



## Linking football team performance to fans' work engagement and job performance: Test of a spillover model

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The weekly performance of one's favourite football team is a crucial affective event. However, little is known about the potential spillover effects that such events may have on fans' work-related attitudes and behaviours. Using a 4-week diary study among 41 public sector employees ( $N = 164$  observations), who were also football fans, we investigated the association of satisfaction with football team performance with work engagement and job performance. On the basis of affective events theory, we hypothesized that satisfaction with the team's Sunday performance would spill over to work engagement and job performance on Monday, through its relation with employees' positive and negative affects on Monday morning. Furthermore, we expected that fans' identification with their team would moderate the relationship between satisfaction with team performance and affect. Multilevel analyses showed that negative (but not positive) affect mediated the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and work engagement, which, in turn, related to job performance. Identification with the team did not moderate the satisfaction with football team performance–affect relationship. The findings illustrate the pivotal role of football fans' reactions in determining their affect, attitudes, and behaviours also in the work domain.

### Practitioner points

- Negative events in the sports domain are likely to spill over to work and have unfavourable effects on employees' daily work engagement and performance. Thus, organizations need to pay attention to how leisure time activities determine work-related well-being and job behaviours.
- Employees, who are football fans, should make sure to reattach to work on Monday morning in order to prevent negative football events from affecting their work in an unfavourable manner.
- Managers should recognize employees' negative affect resulting from dissatisfaction with the performance of their favourite football team and demonstrate transformational and supportive behaviours to reduce negative work outcomes.

Research on emotional reactions of sports fans suggests that their emotional state is influenced significantly by the winning or losing results of the team they support. For

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instance, extant literature indicates that sports fans may experience a range of emotions including excitement, relaxation, boredom, anger, humiliation, and aggression as a result of the performance of their team (Cantor, Comber, & Uzzell, 1989; Kerr, 1994; Kerr, Wilson, Nakamura, & Sudo, 2005; Wann, Dolan, McGeorge, & Allison, 1994). Research has shown that fans' affective reactions relate to subsequent attitudes and behaviours towards their teams, such as loyalty and intention to attend future games (e.g., Biscaia, Correia, Rosado, Maroco, & Ross, 2012; Sumino & Harada, 2004). Evidently, the weekly performance of the team one supports comprises a critical event of a fan's life. However, the extent to which sport-related events and subsequent affective states spill over to fans' lives outside sports is still unclear. The central aim of this study was to investigate whether (satisfaction with) sport-related events relate to fans' work life in a significant way. Given that for millions of people worldwide their attachment to their football club is of considerable psychological importance (Crisp, Heuston, Farr, & Turner, 2007), we focus on football fans.

We integrate the main tenets of affective events theory (AET; Cropanzano & Dasborough, 2015; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and spillover theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) to achieve our research aim. According to AET, critical events at work trigger specific affective reactions that, in turn, determine work-related attitudes and behaviours. In this study, we examine how an event in the private domain influences work. Spillover refers to the process through which psychological states experienced in one life domain transmit and impact psychological states in another life domain, within the same person (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Previous studies supported the spillover hypothesis demonstrating that the experiences from one life domain (e.g., work or leisure activities) are likely to affect the experiences in other life domains (e.g., home or work) either directly or indirectly (e.g., Bowling, Eschelman, & Wang, 2010; Ilies, Wilson, & Wagner, 2009; Xanthopoulou & Papagiannidis, 2013).

We extend this line of research and AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) by proposing that the satisfactory or dissatisfactory performance of one's sports team (i.e., affective event) could spill over to the work domain and influence employee attitudes (i.e., work engagement) and behaviours (i.e., job performance). Using AET as an explanatory framework, we argue that this spillover effect is indirect because satisfaction with football team performance triggers fans' (positive and negative) affective reactions, which, in turn, relate to subsequent work engagement and ultimately, job performance. Moreover, given that the level of identification with one's team determines the way specific sport events affect fans' attitudes and behaviours (Wann *et al.*, 1994), we also investigate the moderating role of team identification [as a relatively stable (trait) characteristic] in the relationship between satisfaction with team performance and fans' affective reactions. We follow football fans over four match-weeks, and we investigate how their satisfaction with the result that their team brought on Sunday relates to affect on Monday morning, as well as work-related attitudes and behaviours on Monday during work.

Furthermore, although previous empirical research has largely relied on objective measures of team performance (i.e., final result/score), we explore the role of satisfaction with football team performance, as objective measures may not reflect fans' affective responses to 'satisfactory losses', 'dissatisfactory wins', as well as draws (Oshimi, Harada, & Fukuhara, 2014). Finally, although most studies have examined fans' emotions during and/or after a game (Biscaia *et al.*, 2012; Wann, Royalty, & Rochelle, 2002), we focus on affect. Considering that emotions are short-lived and directly related to specific events, they are likely to fade away when the event is no longer present. Thus, they are unsuitable for testing spillover effects that concern longer time intervals.

The present weekly study contributes to the literature in at least three ways. First, we shed light on the unexplored spillover effect of sport events (i.e., fans' satisfaction with their football team performance) to the work domain. Second, by examining affect as the underlying mechanism through which satisfaction with football team performance spills over to work, we combine AET (Cropanzano & Dasborough, 2015; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) with spillover theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), thus expanding the explanatory value of both frameworks. As such, we add to the burgeoning literature on the antecedents of work engagement and performance by highlighting the role of affective events outside work. Third, by testing the moderating role of team identification, we attempt to provide a more complete picture of the conditions under which sport events are more likely to spill over to fans' work domain.

