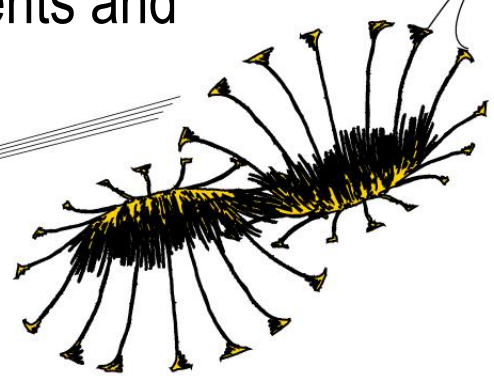


Master thesis
MSc in Business Administration

Individual work engagement and team work
engagement: (new) antecedents and
consequences



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Summary

Motive and goal of this thesis: This study was conducted for a Dutch consulting company. The company assumes that work engagement plays a crucial role for employee performance. On behalf of the company I therefore researched the contribution of work engagement to various performance outcomes and tried to find out how work engagement can be enhanced. The focus was not only on the work engagement of individual employees but also on antecedents for and the role of team work engagement. This thesis concretely focuses on leader work engagement, the employee involvement climate, team reflexivity and leader member exchange as antecedents of team work engagement and/or individual work engagement. This thesis also studies the crossover of team work engagement on individual work engagement. Finally, chargeability, turnover intentions and organization citizenship behavior are studied as possible consequences of individual work engagement.

Method: The research of this thesis was conducted with 116 employees from six teams of the company. Of the participants, 69.6% were male and 30.4% were female. The participants performed different roles within the company and 65.2% of the participants were 32 years or younger. A cross-sectional study was conducted where participants were asked to fill in an online questionnaire within three weeks of time. The data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis.

Results: A positive relationship was found between employee involvement climate, team reflexivity and leader member exchange on the one hand and individual work engagement on the other hand. Also, team work engagement partially mediated the relationship between team reflexivity and leader member exchange on the one hand and individual work engagement on the other hand. Finally, individual work engagement was found to have a positive relationship with organization citizenship behavior and a negative relationship with turnover intentions. There was however no significant relationship between individual work engagement and chargeability.

Discussion: The results illustrate the important role of work engagement when it comes to retaining employees and enhancing organization citizenship behavior. In order to enhance work engagement, the company is advised to involve employees actively in decision making processes, share information with employees, train employees, and use adequate performance based reward systems. Also, a high quality relationship between supervisors and employees has to be established and teams have to reflect on their objectives and on the social aspects of their team work. This way the company's employees can become more engaged in their work.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The incentive for and purpose of this thesis

This study is conducted for and in collaboration with a Dutch consulting company. As an international consulting company, the company's core competencies lie in the talent, knowledge and skills of its employees. It is therefore crucial for the company to employ talented people who can create value for the organization. Consequently, it is an important issue for the company how these talented people can be attracted, developed, retained and motivated to tap their full potential. The company assumes that the engagement of employees plays a crucial role in these motivational processes.

On behalf of this company I dove into the literature on work engagement and researched how work engagement can contribute to organizational success and what can be done to enhance work engagement at the company. My goal was to theoretically research different antecedents and consequences of work engagement. I got a lot of freedom regarding my choice of antecedents and consequences which are studied in this thesis. In order to add value to the already existing literature on work engagement I solely focused on antecedents and consequences which were not (extensively) studied before.

The findings of this thesis do not only contribute to the existing literature on work engagement but can also be of great value for the company. It can develop methods, based on the results of this thesis, to practically enhance the work engagement of its employees. This thesis also partly clarifies how work engagement contributes to performance outcomes that are valued by the company, demonstrating the importance of engaged employees for the company.

In the following sections a short introduction is given on the company and on how work engagement fits the philosophy and goals of the company. After that the theoretical background of this thesis with regard to the importance of work engagement is introduced.

1.1.1 Company information

1.1.2 The company and engagement

1.2 Theoretical background

In the current business world it is all about gaining competitive advantage in order to outperform competitors. In the past, two forms of competitive advantage were mainly observed: low cost and/or differentiation (Porter, 1986; Hill, 1988). However, in today's knowledge-based society, knowledge itself has become a source of competitive advantage (Argote & Ingram, 2000). Therefore, employees have become the key for organizations in order to gain and sustain competitive advantage (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Pfeffer, 1994). According to Pfeffer (1994) a lot of sources of competitive advantage which were based on the five fundamental competitive forces of Porter (entry barriers, supplier and buyer bargaining power, substitutes and threat of new entrants) are less important now than they were in the past. The workforce itself, and the way it is managed and organized, however, has become an important source of competitive advantage instead (Pfeffer, 1994). This is also true for this consulting company, because, as a consulting company, the talent of the company's employees is the basis for its core competencies.

It is therefore crucial for an organization to have employees who tap their full potential. In order to reach this, an organization has to stimulate its employees to make the most of their potential and perform at their best. One way this can be achieved is to enhance an employee's work engagement (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). Engaged employees have a lot of energy and focus regarding their work (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). They are involved in their work and can become so absorbed in their work that they are difficult to distract (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). This engagement can result in various positive organizational outcomes as engaged employees perform well (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). Unfortunately, although widely accepted, only a few studies so far have actually researched the relationship between engagement and performance (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008). There are four reasons why engaged employees should perform better than unengaged employees (Bakker, 2009). First, employees often experience positive emotions which may be a reason for their enhanced productivity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Second, engagement seems to be positively related to good health (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), which puts employees in a more advantageous position to perform well. Third, engaged employees are able to create and mobilize their own resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Finally, there is a crossover of engagement among members of a work team which increases their performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). So far, the few studies on the work engagement-performance relationship have supported the positive relationship between work engagement and performance. Bakker, Demerouti and Verbeke (2004) for example showed that colleagues perceive that engaged

employees show better in-role as well as extra-role performance (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004). The positive relationship between in-role and extra-role performance has also been found by Chung and Angeline (2010). Furthermore, Bakker and Bal (2010) found a positive relationship between engagement and performance of new primary school teachers. Engagement also seems to have a positive relationship with task performance and contextual performance (Christian, Graza & Slaughter, 2011).

The crucial role of work engagement for performance is best illustrated in the Job Demands-Resource Model (JD-R model) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The JD-R model (Figure 3) assumes that job resources and personal resources independently as well as combined predict the work engagement of employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

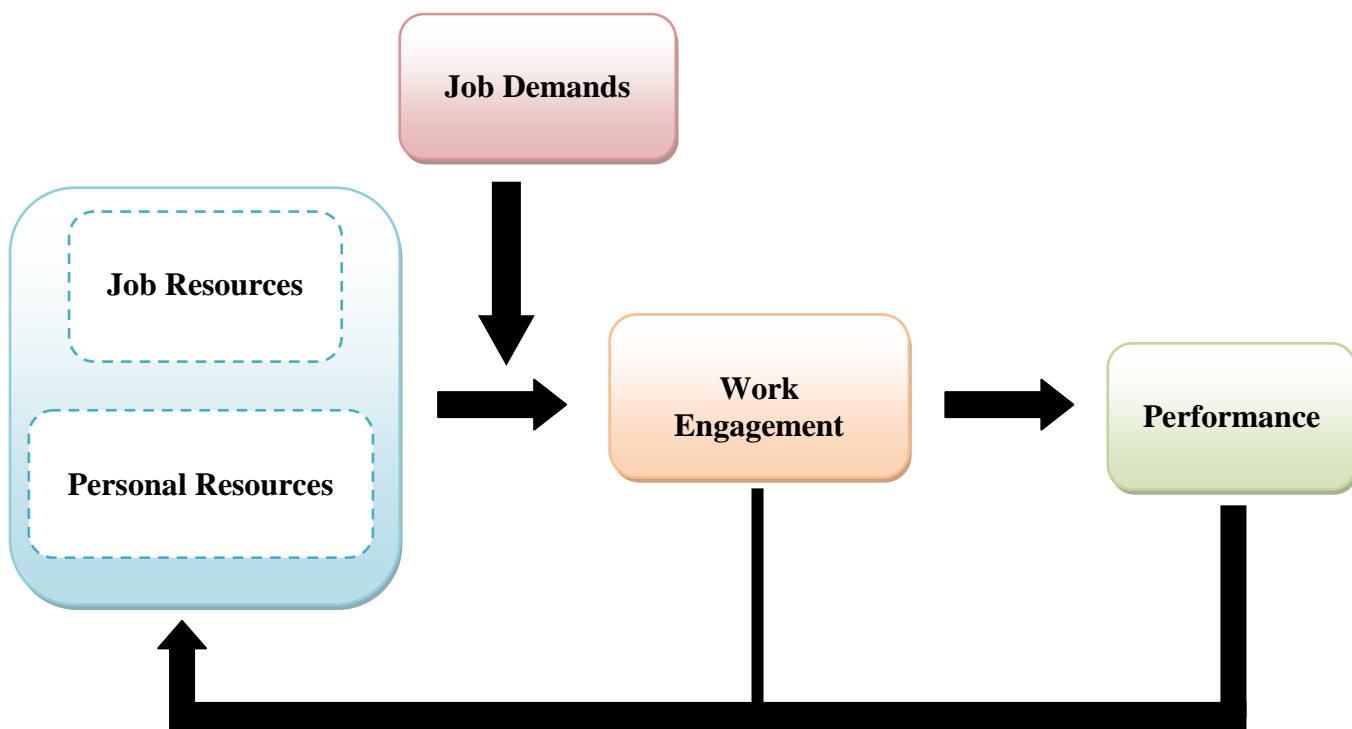


Figure 3. The Job Demands-Resource Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008, p. 218)

Job resources refer to working conditions which provide special resources for employees (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010). They are defined as “physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that (a) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs, (b) are functional in achieving work goals, or (c) stimulate personal growth, learning, and development” (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou, 2007, p. 275). Examples of job resources are social support, performance feedback, or coaching by the supervisor (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). *Personal resources* are “positive self-evaluations that are linked to resiliency and refer to individuals’ sense of their ability to control and

impact upon their environment successfully” (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008, p. 213). These personal resources have, among other things, been shown to predict motivation, performance and job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Examples of personal resources are self-efficacy and self-esteem (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The relationship between resources and work engagement is said to be moderated by various job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). *Job demands* are defined as “physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (i.e. cognitive or emotional) effort on the part of the employee and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs” (Bakker et al., 2007, p. 275). An example of a job demand which fits this definition is work pressure (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Work engagement in turn is said to be positively related to various kinds of performance, for example financial turnover, and in-role and extra-role performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Finally, engaged and well-performing employees are said to create their own resources and therefore enhance their engagement over time (a positive gain spiral) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Although there already exists empirical support for the JD-R model (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010), only a small amount of studies have actually been conducted in this area. A lot of accepted antecedents and consequences of work engagement have not yet been adequately scientifically supported. The aim of this study therefore is to find empirical support for different antecedents and consequences of work engagement.

1.3 Possible antecedents and consequences

The JD-R model depicts the importance of job resources, personal resources and job demands for work engagement of employees and the importance of work engagement for performance outcomes. However, according to Bakker, Demerouti and Xanthopoulou (2012) job resources are the most important drivers of work engagement, as job resources buffer various negative effects of job demands (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010). Also, for an organization that wants to enhance work engagement, job resources are more easy to influence and change than personal resources of employees. Therefore, this thesis only focuses on the contribution of job resources to the work engagement of employees and on the effects of work engagement on various organizational outcomes. The goal of the research in this thesis is to determine various job resources which can be used by an organization to enhance the work engagement of its employees. The relationship between work engagement and a number of organizational outcomes was also researched in order to clarify how work engagement contributes to organizational success. In the last few years much research has been conducted on various job

resources, for example the role of the leader (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010), performance feedback or social support (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). However, many job resources have not been (extensively) studied. This thesis therefore focuses on job demands as well as performance measures, both of which have not been studied extensively or have not been studied at all in the context of work engagement. The existing literature was explored, searching for research gaps regarding job resources and performance outcomes which might be antecedents or consequences of work engagement. In the following section a number of job resources and performance outcomes are shortly introduced that have not been (extensively) studied in the context of work engagement so far, but might be possible antecedents and consequences of work engagement.

First, Cotton (1993) stresses the importance of employee involvement to avoid or minimize negative organizational outcomes like low productivity, absenteeism or turnover. His understanding of the use of employee involvement goes beyond the pure ethical aspects to establishing employee engagement as a tool to reach a variety of management goals (Cotton, 1993). Employee involvement is defined as a “participative process to use the entire capacity of workers, designed to encourage employee commitment to organizational success” (Cotton, 1993, p. 14). It includes taking part in the decision making process, getting incentives, being trained, etc. (Cotton, 1993). The positive effects of employee involvement on organizational outcomes have been supported in various studies. U.S. companies which implemented employee involvement programs found benefits including increased (individual and team) performance, higher quality, less absenteeism and turnover or improvements in production cycle time (Scott, Bishop & Chen, 2003). Furthermore, employee involvement is directly positively related to job satisfaction through enhancing feelings of ownership and commitment, having the opportunity to participate and enjoying it, giving the feeling of control and having the opportunity to interact with others (Scott et al., 2003). Based on this, establishing an organizational environment where employee involvement is supported may let employees feel more engaged. By getting the opportunity to participate in decisions, employees may become more dedicated to their work and will probably have more energy. Employee involvement may therefore be an antecedent of work engagement. In literature there are various concepts which belong to the topic of employee involvement. A concept which has never been studied in the context of work engagement is the *employee involvement climate* (Riordan, Vandenberg & Richardson, 2005). This thesis aims to fill this research gap by studying the employee involvement climate as a possible antecedent of work engagement.

Second, in addition to employee involvement, leadership can also play an important role when it comes to work engagement. According to Janssen and Van Yperen (2004) leaders are a source of work-related knowledge, information and experience and can help employees with their skill development and self-improvement. In literature a lot of research has been dedicated to the various relationships between different leadership styles and work engagement (e.g. Salanova, Lorente, Chambel en Martínez, 2011; Bamford, Wong & Laschinger, in press). However, not much research has been done on the influence of the leader-employee relationship on work engagement. According to the *leader member exchange* theory a high-quality relationship between leader and member brings a lot of advantages for both sides, for example mutual support (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). It is expected that through a good relationship with the leaders, which is characterized by mutual support, an employee can become more engaged with his or her work. This thesis therefore aims to further explore the relationship between leader member exchange and work engagement.

