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Enhancing Employee Engagement through Training &
Development and Workplace Well-Being Initiatives

Darivakis Michail

Supervisor: Myloni Varvara

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Darivakis Michail

Supervising Committee

Supervisor:

Myloni Varvara

Hellenic Open University

Co-Supervisor:

Bitzenis Aristeidis

Hellenic Open University

Patras, Greece, “Month” “Year”

“Dedicated to my family and friends, who supported me during this challenging period”

Abstract

Employee engagement is an important concern in the modern organisations since it is directly linked to employee motivation, commitment and overall organisational performance. In this regard, the current research investigates the connection between the perceptions of the employees towards training and development and the well-being programs in the workplace and the degree of employee engagement. The study is based on the integrated perspective of the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model and Social Exchange Theory, which assume that training and development and workplace well-being initiatives are the complementary organisational resources that can be used to promote engagement.

The quantitative research design was applied based on a structured questionnaire that was given online via Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of four parts that included demographic characteristics, training and development, workplace well-being initiatives, and employee engagement. The dimensions of engagement of employees were analysed based on the aspects of vigour, dedication, and absorption. The last sample was composed of 107 employees who were currently working in Greece.

The results have shown that training and development and workplace well-being programs have a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee engagement. To be more precise, the higher the perceived developmental opportunities and the organisational support of well-being, the higher the rates of engagement were reported by the employees. The regression analysis also indicated that the two predictors collectively accounted a significant percentage of the variance in employee engagement, and the effect of the combination of the two variables was higher than the effect of the individual variables analyzed separately.

Generally, the research adds to the body of literature by demonstrating that the developmental opportunities facilitate employee engagement better when organisations integrate them with practices that enhance employee well-being. The practical implications of the findings to human resource management are also presented whereby organisations need to pursue an integrated approach that promotes the growth of employees, psychological safety, and work-life balance simultaneously to maintain elevated engagement rates.

Keywords: employee engagement, training and development, workplace well-being, human resource management, job demands-resources model, social exchange theory

Περίληψη

Η εμπλοκή των εργαζομένων έχει γίνει ένα κρίσιμο ζήτημα για τους σύγχρονους οργανισμούς, καθώς συνδέεται στενά με το κίνητρο, τη δέσμευση και τη συνολική οργανωτική απόδοση. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, η παρούσα μελέτη εξετάζει τη σχέση μεταξύ των αντιλήψεων των εργαζομένων για τις πρωτοβουλίες εκπαίδευσης και ανάπτυξης και ευεξίας στον χώρο εργασίας και του επιπέδου εμπλοκής τους. Βασισμένη στο μοντέλο Απαιτήσεων-Πόρων Εργασίας (JD-R) και στη Θεωρία Κοινωνικής Ανταλλαγής, η μελέτη υιοθετεί μια ολοκληρωμένη προοπτική, αντιμετωπίζοντας τις πρωτοβουλίες εκπαίδευσης και ανάπτυξης και ευεξίας στον χώρο εργασίας ως συμπληρωματικούς οργανωτικούς πόρους που μπορούν να ενισχύσουν τη συμμετοχή.

Χρησιμοποιήθηκε ποσοτικός ερευνητικός σχεδιασμός χρησιμοποιώντας ένα δομημένο ερωτηματολόγιο που διανεμήθηκε ηλεκτρονικά μέσω των Φορμών Google. Το ερωτηματολόγιο περιελάμβανε τέσσερα τμήματα που κάλυπταν τα δημογραφικά χαρακτηριστικά, την εκπαίδευση και ανάπτυξη, τις πρωτοβουλίες ευεξίας στον χώρο εργασίας και τη συμμετοχή των εργαζομένων. Η εμπλοκή των εργαζομένων εξετάστηκε μέσω των διαστάσεων του σθένους, της αφοσίωσης και της απορρόφησης. Το τελικό δείγμα αποτελούνταν από 107 εργαζόμενους που εργάζονται επί του παρόντος στην Ελλάδα.

Τα ευρήματα αποκάλυψαν ότι τόσο οι πρωτοβουλίες εκπαίδευσης και ανάπτυξης όσο και οι πρωτοβουλίες ευεξίας στον χώρο εργασίας σχετίζονται θετικά και στατιστικά σημαντικά με τη συμμετοχή των εργαζομένων. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, οι εργαζόμενοι που αντιλήφθηκαν ισχυρότερες αναπτυξιακές ευκαιρίες και μεγαλύτερη οργανωτική υποστήριξη για την ευημερία ανέφεραν υψηλότερα επίπεδα εμπλοκής. Η ανάλυση παλινδρόμησης έδειξε περαιτέρω ότι και οι δύο προγνωστικοί παράγοντες εξηγούσαν από κοινού ένα σημαντικό ποσοστό της διακύμανσης στην εμπλοκή των εργαζομένων, με το συνδυαστικό τους αποτέλεσμα να είναι ισχυρότερο από το αποτέλεσμα κάθε μεταβλητής που εξετάστηκε ανεξάρτητα.

Συνολικά, η μελέτη συμβάλλει στη βιβλιογραφία δείχνοντας ότι η εμπλοκή των εργαζομένων υποστηρίζεται πιο αποτελεσματικά όταν οι οργανισμοί συνδυάζουν ευκαιρίες ανάπτυξης με πρακτικές που προάγουν την ευημερία των εργαζομένων. Τα ευρήματα παρέχουν επίσης πρακτικές επιπτώσεις στη διαχείριση ανθρώπινου δυναμικού, υποδηλώνοντας ότι οι οργανισμοί θα πρέπει να υιοθετήσουν μια ολοκληρωμένη προσέγγιση που υποστηρίζει ταυτόχρονα την ανάπτυξη των εργαζομένων, την ψυχολογική

ασφάλεια και την ισορροπία μεταξύ επαγγελματικής και προσωπικής ζωής, προκειμένου να διατηρήσουν υψηλότερα επίπεδα εμπλοκής.