### **Football team performance and affect**

Watching a sports game of their favourite team may constitute a very important event for fans. Scholars have argued that the outcome of such a game is likely to affect testosterone levels (Bernhardt, Dabbs, Fielden, & Lutter, 1998) or even provoke cardiovascular problems (Leeka, Schwartz, & Kloner, 2010; Wilbert-Lampen *et al.*, 2008; Witte, Bots, Hoes, & Grobbee, 2000). This is largely attributed to the important affective reactions (e.g., agony, stress, anger, or excitement) that emerge as a response to the negative or positive game result. In this vein, several studies have focused on delineating fans' affective reactions especially in the football context (Banyard & Shevlin, 2001; Crisp *et al.*, 2007; Jones, Coffee, Sheffield, Yangüez, & Barker, 2012; Kerr *et al.*, 2005; Oshimi *et al.*, 2014; Wann *et al.*, 1994; Yu & Wang, 2015). Through various methodological tools and using both subjective and objective measures of team performance, these studies showed that watching a football game may elicit positive or negative affective reactions among fans depending on the performance of their team.

Appraisal theory posits that the specific affective state that is elicited by a certain event highly depends on the cognitive evaluation of the event (Lazarus, 1991). In this sense, and according to AET (Cropanzano & Dasborough, 2015; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), when an individual evaluates an event as favourable, positive affective states are more likely to be triggered. In contrast, when an event is evaluated as unfavourable, negative affective states are more likely to emerge. Following this assumption, football fans are likely to experience positive affect when they appraise the performance of their team positively, and negative affect when they appraise the performance of their team negatively (Crisp *et al.*, 2007; Oshimi *et al.*, 2014). Given that satisfaction judgments, as attitudinal phenomena, highly depend on one's cognitive appraisals (Weiss, 2002), in this study we focus on the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and affect. Based on the above, we formulate the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1:* Satisfaction with football team performance (a) relates positively to positive affect and (b) negatively to negative affect.

### **Team identification as a moderator**

Social identity theory posits that the self-concept is comprised of both a personal identity and a social identity (Tajfel, 1981). As regards the latter, individuals identify with various social groups (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) and thereby perceive themselves as

actual or symbolic members of the respective group (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Supporting a sports team may be a potential source of identification. Following Mael and Ashforth's (1992) argumentation of social identification, Gwinner and Swanson (2003) defined sports team identification 'as the spectators' perceived connectedness to a team and the experience of the team's failings and achievements as one's own' (p. 276). This perception of connectedness with the team is largely attributed to self-enhancement, enabling fans to bask in reflected glory ('We have won'; cf., Cialdini *et al.*, 1976).

Previous studies (Laverie & Arnett, 2000; Madrigal, 1995) have shown that sports team identification strongly affects fans. Empirical research has also examined the potential moderating role of fans' identification in various relationships. For example, Wann and Branscombe (1992) showed that fans with high identification with their sports team exhibited more positive and negative affects after reading a sports article (after a win or loss) about their team compared to those individuals with low identification. Furthermore, Wann *et al.* (1994) indicated that fans with low sports team identification demonstrated less intense negative post-game emotions as a result of their team defeat compared to those with high sports team identification. This may be explained by the limited relevance that the team performance or result has to low identifiers' social identity. Conversely, fans who perceive their role of supporter of their team as highly salient are expected to react strongly to team performance. Based on the aforementioned argumentation, we postulate that:

*Hypothesis 2a:* Team identification moderates the positive relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and positive affect, such that this relationship is stronger for those with high (vs. low) team identification.

*Hypothesis 2b:* Team identification moderates the negative relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and negative affect, such that this relationship is stronger for those with high (vs. low) team identification.

### **Impact on work engagement**

A football game comprises an important event that may also influence fans' attitudes and behaviours in roles different than that of the supporter. For example, passionate football fans may even risk losing their job or miss important family events in order to attend a game (Vallerand *et al.*, 2008). In this context, we integrate the main tenets of AET (Cropanzano & Dasborough, 2015; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and spillover theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) to investigate whether affective reactions elicited in fans by the performance of their football team may spill over to their work domain, and particularly, whether these affective reactions relate to their work engagement. Representing 'the personal energy employees bring to their work' (Leiter & Bakker, 2010; p. 2), work engagement reflects a motivating work-related state that is characterized by vigour (i.e., high levels of energy at work), dedication (i.e., feelings of enthusiasm and significance with one's work), and absorption (i.e., being fully concentrated and happily immersed in one's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). Work engagement is considered relevant for the present study because it has been proposed and found to be sensitive not only to work-related events but also to what employees do during their leisure time (Sonnentag, 2003; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012).

According to spillover theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), psychological states and their attitudinal or behavioural manifestations transfer from one life domain (e.g., game) to another (e.g., work) and affect the latter domain either directly (e.g., through mimicking), when the role requirements in the involved domains are highly similar, or indirectly via eliciting specific affective states. Considering that the role requirements of football fans, when they support their team, are not the same as their role requirements as employees, we argue that the spillover from football to work is indirect via football fans' affective reactions. This means that affective events related to football games may determine individuals' (positive and negative) affect and ultimately spill over to work. Put differently, satisfaction with the result a fan's team brought on Sunday will relate to his/her affective state on Monday morning that will, in turn, associate with work engagement on that specific day.

In line with AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), we postulate that positive affect on Monday morning will relate positively to work engagement during work on Monday, while negative affect on Monday morning will associate negatively with engagement during work on Monday. Positive affective states such as enthusiasm or happiness may activate employees to invest energy in order to fulfil their goals and therefore make them more engaged in what they are doing (Salanova, Schaufeli, Xanthopoulou, & Bakker, 2010). In line with this assumption, Ouweneel, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, and van Wijhe (2012) in their diary study among employees in a Dutch university found that positive affect after work related positively to next day's work engagement via the enhancement of employees' experience of hope before work. In contrast, negative affective states relate to distress and dysfunction (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Employees are likely to be preoccupied by their negative state, thus being less able to invest energy, feel good, and be absorbed in their work. Furthermore, empirical studies on spillover have supported the mediating role of affect in linking two different life spheres (Daniel & Sonnentag, 2014; Heller & Watson, 2005). However, none of these studies investigated the spillover from football to work. In line with the theoretical arguments and empirical findings presented above, we hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 3a:* Positive affect mediates the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and work engagement.

