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Strength in Numbers: How Social Resources Travel Together to Increase Employee Engagement

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ABSTRACT

Based on a 2021 survey of 273 Australian workers across a range of occupations and industries, our structural equation modelling showed that workplace inclusion is a key driver of social resources for building employee engagement within the organisation. Relative to conservation of resources theory, we discovered that social support, social capital, and workplace inclusion travel as 'resource caravans' in which a series of inter-relationships are activated that optimises their effectiveness in building employee engagement. Specifically, employees' experiences of social support has a direct effect on employee engagement while social capital needs to be mediated by experiences of workplace inclusion in order for social capital to influence employees' engaged state. In addition to the direct effect, social capital and social support reciprocally interact as concurrent resources that influence employee engagement through workplace inclusion. Meanwhile, social support increases its impact on employee engagement when mediated by workplace inclusion. We discuss HR practice implications for cultivating social support and social capital via workplace inclusion initiatives, thatas a package of job resources, offer clear efficiency improvements in building employee engagement.

1 | Introduction

This article reports on a pilot study designed to examine how cultivating a suite of social resources consisting of social support, social capital and workplace inclusion acts in beneficial ways that enhance employee engagement. Fostering social resources is a useful strategy for HR professionals since strengthening employee engagement (EE) is a valuable workplace output for optimizing workforce capabilities (Bailey 2022; Davis and Southey 2024). This is particularly of interest as organisations cope with impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic (Zacher and Rudolph 2021), address global labour shortages and pressures to retain existing staff (Fernandes et al. 2023), adapt to workplace change and remote work and technological disruption (Ancillo et al. 2023), and manage employee burn-out and work exhaustion (Yeves et al. 2022). In the current climate, strengthening EE can play a pivotal role in improving both the general well-being of employees and their performance (Boccoli et al. 2023). Yet, tensions such as those listed above, have the potential to undermine a worker's experience of EE as an accessible 'job resource' to counterbalance the resource stresses (Hobfoll et al. 2018), that employees encounter at work.

This pilot study explores social capital, social support and workplace inclusion as a cooperative set of job resources, with recent early research suggesting that social capital (and human capital) is associated with both workplace inclusion (and exclusion) in an exploratory study by Metz et al. (2022). Further, in pursuing the agenda about how workplace inclusion effects workplace dynamics, Nguyen et al. (2024) noted in their recent scoping review that inclusion research appears to link the inclusion construct mostly to contexts of disability, gender identity, and

Summary

- Job resources, such as workplace inclusion, social support, and social capital, provide essential "resource supplies" that support employee engagement by offsetting job demands.
- Specific mixes of job resources have a resource caravan effect that co-exist resulting in stronger support for employee engagement.
- Workplace inclusion acts as a linchpin resource that boosts the ability of social support and social capital to positively influence employee engagement.

cultural diversity, with a need to measure workplace inclusion beyond these contexts. As much remains to be learned about advancing inclusion, including modelling the complex dynamics between antecedents and outcomes of workplace inclusion (Nguyen et al. 2024), this article provides preliminary empirical insights that contribute towards progressing our knowledge about how bundles of job resources facilitate a process for building more highly engaged and inclusive workplaces.

This article draws on conservation of resource (COR) theory to demonstrate that EE can be cultivated by optimising the concurrent effects—as opposed to the cumulative effects—of a selected suite of social resources. Specifically, we examine the interplay between social support (Jolly et al. 2021), social capital (Soane et al. 2012; Decuypere and Schaufeli 2020), and workplace inclusion (Ferdman 2017; Shore et al. 2018; Metz et al. 2022; Garg and Sangwan 2020), describing them as 'resource caravans' that travel together in passageways as a pack of resources (Hobfoll et al. 2018) to bolster EE. Definitions of these and other major concepts used in this article are provided in Table 1. Here, we explore an existing research gap related to how packages of social resources can combine to support a goal (Halbesleben et al. 2014), such as in the work context by enabling individuals to enhance their sense of EE. This aim extends research by Schmidt and Keil (2013), Hakanen et al. (2011), Halbesleben and Wheeler (2015), and Malik and Garg (2017), and more recently by Sonnentag and Meier (2024) representing how various job resources increase in value that in turn influence work outcomes. Our findings identify implications for designing HR practices that can bolster resource gains for increasing EE.

Moreover, while research related to how resources can accumulate to provide resource gains has received growing interest in recent times (Zhai et al. 2020; Kidron and Vinarski-Peretz 2024), resources can also dynamically decline (Hobfoll 1998), significantly affecting people's well-being (Downes et al. 2021) when resources are lost. Scholars have stopped short of investigating the concurrent effects of resource caravans on EE and identifying which types or mix of complementary resources travel together to influence outcomes (Hobfoll et al. 2018; Halbesleben et al. 2014). Exactly how resources can be distributed in workplaces is not well known (Fujimoto et al. 2023) yet it provides extremely important consequences for how well individuals can recover from resource losses for example, from burnout and overwork, within a passageway to accumulate future resource gains (Sonnentag and Meier 2024; Bakker et al. 2023). Thus, the extent to which individuals may not always be able to best utilise their resources (Kidron and Vinarski-Peretz 2024), suggests that a significant gap in the literature relates to better exploring how the packaging of resources will positively influence employees'

TABLE 1 | Summary of major constructs.

Construct	Definition
Employee engagement (EE)	A practitioner's view of EE might be the level of a worker's enthusiasm, involvement and satisfaction with their work (Bailey 2022, 3)
Conservation of resource (COR) theory	People seek to acquire and conserve personal, social, and material resources for survival which, in part, helps us understand workers' behaviours in response to work-related stress (Hobfoll et al. 2018, 104)
Job resources	Physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that aid in achieving work goals, and/or lessen job demands and associated physiological and psychological costs, and/or promote personal growth and development (Schaufeli and Bakker 2010)
Resource caravans	The accumulation and coexistence of personal, social, and material resources that 'travel' in packs or 'caravans' which may result in positive outcomes (Hobfoll et al. 2018; Zhai et al. 2020)
Social resources (at work)	The combination of social support, social capital, and workplace inclusion as specifically examined in this article
Social support (at work)	An employee's access to others in their network for help, comfort and/or validation that can be psychological, informational and/or physical in nature.
Social capital (at work)	The communal benefits that employees gain from a collective network of connections within which trustful and reciprocal interactions occur among peers (bonding), and with others from different hierarchical levels and organisations (bridging) (Tsounis et al. 2023)
Workplace inclusion	A process that aims for people of all identities and many styles to be fully themselves while also contributing to the larger collective, as valued and full members in the workplace (Ferdman 2017)

work engagement. Specifically, what scholars and practitioners should learn from the current study relates to a rhetorical question as to what kinds of social resources (if any) will enable employees to be highly engaged.

