

Authenticity, Well-being and Engagement

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NZ Government to lead world in measuring success with wellbeing measures

Laura Walters · 16:32, Feb 01 2018



Well-being is an increasingly central component of research (Linton, Dieppe, & Medina-Lara, 2016)

Best employers in Australia and NZ revealed

by John Hilton

03 Aug 2018



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The Aon Best Employers 2018 results show that this years' top performers have an increased focus on employee engagement, communication and strong leadership.

Organisations in healthcare, property and delivery services were among a variety of other sectors identified as Aon's Best Employers.

Engagement a key factor in organisational SUCCESS (Saks & Gruman, 2014)



But why authenticity?

Related to well-being and engagement in conceptions of the 'good life' (Hestir, 2008)

Viewed as a *necessary precursor* for a meaningful and engaged life

Authenticity and Well-being

- Many studies indicating positive relationship between authenticity and well-being:
 - reduced strain and increased well-being Knoll et al. (2015)
 - higher performance and job satisfaction (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a)
- These relationships sometimes confused by conceptualisations
 - Authenticity often viewed as both an *integral part of* and a *route towards* the 'good life'
- But they can be distinguished:
 - In philosophy and psychology: authenticity is a part of the 'good life' but can also lead to conflict and stress
 - Statistical evidence: authenticity – well-being link is unidirectional (Boyraz, Waits, & Felix, 2014)
- This meta-analysis specifically assesses authenticity as distinct from well-being