*Hypothesis 3b:* Negative affect mediates the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and work engagement.

### **Work engagement and job performance**

Research on work engagement has gained momentum because of the strong and systematic empirical evidence supporting the positive link between engagement and employee performance (for a review, see Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). Interestingly, Demerouti and Cropanzano compared the relationship between different employee states with performance and concluded that engagement has the greatest explanatory power over employee performance, because it 'captures both the "can do" and "will do" dimension' (p. 148). Rich, Lepine, and Crawford (2010) have reached similar conclusions in their study among fire fighters. Work engagement pertains to being energetic and enthusiastic about the work, paying greater attention and becoming more absorbed in work, in addition to accepting challenging goals and feeling personally committed to achieve them (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). Thus, engaged employees are both more willing

and more able to reach high performance standards (see also, Bakker & Bal, 2010; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009). Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 4:* Work engagement relates positively to job performance.

Up to this point, we have suggested that fan’s satisfaction with their team performance elicits specific affective reactions and that this relationship is contingent on fan’s identification with their team. Furthermore, we have proposed that there is an indirect relationship of satisfaction with football team performance and fans’ work engagement via positive and negative affects. In turn, we have posited that work engagement will relate positively to job performance. Integrating the above propositions, we hypothesize the following sequence of effects (see also Figure 1):

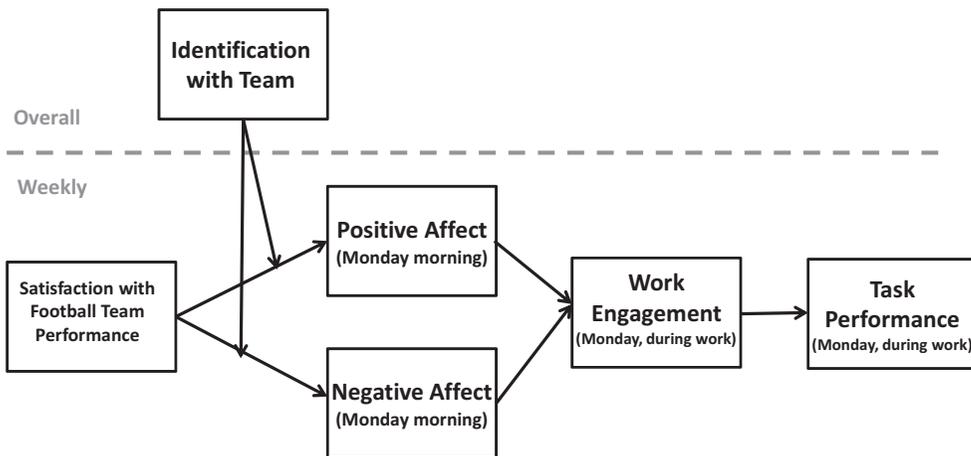
*Hypothesis 5:* The interaction between satisfaction with football team performance and team identification relates indirectly to job performance through first (a) positive and negative affects and then (b) work engagement.

**Method**

**Procedure and participants**

Participant recruitment occurred in a military unit in Greece. We used this occupational group because we had access, and, furthermore, because individuals working in the army are highly disciplined, which is an essential characteristic for diary study participants. In addition, the participants from this military unit came from different parts of Greece, thus enhancing the likelihood of finding fans of different football teams. This condition was very important in order to ensure variance regarding the core variables of our model.

One of the authors approached employees personally, and asked them whether they wanted to participate in a study related to football, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. The basic criterion for participation was that employees were fans of a specific football team and were following their football team by either attending a



**Figure 1.** The hypothesized model and study design.

football game, or following the game on TV or the radio, or at least following the results of their team on a weekly basis. Interested participants received an anonymous envelope with a general questionnaire, a 4-week diary survey, and a set of instructions.

Participants were informed that the study had two parts. First, they were requested to fill in a general questionnaire once, as soon as they agreed to participate in the study. Next, they were asked to complete the diary every Monday afternoon, before leaving work, for four consecutive weeks only if their team played a match on the previous Sunday. On Monday afternoon, participants rated how they felt (i.e., positive and negative affects) on Monday morning when they arrived to work, and what was their level of engagement and performance during work on Monday. Given that in the Greek league matches take place on Sundays and few on Saturdays and Mondays, participants had 6 weeks to complete the four weekly diaries. After 6 weeks, completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes were collected personally from each participant.

In total, we approached 65 employees who were all officers with supervisory roles, working full-time for 5 days (i.e., Monday to Friday). Our final sample was composed of 41 male individuals (response rate = 63%). Age ranged from 26 to 45 years ( $M = 32.4$  years,  $SD = 4.21$ ), and job tenure ranged from 1 to 25 years ( $M = 8.8$  years,  $SD = 6.4$ ). Furthermore, almost 47% held a master's degree, whereas 43% held a bachelor degree. Information on participants' rank was not collected as this could disclose the identity of higher rank officers. Finally, most participants were supporting teams that are considered, historically, big teams. However, smaller teams were also represented in our data. More specifically, 32% of the participants reported that they were supporting Olympiacos Piraeus, 19.5% were supporters of Panathinaikos, 12.2% were supporters of PAOK, and 9.8% were supporters of AEK. For more than a decade, these four teams are the main competitors for winning the Greek football league. Other teams that were represented in our data are as follows: ARIS (7.3%), Hercules (7.3%), Panionios (5%), Atromitos (5%), and Giannena (2.4%).

## Measures

Participants assessed all scale items using a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree, except when stated otherwise.

