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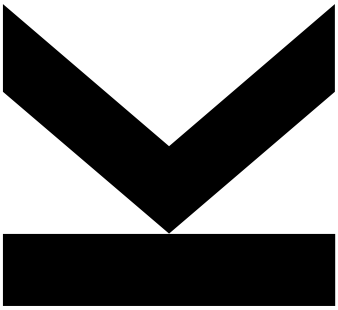

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SWORN DECLARATION

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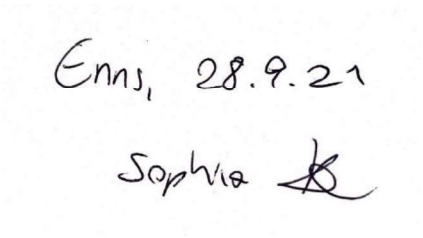

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Abstract

At the heart of organizational success are leaders who, regardless of their structural assignment, age, experience, department or hierarchy level, are subject to constant and consistent development. Motivation plays a key role in making such a development worth the investment by the organization, as the level of motivation participants have in a training course determines how much they learn and how well they apply what they learn in real life. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for organizations as well as employees and trainers to be aware of motivating and amotivating factors in leadership development programs and to understand how autonomous motivation to develop can be increased among leaders.

Previous research has applied various motivation theories to either a work or learning context to find out which factors are motivational for the individuals in the environment. However, literature is scarce on the combination of the two areas, specifically one that involves leaders as participants. Therefore, this thesis uses empirical data gathered from interviews with participants of a leadership development program to give insights into motivation, as well as amotivation, of such participants. The results of these interviews are compared to literature on the three basic psychological needs of the self-determination theory, namely competence, relatedness and autonomy. The theory states that all three needs should be satisfied to ensure that individuals experience autonomous motivation.

The insights from this research show that regarding competence, participants are motivated when they can set their own learning goals at the beginning of the training and apply their learned methods to examples taken from their work life. Moreover, concerning relatedness, they feel especially motivated when trust and openness, along with mutual exchange and resulting friendships are facilitated during the training. In addition, departmental diversity in the training group, perceiving the trainer as competent and receiving recognition all were motivating factors. However, amotivating factors that are part of the need for relatedness came forward as negative emotions that resulted from fear, distrust in the trainer and hierarchical diversity in the training group. With regard to autonomy, mandating the training results in amotivation among participants and seeing the training as an investment in one's personal development, future career and ability to decide how to use the learned methods from the training in real life are motivating factors.

Organizations can influence and increase autonomous motivation by preparing employees for the trainings in accordance with these employees, ensuring consistent development trainings, encouraging managers to show appreciation and support for employee trainings and organizing departmentally diverse training groups.

1. Introduction

If we imagine today's society fifty years ago, we see a different picture of personal and career development in organizations. Most of the time, trainings and other types of education only took place during school or university, followed by an entry into a profession that used “learning by doing” development strategies (Abdel-Malek, 1987). Continuing education during one’s career was reserved for a select few, with regard to hierarchy level, industry type, and department, but it was by no means a necessary prerequisite for the long-term success of the profession (Wells & Schminke, 2001).

Today, this picture is quite different. In a society characterized by increasingly rapid change, cross-functional projects and multi-cultural teams, continuous individual development after initial professional training is the prerequisite for maintaining a successful position in business, along with the business remaining successful on the market (Chen & Klimoski, 2007). This form of continuous learning is referred to as Lifelong Learning (LLL) and defined as "all learning activities undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competence within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective" (European Commission, 2001).

The promotion and development of employees is becoming more and more important, and for this reason, the topic of personnel development can no longer be ignored. Employee learning, which is a crucial part of personnel development in organizations, is usually carried out by the Human Resources department and is applied in almost every large organization across the globe (Wells & Schminke, 2001). Personnel development departments see a high need for life-long learning especially for managers, who are often seen as the “motivators” and “drivers” of the organization and of its employees (Chen & Klimoski, 2007).

In particular, the demand for successful executives who can meet the challenging requirements of their function, especially since these requirements are constantly changing, has intensified (McCauley & Palus, 2020). Due to the limited availability of qualified employees and a correspondingly fiercely competitive labor market, organizations often go with the strategy of developing their managers on their own terms (Müller-Vorbrüggen, 2010). Within future-oriented leadership development, the further development of competencies, such as social intelligence, conflict management, interpersonal skills, (learning) agility, decision-making, self-management, change management, etc., is becoming a focal point (Black & Earnest, 2009). International studies show that managers nowadays are not able to reject continual training to remain great leaders, making it even more apparent that managers and potential future managers need to commit themselves to

leadership development programs (McCauley & Palus, 2020; Black & Earnest, 2009; Müller-Vorbrüggen, 2010).

1.1. Problem Statement

While there are various difficulties and challenges included in implementing a leadership development program, ranging from high costs to generic program content (Waldman et al., 2012), the problem this thesis focuses on is participants' motivation in such programs. Up until recently, managers have focused on being able to motivate their teams and their employees to meet company goals (Jaworski et al., 2018). However, their own motivation in trainings is often perceived as a given by HR personnel or top management, as leaders in companies are expected to be self-motivated to a certain extent. In reality, self-motivation among managers is not always present (Maslen & Hopkins, 2014).

Motivated employees, in both the workplace and training programs, are sought after by every organization Jaworski et al., 2018). The reason for this is that on the one hand higher motivation at work has a major impact on workplace performance, ranging from higher productivity and more innovation to lower levels of absenteeism (Usman et al., 2021). In short, if people are motivated on the job, they increase value creation because motivated people are more committed to finding solutions than those who do things by the book (Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). On the other hand, motivation in trainings helps employees retain information (Usman et al., 2021). Especially when it comes to essential issues such as safety compliance trainings, which organizations depend on to keep their employees healthy, it is crucial for employees to acquire this knowledge and be able to apply it in practice (Wang et al., 2018). Additional advantages of high motivation to learn when training participants include an increase in their effort and perseverance in the task, as well as initiative and an improvement of cognitive processing skills and general performance (Hennebry-Leung & Xiao, 2020).

Employers frequently resort to so-called "extrinsic" motivational factors, such as gains in financial compensation, influence or status, to motivate their employees (Mahmoud et al., 2020). These are important and effective variables, but they also have limits, which prompts the question of how long and regularly different people can be motivated for training solely by the prospect of extrinsic factors, e.g. a bar of chocolate (Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). Therefore, employers are increasingly shifting their focus to sustainable motivation. Employees are sustainably motivated primarily when they are additionally "intrinsically" driven (Shafi et al., 2020). This means they realize their own strengths and competencies through, for example, personal successes, feel involved through recognition and

appreciation from managers and colleagues, and can make self-determined decisions for their areas. In times of shortages of skilled workers, strategic and competence-oriented HR development can make a decisive contribution to ensuring that companies retain qualified employees in the long term through intrinsic motivation (Ozkeser, 2019).

However, often when it comes to development programs, increasing motivation presents itself as a challenge (Gentry et al., 2013; Mahmoud et al., 2020). This is especially the case when employees have little time to spare for development opportunities and are often committed to a full work schedule, as is the case with managers (Gentry et al., 2013). Moreover, aspects of the training or development program itself can lead to a decrease in motivation or to an increase in amotivation for the employees (Mahmoud et al., 2020). These aspects include teaching methods used in the training, the trainers themselves, the topics, the work environment and the support from the outside, among other factors (Mahmoud et al., 2020; Gentry et al., 2013; Zigler, 1962). For this reason, leadership development programs are often faced with motivation challenges. When not motivated, such leadership development programs become a waste of invested resources, as managers do not retain much of what they learned due to distractions and lack of motivation (de Grip et al., 2020). A lack of motivation in such development programs can also lead to a resistance to participate in other development programs (Niemec & Ryan, 2009). Additionally, when participation in specific development programs is mandated by the organization's management, a lack of motivation can hinder employees to take part in other development programs (de Grip et al., 2020). Decreased motivation and amotivation result in deficient skills and competency training of their management (Lee-Kelley & Turner, 2017). This in turn can lead to toxic leadership. Toxic leadership demonstrably worsens the working atmosphere in organizations, as it leads to dissatisfaction, stress in teams and individuals, lower performance and lower employee loyalty to the company (Weberg & Fuller, 2017). Such companies are rated more negatively as employers and companies with frequent poor leadership behavior were rated statistically significantly worse (Yavas, 2016). Moreover, poor leadership behavior can be transferred from the top management level to lower levels in the hierarchy (Weberg & Fuller, 2017). The more toxic or abusive top managers are, the more likely lower-level managers are to exhibit hostile leadership behavior (Yavas, 2016).

In conclusion, retaining or ignoring bad leaders hurts business. Therefore, adequately training or developing current and future company leaders to their fullest potential should be set as the utmost priority in organizations, and the right type of motivation plays an enormous role in the training' success.

1.2. Research Objective and Research Question

While motivation theories are applied to employees in work environments (Thibault-Landry et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2021) and students in learning environments (Niemec & Ryan, 2009; Valenzuela et al., 2017), there is little research about their application in training environments for employees. Specifically, there is also little research on motivation of participants in leadership development programs, where these participants are current or future managers and therefore a particular group of employees. This thesis thus focuses on finding significant factors that either motivate or amotivate participants in leadership development programs. The first research question is as follows.

RQ1: Which (a)motivational factors influence participant motivation in leadership development programs?

The answer to the first research question brings up factors that can be externally influenced. Therefore, to tie this thesis to a practical application, the findings also provide significant insights into how organizations can influence autonomous motivation. Unlike intrinsic motivation, which is an element of autonomous motivation, autonomous motivation can be externally influenced and therefore an organization can affect their employees' willingness to take part in leadership development programs. However, when organizations hire external trainers to develop their employees, their organizational influence is most effective prior to and not during the training. Therefore, the second research question is as follows.

RQ2: How can organizations support autonomous motivation for leadership development programs?

1.3. Structure of the Thesis

In the following chapter of this thesis, "2. Conceptual Background", the theoretical framework will be explained. To this end, Chapter "2.1. Leadership Development" first outlines the raison d'etre of leadership development programs. Chapter "2.2 Motivation" presents work and learning motivation, along with the foundation of this thesis, which is the self-determination theory. The theoretical groundwork will be followed by the latest literature on the theory's practical application in work, as well as in learning environments. This latter sub-chapter is especially crucial as a foundation for the second research question.

The next chapter, “3. Methodology”, presents the methodological approach to answer the research questions. The use of the qualitative research method, specifically the single case study and interview, is then justified and the data collection and analysis are presented.

Chapter 4, “4. Results” presents the results of the qualitative interviews. This chapter is divided into “4.1 (A)motivational Factors” and “4.2 Organizational Support for Motivation”. The first sub-chapter uses the self-determination theory as a guide to present motivational and amotivational factors and presents quotes by interviewees that underline the core messages of the interviews. The second sub-chapter summarizes the main insights by the interviewees regarding how organizations can support autonomous motivation.

Chapter 5, “5. Discussion” compares the empirical findings with the theoretical approaches to answer the first research question in the first sub-chapter “5.1 (A)motivational Factors”, which follows the same structure as Chapter 4. The second research question is answered in the next sub-chapter, “5.2 Organizational Support for Autonomous Motivation” by first deriving these guidelines from the previous sub-chapter and then bringing in suggestions from the interviews. These insights are also compared to theory. In addition, theoretical and practical implications, as well as limitations and recommendations for further research are derived in the subsequent sub-chapters. The conclusion is presented in Chapter 6, which summarizes the key findings.

2. Conceptual Background

In the following chapter, theoretical background is firstly given on the topic of leadership development, where its definition, its reason for existence and its challenges are explained. This theory knowledge is needed to convey its importance in a company's long-term success and the significance its proper implementation has. Secondly, motivation at work as well as learning motivation are described, followed by the self-determination theory from a theoretical standpoint, with a focus on the three basic psychological needs and the organismic integration theory. The organismic integration theory provides a scale that facilitates the assignment of factors into categories of amotivation, controlled motivation and autonomous motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1993). Lastly, there is a review of the most recent literature on the self-determination theory in practice, which includes its application in work environments as well as study environments. These provide the link between the psychological topic of motivation and the business-related topic of leadership development programs.

2.1. Leadership Development

Leadership development is a specific area of personnel development that manages the active facilitation and enhancement of the skills and competencies of current and future managers (Black & Earnest, 2009). While HR development services generally relate to the advancement and training of all employees in a company, leadership development specifically aims to promote leadership skills – usually also specific to an organization's needs – so that the right managers can be deployed in the required positions at the required time (Leonard, 1997). The target group includes not only active managers but also junior managers or managers in training (Arsenault, 1997). This has especially become important in recent years, where leadership development plays a critical role in succession planning, since a large proportion of senior professionals are baby boomers and will therefore retire in the next few years (McCauley & Palus, 2020).

In order to keep pace in the war for talent, companies can therefore no longer rely solely on recruiting external management personnel, but must also become active themselves in identifying and nurturing prospective managers from their own employee pools (Welch, 2000). This means that, in addition to conducting searches in the labor market, companies should also detect, promote and retain internal employees as executives through targeted promotion and training measures. A personnel policy that focuses on the internal development of managers also has a positive effect on employee motivation (McCauley &

Palus, 2020). Giving priority in succession planning to applicants from within the company naturally offers attractive opportunities for advancement and career development and thus promotes employee commitment. It also increases employee acceptance of further training opportunities (Gentry et al., 2013).

The clear objective of leadership development is to train and prepare talented junior staff at an early stage for positions with a higher level of responsibility (Eich, 2008). At the same time, current managers should also be trained to perform successfully in the face of changing expectations and challenges (Black & Earnest, 2009). It is necessary for managers to keep up with the times, and leadership development is intended to help ensure that, as change in executive ranks is an ongoing process (Gentry et al., 2013). Empowering and training existing employees is faster and more economical than conducting an external search. A key component of leadership development programs is to motivate employees to work as leaders in the company, as well as increase their perceived loyalty to the organization (McCauley & Palus, 2020).

2.1.1. Leadership Development Challenges

The reasons for the failure of management development concepts as a whole, or the failure of individual leadership development measures, are varied and complex. If one considers the definition of executives as part of leadership and follows one of Peter Drucker's characterizations of modern leadership as: "Enabling people through common values, goals and structures by means of training and further education to achieve a common performance and to react to changes", it underscores the crucial position of leadership development (Gentry et al., 2013). Closely related to the self-responsibility of individual leaders for their own further development is the importance of managers and their quality. Companies that attach great importance to the development of their employees and executives have a competency model derived from their strategy, which is communicated and accessible to all leaders and forms the basis for all selection, appraisal and development processes carried out in the company (Ramthun & Matkin, 2012).

The regular implementation of assessment and feedback processes to evaluate strategically relevant leadership quality competencies leads to a continuous survey of the status quo of the entire management team as well as to a location analysis of each individual manager, and subsequently to the derivation of company-related and individual development needs (Waldman et al., 2012). In addition, the leaders undergo a permanent comparison of their self-image and the image of others, which supports critical self-reflection, possibly avoids self-overestimation and underestimation, and can lead to positive

internal competition (Jackson et al., 2012). However, in practice, many companies do not regularly survey the quality of their managers due to resource constraints and the lack of awareness of its benefits and can therefore hardly make concrete statements about the development status and the gap between what the organization needs and what is available (Baron & Parent, 2014). Often, the allocation of further training is based on the famous "watering can principle". For example, if the sales department is not performing well, managers are sent to a sales training course (Gentry et al., 2013).

Another challenge is the complexity of the requirements for today's management positions, which often leads to a poor fit between the content of management training and individual and corporate requirements (Ramthun & Matkin, 2012). In order to meet these requirements, it is necessary to clearly separate the teaching of leadership methods and techniques on the one hand and skills relating to the manager as a person on the other. While some leadership methods, such as conducting target agreement discussions, can also be taught in open seminars under certain circumstances, company-specific seminars and training courses should be used to teach topics that are currently of strategic or industry-specific relevance (Johnson et al, 2017). Individually tailored methods such as coaching, on the other hand, are used for very personal content such as dealing with self-image as a manager (Jackson et al., 2012).

This leads to the next challenge that companies face with regard to leadership development programs, namely choosing the right method for teaching certain competencies (Waldman et al., 2012). It is beneficial to match training methods with the needs of training participants and what the topic calls for (Johnson et al, 2017). Methods that have a lack of company relevance and/or lack of strategic relevance and are accompanied by wrong or poor providers are further stumbling blocks on the way to professional leadership development (Groves, 2013).

A frequently confirmed reproach of many leadership training courses is their insufficient transfer reliability and the poor transfer of what has been learned into work practice (Lunsford & Brown, 2016). This is said to be caused by the frequent use of theoretical situations in the training. What has been learned can often not be used or further developed due to a lack of application or difficult framework conditions and thus not infrequently fizzles out in its effect (Johnson et al, 2017). In most cases, these are also one-time measures that are not continuously and regularly refreshed or repeated and practiced, which also diminishes the cost/benefit aspect (Ramthun & Matkin, 2012).

When the above-mentioned challenges are not met with appropriate and timely solutions, leadership development programs are prone to be viewed in either a neutral or negative light by management employees (Gentry et al., 2013). This in turn leads to the key issue of this thesis, namely the motivation of participants to take part in leadership development programs. Motivation is seen as the key to ensuring the successful transfer of knowledge from theory to practice, a satisfied management staff and qualified, self-reflective managers (Waldman et al., 2012). However, in reality, development trainings of any kind are often seen as more of a burden than an opportunity to potential participants (Jackson et al., 2012). In some cases they are mandated by top management and if other work issues become urgent, any type of training is perceived as a mental burden or additional stress to the participants. Therefore, increasing motivation in participants to take part in leadership development programs is a critical concern in today's HR departments (Gentry et al., 2013; Waldman et al., 2012).

