

# Instrumental & Integrative Responsible Leadership Behavioral Styles & Employees' Well-being in India

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*This study examines the relationship between instrumental responsible leadership behavioral styles (IS\_RLBS) and integrative responsible leadership behavioral styles (IG\_RLBS) and employees' well-being (WB). The study also examines the mediating role of meaningful work (MFW) in the social learning theory contexts using a quantitative approach for data collection from 230 employees from India's manufacturing and service sectors. The PROCESS macro was used to analyze the mediation effect. The findings showed that IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS significantly and positively influenced employee well-being and MFW. Moreover, MFW partially mediated the effect of IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS on employee well-being. These findings support the basis for policymakers to make appropriate policies that appreciate successful leader behaviors and enhance employee well-being.*

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## Introduction

Recently, responsible leaders faced multiple business challenges in India (Pless et al., 2022; Varma, 2021), and organizations are operating in a complex and uncertain situation (Kapil & Rastogi, 2019), which can impact employees' personal and professional lives. Additionally, Business Standard in 2020 also reported many remarkable Indian business collapses, primarily due to leaders borrowing too much and failing to repay businesses, which ended up with leaders. Product recall is another problem reported by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India; the recall of Maggi (Maulik, 2018), Nestle India Products (e.g., food), mixed fruit Flavors, and Monster energy drinks from manufacturing industries (Rediff, 2015). All these issues have life pressure on employees (Zheng et al., 2015). In turn, employees' well-being is an interesting area of increasing sig-

nificance in the academic and corporate world, seeking to increase individual satisfaction with their work in organizations (Steger et al., 2012; Zheng et al., 2015). Related to this, recent research has identified a variety of leadership styles, including responsible leadership, to behave with employees respectfully, take care, motivate, and engage with them for organizational growth (Voegtlin et al., 2020; Maak et al., 2016). Previously, responsible leadership behaviors positively influenced employee well-being in studies undertaken by He et al., 2019 Marques et al., 2021). The study of Pathak and Jha (2023) elaborated that the IS\_RLBS focuses on an objective setting for profit maximization, and the IG\_RLBS focuses on welfare orientation to achieve a common organizational goal. IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS can enhance employees' happiness by fulfilling their demands and communicating with stakeholders (Maak et al., 2016; Maak & Pless, 2006). Additionally, Pless et al. (2022) suggested studying the impact of IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS on outcome variables in developing countries. Therefore, we examine the relationship between IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS and employee well-being in the Indian context.

Employees' happiness has been shown as satisfaction with their work, initiative, and engagement in the workplace (Joo et al., 2016) under uncertainty (Haque, 2021; Pless et al., 2022; Varma, 2021). Well-being has become a critical topic for today's policymakers (Joo et al., 2016). Shareholder value maximization firms have begun to shed more light on alternative business purposes, such as

enhancing stakeholders' well-being (Joo et al., 2016).

**Besides responsible leaders, meaningful work (MFW) plays a significant mediating role in employees' well-being.**

Besides responsible leaders, meaningful work (MFW) plays a significant mediating role in employees' well-being. Understanding the leading causes that make MFW is significant for the bottom-line approach of the organization and from the perspective of employee motivation, commitment, and well-being (Martela et al., 2021; Rosso et al., 2010). Achor et al. (2018) reported that employees work not only to earn money but also to derive a sense of purpose; it found that with a desire for a profession, comes 23% of earnings for a meaningful job. MFW derives the individual value of one of the most prominent social activities and a key setting for achieving personal goals in life (Lysova et al., 2019). Considering this, the nomological network for MFW should study sociocultural variables, organizational aspects, job-related elements, and personal psychological factors, specifically those about well-being (Lysova et al., 2019). MFW can help in the workplace with sensemaking, personal growth, and contribution to others (Steger et al., 2012). Rosso et al. (2010) and Steger et al. (2012) defined MFW as "...the employees' perception that work has significant contributions to their professional development and personal life...". MFW positively influences job satisfaction and intrinsic motivations,

meaning in life, work engagement, and calling (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012; Steger et al., 2012). Steger et al. (2012) suggested that investigating the impact of MFW on well-being is an extant area of increasing relevance to academics and industries, as well as those who seek to grow their satisfaction with their work and contributions to their organizations and society.

From the perspective of social learning theory (SLT) (Bandura, 1986), employees can learn through leaders by observing and imitating. It will positively reflect their behaviors at the workplace. This study aims to examine the relationship between IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS and employees' well-being. The study also tests the mediating role of MFW between IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS and employees' well-being using SLT aspects.