### General survey

*Football Team Identification* was measured with six items initially developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992) to measure organizational identification. This scale has been adapted by Gwinner and Swanson (2003) to capture fans' identification with their football team and was shown that it can reliably and validly assess this construct. Sample items for this scale are 'When I talk about my football team, I usually say we rather than they', and 'If a story in the media criticized my football team, I would feel embarrassed' (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .83$ ).

*Football Team Points*. In order to rule out the potential effect of teams' objective performance, we controlled for team points in our analyses. Given that our data collection lasted from November to December 2015, we gathered objective information about the team points that each team had collected (as a result of its wins, losses, and draws) up to the point that the data collection ended.

*Weekly diary*

*Satisfaction with Football Team Performance* was measured using a single item, namely 'I am satisfied with the recent result of my team'. We used a single item of satisfaction with team performance because prior research suggested that a one-item scale to measure satisfaction is equally reliable and valid than multi-item scales (Scarpello & Campbell, 1983). This is because overall assessments of satisfaction that are based on single-item scales are formed by taking into account each specific component that may determine satisfaction and thus have great explanatory value.

*Daily Positive and Negative Affects* was measured using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson *et al.*, 1988). Participants were asked to demonstrate how they felt in the morning when they arrived at work on each of the four study occasions. Positive affect was measured with the following six items: 'strong', 'enthusiastic', 'excited', 'alert', 'inspired', and 'active'. Negative affect was measured using the following six items: 'upset', 'distressed', 'irritable', 'nervous', 'jittery', and 'afraid'. Items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = very slightly or not at all to 5 = extremely. Cronbach's alphas for positive affect ranged from .73 to .88 and for negative affect ranged from .84 to .89 across the four study occasions. Confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) showed that the expected two-factor model (that distinguished between positive and negative affects) fit well to the data ( $\chi^2 = 119.28$ ,  $df = 52$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.29$ , GFI = .90, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .09), and better than the alternative one-factor model [ $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 46.65$ ,  $p < .001$ ].

*Daily Work Engagement* was measured with six items from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006) that were adapted to evaluate daily work engagement (see also, Xanthopoulou *et al.*, 2009). Sample items are as follows: 'Today, I felt strong and vigorous at my job' (vigour), 'Today, I was very enthusiastic about my work' (dedication), and 'Today, I was completely immersed in my work' (absorption). Cronbach's alphas ranged from .90 to .94 across the 4 days that the study took place. Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, and Hetland (2012) showed that the daily version of the UWES has reasonably good factorial validity. Additional CFA results regarding the factorial validity of the daily version of the UWES for this study are available from the authors upon request.

*Daily Job Performance* was measured using two items (i.e., 'Today, I performed well/ Today, I fulfilled all demands of my job') adapted from Williams and Anderson (1991). Given that this scale included only two items, we provide interitem correlations. Interitem correlations for this scale ranged between .79 and .85, suggesting high internal consistency.

**Strategy of analysis**

In order to capture the nested structure of our data (i.e., weekly measurements nested within individuals), we performed multilevel analyses with the MLwiN 2.30 program (Rasbash, Charlton, Browne, Healy, & Cameron, 2005). We tested a two-level model with the weekly measurement occasions at the first level ( $N = 164$  measurement points) and the individuals at the second level ( $N = 41$  participants) of analysis. According to Maas and Hox (2004), a minimum sample of 30 is required at the highest (i.e., second) level of analysis in order to achieve robust estimations in multilevel modelling. The sample size of the present study ( $N = 41$ ) fairly exceeds this rule of thumb, thus providing sufficient power to test the study hypotheses.

Following Mathieu and Taylor (2007), who proposed using grand mean centring for the lower-level independent variables when testing cross-level indirect effects, we centred all individual-level (i.e., identification with the team, team points) and week-level predictor variables to the grand mean. Person-mean centring would eliminate all between-person variance from week-level predictors, thus precluding the test of cross-level indirect effects (e.g., Hypothesis 5). Furthermore, this type of centring is more in line with our expectations as we were not interested in testing how variations from one's mean in satisfaction with the team performance would relate to affect, work engagement, and job performance. Rather, we were interested if weekly levels of satisfaction with the team performance relate to the outcome variables for interest (for similar decisions on centring in other week-level studies, see Bakker & Bal, 2010). The significance of the indirect effects was estimated with the Monte Carlo Method for Assessing Mediation (MCMAM; Selig & Preacher, 2008). This method of estimation provides a confidence interval for the indirect effect. Indirect effects are supported if confidence intervals do not contain zero.

## Results

### *Preliminary analyses and descriptive statistics*

The decision to use a two-level model was supported by the intraclass correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ), which decomposes the variance in the dependent variable and indicates how much of the total variance can be attributed at the different levels of analyses. The intraclass correlation coefficient has been calculated using the following formula:  $\rho = \sigma^2_{uo} / (\sigma^2_e + \sigma^2_{uo})$  (Hox, 2002). For each week-level, dependent variable, we conducted a deviance ( $-2 \times \log$ ) difference test, and we compared a one-level intercept-only (null) model (i.e., weekly measurements) with a two-level, intercept-only model (i.e., weekly measurements nested in persons). In all cases, the two-level model fit better to the data than the one-level, null model. Specifically, results concerning positive affect showed that the two-level model fit significantly better to the data than the one-level model [ $\Delta -2 \times \log(1) = 45.75, p < .001$ ]. The intraclass correlation results showed that 51% of the variance in weekly positive affect could be attributed to between-person variations, while the remaining could be attributed to within-person fluctuations (plus error). As concerns negative affect, results supported the superiority of the two-level null model over the one-level model [ $\Delta -2 \times \log(1) = 34.92, p < .001$ ], while 44% of the total variance could be attributed to between-person changes. With regard to work engagement, the two-level model fit better to the data than the one-level model [ $\Delta -2 \times \log(1) = 76.06, p < .001$ ], and it was found that 64% of the variance was attributable to between-person fluctuations. Finally, as concerns job performance, the two-level intercept-only model fit better than the one-level model [ $\Delta -2 \times \log(1) = 57.87, p < .001$ ], while 56% of the variance was attributed to between-person variations leaving significant amount of variance to be explain by week-level factors. All in all, these results support the use of a two-level model for hypothesis testing.