Furthermore, next to the importance of a good leader-employee relationship, team work has become a non-negligible part of work life. According to West (2010) the most important “reason why people work in teams is because they share a common goal or purpose which they believe will be achieved more successfully if they work together than if they work individually” (p. 15). It is believed that employees who work in teams “have a greater chance of being effective and creative in their work” (West, 2010, p. 15). Also, a team is able to provide support for the individual employee in order to cope with work challenges (West, 2010). However, in order to be effective a team has to reflect upon its functioning (West, 2010). This *team reflexivity* may be another antecedent of work engagement. It is possible that by adequately reflecting on, for example, objectives as well as team support, and thereby ensuring more effective work, employees become more engaged with their work, feel more energetic and are able to dedicate themselves more to their work. Team reflexivity may therefore be an antecedent of work engagement.

Fourth, work engagement is also said to have a crossover component; engaged employees are possibly able to transfer their enthusiasm to their colleagues, making them enthusiastic as well and helping them to perform better (Bakker, 2009). In this study this crossover of engagement was studied in two manners. On the one hand it was researched if an *engaged leader* is able to transfer his or her engagement to employees. On the other hand the relationship between the engagement of individual employees and the *engagement of the team* they are working in was explored.

Previously different possible antecedents of work engagement have been mentioned, but what could be consequences of work engagement? And how can work engagement contribute to firm success?

One possible consequence of work engagement could be the *turnover intention* of employees. Engaged employees obtain a lot of energy from their work and dedicate themselves completely to it (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). Therefore it can be imagined that an engaged employee would have less intentions to leave an organization.

Furthermore, an engaged employee may be motivated to engage in behavior which is valued by the organization but which goes beyond what is recognized in the employee's contract. This formally unrewarded behavior is called *organization citizenship behavior* (OCB) (Organ, 1988). Employees with a lot of energy and who are absorbed by their work will, for example, probably be motivated to engage in behavior like helping a colleague or supervisor with a lot of work load because they feel dedicated to their work. This assumption was also researched in this study.

Finally, it would be interesting to clarify the relationship between work engagement and performance outcomes like productivity. Engaged employees with a lot of energy and dedication regarding their work will be motivated to work hard and tap their full potential. The question is whether engaged employees are significantly more productive than disengaged employees. Within the consulting company *chargeability* is used to measure productivity and it was therefore researched in this thesis as a possible consequence of work engagement.

1.4 Research question

The aim of this research is to clarify if the above mentioned constructs really are antecedents and consequences of work engagement. It shall also be explored what the relationship between work engagement of individual employees and team work engagement is. In order to do so the following three-fold research question was formulated based on the constructs introduced above:

(1) What is the relationship of leader work engagement, employee involvement climate, team reflexivity and leader member exchange on the one hand, and work engagement of employees on the other hand; (2) how does work engagement contribute to turnover intentions, chargeability numbers and organization citizenship behavior; (3) and what is the relationship between employee work engagement and work engagement of a team?

2. Research design and research contribution

In the following section the research design of this thesis is introduced. Furthermore, the scientific relevance and the practical relevance of this thesis are shortly discussed.

2.1 Research design

This thesis has a more theory-driven research approach as it is based on the JD-R model and tries to (further) analyze certain gaps (see chapter 2.2) which can be found regarding possible antecedents and consequences of work engagement. The thesis, however, does not test the whole JD-R model but focuses on different job resources and performance variables as antecedents and consequences of work engagement. The thesis is not only scientifically driven as the consulting company also values the results of this thesis. The main focus of this thesis is however on the contribution to scientific literature in the field of work engagement. In order to answer the research question a quantitative research study was conducted using a cross-sectional design.

2.2 Scientific relevance

The JD-R model is a widely accepted framework for the central role of work engagement in order to enhance performance. However, there are a lot of resources and performance measures which have never or not often been studied as antecedents and consequences of work engagement. This thesis, therefore, contributes to scientific literature and existing research in several ways. First, the crossover effect of team work engagement and individual work engagement has been theorized (Bakker, 2009), but it has not often been scientifically researched. Second, the relationship between an employee involvement climate and team reflexivity on the one hand, and work engagement on the other hand, has never been researched before. Furthermore, not many research studies have studied the direct effect of LMX on work engagement. Also, the relationship between work engagement and chargeability has never been studied. Finally, the relationship between work engagement on the one hand, and turnover and OCB on the other hand has never been studied in this research context.

2.3 Practical relevance

Next to the scientific relevance, this study is relevant for the consulting company, too. It shows the importance of work engagement for firm success. It proves how exactly work engagement is related to organizational outcome variables that are valued by the consulting company. The study furthermore describes how work engagement can be enhanced and gives

practical suggestions on how this can be done. The Human Resource Department could pick up these suggestions in order to enhance work engagement within the consulting company.

3. Main concepts

In the following section the main concepts which are researched in this thesis are discussed in detail. These concepts have already been shortly introduced as possible antecedents and consequences of work engagement. The concepts can also be retraced to the research question.

3.1 Work engagement

Work engagement is defined as a “positive, fulfilling, affective-motivational state of work-related well-being” (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). According to Bakker (2011), work engagement is a positive form of work-related subjective well-being. Bakker’s understanding of well-being is based on Russel’s (2003) two-dimensional view of subjective well-being. According to Russel (2003) two fundamental neuropsychological systems (a pleasure-displeasure dimension on the one hand, and an arousal and activation dimension on the other hand) influence a person’s affect states. According to Bakker (2011) engaged employees are characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure (see Figure 4). Engaged employees feel pleased and happy, are excited and enthusiastic about their work, and gain a lot of energy from it (Bakker, 2011). Engagement exists in contrast to feelings of burnout (Bakker, 2011).

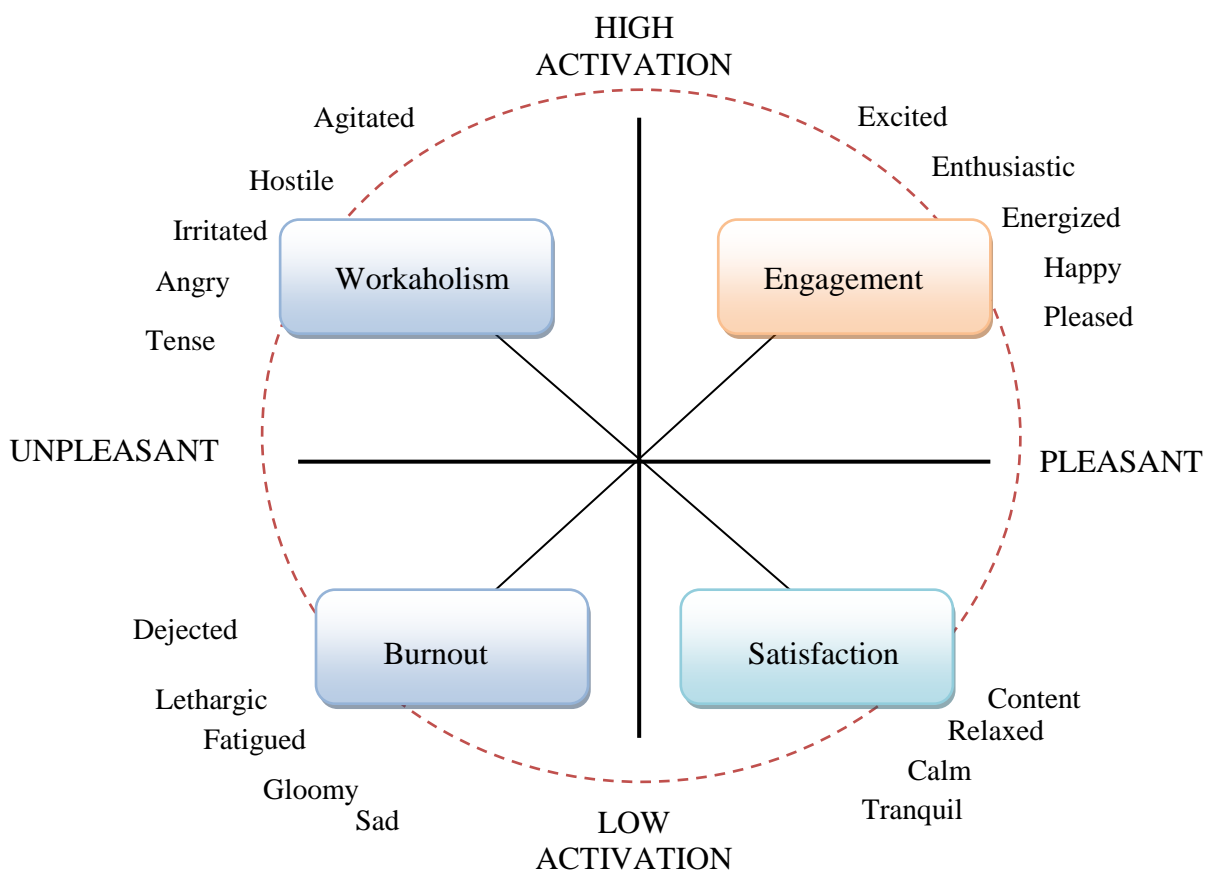


Figure 4. A two-dimensional view of work-related subjective well-being (Bakker, 2011, p. 189)

In literature the terms work engagement and employee engagement are often used interchangeably (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). Work engagement, however, is a more narrow term referring to the relationship of an employee with his or her work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). In comparison, employee engagement can also entail the relationship of the employee with the organization (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). In this thesis the term work engagement will be used, as only the employee-work relationship will be researched. Work engagement has three dimensions: vigor, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006). *Vigor* is characterized as feeling fit and strong, being energetic, being able to work a long time without getting tired and being able to persevere when times get difficult (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Bakker, 2009). *Dedication* is specified as having a lot of enthusiasm and inspiration, being proud of one's work and feeling challenged and satisfied with regard to one's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Bakker, 2009). *Absorption* is defined as being, in a positive way, completely absorbed by the work and having trouble getting away from it (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Bakker, 2009). Absorbed employees have the feeling that time flies when they are at work and forget other things around them (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Work engagement is a motivational concept because engaged employees want to strive for challenging goals and succeed in them (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). It “goes beyond responding to the immediate situation” (Leiter & Bakker, 2010, p. 2) because employees feel personally committed to their work goals (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). An engaged employee enthusiastically applies his or her energy to the work and is intensely involved and absorbed in it (Leiter & Bakker, 2010).

3.2 Employee Involvement Climate

According to Mathe and Slevitch (in press) an employee involvement climate enhances high levels of employee involvement through four variables: power, information, rewards and knowledge. This PIRK framework, based on Lawler, Mohrman and Ledford (1995), states that employees must have the power to make decisions in order to become involved (Mathe & Slevitch, in press). Also, in order to make these decisions, employees need knowledge of the business and information regarding the goals and results of the organization (Mathe & Slevitch, in press; Richardson & Vandenberg, 2005). Finally, an employee has to be rewarded for actions based on this knowledge and for his or her informed decisions (Mathe & Slevitch, in press). Only when all four conditions are fulfilled, a high employee involvement climate is reached.

Based on the PIRK framework a high employee involvement climate is characterized in this thesis by high degrees of participative decision making, information sharing, training, and performance-based rewards (Riordan, Vandenberg & Richardson, 2005). *Participative decision making* is defined as “the perception among employees that they have control over or say in decisions that affect their work” (Riordan et al., 2005, p. 473). Through participative decision making employees get the power and possibility to become actively involved in job decisions. *Information sharing* involves informing employees about the organization itself, organizational goals and plans (Riordan et al., 2005). Sharing information with employees is necessary in order for employees to be able to participate in decision making. *Training* “enables employees to develop the knowledge required for effective performance” (Riordan et al., 2005, p. 474). This knowledge helps employees to make the right decisions and selecting a particular course of action (Riordan et al., 2005) which will hopefully result in achieving organizational goals. Finally, *performance based rewards* link employee behaviors to organizational outcomes (Riordan et al., 2005). Therefore, a good employee involvement climate exists when employees perceive that they can take part in the decision making process on the job, that important organizational information is shared with them, that they are adequately trained and that they are rewarded for their performance.

3.3 Team reflexivity

West (2010) states that the “basic reason for the creation of teams in work organizations is the expectation that they will carry out tasks more effectively than individuals and so further organization objectives overall” (p. xii). There are two dimensions of team functioning: the tasks which have to be completed and the social aspects which determine how members perceive the team as a social unit (West, 2010). According to West (2010) these two aspects have to be constantly reviewed by the team in order to guarantee a good functioning team. This team reflexivity is concretely defined as “the extent to which a team actively reviews its objectives, strategies, and team processes and is prepared to adapt them as necessary to changing circumstances” (Carter & West, 1998, p. 588). Based on this definition, team reflexivity has two dimensions: task reflexivity and social reflexivity (West, 2010). The extent to which a team shows task reflexivity as well as social reflexivity affects the task effectiveness, the mental health (well-being and development) and viability (continue working together as a team) of a team (West, 2010). In figure 5 both dimensions are drawn together, illustrating the four resulting extreme types of teams (West, 2010). A team with high social reflexivity and high task reflexivity is called a fully functioning team, having high task

effectiveness, a good mental health and long term viability (West, 2010). In comparison, a team high on social reflexivity but with low task reflexivity is called a cozy team, characterized by a lot of warmth and cohesion within the team, but with a poor ability to get tasks done effectively (West, 2010). A team low on social reflexivity but with high task reflexivity is called a cold efficiency team (West, 2010). The task efficacy of this type of team is high; however, members will probably not be staying in such a team due to a lack of support from the group and a bad social climate (West, 2010). The last team type is called dysfunctional teams and is characterized by low task reflexivity as well as low social reflexivity (West, 2010). Members of this type of team will be dissatisfied with the social support within the group as well as the lack of achievement resulting in low team viability (West, 2010).