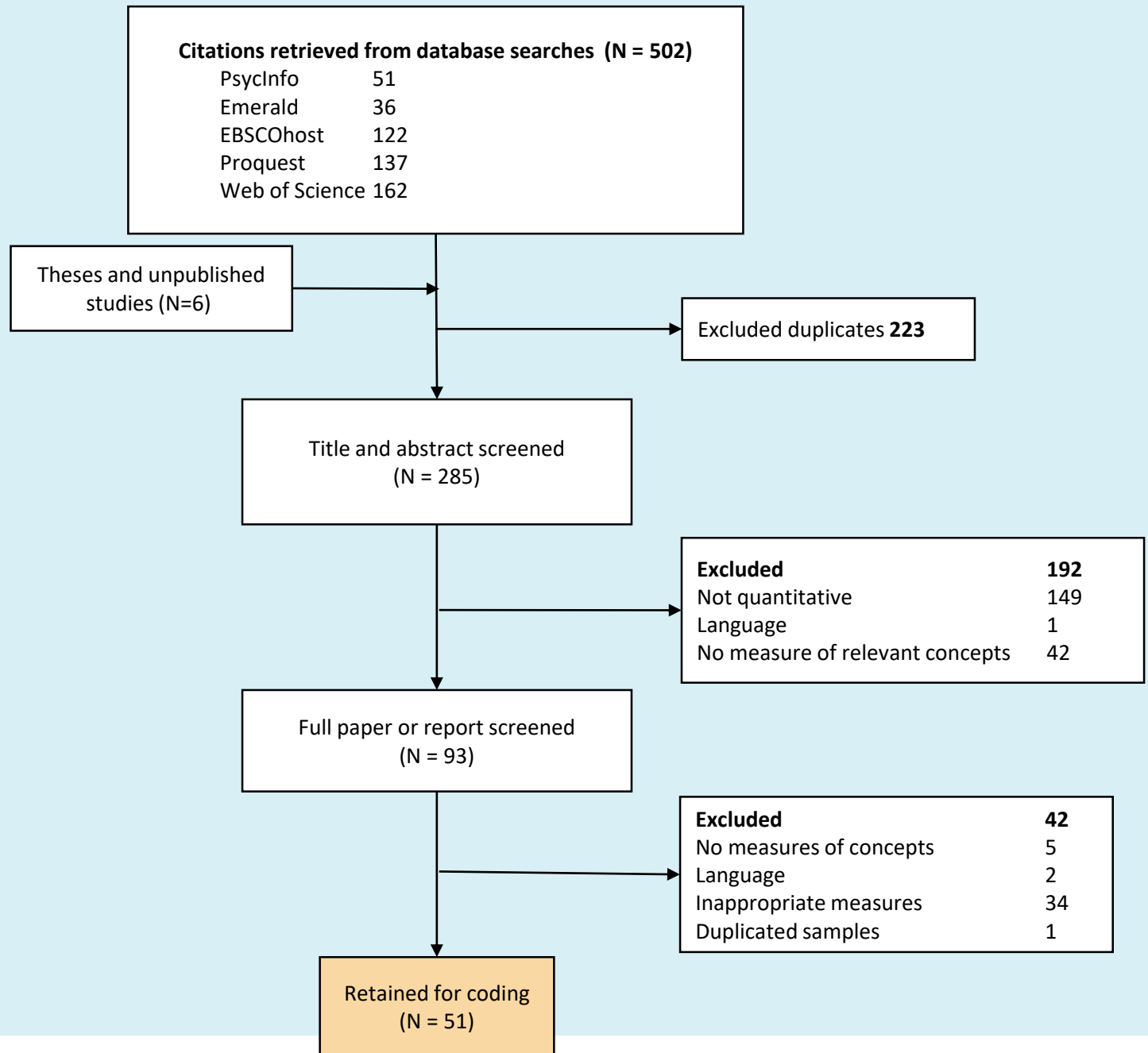
Authenticity and Engagement

- Authenticity as a contributor to engagement at work
 - Kahn's theory of engagement suggests that the more authentic a person can be at work the more engaged they will be
 - authenticity may be an antecedent of work engagement (van den Bosch and Taris, 2014a, Reis et al., 2016)
- Authenticity may also be the process by which organisational variables can impact on engagement.
 - authenticity mediates CSR (Glavas, 2016) and control-oriented culture (Reis et al., 2016) effects on engagement

Definitions of terms and measures

- Authenticity
 - defined as *individual subjective authenticity*
- Well-being
 - defined as a *global, subjective evaluation of one's quality of life*
- Engagement
 - “*energy, enthusiasm and focused effort*” (Reis et al., 2016) in our work

Method

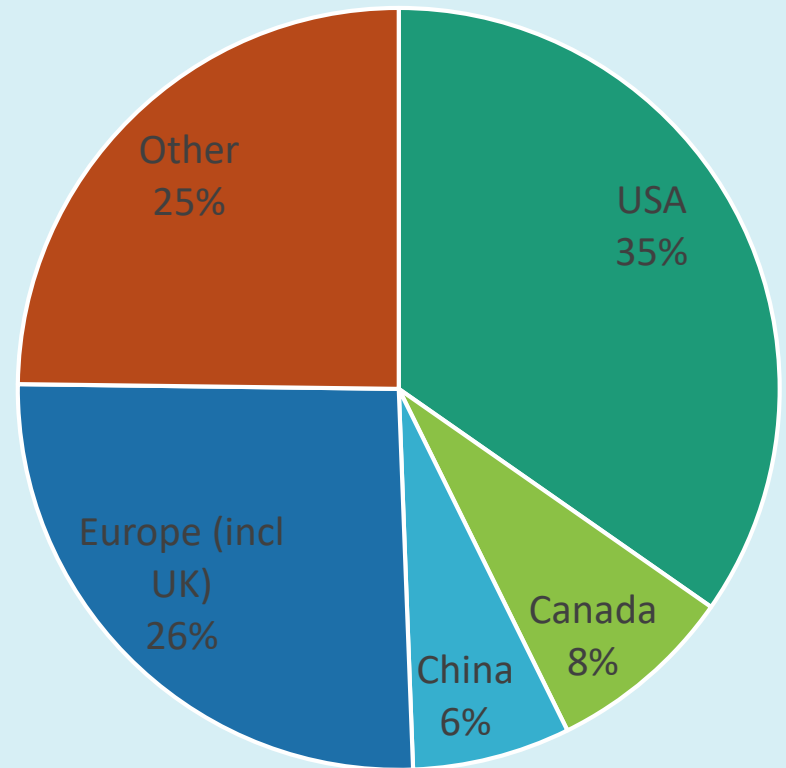
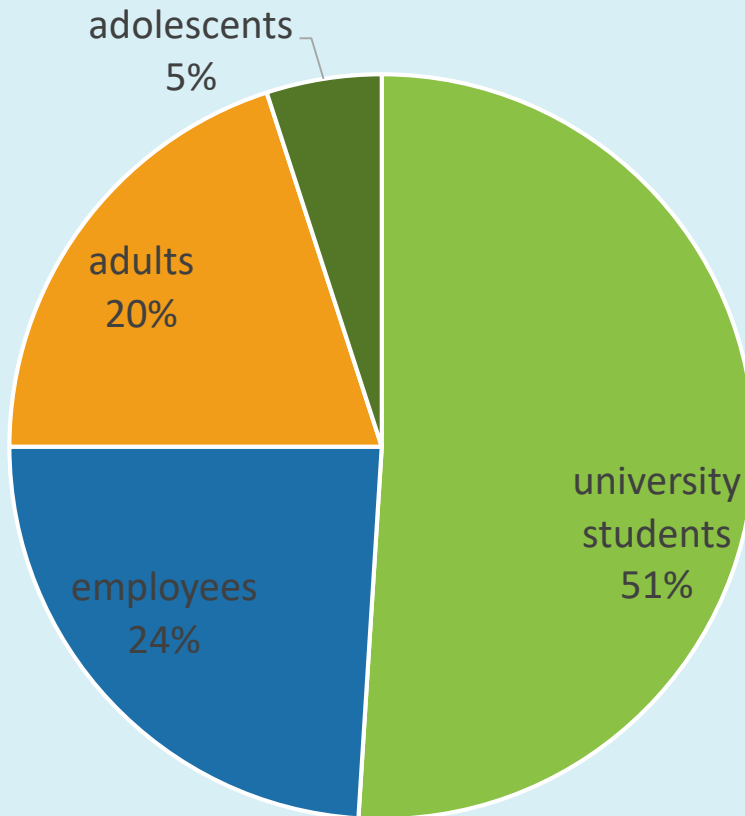


