of anything new. […] People have seen a lot of managers come and go. (M17\|C1)*

The interviews further highlighted the importance of informal conversations between managers and the workforce:

At any point people can come to us and just talk to us. And I do believe that that's actually enough. I mean, what else should we do? Things like that just happen during face-to-face conversations. (M03|C2)

Interestingly, the data also showed that a focus on managers as key drivers for shaping leadership structures may impact overall workplace relations and cultures:

It depends on the manager himself. If you have a temper, you will pass that on to your workforce. I actually think it would be nice if the company would step up and put something in place to prevent that from happening. […] I think it heavily depends on the manager and how they act and on their leadership style. (M02|C2)

Despite this dependence allowing for direct and conversational interactions between the managers and the workforce, this focus may increase the risk of negatively impacting the organisation. Managers may leave the organisation, creating a knowledge gap and disrupting interpersonal relations as leadership mechanisms. In addition, focussing on the manager as central for leadership structures with limited formal guidelines may create dissonance within the workforce based on diverging beliefs, value preferences, or social norms between workers and managers.

The second topic indicates how workplace relations and cultures may impact the perception of the organisation and vice versa. It encompasses structures shaping how people perceive, understand, and regard their work activities and seeks to underscore key drivers or barriers in shaping workplace perceptions. The topic contributes to people's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

The interviews showed that the perception of the workplace may be shaped by the feeling of working towards communal goals:

The thought of we as a company have to deliver isn't really there. Most people stay in their silos. I think it would be important to have more of a "we" feeling here. It would be nice if we could shift from "who made the mistake" to "how can we fix it" and tackle our problems. (M13|C1)

Despite the low employee turnover providing stability, the analysis brought to light that it may negatively impact organisational structures and underlying values:

> *[…] we have a fair few people here who have been here for 25 or 30 or even 40 years. We only have a minimal staff turnover, hardly anyone leaves the company voluntarily. […] At the same time that means we have very old and crusty organisational structures and values. (M16|C1)*

Additional evidence points towards workplace relations being grounded in the company's income structure and stable work environment, enabling workers to structure their life outside the workplace:

> *I think we are very reliable here. If you take me for example, I have been here for 32 years. This company has always paid on time. They were always very generous. That includes the social side. They were generous and greatly reliable. […] That means I was able to plan my life long-term and in a strategic way. It was important to me. (M12|C1)*

Lastly, the interview data indicated the importance of interactions between workers and between managers and workers. The topic reflects on informal proceedings, and focuses on fostering casual or familiar work climates, shaping the underlying structures that influence workplace relations and cultures. It reflects on people's capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect.

The interviews brought to light a focus on informal structures:

> *We don't have any formal structures; it all comes back to what the individual thinks would be best. It's between colleagues and either it works, or it doesn't. (M11|C1)*

Additionally, the findings point towards a heightened importance of formal events that shape workplace relations:

> *We are trying to actively strengthen the work climate here. We do things like Christmas carolling, we have a cafeteria, and we also have a strong WC that always listens to what is going on with the workforce and if there is a problem. (M15|C1)*

In contrast, the interviews showed the importance of formal events while underlining how initiatives to organise such events frequently originated amongst workers:

> *I can definitely say that the working climate here is pretty good. […] one of the main parts is to treat everyone with respect so that*

> *I can treat them with respect. We are definitely trying to create a sense of working together and not against each other. We sometimes have Christmas parties or BBQs, but often that's initiated by the individual, not the company. (M02|C2)*

Investigating the interview data identifies that formal and informal interactions between the workforce and workers and managers may be underlying drivers shaping workplace relations and cultures in the manufacturing industry.

Overall, findings for the *a priori* theme *Workplace Relations and Cultures* support the understanding that the role of managers shaping leadership structures and cultures, people's perception of the workplace driven by reliable income structures and job security, and the level of familiarity between workers and managers and workers are key drivers informing the social dimension of the organisation; thus structuring people's multifaceted relations at the workplace and beyond.

6.4.8. Section summary

The organisational level set out to present findings illuminating the managerial perspective on formal and informal structures influencing how organisations allocate, coordinate, and direct work tasks. With this objective in mind, the findings allow valuable insights into underlying drivers and reasoning of work designs to realize organisational aims and consequently operating on a profitable basis. Exploring the interview data and presenting findings highlights that both participating organisations focus on managers as key drivers in shaping organisational structures and influencing how workers may perceive their workplace. Despite this focus offering several benefits for the organisation and the workforce alike, it increases the risk of disruption in the event of managerial changes; a point that will be explored at a deeper level in the following chapter.

6.5. Institutional Level

6.5.1. Section overview

Following the results of the individual and organisational level, the subsequent section sets out to shine a light on the organisational perspective of the institutional level. Taking this into consideration, the institutional level seeks to present evidence informing how formalised or informal structures grounded in institutional

boundaries may impact worker behaviours, customs, or patterns as well as guiding norms and standards defining the parameters in which industrial organisations operate. The level introduces evidence for the *a priori* themes culture and ideological legacies, nature and state of the product market, economic setting, nature of the labour market, nature of the legal form of employment.

6.5.2. Visual representation at the institutional level (manager)

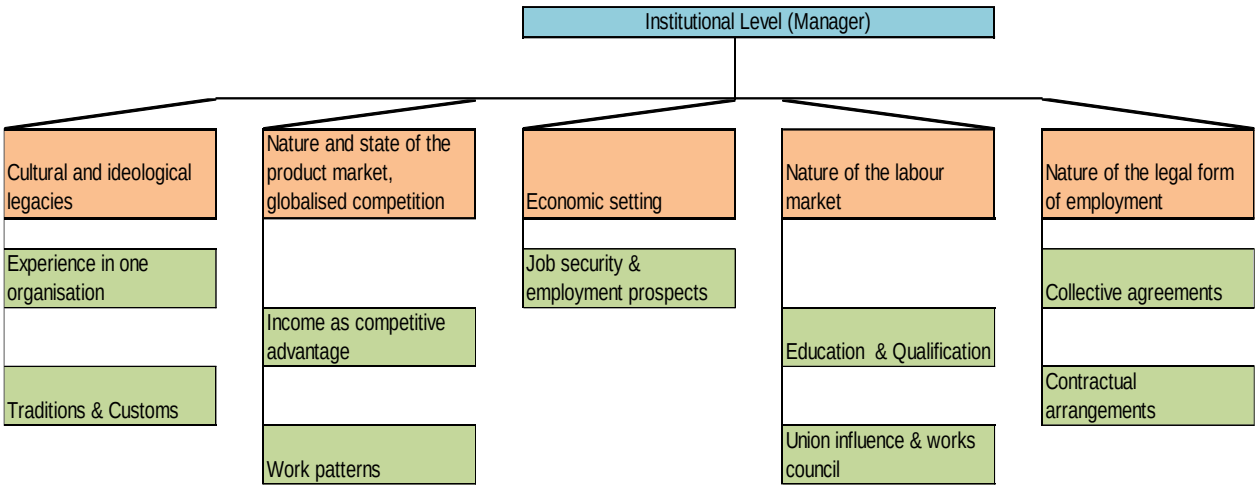

Figure 6.3: Visual representation at the institutional level (manager)

6.5.3. Cultural and ideological legacies

Ideas and ideals shaping people's values

Taking the organisational perspective, the first *a priori* theme addresses underlying traditions, customs, norms, and beliefs guiding people's lives in and outside the workplace. "Cultural and ideological legacies*"* reflects on underlying cultural norms defining social behaviour and values amongst the workforce. Exploring the managerial perspective of these norms may allow for a deeper understanding of foundational values driving organisational decision-making and structures.

Beginning the conversation, the interview data highlighted that a high proportion of the workforce remains within the employment of one company for a prolonged time. Simultaneously, managers noted that new recruitment processes were frequently initiated following the retirement of members of the workforce. Despite these structures allowing for cohesion amongst the workforce, it also underscores the risks of an aging workforce in the industrial sector with limited ability to bridge

intergenerational value gaps. It reflects on people's capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

> *I think it [average age] is just shy of 50 years. We just celebrated two anniversaries earlier today. One was for 40 years the other one for 45 years of service. That is something that in any other company I have worked for would be unattainable. […] I can't imagine that in the future, anniversaries like that will continue to exist. (M16|C1)*

Data from the interview scripts highlights that remaining within the employment of one particular company or within one industry dominated by a limited number of competitors remains a customary legacy within the German manufacturing industry. Nonetheless, these long-term experiences may bear advantages and disadvantages for organisations and workforces alike.

The second topic focuses on traditions and customs shaping people's expectations at the workplace and social engagement with the organisation. These traditions form part of Germany's culture as a developed Western nation and encompass events such as Christmas parties, summer staff parties, family festivals, sports tournaments, guiding how people engage and interact with each other. Generally, these customs and traditions are formalised structures, repeated on a regular basis or informal behavioural patterns. The topics may inform people's capability to enjoy individual, social and family life.

The interviews showed an underlying reasoning for offering formal events:

> *For example, we have a large summer fest tomorrow because it is our 75th anniversary. We also have Christmas parties and things like that. The management board says it is good for morale. (M04|C2)*

The data suggests a connection between formal events, people's interactions, and the overall work climate:

> *I mean, we are organising an anniversary celebration for our 100th anniversary this year. We offer things like back gymnastics. But we don't have a Christmas party for the entire company. Every individual department has one but not the company as a whole. The climate has become a bit negative so not many people still engage (M13|C1)*

Overall, the interview data offers limited insights into cultural and ideological legacies shaping the underlying social norms, values and belief systems within the German manufacturing industry. Nonetheless, the data highlights the importance of formalised events that have become traditions, and the influences of workers remaining in the employment of one company for a prolonged period of time. At the institutional level, formalised events such as Christmas parties form part of cultural legacies in Western countries that have the ability to influence work climates and inform cultural expectations of workers engaged in the German manufacturing industry.

6.5.4. Nature and State of the Product Market, Globalised Competition

The bearings industry – A mature industry with tradition?

The second *a priori* theme seeks to reflect on the *Nature and state of the product market, globalised competition.* With this objective in mind, it suggests that the bearings industry is a global but niche market, rooted in German industrial traditions originating in the automotive industry. Illuminating the particularities of this mature market may contribute to the understanding how institutional boundaries may shape the understanding and perception of work amongst shop floor workers.

The first topic emerging as key driver informing the nature of the market are income structures. Managers highlighted that high-income structures in the bearings industry were a key characteristic of the market, allowing each company to establish itself as a market leader within their region. It reflects on people's capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

The interviews suggest that the high-income structure within the industry often shaped the perception of workplace conditions:

> *However, some colleagues tried to find other jobs, they had to experience the real conditions of the market. Everyone who tried had to admit that all the other companies in this region […] does not pay as well as we do with comparable work activities. (M16\|C1)*

The analysis suggests that high pay scales contributed to distinguishing regional employers:

> *I think if you look at what other companies pay, I'd say we pay a lot, especially for this region. I mean, I haven't worked in that many other companies, but I do believe it's a very good compensation. (M03|C2)*

The high-income structure across the industry supports the understanding that companies operating in the manufacturing industry may define above average pay in comparison to other companies operating within the same region as a competitive advantage; thus, allowing organisations to attract and retain employees across departments.

In addition, the nature of the industry is defined by shift work and pre-defined work structures within the industry. Despite organisations being able to choose to operate on a two-shift or three shift rotation system, work patterns for the shop floor are grounded in machine operations organised in early, late, and night shifts with voluntary overtime on Saturdays. In light of this, applications of shift work patterns influence people's capability to enjoy individual, social and family life.

The data points towards shift models as key dominators across the industry:

> *We work from Mondays to Friday nights, then you change into the late shift for 5 days and from there you go into the early shift. So, we don't work a 2-2-2 system or a 3-3-3 shift system. In the industry, you normally don't do compressed work weeks either where you work for 2 weeks straight and then have 1 week off. We have a standard 21-days, 3-weeks rotations system. […] if we need it, we can add a 6th night shift, a prolonged late shift, or work on Saturdays. (M07|C1)*

At the same time, the interviews show that shift work may be negatively impacting people's lives outside the workplace, but underlined that shift work formed a key element of working in the industry:

> *Ideally, we wouldn't have to work shift. […] the shop floor has to work shift, that's how it works, but they only work 35-hours, so they still have a healthy work-life balance. (M04|C2)*

Reflecting on the nature of the industry underscores that high-income structures and a focus on shift work are primary identifiers of the industry; thus, suggesting

that the industry is rooted in operational designs unchanged for a prolonged time. Nonetheless, from an organisational perspective, negative impacts from work patterns are frequently off set through high salaries and a general focus on financial incentives to shape workers' perception of the workplace.

6.5.5. Economic Setting

Employee Perspectives on industrial contexts

The *a priori* theme *Economic setting* seeks to reflect on the overall market for the bearings industry at a local and national level. With this objective in mind, the theme addresses practices, characteristics, and the wider industrial context in which each of the participating organisation operates in. Presenting findings informing the economic setting of organisations may contribute to defining institutional standards and limitations shaping people's perception of the workplace.

Informing the economic setting of organisations is the understanding that the bearings industry is a mature market within a continuous state of equilibrium. As a supplier industry, its growth and economic performance is determined by the performance of the automotive market and subsequent fluctuations. In light of this, the economic performance of each company may influence people's capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security.

During the analysis, it emerged that the organisation's economic setting may influence the overall perception of the company:

> *I would describe us as quite old-fashioned. It has consequences given the nature of the company. We are operating on a global market and offer our products around the work. However, it is a very old and mature market. The company and its foundational design are 100 years old and not much has changed. We are celebrating our 100-year anniversary this year and we are what you would call a traditional company. (M16\|C1)*

Further, there is indication that the role of supplier to the automotive industry is a key driver:

> *We know that within the automotive supplier industry, we are in the higher quality bracket. We know we produce better surface areas and we are closer to target sizes. We are part of the bearings elite. Of course, that means that our products are a bit more expensive. (M04\|C2)*

In addition to the commercial context of each participating organisation, the economic setting emerged as a key driver and determinant of job security within the organisations.

The interviews highlighted that visibility and transparency about the economic setting may support a wider understanding of the organisation's performance:

> *Well, you invest in your workers and in the company if you are doing well. If everyone knows what your numbers are, they know how the market is doing. If people know a lot of orders are coming in, they know that their future here is secure. (M10\|C1)*

At the same time, the data suggests that the company is operating within a wider market and should not be seen as a singular factor shaping the economic setting:

> *Safe doesn't exist. Our workers know what we are doing, where we are going, how much we've been making. All that information is public on our notice boards. We talk about it. Of course, we depend on the market. If it takes a downturn, we might have to reduce. (M06\|C2)*

Exploring the interview data, the managerial perspective outlines that each participating organisation is embedded in a wider economic system. Successful or unsuccessful commercial activities of the industrial sector impact the performance of each organisation; thus, impacting the overall perception of the workplace with regards to job security.

6.5.6. Nature of the Labour Market

Dynamic interactions between workers and employers

As highlighted in the literature review, the *a priori* theme *Nature of the labour market* seeks to identify institutional boundaries influencing the functioning and dynamics of the wage systems within the iron and metal working trade industry. With this objective in mind, the theme presents findings informing development and changes guiding how employers and workers interact with each other to achieve satisfying outcomes for organisations and employees alike.

The first emerging topic informing the *a priori* theme outlines the centrality of union and WCs influencing the dynamics of the labour market. The findings highlight how

unions seeks to represent employees in the workplace and how WCs actively shape the boundaries in which organisations can operate; thus, actively contributing to the perception of the workplace by the employee. The topic reflects on people's capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence.

The evidence suggests that WC actively shaped work patterns and organisational policies:

> *Overtime is always on a voluntary basis. Even if we wanted to, we couldn't make it mandatory. The WC wouldn't let us do that. (M17|C1)*

During the analysis it emerged how union influenced conflict situations within the organisation:

> *Preventing bullying has a high priority for us. Racism, anything like that. We actually recently had to take action because someone was being racist. But we mostly relay everything to the union, and they take care of it. The union is very well represented here. (M07|C1)*

However, one manager further noted that engaging with an active WC may impact the overall financial performance of the organisation:

> *For example, and quit extensively, our WC attends a lot of external seminars. That alone costs us [sum of money] per year. I always keep track of how much they're spending because they like to overspend their budget. (M06|C2)*

Exploring the interview data, union representation and the influence of the WC actively shape the nature of the labour market in the industry. Taking this into consideration, the findings contribute to the understanding that a structural focus on WCs and unions may support a standardisation of organisational structures across the industry. Despite such standardisations contributing to a perception of stability and reliability, it may also limit the organisation's ability to flexibly react to changes of the labour market and positioning organisations within the labour market.

The second topic reflects on educational infrastructures guiding qualification and certification systems of employees. The educational infrastructure shapes the labour market and determines formal structures of skill acquisition and career

progression within the industry. It contributes to people's capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society.

The data suggests that despite all of the shop-floor workers having completed an apprenticeship, a high number of employees did not have formal training for their current line of work; thus, highlighting the importance of internal qualifications and standardised processes:

> *We have a lot of career changers here. A whole mix of qualifications. I have people here that apprenticed as cooks, handymen […] You can keep looking for people that apprenticed in electroplating but it's difficult and they're expensive. (M11\|C1)*

The interviews further brought to light a connection between completing formal educational training and career progression within the organisation:

> *If you want to progress you have to go back to school after your apprenticeship. You do your Masters' or your technical degree. For example, one of our Masters', he was on the shop floor and the completed his technical degree. He is now a Masters' and line manager. […] There are a lot of examples like this. It's how it works. (M06\|C2)*

The interviews showed that educational infrastructures and arrangements are embedded within organisation, resulting in school systems accommodating for shift work and evening classes:

> *It's not always possible and sometimes they have to keep working shift. But that's something you know in advance. However, school takes that into consideration and their schedules accommodate shift work. You just need to organise yourself, but these are all things that need to come from you (M01\|C1)*

Overall, exploring data from the interview transcripts highlights that the nature of the labour market actively shapes and is shaped by union influence and WCs impacting internal organisational structures. In addition, the labour market focuses on educational infrastructures defining interactions between managers as employer representatives and employees as members of the workforce.

