

Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction and Workplace Well-Being: Examining the Moderation Effect of Migration

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Abstract

Organizations and institutions are coming to realize the significance of engaged employees to the organization's overall progress. Thus, in the recent past, research endeavours are focused on studying the implications of an engaged employee to organizational well-being (Jain et al., 2009; Luthans & Avolio, 2009; McMurray et al., 2010; X. Zheng et al., 2015). Furthermore, the impetus to this string of thought has been afforded by the Positive psychology revolution, which had implications on organizational existence (M. Seligman, 1998; M. E. P. Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2001). So these two streams of thoughts have led to vehement investigations on the theme of workplace well-being (Bordi et al., 2018; Bye et al., 2020; Jarden et al., 2021; McFadden et al., 2021; Newman et al., 2018; Nimmi et al., 2022; Potts et al., 2021; C. Zheng et al., 2015); and a specific segment of research that delves on employee attitudes, that ensure the phenomenon of well-being (Brunetto et al., 2022; Fida et al., 2022; Newman et al., 2018; Walter & Hazan-Liran, 2022; Xu et al., 2022).

Keywords: *workplace wellbeing, work engagement, job satisfaction, migrant employees.*

INTRODUCTION

Organizations and institutions are coming to realize the significance of engaged employees to the organization's overall progress. Thus, in the recent past, research endeavours are focused on studying the implications of an engaged employee to organizational well-being (Jain et al., 2009; Luthans & Avolio, 2009; McMurray et al., 2010; X. Zheng et al., 2015). Furthermore, the impetus to this string of thought has been afforded by the Positive psychology revolution, which had implications on organizational existence (M. Seligman, 1998; M. E. P. Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2001). So these two streams of thoughts have led to vehement investigations on the theme of workplace well-being (Bordi et al., 2018; Bye et al., 2020; Jarden et al., 2021; McFadden et al., 2021; Newman et al., 2018; Nimmi et al., 2022; Potts et al., 2021; C. Zheng et al., 2015); and a specific segment of research that delves on employee attitudes, that ensure the phenomenon of well-being (Brunetto et al., 2022; Fida et al., 2022; Newman et al., 2018; Walter & Hazan-Liran, 2022; Xu et al., 2022).

Though work engagement has been discussed as a crucible of positive organizational scholarship (Levene, 2015); still its attribution to the Job Demands-Resource (JDR) Theory has been immense (Dåderman & Basinska, 2016; Demerouti et al., 2001; Tesi, 2021); which attributes the content of job as crucial to the exhibited attitude of

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engagement by the employee. Thus, indicating work content is critical to the engagement of an employee at work and in organizations.

A recent meta-analysis vividly indicates that low work engagement contributes to decreased well-being (Knight et al., 2017); moreover, the same meta-analysis mentions satisfaction as an outcome variable (Knight et al., 2017). Furthermore, the academic and practitioner fraternity has substantiated Job satisfaction as an integral job attitude of employee engagement (Chevalier et al., 2018; Karanika-Murray et al., 2015; Koekemoer et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2018; Quek et al., 2021). Thus, it could be noted that Work engagement is an integral crucible for workplace well-being and Job-satisfaction; and thus deserves a central role between these two outcome variables. Though these have been long-made constructs, their cumulative associations, especially in the context of migrant employees and expatriates are still understudied.

Moreover, with the paucity of investigations in the Indian context, we aim at understanding the nexus between the focal variables (Fig. 1), and the strength of their association. Second, though the individual effect of work engagement on job satisfaction and workplace well-being has been extensively studied; their aggregate association as the focal variables is rarely investigated (Brunetto et al., 2012); and more so, with the mediation effect of Job satisfaction. Finally, there have been rarely any studies that report the effect of migration on the association between focal variables, the current investigation aims to tap this vacuum.

