



Viki Haichin

**Enhancing Employee Engagement – the Role  
of the Direct Supervisor. A Case of a Large Israeli  
Financial Services Firm**

*Poprawa zaangażowania pracowników – rola bezpośredniego  
przełożonego. Studium przypadku dużej izraelskiej firmy  
z branży finansowej*

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PhD Supervisor: Dr Roderic Gray

Auxiliary PhD Supervisor: Dr Anna Matysek-Jędrych, Prof. UEP

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Supervisor's signature

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## Abstract

Enhancing employee engagement is now a top priority management challenge due to tough global competition and the organizational need to retain skilled employees to increase the productivity and profitability of organizations. Engaged employees show commitment, increased energy, and willingness to contribute voluntarily towards the success of their organizations. The level of engagement employees feels towards their organizations and the work they are required to perform is strongly correlated with the achievement of organizational objectives. However, the global employee engagement rate over the past decade continues to stand at a very low rate of 15% (Gallup, 2022).

During the years 2020-2021, a Covid-19 pandemic attacked the world and influenced greatly on employee engagement and employees' well-being. This research sets out to identify the most significant factors influencing employee engagement in good times and in times of crisis as the Covid-19 pandemic, in a financial institution in Israel and examines the effects of an intervention aimed at improving EE.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the relationships among three independent variables: organizational culture (OC), direct manager behavior (DMB), and team's atmosphere (TA) and employee engagement (EE) – the dependent variable. These three independent variables were proved in the literature as determining factors to predict and explain employee engagement and to influence its creation and enhancement.

This research is done in a mixed method, both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative data were collected from two employee satisfaction surveys conducted two years apart and the qualitative data from the surveys were expanded and enriched through semi-structured interviews. Between the two surveys, training and team building interventions were carried out by company personnel and external consultants enhancing managers' and employees' engagement. Furthermore, this research extended to explore the special circumstances arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, using MICMAC and Grey theory, to determine the influencing factors in times of crisis on EE.

Data were analyzed from three different approaches to facets of engagement: personal engagement, job engagement and organizational engagement. Differences were considered between managers and junior employees. The research findings indicate the following:

1. organizational culture (OC) was found to be the most influential factor affecting EE in good times and in times of crisis, closely followed by team's atmosphere (TA) and thirdly by the direct manager's behavior (DMB). These three independent variables together as factors

affecting EE were found to be interrelated, exerting mutual influence on each other, and can predict and explain 73% of employee engagement.

2. There were significant improvements in EE attributable to the training and team building interventions. These improvements were especially noteworthy among managers.
3. During the Covid-19 pandemic, a response to the pandemic was remote working (working from home) that was found to be subject to broadly the same factors as traditional work patterns. This research indicates two pivotal important factors enhancing engagement for employees working from home are organizational culture and the relationship with senior executives. However, a flat management structure which facilitated direct communication between employees and senior decision-makers was found to be helpful in maintaining and enhancing EE.

Previously, theoretical consideration of EE has been largely based in separate theories of job design and needs satisfaction. This research enables the presentation of a unified theory of employee engagement which integrates and enriches the earlier perspectives. It also offers a framework for organizational management to make real-world improvements to practice.

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## **Introduction**

### **Research topic relevance and research gaps**

The global market is dynamic and often facing changes in globalization processes which influence and change the organizational environment. Organizations around the globe are facing a competitive work environment which consists of frequently new business strategies and senior management's changes. This competitive work environment has an impact and influence on organizational changes, new technology implementation in line with the changes of globalization, and high employee turnover (Taneja et al., 2015).

The dynamic global market is influencing the organizations' growth, profitability, effectiveness, and success. Managing the balance between employee relations, innovation, and maximizing short-term profits is critical to senior management to ensure a sustainable future for their organizations (Hill and Birkinshaw, 2014). Furthermore, organizations' efficiencies increased using advanced technologies, skilled employees and managers, best practices, and training which allowed them to comply with the organizational rules and regulation in daily work.

The survival of organizations depends on maximizing the profits from the existing capabilities and resources of the organization. One main resource an organization has is its human resource, meaning its employees and managers. During the last decades, the topic of creating and enhancing employee engagement has attracted vast interest and a great deal of attention in organizations and in academic research (Albrecht et al., 2015). The concept and theory of employee engagement was presented by Kahn (1990) and brought a new aspect to the motivation theories. Employee engagement theories are based on the foundation of earlier concepts, such as commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior, however the employee engagement concept is much broader. The concept of employee engagement is widely considered a stronger predictor of organizational performance and success, which is reflected in the relationship between the direct manager and employee and in the relationship between the team members.

Engaged employees are important to any organization across industry, company size and nationality, and in good economic times and bad. Engaged employees produce better business outcomes than other employees: disengaged or actively disengaged. For leaders and senior management, it is vital to consider employee engagement, since without employee engagement, there's no team engagement and it's making it more difficult to improve business outcomes. Only 15% of employees worldwide and 36% in the U.S. fall in the "engaged" category (Gallup, 2022).

Successful organizations are characterized by hiring employees who are engaged with their workplace and willing to go an extra mile for their organization. These employees are emotionally linked to their organization, highly involved in their job by making decisions and taking actions every day (Markos and Sridevi, 2010). They *"consistently deliver superior performance, create innovative products and solutions, and serve as brand ambassadors to drive customer loyalty and attract great candidates"* (Phillips et al., 2016, p. 3). Engagement is an emotional state that can be enhanced by organizations, managers, and team members. Building a highly engaged organization takes intention, investment, and effort over several years (Gallup, 2022).

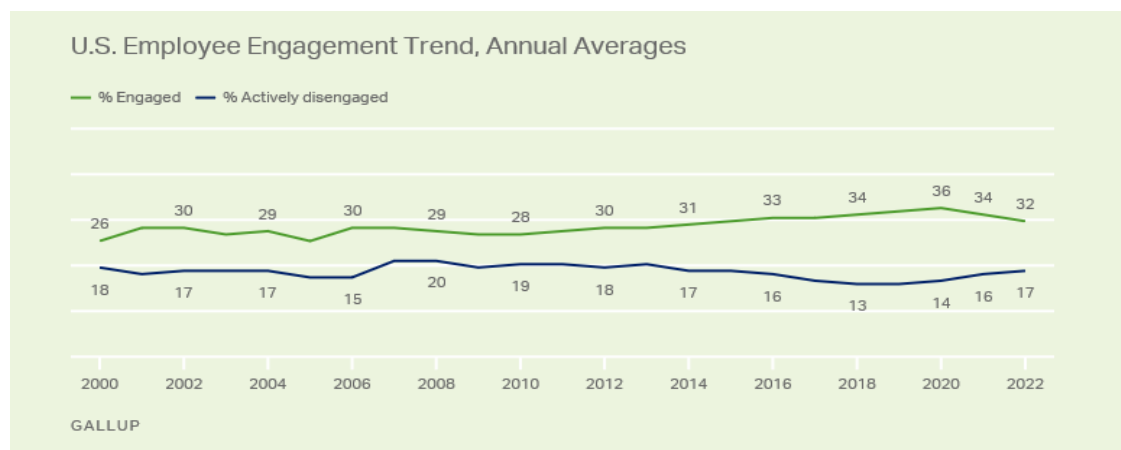
Along with the importance and impact of EE has on the economic aspect of organizations, EE is based on three psychological conditions. According to Kahn (1990), EE is involved in three psychological conditions: safety, meaningfulness, and availability. Positive psychology is focusing on organizations' interest in employees' strengths and engagement, instead of focusing on low motivation and performance, well-being and health issues, and disengagement. Changing perspective from negative issues and behaviors such as damage, disease, disorder, and dysfunction to positive organizational behavior (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008; Schaufeli and Salanova, 2014). Positive organizational behavior relates to employees' mental health and is developed from the positive psychological approach. This approach consists of the development of employee engagement, which is a proactive and positive approach that emphasizes strengths, instead of trying to fix weaknesses (Luthans, 2002).

Human resource management strategies focus on employee engagement and perceive human resource as a key component to leveraging competitive advantages,

such as innovation, organizational performance, organizational competitiveness, and improve business success (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008). Focusing on human resource management stresses that "*Employee contribution becomes a critical business issue because in trying to produce more output with less employee input, companies have no choice but to try to engage not only the body but the mind and soul of every employee*" (Ulrich, 1997, p. 125 as cited in Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008, p. 147).

On the opposite end of the continuum of employee engagement, are present employees who are facing everyday stress and burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Gallup (2022) categorized these employees under two categories called "not engaged" employees and actively disengaged employees.

The ones who are not engaged are "*psychologically unattached to their work and company*" (Gallup, 2022, p. 164). These employees are putting time but do not have the energy or passion for their work and their needs are not being fully met and they are the majority of worldwide employees representing 67%. The second category belongs to the actively disengaged. These employees are unhappy at work. They are bitter that their needs are not being met and furthermore, they are acting out their unhappiness and their percentage worldwide is 18%. Gallup estimates that low engagement costs the global economy US\$7.8 trillion and accounts for 11% of GDP globally (Gallup, 2022).



**Figure 1. U.S Employee Engagement Trend, Annual Averages**

Source: U.S. Employee Engagement Slump Continues (Gallup, 2022)

**Table 1. Employee engagement rates and ESG metrics**

Region	EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT	ENVIRONMENTAL (Satisfied with country's efforts to preserve environment)	SOCIAL (Were not treated with respect all day on the previous day)	GOVERNANCE (Say corruption is widespread in their country's businesses)
Worldwide	21%	61%	11%	74%
United States and Canada	33%	43%	10%	63%
Europe	14%	44%	8%	60%
Middle East and North Africa	15%	50%	12%	76%
Israel	20%	52%	10%	-

Source: composed from the State of the Global Workplace: 2022 Report (Gallup, 2022)

During the years 2020-2021 a Covid-19 pandemic attacked the world and influenced greatly on EE and employees' well-being. Before the pandemic, engagement and well-being were rising globally for nearly a decade, but now they are stagnant. Most employees felt stress, worried, and angry emotions and even physical pain during the pandemic. Leaders formulated new ways to attain "work-life balance" by implementing four-day workweeks and expanding remote work which are now everywhere. According to Gallup (2022) findings, the biggest source of work's burnout is "unfair treatment at work". Work's burnout includes five causes that have one thing in common – the direct manager. The other four causes to work's burnout are an unmanageable workload, unclear communication from managers, lack of manager support and unreasonable time pressure.

In order to improve life at work, stakeholder capitalists are using environmental, social and governance (ESG) metrics, they encourage companies to report on their impact on everything from the environment to their workforce. Most ESG reports focus only on pay and demographics when it comes to the worker and not on respect and care for their employees. Therefore, better managers in the workplace are the ones that treat their employees with respect and care. Direct managers need to be better listeners, coaches and collaborators. They need to help their employees learn and grow, recognize them for doing great work, and make them truly feel cared for. Moreover, teams with thriving workers see significantly lower absenteeism,

turnover and accidents. What employees have to say about how life is at work can be a valuable source of information for executives and senior managements (Gallup, 2022).

A review of the literature in this research study reveals a number of gaps in the study of employee engagement. Despite the fact that most studies have examined and presented the relationships between one or two most important contributing factors influencing the creation and enhancement of employee engagement in the literature, say between employee engagement and organizational culture or between employee engagement and direct manager's behavior or team's atmosphere and between employee engagement and two of these elements, this dissertation analyzes the strong interconnected relationship between these three important influencing and contributing factors on the creation and enhancement of employee engagement: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior and team's atmosphere.

This study addresses the gap and indicates the strong relationship between the three factors and employee engagement, presenting the strong relationship of the pre-intervention survey and the post-intervention survey and the joint group that were examined through the two surveys during the two years period. Moreover, this study presents another point of view during the time of the covid-19 pandemic that was a time of increased stress on all the people involved, which might be expected to exacerbate negative influences on employee engagement. This study's objective is to make an important contribution to understand the relationship between the three influential factors and employee engagement in good times and in times of crisis. Many organizations only focus on the direct manager's behavior or on the organizational culture side for enhancing the level of employee engagement without addressing the other factors together and the level of employee engagement maintains the same with no increase.

This dissertation presents several different approaches to employee engagement and different measurement methods to analyze them, while most studies on employee engagement present one or two approaches to the topic of employee engagement as workplace engagement or job engagement. Also, this dissertation presents a different measurement approach of employee engagement in

times of crisis and uncertainty, especially when organizations around the world are facing new ways of remote working conditions.

Therefore, the varieties of approaches and measurements contribute to the understanding of the intricacy of this topic, which leads to the conclusion fact that employee engagement cannot be addressed based on only one approach.

This dissertation presents the author's definition of employee engagement and analyzes the term from three different approaches to facets of engagement: personal engagement, job engagement and organizational engagement.

In reviewing the employee engagement literature two different approaches arise, one is the practitioner approach and the second is the academic approach. The practitioner approach varies from the academic approach in purpose and outcomes, which focuses on "doing engagement" (Arrowsmith and Parker, 2013; Macey and Schneider, 2008; Wefald and Downey, 2009).

On the other hand, the academic approach focuses on the definition and validation of the psychological aspect of the concept, focused more on the individual level in order to better understand the antecedents, variables, factors and outcomes and their relationships (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014; Crawford et al., 2010; Saks, 2006; Wefald and Downey, 2009; Xanthopoulou et al., 2009).

Most studies on this topic represent the academic approach. This dissertation attempts to bridge the gaps between the academic and the practical approach through findings that are relating to the way of enhancing and creating employee engagement.

### **Research problem and research questions**

In considering the research topic the research problem is related to the role of an organization's culture, direct manager's behavior, and team's atmosphere as elements of employee engagement in a service firm in the financial sector.

To understand the context of this research problem the dissertation analyses thoroughly the following questions:

1. What is the role of each independent variable on achieving engagement, in the three pre-intervention, post-intervention measurements and the joint group?

2. Are there strong and significant correlations between the variables, in the three pre-intervention, post-intervention measurements and the joint group?
3. Does the role position as employee or manager influence the correlations between the independent variables and the dependent variable?
4. Is there a difference in the leading elements of employee engagement during routine times and a crisis measurement?

To examine the research questions mentioned above a quantitative survey in a service firm was conducted twice and after analyzing the quantitative results, a qualitative analysis was performed to take a deeper look at the elements that are influencing in this unit. During the years 2020-2021 the Covid-19 pandemic influenced the whole world, and a MicMac analysis technique which is used for matrix analysis was conducted to emphasize the elements that were influencing and enhancing employee engagement in time of crisis. This technique is described and explain its wider application later in the research procedure (cf. section 2.5).

### **Goals and objectives**

The purpose of this mix method study using quantitative and qualitative analyzing was to explore the strong relationship between the independent variables and the employee engagement and the Micmac analysis strategies that the independent variables: OC, DMB and TA are elements that organization's leaders can use to engage their employees to resulted in increased profits in all times, good or crisis.

The goals of this dissertation are the following:

1. To focus on the assimilation of the three independent variables as a framework for better understanding and enhancing employee engagement.
2. To contribute to the global knowledge of employee engagement and especially about enhancing the level of employee engagement.
3. To present a unified theory to the global knowledge of employee engagement as a framework of this thesis.
4. To encourage organizations' leaders to focus on organizational culture and their human capital resource, in order to make a difference on how employees

perform their jobs, connect to their team's members, and react to their direct managers.

5. To present to organizations' leaders insights on the complexity of this issue: how to engage and enhance their employees in all times: good and in crisis.

In this dissertation, the communicating of the organizational culture of this unit alongside with the leadership skills that managers have received in the intervention process that took place in the researched unit during the two years interval are perceived as key success behavioral factors in enhancing and improving employee level of engagement. To achieve the goals of the dissertation the following objectives have been formulated in the following chapters:

1. Employee engagement – identification of the definitions, approaches, theories, antecedents, outcome, drivers, and disengagement factors.
2. Employee engagement – presenting the author's EE definition and unified theory.
3. Analyze the main important employees' engagement factors: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team's atmosphere.
4. Identifying the relationship between the dependent variable: employee engagement and the three independent variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team's atmosphere.
5. Identification of the factors in time of crisis.

### **The dissertation structure**

This dissertation consists of an introduction, five chapters and conclusions. The five chapters are:

The **first** chapter consists of the literature review of two main topics: (1) the concept of employee engagement; (2) the three independent variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team atmosphere.

1. The topic of employee engagement examines deeply the multi facets concept of employee engagement. Presenting the evolution of the concept, the different approaches which present and explain the complexity of the concept, the



important employee engagement theories, the different definitions of the concept, the antecedents, the drivers, and outcomes of employee engagement.

2. The three independent variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior and team's atmosphere have been discussed combining theoretical and practical issues and focuses on a review of the factors which influence employee engagement. This topic includes the three main factors' definitions, approaches and drivers. Presenting the concept of organizational culture as the basis of organizational existence. The role of the values and behaviors in the context of the culture. The managerial behavior role in enhancing employee engagement and the importance of team atmosphere.

The **second** chapter of this dissertation presents the methodology of the research combining a mix method: quantitative and qualitative analyses. After having the results of surveys administered twice in an interval period of two years, interviews were conducted to fill in the big picture on the influential factors of employee engagement.

The quantitative surveys' results, a pretest – posttest measurements were used and presented three different results of the pre-intervention, post-intervention and the joint group measurement. In this analyzes: three methods served as the basis: Pearson, T-test and multiple regression. The questionnaires that were used to evaluate the level of engagement were built on an employee attitudes survey using a Likert scale from 1-10, which included statements referring to the four variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, team atmosphere and engagement. After having the results of the quantitative results, the interviews were conducted focusing on the big picture of employee engagement and its factors enhancing it in the **third** chapter.

Another different perspective on the level of employee engagement were conducted during the pandemic, the results of this Micmac analysis are presenting the factors that were the influential ones on employee engagement in time of a crisis.

The **fourth** chapter is the discussion of the findings in the light of the literature research, the surveys' findings, the interviews and the covid-19 survey indicating the factors enhancing employee engagement.

The first part of the chapter summarizes the research findings and discussed the correlations between the variables and its influence on employee engagement. The second part analyzes main topics such as the differences between the prediction models of employee engagement and its significance, organizational culture and team's atmosphere as predictors of employee engagement, and the third part refers to the practical implications and the contribution of this research to theory. The **fifth** chapter sums up the limitations of the research and suggests future research directions and the researcher's conclusion.

## **Chapter 1. The concept of employee engagement – why does it matter?**

### **1.1. Development of the concept of employee engagement**

The roots of the concept of employee engagement have been in the academic literature since the 1990s. An early exponent of employee engagement begins with the academic work of Kahn (1990, 1992), who is called "parent of engagement" (Gupta and Sharma, 2018). The concept of employee engagement gained popularity at its genesis in the profession. The concept was widely discussed among managers, consultants and policymakers, but less so in academia. Consulting firms have used this concept extensively, and over the years it has become an important topic among academic researchers from various fields of knowledge such as: management, business, psychology and organizational culture (Welch, 2011).

The concept of employee engagement is defined differently from the two basic semantic concepts that are similar to it and they are: employee commitment and employee satisfaction. Nohria et al. (2008) explained that there are differences between the structures of these related concepts, but employee engagement is seen as energy, effort and initiative that employees bring to their work, while job satisfaction is seen to what extent employees feel their company meets their expectations of work and work meets explicit agreements. Employee commitment is seen as the extent to which employees engage in corporate citizenship (Nohria et al. 2008, p. 1).

The concept of employee engagement evolved in three stages or as academic researchers have called it, "waves" (Welch, 2011; Gupta and Sharma, 2018). Even before the onset of the first wave, in the pre-wave era there was a recognition of the need for workers to engage in their work (Welch, 2011). For example, Katz and Kahn (1966, p. 388) discuss employee behaviors to achieve organizational efficiency. They do not use the term employee engagement, however, their work emphasizes the need for involvement and links involvement to organizational effectiveness.

The first phase/ wave was between the years 1990-1999, and begins with Kahn's academic paper, which presents in a new way the motivation of employees

(Kahn, 1990, 1992). Kahn (1990, p. 694) defines personal work engagement as engaging members of the organization with their role in their workplace, and describes it from a behavioral perspective, where *“people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance”*. In order for employees to be able to perform their job, Kahn added, the need for three psychological conditions must exist, namely: meaningfulness (elements at work), safety (social elements, including management style, process and organizational norms) and availability (few individual distractions) (Kahn, 1990). During this decade, the interest of consulting firms and practitioners in the concept of employee engagement has grown and it has become very common.

The second phase/ wave was between the years 1999-2005 and began with the publication of the book "First Break all the Rules" by Gallup's Buckingham and Coffman (1999). During the first years of the 21st century, the publication of the book accelerated the concept of employee engagement, and many works on the subject were written by both academics and international consulting firms and professional bodies, such as: Hewitt Associates LLC (Merry, 2013), CIPD (Alfes et al., 2010), Institute for Employment Studies (Robinson et al., 2004), Development Dimensions International (Wellins et al., 2005) and Gallup Workplace Audit (Harter et al., 2002). International consulting firms link the concept of high employee engagement to the organization's high business performance and develop various tools for measuring employee engagement to the organization such as: the Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA) (Harter et al., 2002) known as Q12 employee engagement questionnaire and Hewitt Associates LLC (2004, p. 2) measured employee engagement with an 18-item scale.

The positive psychology movement presented a central and important scientific development during this wave, which turned the focus from negative consequences of attitudes in the workplace such as burnout, to positive drivers such as employee engagement (Welch, 2011). The switch prompted the appearance of academic work on engagement within this period (Maslach et al., 2001; Harter et al., 2002; May et al., 2004).

The third phase/ wave of employee engagement was between the years 2006-2010, this wave is characterized by great interest on the part of academics and has

witnessed an increase on the academic side in the term employee engagement as opposed to the term burnout at work. The Job Demands – Resources (JD – R) Model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007) expanded the line of research, which began with the work of Maslach and Leiter (1997) which hypothesized three factors of employee engagement which are opposite to three factors of burnout at work. Schaufeli et al. (2002), argued that employee engagement and burnout are two different concepts in their structure, and yet an engaged employee would experience little burnout in his workplace (Gupta and Sharma, 2018).

At the forefront of this wave stands the work of Saks (2006) who was the first to expand and define the concept of employee engagement to include both job employee engagement and organizational engagement. Saks' work gave legitimacy to an employee engagement approach, as he directly addressed the concern that the idea was more of a "buzzword" than a serious structure. His work provided a compelling argument that presents employee engagement as a scientific concept, and his support for the structure inspired further scientific efforts (Welch, 2011). In 2010, Rich et al. further explored the concept of Kahn's engagement and came up with a new measure of engagement, known as JES (Job Engagement Scale). The continuous research of more than 20 years on engagement has evidenced its dynamic nature and variables (Gupta and Sharma, 2018).

### **1.1.1. Employee engagement – definitions and approaches**

#### ***1.1.1.1. Employee engagement – a multifaceted construct***

The concept of employee engagement is defined by various academic researchers, practitioners, and international consulting companies. As a result, numerous definitions of employee engagement and its measurement exist and there continues to be a lack of agreement and consensus on what engagement actually means (Bailey et al., 2017a; Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014; Saks and Gruman, 2014; Sun and Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Xu and Thomas, 2011). In actual fact, researchers can't even agree on a name for the construct (Saks and Gruman, 2014). Some argue that it should be called employee engagement, while others suggest it should be called job engagement (Rich et al., 2010) or work engagement (Schaufeli and Salanova, 2011).

The concept is attracting greater attention from scholars in disciplines such as business and management, psychology, and organizational behavior (Xu and Thomas, 2011). Despite this, scholars have noted that academic research lags behind practitioner developments (Macey and Schneider, 2008; Robinson et al., 2004) and the literature is underdeveloped, and the concept of engagement is still in its infancy (Kular et al., 2008). Therefore, there remains a paucity of critical academic literature on the subject, and relatively little is known about how employee engagement can be influenced by management's role (Kular et al., 2008). Each researcher gave his own definition to the structure of this concept because each study examined it in a different context (Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014). The dynamic mechanism from which the employee engagement is produced is not well understood (Bledow et al., 2011).

As a result, there is no perfect consensus, no single, unambiguous, and universal definition for the concept of employee engagement from the official definitions in the research literature. The majority of the definitions of EE that were found in academic and practitioner literature (Appendix 1), share the idea that employee engagement concept is a desirable condition, has an organizational purpose and implies involvement, enthusiasm, commitment, passion, focused effort and energy, hence it has both attitudinal and behavioral components (Macey and Schneider, 2008).

To provide an authoritative definition of employee engagement, a total of 43 such definitions were collected from a wide variety of publications made by academic researchers, consulting companies, and practitioners. A full verbatim listing of the definitions collected, and their sources is shown at appendix 1. The content of the definitions was then analyzed. The results allow the author of this thesis to present the collected definitions of the concept of employee engagement in 3 facets: organizational facet, individual facet toward the role and individual facet toward state of mind. The results show that *organizational facet* appears 20 times out of 43 definitions (47%), *individual facet toward the role* appears 12 times out of 43 (28%) and the *individual facet toward state of mind* appears 11 times out of 43 (25%) (see Table 2). Table 2 presents the diversity of characteristics which is introduced in each facet of the concept of employee engagement.

**Table 2. Characteristics of the three facets of employee engagement definitions**

<b>i. Organizational facet of employee engagement – positive affection toward the organization appears 20 times off 43 (47%)</b>	
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Times mentioned</b>
Achieving organizational goals	4
An employee's relationship with his/her manager	1
Attachment to role	5
Awareness of business context, high performance, benefit of the organization	1
Contributing to their employer's success	1
Desire to be a member of the organization	1
Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance	7
Employee's commitment	2
Employee's involvement	1
Employee's positive thinking about his/ her organization	2
Increasing employee productivity	1
Intention to turnover	1
Management strategies, relationship and communication	1
Meeting customers' needs	2
Positive management and workplace conditions	1
Positive relationship with manager	1
Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment	1
Willing to apply extra effort (time, brainpower and effort)	4
'Win-win' scenario for both employees and employers	1
<b>ii. Individual facet of employee engagement – positive affection toward the role appears 12 times off 43 (28%)</b>	
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Times mentioned</b>
Maximum alignment between job satisfaction and job contribution	1
A bond between employee and organization	1
Attachment to role	4
Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance	1
Employee's high performance	1
Employee's involvement satisfaction and enthusiasm	1
Employee's responsibility and commitment to performance	1
Intention to turnover	1
Meeting employees needs	1
Positive connection to co-workers	1
Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment	3
Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort)	3
<b>iii. Individual facet of employee engagement – ppositive affection toward state of mind appears 11 times off 43 (25%)</b>	
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Times mentioned</b>
Activation and pleasure	1
Attachment to role	2
Composite of vigor, dedication and absorption	1
Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance	2
Enjoyment and believe in what they do	1
Feeling valued	1
Internal motivational state	1
Positive state of mind	6
Pride in one's company. Employee's relationship with his/her manager	1

Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment	5
Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort)	1

Source: Author's compilation.

The results also showed that the following characteristics of an employee engagement received mention by a significant proportion of sources, using the same or closely equivalent wording (cf. Table 3) that have been used by researchers and practitioners to explain and define the concept. Table 3 presents the relationship between an employee and his/ her role; the organization; the direct manager; the team; the company's customers and stakeholders.

**Table 3. Employee engagement definition using various expression of employees' characteristics**

i. Employee's attachment to role – 47% (63 of 134)			
Characteristic	Times mentioned	Divided to sub characteristics	Examples of terms used
<b>Physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances</b>	26 of 63 (42%)	Physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances – 77%	Employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances; Employees who are mentally and emotionally invested in their work; Emotional response to a role: negative or positive; Feelings and attitudes employees have towards their jobs; Individual's sense of purpose and focused energy; Positive state of mind: vigor, dedication and absorption; Investment of an individual's complete self into a role; Being positively present; Positive emotions; Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment are activated simultaneously to create an engaged state; Positive, fulfilling yet pervasive and persistent; Heart [emotional], the head [cognitive] and the hand [physical].
		Performance to achieve organizational goals – 23%	Employee is proactive in relation to achieving organizational goals; Improve performance within the job; Illusive force that motivates employees to higher levels of performance; Performance in job; Performance "matters" to the individual; Comprehensive explanation of relationships with performance.
<b>Energy, creativity and satisfaction which lead to job's passion and motivation</b>	20 of 63 (32%)	energy, creativity and passion on the job – 40%	Energy, creativity and passion on the job; Passion that drives employees; Time and energy; Fully involved and enthusiastic about their work; Activation and pleasure; Employee's enthusiasm; Feels involved, committed, passionate; Enjoyment and believe in what they do.



		Satisfaction with job – 30%	Alignment of maximum job satisfaction; Employee's involvement satisfaction and enthusiasm; Intention to turnover; Feeling valued; Activation.
		Personal motivation – 30%	Personal motivation; High internal motivational state; State of fulfilment; Positive state of mind.
<b>Performance and "Go extra mile"</b>	14 of 63 (22%)	"Go the extra mile" – 58%	Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort); Go beyond the expected for the organization; Apply discretionary effort (extra time, brainpower and effort) to accomplishing tasks; Put discretionary effort into their work.
		Performance to achieve organizational goals – 43%	Employee is proactive in relation to achieving organizational goals; Improve performance within the job; Illusive force that motivates employees to higher levels of performance; Performance in job; Performance "matters" to the individual; Comprehensive explanation of relationships with performance.

**ii. Employee's attachment toward the organization – 30% (40 of 134)**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Times mentioned</b>	<b>Examples of terms used</b>
<b>A positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values</b>	21 of 40 (53%)	Improve performance of the organization; Employees' willingness and ability to contribute to company success; Drives employees' attachments to work and company; Positive thoughts about the organization; Employee's positive thinking and feel about his/ her organization; Contributing to their employer's success; Feelings and attitudes employees have towards their organization; Demonstrates those feelings in work behavior; Fully involved about their company; Positive emotional connection with the organization; A positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values; Proactively going above and beyond expectations to help their organization; Citizenship behavior; Feel an emotional connection to the organization; Individual role performance; Commitment to the organization; A bond between employee and organization. Speak positively about the organization; Employee's positive thinking about his/ her organization; Hard work and long stay as a result of commitment; 'Win-win' scenario for both employees and employers.
<b>Desire to be a member of the organization</b>	10 of 40 (25%)	Desire to be a member of the organization; Aware of the business context; Experiencing positive emotions; Pride in one's company; Employees commit – both rationally and emotionally; Fully enthusiastic about their company; Display of personal initiative, adaptability, effort; Positive orientation toward the organization;
<b>great organizational results</b>	9 of 40 (22%)	Great days drive great results for your organization; Achievement of organizational goals; Display persistence directed toward organizational goals; Proactively going to help their organization achieve its goals; Toward desired organizational outcomes; Contributing to their employer's success; Improve the benefit of the organization.

<b>iii. Employee's attachment to the direct manager – 11% (14 of 134)</b>		
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Times mentioned</b>	<b>Examples of terms used</b>
<b>Positive relationship with manager</b>	8 of 14 (57%)	Positive relationship with manager; Engagement as management practice; Experiencing positive emotions to their manager; Maximum job contribution; Employees commit – both rationally and emotionally.
<b>Employees are motivated by their direct manager</b>	6 of 14 (43%)	Management strategies; Relationship and communication; Wider organizational context forefronts the ideological divide, power relationships and contextual; 'win-win' scenario for both employees and employers.
<b>iv. Organization toward the employee – 6% (8 of 134)</b>		
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Times mentioned</b>	<b>Examples of terms used</b>
<b>Meeting employees needs</b>	5 of 8 (62%)	Meeting employee's needs; Focus on promoting positive workplace conditions; A bond between employee and organization; "great days at work".
<b>Management and strategies</b>	3 of 8 (38%)	Management strategies, relationship and communication; Wider organizational context forefronts the ideological divide, power relationships and contextual; 'win-win' scenario for both employees and employers.
<b>v. Employee's attachment toward his/ her team – 4% (5 of 134)</b>		
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Times mentioned</b>	<b>Examples of terms used</b>
<b>work with colleagues</b>	3 of 5 (60%)	Work with colleagues; Meaningful connection to co-workers; Employees commit – both rationally and emotionally
<b>teamwork</b>	2 of 5 (40%)	Achieving organizational goals for colleagues; work group engagement.
<b>vi. Employee's attachment toward company's customers and stakeholders – 3% (4 of 134)</b>		
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Times mentioned</b>	<b>Examples of terms used</b>
<b>employee's attachment company's customers</b>	3 of 4 (75%)	Meaningful connection to costumers; Meeting customers' needs.
<b>employee's attachment toward stakeholders</b>	1 of 4 (25%)	Achieving organizational goals for stakeholders.

Source: Author's compilation based on appendix 1.

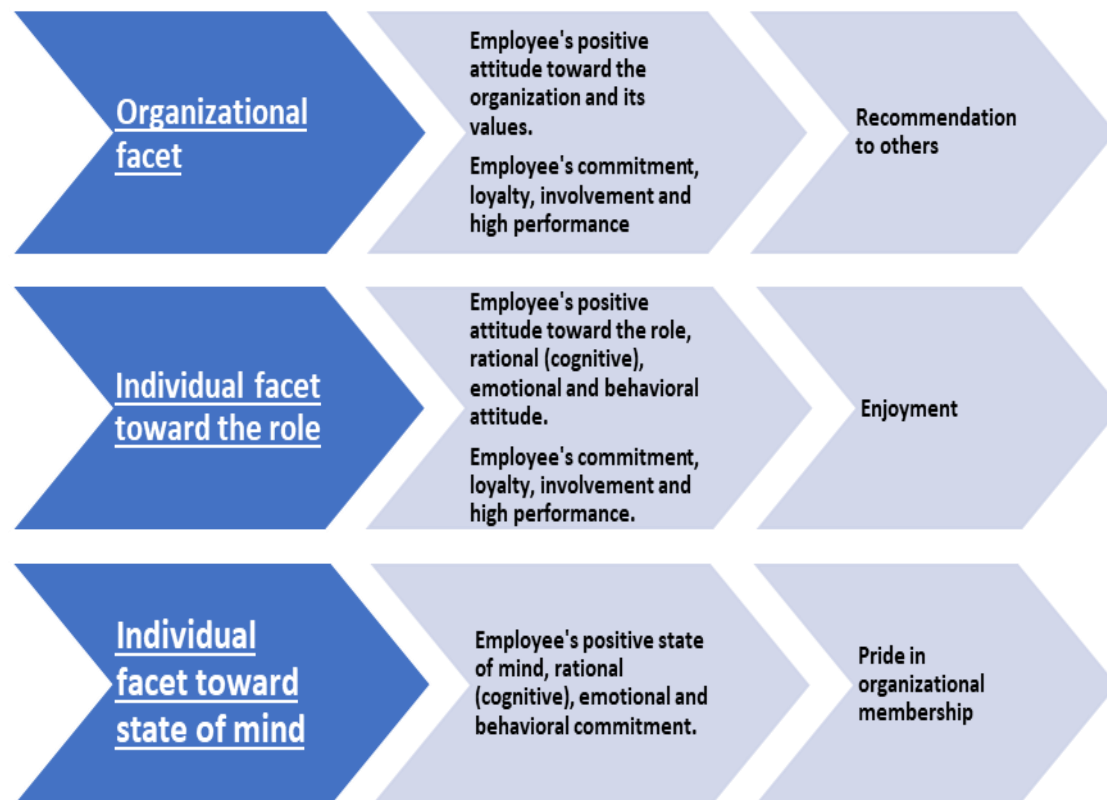
Giving the analysis of the definitions found in 43 academic and practitioner publications (see Appendix 1) allows the author of this thesis to construct a definition for the purpose of this thesis: Employee Engagement is a multifaceted construct that made up of 3 facets; organizational facet and an individual's double facets toward the role and state of mind. Employee Engagement is an employee's positive attitude toward the organization and its values which include an employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance toward the organization and role.

Engagement includes an employee's positive state of mind, rational (cognitive), emotional and behavioral commitment to oneself and the role.

**Table 4. Definition of EE made by the author of this thesis, connection between facets and outcome results of EE**

Facets	Organizational facet	Individual facet toward the role	Individual facet toward state of mind
<b>Toward</b>	Organization	Role	State of mind
<b>Characteristic</b>	Employee's positive attitude toward the organization and its values. Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement, and high performance	Employee's positive attitude toward the role, rational (cognitive), emotional and behavioral attitude. Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement, and high performance.	Employee's positive state of mind, rational (cognitive), emotional and behavioral commitment.
<b>Outcome results</b>	Recommendation to others	Enjoyment	Pride in organizational membership

Source: Author's compilation based on appendix 1.



**Figure 2. Scheme of the definition of EE**

Source: Author's compilation based on appendix 1.

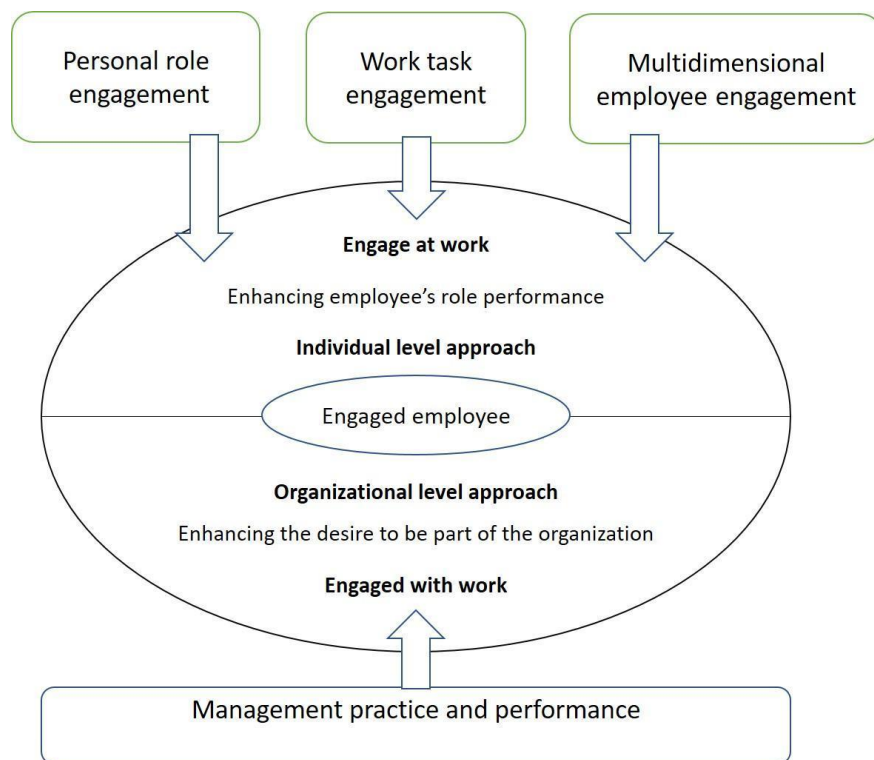
This construct relies on other concepts which are well established in the academic literature such as 'organizational commitment', 'organizational citizenship behavior', 'job involvement', and 'flow' (Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014). At the same time, similar concepts exist, like: 'organizational climate', 'organizational commitment', 'organizational culture', 'managerial climate', 'organizational atmosphere', and 'management culture' (Guest, 2014; Owens, 1981). Still, for the construct of employee engagement, there is a presence of common threads which is an expression of the self through work and other employee-role activities (Finn and Rock, 1997) that surfaced the nature of the construct well (Megha, 2016).

The concept of employee engagement is rooted in academic research and received its first definition in the 1990s with Kahn's preliminary definition (Kahn, 1990). Over the years, researchers and consulting firms gave the concept various definitions, which all come to an understanding that employee engagement is desirable, has an organizational purpose, and has both psychological and behavioral facets in which it involves energy, enthusiasm, and focused effort (Macey and Schneider, 2008). Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) define employee engagement as *"the individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work"* (p. 269)

Employee engagement is achieved as the self-harnessing of the members of the organization to their job roles (Kahn, 1990), as the individual's investment entirely in his role (Rich et al., 2010). According to Saks (2006), employee engagement can be perceived as an individual's pay back to the organization, meaning the employee chooses to engage himself as a response to the resources he receives from his organization. Employee engagement provides a supplementary comprehensive explanation of relationships with performance that reflect narrower aspects of the individual's self (Rich et al., 2010). Also, it is associated with a significant understanding of the organization's purpose (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006) and describes the mental state underlying high degrees of work motivation (Bledow et al., 2011). Solid employee engagement performance with work can be perceived as a relationship which turns over time into trust, loyalty, and mutual commitments (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). It is a dynamic motivational state that changes with

shifting circumstances (Sonnentag et al., 2010). Moving from negative events or mood circumstances to a high-positive mood situation is associated with high work engagement. By building a culture that promotes positive events and that strengthens the beneficial rather than the detrimental consequence of negative events, organizations can increase employee engagement (Bledow et al., 2011).

In the first narrative synthesis which considered the body of 214 accumulated studies evidence relating to engagement and in relation to the meaning, antecedents and consequences of engagement, reveal those definitions of employee engagement could be gathered to four main headings: personal role engagement (cf. section 1.2.2.), work task engagement (cf. section 1.2.3.), multidimensional employee engagement (cf. section 1.2.4.), management practice and performance (cf. section 1.2.5.) (Bailey et al., 2017a, 2017b).



**Figure 3. Relations between the four types of engagement**

Source: Author's compilation based on (Bailey et al., 2017a, 2017b).

### 1.1.2. Personal role engagement

Kahn (1990) was the first to present the concept of personal engagement and based his work on an earlier piece of engagement literature defined by Goffman (1961) which was rooted in role theory. Goffman (1961) defined engagement as the *“spontaneous involvement in the role”* and a *“visible investment of attention and muscular effort”* (as cited in Wildermuth and Pauken, 2008). Katz and Kahn (1966) emphasized the general need for employees to engage with their work and organizations. Yet their work doesn't use the term 'employee engagement' directly, it recognizes the need for engagement and its association with organizational effectiveness. Kahn (1990) defines in his work personal work engagement as the *“harnessing of organisation members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally, during role performances”* (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). This definition clarifies the concept of engagement as a manifestation of being "present at work". To be present at work requires a certain mental state, which is the individual's cognitive, emotional, and physical expression toward their work. To explain the occurrence, Kahn associated three psychological conditions, viz. psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability, which are considered as determining and mediating effects on employee engagement (Kahn, 1990, 1992). The only study that empirically tested Kahn's (1990) model was conducted by May, Gilson and Harter, (2004). This study supported the assumption in which psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety and availability are positively related to engagement (May et al., 2004).

Psychological meaningfulness is defined as the 'the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideals or standards' (May et al., 2004, p. 14). Meaningfulness has the strongest positive relationship with employee engagement (May et al., 2004). Engaged individuals are described as being psychologically present, fully involved, attentive, feeling connected, integrated, and focused in their role performances. Projecting openness to themselves and others, connection to work and others, and bringing one's complete self to performance (Kahn, 1992). Individuals can be involved in their work role physically, cognitively, or

emotionally. Engagement is maintaining involvement simultaneously in a connected rather than disintegrated manner (Kahn, 1992). Meaningfulness is secure for employees when they derive a personal benefit through increased physical, psychological, and cognitive energy (Kahn, 1990, 1992).

Psychological safety is a situation where employees trust that they can bring their true selves without fear of negative repercussions in voicing their standards both on personal or professional condition at work (Kahn 1990, 1992). Employees feel safe when they relate themselves to their role performances and they are provided with sufficient personal satisfaction. As employees feel psychologically safe and their work is meaningful to them, they are psychologically available. In addition, the condition of psychological availability refers to a situation, in which employees are drawn on integration and focused means to enhance their role performances.

Psychological availability introduces employees to continuously have a physical, emotional, and psychological frame of mind which allow them to stay engaged despite personal and professional environmental distractions from daily life. In contrast employees who are highly disengaged in their work roles do not invest their physical, cognitive, and emotional energies, directly reflected in their participation on task activities in negative connotation, robotic, passive, and detached (Crawford et al., 2010; Goffman, 1959).

An important holistic approach by Chalofsky and Krishna (2009) to workplace motivation presents individual and personal process (intrinsic aspects of work motivation), which is significantly influenced and shaped by the contextual and organizational factors, that creates a conceptual frame of a deeper level of motivation, viz., meaningfulness or meaningful work. Work itself is only one facet of meaningful work's construct (Chalofsky, 2003). Chalofsky (2003) identified three themes that consider the basis of a deeper level of motivation, viz. sense of self, the work itself and the sense of balance. These themes build a deeper level of motivation than the traditional intrinsic values of a sense of accomplishment, pride, satisfaction, and praise from one's supervisor (Chalofsky and Krishna, 2009).

This approach outlines the connection between meaning *of* work and meaning *at* work that is expressed in terms of employee engagement (Chalofsky and Krishna,

2009). Chalofsky and Krishna (2009) distinguish between the meaning of work and the meaning at work. Meaning of work is the *"desire to be part of an organization that is going to take care of them and help them take care of their families, support their growth through skill and knowledge development, understand their need to have some work–life balance, and use their skills and abilities in a way that is meaningful"* (Chalofsky and Krishna, 2009, p. 194). Though, meaning at work points toward a relationship between the person and the organization or the workplace, in the sense of commitment and engagement. Once there is meaning at work, *"[only then] will our work become more joyful [and] our organizations will flourish with commitment, passion, imagination, spirit, and soul"* (Richards, 1995, p. 94).

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) expressed employee engagement as a flow concept, in which flow is a holistic sensation that employees experience when they are totally involved in their work. *"As long as a goal provides clear objectives, clear rules for action and a way to concentrate and become involved, any goal can serve to give meaning to a person's life"* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 215), meaning to become an "autotelic personality" (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). The significance of Csikszentmihalyi's research was to find out how intrinsically motivated people are driven by the work itself rather than by the accomplishment of the task. His research revealed a kind of experience where people's performance seemed effortless and described the feeling of being able to continue forever in their task and wanting to learn additional skills to master more demanding challenges (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

In summary, meaningful work can bring a lot of benefits to the organization and can lead to a stronger commitment, satisfaction, and employee engagement toward the organization and toward the work itself. Meaningful work can also emphasize individual and organizational fulfillment, productivity, retention, and loyalty (Geldenhuis et al., 2014).

### **1.1.3. Work task engagement**

The second approach on employee engagement definition is the most dominant one in the stream of research, viewing engagement as an activated positive state of mind directed towards work tasks (Bailey et al., 2017a). This approach conceptualizes



employee engagement as the opposite of burnout. Burnout has the association of employees' stressful health situations (Bailey et al., 2017a; Shuck, 2011). Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001), presented engagement as the 'burnout-antithesis' approach. Presenting the concept of engagement as a positive antithesis to burnout, defining it as *"a persistent positive affective state (...) characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure"* (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 417). Burnout was conceptualized to be the erosion of engagement (Shuck, 2011). Proposing engagement and burnout as two ends of a continuum (Sun and Bunchapattanasakda, 2019).

Building on this, the 'Utrecht Group', Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002) defined engagement as *"a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption"*, an engaged employee has a strong sense of vigor towards, dedication to, and absorption in work's activities (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). Therefore, the concept of engagement is to be willing to dedicate physical, cognitive, and emotional resources to a specific task (i.e., task engagement) (Saks and Gruman, 2014). The core dimensions of engagement: vigor and dedication are direct opposites of the core dimension of burnout: exhaustion and cynicism respectively (Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2006) Vigor involves high level of energy, willingness to invest effort at the job, mental resilience while working; dedication refers to participation, strong involvement in the task, enthusiasm and absorption in work activities refers to effectiveness and be fully connected to the task (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Saks and Gruman, 2014).

#### **1.1.4. Multidimensional employee engagement**

Saks (2006) defined the approach of engagement by means of *"a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components that are associated with individual role performance"* (p. 602) and distinguished it from job engagement and organizational engagement (Saks, 2006). The two concepts are conceptually different from each other. Job engagement shares a psychological term of employee's well-being at the individual level. Whereas organizational engagement relates to improving organizational performance and it is at the organizational level

(Saks, 2006). According to this approach, employee engagement is a merger of employees' attitudes, intentions, and behaviors.

Swanberg et al. (2011) point out this approach by adopting the Utrecht Group definition of employee engagement. Swanberg et al. (2011) measures employee engagement in the setting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral employee engagement. In this way, they extend the construct of employee engagement beyond the strict boundaries of the construct proposed by the Utrecht Group. This approach of employee engagement is perhaps the closest to what many practitioners and consulting companies recognize, as it includes positive attitudes towards the organization, including satisfaction with managers, communication, and resources (Swanberg et al., 2011).

#### **1.1.5. Management practice and performance**

Bailey et al., (2017a) present this approach of "Engagement as management practice and employee's performance" as a new and emerging area of interest. This has become a dominant part in the terms of human resource management (HRM) (Arrowsmith and Parker, 2013). This approach consider engagement as a management practice of "doing engagement" contrary to "being engaged" which makes the concept of employee engagement different and far from its original roots, which lie within the positive psychology movement (Truss et al., 2014 cited in Bailey et al., 2017a, p. 35). This approach lies more within the field of involvement, intervention, and participation, and is linked to the practitioner approach which differs from the academic approach in purpose and outcomes (Arrowsmith and Parker, 2013; Macey and Schneider, 2008; Wefald and Downey, 2009).

Practitioner literature and consulting firms' approach use the term of employee engagement to predict employee actions and outcomes, aiming to improve performance, retention, commitment, and productivity (Saks, 2006; Wefald and Downey, 2009) and it has been "*heavily marketed by HR consulting firms who offer advice on how it can be created and leveraged*" (Macey and Schneider, 2008, p. 3). Jenkins and Delbridge (2013) argue that practitioners and consulting firms mostly ignored unitarist and managerialist approaches and also have failed to engage with

the complexities of the management challenges inherent in the employment relationship. Whilst the academic literature approach provides valuable insights of the concept and focuses on the psychology aspect, paying more attention to the individual level in order to understand antecedents, variables and outcomes of employee engagement. The academic literature approach is rigorously tested and causal relations between antecedents and engagement outcomes are identified (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008; Xanthopoulou et al., 2009; Rich et al., 2010). Therefore, an examination of the academic and practitioner perspective, provide six main organizational features of employee engagement drives (Jenkins and Delbridge, 2013, p. 2685):

- I. organizational values,
- II. job features,
- III. organizational support,
- IV. social relations,
- V. employee voice, and
- VI. organizational integrity, i.e., the way in which organizational values are translated into practice.

Performance of the individual as an element of employee engagement was defined by Britt et al., (2005), as individuals feeling a sense of responsibility and commitment towards performance, so that performance “matters” to the individual. Meaning the employee is personally engaged in doing well in a given performance domain (i.e., the identity of the individual is invested in performance) (Crocker and Wolfe, 2001), and devote increased attentional resources and effort to performing well (Britt, 2003; Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004).

There are two major key components associating employee engagement with performances: spontaneity (Goffman, 1961) and variability (Kahn, 1990) (as cited in Wildermuth and Pauken, 2008). The differentiation between the two components is that spontaneity involves employees undesirable work tasks and yet perform the work without fully being invested, meaning one can accept an unwanted role, and can be forced to perform it, but cannot be ordered to engage in it. On the opposite side, variability involves employees that are satisfied and engaged by choosing one role

over another, meaning the same person could be engaged in one role and not in another (Kahn, 1990).

## **1.2. Theoretical framework for employee engagement**

A wide range of theoretical frameworks have been used to explain employee engagement. Just as there are more than a few definitions of employee engagement, there are also several theories of engagement. Different employee engagement scholars have used a wide range of theoretical frameworks to "explain" engagement by either way: explaining how engagement fits within wider positive psychological paradigms, or explaining through the relationship between engagement, its antecedents, and its outcomes (Bailey et al., 2015). Scholars explain employee engagement from different theoretical perspectives according to their own empirical study, therefore, there is no unique theoretical framework for employee engagement to date (Saks and Gruman, 2014; Sun and Bunchapattanasakda, 2019). Saks and Gruman (2014) noted that the origin of employee engagement theories stem from two primary areas of research: Kahn's Needs-Satisfaction framework (1990) based on ethnographic study of personal engagement and disengagement (cf. section 1.3.1.) and the second area is job burnout and employee well-being (cf. section 1.3.2.) by Maslach and Leiter (1997).

In order to understand the fundamental process in which engagement is thought to operate and the theoretical frameworks, it is significant to present the variety of theories and their relationships in which they have been proposed to "explain" how engagement works. In a narrative synthesis of the literature presented by Bailey et al. (2015), a varied list of 49 theories frameworks of employee engagement is referred to a dataset of 214 items, comprising 172 empirical papers, 38 theoretical articles and four meta-analyses (see Appendix 2). According to this narrative synthesis by Bailey et al. (2015), the findings of the theories of employee engagement (see Table 5) are: 65 of 172 (38%) studies have used the job demands-resources (JD-R) framework (cf. section 1.3.3.), 26 studies (15%) have used the social exchange theory (SET) (cf. section 1.3.4.), conservation of resources theory (COR) (cf. section 1.3.5.) used in 14 (8%) studies, Broaden-and-build theory (cf. section 1.3.6.)

was used in 8 of 214 (5%) studies and only seven studies referred explicitly to Kahn's engagement theory. Important to note that 12% of all the studies, meaning 21 studies were defined as "unspecified" meaning: no theory was mentioned and it was not clear, on reading the paper, what the author's intention was. Bailey et al. (2015) have also found in their narrative synthesis of the literature that the majority of theories frameworks, 43 out of 49 (88%), referred to the remaining studies, 73 of 172 (42%) studies, which were used in five papers/ studies or fewer.

This diversity of theories frameworks indicates that each researcher is using a different theory framework to "explain" engagement from his or her point of view. Therefore, there is as thus far no agreed theoretical framework that may be of particular relevance in explaining engagement. According to Bailey et al. (2015) the principal theoretical framework used in the engagement literature is the job demands resources framework. Therefore, it is important to note that, in line with the principal conceptualization of engagement as a work-related state of mind, most of the theories used to explain the engagement process are derived from the psychology field.

