

Exploring the Psychological Impact of Micromanagement of workforce in budget Supermarket; A case of Lidl

Submitted by:

Stefania-Diana Stanciu
Student ID: 2234963
BA (Hons) Business Management
Institute of Inner City Learning - London Campus
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Submitted to:

Dr. Alfred Mensah
Supervisor
Institute of Inner City Learning - London Campus
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

December 2025

Declaration

I, Stefania-Diana Stanciu, a student at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, confirm that the dissertation entitled “Exploring the Psychological Impact of Micromanagement of Workforce in Budget Supermarkets: A Case Study of Lidl” is my own original work. The study was undertaken as partial fulfilment for the BA (Hons) Business Management programme. It examined how micromanagement influences employee well-being in a retail environment using Lidl UK as a case study. It drawn on primary quantitative data supported by established academic literature.

All participants involved in the study took part voluntarily and anonymously, and no personal or sensitive information was collected. The research was carried out in accordance with the ethical expectations of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, with full attention to confidentiality, informed consent and GDPR standards. The methods used were selected to ensure accurate, responsible and ethical data collection and analysis.

I declare that this work has not been submitted for any other award or assessment, and that all external sources have been properly acknowledged through appropriate academic referencing. I received no external funding for this research and have no conflicts of interest to declare. I take full responsibility for the originality and integrity of the work presented in this dissertation.

Signature: *Stanciu*

Stefania-Diana Stanciu

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Date: December 2025

Abstract

This study examines the psychological impact of micromanagement on employees working in budget supermarkets, using Lidl stores in London as a case study. Guided by the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model, the research investigates how close supervisory control influences stress, motivation, job satisfaction and turnover intentions. A quantitative, deductive, cross-sectional design was employed, using an online questionnaire completed by 17 Lidl employees. Descriptive statistics revealed high levels of micromanagement and low autonomy, alongside moderate stress and motivation. Correlation analysis showed strong positive associations between micromanagement, stress and turnover intentions, and negative links with autonomy, motivation and satisfaction. These findings were reinforced through triangulation with secondary data from Jesús et al. (2025), which similarly showed that toxic micromanagement reduces trust, productivity and innovation. The study concludes that micromanagement acts as a significant psychological stressor in budget retail, contributing to reduced well-being and higher intentions to leave. It recommends adopting autonomy-supportive leadership, enhancing employee voice and implementing regular well-being monitoring. Limitations include the small, London-based sample and cross-sectional design. Future research should use larger samples, mixed methods and longitudinal approaches to deepen understanding of micromanagement in retail environments.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	7
1.1 Introduction	7
1.2 Background of the Study	7
1.3 Problem Statement	7
1.4 Aim, Objectives, and Research Questions.....	8
1.5 Rationale and Importance of the Research	8
1.6 Methodology Overview	9
1.7 Scope of the Study	9
1.8 Structure of the Dissertation	9
1.9 Limitations of the study	9
1.10 Summary of Chapter 1.....	10
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	11
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Base Theory and Conceptual Background	11
2.3 Theoretical Framework: Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model.....	12
2.4 Previous Studies and Lessons Learned	12
2.4.1 Micromanagement and Stress	12
2.4.2 Micromanagement and Motivation	13
2.4.3 Micromanagement and Job Satisfaction	13
2.4.4 Micromanagement, Engagement and Turnover Intentions.....	14
2.4.5 Insights from Retail Settings.....	14
2.5 Gaps Identified.....	15
2.6 Summary	15
Chapter 3: Research Methods & Methodologies	17
3.1 Introduction	17
3.2 Philosophical position of the research	17
3.3 Paradigm position of the research	17
3.4 Position of Research Approach.....	17
3.5 Methodological stance of the research	18
3.6 Stance of the Research Strategy and Design.....	18
3.7 Research Sample and Population	18
3.8 Data Collection and Data Analysis Tools/Techniques	18

3.9 Ethical Consideration of the Research.....	19
3.10 Limitations and Delimitations	20
3.11 Summary of Chapter 3	20
Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis	21
4.1 Introduction	21
4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents	21
4.3 Descriptive Statistics for Key Constructs	22
4.3.1 Construct-level descriptive statistics	22
4.3.2 Item-level descriptive patterns.....	24
4.4 Correlation Analysis	25
4.5 Secondary data.....	28
4.6 Data Quality, Validity and Reliability.....	29
4.7 Summary	29
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations	31
5.1 Introduction	31
5.2 Discussion of Key Findings.....	31
Micromanagement as a Pervasive Supervisory Pattern.....	31
Autonomy as a Restricted Workplace Resource	31
Stress and Emotional Strain as Consequences of Supervisory Control.....	32
Motivation and Satisfaction as Fragile Outcomes	32
Turnover Intentions and the Psychological Costs of Micromanagement.....	32
Triangulation with Secondary Data	33
5.3 Conclusions in Relation to the Research Aim and Questions	33
5.4 Contribution of the Study	34
5.5 Limitations of the Study	34
5.6 Recommendations for Practice.....	34
5.7 Recommendations for Future Research	35
5.8 Summary of Chapter 5.....	35
6.References	36
Appendix I: Questionnaires	39
Appendix II: Ethic form	46

List of tables

Table 1: Demographic information.....	21
Table 2: Descriptive statistics for main constructs (N = 17)	22
Table 3: Correlations between key constructs (N = 17)	26

List of figures

Figure 1: Age distribution of respondents	22
Figure 2: Job role distribution	22
Figure 3: Mean scores for key constructs.....	23
Figure 4: Micromanagement constructs	24
Figure 5: Autonomy and stress.....	24
Figure 6: Motivation and turnover.....	25
Figure 7: Micromanagement vs stress	27
Figure 8: Micromanagement vs turnover	27
Figure 9:Jesus et al. (2025).....	28

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The retail sector has always been a fast-moving and demanding industry, where strong management and clear procedures are essential for daily operations. However, when managers monitor employees too closely or limit their decision-making freedom, it can lead to micromanagement; a style often linked to stress and low job satisfaction (Delgado et al., 2015). This study explored how micromanagement affected the psychological well-being of employees working using Lidl as a case study, which is one of the main budget supermarkets in the UK. The research focused on understanding how constant supervision and a lack of autonomy influenced levels of motivation, stress, and job satisfaction among retail staff.

1.2 Background of the Study

Micromanagement occurs when managers strictly monitor employee's work closely, leaving little room for independence or trust (Lee et al., 2023). While this behaviour may come from a desire to maintain performance, studies show that it often reduces motivation and increases strain (Ryan and Deci, 2017). In the retail sector, staff face high workloads and strong performance pressures, which can make these effects even stronger. Schaufeli (2017) found that limited autonomy combined with constant job demands can lead to emotional exhaustion.

At Lidl, where efficiency and consistency are essential to operational performance, management practices often rely on close supervision and strict procedural control. While effective for standardisation, such practices may limit employee autonomy and contribute to reduced morale and psychological well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Accordingly, this study examines the relationship between micromanagement and employee well-being in a supermarket context.

1.3 Problem Statement

The concept micromanagement has been discussed in different organisational settings. However, little is known in academic literature about its impact on budget retail supermarket employees like Lidl which heavily relies on the close staff supervision to maintain control and meet performance targets, but the effects on employees' mental and emotional health are not well understood (Galindez et al.,

2024). Many workers in this sector experience stress and a lack of motivation, which often leads to higher turnover (Allcorn, 2022). The main problem addressed in this research was the limited understanding of how micromanagement affects employees' psychological well-being and overall job satisfaction in a retail context.

1.4 Aim, Objectives, and Research Questions

Aim:

To examine the psychological impact of micromanagement on employees working in budget supermarkets, focusing on Lidl as a case study.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the psychological impact of micromanagement on employees at working at the budget retail sector
2. To ascertain the relationship between micromanagement and psychological outcomes such as stress, motivation, and job satisfaction.
3. To recommend solutions to micromanagement at budget retail sector.

Research Questions

1. Is micromanagement a problem in budget supermarkets?
2. Are there psychological effects of micromanagement on employees?
3. How does micromanagement influence employee engagement and turnover intentions?
4. What strategies can be implemented to reduce the negative effects of micromanagement in budget retail settings?

1.5 Rationale and Importance of the Research

The employee well-being plays a crucial role in productivity and staff retention, yet it is often overlooked in retail (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). The current study provided some insights into how management style affects employees' mental state and motivation in a high-pressure environment. The findings aimed to help retail

managers find a better balance between control and trust, improving both performance and morale. From an academic perspective, the study used the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model to explain how job conditions and managerial behaviour influence employee well-being.

1.6 Methodology Overview

The study used a quantitative research design, combining an online questionnaire with secondary sources such as academic articles. The survey was completed by 17 Lidl employees working in different positions, including cashiers and shift leaders. It included short statements measured on a five-point Likert scale, covering aspects such as autonomy, stress, and satisfaction. The data were analysed using basic descriptive statistics and correlations. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and the process followed all ethical and GDPR requirements.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The research focused on Lidl employees in London, in the United Kingdom. It did not include other supermarkets or Lidl branches outside London. The study examined only psychological outcomes, such as stress, motivation, and job satisfaction, without exploring financial or operational performance.

1.8 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 presented the introduction and background to the study. Chapter 2 reviews the main theories and previous studies related to micromanagement and well-being. Chapter 3 explains the research methods and data collection process. Chapter 4 presents and discusses the findings, and Chapter 5 provides the conclusions, limitations, and recommendations.