### **IS\_RLBS , IG\_RLBS & Employees' Well-being**

IS\_RLBS focuses on planning and decision-making for future profit (Pathak & Jha, 2023; Pless et al., 2012), and IG\_RLBS is welfare-oriented and encourages employees to achieve common tasks (Maak et al., 2016; Pless et al., 2022). Moreover, RLBS balances the business and social goals of the organization (Patzner et al., 2018).

In the past, human beings have followed well-being (Zheng et al., 2015). Workplace well-being is becoming crucial for organizations (Joo et al., 2016). Well-being combinations or cognitive-af-

fective syndromes "...embody mental networks, views, and interconnected concepts in addition to just affect...." (Inceoglu et al., 2018; Warr, 2013: 80). Warr's (2013) divided well-being into two categories: hedonic well-being emphasizes the subjective experience of pleasure (e.g., contentment, comfort, satisfaction, and serenity), and eudaimonic well-being emphasizes personal feelings and energy. Psychological well-being (PWB) and subjective well-being (SWB) or job satisfaction have often been used as proxies to represent employees' overall well-being in organizations (Zheng et al., 2015).

SWB refers to individuals' overall life quality assessment based on personal standards (Diener, 1984, 2000). It includes two basic elements: life satisfaction, or the perception of the quality of one's life, and emotional experience, including positive and negative emotions (Diener, 1984, 2000). Inceoglu et al. (2018) defined PWB as cognitive processes (i.e., thinking, subjective experience, and functioning). The philosophical roots of PWB lie in eudaimonism, which stresses the good state of psychological functions and the fulfillment of personal potential (Zheng et al., 2015). PWB means that employees will have high levels of positive emotion and satisfaction with life in general; it is a complex subject (Joo et al., 2016).

The review by Inceoglu et al. (2018) focuses on links between leadership behaviors and employee PWB at the individual level. The study investigated a positive relationship between IS\_RLBS

and IG\_RLBS and employees' well-being. In previous studies, responsible leadership behaviors positively correlate with employees' well-being (He et al., 2019; Marques et al., 2021). Haque's (2021) proposed model also conceptualized the relationship between responsible leadership and well-being under uncertainty. Macassa et al. (2019) and Antunes and Franco (2016) also reported that responsible leaders promote the well-being of stakeholders. With this evidence, RLBS can enhance employee well-being. IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS focus on goal setting, inspiring employees, and considering their demands (Pathak & Jha, 2023) to complete the projects. By building mutually beneficial interactions between leaders and followers, RLBS can improve employee well-being (Voegtlin et al., 2020). Voegtlin et al. (2020) also mentioned that employees learn the behavioral styles of their leaders through observation (Bandura, 1986) like taking care, communicating, and managing financial and social goals (Maak & Pless, 2006; Patzer et al., 2018) for associating with both work and personal life outcomes (PWB) (Joo et al., 2016) and enhancing employees' own personal standards (SWB) (Diener, 1984, 2000). Hence, we hypothesized:

**Employees learn the behavioral styles of their leaders through observation.**

H1a: There is a significant positive relationship between IS\_RLBS and employees' well-being.

H1b: There is a significant positive relationship between IG\_RLBS and employees' well-being.

### **IS\_RLBS & IG\_RLBS and Meaningful Work (MFW)**

The word meaning is closely related to meaning-making – a cognitive process whereby people make sense of their work experiences and interactions (Wrzesniewski et al., 2003). In line with SLT (Bandura, 1986), perceptions about meaning are ultimately determined by individuals, although employees are also influenced by leaders' behavioral styles in the workplace (Wrzesniewski et al., 2003). Experiences of MFW are the person's subjective perception of the existential implication or goal of work (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012). Lips-Wiersma et al. (2020), Lips-Wiersma and Wright (2012), Lips-Wiersma and Morris (2009) highlighted the dimensions of the experience of MFW: Unity with others (one's work is of), service to others, expressing full potential (for balancing tensions needed to meet the needs of the self and others (being and doing)), integrity with self (developing and becoming oneself through work), reality, inspiration, and balancing tensions. MFW indicates "...work experienced as particularly significant and holding more positive meaning for individuals..." (Rosso et al., 2010: 95). Rosso et al. (2010) also explained that MFW is self-actualization work that is gratifying for both the individual and the other and engages in a sense of belonging in a group.