6.5.7. Nature of the Legal Form of Employment

Agreements and arrangements

The last *a priori* theme outlines the *Nature of the legal form of employment.* As highlighted in the literature review, the theme seeks to identify publicly defined standards and rules based on enforceable agreements shaping the employment relationships between employees and organisations across the industry. With this objective in mind, reflecting on the legal dimension of employment may contribute to the understanding of institutional boundaries outlining the context in which organisations can operate.

The first emerging topic addresses collective agreements as contractual and legally binding arrangements between employers and employees. Generally, collective agreements are the result of negotiations between employer representatives and trade unions acting as spokesperson on behalf of the employees; thus, defining employment conditions at the national and regional level. It informs people's capability of knowing you will be protected and treated fairly by the law.

The analysis suggests that a string influence of collective agreements in shaping organisational designs:

> *We work in a shift system. That includes overtime on Saturdays if we need it […] We work a standard 35-hour week as per our collective agreement. We are part of the IG Metall's sectoral agreement. It includes metal working and electric industries. We have to be part of that. We now also have the new 8-day agreement. The workers can choose if they want 8 more days off or if they want the equivalent added to their pay. (M12\|C1)*

Interestingly, the interviews brought to light that collective agreements can shape industry-wide standards that impact people's lives in and outside the workplace:

> *For me personally, I used to work for a company where it was normal to work at least 42-hour weeks. In contrast, we are regulated by collective agreements prescribing a 35-hour week. That's a lot more comfortable for employees and makes everything else ok. (M04\|C2)*

Presenting findings outlining the centrality of collective agreements indicates that the legal form of employment focuses on union organisation, enabling employees

to negotiate terms of their employment such as wages, hours, training opportunities, health and safety mechanisms, overtime, resolving grievances, and employee's rights to actively participate in the company's decision-making processes. In light of this, reflecting on collective agreements may contribute to a deeper understanding of underlying legal agreements seeking to promote a harmonious working relationship between employers and employees.

The second topic addresses contractual arrangements. Despite collective agreements seeking to address a wide range of working conditions, it is not mandatory for employees to become members of a union and operate under the umbrella of collective agreements. In light of this, alternative contractual arrangements such as the employment of agency workers influences the nature of the legal form of employment. Akin to the first topic, contractual arrangements reflect on people's capability of knowing you will be protected and treated fairly by the law.

The interviews highlighted that agency workers operate outside collective agreements:

> *I'm in charge of electroplating. The area itself has 28 people working on permanent contracts as per union agreement but we have an additional 6 people working for us on agency contracts. (M11|C1)*

At the same time, the data suggests that an increasing number of temporary contracts amongst younger workers may have a negative impact on their overall perception of the workplace:

> *We do have some younger workers, some of them are here on temp contracts. Of course, they have to go through the martyrdom of having a 6 months' contract that is then extended for another 6 months until you've reached 24 months and the question if you're getting a permanent contract or not. (M15|C1)*

Exploring the interview data, the employment of agency workers and temporary workers informs a secondary form of employment influencing the legal sphere of operating in the metal-working industry and stands in contrast to employment under collective bargaining.

Overall, the application of collective agreements and employment practices for agency and temporary workers illuminates publicly defined standards and norms across the metal working industry. Taking this into consideration, the legal form of employment defines the interactions, duties, and responsibilities of workers and organisations; thus, contributing to the understanding of the legal dimension shaping institutional contexts or work.

6.5.8. Section summary

The section set out to explore and present findings at the institutional level. In light of this, it seeks to inform formal and informal structures defining institutional boundaries and shaping work life at a conscious or subconscious level. The *a priori* themes outline that the institutional dimension of work allows for a high level of standardisation and worker representation across the metal-working industry in Germany. For this reason, worker behaviour, customs, norms, and standards outline cultural and industry-specific boundaries in which organisations operate in and actively shape workers' emotional perception of the workplace.

6.6. Chapter Conclusion

The chapter set out to present and explore findings of the second interview phase, investigating the managerial perspective of the organisation in general, and the shop floor in particular. Taking this objective into consideration, the chapter establishes connections between findings at the individual, organisational, and institutional level, contributing to the understanding of people's capabilities at the workplace.

Data from the interview scripts highlights that managers identified five overarching themes, influencing the organisational, individual, and institutional level alike. First, both participating organisations exhibited a central focus on the managers as individuals shaping relationships at the workplace. Managers identified career opportunities, supported worker development strategies, and defined the company's leadership strategy; thus, actively shaping leadership strategies and workers' daily life. Second, workers were required to show initiative and independently approach the organisation to progress within the organisation or influence their workplace; thereby limiting the organisation to a reactive instead

proactive approach to engaging with their workforce. Third, being regulated by collective agreements under the supervision of WCs and union representatives, both participating organisations exhibited a high-income structure amongst their workforce and identified income structures as core strategy to retain and attract employees. Fourth, a large number of employees remained within the employment of the same organisation and industry for a prolonged time; thus, highlighting the importance of internal training opportunities and career progression within the organisation. Lastly, managers exhibited a focus on informal relationships shaping the work climate amongst the workforce and between managers and workers. In addition, managers highlighted that the applied methodology may allow for a broader and more holistic perspective of the workplace; hence, highlighting insights and subjective experience that may go unnoticed in conventional methods of workplace evaluations such as union surveys.

6.7. Summary Findings Chapters

In conjunction with the previous chapter, chapters 5 and 6 set out to present findings and highlight data derived from the interview transcripts. Each chapter seeks to present findings from either the perspective of the individual worker, or the managerial perspective as organisational representative. The findings chapters represent the study's empirical element, underpinning conclusions for exploring capabilities in organisations (Research Question 1), support investigations into the efficiency of current approaches to HD in organisations (Research Question 2), and illuminate the organisational perspective on the question if the CA offers an alternative lens through which we can analyse organisations (Research Question 3). Following on from the results chapters, the subsequent chapter endeavours to contrast, compare, analyse the findings. It endeavours to identify worker needs and to draw conclusions on the study of HD in organisation; thus, informing the capability perspective of the workplace.

7. Chapter 7: Discussion – Exploring HD in organisations

7.1. Chapter overview

The previous chapters sought to present the study's empirical element and explored findings from the data collection at the individual, organisational, and institutional level from both the perspective of shop floor workers and the perspective of managers. Against this backdrop and in light of concepts, notions, and frameworks explored in the literature review, the following discusses the study's findings at the theoretical and empirical level. With this objective in mind, the chapter sets out to discuss each research question:

- **Research Question 1**: (a.) does the HCD framework provide a robust framework to assess Human Development in organisations (b.) is the framework applicable in the German manufacturing industry?
- **Research Question 2:** (a.) what are current organisational conditions that shape Human Development (b.) Human Capability Development in organisations and what are their effects on people's perception of the workplace?
- **Research Question 3:** (a.) is there added value in applying the Capability Approach to the workplace (b.) can the Capability Approach be operationalised in organisations?

The discussion for Research Questions 1 is led by theoretical findings and forms the backdrop for the discussion on Research Question 2 and 3 which is led by the study's empirical findings.

7.2. Summation of findings and literature review

7.2.1. Human Development in organisations

Enlarging people's choices at the workplace

The first section of the discussion chapter seeks to provide a summation of the findings in relation to this study's literature review. With this objective in mind, the

discussion is seeks to inform the theoretical underpinnings that shape the debate on HD in organisations in view of the findings.

In *Chapter 1: Introduction*, this study identified three key research gaps that underpin the study's objective and form the foundation for its research questions. In light of this, the study first sets out to arrive at a definition for HD that is applicable in the context of organisations. In doing so, the study proposed that HD in organisations may offer an analytical framework that acknowledges the centrality of work and illuminates how the impact of work transcends from the private into the professional sphere. First, the study presented the literature review and identified key concepts, frameworks, and ideas that shape the current notion of HD. As a second step, the study sought to present the empirical findings that draw from the case study and data collection in the German manufacturing industry. Having arrived at this point, the question may arise: what was the benefit of this exercise and what are the study's key findings that contribute to the understanding of HD in organisations?

This study grounds itself in the works of Sen and Ul-Haq and the conceptual understanding of the HDA (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Sen, 2003b) (see section *2.2.2. Introduction to Human Development*). Exploring the key literature, the study arrived at the working definition of HD as enlarging people's choices defined as creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. This reading of HD concurs with the wider debate about HD and engages with the notion that humans can fare better and do more than their current state offers (Sen, 1999a; Alkire, 2002a, 2010b). However, the literature also revealed that the concept of HD is highly complex, and its definition purposefully general and deliberately open-ended. Engaging with critical voices (Ul-Haq, 1995a; Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2003; Alkire, 2010a), the study proposed to overcome the shortcomings of the HDA in binding it to the normative concept of organisations and pairing the study with consistent methodological, epistemological, and ontological considerations. It thereby supports current research efforts to establish a growing body of qualitative HD research.

Subsequently to discussing the concept of HD, the study engaged with the conceptual understanding of work; thus, highlighting the concept's plurality, individuality, and subjectivity. Engaging with key literature about work (see section *2.3.2. Introduction to the Concept of Work*), this study reviewed the historic understanding of work and how it developed from a curse, to a calling, to a vocation (Ciulla, 2000). Using the works of Ciulla (2000) as point of departure (see section *2.3.3. Perspectives and Influences Shaping Work*), this study analyses work from different perspectives. This includes the philosophical perspective (Martin, 2000; Geisen, 2011; McIvor, 2013), which reviews prominent scholarly influences on work and highlights the concept's plurality. It further addresses the sociological perspective of work (Caplow, 1954; Ryan, 1977; Bellah *et al.*, 1985; Perlow, 1999; Grint, 2005; Smelser and Swedeberg, 2005) which finds that the same work activity can have different meaning to different workers. Lastly, it presents the libertarian perspective of work (Martin, 2000; Knutsson, 2003; Hobson and Fahlen, 2009; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012) which establishes that people's private and professional lives have a reciprocal relationship in which one shapes the other. This debate impacts the wider understanding of work and establishes the normative context for HD in organisations. Against this backdrop, this study discusses concepts like meaningful work (Chalofsky, 2003; Yeoman, 2014; Veltman, 2016) and arrives at the understanding that work is influenced by an interrelated network of factors that shape how people act, experience, and understand their work activity and place of work. The centrality of work in people's lives notwithstanding, this study finds that there is no universal definition of what work means to the individual and how the individual perceives work, however, it argues that it is influenced by a person's social, cultural, and economic needs and values.

Defining HD and work in such a manner, this study proposed that work can function as a platform for HD (see section *2.4. Work as a Platform for HD*). With this proposition in mind, this study sets out to contextualises work as a platform for HD by anchoring the debate in the meaningful work literature. In light of this, it reviews key literature on meaningful work (Bowie, 1998; Ciulla, 2000; Michaelson, 2005; Beadle and Knight, 2012; Yeoman, 2014) and promotes the notion that meaningful work comprises of an objective and subjective dimension. Reflecting on existing

meaningful work literature, the study finds that meaningful work is driven by positive or negative work experiences that have inherent meaning to the individual and shape the emotional perception of work activities and workplaces.

Against the backdrop of meaningful work literature (Chalofsky, 2003; Michaelson *et al.*, 2014), the study acknowledges the centrality of work in people's lives. In supporting work as the focal point of people's lives, this study suggests that work can become a platform for HD by means of its social and professional function in people's lives (Ciulla, 2000; Yeoman, 2014). The findings highlight that there is a reciprocal relationship between people shaping the workplace and being shaped by it. With this reading in mind, the empirical element echoes the outcomes of the literature review. It suggests that work as a platform for HD can catalyse or impede conditions in organisations that enable or disable people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives in and outside the workplace. Taking this into consideration, the debate on HD in organisation draws from key literature (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2003; Hartmann, 2014) and seeks to identify mechanisms to improve people's quality and dignity in life. In doing so, it aims to critically evaluates why or why not people are able to use their resources and convert them into real opportunities. For example, the empirical findings highlight that all workers in participating organisations enjoyed the same opportunities to advance their skills or partake in skill development programmes. However, the effectiveness of such programmes and if people participated depended on the manager who encouraged a select group of individuals to realize their training opportunities. In light of this, this study suggests that managerial perspectives and capacities may significantly influence the level of HD in organisations and determine people's ability to convert their resources into real opportunities.

This study contextualises HD in organisations; thus, argues that HD in organisations should be seen as a combination of distinct processes, objectives, and outcomes that engage with people's subjective perception of work. With this objective in mind, this study draws from the interdisciplinary nature of the CA and the HDA that allows for an indicative assessment of organisations. The findings draw from arguments presented in the literature review like the works of Robeyns (2003), who presents the CA as an interdisciplinary framework that captures the

intricacies of factors influencing people's lives and their ability to lead a life they value.

Taking this study's interdisciplinary nature into account and establishing the CA as the conceptual foundation of HD in organisations, this study suggests that HD in organisations is underpinned by moral philosophy and carries forward isolated ideas from scholars like Aristotle, Kant and Smith. First, it indicates that HD in organisations draws from the works of Aristotle (340BC) and establishes human flourishing as a reflection of the HDA's objective: to create environments in which people can lead long, healthy, and creative lives. While the study does not seek to present an Aristotelian reading of HD in organisations, it acknowledges the substantive body of existing literature (Sen *et al.*, 1987; Sen, 1992, 1993, 1999a, 2004, 2012a) and highlights its connection to the works of Nussbaum (2011b, 2011a) and her universal capabilities list (see section *3.4.2. Philosophical foundation and comparison of the CA*). In light of the existing literature, this study supports that wealth - like paycheques - alone is insufficient in providing a good life and achieving subjective well-being.

The empirical findings highlight that people's values and needs were simultaneously driven by monetary factors such as income and non-monetary factors such as their relationship with managers and the authority of managers over workers in the organisation. This study recognizes that there is a large range of ways for people to achieve well-being but suggests, that organisations and workplace environments are key influences in shaping a person's well-being in and outside the workplace. In light of this, both managers and interviewees frequently cited the importance of work contributing to or undermining a person's overall well-being and underlined how work and professional lives were intricately interwoven. It echoes the perspective of HD as an objective presented in the literature review and reflects on how the workplace actively contributes or hinders human flourishing in and outside the workplace; thus, guiding people's quality and dignity in life.

Second, HD as a process reflects on the works of Kant (1785) and his distinction of ends and means. This study concurs that in reading HD as a process in which people are both means and ends, people simulatenously become the drivers and

beneficiaires of HD. This reading provides an opportunity for organisations to view workers as both the drivers and beneficiaries of their organisation. It finds that by shifting the focus from defining workers as means enabling profitable growth towards focusing on the workers themselves, organisations have the valuable ability to create environments in which people are able to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. Thus, this study reviews the key literature (Iversen, 2003; Robeyns, 2003, 2005; Carpenter, 2009; Hollywood *et al.*, 2012) and suggests that HD in organisation reflects on the workers' individuality. Simultaneously, it acknowledges that as human beings, people are socially embedded and connected to others in and outside the workplace. With this in mind, the study promotes that viewing workers as both ends and means acknowledges their dual status as drivers and beneficiaries of organisations.

In the empirical findings, participants continuously observed that work was not their highest priority in life but that it served multiple purposes. For example, participants frequently reported that work served as a means to provide financial stability or a means for self-realisation. This suggests that works' instrumental nature continuously resonated with participants and often perceived their work activity as a means to an end. However, this end could have instrumental or intrinsic value to the worker. It contributes to perceptions of meaningfulness in routine or shift work and adds value to the availability of existing research (Bunderson and Thompson, 2009). The findings acknowledge the subjectivity of work and support the understanding that for some, work formed a platform for self-realisation and that, for others, work served as a means to facilitate their life outside the workplace but that both cases can be interpreted as the instrumental value of work. At the same time, people acknowledged the centrality of work in life and the centrality of workers for the organisation's success. With this observation in mind, the findings acknowledge people's dual role as a means to an end and as ends in themselves that should not be seen in isolation.

Third, this study suggests that HD as an outcome grounds itself in Sen's (2010) reading of Smith (1759, 1776), in which he argues that self-interest can be a driver in shaping how people will act and what they will prioritize in life but should not be seen in isolation and as the sole driver. While self-interest can highlight the

instrumental nature of work, this study acknowledges the dual status of work as both means and end. It recognizes that self-interest remains an underlying driver that shapes people's attitudes, desire to progress, to acquire skills, but argues that HD as an outcome can have inherent meaning to the individual which is reflected in their perception of meaningfulness in work. This reading is supported by key literature (Sen, 1982b, 2010; Gore, 1993; Walsh, 2000; Eiffe, 2016) (see section *3.4.2. Philosophical foundation and comparison of the CA*). With this notion in mind, this study suggests that the HDA lends itself to the assessment of organisations based on its ability to align classic economic theory with moral philosophy. It follows Sen's re-interpretation of Smith and underscores that economic thinking should carry forward ethical elements beyond the interpretation of *homo economicus* to re-focus the debate on people as ends in themselves. Indeed, one of the study's key interpretations agrees that economic and philosophical thinking are intricately interlinked and should not be seen in isolation but as the basis for a reciprocal relationship that shapes people's lives in and outside the workplace.