1.9 Limitations of the study

The study offers useful insights into the psychological effects of micromanagement in budget supermarkets, but several limitations must be recognised. It focuses only on Lidl employees in London, limiting generalisability to other regions or retailers. The small sample ($N = 17$) reduces statistical power, and the reliance on self-report measures introduces risks of response bias and differences in how employees interpret micromanagement and stress. In addition, the cross-sectional design captures experiences at one moment in time, preventing any causal conclusions.

These limitations are reconsidered in Chapter 5 when discussing implications and future research needs.

1.10 Summary of Chapter 1

This chapter outlined the study's background, research problem, and key objectives. It explained why micromanagement is an important issue in the retail sector and described how the research was designed to explore its psychological effects. The next chapter reviews existing academic work on micromanagement, leadership styles, and employee well-being.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the main theory and previous research related to micromanagement and its impact on employees' psychological well-being. The purpose was to place this study within the wider discussion on leadership behaviour, motivation, and workplace well-being. It began by exploring how micromanagement has been defined and understood over time, followed by a discussion of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model. The review then examined findings from previous studies on micromanagement, identifying what is already known and where the gaps remain. The chapter concluded with a conceptual framework that outlined how these theories helped shape the direction of this study.

2.2 Base Theory and Conceptual Background

Definitions of micromanagement vary across the literature, but the common theme in much of the existing literature (Allcorn, 2022; Lee, 2023) describes it as a controlling managerial style characterised by excessive oversight and limited trust. Allcorn (2022) presents micromanagement as a climate in which managers involve themselves in trivial details, restricting employee independence and signalling a lack of confidence in staff capabilities. Lee et al. (2023) focus more on observable behaviours, arguing that the core feature of micromanagement is unnecessary control over routine tasks. Both perspectives point to autonomy as the central issue: when discretion is removed, employees lose the space needed to make decisions, use judgment or feel ownership over their work. Galindez et al. (2024) add that constant supervision can undermine confidence and create a self-fulfilling cycle in which employees become reluctant to take initiative.

The roots of such practices are often linked to Taylor's (1911) Scientific Management, which promoted close supervision and standardised work processes. While these ideas shaped early industrial management, modern research challenges their relevance to contemporary workplaces. Ryan and Deci (2017) argue that controlling environments weaken intrinsic motivation, and Humphrey, Morgeson and Nahrgang (2007) show that autonomy is consistently associated with higher satisfaction and lower strain. From this perspective, micromanagement contradicts psychological evidence on effective job design.

Technological change has further complicated the issue. Bhave (2014) notes that digital performance monitoring can intensify feelings of being constantly observed, creating pressure that goes beyond traditional supervisory control. Meta-analytic evidence supports this view: Siegel, König and Lazar (2022) report that electronic monitoring tends to increase stress and reduce job satisfaction. These patterns are likely to be amplified in highly structured environments such as supermarkets, where work tasks must be completed quickly, procedures are strictly defined and deviations from standard routines are discouraged.

2.3 Theoretical Framework: Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2017), provides a useful framework for understanding how micromanagement affects psychological well-being. The model distinguishes between job demands; elements of work that require sustained effort, such as workload, time pressure and emotional labour and job resources, which help employees cope with these demands, including autonomy, support and opportunities for decision-making.

Micromanagement influences both sides of this balance. Intensive oversight increases demand by adding cognitive pressure and heightening emotional strain. At the same time, it reduces resources by withdrawing autonomy and signalling low trust. Evidence from De Jonge et al. (2010) shows that high demands combined with low control predict strain and health complaints, while Schaufeli (2017) links lack of autonomy to emotional exhaustion. Within retail, where customer interactions are constant and tasks must be completed rapidly, the JD-R mechanisms may become even stronger. For these reasons, the model offers a clear basis for analysing how micromanagement affects stress, motivation and job satisfaction among supermarket workers.

2.4 Previous Studies and Lessons Learned

2.4.1 Micromanagement and Stress

A consistent theme across the literature is that micromanagement contributes to heightened stress. The importance of psychological safety is also underscored by Edmondson (1999), who shows that employees are less willing to speak up or learn from mistakes in climates where they feel overly controlled. In the retail sector, Ghani (2022) reports that technological change and increasing performance monitoring are

often perceived as sources of stress and insecurity, which may further intensify the strain associated with micromanagement. Allcorn (2022) describes how intrusive oversight creates anxiety and undermines employees' sense of psychological safety. Bhave (2014) similarly found that electronic monitoring increases pressure by making workers feel constantly evaluated. More recent evidence strengthens this argument: Siegel, König and Lazar (2022) show that digital monitoring has measurable negative effects on job satisfaction and increases strain across multiple occupations.

However, many studies rely on cross-sectional, self-report data, which limits the ability to establish causality. Samples are also often drawn from office-based or administrative settings, making it unclear how far the findings apply to customer-facing, fast-paced roles such as retail. Even with these limitations, the overall pattern suggests that micromanagement increases job demands while reducing the autonomy needed to buffer stress, consistent with the JD-R model.

2.4.2 Micromanagement and Motivation

Motivation also appears sensitive to controlling supervision. Mackey et al. (2017) found that micromanaged employees report lower engagement and higher anxiety, while Santiago-Torner et al. (2024) link reduced autonomy to emotional exhaustion, a known precursor to declining motivation. These findings align with self-determination theory, which emphasises autonomy as essential for sustaining internal motivation.

There is some nuance. Delgado et al. (2015) suggest that close supervision can help new employees by offering clarity, although this benefit tends to disappear once individuals gain experience. Many motivational studies also use convenience samples or rely on single-industry contexts, limiting their generalisability. Nonetheless, the overall evidence suggests that micromanagement reduces a core job resource, autonomy, making it harder for workers to remain motivated under demanding conditions. This again reflects the dynamics predicted by the JD-R model.

2.4.3 Micromanagement and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is closely tied to how much control employees have over their work. Humphrey, Morgeson and Nahrgang (2007) demonstrate that autonomy is one of the strongest predictors of satisfaction, and Parker (2014) shows that opportunities for decision-making support positive work attitudes. Research on emotional labour provides additional insight. Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) and Totterdell and

Holman (2003) explain that customer-facing roles require emotional regulation, which can drain energy. When micromanagement removes discretion on top of these demands, the risk of dissatisfaction increases.

Industry evidence reinforces these academic findings, showing that retail environments already face pressures such as rigid procedures, high workloads and limited recognition. Grant Thornton (2024) highlight these factors as major barriers to satisfaction, while the SDA (2025) report documents significant emotional strain among supermarket staff. These patterns align with Jesus et al. (2025), who show that toxic micromanagement reduces trust and productivity. Although their study is not retail-specific, the mechanisms they describe reflect typical conditions in budget supermarkets. Overall, when micromanagement is layered onto existing demands, it further restricts key resources and increases the risk of dissatisfaction.

2.4.4 Micromanagement, Engagement and Turnover Intentions

Several studies link micromanagement to declining engagement. Mackey et al. (2017) note that employees who feel overly controlled often feel undervalued, while Santiago-Torner et al. (2024) show that low autonomy contributes to emotional exhaustion and weaker commitment. Retail evidence reflects similar pressures, as frontline roles are marked by high demands, limited involvement in decisions and frequent monitoring. In contrast, empowering leadership practices can strengthen engagement and reduce strain (Tuckey, Bakker and Dollard, 2012), highlighting how micromanagement restricts access to key job resources.

Micromanagement may therefore accelerate disengagement and turnover intentions. Employees who experience tight control are more likely to consider leaving, especially in demanding roles with limited progression. Although many engagement studies use cross-sectional designs that limit causal claims, the overall pattern remains consistent with JD-R: reduced autonomy makes retail work more difficult to cope with, increasing the likelihood of turnover intentions.

2.4.5 Insights from Retail Settings

Retail roles involve a unique combination of repetitive tasks, customer interaction, physical demands and strict performance expectations. Korunka and Kubicek (2017) describe retail as a setting characterised by multitasking and rapid task switching, while emotional labour studies show that sustained customer service work contributes

to fatigue (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). These pressures mean that workers rely heavily on job resources such as autonomy, supportive supervision and opportunities for problem-solving.

Industry evidence indicates that these resources are often limited. Reports on frontline retail work note persistent staffing pressures, rigid oversight and limited involvement in decision-making. Jesus et al. (2025) add wider context by showing that toxic micromanagement undermines trust and innovation, outcomes that are crucial for frontline problem-solving and customer service. Although their research spans multiple industries, the mechanisms they describe, excessive control and restricted discretion, strongly reflect typical conditions in budget supermarket chains. These characteristics suggest that retail may be particularly sensitive to the negative dynamics outlined in the JD-R model, where high demands and low autonomy combine to increase strain.

2.5 Gaps Identified

While micromanagement has been examined in various organisational contexts, far less is known about its psychological impact in retail, despite the sector's demanding nature. Much of the existing (White, 2010; Manz & Sims, 2001; Lee et al., 2019; Giauque et al., 2014) research focuses on office-based, healthcare or professional settings, which differ significantly from supermarket environments characterised by time pressure, customer flow and limited discretion. Retail-specific studies often examine burnout or turnover but do not explicitly analyse micromanagement as a central factor. Additionally, many studies rely on small or convenience samples, use cross-sectional designs or focus on single job roles, limiting the generalisability of findings. Evidence on how micromanagement interacts with retail-specific conditions such as lean staffing, multitasking or strict procedural control is especially limited. These gaps justify further research into how micromanagement affects psychological well-being in budget supermarkets such as Lidl.