Table 1 presents mean scores, standard deviations, and correlations between the study variables both at the between- and at the within-person level of analysis. All correlations were in the expected direction. Given that the correlations between positive affect and work engagement and between work engagement and job performance were high, we performed CFAs to support the distinctiveness of these constructs. Following Bolger, Davis, and Rafaeli (2003), we have used pooled within-subject data after centring around each subject's mean. Results showed that the proposed three-factor model had a

**Table 1.** Means, standard deviations, and correlations between the study variables, ( $N = 41$  participants and  $N = 164$  study occasions)

| Variables                                     | Mean  | SD   | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      | 7      |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1 Team Points                                 | 19.82 | 3.34 | –      | –.25   | –.08   | –.22   | .15    | –.11   | –.11   |
| 2 Identification with Team                    | 4.38  | 0.90 | –.24** | –      | .12    | .39*   | –.35*  | .46**  | .43**  |
| 3 Satisfaction with Football Team Performance | 4.29  | 2.23 | –.04   | .06    | –      | .18    | –.49** | .24    | .29    |
| 4 Positive Affect                             | 3.31  | 0.84 | –.18*  | .33**  | .14    | –      | –.56** | .78**  | .62**  |
| 5 Negative Affect                             | 2.30  | 0.95 | .11    | –.26** | –.31** | –.41** | –      | –.46** | –.57** |
| 6 Work Engagement                             | 4.52  | 1.50 | –.10   | .40**  | .20*   | .67**  | –.39** | –      | .82**  |
| 7 Job Performance                             | 4.97  | 1.69 | –.09   | .36**  | .22**  | .52**  | –.48** | .79**  | –      |

Note. Correlations above the diagonal are person-level correlations ( $N = 41$ ) where week-level data were averaged across the four study occasions; correlations below the diagonal are at the week level ( $N = 164$ ); \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

satisfactory fit to the data given the relatively small sample size for this type of analyses ( $\chi^2 = 161.27$ ,  $df = 69$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.34$ ,  $GFI = .88$ ,  $RMSEA = .09$ ,  $SRMR = .09$ ) and fit better to the data than all alternative two-factor and one-factor models. The full output of these analyses is available upon request.

### Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1a stated that satisfaction with the football team performance relates positively to positive affect, while Hypothesis 2a stated that identification with the team would moderate this relationship. These two hypotheses were tested within the same analysis. As shown in Table 2, both hypotheses were rejected since neither satisfaction with the football team performance ( $\gamma = .032$ ,  $SE = 0.023$ ,  $ns$ ) nor the interaction between satisfaction with the football team performance and organizational identification related significantly to positive affect ( $\gamma = -.023$ ,  $SE = 0.030$ ,  $ns$ ). However, results did reveal that identification with ones' team related positively to positive affect ( $\gamma = .268$ ,  $SE = 0.107$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Table 2 presents also results regarding Hypothesis 1b and Hypothesis 2b. In line with Hypothesis 1b, results showed that satisfaction with the football team performance related negatively to negative affect ( $\gamma = -.086$ ,  $SE = 0.027$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, the moderating role of identification with the team in the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and negative affect was not supported by the data ( $\gamma = .042$ ,  $SE = 0.034$ ,  $ns$ ), thus rejecting Hypothesis 2b. However, team identification also related negatively to negative affect ( $\gamma = -.257$ ,  $SE = 0.110$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Based on the results with regard to hypotheses 1–3, we could only investigate the indirect effect of satisfaction with football team performance on work engagement via negative affect. As shown in Table 2, the positive relationship between football team performance satisfaction and work engagement ( $\gamma = .081$ ,  $SE = 0.036$ ,  $p < .05$ ; M1) became non-significant after adding negative affect in the equation ( $\gamma = .044$ ,  $SE = 0.032$ ,  $ns$ ). The MCMAM showed that this indirect effect was significant (95% confidence interval:  $LL = .0010$ ,  $UL = .041$ ), thus supporting Hypothesis 3b.

**Table 2.** Multilevel estimates for models predicting positive affect, negative affect, and work engagement (N = 41 employees, and N = 164 study occasions)

| Variables                                   | Positive Affect |       |          | Negative Affect |       |          | Work Engagement M1 |       |          | Work Engagement M2 |       |          |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------|----------|-----------------|-------|----------|--------------------|-------|----------|--------------------|-------|----------|
|                                             | Estimate        | SE    | t        | Estimate        | SE    | t        | Estimate           | SE    | t        | Estimate           | SE    | t        |
| Intercept                                   | 3.318           | 0.093 | 35.68*** | 2.303           | 0.096 | 23.99*** | 4.533              | 0.175 | 25.90*** | 4.524              | 0.129 | 35.07*** |
| Team Points                                 | -.024           | 0.029 | -0.83    | 0.010           | 0.030 | 0.33     | 0.002              | 0.054 | 0.04     | 0.024              | 0.040 | 0.60     |
| Team Identification                         | .268            | 0.107 | 2.50*    | -0.257          | 0.110 | -2.34*   | 0.642              | 0.200 | 3.21***  | 0.376              | 0.151 | 2.49*    |
| Satisfaction with Football Team Performance | .032            | 0.023 | 1.39     | -0.086          | 0.027 | -3.19*** | 0.081              | 0.036 | 2.25*    | 0.044              | 0.032 | 1.38     |
| Team Ident. × Result Satisf.                | -.023           | 0.030 | -0.77    | 0.042           | 0.034 | 1.23     | -0.011             | 0.046 | -0.24    | 0.011              | 0.039 | 0.28     |
| Positive Affect                             |                 |       |          |                 |       |          |                    |       |          | 0.805              | 0.108 | 7.45***  |
| Negative Affect                             |                 |       |          |                 |       |          |                    |       |          | -0.200             | 0.093 | -2.15*   |
| -2 × log                                    | 342.29          |       |          | 387.91          |       |          | 491.51             |       |          | 433.91             |       |          |
| $\Delta -2 \times \log (\Delta df)$         |                 |       |          |                 |       |          |                    |       |          | 57.60***(2)        |       |          |
| Level 1 Variance                            | .344            | 0.044 | 0.6%     | 0.493           | 0.064 | 2%       | 0.775              | 0.100 | 3%       | 0.590              | 0.076 | 26%      |
| Level 2 Variance                            | .266            | 0.079 | 25%      | 0.250           | 0.084 | 32%      | 1.054              | 0.277 | 27%      | 0.527              | 0.150 | 63%      |