At present, workplace inclusion has not, to our knowledge, been included in studies measuring EE. Further, beyond the health-context research, such as in studies by Jutengren et al. (2020) and Othman and Nasurdin (2013), the effects of social resources on EE are ambiguous in the literature with further studies necessary to assess their effects across industry contexts. The upcoming conceptual diagram in Figure 1 illustrates that this article addresses a weakness in the literature and practitioner knowledge as to the concurrent impact of workplace inclusion, social support and social capital on EE, when these resources are packaged as 'resource caravans'.

1.1 | Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

Theoretically underpinning this article is the conversation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll et al. 2018). The fundamental tenet of COR theory is that "people will strive to obtain, retain, foster and protect things they centrally value", that is, resources (Hobfoll et al. 2018, 106). Resources can be object/physical, condition, personal, or energy, with the propensity for resource 'loss spirals' to be much faster and more powerful than resource 'gain spirals' that develop more slowly and are intrinsically weak (Halbesleben et al. 2014). When a person's resources are repeatedly threatened or eroded, this creates a loss spiral to the point of desperation where resource losses are compensated by a need to invest more resources in order to conserve resources or create new ones. At this point, the desperation principle posits that to 'preserve the self', people engage in defensive behaviours resulting in withdrawal or becoming aggressive and/or irrational (Hobfoll et al. 2018, 106). COR theory suggests that during this defensive withdrawal time, a person can wait for further assistance and the stressor to pass and/or find a new coping strategy (Hobfoll 2012).

The propensity for a resource loss can be reduced or stabilised in workplace settings if specific combinations of resources are available to a person. This ideation refers to Hobfoll et al. (2018, 106) description of 'resource caravans' in which "resources do not exist individually but travel in packs, or caravans, for both individuals and organizations". Packaging different forms of workplace supports could potentially create resource caravans that combine to produce a goal oriented outcome (Halbesleben et al. 2014). Resource caravans, for instance, were evident in a package of three (3) resources consisting of: coworker support, supervisor support, and 'thriving at work', that led to positive effects on Chinese workers' life satisfaction (Zhai et al. 2020). In essence, COR theory posits that resource caravans supply concurrent and combinative resources in pursuit of a positive outcome. As illustrated in the conceptual diagram in Figure 1, 'resource caravans' are analogous to how a caravan of tethered pack camels carry essential supplies through harsh desert landscapes to reach a far-off place. Similarly, packaging a supply of social resources consisting of social support, social capital, and workplace inclusion, transports essential EE sustaining resources for employees as they navigate periods of resource scarcity or instability.

Based on previous studies that have shown how personal intrinsic resources such as self-esteem, optimism, and self-efficacy are closely tied to social resources such as mutual trust, respect, and understanding amongst peers (Jolly et al. 2021), other combinative resources within the personal and social resources will need to be fostered and nurtured concurrently (Zhang et al. 2022). However, this begs the question as to the quality and makeup of resources accentuating the gain and loss cycle which can be described as "amplifying loops in which cyclic relationships among constructs build on each other positively over time" (Salanova et al. 2010, 119). Cyclic and concurrent relationships have their roots within the fundamental tenets of COR theory. That is, people who already possess resources are more likely to gain more, whereas those who lack resources are more vulnerable to resource loss (Hobfoll 1998; De Cuyper et al. 2022; Ford et al. 2023).

Within a caravan perspective of which resources have a reciprocal and concurrent effect on at outcome, this again raises the question as to which resources should take part in a gain cycle as well as a loss cycle. Sonnentag and Meier (2024, 159–160) suggest that the choice of resources with caravaning effects depend on how these are categorized and go together for example, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism with personal resources, and social support and social power with job related resources. Hobfoll (2012, 230), suggests while resources have often disparate theoretical origins, they 'run in packs' and are intimately tied to one another developmentally or ecologically. Personal resources for instance are highly correlated with social support

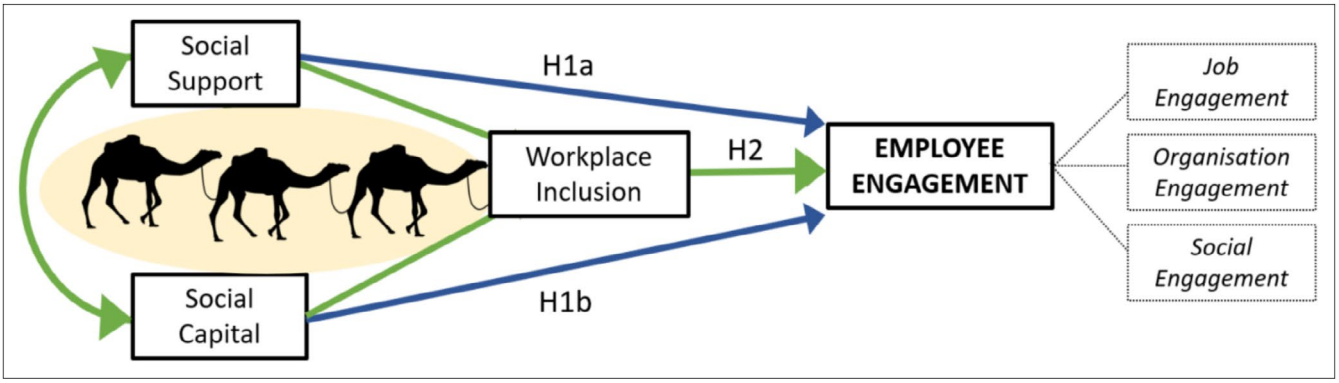

FIGURE 1 | Hypothesised model of resource caravans supplying a suite of social resources for employee engagement.

in extant studies (see Brissette et al. 2002; Rogers et al. 2008). Similarly, and more recently, Chen et al. (2024) found that social support and psychological capital (personal resources) were further mediated by another group of personal resources (emotional exhaustion, personality disintegration, and reduced sense of achievement) that ultimately influenced turnover intention.

In a study related to how contexts influence resource passageways, Brennan et al. (2024) found in a study of leader-member exchange (LMX) and employee engagement, that a resource-rich context—high job security and strong welfare-oriented HR practices—differed to a resource-poor context—fewer financial resources and employment precarity. The study found that LMX was a valuable predictor of employee engagement in the resource poor context compared to the resource rich one where a weaker relationship between LMX and employee engagement was found. In arguing a case as we do in the current study that certain resources have concurrent effects on employee engagement, we heed Sonnentag and Meier (2024, 161), that when considering which resources combine to influence an outcome, researchers need to move "beyond intuition, change, convenience or tradition" and consider how resources change over time. While we do not consider temporal effects in the current study which is also limited by a cross-sectional design, we follow the advice of scholars as to which resources more likely to have reciprocal and concurrent effects (Halbesleben et al. 2014; Bakker et al. 2023; Chen et al. 2024). To this extent, we argue that social capital is a social resource due to the social cohesion and bonding properties that occur within a group of likeminded individuals (Jutengren et al. 2020). Social support is similarly a likeminded resource along with social capital and workplace inclusion which we discuss in more detail below.