Overall, this section aims to contextualise HD at the workplace and people's ability to convert their resources into real opportunities. It promotes HD in organisations as a distinct combination of processes, objectives and outcomes that is able to capture a person's social, cultural and economic needs or values at the workplace. Thus, HD in organisations engages with what shapes people's understanding of work and how work may simultaneously impact their professional and private lives. This reading fosters the notion that HD in organisations requires normative pairing with existing frameworks – such as the debate surrounding meaningful work. By incorporating workplace assessment strategies and the perception of work into the HD debate, the concept accommodates the subjectivity and complexity of work and extends the debate to include non-utility dimensions in organisations. Thus, it reflects on people's positive or negative experiences in the workplace and enables explorations of underlying drivers or barriers that shape the organisation's social dimension.

7.3. Research Question 1

(a.) does the HCD framework provide a robust framework to assess HD in organisations (b.) is the framework applicable in the German manufacturing industry?

7.3.1. Section Overview

Following explorations of what is HD and how can we contextualise it in organisations, the findings highlight that HD is a highly complex and subjective notion. While this study argues (see section *2.2.5. Critique of Human Development* and *3.4.4. Critique of the Capability Approach*) that its complexity and deliberate open-endedness form core strengths of the HDA and CA, this study acknowledges that the same features represent challenges for its application. In light of this, the section first discusses challenges and advantages of operationalising the CA. Secondly, this study proposes to operationalise the CA in organisations by means of applying the HCD framework and discusses whether the HCD framework is a robust normative framework that is applicable outside a New Zealand context. The discussion addressing Research Question 1 is led by findings from the literature review and methodology chapters and draws from the empirical chapters to substantiate the discussion.

7.3.2. Operationalising HD in organisations

The HCD framework and the need to overcome the challenges of the HDA and CA

Reviewing the key literature (Alkire, 2010a), this study first recognizes that HD contains a seemingly unlimited range of possible choices of what people can be or can do. Alkire (2010a) argues that people's choices are in constant flux and challenges the HDA's ability to unify and capture individual preferences under one consistent framework. With this in mind, the reading of HD as an open-ended concept has allowed for a wide range of applications and informed research like the ILO's 'Basic Needs Approach', the concept of social development in the form of health, improving well-being through education or nutrition investments, the idea of human resource development, and the concept of human capital investment in business (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003; Jolly, 2003; Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2003). Engaging with each of these approaches, this study finds that applying the HDA requires a robust methodology framework that offers internal consistency and

guides the context-specific application of HD. With this finding in mind, this study argues that the HCD framework addresses the first challenge of open-endedness and provides a robust platform to explore HD in organisations.

At the heart of HD lie people and its focus on the individual (Ul-Haq, 1995a). Thus, the HDA seeks to assess people's lives from different perspectives which raises the question: how can we measure HD? This study engages with key influences and reviews the Human Resource Approach (Blake and Mouton, 1964) and the Human Capital Approach (Becker, 1975) to evaluate the appropriateness of established approaches to evaluate HD in organisations. The valuable insight these approaches provide notwithstanding, this study finds that these approaches demonstrate a heightened focus on monetary values in organisations, thereby offering a rather limited one-dimensional and limited assessment of organisations. Having reviewed these approaches, this study seeks to avoid a narrow reading of HD in which HD would become equivalent to social development that reflects on changes of social structures or norms and reviews these in connection to economic growth (Fukuda-Parr, 2003). Thus, it sets out to explore whether applying the HCD perspective would provide broader insight that captures the complexity and subjectivity of HD in organisations.

Engaging with key literature addressing the CA, this study finds that Sen (1985b, 1985a, 1993, 2004) advocates for people's lives to be assessed within the general space of capabilities but does not provide specific guidelines how to develop capabilities lists or which capabilities to evaluate when assessing well-being. This forms a key challenge when seeking to operationalise the CA and scholars like Robeyns (2000) argue that the CA's open-endedness and under-specification may provide diverging normative results for capabilities studies. Taking this criticism into account, this study reviews the work of leading capabilities scholars (Comim, 2001; Alkire, 2002b; Robyens, 2003; Vizard and Burchardt, 2007; Nussbaum, 2011a) to establish a robust selection of relevant capabilities in organisations, thereby seeking to avoid an overemphasis of one organisational dimension. With this objective in mind, this study draws its capabilities list from the works of Bryson (2010a) who in turn expands the findings of Vizard and Burchardt (2007). This study proposes to overcome the challenge of measuring HD in organisations by

means of evaluating its findings within the HCD framework and assessing what workers value, and what they are free to be and do within the workplace.

Evaluating key literature (Gasper and van Staveren, 2003; Marin and Davis, 2008) on operational challenges of the CA, the CA focuses on the individual's freedom as its dominant moral value to evaluate subjective well-being. However, this focus is contentious and critical voices argue that the CA may neglect to capture social or political contexts that shape people's freedoms (Dean, 2009); obscure the differentiation between group capabilities that cannot be delivered by individuals pursuing their self-interest (Robeyns, 2005; Carpenter, 2009); and the paradox of focussing on the individual's freedoms in an egalitarian approach (Comim, Qizilbash and Alkire, 2008). Acknowledging these critical voices, this study concurs with scholars like Robeyns (2000) and the works of Alkire, Comim and Qizilbash (2008). It finds that - despite the CA's focus on the individual's freedoms – the CA does not seek to assess the individual as a singular unit or their individual freedom. Rather, the CA provides an assessment that is context-sensitive and establishes freedom as a general good that economically and ethically guides the CA but does not prescribe what freedom should be. Thus, the CA serves as an expanded economic analysis that aims to re-focus the conversation on humans as ends, thereby overcoming the challenge of focusing on freedom as its primary moral value.

7.3.3. The HCD – An appropriate research framework?

The role of capabilities in the workplace

Having discussed the challenges of operationalising the HDA and the CA and how the study overcomes them, the following section provides an in-depth discussion whether the HCD framework appropriately assesses HD in organisation and whether the framework is applicable in the German manufacturing industry. The framework forms the basis for this study's process of list finding and represents the starting point for this study's capabilities list.

The framework sought to operationalise the CA in organisations by means of deriving a list of capabilities of what people value at work in New Zealand and inform New Zealand policy decision-making (see section *4.2.4. Research*

framework – Human Capability Development). Reviewing the key literature (Blackwood, Bryson and Merritt, 2006; Bryson *et al.*, 2006; O'Neil *et al.*, 2008; Bryson and O'Neil, 2009, 2010a, 2010b; Bryson, 2010b), this study finds that the framework was first designed to provide a systemic view of organisations to inform practitioners and policy-makers in the fields of industrial relations, HRM, and general management practices. For the purpose of achieving this objective, the framework grounds itself in the HDA and the CA to inform its normative base. Having said this, Bryson and O' Neil (2010a) base their research on high performance literature and the efficiency of skill development programmes to develop a qualitative research framework that assesses capabilities in organisations. In contrast, this study draws from meaningful work literature and seeks to inform whether organisations have the ability to shape people's HD in and outside the workplace. Taking these contrasts into account, this study finds that the framework's capabilities list seeks to harmonise the social and economic dimensions of organisations and serves as a starting point to analyse workplace characteristics with the ambition to facilitate HD. Moreover, this study explores this frameworks capabilities list exemplified by the case of the German manufacturing industry and suggests pathways that integrate multiple workplace dimensions and perspectives; thus, it explores workplace conditions that facilitate capabilities in organisations.

Reviewing the key literature (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010b), this study suggests that the framework uses the capabilities list developed by Vizard and Burchardt (2007) as a normative base. This study concurs with the approach first proposed by Bryson (2010a) and argues that the capabilities list developed by Vizard and Burchardt (2007) (see *3.4.4. Critique of the Capability Approach*) supports the development of a relevant and appropriate capabilities list that people could and should expect to achieve at their workplace. With this in mind, this study argues that the HCD framework overcomes the challenges of operationalising the HDA and CA in organisations and provides a starting point to explore HD in organisations. This study's findings contribute to the growing body of literature seeking to operationalise the CA and contribute to the wider assessment of organisations. It adds value to and may expand the works of Robeyns (2003) and

Mitra (2006) who both explore work and employment in developed nations but focus on inequality reduction in work settings.

The discussion on whether the framework provides a robust capabilities list that enables a systemic view of organisations and harmonises the economic and social dimension of organisations finds further substantiation in the study's empirical findings. The following discusses these findings and highlights the reality of what conditions in the manufacturing industry may constrain or facilitate HD in the workplace and subsequently influence people's subjective well-being in and outside the workplace. Before discussing its findings around workplace conditions further, this study acknowledges its need to define the use of objective and subjective values for workers.

In section *2.4.2. Introduction to meaningful work* this study put forward the reading that meaningful work is an individualistic concept which reflects meaningful or meaningless work experiences that have inherent meaning to the individual. This reading is grounded, amongst others, in the works of Ciulla (2000), Bowie (1998), Yeoman (Yeoman, 2014), and Michaelson (2005) who all offer definitions of the objective and subjective dimensions of work. Taking existing works into consideration, the following presents workplace conditions according to their objective and subjective value to the worker. With this aim in mind, subjective values draw from the workers' personal experiences and individualistic interpretations that are interlinked with the person's personal value system. In contrast, objective values can be measurable and are expressed in formalised working structures or compliance with workplace regulations that are outside the workers' influence.

First, the 'capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy resonates with the worker capability of work being hazard and harassment free. With this in mind, people's physical security and health was objectively and subjectively valuable to the interviewees. This was expressed in interviewees describing a high level of standardisation and systematic work flows as providing them with a sense of security. Simultaneously, legal requirements and policy compliance requires German companies to comply with specific health and safety

regulations and workplace safety assessment requirements which contributed to people's sense of security, regulated by policies and defined safety standards.

Continuing the conversation, the 'capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and t have the skills to participate in society' relate to the workers' aspiration for a skill development, positive workplace communication, and the opportunity for adult education at the workplace. During the interviews, respondents highlighted the subjective importance of continuous skill development. It was expressed by the appraisal of transparent support structures to facilitate continuous learning at the workplace, the desire to balance personal and professional development, and recognizing structures facilitating formal and informal learning opportunities. In addition, interviewees expressed the importance of the individual's subjective perception of development opportunities that are closely associated with available support structures at the workplace, personal attitude and aptitude towards learning, and the worker's life cycle stage and commitments outside the workplace. Lastly, objective criteria for job design such as shift work or job rotation, as well as the subjective relationship with their line managers represented workplace characteristics in the manufacturing industry which facilitate human capability development.

The 'capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security' resonates the worker capability of receiving and incoming and the perception of job security. Accordingly, interviewees highlighted the importance of income structures and their subjective perception of balancing income and workload. In addition, the objective characteristic of having transparent and standardised pay across the workforce contributed to workers' sense of value and meaning at work. Job security as a workplace characteristic resonated with the objective values of contract design such permanent and long-term work engagements, legal protection against dismissals which is often provided by unions, and transparent reporting on the company's overall performance.

The 'capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities' is closely related to workers' desire for a workplace that offers interesting work, a sense of accomplishment, self-realization, career advancement, and contributes to the

greater good. The interviews showed that these characteristics can be categorized into people's subjective desire for recognition expressed by their contributions being valued by management, a positive work climate, and a sense of achievement beyond financial rewards. In addition, the ability for self-realisation and the subjective value of adapting preference according to workers' life cycle stages facilitated capability development. A formal characteristic are opportunities for career advancement linked to the availability of formal and informal learning opportunities.

The 'capability to enjoy individual, family and social life' resonates with the workers' perception of work-life balance, work hours and work patterns. The interviews showed that this capability connected with objective workplace characteristics. These characteristics included the social life at work expressed by formal events such as Christmas and summer parties as well as the provision of physical social spaces such as break rooms for coffee and lunch breaks. In addition, characteristics influenced by the union seeking standardisation across the workforce included work schedules, work hours, overtime policies, shift pattern, and policies around annual leave.

The 'capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence' links to the worker's perception of formal decision-making processes, and their ole within in the organisation. The interviews show a clear link to the workplace characteristic of worker involvement expressed objective characteristics such as formal improvement suggestion systems and subjective characteristics such as an amicable relationship between the workforce and management. In addition, the level of workplace representation influences this capability's development. The objective characteristic of workplace representation through unions and works councils as well as the opportunity to engage in formal voluntary work role such as safety officers were meaningful and valuable to the workers.

The 'capability of being and expressing yourself and having self-respect' translates to the workplace as having respect, self-realisation, and self-fulfilment. These were expressed in the interviews as job design and prestige relating to the objective characteristics of having a standardised work activity, standardised designs for

workstations, formal worker representation and recognisability of the company name and product. In addition, it related to the subjective workplace characteristic of respect expressed by amicable relationships between workers and between the workforce and management.

The 'capability of knowing you will be protected and treated fairly by the law' resonated with justice, equality, and freedom of choice at the workplace. It refers to the work's legal context and was expressed by the objective workplace characteristics of clear communication and awareness of rights and duties for workers and managers.

The above presents a summarised overview of capabilities people value in the workplace; thus, it suggests which workplace characteristics in the German manufacturing industry may contribute to people's HD. This is reflective of the German manufacturing system as set out in section *4.6. The Study's Cultural Context.* It forms a starting point for comparing the CA in the context of highlight standardised manufacturing systems that are characterised by high level of worker protection, worker representation, and workplace regulation such as in France or Japan.

The findings contextualise what characteristics and capabilities are valuable and meaningful for in the workplace. It grounds the discussion in the key literature informing the HDA (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003; Sen, 2003a), the CA (Sen, 1985b, 1985a, 1988, 1999a), and relevant meaningful work literature (Bowie, 1998; Ciulla, 2000; Michaelson, 2005; Beadle and Knight, 2012; Yeoman, 2014). Applying Bryson's (2010a) capabilities list, this study establishes a wider connection between the framework and the objective or subjective dimensions of meaningful work (see *2.4.2. Introduction to meaningful work as a concept*). In doing so, this study argues that grounding its capabilities list in the context of meaningful work - assessing whether workplace characteristics may be objectively or subjectively meaningful to the individual - contributes to assessing the applicability of Bryson's capabilities list. It provides valuable insight into organisations and identifies workplace characteristics that contribute to a conducive environment for HD in the workplace.

Reviewing the key literature and the findings highlighted above, this study examines the HCD's understanding of capabilities. Bryson and O' Neil (2010a, 2010b) argue that the aim of the HCD framework is to identify what enables workers to perform their job in the complex environment of the workplace. This study concurs that the purpose of assessing people's capabilities in organisations should be to provide insight into worker's quality of life. Yet, this study also finds that the relevant capabilities suggested by the HCD framework facilitate insight into what is objectively and subjectively meaningful to the individual. Building on these findings, this study identifies workplace characteristics that shape people's experience in the workplace and enhances knowledge surrounding social arrangements in the workplace. For example, objectively valuable workplace characteristics include components such as permanent contracts, dismissal protection, or transparency about the company's economic performance, and influences the level of job security at work. As such, it impacts people's capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living with independence and security.

Exploring objective dimensions of meaningful work contributes to the works of Bowie (1998) and finds that work has the ability to influence people's autonomy, level of engagement, and sense of freedom and independence. This reading is especially highlighted in findings of Company 1 which at the time of the Phase I interviews experienced economic difficulties. Shop floor workers subjected to economic insecurity reported how this sense of insecurity negatively impacted their perception of the workplace, sense of freedom and independence, and degree of autonomy in and outside the workplace. These findings echo the core understanding of HD (Ul-Haq, 1995b; Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003; Sen, 2003a) and the CA (Sen, 1985b, 1985a, 1988, 1999a) and substantiate the reading of work in the context of means and ends. It establishes that workplace characteristics can be objective or subjective drivers and barriers to achieving subjective well-being in the workplace.

7.3.4. Assessing workplace characteristics

Human Development in the context of meaningful work

Following the review of the underpinning methodology guiding the list finding process of the HCD framework and discussing workplace characteristics that facilitate HD, the question may arise: what is the added value and theoretical contribution of applying the framework in manufacturing organisations? The answer to this question draws from the meaningful work literature presented in section *2.4. Work as a platform for Human Development*.

The literature review presents the vast body of meaningful work literature that seeks to assess work from a range of perspectives. Reviewing the key literature, scholars such as Chalofsky (2003) and Ryan (1977) argue that work stretches beyond income generation and contributes to people's sense of purpose, identity, and belonging. Contextualising work thus, this study argues that the HCD framework provides systematic insight into organisations that reflect on both the economic and social dimension of work. With this objective in mind, this study concurs with Ryan (1977) and finds that humans derive their subjective meaning and purpose of work from a wide range of workplace characteristics. It echoes the works of Ciulla (2000) and Michaelson *et. al.* (2014) and establishes that work can be a source for identity, self-esteem, and happiness. In light of this, this study contributes to the understanding that people can derive positive fulfilment from work, interactions with family, friends, religion, or wider community engagement and argues that these determinants have the ability to shape people's capabilities.

The findings are substantiated by the study's empirical element which highlights that workplace characteristics - such as work climate - influence people's ability to derive meaning from work. For example, Table 7.1. shows how work climate impacts people' mental security and reflects on whether work is hazard or harassment free, which influences people's capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy. With this example in mind, the empirical findings suggest that work can influence people's sense of self and supports the works of Yeoman (2014) who argues that work can contribute to the enrichment of human lives. The Table further echoes the topic's intricacy and subjectivity and highlights that one characteristic can serve different purposes at the workplace. This reading

finds overlap in the works of Ryan (1977) and his sociological perspective of the workplace that is exemplified by the example of three workers breaking up rocks. Having said that, operationalising the HCD in the context of meaningful work literature (Ryan, 1977; Chalofsky, 2003; Michaelson *et al.*, 2014; Yeoman, 2014) acknowledges that work should have meaning beyond financial gain and is influenced by a complex and subjective range of workplace characteristics. However, this study argues that these characteristics should not be seen in isolation and finds that the proposed capabilities list allows for a comprehensive view of organisations. This systematic view reflects on the multi-dimensional and interconnected nature of work and organisations and contributes to the framework's robustness.