Λέξεις – Κλειδιά: εργασιακή δέσμευση, εκπαίδευση και ανάπτυξη, εργασιακή ευημερία, διοίκηση ανθρώπινων πόρων, μοντέλο απαιτήσεων-πόρων εργασίας, θεωρία κοινωνικής ανταλλαγής

Table of Contents

2 Contents

Abstract	ii
Περίληψη.....	iv
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	vii
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Graphs.....	ix
List of Abbreviations & Acronyms	x
1. Chapter 1-Introduction	1
2. Chapter 2 – Literature Review	3
2.1 Conceptualising Employee Engagement.....	3
2.2 Theoretical Frameworks of Engagement	6
2.2.1 Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model.....	7
2.2.2 Social Exchange Theory	8
2.2.3 Psychological Contract	9
2.2.4 Integrating the Frameworks.....	10
2.3 Training and Development (T&D)	11
2.3.1 Definition and Types of T&D	11
2.3.2 Theories and Models of T&D	12
2.3.3 Training & Development and Employee Outcomes.....	14
2.4 Workplace Well-Being Initiatives	16
2.4.1 Defining Workplace Well-Being	16
2.4.2 Types of Well-Being Initiatives.....	17
2.4.3 Well-Being and Employee Outcomes.....	18
2.5 Integrating T&D and Well-Being: A Holistic HR Approach	20
2.6 Linking Training, Well-Being and Employee Engagement	24
2.6.1 Integrative Models: JD-R, Social Exchange and HR Systems.....	24
2.6.2 HR Bundles (T&D + Well-Being) and Engagement: Empirical Evidence.....	25
2.7 Gaps in the Literature and Research Proposition	29
3 Chapter 3-Research Methodology	32
3.1 Aim of the study	32
3.2 Research Design	32
3.2.1 Alignment of the Questionnaire with the Research Model.....	33
3.3 Questionnaire of the research	33
3.4 Measurement Instruments	34
3.5 Data Collection and research sample	34
3.6 Data Analysis	35
4 Chapter 4-Research results	36
4.1 Demographic characteristics.....	36
4.2 Training and Development.....	42
4.3 Workplace Well-Being Initiatives	45
4.4 Employee Engagement	48

4.5	Research questions-hypotheses	52
4.6	Research results	55
5	Chapter 5 – Discussion	57
6	Chapter 6 – Conclusion	61
	Appendix A: Survey	63
	Bibliography.....	66

List of Figures

Figure 1. Conceptual Model Illustrating the Relationship between Training and Development, Workplace Well-Being Initiatives, and Employee Engagement.....	31
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List of Tables

Table 1. Gender	36
Table 2. Age group	37
Table 3. Highest level of education	38
Table 4. Years of total work experience.....	39
Table 5. Years in current organisation	40
Table 6. Employment sector	41
Table 7. Job level	41
Table 8. Importance of training and development	42
Table 9. Importance of training and development	44
Table 10. Physical and Psychological Well-Being.....	45
Table 11. Work–Life Balance and Flexibility	46
Table 12. Support and Climate.....	46
Table 13. Variables-scores regarding workplace well-being initiatives.....	47
Table 14. Vigour	48
Table 15. Dedication.....	49
Table 16. Absorption	50
Table 17. Variables-scores of employee engagement	51
Table 18. Tests of Normality	52
Table 19. Correlations of importance of training and development and employee engagement	53
Table 20. Correlations of workplace well-being initiatives and employee engagement ...	53
Table 21. Model Summary as of employee engagement	54
Table 22. ANOVA as of employee engagement	54
Table 23. Coefficients as of employee engagement	54

List of Graphs

Graph 1. Gender.....	36
Graph 2. Age group	37
Graph 3. Highest level of education.....	38
Graph 4. Years of total work experience	39
Graph 5. Years in current organisation	40
Graph 6. Employment sector	41
Graph 7. Job level.....	42
Graph 8. Importance of training and development.....	43
Graph 9. Importance of training and development.....	44
Graph 10. Physical and Psychological Well-Being.....	45
Graph 11. Work–Life Balance and Flexibility	46
Graph 12. Support and Climate.....	47
Graph 13. Variables-scores regarding workplace well-being initiatives.....	48
Graph 14. Vigour	49
Graph 15. Dedication	50
Graph 16. Absorption.....	51
Graph 17. Variables-scores of employee engagement.....	52

List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

EAPs – Employee Assistance Programmes

HR – Human Resources

HRD – Human Resource Development

HRM – Human Resource Management

HPWS – High Performance Work Systems

JD-R – Job Demands–Resources

SET – Social Exchange Theory

T&D – Training and Development

UWES – Utrecht Work Engagement Scale

1. Chapter 1-Introduction

Employee engagement has become a key issue of concern among scholars and practitioners in modern organisations because it is directly associated with individual motivation, discretionary effort, job performance, and overall organisational effectiveness. Engaged employees are more likely to exhibit increased energy, commitment, and engagement in their work whereas disengaged employees are more likely to become psychologically withdrawn and perform at low levels. Engagement was first theorised by Kahn (1990) as harnessing of physical, cognitive, and emotional selves in the performance of the role by the employees, and subsequently defined by Schaufeli et al. (2002) as a positive, satisfying, work-related state of mind which is characterised by the state of vigour, dedication, and absorption. To this extent, employee engagement is not just an attitude at work, but a more profound condition of active psychological relationship with work.