Method

- Data extracted from papers:
 - Descriptives for samples: N, country, %female, age
 - Constructed an individualism-collectivist proxy scale for each sample using Hofstede's Individualism scores for that country
 - Measures used for Authenticity, Well-being and Engagement
 - Effect sizes (usually r)
- $k = 75$ (*65 well-being and 10 engagement*)
- Checked for outliers and large samples
 - Adjusted weightings of very large samples so that they were no more than 150% of next largest
 - 1 outlier in Eng studies: analysis conducted with and without this study

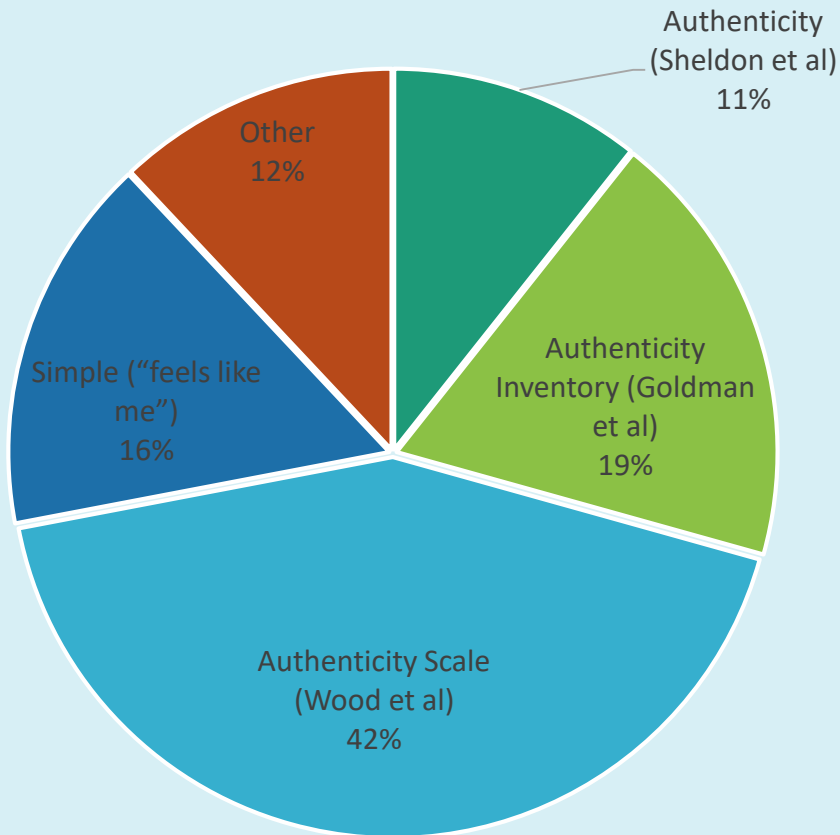
Sample

N = 36,535 (*well-being: N= 18,639;*
engagement: N=17,896)