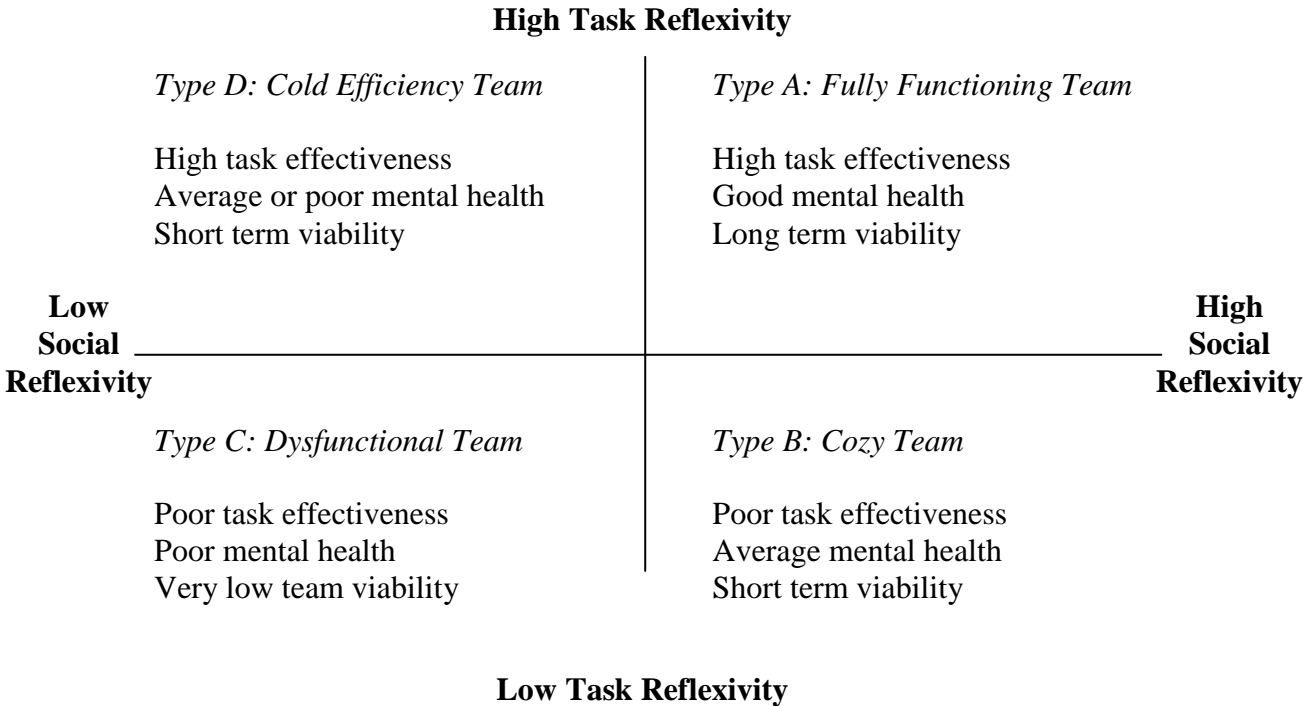


Figure 5. Four types of teams and their outcomes (West, 2010, p. xiii).

An organization should therefore always strive for teams with high task reflexivity as well as high social reflexivity because members of fully functioning teams are more satisfied with the team’s support. The organization can also expect that this type of team will achieve most of their goals and will continue working together in the future.

3.4 Leader member exchange

Research on leadership can be divided into three different domains: leader, follower and relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) (see Figure 6). The leadership domain contains for

example research on the characteristics of a leader or leader behavior (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The follower domain includes research on follower characteristics or the behavior of followers to promote positive outcomes (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The relationship domain, however, “focuses on the dyadic relationship between the leader and the follower” (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, p. 223).

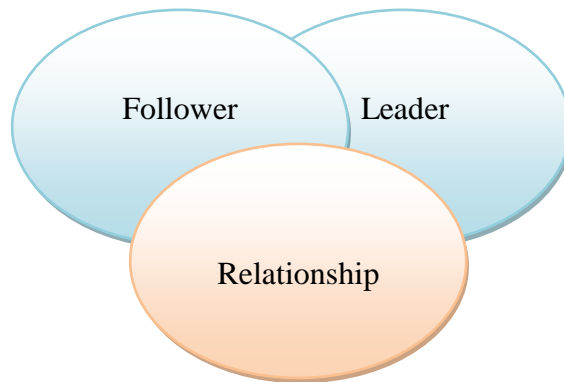


Figure 6. The domains of Leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, p. 221)

Research in the field of Leader Member Exchange (LMX) is an example of a “relationship-based approach to leadership” (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, p. 225) and therefore belongs to the relationship domain.

The basic idea of LMX is that effective leadership processes can only occur when leaders and followers develop mature leadership relationships; these relationships can yield a lot of benefits (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). According to LMX theory a leader develops a relationship with each individual employee (Lunenburg, 2010). Each of these relationships can have a different quality, ranging from poor interpersonal relationships to open and trusting relationships (Lunenburg, 2010). Employees maintaining a qualitatively good relationship with their leader are said to belong to the leader’s in-group (Lunenburg, 2010). These employees benefit a lot from their relationships by taking part in decision makings and obtaining more responsibilities (Lunenburg, 2010). In-group employees repay this trust by putting a lot of time and effort in their work and committing to the organizational success (Lunenburg, 2010). Employees in the out-group, however, have a poor relationship with their leader (Lunenburg, 2010). These employees are “supervised within the narrow limits of their formal employment contract” (Lunenburg, 2010, p. 2). This however results in employees not doing more than they have to, based on their employment contract (Lunenburg, 2010). Because higher quality LMX relationships have a variety of positive outcomes for leaders, followers, work units and the organization as a whole (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), an

organization should support their leaders in building as many in-group relationships as possible. The leadership making model (see Figure 7) depicts the process of how a leader forms a qualitative LMX relationship with a subordinate.

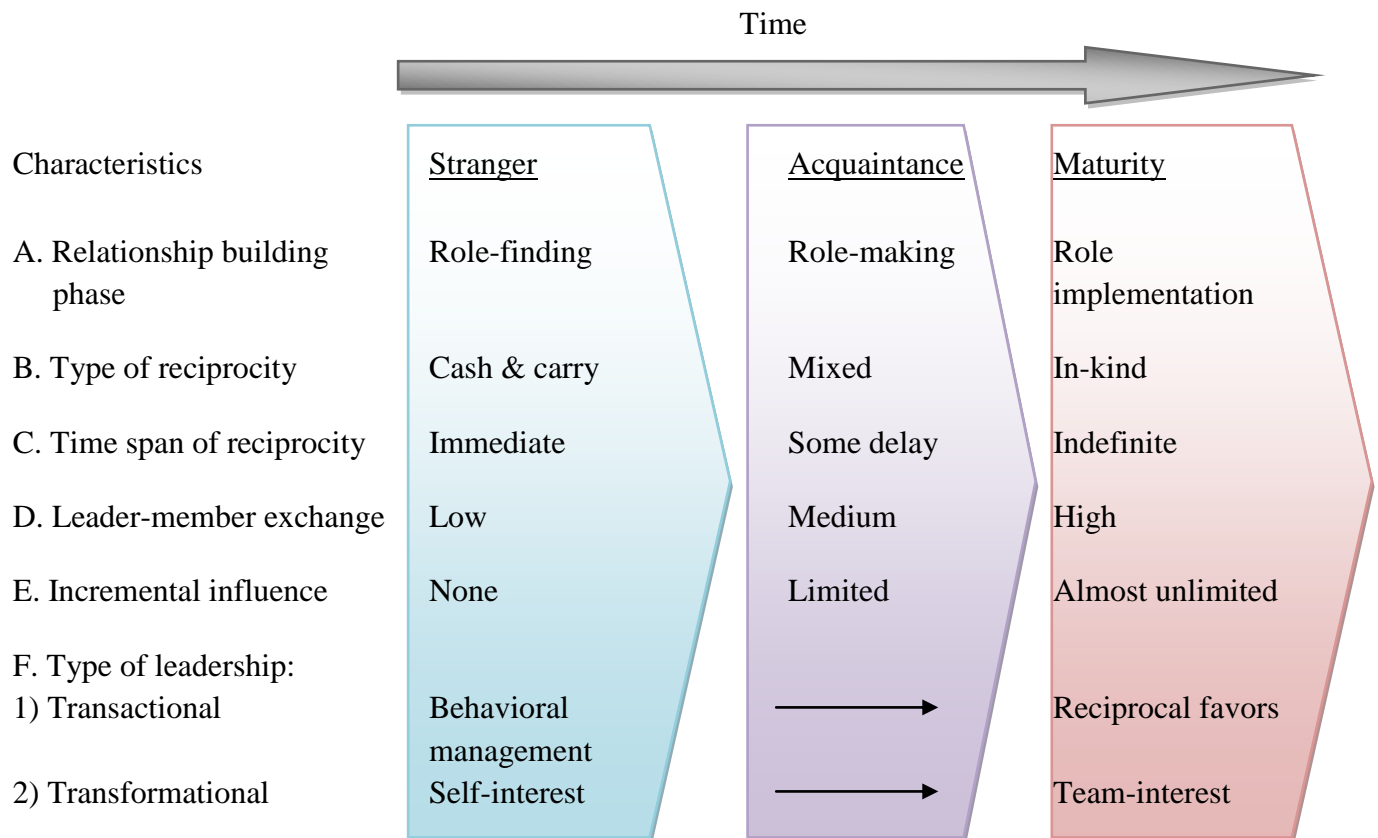


Figure 7. Life cycle of leadership making (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, p. 231)

In the “stranger” phase leader and subordinate come together as strangers for the first time, holding independent organizational roles (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Interactions in this phase are more formal (cash & carry economic exchange) and the relationship between leader and subordinate is limited to what is stated in their employment contracts (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). After an offer for a career oriented social exchange has been accepted by either party, the relationship enters the second stage (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). In this “acquaintance” phase more information and resources are exchanged on work level as well as on personal level (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). However, favors are still exchanged equitably and exchanges occur in a limited period of time (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). When these relationships grow, they enter the last phase and are labeled “mature” partnerships (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). In this phase, leader and subordinate support each other and can count on each other (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Exchanges are also emotional and have a long time span of reciprocity (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Both parties have mutual respect for each other and trust each

other (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). This phase should preferably be reached in order to gain the most benefits from the leader-subordinate relationship.

According to Liden & Maslyn (1998) LMX is a multidimensional concept consisting of: Affect, Loyalty, Contribution, and Professional Respect. Affect is characterized as “the mutual affection members of the dyad have for each other based primarily on interpersonal attraction, rather than work or professional values” (Liden & Maslyn, 1998, p. 50). This desire may for example result in friendship (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Loyalty is characterized as being faithful to each other and expressing public support for the goals and character of the other member of the LMX dyad (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Contribution is defined as the “perception of the current level of work-oriented activity each member puts forth toward the mutual goals (explicit or implicit) of the dyad” (Liden & Maslyn, 1998, p. 50). Finally, professional respect refers to “the perception of the degree to which each member of the dyad has built a reputation, within and/or outside the organization, of excelling at his or her line of work” (Liden & Maslyn, 1998, p. 50). Therefore, a good LMX relationship is characterized by mutual affection, loyalty, personal contribution on both sides and professional respect for each other.

3.5 Turnover intentions

According to Lazear and Gibbs (2009) there are “two different circumstances for thinking about employee turnover” (p. 81). On the one hand there is the rare need for laying off employees due to downsizing (Lazear & Gibbs, 2009). On the other hand there is the “general need to manage regular workforce flows in and out of the firm” (Lazear & Gibbs, 2009, p. 81). When looking at turnover due to the latter circumstance, employee turnover can be either voluntary or involuntary (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 2009). Involuntary turnover occurs when some employees are not able to meet the performance requirements of the organization or violate the policies of the company (Noe et al., 2009). In this case a discipline program has to be evoked which can eventually lead to the employee leaving the organization (Noe et al., 2009). This thesis, however, focuses on voluntary turnover. According to Noe et al. (2009) voluntary turnover can be seen as a consequence of a job withdrawal process in which a dissatisfied employee retreats from his or her job in various ways.

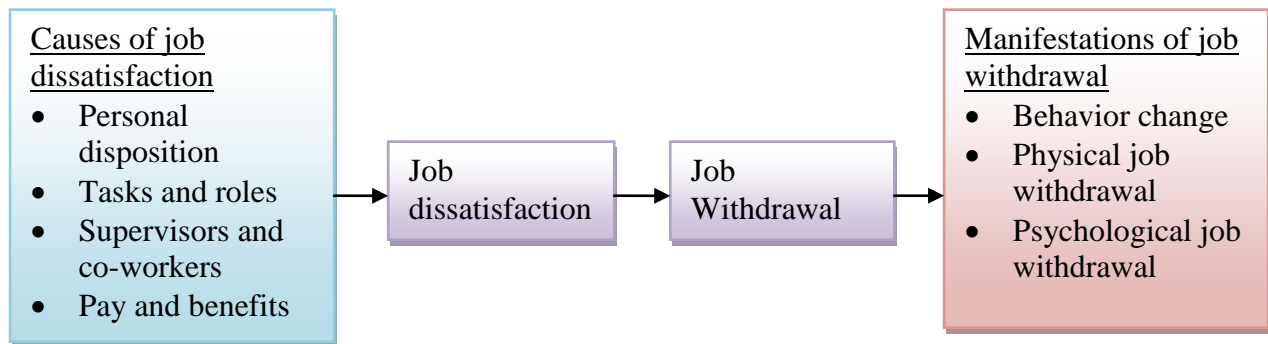


Figure 8. An Overall Model of the Job Dissatisfaction – Job Withdrawal Process (Noe et al., 2009, p. 472)

The model of this Job Dissatisfaction – Job Withdrawal Process (Figure 8) clearly highlights job satisfaction as the most important driver for job withdrawal (Noe et al., 2009). A dissatisfied employee will go through different job withdrawal stages. One of these stages involves voluntarily leaving the company. At first a dissatisfied employee will try to “change the conditions that generate the dissatisfaction” (Noe et al., 2009, p. 473) (behavior change). If this is not possible, the employee might want to solve his or her problem by leaving the company (physical withdrawal) (Noe et al., 2009). However, not all dissatisfied employees may leave the company at this point (e.g. because of a lack of job alternatives). These employees will therefore engage in psychological withdrawal; their minds will be somewhere else (Noe et al., 2009). This is clearly not advantageous for the organization. This thesis, however, focuses on the turnover intentions of the employees. In this thesis turnover intentions are defined as a psychological state of mind, where the employee forms the intention to leave the company in a specified amount of time (so before the employee actually leaves the company). Turnover intentions therefore occur before the employee physically withdraws from the job.