Meanwhile, organisations are working in more challenging and competitive conditions, and attracting, developing and retaining committed employees has become a strategic focus. In this respect, workplace well-being programs, training and development have become increasingly important as human resource management practices. Training and development allow the employees to advance their knowledge, skills, and capabilities, as well as indicate that the organisation is ready to invest in their long-term development and career progression (Otoo, 2022; Ahmed et al., 2024). Likewise, well-being programmes at work, including health and wellness programmes, work-life balance practices, psychological support, and flexible working arrangements, can be used to establish conducive working environments that keep employees active, resilient, and feeling that they are cared about at the workplace (Shuck and Reio, 2014; Rasool et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2024). The two domains thus seem to be very pertinent to the employee engagement development.

This relationship is also supported by theoretical views. According to the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R), employees will be more engaged when the work environment they are in gives them adequate resources to cope with the job demands and meet the work objectives; these resources include; support, autonomy, development opportunities, and a healthy working climate (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). Simultaneously, the Social Exchange Theory states that the more employees feel that the organisation cares and favors

them, the more positive attitudes and behaviours they are prone to give back, including increased engagement (Saks, 2006). In this sense, training and development as well as workplace well-being initiative can serve as key organisational resources contributing to the willingness of employees to invest themselves in their working.

Despite the evidence of the existence of positive correlation between development practices and well-being initiatives and engagement, the literature has tended to discuss the two as independent and distinct resources within the same empirical framework (Ahmed et al., 2024; Alam et al., 2024). This poses a critical gap, because in the practical organisational environment employees do not undergo training, support, and well-being as a standalone practice, but as a subset of a larger working environment. The current research aims to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between the perceptions of the employees about training and development programs and workplace well-being programs and employee engagement, individually and collectively.

Based on this, this dissertation will seek to examine how the perception of training and development by employees relates to workplace well-being programs and the extent of employee engagement. To be more precise, the paper will analyse the positive impact of these two organisational practices on engagement and whether their synergistic effect is greater than the effect of each of them on its own. In this way, the dissertation adds to the body of literature on employee engagement and provides practical implications to organisations that want to establish workplaces that facilitate the growth of employees as well as the well-being of employees.

2. Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Conceptualising Employee Engagement

Since this dissertation will be discussing the role of training and development and workplace well-being plans in increasing the engagement of the employees, it is important to first define the term engagement, and its difference with other similar concepts like job satisfaction, organisational commitment and work motivation. Literature demonstrates that employee engagement is not a unitary concept, which is universally agreed upon but has undergone various theoretical traditions, each of which has focused a little bit differently on the relationship of employees to their work roles (Kahn, 1990; Rich et al., 2010; Saks, 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Kahn (1990) gave the most well known conceptual definition and defined personal engagement as the extent to which individuals harness their physical, cognitive, and emotional energies in role performances. In the opinion of Kahn, the employee is engaged when he or she is fully engaged in the work role and disengaged when he or she backs off or protects himself or herself physically, cognitively, or emotionally. He contended that there are three conditions of the psychological state that define engagement: meaningfulness, safety and availability. Employees are more likely to present themselves to work when they feel that their work is meaningful, psychologically safe to express themselves and has enough physical and emotional resources at their disposal. This role based view became the basis of subsequent empirical assessments and the comprehension of how HR practices (in terms of developmental opportunities and supportive well-being climates) can form the environment that beckons engagement.

Based on this, Schaufeli and others proposed the conceptualisation of engagement as a more work-focused, psychological, and more energy and involvement-intensive state. They describe work engagement to be a positive, satisfying, work related attitude that is not centered on a specific object or incidence but is more enduring and pervasive, an affective-cognitive experience (Schaufeli et al., 2002, 2006). Their model assumes three dimensions of engagement namely vigour, dedication and absorption.

- Vigour is an indication of a lot of energy, mental strength and readiness to put efforts into something despite challenges.
- Dedication: This is a sense of importance, passion, inspiration and pride in the job.
- Absorption can be described as being completely focused and joyfully absorbed in the work whereby time flies and it is hard to get out of work (Schaufeli et al., 2002, 2006).

This three-part model has gained great impact and forms the foundation of popular measures like the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) that has been tested in various nations and professions (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Gil-Beltran et al., 2020).

Saks (2006) views the engagement as a social exchange and differentiates between job engagement and organisational engagement. Job engagement is the amount of psychological presence and investment in the particular work tasks and organisational engagement represents the degree of involvement and attachment to the organisation as a whole. According to Saks, engagement can be achieved when the employees feel that the organisation is offering them any resources of value (training, support and fair treatment) and has the responsibility to give back with even greater energy and engagement (Saks 2006). This method is specifically applicable in the current dissertation, since it is directly related to the interaction of HR practices, such as training and development and well-being programs, which are conceptualised as important resources exchanged between employer and employee.