Building on these findings, this study argues that applying the perspective of capabilities in organisations recognizes that work practices should always aim to improve worker's subjective well-being in and outside the workplace. It reflects on the reality of the workplace and the practices therein. This study draws from the capabilities list identified by the HCD framework (Bryson and O'Neil, 2010a) and finds that conditions - such as a sense of worker involvement - had a positive impact on workers' HD while a strong focus on financial incentives to achieve worker involvement only had limited efficiency in driving HD at work. With these findings in mind, this study endorses that the proposed capabilities list may allow for comprehensive insight into organisations both in and outside the context of New Zealand organisations. However, it extends this notion and argues that at the root of the HD debate in organisations do not only lie valuable workplace characteristics but also the objective to integrate and harmonise worker and organisational values. One should not be seen in isolation but as embedded in a reciprocal relationship with equal impact on the workplace and the workers' well-being.

7.3.5. Section Conclusion

This section discussed the HCD framework and set out to address whether the capabilities list proposed by the framework is robust and relevant in the German manufacturing industry. It critically discussed the challenges in operationalising HD in organisations, identified workplace characteristics facilitating HD, and contextualised HD in meaningful work literature. This study proposes that the

works of Bryson (2010a) form an informational starting point for studies seeking to evaluate HD in organisations. In light of this, this study presents challenges and opportunities of operationalising the CA by means of the capabilities list suggested by the HCD framework. Thus, it finds that the relevant capabilities list provides a robust normative base to assess HD in organisation. Subsequent to evaluating the key findings, this study argues that the proposed capabilities list is applicable outside the context of New Zealand's wine production industry, furniture manufacturing, mental health services, and Maori businesses (Blackwood, Bryson and Merritt, 2006; Bryson *et al.*, 2006; O'Neil *et al.*, 2008; Bryson and O'Neil, 2009). Taking this study's findings and previous studies conducted by Bryson (2010a) into account, this study argues that there is reason to suppose that the proposed capabilities list may be universalizable across industries and cultures. Nonetheless, further empirical studies are needed to verify this and to expand a credible evidence base informing drivers and barriers of HD in organisations.

7.4. Research Question 2

(a.) what are current organisational conditions that shape HD and capabilities in organisations (b.) what is their effect on people's perception of the workplace?

7.4.1. Section overview

Throughout this chapter, we established that HD in organisations is a distinct combination of processes, objectives and outcomes and that the proposed capabilities list takes forward the ideas of HD and CA to integrate multiple perspectives in the workplace. Engaging with these findings begs the question: what are the current conditions that shape HD and capabilities in organisations and what is their effect on people's perception of the workplace? To answer these questions, this study first seeks to discuss conditions that drive or hinder HD in the workplace. It subsequently discusses the effectiveness of work-life balance schemes and skill development programmes to address worker needs and examines how this study's findings contribute to the debate on HD in organisations. This section addresses Research Question 3 and is led by the study's empirical findings and draws from the literature review and methodology chapters to strengthen the discussion.

7.4.2. Evaluating mechanisms in organisations to inform HD

Drivers and barriers of capabilities in organisations - From adult learning to work-life balance schemes

The point of departure for the following discussion lies in the nature of work and our understanding of work as a multi-faceted concept that is in constant flux. As noted earlier, work is a dynamic concept that is shaped by technological developments and generational value shifts of its time (Ciulla, 2000). In light of this and following the review of key literature (Ryan, 1977; Ciulla, 2000; Dik and Duffy, 2009; Yeoman, 2014), this study arrives at the understanding that at its core, work is a highly subjective and individualistic concept. It acknowledges how the same work activity can have different meaning for individual workers. To assess which workplace conditions shape perceptions of the workplace and to gain insight into the subjective notion of work. This study sought to examine work in the German manufacturing industry at the individual, organisational, and institutional level.

As established in the previous section, analysing work in such a manner draws from the works of Bryson (2010a) and provides insight into the social dimension of organisations. Engaging with the study's empirical findings (see *Chapter 5: Results of Phase 1 Interviews* and *Chapter 6: Results of Phase 2 Interviews*), this study's empirical element forms the backdrop to assess current conditions that drive or hinder HD in organisations and presents the capability perspective of the workplace in a real-life context. Taking this objective into consideration, the following table seeks to identify conditions that drive or hinder capabilities in organisations. Having said that and as noted above, this study acknowledges that more empirical work would be needed to extend these findings beyond the practical context of the German manufacturing industry. Nonetheless, this study argues that its findings and contributions to the literature set out a roadmap for organisations that seek to identify conditions that drive or hinder HD and capabilities in organisations.

Level	*A Priori* Theme	Conditions in which the factor…	
		…drives human capability development	**…limits human capability development**
Individual	Attitude, and self-efficacy	1. Ability to balance and private life had a positive impact on work attitude 2. Opportunities for career development regardless of age 3. Positive perceptions of organisational design e.g. income 4. Positive emotional responses to work activity e.g. feeling of pride	1. Absence of appreciation from management 2. Lack of awareness, initiative, and reflection causing unwillingness to engage with the workplace
	Educational experiences	1. Positive perception if workers understand benefit and value of education (e.g. intrinsic, instrumental)	1. Lack of perceived upward mobility due to centrality of management in identifying career opportunities 2. Limited adaptation of educational experiences based on age 3. Affordability of formal training opportunities
	Life, capability, and experience beyond work	1. Interconnectedness of private and professional lives may drive positive work climates	1. Family and social lives may limit HCD at the workplace, but drive people's desire to have a fulfilled life outside the workplace 2. Organisational designs (e.g. shift
	Motivation to work	1. Sense of goal and desire fulfilment as derivative of the work activity 2. Perception of income matching the workload and level of responsibility 3. Conducive work climate based on rituals and traditions	1. Lack of job security and long-term employment 2. Perception of work as means to and end resulting in work becoming burdensome
	Perception of meaningfulness in work	1. Awareness of value in and outside the workplace transformed work into a source of confidence 2. Appreciation and valuation could enhance perception of self-respect	1. Lack of commitment amongst workforce and management reduced perception of meaningfulness
	Perception of work arrangements and culture	1. Strong worker representation and protection 2. Positive work climate improved overall perception of work	1. Lack of job security limited worker HCD 2. Lack of support structures

Level	*A Priori* Theme	Conditions in which the factor…	
		…drives human capability development	**…limits human capability development**
Organisational	Key Structures and operations	1. Allowing workers to have a voice due to extensive worker representation. 2. Comparatively high-income structures allow for a positive perception of the workplace and worker retention	1. Internal hiring practices may limit people's capability to broaden their choices. However, it may be conducive to HCD if it is seen as recognition and career development opportunities by workers
	Philosophy of economic and working life	1. A sense of worker involvement, valuation, and representation as underlying philosophy had a positive impact on HCD	1. An extensive focus on financial incentives as strategy shaping to shape worker motivation and involvement showed limited effectiveness in driving HCD
	Skill formation and arrangement	1. Continuous opportunities and support for formal skill formation showed a positive impact 2. Transparency and awareness of added benefits of informal training opportunities were key drivers.	1. A lack of valuation and support during skill formation processes showed a negative impact on worker attitude and perception of workplace 2. Perceived inequalities on skill development opportunities due to relationship with management and perceived selection bias for external training
	Work organisation and design	1. A hierarchical design with clear reporting structures and leadership responsibilities showed a positive impact on HCD 2. Transparent and clear communication structures facilitating employee-employee and employee-management relationships	1. Management practices designed to solely generate profit with perception of worker as HC were cited as barriers
	Workplace relations and cultures	1. Formal and informal events showed positive impact on HCD 2. Opportunities to socialise improved sense of belonging and contributing beyond the work activity	1. Inefficient worker involvement schemes (e.g. suggestion system) resulted in perception of organisational culture that discourages questions and devalues the worker
Institutional	Cultural and Ideological legacies	1. Social attitudes that recognise traditions, customs, and norms 2. Recognition and valuation of worker experience had positive effect on HCD	1. Social attitudes of managers not acknowledging people's lives and commitments outside the workplace 2. Lack of appreciation and recognition for positive work performances beyond financial rewards
	Nature and state of the product market, globalised competition	1. Awareness and understanding of globalised structures 2. Perceived value of forming part of a global industry/parent company	1. Lack of integration into global structures and isolated focus on production site was cited as limiting factor
	Economic setting	1. Workers identifying as part of a specialised industry transcending organisational boundaries	1. Poor economic performance increased a negative perception of job security
	Nature of the labour market	1. Integration and support of educational arrangements 2. Integration of union influence creating synergistic working between managers and works councils	1. Underappreciation of skill development opportunities and formal education
	Nature of the legal form of employment	1. Awareness of legal rights and duties 2. Contractual regulation and transparent legal frameworks	1. Irregular or temporary contracts, agency work

Table 7.1: Drivers and barriers to HCD

Assessing workplace conditions in such a manner further substantiates the notion of work transcending from the professional into the private sphere. This notion often forms the backdrop for work-life balance schemes and is grounded in the idea that

work and private life are competing spheres (Hobson, 2014). It contributes to the works of Clark (2000) and finds that there is no clearly defined boundaries between what is work and what is private life but that both spheres are indeed interwoven. Taking this into consideration, work becomes a key contributor or key barrier to HD and vice versa. For example, drivers such as 'formal and informal events' are platforms for workers to socialise and transcend from work into the private spheres. Thus, they have the valuable ability to positively influence how workers perceive their job and whether workers will find meaning in work beyond financial remuneration. On the other hand, barriers such as 'lack of value and support from managers during skill formation processes' may negatively impact people's perception of the workplace as a whole and act as a constraint in and outside the workplace.

If meaningful work experiences act as drivers for HD and meaningless experiences underwrite barriers to HD, it begs the question: are there current practices that aim to guide work experiences? The answer to this question is rooted in HRM practices and work-life balance schemes. Reviewing the key literature (Munoz de Bustillo *et al.*, 2011), this study substantiates that the concept of work has been shaped by rapid technological developments like the rise of Artificial Intelligence, generational value shifts, and a globalised workforce. These shifts find substantiation in the study's empirical findings and the Table highlights how factors such as age are determinant of what workers value in their organisation. To counteract these shifts, both participating organisations introduced work-life balance schemes and reported on formal and informal skill development programs. With this in mind, the findings challenge the works of scholars such as Hobson and Fahlen (2009) and argue that the presence of work-life balance schemes or skill development programs only had limited efficiency in determining people's HD at work. This may stand in direct relation to the high level of workplace representation by unions in the manufacturing industry. Thus, this study informs HRM practices and finds that high levels of union representation may lessen the effectiveness of standard work practices like work-life balance schemes and skill development programs to encourage positive workplace experiences and to reduce factors leading to negative workplace receptions.

Reviewing the key literature on the effectiveness of skill development programmes (Reich, R., 1991; Florida, Mellander and Stolarick, 2008; Keep and James, 2012) this study finds that adult learning programmes have limited effectiveness in the manufacturing industry and are often trade-offs between the company's financial investment and gain in form of increased HC (see section *2.3.4. Practical Approaches and Their Implementation*). Nonetheless, the Table shows that participating companies reported a heightened focus on skill development programmes to address evolving worker needs. This study finds that manufacturing organisations continue to operate within the traditions of the HCA (Goldin, 2016) and seek to increase worker mobility within the company by implementing 'up-skilling' policies. With this in mind, this study argues that current approaches to HD and capabilities in organisations focus on financial investments and financial gains from increased HC in organisations and show limited efficiency in addressing worker needs outside a monetary dimension.

Contributing to the debate on skill development programmes, the Table highlights that such programmes do not only focus on HC investments but that their accessibility is often shaped by the central role of managers. These findings strengthen the works of Bryson and O'Neil (2010a) on high performance literature and underscore the volatility of skill development programmes. It underlines that their efficient delivery depends on managers seeing added value or benefit in such programmes and the manager's ability to clearly communicate these benefits to the workforce. Focussing on skill development programmes in such a manner increases the risk of placing the manager at the centre of worker development and may cause inconsistencies in the event of personnel changes. This changing role of mangers further shaped HRM practices in the industry. Despite scholars such as Hansen and Alewell (2012) arguing that HRM practices generally encompass recruitment, training, staffing, rewards, and skill development, this study argues that HRM practices in the manufacturing industry are often confined to administrative tasks. This argument is substantiated by neither participating organisation having a formalised HR team, instead, placing the responsibility of HRM practices on middle managers such as Masters. Within the participating organisations, practices aiming to address evolving worker needs did not fall under the formal umbrella of HRM practices but formed an integral part of managerial

duties, thereby underscoring the central role of managers. It contributes to the works of Dick and Hyde (2006) and highlights the potential organisational risks of placing line-managers at the centre of worker development.

The key literature further reveals that work-life balance schemes and adult learning programmes are reflections of current technological developments within specific industries (Tamkin, 2005; Keep and James, 2012). With this in mind, the empirical findings show that internal skill development programmes were frequently driven by the need to adapt to new technological requirements such as a flexible workforce being able to operate a range of machines. Taking the technological perspective into consideration, this study finds that skill development programmes are often designed to address changing organisational needs but have reduced scope to address workers' needs, desires, and preferences.

7.4.3. Assessing approaches to HD and capabilities in organisations

The influence of unions in shaping organisations

Having discussed work-life balance schemes and skill development programmes in organisations, this study finds that such programmes have limited efficiency in the manufacturing industry. Building on these findings, the following section discusses the underlying motivation for organisations to engage in such programmes, despite their limited applicability in the manufacturing industry.

Reviewing the core literature (Guide, 2000; Böhringer et al., 2012) and the empirical results, this study finds that traditional sectors in the German manufacturing industry – such as the bearings industry – continue to be defined by routine and shift work. Organisational structures are embedded in the high level of worker representation and protection that characterise the industry (see section *4.2.5. Research Methods* and *4.6.2. Unionism in Germany*). In light of this, this study argues that the German manufacturing industry continues to draw from its longstanding history of unionism (Däubler, 2000) and that unions retain their active role in shaping and designing the workplace.

As established earlier, current approaches addressing HD and capabilities in organisations – such as work-life balance schemes - generally aim to integrate both

private and professional spheres of workers' lives and aim to establish a connection between worker needs, desires, and preferences in and outside the workplace. Having said that, the empirical findings highlight that the primary driver for shaping these approaches in the German manufacturing industry are unions. This study finds that unions have shaped the German manufacturing industry since the post-war era and continue to shape the emotional perception of the workplace. These findings contribute to the works of McKitterick and Roberts (1953) who set out the groundworks for exploring the right of co-determination in Germany; Däubler (2000) who discusses the legal and cultural basis for unions to act in the workplace; and Gorton and Schmid (2004) who explore the implications of union participation in corporate decision-making. The literature review (see section *4.6. The Study's Cultural Context*) concludes that WCs and union representation have a long-standing history in the German manufacturing industry and actively shape worker experiences. It contributes to the works of Rüb (2009) and notes that worker representation seeks to establish a platform for workers to speak with one voice and to improve worker well-being across the industry. These findings are supported in a vast legal body (International Labour Organisation, 1948, 1949, 1971; The Federal Republic of Germany, 1972; The Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, 1980) that regulates union and WC activity in Germany. The legal framework establishes traditional mechanisms for unions to exert influence and comprises of collective bargaining agreements that guide workplace designs, shift patterns, work hours, social security systems, and organisational participation mechanisms.

Engaging with the core literature (Däubler, 2000; Rüb, 2009; Benassi and Dorigatti, 2015) the study finds that unions seek to deliver a high level of workplace engagement and protection in the German manufacturing industry. However, engaging with the empirical findings and the Table above, this study argues that union influence frequently sought to emphasise workers' lives outside the workplace and showed limited efficiency in harmonising worker and organisational needs, desire, and goals. For example, the collective agreement negotiations in 2018 sought to strengthen flexibility at work for shift workers. With this objective in mind, unions and employers agreed to grant additional 8 days of leave to workers in the steel and mining industry or to pay an additional bonus equivalent of 8 days

of leave. This arrangement sought to deliver more flexibility for workers to integrate their private and professional lives and to address evolving worker needs (Diekmann, 2018; Handelsblatt, 2018). The benefits of such additional leave notwithstanding, the empirical findings highlight that the agreement challenges organisations to accommodate additional leave requirements without negatively impacting their operational performance, thereby resulting in a negative managerial perspective of union representation and collective agreements in the German manufacturing industry. Thus, this study argues that work-life balance schemes driven by unions are often challenged by real-life economic and social constraints characterising the industry. They are often constrained by power imbalances between employers, employees, and government representatives that show limited efficiency in addressing worker and organisational needs and values.

7.4.4. Section conclusion

This section sought to explore conditions that drive or hinder HD and capabilities in organisations. To address this question, this section finds that work-life balance schemes and skill development programmes are grounded in the traditions of the HCA but show limited efficiency in addressing worker needs in the manufacturing industry. Instead, traditional industry sectors – such as the bearings industry – continue to be shaped by unions and WCs. Having said that, this study finds that unions often operate within socio-economic and political power imbalance that challenge a harmonic collaboration between worker and organisational representatives. In light of these findings, this study argues that the capability perspective may allow deeper insights into organisations. These insights may address the complex nature of work and the wide range of factors influencing the perception of work by means of delivering a systematic analysis of conditions that drive or hinder HD in the workplace. Against this background, this study argues that applying the CA in the workplace may generate knowledge outside socio-economic and political power imbalances of traditional union and worker representation that drive work-balance schemes, thereby harmonising evolving organisational and worker needs

7.5. Research Question 3

(a.) is there added value in applying Sen's capabilities perspective to the workplace (b.) can the Capability Approach be operationalised in organisations?