Turnover can have different advantages for an organization. One advantage is sorting: screening and discovering more candidates for open vacancies (Lazear & Gibbs, 2009). Another advantage is that turnover brings new employees with new knowledge and ideas into the organization (Lazear & Gibbs, 2009). This can result in technical change when necessary and an optimal mix of older and younger employees (Lazear & Gibbs, 2009). Higher turnover may also be a necessity in a hierarchical organization with only a small amount of positions on the top of the pyramid (Lazear & Gibbs, 2009).

3.6 Chargeability

For every organization, it is important to be productive. Productivity can be defined as the amount of output per unit of input. However, productivity can be measured in more than one way. In a factory, productivity can for example be measured based on production hours for a certain good. Within the consulting company productivity is indicated by the chargeability of an employee. Chargeability at the consulting company is defined as the percentage of standard working hours an employee has been working on a chargeable client project within a particular time period. The client is charged the hours the employee is working on a client project. These hours are therefore named chargeable hours. The chargeability of an employee is calculated by dividing the chargeable hours by the hours an employee was available in the given time period.

$$\text{Chargeability} = \frac{\text{Chargeable Hours}}{\text{Standard Available Hours (excl. Overtime)}} \times 100$$

Chargeability also includes chargeable overtime hours which therefore have a positive impact on chargeability. Non-chargeable overtime hours do not have any effect on chargeability as these hours are not part of the standard available hours of an employee. However, chargeability is negatively influenced by training hours because these training hours are part of the standard available hours but cannot be spend on a client's project. Absence like vacations, leave or absence due to illness, on the other hand, does not affect an employee's chargeability as these hours are deducted from the standard available hours.

Chargeability is calculated for every employee as well as for teams. This thesis focuses on the chargeability of teams. The chargeability of teams is calculated twice a month, with every month being divided into two time periods of ca. 80 hours. For each time period a chargeability target is set. This target varies for each team, as the chargeability is dependent on the amount of different levels of people within the team. As every level has a different target, at the end of every time period the actual chargeability (also called PTD, period to date, chargeability) is compared to the team's target. If the target could not be reached it is checked in detail why and what has to be changed in order to reach the target. At the end of the fiscal year a YTD, year to date, target needs to be reached. This is the total amount of all PTD chargeability figures.

3.7 Organization Citizenship Behavior

According to Organ (1988) Organization Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is defined as “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization” (p. 4). This means that OCB is not a requirement of a person’s job description which is specified in his or her employment contract (Organ, 1988). Therefore, performing OCB is a matter of free choice and omitting OCB is generally not punishable (Organ, 1988). OCB is a praiseworthy job performance which goes further than honoring the contractual obligations towards the firm, for example helping the supervisor or colleagues who have been absent (Organ, 1988). Also, OCB is not “directly or formally” (p. 5) compensated through the firm’s reward system (Organ, 1988). However, this does not mean that OCB will never lead to some kind of compensation for the employee. It is believed that OCB can for example over time form an impression on the employee’s supervisor or co-workers which could lead to a salary increase or eventually a promotion (Organ, 1988).

Employees showing OCB might therefore be treated more favorably by supervisors. There are several reasons why this might be the case. According to Organ (1988) OCB leads, when aggregated over time, to a more effective organization. There are several ways in which OCB might increase the efficiency of an organization, for example by enhancing the performance of co-workers or managers through helping them (Organ, Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 2006). Another possibility is that OCB frees various resources which can be used for other purposes (e.g. co-workers help each other so that supervisors have time for other work) (Organ et al., 2006). OCB can also be used to attract the best people which will increase the organizational performance (Organ et al., 2006). Other ways in which OCB contributes to organizational efficiency is by “helping coordinate activities between co-workers” (p. 205), enhancing the ability of adapting to environmental change and creating social capital (e.g. through strengthening network ties) (Organ et al., 2006). Managers might therefore value OCB and treat employees who show OCB more favorably if they believe that in one way or another OCB will enhance organizational effectiveness (Organ et al., 2006). Another reason why supervisors might favor employees who show OCB might be that some supervisors believe that OCB is part of an employee’s role responsibilities or see OCB as a sign for organizational commitment (Organ et al., 2006). Supervisors might also treat employees who show OCB more favorably because of the “norms of reciprocity” (Organ et al., 2006, p. 145). Therefore, a supervisor might want to increase desirable outcomes for an employee showing OCB at many occasions (Organ et al., 2006).

Although a lot of research has been done in the field of OCB there is a continuous debate over the operationalization and different dimensions of OCB (Jahangir, Akbar & Haq, 2004). According to Smith, Organ and Near (1983) OCB has two dimensions: altruism and generalized compliance. Altruism is defined as behavior which is directed at specific individuals (Jahangir et al., 2004). Altruistic employees are for example willing to put extra effort in helping co-workers in need. Generalized compliance is defined as discretionary behavior for one's own sake rather than for another person (Jahangir et al., 2004), for example attending work above the norm (Pond, Nacoste, Mohr & Rodriguez, 1997). By trying to further define OCB Organ (1988) differentiates between five categories of OCB and explains their contribution to organizational efficacy: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue. In comparison DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran (2001) were only able to identify one dimension of OCB. In this thesis, the understanding of OCB is based on the two-dimensional model of OCB by Smith et al. (1983). It is therefore expected that an employee who performs OCB will do so either by helping or supporting others, or by behaving in a discretionary manner for his or her own sake without being directly compensated for his or her behavior through the organization's reward system.

4. Theoretical framework and hypothesis

In the following section the expected relationships between work engagement and its possible antecedents and consequences are outlined. Each expected relationship is discussed in detail and hypotheses are formulated.

4.1 Crossover of work engagement

Work engagement is said to have a crossover component, meaning that feelings of engagement of one person can evoke the same feelings of engagement in another person (Bakker, 2009). The social context therefore plays an important role for work engagement. The JD-R model partly depicts this social context by emphasizing job resources like the social support of colleagues and the feedback of leaders as antecedents of work engagement (Bakker, 2009).

However, people can directly influence each other's enthusiasm and performance by transferring their own feelings to others, e.g. colleagues or family members (Bakker, 2009). Work is seen as a social activity where people often depend on each other (Bakker, 2009). During these social interactions the chance for crossover of emotions is the highest (Bakker, 2009). Research has shown that positive emotions as well as negative emotions are transferable to other people (Bakker, 2009). This crossover can take place consciously as well as non-consciously (Bakker, Emmerik & Euwema, 2006). On the one hand people tend to for example non-consciously imitate the facial expressions, tone of voice, posture and movements of others in their direct environment and therefore to begin to feel the same as well (Bakker, 2009). On the other hand the crossover of feelings can take place consciously by empathizing with enthusiastic others and realizing one's own luck and happiness regarding the own work (Bakker, 2008). Unfortunately most research until now has focused on the crossover of negative experiences like burnout, mostly neglecting the crossover of positive feelings (Bakker, 2009). However, positive feelings can be transferred to other people as well, however not as easily as negative feelings (Bakker, Van Emmerik & Euwema, 2006). Therefore it could also be possible to transfer work engagement from one person to another. Bakker, Shimazu, Demerouti, Shimada and Kawakami (2011) as well as Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2005) proved that work engagement can be transferred from one marriage partner to the other. In the work context a crossover of work engagement has also been shown. Bakker and Xanthopoulou (2009) demonstrated that employees who often communicated with an engaged colleague gained more energy and became more dedicated to

their work. The employees' task performance also improved and they were more motivated to help others (Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2009).

The crossover of engagement in the context of work has already been demonstrated. The question, however, is whether this crossover can also take place from teams to single team members. Can an engaged team influence the work engagement of its members? Totterdell, Kellet, Teuchmann and Briner (1998) successfully demonstrated that the moods of team members are positively related to each other. Only one study has examined the crossover effect of work engagement from teams to individuals until now. There is therefore still a lot of room for research in this area. Bakker, Van Emmerik and Euwema (2006) found that team level work engagement as well as burnout is transferable to team members. By having contact with an engaged team, team members became more engaged themselves (Bakker et al., 2006). According to Bakker et al. (2006) work engagement at team level is an example of a collective mood reached by either responding similarly to shared events or by affecting each other's moods. In this thesis, an engaged team is defined as a team in which the majority of its members feels engaged. Therefore working in an engaged team means having contact with not just one but with many engaged colleagues. It is expected that through this contact unengaged employees will become more engaged because they are constantly confronted with engagement. They will begin to empathize with their colleagues and will begin to realize how happy they can really be with their job. Also, by engaging in shared experiences of success employees will gain a more positive attitude towards their job. The feeling of collective success will give them more energy and they will begin to dedicate themselves more to their work so that they become absorbed in it. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H1: The work engagement of teams has a positive relationship with the work engagement of the team members.

As described above research has shown that a crossover of work engagement between people has been demonstrated in a private context as well as in the context of work. Based on these findings it should also be possible that a leader is able to transfer his or her feelings of engagement to subordinates. This type of crossover, however, has not been researched until now. It is expected that the crossover of work engagement from a leader to a subordinate should take place the same way as the crossover from one colleague to another. A subordinate who spends a lot of time with an engaged leader will consciously and/or non-consciously become engaged as well. Therefore employees will either non-consciously imitate the

engaged behavior of their leader or realize through the leader's behavior how lucky they really are with their job and become more engaged themselves. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H2a: The leader's work engagement has a positive relationship with a follower's work engagement on an individual level.

Furthermore, the engagement of the leader may also have a crossover effect on the work engagement of the team as a whole. Although this relationship has never been tested before, it can be expected that an engaged leader may positively contribute to the engagement of his or her team. Leaders can act as a role model for employees. A leader is among other things a source of feedback and support for employees. When a team is led by an engaged leader, the team will probably become inspired by the leader and will take his or her engaged behavior as a model for their own behavior. It is expected that an engaged leader will enthruse his or her followers, who will become engaged themselves. It is hypothesized that:

H2b: The leader's work engagement has a positive relationship with work engagement on team level.

4.2 Further antecedents of work engagement

4.2.1 Employee involvement climate and work engagement

The employee involvement climate is a somewhat neglected research field. Not many studies have been performed in this area. Accordingly, the influence of an employee involvement climate on outcome variables that are important for an organization has rarely been studied. So far, Mathe and Slevitch (in press) were able to show that the employee involvement climate is positively related to a customer's perception of service quality. This relationship was further moderated by supervisor undermining (Mathe & Slevitch, in press). Furthermore, Richardson and Vandenberg (2005) found that the work units' climate of involvement was negatively related to work unit absenteeism and positively related to managers' rating of work units' OCB. The employee involvement climate has never been studied as an antecedent of work engagement. This thesis therefore aims to fill this research gap.

In an organization with a good employee involvement climate, employees take part in the decision making process. Relevant information is shared with them and they are adequately trained to be able to actively participate in decisions. Employees are also

adequately rewarded for their actions. These practices will lead to employees becoming more engaged. Employees dedicate themselves completely to their job and become absorbed by it. However, this is only possible if employees feel that their work and input is valued by the organization. A basic condition should therefore be that employees gain the knowledge and skills they need in order to successfully perform their job. This is achieved through information sharing and training. Also, when employees are allowed to take part in the decision making process and are rewarded for their actions, they feel valued by the organization and gain the feeling that they can make a difference. This will give them a lot of energy and they will dedicate themselves more to their work. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H3: An employee involvement climate has a positive relationship with work engagement on an individual level.

4.2.2 Team reflexivity and work engagement

Since the introduction of the concept of team reflexivity, only a small amount of research has been conducted in this area. Carter and West (1998) as well as Hoegl and Parboteeah (2006) were able to prove that team reflexivity has a positive relationship with the effectiveness of a team, which leads to a better team performance. According to Hoegl and Parboteeah (2006) reflexive teams make more effective use of the expertise and skills of team members because the constant reflection makes the team more aware of the strengths of the team members. Although hypothesized as well, team reflexivity had no significant relationship with the efficacy of a team (Hoegl & Parboteeah, 2006). Other research was able to demonstrate that team reflexivity has a positive relationship with innovation (Tjosvold, Tang & West, 2004). Furthermore, Nederveen Pieterse, Van Knippenberg and Van Ginkel (2011) were able to show that team reflexivity counteracted the negative effects of a diversity of learning orientation and performance orientation among group members on group performance. These examples show that researchers have already commenced to study the positive outcomes of team reflexivity. However, there is a lot of room for research left in this area. The relationship between team reflexivity and work engagement has never been considered until now. This thesis therefore aims to fill this gap.

According to Tjosvold et al. (2004) reflexivity helps teams to get an insight in their actual workings and it helps to develop new methods and understanding to respond to new conditions or challenges. Apart from these task related insights, reflecting on social factors of team work influences the way in which team members perceive the team as a social unit (West, 2010). It is expected that reflecting on the tasks a team performs, and therefore the

tasks each individual team member is responsible for, the team as a whole as well as each team member individually will experience clarification about the team processes as well as the contribution of each member. Through this insight the team members will be stimulated to rethink their contribution to the team and try to work to their full potential. The team as a whole will also be stimulated to tap its full potential. Through successful group experiences which are based on group effort as well as individual contributions, the team and its members will gain more energy and the team members will dedicate themselves more to the work until they get absorbed by it. The team as a whole will dedicate itself more to its goals and tasks as well. Also, the reflection on the social team aspects will make the team members realize the amount of social support they are getting from each other, which will enhance their work engagement. Therefore the following hypotheses are formulated:

H4a: Team reflexivity has a positive relationship with work engagement on an individual level.

H4b: Team reflexivity has a positive relationship with work engagement on team level.