2.2. Motivation

Motivation refers to processes in which certain motives are activated and converted into actions (Driver, 2017). This gives behavior a direction toward a goal, a level of intensity and a sequence of events. A person's motivation to pursue a particular goal depends on situational incentives, personal preferences and their interaction (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). The resulting motivational tendency is composed of the various incentives of the activity, the outcome of the action, weighted according to the personal motivational profile, and both internal consequences concerning self-evaluation and external consequences. In psychology, a distinction is made between content theories (e.g. Maslow, Herzberg, McClelland, McGregor) and process theories (e.g. Vroom's Expectancy Theory, Adams' Equity Theory, Skinner Reinforcement Theory) (Koenka, 2020).

2.2.1. Work Motivation and Learning Motivation

An important factor in work performance and work quality is work motivation. According to Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory, motivators influence work motivation and thus work performance and come primarily from work content (Othman et al., 2009). Moreover, according to Herzberg, work content is an important motivator in addition to recognition, a sense of achievement, promotion prospects, development opportunities and responsibility (Mahmoud et al., 2020). For employees, one-piece flow results in increased work motivation due to the larger, perhaps complete, work content (Carlisle & Manning, 1994). Whether a job is monotonous or varied is dependent on the work content, which is a condition of satisfaction (specifically, job satisfaction) or dissatisfaction (Batova, 2018). Monotonous

work content, which has arisen in particular through specialization and Tayloristic division of labor (such as piecework), leads to dissatisfaction (Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). It is characterized by a work task that is uniform in content, makes only low demands, and yet can require sustained concentration (Andressen et al., 2011). Job enrichment as a vertical restructuring of the work content is intended to counteract monotony by expanding the work content through additional planning or control functions, and job enlargement by horizontally expanding the content in the form of additional tasks from neighboring areas (Othman et al., 2009).

Work motivation strongly influences job satisfaction (Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). Job satisfaction is what people think and feel about their work and its facets. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their work (Nerdinger et al., 2011). There are several reasons for studying and striving for job satisfaction. Firstly, since work takes up a large portion of the day and thus of one's entire lifetime, it seems desirable for ethical and humanitarian reasons that employees experience satisfaction in their job activities. Job satisfaction can thus be conceived as a humanitarian goal in its own right to enhance the quality of life (Mahmoud et al., 2020). Secondly, job satisfaction can be understood as a means for achieving other organizational goals. Thus, job satisfaction can be targeted in organizations to limit absenteeism or turnover or to increase job performance (Andressen et al., 2011). Thirdly, job satisfaction can be understood as a societal goal to also create acceptance for the prevailing economic and social system through job satisfaction. In many uprisings in different countries and times, dissatisfaction with working conditions emerges as an important triggering factor (e.g., workers' dissatisfaction with the increase in labor demands on June 17, 1953, in the GDR) (Humphreys & Einstein, 2004).

Going beyond motivation specifically at work, development programs in general also need to tackle the issue of learning motivation. Motivation theories are known for being applied to various different areas of science, meaning that the same theories that are applied to work environments are applied to learning environments (Hennebry-Leung & Xiao, 2020).
The term learning culture can be interpreted in many different ways and has found its way into the debate on corporate training work (Arnold, 2001). This is largely understood as "the way in which the company learns and the way in which the employees themselves learn which factors are effective in promoting or inhibiting learning" (Meyer-Dohm, 2002). Accordingly, learning culture includes all factors influencing the learning of employees in the company. While contributions to educational science on learning in a school context, both framework conditions and process characteristics are well considered and well

researched, relevant studies on learning in everyday working life are rare (Beck & Dubs, 1998, Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002).

Vocational learning takes place both incidentally in the work process, for example, when action sequences are adapted to new requirements, as well as in continuing vocational training measures (Oerter, 1997). According to constructivist understanding (Gerstenmaier & Mandl, 1999), it is an active process in which the learners perform learning actions. These actions must be triggered, driven or maintained by motivation so that learning processes are set in motion and continue. "The term learning motivation refers to the processual events that precede and accompany learning. In this sense, learning motivation can be understood as a current state in the person" (Prenzel et al., 2000). In this context, learning motivation exerts an effect on learning success not only in terms of its level (quantity), but also in terms of its quality. One approach from learning research, which focuses on the different quality characteristics of the motivation experience is the self-determination theory of motivation (Deci et al., 2001; Deci & Ryan, 1993).

2.2.2. The Self-Determination Theory

With their self-determination theory of motivation, Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan reinterpret and readjust the relationship between motivation and learning (Deci & Ryan 1985; 1993; Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000) and clearly distance themselves from purely cognitive approaches to understanding human behavior. Deci and Ryan refer to their theory as both organismic and dialectical: organismic, because it posits a fundamental tendency toward the continuous integration of human development, in a process whose psychic energy is from the motivation necessary for it; and dialectical in that this process of integration takes place in a permanent interactive relationship with the social environment (Deci & Ryan, 1993). "Our theory of self-determination is concerned with this dialectical struggle between the active self and the various forces, both within and without, that the person encounters in the process of development" (Deci et al., 1991). At the center of this theory is the concept of the self. The self is understood as both the process and the result of development. From the beginning, the self is determined by organismic integration, but it continually changes, expands, and refines itself in the process of engagement with the social environment, within the processes and structures of the organismic dialectic (Dec & Ryan, 1993). "Thus the self is not simply an outcome of social evaluations and pressures but instead is the very process through which a person contacts the social environment and works toward integration with respect to it" (Deci et al., 1991). Deci and Ryan describe the self as "active self" (Deci & Ryan, 1993).

2.2.2.1. Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation

While a large number of theories (e.g., Heider, 1958; Seligman, 1975; Bandura, 1977) understand motivation as a uniform concept and recognize differences at most in the strength of motivation, Deci and Ryan postulate with their self-determination theory differences also in the quality and orientation of motivated action, in particular in the degree of self-determination or of an externally imposed control governing an action. If an action is experienced as freely chosen, i.e., corresponding to one's own desires and goals, it can be described as self-determined or autonomous. If, on the other hand, it is experienced as being imposed by other persons or intrapsychic constraints, it is considered to be controlled. Self-determination and externally imposed control thus represent the poles of a continuum, which deCharms (1968), following Heider's (1958) attribution theory, characterizes with the terms internal and external causations of action (Deci & Ryan, 1993). This distinction of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is also of great relevance for Deci's and Ryan's understanding of motivational actions, even though it has been further developed in the meantime (Deci & Ryan, 1993). Accordingly, intrinsically motivated behavior is interest-driven and joyful, and does not require external or intrapsychic impulses, promises, or threats that are detached from the action event. "Intrinsic motivation involves curiosity, exploration, spontaneity, and interest in the immediate circumstances of the environment. [...] Intrinsically motivated actions represent the prototype of self-determined behavior. The individual feels free in the selection and execution of his actions. The action agrees with the own conception of oneself. Intrinsic motivation explains why individuals strive, free from external pressures and internal constraints, to engage in an activity in which they can do what interests them" (Deci & Ryan, 1993.). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is linked with the instrumental calculation to achieve a consequence that can be separated from the actual action. Rarely is extrinsically motivated behavior spontaneous, but rather follows a prompt (Deci & Ryan, 1993).

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation emerge as a distinct pair of opposites in this context. However, Deci and Ryan emphasize that extrinsic reward can also sustain intrinsic motivation in some circumstances and does not necessarily weaken it. Also, extrinsically motivated behaviors may well, for example, lead to successful learning (evaluated by "external" standards) and can also be transformed - or integrated, internalized - into self-determined actions. According to Deci and Ryan, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are therefore not diametrically opposed per se. In this way, Deci and Ryan’s theory differs from most of the cognitive theories of motivation - as well as in the importance they attach to the question of the origin of the origin of motivational energy for action (Deci et al., 1991; Deci & Ryan, 1993).

2.2.2.2. Three Basic Psychological Needs

Research studies on motivation largely base their results on the assumption that people have sufficient mental energy to pursue their goals (e.g. Cangelosi & Schaefer, 1992). The self-determination theory of motivation, on the other hand, postulates that three different sources are initially relevant for the generation of this energy: According to this theory, motivational energy is generated from physiological needs (or drives), emotions, and psychological needs (Deci & Ryan 1993). Deci and Ryan attach the greatest importance to psychological needs since they also have an influence on the control of drives and emotions. Three innate basic human needs - "primary psychological needs" (Deci et al., 1991) - appear central to the self-determination theory of motivation:

- the need for competence or efficacy (competence);
- the need for social integration or belonging (relatedness) (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Deci et al., 1993);
- the need for autonomy or self-determination (autonomy).

Thus, according to Deci and Ryan, humans have an innate motivational tendency to experience themselves as effective, functioning, and competent (Deci & Ryan, 1993). "The need for competence encompasses people's strivings to control outcomes and to experience effectance; in other words, to understand the instrumentalities that lead to desired outcomes and to be able to reliably effect those instrumentalities" (Deci et al., 1991). Second, humans have an innate motivational tendency to feel included and accepted in a social milieu, to care about others, and to experience belonging and recognition (Deci & Ryan, 1993). "The need for social relatedness encompasses a person's strivings to relate to and care for others, to feel that those others are related authentically to one's self, and to feel a satisfying and coherent involvement with the social world more generally" (Deci et al., 1991). Third, human beings have the need to experience themselves as personally autonomous, taking initiative, and acting in a self-determined manner (Deci & Ryan, 1993). "The need for autonomy (or self-determination) encompasses people's strivings to be agentic, to feel like the origin (deCharms, 1968) of their actions, and to have a voice or input in determining their own behavior" (Deci et al., 1991). Deci & Ryan (1993) argue that all three basic psychological needs need to be satisfied for an individual to experience motivation.

The concept of innate basic psychological needs represents the center of Deci and Ryan's theory (Deci & Ryan, 1993). The authors stand behind the three innate psychological needs as being reasonably exhaustive and supporting to explain the variance in human behavior

and experience (Deci et al., 1991). The theory is also argued to be productive from the perspective of educational science and is often used, for example, to discuss the conditions and causes of intrinsically motivated learning. Based on this, variables of good teaching or, for example, to justify the necessity of opening up spaces for autonomy and participation of students, for a life and learning in school characterized by democratic principles (Heymann, 2008; Schulz, 2001).

The concept of "psychological needs" can be used in particular to answer the question of the reasons for the motivational potential of certain action goals. Deci & Ryan assume that individuals pursue certain goals because they are able to satisfy their needs this way (Deci & Ryan, 1993). By specifying needs the theory thus also contributes to the understanding of goal selection and intention formation, and allows linking this to the social context. In a social milieu in which an individual has their needs for competence, autonomy, and social inclusion satisfied, the emergence of intrinsic motivation and the integration of extrinsic motivation is facilitated. In a milieu that hinders this satisfaction, on the other hand, it is inhibited (Deci & Ryan, 1993). Controlling measures and events such as punishment, but also - with the limitations mentioned above - rewards, evaluations, imposed goals, etc., are more likely to be perceived as external pressures and thus as controlling. They are capable of destroying intrinsic motivation. However, individuals perceive feedback and supportive measures such as promoting independence and supporting individual initiative and freedom of choice (Deci et al., 1991). With reference to basic psychological needs, Deci and Ryan again suggest that three dimensions are central here, in which the social context has a particular effect on motivational action: first, "structure," second, "involvement" and third, “autonomy support” (Deci et al., 1991; Grolnick et. al., 1991).

- “Structure describes the extent to which behavior-outcome contingencies are understandable, expectations are clear, and feedback is provided" (Deci et al., 1991). Here, the individual experiences themselves as competent and capable of achieving their goals. Feedback can be experienced as encouragement, support, challenge, and assistance and can increase intrinsic motivation if it is given in a way that promotes autonomy and is not destructive (Deci & Ryan, 1993).
- "Involvement describes the degree to which significant others (e.g., parents for children) are interested in and devote time and energy to a relationship" (Deci et al., 1991). In a positive case, the social milieu conveys a feeling of inclusion and appreciation (Deci & Ryan, 1993).
- “Autonomy support (as opposed to control) describes a context that provides choice, minimizes pressure to perform in specified ways, and encourages initiation” (Deci et

al., 1991). The individual experiences themselves in a social context conducive to self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1993).

2.2.2.3. Organismic Integration Theory

At the center of SDT is the concept of motivation controlling a certain behavior. Motivation is hereby considered as a non-unitary, i.e. a multidimensional quantity, which is characterized not only by its respective overall strength, but also and above all by the degree of autonomy underlying it in each case (Deci et al., 1991). In this theory, which out of the three basic psychological needs focuses on “autonomy”, the degree of autonomy describes the subjectively perceived internal share in regulation and, just like the overall strength of motivation, is seen as a continuum (Deci & Ryan, 1993).

The motivation continuum ranges from intrinsic motivation (highest degree of self-determination) through four qualitative gradations of extrinsic motivation (controlled or with varying degrees of self-determination) to amotivation (see Table 1) (Deci et al., 1991).

Table 1: The motivation continuum of the organismic integration theory (Deci & Ryan, 1993)

Motivation Type	**Amotivation**	**Extrinsic Motivation**				**Intrinsic Motivation**
Regulation type	No regulation	External regulation	Introjected regulation	Identified regulation	Integrated regulation	Intrinsic regulation
Motivation	No motivation	Controlled motivation		Autonomous motivation		
Place of cause	None	External	Somewhat external	Somewhat internal	Internal	Internal
Relevant regulatory processes	Nonintentional, nonvaluing, incompetence, lack of control	Compliance, external rewards and punishments	Self-control, ego involvement, internal rewards, punishments	Personal importance, conscious valuing	Congruence, awareness, synthesis with self	Interest, enjoyment, inherent satisfaction

At the right end of the continuum is intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the kind of willingness to act that is triggered by interest and enjoyment in the action itself. Intrinsic motivation includes curiosity, spontaneity, and interest in and in the performance of an activity (Deci & Ryan, 1993). It is considered the optimal form of motivation in teaching and learning contexts because, measured by the degree of autonomy, it has the greatest impact on quality learning and learning success (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Following the continuum

further to the left, one encounters the four forms of extrinsic motivation. Extrinsically motivated behavior, unlike intrinsic motivation, has an instrumental function. It is carried out to achieve a consequence that can be separated from the action. Examples would be learning to pass an exam, to avoid shame due to a possible failure, or due to parental pressure (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Integrated regulation represents the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation. Integration happens when there is a match between the values of (extrinsic) goals of action and the self. The values of the behavior are identified as one's own and are related to other central aspects of the self. The behavior of learners is then subject to integrated regulation if it is essential, for example, to a later career aspiration. Integrated motivated behavior largely coincides with the qualities of intrinsic motivation. However, the action still remains extrinsically motivated, since it is carried out to achieve a consequence and can be done by the outside. (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Identified regulation is another, partially autonomous form of motivation, characterized by personal appreciation of behaviors. Unlike integrated regulation, in identified regulation there is no complete identification with the action, but it is experienced as self-inflicted. In this form of external motivation, individuals identify themselves with a necessary behavior if it is valuable for achieving a personal goal. An example would be learning vocabulary when it is necessary for a personal preference for creative writing or learning for high school graduation when there is a personal desire to study a particular college course of study. (Deci & Ryan, 1993; 2000).

Introjected regulation is a controlled form of motivation. The introjected regulation refers to behaviors that are exerted as a result of internal pressures that are caused by external forces. They refer to events that are related to self-esteem. One does something for the maintenance of self-esteem or to prevent one from feeling bad about oneself. Behavior that is performed out of fear of possible failure is described as introjectively motivated (Deci & Ryan, 1993).

Finally, external regulation is the most highly externally determined form of extrinsic motivation. This type of behavior is motivated by purely external incentives, as the location of the cause of behavior is entirely external. In terms of learning, this could be the reward for passing an exam or the avoidance of punishment or consequences for failure (Deci & Ryan, 1993).

At the left end of the continuum is amotivation, which is the absence of behavior (e.g., loitering, snoozing). Someone who is amotivated lacks the intention to act (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Amotivation can exist for several reasons; for example, when an action is perceived as meaningless (Deci & Ryan, 1993) or when one does not feel competent enough to perform the action (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

2.2.2.4. Autonomous Motivation vs. Controlled Motivation

Instead of considering all five types of motivation, current research has found it useful to derive two central categories of regulation: autonomous and controlled regulation/motivation (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). Autonomous motivation includes intrinsic, integrated, and identified regulation, so all types of motivation that involve the highest or a proportionally high degree of self-motivation. Accordingly, controlled motivation includes motivation types with low or no self-determination value, i.e. introjected and externalized types. This categorization is also used in this paper.

The continuum of autonomous and controlled motivation describes the extent to which the execution of a behavior originates from the person themselves and is based on the person's personal decision (Stone et al., 2009). On the one hand, a behavior can be performed completely voluntarily and reflect personal values and interests, but on the other hand, it can also be motivated mainly by external reasons and be more or less forced (Hao et al., 2017). Autonomous and controlled motivation also reflect different degrees of internalization of the behavior and integration of it into one's self-concept (Autin et al., 2021). The more autonomous the motivation for a behavior, the more strongly we see the behavior as part of our personality and as personally important to ourselves (Hao et al., 2017).

As previously mentioned, this distinction helps understand how to categorize “meaningful” motivations. Controlled motivation combines the two theoretical forms of introjected and external regulation with each other, i.e. actions are performed due to an experienced pressure such as the expectations of the superior or the striving for recognition by others. by other persons (Deci & Ryan, 1993).

Autonomously motivated actions make people more satisfied and stress-resistant, since the performance of the action itself (and not just the achievement of the goal) is experienced as fulfilling (Stone et al., 2009). In a work context, this has positive effects for employees, and it also makes itself felt, for example, in lower absenteeism (Autin et al., 2021).