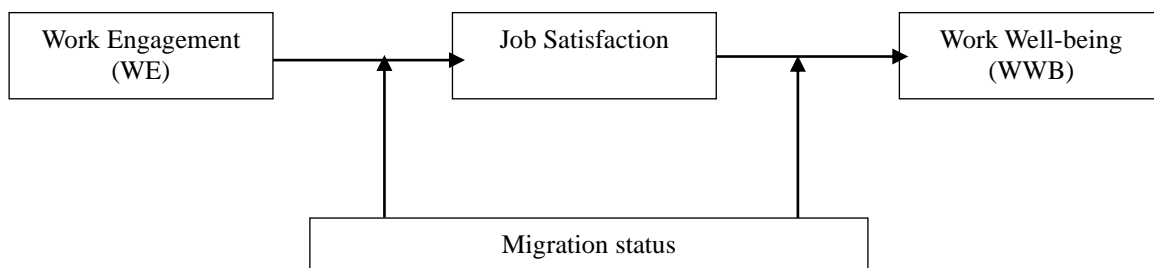


Figure 1: Hypothesized Model

Thus, the research model (Figure 1) answers the following questions: (1) How do the focal variables: Employee engagement, Workplace well-being and Job satisfaction; associate with each other; contextual to India? (2) How does, this association between the antecedent and outcome variable arbitrated by the mediating variable: Job satisfaction; and (3) How does migration modulate the magnitude of this relationship, in an organizational context?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Direct Association: Work Engagement (WE) and Workplace Well-being (WWB)

Conceptually, Work engagement is framed as a positive state of well-being characterized by high levels of energy and strong identification with one's work' (A. Bakker & Leiter, 2010); which signifies the central role of well-being to the aspect of employee's work engagement. Furthermore, Workplace well-being signifies: 'a positive, fulfilling, motivational state of work-related, well-being.'

Moreover, studies perpetuated work engagement (WE) which is a second-order construct is commissioned as a means to achieve workplace well-being (WWB) and happiness (Eek & Axmon, 2013; Rothmann, 2008). Though, these two constructs exhibit conceptual proximity; still they have to be investigated as distinct constructs to account for their separate effects; however abysmal they could be (Eek & Axmon, 2013; Rothmann, 2008); and substantiate discriminate validity. Thus, it could be stated:

H1: Work engagement positively associates with Workplace well-being.

Direct Association: Work Engagement (WE) and Job Satisfaction (JS)

In the light of Self-determination Theory (SDT), the concept of WE garner a state of 'satisfaction' (Karanika-Murray et al., 2015). It is discussed as a positive psychology, wherein employees experience a positive state of mind, with vigour (Rai & Agarwal, 2017), job performance (Karanika-Murray et al., 2015) and flow experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 2016).

Conceptually, WE is comprised of vigor, dedication and absorption; whereas, JS has goal-achievement embedded into it; indicative of physical labour in the earlier, and psychological labour in the latter. So, based on the Job Demand-Resources (JDR) Model, which states that 'job resources' like flow, progression and others; can mitigate the effect of Job Demands i.e., negative connotations like stress, burnout and others (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007) to foster WE; which further leads to positive outcomes and Job satisfaction (A. B. Bakker et al., 2012). Thus, the whole narrative is an indication of the antecedent nature of Work engagement (Alarcon & Edwards, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2018).

H2: Work engagement positively associates with Job satisfaction.

Direct Association: Job Satisfaction (JS) and Workplace well-being

In the light of JDR theory, it could be stated that Job resources, when superseding Job demand, lead to a positive psychological state, which is Job satisfaction. This positive state leads to the fulfilment of work purpose, and motivation to improve performance; which conceptually synchronizes with the concept of well-being. Moreover, JS is a goal-oriented psychological concept, the contentment of which leads to a positive psychological state, which is well-being. Thus, it would be reasonable to derive that Job satisfaction is associated with Workplace well-being as a positive precursor.

Furthermore, there has been consistent empirical evidence, that indicates the antecedence of Job satisfaction to the event of workplace wellbeing (Bye et al., 2020; Rothmann, 2008). Further, a study indicates work-life balance is indicative of job satisfaction and workplace well-being (Felstead & Henseke, 2017); corollary to which it is plausible to state that work-related happiness is an outcome of job satisfaction.

H3: Job satisfaction positively associates with Workplace well-being.