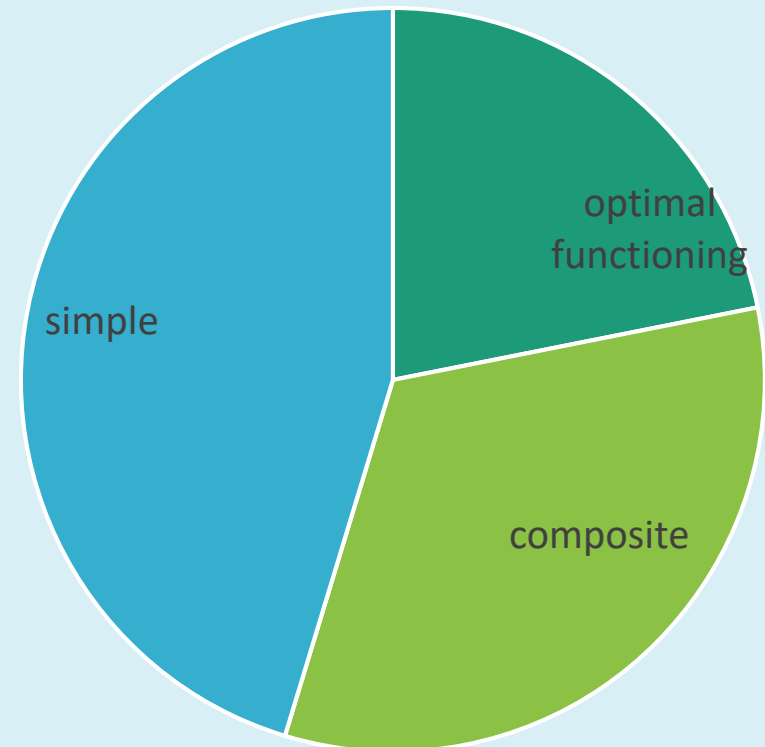


Results: measures

Authenticity measure



Well-being measure



- 9 of the 10 engagement studies used the UWES.

Results: overall effects¹

- Moderate positive relationship between authenticity and well-being
 - $r = .4$, 95% CI [.35, .45]
- Moderate positive relationship between authenticity and engagement
 - $r = .37$, 95% CI [.30, .43]
- Q-values and I^2 indicate heterogeneity across samples therefore useful to look at moderators

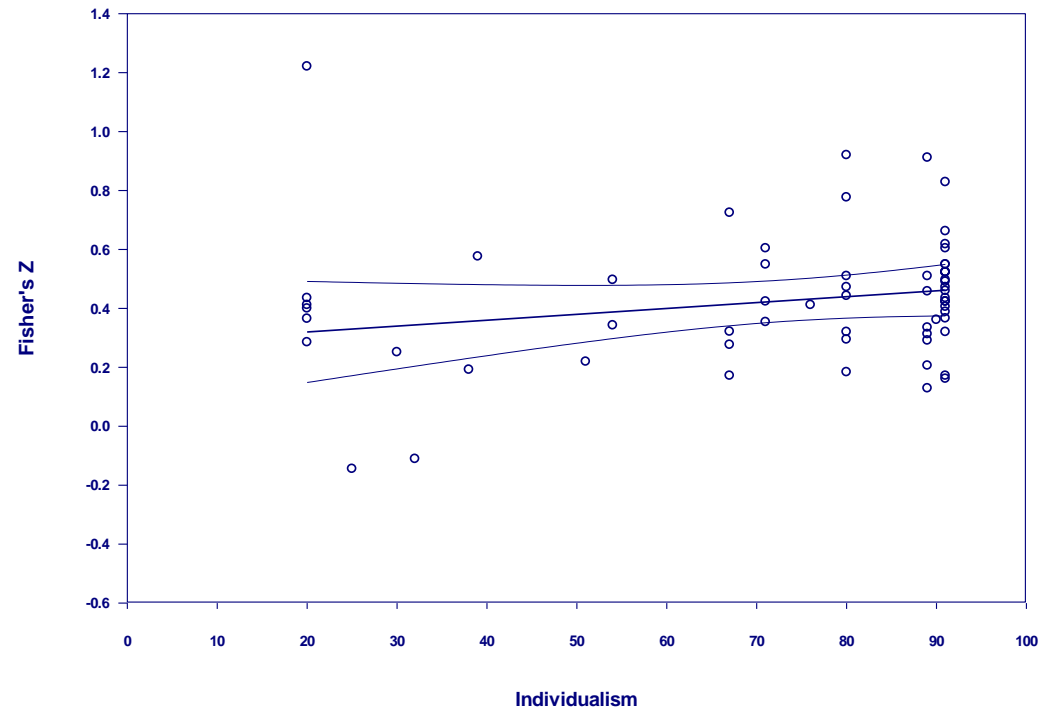
¹ Used both fixed and random effects models – only random effects reported here