Autonomously motivated behavior leads to higher quality in the work result and to a lower number of errors (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2016). This is because employees are more engaged and focused on the activity instead of focusing on an external incentive. Moreover, autonomously motivated employees are more agile and more capable of innovation, as they are not dependent on specifications that were given to them at a past time in a context that is now outdated (Hao et al., 2017).

The advantages of autonomous motivation are particularly large when heuristic activities are performed, i.e. when an agile mindset is required (Stone et al., 2009). Autonomous motivation is more robust, meaning that it persists even in the face of failure, and it is more durable because it is not dependent on external factors. Most importantly, it is better suited to help people solve complex tasks, e.g. “higher-order activities”, because it does not "lock" people into how to achieve something; rather draws their drive from the “why”. So, for example, if a previous procedure no longer works, autonomously motivated employees will nonetheless continue to look for a way to achieve the goal, while externally motivated employees are more likely to justify why the procedure could not be done (Autin et al., 2021).

Particularly in the case of complex tasks, where constant control is not feasible, it is important for motivation to be solution-oriented (Stone et al., 2009). If process steps are "blindly" checked off, a moving goal can easily be missed (Hao et al., 2017). A complicated context exists as soon as several solutions to a problem are possible, whereby expert knowledge is necessary to find the appropriate approach from good practices (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2016). Supervisors cannot have expertise in all topics in their area, so it would be extremely burdensome to have to constantly look over employees’ shoulders or to set targets when the target cannot even be defined yet (Stone et al., 2009).

Nowadays, however, it is often not even possible to precisely formulate a task in the case of heuristic tasks, since the parameters describing such tasks are in a state of flux (Stone et al., 2009). Thus, there is no guarantee that a correct answer even exists. In such a context, employees must probe specifically, observe closely, and try to deduce patterns. Creative questions must be asked to generate innovative answers. Here, too, detailed external specifications are not helpful; people must be agile to be successful (Duncan et al., 2015).

For the above-mentioned reasons, it is crucial for HR personnel to create a work environment that allows employees to be autonomously motivated, even if some factors are supported with external regulation, as is the case in identified and integrated regulation.

Organizations with management employees who are autonomously motivated to take part in leadership development programs are therefore immensely valuable assets (Tafvelin & Stenling, 2020).

2.2.2.5. Amotivation and Demotivation

Three different processes can lead to amotivation: (1) perceived low competence, (2) noncontingency (the feeling that one's behavior will not lead to the desired outcome), and (3) irrelevance (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Albalawi & Al-Hoorie, 2021). According to the organismic integration theory, individuals with low self-determination and amotivation should become more self-determining, if basic psychological needs, especially social inclusion, are perceived by the person as satisfying.

According to Nockur and Pfattheicher (2019), people who are particularly amotivated show sustainable behavior less often than people who are less amotivated. They describe two primary pathways for increasing the likelihood of the occurrence of sustainable behavior: first, to reduce amotivation and second, using external incentives to minimize the influence of amotivation. The results of the studies indicated that, in particular, punishment of unsustainable behavior (whether at the collective or individual level) is effective for highly amotivated subjects. In contrast, there was no effect when using a persuasion strategy. This leads to the belief that external regulation for amotivated subjects could lead to controlled motivation. However, this type of motivation is perceived by many researchers to be an unsustainable one, leading to short-term success.

Amotivation can also be seen as demotivation, meaning that when an amotivation factor, such as stress, clashes with a motivation factor, such as interest, one’s motivation decreases (Brown-Wright et al., 2011). The result of the two, which in this case is a decrease in motivation, is most often termed demotivation. However, in such a clash of motivations, it is important to understand which motivation existed before the other, if indeed it can be determined (Albalawi & Al-Hoorie, 2021). Depending on that “primary” motivation, an individual can be seen as either motivated or demotivated (Jackson-Kersey & Spray, 2013). In theory, the terms are often used interchangeably, as the “primary” motivation cannot always be properly determined (Albalawi & Al-Hoorie, 2021). In this thesis, amotivation will be used to describe a lack of motivation and, if it is unknown, how the individual was primarily motivated. Only when it is clear that an individual is demotivated due to an existing primary motivation will the term demotivation be used.

2.2.3. The Self-Determination Theory in Practice

The self-determination theory has been widely applied in contexts of work motivation, especially with regard to how managers and organizations motivate their employees (Van den Broeck et al., 2021; 2016; Liu et al., 2021). These studies find specific factors that are motivating in a work environment. Moreover, research of the self-determination theory in learning environments, such as schools and universities, underscores the theory's main arguments and provides factors that motivate individuals to learn and participate in learning environments (Niemec & Ryan, 2009; Assor et al., 2009; Chirkov, 2009). However, this thesis deals with a learning environment within a work environment. Moreover, the motivation to participate in leadership development programs depends firstly on events that take place before the start of the program, as well as circumstances that influence motivation during the program. As leadership development programs primarily take place during work time and are seen as a work assignment by employees, motivational factors pertaining to work motivation need to be discussed in this chapter. Following that, the self-determination theory in a learning context practice will be discussed to assess motivational factors that occur during the leadership development program, as in this process learning theories apply. A combination of the two areas of practice – work and learning environments – is needed to assess background knowledge for which factors motivate or demotivate participants in leadership development programs. Both chapters will present motivating as well as amotivating factors that existing literature and previous empirical studies have come forward with.

2.2.3.1. Work Motivation

Current research that relates the self-determination theory to work environments primarily shifts the focus to the three psychological needs (Autin et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2021; Van den Broeck et al., 2021; Iwanaga et al., 2020).

Fowler (2018) discusses how implementing the motivation theory when approaching employee development from a leader's perspective can be used to gain a key strategic advantage as a company. An optimally motivated workforce can be obtained if the leaders of the workforce are trained to support autonomy, develop competence and deepen relatedness. The research mentions that in practice, however, training a leader with competences that enable an evolvement of the three needs is confronted with resistance. Leaders need to move away from an attitude of what employees can be given to be motivated and toward active hands-on development of autonomy, competence and relatedness in an employee's work environment. This change is said to lead to higher-quality results of employees' performance and significant job satisfaction.

Firstly, competency support is needed in organizations so that people strive to experience themselves as effective in relation to the environment (Deci & Ryan, 1993). Intrinsic motivation develops precisely where learners can experience a sense of self-efficacy and competence (Hanover, 1998). Accordingly, learners must be able to experience at their workplace that their own actions contribute to better problem solving (Thibault-Landry et al., 2018).

Regarding both competence and autonomy, management theorists (e.g. Lawler & Hall, 1970) emphasize that job enlargement in organizations can lead to higher intrinsic motivation. Horizontal enlargement of jobs concerns giving employees activities and tasks that they can take pride in, which is related to the psychological need of competence. Vertical enlargement of a job revolves around creating and expanding jobs that enable more autonomy, e.g. decision-making and planning by employees themselves. This way employees feel more productive, fulfilled and self-interested in solving challenges (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; Deci, 1975; Zuckerman et al., 1978). The goal of both enlargements is to make jobs more challenging, as well as give employees more autonomy, which supports the need for autonomy. Moreover, horizontally enlarging jobs is the key to helping employees understand the importance of their job, which again creates a greater satisfaction of the need for competence. Recent approaches to workplace organization focus on the individual competence of employees by decentralizing decision-making processes and delegating them to individual employees, which in older organizational concepts were bundled centrally at a higher hierarchical level (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). This is said to support autonomy and competence. Other motivating factors in the workplace regarding competence are for leaders to present task descriptions and a job role in a clear, structured and descriptive manner (Scarduzio et al., 2018). Additionally, providing feedback and reinforcement is also argued to support employees in their feelings of self-efficacy (Thibault-Landry et al., 2018).

Secondly, regarding relatedness, social inclusion is the feeling of being connected with and caring about others, as well as receiving attention from others, which leads to positively experienced emotions that support the emergence of intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1998). The atmosphere in employees' immediate workplace surroundings contributes to the extent to which they feel secure and integrated (Goodboy et al., 2017). This environment can be a motivating factor, if leaders enable teamwork and provide assistance with difficult tasks (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). Additionally, creating a mistake-tolerating atmosphere where discussion rather than arguments are facilitated can be a helpful driver for workplace motivation (Goodboy et al., 2017). With regard to relatedness, it is crucial for leaders to

establish a partnership with their employees to the degree that the employees choose and feel comfortable with, as this builds trust (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). Even when it comes to extrinsic motivation, it is argued to become autonomous through internationalization, which is a process that is strongly connected to relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1993). This can be done through external measures that encourage individuals to internalize group values (Iwanaga et al., 2020).

Thirdly, regarding how organizations can support autonomy in practice, studies show that external influences, and in particular pressure and coercion, can corrupt intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 2001). If intrinsically motivated work is to occur in the workplace, employees must have degrees of freedom in their actions both in terms of deciding whether to engage in learning processes and in terms of the options available to them in their actions. This is not to be understood as the complete freedom of action; rather, the support for the experience of autonomy is always understood to mean the provision of frameworks and structures within which the learning process is to take place. Research suggests that enabling stimulating jobs for employees that they are personally interested in, is fundamental in increasing autonomous motivation (Van den Broeck et al, 2016). It must also be mentioned that employees should work autonomously and take on responsibility to a degree that they are comfortable with (Autin et al., 2021). In addition, giving employees autonomy also includes enabling self-assessment for them. This can be done through annual employee assessment meetings or employee dialogues that empower employees to contribute to what their job role should include and how they would like to develop (Van den Broeck et al, 2016).

Literature and research on amotivation at work provides a versatile insight into how environmental factors from inside or outside the organization can also demotivate employees. In addition to the above-mentioned factors being motivational in practice, and therefore not considered amotivational, Gagné and Deci (2005) found that, in a work context, extrinsic rewards, such as monetary compensation, lead to lower intrinsic motivation, which negatively affects job performance and organizational commitment.

A study focusing solely on amotivation and authenticity, which in this context describes the degree to which someone acts in agreement with their true self, finds that authenticity and intrinsic motivation are positively correlated and authenticity and extrinsic motivation are negatively correlated (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2018). The study equates acting authentically with acting in a self-determined way and states that the six regulation types of the organismic integration theory are related with regard to an approximate spectrum of

authenticity levels. This means that when individuals experience low authenticity and do not act in a self-determined way, they are in turn being regulated externally or not at all, leading to amotivation and demotivation (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2018).

Furthermore, amotivation has been linked to employees' job insecurity, which in turn was found to mediate the relationship between supervisor incivility and employee job performance (Shin & Hur, 2019). The latter relationship shows that job insecurity is an outcome of supervisors acting in an uncivil way, which is defined as "low-intensity deviant workplace behavior with an ambiguous intent to harm" (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Amotivation is therefore thought to be brought on by employees who are dissatisfied, bullied or harassed at work and are not comfortable in their job or are anxious about losing their job. A trusting relationship with employees' immediate colleagues is found to be crucial to avoid amotivation or demotivation (Shin & Hur, 2019).

Moreover, illness symptoms and work stress were both found to be predictors of amotivation. Thus, employees who experience stress brought on by their work environment and who have symptoms of illness, be it mental of physical, are argued to be amotivated rather than motivated. In addition, a study found that decreased autonomy support led to amotivation. (Nie et al., 2014)

2.2.3.1. Learning Motivation

Motivation is an essential aspect of successful and sustainable learning (Deci, 2009). Therefore, a great deal has already been researched on which factors can influence learning motivation from a teacher's or trainer's view (Chirkov, 2009).

If a teacher wants to increase the learning motivation and learning performance of students, they must address these conditions (Evans & Bonneville-Roussy, 2015). Influencing thus works either in the direct environment or within the person, with the two not being mutually exclusive, but ideally complementing each other. If one stimulates a person's needs, interests, abilities and environment in a positive way on as many occasions as possible, then higher identification, integration and satisfaction can also be expected (Bachmann & Stewart, 2011).

A high goal is to give the recipients the possibility to experience integrated extrinsic motivation and/or intrinsic motivation. Amotivation, on the other hand, must be avoided, because once a person has profoundly experienced this state, research shows that no pedagogical methods will have any effect (Deci, 2009). A teacher should therefore try to

create conditions for the whole class that will enable everyone to satisfy their needs and act according to their interests and abilities (Muñoz & Ramirez, 2015). Teaching according to constructivist ideas provides more freedom for the class without being less structured (Shelton-Strong, 2020). The students feel more self-determined and find the lessons more interesting. Open instruction has often been criticized, as it is wrongly understood as being synonymous with a lack of structure. However, it is precisely open instruction that must be characterized by a strong structure (Deci, 2009). There should be clear goals and time frames, and criteria should be defined, but the path as a strategy for learning must be opened up. With precisely a more flexible approach, one allows the entire class to integrate individual implementation ideas into their own learning. The independent satisfaction of motivational influencing factors is thus at least facilitated and supported by more open learning scenarios and self-directed learning (Müller & Louw, 2004).

What this means in practice is that firstly, with regard to the psychological need of competence, it is necessary to convey the significance of a topic (Assor et al., 2009). For this purpose, exemplary learning content must be prepared in a way that is appropriate for the target group (Shelton-Strong, 2020). Therefore, students must be given all the necessary information and not be manipulated for tactical reasons, as manipulation attempts can lead to distrust and thus a decrease in motivation. This means they will not be able to improve a dry topic in such a way that will lead to intrinsic motivation, but rather it could lead to better insight, even to a certain appreciation. When communicating the importance that a certain topic has in practice, students are more willing to learn unpopular topics that they are not necessarily interested in (Müller & Louw, 2004).

Moreover, the level of difficulty of a task plays a major role in the experience of competence (Niemec & Ryan, 2009). The degree of difficulty is subjectively interpreted, meaning it depends on individual abilities and self-assessment. Deci and Ryan (1993) also assert that "if an activity is to be intrinsic, it must have an optimal level of demand for the individual." Thus, it is important that tasks are neither too easy nor too difficult for the respective recipient (Hensley et al., 2020).

Secondly, relatedness can be supported through feedback, especially when focusing on motivation-specific feedback aspects (Niemec & Ryan, 2009). This includes giving positive feedback that is seen not as controlling but as informative, so that it builds up trust (Valenzuela et al., 2017). Negative feedback, on the other hand, is often perceived by students as controlling and therefore lowers the recipient’s motivation (Niemec & Ryan,

2009). Moreover, research suggests that feedback based on more individual evaluation standards produces more positive effects (Hensley et al., 2020).

Another aspect of relatedness that can increase students' autonomous motivation is the group or classroom atmosphere. The creation of an appropriate learning environment should be therefore directly related to lesson planning by the trainer (Assor et al., 2009).

Thirdly, autonomy is supported by enabling students to choose their learning strategy (Hensley et al., 2020). In this way, students experience themselves as partially self-determining, even in the case of less appealing subjects. In general, controlling measures and events that are experienced as pressure have been found to undermine intrinsic motivation. In contrast, measures and feedback that are experienced as promoting self-reliance, i.e., that support initiative and choice, sustain and reinforce intrinsic motivation (Martin & Dowson, 2009). Through variations in case studies, and work materials, as well as through different forms of presentation and work, a considerable number of decisions can be handed over to students. Such variation is important because it allows for choice and adaptation to the heterogeneous class structure (Müller & Louw, 2004). Another positive effect of personal initiative and freedom of choice is that students contribute their interests to the topic. Thus, the independent choice of approach and implementation is not only a promotion of autonomy, but also of interests (Hensley et al., 2020).

As is the case with work motivation, amotivational factors in a learning environment can deviate from not fulfilling or practicing the above-mentioned motivational factors. Going beyond those factors, Jung & McCormick (2010) found that amotivation in learning environments is predicted to lead to indecision as well as a decrease in interest enjoyment and an expectation for success. Amotivation is also argued to be linked to social influence from individuals' families regarding family members' choice of occupation. This means that students who are socially influenced by family members who have achieved less occupational success achieve similar levels of occupational success. Therefore, social influence plays a major role in amotivation.

This practical application has brought similar results to surface in another study that argues that teachers believe the reasons for student amotivation are social factors, personal factors and home factors (Schwan, 2021). However, students perceive their amotivation differently, as they think they are unable to practically apply what they learn, especially with regard to the future. This study also presents support for how teachers rate their students' interest in learning higher than the students do.

Moreover, the lack of training instruction that leaves students with unanswered questions has a high probability of leading to amotivation in students. In addition, trainers who use autocratic behavior and omit positive feedback influence students to become demotivated throughout a training. Thus, trainers have a direct influence on individuals' amotivation (Borghi et al., 2017).

3. Methodology

Literature on the practical application and relevance of the self-determination theory to development programs in companies exists only to a limited extent, as most applications take place in a general work context. Especially with regard to leadership development programs, which is a specialized area in human resources, research on the comparison of the self-determination theory to the participants' motivation in leadership development programs is scarce. Therefore, expert interviews with former participants of a leadership development program were conducted in order to be able to answer the research questions posed in this thesis. This chapter is intended to elaborate on the research design of this thesis, which involves a large company's cooperation. Following that, the method of semi-structured interviews will be introduced, as well as the data collection and how this data was analyzed to answer the research questions.

3.1. Research Design

At the beginning of this thesis, a comprehensive secondary research study in the form of a literature review was conducted. This analysis of literature provides a fundamental understanding of leadership development programs and the self-determination theory, which focuses on the three psychological needs and the organismic integration theory. In addition, the literature review provides a current overview of how the self-determination theory compares to its practical application in work environments and learning environments. The outcome of the literature review has concluded that there is only a limited amount of knowledge about which factors affect motivation of leadership development program participants. Therefore, the research gap was identified and the following research questions were modeled:

RQ1: Which (a)motivational factors influence participant motivation in leadership development programs?

RQ2: How can organizations support autonomous motivation in leadership development programs?