7.5.1. Section overview

The previous discussion engages with the debate on HD and the contextualisation a relevant list of capabilities in organisations before current approaches to HD and capabilities in organisations. Comparing the findings of each of those sections, it becomes apparent that at the heart of the debate lies the study's reading of the CA and its core concepts. In light of this, the following discusses this study's approach to operationalising the CA in organisations and to discuss whether such an exercise may add value to the debate on workplace assessments. To achieve this aim, the first section explores whether the CA is a holistic tool for assessing worker well-being. The discussion is followed by a debate whether there is added value and benefit in applying the CA to the workplace compared to traditional methods of workplace assessments. In a similar manner to Research Question 2, the discussion on Research Question 3 is findings led and draws from the literature review to strengthen the debate.

7.5.2. The CA in the workplace

The CA in the workplace – A holistic tool to assess worker well-being?

Engaging with the CA and critically examining the key literature (Sen, 1982b, 1985a, 1993, 1995, 1999a), this study finds that the CA is a multi-faceted approach. The approach draws from isolated ideas from schools of thought in the fields of philosophy and economics. These findings contribute to works of scholars such as Ransome (2010) who explores the relationship between Sen and Aristotle. It further adds value to the works of Gore (1993) and Walsh (2000) who investigate the relationship between Sen and Smith, and Ochangco (2016) who illuminates convergences between Sen and Marx. These examples illustrate how the CA takes forward isolated ideas to develop an analytical framework that allows scholars to explore people's lives from different perspectives.

Reviewing the core influences that shaped the CA (see *Chapter 3: The Capability Approach*) and particularly Sen (1985a), this study argues that at its core, the CA defines financial gains alone as insufficient means for people to lead a good life. Instead, the CA defines financial means - such as income – as facilitators that enable people to convert commodities into valuable functionings, thereby characterising financial means as a means to an end instead of an end in itself. With this theoretical understanding in mind, the empirical findings support the notion that financial means alone are not the sole driver for people's well-being at work, but that well-being can be achieved by a large range of ways that reflects on people's individual values and preferences in the workplace. This reading contributes to the works of Gandjour (2008) and Sen (2004) and establishes subjective well-being as an individualistic concept that is the overarching goal for humans to achieve. From this perspective, *Table 7.1.* presents findings that monetary workplace characteristics formed an integral part of HD at the workplace but that workers attached equal importance to non-monetary dimension such as people's capability to engage in productive and valued activities. The findings support this study's aim to operationalise the CA in organisations and evidences that the application of the CA presents a framework that includes both monetary and non-monetary dimensions of work. Based on these findings, this study contributes to a growing body of literature (Robeyns, 2000; Comim, 2001; Vizard and Burchardt, 2007; Marin and Davis, 2008; Bryson and O'Neil, 2010a) seeking to operationalise the CA and argues that the CA acknowledges the complexity and subjectivity of work by supporting comprehensive insight into possible combinations of functionings and capabilities in the workplace that people value, enable them to flourish, and stretch beyond income assessment.

Engaging with the key literature informing the CA (Sen, 1985a, 1985b, 1999a), meaningful work literature (Ryan, 1977; Clark, S., 2000), and HD (Ul-Haq, 1995b), this study extends the review of and engages with the works of Bryson (2010a) and Vizard and Burchardt (2007). It demonstrates that the CA offers insight into organisations at the individual, organisational, and institutional level. These levels reveal what guides people's perception at work from different perspectives and offer a systemic view into organisations. It contributes to works of Bryson (2010a) and her goal to develop a robust capabilities list in the context of the HCD

framework. Thus, this study supports the notion that there are no singular drivers determining meaningfulness in work. Rather, these drivers should be seen as an interrelated and complex system of value preferences connecting and forming the basis for people's work lives and private lives.

Building on these findings, the capabilities perspective acknowledges that the workplace is shaped by the individual employees - their personal value preferences and sense of entitlement – but also recognizes the dual role of public policy and markets in shaping the workplace. It is grounded in Sen's (1981) reading of Smith (1759, 1776) which acknowledges that economics and moral philosophy are intricately interlinked (Sen, 1982c; Gore, 1993; Walsh, 2000; Nussbaum, 2003). In light of this, the study presents a discussion that understands the workplace as an interconnected system of characteristics and conditions. It suggests widening the debate on organisations from evaluating efficiency mechanisms to include concerns about equity and opportunity in the workplace. In adopting this perspective, it centres the debate on the notion of creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives in and outside the workplace.

This study discusses the philosophical origins which shape the CA (see section *3.4.2. Philosophical foundation and comparison*), and highlights prominent influences of Aristotle, Smith, and Marx. Embedded in this discussion is Sen's (1993, 1999a) ambition to move away from classic economic and analysis that focuses on income or utility assessment to include other variables such as health, education, or social exclusion. The discussion builds on Sen's understanding of Marx (1887) and explores the relationship between ownership or property and freedom. Comparing these works, this study finds that the CA offers a more nuanced view of exploitation, unfairness, and inequality. It identifies them as main drivers for people's social standing and subsequent well-being in the workplace. Having said this, these theoretical findings are contrasted by the study's empirical analysis. The data demonstrates that manufacturing organisations continue to be shaped by utilitarian thinking that defines employees as HC who should serve to advance the company but are not seen as ends in themselves.

Engaging with the key literature on utilitarianism (Mill, 1861; Sidgwick, 1874; Bentham, 1996), this study finds that utilitarian thinking in organisations allows companies to assess their workforce's well-being at a general level. Utilitarian thinking suggests a system level analysis that provides a consistent manner of analysis and underpins long-term strategy planning of organisations. The value and benefits of utilitarian workplace assessments notwithstanding, this study also discusses its drawbacks and reviews the works of Sen (Sen and Williams, 1982; Sen, 1999a, 2003a, 2012b; Nussbaum, 2003) who challenges utilitarian thinking as a tool for welfare assessment. These challenges include utilitarianism's insensitivity for distributional differences, insensitivity to rights, freedoms and other non-utility concerns; and unresponsiveness to people's ability to adapt or mental conditioning. With this in mind, this study argues that challenges raised at the theoretical level resonate with the study's findings at the empirical level. This study finds that organisational thinking in the manufacturing industry showed a significant influence of utilitarianism by means of focusing on maximising the sum of utility for the workforce as a whole, irrespective of the individual worker. However, the data demonstrates that such an approach to well-being assessment only offered a limited reading of the individual and their capability to lead a life they value. The analysis suggests that - within organisations - utilities are an inadequate evaluative concept to capture the complexity and subjectivity of work, particularly in an organisational context that is already marked by high levels of standardisation, union representation, and worker protection. These findings contribute to the works of Alkire, Comim, and Qizilbash (2008) and Qizilbash (2006) by means of providing further evidence for shifting the debate from classic economic assessment of utility towards a more varied and nuanced perspective of people's subjective well-being.

Overall, this study argues that the CA's deliberate open-endedness and under-specification allows for a flexible application that accommodates the particularities of organisations and industries such as shift work and unionism. Indeed, Sen sought to establish an alternative framework to assess people's well-being to include non-utility domains. Viewing organisations in such a manner underscores the complexity of work and identifies that interrelated subjects such as the perception of meaningfulness in work, skill formation arrangements, and the nature

of the product market significantly impact worker's quality of life, sense of justice, and general capacity for development.

7.5.3. Added value

Is there added value in applying the CA in organisations?

The previous section discussed this study's approach of operationalising the CA in organisations and examined whether the CA offers a holistic tool for assessing worker well-being. Building on this discussion, the following section seeks to expand this debate and discusses whether there is added value and benefit in such an exercise.

Reviewing the CA's core concepts (see section *3.3. Core Concepts of the Capability Approach*) reveals that at its core, the CA seeks to evaluate people's lives from different perspectives. This study reviews the key literature (Sen, 1985b, 1985a, 1999b) and finds that the framework centres on people's actual freedom and ability to select and convert commodities, functionings, and capabilities into subjective wellbeing. With this in mind, this study argues that the CA – in the context of organisations – might provide insight into what people are able to be or do and have the freedom to do. To achieve this aim, this study operationalises the CA by means of relevant list of capabilities and identifies mechanisms to expand people's capabilities in the workplace. Contributing to the works of Gandjour (2008) and Robeyns (2005, 2006), this study finds that workplace characteristic have the ability to facilitate or constrain objective and subjective capability expansion for workers. For example, the data demonstrates that work standardisation based on collective agreements has the ability to positively or negatively influence people's work-life balance, work hours, and work patterns and consequently shapes people's capability to enjoy their individual, family or social life.

Previous sections discussed Sen's intention to develop an approach that expands classic economic assessment of utilities to include non-utility dimensions (Mill, 1861; Sen and Williams, 1982; Nussbaum, 2003). With this objective in mind, Sen takes inspiration from the writings of Aristotle (340BC), Smith (1759, 1776), and Marx (1887) and anchors his ideas in the fields of economics and philosophy. Developing these findings, this study maintains that the CA – in organisations -

presents a systematic analysis of the workplace beyond income assessment. In order to attain this analysis, this study finds that the CA draws from the areas of philosophy and economics and presents an economic assessment of the workplace that is underpinned by moral philosophy.

This study advocates that assessing the workplace in such a manner accommodates the complexity and subjectivity of work (see section *2.3.3. Perspectives and influences shaping how we understand work*) and provides a comprehensive perspective of work that integrates its subjective and objective dimension (see section *2.3. Work as a Platform for Human Development*). This debate centres on the notion that the same work activity has different meaning to different people (Ryan, 1977) and draws from deontological thinking which states that people should be seen as ends in themselves rather than means to an end (Hobbes, 1651; Kant, 1785; Bowie, 1998). Having said that, this study finds that applying the CA adds value to this debate by incorporating a wide range of dimensions with the ability to shape people's well-being at work. Taking these dimensions into account, the study contextualises the CA in organisations to identify levers in the workplace at the individual, organisational, and institutional level. It contributes to the works of Bennett (2010) and Yeoman (2014) who influence the debate surrounding organisations' moral obligation to provide meaningful work opportunities. In light of this, this study argues that the CA accommodates the complexities of organisations and reflects on dimensions that traditional workplace assessments might neglect. Indeed, applying the CA in organisations supports an industry-and context-specific analysis. It recognizes and takes into account interconnected workplace characteristics and industry particularities, such as traditions of strong worker representation and protection in the German manufacturing industry.

7.5.4. Section conclusion

This section sought to discuss the operationalisation of the CA in the context of organisations and whether such an exercise offered added value to the debate surrounding workplace assessments. With this objective in mind, this study finds that traditional industries – such as the manufacturing industry – continue to assess organisations drawing from utilitarian thinking. Having said that, this study also

finds that utilities form an inadequate evaluative space and suggests that applying the CA expands the debate from utility assessment to include non-utility dimensions. Furthermore, this study finds that the CA provides an economic assessment of the workplace that is underpinned by moral philosophy. In light of this, this study concludes that operationalising the CA in organisations contributes to the debate surrounding workplace assessments by means of accommodating real-life industry particularities and reflecting on the multi-faceted and complex nature of work.

7.6. Chapter conclusion and contribution to literature

This chapter set out to discuss this study's theoretical and empirical findings. It sought to critically discuss the findings of the data collection and the findings of the literature review. This chapter aimed to reflect on the results of the Phase 1 interviews, the results of the Phase 2 interviews and the notions of HD, the concept of work, the understanding of work as a platform for HD, and the CA. To achieve this aim, the chapter revisited the research questions set out in the introductory chapter and identified its main findings and contributions to the literature.

First, this chapter engages with the question of HD in organisations. HD in organisations translates to enlarging people's choices at the workplace with the objective of creating environments at work that enable people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives. It addresses the centrality of work in people's lives and endorses the understanding that HD in organisation is a distinct combination of processes, objective, and outcomes that shape the workplace, thereby impacting people's lives in and outside the workplace. Analysing work in such a manner contributes to the reading of people and their ability to convert resources into real opportunities. Indeed, the debate aims to capture people's social, cultural, and economic needs at the workplace and develops the scholarly debate on workplace assessments and harmonising the social and economic dimension of organisations.

Second, this chapter addresses the question of capabilities in organisations and discusses whether the proposed capabilities list is relevant and applicable in the German manufacturing industry. It identifies workplace characteristics that facilitate capabilities in organisations and grounds the debate in meaningful work literature

to present subjective and objective dimensions of worker values. This study contributes to a credible evidence base that tests the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework outside the New Zealand context and finds that it provides a robust normative base to assess HD in organisations. With this contribution in mind, this study further expands the debate of HD in organisations and expands the applicability of the HCD framework from performance literature to the debate surrounding meaningful work.

Third, this chapter explores current approaches to HD and capabilities in organisations. It discusses the efficiency of adult learning programmes and work-life balance schemes to address evolving worker needs in the manufacturing industry before transitioning into an analysis of conditions that drive or limit HD at the workplace. The section concludes that in industries that continue to be characterised by shift and routine work, traditional approaches – such as adult learning or work-life-balance schemes – have limited capacity in addressing worker needs. Thus, the section highlights that current approaches are restricted in their desire to integrate worker needs with organisational goals, frequently causing tension between worker and employee representatives. In light of this, this study contributes to the debate surrounding the HCA and traditional utilitarian workplace assessment in traditional industries. Further, this study identifies unions and WC in the German manufacturing industry as primary drivers that shape the workplace but argues that the CA offers insight into organisations outside socio-economic and political power imbalances of traditional union and worker representation that drive traditional workplace assessments.

Lastly, this chapter discusses whether applying the CA to the workplace has the potential to add value and benefits to the debate surrounding workplace assessments and HD in organisations. It investigates the connection between the CA's core concepts and the understanding of work, thereby contributing to a body of literature illuminating the conceptual foundation of HD and the CA. The section concludes that the CA has the potential to shift the debate from traditional economic analysis of the workplace driven by utilitarian thinking to include non-utility dimensions of the workplace. It contributes to the debate on workplace assessments and proposes to adopt the CA as a normative framework assessing

the economic and social dimension of organisations that is underpinned by moral philosophy.

Building on the discussion presented in this chapter, the following and final chapter explores whether the study provides answers to the research questions identified in *Chapter 1: Introduction* and revisits the overall aim of the research. Subsequent to this debate, the study deliberates its potential for future research, its limitations, and offers concluding remarks.

8. Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1. Chapter overview

Subsequent to discussing the findings at the theoretical and empirical level, the following chapter sets out to review the research questions and to address whether the key findings answer the research gaps identified in the introductory chapter. This chapter establishes the study's research contributions before discussing the study's potential for future research. Following these explorations, the chapter highlights the study's limitations and offers concluding remarks.

8.2. Review of research questions and research Gaps

8.2.1. Overview

This study set out to explore HD in organisations. By applying a critical comparative review of existing research anchored in the HD debate, the conceptual understanding of work, and meaningful work literature, this study contributes to the fields of HD studies and organisational studies.

This study examines existing literature and presents data to inform a growing body of qualitative HD research. It acknowledges that humans can fare better and do more than their current situation offers. Building on this acknowledgement, this study recognizes HD's complex terminology and suggests that its deliberate open-endedness forms a conducive normative theory for organisational studies.

This study seeks to operationalise HD in organisations by means of drawing from the philosophical, sociological, and libertarian perspective of work. It arrives at the understanding that there is no universal understanding of work. Rather, the concept is shaped by an interrelated network of factors – such as social, cultural, and economic needs and values – that guide how people act, experience, and understand their work activity. This gives way to establishing work as a platform for HD that is anchored in the meaningful work literature which guides the subjective and social dimension of organisations. Thus, the findings emphasize the reciprocal relationship between people shaping the workplace and being shaped by it. This

study suggests that work as a platform for HD has the ability to catalyse or impede conditions in organisations which can facilitate or limit people's ability to lead long, healthy, and creative lives in and outside the workplace or the opposite.

Operationalising HD in organisations strengthens the understanding that people's work and professional lives are intricately interwoven. This study indicates that organisations and workplace environments are key influences in shaping people's well-being, quality and dignity in life. This brings to the fore that HD in organisations should be seen as a distinct combination of processes, objectives, and outcomes that can contribute to the deep knowledge of people's subjective perception of work.

Taking the above into consideration, this study suggests that operationalising HD in organisations draws from the interdisciplinary nature of the CA and HDA which contributes to a comprehensive assessment of organisations. By adopting a critical narrative, this study supports that economic and philosophical thinking are intricately interlinked and should not be seen in isolation. Rather, HD in organisations enables the evaluation of conditions that form a conducive environment for organisations to positively shape people's lives in and outside the workplace or the opposite.

8.2.2. Research Question 1: does the HCD framework provide a robust framework to assess Human Development in organisations and is the framework applicable in the German manufacturing industry?

Addressing the first research gap

This study first explored relevant existing research surrounding the debate on HD in organisations and finds that the HDA and CA are deliberately open-ended and underspecified approaches. Acknowledging these challenges, this study recognizes that operationalising HD and the CA requires a robust methodological framework which guides the concepts' context-specific application. Thus, this study proposed to investigate whether the capabilities list proposed by theHCD framework provides a coherent and appropriate analytical framework for operationalising HD in organisations with applicability outside the context of New

Zealand. To address the second research gap, this study sought to operationalise the CA in the German manufacturing industry.