Differentiation of engagement with regard to job satisfaction, organisational commitment and work motivation as related but conceptually different constructs also needs to be clarified. Job satisfaction is generally perceived as an appraisal or general assessment to the job, which entails making a perception on how well the job satisfies the individual needs and expectations (Rich et al., 2010). The organisational commitment is the mental attachment and loyalty of a worker to the organisation that is usually accompanied by a feeling of wanting to be a part of it (Rich et al., 2010). Work motivation refers to the mechanisms that trigger, guide and maintain the work behaviour. Contrary to this, engagement is more appropriately considered as an activated and energized state of being fully engaged in and interested in what one is doing, which is the combination of cognitive, emotional and behavioural elements (Kahn, 1990; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Rich et al., 2010). According to meta-analytic evidence, engagement, despite having a positive relationship

with satisfaction, commitment, and motivation, offers incremental predictive validity of performance and effectiveness outcomes (Mackay et al., 2017; Rich et al., 2010).

Burnout is also a common concept used in contrast to engagement. Schaufeli et al. (2002) conceptualise engagement as the antithesis of burnout on three dimensions, namely, vitality versus exhaustion, commitment versus cynicism and absorption versus diminished professional effectiveness. Whereas burnout is a condition of prolonged strain and exhaustion, engagement is a condition of vigor and psychological engagement. Nevertheless, scholars warn that engagement is not merely the lack of burnout, but a positive phenomenon in its own right, and associated with improved health, well-being and performance (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Gil-Beltrana et al., 2020; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

The Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model offers a valuable theoretical background to the study of these dimensions and to attribute engagement to certain practices in an organisation. This model would state that any job has some demands (e.g., workload, emotional pressure) and resources (e.g., autonomy, feedback, training, social support). Job resources are suggested to create engagement through stimulating personal growth, learning and development and job demands lead to burnout when excessive and chronic (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). Later research has expanded this model to include the contribution of personal resources, including self-efficacy and resilience, which can also increase vigour, dedication and absorption (Van Wingerden et al., 2017; Sutton, 2020). In this perspective, engagement is realized when employees possess enough resources to fulfill their needs and to develop their positions, that is, which is the domain that training, development and well-being programs act.

Current studies also emphasize the close yet subtle correlation between engagement and well-being in the workplace. Shuck and Reio (2014) conceptualise engagement as a positive work-related state, which adds to, but is not equal to, overall psychological well-being. Engagement is highly activated and involved; well-being, in its turn, is more inclusive, including life satisfaction, emotional balance and lack of distress. Research demonstrates that engaging in work and promoting well-being can be facilitated with the help of supportive working conditions, health-promoting policies and psychological safety (Nazir and Islam, 2020; Rasool et al., 2021; Sorensen et al., 2021). As an illustration, toxic workplaces lower the well-being of employees and consequently engagement (Rasool et al.,

2021), whereas wellness programmes and healthy organisational practices can raise the levels of vigour and commitment (Gil-Beltran et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2024).

In the context of this dissertation, one of the implications of this conceptualisation is that training and development, and workplace well-being interventions may be conceptualised as vital job and organisational resources, which have a direct and indirect positive impact on vigour, dedication and absorption. Empirical research demonstrates that the engagement is positively related to human resource development practices and learning opportunities (Ahmed et al., 2024; Niraula & Kharel, 2023; Otoo, 2022), whereas supportive leadership and resourceful environments in areas like healthcare reinforce employee engagement through increased job resources (Giallouros et al., 2024). Meanwhile, well-being measures like health promotion programmes, work-life balance policies and psychological support may enhance energy and psychological safety, which strengthens the fundamental dimensions of engagement (Shuck & Reio, 2014; Gil-Beltran et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2024).

Overall, this dissertation follows the broadly accepted definition of work engagement as positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is typified by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002) in the broader concept of psychological presence in role performance (Kahn, 1990) and the social exchange perspective of Saks (Saks, 2006). Engagement is different, yet correlated with job satisfaction, organisational commitment and motivation, and defined by the imbalance between job demands and resources as outlined in the JD-R model. This theoretical prism offers a sound basis upon which to discuss the manner in which organisational investments in training and development and workplace well-being can serve as strategic assets that contribute to increasing the level of engagement of employees and, eventually, the organisational performance.

2.2 Theoretical Frameworks of Engagement

In order to comprehend how training and development (T&D) and workplace well-being programs can contribute to a better engagement of employees, it is important to base the study on solid theoretical foundations. The three most appropriate frameworks include the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model, the Social Exchange Theory, and the psychological contract. The combination of these two assists in understanding why and how organisational

investments in learning, development and well-being are converted into more vigour, dedication and absorption at work.

2.2.1 Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model

JD-R model is one of the most significant models of work engagement. It suggests that all jobs may be typified in terms of job demands (e.g., workload, time pressure, emotional demands) and job resources (e.g., autonomy, feedback, support, development opportunities) (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Job demands refer to items of work that demand physical or mental effort that should be sustained, and thus are linked to some physiological and psychological expenses like strain or burnout. Job resources, on the other hand, are functional towards attainment of work objectives, lessens job requirements and the costs thereof, and evokes personal growth, learning and development.

In this model, the engagement develops as a motivational process that is most likely to be motivated by job resources and personal ones. Employees are also more prone to feeling increased states of vigour, dedication and absorption when they feel that they possess enough resources, including autonomy, support, feedback, and development opportunities (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Van Wingerden et al., 2017). Research demonstrates that job resources have the potential to offset the adverse effects of demands and are especially significant in stressful work settings, including the healthcare or high-stress services (Giallouros et al., 2024; Meynaar et al., 2021; Sorensen et al., 2021).