As mentioned, insufficient information could be gathered through secondary research to answer these questions. Thus, a primary research method must be used in order to gather the right data and make the right assertions to better understand the synergy of leadership development programs and motivation of its participants. Possible primary research

methods are quantitative research, qualitative research or a mix of both. Quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among collected variables. It is often used in deductive research to examine the correctness of hypotheses. Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem and involves questions and procedures and then making interpretations of the meaning of the obtained data. This approach is often used in inductive research so that new theories can be derived from the collected observations (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

3.2. Company Cooperation

This thesis is written in cooperation with a large Austrian company. All interviews were held with participants of a particular leadership development program that had been taking place for several years in their organization. The program is customized for the company by local leadership consultancy experts and trainers and specifically caters to “leading leaders”, i.e. managers who have subordinates who are also managers. The participants of this program take part in it on a mandatory basis, as instructed by the management board. There are few participants that have taken part in the program on a voluntary basis. The program is set up in modules which include topics such as conflict management, teamwork, motivation and communication, among others. While the program of a specific cohort can run for over a year, participants can choose if they want to continue after the first module or leave the program.

3.3. Single Case Study

Due to the program setup and cooperation with a company, the qualitative method chosen is a single case study approach. The single case study does not refer to a specific, isolated technique of qualitative research (Lamnek & Krell, 2016). Rather, it subsumes the entire spectrum of social science data collection methods, which is why the construct of single case studies is also referred to as an "approach" (Witzel, 1982). The approach thus denotes a research approach that translates the theoretical guidelines of the methodology into practical instructions for action, without itself being a survey technique (Lamnek & Krell, 2016).

In the course of the individual case study, a typical individual case, such as a person, a group, an event or an organization, is comprehensively investigated, whereby different data collection methods, such as observations, interviews and document analyses, can be used

(Döring & Bortz, 2016), as is the case for this thesis. The aim of the qualitative case study is to draw a holistic and thus realistic picture of the social environment. The central advantage of the individual case study is that by limiting the study to one object or relatively few individuals, a more intensive engagement with the study material is possible, resulting in more extensive and complex findings (Witzel, 1982). When selecting the units of investigation in the course of the qualitative individual case study, it is important to find a case (or unit of investigation) that can be considered an extreme or ideal type due to its suitability. In doing so, the researcher relies on assumptions or external characteristics (Lamnek & Krell, 2016). In this thesis, the selection of the case followed exactly this presumption of characteristics. After briefings with contact people from the partner company, it can be assumed that the group of interviewees has at some point faced motivation issues before, during or after the leadership development program. Due to the similar experiences of the participants and the bounded case, results can be drawn on various motivational factors.

3.4. Target Group and Sampling Strategy

The target group for this thesis consists of former participants of this leadership development program. Current participants would give more accurate results, however, due to the COVID-19 crisis, the program had been temporarily halted. Eight participants were interviewed for this thesis, along with the trainer, adding up to a total of nine interviewees. The participant interviewees include a demographically diverse range of employees from different departments and different hierarchy levels. Participants who left the program after the first module are also included in the target group, as such individuals are helpful for the analysis of amotivation.

There are two sampling techniques: probability and non-probability sampling. The difference is based on whether the sample selection is based on randomization or not. For this thesis, a non-probability sampling technique was chosen since the target group includes only managers who had to be especially contacted by the human resources department to take part in the interviews for this thesis.

3.5. Interview Guideline

Central to the present thesis is to explore the subjective perspective of the case study participants on motivation. Since according to Aghamanoukjan et al. (2009) the qualitative interview serves to identify and analyze the subjective perspective of the respondents, the

qualitative interview was chosen for this thesis. The unstructured interview is not based on any previously developed interview instrument. The participants have the opportunity to express themselves completely freely after the interview introduction. This form of interview includes the narrative interview, the method of thinking aloud, and the ethnographic field interview or field conversation. Unstructured interviews proceed very differently despite the same research topic, which is why direct comparability is not possible (Döring & Bortz, 2016).

The semi-structured interview is based on an interview guide. The interview guide is a catalog of open-ended questions that allow the interviewees to express themselves in their own words. The guide specifies the questions and their order, but also allows for flexibility in bringing questions forward, skipping them altogether or going into more depth in order to keep the interview flowing (Döring & Bortz, 2016.).

For the present thesis, the semi-structured interview was chosen because unstructured interviews do not allow for the necessary comparability between explorative and exploitative business areas and fully structured interview forms cannot reflect the demand for subjective perspectives. The semi-structured interview, on the other hand, through its open-ended questioning, enables the subjective perspectives of the respondents and guarantees a flexible use of the interview guide.

The interview guideline for this thesis uses features that are deemed valuable by Froschauer und Lueger in their publication “The qualitative interview” (2020). In order to enable research beyond the level of the actors and to approach the inherent dynamics of complex social systems, Froschauer and Lueger draw on systems theory. According to this, actions do not originate solely from the intentions of individuals but are "...embedded in a collectively formed lifeworld horizon of relevance structures and typifications" (Froschauer & Lueger, 2020). The views of individuals thus also represent subject-independent elements that allow conclusions to be drawn about the organization of social systems (Froschauer & Lueger, 2020).

3.6. Data Collection & Analysis

"Open research interviews do not begin with the first question, but already in the run-up to the planning and establishment of contact; they also extend not merely to the end of the interview, but to the final documentation of the interview situation" (Froschauer & Lueger, 2020).

In this sense, qualitative interviews are characterized by careful preparation of the access to the research field. Considerations regarding the selection of the interview participants play just as important a role as the appropriate procedure for establishing contact. On the one hand, the insights gained from these interviews represent the first important information about the system. On the other hand, the positioning of the researcher in the field depends on this phase, which can subsequently have an effect on the willingness of the persons involved to cooperate and on the climate of the conversation (Froschauer & Lueger, 2020).

The partner company assisted with setting up initial contact with potential interview partners that fall into the target group. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, seven out of the nine interviews were held on a video conference program and two were held in person at the company's headquarters. The interviews were held over the course of two months in spring 2021 and the language spoken throughout the interviews was exclusively German, which is the mother tongue of all the interviewees. This was done to avoid confusion and bias in the results, as the participants would be elaborating on partly emotional topics where it is important for them to have enough tools to express themselves (Bogner et al., 2009). Due to the face-to-face or screen-to-screen conversations, the author was able to observe emotions and body language shown by the respondents. The interviewees were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of the data. The duration of a single interview was 59 minutes on average. It became apparent that the interviewees were highly interested in the topic. Furthermore, a trusting and respectful discussion atmosphere was achieved in all interviews.

The interviews were recorded with a smartphone, as well as a screen-capturing software program on a laptop, after securing approval to do so and then later transcribed and summarized according to different categories. The categories were chosen for a better presentation of the findings and arose as a result of the very broad knowledge which could be obtained in the interviews. If individuals were mentioned by name in the transcript, these were anonymized by fictitious names to adhere to the anonymity agreements.

In accordance with the postulate of openness, researchers leave the structuring of the interviews to the interviewees with regard to the approach to an object of investigation (Froschauer & Lueger, 2020). By this it is meant that the course of the interview is primarily left to the interviewees and predominantly open-ended questions are asked along a roughly predetermined theme.

The analysis of the transcribed interviews started with getting an overview of the main points and conclusions that came directly from the interviewees. This process included comparing these key points to theory and is precisely where the conceptual background was researched and written.

For the concrete analysis of the transcribed interview material, the coding procedure according to Froschauer and Lueger (2020) was used. In this process, categories relevant for the analysis are derived from the interview text (transcripts). Thus, there is no prior determination of a category system. Since no explicit hypotheses are required, the coding procedure is a useful method in the context of qualitative social research (Froschauer & Lueger, 2020). Microsoft Excel, Word and PowerPoint, along with non-digital mind-mapping methods were used in combination in the coding process. The coding was done firstly in an inductive way, and as a final step in the analysis in a deductive way. In inductive coding, the codes are developed from the data. In the deductive procedure, one refers to already existing models and theories and codes accordingly. Some categories could not be found in literature and thereby present additional findings for motivation in leadership development programs. Once these categories were connected to literature and each other, additional documents, such as notes taken during interviews or during other forms of contact with participants, were added to enhance some key points.

4. Results

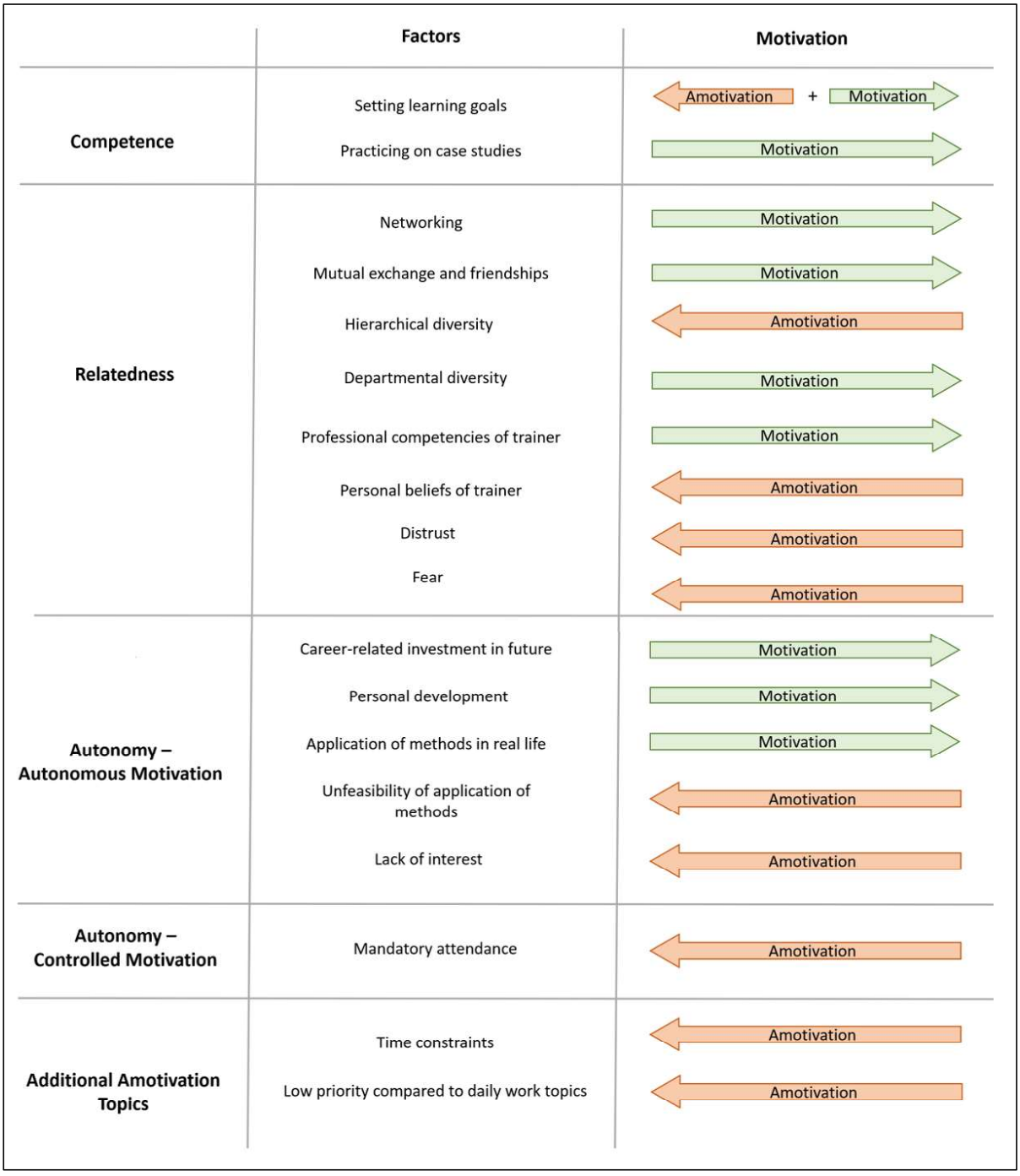

Figure 1: Interview results applied to self-determination theory categories (own depiction)

The above presented overview, which is explained in this chapter, summarizes key points mentioned by the participants of the leadership development program. These points are contextualized as motivational factors that are part of the self-determination theory, starting with the three basic psychological needs, competence, relatedness and autonomy. Experiences of both motivation and amotivation will be presented in each sub-chapter. The motivation continuum of the organismic integration theory will be used to categorize the interviewees' experiences relating to autonomy. After that, the category of amotivation will

explain the interviewees' perceptions on additional amotivating and demotivating factors that do not clearly fit in one of the three categories of psychological needs. Finally, results will be demonstrated that link to the interviewees' attitudes and experience on the organization as external regulators to support intrinsic motivation and decrease amotivation and demotivation.

4.1. Motivational and Amotivational Factors

4.1.1. Competence

Firstly, theory states that participants are motivated if an event or activity gives them competence, which in this context is understood as the feeling of being able to act effectively on what is considered important and to achieve desired results (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Deci et al., 1991; Van den Broeck et al, 2016). The trainer of the program mentioned that at the beginning of the course or of the first module participants set their own individuals goals, as well as group goals for the training. This information was confirmed by participants, who added that they were able to achieve their set learning goal during this training, which helped them stay motivated throughout the leadership development program, which includes several trainings over many months.

"It's important to me that I learn something wh of view, the (program itself and the trainer) didn't have to appeal to me much for me to take part (interviewee 9)

Another aspect that was mentioned by participants in relation to competence is how productive they felt when learning from real-life situations and even past mistakes. In the course of this leadership development program, a learning strategy set by the trainer was to bring in practical examples from the participants' work environment and practice solutions for these challenges. These "case studies", as they were referred to by participants, made the participants realize their change in attitude or action and their self-efficacy, according to their statements. Most participants did not mind that working with practical objects and situations made for a difficult road to finding a solution and state this as an important factor for learning and reflecting. It was also argued that learning from case studies can be compared to learning from mistakes.

"The training was very lively and practical, n recognized. Not made up, but concrete examples and concrete names mentioned in

confidence, like with role plays. That helps enormously. Some solutions to problems were found. It was never boring and very exciting." (Interviewee 2)

However, while most participants see setting goals at the beginning of the program as something positive and motivating that can fulfill the competency need, a participant perceives this experience differently:

"Of course, [your personal development goal and expectations] were asked about. And at the end (it was asked) if the seminar met your expectations. At the end, the trainer always asked: 'Did we do it?' But this is all subjective. How honest is the participant to themselves, how honest are they to the trainer? And how seriously did they take the fact that they can also take away something for everyday life." (Interviewee 7)

This participant remains skeptical about how expectations and development goals are helpful when learning something and staying on top of something. In their view, an articulate trainer or moderator can achieve the result of a training, so what the participants take with them into their daily life or what they learned matched what they expected and hoped for from the training. However, all participants agree that learning something new and feeling confident about new competencies learned is a key point for taking part in such a program.

4.1.2. Relatedness

Humans have a natural aspiration for satisfying social contacts (Deci et al., 1991; Niemec & Ryan, 2009). In the context of work, the striving for social inclusion means experiencing oneself as an effective and valued member of the group and working together toward a common goal (Goodboy et al., 2017). With a clear majority of participants putting a strong emphasis on the importance of this psychological need for motivation, this pattern could be seen in multiple statements throughout the interviews.

"The best thing about the program was exchanging, getting the trust that was built up, especially among those who stayed in the seminar. The trust is actually the most beautiful thing for me. We really were a great group and were happy to meet again [after every module]. (Interviewee 6)

The interviewees stated that getting to know other people in the company was one of the best parts of the program. According to their experiences, they ended up becoming friends with each other in most cases and discuss various leadership development challenges and situations with each other, even after no longer taking part in the program. A participant

mentions this relatedness aspect as “an important side effect” due to the fact that outside the program colleagues get to know each other more on a business level, where some people remain professional and keep walls up. According to this participant, this makes building trust very difficult, meaning that is easier to get to know your colleagues in a friendly training setting where everyone is on a first-name basis. Additionally, these social connections are stated to be beneficial to work life after the training.

“ (.I.)think that's very important as a social component, that you also have a good relationship with other department members. These [trainings] connect you and then also make it easier to find solutions to situations when other d e p a r t m e n t s a r e a l s o (Interviewee 3)

When it comes to the diversity factor of the psychological need for relatedness, the perceptions among the participants are rather uniform, as well. They found a diverse group of training participants to be a positive aspect, as they can benefit from these connections in work and private life.

However, the topic of diversity was often argued in the interviews as a gray area, so an area where the participants see a lot of benefits but also disadvantages. They mention that hierarchical diversity, where employees and their direct supervisors are in the same training group, can have an amotivating effect. This is because they fear making mistakes in front of their supervisors which could lead to them facing consequences outside the classroom setting. They also brought up the topic of not being able to be open and honest when the direct supervisor is present and emphasized that reflecting and practicing in an open setting is crucial for learning.

All participant interviewees mentioned that the trainer was a key factor in the creation of the group dynamics and trust. Every participant said that they were able to appreciate the trainer’s experience and skills in the field of leadership development. According to their statements, the trainer did his best to build a relationship with the participants by being very personable. Additionally, they appreciated the connection they had with him and how this connection worked well in a work atmosphere as well as in a more casual environment.

“[I] primarily [appreciated] the moderator, the trainer. He is also very good as a coach and mediator in difficult situations. I liked his comprehensive view of life, working, collaborating, t h a t i s u l t i m a t e l y l e a d i n g . N o t p r i m a r i l y h i e r of people, c o r r e s p o n d s t o I n t e r v i e w e e 8) w a s w e l l . ” (

Moreover, some participants mentioned that the trainer was able to solve problems between employees and managers, meaning that he was able to solve real-life problems that the participants were seeking solutions for. The trainer made some training participants, who were not interviewed but mentioned in the interviews, try things they had never done before and therefore forced them out of their comfort zone. The trainer made all participants cross a line of comfort, which they state made them feel closer to the group and to leadership tasks.