The study investigated the relationship between IS\_RLBS, IG\_RLBS, and

MFW. In literature, leadership styles have influenced meaningful work (Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Jiang et al., 2019). Leadership styles can increase the MFW among employees, enhancing positive workplace consequences, like engagement, organizational identification, and voice behaviors (Chen et al., 2018; Demirtas et al., 2017). Some leadership styles positively associated with MFW involve transformational leadership (Arnold et al., 2007) and ethical leadership (Demirtas et al., 2017). Rosso et al. (2010) agreed that individuals' views, attitudes, and motivations impact MFW. For example, transformational leaders create a vision of the future and encourage workers to work toward that MFW as employees act together with the fundamental objective of the organization (Bass, 1990). Similarly, IS\_RLBS sets objectives for financial growth, and IG\_RLBS motivates as well as interacts with employees to work on the common goals of the organization (Jha & Pathak, 2024). Employees' relationships stand in a sense of belonging (May et al., 2004; Rosso et al., 2010), and in the perspective of SLT, employees can follow the behavioral styles of leaders like decision-making and communication with colleagues through imitation (Bandura, 1986) to build social identity (May et al., 2004; Rosso et al., 2010). Moreover, Maak et al. (2016), Pless et al. (2022), and Steger et al. (2012) agreed that RLBS are more intrinsically motivated employees and good working relationships with colleagues are significant for creating a bond and a sense of a common tar-

get for adding MFW (Lips-Wiersma & Morris, 2009). The study of Lips-Wiersma et al. (2020) also investigated the responsible leadership behavior positively impacted MFW. Thus, we hypothesized:

H2a: There is a significant positive relationship between IS\_RLBS and MFW.

H2b: There is a significant positive relationship between IG\_RLBS and MFW.

### **Mediating Role of Meaningful Work (MFW)**

MFW denotes work that is worthwhile, important, or valuable to oneself or others (Allan, 2017). MFW is the term used to describe the work that employees naturally perceive as important, valuable, and consistent with their value system (Steger et al., 2012). The studies of May et al. (2004: 14) and May et al. (2014) conceptualized MFW as the value of a work goal or purpose judged by an individual's standards. Most of the theoretical models of MFW have emphasized the individual experience of MFW (e.g., Lips-Wiersma & Morris, 2009). Other broader conceptualizations of MFW can include multiple components, such as work that helps people make sense of their world, facilitates personal growth, and contributes to the greater good (Steger et al., 2012). However, for this study, MFW is work that is personally significant and worthwhile (Allan, 2017). Steger et al. (2012) asserted that MFW is related to other well-being variables like personal growth and intrinsic motivation.

MFW represents the broadening process that can enhance well-being as an aspect of the building process (Soane et al., 2013). MFW is becoming a significant antecedent of personal well-being (Allan, 2017). Furthermore, leaders can directly influence the MFW (Carton, 2018). MFW is key to producing responsible and effective workers (Allan, 2017). Researchers frequently assert that MFW is essential to human well-being (Allan, 2017). Employees with MFW express higher levels of life satisfaction, happy feelings, and purpose outside of the workplace (Arnold et al., 2007; Joo et al., 2016; Steger et al., 2012) and less hostility, stress, anxiety, and depression (Steger et al., 2012). In short, MFW is related to various work-related and general well-being outcomes (Allan, 2017). MFW is an intrinsic value that positively impacts well-being (Allan, 2017). In the previous studies, employees' experience of MFW is associated with positive outcomes like job satisfaction, co-worker relations, well-being, a sense of community, work or personal engagement, spiritual growth, and moral increase (Lips-Wiersma & Morris, 2009; May et al., 2014; May et al., 2004). The factor of MFW (Steger et al., 2012) is personal growth that can enhance SWB like an employee's own standard (Diener 1984; 2000). Well-being is the result of personal achievement, self-actualization, or self-positioning (Zheng et al., 2015).