Training and development can be included in the job resource category. Learning programmes, coaching and career development programs equip employees with skills and competencies they require to respond better to job demands as well as to develop their roles. JD-R As far as JD-R is concerned, these developmental opportunities could increase engagement in at least three ways. First, they directly raise the task-related efficacy and control of employees, which makes the demands seem more manageable. Second, they indicate organisational espousal of individual development, which is part of a feeling of meaningfulness. Third, they are usually accompanied by complementary social and informational support, including feedback and supervisor support, which also serves as a stronger motivator (Ahmed et al., 2024; Niraula & Kharel, 2023; Otoo, 2022).

The well-being programs at the workplace also function as job resources in the JD-R model. Physical and psychological health promotion programmes, including wellness, mental health support, and flexible working, as well as physical exercise-promoting activities, increase the capacity of employees to manage the demands of their job and remain energized (Gil-Beltran et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2024). As an illustration, it has been found that physical exercise and health-promoting behavior in the workplace correlates with increased engagement and performance (Gil-Beltran et al., 2020), whereas unhealthy work-related environments that diminish well-being are connected with decreased engagement (Rasool et al., 2021). That is, T&D and well being programs can have a direct contribution to the motivational path of the JD-R model, and thus result in engagement by enhancing the personal and work resources of the employees.

2.2.2 Social Exchange Theory

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) is an alternative frame, focusing on the relationship and mutual character of engagement. As per SET, relations depend on the expectation of reciprocity: as one party presents the valued resources or benefits, the other party feels obligated to return in the same measure. It is this logic that Saks (2006) directly transfer to engagement and contends that employees are more engaged when they feel that they are treated fairly by the organisation, investment and support. Engagement, in this respect, may be considered a payoff on the investment that the organisation has made in its people.

In this context, training and development are potent indicators of investment in organisations. Once employees get quality training, career development or mentorship, they tend to perceive the same as a sign that the organisation is concerned about their development and future prosperity. Such a sense of backing and investment creates a sense of duty and devotion, which may be realized in increased involvement, increased engagement, and increased persistence in role execution (Saks, 2006; Ahmed et al., 2024; Otoo, 2022). Empirical evidence has established a positive relationship between HRD practices and HRM systems that focus on development and fairness, and employee engagement, which in most cases mediates the relationship between HR practices and performance or turnover intentions (Alam et al., 2024; Niraula & Kharel, 2023; Otoo, 2022).

The well-being programs at the workplace can also be viewed in the same light using SET. When organisations are putting health and wellness programmes in place or stress-management programmes or work-life balance policies, employees can feel that these are more discretionary and not compulsory to the minimum legal or contractual standards. These practices convey the message that the organisation does not only regard employees as resources but human beings, the well-being of whom is important (Nazir & Islam, 2020; Shuck & Reio, 2014). Such perceived organisational support and care may spawn a feeling of gratitude and reciprocity, which encourages employees to reciprocate the support by working harder, being more committed and willing to go the extra mile (Shuck and Reio, 2014; Uddin et al., 2023). On the other hand, in case the employees are exposed to a toxic or careless environment, withholding engagement can result in reduced vigour and commitment (Rasool et al., 2021).

Accordingly, SET can offer a helpful explanation of why T&D and well-being programs affect engagement: they define how the employees view the social exchange relationship with the organisation. Once employees feel that they are treated in a valuable and fair manner, they will respond by being more engaged.

2.2.3 Psychological Contract

Nearly synonymous with SET is the notion of the psychological contract, and this is the notion of the beliefs held by the employees about the mutual obligations between employees and their employer. Such beliefs are not stipulated in employment contracts but rather on unwritten agreements, expectations and perceptions of the manner the organisation will treat them in the long run. Positive attitudinal and behavioural consequences including engagement are linked to a fulfilled psychological contract that the employees believe that an organisation has fulfilled its promise in terms of development, support, and fair treatment. On the contrary, psychological contract breach may also result in less engagement, less trust and more intention to leave.

Training and development is important in the development of the psychological contract. Most employees come into organisations hoping that their skills will be nurtured and that they will have the growth and development opportunities. When the organisation provides

an equal and significant T&D prospects, then the employees feel that this element of the psychological contract is being fulfilled. This satisfaction enhances their feeling of confidence and justice, thus motivating them to put more of their effort into their job (Saks, 2006; Ahmed et al., 2024). On the other hand in the event that the promised or anticipated development prospects do not manifest themselves, employees will feel that their contract is being broken, a fact that will weaken the engagement and can lead to cynicism or withdrawal.

In like manner, well-being programs are being viewed as a subset of the modern psychological contract. Workers tend to require safe, healthy, and conducive work environments especially in the post-pandemic environment and high-stress settings (Meynaar et al., 2021; Sorensen et al., 2021). By ensuring that their organisations actively take care of the physical and mental well-being of the employees through well-organised programmes, flexible approaches to work and supportive leadership, organisations maintain these new demands and reinforce the psychological contract. It has been demonstrated that supportive workplace conditions, such as well-being intervention and positive psychological climates, are linked to increased happiness and engagement at work (Kavyashree & Kulenur, 2023; Shelke & Shaikh, 2023). Conversely, a lack of focus on well-being or the inability to overcome harmful conditions may be viewed as a violation, leading to the lower involvement and the development of strain (Rasool et al., 2021).