However, while all participants agree on the competency level of the trainer, one interviewee commented that they did not agree with the personal beliefs of the trainer, which lead to them feeling rather distant to him. A hesitancy could be observed when further discussing the trainer with this participant.

“ I h a v e a l s o h a d g o o d e x p e r i e n c e s w i t h t h e t r a
with me. I don't think the human and private aspects that he carries are very good, but he
a l s o h a s m a n y t a l e n t s a n d h a s *(Interviewee 9)* *b l e t o c a l l*

In addition, some participants also mentioned that at the beginning of the module they felt a distance to the trainer due to the fact that they were instructed to take part in the training by management. Word spread among employees that the trainer was supposed to get intel on current leadership situations and report these to management. The trainer therefore had to put a lot of effort into the gaining their trust and building a sufficient group dynamic.

This distance to the trainer and lack of motivation grew when some participants perceived a distrust in them. These participants briefly discussed the possibility that top management ordered this leadership development program to gain insight into how well their managers work. One participant mentioned that this led to a lack of trust towards top management and to amotivation with regard to participating in this training. One interviewee pointed out that this discussion topic among colleagues might have led to some participants dropping out of the program, as they felt they would be “snooped on”.

“ We l l i n t h e f i r s t s e m i n a r w i t h t h e t r a i n e r a t
the board to find out information about the managers for the board. He never said that, but
I ' l l j u s t *(Interviewee 7)* *t h a t . ” (*

Some interviewees, including the trainer, brought up the topic of fear and how it led to amotivation. The fear resulted mostly from participants not wanting to reveal their shortcomings in front of a group of colleagues. While many participants applauded role playing exercises, some emphasized how especially these exercises made a lot of participants want to leave the training. Role playing exercises are exercises where two or more participants play a role, e.g. a manager and employee act out a challenge that either (often managers) has been confronted with or was taken directly from one of the participant's experiences. After the role play, the observing participants discussed how the manager handled their role and gave feedback to this participant. The interviewees that brought up the topic of fear stated that this puts the training participants in a very vulnerable position that they can only learn from if they accept this position.

"Of course, there have been a lot of fears here. Fears of failure. Extreme fears of failure. Ninety percent of the people were not used to speaking in front of groups. (...) There (were) many of them who had never done a role play in front of a group. So, some of them really had extreme fears of positioning themselves in front of the group, of showing themselves, and possibly also of failing, the demotivation was strongly being influenced by fear and then disguised by arguments about the subject level, su (Interviewee 5)

One interviewee mentions that fear not only led to amotivation but that it led to the participants being motivated to do the exact opposite of what the training was intended for. These participants often walked out of the program and were motivated to not take part in the training any longer.

Moreover, an interviewee commented that the amotivation brought on by fear turned into high intrinsic motivation once these participants "crossed the hurdle of fear" and got out of their comfort zone. These specific participants that stayed in the program despite their amotivation at the beginning, often showed a high motivation to take part in further trainings and follow-ups after the program modules were completed.

4.1.3. Autonomy

4.1.3.1. Autonomous Motivation

The results of the interviews show various grades of autonomy regarding regulation and which type of motivation it most likely leads to in practice. This subchapter will take the theoretical framework of the organismic integration theory to illustrate the results relating to autonomous motivation, which is reached through identified, integrated and intrinsic

regulation. All interviewees mention factors that can be categorized in these three groups as motivating.

Firstly, identified regulation factors were mentioned by a majority of the interviewees. These factors relate to how the participants were motivated to take part in the leadership development program because they were able to use what they learned in real life. The content in the trainings was communication through theoretical as well as practical efforts. The participants state this as one of the reasons why they were able to apply the information they learned in real life situations at work. The situations where participants state they have used their new knowledge include employee interventions, feedback talks, employee dialogues, conflict management and general mediating situations.

"' Aha moments were always when people noticed that they could use what they learned in everyday life so that suddenly something was different. Suddenly they tried it differently and then th now I actually tried this. Now it actually worked. I did the same thing 10 times before and it didn't work then.' (...) So these interviewee 5) se were

These "aha! moments" were especially noticed by people who were more skeptical at the beginning. Once they found out the usefulness of the leadership development program content, they expressed a desire to take part in it.

However, one participant argued that while they appreciate the content of the program and do not fault the trainer, they blame the company culture and missing tools in the company that would enable application of what was learned in the trainings. This demotivation could be actively experienced by them, as they were motivated during the training but lost a lot of motivation once realizing the application of the learned methods was impossible for them. This experience made them not only oppose this leadership development training but also other more general development programs in the company.

"In the past was often the case that the methods were explained, but then we didn't get the tools to work with them. Theoretical tools are quite good, but when I return to the company and to reality, I am not allowed to lead. Because with every sentence that I start, they say that's not possible. (...) It's not implementation - our hands Interviewee 9) ed." (

Regarding integrated regulation, which is still considered external motivation, two strong factors could be seen in the interviews: the motivation of employees to invest in their future and being able to personally develop.

When it comes to a desire to invest in their future, half of the participants interviewed put much emphasis on this. In addition, they mentioned possible promotions or new positions as a key motivator. One participant stated that trainings can be energy-draining because participants miss workdays, but that the pay-off makes it worthwhile.

“ I l i k e t o [leadership development trainings], [even though] it's a bit exhausting because you're missing additional days of work because you're investi (Interviewee 1)

Along the lines of investing in their future, six out of the nine interviewees comment on how participants can achieve personal development goals in such a leadership development program. These participants’ goals include being able to grow as a leader and become a better manager for their employees but also learning about new situations that may come up one day at work, even if they had not been experienced before. Many participants also mentioned that being able to constantly grow and develop as a leader and as a person are key elements to the position of a manager. Some participants discussed how personal development always involves the risk of making mistakes and perhaps openly showing a weakness. This is stated as the only way to be able to change oneself, even though it is a vulnerable position.

“[Participants] could have theoretically opted out, but my expectation was to the extent that I say I want to be supported in my leadership work, in my daily work. I think that's because of me and my enthusiasm for my work. And the opportunity for me to get input there for my leadership.” (Interviewee 6)

One participant discussed that fact that they did not personally change due to the program, meaning that they did not fundamentally change the way they act as a leader or on a personal level, but that the program helped them to become more secure in their position.

The point of intrinsic motivation, which cannot be externally regulated, was not highlighted in a meaningful way by any participant. While all participants focused on how the training can be helpful in their career-related personal development, pointing at possible “pay-offs” of promotions in the future and being able to become a better leader for their employees,

the topic of personal interest was not explicitly mentioned. However, one participant mentioned a similar note along the lines of intrinsic motivation by showing pure interest in the training with a more personal than career-related pay-off.

"What I also liked was that one (coaching sessions) is also personal things also pop up there and I...it was quite funny because there were managers who went voluntarily. Like me, because I am interested in this further education and want to do something for myself." (Interviewee 6)

It was also stated that some participants' interests at the time are focused on disciplines and topics that are vastly different to the content of the leadership development program. They link these topics also to how they could benefit from them in their work life. It was argued that they did not see a need for the content learned in the leadership development program and this greatly influenced their personal interest in the program's content. The participants emphasize that if a novel leadership development topic arose with which they are unfamiliar, they may be interested in learning more. Therefore, discernable interest could not be clearly seen in any of the participants.

"For [other topics] are much more interesting at the moment...like economic topics. Real estate development, tax topics and so on, because for us at the moment economic success is very, very important. Another person may just need leadership development programs more. It would have to be something completely new where I say, this really appeals to me now and I'll also take the time for it." (Interviewee 7)

4.1.3.2. Controlled Motivation

The organismic integration theory states that both external regulation and introjected regulation lead to controlled motivation among individuals (Deci & Ryan, 1993). Due to the fact that controlled motivation has been observed, as well as demotivating to the interviewees, the topic of external motivation is part of this subchapter.

Almost all participants stated that taking part in the leadership development program was mandatory to a certain degree. According to the participants, the HR department of the company and top management strongly advised that specific managers to take part. Therefore, this factor can be categorized as both external regulation because some participants stated the participation as a mandatory requirement, with possible consequences for non-participation, and introjected regulation, because other participants mentioned they would feel a form of guilt or a fear of consequences, if they did not take part. However, some interviewees also mentioned that some participants were there

voluntarily, resulting in two differently motivated groups (controlled and autonomous) coming together in the training sessions.

“ A t t h a t t i m e , i t w a s t h e w i s h f r o m a b o v e t h a t s e m i n a r (Interviewee 7)

“ H o w c a n I p u t i t . . . e s p e c i a l l y i f t h e m a n a g e m e led, [the participation in the program] is simply ordered. You have learned to live with that i n t h i s (Interviewee 8) *o n . ” (*

The participants that were ordered to take part in the program were seen to be the least motivated out of all the participants. In most cases, these participants were not prepared for the program and were not given a chance whether or not to take part in it. According to the interviewees, the program was made mandatory from one day to the next, leaving some participants frustrated.

Moreover, some participants stated that taking part in such training, with the only motivation being externally regulated, is a waste of time and resources. These types of participants, who were strictly mandated to attend by management, were mentioned to be more likely to leave the training before finishing all modules. They also were less likely to participate or feel that they were part of a particular group. One participant compared this mandated rule to “serving time”.

The interviews also showed that participants who were seemingly forced to take part in the training felt threatened or insulted. One interviewee observed this behavior in other participants and argued that their pride was hurt and that they could be humiliated by joining the program. This became especially apparent in groups that were diverse in age, i.e. where young managers and experienced senior managers were put on the same level. One participant said that during the first training sessions they had no reason to be there and had no problems in their departments, resulting in a high motivation to get out of the training using any excuse.

“ A n d o f , t h e p e o p l e w h o *were ordered to come...were among the first to have a high resistance to the training. The main argument was the timing of course, with the [next] argument being ‘ w h y d o I n e e d t h a t ? I ' v e b e e n l e a d i n g t e r r i f i c w i l l* (Interviewee 5) *In these cases participation was experienced more as a deficit. It was perceived more in terms of ‘ n o w ' t h e y s e n d i n g u s o s c h o o*

Lastly, one interviewee commented on how resistance and amotivation at the beginning of a training program can be something beneficial for the individual. They state that once over the hurdle of amotivation, the participant was able to take away the most learning opportunities and become motivated for intrinsic reasons during the course of the training.

"I have experienced with my groups high motiva that is very clever, because something that does not generate any resistance at all is not a change" (Interviewee 5)

4.1.4. Additional Amotivational Factors

This subchapter includes amotivation factors, including circumstances where a lack of motivation could be perceived, as well as demotivation, which refers to the process of once extant motivation diminishing (Yadac & Baniata, 2013). As the understanding of the difference between amotivation and demotivation was differently perceived by the interviewees, the factors that are mentioned in this chapter are interpreted as both amotivational and demotivational, depending on whether the primary motivation is known.

Some participants mentioned that they experienced amotivation during the training, one so much so that they never completed the modules, and after the training, one participant did not attend further similar training or take part in follow-up meetings, which were meant to be coaching sessions and to provide content follow-up for the program attendees. According to the participant, amotivation took effect due to time constraints. As managers, they stated they had a large responsibility in their organizations and for many employees working for them, so they could simply not find the time and energy to take further part in the leadership development training program.

"Well, that's [the leadership development program], because it's a time issue. The program more than fulfilled my purposes. There would then be feedback [follow-up] talks, but it was not possible for me to join in terms of time and the talks also did not have the benefits for me" (Interviewee 8)

However, while some participants would not take part in the training again, many other participants mentioned amotivation at the beginning of the training. This was for the same reasons that were mentioned by the other two participants, however, these other participants gained motivation in the course of the training, after getting closer to the other participants and getting to know the content better.

"At the beginning I was not motivated at all, I'll be honest, because the background is, as I said, that (…) we are simply very strongly involved in the daily business. (...) That means, for example, that we have a different requirement every day and we have to make sure that we [work] accordingly." (Interviewee 7)

Participants further mentioned that they would not currently attend leadership seminars because it is not a priority for them. Their priorities lie more in learning new specialty skills, rather than perfecting existing leadership skills. They went on to state that focusing on their employees is more important to them than attending this training. However, one participant stated that the time issue just makes it difficult to attend, although not impossible. Lastly, one participant mentioned that any appeal from top management to push sales and profits higher would lead them to being more highly motivated.

One participant mentioned that they felt very motivated to take part in the program at the beginning but eventually became amotivated towards the end of the program. They reasoned that they would not be able to use what they learned in the program in their work life as the company imposes obstacles to doing so. Therefore, they see no point in investing their time and effort in such a program, as participants become hopeful that they can use what they learned in practice but lose inspiration to be good leaders once they cannot implement these newly learned tools.

"[The leadership picture of the company and the leadership picture of the programs] do not fit together. Bringing in such trainers is great if the company is willing to take a step in that direction. And I have not noticed that. It is wasted effort, wasted time, wasted money, if I inspire the employees to trust the program, but then they come back to reality and cannot implement anything. That doesn't add up. You simply have to create opportunities and freedom for managers. As a manager, you usually can't even decide who works for you or how much an employee earns. That's autonomously controlled. It works like an allocation. You also can't operate in the market the way you want. You're like in a tight corset. We need a little jolt from management. (Interviewee 9)

4.1.5. Chapter Summary

To conclude this subchapter, it should be mentioned that participants perceive goal-setting as something positive with the exception of one participant who sees goal-setting as something that can be interpreted subjectively and can be seen as manipulation by the

trainer. Real-life case studies taking from the participants' work experience were mentioned as increasing self-efficacy.
Regarding relatedness, participants were very keen to mention the group itself, networking, departmental diversity, the trainer and team-building in the program as key motivational factors to which they can relate. However, strong perceptions were voiced by some participants regarding hierarchical diversity and distrust towards the trainer, along with his personal matters. These factors were all linked to negative emotions such as fear and were seen as amotivational and demotivational factors.

Autonomous motivation could be seen in all participants to a certain degree. The topic that was most often mentioned was that participants were motivated to take part in the training to work on their career-related personal development and to invest in their future. Regarding controlled motivation, all but one participant stated that the participation in the leadership development program was mandated by top management. These participants were seen to be less motivated than those who were there voluntarily.

Lastly, the participants experienced rising amotivation when faced with time and priority issues. However, it was mentioned that these time and priority issues are a disguise for fear. Some interviewees mentioned that other participants were afraid of taking part in exercises that presented them as vulnerable to critical feedback when making mistakes. This fear also extended to losing face and being insulted by taking part in the program. Specific interest in the topics that the leadership development program aimed to teach and train was not explicitly mentioned by the interviewees; however, interest in other topics was noted.

4.2. Organizational Support for Motivation

To understand how organizations can motivate their employees to take part in leadership development programs, the interviewees gave insight into what has made them more motivated in the past and what could possibly make them more motivated in the future. None of these statements fit into a controlled form of motivation, resulting in the categorization of the self-determination theory's autonomous motivation supporting factors of autonomy support and structure. Involvement of participants' close family members and friends could not be sufficiently assessed through the interviews due to the issue being more closely connected to private matters than business matters. However, organizational support around autonomy support and structure were mentioned in the interviews and are summarized below.

Autonomy support in the workplace includes allowing the learner to decide the pace of their work, freedom of action and choice, recognition of employees' feelings and perspectives, and avoidance of controlling language by supervisors (Kaur et al., 2016; Reeve, 2009).

With regard to the interviewees' thoughts on this topic, many participants mentioned that making the participation mandatory leads to lower levels of perceived autonomy and therefore motivation. They discussed that participation in such leadership development programs should therefore be voluntary.

"This determination [is important], where I can decide. I believe that when we no longer have that, whether in a society or in a profession, then it becomes difficult. Then people become rebellious. I only have to think about myself. Then you don't like to go to work, if you don't have any say at all." (Interviewee 3)

Additionally, participants mentioned that employees in leadership roles should have a certain liking or interest in pursuing such training and should be self-led and self-managed. This should be assessed and guaranteed before positioning an employee in a leadership role. They also mention that then no external motivation would be needed.

However, half of the participants did not agree with full autonomy. One of these participants sees it necessary to support constant development and growth as a part of the official role. They comment that people in leadership positions know what to expect and can plan accordingly. However, this would then make training programs a mandatory protocol.

"If someone takes on a leadership role, then the person must also be prepared...for me, that is a basic prerequisite...to develop further. And then you can certainly say that anyone who wants to take on a leadership role should also go through the essential programs and be prepared to learn and develop. That would be a basic requirement, for example. And then it would be mandatory. Then I think it would be good. The person themselves would then work on their (Interviewee 5)

Moreover, one autonomy supporting aspect that was indicated by participants was that supervisors should show their employees the way but not force them to take a certain path. By this they mean that recommendations should be given to employees; however, the decision not to take part in a training should not be penalized. Managers should know their

employees' strengths and growth opportunities and can present these to them in yearly employee dialogues where employees can also put forward their own development plans. The supervisor should show what kind of opportunities are or can be made available by taking part in such a program. However, one participant takes a stronger view and opined that when an employee decides not to pursue further educational development, which their manager sees as necessary, this employee should not be surprised about not getting a management position or promoted.

Lastly, along these lines, one participant emphasized that support from supervisors is still essential in autonomy support. While employees should be free to choose what they want to do, this should be seen in the support that supervisors show for employees for any autonomous decision they make.

"I would like it if it is voluntary, but on the other hand, the managers should also suggest that they do it. So really sending someone without motivation to participate has only worked for a few. But for many." (Interviewee 5)

While many of the key topics stated by the interviewees about motivation can be linked to the autonomy support of the self-determination theory, there were many more practical matters raised that do not relate to a specific part of the theory. These topics are mentioned to be essential for the motivation of leadership development program participants and can be regulated from an external standpoint by the company.