**Table 5. Core theoretical frameworks which explain employee engagement**

<b>Theory</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Number of appearances in narrative synthesis of the literature by Bailey et al. (2015)</b>	<b>Characteristics/ Factors/ Principles of the theoretical framework</b>
The job demands-resources (JD-R) framework	Bakker and Demerouti (2007)	65 of 214 studies (30%)	The JD-R framework distinguishes between resources, in the form of either job-related resources or personal resources and demands. Resources energize employees and foster engagement, which, in turn, yields positive outcomes such as high levels of well-being and performance (Taris and Schaufeli 2014, p. 26).
The social exchange theory (SET)	Levinson (1965)	26 of 214 studies (12%)	Relationships between employees and employers are based on norms of reciprocity. Where employees feel that they are being treated well and valued by their employer, they are more likely to respond by exerting effort on behalf of the employer in the form of raised levels of engagement (Alfes et al, 2013a).

Conservation of resources theory (COR)	Hobfoll (1989)	14 of 214 studies (6%)	Individuals seek to acquire and preserve valued resources, which can be personal, energetic, social or material resources. The provision of resources may be particularly salient in raising engagement levels among those who are experiencing high levels of demand, since resources buffer their potentially negative effects (Bakker et al. 2007).
Broaden-and-build theory	Fredrickson (2001)	8 of 214 studies (4%)	Fredrickson (2001) argues that engagement is more likely to occur when individuals who experience positive emotions are able to draw on a wider range of behavioral responses and are more likely to be engaged.
Kahn's Need-Satisfying theory	Kahn (1990)	7 of 214 studies (3%)	Engagement is influenced by three antecedent psychological conditions: experienced meaningfulness of work; psychological safety; and experienced availability. Kahn (1990) argues that these three conditions are influenced by the nature of the job, the social environment, personal resources and energy.

Source: Author's compilation based on Bailey et al. (2015)

Psychological traits such as perceived self-efficacy and a proactive approach to work, together with positive affect, are argued to generate an energetic, enthusiastic and engaged state (Parker and Griffin, 2011). As Kahn's Need-Satisfying theory of engagement (1990) is rooted in Hackman and Oldham's (1976) proposal that job characteristics drive attitudes and behavior, Bakker and Demerouti (2007) also argue that the job demands resources model demonstrates how job design can generate engaged states, which lead to the conclusion that the Job design theory has also been found to be relevant to employee engagement. The basic premise of the JD-R model is that demands and resources need to be in equilibrium, ie, if demand exceeds resources motivation is depleted (and psychological damage may result) as high job demands exhaust employees' physical and mental resources and lead to a depletion of energy and health problems which are related to burnout while job resources predict work engagement, extra-role performance, and organizational commitment, whereas if resources exceed demands boredom and feelings of being unappreciated may result (which also leads to de-motivation) (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Burnout

was presented by Maslach and Leiter (1997) in the nineties, as an antithesis of engagement, at the time when research literature about burnout was dominated.

The social exchange theory that presents the relationships between employees and employers that are based on norms of reciprocity, integrated the JD-R model and concept of psychological contract (Birtch et al., 2016; Hu et al., 2016). As well, the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory that is based on the premise that individuals seek to acquire and preserve valued resources, such as personal, energetic, social or material resources, can be relate to the JD-R model as in Bakker et al. (2007) and Kinnunen et al. (2011) studies. According to the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which is primarily a theory of stress and relates to JD-R, resource gain occurs when individuals are able to build on resources they already have (e.g. time, cognitive attention, physical energy) to get used for completing work tasks, but need to be replaced or stress results due to the equilibrium of D-R being disrupted. Resource loss arises for those without access to strong resource supply. According to this view, the provision of resources may be particularly salient in raising engagement levels among those who are experiencing high levels of demand, since resources buffer their potentially negative effects (Bakker et al., 2007).

Furthermore, an integration of three theories was examined by Bakker and Bal (2010) and by Xanthopoulou et al. (2009), who integrated the JD-R model, COR and the Broaden and build theory. The Broaden and build theory occur when individuals experience positive rather than negative emotions, since these create the space for broader range of thought – action repertoires and activated positive affect which is important for stimulating action (Parker and Griffin, 2011).

The following theories are presented by the author of this thesis by their chronological appearance in the literature, as follow, starting with the Job design theory by Herzberg et al. (1959), than following by the Social Exchange theory that was presented by Levinson (1965), than the self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (1985b), than the Conservation of Resources by Hobfoll (1989), than the Need-Satisfying theory by Kahn (1990), than the Burnout antithesis theory by Maslach and Leiter (1997), than the broaden and build theory by Fredrickson (2001) and finally the Job Demands-Resources model by Bakker and Demerouti (2007).

### **1.2.1. Job Design Theory**

Job Design Theory (JDT) is based on the idea that the employee's task itself is the key to his motivation. Namely, the theory defines boring and monotonous work as a factor that reduces the motivation for the best performance of the task and in contrast a factor that improves the employee's motivation is challenging work. It is possible to add challenges to the employee's position in three ways: diversification of the position, autonomy, and providing authority of decision. In addition, enrichment at work and rotation are additional ways to add variety and challenge to the employee's task (Ramlall, 2004).

Frederick Herzberg was one of the first researchers in the field of the redesign of jobs to study the relation/ correlation between the redesign of the position and motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959). In the mid-1950s, Herzberg and his colleagues began their initial work, which included an in-depth review of the research that existed until that time about factors that influence work motivation (Herzberg et al., 1957). On the basis of this review, Herzberg carried out the famous survey conducted among 200 accountants and engineers, from which he derived the initial framework of his theory of motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959).

On this basis, the survey participants described satisfying experiences in terms of factors essential to the content of the work itself, or intrinsic factors. These factors were called motivators and included variables such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, progress, and growth. In contrast, unsatisfying experiences were called hygiene factors and derived primarily from extrinsic factors unrelated to the position, such as the company policy, salary, relations with colleagues, and the management style (Steers and Porter, 1983).

Herzberg asserted that the elimination of the factors of dissatisfaction, or in other words the hygiene factors, would lead to a neutral situation in the employee and not to a situation of satisfaction. To achieve satisfaction (and motivation), it is necessary to use motivators. Meaning, to increase the employee's motivation through basic changes in his role, or in other words, through the enrichment of the employee's role (Steers and Porter, 1983). Therefore, it is necessary to plan and redesign roles and positions according to the employee's abilities and skills, so as to enable the increase



of the challenge and the responsibility, the opportunities for advancement, personal growth, and recognition (Steers and Porter, 1983).

The factors that lead to satisfaction at work, according to Herzberg, are different and distinct from those that lead to dissatisfaction with work. Managers who seek to remove factors that create dissatisfaction with the work can lead to a situation of calm and not necessarily to a situation of motivation in the employee. These managers will appease their employees and will not motivate them (Robbins, 1993).

Kreitner and Kinicki (1998) note one of the findings of Herzberg, in which managers, instead of giving employees additional tasks at the same level of difficulty (horizontal loading), give their employees complex tasks with greater responsibility (vertical loading) and the outcome is that employees perform the tasks typically performed by their supervisors.

Herzberg (1968) presents in his article “One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees” seven principles on how it is necessary to load on the work tasks that are vertical loading, or in other words, more responsibility.

**Table 6. Principles used to provide additional responsibility**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Motivators involved</b>
Removing some controls while retaining accountability	Responsibility and personal achievement
Increasing the accountability of individuals for their own work	Responsibility and recognition
Giving a persona complete natural unit of work (module, division, area and so on)	Responsibility, achievement, and recognition
Granting additional authority to an employee in one's activity; job freedom	Responsibility, achievement, and recognition
Making periodic reports directly available to the worker directly rather than to the supervisor	Internal recognition
Introducing new and more difficult tasks not previously handled	Growth and learning
Assigning individuals specific or specialized tasks, enabling them to become experts	Responsibility, growth, and advancement

Source: Author's compilation based on Herzberg, 1968

Herzberg (1968) maintained that the manager’s part in the motivation of the employee is greater than compensation and good work conditions. In other words, the manager’s role is to enrich the employee's role, so that the employee will have

true motivation, to offer the employee opportunities for advancement, to attain achievements and recognition, to encourage the employee, and to enable the employee to take responsibility. Herzberg's work has been criticized for inadequate methodology (Robertson et al, 1992) and for the implicit identification of job satisfaction with motivation (Vroom, 1966; House and Wigdor, 1967; ACAS, 1992). Attempts to replicate Herzberg's research have provided little support for finding his duality (Burke, 1966; House and Wigdor, 1967; Wood and LeBold, 1970; Wilde et al., 1970), and his theory is now considered too simplistic (Adair, 1990).

In 1976, Hackman, Oldham, and their colleagues developed the perhaps the best-known theory on the topic of job design, which is very similar to Herzberg's theory, which proposes a constellation of traits that should be built in the job so that the work will be satisfying and motivating. However, these two approaches are slightly different regarding the specific characteristics of the work that make it desirable (Pinder, 1984).

According to the job design model of Hackman and Oldham (1980), presented below, an employee will experience motivation with his job when three critical psychological situations are created, which are defined as the main developers of the creation of engagement (Pinder, 1984):

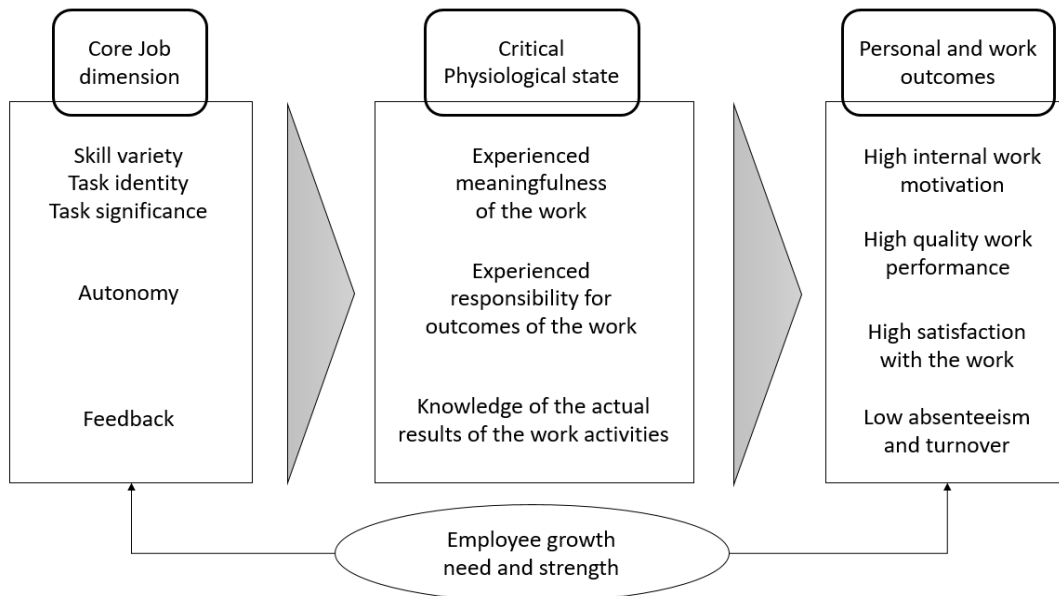
1. Meaningfulness, or in other words, the employee will experience the work as meaningful.
2. Responsibility, or in other words, the employee will have personal responsibility for the job results.
3. Knowledge of the results of one's efforts, or in other words, the employee is aware of the effectiveness of his effort for his performance.

In this approach, it is necessary to plan positions so that they will create for the employee experiences of meaningfulness, responsibility, and knowledge of the results of the effort.

For these psychological situations to occur in the employee's job, there must exist beforehand five core factors that have the aim of promoting these processes. These five core factors are: Skill Variety, Task Identity, Task Significance, Autonomy and Feedback.

For there to be a situation of meaning in the job for the employee, there must beforehand exist three core factors: Skill Variety, Task Identity, and Task Significance. For a psychological situation of responsibility, it is necessary to beforehand enable the core factor of autonomy for the employee and for the situation of personal awareness of the results. First of all, feedback is necessary (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, pp. 257-258). The results of the processes will lead to a beneficial outcome both on the personal level and on the work level: high motivation for work, high quality work performances, low absenteeism, and low employee turnover (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, pp. 255-258).

Different researchers described their approach to the Job Design Model and the core factors in the following ways. Hackman and Oldham (1980) proposed that jobs that require the use of many talents are significantly more experiential and therefore are significantly more motivating than are jobs that require the use of only one or two skills. Pinder (1984) noted that the inclusion of the variety of tasks as an element in role design is consistent with the concept of satisfying the need for growth. However, this is not commensurate with Herzberg's approach, which addresses the simple addition of tasks as horizontal position loading or as the increase of positions. Herzberg, after he proposed enrichment at work, did not emphasize the broadening of the position. The difference between the approach of Hackman and Oldham and the approach of Herzberg is decisive, since the addition of diverse tasks to the job can be a practical means of the creation of some of the main traits that were determined in the two theories (Ramlall, 2004). In contrast, Kahneman et al. (2011) presented a different approach for the increase of the position and the enrichment of the job. They maintained that the intensive transition from one task to another requires considerable effort especially in a time of stress and is unpleasant for the employee who is doing so.



**Figure 4. The job characteristics model of work motivation**

Source: Author's compilation based on Hackman and Oldham (1976)

### 1.2.2 Social exchange theory

Social exchange theory (SET) is one of the most influential conceptual paradigms for understanding workplace behaviors (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) and is the second common theoretical framework among academic researchers to understand employee engagement to their workplace (Bailey et al., 2017a). This theory was developed by Emerson (1976), but its roots began in the 1920s with Malinowski (1922) and Mauss (1925). Social exchange theory is also related to other areas of knowledge such as: anthropology, social psychology and sociology (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005).

Emerson (1976) noted that ""Exchange theory" is not to be taken as a theory, but as a framework of reference", that takes the movement of valued things (resources) through the social process under the assumption that a resource will continue to flow only if there is an estimated return contingent on it (Page 359).

Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) proposed three foundational ideas of social exchange. First, social exchange consists of rules and norms, including reciprocated and negotiated rules (Gergen, 1969). Second, it involves an exchange of resources, which can be economic or socioemotional (Foa and Foa, 1974, 1980). And third, social

exchange relationships develop over time when individuals care about others and thus generate advantageous interpersonal connections (Cropanzano et al., 2002).

Different observations of social exchange have developed, and theorists agree that social exchange consist of a series of complex social interactions that generate obligations to reward the actions of others (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Emerson, 1976; Xu et al., 2020) and are generally seen as interdependent and contingent on the actions of another person (Blau, 1964). In the field of Psychology, "Psychologists call this contingent return *reinforcement*" and in the field of Economics, "economists simply call this reciprocally contingent flow *exchange*" (Emerson, 1976, p. 359).

This theory presents a reciprocal relationship between the organization and employee, meaning there is a two-way relationship between the employee's feelings and fair organizational conduct towards him. This theory states that employee engagement is a reciprocal relationship that leads to loyalty and mutual commitment between the employee and the organization. Employee feels that the organization cares for him, takes care of his needs and values him and his work, then he perceives the conduct of the organization as fair to him and therefore this employee will be willing to put more effort and increase his engagement to the organization (Alfes et al., 2012). Stephen R. Covey (the author of the book "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People") discussed the reciprocal relationship between an employee and his supervisor as a matter of trust (Covey and Merrill, 2006).

Adams' Equity theory is "definitely the most rigorously developed statement of how individuals social exchange relationships" (Steers and Porter, 1983). The major components of exchange relationships are inputs and outcomes. Adams' theory calls for a fair balance between an employee's inputs such as: effort, experience, education, competence, hard work, skill level, acceptance, enthusiasm and an employee's outputs such as: salary levels, benefits, supervisory treatment, job assignments, recognition and status symbols. Adams (1965) suggested that individual expectations about equity or "fair" correlation between inputs and outputs are learned during the process of socialization and through the comparison with inputs and outcomes of others. When an employee identifies an imbalance in his input – outcome ratio

relative and especially compared to other employees, tension is created (Ramlal, 2004).

An important aspect of employee engagement was raised by Guest (2014), a dilemma in which organizations do not offer engaged employees anything in return and concluded that any approach to promoting employee engagement should attract employees by offering them reasons to be involved. When an employee is given something positive, he will feel obliged to reciprocate (Guest, 2014).

Organizational Behaviors and practices convey signals to the employee about the degree of appreciation the organization has towards him, and these "messages" increase the employee's sense of returning to the organization in his work by positive behavior (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). Social exchange theory has an important place in organizational behavior and provides a framework for managers on how to deal with their employees, and increase the employees' engagement to the organization (Alfes et al., 2012; Saks, 2006).

### **1.2.3 Self-determination theory**

Self-determination theory (SDT) was developed initially as a general model of motivation by Deci and Ryan (1985) and was consistent with the positions of psychologists Harlow (1958) and White (1959). This theory has been gradually adapted as a framework for investigation of work motivation (Gagne and Deci, 2005) and considered as a breakthrough in the literature to understand employee's motivation at their workplace (McGregor and Doshi, 2015).

SDT defines needs in a different way as universal necessities, which are essential for optimal human development and integrity (Ryan et al., 1996). The theory focuses on the psychological needs which are essential for growth and on the conditions that promote their fulfillment. Three psychological needs influence self/intrinsic motivation: competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci and Ryan, 1985a). Competence is defined as an individual's confidence in their ability to control the outcome of their performances. Relatedness is the need of reciprocal relationship in an authentic matter between individuals. Autonomy is the freedom to control their

actions and desires (Koestner and Losier, 1996). According to SDT, the fulfillment of these needs will lead to higher levels of self/ intrinsic motivation.

SDT presents two types of motivation: autonomous motivation (intrinsic motivation) and controlled motivation (extrinsic motivation) (Gagne and Deci, 2005; Ryan and Deci, 2000). Gagne and Deci (2005) define clearly these two types of motivation: *“Autonomy involves acting with a sense of volition and having the experience of choice (...) being controlled involves acting with a sense of pressure, a sense of having to engage in the actions”* (p. 334). This theory differs from other motivation theories since it presents motivation as a continuum between autonomous and controlled and it is opposite to the dichotomy of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Gagne and Deci, 2005; Ryan and Deci, 2000; Vallerand, 2000).

Researchers identified three types of interaction between needs and the conditions (environment): Intrinsic motivation which means intrinsically motivated behavior that refers to being fully autonomous, to be willing to perform an action or work for the sake of pleasure or satisfaction. Amotivation which means externally regulated behavior, is the opposite end of the spectrum, means to be fully controlled, due to a sense of lack of inner initiative to perform willingly or ability or potential to perform on any activity. Extrinsic motivation is located in the middle range of the model. Extrinsically motivated behavior means to perform an action or work only with a feeling of obligation or need to achieve the outcome. (Ryan and Deci, 2000a; Vallerand and Pelletier, 1992).

Deci and Ryan (2000) defined four types of extrinsic motivation which occupied different degrees of internalization of the external motivators (Gagne and Deci, 2005; Ryan and Deci, 2000b): 'External regulation', 'Introjected regulation', 'Identified regulation' and 'Integrated regulation'. The 'external motivational regulation', the most controlled type of extrinsic motivation, means a situation based on an external incentive or reward and thus it is the least self-determined. 'Introjected motivational regulation' means a situation in which an individual has adopted a regulation, but without taking ownership of it which can happen in situations of introjects, or feeling guilt, shame, or fear. 'Identified motivational regulation' occurs when an individual values *“a goal or regulation, such that the action is accepted or owned as personally*

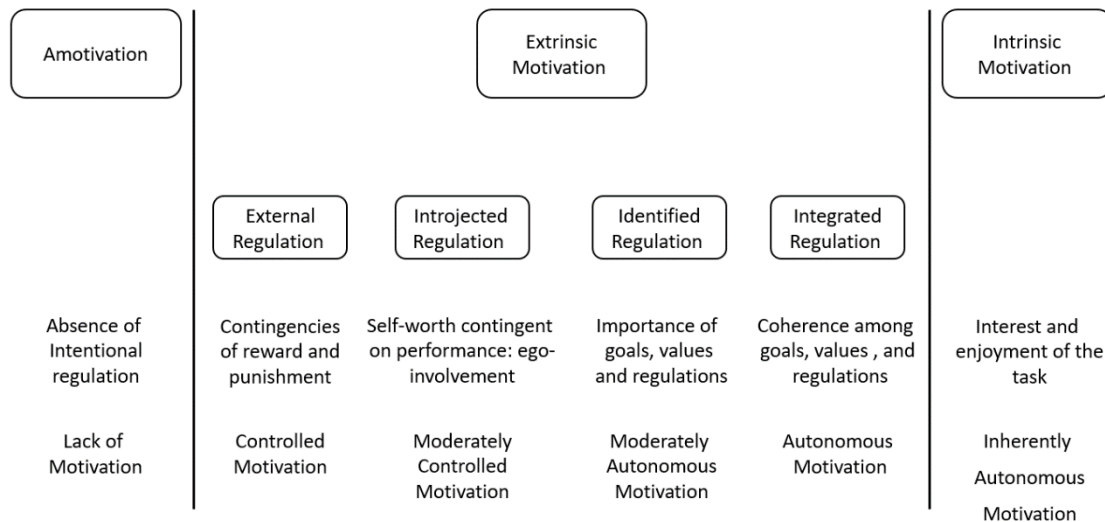
*important*” (Ryan and Deci, 2000b, p. 72) meaning, see the importance of the relationship between the action and personal goals. And 'integrated motivational regulation', the most autonomous controlled motivation, take place when the regulation is integrated into the individual's core values, beliefs, and behaviors which means a situation is lined up with the individual's sense of self or identity and therefore it is vital self-determined (Ryan and Deci, 2000b)

Differences between the four types of extrinsic motivation in relation to the degree of self-determination which is related to the individual's behavior create a greater sense of self-determination when the individual's behaviors are more internalized or more integrated (Ryan et al., 1996). Self-determination theory emphasizes the importance of extrinsic motivation (based on importance) and intrinsic motivation (based on interest) which determines the levels of performance, satisfaction, trust, and well-being in the workplace (Gagne and Deci, 2005).

Another indication to STD which is called reactive autonomy shown as incompetent behaviors of autonomy. Higher levels of rebellious or inefficiency potential at the work environment, integrates between autonomous motivation (engagement) and controlled motivation (withdrawal). A motivational state of mind that advises the process of extrinsic motivation can lead to becoming non-cooperative at the workforce (Koestner and Losier, 1996). SDT is defined not only as the engagement of employees' psychological states and behavioral reactions at the performance levels, as well as the deficiency and lack of engagement which leads to the end result of absence in employee engagement (Meyer and Gagne, 2008).

In conclusion, research defines SDT as essential universal necessities in the employee's engagement and how crucial human development and behaviors are in the workforce. Showing that motivation promotes higher levels of engagement and achievement in employees (Meyer and Gagne, 2008).





**Figure 5. Self-determination continuum**

Source: Author's compilation based on Gagne and Deci (2005, p. 336)

#### 1.2.4 Conservation of Resources Theory

The Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) was presented by Hobfoll (1989) as a theory for psychological stress. This theory is based on the assumption that people seek to acquire and retain for themselves appreciated resources. These resources can be personal, energy-related, social, or material resources, for example, self-esteem, time or money, marriage, or a car (Chakravorty and Singh, 2020).

Profit from a resource occurs when it is possible to build on existing resources, and loss from a resource occurs when people do not have access to further resources to replenish those that have been used up. When we experience the loss of these resources or the threat of loss or lack of profit expected after the investment of these resources, stress is caused (Bailey et al., 2017a).

Stress occurs when these resources (1) are threatened or (2) are lost or (3) when people invest resources and cannot obtain the level of expected return (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). In the spirit of this perception, an employee's level of engagement may increase among those who experience great demand for resources, since these resources block the negative influences (Bakker et al., 2007).

The COR theory is a preferred theoretical framework, since it recognizes the importance of the work and the understanding of burnout (Rupert et al., 2009). This is one of the few theories that advance the examination of burnout as a dynamic

process (Freedy and Hobfoll, 1994). Through the COR model, it is possible to understand the process of burnout as a process during which the work requires critical social and personal resources in a consistent manner and at a far greater speed than it is filled up with resources, in doing so it leads to loss of resources. Examples of the resources related to the work are “time to work”, “stable employment”, and “support of the work colleagues” (Chakravorty and Singh, 2020).

With the existence of a cumulative loss of resources, the person’s ability to cope is reduced, thus leading to increased psychological distress in the form of burnout. These requirements have an emotional character and cause people to restrain and regulate their emotions without pause, thus leading to further loss of resources, and burnout occurs when people do not have many emotional resources to cope with the interpersonal factors of stress at work (Lee and Ashforth, 1996). Persistent exposure to stress is defined as “exhaustion, underachievement, and the inability to handle personal relationships” (LHC, 1994), or as: *“An individual’s negative emotional experience leading to a chronic process ... experienced as exhaustion on a physical, emotional, and cognitive level. Most definitions include withdrawal and decreasing involvement in the job, especially by persons who have been highly involved in their work”* (Sonnentag et al., 1994).

Sonnentag et al. (1994) associate burnout with workplace stressors and argue that *“this relationship has been found to be true for various (...) professional groups,”* although they qualify this by observing that *“tasks with a high motivation potential are negatively associated with burnout”*.

Alongside this theory, there is the more common theory in the research of burnout, the Job Demands Resources Model (JD-R) (Mansour and Tremblay, 2016).

### **1.2.5 Kahn’s (1990) Need-Satisfying Theory**

Kahn (1990) is broadly credited with the first presentation and use of engagement theory to the workplace (Harter et al., 2002; Rich et al., 2010). The term engagement is used specifically to describe an employee’s involvement in various tasks at work and was first published in Kahn’s article the “Psychological Conditions of Personal

Engagement and Disengagement at Work” which appeared in a 1990 edition of the Academy of Management Journal.

Kahn’s (1990) ethnographic study in which he interviewed 32 employees: 16 summer camp counselors and 16 financial professionals about their moments of engagement and disengagement at work. The purpose of his study was to explore how their experiences with various work variables (i.e., manager satisfaction, role clarity, availability of resources) influenced their experience and involvement with work tasks. In the long run, those thoughts would be known as employee engagement.

Kahn cast a wide net of scholarly inquiry for the emerging construct (Freud, 1922; Goffman, 1961; Maslow, 1970; Slater, 1966; Smith and Berg, 1987). His framework includes the use of previous, well-researched organizational constructs such as social identity theory (Ashforth and Mael, 1989), job stress theory (Thoits, 1991), job design (Hackman and Oldham, 1980), and emerging literature on emotion in the workplace (Hochschild, 1979) as mentioned in Shuck (2011).

Kahn wrote that engagement in work was thought to be a motivational variable on both sides of the extrinsic and intrinsic continuum (Shuck, 2011), promoting the use of an employee’s full self in their work roles and went on to define engagement as *"the simultaneous employment and expression of a person’s ‘preferred self’ in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence, and active full role performances"* (p. 700). Along with using one’s full self in work, Kahn suggested that an employee could be physically engaged, emotionally engaged, and cognitively engaged (Rich et al., 2010) and that these states of being were affected significantly by three psychological domains: meaningfulness, safety, and availability (Kahn, 1990). He further argued that individuals ask themselves questions about these three conditions when they make decisions about the extent to which they will engage themselves in a role. Thus, employees who experience a greater amount of psychological meaningfulness, safety, and availability will engage themselves to a greater extent in their work role (Saks and Gruman, 2014).

Psychological meaningfulness was defined as the positive *"sense of return on investments of self in role performance"* (Kahn, 1990, p. 705). Meaningfulness involves the extent to which people derive meaning from their work and feel that they are

receiving a return on investments of self in the performance of their role. Employees experience meaningfulness when they feel worthwhile, useful, and valuable, not taken for granted and receive feedback about their value and significance to the organization. Workplaces that offer incentives for investments of self in role are more likely to lead to psychological meaningfulness (Kahn, 1990; Maslow, 1970).

Psychological safety has to do with being able to employ and express one's true self "*without fear of negative consequences to one's self-image, status, or career*" (Kahn, 1990, p. 705). For Kahn (1990) safety revolved around each employee's need to trust their working environment cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally as well as the need to reasonably understand what was expected of them at work (i.e., job descriptions, contingency plans, feedback from a supervisor) (Shuck, 2011). Social systems that are predictable, consistent, and nonthreatening provide a greater sense of psychological safety (Saks and Gruman, 2014).

Psychological availability was defined as the "*sense of possessing the physical, emotional, and psychological resources necessary*" (Kahn, 1990, p. 705) to complete one's work. Availability refers to the belief that one has the physical, emotional, and psychological resources required to invest oneself in the performance of a role. Kahn suggested that employees must feel they have the tools to complete their work, or these tools will be obtained for them. Resources of availability could be items such as supplies, sufficient budget, and manpower to complete a task (Harter et al., 2002; Wagner and Harter, 2006) and also, opportunities for learning and skill development (Czarnowsky, 2008), a reasonable degree of job fit (Resick et al., 2007), and commitment to the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Employees will be more engaged in workplaces that provide them with physical, emotional, and psychological resources necessary for role performances.

The first study to examine Kahn's (1990) conceptualization of engagement theory, was conducted by May, Gilson, and Harter (2004) that found that all three of Kahn's (1990, 1992) conditions: meaningfulness, safety, and availability were important constructs in the development of engagement. Using a sample of 203 employees from a large insurance firm, results indicated that engagement had a positive relationship to meaningfulness ( $r = 0.63$ ), availability ( $r = 0.29$ ), and safety ( $r$

= 0.45). Meaning job enrichment and role fit were positively related to meaningfulness; rewarding coworker and supportive supervisor relations were positively related to safety while adherence to coworker norms and self-consciousness were negatively related; and resources available were positively related to psychological availability while participation in outside activities was negatively related.

Kahn's conceptualization of employee engagement was hardly used in framework development, even though it was widely cited as a foundational framework. In Bailey's et al. (2017a) narrative synthesis of the literature review only 7 studies were found using Kahn's/ Personal engagement theory (1990) out of 214 studies. A study using specifically Kahn's framework was conducted by Rich, LePine and Crawford (2010). They sampled 245 firefighters to provide empirical evidence that Kahn's (1990) conceptualization of engagement mediated the relationship between value, organizational support, self-evaluation, and the two outcome variables: task performance and organizational citizenship behavior. Rich et al. (2010) also found that intrinsic motivation, job involvement, and job satisfaction failed to explain higher levels of variance than Kahn's conceptualization of engagement, suggesting that engagement is still in need of further improvement and theory building. Additional study using Kahn's framework was conducted by Shuck (2010) who used a sample of 283 employees in multiple fields of industry. Shuck (2010) suggested that job fit, affective commitment, and psychological climate were all significantly related to employee engagement and that employee engagement was significantly related to discretionary effort and intention to turnover (Shuck, 2010). Moreover, affective commitment and two of Kahn's dimensions of engagement (i.e., meaningfulness and availability) were found to be unique predictors of intention to turnover (Shuck, 2010).

Although Kahn's conceptualization of engagement was dominant in the early 1990s, and specifically meant that employee engagement is an internal state of being affected by forces external to the employee, it is emerging once again as a popular theoretical framework for future studies. Table 7 presents a summary of the major works reviewed in this section concerning the needs-satisfying theory approach (Kahn, 1990).

**Table 7. Summary of Kahn's (1990) Needs-Satisfying Theory Literature**

Article citation	Major contribution	Research type
Kahn (1990)	Published early grounded theoretical framework of personal engagement and disengagement. First to define engagement as a separate concept using research. One of two early theories about the development of employee engagement.	Empirical: Ethnographic research with 16 summer camp counselors and 16 financial firm members
Kahn (1992)	Explored psychological presence and its meaning to employees and managers in a workplace context. Introduces the concept of meeting basic needs as a function of engagement.	Conceptual
May, Gilson, and Harter (2004)	First to publish empirical research testing Kahn's (1990) conceptualization of employee engagement.	Empirical: Survey of 203 employees in a large Midwestern insurance firm
Rich, LePine, and Crawford (2010)	One of the first modern studies to reexamine Kahn's original domains of engagement (e.g., meaningfulness, safety, availability).	Empirical: Survey of 245 firefighters employed across four municipalities
Shuck (2010)	First empirical research to suggest engagement as a predictor variable for the intention to turnover construct. Also provides evidence that engagement may not be a predictor of the outcome variable discretionary effort, a well-established belief in practice.	Empirical: Survey of 283 working professionals across the fields of service, technology, health care, retail, banking, nonprofit, and hospitality

Source: Shuck (2011).

### 1.2.6 Maslach et al.'s (2001) Burnout-Antithesis Theory

Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) conceptualized employee engagement as the positive antithesis to burnout, defining engagement as "*a persistent positive affective state ... characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure*" (p. 417). At the time, the burnout literature was dominated by two characteristics (Maslach et al., 2001):

1. Burnout was closely linked with professions where employees were responsible for interacting with people in stressful situations (eg, health care, customer relations).
2. It was understood as the antithesis to job engagement.

The field of psychology had placed a complete focus on finding cures for disease (e.g., depression, psychosocial personality disorders) (Seligman, 2002). Researchers in the burnout literature began considering the role of well-being as a function of engagement and a strategy for optimizing human strength. Maslach et al. (2001) rephrased burnout as the erosion of engagement with the job, meaning "*what*

*started out as important, meaningful, and challenging work becomes unpleasant, unfulfilling, and meaningless. Energy turns into exhaustion, involvement turns into cynicism, and efficacy turns into ineffectiveness"* (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 416). Moreover, engagement was operationalized as the reverse of scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach and Leiter, 1997).

Accordingly, engagement was characterized as the opposite of the three burnout dimensions: exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness. Exhaustion represented the major nature of burnout and its manifestation and was defined as *"being overextended and depleted of one's emotional and physical resources"* (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 399). Cynicism (or depersonalization) component was defined as *"a negative, callous, or an excessively detached response to various aspects of the job"* (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 399). Ineffectiveness was understood to be the direct result of exhaustion and cynicism and was defined as *"feelings of incompetence and a lack of achievement and productivity at work"* (Maslach et al., 2001, p.399).

According to Maslach et al. (2001), job burnout is the result of mismatches in six critical areas of organizational life, which are considered to be the major organizational antecedents of burnout: workload, control, rewards and recognition, community and social support, perceived fairness, and values. The greater the gap or mismatch between the person and these six areas, the greater the likelihood of burnout. Conversely, the greater the match or fit between a person and these six areas of organizational life, the greater one's engagement. In other words, engagement is associated with a sustainable workload, feelings of choice and control, appropriate recognition and reward, a supportive work community, fairness and justice, and meaningful and valued work. Maslach and Leiter (2008) found some support for their theory with respect to the perception of fairness in the workplace. This approach also suggests that, like burnout, engagement mediates the relationship between these six work-life factors and work attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment) as well as stress-related health outcomes. In other words, mismatches lead to burnout, while matches lead to engagement, and burnout and engagement lead to work and health outcomes.

Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Roma, and Bakker (2002) tested the Maslach et al. (2001) framework using the MBI and a slightly different definition of engagement. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined engagement as a *"positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption"* (p. 74) and renamed the state of engagement as work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Using a sample of 314 Spanish university students and 619 Spanish employees from private and public companies (N = 933), results of their research suggested a negative relationship between burnout and work engagement providing some empirical evidence for the use of the MBI-GS as a measure for engagement. From research around the MBI-GS, Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2003) developed the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) that emerged as a widely used measure of engagement.

As a critique of the Maslach et al. (2001) and Schaufel et al. (2002) models, research by Johnson (2003) has suggested that this approach to understand engagement is lacking of the cognitive engagement processes conceptualized by Kahn and focuses only on emotional and physical absences of burnout (Shuck, 2011). Alongside, further studies such as Shirom (2003, 2007) and Wefald (2008) that used a similar framework as Schaufeli et al. (2002) provide additional empirical support for the Maslach et al. (2001) burnout-antithesis approach. Table 8 presents a summary of the main pieces of literature reviewed concerning the burnout-antithesis approach (Maslach et al., 2001).

**Table 8. Summary of Burnout-Antithesis (Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter, 2001)**

Article citation	Major contribution	Research type
Maslach et al. (2001)	Was the first major work on employee engagement after Kahn (1990) and is the other of the two early developmental theories on employee engagement? Maslach et al. (2001) pioneered reaching across academic boundaries for definitions of employee engagement, conceptualizing the construct as the positive antithesis to burnout.	Conceptual
Schaufeli, Salanova, GonzálezRoma, and Bakker (2002)	Tested Maslach et al. (2001) burnout model with measure of employee engagement. Results indicated a negative relationship between levels of burnout and employee engagement.	Empirical: 314 Spanish university students and 619 Spanish employees from private and public companies



Shirom (2003)	Examined the Maslach et al. (2001) and Schaufeli, Salanova et al. (2002) models of engagement and proposed that engagement was a separate psychological state. Proposed several research questions around the psychological state of vigor.	Conceptual
Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova, (2006)	Establishment of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, characterizing engagement as a positive work-related state of being inclusive of vigor, dedication, and absorption building on the earlier Schaufeli, Salanova et al. (2002) model.	Empirical: 14,521 data points across 27 studies carried out between 1999 and 2003 in 10 different countries
Wefald (2008)	Critically examined the concept of employee engagement and provided empirical evidence regarding its validity as a work-related construct.	Empirical: 382 employees and managers at a midsized financial institution

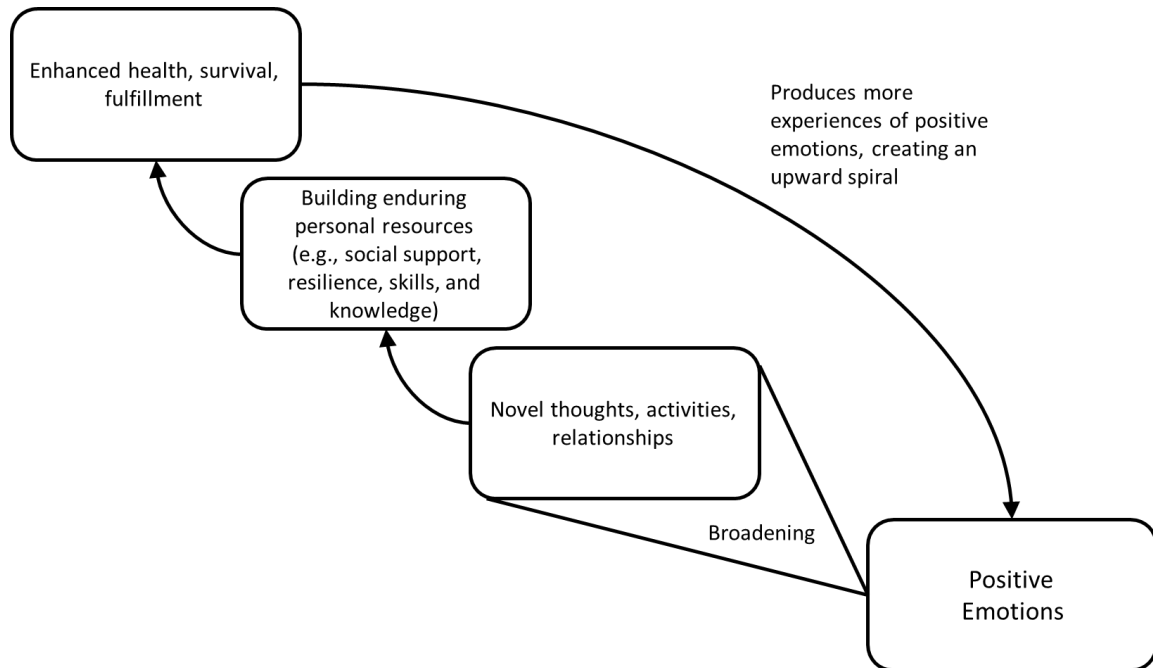
Source: Shuck (2011).

### 1.2.7 Broaden-and-Build Theory

The Broaden-and-Build Theory (B&B) was presented by Fredrickson (1998, 2001) and offers a model to describe the function of positive emotions. This theory is based on the assumption that experience of positive emotions provides an array of physical and psychological benefits (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001). The Broaden-and-Build Theory emerged from the Positive Psychology literature and discovers how individuals develop the capacity to experience and seek out positive experiences. Fredrickson (1998) in her article "*What good are positive emotions?*" noted that positive emotions had been largely ignored, at that time, in the literature and research, because the research literature focused on individual experiences of negative emotions. Theories of human behavior focused on the experience and function of negative emotions and the role of positive emotions had largely been ignored in the literature and research (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001).

According to Fredrickson (1998, 2001), positive emotions such as love, joy, contentment, gratitude, pride, and interest broaden individuals' thought-action repertoire (attention and thinking) during moments of stress, in an effort to support negative emotion regulation and support positive coping mechanisms. Meaning the more individuals experience positive affect, the more likely they are to draw upon appropriate resources when faced with a stressful situation. Involvement in such

behavior also increases the likelihood of a positive outcome despite the initial stressful and aversive situation. As a result, the individual's interpretation of the event shifts from negative to positive (Fredrickson, 2001).



**Figure 6. Broadening Effects of Positive Emotions**

Source: Author's compilation based on Fredrickson (2001)

The positive interpretation of an apparently negative event then increases the individual's capacity for positive affectivity and the likelihood that the individual will continue to reach out towards those resources in the future, therefore creating a positive feedback loop. These emotions share the ability to broaden the individual's quick responses to specific stimuli. As a result of these experiences of positive affectivity, psychological, social, physical, and intellectual, resources are built and developed within these individuals increasing the likelihood that individuals will reach out for these positive coping mechanisms when faced with future adversity (Fredrickson, 2001).

The theory assumes that positive emotions will undo the consequence of negative affective experiences (Fredrickson et al., 2000), assist as protective factors for health and wellness within individuals (Fredrickson and Losada, 2005; Fredrickson et al., 2008), trigger upward spirals toward emotional well-being (Fredrickson and

Joiner, 2002), enhance positive coping by contributing to resilience and essential positive emotional (Tugade et al., 2004), and enhance negative emotion balancing (Fredrickson and Levenson, 1998; Fredrickson et al., 2000; Tugade and Fredrickson, 2004). Eventually, positive emotions improve the overall psychological well-being and life satisfaction of individuals who often experience those (Cohn et al., 2009).

A criticism over the Broaden-and-Build Theory has been made by Rathunde (2000) and by Pérez-Álvarez (2016). Rathunde (2000) argues that the theory credits in an inappropriate manner these positive emotions with broadening thought-action repertoires and neglects the positive impact of negative emotions on skill-building. Furthermore, the theory has been criticized for presenting positive and negative emotions as opposite and describing positive emotions as healthier and as more beneficial than negative emotions (Rathunde, 2000). Rathunde (2000) emphasizes that negative emotions such as depression and stress also play a vital role in building both personal and social resources. Pérez-Álvarez (2016) criticized the field of Positive Psychology as a whole arguing that it is false and named it a "pseudo-science". According to Pérez-Álvarez (2016) the Broaden-and-Build Theory has a "pseudoscientific foundation". Pérez-Álvarez (2016) argues that the distinction between positive and negative emotions is not scientific, it is rather a religious or ethical distinction. Furthermore, happiness cannot be studied in an objective way and happiness and flourishing are Westernized constructs and are not necessarily desirable in all cultures and in all situations (Pérez-Álvarez, 2016).

### **1.2.8 The Job Demands-Resources theory**

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007). This theory is the most widely and frequently cited framework which is associated with the concepts of work employee's engagement and organizational employee's engagement (Albrecht et al., 2015; Bailey et al., 2017b; Sun and Bunchapattanasakda, 2019). The JD-R model has its basis also in the burnout literature (Saks and Gruman, 2014) and examines the differential relationship between demands and resources and both engagement and burnout (Conway et al., 2016). In

fact, Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli (2001) first referred to it as the JD-R model of burnout (Saks and Gruman, 2014).

The JD-R model assumes that in each profession, occupation or working conditions, there are two categories of risk factors that relate directly to stress and exhaustion in the workplace: job demands and job resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). The JD-R model reveals burnout development through two processes. First, burnout is an outcome of not simply high job demands, but demands which exceed resources, which leads to exhaustion. Second, a lack of job resources leads to withdrawal behavior or disengagement from work (Saks and Gruman, 2014).

Job demands refer to physical, psychological, social, or organizational features of a job which require physical, mental, and/or psychological effort from employees. For examples: work overload, job insecurity, role ambiguity, time pressure, and role conflict which are related to burnout and health problems (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, 2008).

Job resources refer to physical, psychological, social, or organizational features of a job which function to achieve work goals, such as: reduce job demands and inspire personal growth, learning and development. Job resources can come from different aspects (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Bakker et al., 2003; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007):

- 1) the organization aspect as pay, career opportunities, job security,
- 2) Interpersonal and social relations aspect as supervisor and coworker support, team climate,
- 3) organization of work aspect as role clarity, participation in decision making,
- 4) the task itself aspect as skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, performance and feedback.

Research on the JD-R model has found that job resources are positively related to work engagement and negatively related to burnout. The JD-R model has been expanded to include personal resources, which refer to “aspects of the self that are generally linked to resiliency and refer to individuals’ sense of their ability to control and impact upon their environment successfully” (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007, p. 124). As a result, personal resources are flexible and open to change and valid reciprocally related to job resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Xanthopoulou et al., 2009).

Albrecht et al. (2015) identified six work-life areas which are workload, control, reward, community, fairness, and values that influence employee's perception of job demands, job resources and engagement. These, JD-R model factors can influence work engagement and explain the assumption that employees are more likely to engage with their work and influence crucial outcomes and financial returns, when they get job-related resources from the organization (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Bailey et al., 2017a; Crawford et al., 2010).

### **1.2.9 Summary and providing a theoretical framework: Toward a Unified Theory of Employee Engagement**

Several theories of employee engagement have been developed and have reflected its roots within positive psychology (Fineman 2006). Most of the research on employee engagement which used to "explain" engagement as a psychological state is based on the JD-R model (Bailey et al., 2015; Saks and Gruman, 2014). However, doubt has been cast over its status as a theory. It is questionable if the JD-R model is really a theory of engagement or just a framework for classifying job demands and job resources. The basic premise of this model is that this model operates as a linear model that assumes that individuals respond in rational ways to a limited range of aspects within their work setting and are driven purely to optimize their situation. Meaning the more resources an employee has, the more engaged the employee will be. Also, this model does not explain what resources will be most important for engagement, therefore, Kahn's (1990) theory is more convincing as it specifies the psychological conditions that lead to engagement as well as the factors that influence each of the psychological conditions (Saks and Gruman, 2014).

Furthermore, the JD-R model fails to take account of heterogeneous, micro- and macro-level contextual factors, interpersonal interactions and emotional or irrational responses (Bailey et al., 2015; Saks and Gruman, 2014). Also, this model fails to address issues of power and politics within the workplace, and the question of who controls the resources and demands experienced by employees (Fineman 2006). Bargagliotti (2012) argues that the JD-R is a transactional model that cannot explain

behavior and motivation in complex or adverse situations such as those dealing with medical emergencies.

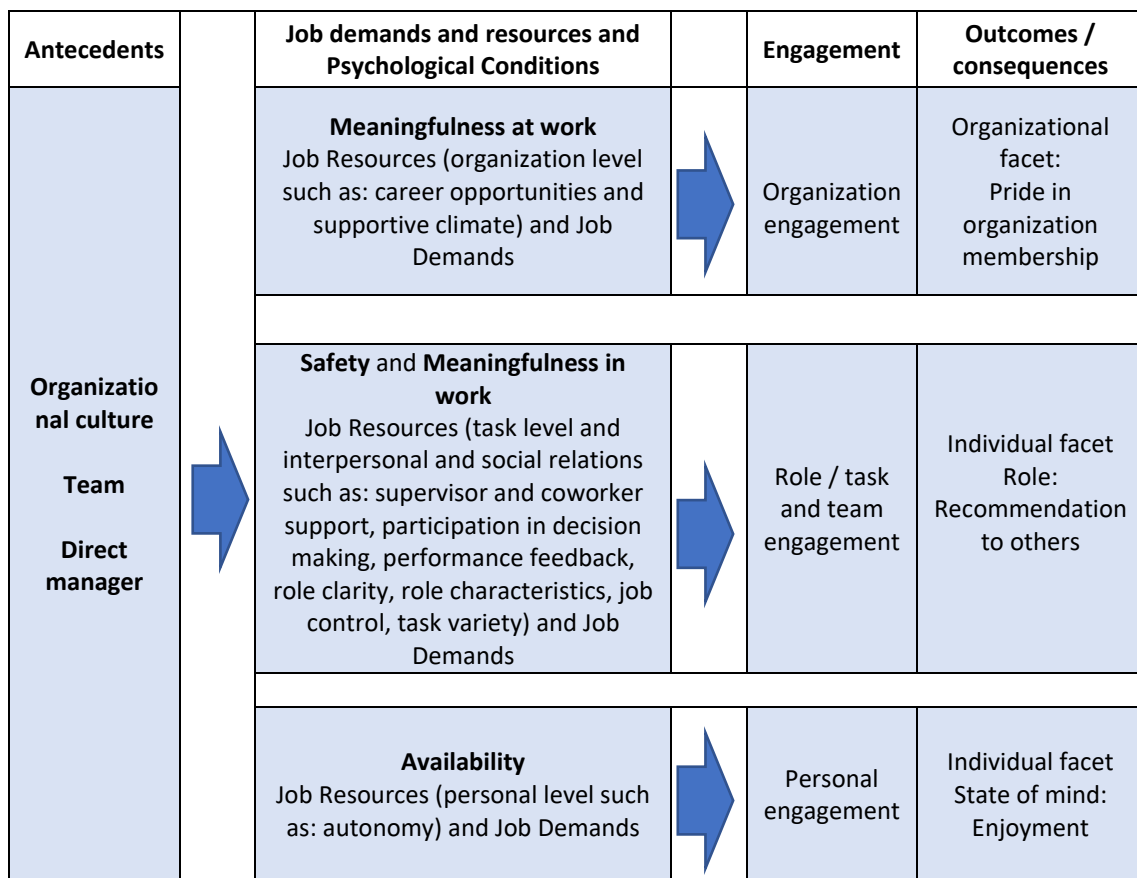
Still, the model fails to consider diversity factors. Banihani et al. (2013) write: *"engagement is gendered where it is easier for men to be physically, cognitively and emotionally engaged than women in organisations (...) and the attempts to raise the level of engagement need to be reconsidered as this may add the workload for women and have negative consequences on their well-being"*, meaning engagement is a gendered construct with antecedents that are more available to men rather than women, and with the display of more expression of masculinity than femininity within the workplace. Concern of these factors is beginning to emerge within the writing on engagement "as practice" which is conceptually and empirically far from engagement "as state". Engagement "as practice" is embedded within theories deriving from industrial relations and industrial sociological perspectives (Jenkins and Delbridge 2013; Keenoy 2014). Instances of theories and models from work sociology or industrial relations such as critical HRM theory (Jenkins and Delbridge, 2013) are very few. As a result, most of the process of defining the theories around engagement adopts a within-person perspective that does not take account of the extensive social or organizational context (Purcell, 2013), individual differences (Truss et al., 2013a), or considers the contested nature of engagement as a potential tool for managerial control (Truss et al., 2013b).

In sum, theories developed to "explain" engagement have largely been set at the level of the individual and introduction of additional theoretical insights from organizational sociological perspectives that reflect considerations of power and politics would further enrich the understanding of engagement.

The lack of an accepted theory of employee engagement is an issue of concern in the engagement literature. As cited before, most of the research on employee engagement is based on the JD-R model. The JD-R model does not provide a theoretical basis that explains what job resources will be related to engagement. This model states that job resources in general will satisfy basic psychological needs for achieving work-related goals and there are no specific psychological variables that intervene or explain the relationship between specific job resources and engagement

(Bailey et al., 2015; Saks and Gruman, 2014). Another limitation of the JD-R model is that it focuses on "work engagement" while there are other forms of employee engagement such as: organizational engagement, task/ role engagement, team engagement and personal engagement. On the other hand, Kahn's (1990) Need-Satisfying theory has provided a theoretical rationale for explaining the relationship between various antecedents and engagement, but this theory has hardly been tested (Bailey et al., 2015). According to Bailey et al. (2015) only seven papers referred explicitly to Kahn's engagement theory and furthermore it has not been integrated with the JD-R model.

For that reason, the author of this thesis is offering a unified theory of employee engagement. This unified theory is built on the integration of two primary core models of engagement that shaped the research literature of employee engagement. These models are the JD-R model and Kahn's (1990) Need-Satisfying theory. An integration of the two primary models relies on three psychological conditions: meaningfulness, safety, and availability by Kahn (1990) with the job demands and job resources and points toward the three types of employee engagement in three levels/ facets: organizational engagement, task/role and team engagement, and personal engagement.



**Figure 7. The unified theory model**

Source: own source

As shown in Figure 7 the Unified theory of employee engagement focuses on linking specific job resources and job demands to each of the psychological conditions and linking each of the psychological conditions to each type of employee engagement. The Unified theory of employee engagement also indicated on one side of the model the three antecedents that lead to engagement which are organizational culture, team, and direct manager, and on the other side of the model present the three consequences/ outcomes: pride in organization membership, recommendation to others and enjoyment that are been influenced by this integration model.

In this unified theory of the two models, meaningfulness, which is one of the three psychological conditions described by Kahn's (1990), has been divided into two types of meaningfulness: meaningfulness *in* work and meaningfulness *at* work as Pratt and Ashforth (2003) refer to.



**The first level in the unified theory:**

"Meaningfulness at work" as described by Pratt and Ashforth (2003) comes from an employee's membership in an organization. Meaningfulness at work has more to do with "*whom one surrounds oneself with as part of organizational membership, and/or the goals, values, and beliefs that the organization espouses*" (Pratt and Ashforth, 2003, p. 314). Meaningfulness at work is more likely to be influenced by factors associated with the organization itself rather than employee's specific tasks. "Meaningfulness at work" can also be related to the Social Exchange theory which presents a reciprocal relationship between the organization and employee, in a two-way relationship between employee's feelings and fair organizational conduct towards him. This relationship leads to loyalty and mutual commitment between the employee and the organization (Alfes et al., 2012).

**The second level in the unified theory:**

This level consists of two psychological conditions by Kahn's (1990): Meaningfulness in work and safety. Meaningfulness in work comes from the type of work an employee is doing, meaning to be involved in making the work and tasks in an intrinsically motivational manner. Kahn's (1990) psychological meaningfulness is similar to what Pratt and Ashforth (2003) refer to as meaningfulness in work. According to Kahn (1990), psychological meaningfulness refers to "*a feeling that one is receiving a return on investments of one's self in a currency of physical, cognitive, or emotional energy. People experienced such meaningfulness when they felt worthwhile, useful, and valuable—as though they made a difference and were not taken for granted. They felt able to give to others and to the work itself in their roles and also able to receive*" (pp. 703–704). Kahn's theory is related to the Job Design theory by Herzberg et al., (1959) that focuses on factors such as job control, task variety, feedback, etc. As stated by Kahn (1990), the main factors that influence the psychological condition of meaningfulness are task characteristics, role characteristics, and task performances that include rewarding. Organizational practices that enhance an employee's performances (e.g., in tasks, in roles, and work) can simplify the meaningfulness in work (Pratt and Ashforth, 2003).