Arnold et al. (2007) and Lips-Wiersma et al. (2020) found the leadership behaviors influenced employees' well-being. Arnold et al. (2007) conceptualized MFW as finding a purpose in

work that is greater than the extrinsic outcomes of the work. Gilbreath and Benson (2004) conceptualized the effect of supervisory behavior (e.g., allowing more employee control, communicating, organizing well, and considering employees and their well-being) on employee well-being. Bhaskar & Mishra, (2019) suggested that employees perceive work to be more meaningful when the task at hand is not only concerned with monetary and transactional aspects but also concerned with the transformative aspects such as alignment of tasks with organizational goals and purpose (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). Further, the author also suggested that the work is perceived as meaningful when there is a feeling of joy, connectedness, and shared purpose with leaders and co-workers (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). Hence, with an instrumental and integrative responsible leadership style (Pathak & Jha, 2023; Maak et al., 2016), a leader can build the work of employees meaningful by keeping the economic and transactional focus as well as the transformative people-oriented focus (Bhaskar & Mishra, 2019).

**The existing evidence indicates a link between responsible leadership and MFW.**

The existing evidence indicates a link between responsible leadership and MFW. If MFW is genuinely a mechanism through which responsible leadership employs a positive impact on well-being, we need to establish the statement that MFW is, in turn, connected to well-being. RLBS emphasizes stakeholders'

welfare (Pless et al., 2022), and it can increase MFW as a welfare orientation and positively impact others' lives (Aggarwal & Singh, 2021).

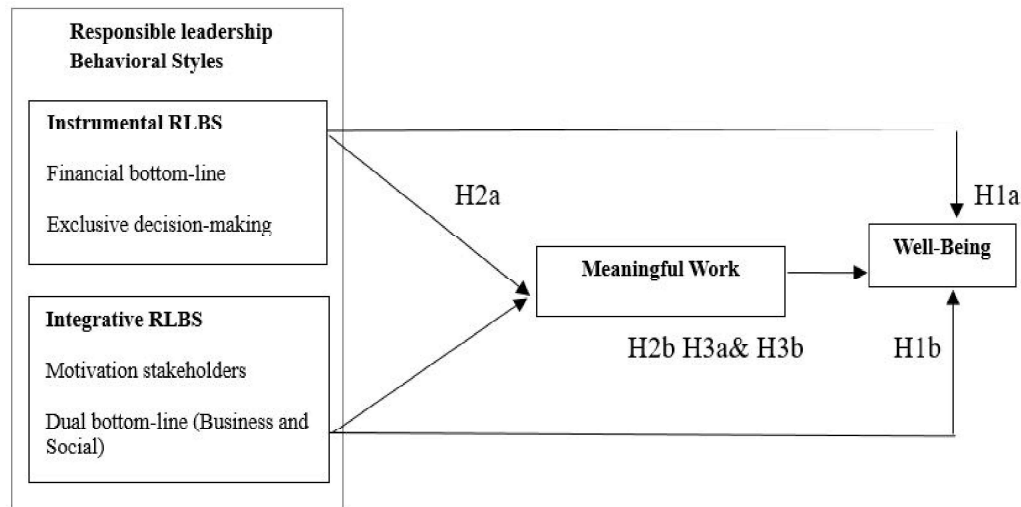
Based on SLT, the concept of social-cognitive (Bandura, 1977) is that leaders can influence employees by interacting and sharing information (Doh & Quigley, 2014) in framing the experience, participation, and shaping the social environment (Inceoglu et al., 2018). Specific information can be made more prominent and shapes expectations affecting behav-

ior (Inceoglu et al., 2018). Hence, MFW can mediate between IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS and employee well-being in Fig. 1. Therefore, we hypothesized:

- H3a: There is a significant positive mediating effect of MFW with the relationships between instrumental IS\_RLBS and WB.
- H3b: There is a significant positive mediating effect of MFW with the relationships between integrative IG\_RLBS and WB.

### Sample & Procedures

**Fig. 1 Proposed Framework of Responsible Leadership Behavioral Styles**



The data was collected from 230 full-time employees working in India's manufacturing and service sectors. We approached the respondents through LinkedIn groups to complete an online survey from 10<sup>th</sup> May to 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023. Before conducting the survey, we obtained the positions of respondents and corporations by explaining the study's methodology, anonymity protections,

and confidentiality in detail. To minimize the common method bias, we follow the rules given by (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Respondents were further told that there were no correct or incorrect answers and that their responses were intended for academic study only to lessen the bias brought on by the ethical sensitivity of the dependent or mediator variable.

## **Measures**

The survey's questions were related to the study's objectives, and the questionnaires were taken from previously approved research surveys. Furthermore, questionnaires on responsible leadership behavioral styles, employee well-being, and meaningful work, as well as a few demographic questions, were also asked to test their impact on the major variables of interest.