2.6 Summary

Existing research consistently links micromanagement to increased stress, reduced motivation, lower job satisfaction and higher turnover intentions. The JD-R model helps explain these outcomes by showing how excessive control increases job demands while diminishing key resources like autonomy and trust. Although many studies highlight these patterns, research in the retail sector remains limited, despite

the high demands and rigid structures that characterise supermarket work. Understanding micromanagement within this context is therefore essential for both academic knowledge and practical management improvement. Overall, the literature suggests that micromanagement has a direct and cumulative impact on employees psychological well-being by increasing stress, reducing perceived control and weakening emotional resilience.

Chapter 3: Research Methods & Methodologies

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used to generate data on the psychological effects of micromanagement in Lidl. It outlines the philosophical and paradigm positions, research approach, strategy, sample, data collection, secondary data integration, analysis techniques, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Philosophical position of the research

The study adopted a pragmatic philosophical position, which is suited for applied research where the aim is to understand a real workplace problem and identify practical solutions. Pragmatism allows researchers to use whatever methods best help answer the research questions rather than committing to a single way of viewing reality (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Since the study explored both how common micromanagement is and how it affects employees psychologically, pragmatism supported the use of structured measurement, numerical analysis, and workplace-focused interpretation.

3.3 Paradigm position of the research

The study followed a post-positivist paradigm. Post-positivism accepts that while human experiences cannot be measured perfectly, they can still be studied systematically using validated instruments and statistical analysis (Bryman, 2016). This paradigm aligned with the study's aim of exploring relationships between micromanagement, stress, motivation, and job satisfaction. It also supported the use of correlations and descriptive statistics to understand patterns within employee responses.

3.4 Position of Research Approach

A quantitative research approach was used in the current study. This approach suited the aim of assessing how frequently employees experience micromanagement and measuring psychological outcomes on a Likert scale. Quantitative studies are effective for examining relationships between variables across a group of participants and for producing results that can be compared with existing research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). Because the research questions focused on identifying patterns and associations, this approach was more suitable than interpretivist, qualitative methods.

3.5 Methodological stance of the research

The study adopted a deductive methodological stance, beginning with existing theories, especially the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and testing whether the expected relationships appeared in the data. Deduction is appropriate when the literature already highlights potential connections, in this case between high job demands, low autonomy, and employee stress. Using a deductive stance helped ensure that the questionnaire items and analysis reflected established theoretical assumptions.

3.6 Stance of the Research Strategy and Design

A survey strategy with a cross-sectional design was used. A survey allowed data to be gathered efficiently from frontline Lidl employees, who often work irregular hours and prefer short questionnaires. Cross-sectional research captures employees' experiences at one point in time, which matched the aim of understanding current levels of micromanagement and well-being without tracking long-term changes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.7 Research Sample and Population

The population for the study was employees of Lidl in London. The participants were chosen using a convenience sampling approach with seventeen employees completed the questionnaires. Although convenience sampling does not provide a fully representative sample, it is commonly used in organisational research where access is restricted (Bryman, 2016). The sample included customer assistant, shift leader/Supervisor, Deputy Manager, offering a useful spread of operational roles. All participation was voluntary, anonymous, and arranged through informal internal contacts.

3.8 Data Collection and Data Analysis Tools/Techniques

Primary Data Collection

Primary data was gathered using an online questionnaire consisting of Likert-scale items measuring micromanagement behaviours, stress, motivation, and job satisfaction. The collected data were analysed using Microsoft Excel, where responses were cleaned and coded prior to analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise the data, and reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal

consistency of the measurement scales. Relationships between variables were examined using correlation analysis. Excel was chosen as it is suitable for analysing Likert-scale survey data and allows efficient handling of quantitative data aligned with the JD-R model, particularly perceptions of autonomy and perceived pressure.

Secondary Data Use

Secondary data was incorporated to strengthen the validity of the findings. The study used published statistical tables from Jesus et al. (2025), which reported correlations and descriptive statistics on micromanagement archetypes and employee outcomes including productivity, trust and innovation. These data served two purposes:

1. They allowed comparison between Lidl findings and wider organisational patterns.
2. They supported interpretation when the primary sample size was relatively small.

Using secondary sources in quantitative studies is recommended because it increases analytical depth and supports methodological triangulation (Saunders et al., 2019).

Data Analysis Techniques

Microsoft Excel was used to analyse the primary data due to its suitability for handling small-to-medium quantitative datasets and Likert-scale survey responses. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and means) were calculated to summarise the extent of micromanagement experiences, while correlation analysis was used to examine relationships between micromanagement variables and psychological outcomes. Excel also enabled the clear presentation of results through charts and tables, supporting effective interpretation of patterns in the data.

3.9 Ethical Consideration of the Research

The study followed standard ethical guidelines for research involving human participants; participation was voluntary, and respondents could withdraw at any time. No personal identifiers, store numbers, or IP addresses were collected. Data was stored securely and handled in line with GDPR. Ethical guidance emphasises protecting confidentiality and minimising risk for participants, especially when discussing sensitive workplace issues.

3.10 Limitations and Delimitations

The methodological choices in this study involve several limitations and delimitations. The use of convenience sampling and a small sample of Lidl employees from London limits the generalisability of the findings to the wider retail sector or other geographical contexts. Reliance on self-report measures may introduce common method bias and subjectivity in perceptions of micromanagement and stress. Additionally, the cross-sectional design prevents causal inference, meaning the findings indicate associations rather than cause–effect relationships

The study is delimited by its focus on a single budget supermarket chain (Lidl) and on psychological outcomes, including stress, motivation, job satisfaction and supervision-related turnover intentions. Organisational outcomes such as financial performance or productivity were excluded. A quantitative approach using Likert-scale items was adopted, meaning in-depth qualitative insights were not captured. These delimitations ensured feasibility within time, access and word-count constraints.

3.11 Summary of Chapter 3

This chapter outlined the methodological choices underpinning the study. A pragmatic and post-positivist stance supported the use of quantitative, deductive methods, while a cross-sectional survey design enabled efficient data collection. Primary data from Lidl employees was complemented by high-quality secondary datasets, allowing deeper interpretation of psychological outcomes linked to micromanagement. Ethical standards guided every stage of the process. The next chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the combined findings.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the survey carried out with Lidl employees in London (N = 17). The findings are shown mainly through tables and figures, using descriptive statistics and correlations. Detailed interpretation is provided in Chapter 5, as outlined in the methodology.

4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic information of the 17 Lidl employees who participated in the survey is summarised in table 1. The sample consisted primarily of respondents aged 18 to 34, the majority identifying as female and working mainly as Customer Assistants. Most participants had between 2–5 years of work experience at Lidl, followed by those with 3–12 months of service. A smaller proportion of respondents held supervisory or managerial positions. These demographic characteristics provide contextual background for understanding the subsequent findings presented in this chapter.

Table 1: Demographic information

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age group	18–24	5	29.4
	25–34	7	41.2
	35–44	3	17.6
	45–54	1	5.9
	55 or above	1	5.9
Gender	Male	5	29.4
	Female	12	70.6
Job role at Lidl	Customer Assistant	11	64.7
	Shift Leader / Supervisor	5	29.4
	Deputy Manager	1	5.9
Length of service at Lidl	Less than 3 months	1	5.9
	3–12 months	5	29.4
	1–2 years	1	5.9