The second psychological condition from Kahn's (1990) theory is safety. Employees must feel safe to fully engage themselves in a role without fear of negative consequences to their self-image, status, or career. Safety is also related to the Conservation of Resources theory that was presented by Hobfoll (1989) as a theory for psychological stress that can spotlight Maslach et al.'s (2001) Burnout Antithesis theory. The Conservation of Resources theory is a preferred theoretical framework, since it recognizes the importance of the work and the understanding of burnout (Rupert et al., 2009). The Conservation of Resources theory is based on the assumption that people seek to acquire and retain for themselves appreciated resources. These resources can be personal, energy-related, social, or material resources (Chakravorty and Singh, 2020).

**The third level in the unified theory:**

The third psychological condition from Kahn's (1990) theory is availability. Personal resources are associated with Kahn's (1990) condition of psychological availability. Personal resources such as self-efficacy, optimism, and organization-based self-esteem, which are included in the JD-R model, predict work engagement and are influenced by job resources. Personal resources talk about the employee's ability to control and impact their environment successfully. Availability is also related to the Self-determination theory (SDT) that was developed initially as a general model of motivation by Deci and Ryan (1985). Self-determination theory focuses on the psychological needs which are essential for growth and on the conditions that promote their fulfillment. As stated by Deci and Ryan (1985) the three psychological needs which influence self/ intrinsic motivation are competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Competence is defined as an individual's confidence in their ability to control the outcome of their performances. Relatedness is the need of reciprocal relationship in an authentic matter between individuals. Autonomy is the freedom to control their actions and desires (Koestner and Losier, 1996). Therefore, personal resources mediate the relationship between job resources and engagement in the same manner as Kahn's (1990) psychological conditions do.

**Table 9. The relationships between psychological conditions and job resources in the Unified theory**

Psychological conditions	Kahn's factors	Job resources for the Unified theory
Meaningfulness at work Org. level	task characteristics, role characteristics, and work interactions	career opportunities; supportive climate
Safety + meaningfulness in work Role/ task/ team/ group level	interpersonal relationships, group and intergroup dynamics, management style, and norms	supervisor and coworker support; participation in decision making; performance feedback; role clarity
Availability Personal level	Four kinds of distractions had a negative influence on psychological availability such as: depletion of physical energy, depletion of emotional energy, insecurity, and outside lives.	Autonomy

Source: Author's compilation

A review of the literature of engagement indicated that there are several types of engagement as introduced in subchapter 1.2. In this Unified theory the engagement construct is building up and can be emphasized by an employee as a spiral of engagement levels/ facets. This spiral starts with personal engagement and rises up to a level/ facet of role/ task/ work/ team engagement and then rises up again to the highest level that an employee can be engaged to which is the organizational engagement.

The basic premise for an employee to be engaged at work is availability. An employee will be engaged in his/ her work, only if he/ she is available to his/ her work. If an employee is occupied with other situations such as: depletion of physical energy, depletion of emotional energy, insecurity, that are different from the work itself then he or she will not be completely involved, mentally present and engaged in the work itself.

As a spiral goes up to higher levels, different facets of engagement come along. Engagement of an employee can be to his/ her role, task and work. Continuing raising of this engagement spiral can go forward to a team engagement and even goes higher to organizational engagement.

Although the engagement spiral has three different facets, these different facets can also be presented in an employee in an individual separated level situation,

meaning an employee can be engaged with the organization and not be engaged with for example the role or his team. In order to enhance employee engagement, one needs to have a growing up spiral in order to be completely engaged with the organization. To follow and explain these individual separated level situations, an explanation can be presented in the following situation. Jobs consist of numerous tasks, it is very likely that there will be variations in engagement from one task to another (Schaufeli and Salanova, 2011). Employees are likely to vary in the extent to which they are engaged in their work, certain tasks, the organization, and their work group. An employee engaged in his/her work or job might or might not be engaged in other domains and vice versa. The antecedents of each type of engagement are likely to be different, and this has implications for the interventions that will be required to increase engagement. And the consequences of each type of engagement might also vary, and this will have implications in terms of the type of engagement that an organization will be most concerned about enhancing.

The antecedents that presented in the unified theory are Organizational Culture, Team and the Direct Manager. The three antecedents are influencing each type of engagement in its three facets through job resources, job demands, and the psychological conditions. The author of this thesis has observed that managers and leaders play a major role in providing employees with job resources and defending them from burden demands, an observation endorsed by Spreitzer et al. (2010). On the other side of the unified theory there are the consequences of employee engagement that are functions of the type of engagement. For instance, organization engagement will be most likely to influence organization-related outcomes such as organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior; role/ task engagement will be most likely to influence task outcomes such as task satisfaction and task performance; team/ group engagement will be most likely to influence team/ group outcomes such as group commitment and performance and personal engagement will be most likely to influence employee well-being.

### 1.3 Antecedents of engagement

Bailey et al., (2017a, pp. 37-39) conducted a systematic synthesis to 155 empirical studies to identify the antecedents of engagement. In the result of analysis, the largest number of empirical studies (65 studies) focused on aspects of job design especially on job demands or resources due to the dominance of the JD-R framework in the theorization of engagement. The next categories of antecedents were perceptions of organizational and team factors (53 studies), psychological states (52 studies), leadership and management (36 studies), and organizational interventions as training or development programs (9 studies).

**Table 10. List of antecedents to employee engagement defined under five main headings**

<b>Main headline</b>	<b>Antecedents</b>
<b>Individual psychological states</b>	self-efficacy, resilience and personal resources; positive affect and optimism; psychological empowerment; meaningfulness, safety and availability; job satisfaction (also considered as an outcome of engagement); Promotive psychological ownership; enjoyment of work; proactive personality; situational motivation; moral identity centrality; work centrality; emotion recognition; achievement striving; extraversion; affective commitment; authentic functioning; core self-evaluation.
<b>Experienced job-design-related factors</b>	job resources; supervisory support; colleague support; feedback and autonomy; job demands; feedback; job control; structural empowerment; work–role fit; opportunities for development; job enrichment; role clarity; job quality; work intensity; schedule satisfaction; feelings of doing the job well; the joy of working; task idiosyncratic deals; job control and active coping; new ways of working (specifically, flexible working arrangements)
<b>Perceived leadership and management</b>	supervisory support; transformational leadership (cf. section 1.8.4); trust in manager/leader; authentic leadership (authentic leadership focuses on transparent and ethical leader behavior and encourages open sharing of information needed to make decisions while accepting followers' inputs – is about being you and making room for others too (Luthans and Avolio (2003))); leader–member exchange; leader-empowering behavior; Charismatic leadership; ethical leadership; and supervisory coaching
<b>Individual perceptions of organizational and team factors</b>	perceived organizational support; psychological contract; contract breach; relational contracts; perceptions of HRM practices; psychosocial safety climate; service climate; person–organization fit; value congruence; communication; remuneration; organizational trust and voice; aspects of team-level engagement and support, e.g., climate and communication
<b>Organizational interventions or activities</b>	training and development programmes, range of interventions; including new ways of working; forum theatre training and mindfulness training and engagement

Source: Author's compilation based on Bailey et al., (2017a, pp. 37-39)

Synthesis of the results showed that these could be grouped under five main headings: 1. Individual psychological states; 2. Experienced job-design-related factors; 3. Perceived leadership and management; 4. Individual perceptions of organizational and team factors; 5. Organizational interventions or activities (Bailey et al., 2017).

In Table 10, presenting the list of antecedents to employee engagement define under five main headings.

Wollard and Shuck (2011) conducted an analysis of 265 abstracts relating to employee engagement, with the purpose of identifying employee engagement's antecedents. They identified a comprehensive list of antecedents on two levels: individual antecedents and organizational antecedents of employee engagement for use in theory building, research, and practice (cf. Table 11).

**Table 11. Individual – level and organizational – level antecedents of employee engagement**

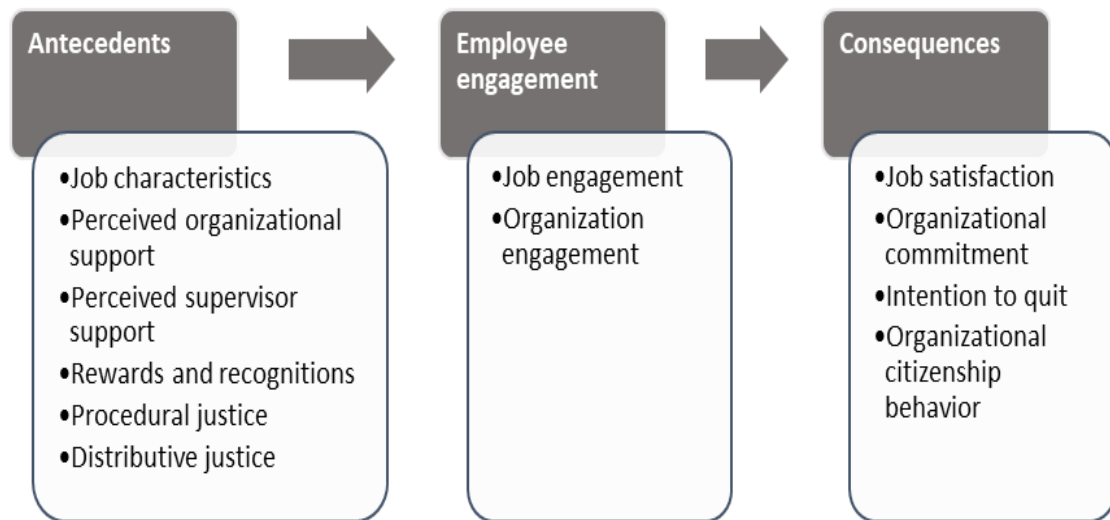
Individual Antecedents to Employee Engagement	Organizational Antecedents to Employee Engagement
Absorption Available to engage Coping style Curiosity Dedication Emotional fit Employee motivation Employee / work / family status Feelings of choice and control Higher levels of corporate citizenship Involvement in meaningful work Link individual and organizational goals Optimism Perceived organizational support Self-esteem, self-efficacy Vigor Willingness to direct personal energies Work / life balance Core self-evaluation Value Congruence Perceived Organizational Support	Authentic corporate culture Clear expectations Corporate social responsibility Encouragement Feedback Hygiene factors Job characteristics Job control Job fit Leadership Level of task challenge Manager expectations Manager self – efficacy Mission and vision Opportunities for learning Perception of workplace safety Positive workplace climate Rewards Supportive organizational culture Talent management Use of strengths

Source: Author's compilation based on Wollard and Shuck (2011, p. 433)

Individual and Organizational-level antecedents were defined as constructs, strategies, and conditions that were implemented and applied directly to individual employees or across an organization, respectively. Those two levels of antecedents

were fundamental to the development of employee engagement and the structural or systematic level (Wollard and Shuck, 2011).

Saks (2006) distinguishes between job engagement and organization engagement. Saks's model combines job and organization engagement with antecedents and consequences of employee engagement (cf. Figure 8).



**Figure 8. A model of antecedents and consequences of employee engagement**

Source: Author's compilation based on Saks (2006)

At the core of the model, there are two types of employee engagement: job and organization engagements, which follow from the conceptualization of engagement as role related (Kahn, 1990). According to Saks (2006), employees can have various roles in the organization, for most organizational members, there are their work role and their role as a member of an organization (Saks, 2006).

Saks (2006) presents in his model six antecedents which influence both types of job employee engagement and organization employee engagement and grouped those under four headings. The first antecedent heading is job characteristics, means a psychological meaningfulness involves a sense of return on investments of the self-in-role performances (Kahn, 1992) and based on Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics model with five core job characteristics: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Psychological meaningfulness can be achieved

through challenging work, variety, different skills' usability, personal choice, and the opportunity to make important contributions (Saks, 2006).

The second antecedent heading gathered together, perceives organizational and supervisor support, which create a psychological safety at workplace. Feeling psychological safety at the workplace means individuals are capable of showing and employing themselves without negative consequences (Kahn, 1992). Supportive environments allow employees to experiment and to try new things and even fail without fear of the consequences (Kahn, 1990). Perceived organizational support (POS) refers to an employees' general belief that the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

The third antecedent heading is rewards and recognition. Kahn (1990) states that employees vary in their engagement as a function of their perceptions of the benefits they receive from a role. A sense of return on investments can come from external rewards and recognition additionally to meaningful work, in so saying employees are willing to be more engaged at work to the degree that they perceive a greater amount of rewards and recognition for their role performance (Kahn, 1990). On the contrary, lack of rewards and recognition can lead to burnout and stress situations (Maslach et al., 2001), therefore, and according to self-esteem theory, once employees receive rewards and recognition from their organization, they will feel obliged to respond with higher levels of engagement (Kahn, 1990).

And the fourth antecedent heading gathered together distributive and procedural justice. Kahn (1990) identified the safety dimension as a predictable and consistent social situation. It is significantly important for an organization to be predictable and consistent in terms of the distribution of rewards as well as the procedures used to allocate them. While distributive justice is perceived by employees as fairness of decision outcomes, procedural justice refers to the perceived fairness of the means and processes that are used to determine the amount and distribution of resources (Colquitt, 2001; Rhoades et al., 2001). Meaning, as long as employees have high perceptions of justice in their organization, they will feel more obliged to their roles by giving more of themselves through greater levels of engagement. Vice versa, low perceptions of organizational justice by employees will lead them to withdraw and



disengage themselves from their work role. Summing up this model, job and organization engagement mediated the relationships between the antecedents and job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intentions to quit, and organizational citizenship behavior (Saks, 2006).

To sum up, positive antecedents, such as job resources, positive psychological states and positive perceptions of leaders and organizations, are associated with higher levels of engagement, while negative antecedents, such as negative mood, hindrance demands, bullying, or abusive supervision, are associated with lower levels of engagement (Bailey et al., 2017a).

#### **1.4 Employee engagement outcomes**

Employee engagement has been linked with many positive job outcomes such as job satisfaction and performance of the individual (e.g., Gruman and Saks, 2011; Koyuncu et al., 2006; Schaufeli and Salanova, 2007), moral (e.g., Bailey et al., 2017a+b), active coping style (e.g., Storm and Rothmann, 2003) and creativity (e.g., Bakker and Xanthopoulou, 2013). Increasingly, management literature claims that employee engagement is needed for high-level organizational performance and productivity (Andrew and Sofian, 2012). Alongside of academic researchers, consulting companies, committees, and associations all around the world such as Gallup, Hewitt Associates, Mckinsey, Bain, Towers Perrin, Blessing-White, DDI, IES, SHRM, Corporate Leadership Council and CIPD had a great interest in defining and searching the outcomes of EE.

Many academic researchers and practitioners agree that employee engagement could be a strong positive factor which leads to organizational performance and success. Employee engagement seems to have a significant potential to affect employees' retention, loyalty and productivity, and also link to customer satisfaction, organizational reputation and the overall stakeholder value (Harter et al., 2002; Robinson et al., 2004; Kular et al., 2008; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007; Fernandez, 2007; Bakker et al., 2007; Hewitt Associates, 2004; Hallberg et al., 2007; Saks, 2006; Towers Perrin, 2003).

According to Bailey et al. (2017a) outcomes of employee engagement can be defined in two categories: moral outcomes and performance. Moral outcomes are

related to employees' participation, satisfaction, energy and focus which they bring to work. In particular, these engaged employees are available, productive, tuned about work's processes and systems and try to make an effort for their workplace. Engaged employees are present at work and have a positive reciprocal relationship with colleagues and supervisors. They have a "voice" in their role and their organization benefits from it, they perform their role with vigor, dedication and absorption. They enjoy a state of well-being and healthy perceptions and life satisfaction (Bailey et al., 2017a; Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014; Bakker and Demerouti, 2008; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Salanova and Schaufeli, 2008; Wollard and Shuck, 2011). As a result, these engaged employees behave positively, adopt innovative behavior and are willing to "go the extra mile" for their organization (Alfes et al., 2013b; Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014; Gallup, 2017; Rich et al., 2010). Consequently, in order to attain employee engagement outcomes, Hewitt Associates (2004), developed a scale which focuses and emphasizes on these employees' behaviors. This scale exhibits three behaviors: Say, Stay and Strive. These behaviors are defined as the three S's: *Say* means an employee speaks positively and recommends his organization to others inside and outside his workplace, *Stay* means an employee displays an intense desire to be a member of the organization and *Strive* means an employee exerts extra effort and engages in behaviors that contribute to business success (Hewitt, 2004).

Performances as outcomes of employee engagement relate to business outcomes and correlate with high levels of revenue, growth, and profit margin (Fleming and Asplund, 2007; Ketter, 2008; Wagner and Harter, 2006). The real goal of employee engagement is improved business outcomes (Gallup, 2017), "employees strongly agree their performance is managed in a way that motivates them to do outstanding work" (Gallup, 2017, page 6). In the Gallup study (2017) highly engaged business units realize a 41% reduction in absenteeism, a 59% lower turnover and a 17% increase in productivity. Highly engaged businesses have higher earnings per share (EPS) (Gallup, 2017).

**Table 12. Outcomes of Employee engagement in Gallup study**

Positive Behavior		outcome
<b>Showing up and staying</b>	Engaged employees show up to work and do more work	A 41% reduction in absenteeism and a 17% increase in productivity
	Engaged employees are more likely to stay with their employers	Between 24%-59% lower turnover
<b>Shrinkage and quality</b>	engaged employees care more about the products and services	A 28% reduction in shrinkage (the dollar amount of unaccounted-for lost merchandise) and a 40% reduction in quality defects.
<b>Safety</b>	Engaged employees are more mindful of their surroundings, safety procedures and diligent about keeping their coworkers and customers protected	A 70% decrease in employee safety incidents and a 58% decrease in patient safety incidents.
<b>Customer outcomes</b>	Engaged employees help their organizations improve customer relationships and obtain impressive organic growth.	A 10% increase in customer metrics and a 20% increase in sales.
<b>Profit</b>	Engaged employees are more present and productive; they are more attuned to the needs of customers; and they are more observant of processes, standards and systems	A 21% greater profitability

Source: Author's compilation based on Gallup (2017, p. 69)

As well, a study by the Corporate Leadership Council (CLC), which surveyed more than 50,000 employees in more than 59 organizations worldwide, came to the conclusions that highly committed employees try 57% harder, perform 20% better, and are 87% less like to leave than employees with low levels of commitment ( CLC), 2004, page 43). Employees who are not engaged are more concentrated on their discontent and mistrust toward management, every so often sharing their poor experiences with their colleagues (Rich et al., 2010; Saks, 2006; Wollard and Shuck, 2011). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are strongly correlated to employee engagement and moderate between employee engagement and turnover intentions (Bailey et al., 2017a).

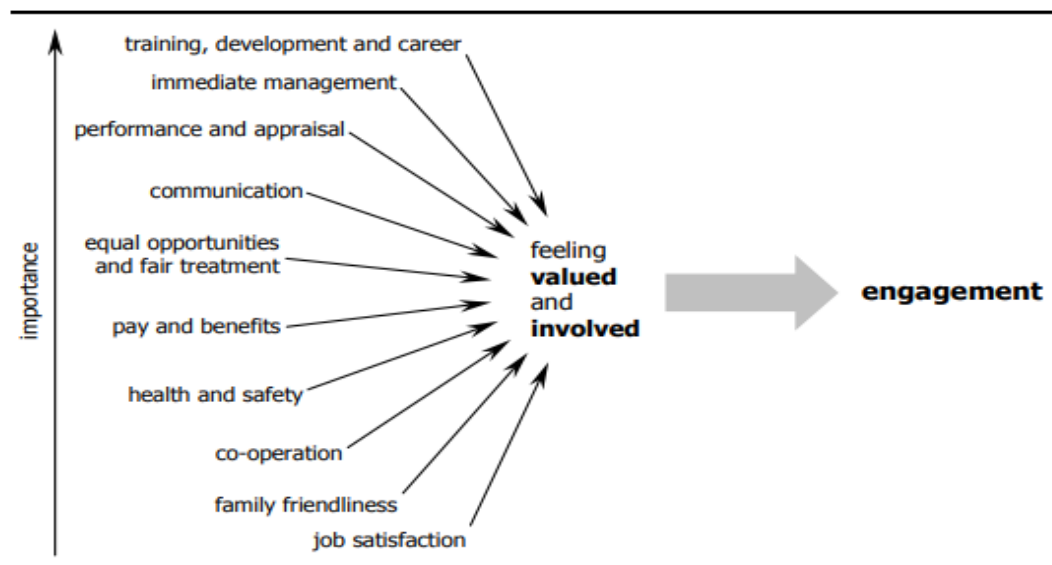
### **1.5 Drivers of employee engagement**

Drivers of employee engagement lead into factors and causes more keenly than the effects of antecedents and outcomes. Therefore, it is essential to identify the main drives that can enhance engagement and influence employees to execute their job in

the workplace effectively and efficiently. Many academic researchers and consulting companies identify various and plentiful drivers of employee engagement that can be regarded as two perspectives of key drivers: (1) key drivers can be classified as extrinsic and intrinsic incentives behaviors that enhance employee engagement; (2) key drivers can also be classified from different point of view as key drivers of the individual behaviors and the organizational behaviors. In other words, intrinsic incentives and behaviors drivers can meet the psychological and mental needs of the employees, such as recognition, responsibility, autonomy, ability utilization, voice, acknowledgment, feedback, respect, and care. Extrinsic incentives behaviors drivers relate to compensation, pay packages, pay rewards, payment, and benefits (Aon Hewitt, 2013) and role of the supervisors, promotion, prestige, working conditions, systems, and technological environment (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014). From the other perspective, individual drivers relate to employees' sense of feeling valued and involved and having the opportunity to feed their views upwards (Andrew and Sofian, 2012; Robinson et al., 2004). And the other point of view is the organizational drivers that can relate to senior management's interest in employees' well-being, organizational values, and a collaborative approach (Antony, 2018).

Researchers also have developed models to draw implications for managers to lead to employee engagement and their diagnosis aims to determine the drivers that will increase employee engagement level (Markos and Sridevi, 2010). A study conducted by Robinson et al. (2004) identified key behaviors influences, which were associated with employee engagement. These key behaviors included belief in the organization, desire to work to make things better, understanding of the business context and the 'bigger picture', being respectful of and helpful to colleagues, willingness to 'go the extra mile' and keeping up to date with developments in the field. Furthermore, the research found that employee engagement was closely linked to feelings and perceptions around being valued and involved, and that the key drivers of engagement included effective leadership, two-way communication, high levels of internal co-operation, a focus on employee development, a commitment to employee wellbeing and clear, accessible human resources policies and practices to which managers at all levels were committed. Figure 9 illustrates the importance of these

influential drivers that can lead to employee's feeling valued and involved that can enhance employee engagement in the organization.



**Figure 9. The drivers of employee engagement: a diagnostic tool**

Source: (IES, 2004)

According to Kular et al. (2008) despite the fact that drivers of employee engagement have been identified, it is also clear that "one size does not fit all". Most drivers that are found to lead to employee engagement are non-financial in their nature, some are related to emotional experiences and wellbeing (May et al 2004). Researchers have also inferred those emotional drivers have a correlation with an individual's personal satisfaction they get from their workplace and by being a part of their organization (Towers Perrin, 2003). This does not mean that managers should ignore the financial aspect of their employees. As Buckingham and Coffman (2005) said, pay and benefits are equally important to every employee, good or bad. Therefore, any organization who has committed leadership can achieve the desired level of engagement with less cost of doing it (Markos and Sridevi, 2010). Better management of engagement drivers enables an organization to reduce organization's attrition and recruitment costs because it has been identified that the longer employees stay with an organization, the less engaged they appear to become

(Ferguson 2007; Kular et al., 2008; Truss et al 2007). Table 13 lists drivers of employee engagement within the literature.

**Table 13. Selected drivers of employee engagement literature**

<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Drivers</b>
Robbins and Judge, 2009 A list of 21 job factors or attributes to EE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Autonomy and independence.</li> <li>● Benefits.</li> <li>● Career advancement opportunities.</li> <li>● Career development opportunities.</li> <li>● Compensation/pay.</li> <li>● Communication between employees and management.</li> <li>● Contribution of work to organization’s business goals.</li> <li>● Feeling safe in the work environment.</li> <li>● Flexibility to balance life and work issues.</li> <li>● Job security.</li> <li>● Job-specific training.</li> <li>● Management recognition of employee job performance.</li> <li>● Meaningfulness of job.</li> <li>● Networking.</li> <li>● Opportunities to use skills/abilities.</li> <li>● Organization’s commitment to professional development.</li> <li>● Overall corporate culture.</li> <li>● Relationship with co-workers</li> <li>● Relationship with immediate supervisor.</li> <li>● The work itself.</li> <li>● The variety of work</li> </ul>
Mani (2011)	Four drivers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employee welfare</li> <li>● Empowerment</li> <li>● Employee growth</li> <li>● Interpersonal relationships</li> </ul>
Seijts and Crim (2006)	The 10 Cs of Employee Engagement, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Connect</li> <li>● Career</li> <li>● Clarity</li> <li>● Convey</li> <li>● Congratulate</li> <li>● Contribute</li> <li>● Control</li> <li>● Collaborate</li> <li>● Credibility</li> <li>● Confidence</li> </ul>
Wallace et al. (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contributions</li> <li>● Connections</li> <li>● Growth</li> <li>● Advancement</li> </ul>
Britt et al. (2001)	involvement and commitment

Institute of Employment Studies (IES) (Robinson et al., 2004)	sense of feeling valued and involved, which has the components such as: leadership, relationships at work, total reward, recognition, work life balance and work itself. Involvement in decision making, the extent to which employees feel able to voice their ideas, the opportunities employees have to develop their jobs and the extent to which the organization is concerned for employees' health and well-being.
Hewitt (2004)	Say, Stay and Strive
IES (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Job satisfaction</li> <li>● Feeling valued and involved</li> <li>● Equal opportunity</li> <li>● Health and safety</li> <li>● Length of service</li> <li>● Communication</li> <li>● Co-operation</li> </ul>
Towers Watson (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rational – how well the employee understands roles/responsibilities</li> <li>● Emotional- how much passion employee can bring to work</li> <li>● Motivational – how willing is the employee to invest discretionary effort to perform their role</li> </ul>
Bhatla (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organizational culture</li> <li>● Organizational communication</li> </ul>
Xu and Thomas Cooper (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Motivation</li> <li>● Job satisfaction</li> <li>● Organizational commitment</li> <li>● Proactive behaviors</li> <li>● Organizational citizenship behavior.</li> </ul> <p>Components of psychological safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Trust in leader</li> <li>● Support from the leader</li> <li>● Creating a blame-free environment</li> </ul>
Judge and Piccolo (2004), Lee (2005), Erkutlu (2008), Griffin et al (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Positive leader behaviors</li> <li>● Follower attitude</li> </ul>
BlessingWhite (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities to grow forward to remain satisfied in their jobs</li> <li>● Strong manager-employee relationship</li> <li>● Retention formula</li> </ul>
Development Dimensions International (DDI, 2005)	A manager must do five things to create a highly engaged workforce. They are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Align efforts with strategy</li> <li>● Empower</li> <li>● Promote and encourage teamwork and collaboration</li> <li>● Help people grow and develop</li> <li>● Provide support and recognition where appropriate</li> </ul>
Towers Perrin Talent Report (2003)	The top three among the ten drivers listed by Perrin are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Senior management's interest in employees' well-being</li> <li>● Challenging work</li> <li>● Decision making authority</li> </ul>
CIPD (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communication is the top priority</li> <li>● Opportunity to feed their views and opinions upwards</li> <li>● Being kept informed about what is going on in the organization</li> </ul>
Gallup (Clifton, 2008)	The manager is the key, employees who have close friendships at work are more engaged

Vance (2006)	Inseparably linked with employer practices, ways in which employer practices affect job performance and engagement. Employee engagement is the outcome of personal attributes such as knowledge, skills, abilities, temperament, attitudes and personality, organizational context which includes leadership, physical setting and social setting and HR practices that directly affect the person, process and context components of job performance.
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Source: Author's compilation based the literature

The author of this thesis decided to focus on three different points of view on employee engagement drivers, which are emphasized in the literature review and are perceived as important for enhancing employee engagement:

- i. Employee's level – employee voice
- ii. Management level – empowerment, trust and autonomy.
- iii. Organizational level:
  1. Organizational appreciation, recognition, and respect.
  2. Personal, team and organizational communication.

### **1.5.1 Employee's level/ perspective driver – employee voice**

Employee voice has attracted considerable attention in research since the 1980s in the fields of Employment Relations/ Human Resource Management and also in the field of Organizational Behavior. Each of these disciplines focuses on different aspects of an employee's voice (Wilkinson et al., 2018). In the field of Employment Relations and Human Resource Management, examining the mechanisms for employees to have "a say" in organizational decision-making (Freeman et al., 2007; Gollan et al., 2015; Wilkinson and Fay, 2011), and in the field of Organizational Behavior, considering voice as an "*extra-role upward communication behaviour*" (Morrison, 2014, p. 174) with the intent to improve organizational functioning. Therefore, employee voice refers to the opportunities employees have to input into decisions affecting their work and to be properly consulted. Employee's voice was identified as a strong driver of employee engagement in practitioner studies (Bailey et al., 2015).

The term Employee Voice has a quite broad content and the message that has been conveyed through it can be about a way to improve (Van Dyne and LePine, 1998), an organizational or work-related problem (Milliken et al., 2003), a situation of



unfairness or misconduct (Pinder and Harlos, 2001), a strategic issue of importance (Dutton and Ashford, 1993), or an opinion that differs from the views of others (Premeaux and Bedeian, 2003).

Definition of employee voice is in what manner an employee has a say in his organization about what is happening by direct or indirect, formal and informal channels (Morrison, 2011) and also as an employee offering innovative recommendations for change, even when others disagree (Van Dyne and LePine, 1998). Table 14 lists several definitions of employee voice within the organizational literature.

**Table 14. Definitions of Employee Voice**

Article	Definition
Van Dyne and LePine (1998)	Promotive behavior that emphasizes expression of constructive challenge intended to improve rather than merely criticize. Making innovative suggestions for change and recommending modifications to standard procedures even when other disagree. (p. 109)
LePine and Van Dyne (1998)	Non-required behavior that emphasizes expression of constructive challenge with the intent to improve rather than merely criticize. (p. 854)
Van Dyne, Ang, and Botero (2003)	Intentionally expressing rather than withholding relevant ideas, information, and opinions about possible work-related improvements. (p. 1360)
Premeaux and Bedeian (2003)	Openly stating one's views or opinions about workplace matters, including the actions or ideas of others, suggested or needed changes, and alternative approaches or different lines of reasoning for addressing job-related issues. (p. 1538)
Detert and Burris (2007)	The discretionary provision of information intended to improve organizational functioning to someone inside the organization with the perceived authority to act, even though such information may challenge and upset the status quo of the organization and its powerholders. (p. 869) Verbal behavior that is improvement oriented and directed to a specific target who holds power inside the organization in question. (p. 870)
Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008)	Employees' expression of challenging but constructive opinions, concerns, or ideas about work-related issues. (p. 1189)

Source: Morrison (2011).

Empowering the voice of employees plays a significant role in organizations. Given the opportunity to employees to voice their opinions and suggestions, lead to solutions that can be reached within the organization (Antony, 2018). Otherwise, it

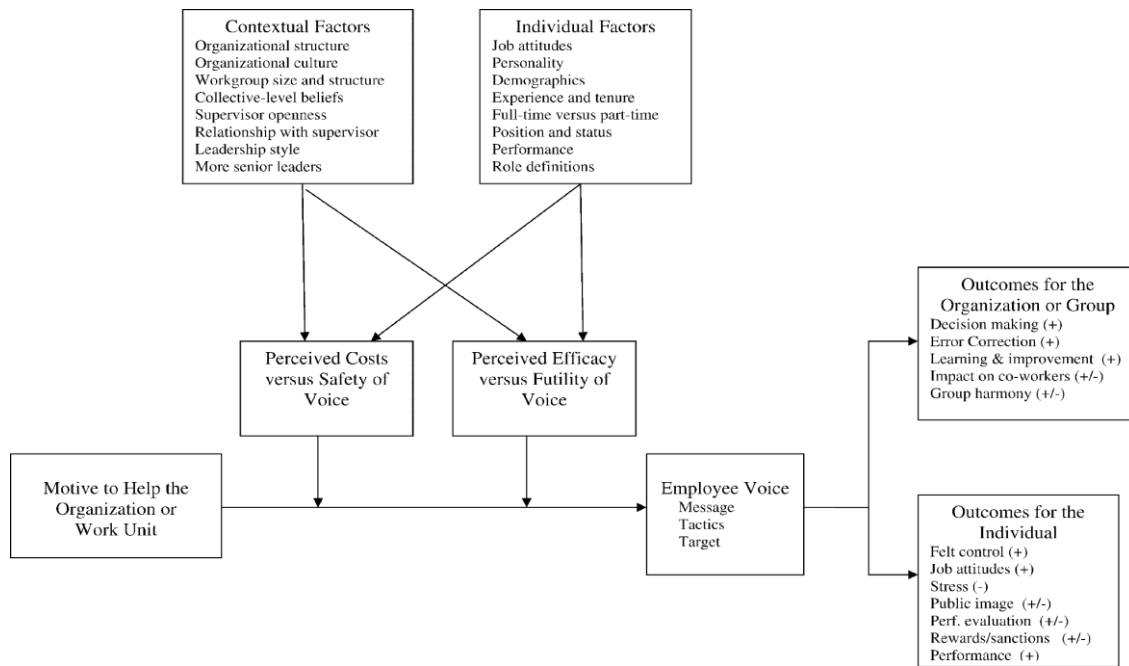
will be "*more a matter of the perceptions of employee voice, which will determine whether employees will try to voice their concerns to management or remain silent and/or exit the organization*" (Benson and Brown, 2010, p. 82). As soon as an employee recognizes his work environment as one in which the employee can share his views, ideas and concerns, in other words can express his voice, then there is a higher chance that he will exhibit higher levels of engagement. Employee's voice is the perception in which the employee feels empowered to engage in behavior to improve his work and his teamwork (Rees et al., 2013).

Since Hirschman's (1970) influential Exit-Voice-Loyalty framework, this line of research conceptualized voice as one of four different ways in which employees can respond to personal dissatisfaction at work, the others being exit, loyalty, and neglect (Farrell and Rusbult, 1992; Rusbult et al., 1988; Withey and Cooper, 1989). The dominant research emphasis within the organizational behavior discipline has been on voice as an improvement-oriented extra-role, or organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (e.g., Van Dyne and LePine, 1998).

Detert and Edmondson (2005) research has examined three sets of antecedents to speaking up behavior – (1) individual differences, (2) formal and informal control mechanisms (Morrison and Milliken, 2000; Horibe, 2001) and (3) managerial behavior (Milliken et al., 2003; Ashford et al., 1998; Edmondson, 2003b). Among these, individual personality differences such as proactive personality (Crant, 2000), self-esteem (Brockner et al., 1998), self-efficacy (Parker, 1993) and the "Big Five" personality dimensions which are openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism or stress tolerance (e.g., LePine and Van Dyne, 2001) have been the most frequently studied predictors of voice.

Morrison (2011) emphasized that the primary driving motive behind employee voice is the desire to benefit the organization or work unit. The literature emphasized that employee voice reflects the intentional decision process whereby the employee considers both positive and negative consequences (Ashford et al., 1998; Detert and Burris, 2007; Morrison and Milliken, 2000). Two key outcome-related considerations have been emphasized in particular. The first is the employee's judgment about whether speaking up is likely to be effective which is often referred to as the perceived

efficacy of voice. The second is the employee's judgment about the risks or potential negative outcomes associated with speaking up, which is often referred to as the perceived safety of voice. The model as illustrated in Figure 10 presents these two judgments that may strengthen or weaken the relationship between the motive to benefit or help the organization and actual voice behavior.



**Figure 10. Model of Employee Voice**

Source: (Morrison and Milliken, 2000)

Wilkinson, Dundon, and Marchington (2013) also provide a useful framework for examining a voice system using the following components: the degree, level, range of issues within its scope, and the form in which participation takes place. The first is the degree that indicates the extent to which employees are able to influence decisions about various aspects of management, meaning whether they are simply informed of changes, consulted or actually make decisions. The second component is the level at which voice is expressed such as task, departmental, establishment, or corporate. The range of issues matter is the third component, incorporating an array of issues from the relatively trivial through operational concerns, for example, how to improve practices on the manufacturing line (Viveros et al., 2018), to more strategic concerns such as investment strategies. The last component is the form that voice

takes which could include "online" involvement (Appelbaum and Batt, 1995), where employees make decisions as part of their daily job responsibilities as distinct from "offline", where employees make suggestions through a formal scheme.

In addition, Marsick and Watkins' (2003) model of "learning organization" can also enhance and develop an approach in the organizational culture to encourage employee voice. Allowing the organization to learn from mistakes and helping to increase and enhance employee voice. This model is facing the organization in three levels: individual, team/ group and organization level. According to this model at the individual level, employees discuss mistakes in an open manner in order to learn from them. Problems are viewed at work as an opportunity to learn. At the team or group level, giving the ability to change things due to the group thinking and allowing the confidence that the organization will act on the employees' recommendations. At the organizational level learned lessons are being shared willingly with all employees.

Furthermore, researchers stated that managers have identified a number of benefits to the organization by permitting employee voice. Benefits as employee loyalty, employee commitment, and organizational performance have increased in the organization and absenteeism have decreased (Wilkinson et al., 2004). Detert and Burris (2007) demonstrated that manager openness raised employee voice by creating enhanced feelings of psychological safety. Likewise, Tangirala and Ramanujam (2010) found that managers' consultation behavior led employees to feel more influential which led to more employee voice. These effects were particularly strong when employees had high job satisfaction and when the manager had high perceived status (Morrison, 2011). Detert and Burris (2007) argued that transformational leadership encourages employee voice since these leaders create commitment and responsibility and encourage employees to become innovative problem solvers. Liu et al. (2010) proposed and showed that transformational leadership identified with higher identification with the employee's supervisor and therefore, it raises employee voice, relates to higher identification with the organization, and leads to more voicing between co-workers. According to Morrison (2011) this study is worth mentioning because it is the first to investigate these two different types of voice behavior.

The evidence that the perceptions of an employee's supervisor play an important role in affecting the frequency of voice behavior. It suggests that supervisors and leaders not only create opportunities for voice by providing formal and informal voice mechanisms, but also shape the cognitions that drive the decision of whether or not to voice (Ashford et al., 2009). In other words, the more open and supportive the relationship (as reflected in high trust, approachability, openness, transformational leadership, high leader-member exchange, etc.), the more positive will be the employee's perceptions of voice efficacy and safety, and thus, the more likely he or she will be to speak up (Morrison, 2011).

The assumption that only formalized structures resolve problems associated with providing voice (Dietz et al., 2009) should not be taken for granted because there is a growth and importance in the informal voice. Spontaneous interactions between managers and employees provide the opportunities for information-passing and consultation (Marchington and Suter, 2013; Morrison, 2011). On the other hand, studies by Locke and Anderson (2010) shows that when leaders send subtle cues conveying power (e.g., direct eye gaze, postural expansion, high vocal volume), their employees tend to speak less. These cues, however, may be sent unconsciously. Also, Ashford et al. (2009) argue that constraints on time and attention can cause leaders to behave without intention in ways that indicate a lack of openness to voice, as not listening, and responding brusquely. Morrison and Rothman (2009) add that an explanation on how feelings of power can exaggerate leaders' views of their own competence and performance, and thus reduce their openness to input. They highlight as well that power can cause leaders to display hostile or dominant behaviors that depress employee's communication. Researchers have also discussed some of the implicit beliefs and biases that can undermine leaders' responsiveness to employee input (Ashford et al., 2009; Morrison and Milliken, 2000). These works, and others, suggest that even leaders who wish to encourage employee voice may not always do so, and that it may be quite difficult for leaders to demonstrate that they truly are open to employee input.

Research on employee voice has yielded important findings but yet it has limitations. The term employee voice is slightly weaker than other related terms such

as employee participation because it does not indicate influence or power-sharing and therefore may be at times no more than "*trickle up*" voice (Wilkinson et al., 2018, p.711). However, "*without voice, there can be no enactment of participation*" (Glew et al., 1995, p. 402). A growing number of scholars have critiqued extant conceptions (and measures) of voice (e.g., Withey, and Cooper, 1989; Janssen et al., 1998; Pinder and Harlos, 2001; Avery and Quiñones, 2002; Van Dyne et al., 2003), stating that conceptions of voice have been too broad or insufficiently attuned to the level of risk involved in speaking up. Ample research of employee voice looks at organizational level and highlights the role of managers who can, through setting agenda and formal structures, preserve silence on a variety of topics and organize them outside the voice process (Donaghey et al., 2011; Dundon and Gollan, 2007).

For Brewster et al. (2007) structures of voice provide avenues to identify and resolve issues within organizations; and even further, Macky and Boxall (2007), point out that mechanisms for voice contribute insights to minimize conflicts and improve trust between management and employees through different channels of communication.

## **1.5.2 Management level/ perspective driver – empowerment, trust and autonomy.**

### **1.5.2.1 Empowerment**

Empowerment has been identified by Zimmerman (2000) as an orientation for working in the community and a process of efforts to apply control and influence over decisions that affect one's life, organizational functioning, and the quality of community life (Perkins and Zimmerman, 1995; Rappaport, 1984; Zimmerman and Warschausky, 1998). Empowerment is a construct shared by many disciplines: psychology, economics, education, community development, organizational behavior and studies of social movements and is often assumed rather than explained or defined (Page and Czuba, 1999). Rappaport (1984) and Zimmerman (2000) have noted that it is easy to define empowerment by its absence, but it is difficult to define it in action because the construct takes on different forms in various people and contexts. Even the agreement on defining the concept is a subject to debate and the meaning of the term empowerment is often assumed rather than explained or defined (Bowen

and Lawler, 1992, 1995; Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Lawler et al., 1995; Potterfield, 1999; Spreitzer, 1995, 1996; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). Rappaport (1984) argued that declaration of a single definition of empowerment may make attempts to achieve a kind of formula or prescription, contrary to the very concept of empowerment. According to Bailey (1992), the way we define empowerment in our projects depends only on the people and context involved.

Page and Czuba (1999) defined empowerment as a multi-dimensional, social, and a process construct. Multi-dimensional occurs within several disciplines (sociological, psychological, and economic), and at various levels (individual, group, and community). A social process by its definition, because it occurs in relationship to others and as a process because it is similar to a path or journey that develops as we work through it. Therefore, employee empowerment mediates the relationship between supervision and outcomes such as work engagement (Arshad et al., 2021) and is used nowadays in organizations to improve service quality, promote innovation, and increase customer satisfaction (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2015).

The construct of employee empowerment consists of two components: psychological and structural/ managerial empowerment (Laschinger et al., 2001). Psychological empowerment is an intrinsic drive that enhances feelings of self-efficacy (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). Thomas and Velthouse (1990) define empowerment from the psychological perspective as the highest level of intrinsic motivation or commitment to a task as manifest in four task assessments: impact, competence, meaningfulness, and choice. Also, Spreitzer (1995, 1996, and 2007) described employee empowerment as a four-dimensional motivational construct that operates through four cognitive mechanisms: meaningfulness of work, competence, self-determination, and impact of work that reflect an active rather than passive orientation to work. (Spreitzer, 2007). From the structural or managerial perspective, employee empowerment is a social construct that describes how those with power in organizations (i.e., managers) share power, information, and resources with those who are lacking it (i.e., employees). Meaning, structural empowerment is the access employees have to the social structures within their workplace that facilitate their realization of goals (Kanter, 1993) and drives through workplace friendship which is

voluntary, person-specific, informal, and reciprocal relationship between employees working in an organization (Berman et al., 2002). Structural empowerment is associated with characteristics such as open communication, open access to information, and intimacy (Sias and Cahill, 1998). Following the structural perspective, Kanter (1979) developed a structural theory of organizational power that describes how power is derived from three sources: (1) supply of essential resources from the external environment; (2) information that including task-related knowledge and performance feedback; and (3) support from top management and engaging in innovative behavior.

Empowerment theory as being presented by Zimmerman (2000) consists of processes and outcomes (Swift and Levine, 1987). Regarding this theory, actions, activities, or structures may well be empowering, and the outcome of such processes leads and affects the level of being empowered. To define the empowerment theory in a clear way, it is important to make a distinction between empowering processes and outcomes (Rappaport, 1984; Zimmerman, 2000). Empowering processes such as an attempt to gain control, obtain essential resources, and understanding of a person's social environment, are fundamental. The process is empowering, only if it helps people to develop skills so that they can become independent problem solvers and decision makers. Empowering processes will vary between different levels of analysis. The empowered outcomes refer to operationalization of empowering processes and vary across levels of analysis. Regarding individuals, outcomes might include situation specific perceived control, skills, and proactive behaviors. Regarding organizations, outcomes might include organizational networks, effective resource acquisition, and policy leverage. Community-level empowerment outcomes might include evidence of pluralism, the existence of organizational coalitions, and accessible community resources.

The development of empowerment theory requires exploration and description at multiple levels of analysis that include mechanisms of empowerment of individual competencies and proactive behaviors, natural helping systems and organizational effectiveness, and community competence and access to resources. Although each level of analysis is described separately it is integrally connected to the



others meaning they are both a cause and a consequence of each other. Empowering processes at one level of analysis contribute to empowered outcomes at other levels of analysis. *"Empowered persons are the basis for developing responsible and participatory organizations and communities; it is difficult to imagine an empowering community or organization devoid of empowered individuals"* (Zimmerman, 2000, p.46). Table 15 summarizes according to the level of analysis, the elements that are connected to the process, meaning empowering elements in three levels and the consequences of the empowering process meaning the outcomes of being empowered.

**Table 15. A Comparison of Empowering Processes and Empowered Outcomes across Levels of Analysis**

Levels of analysis	Process ("empowering")	Outcome ("empowered")
Individual	Learning decision-making skills Managing resources Working with others	Sense of control Critical awareness Participatory behaviors
Organizational	Opportunities to participate in decision-making Shared responsibilities Shared leadership	Effectively compete for resources Networking with other organizations Policy influence
Community	Access to resources Open government structure Tolerance for diversity	Organizational coalitions Pluralistic leadership Residents' participatory skills

Source: Zimmerman (2000)

Bowen and Lawler's (1992, 1995) analysis of empowerment in the private sector that was built upon Kanter's (1979) notion of empowerment, recognized that a key component of empowerment is sharing power and decision-making authority with lower-level employees and they also observed that many empowerment programs failed when they focus on power without redistributing information, knowledge, and rewards (Bowen and Lawler, 1992). According to Bowen and Lawler (1992) empowerment involves having managers share with their employees four organizational components: *"(1) information about the organization's performance, (2) rewards based on the organization's performance, (3) knowledge that enables employees to understand and contribute to organizational performance, and (4)*

*power to make decisions that influence organizational direction and performance"* (Bowen and Lawler, 1992, p. 32).

Ahearne et al., (2005) and Arnold et al., (2000) have defined multidimensional definitions of employee empowerment that treat empowerment as a leadership approach or style. These definitions of empowering leadership style consist of leadership behaviors such as amplifying the meaningfulness of work, encouraging participation in decision making, showing confidence in high performance, leading by example, coaching, informing, showing concern for others, and providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints (Ahearne et al., 2005; Arnold et al., 2000).

Furthermore, empowerment comes from the word Power that means energy, therefore, to empower employees, means to energize them (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990) and also to grant them authority. On the other hand, power can also be used as capacity, under the definition of Conger and Kanungo (1988) of self-efficacy as identification and elimination of conditions that create powerlessness.

Managers have a major role in enhancing empowerment and organizational hierarchy to employees, developing and reinforcing autonomy, trust, and employee engagement (Heyns and Rothmann, 2018). Managers at the workplace set and dictate the tone and attitude for the entire organization: "*employees look to them for cues about what constitutes acceptable conduct*" (Crystal and Brian, 2014, p. 17). They have an essential influence in enhancing employee engagement and motivate employees by creating a supportive and safe atmosphere among their employees. Managers in workplaces should be the source of inspiration to their employees. Managers should lead with purpose, vision, mission and values of the organization, and implement them through a cascading method like a "waterfall", from top management through the middle management till the last employee in the workplace (De Mello et al., 2008; Wang and Hsieh, 2013). Employees are enhancing engagement when their managers are perceived as authentic, supportive and honest, and allowing their employees the opportunity to improve and exercise their judgment, beliefs and skills personally and to shape and implement core organizational values (Wang and Hsieh, 2013).

### **1.5.2.2 Trust as a managerial driver of Employee Engagement**

Trust has been referred to as an elusive notion (Gambetta, 2000), and is a term with many meanings (Williamson, 1993). Three types of trust were defined in the literature: general, specific, and mutual trust. General trust is being developed in childhood which is an important factor in an individual's personality (Kennedy et al., 2001) and is defined as: "*a generalized expectancy held by an individual that the word of another (...) can be relied on*" (Rotter, 1967, p. 651). Differing from a general trust is the specific trust which depends on the perception of a specific situation or an object of trust, which may include organizations and/or individuals. Mutual trust is an important basis of a working relationship in an organization (Mayer et al., 1995). Trust has emerged as a core concept in organizational psychology (OP) and organizational behavior (OB) (Dirks and de Jong, 2021).

A review of the literature present that early explorations of organizational trust (e.g., Deutsch, 1960; Rotter, 1967; Zand, 1972) date back to the sixties and the seventies of the XX century when the field of organizational trust research did not really take off until the mid-nineties with the publication of several influential pieces including Mayer et al. (1995), McAllister (1995), Kramer and Tyler (1996), and Rousseau et al. (1998). Following that time, trust research grew rapidly, creating an immense, rich body of knowledge and turning trust into one of the most influential constructs within OP/OB (Newman et al. 2016). A recent review of the literature by Dirks and de Jong (2021) identifies two metaphorically "waves" that have shaped the field of trust. Wave 1 is called the "swelling stage" between 1995-2007, came essentially from the workplace and societal trends, drove the need to understand trust and emphasize establishing foundational building blocks; wave two is called the "crest-stage" between 2007-2021, came from within the field, as scholars increasingly recognized the limitations of the assumptions underlying wave one and the need to questioning assumptions and examining alternatives.

The essential contribution of wave one was to provide conceptual clarity by introducing clear definitions of trust. Therefore, trust was defined as a psychological state, essential to the formation and sustenance of human relationships, that involves a decision-making process, affected by individual attitudes and cognitions, about an

individual's willingness to accept vulnerability to another based on positive expectations of his or her actions in the future (Butler, 1991; Clarke and Payne, 1997; Mayer et al., 1995; McAllister, 1995; Scott, 1980). Furthermore, trust is manifested by one's actions, meaning eventually reflecting core beliefs, assumptions (Schein, 2004), and the depth of personal commitment (Senge, 2006). Mayer's (1995) definition of trust that has become widely accepted in organizational literature (Dirks and de Jong, 2021; Rousseau et al., 1998) is noted as "*the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party*" (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712). Similarly, Rousseau et al. (1998) defined trust as "*a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another*" (p. 395).

According to these two definitions, four elements highlighted:

1. Trust involves two (or more) specific parties that assume the role of the trustor (the party extending the trust) and the trustee (the party being trusted).
2. Trust is a state as opposed to a trait, meaning that it is dynamic and fluctuates (sometimes quite rapidly) over time.
3. Trust is psychological in nature, which means that it inherently resides within individuals.
4. Trust is given its meaning by considering conditions of uncertainty about and dependence on future actions (and intentions) by others (Dirks and de Jong, 2021).

Meaning trust is a psychological mechanism that allows individuals to suspend uncertainty about others' actions, thereby making knowledge of another's trustworthiness momentarily certain, thereby enabling trustors to make a leap of faith toward positive expectations beyond that which good reasons alone would warrant (Möllering, 2001).

A second conceptual clarification of the construct refers to the dimensionality of trust. McAllister (1995) provided one of the most well-known conceptualizations that distinct between cognition-based and affect-based trust (Dirks and de Jong, 2021)

which have different content and operate slightly different processes. Contrary to McAllister, Mayer et al. (1995) conceptualized trust as unidimensional but emphasized the multidimensionality of perceived trustworthiness instead. Mayer et al. (1995) distinguished between *ability* (trustee is perceived to have the skills or characteristics sufficient to perform well in a specific domain), *benevolence* (the extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor aside from an egocentric profit motive), and *integrity* (trustee is perceived to adhere to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable). Mayer's et al. (1995) and McAllister's (1995) conceptualizations are still highly successful, but they are not easy to reconcile in terms of the dimensionality of trust and recognition of trustworthiness therefore they continue to coexist as distinct and disconnected paradigms (Dirks and de Jong, 2021).

A third conceptual clarification is a distinction between different referents of trust and levels of analysis. Referents of trust represent a further specification of the trustee. A common approach is to distinguish between referents based on their level within the organizational hierarchy, ranging from coworkers to direct supervisors, and top management for example help from coworkers, performance appraisals from supervisors, the strategic direction of top management (Colquitt et al. 2007). Therefore, trust represents an intention to take a risk in a relationship (Gill et al., 2005) and is basically defined as the mutual understanding between two individuals that vulnerabilities will not be exploited, and that the relationship is safe and respectful (Norman, 2006; Rousseau et al., 1998). A similar definition of trust by Doney et al. (1998, p. 604), is "*a willingness to rely on another party and to take action in circumstances where such action makes one vulnerable to the other party*".