This study set out to contribute to a growing body of research seeking to operationalise the CA and proposes additional findings to existing workplace assessment strategies. This study suggests that, in the applied context of organisations, it seeks to harmonise the economic and social dimension of organisations. The framework identifies pathways that facilitate capabilities in organisations and gives prominence to an appropriate list of capabilities that people could and should expect to achieve at work. Taking these findings into consideration, this study strengthens the evidence base informing the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework. It indicates that the suggested capabilities list forms an appropriate and robust platform for investigating capabilities in organisations and its results may guide practitioners in shaping work and social arrangements within their organisations.

This study contributes to existing HD research and highlights a wider connection between the concept and identifying the objective and subjective dimension of meaningful work in manufacturing organisations. Thus, this study grounds the HD in existing meaningful work literature to enable a systematic view of organisations that accommodates the context and industry-specific realties of organisations. Building on these findings, this study arrives at its first key contribution: This study acknowledges that work is influenced by a complex and interconnected range of workplace characteristics. Indeed, this study suggests that the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework is able to reflect on and accommodate the multi-dimensional and symbiotic nature of work in organisations by means of providing a systemic view that is grounded in HD literature, meaningful work literature, and the CA. Thus, this study contributes to the robustness of the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework. In addition, it anchors it in the meaningful work literature, thereby arguing that at the root of the HD debate in organisations lies the goal to integrate and harmonise worker and organisational values. One should not be seen in isolation but as embedded in a reciprocal relationship with equal impact on the workplace.

8.2.3. Research Question 2: what are current organisational conditions that shape Human Development and Human Capability Development in organisations and what are their effects on people's perception of the workplace?

Addressing the second research gap

In addition to investigating HD in organisations and presenting the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework as this study's primary research framework, this study set out to analyse current organisational conditions shaping HD in organisation and to identify their effects on people's perception of the workplace. To address its second research gap, this study conducted a critical comparative analysis of existing organisational mechanisms such as work-life balance schemes and skill development programmes. In addition to its theoretical findings, this study provides supplementary primary data analysis of organisational mechanisms and their effects on shaping the emotional perception of the workplace from the worker and managerial perspective.

Analysing its empirical and theoretical findings, this study puts forward a roadmap for organisations that seek to identify workplace conditions that drive or hinder HD and capabilities in organisations. It substantiates the notion of work and private life being interwoven and identifies work as a key contributor that shapes people's lives in and outside the workplace. Analysing work in such a manner, this study suggests that the concept of work has been shaped by technical developments, a globalised workforce, and generational value shifts. Responding to these developments, organisations have turned to work-life balance schemes and skill development programmes to address evolving worker needs. However, this study identifies limitations of such strategies for organisations that continue to be characterised by routine and shift work. Indeed, this study suggests that high levels of worker representation and protection - such as in the German manufacturing industry – may lessen the effects of standard work practices like work-life balance programmes and skill development programmes. This study contributes to existing literature on workplace assessment strategies and argues that current organisational mechanisms frequently address changing organisational needs but have a potentially reduced scope in addressing evolving worker needs, desires, and preferences.

This study supports a growing body of literature seeking to explore mechanisms that integrate worker and organisational needs. Acknowledging its data limitations, this study indicates that traditional sectors in the German manufacturing industry – such as the bearings industry – continue to be defined by high union activity. Active union engagement was embedded in the organisational structure of participating organisations and was expressed by high levels of worker representation and protection in the industry. Such mechanisms often sought to establish platforms for workers to speak with one voice and gave prominence to actively improving worker well-being across the industry. Thus, this study arrives at its second key contribution: The positive influence of strong union representation notwithstanding, this study puts forward that the efficiency of work-life balance schemes driven by unions is challenged by real-life economic and social constraints that characterise the industry. Indeed, power imbalances and internal objectives of employers, employees, and government representatives can limit the efficiency of existing mechanisms to address evolving worker and organisational needs. Instead, this study proposes that assessing organisations by means of operationalising HD in organisations provides insight outsight these power imbalances.

8.2.4. Research Question 3: is there added value in applying the Capability Approach to the workplace and can the Capability Approach be operationalised in organisations?

Addressing the third research gap

This study calls attention to the multi-faceted nature of the CA and supports a growing body of qualitative research seeking to operationalise a deliberately open-ended framework of thought. A critical review of existing research and primary data presents an informational starting point to operationalising the CA in organisations. Further it provides a basis to understanding the workplace as an interconnected system of people and workplace conditions. Indeed, this study provides evidence that operationalising the CA in organisations widens the debate on organisations from evaluating efficiency mechanisms to include concerns about equity and opportunity in the workplace. This debate accentuates the role of organisations and work in creating environments for people to lead long, healthy, and creative lives.

By operationalising the CA in the applied context of organisations, this study adopts a critical comparative perspective that analyses existing literature informing the CA and primary data collected in the German manufacturing industry. The approach takes forward isolated ideas that are grounded in moral philosophy and economics to develop an analytical framework with the objective of exploring people's lives from different perspectives. Building on these findings, this study highlights evidence that the CA can simultaneously inform the monetary and non-monetary dimensions of organisations. With this notion in mind, this study indicates that the CA can accommodate the complexity and subjectivity of work in real-life contexts. It suggests that operationalising the CA in organisations forms a valuable exercise and provides insight into what workers value. This study calls attention to possible combinations of functionings and capabilities in the workplace that people value, enable them to flourish, and stretch beyond utilitarian income assessment, thereby supporting a growing body of workplace assessment strategies.

In applying the CA in organisations, this study suggests that the CA offers a nuanced view of organisations. This study puts forward that organisational thinking in traditional industries - such as the German manufacturing industry - showed a significant influence of utilitarian thinking. This thinking appeared to be closely related with the workers' perception of the instrumental value of work and whether work was perceived to be meaningful or meaningless to the individual. It particularly emerged when asked about the workers' motivation to work and wider role of work in the works professional and private life. Having said that, this study advocates that the utilitarian approach to well-being assessment in organisations offers a limited reading of the individual and their capability to lead a life they value. This gives rise to this study's third key finding: Drawing from its analysis, this study engages with a robust evidence base surrounding the CA and utilitarianism and highlights utilities as an inadequate evaluative space to capture the complexity and subjectivity of work. Instead, this study advocates that the CA does accommodate these complexities and provides a comprehensive perspective of work, particularly in organisational contexts that are marked by high levels of work standardisation, union representation, and worker protection.

8.2.5. Summary research contributions

This study set out to operationalise the CA in organisations and to explore the links between HD and organisational studies. Reflecting on this aim, this study sought to contextualise the capabilities list proposed by HCD framework in two companies operating in the German bearings industry. Drawing from the interdisciplinary nature of work, HD, and the CA, this study engages with changing worker needs in the manufacturing industry and suggests workplace characteristics that drive or limit capabilities in organisations. As a result, this study supports workplace assessment strategies and puts forward knowledge surrounding conducive workplace environments to facilitate capabilities in organisations.

This study makes several original contributions to research. Firstly, it contributes to HD and organisational studies by means of contextualising HD in organisations and grounding its conceptual base in the meaningful work literature. This study further contributes to an evidence base that informs the robustness of the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework which allows interpretations around its applicability in organisations. This study highlights current organisational conditions that can shape HD and capabilities in organisations - such as work-life balance schemes and skill development programmes – and suggests their effect on people's perception of the workplace. Finally, this study contributes to research around operationalising the CA in organisations and supports workplace assessment strategies.

8.3. Limitations

Drawing from its research contributions, this study recognizes that its methodological design and approach has limitations and shortcomings. In reference to this study's conceptual and methodological boundaries, the following section reflects on the study's limitations. It acknowledges that the CA's complex terminology, limited available testing of the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework outside the context of New Zealand industries, methodological limitations of case study research, and industry specific limitations influence this study's research outcome and process.

This study acknowledges the CA's conceptual shortcomings as discussed in *Chapter 3: The Capability Approach*. Reflecting on the concept's open-endedness, abstract terminology, and under-specification, there is a potential for terminological confusion which may obstruct the clarity of the results. In addition, the CA requires normative contextualisation prior to its application, creating the risk of pairing the approach with concepts that limit the wider applicability of the research outcomes. This study is also limited by the minimal amount of existing qualitative data research available that explores the CA in organisations in developed countries. This study recognises these potential limitations and argues that they are addressed on various occasions throughout this study (e.g. see section *3.4.4. Critique of the Capability Approach*).

The second conceptual limitation is ingrained in the subject's nature. The subjectivity, individuality, and complexity of work limits research that seeks to explore work from the individual's perspective. This study recognizes the subject's limitations and seeks to mitigate the subject's conceptual limitations throughout this study (see section *Chapter 2: Investigating Human Development and the Concept of Work)*.

Following the acknowledgement of this study's conceptual limitations, the following recognizes limitations of this study's research framework. As noted in *Chapter 4: Methodology*, the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework has been predominantly applied within the context of New Zealand organisations with only limited availability of research testing the feasibility, robustness, and relevance in other contexts. However, this study argues that Germany and New Zealand are characterised by similar economic settings and cultural values to overcome this limitation; thus, allowing for the research outcomes to be considered relevant. Furthermore, this study departs from the HCD framework's primary purpose of formulating recommendations for practitioners at the policy level. Instead, it employs the capabilities list proposed by the HCD as its research framework to contextualise the analysis of primary data. Thus, the study argues that the research's diverging purposes overcome the limited availability of works exploring

the HCD framework and addresses the framework's limitations throughout this study.

The third limitation is embedded in this study's methodology and the nature of case study design. This study being is as a multiple case study and investigates two participating organisations, thereby limiting the availability of interview participants at the shop floor and managerial level. To address this limitations, this study reflects on its methodological design and explores how the limitation of data availability can be overcome to ensure data saturation (see section *4.2.2. Research strategy* and *4.2.5. Research method*). In addition, the case study design forms one component of a range of interconnected elements that ensure a robust methodology and methodological fit with mutually enforcing components. With this in mind, this study acknowledges its methodological limitations but argues that its design shows internal consistency and coherence, thereby overcoming these challenges.

The final limitation reflects on the nature and of the industry and its geographic location. This study explores the individual and managerial perspective of the workplace in the context of the German manufacturing industry, in particular the bearings industry. In light of this, this study argues that the bearings industry is marked by high levels of worker representation and worker protection by means of unionism. It acknowledges that unionism in Germany is engrained in the country's history and cultural development; thus, potentially limiting the results to its industrial and cultural context. The industrial and culturally specific context notwithstanding, this study argues that the strong influence of unionism rather represents an advantage than a limitation and offers a conducive environment to explore HD in organisations.

Overall, this study acknowledges its limitations and recognizes that its results should be seen within the context of its methodological and conceptual design. Nonetheless, this study argues that the limitations do not negatively impact the quality, replicability and feasibility of the research outcomes and its contributions to the debate on HD in organisations.

8.4. Potential for Future Research

This study calls attention to HD in organisations and operationalises the CA in organisations. It presents a detailed literature review, findings of the data collection, and discusses the study's implications for existing research that engages with HD and workplace assessment strategies. Building on these findings, this study argues that the collected data and literature review may provide a methodological starting point for future studies. In light of this, the following section addresses the potential for future research and suggests that future research may address three distinct areas. First, future research could explore the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework in industries that are both more and less conducive to the study of HD such as service or integrated-service industries with low worker representation and protection – such as non-union workers in high performance work systems. Such explorations could inform HRM strategies and contribute to the wider debate surrounding HD in organisations. Second, additional research programmes could operationalise the CA in organisations and investigate inequality - such as gender inequality - in the German manufacturing industry. This research could investigate current gender disparities in manufacturing industries and guide practices to reduce gender inequality in the workplace. Third, this study's data base could be used to operationalise the CA with the aim of informing social choice mechanisms in organisations, thereby contributing to future research on the role of unions and WC in traditional industries. Each of these areas is explored in-depth in the following sections.

First, exploring the capabilities list proposed by the HCD in more and less conducive organisational environments could further strengthen the framework and inform industry specific HRM practices that facilitate capabilities in organisations. It could provide further evidence to infrom best and worst practice across industries and cultures which could provide valuable insight for practitioners and scholars. Applying the capabilities list proposed by the HCD in such a manner could contribute to works like Dilip Subramaniam *et.al.* (2013). Subramaniam and his co-authors sought to combine the economic and sociological perspective of the workplace to assess corporate policies and how they contribute to developing sustainable capabilities at work (Subramanian *et al.*, 2013). In addition, applying the capabilities list proposed by the HCD in less or more conducive industries could

contribute to the work of Peter Kuchinke (2010), who set out to explore HD as a central goal for Human Resource Development. He argues that HD as reciprocal obligation between social institutions and individuals has the ability to provide a robust philosophical foundation that shapes HRM practices (Kuchinke, 2010). Additional potential for future research can be found in the works of Roberta Sferazzo and Renato Ruffini (2019) who set out to explore the CA in the context of HRM strategies and liberated companies. The authors argue that emerging concepts in management theory advocate for shifts away from the needs of the organisation and toward the needs and freedoms of the individual (Sferrazzo and Ruffini, 2019). With these works in mind, this study argues that applying the capabilities list proposed by the HCD in less or more conducive industries could contribute to the field of HRM and continuously strengthen the evidence base surrounding HD in organisations.

Second, future research could operationalise the CA in organisations with the objective of understanding social injustice and inequality in the German manufacturing industry. As noted in this study's empirical element, shop floor work in the German manufacturing industry continues to be dominated by male workers. These findings foreground a gender disparity at the workplace and challenge current practices within the industry to achieve gender balance. Such research would contribute to the works of Jude Browne and Marc Stears (2005), who critically compare the CA with resource egalitarianism. The authors investigate whether the CA forms a suitable platform for assessing inequalities - such as gender inequality - and its ability to identify and respond to complex structural inequalities (Browne and Stears, 2005). Moreover, such endeavours would contribute to the works of John Alexander (2008), who provided an in-depth analysis of the CA in the context of social sciences and contemporary political theory. He analysed mechanisms that assess a person's well-being and quality of life against the backdrop of social injustice and unequal societies. Considering these works, this study argues that framing workplace assessments in the context of social justice may illuminate gender inequality in traditional industries and inform practices that could mitigate inequality in the workplace.

Third future research could operationalise the CA in organisations and normatively pair the approach with Social Choice Theory (Sen, 2012b). Investigating organisations in such a manner could explore whether unions and WC in traditional industries may function as social choice mechanisms in the workplace. This research could guide the future roles and responsibilities of unions and contributes to the works of Sen (2012b) on Social Choice. It could investigate whether unions maintain their ability to deliver robust worker representation and protection in industries characterised by routine and shift work and what their future role could look like. Such research would contribute to the works of Christian Ibsen and Maite Tapia (2017), who investigate the decline and revitalisation of unions. They argue that even in countries with traditionally strong union representation - such as Germany - unions are presently employing organising strategies to maintain their collective bargaining powers and ability to influence policy-making but that their overall strategic ability to shape organisations may be declining (Ibsen and Tapia, 2017). Inquiring into the role of unions and WC by means of the CA and Social Choice Theory may provide insight into worker representation that complements traditional worker union structures. Such research could enrich and strengthen unions' abilities to engage with workers, practitioners, and policy makers and contribute to the debate surrounding the future of role of unions and WC.

8.5. Concluding Remarks

Overall, this study sought to explore HD in organisations and to operationalise the CA in organisations. Against this backdrop, this study investigates two organisations in the German manufacturing industry and adopts the capabilities list proposed by the HCD framework as its primary research framework. Drawing from the fields of development studies, organisational studies and meaningful work literature, this study identifies workplace characteristics that facilitate or constrain capabilities in organisations. This study concludes that the CA offers a systematic and holistic perspective of the workplace outside socio-economic and political power imbalances of traditional union representation, thereby harmonising the social and organisational dimension of organisations. This study's results inform practitioners and scholars who are engaging in workplace assessment strategies and seek to establish conducive environments that facilitate capabilities in organisations.

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9. Appendix

9.1. Appendix A.1.: Company Characteristics

Company Characteristics			
Category	**Topic (Reference Year 2018)**	**Company 1**	**Company 2**
General Information	Number of employees (production site	300	100
	Number of employees (Parent Company)	3 000	6 860
	Revenue	500 Mil Euro	887 Mio Euro
	Average Age (Shop floor)	Late 40's	Early 40s
	Founded (year)	1919	1948
	Industry	Bushings & Bearings	Bushings & Bearings
	Production Line	Full (Foundry to Finished Product)	Half (Raw Metal to Finished Product)
	Organisational Structure	Traditional	Traditional
	Size	SME	SME
	Offers Apprenticeships	No	Yes
	Multigenerational (several generations of same family employed on the shop floor)	Yes	Yes
Shift System	Shift System	2-Shift rotation (3rd shift upon request to WC)	21-day, 3 shift rotation
	Early Shift (Mo-Fr)	6am-2pm	6am-2pm
	Late Shift (Mo-Fr)	2pm-10pm	2pm-10pm
	Night Shift (Sun-Fr)	10pm-6am (upon request to WC)	10pm-6am
	Overtime (voluntary)	Saturdays 6am-noon	Saturdays 6am-noon
Union Organisation	Operation under collective agreement with IG Metall	Yes	Yes
	Works Council (right of co-determination)	Yes	Yes
	Managerial structure	Master as line managers for shop floor	Master as line managers for shop floor
	Work hours (shop Floor)	35	35
	Annual leave (shop Floor)	30 days	30 days
	Additional annual leave for shift workers	8 days (can be requested as pay)	8 days (can be requested as pay)
	Pay Scale	ERA	ERA

Table 9.1: Company characteristics

9.2. Appendix A.2.: Overview of Secondary Data Obtained from Organisations and Legal Documents

Category	Secondary Data	Company 1	Company 2
Internal Policies	Code of conduct	x	x
	Health and safety policies	x	x
	List of available seminars to employees	x	x
	Qualification matrix (shop floor)	x	x
	Shift patterns (shop floor)	x	x
	Overtime regulation (shop floor)	x	x
	Overview of staff assemblies	x	x
	Overview of staff meetings (shop floor and management)	x	x
Organisational Structures	Organizational chart (production site)	x	x
	Organisational chart (parent company)	x	x
	Scrap rates (per product category)	x	x
	Sick days (shop floor)	x	x
	Revenue (monthly overview)	x	x
	Product information	x	x
	Pay scales (shop floor)	x	x
Works Councils	List of available seminars to members of the works council	x	
	List of union representatives	x	x
Legal Documents	European Convention on Human Rights (Art. 11 §1)	x	x
	UN's International Covenant on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights (Art.8 §1a-1d)	x	x
	ILO Conventions 87,98, C135	x	x
	German Constitution (Art.9, Art.5, Art. 14)	x	x
	German Works Constitution Act	x	x
	German Co-Determination Act	x	x
NB: Some of the material above contains sensitive information confidential to the participating organisation.			