2.2.4 Integrating the Frameworks

Combinations of these two theories and the psychological contract provide a logical theoretical framework of this dissertation, as presented in the JD-R model, Social Exchange Theory and the psychological contract. JD-R model brings out the fact that T&D and well-being efforts are job and personal resources which directly facilitate vigour, dedication and absorption. The Social Exchange Theory is the reason why employees react more to such practices, since they feel like they are being given a very valuable advantage in a two-sided relationship. The psychological contract introduces an expectation, dynamic layer, and puts a greater focus on perceived fulfilment or violation of developmental and well-being promises in forming engagement.

This combined theoretical model helps to substantiate the main thesis of the paper, according to which strategic investments in training and development and workplace well-being do not just increase skills or decrease stress levels in the abstract, but work through effective psychological and relationship processes to raise employee involvement and, eventually, organisational performance.

2.3 Training and Development (T&D)

Training and development (T&D) is one of the primary pillars of human resource management that is commonly known as one of the primary organisational levers in terms of skills, employability and employee engagement. Within the framework of this dissertation, T&D is not just a performance enhancing mechanism, but also a strategic job resource, which may arouse the vigour, dedication and absorption of employees at work.

2.3.1 Definition and Types of T&D

Training is generally seen as an organised attempt by an organisation to make job related knowledge, skills and behaviours to be learnt, development is the long term growth processes that equip the employees to take up new roles and wider responsibilities. Training and development together have a broad range of both formal and informal learning experiences that take place both within and outside the work place.

One of the differences is often formal and informal learning. Formal training involves structured programmes that have set goals and curriculum, including classroom courses, workshops, seminars and accredited qualifications. They are interventions that are usually centrally planned by the HR or learning and development departments and are strictly tied to the organisational objectives. By comparison, informal learning is more natural and takes place during normal working hours, interpersonal relationships, troubleshooting, and independent studies. Even though not as evident, informal learning may also play a significant role in developing the skills, attitudes and interest of employees, particularly when organisations foster the sharing of knowledge and reflection.

The other distinction that should be noted is that between on-the-job and off-the-job training. On-the-job training takes place in the normal work setting usually through job rotation,

stretch assignment, shadowing or supervised practice. This kind of training enables the employees to learn on the job, use new skills on the job and feel mastery in their jobs, as well as this can lead to increased engagement. External courses or university programmes are off-the-job training methods, which are usually undertaken outside the direct work situation. Although it might be less related to daily operations, it can also broaden the mindset of the workers and indicate that an organisation is willing to invest in them in the long run (Ahmed et al., 2024; Niraula & Kharel, 2023).

Over the past few years, e-learning and technology-based learning have emerged as significant elements of T&D portfolios. Learning management systems, micro-learning systems and virtual classrooms are becoming more and more popular in organisations as a way to deliver flexible, scalable and personalised learning opportunities. Such modalities can enhance geographically dispersed or time-constrained employees access to development as well as sustain cultures of continuous learning.

In addition to the formal training, other development practices are coaching and mentoring. Coaching is usually a goal-oriented and structured relationship that aims at assisting employees to enhance certain performance or behavioural results and mentoring is commonly a developmental relationship that extends over time and aims at wider career advice and psychosocial support. Both practices can reinforce the feeling of support and development of employees, which, respectively, can improve the level of their engagement in work (Otoo, 2022; Uddin et al., 2023).

Lastly, career development processes, including succession planning, internal mobility programmes, career paths and development plans, are an indication that the organisation is ready to invest in the future of its employees. Such practices not only increase employability but also the feeling of commitment and reciprocity that can be converted into an increased degree of engagement (Alam et al., 2024; Otoo, 2022).

2.3.2 Theories and Models of T&D

A number of theoretical schools of thought assists in understanding the importance of T&D in terms of individual and organisational performance, such as engagement.

First is the Human Capital Theory which considers knowledge, skills and abilities of employees as capital that can bring about economic returns. In this view, T&D investment increases human capital, which increases productivity, innovation, and organisational competitiveness. Meanwhile, the employees who will get such investments will probably feel more competent and valued, which may lead to the emergence of positive attitudes and engagement.

The Adult Learning Theory (commonly connected with the concept of andragogy by Knowles) implies the concept of adult learner self-directedness and the presence of previous experiences in learning, as well as the motivation in case learning is connected with the problems of real life and with internal objectives. Best T&D programmes must thus honor the autonomy of learners, build on their experiences and be able to relate the content and their work roles. Under these principles, training will be seen as meaningful and empowering, which can be used in support of the psychological conditions of engagement suggested by Kahn (1990).

Experiential models of learning include learning cycle by Kolb which focuses on learning by a cyclical process of concrete experience, reflection, conceptualisation and active experimentation. T&D interventions using experiential learning components, including simulations, action learning projects or reflective practice, promote more profound learning and self-development. This experience aspect is consistent with the notion that job and personal resources facilitate engagement because it allows employees to expand and exploit their capabilities more comprehensively (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Van Wingerden et al., 2017).

A strategic training and development view is becoming more popular in contemporary organisations, where T&D programmes are being equated to business strategy and performance goals. Training and development is not something in isolation, but it is part of larger learning cultures where a culture of continuous improvement, sharing of knowledge and innovation is promoted. Such cultures have higher chances of employees to experience autonomy, mastery and relatedness, which contributes to engagement and well-being (Gil-Beltran et al., 2020; Sorensen et al., 2021). Other HR practices that engage with strategic T&D include performance management, reward systems and leadership development and

produce coherent bundles of practices that enhance engagement and effectiveness (Alam et al., 2024; Giallouros et al., 2024).

Overall, these theories imply that T&D is not only about skill acquisition but about the establishment of developmental experiences and environments that favour the psychological needs of the employees, perceived organisational levels of support and resources, which are all essential stimulators of engagement.