Mediation – Moderation Effect:

The earlier discussions have substantiated the positive association between WE and JS; moreover, their conceptualization is indicative of their integral association. According to the JDR Theory, role clarity is fundamental to WE, which cumulatively funnels to JS and thus, WWB (Avey et al., 2011). Moreover, employee health is found to be a conjoint variable that integrates Job satisfaction, work engagement and well-being (A. B. Bakker et al., 2008; Drydakis, 2019; Haar et al., 2014; Jarden et al., 2021; Lowery & Cassidy, 2022; Selvaraj & Bhat, 2018; C. R. , Snyder et al., 1991; C. Zheng et al., 2015); thus it could be postulated that they share an association. Further, it is empirically substantiated that WE and JS prelude the event of workplace well-being; thus, it could be stated that:

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the association between Employee engagement and Workplace well-being.

Though, it could be obvious to state that migration and expatriation effects the principal relationships (Lauring & Selmer, 2015; van der Ham et al., 2014); it is equally significant to understand the magnitude to those relationships and their effect size. This could pave the way to the creation of policies that aid categorical treatment to be rendered for distinct migrant employees, if needed. Thus, it is plausible to state:

H5: Migration moderates the association between the focal variables i.e., WE, JS and WWB.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study could gather a total of 286 usable responses, wherein the respondents with full-time employment i.e., a minimum of 40 hours of employment per week; and a minimum experience of two years with the current employer were considered. Native employees comprised 58.39% of the population, with an average age of 28.96 (S.D. = 12.235).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Characteristics		Frequency	%	Std. Dev.
Migration status	Native	167	58.3	.500
	Migrant	119	41.6	
Age (in years)	21 – 30	76	26.57	12.235
	31 – 40	97	33.91	
	41 – 50	103	36.01	
	51 – 60	7	2.44	
	60 and above	3	1.04	
Years with current org.	1 – 10	97	33.91	3.765
	11 – 20	121	42.30	
	21 – 30	54	18.88	
	30 and above	14	4.89	
Education	Higher Schooling	4	1.39	0.742
	Baccalaureate	157	54.89	
	Masters	97	33.91	
	Ph.D.	7	2.44	
	Others	21	7.34	

Instruments

A three-item Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire was used to assess Job Satisfaction, with an Alpha index of .641. UWES-3 was used for Employee engagement and a six-item scale by Zheng for assessing Workplace well-being (Schaufeli et al., 2019; X. Zheng et al., 2015); with a Cronbach's alpha index of .599 and .875 respectively.

Table 2: Measurement Model

Items		Loading	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
Job Satisfaction					
JS_1	In general, I don't like my job. *	Eliminated	.641	.642	.340
JS_2	All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	.724			
JS_3	In general, I like working here.	.651			
Work Engagement					
WE_1	At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	.501	.599	.602	.474
WE_2	I am enthusiastic about my job.	.526			

WE_3	I am immersed in my work.	.702			
Workplace Wellbeing					
WWB_1	I am satisfied with my work well-being.	.741	.875	.862	.511
WWB_2	In general, I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.	.764			
WWB_3	I find real enjoyment in my work.	.688			
WWB_4	I can always find ways to enrich my work.	.713			
WWB_5	Work is a meaningful experience for me.	.708			
WWB_6	I feel basically satisfied with my work achievements in my current job.	.671			

Control Variables

The study's sanctity was ensured by controlling for organizational tenure, age, cadre, and sector of industry. Some of these control variables are evinced to influence the focal variables, and hence this precision was taken in order to ensure robustness of the work.

DATA ANALYSIS

Psychometric assessment

SEM CFA was modelled to assess the hypothesized model represented in Figure 1. The model-fit indices of the correlational model indicate satisfaction [χ^2 (36, n = 286) = 55.985, p = .018, CMIN/DF = 1.555, NFI = .963, CFI = .986, TLI = .979, RMSEA = .041, and SRMR = .0281]. Convergent validity was assessed using standardized factor loadings; which earned a factor loading for each of the items above .50; indicated in Table 2; an CR and AVE were within the threshold; thus, offering convergent validity amongst the items.

Discriminant validity was assessed using the HTMT ratio criterion; wherein the indices were below the range of 0.85.