*Responsible Leadership Behavioral Styles:* For measurement, we used responsible leadership behavioral styles with two dimensions, instrumental and integrative, adapted from et al. (Jha & Pathak, 2024), and 13 items were anchored in a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. A sample item from the RLBS was "My leader believes in exclusive decision-making processes."

*Well-being:* Employee well-being, involving life well-being, work well-being, and psychological well-being, was measured in the questionnaire from Zheng et al. (2015), the items used by He (2019). The items were anchored in a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. A sample item from the WB was "I am close to my dream in most aspects of my life."

*Meaningful Work:* Meaningful work with 22 items including seven factors, i.e. unity with others, service to others, expressing full potential, integrity with self, reality, inspiration, and balancing tensions adapted from Lips-Wiersma et al. (2020).

The items were anchored in a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = never to 5 = always. A sample item from the MFW was "I have a sense of belonging."

*Demographic Variables:* The employee survey obtained demographic questions. Regarding job positions, there were 70 (30.4%) senior, 101 (43.9%) middle, and 59 (25.7%) junior-level employees. In the age group of 20-30, there were 90 (39%) and in the age group of 31-60, there were 140 (61%) employees. For the work experience of below five years, there were 92 (40%), and for above five years, there were 138 (60%) employees. Related to education qualification, there were 79 (34.3%) graduates, 122 (53.0%) post-graduates, 17 (7.4%) PhDs, and 12 (5.2%) other degrees. For the specific type of organization, employees are from 133 (57.8%) public sector, 62 (27.0 %) private sector, and 35 (15.2%) MNCs. In the specific sector type of the organization, there were 196 (85.2%) services and 34 (14.8%) manufacturing.

## **Analysis & Results**

This study covers internal reliability, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and regression analyses. To check the internal reliability and descriptive statistics, we used the 29th version of SPSS software. For CFA results, we used the 29th version of the AMOS software. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was applied to evaluate variables like RLBS, well-being, and MFW. Additionally, PROCESS macro (v4.2) was used to analyze the mediation analysis. Furthermore, as Hayes (2017) suggested, this software is

prevalent in the management and commercial fields.

*Descriptive Analysis;* The standard deviations, and correlations of the variables for the measures can be found in Table I. Initially, the employee survey included demographic details such as age, employment position, education qualification, work experience, type of organiza-

tion, and sector of the employees. The following questions related to the independent variable, mediator variable, and dependent variable.

*Common Method Bias:* Common method bias was tested through Harman’s single-factor test method (Podsakoff et al., 2003). This test pro-

**Table I Descriptive Statistics & Correlations**

	Mean	SD	IS_RLBS	IG_RLBS	MFW	WB
IS_RLBS	3.62	.551	.519			
IG_RLBS	3.76	.664	.455**	.595		
MFW	3.93	.583	.275**	.426**	.579	
WB	3.77	.774	.262**	.401**	.499**	.50

Note: \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), IS\_RLBS - instrumental responsible leadership behavioral style, IG\_RLBS - integrative responsible leadership behavioral style, MFW - meaningful work, WB - well-being.

vides evidence that the current study’s data is free from common method bias. There were nine factors to minimize common method bias, and 14.29 % were explained by factor 1. When only one factor was extracted, and 27.77 % of the total variance was explained, it was less than 50% in both cases (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis:* Results of model fit indices the Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) of RLBS ( $\alpha = .797$ , CR = .9405, AVE

=.5602), MFW ( $\alpha = .911$ , CR=.9676, AVE =.5797), and WB ( $\alpha = .746$ , CR=.742, AVE=.50).

Furthermore, we measured the structural model for goodness of fit through AMOS 29 software. The measurement model included four constructs: responsible leadership behavioral styles, meaningful work, and employee well-being. The measurement model showed a good fit to the data as ( $\chi^2=2.409$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $\chi^2=2.823$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $\chi^2=2.284$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The values of measurement of good fitness, such as the comparative fit index

**Table 2 Measurement of the model**

Variable	P_CLOSE	CMIN/DF	RMR	GFI	NFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
RLBS	.000	2.409	.071	.916	.890	.933	.911	.932	.078
MFW	.000	2.823	.115	.817	.826	.880	.861	.879	.089
WB	.000	2.284	.053	.987	.971	.984	.975	.984	.075

Note: RLBS- responsible leadership behavioral styles, MFW- meaningful work, WB – well-being

(CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root means square residual are presented in Table 2. All fitness indicators meet the minimum thresholds as recommended by (Hair et al., 2015). All the items have a high factor loading above 0.5.