First, some interviewees mentioned that they found the structure and frequency of the program to be to their liking and one of the reasons why they enjoyed taking part in it. The structure was stated to be partly influenced by how the participants preferred shaping it, making them part of the decision-making process. Moreover, there was clear communication involved when presenting the structure, which was also appreciated by the participants.

"[The structure] was very perfect, yes. Above all, what I always like about a seminar is that when you take part, there is an official round of introductions at the beginning. And then the trainer presents a very clear concept of what the training will be like. Now we will work for two hours, then we have a break and then lunch. Everything is coordinated with the course participants, [...] (Interviewee 5) was great." (Interviewee 5)

However, while the course structure was positively acknowledged by course participants, an interviewee argued that there could be improvements made with regard to how the different modules are organized time-wise. They mention that a certain frequency of the training sessions should be given, so that managers do not leave the learning process for too long.

“ I t h i n k i t w o u l d b e g r e a t i f t h e r e w e r e s o m e new topics to learn and refresh. That is, it should happen at regular intervals, once every s i x m o n t h s m a y b e a y e a r o r s o . ” (I n t e r v i e w e e 5)

Secondly, the methods that were used to convey the course material were positively received by the participants. These methods included a mixture of playful exercises, like role-playing exercises with observers, group discussions and theory inputs. The mixture of methods was stated to have a positive effect on participation by seven interviewees.

“ T h e t r a i n i n g w a s v e r y l i v e l y a n d p r a c t i c a l , n recognized. Not made up, but concrete examples and concrete names mentioned in confidence. Role plays helped enormously. Some solutions to problems were found. It was n e v e r b l a n d a n d I n t e r v i e w e e 2) e x c i t i n g . ” (

Thirdly, interviewees argued that it would make sense to offer the program to potential future managers. They discuss that this would prepare them well for their potential future role as managers, rather than making many mistakes at the beginning of taking on such a role, as this can be demotivating. One of these interviewees stated that positive participation in the program could end up in more potential future managers being identified than could be accommodated given the number of management positions opening up in the company but that this is necessary to ensure the proper education and appropriate skillsets of staff.

“ I t u l d b e n i c e if young employees were also steered in this direction. Then you have already developed the potential and you could apply that right at the beginning. That way it overlaps and then you also make (fewer mistakes)... That's what happened to me, I didn't come into the company as a manager. Then had 50 employees right away and made many m i s t a k e s (I n t e r v i e w e e 8)

However, an interviewee expressed that to properly learn from this leadership development program, participants needed to first gain management experience. This way they would

have a foundation to build on and a practical connection to the topics being discussed in the program.

“I think it's better to do the program, if who is just interested, I wouldn't let them do it. If someone has a small team, it certainly makes sense. But there are other programs at our comp (Interviewee 5)

Fourthly, a participant talked about how they were not clear about what expectations their managers had for them regarding the leadership development program. Other participants also mentioned that there was little to no preparation for leadership development programs, or in other words, there was no easing into it. They stated that without communication from the company about what outcomes they expect from managers who benefit from the program, the start of the program can seem abrupt.

“What I was missing was a topic of what is expected of me now, actually, from the company and program. These are now my tasks and we expect from you to report, to lead the wage, to make sure that the employees are motivated, that sick leave decreases and that the vacations are reduced, and much more. A clear announcement of what is expected of me.” (Hess)

4.2.1. Chapter Summary

Autonomy support was voiced by four interviewees as a key ingredient to increasing motivation to take part in the leadership development program. They argue that making the program voluntary could increase people’s motivation to take part in them, as long as they are nudged in that direction by management. However, four other interviewees stated that giving full autonomy to employees may make them not take part in the program at all.

Other factors mentioned by interviewees that could increase motivation and be regulated by the organization include setting up a certain frequency for the program modules, letting participants weigh in on the daily structure and content of program, switching between different methods of conveying information, offering the program at an earlier stage in managers’ careers, even before they become managers, and setting clear expectations for the program participants by their managers.

5. Discussion

The results of this thesis' empirical research give way to an applied understanding of the self-determination theory in regard to leadership development programs. The findings answer the first research question "Which amotivational factors influence participant motivation in leadership development programs?", as they present the factors that participants engage with or experience. While to a large degree these findings corroborate the understanding of the three basic psychological needs and the organismic integration theory of the self-determination theory, some empirical evidence stands in contrast to existing theory, and can be seen as a new addition to the theory.

Moreover, the second research question, "How can organizations support autonomous motivation for leadership development programs?" is answered with these findings and brings up crucial elements that can be externally regulated. These are mainly compared to the conceptual background of the self-determination theory in practice.

The following two sub-chapters answer the two research questions by contrasting existing theory and empirical findings and bringing novel factors forward. Subsequently, implications for theory and practice, as well as the limitations of this study and further need for research, are stated.

5.1. Amotivational Factors

According to Deci et al. (1991), there are three empirically validated and cross-cultural basic psychological needs, the satisfaction of each is important for effective behavior and mental health, or in other words, motivation.
This chapter outlines the motivational and amotivational factors of the three basic psychological needs, from competence to relatedness to autonomy, and finishes with additional amotivational factors that do not fit any of the three categories. Every one of the following sub-chapters compares the self-determination theory ("2.2.2 The Self-Determination Theory") to the practical results of the empirical study ("4. Results"), in addition to the existing literature on the practical relevance of the theory ("2.2.3 The Self-Determination Theory in Practice"), if applicable. In each paragraph of the sub-chapters, a piece of literature is referred to and contrasted or correlated with the associated findings of the results sections. While no clear or strong amotivational factors could be found that relate to the need for competence and autonomous motivation, the insights of this thesis present opposing factors regarding the need for relatedness.

5.1.1. Competence

Competence is understood as the feeling of being able to effectively influence the things that are considered important and to achieve the desired results accordingly (Deci et al., 1991). Theory and research on the self-determination theory states that individuals are motivated through feeling competent and productive (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Thibault-Landry et al., 2018; Hanover, 1998). This can be seen in the findings (4.1.1 Competence) of this empirical study, as participants were motivated through feeling a sense of achievement. According to three of the interviewees, this sense of achievement was accomplished through setting a learning goal at the beginning of the training program. The participants were most motivated by this factor when they were able to set the learning goal themselves, with as little interference from the trainer as possible, as they voiced positive opinions about this factor in particular.

This shows that the need for competence is strongly tied to other psychological needs, in this case, the need for autonomy. If the goals are not set by the participants themselves, then their competency and autonomy are seemingly not fulfilled, and this leads to amotivation. Additionally, when development goals are set by the trainer, participants could perceive a feeling of manipulation, as the trainer organizes the course in a way that will fulfill the learning goals as mandated by the employer. Thus, this could lead to distrust in the trainer, which ties this competency factor to the psychological need of relatedness. Therefore, it can be said that allowing participants to decide their own learning goals, autonomously, at the beginning of a training program is a motivating factor throughout the training, as it adds to self-efficacy, since the participants feel competent enough to not only set realistic learning goals, but also to achieve them.

Moreover, existing literature (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Thibault-Landry et al., 2018) discusses how individuals need to experience effectance, which is the state of having a causal effect on objects and events in the environment, in order to be satisfied enough to feel motivated. To experience effectance, individuals need to be able to understand the instruments and methods that lead to their desired outcome, and importantly, they need to see this desired outcome as meaningful (Deci & Ryan, 2001). This theory is also reflected in the empirical findings (4.1.1 Competence), which show that training participants felt motivated when using real life cases to learn methods of leading, conflict management, mediation and how to give feedback.

Moreover, by using examples from participants' work lives, participants were directly shown how to apply what they learn in the training to their work life. These real life case studies are especially helpful to keep participants motivated when they are associated with

mistakes that were made by the participants, thus showing the consequences of what happens when a task is not performed correctly. This causality of incidents helps participants be motivated to learn enough to take care in minimizing errors in their work practice. Therefore, it can be argued that when training participants of leadership development programs use case studies taken from their work lives and learn how to apply methods to their desired outcomes in their work practice, as well as being shown the importance of this outcome, they are more likely to be motivated to participate. It can be concluded that enabling participants to practice utilizing case studies can be a motivational factor.

The way competence is treated in self-determination theory shows that for the most part, it is applicable in a practical sense and sheds light on crucial factors for motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Iwanaga et al., 2020). Without this need being satisfied, training participants seem not to bother taking part in the training, showing how important practicability is when it comes to learning content.

However, it can be argued that the extent to which the need for competency is addressed in self-determination theory remains theoretical and uses generalities. This is shown in practice, for example, when setting development goals as a group, these goals cannot take every participant's individual desires into account and therefore this need of practical competency cannot be fully satisfied within a group training session, unless all training participants think alike. Moreover, a participant who was amotivated by the possible manipulation of the trainer regarding the setting of learning goals (4.1.1 Competence), was motivated to take part in other parts of the training and still expressed a motivation to learn. This shows that unlike the self-determination theory, which states that all basic psychological needs need to be met to be motivated (Deci & Ryan, 1993), participants of the leadership development program remained motivated, despite their need for competence not being fully met.

5.1.2. Relatedness

Moving on to relatedness, theory asserts that humans experience the need to feel socially included, which incorporates not only the importance that others have for an individual, but also the importance that individuals themselves have for others (Deci et al., 1991). Humans are then motivated when they are included and accepted in social circumstances and experience belonging (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). The empirical findings (4.1.2 Relatedness) of this thesis only partly underline this part of the self-determination theory. They show that this feeling of acceptance and being part of a social group is one of the

most important factors for training participants to stay motivated. This motivation was further enhanced when the training participants became friends during the program or knew that they were going to become friends with each other after the program ended. After-training dinners and meet-ups were seen as an appropriate and satisfactory opportunity to make friends and grow one's network, both privately and professionally. This is because of the similar interests and work lives the participants have, as they all have a background, experience or interest in leading. Therefore, enabling mutual exchange and friendships, especially through casual post-training settings, is a motivational factor for participants of leadership development programs.

This feeling of belonging to a group became a further motivating factor when they experienced a sense of vulnerability from each other. This led them to feel closer to the group and to build a foundation of trust. Especially during role play exercises, where participants were observed mimicking real life situations in different roles, this trust was able to flourish, as some participants had to openly show their leadership skills and receive feedback from the observers in the training exercise. Letting one's walls down to build trust is acknowledged in this empirical study as a positive and gratifying element of the leadership development training.

However, these role play exercises were often not embraced by some participants because the fear of making mistakes in front of an audience was present among some members. To an extent, this fear was also perceived by some participants as humiliation, anxiety and embarrassment, making the exact emotion difficult to be precisely defined. Participants stated in the results (4.1.2 Relatedness) that it was easy to judge from the outside if something in a role play exercise could have been done differently by one of the training participants. This shows that especially when participants felt judged or found themselves in a judgmental position, they were amotivated to take part in the exercise and training. Participants who felt like this explained that they had had previous negative experiences with these exercises and nothing had changed when confronted with the exercise again in the leadership development program. Therefore, it can be said that anxiety-driving emotions, such as fear of embarrassment and humiliation are an amotivating factor in a setting where relatedness needs, such as social inclusion and belonging, should be satisfied. However, it is a motivating factor when participants do not feel judged or are not prone to making mistakes in front of an audience, especially when a training setting builds up trust to allow participants to be open to change and show a vulnerable side. Whether one or the other applies depends, to some extent but not fully, on previous experiences participants had with these exercises.

The diversity of the leadership participant group posed a contrasting participants' view on how dissimilarities among participants influence their motivation. Literature in this regard states little on this aspect of relatedness; however, research that has applied the self-determination theory to real-life practices argues that the workplace atmosphere plays an essential role in how well the need for relatedness is satisfied in an individual (Nie et al., 2014). The results of this thesis (4.1.2 Relatedness) show that diversity strongly influences the training or classroom climate with participants mostly stating that they felt motivated when the social group was diverse in terms of departments and age, as well as experience. This is because participants liked growing their network in diverse areas, as well as felt it was interesting to meet diverse people and learn from another in the training setting. A well-balanced diverse group therefore positively contributes to workplace climate and is a motivating factor for participant motivation.

However, strong amotivation could be seen when participants were confronted with hierarchical diversity in the trainings, as when a manager was in the same seminar as their employee. This led to a sense of fear, as employees did not want to make a mistake in group exercises in front of their manager. It also led to managers not wanting to do the same in front of their employees. This shows that only one type of diversity is motivational for participants. Similar to the fear of embarrassment and humiliation when being vulnerable, participants are amotivated when confronted with making mistakes in front of their supervisor. This finding is corroborated by one study that applied the self-determination theory to a work setting and suggests that creating a mistake-tolerating atmosphere where discussion, rather than arguments are facilitated can increase workplace motivation. Thus, this shows that satisfying the need for relatedness is no longer the case in situations that evoke fear and embarrassment.

The trainer played a crucial, mediating role in all motivational factors concerning relatedness. They took on an essential role in forming the group dynamics and enhancing the feeling of relatedness, as group-building exercises and ice breakers were used and appreciated by participants. This is especially seen as a motivating factor by the participants as they thought highly of the trainer's competences. Thus, being led and mediated or moderated by a competent third party or trainer is a motivational factors.

Perhaps controversially, the trainer attempted to build up trust and show vulnerability by presenting details of their private life and personal beliefs. While this attempt was most likely made in good conscience, it was rejected by some participants that had contrasting

personal beliefs. As a result, the need for relatedness was disrupted and for these participants there was no desire to establish such a connection to the trainer. This led to demotivation in some participants who then focused on the trainer more as a person than as a moderator or instructor. This is because the participants do not perceive themselves and the trainer as equals in the hierarchy when their beliefs differ, which leads to a power distance. When the trainer's personal beliefs lined up with the beliefs of the participants, participants seemed closer and more trustful towards to the trainer, which makes this an additional motivational factor. Therefore it can be stated that sharing personal beliefs as an instructor in a professional training setting can be both a motivational factor, when the beliefs line up with those of the participants, and as an amotivational factor, when personal beliefs do not align. Moreover, a distrust in the trainer grew when participants got wind of rumors and gossip that the trainer could have been sent by top management to inform them of the participants' development and status quo of leadership ability. This issue was never addressed in the group with the trainer, leading to its further spread. In addition, this distrust evolved when participants received information that the trainer allegedly had a close relationship with top management. This again led to a greater power distance between the participants and the trainer, which disrupts the need for wanting to connect to the trainer. Therefore, participants in this context do not feel the need for relatedness and instead see any type of distrust in the trainer as an amotivational factor.

In addition, theory states that experiencing recognition plays an important role in motivating individuals (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Goodboy et al., 2017). This indeed could be seen as motivating in how the trainer addressed the participants and expressed recognition of them. While this was also done through exercises and fulfilling the need for competence by feeling successful, it could also be perceived in how participants appreciated being noticed for their development, effort and success in the leadership development program. Moreover, through group exercises and dinners after the training the participants felt valued and recognized, which was mostly mediated through the trainer. Thus, receiving recognition for development from an instructor is an additional motivational factor.

In conclusion with regard to the need for relatedness, it can be argued that the trainer greatly influences the motivation of participants and is therefore a powerful instrument. Strong emotions, such as fear, distrust, humiliation and embarrassment led to amotivation, along with distrust in or growing power distances with authoritative figures, like the trainer. Theory states that satisfying the need for relatedness is an essential part of being motivated. While this could be seen in the results of this thesis, it can be argued that the self-determination theory strongly generalizes this part of the three basic psychological needs. This is because

the need to feel included in a group was not the case for participants who were in a group with their manager. Moreover, employees did not feel the need to relate to their trainer, when their personal beliefs did not line up. Therefore, the need for relatedness has its limits, which are all tied to emotions, such as feelings of humiliation, embarrassment, fear and distrust.

5.1.3. Autonomy

The organismic integration theory states that autonomous motivation is more sustainable than controlled motivation and gives a categorized scale of motivation types (Deci & Ryan, 1993). This scale ranges from amotivation to extrinsic motivation (external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, integration regulation) to intrinsic motivation. External and introjected regulation are expressed as controlled motivation and identified, integrated and intrinsic regulation as autonomous motivation. According to the self-determination theory, autonomous motivation makes employees more satisfied and stress-resistant, since their performance is experienced by them as fulfilling (Van den Broeck et al., 2011; Deci & Ryan, 1993). This theory could also be reflected in the results of this empirical study, where the training participants reminisced fondly about self-determined events they experienced during the program.

Literature states that individuals want to feel like they are the origin of their actions and are not influenced to a certain extent (Stone et al., 2009; Autin et al., 2021; Hao et al., 2017). Moreover, they are motivated by participating in events of their own free will, along with using information how they see fit (Autin et al., 2021). The findings of this thesis (4.1.3.1 Autonomous Motivation) are in line with this literature, as employees seemed especially motivated when they found out for themselves how to use what they learned in real life. This can be categorized as identified regulation on the organismic integration scale, as applying methods in daily life to make the participant's lives easier to some extent can be argued as being of personal importance and conscious valuing. This is different to the motivational factor related to the psychological need of competence, which concerns using case studies during the training.

The actual application of methods takes place after the training and can therefore be a motivating factor for the next training, as this leadership development program, like most of its kind, takes place over the course of around a year. Participants seemed motivated by this factor because they were able to discover for themselves and decide for themselves when and where to use these newly learned methods and this knowledge. This gave them the sense that they are not mandated to use such knowledge but instead are given

autonomy over how to use what they learn in real life, which can therefore be concluded as a motivational factor. Hence, not achieving this factor, i.e. not being able to actually apply learned methods in real life work situations, was extremely demotivating for the participants. This got to a point where one interviewee stopped the program altogether after making this realization. The blame for this was primarily placed on the company culture and company politics , as it was mentioned that changing the culture could lead to changing the leadership style and effectiveness of leaders inside the organization.