2.3.3 Training & Development and Employee Outcomes

A significant amount of literature has been associated with T&D and various employee outcomes such as performance, satisfaction, retention and employability. Employees who undergo good quality training programmes tend to exhibit more high standards of task performance and discretionary behaviours partly due to the fact that they are more competent and confident in their roles. The role of engagement is a significant mediating force in this process: the more employees are energised and committed, the more likely they are to convert their new-found skills into performance (Mackay et al., 2017; Rich et al., 2010).

There is also a correlation between T&D and job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Existence of development opportunities is an indicator that the organisation appreciates its employees and it is ready to invest in them and this can contribute to improved job satisfaction and organisational attachment. Satisfied and committed employees, in their turn, are more likely to be more engaged and less likely to leave (Saks, 2006; Otoo, 2022). Indicatively, in the study conducted by Otoo (2022), human resource development practices affected turnover intentions in a negative manner, and employee engagement mediated the relationship between the two. This indicates that T&D does not only enhance the attitudes directly but also operates through engagement in order to affect the important retention outcomes.

T&D also provides employees with portable skills and knowledge in terms of employability, enhancing their internal and external labour market value. Although this may seem to be a way to enhance mobility, studies also suggest that in case development is seen as equitable and consistent with employee ambitions, it can have the effect of heightening loyalty and engagement, as employees feel safer and more supported in their careers (Niraula & Kharel,

2023; Alam et al., 2024). In their investigation of Nepalese commercial banks, Niraula and Kharel (2023) have discovered that practices of human resource development were positively linked to the concept of employee engagement, which explains why systematic development is significant in promoting positive psychological states.

A number of empirical studies make a direct correlation between T&D or wider HRD/HRM practices and engagement. The study conducted by Ahmed et al. (2024) demonstrated that, through employee engagement as a mediator, training and development, and work-life balance practices had an impact on job performance. Their results indicate that the developmental and supportive practices form a major job resource that increase engagement and consequently lead to better performance outcomes. Alam et al. (2024), on the same note, indicated that practices of human resource management such as training were positively correlated to engagement among employees in Bangladesh, a fact that highlights the relevance of integrated systems of HR in facilitating engagement.

In addition to the conventional training, the developmental environment in general, including leadership support, communication and learning climate, is also important. The study by Giallouros et al. (2024) has shown that leadership and job resources acted in a collaborative manner in increasing employee engagement in a public healthcare environment, which shows that developmental leadership and resource-rich environments are especially important in a demanding environment. The results can be echoed by the JD-R model, in which training, feedback, support and learning opportunities act as job resources to drive engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Van Wingerden et al., 2017).

To conclude, the literature has a high likelihood that T&D is a multidimensional developmental resource that has an impact on a broad spectrum of employee outcomes. T&D helps in increasing performance, satisfaction, retention and employability by improving skills, signalling organisational support and imbedding employees within learning-oriented cultures. Most importantly to this dissertation, empirical studies have shown that employee engagement is one of the key mechanisms by which T&D has these impacts. This means that knowledge of T&D practices and exploitation is core to organisations which might seek to improve engagement, particularly when used together with complementary workplace well-being programs.

2.4 Workplace Well-Being Initiatives

Alongside training and development, the importance of workplace well-being programs has become a significant component of modern HR practices that should be used to improve employee engagement. The organisations are becoming more aware of the fact that sustainable performance cannot be realised only by skill development and performance management, but also by systematic concern about the physical, psychological and social well-being of employees. Regarding the JD-R viewpoint, well-being programs provide essential resources to allow employees to manage demands and retain the energy required to engage (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Sorensen et al., 2021).

2.4.1 Defining Workplace Well-Being

Workplace well-being is a multidimensional construct that is usually broad and includes such dimensions as physical, psychological and social. Physical wellness is associated with health conditions, the lack of diseases, and the existence of healthy habits including exercise, sleep and nutrition. Positive emotional states, resilience, meaning and autonomy, and low rates of distress, anxiety and burnout are all included in psychological well-being. The quality of relationships at work, the sense of belonging, the social support and positive interaction with colleagues and supervisors are the characteristics of social well-being (Shuck & Reio, 2014; Sorensen et al., 2021).

The PERMA framework presents a handy integrative framework that conceptualises well-being in five domains, including Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment. Despite being created as a general framework of flourishing, PERMA is becoming more applicable to the organisational setting as a tool to inform interventions that would improve positive affect, increase engagement, improve social ties and instill a sense of purpose and accomplishment in the workplace. This holistic perspective supports the notion of well-being not being merely the lack of ill-health, but the existence of positive functioning and flourishing that in turn provide fertile grounds of work engagement.

The strong interaction between well-being and engagement has empirical evidence. As an example, Shuck and Reio (2014) state that engagement is an activated work-based state that

leads to, but is not equivalent to the more general well-being; engaged employees are more prone to positive affect, meaning and development. In the same way, the research on high-stress settings, including health facilities and intensive care units, reveals that resilience, perceived support and healthy work environment correlate with increased engagement and reduced burnout (Meynaar et al., 2021; Giallourous et al., 2024). In this respect, workplace well-being can be regarded as a resource foundation that facilitates and supports engagement in the long run.