4.2.3 Leader member exchange and work engagement

In the area of LMX a lot of research has already been carried out. However, most of the research has focused on the influence of LMX on performance ratings, job satisfaction or turnover. Harris, Kacmar and Witt (2005) were able to show that the relationship between LMX and turnover intentions is curvilinear. These findings were supported by the work of Kim, Lee and Carlson (2010), who found a curvilinear relationship between LMX and turnover intentions for non-supervisory employees. However, the relationship between LMX and turnover intentions was linear for supervisory employees (Kim et al., 2010). Janssen and Van Yperen (2004) proved the positive relationship between LMX and in-role job performance, innovative job performance and job satisfaction. In contrast, Jordan and Troth (2011) demonstrated the role of LMX as a mediator between the ability to manage others' emotions, and turnover intentions and job satisfaction. Kacmar, Witt, Zivnuska and Gully (2003) were able to show that the relationship between LMX quality and job performance is moderated by the frequency of communication between supervisor and employee. A direct relationship between LMX and performance was also demonstrated in the study of Wayne, Shore, Bommer and Tetrick (2002) who found a positive relationship between LMX and performance ratings. They also hypothesized a relationship between LMX and OCB which could not be supported (Wayne et al., 2002). Already in 1982 research demonstrated the relationship between LMX and different outcome variables. Graen, Noval and Sommerkamp

(1982) showed that LMX training produced significant effects on “productivity, supervisory ratings of LMX quality, member rating of dyadic loyalty, LMX quality, motivating potential of the job, role orientation, overall job satisfaction, job problem severity, and measures of job stress as well as dyad agreement” (p. 126).

In the last few years research in this area has begun to focus on the relationship between LMX and work engagement. Atwater and Carmeli (2009) showed that LMX is positively related to an individual’s feelings of energy. In another study Li, Sanders and Frenkel (2012) demonstrated that LMX is positively related with work engagement which is in turn positively related to job performance. The LMX-work engagement relationship has also been found to be moderated by HRM consistency (Li et al., 2012). Hornung, Rousseau, Glaser, Angerer and Weigl (2010), however, found evidence for a LMX-work engagement relationship which is mediated by task i-deals. Konermann (2011) found that LMX moderated the relationship between work engagement and OCBO (OCB which is beneficial to the organization). These examples show that in the last few years some research has been conducted on the LMX-work engagement relationship. However, there is still a lot of room for research left.

Li et al. (2012) argue that the supervisor is “the most immediate and salient superordinate” (p. 2). The relationship between the supervisor and the employees is highly important when it comes to maintaining employee enthusiasm (Li et al., 2012). This enthusiasm is important for providing service excellence (Li et al., 2012). It is argued that in a high quality relationship, where the employee is part of the in-group, the supervisor is a source of trust and emotional support (Li et al., 2012). It is expected that the supervisor will encourage employee engagement through this support by creating a pleasant work atmosphere. In a high quality relationship, the employee experiences a lot of advantages, for example more responsibilities, or the chance to contribute to the decision making process (Lunenburg, 2010). These opportunities will make employees more dedicated to their work. They will gain more energy because, due to their good relationship with the supervisor, they experience support and help and feel that they can trust their supervisor. They will become absorbed by their work, which gives them so many great possibilities. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H5a: Leader member exchange has a positive relationship with work engagement on an individual level.

Although LMX focuses on the relationship between the supervisor and each individual employee it can also be expected that LMX will have a positive relationship with the work engagement of the whole team. All employees with whom the supervisor establishes a high quality relationship with are said to belong to the in-group, which is favored in different ways. However, employees who have a low-quality relationship with their supervisor belong to the out-group. It is expected that when most of the employees, or in an ideal case all employees, of a team have a high quality relationship with their supervisor, the team as a whole will recognize this and will be more engaged. If the team is equal to the supervisor's in-group, it can be expected that the team as a whole will profit from this e.g. by getting more responsibilities (and not just every employee individually). This recognition by the supervisor will give the team more energy to perform well and the team members will dedicate themselves to the team's objectives and goals. By doing this the team will live up to its full potential. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H5b: Leader member exchange has a positive relationship with work engagement on team level.

4.2.4 The mediating role of team work engagement

As described above the work engagement of the leader, team reflexivity and LMX are hypothesized to have a positive relationship with work engagement on an individual level as well as on a team level. Based on these hypotheses and the predicted positive relationship between team work engagement and work engagement on an individual level it can be expected that team work engagement will partially mediate the relationship between the mentioned antecedents and work engagement on an individual level. The following hypothesis is formulated:

H6: Work engagement on team level partially mediates the relationship between antecedents of work engagement and work engagement on an individual level.

4.3 Consequences of work engagement

Based on the JD-R model the idea that work engagement is related to a lot of organizational outcomes like turnover, performance etc. is widely accepted in the business world. Companies including consulting firms which focus on the work engagement of their employees act on the assumption that work engagement is linked to organizational success. However, only some studies have actually proven this link. In this thesis the link between work engagement on the

one hand, and turnover, chargeability numbers and OCB on the other hand, is researched in the context of a global consultancy company.

4.3.1 Work engagement and turnover intentions

The JD-R model clearly states that work engagement is related to employee turnover. In the last few years a couple of studies have been published which aimed to scientifically prove this relationship. In 2011 Alarcon and Edwards researched the work engagement-turnover relationship with undergraduate students from a university who worked in a customer service or helping profession. In this context work engagement significantly predicted turnover intentions and job satisfaction. Likewise, Bhatnagar (2012) found a negative relationship between work engagement and turnover intention among participants from the R&D domain in India. The same relationship was found using Taiwanese flight attendants as respondents (Chen & Chen, 2012) and American hotel employees (Park & Gursoy, 2012). The negative relationship between work engagement and turnover has therefore already been shown in different countries. However, it has not been proven in the context of consultancy. To make sure that this work engagement-turnover relationship also holds in the context of a consultancy firm (which is of utmost importance for the consulting company as they focus on work engagement as a guarantor of success), the corresponding hypothesis has been added to this thesis.

It is expected that an engaged employee will have less intention to leave the company than a disengaged employee would, because the engaged employee feels comfortable about doing his or her job at the firm he or she works for. An engaged employee is completely dedicated to his or her job and gains a lot of energy from it. Engaged employees also get absorbed by their work and even forget other things around them when they are at work. An employee who is very passionate about the own work will probably not easily tend towards leaving the company he or she works for. Therefore the following hypothesis has been formulated:

H7: Work engagement on an individual level has a negative relationship with turnover intentions.

4.3.2 Work engagement and organization citizenship behavior

Organization Citizenship Behavior is a widely studied concept. For several decades researchers have studied this concept extensively. A lot of studies have been dedicated to the different antecedents of OCB. In 1983 Smith, Organ and Near found that leader

supportiveness and job satisfaction as well as an employee's personality and urban or rural background influence OCB. In 2004 Jahangir, Akbar and Haq conducted a literature review on the antecedents of OCB and found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment, role perceptions, leader behaviors and LMX, fairness perceptions, individual dispositions, motivational theories and the age of an employee are related to OCB. Furthermore Wang, Hinrichs, Prieto and Howell (2010) showed that perceived support and perceived distributive justice are positively related to OCB. However, it seems that national differences exist regarding the most influential antecedents of OCB (Wang et al., 2010). Halsleben, Harvey and Bolino (2009) showed that state engagement is positively relate to OCB.

In the last few years researchers in the OCB field began to study work engagement as an antecedent of work engagement. However, not many studies have been conducted in this area until now. Babcock-Roberson and Strickland (2010) demonstrated that work engagement fully mediates the relationship between charismatic leadership and OCB among undergraduate students. One year later Konermann (2011) showed, in an educational context, that work engagement has a positive relationship with OCB beneficial to the organization as well as OCB beneficial to an individual. These relationships, however, were moderated by LMX or autonomy (Konermann, 2011). The relationship between work engagement and OCB shall be researched in a business context in this thesis.

It is expected that an engaged employee will show OCB because of his or her deep dedication to the job. An engaged employee feels so dedicated to his or her work that he or she will perform to his or her full potential and does not mind to perform extra tasks and to help others as long as these tasks are related to the job. Being an engaged employee means getting fully absorbed by the work. Therefore an engaged employee will also engage in OCB because he or she feels comfortable in his or her job and gets a lot of energy from it. This allows him or her to perform extra tasks that are not rewarded by the formal reward system but are still part of everyday work life. An engaged employee draws so much pleasure from his or her job that engaging in OCB is gladly done. Engaged employees are motivated to go the extra mile, which includes doing things which are not directly rewarded but which are important for the organization or colleagues. The following hypothesis is therefore formulated:

H8: Work engagement on an individual level has a positive relationship with organization citizenship behavior.

4.3.3 Work engagement and chargeability

Studies have shown that work engagement is positively related to objective performance on the department or unit level (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). Engagement, for example, had a positive relationship with customer ratings of performance (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). Another study showed that job satisfaction (an antecedent of work engagement) was positively related for example to profitability as well as productivity. However, the direct relationship between work engagement and productivity measures has not yet been proven. It can however be expected that work engagement has a positive relationship with productivity measures like chargeability. An engaged employee feels dedicated to his or her job and will therefore be motivated to work hard in order to reach his or her goals. An engaged employee also has a lot of energy which will make him or her more productive. Being absorbed by one's work also means that an engaged employee's attention is less likely to be drawn off from his or her work. This means that an employee will spend more time working, which will make him or her more productive as well. In the case of this consulting company this means that engaged employees will spend more chargeable hours on a client's project than unengaged employees will. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H9: Work engagement on an individual level has a positive relationship with chargeability.

4.4 Research model

The hypotheses motivated above are outlined in the research model (Figure 9). This research model has a direct relationship with the JD-R model (Figure 3). The variables on the left side (leader work engagement, employee involvement climate, team reflexivity and LMX) are equivalent to the job resources in the JD-R model. Team work engagement and individual employee work engagement represent the concept of work engagement of the JD-R model. Finally, the concepts on the right side (chargeability, turnover intentions and OCB) represent the performance outcomes depicted in the JD-R model. The research model therefore represents a cutout of the JD-R model.

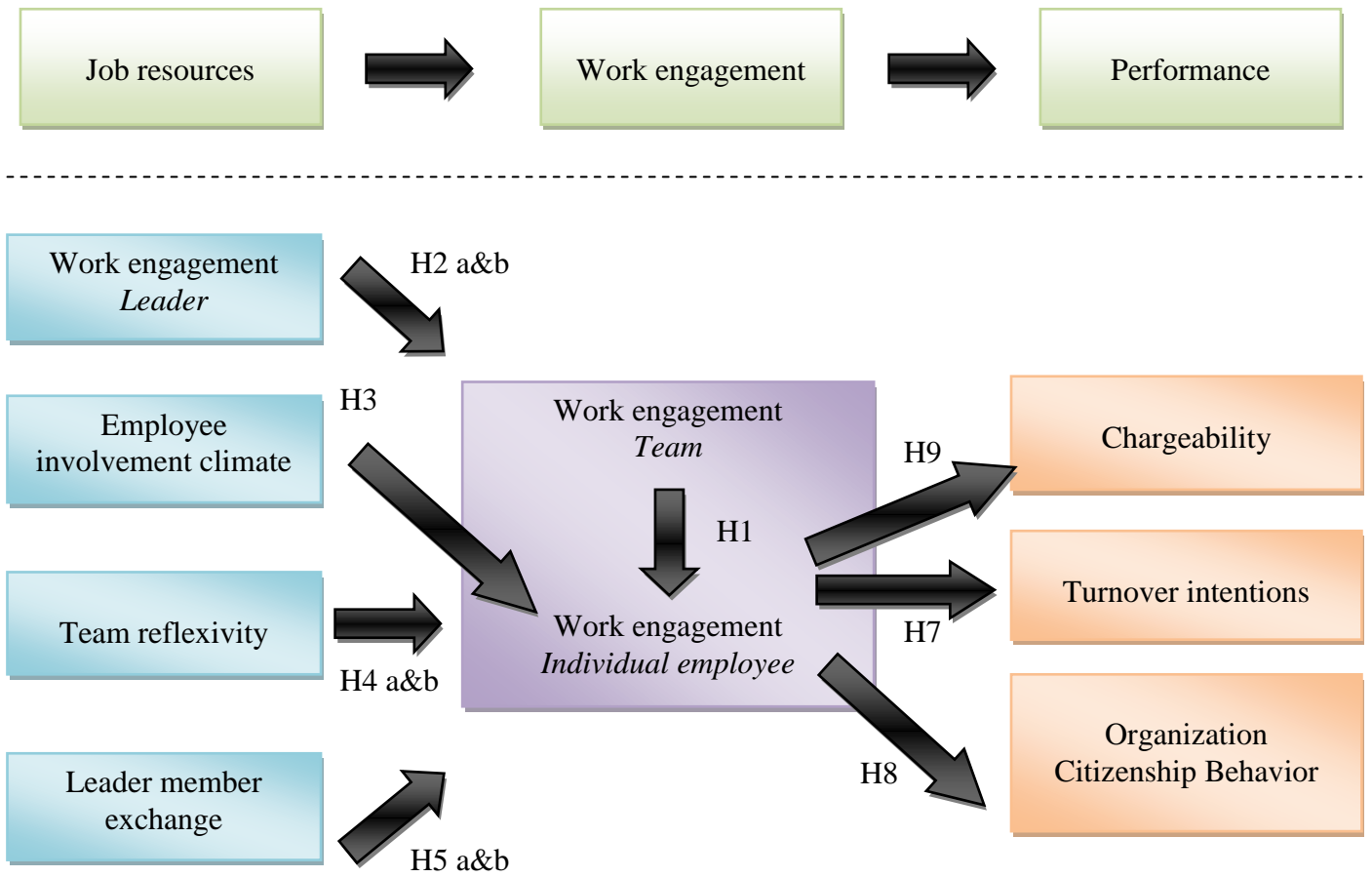


Figure 9. The research model and its JD-R model equivalents

5. Methods

In the following section the research methods that were used in this study are described. First, information about the participants of this study is given. After that the procedure of the survey study is outlined. All researched variables were measured with already existing questionnaires. The measurement of these variables is outlined in detail in the following section.