	2–5 years	8	47.1
	5 years +	2	11.8

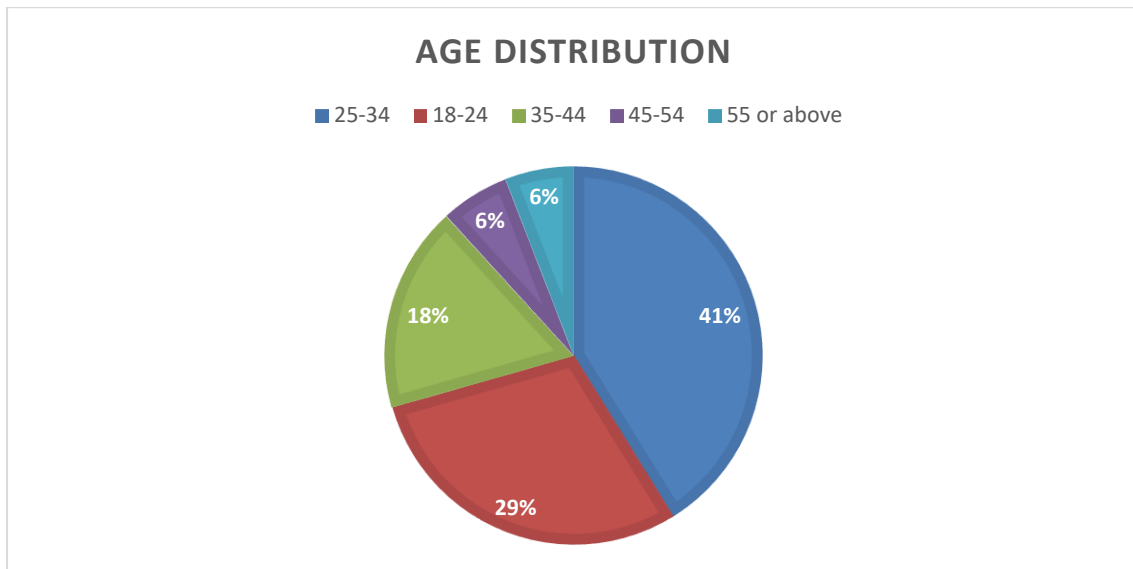


Figure 1: Age distribution of respondents

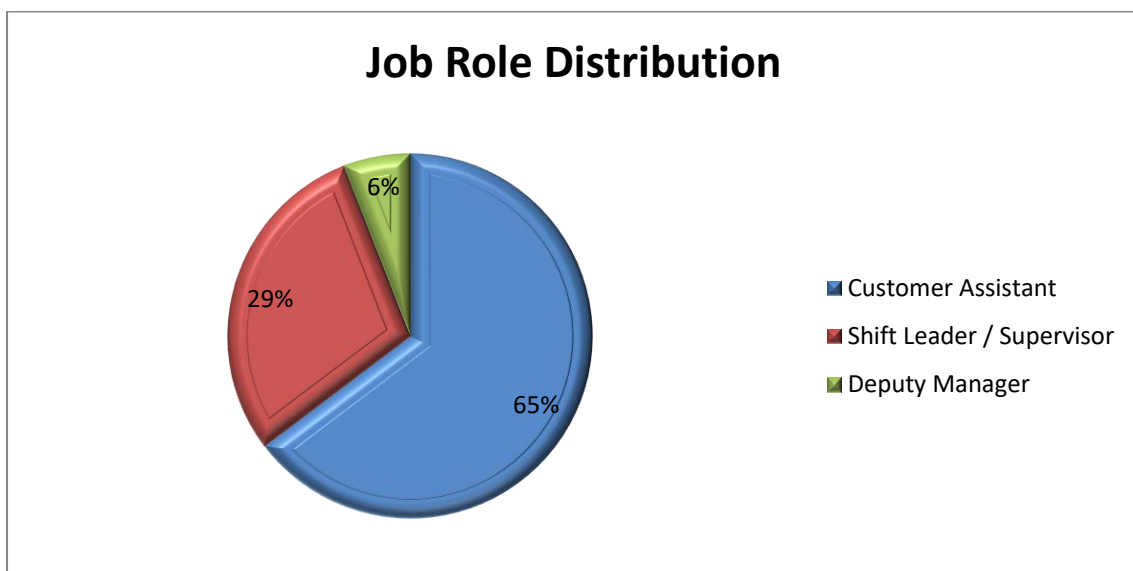


Figure 2: Job role distribution

4.3 Descriptive Statistics for Key Constructs

4.3.1 Construct-level descriptive statistics

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for main constructs (N = 17)

Construct	Number of items	Mean (1–5)	SD
Micromanagement intensity	6	3.63	1.05
Perceived impact of micromanagement	1	3.71	1.45
Autonomy and voice	3	2.73	1.01
Stress, anxiety and fatigue	4	3.19	1.00
Motivation and satisfaction	6	3.51	0.95
Supervision-related turnover intentions	2	3.29	1.23

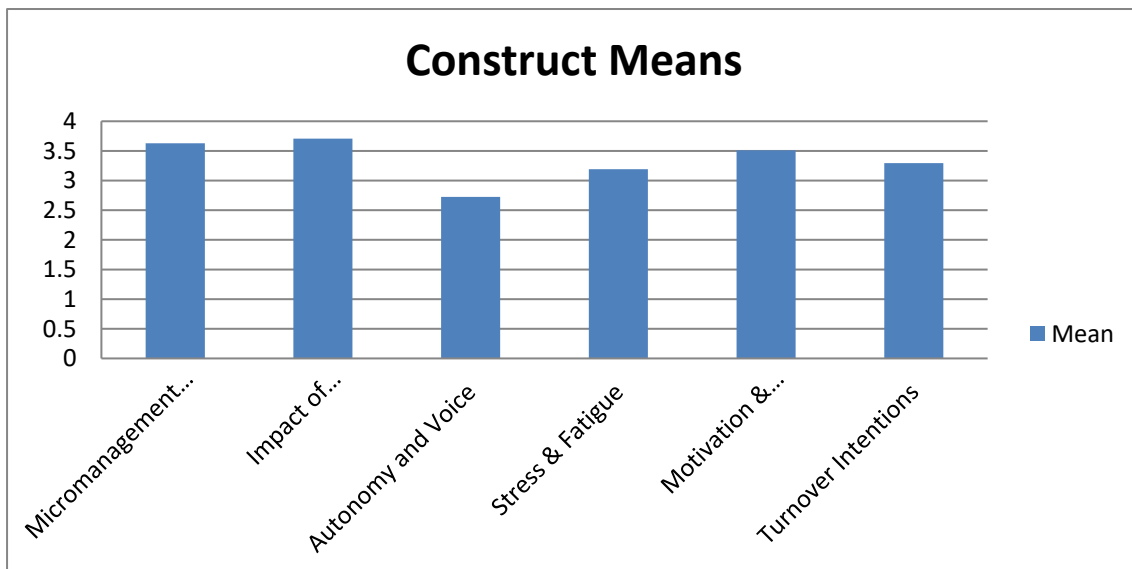


Figure 3: Mean scores for key constructs

Taken together, these construct-level means suggest that micromanagement is not an isolated or occasional experience but a relatively common supervisory pattern within the participating Lidl stores. The combination of high micromanagement scores and low autonomy is consistent with descriptions of controlling leadership in the literature, where excessive oversight is associated with reduced decision latitude and restricted voice (Allcorn, 2022; Galindez et al., 2024). This pattern directly addresses Research Question 1, indicating that micromanagement can indeed be considered a problem in budget supermarket settings.

4.3.2 Item-level descriptive patterns

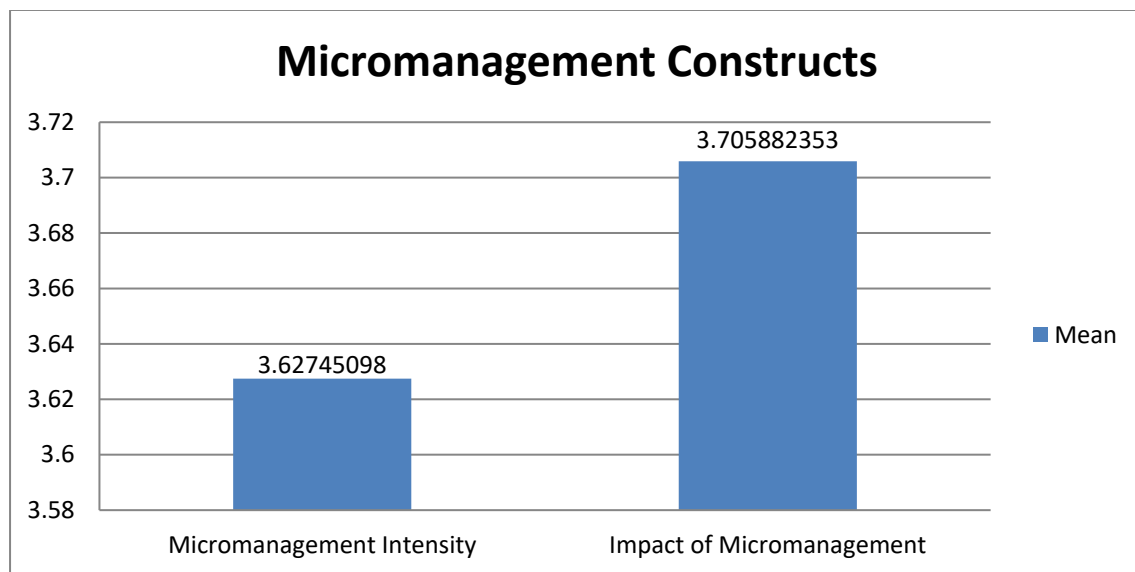


Figure 4: Micromanagement constructs

The results show that employees generally perceive a high level of supervisory control. Mean scores for items related to close monitoring, limited flexibility, and frequent checking ranged from 3.47 to 3.94, suggesting that many respondents experience constant oversight in their daily work. The item measuring the perceived impact of micromanagement on employee performance also produced a relatively high mean score of 3.71, indicating that employees feel such practices affect their ability to perform their roles effectively.