Table 3: Correlational Statistics and Discriminant Validity

	Job Satisfaction	Work Engagement	Workplace Wellbeing
Job Satisfaction	.688	0.773	0.874
Work Engagement	.797***	.583	.903
Workplace Wellbeing	.894***	.929***	.715

Notes: Values below the diagonal, are correlations between variables, values above the diagonal are HTMT ratio; and values on the diagonal (in bold) are square-roots of AVE | **Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Hypothesis testing

The statistical output indicated support for direct associations i.e., H1 and H2; wherein a positive, significant association was indicated in all three relationships i.e., between work engagement with Workplace wellbeing (WE→WWB = .595, p<0.01); and Job satisfaction (WE→JS = .797, p<0.01). Support was also found for H3, wherein a positive

association was deciphered between Job satisfaction and workplace wellbeing (JS→WWB = .421, p<0.01).

The mediation effect was examined to be insignificant (WE→JS→WWB = .335, p>0.10), thus offering no support for H4.

The moderation effect between the antecedent and outcome variable was partially purged (JS:EmpStat_[Native]→WWB = .4909, p<0.01; JS:EmpStat_[Migrant]→WWB = .6415, p<0.01). So partial support for H5 was accomplished. And the indirect moderation effect was significant (WE:EmpStat_[Native]→JS:EmpStat_[Native]→WWB=.1691, p<0.01; WE:EmpStat_[Migrant]→JS:EmpStat_[Migrant]→ WWB= .2610, p<0.01), thus indicative of the role of the moderator variable: Migration is tweaking the indirect effect; so partial support for H5 was reiterated.

Figure 1: Interaction Plot for Migration as Moderator

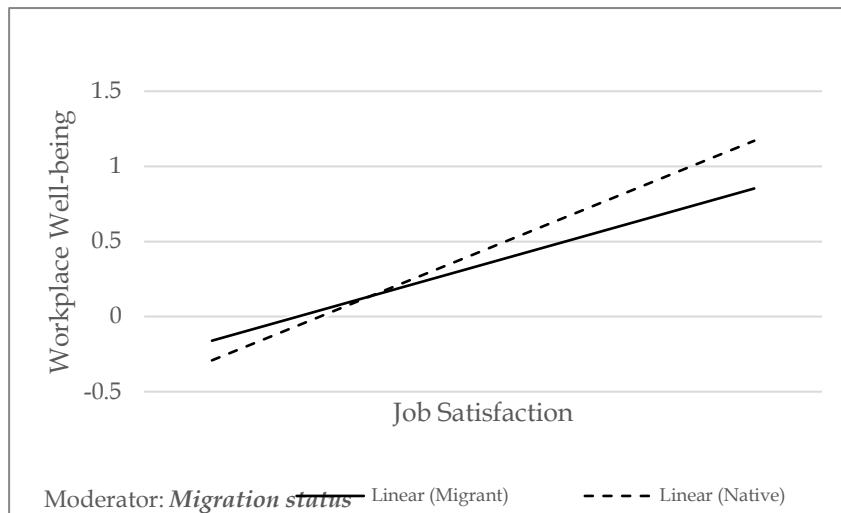


Table 4: Regression Effect - Direct and Indirect Effects

Paths	Estimates	S.E.	C.R.	Estimate s	S.E.	LLCI	ULC I	Mediati on Effect
	Direct Effect			Indirect Effect				
WE→WWB	.594***	.224	3.623					
WE→JS	.797***	.141	6.570					
JS→WWB	.421**	.179	2.762					
Mediation: WE→JS→WWB				.2079**	.044	.1270	.303	Yes
				*	7		8	
Moderation: EmpStat→JS				.0537	.072	-.0890	.196	No
					5		5	
Moderation: EmpStat*WE→JS				.0348	.104	-.1713	.240	No
					7		8	
Moderation: EmpStat→WWB				-.0188	.048	-.1149	.077	No
					8		2	
Moderation: EmpStat*JS→WWB				.1506**	.065	.0218	.279	Yes
					5		4	
Moderation:				.4909**	.052	.3885	.593	Yes