5.1 Participants

Overall 116 employees from six different teams participated in this study. The participants were all working at the company. All participants worked at the company's local head office in The Netherlands. The response rate was 46%. Most of the participants were male (69.6%) and 30.4% were female. Also, most of the participants (65.2%) were 32 years or younger and worked 4.5 years or less (68.8%) at the firm. Furthermore, 33% of the participants were Consultants, 29.5% were Analysts, 20.5% were Manager, 14.3% were Senior Manager and 2.7% were Senior Executives. Almost all participants were Dutch. Only four participants came originally from other countries.

5.2 Procedure

In order to collect the necessary data for answering the research question a survey study was conducted. In the data collection process several steps were completed. First the survey was designed. The survey consisted of a variety of items from surveys derived from other studies which have proven to be valid measures for each variable. However, in order to prevent the survey becoming too long and to ensure a higher response rate, only a selection of items was used for the actual survey. In the second step the survey was presented to an HR professional of the company. After the survey was approved by the HR professional, the HR professional contacted the leaders of a variety of teams within the consulting company and asked for their participation. In the fourth step, emails were sent from either the team leaders or the HR department to the different team members containing a request of participation and a link to the online survey. The team members had two weeks' time to participate in this study. In order to ensure that as many team members as possible filled out the survey, a reminder was sent after one week. However, because after two weeks not enough employees had participated in the study, the deadline for filling out the survey was extended by one week.

5.3 Instruments

5.3.1 Utrecht Work Engagement Scale

The work engagement of the participants was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). This scale is known to have a good internal consistency and good test-retest reliability (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). The original version of this questionnaire contained 24 items which had to be cut by 7 items after a psychometric analysis (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Therefore the complete UWES now consists of 17 items which load on three dimensions (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Each dimension is measured using a special subscale. In this thesis the short version of the UWES, the UWES-9, was used (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006). This questionnaire consists of 9 items (Schaufeli et al., 2006). A list of the items used can be found in Appendix A. The scale for measuring vigor contains 3 items. An example of an item of the vigor scale ($\alpha = .81$) is: "At my work, I feel bursting with energy". The dedication scale ($\alpha = .86$) consists of 3 items, too. An example of an item for measuring dedication is: "I am proud of the work that I do". The last 3 items of the questionnaire measure absorption ($\alpha = .69$). The second item of this subscale ("I feel happy when I am working intensely") had to be excluded from further analysis in order to enhance the reliability of the absorption scale. Also, the factor analysis revealed that this item loaded less on the absorption dimension than the other two variables. The participants were asked to indicate to which extent they agreed with the statements. The scoring of the items varied between 1 ("Strongly disagree") and 5 ("Strongly agree"). High scores on each of the subscales indicated a high extent of work engagement. For further analysis work engagement was not divided into subscales but was used as one variable. The scale used had a Chronbach's α of .85.

The scores for team work engagement are based on the employees' scores on the UWES-9. In order to gain team work engagement scores, the mean work engagement scores on the UWES-9 were calculated for each team. A multilevel analysis could not be performed. Therefore, the mean work engagement scores for each team were calculated using all team members' individual work engagement scores.

The leaders' work engagement scores were supposed to be measured using the UWES-9 as well. However, only six teams with four different team leaders could participate in this study. The leaders' data would therefore not be representative enough to gain meaningful results. Therefore, leader work engagement was not measured. This means that the respective hypotheses were not tested.

5.3.2 Measuring team reflexivity

Team reflexivity was measured using a questionnaire developed by Carter and West (1998). This questionnaire originally consisted of 16 items (Carter & West, 1998). These items are divided into two subscales measuring either task reflexivity or social reflexivity (Carter & West, 1998). In this thesis only a small selection of 3 items per sub scale was used. The items were mainly chosen based on their factor loadings measured in the original study of Carter and West (1998). The scale for measuring task reflexivity ($\alpha = .70$) has therefore 3 items. An example of an item of the task reflexivity scale is: “We regularly discuss whether the team is working effectively together”. An example of the social reflexivity scale ($\alpha = .71$) which also consists of 3 items is: “When things at work are stressful, we pull together as a team”. The reliability of the social reflexivity scale was enhanced by excluding item 2 (“Conflict tends to linger in this team”) from the analysis. Factor analysis also revealed that this item loaded heavily on another factor. A list of all used items can be found in Appendix B. The participants were asked to which extent they agree with these statements. The scoring of the items varied again between 1 (“Strongly disagree”) and 5 (“Strongly agree”). High scores on both subscales indicate a high degree of team reflexivity. The scale used has a Chronbach’s α of .78, which is above the critical value of .70.

5.3.3 Measuring employee involvement climate

The employee involvement climate within the firm was measured using a questionnaire developed by Riordan, Vandenberg & Richardson (2005). The original scale for measuring employee involvement climate consisted of 18 items divided into 4 subscales for each of the four dimensions of employee involvement climate: Participative Decision Making, Information Sharing, Performance Based Rewards, and Training (Riordan et al., 2005). For this thesis the questionnaire was shortened. Only 2 items per dimension were used. A list of all items used can be found in Appendix C. An example of an item of the Participative Decision Making scale ($\alpha = .68$) is: “I have enough input in deciding how to accomplish my work”. “Company goals and objectives are clearly communicated to employees” is an example of an item of the Information Sharing scale ($\alpha = .73$). An example of an item of the Performance Based Rewards scale ($\alpha = .76$) is: “Generally I feel this company rewards employees who make an extra effort”. Finally, an example of the Training scale ($\alpha = .77$) is: “I have had sufficient/adequate job-related training”. The participants were asked to which extent they agree with these statements. The scoring of the items varied again between 1 (“Strongly disagree”) and 5 (“Strongly agree”). High scores on all subscales indicate a high

degree of employee involvement climate. The scale used has a Chronbach's α of .78, which is above the critical value of .70.

5.3.4 Measuring LMX

Leader Member Exchange was measured using an LMX scale developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998). Their original scale consisted of 11 items loading on four dimensions: affect, loyalty, contribution and professional respect (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). For this thesis the questionnaire was shortened, using one item per dimension. The item of the affect scale says: "I like my supervision very much as a person". The item measuring loyalty is: "My supervisor would come to my defence if I were "attacked" by others". Furthermore, the item measuring contribution says: "I do work for my supervisor that goes beyond what is specified in my job description". Finally, the item measuring professional respect says: "I respect my supervisor's knowledge of and competence on the job". These items are again listed in Appendix D. The participants were again asked to which extent they agree with these statements. The scoring of the items varied between 1 ("Strongly disagree") and 5 ("Strongly agree"). High scores on all items indicate a high degree of Leader Member Exchange. The scale used has a Chronbach's α of .78, which is above the critical value of .70.

5.3.5 Measuring turnover intentions

Turnover intentions were measured with one item which says: "I am committed to stay at the company for...". The participants were given five answer possibilities ranging from 1 ("Less than 1 year") to 5 ("More than 5 years"). This item was derived from an annual company survey and adjusted to the requirements of this thesis. The item with all its response possibilities is listed in Appendix E.

5.3.6 Measuring chargeability

The chargeability numbers were provided by the company. Chargeability at the company is measured two times a month. The chargeability is calculated for each individual employee as well as for whole teams. For this thesis chargeability numbers on team level were used. The chargeability numbers provided by the consulting company stem from one period of ca. 80 work days. Additionally, the company provided the target chargeability of each team. The actual chargeability numbers can therefore be compared with the targets in order to see whether the targets have been met or not.

5.3.7 Measuring Organization Citizenship Behavior

Organization Citizenship Behavior (OCB) was measured using a questionnaire developed by Pond, Nacoste, Mohr and Rodriguez (1997). Traditionally OCB is measured by asking the manager to evaluate each employee individually. However, due to reasons of convenience, for this thesis it was more appropriate to let all employees rate their OCB themselves instead of asking the team leaders to evaluate each employee separately. The questionnaire of Pond et al. (1997) fits these requirements. It is based on a scale developed by Smith, Organ & Near (1983). Pond et al. (1997) reworded each item to fit the required “self-report nature” (p. 1530) of their research questions. The questionnaire of Pond et al. (1997) consists of 16 items divided into two subscales: altruism and generalized compliance. However, for the current study only four of these items were selected and adjusted to the requirements of the study. The altruism scale ($\alpha = .32$) contains two items. An example of an item of this scale is: “I make innovative suggestions to improve our department”. The generalized compliance scale ($\alpha = .30$) consists of two items as well. An example of an item of this scale is: “I attend work above the norm”. It was not possible to enhance the reliability of the subscales by excluding one or more items. A list of all OCB items can be found in Appendix F. The participants were asked to which extent they agree with these statements. The scoring of the items varied between 1 (“Strongly disagree”) and 5 (“Strongly agree”). High scores on all items indicate a high degree of OCB. For further analysis OCB was not divided into its subscales but used as a whole variable. The scale used has a Chronbach’s α of .55, which is lower than the critical value of .70, but this could not be enhanced by excluding one or more of the items used.

5.3.8 Control variables

Next to the independent and dependent variables various demographic variables were measured (see Appendix G). In case these variables correlated with the dependent variables, they were added to the regression analysis in the form of control variables. The mean and standard deviations of all variables can be found in Table 1. First the gender of all participants was measured by creating a dummy variable with the choices male or female. Furthermore, participants were asked about their age. For anonymity purposes the participants were asked to indicate whether they were older than 32 years (the mean age within the company), or 32 years or younger. Research has for example shown that age is an important factor when it comes to work engagement, with older employees being more engaged than younger employees (Park & Gursoy, 2012). Third, the participants had to indicate how long they have been working at the company. For anonymity purposes two choices were given. Participants

had to indicate whether they worked longer than 4.5 years (mean time of service within the company) at the company, or exactly 4.5 years or less. Furthermore, participants had to indicate in which team they were working. Employees of six different teams participated in this study. Participants also had to specify their work role ranging from Analyst (starter function) to Senior Executive. Finally the culture of the participants was measured by asking them about their country of origin. Culture plays an important role for OCB as national differences exist regarding the most valued and most influential antecedents of OCB (Wang et al., 2010).

Next to these demographic variables job satisfaction and pro-social behavior were measured. In the literature both variables are seen as antecedents of OCB (Organ, 1988). Furthermore, job satisfaction is seen as an antecedent for turnover intentions as well (Noe et al., 2009). Therefore, in order to prevent these possible confounding variables to influence the research results, they were added as control variables to the regression analysis.

Job satisfaction was measured with a short version of the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) (Noe et al., 2009). The JDI entails a variety of questions spread over five different areas: satisfaction with work itself, supervision, pay, promotion opportunities, and co-workers. For each of these dimensions three items were used (see Appendix H). Participants had to indicate whether or not the shown adjectives describe their current work situation. High scores on all items indicate a high degree of job satisfaction. The scale used has a Chronbach's α of .72, which is above the critical value of .70. The reliability was enhanced by excluding the first item from the conceptual area of payment from the analysis.

Pro-social behavior was measured using the pro-social tendency measures for late adolescents by Carlo and Randall (2002). The items are however formulated in a way that they are also applicable for adults. The original questionnaire contained 23 items divided into six subscales: anonymous, public, altruism, emotional, compliant, and dire (Carlo & Randall, 2002). For the current research one item per subscale was used as an indicator for the participant's pro-social tendencies. An example of an item is: "When people ask me to help them, I don't hesitate". A list of all items used can be found in Appendix I. The participants were asked to which extent they agree with these statements. The scoring of the items varied between 1 ("Strongly disagree") and 5 ("Strongly agree"). High scores on all items indicate a high degree of pro-social behavior. Because of the low reliability of this scale (Chronbach's α of .32), which could not be enhanced, one item of this scale (item 6) was chosen and used as a representative of the pro-social behavior construct in the following analyses.

5.4 Data analysis

The data was analyzed with SPSS 18. First all negative formulated items were recoded. After that, a factor analysis was done in order to make sure that all measurements have an adequate validity. Also, a reliability analysis was performed. Based on these two analyses some items were excluded from further analysis to enhance the validity and reliability of the measurements. After that, descriptive statistics were computed. Furthermore, a correlation analysis was done to determine how the variables relate to each other. Based on this correlation analysis the control variables for the regression analysis were chosen. Finally, a hierarchical regression analysis was done in order to test the various hypotheses.

6. Results

In the following section the results of the analyses are presented. First the results of the correlation analysis are presented and listed in detail. Second, in order to answer the hypotheses a hierarchical regression analysis was performed. The results of this analysis are presented and listed in detail. Finally, conclusions are presented based on these analyses and additional not hypothesized findings are outlined.

6.1 Correlation analysis

First, the correlation analysis revealed that most of the demographic variables do not significantly correlate with the various research variables. The gender, the culture of the respondents and the respondents' pro-social behavior do not significantly correlate with any of the research variables. Therefore, these demographic variables were not used as control variables in the following regression analysis. However, the number of years an employee has been working within the firm significantly correlated with employees' individual work engagement ($r = .23$; $p < .05$) and chargeability ($r = -.19$; $p < .05$). The age of an employee significantly correlates with chargeability ($r = -.22$; $p < .05$). The team an employee works in also significantly correlates with chargeability ($r = .51$; $p < .01$). Furthermore, the role the employees are performing within the firm significantly correlates with the employee involvement climate ($r = .30$; $p < .01$) within the firm as well as with the employees' individual work engagement scores ($r = .27$; $p < .01$) and chargeability ($r = -.29$; $p < .01$). Additionally, the JDI significantly correlates with all research variables. The JDI correlated significantly positive with the employee involvement climate ($r = .61$; $p < .01$), LMX ($r = .51$; $p < .01$) and team reflexivity ($r = .55$; $p < .01$). Furthermore JDI correlates with team work engagement ($r = .19$; $p < .05$) as well as with individual work engagement ($r = .61$; $p < .01$). The JDI also correlates significantly with turnover intentions ($r = -.29$; $p < .01$) and OCB ($r = .24$; $p < .05$). Based on these findings, the number of years the employees have been working within the firm, the role they entail and the JDI have to be added as control variables to the regression analysis.