Participants were especially demotivated by this factor because they felt misled by the leadership development program, as they were taught helpful techniques but could not apply them at work due to obstacles set up by the organizations. This led to immense frustration among participants that not only affected participant motivation but went as far as to affect work motivation. This presents a unique insight into how decreased training motivation can lead to decreased work motivation. This insight is also reflected in an existing study on learning motivation that argues that students are amotivated when they cannot find practical uses for what they learned in class (Schwan, 2021).

Moreover, there were tipping effects for people who were more skeptical at the beginning, which shows how overcoming a hump of amotivation can add more motivation to a person than when they are motivated from the beginning. This was mentioned by many participants, as well as the trainer (4.1.3.1 Autonomous Motivation). The reason for this depends on the type of amotivation a participant is experiencing. Literature explains such an effect by stating that once the exact reason for amotivation is abolished, for example when individuals receive autonomy and self-determination over something that was mandated prior, these individuals may receive an increase of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Hensley et al., 2020). However, literature on this is still scarce, making this reasoning only an assumption.

Research argues that individuals are motivated when they fully have a voice in determining their behavior (Hao et al., 2017; Stone et al., 2009; Deci & Ryan, 2001). This was reflected in the interviews in the form of integrated regulation, as participants strived to take part in their trainings to advance the personal development. Participants enjoyed being able to grow as a leader and learn new ways of how to be effective and good in this role. They have integrated and possibly also identified themselves with their leadership role and therefore are autonomously motivated to take part in the training. Participants were especially motivated when they had the chance to be vulnerable and risked making mistakes as this was seen by them as the best way to grow. This type of vulnerability however takes a

different direction than when it is connected to relatedness; as with autonomy, participants think about themselves. Being secure in one's position and reaffirming some leadership qualities that participants had was also motivational.

Literature also states that employees feel the need to take initiative and be the driver of their career (Deci & Ryan, 2001; Hao et al., 2017; Stone et al., 2009). In the findings (4.1.3.1 Autonomous Motivation) this can be mirrored in the integrated regulation part of how employees felt the need and were motivated to invest in their future through the training program. Employees see the possibility of possible promotions or new positions and therefore are motivated. They like being in charge of their own career and taking the initiative. Even though the training days are seen as energy-draining and time-consuming, participants who are motivated by this say that they are a good investment. Therefore, this can be stated as another motivational factor.

Moving on to the other part of the organismic integration theory spectrum, controlled motivation takes place when the execution of behavior does not originate from the person themselves and is not based on the person's personal decisions (Deci & Ryan, 1993). This makes individuals less motivated in the long-term and a certain amount of controlled motivation can lead to amotivation, making it a lot less sustainable than autonomous motivation (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2016). For the most part the leadership development program was mandatory for the participants. Participants mentioned that they felt guilty and feared consequences if they did not take part in the program, which raises the topic of fear again. Some participants were there voluntarily but only one of them was interviewed, making information on this group of people inconclusive. The participants collectively mentioned this mandate of taking part in the program as a wish from above, which states a large power distance. Participation was simply required by management and some participants argued that this is just part of the position of being a leader in the company. This deprives them of all sense of autonomy and leaves them amotivated from the beginning. Therefore, the above-mentioned motivational factors that did take place in most participants were an add-on, as most of the time amotivation was the preliminary and primary type of motivation when entering the program. The participants felt that this mandatory attendance showed management's distrust of them performing as good leaders.

These types of participants that were strictly sent by management (in contrast to being strongly urged or recommended to go) were seen to be the least motivated in the group and therefore also left the training before finishing all the modules. These participants perceived the training as an insult to their leadership skills, as it took a hit to their pride. Especially

when the groups were diverse in age and experience, the more senior leaders did not want to take part in the training or specific parts of the training, like role play exercises. Individuals who feel the need to prove themselves and could therefore be humiliated in the process by being outperformed by younger leaders are anxious about taking part and therefore highly amotivated. This shows these participants' insecurity in their role and leadership skills, making these individuals strongly in need of the training but at the same time the least motivated of all due to mandatory attendance and diversity in the group.

This emotional tie to mandating trainings shows that this amotivational factor is tied to relatedness, as it inhibits these participants from trusting the trainer and even their supervisors. Therefore, mandating development trainings for employees can be argued as an amotivational factor. However, what is more, the participants who were mandated to take part in the training and did not have strong negative emotions about it, were amotivated at the beginning of the training, yet more motivated towards the end of the training. This shows that amotivation can be changed into motivation, even if the need for autonomy is not met. Often, the trainer and the group were the reason for the change, highlighting the crucial role relatedness plays in motivation.

The findings of this empirical study (4.1.3.1 Autonomous Motivation) underscore the sustainable effects of autonomous motivation compared to the short-lived motivation and amotivation that externally regulated motivation leads to. Autonomous motivation is most effective when it is thought to be brought on by oneself, even if the external environment can influence an individual to a certain degree. The motivational factors, which include actually applying methods they used in real life, investing in their career and personally developing themselves further as a leader, therefore reflect autonomous motivation, which leads to more effective and satisfied employees. However, amotivational factors that revolve around mandating the training could not be categorized as controlled motivation according to the organismic integration theory. This is contrary to the theory, which argues that individuals who are extrinsically motivated through authoritative mandates are mostly amotivated or demotivated (Deci et al., 1991; Deci & Ryan 1993; Brown-Wright et al., 2011). Thus, it can be argued that completely depriving employees of control of their personal development leads them to having low or no motivation to take part in the training. Negative emotions, such as the perception that authority ordered the training because they do not trust they are good leaders, leads to further demotivation of the employees. This shows that distrust in management takes hold not only when satisfying the need for relatedness but also the need for autonomy.

5.1.4. Additional Amotivational Factors

The findings of this thesis (4.1.4 Additional Amotivational Factors) also bring additional amotivational factors to life that cannot be clearly categorized in the self-determination theory. Existing literature on amotivation states that a lack of motivation is brought about due to perceived low competence, noncontingency and irrelevance (Deci & Ryan, 1991; Deci et al., 1993; Albalawi & Al-Hoorie, 2021; Deci, 1975; Ryan, 1995). Perceived low competence could be seen in the results (4.1.4 Additional Amotivational Factors) with regard to the frustration and fear of embarrassment that participants felt when faced with exercises where they had to show their leadership skills in front of other participants and the trainer. This clearly led to amotivation, as some participants simply did not want to take part in such exercises.

Moreover, noncontingency, which concerns individuals' feelings that their behavior did not lead to desired outcomes, could also be observed in how participants felt especially amotivated when their methods could not be used in real life due to obstacles by the organization. Furthermore, irrelevance could be observed in the findings, (4.1.4 Additional Amotivational Factors) as some participants mentioned that they did not find the content of the course particularly significant. For some this was due to the fact that they had already learned the content on leadership skills in other trainings and therefore did not find it helpful or relevant for them. Some participants opened up about their amotivation in a direct way so that the results could be clearly categorized as being of amotivational behavior. However, it can be assumed that other participants did not want to lose face and therefore often mentioned time constraints as a reason for they stopped taking part in the program or no longer wanted to take part in it. They justified these time constraints with their hectic work life and responsibilities as managers. The trainer, however, interpreted this as a mask for an unwillingness to further develop by facing fears and being in uncomfortable situations. This would then link time constraints back to the topic of fear, which is a very strong amotivator with regard to the psychological need of relatedness.

Moreover, some participants outright mentioned that developing themselves was not their priority at that moment and therefore a reason for not taking part in the training program. As it cannot be appropriately concluded if the amotivational factor was really time constraints, priority issues or negative emotions such as fear, it can be assumed that all three played a large role in the amotivation of participants. These factors are not mentioned in the self-determination theory and therefore add an additional practical relevance to this theory. However, theory (Shin & Hur, 2019; Andersson & Pearson, 1999) states that amotivation at work is brought on by negative emotions, such as stress, fear of job loss and insecurity, which are all in line with the findings of this study (4.1.4 Additional Amotivational Factors).

Therefore, it can be concluded that amotivational factors include fear of losing face, time constraints, lack of priority and unfeasibility of using methods in real life.

Despite the importance of interest in theory, especially as it one of the fundamental parts of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1993; 2000), it was not explicitly mentioned in any of the interviews. All participants seemed to be very focused on keeping the interviews professional and therefore possibly did not state their personal interest in the topic. Therefore, it cannot be clearly concluded from this thesis, whether or not some participants were interested but did not share this personal interest. Interest is the only factor that cannot be influenced externally, making this possibly the reason for the lack of mention in interviews.

Lastly, concerning amotivation, it can be argued from the results (4.1.4 Additional Amotivational Factors) that participants who were amotivated at the beginning of the training and had enough motivation to stay, became more motivated throughout the training than participants who were motivated at the beginning of the training. This was especially the case for participants who faced their fear and therefore got out of their comfort zone. They were observed as feeling more secure after opening up and being in a vulnerable position. It can be concluded that the reason for them being more motivated than other participants towards the end of the training is due to the trainer, who was especially attentive to skeptical training participants. Therefore, giving amotivated participants room and the opportunity to grow and be vulnerable without pushing them away is another motivational factor.

5.1.5. Main Insights

It can be argued that fear is a key amotivational factor for participation in leadership development programs. This emotion appeared in different forms, such as fear of embarrassment or fear of making mistakes and losing face, in all three psychological need categories. While there is no research on fear in development programs, it can be assumed that this amotivational factor may be significant to leadership programs because participants are expected to act professionally and flawlessly. This puts a great deal of pressure on participants and therefore discourages many from taking part in such trainings. Fear was also often disguised when participants blamed their environment, such as the exercises, the trainer and the organization's culture and politics. This topic of fear has been discussed in theory with regard to work motivation and shows similar tendencies as the findings of this thesis (4.1.2 Relatedness; 4.1.3.2 Controlled Motivation) (Shin & Hur, 2019; Andersson & Pearson, 1999).

Moreover, there was much hesitancy and controversy when talking about the trainer's connection to top management. Only a few participants briefly mentioned the topic and brushed over it with some kind words for the trainer. This shows that fear is an issue not only in the leadership development program but also outside in the organization. One participant was hesitant to be interviewed and agreed to the interview only after given assurance that the transcript could be viewed by them, which shows how this fear extends to connections outside the organization. Fear of negative consequences when speaking up about a topic that is clearly amotivational could be devastating for facilitating motivation in development programs.

In conclusion, for the most part, the theory predicted the empirical results with regard to motivational factors. All psychological needs are intertwined and affect all factors to a certain degree. When all but one of the psychological needs are met, amotivation can arise, as is the case with regard to relatedness especially. In the case of interviewee 9, who took part in the training voluntarily and had a high motivation for learning from the beginning, the personal opinions this person had about the trainer were one of many other factors that eventually led to strong amotivation. However, in other cases, the trainer was able to encourage participants to go from amotivation to high motivation.

This highlights relatedness as playing an especially crucial role compared to the other two needs. When distrust or fear appeared, the motivation in participants very quickly disappeared and turned into demotivation. However, when participants took part in the program on a mandatory basis, which is said to lead to amotivation in theory (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2016), which could be seen in practice in the findings of this thesis (4.1.3 Autonomy), these participants were still able to find motivation when the relatedness was satisfied. While this shows that all three basic psychological needs should be met to achieve the strongest and most sustainable form of motivation, the need for relatedness not being met leads to higher or more immediate amotivation than the need for the other needs not being met. When competence or autonomy were not met, and the need for relatedness was met, participants were still motivated to take part in the training, putting yet again a strong emphasis on relatedness.

Moreover, one cannot be guaranteed motivation by just fulfilling basic psychological needs, as additional amotivational factors, such as a lack of time and priority, could still appear and de- or amotivate the individual. Moreover, amotivational factors appeared in all interviews and at some points contradicted the self-determination theory. This is because some factors that are theoretically seen as purely motivational also have amotivational properties. The

topic of diversity primarily came up as such a factor, as it is only motivating to a certain extent. Therefore, it can be stated that the desire to fulfill psychological needs does translate into every scenario in practice.

5.2. Organizational support for autonomous motivation

According to the organismic integration theory, autonomous motivation can stem from regulation of the external environment, as long as it targets identified and integrated regulation (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Deci et al., 1991). Identified regulation can be achieved through enabling or supporting individuals to see their personal importance in doing a certain task. The individual themselves should feel a conscious valuing of the task. Integrated regulation is achieved through facilitating individuals to do something that they feel their ideal self would do (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Literature states that various activities or changes in the environment can be carried out by organizations and learning institutions to stimulate autonomous motivation (Stone et al., 2009; Tafvelin & Stenling, 2020). Essentially, autonomous motivation is the most sustainable and effective type of motivation and therefore is of high value for companies (Tafvelin & Stenling, 2020).

This sub-chapter is divided into two parts. The first and main part discusses how the organization can support autonomous motivation by deriving suggestions from the (a)motivational factors stated to answer the first research question. These derivations are complemented through this study's interviewees' perceptions of how their organization can support autonomous motivation. These findings (4.2 Organizational Support for Motivation) are compared to what existing literature has put forward on the application of the self-determination theory to work motivation. This includes factors before, around and after the training. Factors during the training are mostly influenced by the trainer themselves and are addressed in the second part of this sub-chapter. These factors concern the practical application of the self-determination theory to learning motivation and cannot be directly influenced by the organization. Therefore, the latter part of this sub-chapter is an exploration of the extent to which the organization can influence this.

First, supporting competence plays a key role for enabling employee motivation at the workplace (Fowler, 2018). The discussion of the first research question addresses setting learning goals autonomously and practicing on case studies as motivational factors in leadership development programs. Due to the fact that practicing on case studies affects the organization of the training more than the organization of the program itself, companies cannot influence this factor, unless they have full control and say in how the training is set

up. However, regarding learning goals, organizations can incorporate these in preparations for leadership development program. What is crucial is to give participants full autonomy of what they would like to learn in a training. This preparation process helps participants reflect and identify with the contents of the training program and therefore can support autonomous motivation.

Studies about how organizations can support competence to fuel work motivation state that job enlargements, so catering job tasks to what employees enjoy doing and take pride in, are an essential factor (e.g., Lawler & Hall, 1970; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; Deci, 1975; Zuckerman et al., 1978). This could not be directly discovered in the empirical findings (4.2 Organizational Support for Motivation) of this thesis, however, as it is not contradicted in any way, it can be regarded as a potentially successful organizational influence. Another study on this topic also argues that making job roles more clear, structured and descriptive is a motivator for motivation that organizations can influence (Scarduzio et al., 2018). In the interviews this could be reflected, as participants mentioned that it was not clear what their expectations were of the program and therefore wished for an improvement on this. This shows that participants do not want to be left in the dark with their job roles and would appreciate guidance.

To not conflict with the need for autonomy, the expectations of the participants in the program should not be purely decided on by management but rather mutually agreed on by both supervisor and employee, leading to another organizational influence. Lastly, regarding the topic of competence, a study brought up the importance of providing feedback and reinforcement at work to stay motivated as an employee (Thibault-Landry et al., 2018). This translates into leadership development programs as well, as participants of this study mentioned they appreciate feedback, as long as it is not critical. While they mostly mentioned that they appreciated this behavior by the trainer, it can be argued that organizations can influence this factor through supervisors showing appreciation for participation in leadership development programs.

Secondly, supporting relatedness is also essential for motivating individuals (Fowler, 2018). The answer to the first research question shows that distrust and fear are serious issues for participants and influential amotivators. Therefore, organizations should expand trust-building activities and cultures amongst their employees. Trust is also argued to be supported through enabling teamwork amongst colleagues in work settings (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). However, this was not mentioned in the interviews with the exception of participants fondly remembering post-training casual hangouts and dinners. The reason

why it wasn't mentioned could be that the company already creates teamwork in work settings and training settings to a satisfactory degree. Therefore, despite teamwork not being explicably mentioned in the results, it was hinted at often (4.1.2 Relatedness; 4.2 Organizational Support for Motivation) and there were no contradictions, making it another supporting factor that organizations can influence.

Moreover, trust-breaking topics in the findings (4.1.2 Relatedness) of this thesis largely target the issue of diversity. Departmental diversity in training groups that include employees from different work areas, professions and subsidiaries are stated in the interviews to be highly motivating. Therefore, to boost motivation amongst training participants, organizations should actively pursue making participant groups diverse to facilitate networking and friendships. However, according to empirical findings of this thesis (4.1.2 Relatedness), these training groups should not include hierarchical diversity. Participants often emphasized their inability to open up and learn when their supervisor was a participant in the same training group. Therefore, for organizations to support relatedness as a motivational area, they should not put supervisors and direct employees into the same training group. Thus far, such hierarchical diversity in leadership development programs has not been discussed in previous literature.

Furthermore, a previous study argues that supervisors who establish partnerships with employees are able to facilitate trust that way and can then motivate their employees (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). The empirical findings of this thesis (4.1 Organizational Support for Motivation) show that participants would see an improvement in motivation of participants if they had more support from supervisors. This influencing factor is again tied to building trust among employees and it can be concluded that establishing trust in supervisors should be a priority for organizations to support autonomous motivation.

Thirdly, according to existing literature that applied the self-determination theory to a work context, employees must have freedom to act as they wish in order to be motivated (Deci & Ryan, 2001; Van den Broeck et al, 2016; Autin et al., 2021). This is in line with the findings of this thesis (4.1.3.2 Controlled Motivation; 4.2 Organizational Support for Motivation), as they show that employees would be much more motivated if they had the freedom to choose to participate or not in the leadership development program. This could make them feel less fear and other negative emotions that lead to amotivation, as they would not feel boxed in by management. However, half of the training participants argue that training participants should feel enough pressure to take part in trainings so that they do not leave them out completely. For this, human resources can endeavor to add continuing development to the

job role of management positions or even make them part of the work contract. This part of the findings (4.2 Organizational Support for Motivation) is not in line with theory, as participants believe that putting a bit of pressure on managers and strongly urging them to take part in trainings is necessary for them to further develop. This is because the rigid daily schedules of managers usually occupy most or all of their time and would therefore hinder development. However, all participants agree that constant development is a necessity in a leadership role.