EmpStat _[Native] *JS→WWB	*	1		3	
Moderation:	.6415**	.108	.4279	.855	Yes
EmpStat _[Migrant] *JS→WB	*	6		1	
Moderation:	.1691**	.060	.0636	.298	Yes
EmpStat _[Native] *WE→Emp	*	1		8	
Stat _[Native] *JS→WWB					
Moderation:	.2610**	.061	.1580	.392	Yes
EmpStat _[Migrant] *WE→Em	*	2		3	
pStat _[Migrant] *JS→WWB					

***Correlation is significant at the 0.00 level (2-tailed) | **Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

DISCUSSION

While the direct relationships received support as hypothesized in the current investigations; the current association still makes it evident, contextually. Further, the study makes the indirect association insignificant; though the mediation effect is significant for both native and immigrant employees; indicating that though the direct relationship between WE and WWB is significant and stronger; Migration has the potential to ameliorate its indirect effect i.e., while in general parlance indirect association is insignificant; it become evident and significant in the context of migration and expatriation; thus stating the feeble presence of Job satisfaction as mediator; becomes strengthened in the context of migration, thus making migration as a significant determinant of all the focal variables. The study accentuates the standing of Work engagement to influence workplace wellbeing; underscoring the strength of Work engagement as primal, than any other variable to influence well-being. Thus, organizations can aim at targeting Employee engagement by tapping vigour and dedication; instead of aiming at Job satisfaction alone. Furthermore, the study is significant in indicating that if organizations aim at WWB vide JS, then migration could be pivotal to establishing the association. Though with meagre support, which further needs substantiation in future studies; it could be stated that the moderation effect of ‘migration’ is higher in magnitude than that for native employees; thus indicating that Job satisfaction is a vital constituent of wellbeing for migrant and expat employees; as compared to the native. Rationale for this could be attributed to the instances of culture shock, cost of living, emotional and cognitive challenges that migrant employees face on their expatriation.

Thus, the current research accentuates the underpinnings of the hypothesized relationships; besides magnifying the association of migration with focal variables (Lauring & Selmer, 2015; van der Ham et al., 2014). Though in the earlier studies, Job satisfaction mediated the association (Avey et al., 2011); herein its role has been restricted.

The study underscores the direct effect of WE on WWB, wherein organizations can target work engagement, instead of JS for the creation of a happy employee, in general; thus emphasizing the need for physical engagement, and just not psychological satisfaction (Chevalier et al., 2018). The study hints at the need to create flow experiences at the workplace (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 2016; Tse et al., 2020); to achieve workplace well-being.

IMPLICATIONS

Thus, drawing from SDT and JDR Theory, the notion of work engagement creates well-being of the employees; thus, organizations should check for the antecedents of WE (i.e., those that create absorption, vigour and dedication) and try to tap them to create well-being at the workplace. It is realized in the current study, that the presence of mediators shrinks the effect size, which has elaborate implications for theorists and practitioners. Thus, the association between WE and WWB is well-established in the light of SDT.

Theoretically, the investigation is indicative of well-being to exhibit synergy with work engagement; which gets mitigated in the cumulative/collaborative presence of Migration and Job satisfaction. So, a variable like JS, which is feeble gets potent in the presence of migration; thus indicating the need for diverse and distinct policies for migrant employees. Organizations can devise ways for competency-based work allocation, interesting work and challenging work profiles for achieving eudemonic and hedonic happiness for their employees. Though this research may not be sufficient to adopt discursive policies; attempts could be made to harness employee engagement, till a body of literature gains momentum in this area of study, especially in the context of migration and cross-culture.

CONCLUSION

Recent organizational initiatives have been shifting from welfare initiatives to hedonic policies. The current investigation supports such strategies; wherein ascendancies can harness the engagement of employees on a broader parlance, especially for migrant employees. Organizations need to delve into the distinct policies that can be made to engage native and migrant employees for a delightful working experience. The current investigation records two significant inferences. First, employee wellbeing is a direct outcome of engagement measures; and second, the pathway to wellbeing is distinct for migrant and non-migrant employees. Though initial, studies of such kind should be encouraged in distinct zones (geographical, cultural, contextual, operational and temporal), for the development of a whole body of research and a fulfilling work experience.

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