The benefit of identifying resource caravans responds to the challenge that some resources will be enhanced only if they come after other resources (Schmidt and Keil 2013), which suggests that resource investment is a sequential chain-like process of acquiring new resources (Hakanen et al. 2011). According to this line of thinking, people self-regulate and need to choose the right resources to build and protect their existing resources (Hobfoll et al. 2018). However, a self-regularity focus leads to differential behavioural outcomes. For instance, some individuals might adopt a promotion focus if working on a task is perceived as a gain, or conversely, adopt a prevention focus if working on a task is perceived as a loss (Wallace and Chen 2006). This indicates that despite COR principles suggesting that workers should be able to draw from their existing pool of resources to recover losses, according to extant research, this may not be enough as individuals may neither access nor self-regulate their use of resources sequentially to the extent that they can prevent a downward spiral towards more losses. Job demands associated with the physical, psychological, social, and organisational requirements of work create job stressors and negative engagement (Macey and Schneider 2008) which need to be offset by a sufficient supply of job resources (Bakker and Demerouti 2007). Consistent with extant research, inspiring, strengthening, and connecting workers through a supply of social resources can contribute towards EE accrual (Jolly et al. 2021; Soane et al. 2012). We focus on social resources in this paper because, along with reduced job demands and other organisational resources (such as better job design, more pay), social resources that include factors such as supervisor and co-worker support are associated with positive EE (Rahmadani and Schaufeli 2022), resulting in better overall social experiences (Elfenbein and Zenger 2014). Workplace inclusion means that workers have equal access to valuable resources (Fujimoto et al. 2023); thus, as a resource in and of itself—workplace inclusion must be present for social support and social capital to contribute to positive EE outcomes.

1.2 | Employee Engagement (EE)

Within the resource caravan perspective, it is commonly accepted that EE relies upon resources that enable people to better control work demands and the work environment (Bakker et al. 2014; Kim and Kang 2017) helping to reduce burnout, stress, and withdrawal inter alia. However, it is perhaps helpful for both scholars and practitioners to think of EE from a practitioner's perspective that 'EE might be the level of a worker's enthusiasm, involvement and satisfaction with their work' (Bailey 2022, 3). That is, EE is often used interchangeably with the terminology, 'work engagement', although EE tends to represent the broader view of job and organisational engagement (Rahmadani and Schaufeli 2022). Many view EE as a crucial job attitude associated with both worker well-being and organisational productivity (Bailey 2022), that manifests as collections of thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Kahn 1990). The literature on engagement often presents overlapping terminology such as personal engagement (Kahn 1990; Rich et al. 2010), work or job engagement (Schaufeli et al. 2002; Schaufeli and Bakker 2010), and EE (Saks 2006, 2019), using a variety of definitions such as a 'positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption' (Schaufeli et al. 2002).

For the current study, EE is an outcome (Bailey 2022; Saks 2006, 2019; Shuck 2011) and dependent variable in our analysis. We agree with Saks (2006, 2019) multi-dimensional view of EE, meaning, workers can dually engage with both their job, and/or their organisation. In addition, Figure 1 illustrates Soane et al. (2012) idea of 'social engagement' providing a third dimension of EE. Soane et al. (2012, 531–532) developed the ISA Engagement Scale measuring three facets of engagement—affective, intellectual and social. Affective engagement, that is, a positive regard towards one's work role, and intellectual engagement, that is, absorption in one's work, align closely with Saks (2006) conceptualisation of 'job engagement'. However, Soane et al. (2012) social engagement is not as clear in Saks (2006) two dimensions of EE. Social engagement is the "extent to which one is socially connected with the working environment and shares common values with colleagues" (Soane et al. 2012, 532). It supports better self-in-role experiences and the extent to which a person feels connected (Kahn 1990) and motivated to achieve positive work outcomes (Halbesleben and Wheeler 2015).

1.3 | Social Support

Workplace social support is embedded in the relationships an employee forms with peers, colleagues, supervisors, and management (Halbesleben et al. 2014; Hobfoll et al. 2018). It is through these connections that employees receive both psychological and material resources, as a benefit of their social interactions (Jolly et al. 2021). Social support can improve coping, esteem, belonging,

and competence and manifests through interactions, exchanges, and relationships through which a person can—or perceives they can—access tangible help or assistance from others (i.e., instrumental support), along with informational support (such as facts, instructions), emotional support (such as empathy and care), and constructive feedback (Nielsen et al. 2020; Jolly et al. 2021). Nielsen et al. (2020) found that social support cushioned the impacts of workplace bullying on workers' health and competence, while other researchers have found that social support can mitigate stress-related work or study (McClean et al. 2022), increase psychological well-being (Poudel et al. 2020), lower mental health risks (Karaca et al. 2019), and aid employees to accumulate job resources by empowering them to engage in proactive behaviours (Guan and Frenkel 2019). Therefore, we hypothesise that the focus and dedication associated with EE is more likely to occur in circumstances where employees can benefit from the positives that social support networks provide, such as reduced work stress, facilitating stronger emotional well-being and sense of belonging, and access to information and feedback to solve problems and to cope with challenges.

Hypothesis 1a. *Social support (SS) resources and employee engagement (EE) are directly and positively related.*

1.4 | Social Capital

Social capital comprises two dimensions, cognitive and structural, with the cognitive dimension capturing employees' perceptions regarding trust, solidarity and reciprocity. The structural dimension reflects employee network interactions, mutual accountability, and transparent decision-making processes that exist (a) among peers, that is, bonding social capital, and (b) among individuals across hierarchical levels and organisations, that is, bridging social capital (Jutengren et al. 2020; Tsounis et al. 2023). The relationship between social capital and EE thus far has not been a high priority in existing engagement studies, except for a number of investigations within the health and medical related contexts (Kouvonen et al. 2006; Jutengren et al. 2020). Scholars suggest that managers who cultivate social capital as a resource are more likely to manifest a higher level of perceived organisational performance (Kidron and Vinarski-Peretz 2024) and job performance and engagement (Tsounis et al. 2023). Extant research has also found empirical associations between COR theory and social capital as one resource that correlates positively to other valuable resources (Habets et al. 2021). Therefore, as social capital comprises of an employee's network of trusted relationships and goodwill with other people in relation to their work, we contend that social capital acts as an enabler of positive EE, leading to the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1b. *Social capital (SC) resources and employee engagement (EE) are directly and positively related.*