Note. R<sup>2</sup> percentages are calculated in approximation; M1 = Model 1; M2 = Model 2; \*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .001.

Table 3 presents the results with regard to job performance. Results supported Hypothesis 4 since work engagement related positively to job performance ( $\gamma = .846$ ,  $SE = 0.074$ ,  $p < .001$ ; see Table 3; Model 3). Hypothesis 5 stated that the interaction between satisfaction with football team performance and team identification will relate indirectly to job performance through first (1) positive and negative affects and then (2) work engagement. Results regarding Hypothesis 2 did not support the moderating role of team identification on the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance, on the one hand, and positive and negative affects, on the other hand. These null findings automatically reject the mediated moderation effect of Hypothesis 5.

However, the MCMAM supported a series of indirect effects included in Hypothesis 5. Namely, as shown in Table 3 (Model 1), satisfaction with football team performance related positively to job performance ( $\gamma = .108$ ,  $SE = 0.044$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, this effect disappeared when negative affect (Table 3; Model 2) and work engagement (Table 3; Model 3) were included in the equation. MCMAM results supported the positive indirect relationship of satisfaction with football team performance with job performance through negative affect (95% confidence interval: LL = .008, UL = .053). Furthermore, results supported the positive, indirect relationship of positive affect with job performance through work engagement (95% confidence interval: LL = .476, UL = .905), as well as the negative indirect relationship of negative affect with job performance through work engagement (95% confidence interval: LL =  $-.330$ , UL =  $-.014$ ). All in all, our results indicate that there is a significant, positive indirect effect from football team performance satisfaction to job performance first, via reduced negative affect and next, via increased work engagement, thus partly supporting Hypothesis 5b.

## Discussion

By integrating the main tenets of AET (Cropanzano & Dasborough, 2015; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and spillover theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), the central aim of this study was to explore the indirect relationship of satisfaction with football team performance with fans' work engagement and, consequently, job performance via positive and negative affects. Also, we incorporated fans' identification with their team as a potential moderator on the relationship between football team performance satisfaction and affect. The findings showed that dissatisfaction with team performance associated positively with negative affect, which then related negatively to work engagement and in turn, job performance. Contrary to our predictions, satisfaction with team performance did not relate to positive affect. In addition, team identification did not moderate the satisfaction with football team performance–affect relationship. In what follows, we discuss the implications of these findings for theory and practice.

### Theoretical implications

The most significant contribution of this study is that we integrate AET (Cropanzano & Dasborough, 2015; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and spillover theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), in order to explain how critical sport events that happen outside work (i.e., satisfaction with the performance of the football team one supports) may determine how employees feel and behave at work. Drawing from AET, we proposed and found that the spillover from football to work is indirect because the satisfaction one feels with the performance of the team he/she supports determines how he/she feels (i.e., positive and

**Table 3.** Multilevel estimates for models predicting job performance (N = 41 employees and N = 164 study occasions)

| Variables                                   | Model 1  |       |          | Model 2     |       |          | Model 3     |       |          |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|-------|----------|-------------|-------|----------|-------------|-------|----------|
|                                             | Estimate | SE    | t        | Estimate    | SE    | t        | Estimate    | SE    | t        |
| Intercept                                   | 4.983    | 0.188 | 26.51*** | 4.977       | 0.158 | 31.50*** | 4.974       | 0.115 | 43.25*** |
| Team Points                                 | 0.004    | 0.059 | 0.07     | 0.024       | 0.049 | 0.49     | 0.004       | 0.036 | 0.11     |
| Team Identification                         | 0.661    | 0.216 | 3.06*    | 0.374       | 0.185 | 2.02*    | 0.058       | 0.138 | 0.42     |
| Satisfaction with Football Team Performance | 0.108    | 0.044 | 2.45*    | 0.052       | 0.040 | 1.30     | 0.015       | 0.030 | 0.50     |
| Team Ident. × Result Satisf.                | -0.083   | 0.057 | -1.46    | -0.054      | 0.050 | -1.08    | -0.064      | 0.037 | -1.73    |
| Positive Affect                             |          |       |          | 0.611       | 0.136 | 4.49***  | -0.082      | 0.118 | -0.69    |
| Negative Affect                             |          |       |          | -0.483      | 0.118 | -4.09*** | -0.317      | 0.089 | -3.56*** |
| Work Engagement                             |          |       |          |             |       |          | 0.846       | 0.074 | 11.43*** |
| -2 × log                                    | 551.46   |       |          | 509.28      |       |          | 413.76      |       |          |
| $\Delta -2 \times \log (\Delta df)$         |          |       |          | 42.18***(2) |       |          | 96.02***(1) |       |          |
| Level 1 Variance                            | 1.215    | 0.157 | 4%       | 0.965       | 0.124 | 24%      | 0.542       | 0.070 | 57%      |
| Level 2 Variance                            | 1.140    | 0.322 | 29%      | 0.769       | 0.228 | 52%      | 0.398       | 0.119 | 75%      |

Note. R<sup>2</sup> percentages are calculated in approximation; \*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .001.

negative affects). Our results showed that negative (but not positive) affect explains why and how satisfaction with football team performance relates to work engagement and consequently, job performance. We found that when football fans are dissatisfied with the performance of their team, they experience negative affect that makes them less engaged in their work, which, in turn, results in lower performance. These findings extend AET by showing that critical events outside the work domain may also affect work-related attitudes and behaviours. Also, our study further substantiates spillover theory by emphasizing the role of affect as a linking mechanism between different life domains.