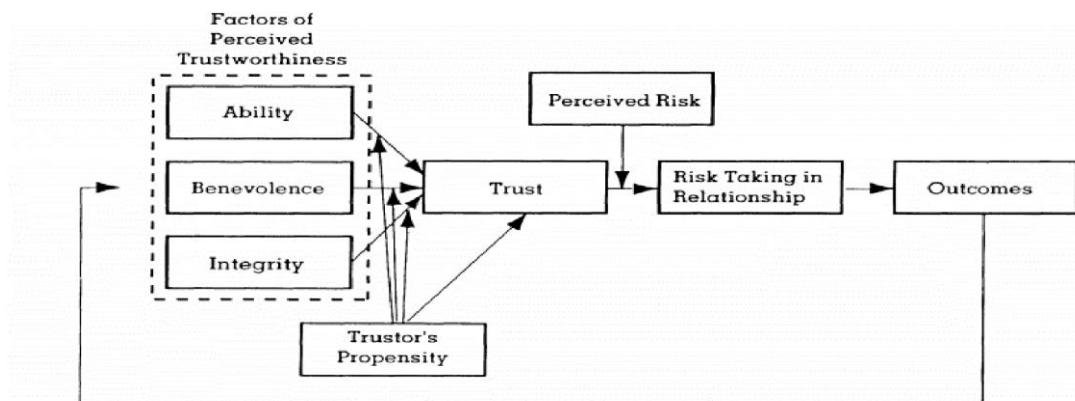
In the literature, researchers had a high interest in the relation between trust and organizational outcomes due to the fact that it is essential for successful working relationships (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002; Kramer and Tyler, 1996). Trust has been found to be a critical factor in establishing cooperative relationships among organizational members (Bromiley and Cummings, 1995; Hwang and Burgers, 1997; Wells and Kipnis, 2001). Employees nowadays are more dependent on each other due to globalization, international trends, and the increasing diversity of employees in workplaces. A definition by Ebert (2009, p. 69) emphasizes the importance of the social relationship:

*"Trust is based on social relations, group memberships, and shared values. Trust involves risk and vulnerability and is especially important when there is a lack of familiarity".* Organizational trust can be classified under three dimensions: trust in the organization, trust in management, and trust in employees' co-workers. Trust in the organization means the confidence employees have in the organization itself and in the organizational system, not in a particular person or workgroup (Bagraim and Hime, 2007; Dirks and Ferrin, 2001; Paliszkievicz, 2011). Trust in direct management and in co-workers represents an interpersonal pattern of trust (Bagraim and Hime, 2007; Tan and Lim, 2009) and this sort of trust is often regarded as the *"hallmark of effective relationships"* (Dirks and Ferrin, 2001, p. 3) or the "glue" of social relationships within an organization (Abrams et al., 2003). Trust between line managers or supervisors and their employees is very personal, as a result, the relationships between trust in supervisors and job satisfaction are significantly important and well established in the literature (Dirk and Ferrin, 2002). This sort of trust as social "glue" links the relationships of trust between employees, managers, processes, and environment and can improve engagement, while lack of trust in managers and supervisors' results in a lack of employee engagement in their workplace (Covey and Merrill, 2006).

Wang and Hsieh (2013) noted that trust in the direct manager, is one of the most important elements of employee engagement but it refers to the perception that an individual can be trusted under particular circumstances, either personally in his inner intentions, or in his general character attributes (Brown et al., 2015; McKnight and Chervany, 2001; Tan and Lim, 2009). The topic of trust becomes even more important with regard to self-directed work teams that highlight the importance of trust as a substitute for direct supervision (Mayer et al., 1995). Additionally, there is evidence of a positive relationship between trust in peers and job satisfaction (Cook and Wall, 1980; Lehmann-Willenbrock and Kauffeld, 2010). The consequence of the relationships of trust and mutual respect within a workgroup or a team indicates that *"individuals are likely to believe that they will be given the benefit of the doubt – a defining characteristic of psychological safety"* (Edmondson, 2003a, p.18; Edmondson et al., 2004, p252). As safety is known to be one of three of Kahn's (1990) psychologically condition which enables employees to show creativity, willingness to

experiment with unfamiliar and new work methods, and expressing themselves, and as a result, they are expected to be more engaged in their work (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004). Trust researchers stated that an employee who is in a trusting relationship, then the employee feels safe and positive, and this will lead to higher job satisfaction (Dirks and Ferrin, 2001; Mayer et al., 1995; Werbel and Henriques, 2009). Oppositely, if there is a distrusting relationship then an employee is likely to feel anxiety and negative emotions, which results in lower job satisfaction (Dirks and Ferrin, 2001; Mayer et al., 1995). In order to increase employees' trust, managers need to be authentic. Covey and Merrill (2006) proposed that managers can stimulate trust and authentic concern that leads to reciprocation. Moreover, adopting suitable and transparent communication skills by managers, and consistency in both communication and action with employees, will lead to building mutual trust, meaning leads to positive relationships, enhancing employee engagement and trust. (Elsbach and Eloffson, 2000; Norman et al., 2010). As a result, effective managers or leaders are also effective communicators (Clutterbuck and Hirst, 2002). The dynamic forces of trust and the potential value can have a major influence on an organizational function and effectiveness. Trust is seen as maintaining collaboration within the workplace, as it allows for the sharing of information, enhanced relationships among individuals and teams and enriches problem-solving and conflict resolution, which leads to better organizational performance (Brown et al., 2015; Lyman, 2003; Six et al., 2010).

In the literature, there are several trust models which refer to three similar components: ability, benevolence, and integrity, and based on trust research (Covey and Merrill, 2006; Mayer and Davis, 1999; Reina and Reina, 2007) but Mayer et al. (1995) model is perhaps the most influential model of trust to date and proposed a set of key relationships with antecedents and consequences that explain the way trust develops and operates in organizational settings. The model is based on the necessity of building trust between two individuals: a trustor and a trustee and both perceived characteristics of the trustor and trustee influence trust (Dirks and de Jong, 2021).



**Figure 11. Mayer et al. (1995) Trust model**

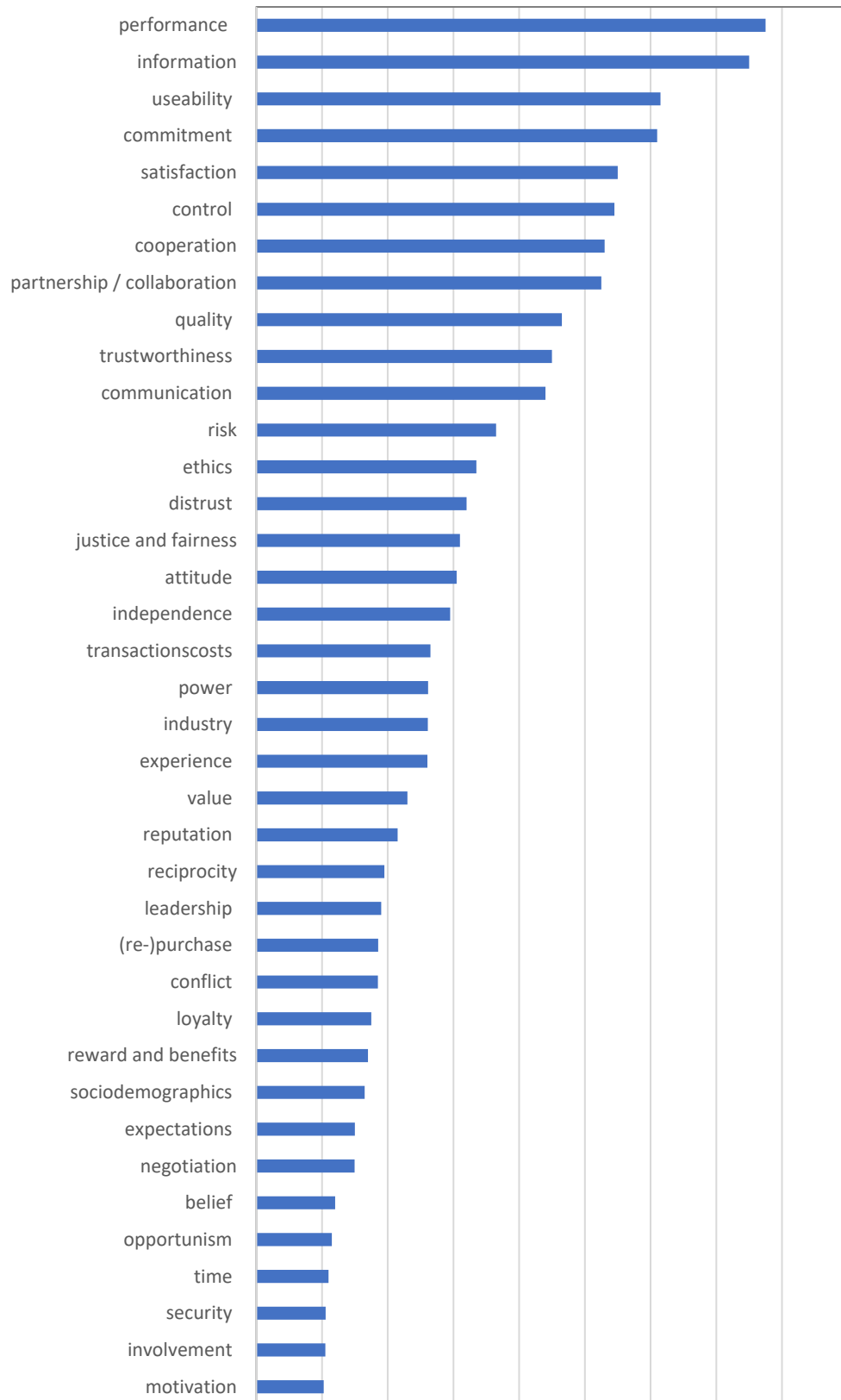
Source: Mayer et al., (1995).

Under this model, trust does not involve risk by definition, but a willingness to engage in risk-taking with the trustee (e.g., sharing sensitive information). On the antecedents' side, trust was proposed to be primarily a function of the perceived trustworthiness of the trustee (i.e., ability, benevolence, integrity) and the trustor's general propensity to trust. On the consequences side, it proposed that trust contributes to positive organizational outcomes by increasing the trustor's willingness to engage in risk-taking in the relationship and that this is moderated by perceived risk (Dirks and de Jong, 2021). Risk is an essential component of a model of trust. While there is no risk taken in the pure willingness to be vulnerable (i.e., to trust), nonetheless, the risk is inherent in the behavioral manifestation of the willingness to be vulnerable. One does not need to risk anything to be willing to trust; however, one must take a risk to engage in trusting action. Trust will lead to risk-taking in a relationship, and the form that the risk takes (Mayer et al., 1995). According to Schoorman et al. (2007, p. 348), tried to understand how parties process information about others and how they decide how much risk to take with those others. *"Perceptions of others and perceptions of risk should be processed to come to decisions about taking risks"*.

A literature synthesis of 808 articles made by Ebert (2009) allowed the definition of forty "key variables" that were involved in trust-formation and introduced in the diagram (see Figure 12). At the top of the diagram with the highest



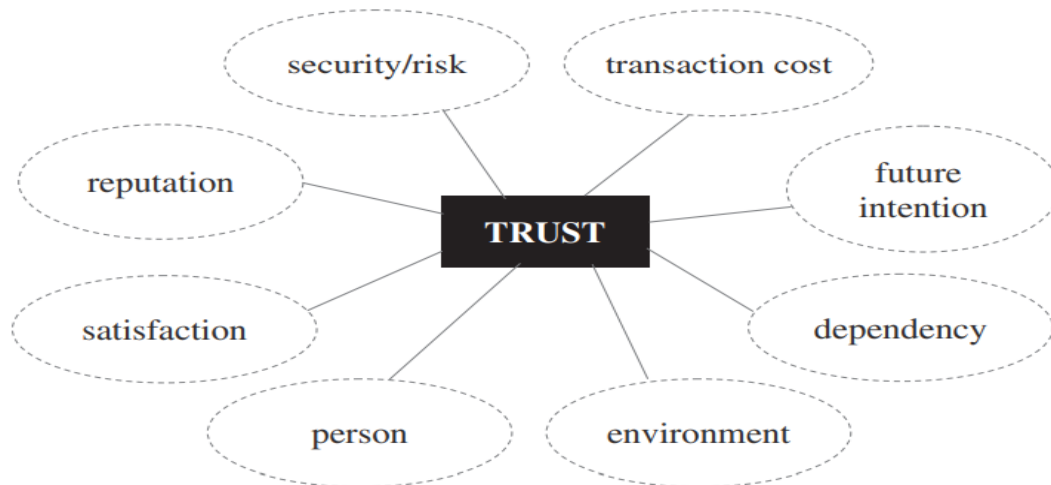
percentage are presented two "key variables": performance and information (accessibility to information), meaning these are the most frequently mentioned variables analyzed in connection with trust. On the bottom of the diagram with the lowest percentage, involvement is the "key variable" that has the least frequently mentioned in the literature synthesis. This frequency is an important indication of the variables which describe the importance of trust research (Ebert, 2009).



**Figure 12. Frequencies of listed key variables involved in trust creation (in %)**

Source: Ebert (2009).

Following this list of 40 key variables found in trust literature, Ebert (2009) categorized trust into eight clusters: dependency, environment, future intention, person, reputation, satisfaction, security/risk, and transaction costs which seemed a suitable way to present a general trust model.



**Figure 13. The eight clusters of trust variables**

Source: Ebert (2009, p.78)

Each cluster contains varied variables that explain and expand its meaning (Table 16).

**Table 16. The eight clusters of trust variables**

Cluster	Variables
Dependency	Dependence, autonomy, leadership, and power
Environment	Time, industry, and culture
Future intention	cooperation, benefit, collaboration, commitment, reciprocity, loyalty, (repeat) purchase, and use of product or service (all of these being actions that express the future intention to trust)
Person	Socio-demographics and involvement
Reputation	Reputation, quality, performance, justice, fairness, value, and ethics
Satisfaction	Satisfaction and experience, since satisfaction is the result of the perception of experience with a product or service, or an interaction with a trusted partner
Security/risk	Security, risk, conflict, and opportunism for example: If a partner behaves opportunistically at the expense of the other, conflicts will occur, the perceived level of risk will be high, and the perceived levels of safety and security will be low
Transaction cost	Variables that can be separated in ex-ante and ex-post transactions costs

Source: Ebert (2009).

In wave two researchers had become more interested in integrating levels of analysis (Fulmer and Dirks, 2018). Although in wave one, work recognized trust as multilevel in nature (Rousseau et al., 1998; Zaheer et al., 1998), most of the research in wave one focused on one level at a time, meaning individual or team (Fulmer and Gelfand, 2012). In wave two integration levels focused primarily on cross-level models of trust, for example, examining the impact of variables at one level on variables and relationships at other levels (Rousseau, 1985) that manifested across three streams of research. The first stream has focused primarily on integrating individual and team levels, examining direct and interactive effects of team-level trust on outcomes (Braun et al., 2013) and determinants (Schabram et al., 2018) of the individual-level. The second stream attempted to integrate the individual and the societal level, founding in collectivist cultures: trustors relied more on contextual signals (Branzei et al., 2007), and in individualistic cultures: cognition- and affect-based trust was more highly correlated, and shared third-party ties (Chua et al., 2009). And the third stream involves trust and social networks (Ferrin et al. 2006).

An example of research in wave two integrating levels of analysis was conducted by Knoll and Gill (2011) to examine two aspects of Mayer's (1995) model of organizational trust. First is the possibility to generalize the integrative model to predict trust across different referents (i.e., supervisors, subordinates, and peers). Second, examine the relative importance of ability, benevolence, and integrity when making upward, downward, and lateral trust judgments. The results of the study support the ability to generalize the model to other referents and the three components of trustworthiness (ability, benevolence, and integrity) were related to trust in supervisor, trust insubordinate, and trust in peers. This model, although consistent with other theories of trust, is distinct from previous conceptualizations of organizational trust because it separates trust from its antecedents and outcomes (Knoll and Gill, 2011).

Terms such as cooperation, confidence, predictability, and reliability have been used as synonyms to the concept of trust and have created some uncertainty about the nature of trust (Mayer et al., 1995; Ebert, 2009). The distinction between the concept of trust and the terms cooperation and confidence are blurred. Although

trust can frequently lead to cooperative behavior, trust is not an essential condition for cooperation to occur, because cooperation does not necessarily put a party at risk (Ebert, 2009). Luhmann (1988) proposed a distinction between trust and confidence. According to Luhmann (1988) both concepts refer to anticipations and expectations that may lead to disappointment. Therefore, trust differs from confidence due to the requirement of previous engagement on a person's part, including recognizing and accepting that risk exists.

Despite its importance in organizational research, the study of trust has not been without problems. There have been some inconsistencies in the conceptualization and measurement of trust in previous research (Bigley and Pearce, 1998; Dirks and Ferrin, 2001). The most serious criticism is the lack of agreement about the structure of trust, and in particular, the inability of researchers to distinguish between the antecedents and the construct of trust itself (Bhattacharya et al., 1998; Mayer et al., 1995).

In summing up the meaning and implications of trust alongside with a view to the "third wave" starting 2021, societies and organizations across the globe have been undergoing fundamental changes that have important implications for trust. First, workplace technologies and "Virtuality" is often believed to create challenges for developing and maintaining trust (Gilson et al., 2015), especially when individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and value systems are involved. Workplaces are also increasingly employing technology in the form of artificial intelligence (AI) and robots and teaming them up with human employees (Glikson and Woolley, 2020).

The second implication is the nature of workplaces and the work relationships that are undergoing a major change as well. Organizations have relied upon clear boundaries, structures, and roles, but these are becoming increasingly fluid due to an increase in working remotely and/or working from home that has been accelerated by the pandemic. Therefore, events that occurred within the home domain may impact trust within the workplace and vice versa. Also, team boundaries are changing, and the composition of the team becomes unstable (Ancona et al., 2021). The constant change in the level, nature, and dynamics of team trust according to change of team members. Also "gig workers" are on a rise and they are not operating as part

of a traditional organization. They are independent contractors that do not come to an office, do not work in teams, possibly do not even have a supervisor, and have limited opportunities to socialize and build trust with their colleagues. As a result, those (internal) parties may no longer represent meaningful referents of trust; instead, for many of these employees, the most relevant referent of trust may become the (external) customer. As such, these new organizational forms will have important implications in terms of shifts in referents of trust and the key factors driving trust (Gu et al., 2021).

Third, trust in institutions and leaders has been in crisis across the globe. In many countries, the level of trust that people have in government, businesses, religious institutions, legal institutions, media, and their leaders has dropped dramatically over the past decade (Edelman, 2021).

Given the current challenges related to trust in society and organizations around the globe, researchers expect that trust research will continue to grow into the third wave of research with an aim to make organizations and teams function more smoothly, to make workplaces more humane, and promote collaborative work to address important organizational challenges. *"Trust will no longer be labeled "in crisis" across the globe but will be a strength that improves the welfare of people and organizations worldwide"* (Dirks and de Jong, 2022, p.23).

### **1.5.2.3. Autonomy**

Autonomy is an essential component to employee engagement and how an individual perceives his rights, freedom, and dignity (Gagné and Bhave, 2011). Conceptualizations of autonomy reflect the historical and economic environment of organizations. In the seventies, economies were predominantly based on traditional assembly lines which employees were manufacturing and working on. Therefore, Hackman and Oldham's (1975) job characteristics model conceptualized autonomy as the extent to which the job provided employees with freedom and independence over their work schedules and work processes. In the following decades, a new view of autonomy was required due to the new manufacturing technologies development (flexible manufacturing systems, total quality management practices, just-in-time

inventory management) and the term control, represented in several forms of control the conceptualization of experienced autonomy (Jackson et al., 1993; Wall et al., 1990). Recent economic trends as globalization increased competition, and the transition to a services-based economy centered on giving decision-making control to employees (Spreitzer, 1995).

Autonomy is a key ingredient of modern organizations, in relation to Taylor (1911) who emphasized that "scientific management" consisted of "mental revolution" which is now discredited. Taylorism breaks tasks down into their component steps and prescribes how each person should do his or her specific series of steps, therefore, it denies autonomy. Taylor also thought that workers were motivated only by money so their interests would align with management if they were according to their output, therefore, both management and worker would want to maximise production. Thus, theorists have highlighted autonomy as a critical interest for employees that organizations need to address (Budd, 2004; Hirschman, 1970). Organizational behavior research has studied the concept of employee autonomy by examining how workplace practices affect autonomy, in the field of job design and participative management, resulting influence the performance and employee engagement (Evans and Fischer, 1992) and considers three distinct perspectives on employee autonomy which are work scheduling autonomy, work methods autonomy, and decision-making autonomy (Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006). In addition, Breugh (1985) separated autonomy into several subcomponents, as method autonomy, scheduling autonomy, and criterion autonomy (i.e., choice in how to measure job performance), all indicating the association of positive work outcomes, work satisfaction, job involvement, absenteeism, and performance quality. Breugh's (1985) multidimensional work autonomy scale was found supported by Sadler-Smith et al., (2003). Work tempo, work method, and job evaluation are conceptualized as Maastricht Autonomy List which assessed job autonomy as opportunities to exercise control (de Jonge et al., 1994). Other conceptualizations of autonomy addresses task-related and context-related autonomy (Gomez-Mejia, 1986) and the High Involvement Work Practices model (Lawler, 1986), which influences the power to act and make decisions, demonstrating positively in relation to organizational return on equity,

employee commitment and satisfaction (Vandenberg et al., 1999). The need for autonomy was related to training purposes because autonomy fosters the internalization of the value for sharing knowledge. (Roca and Gagné, 2008; Gagné, 2009).

Job autonomy has been linked to behavioral and engagement indicators and positively related to role, self-efficacy, flexibility, organizational commitment, feelings of ownership and commitment to organizational change (Aubé et al., 2007; Morgeson et al., 2005; Parker and Axtell, 2001). Additionally, job autonomy was identified as one of the main antecedents of employee innovative behavior (Hammond et al., 2011) and found positively associated with safe working behaviors (Parker et al., 2001), significant predictor of performance (Claessens et al., 2004), an important factor for proactive work behavior as proactive idea implementation and problem solving, and innovative work behaviors (Parker et al., 2006; Ramamoorthy et al., 2005).

Self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985b) has provided strong evidence of the significance of autonomy in the workplace, autonomy means to subject one's actions to the highest level of reflection (Deci and Ryan, 1985b). Employees feel autonomous, as they feel free to choose to do things that are interesting on personal and meaningful levels. Self-determination theory claims three basic psychological needs, predominately the need for autonomy. In comparison to the other conceptualizations of autonomy, self-determination theory makes a strong argument that autonomy is a need that must be satisfied permitting employees to function optimally, relating to better work motivation, productivity, and well-being (Gagné and Deci, 2005) and also shows that satisfaction of the need for autonomy is associated with greater work engagement (Baard et al., 2004; Deci et al., 2001). Self-determination theory has also found that motivational job design can actually compensate for poor leadership and help maintain motivation levels and vice versa. Employees feel in control of the situations through job autonomy constraints do not necessarily have debilitating effects on their motivation (Bellerose and Gagné, 2009).

For many years, autonomy has taken a central place in various theories of job design, for example, Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics theory (1980), Karasek's Job-Demands Control theory (1979) and Bakker and Demerouti's Job-



Demands Resources theory (2007). Job Design theory offers compelling cross-cultural evidence for the importance of autonomy in the workplace (Gagné and Bhave, 2011). Hackman and Oldham (1975) imply job autonomy as creation of responsibility and accountability for work outcomes, which is linked to intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction performance, and employee retention (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Another framework proposed by Warr is the Vitamin Model (1995) for reviewing job autonomy. Warr (1995) proposed that certain job attributes such as job autonomy and job demands function like "vitamins". Meaning Vitamins are desirable up to specific levels but are harmful or ineffective at excessive levels. As a result, Warr (1995) hypothesized the relationships between the "vitamins" and employee outcomes. Other research by Cabrera, Collins and Salgado, (2006) also found that in jobs with a lot of autonomy, employees tend to participate more in knowledge sharing (Cabrera et al., 2006).

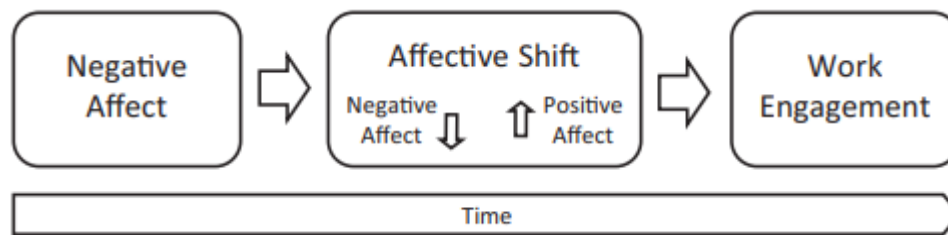
### **1.5.3 Organizational level**

#### **1.5.3.1 Organizational Appreciation, recognition respect and dignity**

Workplace is a critical domain in one's life, where an employee needs to be informed and to be treated with appreciation, acknowledgment, recognition, respect and dignity, which play a major role in an employee's work life (Bolton, 2007; Laitinen, 2011; Sayer, 2007; Tiwari et al., 2021). These constructs are important to all employees at the workplace, at all hierarchical levels. Once employees are feeling appreciated by their organizations, they become more motivated, committed, and engaged in their work, enabling a win/win situation for both the employer and the employee (Mattila, 2008). Even though employees may experience both the presence and absence of these constructs during their work life.

Appreciated employees perceive their managers as fair about processes and outcome which serves an important psychological need (Greenberg, 1990). Relationships between affect and employee engagement indicate the importance of positive feedback given by managers, particularly for mistakes, instead blaming the employees or even humiliating them publicly. Empowering feedback can create for

employees the change from negative to positive emotions as presented in the affective shift model (Bledow et al., 2011; Tiwari et al., 2021).



**Figure 14. The affective shift model of work engagement**

Source: Bledow et al. (2011).

The affective shift model suggests that negative affect is positively related to work engagement if negative affect is followed by positive affect. Meaning moving from a negative situation (events and mood) to a high-positive mood situation is associated with high work engagement. Work engagement emerges from the dynamic interaction of positive and negative affect (Bledow et al., 2011).

Appreciation promotes employees' well-being and success by creating and maintaining social bonds and building trust and also may help employees feel valued, which frees their inner desire to excel and help others – including customers, managers and colleagues (Fagley and Adler, 2012). Credit refers to acknowledgement and appreciation for an employee's work shown by others and associated with any effort or contribution made to a workplace activity, including offering ideas and assistance. Conducting in an ethical, fair and just manner in the workplace, means that the credit will be given to real contributors, otherwise, this may have personal, organizational and social implications. Giving unjustified credit that comes at the expense of another employee, will create an unfair and cheating situation that can lead to undermining employees' identity within the organization (Graham and Cooper, 2013). Acknowledgement as defined by Ariely (2016) is "*a kind of human magic, a small human connection, a gift from one person to another that translates into a much larger more meaningful outcome*" (p. 293). Acknowledging employees for their efforts means treating them as unique individuals, appreciating and respecting them for their

creativity and intelligence that enhance employees' motivation and engagement (Ariely, 2016).

Recognition is one of the most important catalysts of human activity (Mattila, 2008) and is based on the extent to which people believe that employees' value extends beyond the immediate economic exchange (Lucas, 2017). Recognition is valued precisely where the other doesn't have to give it (Sayer, 2007) and also enables to build self-esteem, autonomy, and as a consequence dignity in the workplace (Islam, 2012; Pless et al., 2017).

Respect has been defined as a "*regard for every human being as a source of value, despite social cultural or political differences*" (Faulkner and Laschinger, 2008 p. 216) and includes positive action such as "*paying attention to and taking seriously another person*" (Laschinger, 2004, p. 7). Many employees desire far more respect at the workplace than they receive (Rogers and Ashforth, 2017). According to Van Quaquebeke and Eckloff (2010), there is a separation between employees' desired respect and the respect that they report actually receiving at work. Moreover, researchers indicate that this contradiction is particularly pronounced in low-status or "dirty" status work (e.g., Henry, 2011; Hodson, 2001; Sanders and Campbell, 2007), suggesting that those who receive the least respect at work most want it. Respect was ranked among the highest rate characteristics employees valued most in their job, above income, career opportunities, and the amount of leisure time afforded by the job (van Quaquebeke et al., 2009). Similarly, in the research on what employees view as characteristics of excellent managers, "*it was found that trust and respect dominated all other categories of managerial behavior*" (Drehmer and Grossman, 1984, p. 763). Respect has been defined conceptually and has been incorporated into the constructs of trust and support in a measure of organizational climate (Augsberger et al., 2012). Self-respect depends much on how others treat us, especially with people we associate on a regular basis. For the employed, the workplace has a hugely important influence on whether employees can live with self-respect and dignity (Calhoun, 2003). Affirmations of respectful interaction can include politeness, proper forms of address, greetings, and civility. Respectful interaction includes interactions between bosses and subordinates, between coworkers, and between employees and

clients/customers. Feelings and conditions of which have major implications for our well-being like integrity, respect, pride, recognition, worth and standing or status, are positively related to dignity (Sayer, 2007).

Dignity is a fundamental value for humanization processes in organizations, including organizational cultures and social relationships in the workplace (Lamont, 2000; Hodson, 2001; Bolton, 2007; Sayer, 2007; Lucas, 2015; Bal, 2017; Kostera and Pirson, 2017; Pirson, 2017). Employee's dignity, sense of value, and satisfaction depends on how individuals treat each other in social relationships (Zawadzki, 2018). Dignity in the workplace has been interpreted as fair treatment, including elements of economic security, intrinsically satisfying work, working conditions, equality, esteem, worth, autonomy and respect (Buzzanell and Lucas, 2013; Berg and Frost, 2005). Dignity can be understood as respect expressed in work contexts. In nearly all definitions of dignity, respect is a prominent component. Lucas (2017) presents dignity in the workplace in multiple ways: first as recognition of humanity, based on the belief in the value of people. Second as respect expressed in work contexts that relies upon "*words and deeds*" (Lucas, 2017, p. 4) which means respectful communication that recognizes another person as "*someone who is more than what they do for a living, who demands respect simply as a person*" (Lucas, 2017, p. 4 based on Sayer, 2007 pp. 572–573). Third, autonomy is granted to individuals in their work roles. Authority and control over decisions regarding work and prioritizing tasks (Hodson, 2001). Fourth is individuals' ability to make contributions through work activity. And fifth as the status generated by work activity like medical doctors. Dignity had attracted less interest in management and organizational ethics fields until recently (Alvesson et al., 2009; Prasad et al., 2016). Ironically, dignity had less exploration in the context of emerging economies (Tiwari et al., 2021) where its importance is reflected in terms of "exchange relationships" (Bolton, 2007). In the workplace the paradox of dignity is being reflected because of the challenge and difficulty to capture the phenomenon of dignity by enquiring why people in certain situations feel less or more dignified (Zawadzki, 2018). In order to facilitate this task, researchers tend to investigate dignity through the prism of organizational pathologies that pose a threat (Kaufmann et al., 2011; Karlsson, 2012; Crowley, 2014). Workplace dignity is the self-recognized worth

acquired from (or injured by) engaging in work activity. Including two situations: (1) worth that is acknowledged while engaged in work activity meaning being praised by a manager for a job well done, being treated with respect on the job; (2) worth that is derived from engaging in work itself meaning self-esteem gained from successfully meeting an intrinsically satisfying challenge, the status accrued from having a "real job" (Lucas, 2017).

Denial of dignity can be broadly classified under the headings: absence of self-organization and commitment, lack of self-discipline, low wages, physically demanding work, limited resources and doing demeaning work that undermines dignity (Ackroyd, 2007; Berg and Frost, 2005). The phenomenon of denial of dignity has been documented in terms of powerlessness, work overload, humiliation, ignoring scientific and professional abilities, etc. (Berg and Frost, 2005; Stuesse, 2010). Denials can include yelling, name calling, swearing, incivility, ostracism, gossip, abusive supervision, and workplace bullying (Lucas, 2017).

The context of social relations indicates that every human is a sensitive social being, who is physically, psychologically, economically, and culturally dependent on others throughout the whole of life. These relations indicate that our dignity takes shape in the process of experiencing relationships with other people (Sayer, 2007; Zawadzki, 2018).

### **1.5.3.2        *Personal, team and organizational communication***

Organizational and personal communication is a key driver for employees' actions and behaviors aiming to enhance employees' performance and engagement, and it is perceived as the top priority in leading to employees' engagement (Bakker et al., 2011; Joshi and Sharma, 1997; Markos and Sridevi, 2010; Sarangi and Srivastava, 2012; Welch, 2011). Communication in the organization can be in all directions: downward, upward, and horizontal (Robertson, 2005). In the communication process with employees, Rhee and Moon (2009) found that information flow, information adequacy, and interaction supportiveness were significant factors in the communication process with employees and are likely to contribute and enhance job engagement (Walden et al., 2017).

Information flow and interaction supportiveness involve employees' perceptions of the climate of communication within organizations and information adequacy considers employee views of the content of communication about personal and organizational issues. These components of employee communication are the predictors of relationship management outcomes (Robertson, 2005; Rhee and Moon, 2009). Together, they address the ordinary layers of communication within organizations: organization to employee and manager to employee, and they assess how employees perceive the accessibility of tasks and relevant information about the organization (Rhee and Moon, 2009). Interaction supportiveness involves the shared perceptions of how people support each other through openness, displays of empathy, and other behaviors (Rhee and Moon, 2009). This support should help employees feel affirmed, appreciated, and valued (Robertson, 2005).

Projecting on the process of employee engagement, clear senior management's communication is needed to understand how employees' roles fit in leadership vision and organizational goals (MacLeod and Clarke, 2009). In addition, managers that communicate with employees on strategic and operational issues have been found to facilitate employee engagement (Welch, 2011). The first of eight positive predictors of employee engagement is expansive communication (Zhang, 2010).

Fostering reciprocal and symmetrical communication with employees in organizations predict employee opinions about the quality of this relationship (Kim and Rhee, 2011; Men, 2014; Men and Jiang, 2016) and supports in management behavior creating an environment, a culture, in which employees can be engaged (Bakker et al., 2011; Christian et al., 2011; Maslach and Leiter, 2008). This reciprocal communication (both top-down and bottom-up) affects positively on employees' response because it makes them feel valued and involved and increases their tendency to engage in organization. These employees have an active role, engaging in activities offered by their managers (Reissner and Pagan, 2013) and fostering engagement and performance (Sanders and Frenkel, 2011). Elements of symmetrical internal communication such as reciprocity, openness, and feedback are predictors of employee engagement (Walden et al., 2017).

According to Ruck and Welch (2012), Welch (2011), and Welch and Jackson (2007) employee engagement logically results from strategic employee communication, meaning communication that employees perceive as open, thorough, and relevant to their daily work needs (Walden et al., 2017). Open communication strengthens employees' commitment to their organization and helps reduce the likelihood that they will look for new employment opportunities outside of the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Openness is an important variable in organizational communications and described as an essential characteristic of an effective organization which influences performance, job satisfaction, role clarity, and information adequacy. There is no single accepted definition of communication openness, and the concept includes both the message sending as well as the message receiving behaviors of supervisors, subordinates, and peers regarding a job task, as shown in Table 17 (Rogers, 1987).

**Table 17. The dimensions of communication openness**

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Message sending:</b>	<b>Message receiving:</b>
<b>Superior behavior</b>	From superior to subordinate (downward)	To superior from subordinate (upward)
<b>Subordinate behavior</b>	From subordinates to superior (upward)	To subordinates from superior (downward)
<b>Peer behavior</b>	From peer to peer (horizontal)	To peer from peer (horizontal)

Source: Redding (1972, p. 405) as quoted in Roger (1987, p. 54).

Different communication channels as written, electronic, and digital are available, but the most effective and valuable channel of communication is still the personal face-to-face communication (Goodman and Truss, 2004). Meaning this channel allows discussions and debates more than the impersonal types of communication. Aon Hewitt's (2013) research on 94 global companies indicates that engagement in highly engaged organizations, starts with senior leadership. By building trust and honest communication, leaders can be perceived as significant and more effective. It is a top to bottom approach. Communication is an important dimension in building the perception of leader effectiveness therefore, leaders need to communicate the reality of the business performance. Major components of employee engagement are strong leadership and frequent communication that is

open, honest, and transparent (Antony, 2018). Similarly, a study of 2,564 managers by Gallup (2015) in 195 countries found that work-force employee engagement was improved when managers had some form of daily communication.

Sullivan (1988) suggests that the use of appropriate and effective communication channels by managers at all organizational levels is necessary. He recommends the use of motivational language, which aims to give employees, through clear communication and ethical way, the knowledge they need for understanding their level of performance. The function of language is to facilitate the "*belief-toward-knowledge process*" (Sullivan, 1988, p. 105). Motivating language theory (MLT) by Sullivan (1988) claims that "*uncertainty-reducing language*" (Sullivan, 1988, p. 105) is the primary form of communication. Managerial communication can be categorized in terms of three kinds of speech acts: (1) reduce employee uncertainty and increase his or her knowledge; (2) implicitly reaffirm the employee's sense of self-worth as a human being; (3) facilitate the employee's construction of cognitive schemas and scripts, which will be used to guide the employee in his or her work (Sullivan, 1988). Ensuring that the overall system of communication within an organization leads to an adequate flow of information and focusing on employees' individual communication needs strengthens employees' commitment to the organization and sets the stage for longer-term behavioral intentions. Sullivan maintains that employees want to know and understand their performance as regards their job goals to reduce uncertainty, and they perform better if they are properly informed by managers.

### **1.6 Employee's disengagement factors of causes and effect**

Employee disengagement phenomena can be revealed from two aspects: personal disengagement or negative organizational behaviors. The concept of employee disengagement was defined by Kahn (1990) as "*the simultaneous withdrawal and defense of a person's preferred self in behaviors that promote a lack of connections, physical, cognitive, and emotional absence, and passive, incomplete role performance*" (Kahn, 1990, p. 701). Personal disengagement leads to uncoupling of employees with



work roles and can be categorized as behaviors such as robotic, apathetic, detached or effortless or even burn out (Kahn, 1990, p. 701).

Disengaged employees are not enthusiastic about the work itself and can be described as not willing to expend extra effort or support their teamwork. These disengaged employees tend to adopt a “wait-and-see” attitude and they are not interested or curious about their organization, work, or role. Actually, they are detached from their jobs and tend to be considerably less efficient and less loyal to their organizations. Furthermore, they often have poor relationships with their managers and coworkers. They are typically unhappy at work and are less satisfied with their personal lives. They actively express their unhappiness, which has a negative influence on their colleagues and provides lack of achievements and participation in engaged teams. Nevertheless, they often make trouble, often complain, and even have accidents. They experience more stress and insecurity about their job than their co-workers. As a result, they can harm the organization in the manners in which they speak to customers and their negative behavior affects client satisfaction. (Harter et al., 2002; Wellins and Concelman, 2005). Research by Branham (2005) as mentioned in Heikkeri (2010), indicated that disengaged employees tend to quit the organization due to insufficient leadership characteristics (35%), organizational environment (49%), job characteristics (11%) and only five percent were unavoidable which included retirement, birth of a child, or family issues (Branham, 2005).

**Table 18. Sources and causes of employee disengagement**

<b>External environment</b>	<b>Psychological</b>	<b>Organizational</b>	<b>Other</b>
Instability	Lack of meaningfulness	Restructuring	Substance abuse
Insecurity	Lack of identification	Inadequate conditions	Competency issues
	Lack of trust	Poor organization and/or leadership	Laziness
	Sense of being undervalued	Ponderous bureaucracy	Illness
	Frustrated ambitions	Poor resourcing	Interpersonal issues
	Perceived inequities	Acceptance and tolerance of low outputs	
	Disinterested	Work complexity	
	Stress and anxiety		

Source: Pech and Slade (2006), p. 24

Potential cause and effect are responsible for obstructing employee engagement and can be divided into several groups: External environment causes; Psychological causes; Organizational causes; other causes (see Table 18) (Pech and Slade, 2006). Each group describes the various sources and factors that lead to employee's disengagement.

External environment factors can be instability and insecurity that arise from government, unions, or shareholders, or can be from possible opportunities as an unanticipated outside job offer. Psychological factors can result from lack of psychological meaningfulness and safety at work, from lack of identification with an organization and trust, from a sense of being less valued and unfair salary and performance, stress, anxiety, and disinterest. Organizational causes can be restructuring of the organization, transformational changes, organizational culture with inadequate norms, traditions, policies and practices (unethical actions, sexual harassment, racial discrimination, unreasonable enforcement of authority, etc.), bad working conditions, poor management and leadership, overgrown bureaucracy, lack of resources, low standards and acceptance of poor performance, work complexity, and other causes such as employee's substance abuse and unacceptable behavior, illness, laziness, competency issues, and poor interpersonal relationships which are the effects of disengaged employees at their environment.

According to Gallup research (2013), 52% of American employees were disengaged, with another 18% actively disengaged. That 18% alone costs the United States between \$450 billion to \$550 billion each and every year due to lack of productivity. Due to the loss of productivity and the high cost, there are clear incentives for organisations to improve factors that lead to disengagement and to encourage employees to enhance their engagement to the workplace (Gallup, 2013). Even though the responsibility for the preliminary problem that leads to disengagement is on the individual, the organization has a part of it too. Various options have been suggested for organisations to manage the situation, such as manage the situation by counseling, training, retrenchment, demotion, or negotiation, and these strategies are likely to be more effective if managers confront such

problems before they become embedded within the organizational culture (Pech and Slade, 2006).

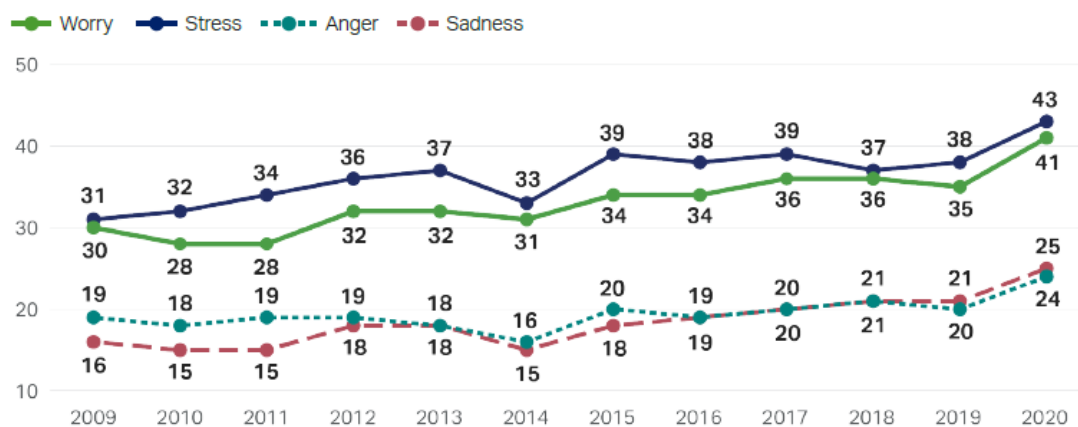
Although there are many factors for employee's disengagement, researchers have found that fear and stress have a great influence on employees (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009; Bartlett and Bartlett, 2011). As stated by Kish-Gephart et al. (2009), there is a growing body of research which suggests that organizations' employees have the potential to voice their opinion on important issues, however, they often remain silent instead, due to the fear of negative personal and professional consequences.

Fear is a powerful emotion that shapes many aspects of our lives not only in organizations. Fear has an influence on human behavior, perception, and cognition. Even more fear encourages avoidant behavior, narrowed perceptual and cognitive focus on perceived threats, and pessimistic judgments about risks and future outcomes (Frijda, 1986; Izard, 1993; Lerner and Tiedens, 2006; Maner and Gerend, 2007; Rachman, 1990). Placing attention on fear in organizational culture does not allow the pace of comprehensive "affective revolution" in organizational behavior (Barsade, et al., 2003). In addition, fear in the workplace can be often implemented by manager's behavior, such as bullying, shaming, or even humiliating employees (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009).

These behaviors such as bullying, lack of respect and even a culture of humiliating employees can paralyze an employee's inner drive and engagement (Bartlett and Bartlett, 2011) and even have a negative impact on the employee's physical and emotional health which impacts the organization. Organizational impacts of these negative behaviors which are corresponding to managers' bullying in the workplace, also affects the increase of cost, productivity, reputation, legal issues, and organizational culture. The immediate effect of this behavior is silencing employees at the workplace. Other consequences of fear besides silencing employees at the workplace that can influence are communication and co-worker relationships in teams and intergroup relationships. These negative behaviors can impact reward and sanctions distribution. And even more, on restraining employees from contributing to organizational knowledge or improving organizational activities (Appelbaum et al., 1998; Kish-Gephart et al., 2009; Pillania, 2006; Nembhard and Edmondson, 2006).

Another major cause of disengagement is occupational stress which is a major factor labeled "role stress". In the Eighties this factor drew ample attention in the field of organizational psychology. The definition of occupational stress was determined by researchers as a symptom of job environment aspects that leads to feelings of threats (Caplan et al., 1975), and a negative environmental factor related to the role (Cooper and Marshal, 1976), which leads to unpleasant emotions such as depression, anger, tension, frustration, etc. (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1978). Stress is derived from occupational environment, meaning that the individual demands of various jobs have the capacity over a period of time to exhaust the physical and psychological resources of employees in the organization and are recognized as psychological variables such as anxiety, anger, frustration, depression etc. (Orpen, 1991).

In 2021, Gallup research identified four main factors that was associated to the COVID-19 epidemic which was affiliated to stress (43%), worry (41%), anger (25%), and sadness (24%) are all negative attributes to employees' mental and psychical wellbeing at workplace. According to these findings, all negative emotions reported among employees have been rising since 2009 until today.



**Figure 15. Employees' Negative Emotions**

Source: Gallup (2021). State of the global workplace: 2021 report. *Gallup*.

## **1.7 Organizational culture as an enhancing element of Employee Engagement**

### **1.7.1 Definitions and approaches of organizational culture**

The term culture is based on an identification of 164 definitions of culture and has been defined as "*patterns, explicit and implicit of and for behavior, acquired and transmitted by symbols (...) The essential core of culture consists of tradition (...) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand, as conditioning elements of future action*" (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952, p. 181). Meaning culture is a latent, hypothetical construct (Lytle et al., 1995) that has not changed fundamentally throughout time as it was first defined (Singh, 1990).

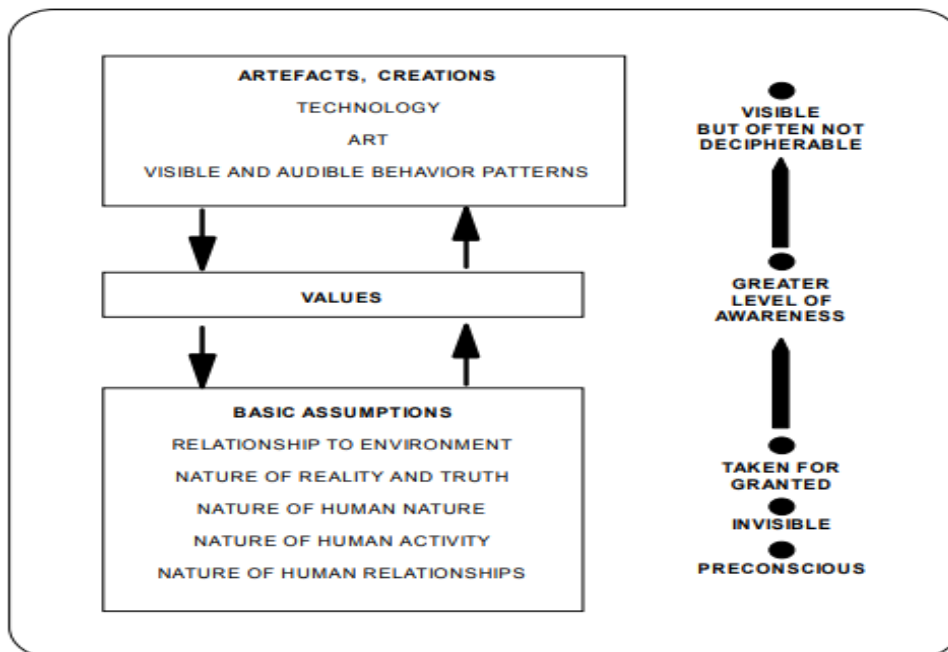
The term "Organizational Culture" (OC) has many different definitions in the literature that have been defined by researchers under two main disciplinary foundations: sociological, meaning: organizations have cultures, and anthropological, meaning: organizations are cultures (Cameron and Quinn, 2011), significance that an organization and its culture cannot be distinguished from each other, and both are grounded in the communicative practices of those who constitute the organization (Smircich, 1983).

These varied definitions share and relate to "*the underlying values, beliefs and principles that serve as a foundation for an organization's management system, as well as the set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce those basic principles*" (Denison and Neal, 1999, p. 3). Meaning, sharing a common idea that culture gives priority to the cognitive components: assumptions, beliefs, and values, while others expand the concept to include behaviors and artifacts, leading to a common distinction between the visible and the hidden levels of organizational culture (Baron and Walters, 1994; Cleland, 1994; Guest et al, 1996; Hofstede, 1991; House et al., 2004; Kilmann et al., 1985; Meek, 1988; Morgan, 1986; Sackmann, 1991; Schein, 1985, 2010; Schneider, 1994; Smircich, 1983).

Schein (2010) provided a clear, concise, important and inclusive definition of organizational culture: "*a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new*

members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (Schein 2010, p. 18). According to Schein (2010), a culture to a group is what personality or character is to an individual. A metaphor which means a particularly useful way of looking at an organization's culture and to think of it as being like an individual's personality. Therefore, we quickly learn the "right" things to do and say and, inevitably, the right things to think and to believe (Gray, 2007).

Schein's theory (1980, 1985, and 1990 as cited in Gray, 1998) proposed a model of three levels of organizational culture that contains artifacts, espoused beliefs and values and underlying assumptions. In the first level, on the surface, visible to the observer, are the artifacts and creations, the culture's constructed physical environment. Artifacts that consist of rituals, language, myths, dress, and even organization space that means what can be touched and seen. In the second level, espoused values are "*the sense of what 'ought' to be, as distinct from what is*" (Schein, 2010, p. 28) meaning what have been said by the members of the organizational about those aspects of culture which are reported by management as core values of the organization, may or may not reflect the reality in the organization. The third level concerns the underlying assumptions of organizational life: the nature of being, reality and the environment (Gray, 1998).



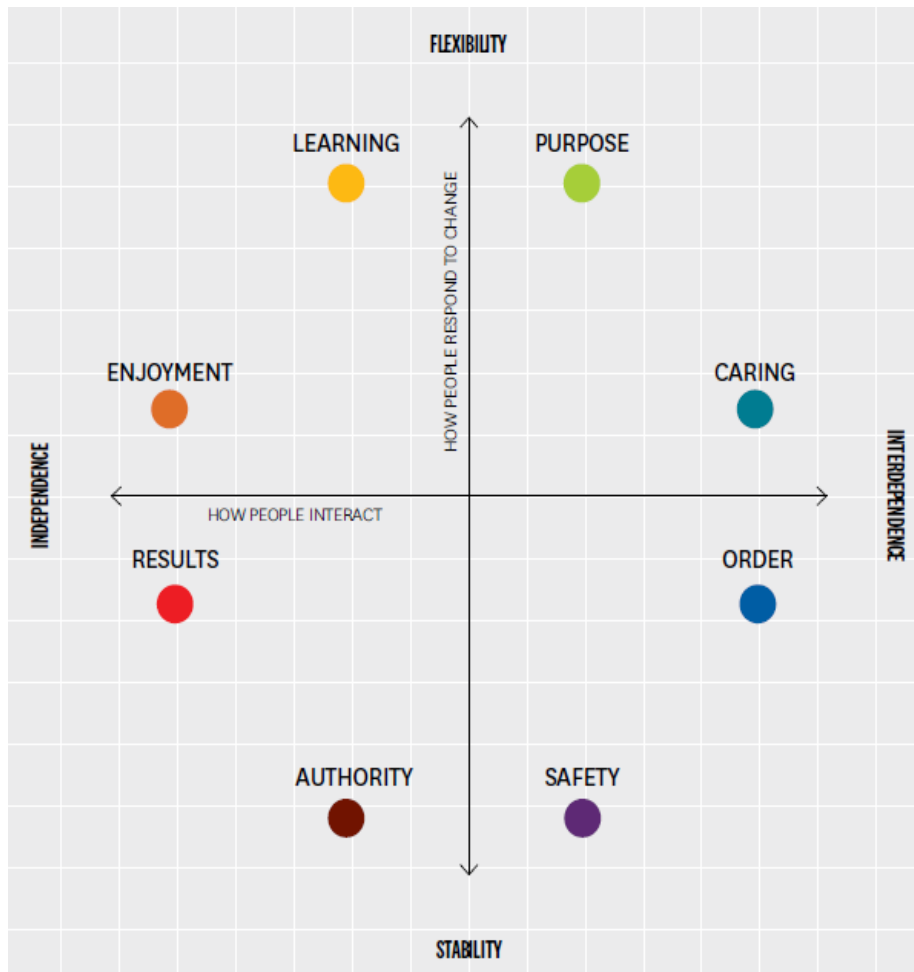
**Figure 16. Levels of organizational culture**

Source: (Schein 1985, 1990 as presented in Gray, 1998).

Significance behavior and feelings which are below the surface, are unspoken. "*The way we do things around here*" is usually hidden within the collective unconscious of the organization's members (Baron and Walters, 1994; Gray, 1998; Guest et al., 1996; Kilmann et al., 1985; Sackmann, 1991; Schneider, 1994).

### **1.7.2 Organizational culture dimensions, attributes styles and frameworks**

Multidisciplinary approach to organizational culture which contains diverse characteristics, styles and frameworks allows one to define and to understand the nature and the D.N.A of organizational culture. Researchers as Cameron and Quinn (2011), and Groysberg, Lee, Price, and Yo-Jud Cheng (2018) who employ similar dimensions in their culture frameworks focused on the human dimension while other researchers as Cooke and Szumal (2000), and Jacobs et al. (2011) focused on the work and the environment dimensions. Groysberg et al. (2018) focused on people's interactions and responses to change, meaning the range of independence that people have at their workplace that ranges from highly independent to highly interdependent.