1.5 | Workplace Inclusion

People with distinct backgrounds can provide specialist and much needed expertise (Pelled et al. 1999) thereby enriching the diversity of thought and workplace innovation opportunities. However, organisations that aim for workforce diversity can still fail to foster workplace inclusion. Ferdman (2017, 235) broadly defined workplace inclusion as those organisations in which, "people of all identities and many styles can be fully themselves while also contributing to the larger collective, as valued and full members." Inclusion practices seek to create equal access to decision-making resources, and upward mobility opportunities for the diversity of individuals (Shore et al. 2018). Workplace inclusion means that everyone should have a voice, especially those in previously stigmatised, subordinated, or disregarded categories to express themselves in authentic ways, whilst ensuring that a greater range of people and groups feel safer and more at ease (Ferdman 2017, 256). Inclusion provides individuals with access to information and resources (Ferdman 2017) enabling better representation and fairness (Shore et al. 2018), whereby all workers are treated as insiders (Pelled et al. 1999). In a recent study on inclusion within professional associations, Metz et al. (2022) found that most respondents had experienced both inclusion and exclusion in some form that was associated with, among other resources, their access to social capital suggesting that social capital was important for inclusion while lack of access attenuated exclusion factors.

Resource caravans allow the cumulative resources to travel together to support a person's work performance (Bakker et al. 2014). In this article, the cumulative nature of resources is posited to exist in the presence of reciprocal relationships between social support and social capital resources, the output of which is mediated and strengthened by the effects of a third resource—workplace inclusion. That is, personal resources are likely to result from supportive social conditions (Jabeen et al. 2021), that foster social support (Jolly et al. 2021), and inclusion (Ferdman 2017), that in turn has a positive effect on EE. At the same time, the interrelationships that occur within social capital (i.e., bonding, bridging and linking) suggests that individuals will see value in connecting personal resources by bonding with colleagues and linking across hierarchical levels. Thus, social capital offers a valuable resource since it is related to how co-workers collectively increase their relational skills through social support (Jolly et al. 2021; McClean et al. 2022). Also, given that social support is evident by how peers communicate and relate, this suggests that social capital is a valuable concurrent resource along with the source of social support, where one resource needs the other. Furthermore, based on their scoping review, Nguyen et al. (2024) mapped a path model of inclusion in which social capital was listed as potential antecedent of inclusion, and work engagement as a possible effect of inclusion in their path model, providing theoretical support to extend our third hypothesis identifying the role of workplace inclusion as an intervening variable effecting the strength of social support and social capital's impact on employee engagement. Taken together, we suggest social support and social capital would need to act as concurrent and interactive resources that have cumulative effects on outcomes. Above all, because of the positive intervening effect that inclusive behaviours are expected to have on fostering a sense of belonging among employees, we propose that workplace inclusion should mediate the interacting effects of social support and social capital on EE as outlined in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2. *Workplace inclusion (INCL) mediates a positive indirect effect of the reciprocal interaction effect of social support (SS) resources and social capital (SC) resources on employee engagement (EE).*

2 | Method

2.1 | Data Collection and Sampling

Upon gaining the mandatory ethical approval required to pursue research with human participants, an online survey was made available for a period of 6 months from June to December 2021. The survey was circulated to a conglomerate of organisations ranging from IT and professional accounting firms, government agencies, education, service, and other general manufacturing firms through a purposive sampling method. Correspondence was first made with key decision makers who agreed to promote the survey within their respective organisations. The survey returned 330 responses. Upon assessing missing data and completion errors, 273 completed surveys were retained for analysis ($n = 273$).

2.1.1 | Construct Measures

Item constructs for analysis were sourced from existing empirically valid scales where all items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7 anchored by the terms: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Slightly disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Slightly Agree; Strongly Agree.

2.1.1.1 | Employee Engagement (EE). Saks (2006, 617–618) multidimensional engagement scale was used to measure EE as well as Soane et al. (2012) measure of 'social engagement' dimension of EE. Saks (2006) distinguished two measures: an individual's job engagement with sample items included: 'This job is all consuming', 'I am totally into it' and an individual's organizational engagement with example items being: 'One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this organization', 'Being a member of this organization makes me come "alive"'. Plus, Soane et al. (2012) social engagement scale with sample items including: 'I share the same work values as my colleagues', 'I share the same work goals as my colleagues', and 'I share the same work attitudes as my colleagues'.

2.1.1.2 | Workplace Inclusion (INCL). The INCL scale was sourced from Bupp's (2017) inclusion at work scale and Pelled et al. (1999) eight-item demographic dissimilarity and workplace inclusion scale. The former included variables related to co-worker inclusion as valued peers in the core group, for example, 'I feel excluded by the workgroup because I am different' (reverse coded); 'co-workers are treated as valued members of the team without losing their unique identities', and 'within my work group I am encouraged to offer ideas on how to improve operations'. Pelled et al. (1999, 1021) items measured both influence and access to information, for example: 'I have influence over decisions about ways to improve productivity', and 'I am well-informed about my organization's goals'.

2.1.1.3 | Social Support (SS). The SS scale was sourced from the Karasek et al. (1998, 355) seven item social support scale designed to assess co-worker social support in the workplace. Sample items included: 'when it is necessary, I can ask my colleagues for help,' 'I feel appreciated by my co-workers' and 'there is a good atmosphere between me and my co-workers'.

2.1.1.4 | Social Capital (SC). The SC scale was sourced from Kouvonen et al. (2006, 4) nine item psychometric evaluation of social capital at work scale representing bonding, bridging, and linking, with sample items including: 'we have a 'we are together' attitude,' 'people across departments cooperate in order to help develop and apply new ideas' and 'we can trust our supervisor'.

2.1.2 | Descriptive Statistics

Table 2a demonstrates the diversity of the respondents. Sixty-six percent (66.3%) were female, with just over a quarter of all respondents aged 40 to 49 years-of-age (27.1%), and 50 to 59 years-of-age (26.1%), respectively. Nearly 2% (1.9%) of the participants identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, which is not dissimilar to the June 2021 Census figures reporting that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons account for 3.8% of the Australian population, of which 66.2% (two-thirds) are aged 15 years and above (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021a) and from which 54.1% of them are in the labour force (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021b). More broadly, 8.8% of respondents identified that they have a diverse ethnic/cultural/racial background, with 13.6% speaking a language other than English at home. Five percent (5.1%) identified as neurodiverse, and 5.5% of respondents indicated that they had a disability, with an additional 11% identifying that they had a long-term health condition or chronic illness. Just over 8% of respondents provide caregiving for parents/adults and 25.3% for children.

Additionally, Table 2b profiles the respondents' work environment, including industries and sectors represented by the respondents, seniority, employment duration and remote working situations.