Moreover, the answer to the first research question brings up the topic of personal affiliation with the leadership development program, as participants were especially motivated when seeing an opportunity for personal development as well as an investment in their career. Studies show that this is a difficult area to influence, however, organizations can do this by creating stimulating jobs for their employees (Deci, 1975; Zuckerman et al., 1978). This is not mentioned directly, possibly because interviewees were afraid of losing face or facing consequences if stating such a fact. However, interview results show that employees in management positions should be more carefully recruited. Moreover, they advise the human resources department to prepare managers for development training in a timely manner. This way, participants are given a chance and time to identify with the training and to develop development goals, which can increase autonomous motivation.

Furthermore, as is the case with supporting relatedness in organizations, participants mentioned that they would appreciate having better support from managers for development trainings. According to existing literature, in practice, supervisors often prefer employees to do daily work to achieve target numbers and neglect their employees' development (Gentry et al., 2013; Baron & Parent, 2014; Jackson et al., 2012). The management employees taking part in this thesis' study understand and see the necessity and the desire to develop and therefore could be motivated by securing support from their supervisors. This should take place during employee dialogues where employees choose their development plans by only consulting, rather than being mandated, by their supervisor. Recommendations by the supervisor can take place but should not be followed by negative consequences for the employee, if they choose not to go down a development path that is recommended by HR or by their supervisor. In theory, handing the wheel over to employees on their own development journey has proven successful in work and learning motivation. Therefore, this is a further way that organizations can influence their employees' motivation for leadership development programs.

The organization that this study's training participants work for usually hires external trainers to train their employees, making their influence on these trainings limited. However, working together closely with the trainer can help increase autonomous motivation in participants, if the following factors are considered and implemented. The following section provides insight into how the training itself should be set up and how it should take place by comparing existing theory on learning motivation in practice to the results of the interviews.

Firstly, with regard to competence, previous studies state that the trainer needs to convey the significance of the topic and make participants understand why learning in this training can help them in real life (Assor et al., 2009; Müller & Louw, 2004). For this, the level of difficulty should be chosen appropriately, so that participants do not feel like they will fail (Niemec & Ryan, 2009). The empirical findings (4.2 Organizational Support for Motivation) show that choosing the right methods and the appropriate content were crucial to maintaining high motivation throughout the training. The right methods include methods that the participants deem fitting, meaning that the trainer may need to customize trainings for different groups. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the organization to prepare the trainer for the group participants and group dynamics and to work closely with the trainer when preparing the methods and content of the leadership development program. Specifically, interviewees showed a strong liking for role play exercises, group discussions and other group exercises that facilitated positive group dynamics. Moreover, structure and frequency of programs were discussed as having an influence on the motivation of participants. These mention that the trainings should take place in regular intervals and be consistent so that managers do not leave the learning process. Organizations can ensure this structure of trainings in advance and facilitate a constant level of learning motivation amongst their employees.

Supporting relatedness in trainings can be done through positive and constructive feedback (Niemec & Ryan, 2009). While in theory this is argued to come mostly in a top-down order from teacher to student, the empirical findings of this thesis (4.1.2 Relatedness; 4.2 Organizational Support for Motivation) show that in an employee training setting, this positive feedback is also appreciated from other colleagues in the group, as well as the trainer. This of course is difficult to be influenced directly by the organization, however, it should be part of the training preparation process with the trainer.

In addition, the classroom atmosphere should be stimulating for learning by bringing in diversity but also harmonious, informal exchanges (Assor et al., 2009). As is the case with most relatedness supporting topics, this has the goal of building trust amongst students and

therefore is a strong motivational factor that should be strongly supported (Niemec & Ryan, 2009). This was brought up in most interviews as a highly beneficial factor that can be further enhanced by organizations planning get-togethers of training participants.

Lastly, studies that apply the self-determination theory to learning motivation state that students should choose their learning strategy so that they see themselves as self-determining (Hensley et al., 2020; Müller & Louw, 2004). This was not mentioned in the interviews but can be derived from the answer to the first research question, where setting up development goals by participants themselves is argued as a motivational factor. Therefore, organizations should ensure such a strategy for their leadership development programs by including this in the preparation stages for development programs.

While intrinsic motivation is said to not be able to be actively influenced by external forces, autonomous motivation can (Deci & Ryan, 1993; Van den Broeck et al., 2011). This shows that organizations have the ability and opportunity to facilitate and even create sustainable motivation in their employees for leadership development programs. While usually work motivation and learning motivation are seen as two separate areas, the findings of this research present similarities and consistencies between them. Organizations should therefore be aware of how far their influence can take employees and understand that working together closely with the trainer before, during and after the leadership development training can be highly beneficial for employee motivation. As this thesis brings up the importance of the trainer and the strong influence the trainer has on the learning motivation of employees, it makes the right choice of the trainer an essential part of successful implementation of leadership development trainings. However, it is imperative for organizations to realize that their influence has limits and that this is not a negative aspect of employee training. Instead, an organization's limits in this regard should be seen as a chance for employees to develop without being restricted or tied to expectations of a company and take advantages of as well as be inspired by outside influences.

In conclusion, motivation to learn and develop is an essential part of keeping up with ever-changing environmental changes on the market, in companies, and in general. Approaches that organizations can take to influence autonomous motivation include preparing employees for the program in a timely manner through employee dialogues, showing appreciation for participation, facilitating teamwork in trainings as well as in the workplaces, organizing training groups to be departmentally diverse but not hierarchically diverse, enable partnerships between supervisors and their participant employees, ensuring consistent development measures for their employees, avoiding mandatory attendance in

leadership development programs and choosing suitable trainers, as well as working together closely with trainers. As is stated in the discussion to the first research question, relatedness appears to be held at a higher priority by participants than other psychological needs. Therefore, it is essential to mention that organizations should have a dominant focus on building trust and catering to relatedness factors of their employees.

5.3. Implications

Regarding theoretical implications, this study outlines which factors can motivate or amotivate participants to take part in leadership development programs. Moreover, this thesis provides empirical insights on how organizations can influence autonomous motivation to enable motivating factors. Although some motivating factors have been well-researched, such as factors that concern the need for autonomy (Niemec & Ryan, 2009; Hensley et al., 2020), this thesis brings in a significant perspective on how the self-determination theory has a lot more facets than three equally strong psychological needs that should be satisfied to achieve motivation.

First, for the most part, the theory predicted the results of this thesis with regard to the need for autonomy and competence. This thesis in return underlines the accuracy of the needs of the self-determination theory. This has also been the case in previous research (e.g. Chirkov, 2009).

Secondly, this thesis advances research on amotivation, as insights are brought up that have not been part of the self-determination theory and research on it so far. These insights include the specifications of how time and priority issues can lead to amotivation and overturn previous motivation. Moreover, this thesis highlights the common topic of how fear in various forms causes high amotivation among participants, which could be seen as an integral part of each psychological need.

Thirdly, in this sense relatedness has revealed itself in the context of participants of a leadership development program to be the more dominant of the three factors. The feelings of recognition and belonging therefore seem to be of higher importance to participants than satisfying the needs for autonomy and competence. This can either be reasoned with the fact that it is specific to Austrian culture or the company culture that this need is less satisfied or it can be reasoned with the fact that psychological safety is of higher importance to humans. Maslow, for example, puts physiological needs, such as water and food, and the need for safety at the bottom of the Maslow pyramid (Freitas & Leonard, 2011). This means

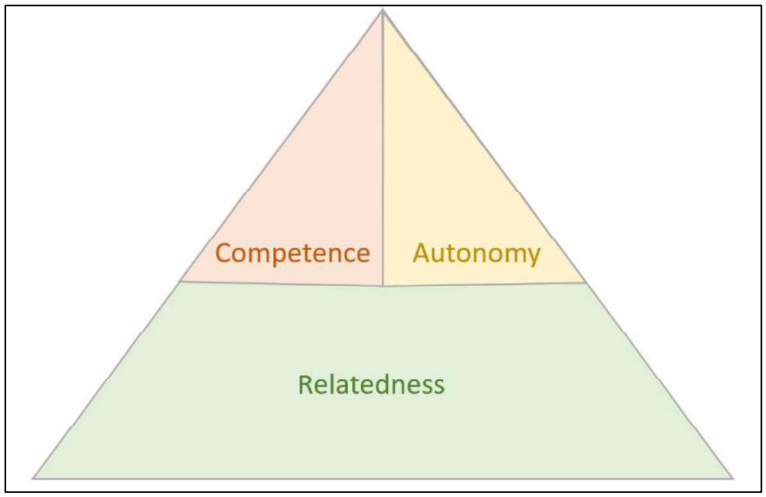

Figure 2: The self-determination pyramid (own depiction)

that they have a higher priority than other needs, such as the need for self-actualization. The insights of this thesis show that a similar concept can be applied to the self-determination theory, where relatedness has a higher priority than competence and autonomy, depending on the context, involved individuals and situation (see Figure 2).
This contribution to literature highlights that depending on the context and the application of the self-determination theory, which has sub-theories that focus substantially on autonomy and self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1993), the psychological need of relatedness could trump autonomy.

Regarding practical implications, this thesis dealt with an analysis of a specific leadership development program and therefore offers implications for practitioners. To be successful in the long run, companies need to have motivated employees that feel the desire to grow their competencies in leadership development programs.

Organizations can use this thesis and especially Chapter 5.2 as a guideline to motivate their employees for leadership development trainings. The insights present suggestions that not only deviate from theoretical findings but are also directly taken from participant interviewees. While some suggestions include a change to the company culture, such as increasing trust via managers, other recommendations can be more easily influenced by implementing a set structure to employee dialogues and organizing a training group to not include hierarchical diversity as a first step. Moreover, trainers of leadership development programs can use the insights to adapt or set up their training programs to ensure more motivated participants. These results are intended to raise awareness among organizations and leadership development trainers in order to establish a learning transfer and support high performance of employees that result from high autonomous motivation for and in leadership development programs. The focus needs to be limited regarding the effort to hire

the right employees as well as shifted to the importance of shaping and encouraging employees with the right methods.

5.4. Limitations

The findings of this paper are intended primarily as guiding insights and reflections on how motivation and amotivation are shaped in a learning environment inside a company, as well as providing a critical view on the practical application of the self-determination theory. The theory itself has been widely cited, but seldom contemplated and studied in a leadership development context. The findings of this thesis represent only one view based on a small sample and must not be over-interpreted. As is the case with the majority of qualitative studies, the scope of this investigation is limited, and the factors and characteristics found around motivation and amotivation are not necessarily transferable or even generalizable to other companies.

One of the limitations of single case studies is that all participants are subject to the same environment and company culture, which presents the issue of their answers being similar or similarly influenced by their environment (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). Moreover, due to the fact that the sampling strategy was set by the company through convenience sampling, there is the possibility of deliberately distorted selection or content (Sedgwick, 2013). The author was made aware that the specifically skeptical and possibly amotivated participants were more difficult to convince to take part in this study. In addition, as the interviews took place in a work context, the interviewees possibly presented bias or changed their answers to what the interviewer wanted to hear. The latter is commonly the case in dialogues from a psychological perspective (Vail & Boyer, 2014). As the findings of this thesis show that fear in its various forms is a common topic regarding amotivation, this fear may have been a driver for participants to change their answers or distort the truth to a certain degree.

Another clear limitation was the number of the interviews conducted. Nine interviews with leadership development program participants are not enough to generalize about the statements obtained. Moreover, it would have been of scientific significance to also interview supervisors and employees of the participants. These could have offered relevant insights about their colleague's motivation before, during or after the program. With regard to one particular interviewee, namely the trainer, a certain bias towards the program had to be taken into account for the findings of this thesis and therefore presents another limitation.

Moreover, there was a set time frame of three months to organize and conduct the interviews, which limited the target group to participants who were available during that time.

In conclusion, it can be said that the limitations described can be regarded as minor, as the author was aware of these limitations and therefore only drew well-founded conclusions. The present study thus contributes to gaining insights into the application of the self-determination theory, as well as its comparison to a real-life training environment.

5.5. Further need for research

The need for further research firstly results from the above-mentioned limitations. More generalizable conclusions regarding participant motivation in leadership development programs can be drawn if the research on this topic is extended to different industries, as well as different types of companies. In addition, conducting more interviews with various different types of leaders from different hierarchy levels also could make future research in this area more generalizable. In addition to building a generalizable foundation in theory, doing research in future in different industries and among different employees would also offer insights that could answer the question if the findings of this thesis are only applicable to leaders, or also to other employees or groups of people, such as students.

The issue of fear appeared very often among the interviewees and therefore presents solid ground for further research into this specific emotion. Fear spans across all psychological needs to a certain degree and therefore could be researched further in each of them individually.

This thesis answers the question of which factors were motivational and amotivational but does not uncover the exact reasons why and instead gives reasons from theory. Uncovering these reasons in more detail and with empirical research can bring forward more insights about how motivation and amotivation appear in humans in leadership training contexts. This would then connect the dots to different areas of research, such as psychology, biology and possibly philosophy.

Furthermore, if future studies come to the same conclusions about other work or learning areas as this thesis does about relatedness being a dominant need among participants in a leadership development context (relatedness), then these similarities and differences could be researched. This could be done with a literature review, which would offer a valuable “big picture” and overview of participant motivation. Moreover, uncovering why

relatedness is so important to participants, along with its connection to other motivation theories, such as Maslow's pyramid, would provide a diverse and comprehensive view of this topic.

In the future, any research on the topic of motivation in the socio-economic world will provide valuable insights into an area whose full potential is far from being tapped out.

6. Conclusion

This final chapter summarizes the main findings of this thesis and highlights the answers to the two research questions, namely, which factors lead to motivation, as well as amotivation, among leadership development program participants, and how organizations can influence these factors to achieve higher autonomous motivation among participants. The self-determination theory by Deci et al. (1991) was used as the theoretical groundwork, as well as the framework for the empirical research.

The first research question presents an overview of possible factors that can motivate and amotivate participants, and shows tendencies of what are the most crucial considerations and influences with regard to participant motivation, according to the participants themselves.

First, the analyses of the interviews and the comparisons to the literature regarding self-determination theory confirm that leadership training participants are more motivated when their need for competence is fulfilled, when compared to the circumstances when this is definitively not the case. Motivating factors regarding this psychological need include setting development goals at the beginning of the training and offering opportunities for participants to practice fulfilling these goals through case studies taken from the participants' work life. However, these two factors do not stand alone and are connected to autonomy, as setting goals at the beginning of a training program was the most significant motivating factor for participants, especially when not decided by a trainer and instead worked through by the group participants themselves.

Secondly, the psychological need for relatedness appears in connection with motivating, as well as amotivating, factors and is the only one of the three needs to contradict the general literature on the self-determination theory. Enabling mutual exchanges and friendships, facilitating trust and openness, establishing departmental diversity in the group, perceiving the trainer as competent and receiving recognition were motivating factors for the training

participants. The three amotivating factors regarding relatedness, namely, experiencing fear, distrust in the trainer and hierarchical diversity in the group can all be connected to negative emotions. These factors can lead to a dominating amotivation that in some cases has persisted for years. This highlights the importance that relatedness plays for these particular training participants.

Thirdly, motivating factors were found that relate to autonomous motivation, and amotivating factors were found that relate to controlled motivation. Regarding the former, participants were motivated when perceiving the leadership development program as an investment in their future professional career and in their personal development, as well as when they were able to apply their learned methods in real life. It was especially amotivating when the autonomy and opportunity to apply their learned methods at work was taken away from participants. Concerning controlled motivation, the obligation of the interviewees to take part in the program, which was set by management, was perceived as especially amotivating. Moreover, two amotivating factors that could not be categorized in any of the three psychological needs were found, namely, lack of priority and lack of time. Due to the statements of the interviewees, these could not be clearly connected to lack of interest, but could better be categorized as related to the need for autonomy.

To conclude the main findings of the first research question, it can be argued that relatedness plays a dominant role with regard to motivation rather than to the other two needs. This is because when the need for relatedness was not satisfied, but the other two needs were satisfied, the participant was amotivated. However, when the one of the two other needs was not satisfied, but relatedness was satisfied, then the individual was motivated. Moreover, participants who were especially amotivated at the beginning of the training and then were subjected to motivation attempts by, for example, the trainer during the training, these participants were especially motivated towards the end of the training, showing that the state of motivation is not permanent and can be influenced and redirected.

Regarding the second research question, suggestions for organizations to increase autonomous motivation among their employees could be presented. These deviated from the first research question, grouped with insights from the interviewees and compared to the extant literature. It can be argued that preparing employees for the training sessions by, for example, using an annal employer/employee dialogue to set learning goals, as well as ensuring consistent development training programs, are both part of a process that can be set up by organizations. Moreover, organizations should encourage managers to show appreciation and support employee training development, and to facilitate teamwork in the

workplace. A Human Resources Department can increase autonomous motivation prior to implementing training by organizing training groups to be departmentally diverse but not hierarchically diverse. Moreover, the HR department should work closely with the trainer chosen to moderate the leadership development program. These procedures are helpful methods to encourage employees to voluntarily take part in leadership development programs, which in turn abolishes the mandatory attendance rule.

To conclude, motivating and amotivating factors highly influence how employees behave in a leadership development program. While this thesis offers a limited overview of the factors, it can be seen that employees exhibit a strong sense of self to satisfy their need for relatedness, belonging and recognition. Organizations have the power to influence and support this need, as well as the other psychological needs, to ensure autonomous motivation among their employees and hence a workforce that feels the desire and motivation to constantly develop and innovate.

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