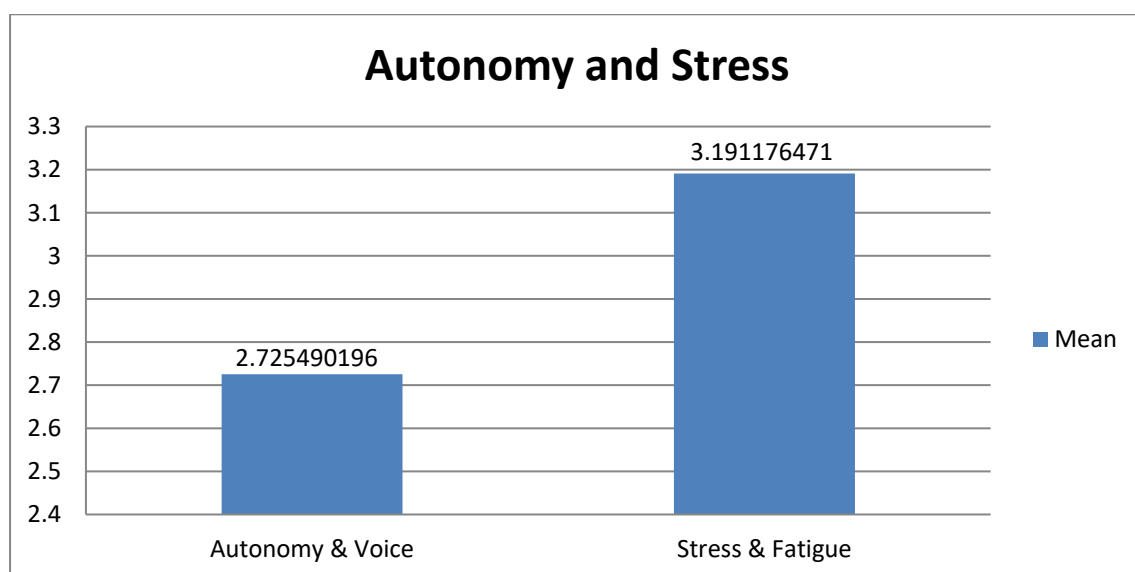


Figure 5: Autonomy and stress

The relatively low scores for autonomy and voice, combined with moderate levels of stress, anxiety and fatigue, align with the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) perspective that low control under high job demands elevates strain (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Schaufeli, 2017). In the context of Research Question 2, these findings suggest that micromanagement does not simply shape how work is organised but is likely to function as a psychological stressor that undermines employees' capacity to cope with existing retail demands.

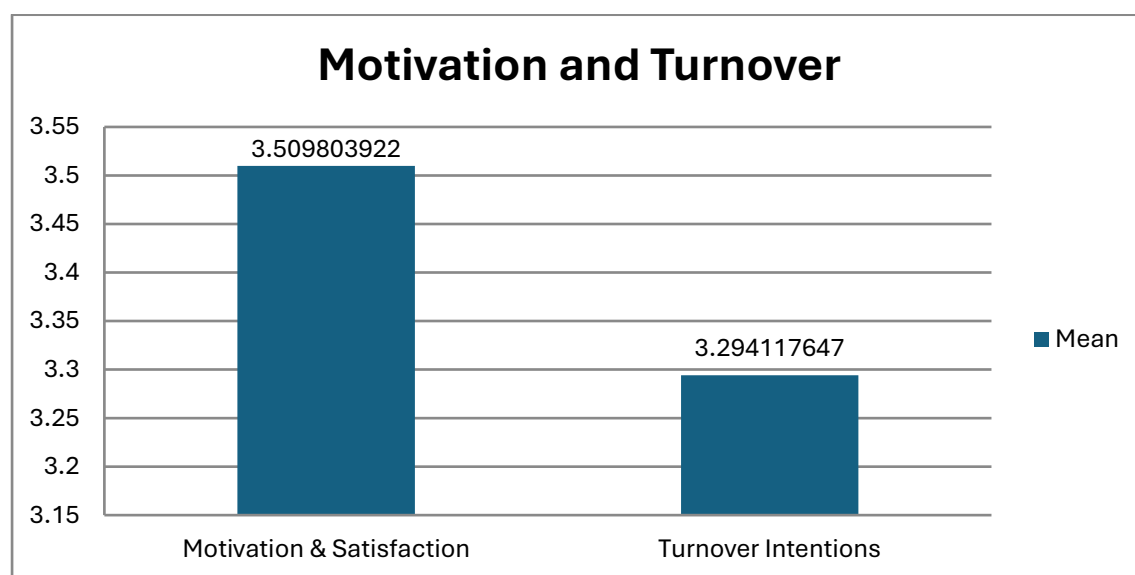


Figure 6: Motivation and turnover

The moderate levels of motivation and satisfaction, alongside noticeable supervision-related turnover intentions, indicate a fragile balance. While employees are not uniformly disengaged, the finding that supervision reduces enthusiasm for work suggests that micromanagement may gradually erode intrinsic motivation, as proposed by Ryan and Deci (2017) and supported by Mackey et al. (2017). This provides preliminary evidence for Research Question 3, implying that micromanagement may weaken engagement and contribute to employees considering leaving the organisation.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Composite scores were generated for each of the study's key constructs, namely micromanagement intensity (Q5–Q10), autonomy and voice (Q12–Q14), stress,

anxiety and fatigue (Q15–Q18), motivation and satisfaction (Q19, Q21–Q24, Q26), and supervision-related turnover intentions (Q20, Q25). These composite variables provided a clearer overview of how the main themes operated across the dataset. Following this, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationships between the constructs and to identify any significant patterns in how they interacted.

Table 3: Correlations between key constructs (N = 17)

(Values are Pearson's r ; bold indicates relatively strong associations, $|r| \geq 0.50$.)

Construct	1. Micromanagement	2. Autonomy & voice	3. Stress & fatigue	4. Motivation & satisfaction	5. Supervision- related turnover
1. Micromanagement	1.00	-0.50	0.72	-0.34	0.75
2. Autonomy & voice	-0.50	1.00	-0.51	0.51	-0.35
3. Stress & fatigue	0.72	-0.51	1.00	-0.38	0.83
4. Motivation & satisfaction	-0.34	0.51	-0.38	1.00	-0.44
5. Supervision- related turnover	0.75	-0.35	0.83	-0.44	1.00

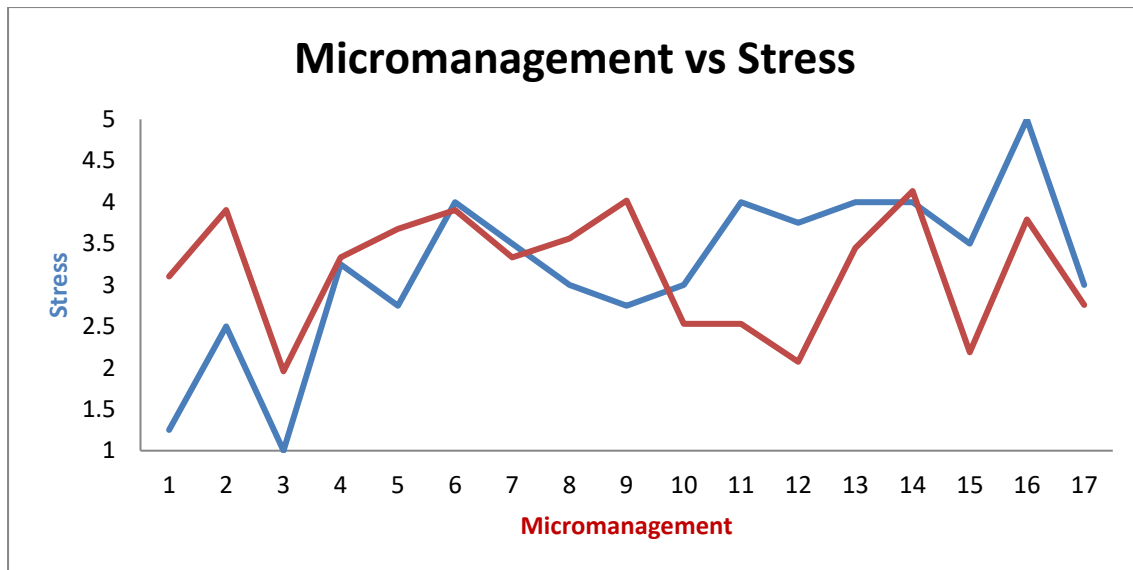


Figure 7: Micromanagement vs stress

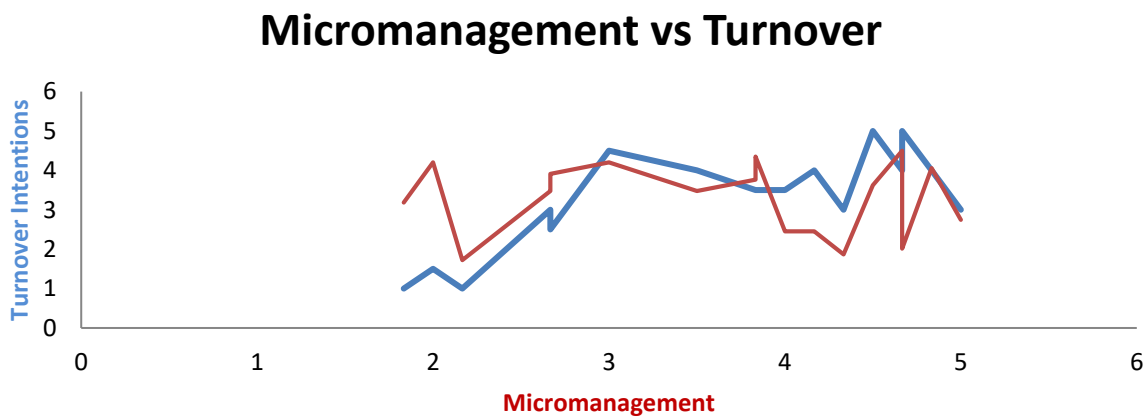


Figure 8: Micromanagement vs turnover

The correlation analysis revealed several clear patterns across the composite variables. Higher levels of micromanagement were strongly linked to increased stress and fatigue ($r = 0.72$), as well as stronger supervision-related turnover intentions ($r = 0.75$). This suggests that more intensive oversight is closely connected to both emotional strain and employees' thoughts of leaving the organisation. These findings align with Research Questions 2 and 3, which explored whether micromanagement affects psychological well-being and influences engagement and turnover intentions.