2.1.2.1 | Normality and Common Method Variance (CMV) Assessment. Since data were collected using a single source, it could be deemed to suffer from common method variance. Results for common method variance were checked using multi-trait-multimethod model (MTMM) proposed by Byrne (2016) the substantial or large change in the Comparative Fit Index (CFI). Hence, we first tested the issue of common method variance by following the suggestions of Byrne (2016) by testing the model designed with the Correlated traits/correlated methods (CFI = 0.846) and the model constructed with freely correlated traits/uncorrelated methods (CFI = 0.860). The p-value of 0.358 for the Chi-squared distribution test suggests that the presence of common method variance is highly unlikely (Collier 2020). Secondly, following Kock (2015), all the variables were regressed against a common variable, and if the VIF ≤ 3.3, then there was no bias from the single source data. Tables 3a and 3b record the VIF for all latent variables loading for the 1st order measurement models. With the VIFs less than 3.3, the dependent variable's (EE) three dimensions showed no serious issues with the data for either a single source bias or multicollinearity (Cassel et al. 1999). Both robust tests reported in Tables 4a and 4b showed that the data collected did not suffer from common method bias.

TABLE 2A | Diversity Profile of Respondents.

Demographic	*n*	%
Gender		
Male	86	31.5
Female	181	66.3
Non-binary	2	0.7
Prefer not to say	4	1.5
Age group (in years)		
20–29	34	12.5
30–39	61	22.4
40–49	74	27.1
50–59	71	26.1
60–69	27	9.9
70 and above	6	2.2
Speak other language than English at home		
No	236	86.4
Yes	37	13.6
Highest level of completed education		
Primary school education	1	0.4
Secondary school education	18	6.6
Vocational qualification (Certificate/Diploma)	47	17.2
Bachelor/Bachelor (Honours) Degree Level	72	26.4
Postgraduate Level	135	49.5
Origin Identification (Multiple: Base $N = 273$)		
Aboriginal	4	1.5
Torres Strait Islander	1	0.4
Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander	268	98.1
Group Identification (Multiple: Base $N = 273$)		
Neurodiverse	14	5.1
With physical disability	8	2.9
With mental disability	7	2.6
With long-term health condition or chronic illness (other than physical or mental disability)	30	11.0
With care-giving responsibilities to infants/children	69	25.3
Giving primary or significant care to another adult, such as parent or partner	22	8.1
From a diverse ethnic/cultural/racial background	24	8.8

2.1.3 | Data Analysis

A two-step approach to analysing the data using IBM SSPS AMOS version 27 software was used. Firstly, several confirmatory analyses of first-order measurement models were constructed for the responses for the measured items in the data collection process. Tables 3a and 3b provide the items that loaded onto each latent independent variable (social support—SS, social capital—SC, and workplace inclusion—INCL) as well as the three dimensions proposed to form the dependent variable, employee engagement (EE).

2.1.3.1 | First-Order Measurement Model Assessment. In the current model, all first-order constructs assessment criteria for evaluating measurement models were assessed through the indicator reliability, convergent reliability, internal consistency, and discriminant validity (Hair et al. 2017). Tables 3a and 3b contain the following statistics. Firstly, all indicator loadings > 0.5 suggested indicator reliability (Hulland 1999, 198) meaning only the listed items were retained. Secondly, convergent reliability with AVE values exceeding 0.5 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988) as the assessment of discriminant validity were checked while all latent variables had a composite reliability above 0.7, indicating adequate convergence or internal consistency (Gefen et al. 2000). Additionally, for brevity, four commonly used advanced goodness-of-fit measures were included to support the 'fit' robustness of all the measurement models in Tables 3a–3c and 5. These tests are: (1) standardised RMR (SRMR) where < 0.05 represents a well-fitting model (Byrne 2016); (2) goodness of fit index (GFI) requiring a value of > 0.9 for each index (Tabachnick and Fidell 2007); (3) comparative fit index (CFI) requiring a value of between > 0.9 (Tabachnick and Fidell 2007) and ≥ 0.95 (Hu and Bentler 1999) for each indices; and (4) root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) as one of the most informative criteria with a desired value of ≤ 0.08 (Tabachnick and Fidell 2007).

2.1.3.2 | Second-Order Measurement Model Assessment. A two-stage approach was employed to assess the second-order measurement model. Table 3c provides the four commonly used advanced goodness-of-fit measures, and a summary of each statistical measure's purpose, to support the 'fit' robustness of the measurement models.

The ratio of correlations is used to assess discriminant validity in Tables 4a and 4b. There are two ways to use the HTMT to assess discriminant validity: (1) as a criterion or (2) as a statistical test. As shown in Table 4b, all HTMT values are below 0.90 and therefore passed both recommended values, that is, the HTMT.85 (Kline 2011) and the HTMT.90 (Gold et al. 2001).

3 | Results

The results for the developed structural model to test the developed three hypotheses is provided in this section, with statistically significant outcomes that will be presented, illustrated in Figure 2.

TABLE 2B | Work environment profile.

Demographic	*n*	%
Which industry do you work in?		
Agriculture, food, and natural resources	6	2.2
Education and training	178	65.2
Business management and administration	13	4.8
Finance	27	9.9
Government and public administration	19	7.0
Health science	1	0.4
Information technology	14	5.1
Law, public safety, corrections and security	2	0.7
Manufacturing	1	0.4
Marketing, sales, and service	4	1.5
Science, technology, engineering and mathematics	8	2.9
Respondent's responsibility level		
Individual contributor with no direct reports	170	62.3
Frontline manager	39	14.3
Mid-senior manager (your direct reports supervise others)	43	15.8
Executive manager/leader	21	7.7
Which sector does the respondent organization operate?		
Public sector/Government/Government services or agency	192	70.3
Private sector—For profit	50	18.3
Private sector—Non-profit	31	11.4
No of people in the respondent's immediate work team/unit/group		
0–10 people	204	74.9
11–20 people	33	12.0
Above 20 people	36	13.1
Duration of work with current employer (in years)		
Less than a year	2	0.7
1–10	195	72.2
11–20	55	25.7
21–30	18	6.6
Above 30	3	1.2
Percentage estimate of working onsite (employer's premises or offices)		
0%–25%	79	28.9
26%–50%	19	7.0
51%–75%	55	20.1
75%–100%	120	44.0
Percentage estimate of working at home/private residence (%)		
0%–25%	143	52.5

(Continues)

TABLE 2B | (Continued)

Demographic	*n*	%
26%–50%	43	16.2
51%–75%	20	7.3
75%–100%	67	24.0
Working environments as direct reports (Multiple: Base $N = 273$)		
100% remote working environments	22	8.1
100% on employer's premises, office, or worksite	21	7.7
Split between remote work and employer's worksite	99	36.3
Don't have any direct reports	134	49.1
Other	1	0.4

3.1 | Structural Equation Model (SEM) Assessment and Hypothesis Testing

The SEM goodness-of-fit is the first assessment stage of the results process for this study. Although the initial SEM constructed contained all the paths to test the three hypotheses and the results support all paths as significant, all the goodness-of-fit criteria did not achieve the selected advanced goodness-of-fit measures (SRMR = 0.0000, GFI = 1.000, CFI = 1.000, RMSEA = 0.617) identified in prior studies. A revised SEM was constructed that provided a match to the criteria for the selection of goodness-of-fit statistics, which provided in Table 5 support the robustness of this revised SEM. Secondly, Table 5 provides the results for all hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1a (H1a) relates to the direct relationship between SS and EE. SS shows a positive sloping Beta ($\beta = 0.298$) and significant effect on EE ($p = 0.000$), meaning H1a is accepted—SS significantly and directly effects EE.