**Figure 17. Groysberg's et al. framework of Integrated Culture**

Source: Groysberg et al. (2018)

Organizations that their culture inspires independence, will focus and lead to autonomy, individual action and competition, and oppositely, organizations that their culture focuses on interdependence will lead to encourage more integration, close relationship management and coordination of group efforts. There are two approaches regarding the response to culture change: stability and flexibility. The stability approach is focusing more on consistency, predictability, and maintenance of the status quo which tend to follow rules, use control structures, reinforce hierarchy, and strive for efficiency. The flexibility approach is focusing on adaptability and receptiveness to change which tend to prioritize innovation, openness, diversity, and longer-term orientation (Groysberg et al., 2018). On the other hand, Jacobs et al. (2011) who referred to work and environmental dimensions, have defined a list of nine dimensions of organizational culture: workload; autonomy;



management/leadership style; teamwork and communication; employee orientation; customer orientation; task vs. goal orientation; and internal vs. external orientation.

Ralston et al. (1997) highlights the power of economic ideology on the work environment. A model that integrated the national and organizational culture was provided by Kanungo and his associates (Kanungo and Jaeger, 1990; Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994 as cited in Aycan et al., 1999) named the Model of Culture Fit (see Appendix 3). This model asserts that the sociocultural environment (national culture) affects internal work culture and human resource management (HRM) practices. The internal work culture (organizational culture) is revealed in the managerial assumptions and beliefs which relate to two significant factors: (1) the task – the nature of it and how to implement it; (2) the nature of the employees and their behaviors. These two factors create the basis of the implementation of HRM practices and procedures which are shaped by diverse environmental forces (Aycan et al., 1999).

Four generally accepted attributes to organizational culture that assists the essence of the OC and have been identified by Schein (2010), Schwartz (2012), Hofstede (2003), Groysberg et al. (2018), Keyton (2014) and other leading scholars are:

1. Shared culture – Culture is a group phenomenon and can only exist in a group. It is reflected in shared behaviors, values, and assumptions and is most experienced through the norms and expectations of a group, which creates the unwritten rules.
2. Pervasive – Culture is pervasive and permeates multiple levels and applies very broadly within an organization.
3. Enduring – Culture can direct the thoughts and actions of group members over the long term. It develops through critical events in the collective life and learning of a group or an organization.
4. Implicit – An important and often overlooked aspect of culture is that despite its subconscious nature, people effectively respond to it instinctively.

Defining the cultural style of an organization can present a better understanding of the organization's DNA and the leader's requirements on how to

achieve the organization's goals, meaning the impact of the culture on the business and assess its alignment with strategy. According to Groysberg et al. (2018) an organizational culture style can be defined into eight aspects or types as follows: *Caring, Purpose, Learning, Enjoyment, Results, Authority, Safety and Order*. These aspects are presented in a table that focuses on various workplace styles, the workplace environment, values that unite the employees, leaders that stress their focus for each workplace style and the advantages and disadvantages of each workplace style (see Appendix 4).

### **1.7.3 Values as the core of organizational culture**

Values are an essential components in the organizational culture and they are actually perceived as the core of the organization by many researchers such as: Csikszentmihalyi 1990; Ferguson and Milliman 2008; Gray, 1998; Hofstede, 1991; Kotter and Haskett 1992; Sackmann, 1991; Schein, 2010; Schneider, 1994; Smircich, 1983.

A definition of values is "*the belief upon which a person acts by preference*" (Brown, 1976, p.16) and organizational values represent the philosophical views, priorities (Anderson, 1997), and sense of purpose of the organization (Channon, 1992). Therefore, they are "*the deeply ingrained principles that guide all a company's actions; they serve as its cultural cornerstones*" (Lencioni, 2002, p. 114). Values provide the groundwork for organizational practices and the framework in which employees think, act, and make decisions. Effective core organizational values are a unique set of organizational wide beliefs and ideas that intrinsically influence the attitudes and behaviors of employees to achieve institutional and societal goals as well as promote employees to attain personal aspirations (Lewis, 1997). Meaning, core organizational values impact both organizations and their employees which goes beyond the utilitarian exchange of time for money or advancement (Ferguson and Milliman, 2008; Maslach and Leiter, 2008).

Researchers have identified many ways that values impact organizations such as: (1) guiding organizational decision making (including providing a framework for integrating and coordinating efforts); (2) motivating and inspiring people to a cause

and a connection with the organizational vision and higher purpose; and (3) providing moral guidance (include giving direction in times of ethical dilemmas or crisis) (Ferguson and Milliman, 2008). Evident from the literature is that a successful organizational culture has employees with common basic organizational values and assumptions (Calori and Sarnin, 1991; Denison, 1990; Ferguson and Milliman, 2008; Gray, 1998; Gordon and DiTomaso, 1992; Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Van den A Berg and Wilderom, 2004).

Oppositely, inauthentic values (untrue or not alive) that have been treated insincerely or implemented incorrectly, can cause devastating consequences on the organization and employees (Ferguson and Milliman, 2008). Once there is a value conflict, therefore there is a gap between employee's and organizational values. Employees will find themselves making a tradeoff between work they want to do and work they have to do. Resolutions of the tension which result from value conflicts, are the need to bring personal expectations in line with those of the organization or to leave the organization in search of more fulfilling career opportunities (Maslach and Leiter, 2008) which support the significant need of employees for trust, cooperation and empowerment from the managerial side.

#### **1.7.4 Behavioral element role in organizational culture**

The word "behavior" refers to "*anything you can see someone "do" or hear someone "say"*" (Pounds et al., 2015, p. 7). A strong relationship between OC and behaviors influences employee attitudes and actions. OC creates a behavioral element which directs employees to behave in ways that are consistent with its culture (Gregory et al., 2009). "*Culture serves as a sense-making device that can guide and shape behavior*" (Smircich, 1983, p. 346), therefore, the behavioral element is physical or verbal and is so specific that it can be counted. OC's study is therefore about understanding people's perceptions of the organizations in which they work and how these perceptions influence their work (Jacobs et al., 2011). People do not behave in and respond to the world "as it really is" but as they perceive its values, beliefs, and assumptions (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2019). Behaviors become a part of the culture mainly when creating a competitive edge to enable the members and especially the

new members in the organization to well understand acceptable behavior and practices (Martins, 2000 as cited in Sun, 2008).

The behavioral approach asserts that culture can be changed via changing behaviors. Behavior change is largely the product of reinforcement patterns. In the organisational context this means continual management attention, reinforcing positive behaviours and blocking negative ones. These changes are the product of a working group and organizational climate that can change over time and influence the organizational culture (Pounds et al., 2015). Much has been written about the impact that culture has on the behavior of employees and on the effectiveness of the organization (Gray, 1998; Schein, 1985, 2010; Quinn, 1988). For this reason, quality improvement initiatives are often directed at identifying and where necessary changing the activities (behaviors) of frontline employees (Pounds et al., 2015). Organizations use different resources and processes to guide behavior and change. Organizational culture is playing an indirect role in influencing behavior by using managerial tools, such as strategic direction, goals, tasks, technology, structure, communication, decision making, cooperation and interpersonal relationships (Martins and Terblanche, 2003). Consequently, the goal of "improving" culture is to strive for changing organizational behaviors that can happen simply if an employee changes his behaviors. The behavioral approach emphasizes behaviors like feedback and recognition, and it is systematically applied and maintained by the organization, rather than simply count on culture being created by executives. Applying the behavioral approach has achieved solid, business-focused results in a wide variety of organizational performance objectives therefore, changing behavior was the key to achieving the performance objective. The behavioral quality improvement plan of the organization can directly improve an organization's bottom line by reducing the cost of poor quality that is estimated to be 5% to 30% of revenue or 25% to 40% of operating expenses. Therefore, implementing a quality improvement plan effectively with high employee engagement can contribute to organizational success (Pounds et al., 2015).

### **1.7.5 Attitudes element in organizational culture**

Attitudes are described as "*an enduring organization of several beliefs focused on a specific object (physical or social, concrete or abstract) or situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner*" (Rokeach, 1968, p.550). Attitudes are a little harder to define than beliefs (Gray, 2007). "Learned orientations or dispositions" towards things or situations lead us to respond favorably or unfavorably towards them. This complex situation combines three kinds of components: thinking or cognitive elements, feelings and value judgements (affective elements), and the actions that result (the behavioral element).

Most definitions of attitudes agree that they are learned, either from direct experience or from observing others. The process of reinforcement, or conditioning, is following the "Law of Effect" which says that actions which are reinforced tend to be repeated, whilst actions which are not reinforced tend to die out (Gray, 2007). In relation to the process by Kelly (1955) of Compliance – Identification – Internalization, having the "right" attitudes help you fit in and having the wrong attitudes can get you excluded, which stresses that attitudes can be very hard to change (Gray, 2007).

Understanding the processes of reinforcement and learning, and the effects they have on decision-making can be very enlightening and certainly repay the time and effort involved. Organizations, as individuals, have values, attitudes and beliefs and these have a profound effect on what the organization can do, hold and practice, and even sees as the right things to do (Gray, 2007).

### **1.7.6 Organizational climate element in the organizational culture**

Schein noted that in order "*to understand what goes on in organizations and why it happens in the way it does, one needs several concepts. Climate and culture, if each is carefully defined, then become two crucial building blocks for organizational description and analysis*" (Schein, 2000, pp. xxiv–xxv). Organizational climate signifies that the internal environment of an organization is experienced by its members, influences their behavior, and can be described in terms of the values and attributes of the organization (Gray, 2007). The connection between climate and culture is reciprocally strong. Culture is composed of values, basic assumptions, and beliefs, and

is established in the policies, practices, and procedures that define the workplace climate.

Researchers (Denison, 1996; Glisson and James, 2002; Ostroff et al., 2003; Schneider et al., 2011) are interested in the importance of the differentiation between climate and culture. The difference derives essentially from the fact that both represent the concept of organizational culture, but they differ in their goals, conceptualization, perception and influence on the organizational day-to-day work-life (Schneider and Barbera, 2016). The core values refer to what the organization believes and highlights, mainly its foundational principles and ideals while organizational climate refers to the meaning employees relate to the organization's policies and practices (Schneider et al., 2013). Definitions of climate try to shape the meaning of the term to fit employees' organizational aspirations as "*how it feels to work in a particular environment and for a particular boss*" (Watkin and Hubbard, 2003, p. 380).

Schneider and Barbera (2016) identified ten central themes that are involving in the relationship between organizational culture and climate: (1) Both influence everything that happens in the organization and everything that happens affects them; (2) Both are reciprocally related; (3) Both are multi-level phenomena; (4) Both are differentiated phenomena; (5) Organizations have multiple foci for climates and cultures; (6) Both emerge and can change over time; (7) Leadership is central to climate and culture formation and maintenance; (8) Both emerge from systems of stimuli; (9) Both are measurable; (10) Both can yield competitive advantage.

In conclusion, climate isn't the same as culture, since culture is the personality of the organization and is very hard to change, while climate is strongly affected by managers' behavior, which they can change if they want to. Moreover, climate is perceived by individuals as a collective product of individual's perceptions. Therefore, we can't make other people perceive things the way we think that they should. We can only acknowledge their perceptions and use this information when deciding how we should behave. Managers' behavior has a big impact on people's perceptions of organizational climate, and it is both a danger and an opportunity (Gray, 2007).

## **1.8 Management theories as an element for enhancing EE**

### **1.8.1 The development of management theories, for understanding the managerial role**

Management theories have been the topic of interest for decades and there are management theories that confirm certain ways of managerial practices while others contradict them. Management theories were classified differently by scholars. A broader group classification divided them into three distinctive schools of thoughts which are classical, neo-classical, and modern management theory. Classical theories emphasize heavily on scientific methods, administrative approach and bureaucratic structures for managerial practices while focusing on the task efficiency by motivating employees via monetary rewards. Notable work of this school include: scientific management perspective by Frederick W. Taylor, administrative management by Henri Fayol and bureaucratic organizations by Max Webber.

On the other hand, neo-classical theories looked at the human's individual needs, their relations at work, behavioral aspects, and motivations behind effectiveness. The neo-classical theories focused more on human-orientation and largely paid attention to drives, time needs, attitudinal and behavioral aspects of employees and argued that motivation is always resulting from monetary rewards. Notable work of this school include: Maslow's hierarchy of need, human relations by Elton Mayo, behavioral school – Hawthorne experiment, X-and-Y theory by Douglas McGregor, and Herzberg's two-factor theory (Sridhar, 2017; Hussain et al., 2019).

Lastly, the modern management theory found "no one fit method for all situations" by considering systems, contingent approaches while organizational humanism and management science as core concepts to operate in the dynamic environment. This school of thought argued that complexities, connectedness and context are contributing factors to organizations and therefore formed the modern management theory. This school considered logic and viewed management applicability to distinctive situations. The purpose of modern management theories remained on the effective and efficient management of resources in order to retain best talent and survive in the dynamic environment by using the approach and style that is in the best of organizational interest (Sridhar, 2017; Hussain et al., 2019).

Although changes in contemporary life, management practices of the modern day still revolve around the earlier schools of management (classical and neo-classical theories). There is a shift in paradigm from "task-orientation", "efficiency", "structural patterns" and "one fit for all" to "people-orientation", "effectiveness", "flexibility" and "situational stance". While, the challenges of the modern-day management appear to be largely altered, due to the increased complexities, context and connectedness, the management practices are largely driven from the traditionalists and human relations theories (Hussain et al., 2019).

Contemporary management focuses on the cultural aspect, therefore, managers are using the pragmatic approach to deal with the contemporary management challenges, using a mix of strategy. Meaning using the situation as a context, organization as a system, individual needs as part of organizational humanism, and contingent approach to manage workforce through a wide range of managerial practices that are driven from early theories of management (Hussain et al., 2019).

### **1.8.2 The managerial perspective and its relationship with organizational culture**

From a managerial perspective it is helpful for leaders and managers in all levels to consider the organizational culture styles in order to drive organizational performance. Organizational culture is an important and crucial factor influencing all aspects of the organizational life, a powerful managerial tool influencing human aspects, business processes and activities, and also seems to be the most directly affecting employee engagement (Groysberg et. al., 2018; Kotter and Heskett, 1992).

Groysberg et al. (2018) stress the importance of culture being aligned with strategy, with leadership style, and with organizational design and structure, meaning culture and organization is a two-way relationship. Therefore, in the literature there were found by researchers on a micro level, significant relationships between the fit of employees, organizational culture and several important outcomes such as job commitment and turnover that have an affect the organization's effectiveness (Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Schein, 2010).



Researchers such as Coopey (1994), Morgan (1986), Schein (1985) and Schneider (1994) examined the role of leaders in shaping organizational culture. Focusing on the relationships between leadership style and organizational culture often provides key insights on "*why organizations work in the way they do*". Leaders and managers have a special advantage in developing value systems and codes of behavior because they often have the power to reward or punish those who follow or ignore their lead (Morgan, 1986, as quoted in Gray, 1998, p. 18).

Therefore, leaders and managers that are aware of this process and systematically acting in paying attention to certain things, have a powerful way in communicating a message, especially if they are totally consistent in their own behavior (Schein, 2010). On the other hand, if they are not aware of the power of this process or are inconsistent in what they pay attention to, subordinates and colleagues will spend inordinate time and energy trying to decipher what a leader's behavior really reflects and will even project motives onto the leader where none may exist. Employees do just enough to satisfy their bosses' demands - if managers settle for *adequate* performance that's what they will get, there's no need for employees to put in the extra effort to give *excellent* performance (Schein, 2010).

Schein (2010) offers the "six primary embedding mechanisms" (see table 19) as one of the most powerful tools for leaders and managers in order to communicate what they systematically pay attention to, believe in or care about. Leaders who master these mechanisms, can teach their organizations how to perceive, think, feel, and behave based on their own conscious and unconscious convictions, which operate simultaneously.

Meaning anything from what they notice and comment on to what they measure, control, reward, and in other words: deal with systematically (Schein, 2010). These mechanisms are visible artifacts of the emerging culture, and they directly create what would typically be called the "climate" of the organization (Schneider, 1990; Ashkanasy et al., 2000).

**Table 19. How Leaders Embed Their Beliefs, Values, and Assumptions**

<b><i>Primary Embedding Mechanisms</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis</li> <li>• How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises</li> <li>• How leaders allocate resources</li> <li>• Deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching</li> <li>• How leaders allocate rewards and status</li> <li>• How leaders recruit, select, promote, and excommunicate</li> </ul>
<b><i>Secondary Articulation and Reinforcement Mechanisms</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational design and structure</li> <li>• Organizational systems and procedures</li> <li>• Rites and rituals of the organization</li> <li>• Design of physical space, facades, and buildings</li> <li>• Stories about important events and people</li> <li>• Formal statements of organizational philosophy, creeds, and charters</li> </ul>

Source: Schein (2010, p. 246)

### **1.8.3 Managerial element in building culture and enhancing employee engagement**

The main role of management is to establish the culture within the organization because culture belongs to all members of the organization and it's not unique to management only (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). Any change or improvement of culture is likely to result from the behaviour of the top management through the middle managers until the frontline employee. Managers' role in changing or improving culture is to pass the practices, the behaviors, and the actions through the waterfall down. Consistent management behaviour such as such as: believing in the change they want to implement; taking significant steps toward setting a vision; responding to the changing demands of the business environment is an important element in this. And in order to assert a real change in the organizational culture, several requirements are needed: (1) A clear, simple messages to the employees; (2) Remaining of the senior management long enough in the organization to allow to execute and see the change realized; (3) It is important to balance shorter-term objectives (i.e., climate adjustments and transactions) with longer-term goals (i.e., culture transformation) (Denison and Neal, 1999; Church et al., 2014).

Huhtala and Feldt (2016) emphasise the interrelationship between organizational culture, participative management, and employee engagement, because in the center of the organizational and employee engagement cultures lies,

profoundly, the ethical values of the organization. Taneja et al. (2015) also assert that what differentiates one organization from another is its employees which makes the human aspects in the organization and employee engagement with organizational culture vital for organisational success.

#### **1.8.4 Types of leadership styles to enhance employee engagement**

In the literature, there are several varieties of leaders and therefore it is difficult to choose a specific type of leadership that will suit all contexts. According to the Full Range Leadership Model by Bass (1985), there are three leadership styles identified as transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. Bass's model has evolved into the nine-factor model that composed of transformational behavior (idealized influence behavior, idealized influence attribution, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration), transactional behavior (contingent reward, active management by exception, passive management by exception), and laissez-faire (Bass et al., 2003).

The transformational leadership has attracted the attention of many researchers (Northouse, 2021). According to Burns (1978, p.20) transformational leadership "*occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher level of motivation and morality*", meaning it is a process rather than a specific behavior. Transformational leaders focus on the individual needs and personal development of followers. Transformational leaders are those who appeal to higher ideals and moral values and empower followers to produce profound and fundamental change. These leaders provide deeper levels of connection and higher levels of commitment, performance, and morality of both leader and follower (Burns, 1978) and can achieve that in several ways: (1) by making subordinates aware of the importance and value of task goals; (2) by making subordinate go beyond their own self-interest for the sake of the organization; and (3) by making subordinates increase their high-level needs (Bass, 1985).

Individualized consideration is one of the four behavioral components of transformational leadership (Bass and Avolio, 2004). This consideration behavior for

subordinates is an important aspect of the leader-subordinate relationship (Bass, 1985) which allows leaders to build a strong relationship with each follower. These leaders act as coaches or mentors and give constructive feedback (Bass et al., 2003; Sadler, 2003). Leaders would personally help subordinates, support them, and use empowerment to help subordinates develop in their jobs. Such leaders create new learning opportunities and develop followers to successively higher levels of potential (Bass et al., 2003) which positively contribute to employee work engagement. Transformational leadership is positively related to employee work engagement, particularly when the employee is creative, innovative, and proactive. Transformational leaders boost employees' optimism and subsequently enhance their work engagement (Tims et al., 2010).

Another leadership style that has been a growing trend in the workplace over the last 20 years is the spiritual leadership. This leadership is an intrinsic and essential quality in implementing the organizational values. The spiritual leaders are motivating and inspiring employees through a strong vision. Their purpose is to fulfill fundamental and moral needs of their followers, which includes the following key aspects: articulating meaningful values for higher cause or purpose, being authentic, and being committed to developing and empowering employees (Ferguson and Milliman, 2008). Employees hold their managers responsible for operating ethically (Swinton and Pattison, 2010). Therefore, managers need to develop the ability to empower employees and engage them in their work. Managers' responsibility is to create and enhance cooperation and team spirit (Appelbaum et al., 2004). Hereby, spiritual leaders might be associated with transformational leaders since they both promote and empower their teams (Ferguson and Milliman, 2008).

#### **1.8.5 Performance management as a managerial tool for influencing and enhancing EE**

Performance management (PM) is an ongoing organizational process that includes a wide range of activities such as identifying, evaluating, and promoting personal and team performance in order to achieve organizational goals (Aguinis and Pierce, 2008; DeNisi and Pritchard, 2006). PM processes can have a positive and direct influence on

employee engagement and upon attitudinal, behavioral, and organizational outcomes, and on the other side can have indirectly influence engagement and outcomes through their influence on organizational climate, perceptions of job demands and resources, and of the associated feelings of meaningfulness, safety and availability that employees experience. Mone and London (2010) identified five performance management activities that influence engagement: (1) setting performance and development goals; (2) providing ongoing feedback and recognition; (3) managing employee development; (4) conducting appraisals; and (5) creating a climate of trust and empowerment (Albrecht et al., 2015).

### **1.9 Teamwork as a factor enhancing employee engagement**

Teams have become the basic unit for many organizations around the world and also the symbol of an ideal model of work and working behavior (Erden and Ozen, 2003). Teamwork is a key component of organizations and refers to the formation of a group of employees who cooperate with each other toward a mutual goal. Frequently, it involves employees supporting and assisting one another, often through complementary tasks (Rasmussen and Jeppesen, 2006). The manager-employee relationship has an effect on the quality of teamwork, and teamwork has some positive impact on employee engagement (Sparrowe and Liden, 2005, Brunetto et al., 2013).

The growing importance and popularity of teamwork in organizations has led to many studies focusing on the effectiveness and characteristics of teamwork. Costa (2003) proposes to see organizational units as analogous to work teams whose interdependence on their mission requires that people develop common understandings and predictable patterns of behavior.

However, teams are not built easily and require certain conditions in order to become successful and efficient. These conditions are evident in the organizational culture and in HRM systems that are needed to be conceptualized and managed (Schneider et al., 2000). From this perspective, the workplace plays an important role in developing and creating an environment that will have a positive impact on teams.

The four-factor theory of innovation by West (1990), as noted in Kivimaki and Elovaino (1999) argues that group innovations often result from team activities which are characterized by four elements: (1) Vision – means focusing on clear and realistic objectives in which the team members are committed; (2) Participative safety – means interaction between team members in a participative and interpersonally non-threatening climate; (3) Task orientation – means commitment to high standards of performance and, thus, preparedness for basic questions and appraisal of weaknesses; (4) Support for innovation – means enacted support for innovation attempts including, e.g. cooperation to develop and apply new ideas.

The relevance of promoting a supportive team climate in order to build more vigorous, dedicated and absorbed teams is that it may lead to enhanced team engagement, and their performance at work. Promoting a climate of psychological safety and rewarding constructive criticism as well as dealing with interpersonal problems in such a way that the supervisor is perceived as caring for his/her subordinates are approaches that are capable of fostering a supportive team climate. Coordination between team members will ensure the existence of appropriate communication channels between them and to accomplish team's goals and avoid an additional source of stress that would lead to poor team performance. Recruiting candidates who complement team skills would help to boost team working (Schaufeli and Salanova, 2011).

## Chapter 2. Empirical study and methodology

### 2.1 The research model and hypothesis

Relying on the theoretical background and taking in consideration the gaps identified in the literature review conducted in Chapter 1, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

Hypotheses for research Pre-intervention (year 2016), Post-intervention (year 2018) and the joint group participants in the two surveys:

#### **Pre – intervention:**

**H1:** There is a relationship between employee personal engagement (EE) and the three independent variables: organizational culture (OC), direct manager's behavior (DMB), and team's atmosphere (TA).

**H2:** There is a relationship between the three independent variables: organizational culture (OC), direct manager's behavior (DMB), and team's atmosphere (TA).

#### **Post – intervention:**

**H3:** Post-intervention values of the research variables (EE, OC, TA and DMB) will be higher than the pre-intervention values.

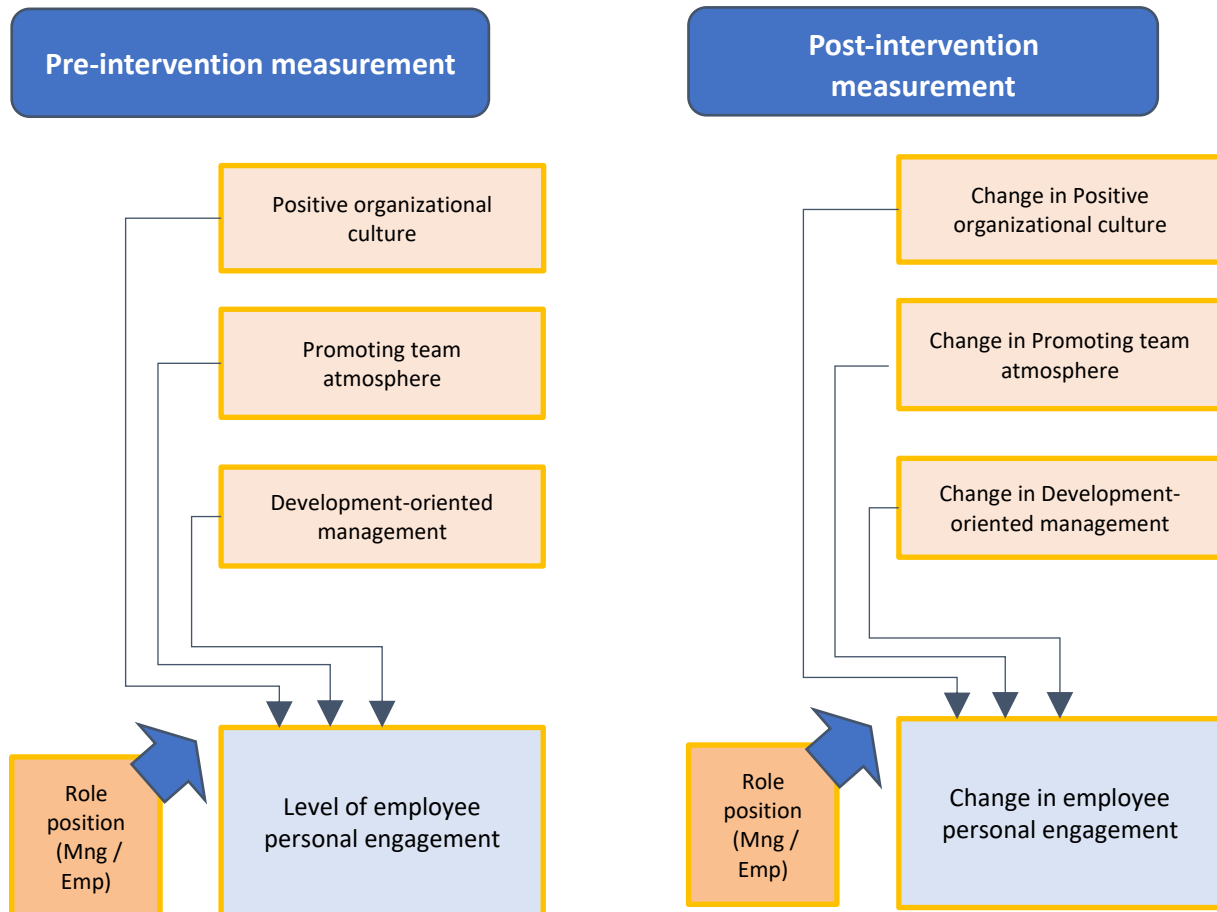
**H4:** The relationship will be stronger after the interventions between the three independent variables: (OC, TA, and DMB).

**H5:** The variable Role position (employee or manager) influences the relationship between the dependent variable (EE) and the three independent variables (OC, TA and DMB).

The model is based on the premise that organizational change process alongside with intervention influences the level of employee engagement. This research sets out to examine the influence of purposeful intervention on EE.

Following this model the change in the three independent variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior and team's atmosphere influence the dependent variable: employee engagement. The role position variable: employee or manager, examines the level of engagement among managers and employees.

The model claims that the three independent variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior and team's atmosphere are predictors of the dependent variable: engagement.



**Figure 18. The model of enhancing employee engagement**

Source: Author's compilation.

## 2.2 The target population and research sample

The target population of the study included employees who worked in the financial sector in a large service organization (Bank). This organization has various locations throughout Israel and includes approximately 5,000 employees. The headquarters units include approximately 3,000 employees in diverse fields of knowledge such as: HR, training, marketing, accounting, technologies, etc., and approximately 2,000 employees in the service branches in various places in Israel. This population was



made up of a diverse employee base that shared a common operational philosophy and was guided by similar organizational goals and objectives.

The variety of roles in this large service organization includes different roles for both employees and managers. The hierarchy is well defined between employees and managers. The variety of roles in this large service organization includes for employees: frontal customer service positions, and administrative positions in the various units. Various management positions range from team leaders, branch managers, administration managers, to senior management. This population was chosen because it satisfied the criteria that the researcher chose for her research, namely, a service organization in the financial sector. The researcher is working for this organization at their HR division as the administrative manager for the facility and has access to the population and pertinent data related to the population.

During the years 2002-2012, the organization conducted a biennial survey of employee's attitudes and satisfaction from the organization. A long 60-item instrument performed to measure the attitudes and satisfaction of employees in five sub-scales: examining different perspectives of employees about top management through direct supervisor and team or unit up to me as employee in this organization. The main purpose of this process was to help the organization to improve the satisfaction and motivation of the employees. The results helped to improve organizational goals and attitudinal issues among units and persons, but this process requires a lot of time and a lot of resources.

After the year 2013, a change in the senior management of the organization and a new strategic plan for the following years to come, impacted the organizational climate. This period was a period of re-design and innovation of the instruments.

### **2.2.1 The research sample**

The research sample framework was taken from the research population. The research sample is based on one representative unit from the population, which contains at total 311 managers and employees. This research sample unit was surveyed twice in January 2016 and January 2018, having a two years gap between the two surveys.

This research's unit contains different subunits including headquarters and customer service subunits where the hierarchy is well defined between employees and managers. This unit has a comprehensive aspect of the financial sector organizations. This unit contains specialized subunits as HR, recruitment, training, technologies, etc. The varied employees and managers are new and veteran to the organization, temporary and tenured employees, young and adults between the ages of 20 up to 67 years old. The employees of this unit have a diverse educational level: high school to academic degrees. The majority of the research samples were female employees.

**The first**, pretest research sample of 2016 included 195 (63%) respondents of the total unit's employees, and **the second**, posttest research sample of 2018 included 224 (72%) respondents of the total unit's employees. In the pretest-posttest research samples the ratio between role position (managers and employees), gender, education and age kept its proportions. The distribution of education, in the pretest-posttest research samples, is divided into 3 clusters: partial secondary (means graduated secondary (12 years) without a diploma) – less than 10%, secondary – approximately 50% and university degree – approximately 40%. Age is also divided into 5 clusters that keep the ratio between the two administrations.

### **2.2.2 The joint sample**

During the two years gap between the two surveys (2016 and 2018), some employees and managers had left the organization's research unit and others had joined this research's unit. A large group of employees and managers participated in both surveys.

The joint sample of both surveys included a large group of 91 participants that worked at this unit at two periods of times (2016 and 2018), under the same senior manager and continue to work with the same direct managers in both surveys. The joint sample of both surveys maintained the ratio and the proportion of the following variables: role position, gender, education, and age.

**Table 20. The participants in the pre-intervention, post-intervention, and joint group measurements**

	Pre-intervention measurement in year 2016	Post-intervention measurement in year 2018	Participants in both surveys administrations
<b>Population</b>			
Total population	311	311	91
Number of respondents	196 (63%)	234 (75%)	91 (29%)
<b>Role position</b>			
Managers	22 (11%)	17 (7%)	12 (13%)
Employees	174 (89%)	217 (93%)	79 (87%)
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	65 (33%)	66 (28%)	25 (28%)
Female	131 (67%)	168 (72%)	66 (72%)
<b>Education</b>			
Partial Secondary	16 (8%)	14 (6%)	17 (19%)
Secondary	96 (49%)	117 (50%)	30 (33%)
University Degree	84 (43%)	103 (44%)	44 (48%)
<b>Age</b>			
Up to 24	29 (15%)	31 (13%)	20 (22%)
25-34	92 (47%)	87 (37%)	36 (40%)
35-44	27 (14%)	51 (22%)	13 (14%)
45-54	14 (7%)	21 (9%)	8 (9%)
55+	34 (17%)	44 (19%)	14 (15%)

Source: own research

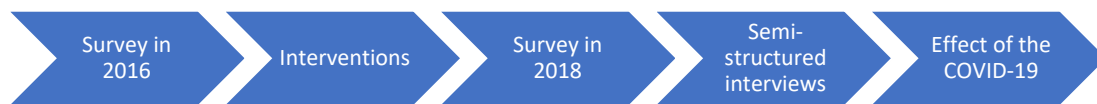
### 2.3 Research method

In this research a mixed methodology involved the collection, analysis, and mixing of both quantitative and qualitative data into a single research study. The quantitative approach (personally administered questionnaires) was used twice as the main instrument for collecting the required numerical data. In addition, the qualitative approach (semi-structured interviews) was conducted to collect the required non-numerical data and to corroborate and enrich the findings of the quantitative approach. This combination is important and relevant to achieve the objectives of this study. In fact, each approach has its own strengths and weaknesses. The best way to minimize the weaknesses of each approach is to use them both.

The aim of mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches is to increase the understanding of the research problem under study in a way that either approach alone cannot. Using a mixed research methodology is a better choice (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Singleton and Straits, 2005). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) stated

that mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry.

For the quantitative approach, the one-group pretest–posttest approach was the main method used for this research. This method "one-group pretest-posttest" checks the situation of the research's unit before and after the interventions that have been implemented in the organization. For the qualitative approach a case study approach was used in order to study in depth a defined period of time for a particular individual, program, or event. It involves an empirical investigation of a particular phenomenon within its real-life context using different sources of evidence (Robson, 2002).



**Figure 19. The flow of the research study**

Source: own research.

### **2.3.1 The quantitative approach**

In October 2015, the senior manager of the researched unit called to perform a survey in his unit. A re-design and innovation of the instrument was needed. After a long methodological process that included participants from different departments within the organization and from outside the organization a group of managers and employees from the HR division, the research unit and external consulting company adviser, built a new 33-items instrument, the first 30-items were closed-ended questions based on the original instrument and kept the 5 sub-scales of it. The last 3 questions were open ended and allowed the employees to express their opinion about the unit.

The new 33-items instrument has been examined by this group of employees, managers and adviser, and reliability and validity were needed to be re-examined. The main purpose of this new 33-items instrument was to examine the attitudes and satisfaction of the employees and managers in the researched unit. This instrument included 5 sub scales: total satisfaction (2 items), organizational culture (7 items), my team (4 items), my direct supervisor (8 items), and empowerment (meaning me as an

employee of this unit) (9 items), and also included at the end of the questionnaire three open-ended questions.

The questionnaire used a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree). The 10-point scale is the easiest to use, because respondents feel that the scales with more options allowed them greater expression of feelings. The researchers concluded that overall, the 10-point scale scored best, followed by the 7-point and 9-point scales (Chyung et al., 2017).

A subscale of employee engagement was built from the instrument and contained four items: two items from the subscale of total satisfaction (meaning questions of recommendation to others) and two items from the subscale of empowerment (meaning questions about me as employee).

In the subscale of total satisfaction, 2 items were included: (1) recommendation to a friend or a family member **to work** in this research's unit and (2) recommendation to a friend or a relative **to be a client** of this research's organization.

In the subscale of empowerment (me as employee), 2 items were included: (1) I'm **proud** to work in this research's unit and (2) I **enjoy** working in this research's unit. A total of 4 items were built the subscale of Employee Engagement in this research.

The instrument included 3 open questions that were not obligatory to response:

Open-ended questions are:

1. What are the things you like most about this unit?
2. If you could change one thing in this Unit, what would you change?
3. Is there anything else not previously mentioned here you would like to add?

**Table 21. The quantitative research variables**

Variables	Dependent / Independent	Questions number from the questionnaire
Employee Engagement (EE)	Dependent	Four items: 1, 2, 29, 30
Organizational Culture (OC)	Independent	Seven items: 3-9
Team Atmosphere (TA)	Independent	Four items: 10-13
Direct manager' behavior (DMB) – development-oriented management	Independent	Eight items: 14-21

Source: own research.

### 2.3.2 The qualitative method:

Two questionnaires for the semi-structured interviews were built to explore the phenomenon of employee engagement in this unit. One questionnaire was built for the manager's interview and the other was built for the employee's interview. During the year 2018, 10 interviews were held with employees and managers from the research's unit.

Both questionnaires for the semi-structured interviews included questions about the 4 sub-scales: EE, OC, TA and DMB that were used in the 30-items survey to explore in depth the phenomena of Employee Engagement.

**Table 22. The qualitative research questions**

Research question	1. Are structural factors, such as organizational culture, management (direct manager's behavior) and team's atmosphere related to employee's personal engagement?	2. Does an intervention that includes an improvement in the perception of the organizational culture, the perception of the management (the behavior of the direct manager) and the perception of the team atmosphere also improve employee's personal engagement?
Interview questions to managers	#4, #6, #7, #9	#1, #2, #3, #5, #8, #10
Interview questions to employee	#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #12	#8, #9, #10, #11

Source: own research.

## 2.4 Variables

The study variables can be divided into three groups: dependent variables, independent variables, and additional variable.

### 2.4.1 Dependent variables

In this framework there are three variables: Employee engagement before the intervention (from survey of 2016); EE after the intervention (from survey of 2018); and enhancement / gap of EE following the intervention (2018-2016)

#### 1. Employee engagement (before and after the intervention)

This variable is the average of the four items 1, 2, 29, 30 from the research questionnaire. The four items deal with the pride and enjoyment felt by the

respondent by working in the organization and to the extent of his recommendation to work and be a customer of the organization. The variable was measured twice – before and after the intervention. The answer scale ranges from 1 to 10 with a high score indicating a high sense of engagement.

The internal reliability of the four items results using SPSS is .95 before the intervention and .88 after the intervention.

## **2. Improvement in employee engagement following the intervention**

The improvement in employee engagement is calculated through the difference between the respondent's score in the "employee engagement" index after the intervention and the respondent's score in the "employee engagement" index before the intervention. The index score ranges from -9 to 9, a negative score means a decrease in the employee's level of engagement, a positive score means an improvement in the level of engagement and a zero score means no change in the employee's score. The higher the score in absolute value the greater the change (positive or negative) following the intervention

### **2.4.2 Independent variables**

In this framework there are three main variables: organizational culture, team atmosphere, and management. Each of these variables is classified into three variables: before the intervention, after the intervention and the enhancement / gap that occurred following the intervention.

#### **2.4.2.1 Organizational Culture**

##### **1. Organizational culture (before and after the intervention):**

This variable is an average of seven items 3-9 from the research questionnaire. The seven items measure various positive qualities of the organization as experienced by the respondent. The variable was measured twice: before and after the intervention. The answer scale ranges from 1 to 10 with a high score indicating a positive evaluation of the trait.

The internal reliability of the seven items results using SPSS is .92 before the intervention and .91 after the intervention.

**2. Improvement in the organizational culture following the intervention:**

The improvement in the organizational culture is calculated through the difference between the subject's score in the "organizational culture" index after the intervention and the respondent's score in the "organizational culture" index before the intervention. The score of the index ranges from -9 to 9, a negative score means a decrease in the level of the organizational culture, and a positive score means an improvement in the level of the organizational culture, and a score of zero means no change in the employee score. The higher the score in absolute value the greater the change (positive or negative) following the intervention.

**2.4.2.2. Team atmosphere**

**1. Team atmosphere (before and after the intervention):**

This variable is an average of four items 10-13 from the research questionnaire. The four items measure the openness and partnership of the staff in the team as experienced by the respondent. The variable was measured twice - before and after the intervention. The answer scale ranges from 1 to 10 with a high score indicating a sense of openness and high partnership. The internal reliability of the four items results using SPSS is .82 before the intervention and .87 after the intervention

**2. Improvement in the team atmosphere following the intervention:**

The improvement in the team atmosphere is calculated through the difference between the respondent's score in the "team atmosphere" index after the intervention and the respondent's score in the "team atmosphere" index before the intervention. The score of the index ranges from -9 to 9, a negative score means a decrease in the level of the atmosphere in the team, a positive score means an improvement in the level of atmosphere in the team, and a zero score means no change in the employee score. The higher the score in absolute value the greater the change (positive or negative) following the intervention.



### **2.4.2.3 Direct manager's behavior (Development-oriented management)**

#### **1. Development-oriented management (before and after the intervention):**

This variable is an average (mean) of eight items 14-21 of the research questionnaire. The eight items measure the employee's appreciation for the quality of employee development that the management style of his or her direct manager represents. The variable was measured twice: before and after the intervention. The answer scale ranges from 1 to 10 with a high score indicating a positive evaluation of the trait. The internal reliability of the eight items results using SPSS is .95 before the intervention and .92 after the intervention.

#### **2. Improvement of development-oriented management following the intervention:**

The improvement in development-oriented management is calculated through the difference between the respondent's score in the "Development-oriented management" index after the intervention and the respondent's score in the "Development-oriented management" index before the intervention. The index score ranges from -9 to 9, a negative score means a decrease in the level of development-oriented management, a positive score means an improvement in the level of development-oriented management and a zero score means no change in the employee score. The higher the score in absolute value the greater the change (positive or negative) following the intervention.

### **2.4.2.4 Additional variable**

This group of independent variables include an external independent variable:

#### **Role position (manager / employee):**

The employees were classified into two groups - employees and managers.

## **2.5 Research procedure**

Following organizational change in the senior management in 2013, the long 60-items attitude and satisfaction employee's survey was stopped, and the senior management conducted only in a few units in this organization an attitude and satisfaction employee's survey that followed the organizational and personnel changes. The unit

on which this study is based was chosen due to organizational, administrative, and personnel changes. The unit manager requested to carry out the 30-items survey in his unit in October 2015 due to work plans for the year 2016.

The survey was uploaded to the organization's intra-organizational survey system and sent via email link to all unit employees (311 employees and managers) in January 2016. The email included an opening explaining that each employee's opinion is important. The level of satisfaction with the five subscales: management, unit/team, direct manager, empowerment as an employee, and total satisfaction, can be used by the organization to improve processes and advance the unit's goals and objectives. It was also explained by email that the survey is anonymous, and it will not be possible to reach employees who will answer the survey. The email was sent to all employees three times over a two-week period. The third email stated that the survey would be closed and could not be answered at the end of the two weeks period.

At the beginning of the year 2016, the results of the first 30-items survey were administered by the research department in the HR division of the organization, where the researcher of this study works, together with the consultant from the external consulting firm for the organization. The results were presented to the senior manager of the unit, being studied at the level of the entire unit, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the unit. Alongside the results, and for the first time in the organization the concept of "employee engagement" was presented and included four items from the questionnaire.

For the purpose of the intervention process that was conducted by both consultants of the Human Resources Division and by external consultants, a comprehensive analysis process was carried out at the level of each sub-unit. Each manager was characterized and analyzed by the manager's subscale questions that have been rated by the employees of that manager.

The consultants worked with the managers and with their employees in each subunit, enhancing employee engagement and developing managerial skills. The intervention process lasted two years (2016-2018) and after two years, the requirement for another survey was introduced into the 2018 work plans. Again, the

senior manager of the surveyed unit requested to redo the survey as it is in order to obtain a snapshot of a long process that was continued in the researched unit.

The intervention process included organizational intervention in three levels: the organizational level, the unit level, and individual level with the managers and employees of the sub-units. At the organizational level, a website was established intended for unit managers, which included content from workshops and world's professional content that assisted managers in their day-to-day work vis-à-vis employees. This website included TED films to enrich the managers. Changes in different levels of the organization, impacted the organization and led to a "uniform language" that introduced new concepts as KPI, organizational vision, organizational ethics, employee engagement, etc. A consistency was created to unite employees and managers into the organization's new strategic plan.

During December 2017, the same 30-items survey was prepared for the second time in the survey system and employees' lists were updated for the survey. The survey was sent to employees of the unit for the second time, via email on the organization's internal network, with a link to the survey. The survey was open for a two weeks period, and a reminder was sent twice to all employees about the survey's reinstatement.

The author of this work received the approval of the head of the Human Resources Division to use the data from the two surveys, the results of which were presented to the unit manager in 2016 and 2018. In addition, the author of this work was asked to sign a confidentiality agreement regarding the name of the organization on which the surveys were conducted.

After receiving the results of the two surveys, during 2018, the author of this research decided to conduct semi-structured questionnaires with ten employees and managers that participated in both surveys. From the list of employees who participated in the two surveys, employees and managers were selected without prior knowledge based solely on general data such as age, tenure, and role/ position. These employees have been carefully selected with an emphasis on having both young and older employees (based on age), permanent and temporary employees (based on tenure), and managers or employees (based on role/position). To clarify the true

identity of these employees and managers, the author of this research needed to look for their names in the active directory file because the surveys' data did not include any details regarding the participants except ID-respond number that was linked to the employee identification number in the active directory.

Two semi-structured questionnaires were constructed, which included questions for both employees and managers. The purpose of the questionnaires was to deepen and understand the process that each participant went through in the organization from his or her point of view. Managers underwent training and mentoring by consultants, on their individual level, their unit level and the organization level. These managers were exposed to changes that occurred in the organization and it was important to examine how the process of change in the organization affected them and affected engagement among their employees. On the other hand, the employee questionnaires examined the effects of the change process in the organization, their satisfaction, and the level of engagement to the organization, to their unit, and their direct manager. The employee questionnaire included 12 questions about employee's engagement, employee's satisfaction with the organization, with his/her direct manager, his/her team/unit. The manager questionnaire included 10 questions about the impact of the intervention and organizational change process on his decisions as a manager, his impact on his team, his enhancing employee engagement in his subunit.

During the interviews the semi-structured questionnaire was used as a guide to the researcher to explore a deeper understanding of employee engagement phenomena. All interviews were conducted in an environment and conditions in which the interviewees felt comfortable and at ease to openly share their perspectives on the questions. The interview was recorded by a tape recorder and notes were taken during the interview. All interviewees expressed their consent to be interviewed and to analyze their responses anonymously.

Prior to each interview, the interviewees were given details about the purpose of the study and their roles in assisting the researcher of the study in conducting the research. At the beginning of each interview the researcher presented the new strategy of the organization, the interventions in three levels: organizational,

administrative at the unit level and personnel change and then the interview questions. Repetition of responses led the researcher to change the way she managed the additional questions of the interview, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the employee engagement. The interviews took about 45 minutes up to an hour and a quarter. If necessary, the researcher took longer to allow interviewees to respond adequately to the interview questions.

### **2.5.1 Effect of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Employee Engagement in remote work**

Recently, the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic has hit business markets and has unexpectedly shaken the entire world. The pandemic severely disrupted and influenced organizations and their employees. Around the world, people had to stay-at-home and maintain social distance by staying away from public places. For organizations it is difficult to ensure that their employees can work effectively and tackle issues while maintaining high levels of commitment, dedication and employee engagement. These behaviors are some of the most crucial prospects for business performance and their survival in crucial times (Van der Voet and Vermeeren, 2017). To contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of employees and organizations worldwide were forced to quickly adopt remote work (RW) measures (International Labour Organization, 2020; OECD, 2020).

At the beginning of the epidemic, employees had to work only remotely (at home), in order to keep offices for workers who provided necessary services. Only in June 2020, lockdown measures were slowly lifted, and many Israeli workers continued to work remotely at home, whether full-time or at least two or three days a week, in order to rotate and limit the number of people working on-site.

In this pandemic situation and for the first time, many employees performed their usual job tasks in an unusual context: their home instead of the office. In this transition, it is unknown what the role previous job performance may have had on employees' remote work performance and their motivation to work effectively in the remote work situation.

For bridging the above research gaps in time and the influence of the COVID-19 on our new working life, this study utilises a novel decision-aid approach for

evaluating the factors influencing EE that would help HR managers and organizational managers deal with the "new normal" business environment and new approaches and enhancement to EE. This new perspective on the research addresses the following questions:

1. What are the critical factors influencing EE, following the COVID-19 pandemic, in the context of Hybrid/ remote work of the service organization in the financial sector?
2. How are these factors interrelated with each other?
3. What are the implications of the critical EE factors influencing and enhancing engagement as well as improving the Hybrid work of the service organization in the financial sector?

To identify the factors influencing EE in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, first, the literature was reviewed widely. Then, managers and employees and HR experts from the unit of the service organization were consulted and their opinions were collected. Following this, **Pareto analysis** was performed to select the significant EE factors. In this study, Pareto analysis was carried out to differentiate the critical factors from trivial ones (Bajaj et al., 2018; Talib et al., 2015).

In order to find the interrelated relationships between the factors of EE in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and their implications, the methodological framework that were used included the grey theory, the structural self-interaction matrix (SSIM), the Reachability Matrix, the level of partitions, diagraph and MICMAC analysis.

### **Grey theory**

The grey system theory was proposed by Deng Julong (1989). The use of this theory is when any system suffers from incomplete and inadequate information and uncertainty. The grey system theory can minimize the natural information gap while analyzing this system. The main advantage of using a grey theory is that the uncertainty of complex decision-making problems can be incorporated and easily handled. The grey system theory has been used for forecasting, evaluating alternatives, explaining complex systems, and quantifying the uncertainty in the

information. Many researchers have successfully applied grey system theory in a number of areas such as forecasting, management, supplier selection, business strategy and so on. When the decision-making process is related to the subjectivity and perception of experts, problems of ambiguity and uncertain information arise. The grey system theory - helps to deal with these problems (Nasir et al., 2021, 2022).

### **ISM/TISM and Grey TISM**

Total Interpretive Structural Modeling (TISM) was developed by Sushil (2012) and is built on the theoretical foundation of Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) that was proposed by Warfield (1974). Both ISM and TISM are qualitative pair comparison methods to evolve hierarchical relationships among a set of elements. These methods help to convert ill-structured mental models into well-articulated models that act as base for conceptualization and theory building. In the conceptualization phase of any research, the key questions to be answered for theory building are "what", "how", "why", "when", "where", and "who" (Whetten, 1989). The "what" and "how" are the first two that are effectively handled by ISM. The third question "why" was answered by the form of TISM by Sushil (2012, 2017). TISM differs from ISM in two ways: (1) in providing interpretation of all the links along with nodes; (2) in retaining select transitive links that have meaningful interpretations, contrary to ISM in which all the transitive links are dropped. Therefore, it makes the TISM model more explanatory in character.

The cornerstone of ISM and TISM is the fully transitive reachability matrix, which is derived by first carrying out the pair comparisons of the elements under consideration and then is subject to transitivity check. For  $n$  elements  $n(n - 1)/2$  pair comparisons are to be made, which becomes quite complicated as the number of elements increases beyond ten.

### **MICMAC analysis**

The MICMAC method was developed by Michel Godet and François Bourse. MICMAC stands for the French definition: "Matrice d'impacts croisés multiplication appliquée á un classement (MICMAC)", meaning a cross-impact matrix multiplication applied to

classification which is a structural prospective analysis used to study indirect relationships meaning examines the relative strength and weakness of factors: driver factors and (dependent) reliant factors.

In MICMAC analysis, factors are divided into four clusters with respect to the driving power and dependence power. These clusters are: Cluster I: Autonomous Factors – factors that are relatively cut off from the system and have weak or no dependence on other factors; Cluster II: Dependent Factors – cluster II factors are primarily dependent of other factors; Cluster III: Linkage factors – the connecting factors that are unstable and most influence others; and Cluster IV: Independent Factors – these factors have weak influence from others factors and have to be paid maximum attention owing to the strong key factors.

ISM/TISM methodology has been applied widely with MICMAC analysis to classify variables as driver, linkage, dependent and autonomous variables. MICMAC analysis is also known as gray area exploration. (Ahmad et al., 2019).

In an indirect relationship, one can observe three variables and their direct effects: variable X effects Y, variable Y affects Z, X and Z have no direct effect, but their relationship with Y is a cross-correlation, where any change in X will affect Z.

#### **Methodological framework – Gathering data from the respondents and analyzing it**

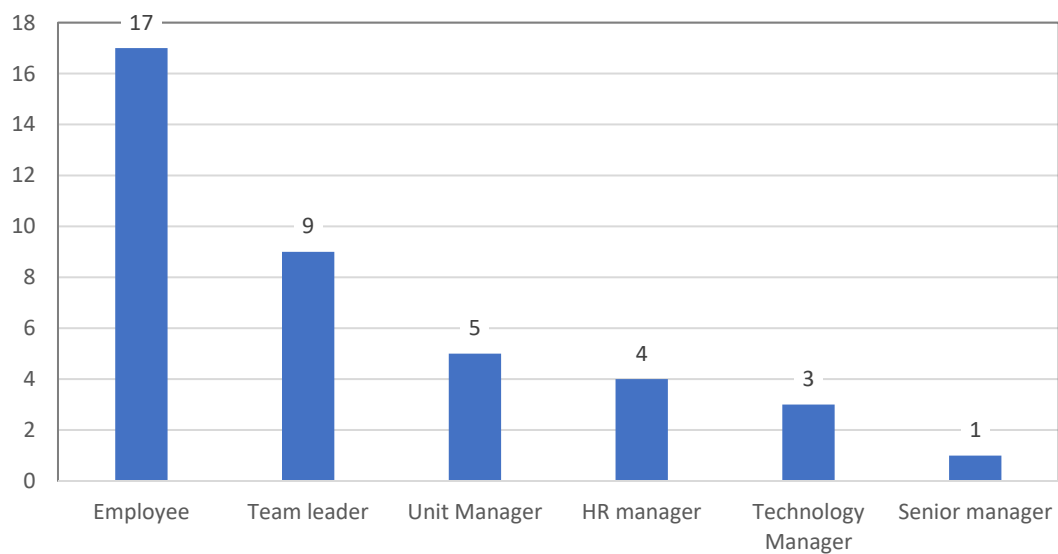
The methodological framework and findings provide valuable insights to HR managers and unit's managers to adopt essential practices for achieving long-standing employee engagement and enhancing employee engagement amid the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Managers are facing challenges to improve and enhance employee engagement at the hybrid work during this COVID-19 pandemic. To develop the decision-aid approach, data were collected from 39 respondents, including HR professionals, managers and employees from the researched unit. The profiles of these respondents are given in Table 23.