Micromanagement also showed a moderate negative association with autonomy and voice ($r = -0.50$), indicating that greater supervisory control tends to coincide with reduced opportunities for employees to make decisions or contribute ideas. This pattern is consistent with the JD-R framework, which proposes that decreases in key

resources, such as autonomy, intensify the effects of job demands, leading to strain (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). It also mirrors the findings of Allcorn (2022) and Lee et al. (2023), who argue that restrictive supervision undermines employee confidence and psychological safety.

In contrast, autonomy and voice demonstrated a positive relationship with motivation and satisfaction ($r = 0.51$), highlighting the importance of employee discretion in fostering more positive work attitudes. This supports long-established research showing autonomy as a major predictor of intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction (Humphrey et al., 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Finally, stress and fatigue were found to be strongly associated with turnover intentions ($r = 0.83$), suggesting that heightened psychological strain is a key factor in employees considering leaving their jobs, consistent with findings from Mackey et al. (2017) and recent retail industry reports.

Although these correlations are theoretically coherent and consistent with previous research, they should be interpreted cautiously due to the small sample size ($N = 17$). The relationships observed are therefore indicative rather than generalisable, but they nonetheless provide meaningful insight into how micromanagement may function as a psychological stressor within a budget retail environment.

4.5 Secondary data

Table 3. *Correlation Matrix Between Micromanagement Archetypes and Employee Outcomes*

<i>Micromanagement Archetype</i>	<i>Productivity</i>	<i>Trust in Leadership</i>	<i>Innovation Behavior</i>
1. The Boss Hawk	-0.38**	-0.45**	-0.31**
2. The Control Freak	-0.41**	-0.49**	-0.37**
3. The Endless Checker	-0.29**	-0.34**	-0.25**
4. The Task Interrupter	-0.33**	-0.30**	-0.29**
5. The Meeting Phanatic	-0.22**	-0.27**	-0.20**
6. The Nitpicker	-0.36**	-0.44**	-0.35**
7. The Idea Thief	-0.27**	-0.48**	-0.42**
8. The Trust-Phobic	-0.31**	-0.51**	-0.33**
9. The Insecure Boss	-0.34**	-0.47**	-0.30**
10. The Credit Hound	-0.25**	-0.40**	-0.39**

Interpretation of Correlation Coefficients (r): .00-.19 = Very Weak | .20-.39 = Weak | .40-.59 = Moderate | .60-.79 = Strong | .80-1.0 = Very Strong
*Note: All values significant at $p < .01$ (**).*

Figure 9: Jesus et al. (2025)

The secondary data from Jesus et al. (2025) provides valuable triangulation for the primary survey findings. Their results show that “toxic micromanagement” is associated with lower levels of trust, innovation and productivity across multiple organisational settings. These negative patterns closely mirror the correlations identified in the Lidl dataset, particularly the strong associations between micromanagement, stress and turnover intentions. Although the two datasets differ in

size and context, the consistency in directional trends strengthens the credibility of the present study's findings. The secondary data also suggests that the effects of micromanagement extend beyond psychological well-being to broader organisational outcomes, implying potential long-term consequences for performance in retail environments. This comparison supports the interpretation that micromanagement represents not only a supervisory style but a substantive organisational risk factor, reinforcing the relevance of Research Questions 1–3 within the Lidl context.

4.6 Data Quality, Validity and Reliability

Several steps were taken to enhance the validity and reliability of the quantitative data. The questionnaire items were informed by established constructs in the literature on micromanagement, job demands, autonomy and psychological well-being, which helped support content validity. Items were grouped into logically coherent constructs such as micromanagement intensity, autonomy and voice, stress and fatigue, motivation and satisfaction, and supervision-related turnover intentions, improving the clarity of measurement.

However, the study did not formally assess internal consistency reliability using statistics such as Cronbach's alpha. As a result, while the constructs are theoretically grounded, the reliability of the composite scales cannot be empirically confirmed within this dataset and should be treated with caution. In addition, the small sample size increases the risk that correlations may be influenced by a small number of extreme scores. The findings are therefore best interpreted as exploratory and indicative of patterns that warrant further investigation in larger, more diverse samples.

4.7 Summary

This chapter revealed the findings from the primary survey of Lidl employees and the secondary dataset from Jesus et al. (2025). Descriptive results showed high levels of micromanagement, low autonomy and moderate stress, motivation and satisfaction. Visual summaries indicated that close supervisory control was common, while opportunities for independent decision-making were limited. Correlation analysis revealed strong associations between micromanagement, stress and turnover intentions, and positive links between autonomy, motivation and satisfaction, consistent with JD-R predictions and previous research.

The triangulation with secondary data confirmed similar negative effects of micromanagement on outcomes such as trust, innovation and productivity. A brief validity and reliability review highlighted the exploratory nature of the findings due to the small sample size and absence of formal reliability testing. Overall, the chapter demonstrated that increased supervisory control is closely related to reduced psychological well-being and weaker workplace attitudes. The next chapter discusses these findings in relation to the wider literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an analytical discussion of the findings presented in Chapter 4 and interprets them in relation to the existing literature and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. The chapter explains how the results address the research questions and objectives, identifies the implications of the observed patterns, and reflects on the meaning of micromanagement within a budget supermarket environment. It then outlines the study's contributions, acknowledges limitations, and presents recommendations for practice and future research.

5.2 Discussion of Key Findings

Micromanagement as a Pervasive Supervisory Pattern

The study shows that micromanagement was experienced frequently and consistently by Lidl employees, as reflected in the high mean score for micromanagement intensity. This indicates not occasional oversight but a sustained managerial approach that shapes everyday workplace interactions. The finding aligns closely with descriptions of micromanagement in the literature, where constant checking, rigid control, and excessive involvement in minor details are viewed as characteristic features of this supervisory style (Allcorn, 2022; Lee et al., 2023). The high level of perceived supervisory control in the sample suggests that micromanagement is embedded in the operational culture of budget supermarkets, where efficiency, speed and procedural uniformity are emphasised.

Autonomy as a Restricted Workplace Resource

Autonomy and voice recorded the lowest scores among all constructs, indicating that employees felt they had limited freedom to make decisions or influence work processes. This pattern mirrors long-standing empirical findings that retail environments tend to offer limited discretion, partly due to task standardisation and performance monitoring. According to the JD-R model, autonomy is a critical job resource that allows employees to cope with job demands, build competence and maintain motivation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Its absence therefore has psychological consequences. In this study, the moderate-to-strong associations between autonomy, motivation and satisfaction demonstrate how reduced control may

weaken employees' positive attitudes toward their work. These findings reinforce the argument that autonomy is not merely a preference but a fundamental element of employee well-being (Humphrey et al., 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Stress and Emotional Strain as Consequences of Supervisory Control

The results show that stress, anxiety and fatigue were notable among respondents, and that these experiences were strongly correlated with micromanagement. This reflects the JD-R proposition that high demands combined with low job resources increase the likelihood of strain. The strong correlation between micromanagement and stress ($r = .72$) suggests that micromanagement is a central psychological stressor in this environment. The literature similarly highlights that constant supervision and limited discretion reduce psychological safety and increase emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli, 2017; Mackey et al., 2017). The findings therefore demonstrate a clear mechanism through which micromanagement contributes to discomfort and reduced well-being in retail settings.

Motivation and Satisfaction as Fragile Outcomes

Although motivation and job satisfaction mean scores were moderately positive, they were far from high, suggesting that employees remain functional but not highly engaged. The item indicating that supervision reduces enthusiasm for work underscores this fragility. The relationship between autonomy and motivation further illustrates that controlling practices undermine intrinsic motivation, a conclusion strongly supported by self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The presence of moderate motivation despite restrictive supervision may reflect employees' coping strategies, job familiarity or financial need, rather than genuine fulfilment. The findings suggest that motivation in this environment is dependent on external factors rather than intrinsic engagement, making it vulnerable to further declines if job demands increase.

Turnover Intentions and the Psychological Costs of Micromanagement

The study found strong associations between stress and supervision-related turnover intentions ($r = .83$), and between micromanagement and turnover intentions ($r = .75$). These results highlight that micromanagement is not only linked to reduced psychological well-being but also to employees considering leaving the organisation. This supports existing research showing that controlling leadership styles are a

consistent predictor of turnover intentions across industries (Mackey et al., 2017). In the context of budget retail, where turnover rates are historically high, micromanagement may be a significant contributor to retention challenges. These findings emphasise the practical implications of supervisory behaviour, as turnover imposes financial and operational costs on organisations.

Triangulation with Secondary Data

The integration of secondary data from Jesus et al. (2025) reinforces the primary findings. Their research identified negative relationships between toxic micromanagement and organisational outcomes such as productivity, trust and innovation across a large multi-industry sample. The convergence of these patterns with the Lidl findings strengthens the argument that micromanagement is harmful both to individual psychological states and broader organisational performance. Triangulation therefore enhances the credibility and contextual relevance of the study's conclusions.

5.3 Conclusions in Relation to the Research Aim and Questions

The aim of the research was to examine the psychological impact of micromanagement on employees working in budget supermarkets, using Lidl as a case study. The evidence gathered supports the conclusion that micromanagement has clear and measurable psychological consequences in this environment.

The first research question asked whether micromanagement is a problem in budget supermarkets. The findings demonstrate that employees perceive close supervisory control as common, intrusive and impactful, confirming that micromanagement is indeed a significant issue in this sector.