Hypothesis 1b (H1b) relates to the direct relationship between SC and EE and while the result for the initial SEM provided SC has a positive Beta ($\beta = 0.163$) with a significant effect at 0.037 ($p = 0.037$) on EE, the revised SEM required this direct path SC and EE to be removed to produce a robust good fitting SEM. This revised SEM means H1b is not accepted.

Hypothesis H2 related to the indirect relationship between the interrelationship of SS and SC on EE that is mediated by INCL and testing was undertaken, initially using a one-way directional path in the SEM of SS to SC. As hypothesised, the results in Table 5 confirmed significant SS to SC interactive one way path at 0.775 ($p = 0.000$). For completeness, an alternative one-way directional path in the SEM of SC to SS illustrates the same significant SC to SS path at 0.775 ($p = 0.000$). A further alternative SEM using the two-way co-variant of SS and SC produced a similar path at 0.772 ($p = 0.000$). These results support the statistically significant and moderately positive interrelationship between SS and SC meaning that if one variable increases, the other tends to increase suggesting that the relationship between SS and SC occurs concurrently and reciprocally and not by random chance.

The SEM results used to assess the mediating effect of INCL component of Hypothesis H2 shows SS with a positive sloping Beta ($\beta = 0.135$) with a significant effect on INCL ($p = 0.044$) as well as SC shows a positive sloping Beta ($\beta = 0.606$) with a significant effect on INCL ($p = 0.000$) and INCL to EE have a positive sloping Beta ($\beta = 0.473$) and significant effect on EE ($p = 0.000$), contributing towards Hypothesis H2 acceptance. The total effect calculation of 0.906 for combined direct and indirect paths shows a high level of influence of SS both directly on EE as well as through INCL and SS on EE. Similarly, a total effect calculation of 1.079 is achieved for SC indirectly on EE through INCL.

4 | Discussion

This study collected cross-sectional survey data, meaning that it was collected at a single point in time from multiple participants. Whilst this approach permits us to hypothesise and test effects between variables related to correlations amongst variables and to build a model, cross-sectional effects are not enough to determine cause and effect, or in what order things occur. Arguably, workplace inclusion increases social support and thus social capital, or vice versa. Similarly, social capital might moderate the relationship between social support and workplace inclusion. All are possible. But to avoid the risk of finding false positives by running multiple variations of the model, the hypotheses were pre-specified using insights from prior studies, to maintain the integrity of our findings. Here, we closely followed the guidelines of Sonnentag and Meier (2024) for assessing COR resources and the strengths of COR effects on outcomes.

As a pilot study, this is the first study to our knowledge that illustrates the concurrent effects of social resources on positive EE by illustrating the direct and indirect effects of social support, social capital, and workplace inclusion on EE, consequently expanding on what we know about COR theory related to resource caravans. In addition to previous research that shows resource acquisition is sequential (Schmidt and Keil 2013), or chain-like (Hakanen et al. 2011), our model indicates that separate resources create better value when available concurrently, illustrating a potentially more efficient way to acquire resources to

TABLE 3A | Full measurement 1st order model three independent latent variables.

Construct	Item[a]	Loadings	AVE[b]	CR[c]	VIF[d]	T-values[e]
Social support (SS)	SS_1	0.795	0.846	0.910	2.538	0.003
	SS_2	0.875				
	SS_4	0.864				
	SS_5	0.849				
	SS_6	0.912				
	Goodness of fit statistics: SRMR—0.050; *GFI*—0.993; *CFI*—0.999; *RMSEA*—0.050					
Social capital (SC)	SC_4	0.875	0.911	0.961	3.254	0.039
	SC_5	0.927				
	SC_6	0.910				
	SC_7	0.923				
	SC_8	0.919				
	Goodness of fit statistics: SRMR—0.0157; *GFI*—0.984; *CFI*—0.993; *RMSEA*—0.078					
Workplace inclusion (INCL)	INCL_2	0.849	0.828	0.939	2.049	0.000
	INCL_3	0.879				
	INCL_4	0.796				
	INCL_10	0.786				
	INCL_11	0.865				
	INCL_12	0.806				
	INCL_13	0.823				
	Goodness of fit statistics: SRMR—00096; *GFI*—0.995; *CFI*—1.000; *RMSEA*—0.0000					

[a]Items removed without loadings > 0.5.
[b]*Reflective:* All average variance extracted (AVE) > 0.5 as it indicates convergent reliability.
[c]*Reflective:* All composite reliability (CR) > 0.7 indicates internal consistency.
[d]*Formative:* Variance inflation factor < 3.3.
[e]*Formative:* T-Values > 1.96 (*) and sig at 5% for a two-tailed test.

mitigate resource losses. Our model did show that while social support directly increases EE ($\beta = 0.298$, $p = 0.000$), once employees also feel a sense of workplace inclusion, the power of social support to increase EE rises markedly ($\beta = 0.608$, $p = 0.000$) to a total effect β of 0.906. The ability of social capital alone to directly contribute to improving EE is not apparent. However, and key to demonstrating the beneficial nature of resource caravans, once social support and workplace inclusion resources are available, these resources 'activate' an ability for social capital to contribute positively towards EE (a total effect β of 1.079 through resources whereby SC to INCL $\beta = 0.606$ plus INCL to EE $\beta = 0.473$, $p = 0.000$). Further evidence of the resource caravan effect is that our model identifies that social support and social capital are interdependent in nature, influencing and reinforcing each other ($\beta = 0.77$, $p = 0.000$). Thus, while social support provides the resources that encourage or motivate individual employees to create and strengthen their connections with others across and beyond the organisation, the social capital that these connections communally create in return fosters social support by providing individuals with a sense that they are being cared for as a member of a socially supportive network.