**Table 23. Covid-19 questionnaire – respondents' profile**

Position	No. of respondents	Percentages
Employee	17	44%
Team leader	9	23%
Unit manager	5	13%
HR manager	4	10%
Technology manager	3	8%
Senior manager	1	3%
Total	39	1

Source: own research.



**Figure 20. The respondents' profile**

Source: own research.

### **Preparing the questionnaire**

A questionnaire was prepared using the 29 primarily selected factors from the literature and also from the data of remote work's survey that was administered in July 2021 in the research unit. The respondents were then communicated about the objective of the study, and the questionnaire was sent to them via email. They were requested to check the relevance of the listed factors for enhancing EE, in the context of remote work following the COVID-19 pandemic, for the service organization in the financial sector. Furthermore, the respondents were asked to give their opinions on the priority weights of EE factors using a seven-point Likert scale where 1 indicates very low priority and 7 indicates very high priority (Sodhi et al., 2012).

### **Pareto analysis**

In the next phase, Pareto analysis was carried out to identify the “vital few” factors for EE enhancement. Pareto analysis is based on the 80/20 principle, where 20% of the factors have 80% impact, and the remaining 80% of the factors have the residual 20% impact. This method has been applied in many areas to identify the most crucial factors or variables (Kaur et al., 2019). Pareto analysis has the advantage of identifying significant factors, while eliminating the trivial ones, by synthesizing the scores given by the experts.

After collecting the experts' feedback, the scores were aggregated and the factors which contributed to the cumulative score of around 80% of the total were selected for further analysis. Actually 18 out of 29 factors were selected which represent the portion of around 65/35.

Data were collected from the same 39 respondents to analyze the relationships among factors selected from the Pareto analysis. The novel grey TISM method was applied to establish the decision aid approach, explaining the influential relationships among the factors to achieve EE.

### **Grey TISM**

The aim of the TISM is to develop the model using the judgments and opinions from respondents and experts, under an uncertain business environment created by COVID-19 pandemic, therefore, the TISM may suffer from a lack of complete information (Sushil, 2017, 2018). Although HR professionals, managers, and employees have a great deal of knowledge about the EE, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced them to rethink the EE factors at remote work. There exists uncertainty and incomplete information while developing the model of relationships among the EE factors, using TISM. Grey system theory has the advantages of handling a small amount of information and providing satisfactory results for many variables. Therefore, this study integrates the grey system theory and TISM to establish the decision-aid approach for improving EE for remote working to achieve EE sustainability. Traditional TISM uses the binary number to develop the structural self-

interaction matrix (SSIM) based on the respondent's opinions. However, this cannot effectively capture the incompleteness and uncertainty of the information. The novelty of the current research methodology is the integration of grey system theory with TISM for developing the SSIM of EE factors (Jena et al., 2017; Sharma, 2021)

### **Building the Structural self-interaction matrix (SSIM)**

The contextual relationship between each pair of factors was established according to domain knowledge, representing whether or not one factor leads to another. For developing the SSIM, following four symbols are used to show the direction of relationship between elements (i and j):

V: means factor i leads to factor j (factor i will influence factor j).

A: means factor j leads to factor i (factor i will be influenced by factor j).

X: represents a bidirectional relationship (factors i and j will influence each other).

O: no relation between the factors.

### **Reachability Matrix**

In both ISM and TISM, these interactions are presented in the form of a binary  $n \times n$  matrix called a reachability matrix, meaning a matrix which  $n$  is the number of factors. This matrix has  $n$  Rows by  $n$  Columns and each pair-comperason cell is using 0 and 1 to represent the relationship of pair-comperason. With each pair comparison, the direction of the relationship is to be established as forward ( $i \rightarrow j$ ), backward ( $j \rightarrow i$ ), both ways ( $i = j$ ), and no relationship (0). In this matrix, diagonal elements are placed with "1" entry as each element reaches to itself. Then, the reachability matrix is subject to transitivity checks, i.e., if  $i \rightarrow j$  and  $j \rightarrow k$ ; then, the transitive relation is  $i \rightarrow k$ . The transitivity of higher order relationships is also checked to get a fully transitive matrix. The fully transitive reachability matrix is used as a base to carry out hierarchical partitioning.

SSIM is converted to a binary matrix, called the initial reachability matrix, by replacing it with 1 or 0. The rules for transformation are presenting in table 24.

**Table 24. Rules for transformation**

If the (i, j) Entry in the SSIM Is	Entry in the Initial Reachability Matrix	
	(i, j)	(j, i)
V	1	0
A	0	1
X	1	1
O	0	0

Source: Sharma (2021).

NOTE: Transitivity is checked for the final reachability matrix, which means that if  $(i, j) = 1$  and  $(j, k) = 1$ , then  $(i, k) = 1$ .

### **Level partition**

Level partition takes place after the final reachability matrix. The reachability set, antecedent set and intersection set are identified for each factor. The reachability set consists of the factor itself and the other factors which it may help achieve, and the antecedent set consists of the factor itself and the other factors which may help in achieving it. The factor(s) having the same reachability and intersection sets is/are treated at the highest level. The intersection set is obtained for all factors.

The factor, for which the reachability set is the same as the intersection set, comes at the top of the hierarchy. It implies that this top-level factor will not lead to achieving any other factor. After the identification of the top-level factor it is removed from the other factors. Then the number of iterations of this process is done to get the level of each factor. The process is repeated iteratively to get the factors classified at different hierarchical levels. This is used to prepare a diagraph depicting hierarchical relationships.

### **Diagraph**

According to the levels of each factor and the final reachability matrix, an initial model of ISM/TISM, with regard to the transitivity, is drawn.

### **MICMAC analysis**

In MICMAC analysis, factors are divided into four clusters with respect to the driving power and dependence power. These clusters are: Cluster I: Autonomous Factors – factors that are relatively cut off from the system and have weak or no dependence on other factors; Cluster II: Dependent Factors – cluster II factors are primarily

dependent of other factors; Cluster III: Linkage factors—the connecting factors that are unstable and most influence others; and Cluster IV: Independent Factors – these factors have weak influence from others factors and have to be paid maximum attention owing to the strong key factors (Sharma, 2021).

## **Chapter 3. Data Analysis Procedures**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The main purpose of this chapter is to present the quantitative and qualitative analyses. The chapter is divided into four main sub-chapters. Sub-chapter 3.2 gives a complete picture of the quantitative analysis of the numerical data, which were collected from the two surveys between the years 2016 and 2018 (195 and 234 completed questionnaires respectively) and the analysis of the joint group of 91 completed questionnaires, by using the most relevant statistical tools available through the SPSS.

The results of the qualitative analysis of the non-numerical data, which were collected from 10 semi-structured interviews with direct managers and employees from the researched unit in the financial sector, are presented in sub-chapter 3.3. The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on employee engagement, working remotely analyzed by Pareto and Grey theory is present in section 3.4. Sub-chapter 3.5 is devoted to provide a clear picture about the main quantitative and qualitative findings.

#### **3.1.1 Analytical procedures**

##### **3.1.1.1 Pearson correlation coefficient**

Pearson correlation is one of the most useful metrics in inferential statistics. This metric is designed to find a statistical relationship between two interval variables such as employees' income and their monthly consumption. These two variables are quantitative variables (monetary amount). Therefore, the examination of the relationship between these variables can be described by the Pearson correlation test. The Pearson test result indicates the intensity of the relationship that is between 0 and 1. Meaning, the higher the number, the stronger the intensity of the relationship. Furthermore, the direction of the relationship can be positive or negative. Positive means there is an identity between the variance of the two variables, and negative, means there is a contrast between the variance of the two variables. Additionally, to allow the results of the analysis to be included on the entire study population,

significant value is obtained. The strength can be assessed by these general guidelines: up to 0.2 it is a weak correlation, between 0.2 and 0.4 it is a moderate correlation and above 0.4 it is a strong correlation. These values are also true for negative values (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2007).

### **3.1.1.2 T-Test**

The T-test is a generic name for statistical tests that are based on hypotheses about the expectation of data coming from a normal distribution, where the variance is unknown. The t-test is used to compare the means of two population groups. In these tests, the test statistic is divided by t distribution given that the hypothesis  $H_0$  is correct. If the sample is large, it is customary to replace the test roughly by assuming that the variance of the population is equal to the variance of the sample.

Main uses for t-tests (Petrie and Sabin, 2009):

- I. A hypothesis test in which we accept or reject hypotheses that describe the value of the expectation in any population, based on a single sample.
- II. A hypothesis test in which, based on two samples, we accept or reject hypotheses about the relationship between the expectation of the populations from which the samples are drawn (the variation of this test for cases where we cannot assume that the variances of the different populations are roughly equal, sometimes called the Welch test).
- III. A hypothesis test for the expectation of two different populations in cases where we can "pair" individuals between the two populations.
- IV. Hypotheses on the correlation between two random variables.

In this dissertation, two kinds of T-Test are being used:

- I. Independent-Samples T-Test: In this case there is only one value that was checked, and, in this dissertation, there is the pre-test and post-test to check hypothesis 1 and 2 between different roles.
- II. Paired-Samples T-Test: In this case there are two values that there is the need to check the difference between them, in this dissertation is the pre-test and the post-test to check hypothesis 3, the result pre-test and post-test.

### **3.1.1.3 Multivariate linear regression analysis**

Regression analysis is a set of statistical processes for estimating the relationships between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. Meaning estimating the simultaneous effect of several independent variables on the phenomenon being investigated. The most common form of regression analysis is linear regression, in which one finds the line (or a more complex linear combination) that most closely fits the data according to a specific mathematical criterion.

Multivariate linear regression analysis is designed to examine the possibility that a few variables predict a dependent variable. The analysis provides some important data. The first is the  $R^2$  that explains how a set of variables explains a dependent variable and consequently makes fewer errors when we predict the dependent variable based on the results of the independent variable.

The  $R^2$  means the percentage of variance of the dependent variable that we manage to predict using the independent variables. This statistic has a given significance that means, the percentage of chance of making a wrong prediction. Next is the data of the predicted variables. The statistic  $\beta$  is the coefficient of prediction of the regression method. Meaning, the level of predicting the specific variable and the predictive direction and of course the meaning of each of the variables. Also, the constant data is needed to be added, because it is the basis of the formula for the regression prediction line (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2007).

## **3.2 Presentation of results – the quantitative analysis of the numerical data**

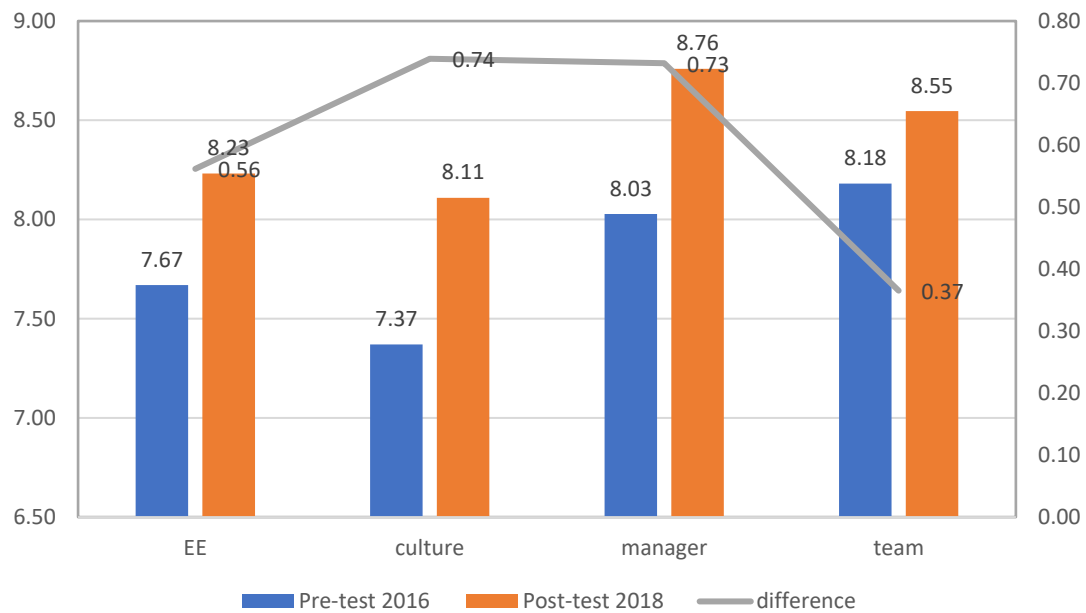
### **3.2.1 Questionnaire analysis**

This sub-chapter presents the results of the quantitative analysis of the numerical data, which were collected on the basis of the four main variables in this research: EE, organizational culture, team atmosphere and direct supervisor behavior. The main variables are presented by using the means of all the subjects from the two surveys (2016, 2018) and the joint group.

The data were collected by using the Likert scale, and this presentation provides a general view of all the variables. In general, the mean scores for all the variables that were measured are quite high; however, the analysis indicates that the



level of organizational culture is relatively low. Even though the values of employee engagement are quite high, there is room for discussing an improvement (see Figure 21). Tables 25 to 36 present the results of the research carried out in connection with this dissertation.



**Figure 21. The mean scores of all the research variables**

Source: The survey results.

**H1:** There is a relationship between employee personal engagement and the three independent variables: organizational culture (OC), direct manager's behavior (DMB), and team's atmosphere (TA).

To examine hypothesis 1 a Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis was performed. This analysis is associated with performing correlation tests for interval variables, with the assumption expressing a linear correlation.

The purpose of the following three columns is to confirm the hypothesis 1 relationship between the variable employee engagement (dependent variable) and the three independent variables (organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team's atmosphere). According to the hypothesis, a positive, stronger, and significant relationship is expected in all three columns.

The table describes the relationship between the pre-intervention, the post-intervention and between the difference values (Pre-intervention – Post-intervention) of the variables.

**Table 25. Pearson's Correlations between the research variables**

	Employee Engagement		
	Pre	Post	Difference
OC	.775**	.771**	.832**
TA	.616**	.619**	.670**
DMB	.584**	.592**	.629**

\* $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis indicates that the correlations between the organizational culture, team's atmosphere and direct manager's behavior variables and employee engagement are very high, positive, and significant, and that the chances of making mistakes are very low (less than .05). Considering that it can be stated that **Hypothesis 1 is fully supported**. Nevertheless, relatively speaking, the correlation of direct manager's behavior with employee engagement is slightly lower than the correlation of culture and team's atmosphere with employee engagement.

**H2:** There is a correlation between the three independent variables: organizational culture (OC), direct manager's behavior (DMB), and team's atmosphere (TA).

**H4:** The relationship will be stronger after the interventions between the three independent variables: (OC, TA, and DMB).

Table 26 examines hypotheses 2 and 4 regarding the relationship between the three independent variables (organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team's atmosphere) using Pearson analysis which is a relationship analysis for quantitative variables. According to the hypotheses 2 and 4, a positive, stronger, and significant relationship is expected in all three columns (Pre-intervention, Post-intervention and the joint group (Difference)).

**Table 26. Pearson's Correlations between the research independent variables**

	Pre		Post		Difference	
	OC	TA	OC	TA	OC	TA
TA	.672**		.516**		.619**	
DMB	.640**	.693**	.525**	.574**	.707**	.623**

\* $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

In accordance with the hypotheses 2 and 4, the analysis indicates that the correlations between the organizational culture, team's atmosphere and direct manager's behavior variables are high, positive, and significant correlations as expected from the hypothesis. The chances of making mistakes are very small (less than .05). Taking into consideration that, it can be stated that **Hypotheses 2 and 4 are fully supported**. Nevertheless, relatively speaking, the correlation of OC with direct manager's behavior in the Post-intervention measurement is slightly lower than the correlation of OC with TA.

**H3:** Post-intervention values of the research variables (EE, OC, TA and DMB) will be higher than the pre-intervention values.

Table 27 examines hypothesis 3 which is the central hypothesis of the study, regarding the improvement of all four variables (organizational culture, direct manager's behavior and team's atmosphere and employee engagement between the pre-intervention measurement and the post-intervention measurement. To test the hypothesis, a t-test analysis was performed on dependent samples.

**Table 27. Paired sample T-test Pre-intervention – Post-intervention**

	Before (Pre-intervention) (91)		After (Post-intervention) (91)		r	t
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.		
EE	7.67	1.95	8.23	1.65	0.193	-2.202*
OC	7.37	1.86	8.11	1.60	0.243*	-3.110**
TA	8.18	1.74	8.55	2.04	0.255*	-1.415
DMB	8.03	2.38	8.76	1.72	0.233*	-2.545*

\* $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis indicates that in all four variables there is a difference so that the post-intervention measurement is higher than the pre-intervention measurement.

In three of these four variables (excluding Team's atmosphere) the difference is significant. Accordingly, it can be said that hypothesis 3 has been **almost fully supported**. Additionally, the analysis shows a Pearson correlation between the parallel variables of Pre-intervention and Post-intervention measurements. The correlation between the four variables is relatively weak and only the correlation between TA and DMB is significant. To sum up, the analysis indicates that the improvement between the Pre-intervention and Post-intervention measurements in the four variables is not linear, so the effect of the intervention did not apply to all employees in the same way, some experienced greater improvement and some experienced less or no improvement at all.

**H5:** The variable Role position (employee or manager) influences the relationship between the dependent variable (EE) and the three independent variables (OC, TA and DMB).

Table 28-30 examines hypothesis 5 regarding the influence of the variable: Role about the difference between managers and employees in the four main research variables. To test the hypothesis, a T-test analysis was performed on the four variables regarding the Role (manager/ employee). Three analyses were done: pre-intervention (Table 28), post-intervention (Table 29) and the difference between pre-intervention measurement and Post-intervention measurement (Table 30).

**Table 28: independent sample T-test – (Pre-intervention measurement)**

	Employee (174)		Manager (22)		t
	M	S.D	M	S.D	
EE	7.15	2.29	8.25	1.06	-3.863***
OC	7.17	1.97	7.91	1.34	-2.289*
TA	8.15	1.71	8.62	0.99	-1.896
DMB	8.10	2.42	8.15	1.96	-0.126

\* $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis of table 28 indicates a consistent difference between managers and employees in all four variables in the pre-intervention measurement.

The analysis indicates that managers express higher positions than those of employees and a significant difference between managers and employees is indicated in EE and OC variables. However, at TA and direct manager's behavior variables, there is not a significant difference.

**Table 29. independent sample T-test – (Post-intervention measurement)**

	Employee (217)		Manager (17)		t
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
EE	7.68	2.06	8.65	1.20	-1.902
OC	7.91	1.76	8.82	.93	-2.102
TA	8.32	2.10	8.65	2.32	-0.599
DMB	8.64	2.18	8.90	1.60	-0.469

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis of table 29 indicates the difference between managers and employees as was found in Table 28, meaning managers express higher positions than those of employees. However, unlike Table 28, the analysis indicates that the difference is significantly reduced, thus in none of the variables was a significant difference.

**Table 30: independent sample T-test – (Difference – joint group)**

	Employee (79)		Manager (12)		t
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
EE	0.56	2.49	0.56	1.31	-0.001
OC	0.78	2.30	0.56	1.33	0.367
TA	0.47	2.25	-0.08	2.64	0.851
DMB	0.83	2.71	0.34	2.03	0.681

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis of table 30 indicates that employees' improvement following the intervention is higher compared to managers. Although the analysis indicates that both managers and employees had an improvement in all variables, the team's atmosphere variable indicated that the increase was less marked among managers than among employees. The employees' improvement is consistently better. Despite all this, the finding is not significant.

Table 31 examines from another perspective of the differences between managers and employees by the variable: Role. A Pearson's Correlations analysis is examined between research variables and Employee Engagement.

**Table 31. Pearson's correlations between the research variables and Employee Engagement**

		Pre	Post	Difference
<b>Employee</b>	OC	.772**	.771**	.846**
	TA	.624**	.618**	.696**
	DMB	.594**	.600**	.642**
<b>Manager</b>	OC	.804**	.606**	.646**
	TA	.265	.756**	.706**
	DMB	.593**	.401	.553*

\* $p < .05$ \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis of Table 31 indicates that in most correlations there are positive, stronger, and significant correlations among both managers and employees, although all relationships among employees are slightly higher. The analysis indicates that among managers there are two non-significant connections (less than .05): in the Pre-intervention measurement, managers have a weak correlation (.204) between TA and EE and in Post-intervention measurement, another weak correlation between direct manager behavior and EE (.401). Among employees all correlations are positive, strong and significant.

Tables 32 and 33 examine the relationship between the three independent variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and TA separately for managers and employees by the variable: Role. A Pearson's Correlations analysis is examined between the three independent variables among employees (Table 32) and among managers (Table 33).

**Table 32. Pearson's correlations between the research variables (Employee)**

	Pre		Post		Difference	
	OC	TA	OC	TA	OC	TA
TA	.678**		.527**		.668**	
DMB	.641**	.722**	.531**	.585**	.715**	.665**

\*  $p < .05$ \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

**Table 33. Pearson's correlations between the research variables (Manager)**

	Pre		Post		Difference	
	OC	TA	OC	TA	OC	TA
TA	.492*		.527**		.444*	
DMB	.704**	.259	.531**	.585**	.646**	.459*

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis of Tables 32 and 33 indicates that in most correlations there are positive, stronger, and significant correlations among both managers and employees, although all relationships among employees are stronger than managers as indicated also in Table 31. The analysis of Table 33 indicates that among managers there is one non-significant connection (less than .5) in the Pre-intervention measurement, managers have a weaker correlation (.248) between TA and manager (development-oriented management).

In the next stage of presenting the findings the general model of the research will be analyzed. The findings so far indicate that the three variables – organizational culture, team atmosphere and development-oriented management influences the dependent variable employee engagement and are interconnected to each other. The model shows that the three independent variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team (team's atmosphere) are predictors of the dependent variable – employee engagement. The variable: Role (employees/ managers) is related to the research variables then it is also taken as an independent variable of the model in order to predict the degree of employee engagement.

Tables 34 and 35 present analysis of multiple regression between the predictive variables, including the variable – Role, on the dependent variable in Pre-intervention measurement and Post-intervention measurement.

**Table 34. Multiple Regression – (Pre-intervention measurement)**

Predictors	EE			
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
OC	0.72	0.07	0.63	9.73***
TA	0.16	0.09	0.12	1.754
DMB	0.10	0.06	0.11	1.541
Role (manager/ employee)	0.46	0.31	0.07	1.478
R <sup>2</sup>				.63
F				79.169***

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis of Table 34 indicates that the independent variables clearly and strongly predict the dependent variable of employee engagement. As can be seen in the table the percentage of explained variance R<sup>2</sup> is escalated. In other words, by using it, it is possible to explain the 64% variance of the dependent variable by the independent variables. Additionally, this result is very significant at a high level, so that it can be said that this result is at a very good level of confidence. Furthermore, it seems that the main variable in terms of predictability is the organizational culture with the  $\beta$  prediction that stands at .73 which is a significant prediction. Apart from the organizational culture variable, there is no other variable whose prediction is clear or strong.

**Table 35. Multiple Regression – (Post-intervention measurement)**

Predictors	EE			
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
OC	0.65	0.06	0.56	11.961***
TA	0.22	0.05	0.23	4.875***
DMB	0.15	0.05	0.16	3.341***
Role(manager/employee)	0.26	0.29	0.04	0.873
R <sup>2</sup>				.68
F				120.175***

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis of Table 35 indicates that in the **Post-intervention measurement**, the independent variables clearly and strongly predict the dependent variable of employee engagement. In this analysis, the percentage of explained variance R<sup>2</sup> is very



high and it is possible to explain the 68% variance of the dependent variable (EE) by the independent variables, meaning the prediction is highly significant.

Comparing the percentage of explained variance  $R^2$  from Table 35 the "**Post-intervention measurement**" data, to the one in table 34 the "**Pre-intervention measurement**" data, is indicated slightly higher (68% vs. 64%) but the difference between them is not unusually high.

Additionally, the analysis of the "**Pre-intervention measurement**" data, indicates that the main variable in terms of predictability is the organizational culture, and in Table 35 - the analysis of the "**Post-intervention measurement**" data, indicates there are a number of variables that are involved in predicting the dependent variable. The analysis of table 35 indicates that the independent variable organizational culture remains a significant predictor variable ( $\beta = .63$ ) but slightly lower than in the "**Pre-intervention measurement**" prediction. Two other independent variables: TA and DMB are as well significant while their  $\beta$  is not strong .12 and .17 respectively.

**Table 36. Multiple Regression – (Difference)**

Predictors	EE			
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
OC	0.730	0.095	0.680	7.688***
TA	0.257	0.079	0.260	3.243***
DMB	-0.008	0.079	-0.009	-0.102
Role (manager/employee)	0.299	0.341	0.052	0.878
$R^2$				.73
F				52.401***

\* $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: own research

The analysis of **the difference/ gap between the two measurements data** that has been presented in Table 36 indicates very interesting findings. The independent variable organizational culture did not enter the analysis due to too high a match between it and the dependent variable (highly collinearity). In spite of this, the explained percentage of variance is strong and significant ( $\beta = .73$ ).

In the analysis of **the difference/ gap between the two measurements data**, and amid the absence of the independent variable organizational culture, the most significant variable in the prediction is "development-oriented management" whose

net prediction is very high and significant ( $\beta = .75$ ). The other independent variables in this analysis do not significantly predict the dependent variable – EE.

### **3.2.2 Qualitative analysis**

Following the results of the questionnaires from the quantitative sub – chapter, a positive and stronger relationships between the research variables were found. The author of this study conducted semi-structured interviews with five managers and five employees from the research unit, in order to understand what impacted and enhanced employee engagement and therefore, increased the values of the research's variables and how this was related to the intervention process that was carried out in the organization. All the participants were selected by their experience, seniority and age. To maintain confidentiality, the author assigned each participant a code for the five employees: EMP1-EMP5 and managers MNG1-MNG5 versus using his or her name.

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the themes that impact and enhance employee engagement. Regarding the research questions, two themes were identified. Theme 1: The impact of the organizational culture on EE following the intervention. This theme includes two sub-themes: (1) Rewards and recognitions; (2) Managers' behavior. Theme 2: Team atmosphere and direct manager behavior influence employee personal engagement. This theme includes two sub-themes: (1) team atmosphere; (2) empowering employees.

#### **Theme 1: The impact of the organizational culture on EE following the intervention**

Following the results of the quantitative analysis, the organizational culture in pre-intervention post-intervention is the most influential factor on EE. From the interviews, two main sub-themes emerge that explain the increase EE in the post-intervention. An analysis of the interviews shows that rewards and recognitions and managers' behavior were the main sub-themes that the interviewees emphasized.

#### **Rewards and recognition following the intervention**

Following the intervention in the organization, a new financial index was introduced to this unit in order to cherish employees. This new financial index is called "Employee's Index". This index is actually a bonus which employees get for their effort

every annual quarter. Employees get this bonus (extra money) directly to their salary, according to their presence at work, working by the organization's procedures, avoiding making mistakes and volunteering activities in the workplace (as extra hours) during the last three months. This new "employee's index" is additionally granted previously to pre-intervention. This bonus can reach up to 20% of the base salary.

All employees indicated that they have received bonuses for their work hence they feel committed to meeting their goals (KPI) and they are willing to go the extra mile for the organization. For example: EMP2 indicated that "the purpose of the rewards is to make employees feel comfortable and motivated, and I think it is very helpful to engagement". EMP2 added "I'm trying hard to keep up my goals. In the last year I tried very much to get into the leading side and add more things on myself. I'm willing to take the extra step and to get an interesting position in the organization, to know that I can contribute in a more meaningful way".

Several managers stated that most employees want to get permanency in the organization and wanted to develop themselves, to succeed in their work, and to get the chance to be promoted in the organization. MNG4 stated that in this unit they have a promotion-development process for talents called "Star's track" that the main purpose is to identify talented employees to become team leaders and said: "managers are using the "employee's index" to locate talented employees. When I'm focused on one employee that I think has a talent, I keep him close to me and make sure he will be developed". MNG2 stated that "they (employees) all want to get permanency in the organization. Thus, they are making an extra effort to succeed. The key motivation for the employee is from two aspects. One there is a promotion process, and the second is that the employee understands that he has been seen in the organization, that everyone sees his contribution to the organization, therefore the organization gives him the opportunity to get a promotion process and to develop".

On the other hand, recognition is also part of the organizational culture, although it should be part of managers' behavior in everyday management, like giving feedback on work issues. MNG1 talked about himself being recognized by the senior managers of his unit and division, and said: "every year an employee is elected

according to his achievements, and is being rewarded by his senior manager. It started with the new senior management. When they chose me, I felt very proud. It gave me motivation and incentive to work even harder". The researcher asked MNG1 if he received a cash bonus for his excellence and MNG1 replied that "it is better than money. The senior manager of this division knows me personally and it is worth a fortune". MNG1 added that in his unit they do the same process with all the employees every quarter and these excellent employees or managers receive a certificate and a bouquet of flowers for their effort and advancing projects and goals for the organization.

### **Organizational culture shapes and influences managers' behavior following intervention**

Managers of this unit must follow regulation, rules and procedures of the work. They see the benefit of the unit before their own personal interest. These managers started as employees at this organization and as a result of their hard work they have been promoted to direct managers. MNG3 said "In this organization we bend to regulation rules and we work in a constructed framework, eventually I can't do what I want". MNG2 mentioned that "Organizational culture obligates the managers to be obsessed with their customers". EMP3 stated that "in this organization you get a clear sense that if you do not align according to conventions then you can find yourself out of the organization". EMP4 indicated that all managers in this unit are trying hard to show how much they work for this organization: "they show how deeply they try to meet the goals, and the organizational culture". EMP5 stated about her manager that when her team members have a criticism about the organization, her manager is not allowing them to protest against it. MNG1 said "Over time you developed masks that you put on yourself in front of your employees and in front of your managers. Here the organization shapes my opinions". Additionally, managers have an influence over employees due to their perception of OC. Managers take care that all KPI and goals will be met in a complete way/ perfectly.

## **Theme 2: Team atmosphere and direct manager behavior influence employee personal engagement**

Following the results of the quantitative analysis, team atmosphere and direct manager's behavior in pre-intervention post-intervention influenced EE. From the interviews, two main themes emerge that explain the increase EE in the post-intervention: team atmosphere and direct manager's behavior that empowers employees.

### **Team atmosphere**

EMP4 said "Our manager encourages us (all team's members) for our good work, thanks to this I feel committed to the job and meeting the goals". The majority of employees indicated that there is a good atmosphere in their team and the willingness of reciprocal assistance between team members. Some indicated that according to the intervention in the organization on a team level, the cooperation is better. EMP1 said: "We understood that we need to work in cooperation". EMP1 and EMP5 stated that "During work time there is a good atmosphere between team members, and everybody is happy and looking forward to meeting each other". EMP5 indicated that lately the direct manager had changed and the cooperation between the team members is much better now. EMP5 said that "With the previous manager, each one was responsible for his own goals. We did not work together to achieve the goals as a team", and emphasized that there was no team's atmosphere between the team members: "We came (to work), did our job and went home. Each to himself". EMP2 emphasized that "It is important for me to contribute to the team, most important is to succeed as a team and reach goals". EMP3 said that "Our manager knows how to identify our individuality as a team and to adapt himself to us", when I asked for example EMP3 answered that "the team really like to have food parties, so the manager unites the team members by arranging food party in which everyone attends to the meeting".

After the intervention in the organization and following the uniqueness of this unit, on special occasions that are called "happy days", like holidays and international occasions such as football league matches, employees and managers get extended food and snacks and some activities that break the routine of this workday. EMP2 said

"you get to the workplace; it is not only for doing the work itself, but you also get more – company and pleasure". EMP3 said: "When you get something from the organization that you do not have to get - it gives you a good feeling".

### **Direct manager empowers employees**

Managers give personal attention to their employees. EMP1 said: "I have a good relationship with my manager. There is real care for everyone. I can even say "mother". EMP2 said: "with my manager, there is genuine support and help, and I can talk with him about any subjects". EMP3 said: "my manager assisted me in understanding my work and supported me in getting my job done. With her assistance I feel less stressed than I used to be". EMP4 said: "my manager gives everyone in the team his space".

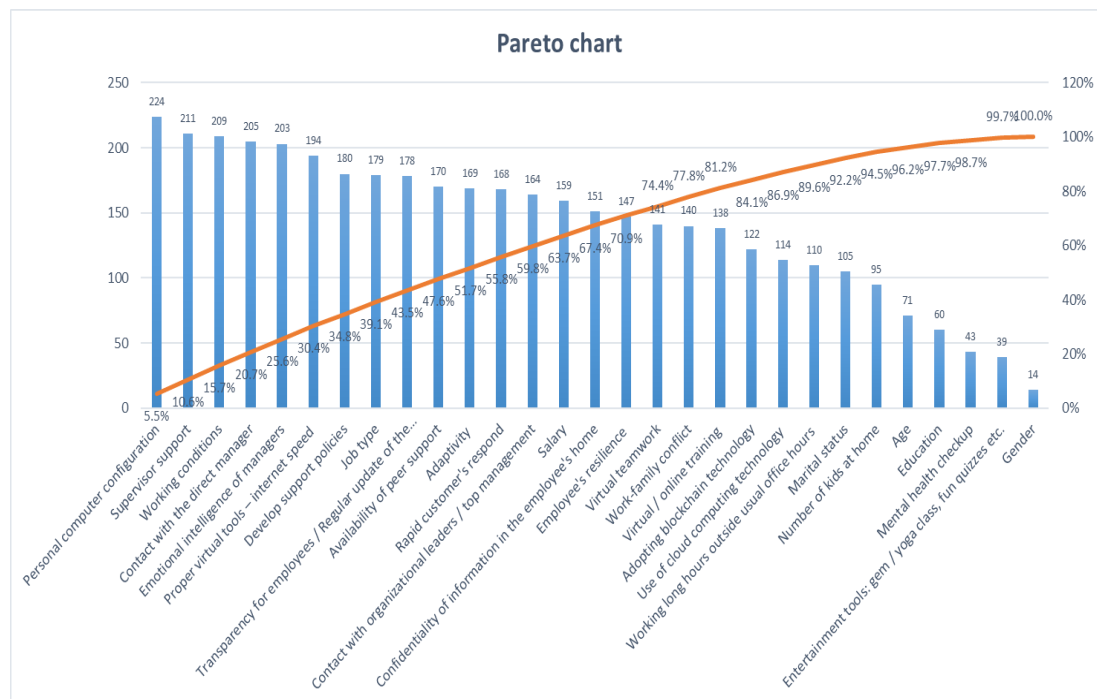
On the other side, managers were being asked about their relationships with their employees and their perspective on it. All managers stated that they care about their employees and especially about their employee's personal development. MNG1 said: "I will give everything of myself to my employees. I will give them the most comfortable platform to work here, and I will make them feel confident. In this way I will show them my contribution and from the other side their contribution to work will be much greater". MNG2 said: "my employees first and foremost receive personal attention. I always find out what they are doing in their private lives, what is going on at home, with their studies, and only then I talk with them on issues related to work".

Additionally, both managers and employees indicated that employees want challenge, autonomy and diversity in their work. Moreover, they believed that employees should receive training and resources that are needed to carry out their work. MNG 3 said: "I work with each one of my employees on the subject of service issues, by training and feedback that I give them I find myself helping them". MNG4 said: "I go through with my (superior) manager over the list of employees, and we are analyzing together how to develop each employee according to his abilities". MNG2 said: "I am training my employees according to the training that I got. I do it in order to develop and empower employees and to enable them to reach better places in the organization".

Furthermore, few managers indicated that their employees are engaged to them and not directly to the organization. These managers claim that they are the "linking element" that creates the employees' engagement to the organization. MNG1 said: "the role of the manager is to make the connection between employee's needs and the organizational goals". Afterwards, MNG1 added that "empowering employees contributes to employee personal engagement to the direct manager and in the long run contributes to the engagement with the organization". Similar statement is made by MNG5 that says that employees engage to their direct manager and indirectly to the organization". MNG4 added that "Employees' priorities are not necessarily coherent with the organization's goals. But on the other hand, employees will absolutely meet the goals I have set for them".

### 3.2.3 The results of the factors influencing EE during the Covid-19 pandemic analysis

This analysis of the results from the covid-19 survey indicates the interrelationship between the 18 factors influencing remote work outcome in the form of employee engagement during the pandemic.



**Figure 22. Pareto analysis of factors influencing EE in the context of COVID-19 pandemic**

Source: own research

A Pareto analysis is presented in Figure 22, including the following results of 29 factors that were collected from the literature, managers, and employees. After analyzing the result, a list of 18 factors were developed from the Pareto analysis indicating 65/35 ratio of the factors. A list of the developed factors is presented in table 37.

**Table 37. List of significant factors from the Pareto analysis**

F1 - personal computer configuration
F2 - Supervisor support
F3 - Working conditions
F4 - Contact with the direct manager
F5 - Emotional intelligence of managers
F6 - Proper virtual tools – internet speed
F7 - Develop support policies
F8 - Job type
F9 - Transparency for employees / Regular update of the employees in the organization
F10 - Availability of peer support
F11 - Adaptability
F12 - Rapid customer's response
F13 - Contact with organizational leaders / top management
F14 - Salary
F15 - Confidentiality of information in the employee's home
F16 - Employee's resilience
F17 - Virtual teamwork
F18 - work-family conflict

Source: own research.

The set of EE factors identified in Table 37 for EE was used to develop the model which represented the correlation between eighteen factors. In the TISM model, the initial step was the development of the structure self-interaction matrix (SSIM) where the EE factors of each pair were compared by the correlation criteria and four symbols V, A, X, or O were used (see Appendix 5.2 – 5.3). A Grey reachability matrix derived from aggregated grey SSIM by the rule presented in Appendix 5.5 for getting to the final crisp reachability matrix (Appendix 5.4 – 5.7).

For example: Internet speed (F6) influences the Rapid customer's response (F12) so the symbol used is "V". Develop support policies (F7) influences the



Working condition (F3) so the symbol used is "A". Adaptability (F11) and Employee's resilience (F16) influence each other so the symbol used is "X". Personal computer configuration (F1) has no relation with the Contact with top management (F13) so the symbol used is "O".

SSIM is converted to a binary matrix called the initial reachability matrix by replacing the original symbols V, A, X, and O with 1 or 0 (Appendix 5.6) and cf. Section 2.5.1 (Reachability Matrix).

When paired to the same factor, i.e., Personal computer configuration (F1) with (F1) is formed, it is represented by 1. The concept of transitivity is introduced in Section 2.5.1 when the initial reachability matrix (Appendix 5.7) has been obtained and is presented in final reachability matrix Appendix 5.9, wherein entries marked \* show the transitivity.

For example, in Appendix 5.9, the initial reachability matrix shows that Contact with top management (F13) is interrelated to Develop support policies (F7) and Develop support policies (F7) is interrelated to Adaptability (F11), then the interaction (F13) and Adaptability (F11) having 0 value is transformed into 1\*.

The final reachability matrix, with transitivity links, was developed from the reachability matrix after checking the transitivity among the factors for EE.

The final crisp reachability matrix of the factors with transitivity links is presented in Appendix 5.9. With the help of this final reachability matrix, level partitioning was carried out to develop the hierarchical model of factors explaining the contextual relationships among them. The level partitioning of factors indicating the level of each factor with antecedent and consequent relationships (Appendix 5.10). The contextual relationships, direct or transitive, between the factors have been delineated in Figure 23 through links.

Presenting the results from the covid-19 survey indicates the interrelationship between the 18 factors influencing remote work outcome in form of employee engagement during the pandemic.

From Table 38 and Figure 23, it is seen that EE (F19) is positioned at the first level (L-1) of the hierarchy. Level 2 consists of Transparency for employees/ Regular update of the employees in the organization (F9) and Rapid customer's response (F12)

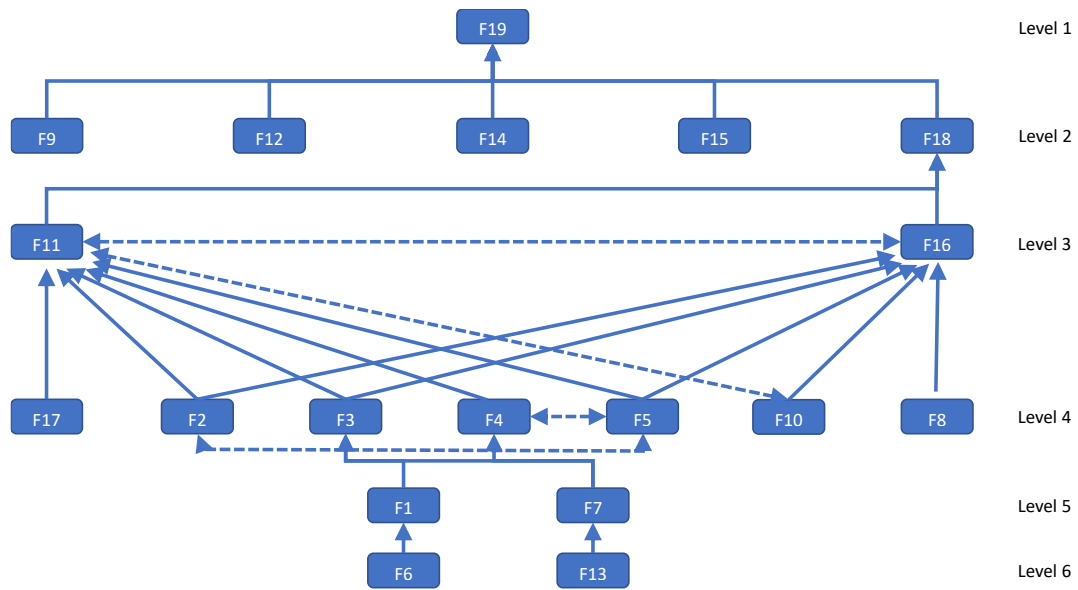
and Salary (F14) and Confidentiality of information in the employee's home (F15) and Work-family conflict (F18). Level 3 includes Adaptability (F11) and Employee's resilience (F16). Level 4 comprises Supervisor support (F2), Working conditions (F3), Contact with the direct manager (F4), Emotional intelligence of managers (F5), Job type (F8), Availability of peer support (F10) and Virtual teamwork (F17). Personal computer configuration (F1) and Develop support policies (F7) are placed at level 5. Finally, level 6 incorporates Internet speed (F6) and Contact with Top management (F13).

Contact with organizational leaders/ top management was found to be affecting EE as a pivotal factor. Top management includes all the senior managers of the organization that normally lead and make the tone about the organizational culture. From the results it appears that also in times of crisis the most pivotal factor influencing remote work outcome in form of employee engagement is OC during COVID-19 pandemic. As such it resulted from the survey's data results that OC is building and enhancing EE in the organization on a daily work routine. The other pivotal factor is fast internet which is the basic and essential factor for remote working. A high-speed connection is needed to do the work.

**Table 38. Level partition of each factor**

Factors	Level
F19	1
F9, F12, F14, F15, F18	2
F11, F16	3
F2, F3, F4, F5, F8, F10, F17	4
F1, F7	5
F6, F13	6

Source: own research.



**Figure 23. Model depicting the relationships between EE factors based on TISM**

Source: own research.

Driving Power ↑	9										
	8										
	7										
	6										
	5	F5				Independent factors		Linkage factors			
	4.5	F2, F7, F10				Autonomous factors		Dependence factor			
	4					F4					
	3	F6, F8		F17		F3		F16			
	2	F13		F1				F11			
	1	F15		F9, F14		F12		F18			
		1	2	3	4	4.5	5	6	7	8	9
	Dependence Power →										

**Figure 24. Cross-impact MICMAC analysis of EE factors**

Source: own research.

MICMAC is used to examine the strength of the relationship between driving power and dependence power of EE factors (Appendix 5.8). The EE factors have been categorized into four clusters based on their driving and dependence power, as shown in Figure 24.

**The four clusters of EE factors are:**

**Cluster I: Autonomous factors**

Cluster I represent autonomous factors and consists of EE factors which have weak driving and dependence power. This cluster has eleven EE factors (61%). Cluster I factors are relatively disconnected from the system. Autonomous factors in cluster I are Personal computer configuration (F1), Working conditions (F3), Contact with the direct manager (F4), Internet speed (F6), Job type (F8), Transparency in information to employee (F9), Rapid customer response (F12), Contact with the top management (F13), Salary (F14), Confidentiality of information (F15), and Virtual teamwork (F17). All the above factors are not influential on EE especially in time of the COVID-19 pandemic although they are from the literature. Which means these factors are not significantly altered by the special circumstances of working from home. These factors have influence in daily work routine but during the pandemic had no influence on EE.

**Cluster II: Dependence factors**

Dependence factors have a strong dependence power and weak driving power. This dependence cluster has three EE factors (17%), Adaptability (F11), Employee's resilience (F16) and Work-family conflict (F18). These three factors stressed the psychological conditions of the employees. During times of crisis psychological conditions of employees have much more effect than daily life routine on employee personal engagement.

**Cluster III: Linkage factors**

Linkage factors have a strong driving power as well as strong dependence power. This linkage cluster has no EE factors.

**Cluster IV: Independent / Driving factors**

Independent / Driving factors consist of driving factors that have strong driving power but weak dependence power. This independent cluster has four EE factors (22%), Supervisor support (F2), Emotional intelligence of managers (F5), Develop support policies (F7), and Availability of peer support (F10). These four factors are the key

factors that fall under the creation and enhancement of EE. These factors are related to the direct manager behavior and team atmosphere which influence EE on remote work during the covid-19 pandemic. Meaning not only in daily work routine the relationship between direct manager and EE and TA and EE has a major influence but also in times of crisis like the pandemic.

### **3.3 Summary of results**

The summary will refer to the three main themes: (1) The correlations between the four research variables and the differences between the pre-intervention survey, the post-intervention survey, and the results of the joint group; (2) The analysis of the correlations between the research variables in a division by Role (managers or employees); (3) The differences between the three measurements prediction models of employee engagement.

In the light of these three main themes, some unexpected questions will be presented, and the author of this thesis will try to answer from a complementary resource as interviews or discussing these unexpected and unanswered results.

#### **3.3.1 The correlations between the research variables**

There are strong positive and significant correlations between all four variables and the chance of making mistakes is very low (0.01) in the three measurement: survey of 2016 is called the pre-intervention (Pre) and included 196 participants, the survey of 2018 is called the post-intervention (Post) and included 234 participants and in the joint group that represent the gap / difference between the two measurements of the joint group (Difference) and included 91 participants (see in results Table 25).

Referring to the correlations between EE with the three independent variables there are some differences between the correlations. The highest correlation is between EE and OC in the three measurements (pre-intervention and Post-intervention and the joint group). Followed in second place is the correlation between EE and TA and in the last place the correlation of EE and DMB (see Table 25).

Moreover, the highest positive strong correlations between EE and the three independent variables have been found in the joint group measurement as it was

expected due to the intervention that took place in this organization, meaning higher than the other (pre-intervention and Post-intervention) measurements (see Table 25).

The correlations between the three independent variables (O.C, T.A and DMB) in all measurements (pre-intervention, Post-intervention and difference) are stronger, positive, and significant as it was expected, and the joint group have the highest correlation compared to the pre-intervention and Post-intervention measurements (see Table 26).

The correlations between DMB and TA in all measurements are positively higher, stronger, and significant as it was expected. Also, it is indicated that these correlations are the highest, compared to the other independent variables correlation in the pre-intervention and post-intervention measurements.

Additional correlations between the variables OC, TA and DMB are also positive, high, strong, and significant ones as it was expected according to the hypothesis (see Table 26). The highest and strongest value correlation in the joint group is between DMB and OC. Meaning after the intervention that took place in the organization, participants of the joint group stress that OC and DMB is the strongest relationship that supports the research hypothesis.

Taking a deeper look between pre-intervention and post-intervention measurements of the three independent variables indicates that there is a slight decrease in the correlations' values, although they are all keeping their positive strong and very significant relationship. However, in the joint group measurement the values of the correlations are higher than those of the Post-intervention measurement (see Table 26).

This difference, in the value of the correlations although all are positive, strong, and significant, need to be explored and discussed. *Why is there a decrease in the post-intervention measurement correlation values while in the joint group the results are higher?*

To answer this unexpected question while referring to the interviews to look for the explanation it will be discussed in chapter 4.

### **3.3.2 The analysis of the correlations between the variables in a division by Role position**

The analysis of the correlations between the research variables by Role position (employees or managers) indicated that most correlations are strong and significant in the two types of Role position in the pre-intervention, post-intervention and joint group measurements (Tables 31-33). There is a certain difference between the correlations of EE with the independent variables among employees compared to managers.

The correlations among employees are positive, stronger, and significant and almost all value correlations are higher than those by managers (Table 31). Among employees the correlations between all research variables in the Pre-intervention and Post-intervention measurements kept their values as positive, strong, and significant relationships. The joint group points out the highest value, strongest and very significant correlations. Additionally, among employees, the mean average of all the research variables is increased between pre-intervention and post-intervention measurements, meaning that employees are more engaged.

In the joint group among employees, the mean average of all the research variables are positive, meaning that employees' perception of the variables in the post-intervention measurement is higher than the pre-intervention measurement. The highest gap is indicated in the DMB variable (0.83) (Table 30).

Among managers the correlations between the research variables in the pre-intervention and Post-intervention measurements are also positive, stronger, and significant (Table 31), except two correlations between EE and two independent variables: EE with TA (.265) in the pre-intervention measurement, and EE with DMB (.401) in the Post-intervention measurement indicates a moderated and non-significant correlations. Additionally, among managers, the mean average of all the research variables is increased between pre-intervention and post-intervention measurements, meaning that managers are also satisfied (tables 28-29).

In the joint group among managers, the mean average of most research variables are positive, meaning the managers' perception of the research variables in the post-intervention measurement are higher than the pre-intervention

measurement. Only among managers' perception of the variable TA has a negative value (-0.08), showing it is a slight difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention of the joint group (Table 30).

Taking a deeper look at the results among managers, arise two unexpected and surprisingly questions: why these relationships between EE and two independent variables would be like that:

1. Why among managers, in the pre-intervention measurement, the relationship between EE with TA (.265) is low and non-significant correlation?
2. Why among managers, in the Post-intervention measurement, the relationship between EE with DMB (.401) is moderate and non-significant correlation?

To answer these unexpected questions while referring to the interviews to look for the explanation it will be discussed in chapter 4.

### **3.3.3 The prediction model of engagement by the independent variables**

The direct prediction model of the Pre-intervention measurement reveals that the combined three independent variables: OC, TA and DMB do explain and predict 63% of employee engagement. Among the predictor variables OC ( $\beta = .63$ ) is a very strong predictor and very significant. In contrast the predictions of TA ( $\beta = .12$ ) and DMB ( $\beta = .11$ ) are weaker and non-significant. Meaning the major variable in predicting EE in the pre-intervention measurement is OC (Table 34).

Compared to the direct prediction model of the Post-intervention measurement reveals that the combined three independent variables: OC, TA and DMB do explain and predict 68% of employee engagement and all the variables are very significant. The predictor variable OC ( $\beta = .56$ ) is a strong predictor. In contrast the predictions of TA ( $\beta = .23$ ) and DMB ( $\beta = .16$ ) are weaker and are significant. (Table 35). Relating the percentage of explained variance  $R^2$  indicates that the model predicts 68% of employee engagement after the interventions (68% vs. 63%) which is higher.

The direct prediction model of the joint group (Difference) reveals that the two independent variables: OC and TA do explain and predict 73% ( $R^2 = .73$ ) of employee engagement and the variables are strong and very significant. The DMB variable ( $\beta = -.009$ ) has a negative influence on the prediction model, meaning a negative beta



coefficient indicates the decrease in the dependent variable – EE for a unit change in the independent variable – DMB.

Taking a deeper look at the results of the three prediction models, arise one unexpected and surprisingly question:

*Why did the variable DMB not enter the prediction model of the joint group?*

To answer this unexpected question while referring to the interviews to look for the explanation it will be discussed in chapter 4.

## Chapter 4. Discussion and implications

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the results of the quantitative study in the pre-intervention and the post-intervention measurement and the joint group results with a supplementary result from qualitative study. As was presented in chapter 3, the surveys' results showed that some research hypotheses were fully supported and one was partially supported, but that left some unanswered questions, mainly the question: why? There are several surveys' results that the author of this thesis was thinking: why would it be like that? This left some unexpected questions that were explored in the interviews, the qualitative study, with members of staff: employees and managers. As a result of that, the author of this research was able to clarify some of the unexpected results. After the attempt to look for answers in the interviews for the unexpected results, some unanswered results are presented as themes for the discussion. This discussion will be conducted in the context of the research questions, the hypotheses, the literature review, and the unified theory that was presented in this study.

The next phase is to combine the surveys' results with the results from the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on EE and its influence on employee's remote working.

This chapter is divided into four subchapters:

- 4.1 – A discussion of the results combining the quantitative and qualitative analyses in an attempt to answer these unexpected results.
- 4.2 – A discussion of the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses in accordance with the research hypotheses, questions, and existing literature.
- 4.3 – The study's contribution to the theory.
- 4.4 – The practical implications.

The main purpose of this study was to explore the role of organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team's atmosphere as factors of employee engagement in a service organization in a financial sector.

The two research questions of this dissertation as initially was formulated are: Are the three independent variables organizational culture (OC), direct manager's behavior (DMB), and team's atmosphere (TA) related to employee engagement (EE)? Does an intervention that includes an improvement in the perception of the three independent variables also improve employee engagement? In light of these questions the following four topics will be discussed with reference to the hypotheses and unanswered questions aroused from the surveys' results:

1. The meaning and the consequences of the correlations between the independent variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team's atmosphere between each of them and the dependent variable employee engagement in the pre-intervention, post-interventions and the joint group (H1-H4).
2. Does the Role position variable (managers and employees) make a difference in enhancing EE (H5)?

Two correlations **among managers** are surprisingly and unexpected:

- I. The correlations between **TA and EE** in the Pre-intervention measurement.
  - II. The correlations between **DMB and EE** in the Post-intervention measurement: why is it like that and what are the meaning and the consequences of it?
3. The three prediction models of EE by the independent variables and its significance.

The difference between the prediction's models: The Post-intervention measurement compared to the joint group prediction model.

- I. Post-intervention: OC, TA and DMB are the predictors of EE.
  - II. The joint group: OC and TA are the only predictors of EE, and why is DMB not in the model?
4. The role of organizational culture in building employee engagement.
    - I. In the Pearson correlation of the research variables, OC has the strongest correlation with EE in all the 3 measurements (pre-intervention, post-intervention and joint group).