The second question concerned whether micromanagement has psychological effects on employees. The results show strong associations with stress, fatigue and reduced motivation, indicating that micromanagement acts as a psychological stressor. This conclusion is further supported by the JD-R model and corresponding literature.

The third question examined the influence of micromanagement on engagement and turnover intentions. The strong positive correlations between micromanagement, stress and intentions to leave suggest that micromanagement reduces engagement and increases the likelihood of turnover.

The final research question asked what strategies could be implemented to reduce the negative effects of micromanagement. The findings indicate that reducing unnecessary monitoring, increasing autonomy and strengthening employee voice would mitigate many of the negative outcomes identified.

5.4 Contribution of the Study

This study makes an original contribution by applying the JD-R model to frontline retail work within a budget supermarket context, an area that has received limited academic attention. It provides quantitative evidence showing how micromanagement affects psychological well-being in a sector characterised by procedural rigidity and high performance expectations. The use of triangulation enhances methodological rigour and demonstrates the broader applicability of the findings. The research also highlights the importance of considering psychological factors in operationally focused environments, which may influence managerial development, staff retention strategies and organisational culture.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The study has several limitations. The sample was small and limited to 17 employees from Lidl stores in London, which restricts the generalisability of the findings.

The convenience sampling used may also introduce selection bias, as participants who chose to take part might differ from those who did not. The self-report nature of the questionnaire may be affected by mood, social desirability or personal bias, and the absence of formal reliability testing limits statistical certainty. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design prevents causal inferences, meaning that although the relationships observed are strong, they cannot confirm the direction of causality. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings and planning future research.

5.6 Recommendations for Practice

The findings suggest that micromanagement poses psychological risks and undermines workplace attitudes in budget supermarket environments. Organisations like Lidl would benefit from adopting autonomy-supportive leadership practices that promote employee discretion, encourage problem-solving and reduce unnecessary oversight. Managerial training should focus on developing trust-based supervision,

constructive feedback skills and strategies for delegating responsibility effectively. Enhancing employee voice through regular communication forums, anonymous feedback systems and participatory decision-making could strengthen motivation and psychological safety. Systematic well-being assessments, such as periodic surveys or confidential check-ins, would help identify early signs of strain. Finally, providing clear career progression pathways, job rotation opportunities and skill development initiatives may boost motivation and reduce turnover intentions.

5.7 Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies should aim to use larger and more diverse samples across multiple stores, regions and supermarket chains to strengthen generalisability. Longitudinal research would offer deeper insight into how micromanagement and psychological well-being evolve over time and whether managerial interventions lead to measurable improvements. Mixed-methods approaches combining surveys with interviews or focus groups could capture richer narratives and clarify how employees interpret supervisory behaviour. Future research should also examine additional organisational outcomes such as performance, customer satisfaction and absenteeism to understand the wider impact of micromanagement. Exploring contextual factors—such as staffing levels, store size and workload intensity—may further illuminate how retail environments shape the experience of micromanagement.

5.8 Summary of Chapter 5

This chapter has interpreted the quantitative findings through the lens of existing literature and the JD-R model, demonstrating that micromanagement has significant psychological and organisational implications for employees in budget supermarkets. The study concludes that micromanagement increases stress, restricts autonomy, weakens motivation and contributes to turnover intentions. The chapter also outlined the study's contributions, limitations and practical recommendations, and suggested avenues for future research. Together, the findings underscore the importance of leadership practices that balance operational control with employee autonomy to support well-being and performance in retail environments.

6.References

- Allcorn, S., 2022. Micromanagement in the workplace. *Organisational and Social Dynamics*, 22(1), pp.83-98.
- Bakker, A.B. and Demerouti, E., 2017. Job demands–resources theory: taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 22(3), p.273.
- Bhave, D.P., 2014. The invisible eye? Electronic performance monitoring and employee job performance. *Personnel psychology*, 67(3), pp.605-635.
- Brotheridge, C.M. and Grandey, A.A., 2002. Emotional labor and burnout: Comparing two perspectives of “people work”. *Journal of vocational behavior*, 60(1), pp.17-39.
- Bryman, A., 2016. *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th edition. Sage Publications.
- De Jonge, J., Van Vegchel, N., Shimazu, A., Schaufeli, W. and Dormann, C., 2010. A longitudinal test of the demand–control model using specific job demands and specific job control. *International journal of behavioral medicine*, 17(2), pp.125-133.
- Delgado, O., Strauss, E.M. and Ortega, M.A., 2015. Micromanagement: When to avoid it and how to use it effectively. *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy*, 72(10), pp.772-776.
- Edmondson, A., 1999. Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative science quarterly*, 44(2), pp.350-383.
- Galindez, J.P., Arias, J.P. and Bragas, C.M. (2024) ‘Micromanagement on employee performance: A killer or motivator’, *International Journal for Research Trends in Social Science & Humanities*, 2(4), pp. 312–339.
- Ghani, B., 2022. ‘Work stress, technological change and job insecurity in the retail sector’, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 935741

Giauque, D., Anderfuhren-Biget, S., & Varone, F. (2014). Stress and turnover intentions in international organizations: Social support and work–life balance as resources. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25(12), 1796–1815

Grant Thornton, 2024. Clearing roadblocks to retail employee satisfaction. [Clearing roadblocks to retail employee satisfaction | Grant Thornton](#)

Humphrey, S.E., Nahrgang, J.D. and Morgeson, F.P., 2007. Integrating motivational, social, and contextual work design features: a meta-analytic summary and theoretical extension of the work design literature. *Journal of applied psychology*, 92(5), p.1332.

Jesus, R.M., Santos, L.A., Ramirez, J.P. and Lee, D.H. ,2025. 'Toxic micromanagement in the workplace: Its impact on employee productivity, trust, and innovation', *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 46(1), pp. 38–47. [JESTMI-2.pdf](#)

Korunka, C. and Kubicek, B., 2017. Job demands in a changing world of work. In *Job demands in a changing world of work: Impact on workers' health and performance and implications for research and practice* (pp. 1-5). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Lee, J., Ahn, S., Henning, M.A., van de Ridder, J.M. and Rajput, V., 2023. Micromanagement in clinical supervision: a scoping review. *BMC Medical Education*, 23(1), p.563.

Lee, J., Chiang, F. F. T., van Esch, E., & Cai, Z. (2019). Why and when servant leadership facilitates team cohesion and helping behaviours: A multilevel analysis. *Human Resource Management*, 58(4), 441–456

Mackey, J.D., Frieder, R.E., Brees, J.R. and Martinko, M.J., 2017. Abusive supervision: A meta-analysis and empirical review. *Journal of management*, 43(6), pp.1940-1965.

Manz, C. C., & Sims, H. P. (2001). The new superleadership: Leading others to lead themselves. *Berrett-Koehler Publishers*.

Parker, S.K., 2014. Beyond motivation: Job and work design for development, health, ambidexterity, and more. *Annual review of psychology*, 65(1), pp.661-691.

Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory. Basic psychological needs in motivation, development and wellness*. New York, NY : Guilford Press

Santiago-Torner, C., Ariza-Montes, A., Han, H., Leal-Rodríguez, A.-L. and Giorgi, G. (2024) 'The relationship between ethical leadership and emotional exhaustion: The role of autonomy', *Systems*, 12(11), 454.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019) *Research Methods for Business Students*. 8th ed. Pearson Education Limited.

Schaufeli, W.B., 2017. Applying the Job Demands-Resources model: A 'how to' guide to measuring and tackling work engagement and burnout. *Organizational dynamics*, 46(2), pp.120-132.

Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association (SDA), 2025. *Under Pressure: The Hidden Cost of Supermarket Work* [SDA-Under-Pressure-Report-V8-DIGITAL.pdf](#)

Siegel, R., König, C.J. and Lazar, V., 2022. The impact of electronic monitoring on employees' job satisfaction, stress, performance, and counterproductive work behavior: A meta-analysis. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 8, p.100227.

Taylor, F.W., 1911. *The principles of scientific management*. NuVision Publications, LLC.

Totterdell, P. and Holman, D., 2003. Emotion regulation in customer service roles: testing a model of emotional labor. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 8(1), p.55.

Tuckey, M.R., Bakker, A.B. and Dollard, M.F., 2012. Empowering leaders optimize working conditions for engagement: a multilevel study. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 17(1), p.15.

White, R. D. (2010). The micromanagement disease: Symptoms, diagnosis, and cure. *Public Personnel Management*, 39(1), 71–76

Appendix I: Questionnaires

Exploring the Psychological Impact of Micromanagement of workforce in budget supermarket; A case of Lidl

This questionnaire is part of an academic research project examining how micromanagement affects employees working in budget supermarkets, with a particular focus on Lidl.

Your responses will help provide insight into how different management behaviours may influence stress, motivation, job satisfaction, and overall work experience.

The questionnaire should take approximately 5–7 minutes to complete.

All responses are anonymous, no personal details are collected, and you may withdraw at any time.

Thank you for your participation.