*Direct Effect:* Table 3 presents the correlations of the studied variables. As hypothesized, RLBS has a positive and significant effect on employees’ well-being and meaningful work. The regression coefficient values ( $r = .262, p < 0.001$ ;  $r = .401, p < 0.001$ ) of IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS with employees’ well-being are positive and significant. Therefore, H1a and H1b are supported. The regression coefficient values ( $r = .277, p < 0.001$ ;  $r = .426, p < 0.001$ ) of IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS with meaningful work are positive and significant. Hence, H2a and H2b are also supported.

*Mediating Effects:* Hypothesis 3a and 3b predicted a positive effect of IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS on well-being through the mediating effect of meaningful work in Table 4. In SPSS, we used Hayes’ PROCESS macro to test this prediction (Hayes et al., 2022). Well-being was predicted from IS\_RLBS with  $R^2 = .2934$  and  $F = 47.1285, p < .001$ . IS\_RLBS predict MFW ( $a = .3735, t = 7.1013, p < .001, LL/UL = .2699/.4771$ ), MFW predict well-being ( $b = .5345, t = 6.5290, p < .001, LL/UL = .3732/.6958$ ). To control the mediation, there was a positive, direct effect of IS\_RLBS on well-being ( $c = .2675, t = 3.7236, p < .001, LL/UL = [.1260/.4091]$ ). The indirect effect of IS\_RLBS on well-being via MFW was positive and statistically significant,  $ab = .1996, 95\% CI [.1125, .2988]$ . Therefore, hypothesis 3a was supported partially.

Similarly, well-being was predicted from integrative RLBS with  $R^2 = .2934$  and  $F = 47.1285, p < .001$ . IG\_RLBS predict MFW ( $a = .3735, t = 7.1013, p < .001, LL/UL = .2699/.4771$ ), MFW predict well-being ( $b =$

Table 3 Regression Analysis (Direct Effects)

Hypothesis	Direct Relationship	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F	t	â	p-value	Conclusion
H1a	IS_RLBS à WB	.069	.065	16.798	4.099	.368	<.001	Supported
H1b	IG_RLBS à WB	.161	.157	43.658	6.607	.467	<.001	Supported
H2a	IS_RLBS à MFW	.076	.072	18.877	4.345	.293	<.001	Supported
H2b	IG_RLBS à MFW	.181	.178	50.428	7.101	.374	<.001	Supported
H3	MFW à WB	.250	.247	76.098	8.723	.664	<.001	Supported

Note: IS; instrumental, IG; integrative, RLBS; responsible leadership behavioral styles, MFW; meaningful work, WB; well-being

.5345,  $t = 6.5290$ ,  $p = <.001$ , LL/UL = .3732/.6958). To control the mediation, there was a positive, direct effect of IG\_RLBS on well-being ( $c = .2675$ ,  $t = 3.7236$ ,  $p = <.001$ , LL/UL = .1260/.4091). The indirect effect of IG\_RLBS on well-

being via MFW was positive and statistically significant,  $ab = .1996$ , 95% CI [.1125, .2988]. Therefore, hypothesis 3b was also supported partially.

**Discussion & Conclusion**

**Table 4 Mediation Analysis (Indirect Effects) Model- 4**

Hypotheses	Indirect relationship (with mediation)	Indirect effect $\beta$ (SE)	LL	UL	Conclusion
H3a	IS_RLBSàMFWàWB	.1800 (.0617)	.0712	.3134	Partially supported
H3b	IG_RLBSàMFWàWB	.1996 (.0479)	.1125	.2988	Partially supported

Note: IS; instrumental, IG; integrative, RLBS; responsible leadership behavioral style, MFW; meaningful work, WB; well-being, LL; lower limit; UL; upper limit

In sum, from the social learning theory perspective, this study examined the mediation effect of MFW in the relationship between IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS and employees' well-being. IS\_RLBS was found to have a significant positive influence on employee well-being, and IG\_RLBS was also found to have a significant positive effect on employee well-being. The findings of studies like He et al. (2019) and Marques et al. (2021) also show that responsible leadership behavior was positively related to employees' well-being. Particularly, IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS effectively communicate with stakeholders, motivate them to work, and take care of employees at the workplace (Maak & Pless, 2006; Maak et al. 2016), subsequently promoting employee well-being (Zheng et al. 2015). IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS were found to have a positive effect on meaningful work. This is consistent with the finding of the study showing that responsible leadership behavior (e.g., discursive conflict resolution and decision-