The finding that football fans are more likely to experience negative affect when they are dissatisfied with the result of their team is in line with previous evidence, indicating that dissatisfying results, such as losing a match, elicit multiple negative emotions to fans (e.g., Cantor *et al.*, 1989; Kerr *et al.*, 2005; Rainey, Yost, & Larsen, 2011; Zalla *et al.*, 2000). Moreover, our findings suggest that a dissatisfactory team result is likely to prohibit individuals' work engagement, via negative affectivity. Based on the role scarcity hypothesis (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), since being a fan demands part of one's – limited – resources (energy and affect), a dissatisfactory team performance absorbs resources that could otherwise be invested in the job. Therefore, participation in the work role may become harder due to participation in the fan role, when the result is dissatisfactory. Besides, as Bakker and Geurts (2004) posit, fulfilling the work role is highly demanding in terms of effort and emotions. Thus, our findings imply that AET can be used as an underlying mechanism in the spillover that the sports domain can have over the work domain.

Interestingly, though, as truth lies in the eyes of the beholder, a fan's role appears to be conflicting with the employee role. In particular, our findings suggest that in case of dissatisfaction with the performance of supporting team, there is a negative effect on attitude and behaviour at work. Examining the work–family/family–work conflict, Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) argued that participation in the work role becomes harder due to participation in the family role. In analogy, dissatisfaction with team performance seems to produce a strain conflict, as strain produced by one's fan role with regard to a football event could make functioning at work more difficult. Hence, our work extends the spillover theory, identifying a sport–work conflict.

Contrary to our expectations, results did not provide support for the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and positive affect, suggesting that the spillover from football game to work is mediated only by negative affect. Although this finding may appear odd, it may be explained by the fact that negative events and the related affective states have longer lasting and more severe consequences than positive events (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001; Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). As Baumeister and colleagues note, 'When equal measures of good and bad are present, (however), the psychological effects of bad ones outweigh those of good ones' (p. 323). Hence, a dissatisfactory team result may have greater power over individuals' response towards their work, as expressed by work engagement and work performance.

This study also attempted to contribute to the discussion on the conditions under which critical events determine specific affective reactions. To this end, we proposed that identification with the team moderates the relationship between satisfaction with the football team performance and affect in a way that affective reactions are more intense for those who identify with their team. Contrary to the expectations, our results did not support this moderating effect. A methodological reason that may explain the rejection of the moderation hypothesis may be the fact that our sample consisted of fans that identified themselves considerably with their team ( $M = 4.38$  on a 7-point scale). This means that

we did not have many fans low in team identification, which implies range restriction in the moderator that makes rejection of moderating effects more likely (McClelland & Judd, 1993).

Another explanation for this insignificant interaction may relate to the possible weekly variability of team identification as a result of the team performance or result (Koenigstorfer, Groeppel-Klein, & Schmitt, 2010). That is, it is likely that in order to protect their self-image in the case of defeat or underperformed matches, fans may increase their psychological distance with their team (Cialdini *et al.*, 1976). In contrast, when teams demonstrate a satisfactory performance, fans tend to bask in reflected glory, thus attenuating the psychological distance between themselves and the team (Snyder, Lassegard, & Ford, 1986). Therefore, measuring team identification as a trait variable may have confounded our findings. In this regard, future research could benefit from assessing identification with the team also on a weekly basis.

### **Limitations and future research**

The present study has some limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, all results are based on self-reports. This means that we possibly introduced a certain level of subjectivity in the model variables. This is particularly true for job performance, as participants may be inclined to portray their performance as relatively favourable (social desirability effect). However, when it comes to affect and work engagement, we believe that participants have best access to their own feelings and attitudes, and hence, subjectivity should be less of a concern for these variables.

An additional limitation is that all variables (except for team identification that was measured once at the beginning of the study, and objective team performance in the form of team points) were measured at the same point in time (after work, each Monday). However, this limitation is partly counteracted by the fact that we asked participants to rate the study variables by having in mind different times within the day (affect in the morning; engagement and performance during work). Another limitation is that by measuring morning affect in the afternoon, we increase the chance that afternoon affect influenced evaluations of morning affect. However, this is partly counteracted by the fact that engagement (that was measured with having the whole workday a reference point) also incorporates an affective component (i.e., dedication).

As regards the demographic profile of our sample, the vast majority of the respondents held a bachelor or a master's degree. In this regard, future studies could replicate the present findings by focusing on a less-educated sample. Moreover, we have solely focused on the effect of a subjective indicator of team performance. Although we did control for team points as an objective (trait) indicator of team performance, we did not control for objective results at the week level. Future studies may use both objective and subjective indicators of teams' weekly performance in order to test the hypothesized model in a more robust way. It is important to note that including team points as a control variable did not confound our findings. As such, these results strengthen our argument that objective results may not accurately reflect fans' affective responses to 'satisfactory losses', 'dissatisfactory wins', as well as draws, thus further supporting our choice to measure 'satisfaction with the team performance'.