Second, the correlation analysis revealed that almost all research variables correlate significantly positive with each other. The employee involvement climate significantly correlates with LMX ($r = .52$; $p < .01$), team reflexivity ($r = .58$; $p < .01$), team work engagement ($r = .24$; $p < .05$), individual work engagement ($r = .60$; $p < .01$), turnover intentions ($r = -.26$; $p < .01$) and OCB ($r = .35$; $p < .01$). Furthermore, LMX correlates significantly with team reflexivity ($r = .51$; $p < .01$), team work engagement ($r = .25$; $p < .01$)

and individual work engagement ($r = .50$; $p < .01$). LMX also correlates with turnover intentions ($r = -.24$; $p < .05$) and OCB ($r = .36$; $p < .01$). Team reflexivity is significantly correlated to team work engagement ($r = .29$; $p < .01$) as well as to individual work engagement ($r = .52$, $p < .01$). Team reflexivity also correlates with turnover intentions ($r = -.20$; $p < .05$) and OCB ($r = .36$; $p < .01$). Furthermore, team work engagement significantly correlates with individual work engagement ($r = .36$; $p < .01$) but not with turnover intentions or OCB. Individual work engagement, however, negatively correlates with turnover intentions ($r = -.31$; $p < .01$) and OCB ($r = .46$; $p < .01$). Finally, turnover intentions are negatively correlated to OCB ($r = -.29$; $p < .01$). Chargeability does not significantly correlate with any of the other research variables.

Table1
Mean, standard deviations and correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Gender	1.30	.46	1															
2. Age	1.35	.48	-.20*	1														
3. Years at firm	1.31	.47	-.03	.32**	1													
4. Team	3.61	1.95	.18	-.16	.07	1												
5. Role	2.28	1.12	-.16	.70**	.51**	-.16	1											
6. Culture	1.07	.40	-.10	.25**	.07	-.06	.24*	1										
7. JDI	1.80	.16	-.05	.00	.03	.07	.16	.05	1									
8. Pro-social behavior	2.92	.87	-.14	-.15	-.06	-.04	-.06	.05	.01	1								
9. EI climate	3.71	.53	-.16	.14	.18	-.02	.30**	.18	.61**	.06	1							
10. LMX	3.96	.60	.04	-.01	.15	-.01	.09	-.02	.51**	-.08	.52**	1						
11. Team reflexivity	3.65	.62	-.17	-.00	.09	.11	.10	.07	.55**	-.12	.58**	.51**	1					
12. Work engagement team	3.64	.19	-.07	.10	.11	-.06	.14	.03	.19*	-.03	.24*	.25**	.29**	1				
13. Work engagement individual	3.64	.53	-.05	-.15	.23*	-.02	.27**	.13	.61**	-.12	.60**	.50**	.52**	.36**	1			
14. Turnover	2.75	1.13	.11	-.08	-.09	.15	-.02	-.04	-.29**	-.03	-.26**	-.24*	-.20*	-.09	-.31**	1		
15. OCB	3.81	.45	.03	-.06	.18	.04	.12	.02	.24*	-.01	.35**	.36**	.36**	.20	.46**	.29**	1	
16. Chargeability	79.96	7.69	.02	-.22*	-.19*	.51**	-.29**	.03	.01	.04	-.01	-.07	-.01	-.16	-.06	-.12	-.05	1

Note. * = p < .05; ** = p < .01

6.2 Regression analysis

In order to test the hypotheses described above a hierarchical regression analysis was performed. The results of this regression analysis can be seen in table 2 and table 3. Based on the results of the correlation analysis, several variables (age, years at the firm, team, role and JDI) were included as control variables in this regression analysis.

The regression analysis revealed a positive relationship between team work engagement and individual work engagement ($\beta = .23$; $p < .01$). Furthermore, a positive relationship between the employee involvement climate and individual work engagement was found ($\beta = .32$; $p < .01$). There is also a positive relationship between team reflexivity on the one hand, and individual work engagement ($\beta = .25$; $p < .01$) as well as team work engagement ($\beta = .26$; $p < .05$) on the other hand. Furthermore the relationship between LMX and work engagement was tested. A positive relationship between LMX and individual work engagement was found ($\beta = .22$; $p < .05$). There is also a significant relationship between LMX and team work engagement ($\beta = .20$; $p < .10$). Furthermore, when the variable team work engagement was added to these regressions the positive relationships between employee involvement climate, team reflexivity and LMX on the one hand, and individual work engagement on the other hand stayed significant.

Table 2
Results of the hierarchical regression analysis

Variables	Individual Work Engagement										Team Work Engagement			
	1	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	3c	4	5	1	2a	2b	3
Model														
Age	.05	.05	.06	.05	.06	.06	.05	.05	.07	.06	.01	.01	.01	.01
Years at firm	.17	.15	.14	.15	.13	.13	.14	.12	.12	.11	.07	.05	.03	.03
Team	-.05	-.04	-.04	-.07	-.03	-.03	-.05	-.03	-.04	-.03	-.06	-.08	-.05	-.06
Role	.06	.04	-.02	.06	.07	-.02	.04	.06	.01	.00	.07	.07	.08	.08
JDI	.60	.56	.42***	.47***	.49***	.40***	.46***	.47***	.34**	.34**	.19°	.05	.08	.00
Team Work Engagement		.23**				.20**	.19*	.20**		.17*				
EI climate			.32**			.28**			.22*	.21°				
Team reflexivity				.25**			.20*		.13	.10		.26*		.20°
LMX					.22*			.19*	.13	.11			.20°	.13
R ²	.43	.48	.49	.47	.46	.52	.50	.50	.51	.54	.06	.10	.08	.11
Change in R ²		.05	.06	.04	.03	.09	.07	.07	.09	.12		.04	.02	.05

Note. ° = p < .10; * = p < .05; ** = p < .01; *** = p < .001

The regression analysis also revealed a negative relationship between individual work engagement and turnover intentions ($\beta = -.25$; $p < .05$). Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between individual work engagement and OCB ($\beta = .50$; $p < .001$). Finally, there is no significant relationship between individual work engagement and chargeability ($\beta = .06$; $p = ns$).

Table 3
Results of the hierarchical regression analysis

Variable	Turnover Int.		OCB		Chargeability	
	1	2	1	2	1	2
Model						
Age	.15	.16	-.23	-.25*	.02	.02
Years at firm	.09	.14	.16	.07	-.15	-.16
Team	.16	.15	-.01	.02	.53***	.53***
Role	.10	-.09	.18	.15	-.12	-.13
JDI	-.29**	-.14	.20*	-.10	-.01	-.04
Individual Work Engagement		-.25*		.50***		.06
R ²	.13	.17	.11	.26	.32	.32
Change in R ²		.04		.15		.00

Note. * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$

6.3 Conclusions

Most of the results presented here confirm the expectations formulated in the hypotheses. A narrow discussion of the results can be found in chapter 7.1. Next to the results of the regression analysis which either support or disprove the hypotheses, it is worth mentioning that when team reflexivity and LMX are both regressed on team work engagement, only the relationship between team reflexivity and team work engagement is significant ($\beta = .20$; $p < .10$). It therefore seems that team reflexivity suppresses the relationship between LMX and team work engagement. Furthermore, the JDI seems to be an important antecedent of individual work engagement. The JDI is significantly positively related to individual work engagement ($\beta = .60$; $p < .001$). The JDI is also positively related to team work engagement ($\beta = .19$; $p < .10$) but seems to be suppressed by team reflexivity and LMX. Furthermore, the regression analysis revealed that individual work engagement was significantly related to team work engagement ($\beta = .38$; $p < .05$). Also, when individual work engagement was added to the regression analyses of the relationships between team reflexivity or LMX on the one

hand and team work engagement on the other hand, the previously significant relationships of team reflexivity and LMX with team work engagement vanished. This shows that individual work engagement fully mediates the relationship between the employee involvement climate and LMX on the one hand and team work engagement on the other hand. The results of this regression analysis can be found in Appendix J.

7. Discussion

In this final section, the results of the previous analyses are discussed in detail. It is checked whether the hypotheses were supported or not. After that the limitations of this study are presented. Thereafter, the added value of this research and its practical implications for the consulting company are discussed. Finally, suggestions are given for further research.

7.1 Discussion of results

The regression analysis described before provides a lot of support for the proposed hypotheses (see Figure 10). However, not all hypotheses could be supported. The first hypothesis proposed a positive relationship between team work engagement and individual work engagement. The regression analysis showed that there is indeed a significant positive relationship between team work engagement and individual work engagement. Therefore, the first hypothesis is supported. The more engaged a team is, the more engaged the team members are.

The second hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between leader work engagement on the one hand and individual work engagement (H2a) and team work engagement (H2b) on the other hand. Unfortunately the second hypothesis could not be tested because only six teams participated in this study. Therefore, too few leaders actually participated in the study to derive sufficient data. The hypothesis was therefore not tested.

The third hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between employee involvement climate and individual work engagement (H3). The regression analysis showed that there is indeed a positive relationship between employee involvement climate and individual work engagement. Hypothesis 3 is therefore supported. Involving employees in decision making processes, sharing information with them, giving them training and rewarding them for their results does result in more engaged individual employees.

Fourth a positive relationship between team reflexivity on the one hand, and individual work engagement (H4a) and team work engagement (H4b) on the other hand was predicted. The regression analysis supported both hypotheses. There is a significant positive relationship between team reflexivity, and individual work engagement as well as team work engagement. This shows that the more reflective a team is, the more engaged the team is. Also, team members are more engaged when their team often reflects on its objectives and the social aspects of team work.

The fifth hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between LMX on the one hand, and individual work engagement (H5a) and team work engagement (H5b) on the other hand. The regression analysis found evidence for both hypotheses. Therefore, both hypotheses are supported. This means that the more the leader-employee relationship nears the maturity stage (see Figure 7) the more engaged the employee is. Also, the team as a whole is more engaged when the leader establishes high quality relationship with his or her employees.

The sixth hypothesis predicted that team work engagement would partially mediate the relationship between team reflexivity and LMX on the one hand, and individual work engagement on the other hand. The regression analysis showed that team work engagement indeed mediates the relationships between team reflexivity and LMX on the one hand and individual work engagement on the other hand. There is a significant positive relationship between team reflexivity and individual work engagement, as well as a positive relationship between LMX and individual work engagement. Furthermore, positive relationships have been found between team reflexivity and team work engagement as well as between LMX and team work engagement. Finally, the significant relationships between team reflexivity and LMX on the one hand and team work engagement on the other hand did not disappear when team work engagement was added to the regression analysis. Team work engagement also stayed significant under this condition. These facts argue for a partial mediation of team work engagement in contrast to a full mediation. Hypothesis six is therefore supported.

Hypothesis seven predicted a negative relationship between individual work engagement and turnover intentions. This hypothesis is supported as well. The more engaged an employee is, the less likely he or she has the intention to leave the firm.

The eighth hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between individual work engagement and OCB. This positive relationship was found to be highly significant during the regression analysis. Hypothesis eight is therefore supported. The more engaged an employee is the more organization citizenship behavior he or she will show.

Finally, the ninth hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between individual work engagement and chargeability. This hypothesis could not be supported. No significant relationship between individual work engagement and chargeability could be found. This is probably based on the fact that chargeability depends on a lot of variables, like the leadership style of the supervisor or individual training hours which influence the hours an employee is available for chargeable work. It was however not possible to control for all of these variables. It is therefore most likely that one or more third variables confounded the measured relationship between individual work engagement and chargeability.

The research question was:

(1) *What is the relationship of leader work engagement, employee involvement climate, team reflexivity and leader member exchange on the one hand, and work engagement of employees on the other hand; (2) how does work engagement contribute to turnover intentions, chargeability numbers and organization citizenship behavior; (3) and what is the relationship between employee work engagement and work engagement of a team?*

This research question can finally be answered as follows:

1) Team reflexivity and LMX have a positive relationship with individual work engagement as well as team work engagement, and the employee involvement climate has a positive relationship with individual work engagement.

2) Work engagement is definitely positively related to OCB and negatively related to turnover intentions. The relationship between work engagement and chargeability is still unclear and needs more research.

3) There is a crossover effect of team work engagement on individual work engagement. This results in a partially mediating role for team work engagement in the relationship between team reflexivity and LMX on the one hand and individual work engagement on the other hand.

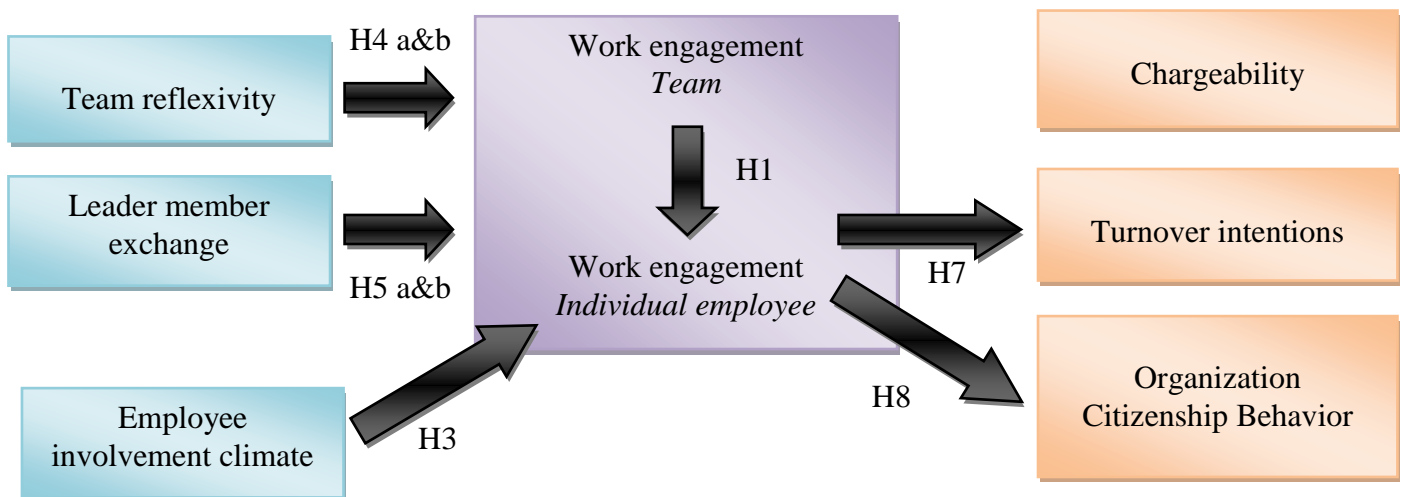


Figure 10. Supported hypotheses

7.2 Limitations

The scientific research for this thesis has several limitations which will now be discussed. First, the research study was conducted in the form of a cross-sectional design. All independent and dependent variables were therefore measured at the same time. It is therefore

not possible to detect causal relationships between these research variables. If another research design would have been chosen, preferably a longitudinal design, causal relationships could have been measured.