Does the measure matter?

- Difference between authenticity measures was significant ($Q_{\text{between}} = 11.74, p < 0.05$)
 - Authenticity Inventory (Goldman et al) showed stronger positive relationship to well-being.
- Difference between WB measures was marginally significant ($Q_{\text{between}} = 6.09, p = 0.05$) composite measures and optimal functioning measures showing a stronger relationship with authenticity than simple measures
- i.e.: stronger relationships with broader / more complex measures

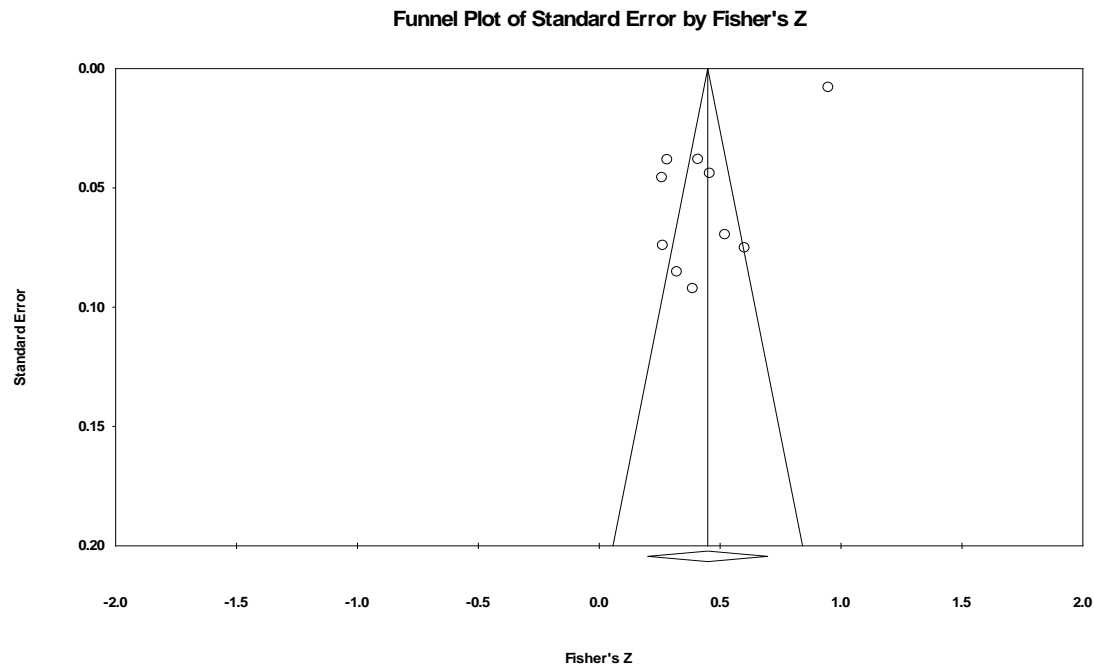
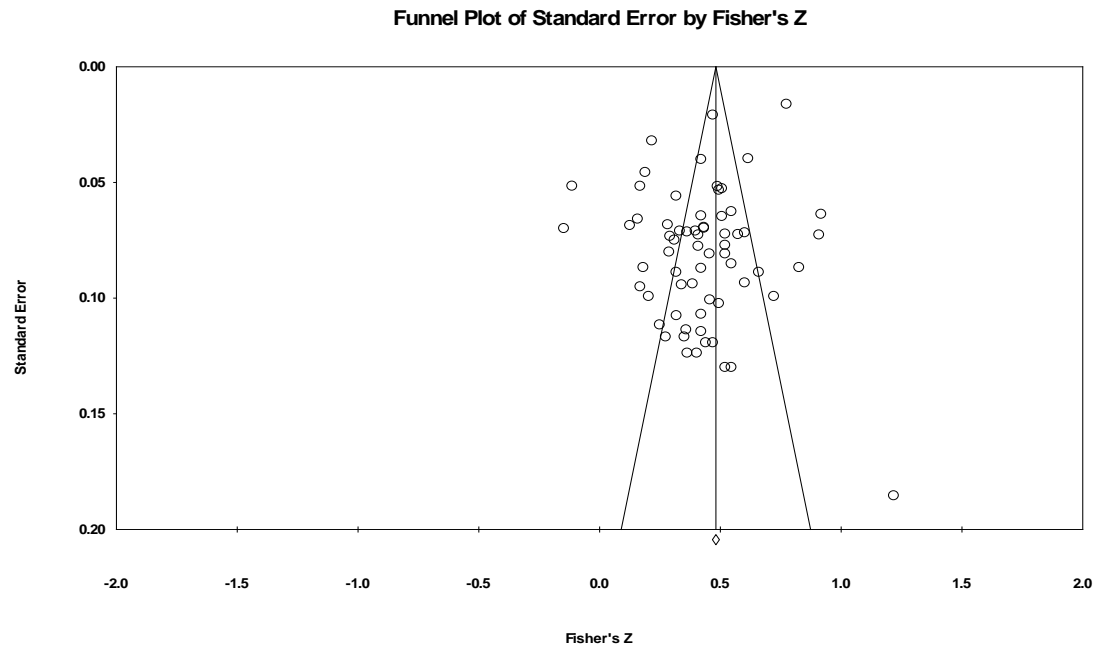
Sample characteristics