Also, we did not control for trait affect. Given that trait affect is a more distal antecedent of state affect, we have focused on most proximal antecedents to explain how employees feel on Monday morning (i.e., satisfaction with team performance; Sonnentag, Dormann, & Demerouti, 2010). Considering the crucial role of testing proximal antecedents of

affect, we would not expect that controlling for trait affect would diminish totally the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and affect. However, future studies should take trait affect into account in order to provide more robust estimations of the hypothesized processes.

Another limitation of our study is that we focused solely on in-role performance neglecting empirical evidence supporting the link between work engagement and contextual performance (for a review, Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010) also on the weekly level (Bakker & Bal, 2010). Future studies could benefit from investigating the spillover of football team results on contextual performance as well. In this regard, it would be interesting to test whether the effect of football events is stronger on task or contextual performance. Given that contextual performance is likely to demonstrate more fluctuations compared to task performance, we assume that this effect would be greater on the former facet of performance. Relatedly, our analysis seems to be rather conservative, because of the strict and low autonomy context of the army, which may confine fluctuations in task performance. As such, we would expect that replicating the present relationships with other contexts would provide stronger effects.

Moreover, future research might extend the present analysis by addressing the duration of the negative effect of satisfaction with football team performance on the examined outcomes. Along this line of thinking, future studies could use more elaborate experience sampling designs, where affect and work experiences are measured during the entire week, thus providing useful insights regarding the duration of the effect that such events have. Furthermore, future studies could also investigate the importance of football matches in relation to other events that took place in the weekend in explaining fans' work outcomes on Monday. This would allow testing whether the spillover of football events on work experiences is valid even when other weekend events are taken into account. Finally, one limitation is that we solely focus on a specific sport event namely football. However, given the rationale of spillover effects, it is likely to expect that this effect can be generalized to other team sports. Therefore, future studies could investigate the present relationship in other sports as well.

### ***Practical implications***

Considering that football is one of the most popular sports worldwide and that football fans comprise a great proportion of sports fans, the results of the present study shed light on the critical role of sport events, in general, and football events, in particular, for daily employee attitudes and behaviours. Our study supported the negative spillover of fans' dissatisfaction with the performance of their football team to their work engagement and in turn job performance through negative affect. These results suggest that managers should be aware that certain events outside work (i.e., a bad performance of employees' favourite football team) may have an unfavourable impact on employees at work and thus make an effort to prevent such a negative spillover. For instance, managers may decide to assign particularly important or complex tasks to their followers, who are football fans, on Tuesdays instead of Mondays, thereby decreasing the likelihood of unsuccessful performance.

Furthermore, managers who are aware of the impact of football match outcomes on their employees' affect may decide to invest or use more transformational leadership behaviours on Mondays after the weekend during which employees favourite football team has lost, because it is on these days that employees would need a boost in their positive affect (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2016). To achieve elevated levels

of transformational behaviours, managers need to be able to accurately recognize employees' affect through both verbal and non-verbal cues (Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005). As such, managers need to be cognizant of and alert to the negative impact of employees' football team performance on employees' affect. Taking this a step further, managers could reap affective outcomes by focusing on such emotional processes and showing empathy to employees' needs (Humphrey, 2002). In addition, given that managers' mood may be transmitted to their employees' via a mood contagion process (Sy, Côté, & Saavedra, 2005), they should be aware of the impact that an unfavourable outcome of their own football team may have on their own engagement and performance on Monday and therefore make attempts to regulate their own affective state.

Along similar lines, managers seeking to prevent employees from the present undesirable outcomes may benefit from providing high levels of support, thus influencing employees' emotions (Cole, Bruch, & Vogel, 2006) and enhancing their levels of work engagement (Swanberg, McKechnie, Ojha, & James, 2011) and performance (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). In fact, supervisor support may be essential in cases of teasing or mocking towards employees who are fans of underperforming football teams.

An alternative strategy for managers to prevent employees' low levels of engagement and job performance after a bad performance of their football team would be to promote their reattachment to work (i.e., mentally reconnect to work before actually starting to work; Sonnentag & Kühnel, 2016) on Monday morning. Sonnentag and Kühnel argued that employees' morning psychological reattachment to work may offer some useful returns on their work engagement. In this vein, managers could be instrumental in terms of providing time and space to employees to reattach to work by raising and discussing work-related issues, when they meet them on Monday morning, instead of discussing football results of the past weekend. Furthermore, in addition to supervisors' efforts, employees could help themselves in fostering such a process. For example, given that morning reattachment strongly affects work engagement, fans could try to think of the interesting tasks that await them at work, while commuting to work.

All in all, we propose that the role of managers is pivotal in mitigating the potential damaging effects of negative events that take place outside one's work for work-related attitudes and behaviours. Although we have solely focused on a specific sport event (i.e., the performance of one's football team during Sunday), our results may provide insights for wider organizational interventions by implying that all sorts of (negative) events that take place outside work may have important consequences for employees, while at work. To this end, interventions like the one developed by Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner, and Zimmerman (2011) aiming at enhancing supervisors' skills and motives to increase their interpersonal contact with employees in order to support employees' in managing the work–family interface could help. Such interventions could also be enriched through raising awareness on the role of off-job events for work-related behaviours and on what supervisors can do to mitigate the potential negative effects of such off-job events for employees.

## **Conclusion**

Drawing on AET and spillover theory, the current research investigated the relationship between satisfaction with football team performance and both fans' work engagement and job performance, through the mediating role of positive and negative affects. We also assumed that fans' levels of identification with their football team would moderate these

relationships. The findings revealed that only negative affect mediates the link between satisfaction with football team performance and work engagement and then job performance. Furthermore, football team identification did not have any significant moderation effect. We believe that the present study will encourage researchers to further investigate how fans' experiences in the sports domain may influence fans' work outcomes.

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