**Psychological MFW is “a feeling that one is receiving a return on investments of oneself in a currency of physical, cognitive, or emotional energy”.**

making) was positively associated with MFW (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2020). Notably, IS\_RLBS sets goals, and IG\_RLBS motivates as well as engages employees to achieve purposeful common projects (Patzner et al., 2018; Pless et al., 2022). In other words, RLBS integrates the business and social objectives (Pless et al., 2012). Moreover, meaningful work was found to significantly partially mediate the relationship between IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS and employee well-being. In the presence of meaningful work in the relationship between RLBS and WE, employees feel better as well as work better (Allan, 2017; Martela et al., (2021). A previous study by Soane et al. (2013) pointed out that psychological MFW is “a feeling that one is receiving a return

on investments of oneself in a currency of physical, cognitive, or emotional energy.”

One distinct and significant finding from our study relates to the role of MFW in mediating the relationships between RLBS and employee well-being. Our research examines the psychological mechanisms by which leader behaviors influence employees’ well-being. By testing the mediating role played by meaningful work, our research broadened the empirical understanding of additional indirect effects of good leadership on employees’ behavior. In support of Arnold et al. (2007) proposal that leaders’ influence on work conditions could be indirect (when conditions improve for better management of work-related strain), our study found that meaningful work mediated responsible leadership and employee well-being relationships.

### **Theoretical Contributions**

This study expands the theoretical framework and body of literature on IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS and well-being. First, the findings add to the knowledge about responsible leadership and well-being by providing insight into the positive outcomes of IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS on well-being. The results provide evidence that IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS enhance employee well-being. As a result, this study not only answers researchers to examine the positive effects of IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS (Maak et al., 2016; Pless et al., 2022) but also expands on the antecedents that facilitate employee well-being (Haque, 2021;

He et al., 2019; Marques et al., 2021). Moreover, the findings also enrich the mediating effect of MFW in the relationship between RLBS and employees’ well-being, thus adding to the literature on IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS.

Second, this study showed that IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS positively influence employee well-being through MFW as a mediator in social learning theory (Bandura, 1986). Employees follow the behavioral styles of leaders by observation (Bandura, 1986), which will positively impact the employees’ personal and professional growth (Junaidi, 2023). The findings explain how IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS affect employee well-being and validate and develop the theoretical justification of SLT theory on the relationship between RLBS and employee well-being. This study also examined the mediating role of meaningful work between IS\_RLBS-WB and IG\_RLBS-WB relationship. This extended the IS\_RLBS and IG\_RLBS literature on employee well-being.

### **Managerial Implications**

The findings indicate that leaders may consider using IS\_RLBS to enhance business and financial growth, which will positively impact employees’ behavior to grow themselves at the workplace. When an organization grows, leaders provide better facilities and pay employees for happiness (Black & Venture, 2017). Leaders should also consider IG\_RLBS to encourage employees to achieve common goals (Pless et al., 2012), and it will also positively impact employees’ lives to

balance things personally and professionally. When leaders interact with employees to solve and understand their problems, it will positively impact employee well-being. In a nutshell, leaders should follow both behavioral styles, instrumental and integrative, to balance the financial and social objectives of the organization. As a result, employees' happiness will increase, and turnover intention will decrease (Samad et al., 2022). Work assignments will be based on the potential of MFW, and employees work with integrity. When increasing work well-being and decreasing life well-being and psychological well-being, this is an opportunity for managers to ensure a particular kind of well-being.

### Limitations & Research Directions

There are various limitations related to this research. First, we collected data only from Indian employees from the manufacturing and service sectors, which still lacked the drive-in of other sectors. Thus, future studies need to collect data from NGOs and other countries to understand the social, political, economic, and environmental factors. Second, we collected data from employees only, but it still lacked perception at different levels. Therefore, future studies should embed data from both superiors and subordinates. Third, a cross-sectional research methodology was used in this study, which raises the possibility of systematic bias. To mitigate the potential for common method variance bias, we followed some of the recommendations by Podsakoff et al. (2003) and conducted Harman's single-factor test. To allow a more sig-

nificant generalization of similar studies, we suggest using experimental and longitudinal research designs, where data from RLBS, MFW, and WB would be gathered from different sources at various points in time and diverse contexts for future studies.

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