- Moderators: no effect of % female, sample type (students or employed) or age
- Collectivism *weakens* the relationship between A and WB



Publication bias?

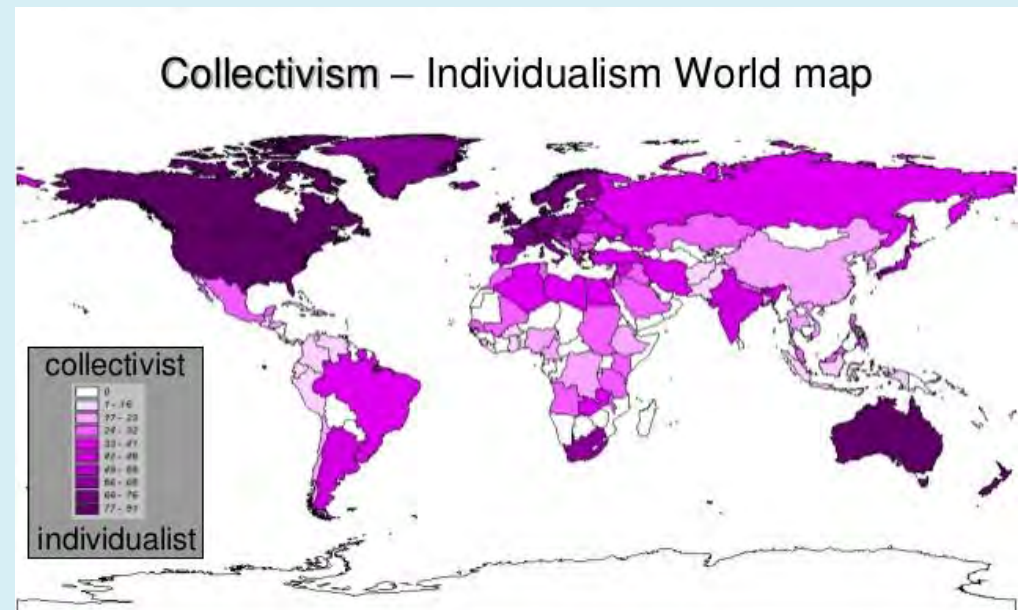
- Funnel plots, Begg and Mazumdar's rank correlation, cumulative meta-analysis and trim / fill method all showed little or no evidence of publication bias



Implications for research

Care in choice of measures:

- authenticity although contributing to well-being and engagement, is a distinct concept
- Strong recommendation not to use authenticity measures as a proxy for engagement or well-being



Implications for work



Does it matter if we
pretend to be something
we're not at work?

YES!



Thank you!

Any questions?

(contact me: anna.sutton@waikato.ac.nz)