Table 9.2: List of secondary data obtained from organisations and legal documents

9.3. Appendix A.3. Secondary Data Mapped against Research Questions and Level of Analysis

Prior Work (Literature Review)		Analysis		
Capability List (Vizard & Burchardt 2007)	**Worker Capability - What makes work valuable and meaningful? (Adapted from Bryson & O'Neil, 2010)**	**Secondary Data**	**Level of Analysis**	**Research Question**
Capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy	Work that is hazard, discrimination and harassment free	Health and Safety Policies	Organisational	RQ III
		List of available seminars to employees	Individual	RQ III
		Sick days (shop floor)	Individual	RQ III
Capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society	Skill development, workplace communication, general adult education at the workplace	List of available seminars to employees	Organisational	RQ III
		Qualification matrix (shop floor)	Organisational	RQ III
Capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security	Income, job security	Pay scale (shop floor)	Institutional	RQ III
		Scrap rates (per product category)	Organisational	RQ III
		Revenue (monthly overview)	Organisational	RQ III
Capability to engage in productive and valued [meaningful] activities	Interesting, sense of accomplishment, self-realization, greater good, career advancement	List of available seminars to employees	Individual	RQ II
		List of available seminars to members of the works council	Institutional	RQ II
		Product information	Organisational	RQ II

Prior Work (Literature Review)		Analysis		
Capability List (Vizard & Burchardt 2007)	**Worker Capability - What makes work valuable and meaningful? (Adapted from Bryson & O'Neil, 2010)**	**Secondary Data**	**Level of Analysis**	**Research Question**
Capability to enjoy individual, family and social life	Work-life balance, work hours, shift work, shift patterns	Code of conduct	Organisational	RQ II
		Shift patterns (shop floor)	Organisational	RQ III
		Overtime regulation (shop floor)	Institutional	RQ II
Capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence	Decision-making processes, involvement	Overview of staff assemblies	Organisational	RQ III
		Overview of staff meeting (shop floor and management)	Organisational	RQ III
		Organisational chart (production site)	Organisational	RQ III
		Organisational chart (parent company)	Organisational	RQ III
		List of union representatives	Institutional	RQ III
Capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect	Respect, self-realisation, self-fulfilment	Code of conduct	Organisational	RQ II
Capability of knowing you will be protected and treated fairly by the law	Justice, equality, freedom of choice	European Convention on Human Richts (Art. 11 §1)	Institutional	RQ III
		UN's International Covenant on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights (Art.8 §1a-1d)	Institutional	RQ III
		ILO Conventions 87,98, C135	Institutional	RQ III
		German Constitution (Art.9, Art.5, Art. 14)	Institutional	RQ III
		German Works Constitution Act	Institutional	RQ III
		German Co-Determination Act	Institutional	RQ III

Table 9.3: Secondary data corresponding to research questions and legal documents

9.4. Appendix: A.3.: Sample Worker Interview

Details: Worker Interview 4 (W04/C1) (Rec 4)

Q: Is the purpose of the study clear and do you understand that your answers will be used to inform an academic study?
A: Yes

Q: Do you consent to participate in this study and for the interview to be audio recorded?
A: Yes.

Introduction
Q: How long have you been working for the company?
A: Since 2006

Q: Could you describe your job for me?
A: I'm a mill operator on the C&C mills. It means I have to programme the machine and mill the products.

Q: What do you like or dislike about your job?
A: I like the work itself. It's a lot of fun. But everything around it is a bit difficult. Especially the organisation and workflow around it. I don't know today what or where I'm going to work tomorrow. It is quite uncertain.

Capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy
Q: Do you feel mentally and physically healthy and how has your work impacted your health?
A: I feel good. I don't think I have any problems. They always take a lot of care that work safety is met.

Q: Do you feel mentally and physically safe at work?
A: Yes. It's difficult to say. I don't think I have to be careful with what I say or do. I feel safe.

Capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society

Q: Have you been able to develop your skill set since joining the company?

A: Yes. Because of the different machines I've been working. I have been programming different ones. Personally, yes, but I mean I'm also ten years older than when I started. Maybe work had something to do with in regards of dealing with your colleagues. I mean, you meet them every day during your breaks and sometimes you meet up with them during your free time and you always exchange information with them.

Q: What educational programmes have you taken part in?

A: No. I would do something if it would be relevant for me. I mean I have been shown how to work the machines and everything, but that was mostly done by other colleagues. I haven't done anything externally.

Q: Has your job helped you to participate in society?

A: A little bit, yes. I joined the worker union and participated in things with them. I'm a union workplace representative of the IG Metall lower Saxony. My colleagues and the WC here in this company asked me if I would be interested in it. I started on the council and then switched to the union and yeah.

Capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security

Q: Does your income enable you to make purchases to fulfil your basic needs?

A: Yes. The money is good here.

Q: Would you describe your job as secure and how does job security impact your life?

A: Secure? At the moment, no. But there is no point in thinking about it. Whatever is going to happen will happen. Maybe that would have been different a couple of years ago, but by now. You get older, you get calmer and you know that there is no point in worrying. Job security has gotten worse over the last couple of years. It's mainly due to the reduced number of orders we get here. It's partially due to

economics, but I don't know how much responsibility the company itself carries. Difficult to say.

Capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities

Q: What do you value most about your job?

A: To make good money. I mean it's also important to enjoy your work and have fun. Your working environment should be alright too. Having nice colleagues and feeling comfortable at work.

Q: In what ways is your job meaningful to you?

A: Not that meaningful anymore. It's mostly because of the lack of planning here and all of the back and forth. You always have to think about, and you tell your worries to people, but in the end, nothing happens. Work used to be more meaningful to me, but now I focus more on my friends and family. It's not necessarily because of job security. I always used to care and think about a lot of things and then would tell it to people, but if everything then is forgotten or runs dry. Ah well. You know, if you talk to someone and you get the feedback that you had a great idea and that it should be incorporated, but then nothing happens you lose all motivation.

Q: Do feel like you have accomplished your career goals or is there anything that you would like to do?

A: At the moment, I'm happy and satisfied as it is.

Capability to enjoy individual, family and social life

Q: How does work influence your life in terms of social, family and individual aspects?

A: Primarily due to shift work. You don't really have that much time and especially when you're working late shifts, you hardly ever see your children. For a bit in the morning, right before they leave for school or day care. You can plan your week, but it always means that you won't see your children or your wife, but well.

Q: How many hours do you normally work and how many hours are you contracted to work?

A: We have the 35-hour week here and I don't work overtime here. If I could work overtime it would mean that we are getting enough orders in, but at the moment there isn't much work we can do. I'd rather say that there isn't enough work.

Capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence

Q: Do you feel like your voice is being heard in the company and if yes, how?

A: Ah well. Like I said earlier, you can voice your opinion here, but if someone listens to it. It tends to just evaporate. It would be nice if people would actually listen to the people working here. It would make working here better.

Q: Do you have the capability to make any decisions that directly influence your job?

A: I think so. I can design my own workspace and can do pretty much what I want with it.

Capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect

Q: Do you feel as if you are able to express yourself at work?

A: I think so. I'm happy here.

Q: How is your job perceived by family members and peers?

A: I don't know. I mean, what do my peers think? I mean, I'm a C&C miller, so I help finishing the product. It's got different requirements than other jobs. My family or friends don't really know what I do and if I tell them that I work as a C&C miller, they usually don't quite know what that is. But it doesn't quite interest me to be honest. It's no help to them.

Q: Do you feel as if your job provides you with self-respect?

A: Not necessarily. It is all connected. The entire situation in the company. What happened and what will happen. The company has changed drastically since I started here. When I first came here, they hired a lot of people and everything was going upwards. At the moment, the opposite is true. It is less and less important what people say, and no one listens.

Capability of knowing you will be protected and treated fairly by the law

Covered by European, federal and German labour laws and statue

9.5. Appendix A.4.: Sample Manager Interview

Details: Manager Interview 9 (C1 M9) (Rec 21)

Q: Is the purpose of the study clear and do you understand that your answers will be used to inform an academic study?
A: Yes

Q: Do you consent to participate in this study and for the interview to be audio recorded?
A: Sure

Introduction

Q: For how long have you been holding a managerial post?
A: I think by now I'm in year 16.

Q: Could you describe your job for me?
A: I work as Masters' in production. That means that I am responsible for all the employees working in my area. That includes anything from training and shadowing to making sure that we take care of our employees. Of course, we also need to make sure that we are productive and ensure that the company is making money. That's the core principle.

Capability to be alive, to live in physical security and to be healthy

Q: In what ways does your company attempt to avoid mental or physical health hazards?
A: Well, we have different means and ways. It is always the question, what opportunities do you want to create and what opportunities can you realise. In some areas, our machines are quite old, and we would have to invest a lot of money to update them. That's not possible and doesn't really get us anywhere. So, we mostly opt for training our employees properly. Formal processes are quite easy. We have one person in charge of work safety, they are in charge of regular audits and risk assessments. If anything comes back as unusual, I get the report and then need to implement measures to minimise risk. That's it. Let me say it like that, as far as I know, I am not aware of me having to step in because someone was bullied or

discriminated. The people that I know and work here, it works. Plus, a strong word in the right moment is nothing bad. I mean, of course, in this day and age, people expect their managers to be coddling them. “We all love each other”. That doesn’t work. It’s a joke. I have to admit that I have only been here for 14 months, before that I used to work for VW for 28 years which included 15 years at a management level and the clocks run differently over there. In that company, employees are the most valued good. Employees have any benefits and rights imaginable, but they protest if you remind them of their duties. It’s difficult. Luckily, it’s easier here. We have flatter hierarchical structures here and they still allow the Masters’ to do work they’ve been hired to do. We do have a management position. That does come with a certain level of responsibility and I require a company to let me act on that. You need to take initiative.

Q: In what ways does your company attempt to build trust between colleagues and avoid harassment?
A: If someone points out that there is a problem somewhere, we will to solve it. Anything else doesn’t really get you anywhere. Then again, having a good working climate depends on how you define or perceive it. The first and foremost reason why we’re here is to earn money. It’s as simple as that. The whole motto of “We all love each other” is nice and it’s nice if it works, but it’s not always appropriate.

Capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and reason, and to have the skills to participate in society

Q: In what ways does your company value worker skill development both technical and personal and how is it facilitated?
A: First of all, if we’re talking information flow, once a month we have a big meeting where we get everyone together and we inform about everything that has happened in the company. That includes production. It’s very important. We even have a large black board and we post everything important on that board. The workers receive any piece of information that may be of importance to them. Communication is the only thing we have, and it doesn’t work in any other way. If we don’t talk to each other, it won’t work. Regarding qualifications, we have a very high average age and that means that a lot of people don’t want to learn more. They’re happy with the work that they’re doing and would like to continue doing so

until they retire. Apart from that, the younger generation that we have just hired, I expect a high flexibility and we need to give them additional qualification. Qualifications aren't necessarily just on a voluntary basis either. Stefan and I, we're the ones who are both in charge of our department. If we think that a colleague needs additional qualifications for something, then that's the law. Unless, someone can come up with a credible argument of why he isn't able to have that additional qualification. Or maybe because he thinks he can't do it, even though we should know better. We're not on make a wish.

Q: In what ways is your company offering support for further education and in what ways do you think it could be improved?
A: If we realise that we need additional seminars or training, may it be internal or external, we just include it into our education plan. We then submit that plan to central and that's how it all works. For example, we're currently sending two people to Trumpf for a seminar about metals and things you can do with them. It's quite important. Of course. Initiative comes from both sides. We normally get together with our worker once a year and talk with them. I think it's important to spend 30min or an hour once a year talking to them without interruptions. It's different to just having a chat at one of the machines for five minutes. That's normally when we cover how they would like to progress and develop, what they would like to do and even where they're seeing themselves in the future. Maybe sometimes we even give them a little push into the right direction. Especially if it is someone who you think has more potential. Quite often that's a shame and that's when you encourage them to think about their options. The conversation happens once a year and if someone indicates that they would like to do something, we make she that they get to do it. As far as it's possible and sensible. I mean, there is no point for someone who works on a press to go to a programming seminar or to learn how to drill on a CNC machine. If someone wants to become a Masters' or complete another technical qualification, I won't stand in their way. However, I always say that it only makes sense if a person does it with a goal and a job perspective. You need someone who vouches for you. If there is someone who wants to hire you as Masters' or in a technical position, they will normally hint that that's what they want. That's normally the point when you would go back to school. Some people go back to school without that reassurance, but in those cases, they don't have to be

surprised if that doesn't end in anything. Best example is Volkswagen, it's not as bad here, but over there every third person has their technical or Masters' qualification. That not everyone can get hired for such a position is self-explanatory. You need the position and the ability to do it. The qualification alone doesn't really get you anywhere.

Q: In what ways do you think work in general and your company in particular helps employees to participate in society?
A: In all honesty, I don't know. I'm not involved enough in any of my employee's private life to know how work influences them. No clue. I know it influences myself, but that's a different story. The shift system that we have here, it is one of the most humane and best systems that I have ever encountered. The set timeframes are incredibly flexible. For example, we finish the late shift on a Friday at 19:15. You can't forget that. Of course, something like working weekends is part of the job. But even then, we only work the early shift and that finishes between 11 and noon. You can go and enjoy your social life. I mean, the shifts are fixed, of course we do have shift swaps, but that quite often is being initiated by the workers themselves. If for example someone gets ill and there is an empty machine, people often ask if they can swap shift and work early instead of late shifts. I don't mind. In terms of that, we are very flexible here. I'm used to other things. 18 or 21 shifts, if you're working those system, you don't even have to think about having a private life or a family.

Capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security

Q: Do you think shop floor wages allow workers a comfortable standard of living?
A: Definitively. It's definitely a company that pays a lot. Honest answer? I think sometimes they're overpaid. Of course, they will probably think that they're underpaid. That's self-perception. But in all honesty, I wouldn't mind them being paid that much if they would deliver a performance to match the pay cheque. That would be great. I would be a huge supporter of bonus payments or performance pay so that you can actually influence and instrumentalise pay. That would be nice.

Q: In what ways does your company enable workers to be independent and feel secure?

A: I can only repeat it. If you are someone who delivers a certain performance and puts some effort into their job, you can grow old in this company. That's that. It is a company whose first priority is to earn money, just like any other company in the world. Of course, as in any middle-sized company, some things hit us harder if, you do have to make sure that you generate a certain level of profits, of course. Every single person needs to understand this. Every person in this company is responsible for themselves and their own fortunes. We do have a very high average age here and it is very difficult to change them. That's sometimes difficult. Only because something worked 20 years ago, does not mean that it is still working now. Especially given that if you left them on their own for a while, it's difficult to take them along now.

Capability to engage in productive and meaningful (valued) activities

Q: What do you think your employees value most about their job?

A: On the one hand, if they're working here, they will try to give it their best effort. We do have a very demanding product. There is zero margin for error. You can't have a single mistake. If you make a mistake, someone's car engine might explode. That can be very expensive for us. That is also something they all know and have a very strict sense of quality assurance. Also, a lot of people are involved and engaged, but we are struggling to have them go the last mile. Apart from that, in a company this size, everybody knows anybody, that makes for a very good working climate. It's nice. Surprisingly, we don't even have that many people from this region. Some of our workers have to commute 80 or 90 km. We do have them.

Q: Do you think it is important that your employees engage in meaningful activities?

A: Yes, I think so. It's a give and take. A worker receives more responsibility if you think that he's able to do it. And normally, if someone is given more responsibilities and is doing a good job, they then take to take pride in it. Of course. Every person wants to be part of the company, that's clear. Of course, they're always exceptions.

Q: In what ways does your company support your employees' career advancement?

A: We it depends on how you're looking at it. Normally, in industries like this career development refers to becoming a Masters'. If we want to ensure that our machines

run at all times, we need people with a high degree of qualifications. The dream and goal is that everyone would be able to work any machine. That doesn't work but it's a goal. If we're talking about becoming a Masters', that's more difficult because you just don't have that many openings. To be honest, that's the case almost everywhere. If I think back to VW and other companies of that size, have been artificially inflated with too many management positions. They're noticing that now and that's why a lot of those positions don't get rehired. That's normal.

Capability to enjoy individual, social and family life

Q: How does your company define a healthy work-life balance for workers and how is it ensured?

A: Well. Difficult. I can only really talk from the employer perspective. If you take into considerations, what shift models we have, workload, work hours, and pay, everyone should be able to have a decent and quiet live. If someone is stressed and does not have enough time for their private life, that's more related to their social life, than their work life.