Furthermore, the generalizability of the results is limited based on the fact that only respondents from the business consulting sector took part in this study. It is possible that the detected relationships between independent and dependent variables could vary in other sectors.

Third, due to the limited time available for this research, it was impossible to control for all variables which could influence the chargeability of the employees. Chargeability is influenced by a lot of different variables, for example the amount of time an employee spends on trainings. It is possible that a relationship between work engagement and chargeability could not be detected because of one or more influential third variables.

Fourth, this thesis faced minor to severe reliability problems when it came to measuring OCB and pro-social behavior. The reliability of OCB was under the critical value and could not be enhanced by excluding various items from the analysis. The measurement of pro-social behavior (one of the control variables) had severe reliability problems which could not be solved. Finally, one item of the questionnaire used was chosen as a representative for the construct of pro-social behavior and used in the further analyses. This makes the respective results less reliable.

Fifth because only six teams with four different supervisors took part in this study, it would not have been possible to gain representative results regarding leader work engagement. Therefore, this variable, although hypothesized, was not analyzed in this thesis. Hypotheses 2a and 2b were therefore not tested.

7.3 Added value

This thesis adds various findings to the existing literature on work engagement. First of all the crossover effect of work engagement from a team to an individual had only been researched in one study before. This thesis supports the findings of Bakker et al. (2006) by demonstrating a positive relationship between the work engagement of a team and the work engagement of the individual members.

Second, the relationship between employee involvement climate and work engagement had never been studied before. This thesis showed that employee involvement climate is indeed an antecedent of work engagement.

Third, the relationship between team reflexivity and work engagement has never been studied as well. This thesis showed that there is a positive relationship between team reflexivity on the one hand and team work engagement as well as individual work engagement on the other hand. It was therefore possible to demonstrate that team reflexivity is an antecedent of work engagement as well.

Fourth, this thesis supports the positive relationship between LMX and individual work engagement (which Li et al. (2012) already demonstrated), but specifically in the context of a business consulting firm. Furthermore, this thesis demonstrates for the first time that LMX also has a positive relationship with team work engagement.

Fifth, this thesis supports the negative relationship between work engagement and turnover intentions (which was already researched by Bhatnagar, 2012; Chen & Chen, 2012; Park & Guroy, 2012), in the context of a business consulting firm. Turnover intentions are therefore a consequence of work engagement as described in the JD-R model.

Finally, OCB has not often been studied as a consequence of work engagement. This thesis supports the positive relationship between work engagement and turnover. OCB is therefore a consequence of individual work engagement.

7.4 Practical implications

Based on this thesis research several practical recommendations can be given to the consulting company. This thesis highlights the importance of work engagement for organizational success. In order to minimize turnover and enhance organization citizenship behavior, the company should try to enhance the work engagement of its employees. Engaged employees have less intentions to leave the company than do disengaged employees. This way the company can retain good performing and talented employees who may otherwise leave the company to search for a more engaging job. Engaged employees are also more willing to engage in behavior which is beneficial to the organization, like helping colleagues, although this behavior is not formally rewarded by the company's reward system. This will be beneficial to the company, because tasks may be finished faster and/or better. Also, OCB may have beneficial outcomes for the organizational culture. People will probably value working in an organization where employees support and help each other.

Furthermore, this thesis gives concrete ideas how the consulting company can enhance the work engagement of its employees. First, the company should try to enhance its employee involvement climate. This means that the company should try to involve employees as much as possible in decisions regarding their work. For the employees to feel engaged, it is

important that they have the feeling that they have a say in or control over decisions which affect their own work. Furthermore, the company has to share all important information regarding the organization itself, its goals and its plans. Only through information sharing can employees get all important information they need to perform at their best and are they able to actively participate in decisions. The company also has to provide all necessary trainings for their employees. Training helps employees to gain knowledge and skills they need to perform effectively and make correct decisions. When employees feel that they perform effectively and successfully at work, these employees will gain more energy from their work and will dedicate themselves more to it. Finally, the company has to focus on its performance based reward system. It has to be checked whether all individual behaviors which are successfully linked to desired organizational outcomes are adequately rewarded by the formal reward system. A good performance based reward system will contribute to employees' feeling of success. The feeling of being adequately rewarded for one's effort will give employees more energy. Employees are given an incentive to dedicate themselves more to their work and they will possibly become absorbed by it.

Second, this thesis shows that the feeling of engagement of the whole team is an important factor when it comes to individual feelings of engagement of employees. When the team as a whole feels engaged, this feeling will transfer to each individual group member as well. Based on this crossover effect, the company should try to enhance the work engagement of the team as well in order to enhance the employees' individual feelings of work engagement. Two possibilities how this can be achieved are described under points three and four.

Third, this thesis demonstrates that team work engagement and individual work engagement can be enhanced by improving team reflexivity. Teams within the company should frequently and actively review their objectives. Reviewing team objectives will enhance the commitment of the team and all team members to desired goals. When employees realize that they have successfully reached objectives and goals, or even exceeded them, this will give the team and its members more energy. Employees will be able to dedicate themselves more to the work when objectives are clear and they know exactly what they have to do in order to reach their goals. Successfully reviewing goals and objectives will help employees to become more absorbed by their work and be less likely distracted from it. Furthermore, teams within the company should review the social aspects of team work. It is important that all members feel comfortable working within the team and that they feel supported by the team. Only when this is the case, employees will like working in the team

and have a lot of energy during their work. When feeling comfortable working in the team, employees will be more willing to dedicate themselves more to their work and can become absorbed by it. It is important that objectives as well as the social aspects of team work are both reviewed adequately. The goal is to build a fully functioning team (see Figure 5). This will lead, next to engaged employees, also to higher task effectiveness, better mental health and long term viability.

Finally, the relationship between the supervisor and the employee is very important for an employee's work engagement. Therefore, in order to enhance employee work engagement, the company should call the supervisors' attention to the relationship they have established with their employees. It is important that supervisors actively monitor the relationships they establish with their fellow employees. Mature partnerships based on mutual trust between supervisor and employees have to be established. In a good supervisor-employee relationship, both sides support each other and can count on each other. A good relationship with the supervisor will entail more energetic employees who dedicate themselves more to their work. It is important that supervisors actively pass through the three stages of the life cycle of leadership making (see Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). It is also important that supervisors actively support the transition from the stranger phase, through the acquaintance phase, to the maturity phase (see Figure 7), by taking the initiative and enhancing social exchange (professionally as well as personally).

7.5 Further research

There are various possibilities for further research. First, it would be very interesting to test whether there is a crossover effect of leader work engagement on team work engagement and individual work engagement, as hypothesized in hypotheses 2a and 2b. In order to do so a lot of different teams with different leaders have to take part in the research in order to gain representative results.

Furthermore, the relationship between work engagement and changeability could not be demonstrated. However, it would be interesting to analyze whether there really is no relationship between work engagement and changeability, or whether the respective result of this thesis is based on the fact that not all confounding variables could be controlled for. An additional study should be done, which only focuses on the work engagement-changeability relationship and tries to control for as many confounding variables as possible. Only then one can be sure that the result of this thesis is right.

Although this thesis generated new and interesting results, no causal relations can be derived from these results. It would therefore be interesting to know whether the relationships found are also causal relationships. In order to analyze this a study using a longitudinal design should be conducted. This means measuring the employee involvement climate, team reflexivity and LMX at one point in time (T1) and the team work engagement and individual work engagement in a later point in time (T2), preferably some weeks later. Finally, turnover intentions, OCB and chargeability have to be measured at an even later point in time (T3). Only then can causal relationships be tested.

Also, from a scientific point of view it would be interesting to analyze whether the results of this thesis also hold in other contexts, e.g. other industrial sectors. It would be exciting to know whether the results of this thesis are universally applicable, or not.

Finally, in this thesis, only the relationship between employee involvement climate and individual work engagement was measured and analyzed. It is however possible that an employee involvement climate can have a positive relationship with work engagement on team level as well, assuming that the four involvement techniques (participative decision making, information sharing, training and performance based rewards) are executed on team level as well. A team can for example be asked to reach a collective decision about a topic, which is then taken into account by the supervisor. Information sharing and training can also take place on team level, for example when important information is shared with the whole team during a team meeting or when a team is assigned a collective training weekend. Furthermore, performance rewards can take place on team level. A team can be collectively rewarded for a good team effort and good results. When this involvement takes place on team level, it can be assumed that the team will collectively feel more engaged as the members feel that the team as a whole is appreciated by the managers. Therefore, the team will dedicate itself more to team goals and projects and will gain more energy and become ultimately more absorbed by its work.

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Appendices

Appendix A: UWES-9

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. (vigor)	1	2	3	4	5
At my work, I feel bursting with energy. (vigor)	1	2	3	4	5
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.(vigor)	1	2	3	4	5
My job inspires me. (dedication)	1	2	3	4	5
I am enthusiastic about my job.(dedication)	1	2	3	4	5
I am proud of the work that I do. (dedication)	1	2	3	4	5
I am immersed in my work. (absorption)	1	2	3	4	5
I feel happy when I am working intensely.(absorption)	1	2	3	4	5
I get carried away when I am working. (absorption)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B: Team reflexivity questionnaire

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
We regularly discuss whether the team is working effectively together. (task reflexivity)	1	2	3	4	5
In this team, we modify our objectives in the light of changing circumstances. (task reflexivity)	1	2	3	4	5
This team often reviews its approach to getting the job done. (task reflexivity)	1	2	3	4	5
Team members provide each other with support when times are difficult. (social reflexivity)	1	2	3	4	5
Conflict tends to linger in this team. (social reflexivity)	1	2	3	4	5
When things at work are stressful, we pull together as a team. (social reflexivity)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C: Employee involvement climate questionnaire

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I have enough input in deciding how to accomplish my work. (Participative decision making)	1	2	3	4	5
I have enough freedom over how I do my job. (Participative decision making)	1	2	3	4	5
Company goals and objectives are clearly communicated to employees. (Information sharing)	1	2	3	4	5
Company policies and procedures are clearly communicated to employees. (Information sharing)	1	2	3	4	5
Generally I feel this company rewards employees who make an extra effort. (Performance-Based Rewards)	1	2	3	4	5
There is a strong link between how well I perform my job and the likelihood of receiving high performance appraisal ratings. (Performance-Based Rewards)	1	2	3	4	5
Education and training are integral parts of this company's culture. (Training)	1	2	3	4	5
I have had sufficient/adequate job-related training. (Training)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix D: LMX questionnaire

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I like my supervisor very much as a person. (affect)	1	2	3	4	5
My supervisor would come to my defense if I were "attacked" by others. (loyalty)	1	2	3	4	5
I do work for my supervisor that goes beyond what is specified in my job	1	2	3	4	5

description. (contribution)					
I respect my supervisor's knowledge of and competence on the job. (professional respect)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E: Measuring turnover intentions

	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	3-4 years	5-6 years	More than 6 years
I am committed to stay at the company for...	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix F: OCB questionnaire

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I make innovative suggestions to improve our department (altruism)	1	2	3	4	5
I help others who have been absent (altruism)	1	2	3	4	5
I attend functions that are not required but that help improve the image of the organization (generalized compliance)	1	2	3	4	5
I attend work above the norm (generalized compliance)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix G: Measuring demographic variables

Gender

What is your gender?

Male	Female
1	2

Age

How old are you?

32 or younger	Older than 32
1	2

Time worked at the company

How long have you been working at the company?

4,5 years or less	Longer than 4,5 years
1	2

Team

In which team do you work?

CSG FS	TGP H&PS	CSG H&PS	Mgmt Con H&Ps	Mgmt Con Operations	Mgmt Con Talent & Organization
1	2	3	4	5	6

Role

Which role do you perform?

Analyst	Consultant	Manager	Senior Manager	Senior Executive
1	2	3	4	5

Culture

What is your country of origin?

Appendix H: Job Description Index

Think of your present work. What is it like most of the time? How would you describe the...
Work itself

Routine	Satisfying	Good

Supervision

Impolite	Doesn't supervise enough	Praises good work

Pay

Less than I deserve	Insecure	Highly paid

Promotion opportunities

Dead-end-job	Unfair policies	Based on ability

Co-workers

Intelligent	Responsible	Boring

No/Yes = 1/2

Appendix I: Pro social tendency measures for late adolescents

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I get the most out of helping others when it is done in front of others. (public)	1	2	3	4	5
When people ask me to help them, I	1	2	3	4	5

don't hesitate. (altruism)					
I tend to help needy others most when they do not know who helped them. (anonymous)	1	2	3	4	5
It is easy for me to help others when they are in a dire situation. (dire)	1	2	3	4	5
I respond to helping others best when the situation is highly emotional. (emotional)	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that if I help someone, they should help me in the future. (compliant)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix J: Individual work engagement as a mediator

Variables	Team work engagement						
	1	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	4
Model							
Age	.01	-.01	.01	.01	-.01	-.00	-.00
Years at firm	.07	.01	.05	.03	.00	-.01	-.01
Team	-.06	-.04	-.08	-.05	-.05	-.03	-.05
Role	.07	.05	.07	.08	.05	.06	.06
JDI	.19	-.04	.05	.08	-.11	-.09	-.13
Individual work engagement		.38**			.33*	.35**	.31*
Team reflexivity			.26*		.18		.15
LMX				.20°		.12	.08
R ²	.06	.14	.10	.08	.16	.15	.16
Change in R ²		.08	.04	.02	.10	.09	.10

Note. * = p < .05; ** = p < .01; *** = p < .001