COR research suggests that the literature remains ambiguous about the timing and order in which resources are acquired (Halbesleben et al. 2014; Halbesleben and Wheeler 2015; McClean et al. 2022), and the dynamics of resources in general pertaining to organisational settings (Kim and Kang 2017; Kidron and Vinarski-Peretz 2024). While the current research cannot answer all of these questions based on the research design, we broaden the COR literature by demonstrating the types of resources, that is, 'co-resources', that travel together in caravan passageways for the purposes of strengthening EE. While we cannot make conclusions that social capital and social support are substitutable, we do suggest that these resources are complementary to the extent that concurrent access to them builds the cumulative value of resources (Schmidt and Keil 2013). Principally, our model confirms that without employees feeling included at work, the benefit of a resource caravan effect on EE will not occur. This is an important finding within the context of assessing EE antecedents as this is the first study to our knowledge that sheds light on the powerful influence of workplace inclusion on EE, answering calls by scholars to address inclusion in engagement studies (Garg and Sangwan 2020).

TABLE 3B | Full measurement 1st order model—three dimensions of dependent latent variable (EE).

Dimension	Item[a]	Loadings	AVE[b]	CR[c]	VIF[d]	T-values[e]
Social engagement (SE)	SE_1	0.586	0.633	0.668	1.734	0.000
	SE_2	0.658				
	SE_3	0.656				
Organisational engagement (OE)	OE_1	0.614	0.706	0.780	1.320	0.000
	OE_2	0.712				
	OE_3	0.706				
	OE_4	0.790				
Job engagement (JE)	JE _7	0.815	0.823	0.894	1.500	0.000
	JE _8	0.850				
	JE _9	0.779				
	JE_10	0.850				
	Goodness of fit statistics: SRMR—0.0426; *GFI*—0.936; *CFI*—0.974; *RMSEA*—0.075					

[a]Items removed without loadings > 0.5.
[b]*Reflective:* All average variance extracted (AVE) > 0.5 as it indicates convergent reliability.
[c]*Reflective:* All composite reliability (CR) > 0.7 indicates internal consistency.
[d]*Formative:* Variance inflation factor < 3.3.
[e]*Formative:* T-values > 1.96 (*) and sig at 5% for a two-tailed test.

TABLE 3C | Full measurement 2nd order dependent latent variable.

Latent construct	Dimension	Loadings[a]	T-values[b]
Employee engagement (EE)	Organisational engagement (OE)	0.753	0.000
	Job engagement (JE)	0.749	0.000
	Social engagement (SE)	1.251	0.000
	Goodness of fit statistics: SRMR—0.0426; *GFI*—0.936; *CFI*—0.974; *RMSEA*—0.075		

[a]Items removed without loadings > 0.5.
[b]*Formative: T*-values > 1.96 (*) and sig at 5% for a two-tailed test.

TABLE 4A | Discriminant validity—Fornell and Larcker criterion for latent variables.

	SC	SS	INCL	EE
Social capital (SC)				
Social support (SS)	0.775**			
Workplace inclusion (INCL)	0.711**	0.604**		
Employee engagement (EE)	0.616**	0.583**	0.653**	

**Correlation is significant at the level < 0.01 (2-Tailed).

TABLE 4B | Discriminant validity—Fornell and Larcker criterion for dependent variable dimensions.

	JE	SE	OE	EE
Job engagement (JE)				
Social engagement (SE)	0.486**			
Organisational engagement (OE)	0.573**	0.342**		
Employee engagement (EE)	0.869**	0.740**	0.799**	

**Correlation is significant at the level < 0.01 (2-Tailed).

While the current study does not promote causality because of the cross-sectional design, the findings broaden what we know about the concurrent and reciprocal effects of certain kinds of resources that create passageways towards better employee engagement outcomes. Accordingly, social resources and social capital have complementary effects on employee engagement mediated by work inclusion resources. These personal and organizational resources travel together to have a concurrent and sequential effects that are more than simply choosing resources by chance, happenstance or intuition (Sonnentag and Meier 2024). Second, social resources are formed through nurturing and learned adaptation and accompanied by co-travellers to create a reciprocal effect. Thus, with

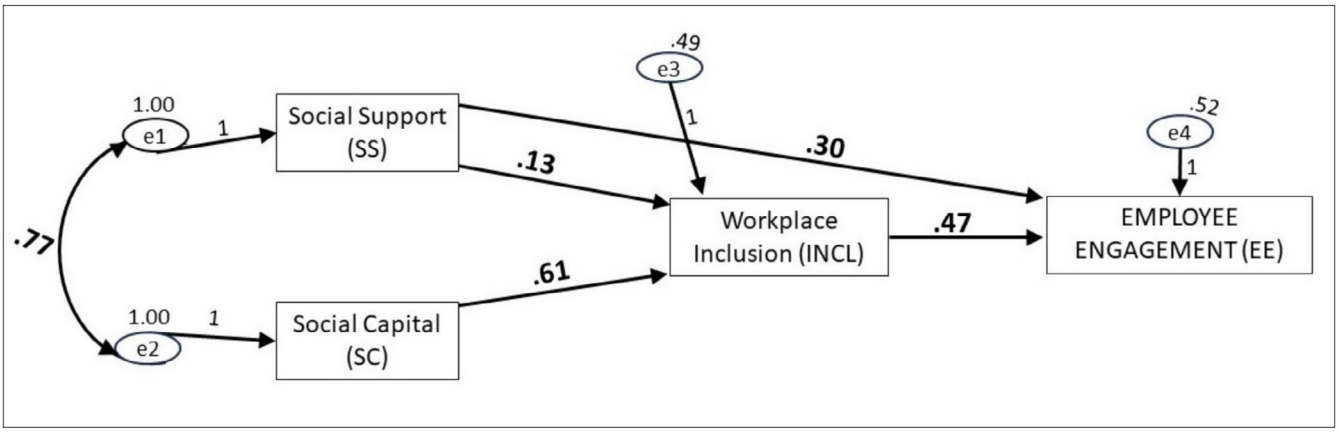

FIGURE 2 | SEM results of the hypothesised relationships ($p < 0.05$).

TABLE 5 | Structural equation model for hypothesis testing.

Relationship			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	*p*
INCL	←	SC	0.606	0.067	9.083	***
INCL	←	SS	0.135	0.067	2.017	0.044
EE	←	INCL	0.473	0.055	8.665	***
EE	←	SS	0.298	0.055	5.453	***
SS	←	SC	0.775	0.038	20.281	***
SC	←	SS	0.775	0.038	20.281	***
e2 SC	↔	e1 SS	0.772	0.076	10.138	***

Effects	Direct	Indirect	Total effect
SS ► EE	0.298		
SC ► INCL ► EE		0.608	
			0.906
SC ► INCL ► EE	0.000	1.079	1.079

Note: Goodness of fit statistics: SRMR—0.0426; GFI—0.936; CFI—0.974; RMSEA—0.075.
***$p = 0.000$.

the reciprocal nature of social support and social capital, individuals and leaders can shape EE behaviours in their interactions with others within and across the organisation. Third, fostering inclusive work behaviour concurrently with social support and social capital is critical for developing behaviours that heighten the positive effects on EE.