Q: How do you structure your workers' shift/work patterns?

A: Well, like everyone else we work a 35-hour week. We also have two 3shift systems. Of course, only few areas only work early shifts or some workers who have special permissions due to age for example. A lot of people work 2 shifts and some people work 3 shifts. Sometimes we work Saturdays but if we do, we only work the early shift and finish latest at noon. Average shift finish on a Saturday is 11am.

Capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence

Q: What are your company's mechanisms to evaluate employee suggestions for work improvement?

A: I think employee suggestions are incredibly valuable. I would have to be stupid not wanting to tap into my employees' knowledge. That's that. They are the ones that spend all day at their machine, and they have the overview of what is happening around them. If they think that in doing something differently it could be beneficial for him or for the company, that's great. Especially if you can calculate the benefit. Great. We have a standard suggestion system. Every worker can fill

out a form and submit it. Our suggestions managers then must look at it and decides who is most relevant to evaluate it. That's the point where we start to look and disseminate it. The final decision is if it should be implemented or rejected. We do pay for the suggestions. They form the basis and then people can get a percentage. Sometimes even if we don't implement it, we do award an acknowledgement bonus. Normally that's 50€, it's a full tank of gas and people are happy. That then also motivates the employees to continue to do what they're doing. There is only one thing in the world that motivates people [money] and that's the reason why we are all here.

Q: In what ways do you involve your employees in decision-making processes and why?
A: It depends on what it is all about. Some decisions need to be taken by Masters', that's why we have them. If it we're talking about setting up a new machine, that's something where you need to involve the worker and ask if you should place the machine facing left or right, or what height do we need. You must ask them if they have any ideas on how to optimize the processes. These are all things you should definitely think about and engage with. If it's about physically designing your workstation, it makes sense to involve them. If it's strategic, then no.

Capability of being and expressing yourself, having self-respect
Q: In what ways do you think your employees can express themselves about work concerns?
A: Well we just talked about that. It makes sense. There is a lot of things that I can prescribe but I'm not the one who has to work on that station. If someone needs to twist and turn before being able to do something, I've done something wrong. Every machine is different. People can influence their station, but we don't have a production belt or anything like it. We have individual stations which means that every station is different, and you need to look at it from an individual perspective.

Q: How do you think jobs in this company are perceived by society, families and peer?
A: I honestly don't know. I have never thought about that.

Q: In what ways do you think workers take pride/feel self-respect in their work and what influences that?

A: Yes. A lot of the people working here have been here for a very very [emphasis] long time. For example, today, we had a 45-year anniversary. Just imagine, 45 years. He started to work here when he was 16 years old, not many people can reach that level. It's quite normal here that we have 35- or 40-year anniversaries. Today, we have 45 years, as I said, you can grow old in this place. But it is reflected in our average age. Of course, I think that's important. If a person takes pride in their work, they will enjoy doing it. That's straightforward. He will also have a different relationship to the product. It's not just a part you're producing but it is his part that he's producing.

Additional Questions (Evaluation)

Q: Do you feel like this form of evaluation is potentially beneficial to your workers and your company? Why?

A: It's something different. There aren't many that also ask management what they think about things. People like to assume. However, we have a high degree of responsibility because we are in leadership positions with all consequences and requirements. It's not a small company and let me say it like this, if we make a tiny mistake, it sometimes can massively backfire. Especially if you're thinking about things work safety. You're liable. If something bad happens, the first person who they come is the responsible Masters'. Also, it's a very high frequency of making decisions. People don't have time, if they come into your office, they want an immediate answer. And there is a lot of people that do come to your office. You can't really say, I need to read up on this, come back in 10 minutes. That doesn't work.

Q: Do you think this form of evaluation provides additional insights in comparison to other surveys? Why?

A: I haven't really participated in a lot of surveys. But like I said, I like it, I thinks it's good. It's something different, it's not just monotonous ticking boxes. Let's say it like that. The stuff that the IG Metal does isn't really my thing. These are all things; I just don't partake in.

9.6. Appendix A.5.: Reference Distribution Phase 1 Interviews

	References Workers			
Participant	**Individual Level**	**Organisational Level**	**Institutional Level**	**Total**
W1 C1	4	2	0	6
W2 C1	1	1	2	4
W3 C1	4	1	1	6
W4 C1	0	1	0	1
W5 C1	2	1	1	4
W6 C1	0	1	0	1
W7 C1	1	0	0	1
W8 C1	1	0	1	2
W9 C1	2	0	0	2
W10 C1	5	1	5	11
W11 C1	2	1	0	3
W12 C1	4	1	0	5
W13 C1	2	1	0	3
W14 C1	3	3	1	7
W15 C1	1	1	0	2
W16 C1	3	0	1	4
W17 C1	1	5	1	7
W18 C1	1	0	2	3
W19 C1	0	0	0	0
W20 C1	1	3	0	4
W21 C1	0	0	1	1
W22 C1	2	2	4	8
W23 C2	0	1	1	2
W24 C2	1	2	2	5
W25 C2	0	1	2	3
W26 C2	4	1	1	6
W27 C2	2	0	0	2
W28 C2	2	1	0	3
W29 C2	2	2	0	4
W30 C2	1	1	0	2
W31 C2	2	2	1	5
W32 C2	2	4	2	8
W33 C2	4	1	0	5
W34 C2	1	1	0	2
Total	**61**	**42**	**29**	**132**

Table 9.4: Reference distribution Phase 1 interviews

9.7. Appendix A.6.: Reference Distribution Phase 2 Interviews

	References Managers				
Participant	**Individual Level**	**Organisational Level**	**Institutional Level**	**Perception**	**Total**
M1C2	4	4	1	0	9
M2C2	7	4	0	1	12
M3C2	1	3	1	1	6
M4C2	4	2	3	1	10
M5C2	3	1	0	0	4
M6C2	6	5	3	1	15
M7C1	1	2	2	1	6
M8C1	1	0	0	1	2
M9C1	3	1	0	0	4
M10C1	6	4	1	1	12
M11C1	6	4	2	1	13
M12C1	5	8	1	1	15
M13C1	4	3	1	0	8
M14C1	1	0	0	0	1
M15C1	6	4	1	1	12
M16C1	6	3	3	0	12
M17C1	0	1	1	1	3
M18C1	1	0	0	0	1
Total	**65**	**49**	**20**	**11**	**145**

Table 9.5: Reference distribution Phase 2 interviews

9.8. Appendix A.8.: Ethics Forms

ETHICS FORM B: REVIEW CHECKLIST

"DUBS SCE" refers to Durham University Business School's Sub-Committee for Ethics throughout.

This checklist should be completed for every research project that involves human participants. It should also be completed for all ESRC funded research, once funding has been obtained. It is used for approval or to identify whether a full application for ethics approval needs to be submitted.

Before completing this form, please refer to the University's "Ensuring Sound Conduct in Research" available at http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/ethics/default.aspx – all researchers should read Sections A, B and F; Principal Investigators should also read Section D. The researcher and, where the researcher is a student, the student and supervisor are responsible for exercising appropriate professional judgement in this review.

This checklist must be completed before potential participants are approached to take part in any research.

Section I: Project Details

1. Project title: … **Human Development in Organisations: Operationalising the Capability Approach in the German manufacturing industry** ……
2. Start date: …**April 2015**… Expected End date: …**December 2019**……..

Section II: Applicant Details

3. Name of researcher (applicant)
   Or student: ……**Gianna Huhn…….**……
4. Status (please delete those which are not applicable)
   Postgraduate Research Student
5. Email address
   (staff only): ……

6. Contact address: ……

……

7. Telephone number: ……...

Section III: For Students Only

8. Programme title: …**Doctoral Programme** …….

9. Mode (delete as appropriate)

   Part Time

10. Supervisor's or module leader's name: **Geoff Moore, Andreas Pantazatos**…..

11. Aims and Objectives: Please state the aims/objectives of the project

The study's objective is to link Human Development with organisational studies and to investigate how work impacts people's ability to lead long, healthy, and creative lives, illustrated by organisations operating in the German manufacturing industry, an industry that is characterised by strong union influence, routine work, and shift patterns.

12. Methodology: Please describe in brief the methodology of the research project

Case study research grounded in qualitative data and template analysis.

13. Will data be collected from participants who have not consented to take part in the study e.g. images taken from the internet; participants covertly or overtly viewed in social places? If yes, please give further details.

*Does the research take place in a public or private space (be it virtual / physical)? Please explain: - **Private & Physical. The interviews will take place in each organisation's meeting rooms/offices.**

Explain whether th**e research is overt or covert:**
Overt – The general manager and the WC have been informed about this study and have given their consent to participate

Explain how you will verify **participants' identities:**
Participants' identity will be identified by the WC, managerial staff on site, and their ID badges.

†Explain how info**rmed consent will be obtained:**

Participants will receive a copy of the research consent form in German. The form will be read out to participants after which they will be asked to consent to participate. Their verbal consent will be recorded and reflected in the transcripts.

*Ethical guidelines (BPS, 2005) note that, *unless consent has been sought, observation of public behaviour takes place only where people would reasonably expect to be observed by strangers.*

†It is advised that interactive spaces such as chat rooms and synchronous and asynchronous forums be treated as private spaces requiring declaration of a research interest and consent.

Additional guidance on internet research can be obtained at: http://www.bps.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/conducting_research_on_the_internet-guidelines_for_ethical_practice_in_psychological_research_online.pdf

14. Risk assessment: If the research will put the researcher(s) into a situation where risks to the researcher(s)' health and safety are greater than those normally incurred in everyday life, please indicate what the risks are and how they will be mitigated. (Please note that this also includes risks to the researcher(s)' health and safety in cases of international research and in cases where locally employed Research Assistants are deployed).

    Research which will take place outside the UK requires specific comment. (Note that research outside the UK is not automatically covered by the University's insurance. See the DUBS intranet site (http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/ethics/default.aspx) for further details).

The interviews will be conducted in several locations in Germany and there is minimal risk involving the research. Germany is the researcher's native country and generally considered a face place for work and travel. Further, the participating organisations were identified using trusted and reliable contacts.

For student research the supervisor should tick the following, as appropriate. The study should not begin until all appropriate boxes are ticked:

☒ The topic merits further research

☒ The participant information sheet or leaflet is appropriate (where applicable)

☒ The procedures for recruitment and obtaining informed consent are appropriate (where applicable)

Comments from supervisor:

This is standard qualitative research with appropriate ethical considerations being applied. There is a very small chance that interviewees may regard some of the topics as being of a sensitive nature, but they will be in a position to refuse to answer or to terminate the interview if so.

Section IV: Research Checklist

Research that may need to be reviewed by NHS NRES Committee or an external Ethics Committee (if yes, please give brief details as an annex)

		YES	NO
1	Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS or the use of NHS data or premises and / or equipment?[6]		X
2	Does the study involve participants age 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent? (e.g. people with learning disabilities: see Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005). Please note: - That with regard to 1 and 2 on the previous page, all research that falls under the auspices of MCA must be reviewed by NHS NRES.		X

Research that may need a full review by Durham University Business School Sub –Committee for Ethics (DBS SCE)

3	Does the study involve other vulnerable groups: children, those with cognitive impairment, or those in unequal relationship e.g. your own students? [2]		X
4	Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (e.g. students at school, members of a self-help group, residents of a Nursing home) [3]		X
5	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (e.g. deception, covert observation of people in non-public places)		X

Footnotes

[6] Research in the NHS may be classified as “service evaluation” and, if so, does not require NHS research ethics approval. In such cases, prior written confirmation that the research is considered to be service evaluation is required from the appropriate authority, and on receipt of this the “No” box may be ticked and this form used for ethics approval. Advice and assistance is available from business.ethics@mds.ad.dur.ac.uk

6 Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics? (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) [ ] [X]

7 Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind? [ ] [X]

Research that may need a full review by Durham University Business School Sub – Committee for Ethics (DBS SCE) (continued)

[ ] [X]

8 Will tissue samples (including blood) be obtained from participants? [ ] [X]

9 Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?

_____

Footnotes

Research in the NHS may be classified as "service evaluation" and, if so, does not require NHS research ethics approval. In such cases, prior written confirmation that the research is considered to be service evaluation is required from the appropriate authority, and on receipt of this the "No" box may be ticked and this form used for ethics approval. Advice and assistance is available from business.ethics@mds.ad.dur.ac.uk

[2] Vulnerable persons are defined for these purposes as those who are legally incompetent to give informed consent (i.e. those under the age of 16, although it is also good practice to obtain permission from all participants under the age of 18 together with the assent of their parents or guardians), or those with a mental illness or intellectual disability sufficient to prevent them from giving informed consent), or those who are physically incapable of giving informed consent, or in situations where participants may be under some degree of influence (e.g. your own students or those recruited via a gatekeeper - see footnote 3). Where students are perfectly able to choose to be involved and to give informed consent then, so long as there is no impact on assessment, the "No" box may be ticked.

[3] This applies only where the recruitment of participants is via a gatekeeper, thus giving rise to particular ethical issues in relation to willing participation and influence on informed consent decisions particularly for vulnerable individuals. It does *not* relate to situations where contact with individuals is
established via a manager but participants are willing and able to give informed consent. In such cases, the answer to this question should be "No."

YES NO

10 Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life? [ ] [X]

11	Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?		x
12	Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?		x
13	Does the research involve members of the public in a research capacity (participant research)?		x
14	Will the research involve respondents to the internet or other visual / vocal methods where methods are covert, intrude into privacy without consent, or require observational methods in spaces where people would not reasonably expect to be observed by strangers?[4]		x
15	Will the research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given?		x
16	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? [5]		x

Section V: What to do next

If you have answered 'No' to all of the questions:
Undergraduate and Postgraduate taught students should discuss this with their supervisor, obtain his or her signature and submit it with their business project or dissertation.
DBA / MPhil / PhD students should discuss this with their supervisor, obtain his or her signature and submit it as part of the transfer / 9 month review process and with their study.
Work that is submitted without the appropriate ethics form may be returned un-assessed.
Members of staff should retain a copy for their records, but may submit the form for approval by DUBS SCE if they require approval from funding bodies such as ESRC. *In such cases, the letter of invitation to participate, Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form and, where appropriate, the access agreement should also be submitted with this form.*
Please note that DBS SCE may request sight of any form for monitoring or audit purposes.

If you have answered 'Yes' to any of the questions in Section IV, you will need to describe more fully how you plan to deal with the ethical issues raised by your research. This does not mean that you cannot do the research, only that your proposal will need to be approved by the DUBS SCE.

Contact the Chair of the DUBS SCE in the first instance to discuss how to proceed. You may need to submit your plans for addressing the ethical issues raised by your proposal using the ethics approval application form REAF, which should be sent to the committee at business.ethics@mds.ad.dur.ac.uk.

(Continued overleaf)

Footnotes

[4] This does not include surveys using the internet providing that the respondent is identifiable only at their own discretion.

[5] In experiments in economics and psychology in particular it is common to pay participants. Provided such payments are within the normal parameters of the discipline, the answer to this question should be "No."

(Form REAF can be obtained from the School Intranet site at http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/Pages/Default.aspx or using the student / visitor access:-

http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/ethics

Username: dubs\ethicsvisitors

Password: durham

If you answered 'yes' to Questions 1 or 2 in Section IV, you will also have to submit an application to the appropriate external health authority ethics committee, but only after you have received approval from the DUBS SCE. In such circumstances complete the appropriate external paperwork and submit this for review by the DUBS SCE to business.ethics@mds.ad.dur.ac.uk.

Please note that whatever answers you have given above, it is your responsibility to follow the University's "Ensuring Sound Conduct in Research" and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing appropriate participant information sheets and consent forms, abiding by the Data Protection Act and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.

Any significant change in research question, design or conduct over the course of the research project should result in a review of research ethics issues using the "Process Flow Chart for Students and Staff Undertaking Research" and completing a new version of this checklist if necessary.

Declaration

Signed

(staff only, students insert anonymous code): …… Gianna Hachn ……

Date: …28.01.2018……

Student / Principal Investigator

Signed:…… ……..

Date: …01.02.2018……

Supervisor

9.9. Appendix A.9: Ethics Consent Form

Research Consent Form
(For the purpose of the interviews, the following form has been translated from English into German)

The interviews form part of the empirical element of my PhD Study. The study's objective is to link Human Development with organisational studies and to investigate how work impacts people's ability to lead long, healthy, and creative lives, specifically in the German manufacturing industry, an industry that is characterised by strong union influence, routine work, and shift patterns.

The study is being carried out by means of interview conducted at the production site and during production hours in Germany. The objective is to gather insights into the individual worker/manager (please circle) perspective of the workplace.

In consenting to participate in this study, you (the interviewee) will be agreeing to the following:

- The research will involve an interview. The interview is semi structured and will be recorded on a digital recorder with your consent. Additionally, written notes may be taken.
- The interview data will be translated from German into English and the study will be written in the English language.
- As the interviewee, you have the right not to answer any question posed during the interview and to withdraw from this study at any time without having to provide an explanation.
- Every effort will be made to ensure anonymity; your name and any other information that could be used to identify you will not be published.
- You will be offered the opportunity to receive a full transcript of the interview in German. You may add comments and amend or remove any part of the transcript.
- The interviewee understands that anonymised transcripts may be viewed and discussed by other academics.
- The interviewee understands that anonymised excerpts from the interview may be published as a result of this study.
- The interviewee understands that the interview transcripts may be archived both on paper and digitally for future research.

I hereby freely give my consent to participate in this study and acknowledge that the information above has been explained to me adequately.

Signature…….

Date:…….

NB: This form was approved by the WC of each participating organisation prior to the interviews with shop floor workers and consent was given orally at the beginning of each interview.