* Indică o întrebare obligatorie

Section A: Demographic Information

1. What is your age group? *

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55 or above

2. What is your gender? *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say

3. What is your job role at Lidl? *

- ☐ Customer Assistant
- ☐ Shift Leader / Supervisor
- ☐ Deputy Manager
- ☐ Store Manager

4. How long have you been working at Lidl? *

- ☐ Less than 3 months
- ☐ 3–12 months
- ☐ 1–2 years
- ☐ 2–5 years
- ☐ 5 years +

Section B: Micromanagement

Please respond to the following statements using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

5. My supervisor closely monitors every detail of my work. *

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

6. I feel that I am not trusted to make small decisions on my own. *

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

7. My tasks must be completed exactly as instructed, with little flexibility. *

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

8. My supervisor frequently checks up on me even when it is not necessary. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. I receive overly detailed instructions that limit my ability to use my own judgment *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. I feel that my supervisor controls my work more than is needed. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. Micromanagement affects employee performance at Lidl. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section C: Autonomy & Job Control

Please respond to the following statements using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

12. I have enough freedom to decide how to carry out my daily tasks *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. I feel I can take initiative without fear of being criticised. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. I am given opportunities to contribute my own ideas at work. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section D: Stress & Psychological Pressure

Please respond to the following statements using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

15. I often feel stressed because of the way my work is supervised. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

16. The level of monitoring at work makes me anxious. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. I feel mentally drained at the end of my shifts. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. I worry about making mistakes because of strict supervision. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section E: Motivation & Job Satisfaction

Please respond to the following statements using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

19. I feel motivated to do my job well. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. The way I am supervised reduces my enthusiasm for work. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. I am satisfied with the level of support I receive from my supervisor. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. I enjoy my work at Lidl. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section F: Engagement & Turnover Intentions

Please respond to the following statements using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

23. I feel committed to staying in my job in the near future. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

24. I feel committed to staying in my job in the near future. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

25. I sometimes think about leaving this job because of the way I am supervised. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

26. I would recommend Lidl as a positive workplace to others. *

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix II: Ethic form

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

RESEARCH STUDENTS

This form is to be completed by the student within SIX months for full-time students and TWELVE months for part-time students, after the commencement of the research degree or following progression to Part Two of your course.
Once complete, submit the form via the [UWTSD Central College Portal](#) or [Ethics Approval email](#).
This document is also available to download.

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to ethics@uwtswd.ac.uk, with the Ethical Approval followed by your name.
STUDENTS ON NON-ACADEMIC OR TAUGHT MATTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form and receive the outcome via systems registered to you by the supervisor/colleague.

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

10 Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?

YES

NO

IF YES, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate).

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1

Initiative title

Exploring the Psychological Impact of Micromanagement of workforce in budget Supermarket: A case of Lidl

2

Proposed start date

30/09/2025

Proposed end date

31/12/2025

3

Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section)

Ensure that you write for a **Non-Specialist Audience** when outlining your response to the points below:
Purpose of Research Activity
Micromanagement, briefly, how **Excessive Research** has informed the proposed activity and explain how the research activity will add to the body of knowledge for it addresses an area of importance.
Purpose of Research Activity
This project aims to explore how micromanagement affects the mental well-being of employees working in budget supermarkets, using Lidl as an example. In many retail settings, staff work under strict supervision and have limited freedom to make decisions. These conditions may lead to higher stress levels, reduced motivation, and lower job satisfaction. The study seeks to understand how such close managerial control influences employees' feelings, motivations, and general attitude toward their jobs. Although previous studies have discussed micromanagement in offices or healthcare, there is little research on this issue in supermarkets. By focusing on Lidl, this study hopes to highlight the psychological effects of micromanagement in retail and suggest practical ways to create a healthier, more supportive workplace.
Research Question
1. Is micromanagement a problem in budget supermarkets?
2. Are there psychological effects of micromanagement on employees?
3. How does micromanagement influence employee engagement and turnover intentions?
4. What strategies can be implemented to reduce the negative effects of micromanagement in budget retail settings?
Aims of Research Activity
The main goal of this research is to examine how micromanagement influences the psychological state of employees in the retail sector. The study intends to find out how strict managerial control can cause stress and reduce motivation, while also identifying possible solutions to improve working conditions and employee morale in organisations like Lidl.

4

Objectives of Research Activity

To explore how micromanagement affects stress, motivation, and job satisfaction among Lidl employees.
To analyse the connection between close managerial control and psychological outcomes such as burnout or disengagement.
To identify leadership approaches that can limit the negative effects of micromanagement.
To offer practical recommendations for supporting employee well-being and productivity in the retail environment.
Proposed methods (maximum 500 words)
Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
The study will use a mixed-method approach, combining both secondary and primary data.
Secondary data will come from published sources such as academic journals, company reports, and industry statistics related to management style, employee well-being, and job satisfaction in retail. These documents will help provide background information and context for the research.
Primary data will be collected through a short online questionnaire completed by current Lidl employees. The questionnaire will include simple statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale (for example, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). The questions will cover areas such as management behaviour, autonomy at work, levels of stress, motivation, and job satisfaction. The survey will take around 3-4 minutes to complete.
Participants will be adults (aged 18 or above) currently working at Lidl in the UK. The survey link will be shared with employees who may also pass on to their colleagues. This allows voluntary participation without pressure or obligation. No personal data such as names, store numbers, or IP addresses will be collected, ensuring complete anonymity.
Data will be downloaded securely and analysed using Excel or SPSS. The results will be presented using simple statistics such as averages and correlations to explore relationships between micromanagement and psychological outcomes.
All secondary sources will be cited properly, and all procedures will follow the UWTSD Research Ethics Code, the UK GDPR, and the Data Protection Act 2018.
Location of research activity
Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
Research activity outside of the UK
If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those used in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues related to the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this.

10

Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT publicly available?

NO

YES

IF YES, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales.
this box should remain as you type

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

1

UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice

IS

2

UWTSD Research Data Management Policy

IS

3

Just any other relevant documents here?

NO

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

1

Is your research externally funded?

YES

NO

2

Are you a member of a RESEARCH SOCIETY?

YES

NO

3

Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?

Voluntary

Employed

4

Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD/Industry/Professional Learning Partnership (ALP)?

YES

NO

5

Has permission to undertake the research been provided by the partner organisation?

YES

NO

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

1

Will the research activity include:

Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?

YES

NO

2

Use of interviews?

YES

NO

3

Use of focus groups?

YES

NO

4

Use of participant diaries?

YES

NO

5

Use of video or audio recording?

YES

NO

6

Use of computer-generated log files?

YES

NO

7

Participant observation with their knowledge?

YES

NO

8

Participant observation without their knowledge?

YES

NO

9

Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?

YES

NO

10

Administration of any questionnaires, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically harmful or emotionally harmful / offensive?

YES

NO

11

Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?

YES

NO

12

Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?

YES

NO

13

Use of procedures that involve deception?

YES

NO

14

Administration of any substances, agent or placebo?

YES

NO

15

Working with live vertebrate animals?

YES

NO

16

Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?

YES

NO

17

Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.

YES

NO

18

Details of any other primary data collection method:

46

[this box should expand as you type]			

If **NO** to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If **YES** to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

Who are the intended participants:		YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 16 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a participant?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specify any group who may be unable to give consent.		
Details of any other participant groups		☐	☒

[this box should expand as you type]

Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?
11	Who will the participants be?

25-26
Participants will be current L1 employees who work in different roles such as cashiers, shift supervisors, and team leaders
[this box should expand as you type]

3	
Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.	
n/a	

[this box should expand as you type]

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

Does the research involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) "GDPR" and the Data Protection Act 2018 ("DPA"))?		YES	NO
1	"Personal data" means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (data subject). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, material, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any data or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	☐	☒
If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected.			
2			
Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?		YES	NO
"Special category data" means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subject's: (a) race or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetic data. If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected.		☐	☒
3			
Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?		YES	NO
5	Manual files (e.g. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☒	☐
9	Laptop computers / Cloud Portable disk-drive/ memory sticks?	☐	☒
10	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other - specify:	☐	☒
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected: data confidentiality including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, access restriction and pseudonymisation. N/A		

12	
How will you identify the participants?	How will you identify the participants? Participants will be identified through convenience and snowball methods within the retail environment. The online questionnaire link will be shared among L1 employees who are willing to participate and may choose to forward it to their colleagues.

[this box should expand as you type]

Information for participants:		YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☐	☐	☒
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	Will you inform participants of the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you deliver participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			

[this box should expand as you type]

Information for participants:		YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☒	☐	☐
25	Is specialist electronic or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			

[this box should expand as you type]

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.
If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaboration) you may append that to this form.

1	
Full risk assessment completed and appended?	
YES NO	
2	
Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information. n/a [this box should expand as you type]	
3	
If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or conflicting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any responsibilities (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, current procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities. n/a [this box should expand as you type]	
4	
Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harassment, property, conflict of interest. Risk to the investigator [this box should expand as you type]	
5	
Universal/organisational risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection [this box should expand as you type]	
6	
Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems [this box should expand as you type]	
7	
Disclosure and Flaming Service If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Flaming Service (DFS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants. 7 Does your research require you to hold a current DFS Certificate? YES NO N/A 8 If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "N/A". In this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number.	

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	
Feedback What feedback and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?	
n/a	
2	
Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If getting consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.	

SECTION K: Declaration

The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website [this box should expand as you type]	
1	Signature of applicant: Date: 19/10/2025

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Signature of Student/Supervisor: Or Affirm Member	Date: 19/10/2025
3	Signature: [Signature]	

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:	Date:
5	Signature: [Signature]	

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle.
☒	I have attached a copy of the form approved from external organisation (where appropriate).
☒	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate). ONLY IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DfG/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.

RESEARCH STUDENTS ONLY Once complete, submit this form via the MU300 Academic College Portal at https://myself.mdu.ac.uk	
RESEARCH STAFF ONLY	