This study suggests in support of prior work that the work environment needs to be grounded in mutual trust, respect, and obligation to improve the bonding aspects of social capital, which according to scholars empower and motivate both followers and leaders to expand their relationship beyond the formalised work role and contract (Mäkelä et al. 2021). In turn, employees will be more likely to feel that more personalised social interactions enable them to identify better with their jobs and organisation (Mäkelä et al. 2021). Moreover, together with workplace inclusion, strong bridging and linking relationships can help employees to build individual resources (Elfenbein and Zenger 2014).

4.1 | Implications for HR Practice

Within the contemporary workplace, managers who wish to cultivate EE can actively sponsor employees to enhance their social resources; the key to achieving this is to foster a climate of inclusivity (Shore et al. 2018). The necessity to create inclusion as a cultural norm in the workplace is further underscored by recent regulatory updates requiring Australian organisations to manage psychosocial safety risks (WHSQ 2022) and to take proactive 'positive duty' steps to prevent sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation (Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) 2023). This means that managers need to prioritise and manage psychosocial safety and mental wellbeing, which in part requires all employees to have a full sense of participation and being equally seen, valued, and supported as an organisational members (Shore et al. 2018). Fostering a sense of belonging through social support and social capital are at the nexus of both worker engagement and inclusive cultures. Fostering positive relationships can involve, for instance, providing opportunities for employees to meet and engage with their colleagues and with others working in the industry, and by championing values of authenticity, respect, and collegiality amongst staff (Shore et al. 2018; Zhang et al. 2022).

It is challenging for employees to build resources, yet easy to lose them (Halbesleben et al. 2014; Hobfoll et al. 2018), particularly in organisations that inhibit inclusive cultures and taking an interest in employee wellbeing. Notwithstanding that authentic inclusivity comes with tensions and challenges, HR professionals need to respond to the social discourse and broader community expectations to implement inclusive mechanisms that support employees (Ferdman 2017; Metz et al. 2022). Thus, to foster workplace inclusion, attention needs to be paid to macro, meso, and micro processes that manage the duality of 'how can we be both alike and different simultaneously?' (Ferdman 2017, 243). HR practitioners have the scope to create and/or modify HR systems, policies and practices so that they disrupt and challenge subliminal biases, particularly as 'legitimate workplace structures' can benefit stereotyped employees (Murray and Southey 2020). For example, 'caring HRM' systems (Saks 2022) and high performance HR practices (Boxall et al. 2019) can steer organisations towards creating systems that recognise the benefits of diversity and intergroup relations. Ferdman (2017, 238)

advises that inclusion 'builds on prior conceptions of pluralism and multiculturalism and provides a counterpoint to assimilation', by creating a culture that embraces the coexistence of multiple values, perspectives, styles, and means of accomplishing goals within the same social system.

Organisations can expect that different dimensions of diversity or groups will require different social support strategies (Ferdman 2017), which may involve customising interpersonal and supervisory training, increasing internal mobility and career development, providing clear job descriptions, and voice opportunities (Zhong et al. 2016). Moving beyond compliance and diversity headcounts, HR professionals can monitor organisational policies and processes for systemic blind spots that mask inclusive access to social and capital resources. HR professionals can purposely promote inclusion initiatives aiming to assist individuals who struggle to access and create interpersonal connections and build social networks and resources. This could involve tactics such as habitually using a triple communication plan to broadcast opportunities across multiple channels, multiple times (Mitchell 2017). Such opportunities can include workshops to hear from employees, systems for involving them in decision making, and recognising, honouring and advancing diversity (Shore et al. 2018). In addition, providing knowledge and information to employees about personal and career development opportunities is clearly needed, such as awareness and training related to improving intercultural communication, managing difficult conversations, understanding group formation processes, connecting people through formal mentorship and coaching programs, social clubs and work-based community intranets. Taken together, it is crucial for HR professionals to act promptly to build a foundation of diverse, equal, and inclusive HRM systems that intercede to build resource caravans that empower employees to acquire healthy degrees of social support and social capital, as catalysts for enhancing EE within their organisations.

4.2 | Study Limitations and Future Research

This study has identified key variables, feasible hypothesises and correlations about a specific set of variables within a proposed 'resource caravan' that can subsequently guide longitudinal research to establish temporal sequences and causal inferences. As a pilot study reliant on cross-sectional data, it limits the possibility of identifying the sequence in which the respective job resources came into play, for example, whether increased workplace inclusion leads to greater social support and social capital, or vice versa. Additional limitations also reflect the participant profile in which the survey responses represented people across a range of diversity groups; it did not always mirror their profile consistent with a general profile of Australia's population. The sample also skewed towards female respondents and people working in education and training.

Stronger theoretical support for resource caravans and employee engagement can be determined by future studies aiming to sequence and measure the temporal effects of variables identified here to better inform effective interventions. Future research can consider how other resource combinations support EE more effectively, for instance resources such as decision latitude, autonomy, job security, role clarity, organisational communication, or physical/environmental factors, including the longitudinal effects of resource caravans over time. There is also an avenue to consider the converse of 'resource caravans' and study the deleterious impact that compounded job demands may have on EE, that is, where two or more job demands produce a combined negative effect greater than the sum of their separate effects. Last but not least, Truss et al. (2013, 2664) discussed how engagement research tends to assume a unitarist perspective where there are concerns about the legitimacy of this frame of reference in times of work intensification and changing employment relationships. Therefore, research is necessary to consider how engagement theory or practices might be challenged by the competing tensions between workers and employers, particularly for those workers who are members of marginalised and stigmatised groups where normative engagement policies may overlook their needs.

5 | Conclusion

Cultivating an environment in which EE can flourish is a proactive approach for HR professionals to address the pressures associated with finding, retaining and sustaining a productive and enthusiastic workforce in times of post-pandemic staffing shortages, disruptive change, and mental health struggles, alongside increasing regulatory obligations to care for employees. While HR can, and will, find it challenging to cultivate personal resources that are intrinsically derived within the employees' psyche, such as happiness and resilience, the package of social resources discussed in this paper are manifestly within HR's grasp. This study tested the logic that social support, social capital, and workplace inclusion need to travel together as a package, that is, all must be present, to operate efficiently as valuable resources that help to create positive EE conditions. Within the resources we examined, we identified that workplace inclusion plays a mediating role for social resources to facilitate stronger evidence of EE. If employees feel their unique and diverse qualities are not appreciated, the benefits of social support will likely be diluted and social capital rendered futile in the bid to foster EE. We encourage further discourse and research about the prioritisation and co-location of packages of job resources to achieve better efficiency and effectiveness in creating both engaged and inclusive workplaces.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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