- II. The OC variable is the only significant predictor of EE in the pre-intervention measurement.
- III. In the post-intervention and the joint group OC is the highest significant predictor.

#### **4.1 Discussion of the results combining the quantitative and qualitative analyses in an attempt to answer these unexpected results**

The statistical results that were presented in chapter 3, raising some unanswered questions mainly the question why? The author of this thesis had to go deeper in order to answer these unanswered questions. The way to go deeper is to go and ask people in the researched unit. Unanswered questions were explored in the interviews with members of staff: managers and employees. As a result of that, the author of this thesis was able to clarify some of the unexpected results or results that were not fully explained:

1. The correlations between the three independent variables in the Pre-intervention measurement, Post-intervention measurement and the joint group are positive and strong. Why is there a slight decrease in the correlation results of the Post-intervention measurement compared to the Pre-intervention measurement (it would be expected to be higher than the Pre-intervention measurement), whilst the correlation results of the joint group are higher than the post-intervention measurements? (Table 26).
2. Why among managers, in the Pre-intervention measurement, the relationship between EE with TA (.265) is low and non-significant correlation?
3. Why among managers, in the Post-intervention measurement, the relationship between EE with DMB (.401) is moderate and non-significant correlation?
4. Why did the variable DMB not enter the prediction model of the joint group?
5. Why is there a difference between the post-intervention and the joint group prediction models?

In order to answer these questions and to look deeper, a combination of the statistical results and interviews are aimed to give a response and support to these unexplained questions.

#### **4.1.1 The independent variables' correlations following the intervention present a lower value in the Post-intervention measurement compared to the joint group.**

According to hypothesis H4, following the intervention that occurred in this unit, the correlations between the three independent variables are expected to be higher and stronger in the post-intervention and joint group measurement, compared to the pre-intervention measurement results. The post-intervention measurement and the joint group results showed positive and strong results, meaning the hypothesis H4 was fully supported, but the post-intervention measurement results were slightly lower compared to the joint group results. The author of the thesis poses a question: why the correlation results of the post-intervention measurement are slightly lower compared to the joint group, while the mean scores of the three independent variables in the post-intervention measurement are high.

The interviews with managers indicate that it is hard to recruit, maintain and keep employees. This period was a period of change in the organization. Lean strategy and change in organizational structure also influence this researched unit. Managers talked about the need to be obsessed with customers. All the focus and goals orientation were directed to customers. The results suggested the possibility that there are other variables that influenced the relationship between OC, TA and DMB among all employees and managers in the Post-intervention measurement. Such variables can be related to "Employee Index", and working regulation, which is a byproduct of the intervention that took place in this unit and influences the relationship between OC, TA and DMB. These variables could be: regulation that was enforced in this unit due to the intervention, such as working extra shifts and hours on a voluntary method, working on a free day (six days a week), duration of call with customers, meeting personal KPI and Goals, which were not measured in this research.

#### **4.1.2 A change among managers in the relationship between EE with TA and EE and DMB**

Among managers, almost all correlations between the research variables are strong, positive and significant in the three measurements but there are two unexpected correlations revealed from the analysis of the surveys' results between the pre-intervention to the post-intervention measurements which raises the question: why is it like that?

1. Why is the correlation between **EE and TA** a weak and non-significant correlation (Pre-intervention measurement, .265)?
2. Why is the correlation between **DMB and TA** a weak and non-significant correlation (Pre-intervention measurement, .259)?
3. Why is the correlation between **EE and DMB** a moderate and non-significant correlation (Post-intervention measurement, .401)?

In order to answer and explain these unexpected results among managers especially after the intervention, which raises the question why it is like that? A deeper emphasis into the interviews took place to answer and explain these unexpected, surprising correlations.

An interesting point among managers is the change that occurs in the results from the pre-intervention measurement to the post-intervention measurement. In the pre-intervention measurement, the relationship between **EE and TA** is weak and non-significant which turns after the intervention to be a strong and significant relationship. Furthermore, the strongest correlation among managers is in the joint group between **EE and TA**. Moreover, the mean average of the variable **TA** has a very minor change between the pre-intervention (8.62) and the post-intervention (8.65) measurements, which indicates a very high mean average (8.65) and slightly decrease in the joint group.

In order to explain this, data from the interviews with managers pointed out that managers at the pre-intervention measurement did not work together as a team. They worked in individual ways, they were not associated with a team and that is their relationship. They needed to justify themselves to their boss (the senior manager of this unit, who is the same senior manager in the pre-intervention and the post-

intervention measurements) but not collectively, not together. Each one needs to go to the boss and explain what kind of job they are doing which is quite normal. This indicates that there is a big gap in seniority between these direct managers and the senior manager of this unit that creates a relationship that has greater distance. In the post-intervention measurement, the most interesting and important thing is that something happened that changed their attitude to their colleagues. Instead of being individuals and separated, they become more of a team, meaning they had something in common. The managers have united goals (KPI) that they need to accomplish, so they work together. During the intervention, these managers received training: managers' development program. External trainers were brought in to do some managers' development training which come with a number of management skills. The significant thing that was found in this research, as well as individual's developments for managers on effect of the training program which all the managers undertook, they all took part in it. One effect of that was a change of attitude among these managers from being very individually focused, on their own departments, they began to act much more as colleagues to support each other, to take advice from each other and to make use of each other's skills.

The second unexpected surveys' result among managers in the post-intervention measurement is that the correlation between **EE** and **DMB** indicated a non-significant moderate correlation compare to a significant strong correlation in the pre-intervention measurement.

From the results, the mean average of the variable DMB has highly increased (0.75) between the pre-intervention to the post-intervention measurements and has the highest mean average (8.90) and also increased in the joint group (0.34) (table 28-31) as it was expected due to the intervention. Trying to answer this question and having a deeper look in the interviews did not give a clearer answer. From the interviews, managers received guidance as part of their training and development program, therefore, their DMB was expected to have a high correlation with EE.

The interviews raise several points that need to be addressed in accordance with the analysis of the results and in drawing conclusions. The main point is that these managers are working at the core of the action, they are the ones that have all the

responsibility to meet the unit goals. It is important to notice that the change in the organization puts this unit in the focus of the whole organization. Changes in technology and lean strategy took place in the organization and affected these managers' attitudes and behaviors. Each one of these managers were responsible for a large number of employees (22-25 employees) that needed to meet the goals of this unit which led to having indirect responsibility for the success of the organization.

The DMB variable among managers is related to the senior manager of this unit, the Boss of the direct managers. This senior manager is in a high hierarchy position. He is the one that grants permission for the development program for managers, but he is not the one that personally trains each one of the direct managers. There is a lack of a managerial level between them that creates a desire among the direct managers to succeed and to prove themselves to the senior manager. As a result, it can be understood that the direct managers highly value their senior manager, and it is reflected in the score average they give to their manager.

In evidence, the mean average of the variable **DMB** has a major change between the pre-intervention (8.15) and the post-intervention (8.90) measurements (table 28-31). Moreover, it is important to indicate that there are 5 new managers that did not participate in both surveys, they were not included in the joint group. Explanation: there are 17 managers in the Post-intervention measurement and 12 managers in the joint group, meaning the senior manager appointed 5 new managers during the two years interval. The calculation of weighted mean average of this small group of managers is  $X=9.8$ .

$$\frac{12 * 8.5 + 5 * X}{17} = 8.90$$

12 - *managers from joint group*  
5 - *new manages in the post mesurment*

This is an unexpected result of the mean average of the 5 managers, meaning almost all 5 managers gave the highest response in all the managers' questions. This raises the question why? What really happened to the group of these new five managers that they ranked their boss with "10" on all eight questions?



As a result, it can be concluded that the senior manager has a very high impact on the direct managers. The interviews with the managers suggested that the new managers felt strong loyalty to the manager who recruited them. Meaning, the senior manager appoints these direct managers who work under him and who match the unit and the organization's goals. Among the direct managers there is a sense of satisfaction and a strong desire to meet the expectations of the senior manager. Illustrating the findings of the interviews according to theme 2 in the interviews.

The third unexpected correlation among managers is between **DMB and TA** that is also increased from low and non-significant correlation to a strong significant correlation (Pre-intervention to Post-intervention). The explanations that were given from the interviews with the managers indicated the same answers to this relationship.

#### **4.1.3 DMB variable did not enter into the prediction model of the joint group and the difference between the post-intervention and the joint group prediction models**

Taking a deeper look at the three measurements predictors' models indicates that before the intervention, in the pre-intervention measurement OC is the only predictor variable of EE. This means that the organizational culture has significant influence in this unit on EE. In the Post-intervention measurement all the three independent variables entered as predictors of EE in the predictor model and the hypotheses H1-H4 were supported as it was expected. In the joint group prediction model, unexpected and surprising results have been accepted in this model that brought the author of this study to take a deeper look in the statistical results and the interviews for an answer to the question: why DMB is not in the prediction model of the joint group?

In order to answer this question, the author of this thesis points out different aspects of the statistics results combining them with results from the participants in the interviews.

In the joint group that included 91 participants who repeated the surveys twice with an interval of two years, the surveys' results indicate that all correlations of OC, TA and DMB with EE are positive, strong, and significant. Also, these correlations have

the highest values compared to the Pre-intervention and Post-intervention measurements as it was expected due to the intervention that took place in this unit. The correlation between DMB and the OC has been found as the highest strong correlation and the second strong value correlation is between DMB and TA.

Furthermore, the average means of the joint group after the intervention indicates that the average means of all the research variables were significant and increased as expected, except for the non-significant TA. Additionally, among managers of the joint group, the strongest correlation is between TA and EE, meaning the development training had an influence on their relationship as a team. More important are the two correlations among managers which are strong and very significant between OC with EE and OC with DMB. Similar correlations are presented among employees of the joint group, the strongest correlations are between OC with EE, and OC with DMB. From this point of view, the variable OC has a stronger positive impact on both EE and DMB among both employees and managers.

From one point of view, the DBM is not in the prediction model but there is not a clear cut – why? Is it only because OC is a very influential factor of EE or because there are other elements that are influencing that took the DBM out of the prediction model that were not checked in this research.

From the interviews, it is indicated that managers talked about the OC influencing their work and their performance in their team. The interventions were in three levels: organizational level that influenced the whole organization, in the unit level that focused on the unit itself, its managers and employees and had an influence on the task, KPI, technology and other factors that could influence EE. The last level was the personal level, managers had a managers' development training program that focused on management skills assisting them to manage their team members. Also, employees had a training program that the senior management connected to the development course that an employee can get through the "stars track" program or even by their own managers that needed to be responsible for assisting their employees on their regular tasks and on everyday targets.

The manager is in a very important position from two points of view: (1) from the managerial level – the senior manager sees the direct managers as partners in

meeting goals and visions; (2) from the employees' level – the direct manager is the one that managing the KPI, and giving the tone around the team members – so what happened in the joint group that DMB did not enter to the prediction model of EE?

Normally, it is expected that DMB will be a predictor of EE but according to the results of the quantitative analysis, the DMB did not enter into the prediction model in the joint group. The behavior of the direct manager is always an important factor in how people feel about their job. If an employee has a Boss that he really gets on with and respects and helps him and the employee can go for advice and seems to look after him and care about him - it makes the atmosphere better and if someone has the opposite then he feels badly about it. When you ask people about their direct manager, if they think that the way that their direct manager behaves entirely consists, one way with the organizational culture, so he or she behaves exactly as they expected them to behave which is a big factor in trust. Does this person do what I expected them to do? Is their behavior predictable? This is an important factor; the behavior of the direct manager is consistent with the organizational culture, and it is also consistent with the team culture. Therefore, there is nothing remarkable about the direct manager's behavior, it is just fixed with the way things are in that organization or especially with this part of the organizational unit. If that is the case, it's maybe not that the behavior isn't significant, but it does not seem worth mentioning it. Does not seem worth putting a lot of emphasis on it to the people who answered the questions in the survey, because their direct managers behave exactly as he or she does and therefore it does not seem particularly important. This can also indicate that there are other variables that influence EE in a much stronger way and managers have an influence in an indirect way on EE. Among managers in the joint group the correlation between EE and DMB has a strong and significant value, but it is lower compared to employees, meaning a positive trusted relationship is influencing this correlation among employees more than managers.

#### **4.1.4 Summary of the results and the unexpected questions that raised from the results:**

It can be summed up that these are the following five main topics that escalating from the data:

1. All research variables have a strong correlation between each one and with EE.
2. The direct managers are changing their attitudes as a result of the interventions.
3. There are differences between the prediction models.
4. The DMB is a weak variable and not entered into the prediction model of the joint group.
5. OC is the strongest variable building and enhancing EE.

#### **4.2 Discussion of findings against extant literature**

##### **4.2.1 The Influence of organizational culture, direct manager's behavior, and team's atmosphere on employee engagement (H1-H4)**

In the literature, organizational culture has been found as an important element for achieving and enhancing employee engagement. In this study the three research measurements validate these findings and reveals that organizational culture can predict and explain 63%, 68% and 73% (Pre-intervention, Post-intervention and joint group) of employee engagement according to the longitudinal data that enable examination of relationships between the same constructs at different points in time (Table 34, 35 and 36).

However, in all measurements a team atmosphere is a significant variable and its relationship to employee engagement is no less strong than the relationship between organization culture and employee engagement. A Pearson analysis indicates that the correlation between organizational culture, team's atmosphere and employee engagement is higher than the correlation between DMB and employee engagement (Table 25). However, the significant correlations between the independent variables in the Post measurement can explain 68% of the drivers to create employee engagement while the other 32% can be explained by other drivers

that relate to technology, environment and work conditions, and personal elements like salary and promotion programs. Other drivers or factors can be added with the significance of the Covid-19 survey.

#### **4.2.1.1 The relationships between organizational culture as norms, values, beliefs, and behaviors and employee engagement**

In the literature, the relationship between organizational culture as norms, values, beliefs, and employee engagement has been explored by many researchers. This research findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that organizational culture has a positive and strong relationship that emphasizes that OC is the significant influence factor in creating and enhancing EE in daily work routine and in crisis situations. OC impacts employees' perceptions and beliefs which affects employees' behavior and their perception of the organizational reality. As a result, the culture influences employee engagement (Schein, 2010; Kotrba et al., 2012; Sarangi and Srivastava, 2012; Reissner and Pagan, 2013). This study supports this conclusion and states that organizational culture and team's atmosphere are strong predictors of employee engagement in comparison to direct manager behaviors (Table 36). The research findings are consistent with the literature review on the essential role of organizational culture and team's atmosphere on creating employee engagement.

The important role of OC as perceived as essential in creating and enhancing EE, is explained in the literature by the follow studies:

1. OC has many layers: norms, values, beliefs, assumptions and ideas. In simple words: "This is the way we do things around here". OC has a great impact on employees' perceptions and how employees believe they should behave in their organization (Schein, 2010). These perceptions and beliefs guide employees' behaviors that are connected to employee's commitment, satisfaction, effectiveness and engagement (Kotrba et al., 2012; Reissner and Pagan 2013; Sarangi and Srivastava, 2012).
2. OC is a major factor in motivating and enhancing employee engagement. OC is considered an essential contributing factor in raising the level of motivation and performance among employees (Mahal, 2009).

3. OC has a major influence on employees' performance. OC appears to be the strongest factor that affects and enhances EE (Groysberg et. al., 2018; Latham and Pinder, 2005; McGregor and Doshi, 2015).
4. Values are powerful motivators of behaviors and are similar to needs in their ability to direct and sustain behaviors. Values are much closer to actions than needs, because needs are inborn while values are acquired cognition and experiences. Values are one of four elements that shape behaviors alongside formal structure, systems and policies (Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Latham and Pinder, 2005).
5. OC can be perceived as a behavioral pattern which is implemented over the long-term life span in the organization (Kotter and Haskett 1992). "*Culture serves as a sense-making device that can guide and shape behavior*" (Smircich, 1983, p. 346). People do not behave in and respond to the world "as it really is", but as they perceive its values, beliefs, and assumptions (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2019). OC is all about understanding people's perceptions about their workplace and how it influences their work (Jacobs et al., 2011). Meaning the purpose of any improvement initiative is to specifically identify activities, behaviors, which an employee can execute in order to achieve the organizational goals.
6. OC has assimilated other constructs like organizational structure, strategy and control which are coinciding with the concept of culture (Denison and Neal, 1999; Hofstede al., 1990).
7. OC has an important role as an "*operating system*" of the organization. This role manifested in fostering new technology adoption which led to organizational growth and success (Balthazard et al., 2006, p.711; Chatman and Jehn, 1994).

#### **4.2.1.2 The relationships between team atmosphere and employee engagement**

Team atmosphere as a factor enhancing EE is influenced by the co-worker relationship in a team. Team and co-worker relationship is significantly influential on employee

engagement. This study supports this conclusion. Collegial and professional skills play an important role especially in the success of fresh employees (Hertzog et al., 2000).

The important role of TA as perceived as essential in enhancing EE, is explained in the literature by the follow studies:

1. Team and co-worker relationships are being reflected by team's achievements and collaborative decision making, which leads employees to take on greater responsibility to achieve shared goals and visions (Kahn, 1990), which provide a meaningful work experience.
2. Team atmosphere is another aspect that clearly emphasizes the interpersonal harmony aspect of EE. Kahn (1990) found that supportive and trusting interpersonal relationships, as well as a supportive team, promote employee engagement which is essential for employees to feel safe in the workplace and engage totally with their responsibility to experiment and to try new things and even fail without fear of the consequences (Kahn, 1990).
3. Workplace's relationships have been found by May et al. (2004) as a significant impact on meaningfulness which is one of Kahn's (1990) components of EE.
4. Effective team and a healthy co-worker relationship are required for enhancing engagement. The following factors play a major role in building an effective high-performance team: talent, team climate, collective pride, commitment, leadership, purpose, communication, continuous improvement, team ethics and team bonding (Bhogle and Bhogle, 2011). These factors have been found to be highly significant in improving team and co-worker relationships and promoting an ambience where collegiality can thrive (Anitha, 2014).
5. Locke and Taylor (1991) argued that individuals who have positive interpersonal interactions with their co-workers also should experience greater meaning in their work. Therefore, if an employee has good relationships with his co-workers, his work engagement is expected to be high.
6. Halbesleben's (2010) meta-analysis research has found that engagement is significantly related to these consequences: commitment, health, turnover intentions, and performance that influence the team atmosphere.

7. Mone and London (2010) suggest that after improving performance management, organizations can create and maintain high levels of employee engagement. Therefore, the energy and focus inherent in job involvement allows employees to bring their full potential to the job which enhances the quality of their primary responsibilities.
8. Gallup has found that 70% of the variance in a team's engagement is related to their management, meaning managers create the conditions that promote the behaviors of engaged employees. The manager is either an engagement-creating coach or an engagement-destroying boss, but both relationships affect employee behavior (Gallup, 2022).

#### **4.2.1.3 The relationships between direct manager behavior and employee engagement**

The direct manager behavior is indicated by his management practices. The management practices are focused on direct manager's specific behaviors covered as a part of the organizational culture along with development and learning programs. In other words, behaviors that included developing open communication between managers and employees, encouraging managers to provide clear expectations and involving employees in decision-making processes (Shuck et al., 2011).

The important role of DMB in enhancing EE, is explained in the literature by the follow studies:

1. The direct manager plays an important role in the development of engagement and encouraging cultures (Arakawa and Greenberg, 2007; Harter et al., 2002, 2003; Macey and Schneider, 2008; Saks, 2006).
2. Many managerial behaviors have the potential to provide a sense of meaningful work, a safe workplace for employees to work and open communication, as well as the necessary resources to complete one's work (Hackman and Oldman, 1976; Kahn, 1990; Maslow, 1970).
3. On the other hand, poor management practices (unfriendly climate) and poor communication skills reduce employee satisfaction (Brown and Leigh, 1996)



and increase turnover levels (Harter et al., 2002). Disengagement can cause turnover or terminate employment.

4. Gallup (2022) has found that in every workplace, no matter what country, industry, or market it operates in, managers are essential to build and enhance employee engagement. Direct manager's actions such as setting clear expectations, positioning employees to use their strengths, and providing employees with regular recognition and praise are building and enhancing EE.
5. Organizational leadership also plays an important role in engagement, without leadership support, managers will be fighting hard no matter how they strive to be engagement-creating coaches (Gallup, 2022).
6. "*Engaged employees don't need or want a boss, but they will seek out their manager's advice*". Today's manager needs to be a coach, holding employees accountable while encouraging development and growth through meaningful conversations which is the most powerful tool a manager holds. (Gallup, 2022).
7. The direct manager communicates the organizational goals and vision with an image that every employee can relate (Bolman and Deal, 2003; Elster and Corral, 2009).

#### **4.2.2 Direct managers change their attitudes following the interventions**

The direct managers following the interventions that took place in their unit, had a change of attitudes, from being very individually focused, they began to act much more as colleagues to support each other, to take advice from each other and to make use of each other's skills. In the literature perceived social support which means work relationships with colleagues and supervisors are related to positive attitudes towards change. Organizational culture is related with attitudes toward organizational change (Rashid et al, 2004) meaning organizational support as employee voice and participation, information and communication, work–life balance are positively and significantly toward change (Giauque, 2015). This study supports this conclusion and is explained in the literature by the follow studies:

1. A change of attitudes is associated with behaviors that reflect a positive overall evaluation of the change. Strong, positive attitudes toward change are likely to be based on change aspects with high personal relevance leading to positive evaluative beliefs and emotions (Frijda and Mesquita, 2000; Lazarus, 1991).
2. Positive attitudes toward change are relatively stable over time, and are expected to produce behaviors that are focused, persistent, and effortful in their attempts to support and facilitate the implementation of change (Ajzen, 2001).
3. Such attitudes are also thought to be relatively stable over time, resistant to persuasion, and highly predictive of behavior (Ajzen, 2001). Positive attitudes toward change and strong attitude-behavior links are expected to produce behaviors that are focused, persistent, and effortful in their attempts to support and facilitate the implementation of change.
4. Pro-change behaviors include extra role efforts to solve unexpected problems, adapt the general change approach, and become content with subunit levels of competence, behavioral norms, and values (Lines, 2005).
5. Strong, positive attitudes are likely to be conducive to high levels of organizational citizenship behaviors (Organ, 1990).

#### **4.2.3 The prediction models of employee engagement – its significance and implications and DMB is a weak predictor of the joint group**

The prediction model of the post measurement indicated that the three independent variables: OC, TA and DMB are the predictors of EE. Meaning there are direct relationships between the independent variables, Organizational culture, team atmosphere and direct manager behavior and the dependent variable employee engagement.

In academic literature research, it can be found a wide range of studies pointing out and demonstrating the variety dimensions, which structuring these independent variables as predictors of employee engagement, and which emphasizing the direct relationships between them. Moreover, in the academic

literature research, no reference was found to the existence of this research prediction model between the three independent variables: OC, TA and DMB as one construct and the dependent variable – EE, as shown in the actual study.

A search of the academic literature indicates that there are not sufficiently conducted comparative studies of the relationships between each of the independent variables and EE, particularly between direct manager and EE, and team atmosphere and EE compared to OC and EE. As well as the relationships between the three independent variables as one construct, and EE, and analyzing the relative weight of each of these independent variables on creating and enhancing EE.

The prediction model of the joint group indicated that only OC and TA are the predictors of EE, meaning DMB did not enter the prediction model in this specific group of employees and managers. Probably the reason is because organizational culture and team's atmosphere are inclusive, straightforward, and profound variables. From the surveys' results, it can be noticed and emphasized that in the joint group, employees are highly engaged in their workplace. According to Gallup (2022) a manager should change his behavior and become more of a coach to guide his employees, empower them to take on challenges and to use their strengths, therefore "*engaged workers don't need or want a boss*". As overall, they seek for their manager's advice, assistance and advocacy to improve their performance.

#### **4.3 Contribution to the theory**

A contribution to academic research is made by this study on three key aspects:

1. This study presents four different perspectives related to weight of each of the following important factors: organizational culture, team atmosphere and direct manager's behavior in creating and enhancing employee engagement and the positive and significant relationships that exist between these factors. Furthermore, this study indicates the difference by role position (manager/employee) influencing positively and significantly these factors in creating and enhancing employee engagement.
2. This study emphasizes the existence and importance of significant and positive relationships among the four variables. Also, it is among the few studies that

analyze the simultaneous effect of the three independent variables: organizational culture, team atmosphere and direct manager's behavior on employee engagement. The study revealed that these three variables are strong predictors of employee engagement and they can explain 68 percent of the reasons for creating employee engagement, whereas the 32 percent can be explained by other factors.

3. This study significantly emphasizes the existence and importance of significant and positive relationships among the three variables (organizational culture, team atmosphere and employee engagement) that was following the intervention in the organization on the same group of participants. These three independent variables can explain even more 73% percent of the reasons for creating employee engagement. The variable direct manager's behavior did not enter the model as a decisive predictor of employee engagement. A probable reason for this is that the specific variable DMB was subsumed within the variables organizational culture and team's atmosphere, which are inclusive, straightforward, and profound variables.

This study supports the research approach that during globalization, a strong organizational culture, consolidates the managers and employees within the unit in the organization. A strong organizational culture leads to high productivity and profitability, improves the competitive advantage of the organization, enables the creation of a good team atmosphere that enables increasing the connection between employees and managers to the organization as well as developing training programs for managers in a variety of management positions. Organizational culture ultimately reinforces the immediate growth and sustainable growth of the organization.

#### **4.4 Practical implications**

Employee engagement is a topic that employs and interests many consulting companies, practitioners, and organizational leaders. This topic has a significant implication on the success and productivity of the organization, from one side and on the other on employee's well-being. One of many organization's targets is to maintain a high level of engaged employees. Actually, the level of disengaged employees rises

and has a significant impact on the organization's profit, ability to retain talented employees, and employee citizenship (Gallup, 2022).

The concept of employee engagement has received a greater profound meaning and understanding, particularly in a time of a crisis. The level of engagement among those employees who kept working during the pandemic have taken greater significance. Additional variables to measure the level of employee engagement have been examined such as self-resilience and hybrid work that have been empowered due to the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Three main important facets are presented in this study, together they create the change in the organization and increase the level of employee engagement. This study found that organizational culture, team atmosphere and direct manager's behavior can predict 73% of the employee engagement and has a strong and positive relationship between these three independent factors and employee engagement. The implications for practice of this study are reflected in the following three levels: at the organizational level, at the team level, and at the individual level.

Therefore, the implications of this study can affect other similar workplaces as this organization in the financial sector, and also affect both the work of global consulting firms, leaders and senior executives in organizations, leading them to consider and examine the integration of these three factors in their organization.

Executing lean strategy alongside a change to a flat organizational structure is a main goal in many organizations nowadays. The combination of the new strategy with a development of managerial training program and development of an employee empowerment process that emphasis on teamwork, enable to predict a high level of employee engagement to the organization.

#### **4.4.1 Implications of research at the organizational level**

Consulting companies such as Gallup, McKinsey, Deloitte etc., have been engaged in the field of employee engagement for several decades. These consulting firms focus on analyzing their customers' companies' findings looking for implications of employee engagement, in relation to one or two influential factors such as direct manager, teamwork or senior management of the organization.

This study sheds light on the integration of the three factors together while restructuring the organization and transferring to lean strategy and within it implementing flat organizational structure which has been successfully and effectively implemented in this researched unit in the financial sector.

### **Lean strategy and flat organizational structure**

A flat organizational structure strengthens the connection and importance of the direct manager in his work with the senior manager. This flat organizational structure without an in-between manager who mediates between them, increases the direct manager's level of engagement.

The direct manager appreciates the importance of his role in the new organizational hierarchy that places him directly with the unit's senior manager. This status enables the direct manager to contribute and influence organizational processes, and to make decisions that will affect the organization and its unit in particular.

Following lean strategy, allows the direct manager to receive and convey messages in both directions: top-down approach from the senior manager to his employees and vice versa.

### **Top-down approach – influencing of the senior manager on the direct managers**

The impact of working directly with the senior manager enables a clear and open communication of the organization's values, goals and vision. This allows direct managers to convey and instill in their employees the vision and goals of the organization in the clearest way and in a direct manner. In doing so, they enhance engagement in their employees, helping them to implement and carry out their mission to achieve the goals of the organization. Furthermore, it is important that managers in all levels take the time to communicate organizational goals on a consistent basis.

### **Bottom-up approach – employee's voice**

The bottom-up approach management allows employees to voice their perception about the work processes in the workplace and to suggest solutions to regulation and processes.

Following the openness to hear an employee's voice, the direct manager permits his employees to express their opinions freely and directly on work processes, procedures, technologies and everything related to their day-to-day work. Along with this, it enables streamlining and improving processes and proposing creative solutions. For that reason, regular meetings for their employees, in which all employees' concerns, achievements, and failures are openly communicated can facilitate this process

The effect of having meetings with employees to voice about problems and achievements allows: (1) a better understanding of the organizational changes that need to be treated; (2) a better understanding of organizational regulations and policies that may need revising, which can lead to increased involvement, trust and engagement between employees and management.

#### **4.4.2 Implications of research at the team level**

The intervention process that was carried out in this organization illuminated two different types of teams: (1) work teams consisted of employees; (2) a team of direct managers. Many studies show that organizations place great emphasis on the importance of the "classic" team - employees and direct manager, and on the meaning and implications of the team on meeting the organization's goals and profitability. Organizations that want to strengthen even more the team atmosphere around the various units of the organization, must understand that there is an additional team consisting of all the direct managers of a unit.

Many organizations do not emphasize collaboration between their direct team leaders/ managers and make each team work individually without shared working relationships between them (Gratton and Erickson, 2007; Katzenbach and Smith, 1993; Moxon, 1993). Creating a platform for the formation of direct managers will make it possible to create a space for brainstorming, new ideas, consultations, and

intentions of direct managers among themselves. Eventually, most managers face the same problems and the same dilemmas. A good relationship between the direct managers will enable the support, sharing of ideas and creating a pleasant and supportive environment for the direct managers as well.

From a management perspective, an engaged team should be considered to be a priority. From a team perspective, all team's members must be committed to the job to get high productivity and improved work practices (Kahn, 1990). Disengaged teams can result in lower team cohesion, higher errors, and omissions, wasted organizational resources, and even high turnovers.

Managing team engagement is by instituting regular feedback sessions for employees where they can demonstrate and communicate reasons for perceived low or high involvement and engagement level. Mentoring, clear, and consistent communication, repetitive training, accountability to team members for themselves and others and allowing employees to try new things are means by which managers can improve team engagement that influences and impacts workplace regulations.

### **The team of direct managers**

The process of intervention that took place in this organization allowed the organization to improve and streamline those teams. The team of direct managers have become a team only after these managers have changed their attitudes from being individual managers to a team of managers due to the interventions. This process allowed them to share a common goal, and on the other hand, to be responsible for creating a cohesive team atmosphere between their employees.

Enabling the creation of the platform / forum for direct managers, encourage them to participate and share their personal experiences and thus assist in the personal and team development of direct managers. Organizations that want to empower their teams can learn about the change process being made in that organization and empower their teams. Educating feedback sessions can provide leaders the assistance to bring teams closer together with greater knowledge of acceptance for differences as well as collaborating similarities among employees to establish cohesiveness.



Implementation of reliable engagement practices, leaders will have much greater knowledge of what engages / disengages employees and how the two complementary concepts affect performance. By investigating employees on how they feel about their work surroundings, leaders are able to project their concerns onto employees and their contribution to the organization. Through intentional encouragement for employees, which emphasizes the improvement between employees and managers relationships, highlighting the establishment of trust, leading to higher satisfaction in the workforce.

#### **4.4.3 Implications of research at the individual level**

The intervention process that was carried out in this organization had illuminated also on the individual level. Employees were evaluated on an individual basis in order to establish the enhancement of employee engagement and the improvement of the work itself.

Customer service is an important goal of service orientation units, monitoring and controlling the performance of the employees and their behaviors toward customers. Employees have an essential aspect in problem solving, to enable the best solution that the company can offer for customers. Employees must be professional and provide a solution to problems that arise.

It is imperative for direct managers to facilitate integration and understanding of physical, psychological, and social needs of the individuals in order to enhance engagement and to improve performance.

A balance between rewards and sanctions is critical for behavioral change and subsequently improves job engagement. Direct managers have a direct role in providing resources to employees for efficiency. Direct communication that involve face-to-face interaction as frequently as possible even on a daily basis, involving active listening, encouragement, and feedback are all methods of proper communications. Open discussion and feedback sessions between senior management and direct managers enable concerns that arise to be voiced without the fear. In order for an individual to be truly successful, the efforts of all parties: senior managers, direct managers and employees must be demonstrated consistently.

#### **4.4.4 Implications of research at the time of crisis**

During times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of the organizational flat structure allows a direct transmission of information between management and employees. Direct managers conducted and conveyed clear feedback on the emotions of employees during this time frame. The transition to remote working allowed flexible conditions and adaptation to employees. The flexibility in working hours, remote employee support, continued employment even in times of uncertainty, and of course continued providing benefits to employees, increased the sense of engagement among employees especially during this challenging period.

The organizational culture and the relationship with senior executives were the most pivotal important factors for employees working from home. Maintaining continuous contact with the organization's management emphasizes the importance of the organizational culture in daily work life in the eyes of employees who have had to continue their work remotely. Maintaining continuous contact with the organization's management emphasizes the importance of the organizational culture in daily work life from employees' point of view who have had to continue their work remotely.

## Conclusions

### Limitations of the study:

Every study has limitations that are naturally related to the limitations of the researcher himself, his human biases, his points of view, and even his personal experience. These limitations vary between the type of research (quantitative or qualitative) and the nature of the researcher's view of the research question (personal and cultural biases).

In this dissertation, the author of this study identified a number of factors that may influence and limit the results of the study and its conclusions. The factors identified are:

1. The present study focused on a certain sample population which was based on one unit within an entire financial organization. The unique nature of this service-providing unit allows one to study the level of employee engagement within it, but the study focuses on one unit which limits the diversity of the research's sample such as other role types, different organizational structure, and even different levels of technologies.
2. The present study focused on certain variables of many factors that might influence EE, three factors stand out in the literature, and they are OC, DMB and TA for analyzing the relationships between the three independent variables: organizational culture, team's atmosphere, direct manager's behavior, and the dependent variable: employee engagement. By focusing on these three variables the author of this study set the framework of the research in which she seeks to focus.

The present study emphasizes three independent variables, and several dimensions present in the unified theory, as appreciation, respect for employees, open communication and fearless work environment, direct manager's support and integrity, and a meaningful work's goals, norms and values. This study presents these dimensions and considers it as a contribution to the research knowledge and of leading researchers' finding on

the topic of EE (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Britt et al., 2005; Denison et al., 2006; Saks, 2006; Swanberg et al., 2011). However, the author did not examine other variables and other dimensions that could have influenced the results of the study.

3. The conclusion is based on several surveys:
  - 3.1 The first and second surveys were based on a long employee's attitude survey (Arrowsmith and Parker, 2013) that was shorted in purpose of studying the level of EE within this researched unit "*as a novel, catchy label that covers traditional concept*" such as satisfaction and commitment (Bakker and Leiter, 2010, p.182). This survey repeated twice within an interval of two years. The gap between the limitation of time, or even another repetition of this survey in the year 2020, showing the development of levels of EE, which would make a new survey a continuation of the previous research.
  - 3.2 Quantitative research questionnaires were constructed on the basis of a long employee's attitude survey, which included 60 items. The abbreviated questionnaire examined in the unit included 30 items on five topics and was repeated twice in the years 2016 and 2018. In this present study the author of this study was limited to a questionnaire with existing questions and could not add further questions.
  - 3.3 The quantitative research questionnaire was divided into five different topics according to the researcher's understanding of the interrelationship between the research questions and the relevance of each topic. This element may be a limitation in the study due to the subjective observation and understanding of the researcher, as other researchers may divide the questions in the topics in a different way and arrive at different results from this study.
  - 3.4 The survey of remote work during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic allowed the author of this study to focus on variables that affect and enhance EE during the Covid-19 time. These research results focus only on employees and managers from this researched unit that were allowed to work from home. There were other employees that were called "non-essential workers" that were sent to partial payment vacation – this group of employees was not

included in the survey of remote work and the author of this study cannot evaluate the level of EE in this group of "non-essential workers" who returned to work after three months staying at home.

- 3.5 This work is done in a mixed method, both quantitative and qualitative research. First the quantitative research was done then the qualitative research was done in a purpose to give answers to the questions that arose in the quantitative research. The author of this study relied on the issues that arose from the qualitative research and did not focus on other factors or reasons that did not arise during the interviews that might provide answers to the questions.
4. The present study focused on the type of role position: employee / manager, alongside the intervention that took place in the organization that could have affected additional variables. Choosing these variables constituted the boundaries of the study and allowed a broad focus on the selected topics from both quantitative and qualitative results. However, the author of this study did not examine other variables and other dimensions that might have influenced the results and the conclusions of this study.

Each of the above limitations of this research can form the basis for future research and a deeper interest in the academic and practical field of employee engagement.

### **Future research directions**

Future research directions can be based on innovative approaches and theories in the study of the whole employees' experience in their workplaces and organizations. The new organizational landscape especially due to the Covid-19 pandemic requires new thinking to approach employees. Material benefits to employees look like a quick fix to issues of organizational engagement especially in the short-term, and therefore it cannot be reliable. Employee engagement stems from the meaning, the purpose, and the total experience that an employee has with the organization. The organizational culture needs to focus on the understanding of each employee's needs in a deeper way. As well, organizational culture needs to demonstrate care toward the employees and to create with them a co-design experience that will emphasize and demonstrate

this experience. Therefore, organizations need to embrace broad thinking and to face other aspects of organizational life and use tools to help make them substantial. As such, employees need to be seen not only as resources, but as meaning-making, purposeful, learning and experiencing human beings.

The author of this study would like to propose research directions that would relate to the challenges posed by the whole employee employment experience regarding engagement and the validity of conventional management thought patterns for enhancing employee engagement.

The following research directions, topics and questions can be related to these directions:

1. Future study can focus on the topics:
  - I. Employee's emotions and behaviors during work day and its influence on the level of engagement.
  - II. The level of engagement among service-oriented millennials and the comparison between a large, medium and smaller-sized organization.
2. Research questions as follow:
  - I. What are the challenges that are being posed by the whole employee experience on the creation and enhancement of employee engagement?
  - II. In view of these challenges, do managers in a service-oriented organization invest effort in the right directions to engage employees to work?
3. Further directions:
  - I. Ongoing study of the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic on employee engagement.
  - II. What are the challenges that are posed by the Covid-19 pandemic on managers in enhancing engagement among their employees?

## Summary and conclusions

The aim of the doctoral dissertation was to examine the role of the organizational culture, team's atmosphere, and the direct manager's behavior (independent variables) as determining employee engagement (dependent variable) in a service organization in the financial sector.

The subjects of this study were the employees and managers of a service organization who experienced organizational intervention at all levels: at the organizational level, at the unit level and at the individual level. Furthermore, the subjects of this study were administratively surveyed twice with an interval time of two years. The results of the quantitative study were confirmed and considerably enriched by a qualitative study that included interviews with both managers and employees. The three independent variables have been confirmed by reference to the literature and in this dissertation as factors of predicting and explaining employee engagement.

To summarize the current doctoral contribution to research and practice, several conclusions can be drawn:

1. The following hypotheses were formulated to examine the relationship between the three independent variables and EE in the Pre-intervention measurement (year 2016), Post-intervention measurement (year 2018) and the joint group which includes participants in the two surveys:

### **Pre-intervention measurement hypotheses:**

**H1:** There is a relationship between employee personal engagement (EE) and the three independent variables: organizational culture (OC), direct manager's behavior (DMB), and team's atmosphere (TA). This hypothesis was **fully supported**.

**H2:** There is a relationship between the three independent variables: organizational culture (OC), direct manager's behavior (DMB), and team's atmosphere (TA). This hypothesis was **fully supported**.

### **Post-intervention measurement hypotheses:**

**H3:** Post-intervention values of the research variables (EE, OC, TA and DMB) will be higher than the pre-intervention values. This is the central hypothesis

of the study, regarding the improvement of all four variables: organizational culture, direct manager's behavior and team's atmosphere and employee engagement between the pre-intervention measurement and the post-intervention measurement. This hypothesis **was supported** and in three of the variables (EE, OC and DMB) the increase was significant.

**H4:** The relationship will be stronger after the interventions between the three independent variables: OC, TA and DMB. This hypothesis was also **fully supported** although it was observed that the strength of relationships was slightly uneven with the correlation between direct manager's behavior and organizational culture weaker than that between organizational culture and team atmosphere.

**H5:** The variable Role position (employee/worker or manager) influences the relationship between the dependent variable (EE) and the three independent variables (OC, TA and DMB). The term employee is used to designate subordinate roles. The hypothesis was **partially supported**. A significant difference was found in the relationship between engagement and TA in the pre-intervention measurement among managers but no significant difference for the other variables.

2. I have presented a Unified theory that is based on the combination of two core models of employee engagement, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, developed by Bakker and Demerouti and Kahn's Need-Satisfying theory. The Unified theory combines previously separate theories and demonstrates that they are interconnected and function as a system. The various components of this system work together to produce properties and behaviors that cannot be observed in the individual components alone. In other words, the system as a whole is greater than the sum of its parts. My research supports this idea that these components are a system. This system emphasizes three psychological conditions – meaningfulness, safety, and availability – and incorporates the job demands and job resources to identify three types of employee engagement: organizational, task/role and team engagement, and personal engagement. This system suggests that these



three facets of engagement need to be considered in order to understand the employee engagement in full. The Unified theory model of employee engagement suggests that three factors: organizational culture, team's atmosphere and direct manager's behavior, influence employee engagement, which leads to three outcomes: pride in organization membership, recommendation to others and enjoyment.

The Unified theory model of employee engagement includes three levels:

- i. The first level in the Unified theory of employee engagement is "Meaningfulness at work" which comes from an employee's membership in an organization. It is associated with factors related to the organization itself, rather than the specific task the employee performs. It is based on Pratt and Ashforth's (2003) definition and it can be related to the Social Exchange theory, which suggests a reciprocal relationship between the employee and the organization, leading to loyalty and mutual commitment.
- ii. The second level in the Unified theory of employee engagement is made up of two psychological conditions as described by Kahn (1990): Meaningfulness in work and Safety. Meaningfulness in work refers to the type of work an employee is doing, and being involved in making the work and tasks in an intrinsically motivational manner. Safety refers to the feeling that employees must have to fully engage themselves in a role without fear of negative consequences to their self-image, status, or career. These two conditions are related to Job Design theory by Herzberg et al., (1959), Hackman and Oldham (1980) and the Conservation of Resources theory by Hobfoll (1989) which focuses on understanding burnout. Organizational practices that enhance an employee's performance and simplify the meaningfulness in work can also promote employee engagement.
- iii. The third level in the Unified theory of employee engagement is the psychological condition of availability, which relates to personal resources such as self-efficacy, optimism, and organization-based

self-esteem. These personal resources predict work engagement and are influenced by job resources. Availability is also linked to the Self-determination theory (SDT) developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) which focuses on the psychological needs that are essential for growth and conditions that promote their fulfilment. These three psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness, influence self/intrinsic motivation. Personal resources mediate the relationship between job resources and engagement in the same way as Kahn's (1990) psychological conditions do.

The unified theory of employee engagement that was presented in chapter 1 (cf. 1.2.9.1.) describes engagement as a spiral of levels/facets, starting with personal engagement, moving to role/task/work/team engagement, and culminating in organizational engagement. The basic requirement for engagement is availability, meaning that employees can only be engaged if they are available to their work. The engagement spiral has three different facets, which can also be present in an employee as individual levels. This means that an employee can be engaged with the organization but not engaged with their role or team. In order to enhance engagement, the spiral needs to be grown. The factors that lead to engagement are organizational culture, team and the direct manager, which influence engagement through job resources, job demands, and psychological conditions. The consequences of engagement vary depending on the type of engagement, such as organizational commitment, task satisfaction and task performance for role/task engagement and employee well-being for personal engagement. To sum up the Unified theory model presents how theory is constructed and supported by the work and is presented in detail in my text.

3. Organizational culture has a major role in influencing and enhancing employee engagement and focusing on the development of the human capital in the organization by reinforcing the team's atmosphere and the direct manager's behavior. Managers' responsibility in the organization is to disseminate the culture that dictates the tone regarding how we do things

around here. Furthermore, they are in charge of enhancing employee engagement in the workplace. According to Gallup (2022) only 15% of employees around the world are being engaged with their organization, 67% of employees were not engaged and actively disengaged employees were 18% to their workplace.

Why is it that only 15% of employees around the world are engaged? This is undoubtedly a low rate of engaged employees which points out the effectiveness of the managers in creating and enhancing employees' engagement.

Many organizations prefer to focus on achieving short term business results at the expense of investing in the concept of engagement. Therefore, their organizational culture does not prioritize the psychological factors as meaningfulness, safety and availability for creating and enhancing engagement (Kahn, 1990). Many organizations prefer to focus on achieving short term business results instead of investing in the concept of engagement. As long as the organizational mission is to focus on the short-term business results, without focusing on employee's psychological factors that enhance engagement, the rate of engaged employees will remain as low as it was in recent years.

Therefore, the main priority of direct managers is to raise the level of engagement by being respectful, ethical and a high level of integrity towards their employees and teams, appreciation, feedback, authority and autonomy, in a manner that can build trustful relationships (Gallup, 2017).

4. This dissertation found that there are strong positive and significant relationships between the independent variables: Organizational culture, team's atmosphere, and direct manager's behavior and the dependent variable: employee engagement. According to the results of the second survey that was conducted after two years of intervention that took place in this organization, the three independent variables together can predict and explain 68% of employee engagement while the remaining 32% can be explained by other factors such as technology, environment and work

conditions, and personal elements like salary and promotion programs. In the joint group, the DBM was excluded from the prediction model, meaning the prediction model can predict 73% of EE by only two independent variables: OC and TA. Probably the reason is because organizational culture and team's atmosphere are inclusive, straightforward, and profound variables.

5. Most studies in the literature that tested only the relationship between DMB and engagement, indicate that DMB is a key influencer factor in creating and enhancing EE. While the analyzing DMB with the other two dominant and significant variables: organizational culture and team's atmosphere, DMB as a variable takes on a different proportion and even has been excluded as a separate specific variable from the prediction model of the joint group. Organizational culture and team's atmosphere were shown in this research to be dominant following the interventions, and the behavior of the direct manager would be a contributory factor in these two variables and in their influence on engagement.

The strategic change and the intervention that took place in this unit influenced managers to change their perception and focus on flexibility, creativity and empowerment of employees that effected and enhanced the level of employee engagement of the joint group. On the other hand, if trying to build only on the direct manager's behavior, it will require more effort and not necessarily achieve the expected results.

Therefore, it can be concluded that organizational culture and a team's atmosphere are the foundation stone of employee engagement and organization's leaders should invest in building these cornerstones while enlightening the relationship between employees and managers. Furthermore, this research supports the finding that "*engaged workers don't need or want a boss*", meaning, the manager is an engagement-creating coach, guiding his employees, empowering them to take on challenges and to use their strengths (Gallup, 2022).

6. This research emphasizes the importance of strategic change along with interventions in all the three organizational levels (organization, unit and

individual), which can lead the senior management of these organizations to adopt the three independent variables as main factors and influencers of employee engagement. Regarding the academic research on employee engagement, the prediction model of the post-measurement emphasizes the three independent variables as one construct that is needed to examine its influence on employee engagement.

7. During times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, this research emphasizes the importance of the organizational flat structure, which allows a direct transmission of information between management and employees. Two pivotal important factors enhancing engagement for employees working from home are organizational culture and the relationship with senior executives. Direct managers need to focus on clear feedback, working hours' flexibility, remote employee's support and continued employment especially in times of uncertainty and challenging time.

To sum up, this research contributes to academic research and encourages researchers to focus on new research directions of employee engagement, both in routine and in times of crisis. The mission of creating and increasing the level of employee engagement, by focusing on the three levels of the organization and emphasizing on the individual level of the employee in his or her employment experience: from the basic psychological needs through job achievement to performance, will provide a more ample explanation on the relationship between direct manager and employee engagement.

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**Appendix 1. Selected definitions of employee engagement found in academic and practitioner literature**

<b>i. Individual facet – positive affection toward state of mind</b>			
<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Definition of Employee Engagement</b>	<b>Approach/ Perspective</b>	<b>Clarification of definition</b>
<b>Maslach and Leiter (1997, 2001)</b>	As positive scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory <i>"A persistent positive affective state... characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure"</i> (p.417).	Burnout antithesis approach.	Positive state of mind. Activation and pleasure.
<b>Schaufeli et al. (2002)</b>	"A positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption" (p.74).	Work Engagement Approach. Individual perspective. The definition speaks about employee engagement with work activities. The study brought out the concept from burnout literature. Focused on core aspects of engagement.	Positive state of mind. Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance.
<b>Colbert, Mount, Harter, Witt, and Barrick (2004)</b>	High internal motivational state.	Need-Satisfying approach (Personal Engagement).	Internal motivational state.
<b>Development Dimensions International (DDI) (Wellins et al.) (2005)</b>	The extent to which people enjoy and believe in what they do and feel valued for doing it.	Individual perspective, the report extensively worked on identifying various factors that result in to higher levels of engagement. The study focused on conceptual understanding and conditions favorable for employee to be engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attachment to the role.</li> <li>▪ Enjoyment and believe in what they do.</li> <li>▪ Feeling valued.</li> </ul>
<b>Gibbons (2007)</b>	<i>"Employee engagement involves the interplay between three factors: cognitive commitment, emotional attachment, and the resulting behavioral outcomes. Employee engagement has a set of assumptions as to what drives employees' attachments to work and company. Common drivers are pride in one's company and an employee's relationship with his/her manager."</i>	Multidimensional approach.	Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment. Pride in one's company. Employee's relationship with his/her manager.
<b>Macey and Schneider (2008a)</b>	As a disposition (i.e. trait engagement) ... an inclination or orientation to experience the world from a particular vantage point. Trait engagement gets reflected in psychological state engagement ... (state engagement) ... an antecedent to behavioral engagement ... (behavioral engagement) is defined in terms of discretionary effort p. 5, 6.	Individual perspective. Helped to clear the cluttered, scattered and unfocused conceptual state of EE by breaking the engagement construct into distinct parts and debunking "folk" definitions of engagement. (Shuck and Wollard, 2010)	Positive state of mind. Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment. Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort).
<b>Shuck and Wollard (2010)</b>	<i>"An individual employee's cognitive, emotional and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcomes"</i> (p.103).	Individual perspective	Positive state of mind. Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment.

<b>i. Individual facet – positive affection toward state of mind</b>			
<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Definition of Employee Engagement</b>	<b>Approach/ Perspective</b>	<b>Clarification of definition</b>
<b>Swanberg et al. (2011)</b>	<i>"Work engagement is a positive work-related psychological "state of fulfillment" that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption"</i> (p. 614).	Engagement as a composite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Composite of vigor, dedication and absorption.</li> <li>▪ Positive state of mind.</li> <li>▪ Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance.</li> </ul>
<b>Soane et al. (2012)</b>	<i>"Kahn (1990) presented engagement as a construct with three facets (physical, cognitive and emotional) that are activated simultaneously to create an engaged state."</i> (p. 531)	Personal role engagement.	Attachment to role. Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment.
<b>Selmer et al (2013)</b>	'Engagement can be defined as a positive, fulfilling yet pervasive and persistent cognitive state of mind'. Engagement was examined at the work group level (p. 97)	Multidimensional engagement.	Positive state of mind
<b>Insync Surveys (2016)</b>	Engagement of the heart [emotional], the head [cognitive] and the hand [physical]. Engaging employees' hearts refers to their positive emotional connection with the organization; engagement of the head refers to positive thoughts about the organization; and engagement of the hand refers to the discretionary efforts made by employees.	Individual perspective. Insync Surveys (2016) White Paper is based on the literature of Rich et al. (2010)	Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment.
<b>ii. Individual facet – positive affection toward the role</b>			
<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Definition of Employee Engagement</b>	<b>Approach/ Perspective</b>	<b>Clarification of definition</b>
<b>Kahn (1990)</b>	<i>"The harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances"</i> (p. 694).	Need-Satisfying approach (Personal Engagement).	Attachment to role
<b>Rothbard (2001)</b>	As two competing arguments which effecting engagement in multiple roles: depletion and enrichment, and integrate them by identifying the type of emotional response to a role: negative or positive, as a critical contrasting assumption held by these two perspectives.	Need-Satisfying approach (Personal Engagement). Individual perspective	Meeting employees needs

ii. Individual facet – positive affection toward the role			
Author(s)	Definition of Employee Engagement	Approach/ Perspective	Clarification of definition
<b>Gallup, (Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes) (2002)</b>	<i>"The individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work"</i> (p. 269).	Need-Satisfying approach (Personal Engagement). Organizational perspective, the study reviewed business outcomes associated with employee engagement meta analytically and identified that higher level of engagement is positively associated with business outcomes, engagement – profit linkage.	Employee's involvement satisfaction and enthusiasm.
<b>May, Gilson, and Harter (2004)</b>	Tested Kahn's (1990) conceptualization of the three (Kahn, 1990, 1992) psychological conditions of engagement indicated that meaningfulness, safety and availability had a positive relationship with engagement. <i>"In engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances"</i> (p.12).	Need-Satisfying Approach. Individual differences shape a person's nature, perception and personality which, affects their ability to personally engage or disengage in different role performances and suggests the relation between employee engagement and emotional experiences and wellbeing	Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment.
<b>Britt et al. (2005)</b>	'The construct of self-engagement was derived from the Triangle Model of Responsibility ... and is defined as individuals feeling a sense of responsibility for and commitment to a performance domain so that performance "matters" to the individual.' (p. 1476)	Self-engagement with performance.	Employee's responsibility and commitment to performance.
<b>Saks (2006)</b>	<i>"A distinct and unique construct that consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components that are associated with individual role performance"</i> (p. 602)	Multidimensional approach. First explicit research to test antecedents and consequences to EE in the academic literature.	Attachment to the role. Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment.
<b>Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (Alfes et al.) (2010)</b>	<i>"Being positively present during the performance of work by willingly contributing intellectual effort, experiencing positive emotions and meaningful connections to others"</i> .	Organizational perspective, The report emphasized on identifying engagement levels in different settings to suggest organizations to develop strategies for engaged workforce	Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort). Positive connection to co-workers.
<b>Mone and London (2010)</b>	An engaged employee is someone who feels involved, committed, passionate, and empowered and demonstrates those feelings in work behavior	Organizational perspective The book enlightens the importance of employee engagement in getting higher performance.	Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance.
<b>Rich, LePine, and Crawford (2010)</b>	<i>"As the investment of an individual's complete self into a role, provides a more comprehensive explanation of relationships with performance than do well-known concepts</i>	Need-Satisfying approach (Personal Engagement).	Employee's high performance. Attachment to role.



ii. Individual facet – positive affection toward the role			
Author(s)	Definition of Employee Engagement	Approach/ Perspective	Clarification of definition
	<i>that reflect narrower aspects of the individual's self" (p. 617).</i>		
<b>Rich et al. (2010)</b>	'Kahn noted that engagement is observed through the behavioural investment of personal physical, cognitive, and emotional energy into work roles (Kahn, 1992). Put simply, engagement involves investing the "hands, head and heart"' (p. 619).	Personal role engagement.	Attachment to role. Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment.
<b>Shuck et al. (2011)</b>	As a bond between employee engagement and organizational performance and outcome variables such as: discretionary effort, intention to turnover.	Need-Satisfying Approach.	A bond between employee and organization. Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort). Intention to turnover.
<b>BlessingWhite (2018)</b>	<i>"Employee engagement means an alignment of maximum job satisfaction (personal motivation) with maximum job contribution (putting your people in positions to do their best). These are "great days at work," and great days drive great results for your organization" (p.3).</i>	Organizational Perspective. Presenting an employee engagement model, according to an individual's level of satisfaction and willingness to contribute for accomplishing tasks.	Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort). Maximum alignment between job satisfaction and job contribution.
iii. Organizational facet – positive affection toward the organization			
Reference	Definition of Employee Engagement	Approach/ Perspective	Clarification of definition
<b>Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) (2004)</b>	The Council has defined engagement as the extent to which employees commit—both rationally and emotionally—to something or someone in their organization, how hard they work, and how long they stay as a result of that commitment.	Organizational Perspective, the report focused on key business outcomes associated with employee engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment.</li> <li>▪ Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort).</li> <li>▪ Intention to turnover.</li> </ul>
<b>Hewitt (2004)</b>	As the employee's desire to say (speak positively about the organization), stay (desire to be a member of the organization) and strive (go beyond the expected for the organization).	Work engagement approach.	Desire to be a member of the organization.
<b>Institute for Employment Studies (IES) (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday) (2004)</b>	<i>"A positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for</i>	Organizational Perspective, Work engagement approach. The study emphasized on aspects of engagement and focus on the advantages associated	Awareness of business context, high performance, benefit of the organization.

iii. Organizational facet – positive affection toward the organization			
Reference	Definition of Employee Engagement	Approach/ Perspective	Clarification of definition
	<i>the benefit of the organization."</i>	with engaged employee in an organization	
<b>Wellins and Concelman (2005)</b>	Illusive force that motivates employees to higher levels of performance. This coveted energy is an amalgam of commitment, loyalty, productivity an ownership. Further added that it includes, feelings and attitudes employees have towards their jobs and their organization.	Organizational perspective, the focus of the study is to identify the contribution of engagement in achieving higher performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Employee's commitment, loyalty and high performance.</li> <li>▪ Attachment to role.</li> </ul>
<b>Lucey, Bateman and Hines (2005)</b>	Interpret Gallup engagement index as measuring by what means each individual employee connects to the company and the customers.	Need-Satisfying approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Employee's commitment, loyalty and high performance.</li> <li>▪ Meeting customers' needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Society for Human Resource Management (Vance) (2006)</b>	Employee engagement is not defined. Various definitions and conceptualizations are discussed throughout the article.	First professional to address engagement as conceptualized by consulting and commercial organizations.	Employee's positive thinking about his/ her organization.
<b>Cook (2008)</b>	How positively the employee thinks about the organization, feels about the organization and is proactive in relation to achieving organizational goals for customers, colleagues and other stakeholders.	Work engagement approach.	Employee's positive thinking about his/ her organization. Achieving organizational goals. Meeting customers' needs.
<b>ASTD - American Society for Training and Development, (Czarnowsky) (2008)</b>	<i>"Employees who are mentally and emotionally invested in their work and in contributing to their employer's success" (p. 6)</i>	Need-Satisfying approach (Personal Engagement). First professional association (ASTD) to conduct and disseminate empirical evidence of engagement and link concept to learning and focusing on the experience of the employee.	Attachment to role. Contributing to their employer's success. Achieving organizational goals.
<b>Newman and Harrison (2008)</b>	The simultaneous presence of three behaviors in employees, namely, their performance in job, citizenship behavior and involvement.	Individual perspective.	Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance.
<b>Macey, Schneider, Barbera and Young (2009)</b>	Individual's sense of purpose and focused energy, evident to others in the display of personal initiative, adaptability, effort, and persistence directed toward organizational goals.	Individual perspective, the study addressed the problem of conceptual ambiguity by providing definition of engagement. Engagement was described in terms of energy an employee experience and exhibit to others in the process of accomplishing tasks.	Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance.

iii. Organizational facet – positive affection toward the organization			
Reference	Definition of Employee Engagement	Approach/ Perspective	Clarification of definition
<b>Reio and Sanders-Reio (2011)</b>	<i>"Engagement is being psychologically present when performing an organizational role. Engaged employees are more likely to have a positive orientation toward the organization, feel an emotional connection to it, and be productive"</i> (p. 464; based on Kahn, 1990)	Personal role engagement.	Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance.
<b>Kenexa work trends report (2012)</b>	<i>"Engagement is the extent to which employees are motivated to contribute to organizational success, and are willing to apply discretionary effort (extra time, brainpower and effort) to accomplishing tasks that are important to the achievement of organizational goals."</i>	Organizational Perspective, this report provides the five-year trend of engagement levels there by stating the role of employee engagement in predicating organizational outcomes.	Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance. Achieving organizational goals. Willing to apply extra effort (time, brainpower and effort).
<b>Towers Watson (2012)</b>	Employees' willingness and ability to contribute to company success. Meaning, engagement is the extent to which employees "go the extra mile" and put discretionary effort into their work — contributing more of their energy, creativity and passion on the job.	Work engagement approach.	Willing to apply extra effort (time, brainpower and effort). Attachment to role.
<b>Arrowsmith and Parker (2013)</b>	Singularity of HR perspectives with an emphasis on acknowledgement and representation of employee interests.	Engagement as management practice.	Positive relationship with manager
<b>Jenkins and Delbridge (2013)</b>	'Soft' engagement: a focus on promoting positive workplace conditions and relationships between managers and employees. 'Hard' engagement: a focus on increasing employee productivity through engagement.	Engagement as management practice.	Positive management and workplace conditions. An employee's relationship with his/her manager. Increasing employee productivity.
<b>Reissner and Pagan (2013)</b>	Employee engagement with the organization, in relationship with employee engagement and communication strategies.	Engagement as management practice.	Management strategies, relationship and communication.
<b>Truss et al. (2013)</b>	<i>"Engagement can invariably be a 'win-win' scenario for both employees and employers as the micro-level enactment of engagement within the wider organizational context forefronts the ideological divide, power relationships and contextual constraints experienced in 'doing'</i>	Organizational perspective. Link between employee engagement and performance, suggest that engagement may constitute the mechanism through which HRM practices impact individual and organizational performance.	win-win' scenario for both employees and employers

iii. Organizational facet – positive affection toward the organization			
Reference	Definition of Employee Engagement	Approach/ Perspective	Clarification of definition
	<i>engagement and 'being engaged" (p. 2666)</i>		
<b>Deloitte (Bersin) (2015)</b>	The passion and commitment that drives employees to devote their time and energy to work, proactively going above and beyond expectations to help their organization achieve its goals.	Individual perspective	Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance. Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort). Achieving organizational goals.
<b>Centre for Creative Leadership (Deal et al.) (2015)</b>	Satisfaction with job and commitment to the organization.	Organizational Perspective	Attachment to role. Employee's commitment.
<b>Bain and Company (2018)</b>	Employee Engagement Surveys measure whether employees are fully involved and enthusiastic about their work and company.	Work engagement approach	Employee's involvement. Attachment to role.

### Classified the 43 definitions of EE into 3 facets:

#### 1. Individual facet – Positive affection toward state of mind: appears 11 times off 43 (26%)

Activation and pleasure	1
Attachment to role	2
Composite of vigor, dedication and absorption	1
Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance	2
Enjoyment and believe in what they do	1
Feeling valued	1
Internal motivational state	1
Positive state of mind	6
Pride in one's company. Employee's relationship with his/her manager	1
Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment	5
Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort)	1

#### 2. Individual facet – Positive affection toward the role: appears 12 times off 43 (28%)

Maximum alignment between job satisfaction and job contribution	1
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A bond between employee and organization	1
Attachment to role	4
Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance	1
Employee's high performance	1
Employee's involvement satisfaction and enthusiasm	1
Employee's responsibility and commitment to performance	1
Intention to turnover	1
Meeting employees needs	1
Positive connection to co-workers	1
Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment	3
Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort)	3

**3. Organizational facet – Positive affection toward the organization: appears 20 times off  
43 (47%)**

Achieving organizational goals	4
An employee's relationship with his/her manager	1
Attachment to role	5
Awareness of business context, high performance, benefit of the organization	1
Contributing to their employer's success	1
Desire to be a member of the organization	1
Employee's commitment, loyalty, involvement and high performance	7
Employee's commitment	2
Employee's involvement	1
Employee's positive thinking about his/ her organization	2
Increasing employee productivity	1
Intention to turnover	1
Management strategies, relationship and communication	1
Meeting customers' needs	2
Positive management and workplace conditions	1
Positive relationship with manager	1
Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment	1
Willing to apply extra effort (time, brainpower and effort)	4

'Win-win' scenario for both employees and employers	1
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### Characteristic of EE definitions:

#### 1. Employee's attachment to role characteristic

Characteristic	Times mentioned	Examples of terms used
Personal motivation	6/63	Personal motivation; High internal motivational state; State of fulfilment; Positive state of mind.
"Go the extra mile"	8/63	Willing to apply extra work's effort (time, brainpower and effort); Go beyond the expected for the organization; Apply discretionary effort (extra time, brainpower and effort) to accomplishing tasks; Put discretionary effort into their work.
Physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances	20/63	Employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances; Employees who are mentally and emotionally invested in their work; Emotional response to a role: negative or positive; Feelings and attitudes employees have towards their jobs; Individual's sense of purpose and focused energy; Positive state of mind: vigor, dedication and absorption; Investment of an individual's complete self into a role; Being positively present; Positive emotions; Rational (cognitive), behavioral and emotional commitment are activated simultaneously to create an engaged state; Positive, fulfilling yet pervasive and persistent; Heart [emotional], the head [cognitive] and the hand [physical].
Commitment, loyalty, productivity and ownership	9/63	Employee's commitment, loyalty and high performance; Involvement; Be productive; Psychologically present when performing an organizational role; Commitment that drives employees; Employee's responsibility and commitment to performance; Cognitive commitment feels involved, committed; Employees commit both rationally and emotionally.
Performance to achieve organizational goals	6/63	Employee is proactive in relation to achieving organizational goals; Improve performance within the job; Illusive force that motivates employees to higher levels of performance; Performance in job; Performance "matters" to the individual; Comprehensive explanation of relationships with performance.
energy, creativity and passion on the job	8/63	Energy, creativity and passion on the job; Passion that drives employees; Time and energy; Fully involved and enthusiastic about their work; Activation and pleasure; Employee's enthusiasm; Feels involved, committed, passionate; Enjoyment and believe in what they do.
Satisfaction with job	6/63	Alignment of maximum job satisfaction; Employee's involvement satisfaction and

enthusiasm; Intention to turnover; Feeling valued; Activation.

**2. Characteristic of EE definitions - Employee's attachment toward the organization**

Characteristic	Times mentioned	Examples of terms used
<b>Desire to be a member of the organization</b>	<u>10/41</u>	Desire to be a member of the organization; Aware of the business context; Experiencing positive emotions; Pride in one's company; Employees commit—both rationally and emotionally; Fully enthusiastic about their company; Display of personal initiative, adaptability, effort; Positive orientation toward the organization;
<b>A positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values</b>	<u>21/41</u>	Improve performance of the organization; Employees' willingness and ability to contribute to company success; Drives employees' attachments to work and company; Positive thoughts about the organization; Employee's positive thinking and feel about his/ her organization; Contributing to their employer's success; Feelings and attitudes employees have towards their organization; Demonstrates those feelings in work behavior; Fully involved about their company; Positive emotional connection with the organization; A positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values; Proactively going above and beyond expectations to help their organization; Citizenship behavior; Feel an emotional connection to the organization; Individual role performance; Commitment to the organization; A bond between employee and organization. Speak positively about the organization; Employee's positive thinking about his/ her organization; Hard work and long stay as a result of commitment; 'Win-win' scenario for both employees and employers.
<b>great organizational results</b>	<u>9/41</u>	Great days drive great results for your organization; Achievement of organizational goals; Display persistence directed toward organizational goals; Proactively going to help their organization achieve its goals; Toward desired organizational outcomes; Contributing to their employer's success; Improve the benefit of the organization.

**3. Characteristic of EE definitions - Organization toward the employee**

Characteristic	Times mentioned	Examples of terms used
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<b>Meeting employees needs</b>	<u>4/7</u>	Meeting employee's needs; Focus on promoting positive workplace conditions; A bond between employee and organization; "great days at work".
<b>Management and strategies</b>	<u>3/7</u>	Management strategies, relationship and communication; Wider organizational context forefronts the ideological divide, power relationships and contextual; 'win-win' scenario for both employees and employers.

#### 4. Characteristic of EE definitions - Employee's attachment to the direct manager

Characteristic	Times mentioned	Examples of terms used
<b>Positive relationship with manager</b>	<u>8/14</u>	Positive relationship with manager; Engagement as management practice; Experiencing positive emotions to their manager; Maximum job contribution; Employees commit—both rationally and emotionally.
<b>Employees are motivated by their direct manager</b>	<u>6/14</u>	Management strategies; Relationship and communication; Wider organizational context forefronts the ideological divide, power relationships and contextual; 'win-win' scenario for both employees and employers.

#### 5. Characteristic of EE definitions - Employee's attachment toward his/ her team

Characteristic	Times mentioned	Examples of terms used
<b>work with colleagues</b>	<u>3/5</u>	Work with colleagues; Meaningful connection to co-workers; Employees commit—both rationally and emotionally
<b>team work</b>	<u>2/5</u>	Achieving organizational goals for colleagues; work group engagement.

#### 8. Characteristic of EE definitions - Employee's attachment toward company's customers and stakeholders

Characteristic	Times mentioned	Examples of terms used
<b>employee's attachment company's customers</b>	<u>3/4</u>	Meaningful connection to costumers; Meeting customers' needs.
<b>employee's attachment toward stakeholders</b>	<u>1/4</u>	Achieving organizational goals for stakeholders.

#### Appendix 2 – List of theoretical frameworks of employee engagement

Theoretical Framework	Example Reference	Number of occurrences
Job demands-resources model	Schaufeli et al (2002)	65
Social exchange theory	Alfes et al (2013)	26
Unspecified	Extremera et al (2012)	21
Conservation of resources theory	Bakker et al (2007)	14
Broaden-and-build theory	Bakker and Bal (2010)	8

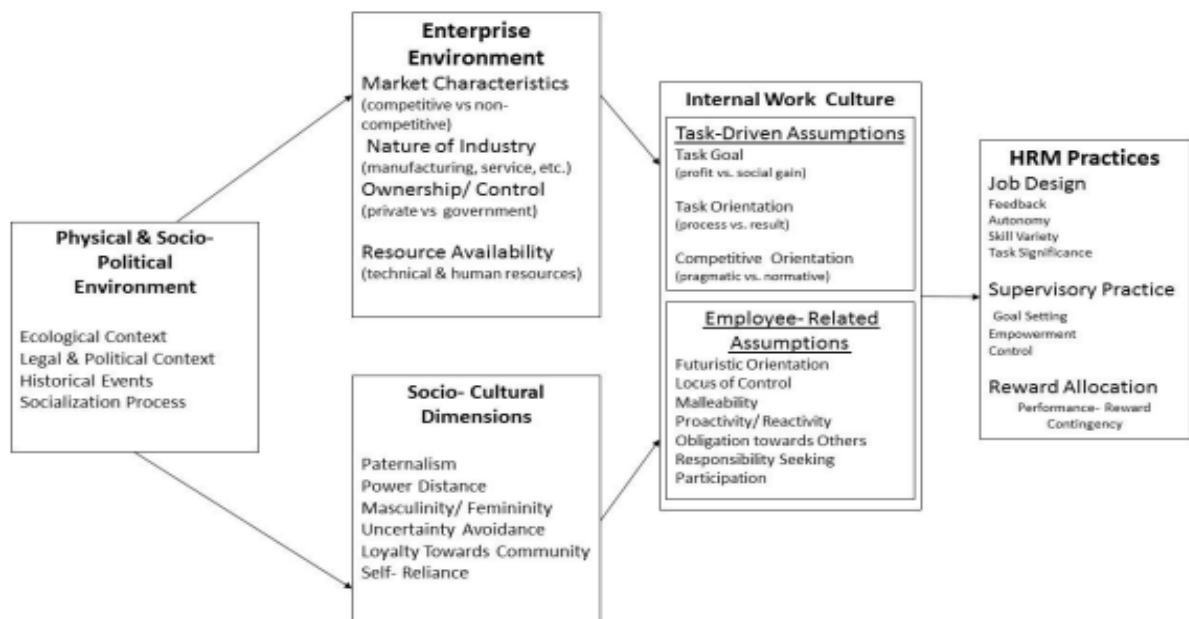


Kahn's / Personal engagement theory	Kahn (1990)	7
Self-determination theory	Gillet et al (2013)	5
Job design / characteristics theory	Hornung et al (2010)	4
Transformational leadership	Tims et al (2011)	4
Work engagement theory	Otken and Erben (2010)	4
Authentic leadership	Bamford et al (2013)	3
Attachment theory	Lin (2010)	2
Demand-control-support theory	Taipale et al (2011)	2
Effort-reward imbalance model	Feldt et al (2013)	2
Human capital theory	Gracia et al (2013)	2
Self-efficacy theory	Høigaard et al (2012)	2
Social cognitive/learning theory	Heuven et al (2006)	2
Ability-motivation-opportunity framework	Arrowsmith and Parker (2013)	1
Affective events theory	Ouweneel et al (2012)	1
Affective shift model	Bledlow et al (2011)	1
Attribution theory	Cheng et al (2013)	1
Charismatic leadership theory	Babcock-Roberson and Strickland (2010)	1
Cognitive stress theory	Andreassen et al (2007)	1
Contingent leadership theory	Song et al (2012)	1
Critical HRM theory	Jenkins and Delbridge (2013)	1
Crossover theory	Bakker and Xanthopoulou (2009)	1
Crossover/emotional contagion theory	Bakker et al (2006)	1
Emotional dissonance-emotional labour model	Bechtoldt et al (2011)	1
Ethical leadership theory	Den Hartog and Belshak (2012)	1
Expectancy theory	Anaza and Rutherford (2012)	1
Group engagement model	He et al (2013)	1
Idiosyncratic deals	Hornung et al (2010)	1
Job embeddedness theory	Karatepe and Ngeche (2012)	1
Justice theory	Gillet et al (2013)	1
Knowledge conversion theory	Song et al (2012)	1
Leader consideration framework	Hornung et al (2011)	1
Leader integrity theory	Moorman et al (2013)	1
Mismatch proposition of wellbeing	Dylag et al (2013)	1
Organisational support theory	Ratnasingam et al (2012)	1
Person-situation framework	He et al (2013)	1
Positive emotions theory	Gorgievski et al (2010)	1
Psychological empowerment theory	Stander and Rothmann (2010)	1
Relative deprivation theory	Mauno et al (2005)	1
Resources-experiences-demands model	Del Libano et al (2012)	1
Role spillover theory	Fiksenbaum et al (2010)	1
Salutogenic-model of coping	Bakibinga et al (2012)	1
Self-categorisation theory	Otken and Erben (2010)	1
Social identity theory	Anaza and Rutherford (2012)	1
Structural empowerment theory	Spence Laschinger (2010)	1

Source: Bailey, C., Madden, A., Alfes, K., Fletcher, L., Robinson, D., Holmes, J., ... & Currie, G. (2015). Evaluating the evidence on employee engagement and its potential benefits to NHS

staff: a narrative synthesis of the literature. *Health Services and Delivery Research*, 3(26), 1-424.

**Appendix 3: Figure of The model of cultural fit**



Source: Aycan et al., 1999.

**Appendix 4: Eight styles of organizational culture**

culture style	focus	Work environment	The value which unites the employees	The leaders emphasize	Advantages	Disadvantages
Caring warm, sincere relationships	Relationships and mutual trust	Warm, collaborative, people help and support each other	Loyalty	Sincerity, teamwork, positive relationship	Improved teamwork, engagement, communication, trust and sense of belonging	Emphasis on consensus building may reduce exploration of options, stifle competitiveness and slow decision-making

Purpose driven, idealistic, tolerant	Idealism and altruism	Tolerant, compassion, people try to do good for the long-term future of the world	Sustainability and global communities	Shared ideas and contributing to a greater cause	Improved appreciation for diversity, sustainability, and social responsibility	Over emphasis on the long-term purpose and ideas may get in the way of practical and immediate concerns
Learning open, inventive, exploring	Exploration, expansiveness, creativity	Inventive, open-minded, people spark new ideas and explore alternatives	Curiosity	Innovation knowledge and adventure	Improved innovation, agility and organizational learning	Over emphasis on exploration may lead to a lack of focus and in the ability to exploit existing advantages
Enjoyment playful, instinctive, fun loving	Fun and excitement	Lighthearted places, people tend to do what makes them happy	Playfulness, stimulations	Spontaneity and a sense of humor	Improved employee morale, employee engagement and creativity	Over emphasize on autonomy and engagement may lead to a lack of discipline, and create possible compliance governance issues
Results. Achievement driven, goal-focused	Achievement and winning	Outcome-oriented and merit-based, people aspire to achieve top performance	A drive for capability and success	Goal accomplishment	improved execution, external focus capability building and goal achievement	Over emphasis on achieving results may lead to communication and collaboration breakdowns and higher levels of stress and anxiety
Authority bold, decisive, dominant	Strength, decisiveness, boldness	Competitive places, people strive to gain person advantage	Strong control	Confidence and dominance	Improved speed of decision making and responsiveness to threats or crisis	Over emphasis on strong authority and bold decision making may lead to politics and a psychologically conflicts

Safety realistic, careful, prepared	Planning, caution, preparedness	Predictable places, people think it through carefully	Desire to feel protected, anticipate change	Realistic and planning	improved risk management, stability, and business continuity	Over emphasis on Standardization and Formalization may lead to bureaucracy, inflexibility, dehumanization of the work environment
Order. Rule abiding, respectful, comparative	respect, structure shared norms	methodological places, people tend to play by the rules and want to fit in	Cooperation	shared procedures	Improved operational efficiency, reduce conflict and greater civic mindedness	Overemphasis on rules and traditions may Reduce individualism , Stifle, creativity, and limit organizational agility

Source: Based on Groysberg et al., (2018).

## Appendix 5: Factors influencing EE during the Covid-19 pandemic Analysis

### Appendix 5.1: list of factors from literature and from remote work survey

No.	Element / Factors	Score	Cumulative sum	Cumulative %
1	Personal computer configuration	224	224	5.46%
2	Supervisor support	211	435	10.60%
3	Working conditions	209	644	15.70%
4	Contact with the direct manager	205	849	20.69%
5	Emotional intelligence of managers	203	1052	25.64%
6	Proper virtual tools – internet speed	194	1246	30.37%
7	Develop support policies	180	1426	34.76%
8	Job type	179	1605	39.12%
9	Transparency for employees / Regular update of the employees in the organization	178	1783	43.46%
10	Availability of peer support	170	1953	47.60%
11	Adaptability	169	2122	51.72%
12	Rapid customer's respond	168	2290	55.81%
13	Contact with organizational leaders / top management	164	2454	59.81%
14	Salary	159	2613	63.69%
15	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home	151	2764	67.37%

16	Employee's resilience	147	2911	70.95%
17	Virtual teamwork	141	3052	74.38%
18	Work-family conflict	140	3192	77.80%
19	Virtual / online training	138	3330	81.16%
20	Adopting blockchain technology	122	3452	84.13%
21	Use of cloud computing technology	114	3566	86.91%
22	Working long hours outside usual office hours	110	3676	89.59%
23	Marital status	105	3781	92.15%
24	Number of kids at home	95	3876	94.47%
25	Age	71	3947	96.20%
26	Education	60	4007	97.66%
27	Mental health checkup	43	4050	98.71%
28	Entertainment tools: gem / yoga class, fun quizzes etc.	39	4089	99.66%
29	Gender	14	4103	100.00%

## Appendix 5.2: Knowledge-based interpretive logic.

Elements / factors	Paired comparison of elements	Sym bol
F1 - personal computer configuration		
F1-F2	Personal computer configuration will influence the supervisor support.	N
F2-F1	Supervisor support will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F3	Personal computer configuration will influence the working conditions.	H
F3-F1	Working conditions will influence the personal computer configuration.	VL
F1-F4	Personal computer configuration will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F1	Contact with the direct manager will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F5	Personal computer configuration will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F1	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F6	Personal computer configuration will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	L
F6-F1	Proper virtual tools (internet speed). will influence the personal computer configuration.	VH
F1-F7	Personal computer configuration will influence the develop support policies.	N
F7-F1	Develop support policies will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F8	Personal computer configuration will influence the job type.	N
F8-F1	Job type will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F9	Personal computer configuration will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F1	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F10	Personal computer configuration will influence the availability of peer support.	N
F10-F1	Availability of peer support will influence the personal computer configuration.	N

F1-F11	Personal computer configuration will influence the adaptivity.	N
F11-F1	Adaptivity will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F12	Personal computer configuration will influence the rapid customer's respond.	VH
F12-F1	Rapid customer's respond will influence the personal computer configuration.	VL
F1-F13	Personal computer configuration will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F1	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F14	Personal computer configuration will influence the salary	N
F14-F1	Salary will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F15	Personal computer configuration will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	VH
F15-F1	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the personal computer configuration.	L
F1-F16	Personal computer configuration will influence the employee's resilience	N
F16-F1	Employee's resilience will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F1-F17	Personal computer configuration will influence the virtual teamwork.	H
F17-F1	Virtual teamwork will influence the personal computer configuration.	VL
F1- F18	Personal computer configuration will influence the work-family conflict.	N
F18-F1	Work-family conflict will influence the personal computer configuration.	N
F2 - Supervisor support		
F2-F3	Supervisor support will influence the working conditions.	N
F3-F2	Working conditions will influence the supervisor support.	N
F2-F4	Supervisor support will influence the contact with the direct manager.	VH
F4-F2	Contact with the direct manager will influence the supervisor support.	L
F2-F5	Supervisor support will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	H
F5-F2	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the supervisor support.	VH
F2-F6	Supervisor support will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F2	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the supervisor support.	N
F2-F7	Supervisor support will influence the develop support policies.	N
F7-F2	Develop support policies will influence the supervisor support.	N
F2-F8	Supervisor support will influence the job type.	N
F8-F2	Job type will influence the supervisor support.	N
F2-F9	Supervisor support will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	H
F9-F2	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the supervisor support.	VL
F2-F10	Supervisor support will influence the availability of peer support.	VH
F10-F2	Availability of peer support will influence the supervisor support.	L
F2-F11	Supervisor support will influence the adaptivity.	H
F11-F2	Adaptivity will influence the supervisor support.	VL

F2-F12	Supervisor support will influence the rapid customer's respond.	H
F12-F2	Rapid customer's respond will influence the supervisor support.	VL
F2-F13	Supervisor support will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F2	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the supervisor support.	N
F2-F14	Supervisor support will influence the salary.	H
F14-F2	Salary will influence the supervisor support.	VL
F2-F15	Supervisor support will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F2	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the supervisor support.	N
F2-F16	Supervisor support will influence the employee's resilience.	VH
F16-F2	Employee's resilience will influence the supervisor support.	L
F2-F17	Supervisor support will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F2	Virtual teamwork will influence the supervisor support.	N
F2-F18	Supervisor support will influence the work-family conflict.	H
F18-F2	Work-family conflict will influence the supervisor support.	L
F3 - Working conditions		
F3-F4	Working conditions will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F3	Contact with the direct manager will influence the working conditions.	N
F3-F5	Working conditions will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F3	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the working conditions.	N
F3-F6	Working conditions will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	VL
F6-F3	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the working conditions.	VH
F3-F7	Working conditions will influence the develop support policies.	L
F7-F3	Develop support policies will influence the working conditions.	H
F3-F8	Working conditions will influence the job type.	L
F8-F3	Job type will influence the working conditions.	H
F3-F9	Working conditions will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F3	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the working conditions.	N
F3-F10	Working conditions will influence the availability of peer support.	H
F10-F3	Availability of peer support will influence the working conditions.	L
F3-F11	Working conditions will influence the adaptivity.	H
F11-F3	Adaptivity will influence the working conditions.	VL
F3-F12	Working conditions will influence the rapid customer's respond.	H
F12-F3	Rapid customer's respond will influence the working conditions.	VL
F3-F13	Working conditions will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	VL
F13-F3	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the working conditions.	H
F3-F14	Working conditions will influence the salary.	VL
F14-F3	Salary will influence the working conditions.	H
F3-F15	Working conditions will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	VH
F15-F3	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the working conditions.	L

F3-F16	Working conditions will influence the employee's resilience.	H
F16-F3	Employee's resilience will influence the working conditions.	VL
F3-F17	Working conditions will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F3	Virtual teamwork will influence the working conditions.	N
F3-F18	Working conditions will influence the work-family conflict.	H
F18-F3	Work-family conflict will influence the working conditions.	L
F4 - Contact with the direct manager		
F4-F5	Contact with the direct manager will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	H
F5-F4	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the contact with the direct manager.	VH
F4-F6	Contact with the direct manager will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F4	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F7	Contact with the direct manager will influence the develop support policies.	L
F7-F4	Develop support policies will influence the contact with the direct manager.	H
F4-F8	Contact with the direct manager will influence the job type.	N
F8-F4	Job type will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F9	Contact with the direct manager will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	H
F9-F4	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the contact with the direct manager.	H
F4-F10	Contact with the direct manager will influence the availability of peer support.	N
F10-F4	Availability of peer support will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F11	Contact with the direct manager will influence the adaptivity.	H
F11-F4	Adaptivity will influence the contact with the direct manager.	L
F4-F12	Contact with the direct manager will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F12-F4	Rapid customer's respond will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F13	Contact with the direct manager will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F4	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F14	Contact with the direct manager will influence the salary.	H
F14-F4	Salary will influence the contact with the direct manager.	VL
F4-F15	Contact with the direct manager will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F4	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the Contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F16	Contact with the direct manager will influence the employee's resilience.	N
F16-F4	Employee's resilience will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N
F4-F17	Contact with the direct manager will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F4	Virtual teamwork will influence the contact with the direct manager.	N



F4-F18	Contact with the direct manager will influence the work-family conflict.	H
F18-F4	Work-family conflict will influence the contact with the direct manager.	L
F5 - Emotional intelligence of managers		
F5-F6	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F5	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F7	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the develop support policies.	N
F7-F5	Develop support policies will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F8	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the job type.	N
F8-F5	Job type will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F9	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	H
F9-F5	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	L
F5-F10	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the availability of peer support.	H
F10-F5	Availability of peer support will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	VL
F5-F11	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the adaptivity.	H
F11-F5	Adaptivity will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	VL
F5-F12	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F12-F5	Rapid customer's respond will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F13	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F5	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F14	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the salary.	N
F14-F5	Salary will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F15	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F5	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	N
F5-F16	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the employee's resilience.	VH
F16-F5	Employee's resilience will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	VL
F5-F17	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the virtual teamwork.	H
F17-F5	Virtual teamwork will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	VL
F5-F18	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the work-family conflict.	H
F18-F5	Work-family conflict will influence the emotional intelligence of managers.	VL
F6 - Proper virtual tools (internet speed)		
F6-F7	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the develop support policies.	L
F7-F6	Develop support policies will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	H
F6-F8	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the job type.	N

F8-F6	Job type will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F9	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F6	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F10	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the availability of peer support.	N
F10-F6	Availability of peer support will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F11	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the adaptivity.	H
F11-F6	Adaptivity will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	VL
F6-F12	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the rapid customer's respond.	H
F12-F6	Rapid customer's respond will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	VL
F6-F13	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F6	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F14	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the salary.	N
F14-F6	Salary will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F15	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F6	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F16	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the employee's resilience.	N
F16-F6	Employee's resilience will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F17	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F6	Virtual teamwork will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F6-F18	Proper virtual tools (internet speed) will influence the work-family conflict.	N
F18-F6	Work-family conflict will influence the proper virtual tools (internet speed).	N
F7 - Develop support policies		
F7-F8	Develop support policies will influence the job type.	N
F8-F7	Job type will influence the develop support policies.	N
F7-F9	Develop support policies will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	H
F9-F7	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence develop support policies.	L
F7-F10	Develop support policies will influence the availability of peer support.	N
F10-F7	Availability of peer support will influence the develop support policies.	N
F7-F11	Develop support policies will influence the adaptivity.	H
F11-F7	Adaptivity will influence the develop support policies.	VL
F7-F12	Develop support policies will influence the rapid customer's respond.	H
F12-F7	Rapid customer's respond will influence the develop support policies.	VL

F7-F13	Develop support policies will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	L
F13-F7	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the develop support policies.	H
F7-F14	Develop support policies will influence the salary.	VH
F14-F7	Salary will influence the develop support policies.	VL
F7-F15	Develop support policies will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	VH
F15-F7	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the develop support policies.	H
F7-F16	Develop support policies will influence the employee's resilience.	N
F16-F7	Employee's resilience will influence the develop support policies.	N
F7-F17	Develop support policies will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F7	Virtual teamwork will influence the develop support policies.	N
F7-F18	Develop support policies will influence the work-family conflict.	H
F18-F7	Work-family conflict will influence the develop support policies.	L
F8 - Job type		
F8-F9	Job type will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F8	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence job type.	N
F8-F10	Job type will influence the availability of peer support.	N
F10-F8	Availability of peer support will influence the job type.	N
F8-F11	Job type will influence the adaptivity.	N
F11-F8	Adaptivity will influence the job type.	N
F8-F12	Job type will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F12-F8	Rapid customer's respond will influence the job type.	N
F8-F13	Job type will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	H
F13-F8	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the job type.	L
F8-F14	Job type will influence the salary.	VH
F14-F8	Salary will influence the job type.	L
F8-F15	Job type will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F8	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the job type.	N
F8-F16	Job type will influence the employee's resilience.	VL
F16-F8	Employee's resilience will influence the job type.	H
F8-F17	Job type will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F8	Virtual teamwork will influence the job type.	N
F8-F18	Job type will influence the work-family conflict.	H
F18-F8	Work-family conflict will influence the job type.	L
F9 - Transparency for employees / Regular update of the employees in the organization		

F9-F10	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the availability of peer support.	N
F10-F9	Availability of peer support will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F11	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the adaptivity.	L
F11-F9	Adaptivity will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	VL
F9-F12	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F12-F9	Rapid customer's respond will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F13	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F9	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F14	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the salary.	N
F14-F9	Salary will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F15	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F9	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F16	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the employee's resilience.	L
F16-F9	Employee's resilience will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	VL
F9-F17	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F9	Virtual teamwork will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F9-F18	Regular update of the employees in the organization will influence the work-family conflict.	N
F18-F9	Work-family conflict will influence the regular update of the employees in the organization.	N
F10 - Availability of peer support		
F10-F11	Availability of peer support will influence the adaptivity.	H
F11-F10	Adaptivity will influence the availability of peer support.	L
F10-F12	Availability of peer support will influence the rapid customer's respond.	H
F12-F10	Rapid customer's respond will influence the availability of peer support.	VL
F10-F13	Availability of peer support will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F10	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the availability of peer support.	N
F10-F14	Availability of peer support will influence the salary.	N
F14-F10	Salary will influence availability of peer support.	N
F10-F15	Availability of peer support will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N

F15-F10	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the availability of peer support.	N
F10-F16	Availability of peer support will influence the employee's resilience.	H
F16-F10	Employee's resilience will influence the availability of peer support.	VL
F10-F17	Availability of peer support will influence the virtual teamwork.	VH
F17-F10	Virtual teamwork will influence the availability of peer support.	H
F10-F18	Availability of peer support will influence the work-family conflict.	VH
F18-F10	Work-family conflict will influence the availability of peer support.	H
F11 - Adaptability		
F11-F12	Adaptability will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F12-F11	Rapid customer's respond will influence the adaptability.	N
F11-F13	Adaptability will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F11	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the adaptability.	N
F11-F14	Adaptability will influence the salary.	N
F14-F11	Salary will influence the adaptability.	N
F11-F15	Adaptability will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F11	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the adaptability.	N
F11-F16	Adaptivity will influence the employee's resilience.	VH
F16-F11	Employee's resilience will influence the adaptability.	VH
F11-F17	Adaptivity will influence the virtual teamwork.	VH
F17-F11	Virtual teamwork will influence the adaptability.	L
F11-F18	Adaptability will influence the work-family conflict.	H
F18-F11	Work-family conflict will influence the adaptability.	L
F12 - Rapid customer's respond		
F12-F13	Rapid customer's respond will influence the contact with organizational leaders / top management.	N
F13-F12	Contact with organizational leaders / top management will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F12-F14	Rapid customer's respond will influence the salary.	VL
F14-F12	Salary will influence rapid customer's respond.	H
F12-F15	Rapid customer's respond will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F12	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F12-F16	Rapid customer's respond will influence the employee's resilience.	N
F16-F12	Employee's resilience will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F12-F17	Rapid customer's respond will influence the virtual teamwork.	VL
F17-F12	Virtual teamwork will influence the rapid customer's respond.	H
F12-F18	Rapid customer's respond will influence the work-family conflict.	N

F18-F12	Work-family conflict will influence the rapid customer's respond.	N
F13 - Contact with organizational leaders / Top management		
F13-F14	Contact with organizational leaders will influence the salary.	L
F14-F13	Salary will influence the contact with organizational leaders.	VL
F13-F15	Contact with organizational leaders will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F13	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the contact with organizational leaders.	N
F13-F16	Contact with organizational leaders will influence the employee's resilience.	H
F16-F13	Employee's resilience will influence the contact with organizational leaders.	L
F13-F17	Contact with organizational leaders will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F13	Virtual teamwork will influence the contact with organizational leaders.	N
F13-F18	Contact with organizational leaders will influence the work-family conflict.	N
F18-F13	Work-family conflict will influence the contact with organizational leaders.	N
F14 - Salary		
F14-F15	Salary will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F14	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the salary.	N
F14-F16	Salary will influence the employee's resilience.	L
F16-F14	Employee's resilience will influence the salary.	VL
F14-F17	Salary will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F14	Virtual teamwork will influence the salary.	N
F14-F18	Salary will influence the work-family conflict.	N
F18-F14	Work-family conflict will influence the salary.	N
F15 - Confidentiality of information in the employee's home		
F15-F16	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the employee's resilience.	N
F16-F15	Employee's resilience will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F17	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F15	Virtual teamwork will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F15-F18	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home will influence the work-family conflict.	N
F18-F15	Work-family conflict will influence the confidentiality of information in the employee's home.	N
F16 - Employee's resilience		
F16-F17	Employee's resilience will influence the virtual teamwork.	N
F17-F16	Virtual teamwork will influence the employee's resilience.	N
F16-F18	Employee's resilience will influence the work-family conflict.	L
F18-F16	Work-family conflict will influence the employee's resilience.	H
F17 - Virtual teamwork		
F17-F18	Virtual teamwork will influence the work-family conflict.	L

F18-F17	Work-family conflict will influence the virtual teamwork.	H
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**Appendix 5.3: SSIM - Structural self-interaction matrix for EE factors**

	F18	F17	F16	F15	F14	F13	F12	F11	F10	F9	F8	F7	F6	F5	F4	F3	F2	F1
F1 - personal computer configuration	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	A	O	O	V	O	X
F2 - Supervisor support	O	O	V	O	O	O	O	V	O	O	O	O	O	X	V	O	X	
F3 - Working conditions	O	O	V	O	O	O	O	V	O	O	O	A	O	O	O	X		
F4 - Contact with the direct manager	V	O	O	O	O	O	O	V	O	O	O	A	O	X	X			
F5 - Emotional intelligence of managers	V	O	V	O	O	O	O	V	O	O	O	O	O	X				
F6 - Proper virtual tools – internet speed	O	O	O	O	O	O	V	O	O	O	O	O	X					
F7 - Develop support policies	O	O	O	O	O	A	O	V	O	V	O	X						
F8 - Job type	O	O	V	O	V	O	O	O	O	O	X							
F9 - Transparency / Regular update of the employees in the organization	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	X								
F10 - Availability of peer support	O	X	V	O	O	O	V	V	X									
F11 - Adaptability	V	A	X	O	O	O	O	X										
F12 - Rapid customer's respond	O	O	O	O	O	O	X											
F13 - Contact with organizational leaders / top management	O	O	O	O	O	X												
F14 - Salary	O	O	O	O	X													



F15 - Confidentiality of information in the employee's home	O	O	O	X														
F16 - Employee's resilience	V	O	X															
F17 - Virtual teamwork	O	X																
F18 - work-family conflict	X																	

**Appendix 5.4: Grey reachability matrix derived from aggregated grey SSIM.**

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	F13	F14	F15	F16	F17	F18
F1	_	N	H	N	N	L	N	N	N	N	N	VH	N	N	VH	N	H	N
F2	N	_	N	VH	H	N	N	N	H	VH	H	H	N	H	N	VH	N	H
F3	VL	N	_	N	N	VL	L	L	N	H	H	H	VL	VL	VH	H	N	H
F4	N	L	N	_	H	N	L	N	H	N	H	N	N	H	N	N	N	H
F5	N	VL	N	VH	_	N	N	N	H	H	H	N	N	N	N	VH	H	H
F6	VH	N	VH	N	N	_	L	N	N	N	H	H	N	N	N	N	N	N
F7	N	N	H	H	N	H	_	N	H	N	H	H	L	VH	VH	N	N	H
F8	N	N	H	N	N	N	N	_	N	N	N	N	H	VH	N	VL	N	H
F9	N	VL	N	H	L	N	L	N	_	N	L	N	N	N	N	L	N	N

F10	N	L	L	N	VL	N	N	N	N	_	H	H	N	N	N	H	VH	VH
F11	N	VL	VL	L	VL	VL	VL	N	VL	L	_	N	N	N	N	VH	VH	H
F12	VL	VL	VL	N	N	VL	VL	N	N	VL	N	_	N	VL	N	N	VL	N
F13	N	N	H	N	N	N	H	L	N	N	N	N	_	L	N	H	N	N
F14	N	VL	H	VL	N	N	VL	L	N	N	N	H	VL	_	N	L	N	N
F15	L	N	L	N	N	N	H	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	_	N	N	N
F16	N	L	VL	N	VL	N	N	H	VL	VL	VH	N	L	VL	N	_	N	L
F17	VL	N	N	N	VL	N	N	N	N	H	L	H	N	N	N	N	_	L
F18	N	L	L	L	VL	N	L	L	N	H	L	N	N	N	N	H	H	_

**Appendix 5.5: Transforming SSIM reachability matrix to Grey number**

Linguistic variables	Related grey number
No influence (N)	[0, 0]
Very low influence (VL)	[0, 0.25]
Low influence (L)	[0.25, 0.50]
High influence (H)	[0.50, 0.75]
Very high influence (VH)	[0.75, 1]

**Appendix 5.6: Final grey reachability matrix.**

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	F13	F14	F15	F16	F17	F18
F1	–	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.75, 1]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.75, 1]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]
F2	[0, 0]	–	[0, 0]	[0.75, 1]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.75, 1]	0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0.75, 1]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]
F3	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	–	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0.25]	[0.75, 1]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]
F4	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	–	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]
F5	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0.75, 1]	–	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.75, 1]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]
F6	[0.75, 1]	[0, 0]	[0.75, 1]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	–	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]
F7	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	–	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0.75, 1]	[0.75, 1]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]
F8	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	–	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.75, 1]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]
F9	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	–	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]
F10	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	–	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.75, 1]	[0.75, 1]
F11	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0.25]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0.25, 0.50]	–	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.75, 1]	[0.75, 1]	[0.50, 0.75]
F12	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	–	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]
F13	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	–	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]
F14	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0.25]	–	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]

F1 5	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	–	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]
F1 6	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0.25]	[0.75, 1]	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	–	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]
F1 7	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	–	[0.25, 0.50]
F1 8	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0.25]	[0, 0]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.25, 0.50]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0, 0]	[0.50, 0.75]	[0.50, 0.75]	–

**Appendix 5.7: Final crisp reachability matrix from final grey reachability matrix.**

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	F13	F14	F15	F16	F17	F18
F1	0.75	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.50	0.00
F2	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.75	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.75	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.50
F3	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.50	0.00	0.50
F4	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.75	0.50	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50
F5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.50	0.50
F6	0.75	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F7	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.75	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.75	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.50
F8	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50

F9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.25	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00
F10	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.75	0.75
F11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.75	0.50
F12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F13	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.25	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00
F14	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00
F15	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00
F16	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.25
F17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.25	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.25
F18	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.50	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.75

**Appendix 5.8: Initial crisp reachability matrix based on grey reachability matrix for building the MICMAC**

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	F13	F14	F15	F16	F17	F18	Driving power	Rank
<b>F1</b>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
<b>F2</b>	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	2
<b>F3</b>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	4
<b>F4</b>	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	3
<b>F5</b>	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	6	1
<b>F6</b>	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4
<b>F7</b>	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2
<b>F8</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	4
<b>F9</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
<b>F10</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	2
<b>F11</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	4
<b>F12</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
<b>F13</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
<b>F14</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	6
<b>F15</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	6
<b>F16</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	4
<b>F17</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	4
<b>F18</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6

Dependence	2	2	3	4	3	1	2	1	2	2	9	3	1	2	1	7	2	5		
Rank	6	6	5	4	5	7	6	7	6	6	1	5	7	6	7	2	6	3		

**Appendix 5.9: Final crisp reachability matrix after checking transitivity for level partition and building a diagram**

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	F13	F14	F15	F16	F17	F18	F19 (EE)
F1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1*	0	0	0	0	1*	0	0	1
F2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1*	1
F3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1*	1
F4	0	1*	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1*	0	1	1
F5	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
F6	1	0	1*	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
F7	0	0	1	1	1*	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1*	0	1*	1
F8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1*	0	0	1	0	1	0	1*	1
F9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
F10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1*	1
F11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
F12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
F13	0	0	1*	1*	0	0	1	0	1*	0	1*	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
F14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
F15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
F16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1



F17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1*	0	0	0	1*	1	1*	1
F18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
F19 (EE)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

## Appendix 5.10: Level partition of each factor

### Level partition—Iteration 1.

Factor s	Reachability set	Antecedent set	Intersection set	Level
F1	1,3,11,16,19	1,6	1	
F2	2,4,5,11,16,18,19	2,4,5	4,5	
F3	3,11,16,18,19	1,3,6,7,13	3	
F4	2,4,5,11,16,18,19	2,4,5,7,13	2,4,5	
F5	2,4,5,11,16,18,19	2,4,5,7	2,4,5	
F6	1,3,6,12,19	6	6	
F7	3,4,5,7,9,11,16,18,1 9	7,13	7	
F8	8,11,14,16,18,19	8	8	
F9	9,19	7,9,13	9	
F10	10,11,12,16,17,18,1 9	10,17	10,17	
F11	11,16,18,19	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,13,16,17	11,16	
F12	12,19	6,10,12,17	12	
F13	3,4,7,9,11,13,19	13	13	
F14	14,19	8,14	14	
F15	15,19	15	15	
F16	16,18,19	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,16,17	16	
F17	10,11,12,16,17,18,1 9	10,17	10,17	
F18	18,19	2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,16,17,18	18	
F19 (EE)	19	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17 ,18,19	EE	Level 1

### Level partition—Iteration 2.

Factors	Reachability set	Antecedent set	Intersection set	Level
F1	1,3,11,16	1,6	1	
F2	2,4,5,11,16,18	2,4,5	4,5	
F3	3,11,16,18	1,3,6,7,13	3	
F4	2,4,5,11,16,18	2,4,5,7,13	2,4,5	
F5	2,4,5,11,16,18	2,4,5,7	2,4,5	

F6	1,3,6,12	6	6	
F7	3,4,5,7,9,11,16,18	7,13	7	
F8	8,11,14,16,18	8	8	
F9	9	7,9,13	9	Level 2
F10	10,11,12,16,17,18	10,17	10,17	
F11	11,16,18	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,13,16,17	11,16	
F12	12	6,10,12,17	12	Level 2
F13	3,4,7,9,11,13	13	13	
F14	14	8,14	14	Level 2
F15	15	15	15	Level 2
F16	16,18	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,16,17	16	
F17	10,11,12,16,17,18	10,17	10,17	
F18	18	2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,16,17,18	18	Level 2

**Level partition—Iteration 3.**

Factors	Reachability set	Antecedent set	Intersection set	Level
F1	1,3,11,16	1,6	1	
F2	2,4,5,11,16	2,4,5	4,5	
F3	3,11,16	1,3,6,7,13	3	
F4	2,4,5,11,16	2,4,5,7,13	2,4,5	
F5	2,4,5,11,16	2,4,5,7	2,4,5	
F6	1,3,6	6	6	
F7	3,4,5,7,11,16	7,13	7	
F8	8,11,16	8	8	
F10	10,11,16,17	10,17	10,17	
F11	11,16	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,13,16,17	11,16	Level 3
F13	3,4,7,11,13	13	13	
F16	16	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,16,17	16	Level 3
F17	10,11,16,17	10,17	10,17	

**Level partition—Iteration 4.**

Factors	Reachability set	Antecedent set	Intersection set	Level
F1	1,3	1,6	1	

F2	2,4,5	2,4,5	2,4,5	Level 4
F3	3	1,3,6,7,13	3	Level 4
F4	2,4,5	2,4,5,7,13	2,4,5	Level 4
F5	2,4,5	2,4,5,7	2,4,5	Level 4
F6	1,3,6	6	6	
F7	3,4,5,7	7,13	7	
F8	8	8	8	Level 4
F10	10,17	10,17	10,17	Level 4
F13	3,4,7,13	13	13	
F17	10, 17	10,17	10,17	Level 4

#### Level partition—Iteration 5.

Factors	Reachability set	Antecedent set	Intersection set	Level
F1	1	1,6	1	Level 5
F6	1,6	6	6	
F7	7	7,13	7	Level 5
F13	7,13	13	13	

#### Level partition—Iteration 6.

Factors	Reachability set	Antecedent set	Intersection set	Level
F6	6	6	6	Level 6
F13	13	13	13	Level 6

#### Appendix 5.11: Level-wise relationship among the factors of EE.

Level	Factors	Relationship
Level 1	F19	EE can be enhance at remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Level 2	F9 – F19	Transparency in information to employee is influencing the level of trust the employee has in the organization.
	F12 – F19	Rapid customer's respond help to increase EE by immediate success.

	F14 – F19	The basic premise is that an employee will get his salary for doing the work. If your salary is been affected by remote work than your level of Engagement is also affected.
	F15 – F19	Confidentiality of information in the employee's home is influencing the level of trust the employee has in the organization.
	F18 – F19	Work – family conflict has an impact on employee's daily remote work. The balance between work and family influence the level of EE.
Level 3	F11 – F18	Adaptability helps in attaining better coping with work – family conflict.
	F16 – F18	Employee's resilience helps to maintain the effective influence on the work – family conflict.
	F11 – F16	Adaptability helps to maintain high level of employee's resilience. A fast adaptability to the remote work helps the employee to cope with his mental resilience of the situation.
Level 4	F2 – F11	Manager support will help employee's adaptability to the new situation.
	F3 – F11	Working condition will increase the level of employee's adaptability for the remote work.
	F4 – F11	Contact with the direct manager will influence employee's adaptability.
	F5 – F11	Emotional intelligence of Managers will help employees to adapt to the new situation of remote working.
	F10 – F11	Availability of peer support promotes awareness of employees' adaptability for the remote work.
	F11 – F10	Employee's adaptability increase peer support.
	F17 – F11	Virtual teamwork will increase the employee's adaptability for the remote work.
	F2 – F16	Supervisor support will help employee's resilience to adjust to the new situation.
	F3 – F16	Work condition will increase the resilience of employee in remote work.

	F5 – F16	Emotional intelligence of Managers will help employees to cope with the new situation of remote working and increase their resilience.
	F8 – F16	Job type will help to cope with the new situation of remote working and increase employees' resilience.
	F10 – F16	Availability of peer support is help employees facing the new situation and strengthen their mental resilience.
	F2 – F5	Emotional intelligence of managers will influence the supervisor support.
Level 5	F1 – F3	Personal computer configuration will help to enhance the essential work conditions.
	F1 – F4	Personal computer configuration will create the infrastructure to promote a successful framework condition with the direct manager.
	F7 – F3	Develop support policies creates the infrastructure for work conditions.
	F7 – F4	Develop support policies requires a direct connection with the manager support.
Level 6	F6 – F1	Internet speed will supply the network requirements to personal computer configuration. Can connect more effectively and eventually makes the personal computer configuration activities easier.
	F13 – F7	Contact with the top management will support the implementation of the Develop support policies. Therefore, the policies protocols can be promoted more easily.

**Appendix 5.12: Cross-impact matrix multiplication applied to classification (MICMAC) analysis of EE factors.**

↑ Driving Power	9										
	8										
	7										
	6			F5							
	5		F2, F7, F10			Independent factors	Linkage factors				
	4.5					Autonomous factors	Dependence factor				
	4				F4						
	3	F6, F8	F17	F3				F16		F11	
	2	F13	F1								
	1	F15	F9, F14	F12				F18			
		1	2	3	4	4.5	5	6	7	8	9
	→ Dependence Power										