2.4.2 Types of Well-Being Initiatives

The number of well-being programs is extremely diverse in organisations, and they can include specific health programs or more general cultural activities. The first category is health and wellness programme that is aimed at enhancing physical health and healthy lifestyles. These can be in the form of fitness facilities or subsidies, physical activity campaigns, health screening, nutrition workshops and programmes to decrease sedentary behaviour. The studies indicate that the engagement and performance of the employees are positively connected with their physical exercise, in part, because it improves energy and resilience and personal resources (Gil-Beltran et al., 2020).

The second type is flexible working practices and work-life balance policies that include flexible hours, work-life balance policies, compressed work weeks, and parental leave. These practices are supposed to minimize work-family conflict and provide employees with more control over the timing of their work and its place. Flexibility can be used to minimize stress, promote psychological health and improve engagement, especially in jobs that are demanding or in crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, when it is implemented on a fair and consistent basis (Khan, 2021; Tulucu et al., 2022).

A third category is the Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) and mental health support. EAPs normally provide confidential counselling, personal or work related referrals and support services including stress, substance abuse, financial or family problems. Mental health support can also mean manager training on distress recognition, resilience-building courses, mindfulness courses and psychological services. It has been shown that psychological distress and work engagement can be improved with the help of mindfulness

and resilience interventions, particularly among health workers who are vulnerable to high emotional demands (Tuluclu et al., 2022; Meynaar et al., 2021).

The fourth group of initiatives is the recognition practices, positive leadership and inclusive culture. Recognition programmes are used to reward the effort of employees by giving them formal awards or informally rewarding them to reinforce the sense of worth and inclusion. Inclusive cultures embrace respect, fairness and equal opportunities, which minimizes cases of discrimination or exclusion. Higher workplace happiness, a better psychological climate and higher involvement are linked to such climates (Kavyashree & Kulenur, 2023; Shelke & Shaikh, 2023). It has also been demonstrated that leadership that is proactive in supporting the well-being of employees, including offering resources, including staff in decision-making and modeling healthy behaviours, can also help to increase engagement in public and healthcare organisations (Giallouros et al., 2024; Sorensen et al., 2021).

Lastly, there are organisations that have integrated wellness programs that would be a combination of physical, psychological and social elements. Indicatively, within the hospitality industry, Yu et al. (2024) established that the overall wellness programmes (both health promotion and stress management and supportive practices) enhanced employee engagement. Similarly, Duffy et al. (2024) indicate that corporate based health and wellness programmes, when timely and receptive to the needs of the employees are positively correlated with engagement especially in high stress communication-intensive jobs. These results underscore the fact that well-being initiatives are best operationalised in the event that they are consistent, purposeful and entrenched in normal organisational operations as opposed to a token gesture.

2.4.3 Well-Being and Employee Outcomes

There is a lot of literature on the correlation between the well-being in the workplace and the outcomes of employees. Well-being is generally high, which leads to stress reduction, burnout, improved health and job satisfaction, and poor well-being correlates with absenteeism, presenteeism, turnover intentions and poor performance (Sorensen et al., 2021).

Among the main research directions is the relationship between well-being, stress and burnout. Employees are also more apt to develop emotional exhaustion, cynicism and

diminished professional efficacy which are pillars of burnout when their job demands are high but the available resources to the job are not adequate-chronic (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). These adverse effects can be reduced by workplace well-being programs that enhance resources (e.g. support, autonomy, health programmes). As an illustration, Rasool et al. (2021) observed that the mediating role between toxicity and engagement was played by organisational support and employee well-being in the context of a toxic workplace environment. That is, adverse circumstances minimized the engagement, but well-being-oriented practices and being mindful could mitigate it.

Turnover intentions and retention have a close relationship with well-being also. Psychologically and physically sick workers, unprotected or subjected to unhealthy relationships will tend to tune out and think of quitting the organisation. On the other hand, employees who feel that their employer is concerned about their well-being and offers resources to sustain it are more likely to return the loyalty and engagement (Nazir and Islam, 2020; Uddin et al., 2023). Research on social support in family and happiness at work, such as the case of supportive environments both outside and inside the workplace, demonstrates that positive emotions, job satisfaction and engagement, and the wish to leave the job are less likely to occur (Shelke & Shaikh, 2023; Uddin et al., 2023).

An increasing literature empirically relates well being programs and participation. Shuck and Reio (2014) state that engagement is both a cause and a consequence of well-being; employees who are engaged have a higher chance of having a psychological well-being, and well-being-increasing practices provide an environment that maintains engagement. Gil-Beltran et al. (2020) prove that physical exercise, along with sufficient job resources, is a predictor of increased engagement and performance, which proves that physical health initiatives are not just a nice to have but a core factor in the organisational performance. Yu et al. (2024) demonstrate that wellness programmes have a serious positive impact on engagement in hospitality environments, which implies that these efforts are especially valuable in the service professions where emotional labour and abnormal working hours may become a source of stress. Equally, Duffy et al. (2024) discover that employees who participate actively in corporate wellness programmes report increased engagement rates, particularly when programmes focus on the work-related stresses.

These findings can be explained with the help of the JD-R model: well-being initiatives raise job and personal resources (e.g., energy, resilience, support), which in its turn trigger the motivational process resulting in engagement (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Van Wingerden et al., 2017). The social Exchange Theory and the perspectives of psychological contract also mention that investment in the well-being of employees sends a message of care and respect, and employees respond by increasing their engagement, discretionary effort and commitment (Nazir & Islam, 2020; Saks, 2006).

To conclude, workplace well-being programs comprise various practices that focus on physical, psychological and social spheres of the lives of employees. These programs do not only decrease stress and burnout and decrease turnover intentions, but also serve as effective job resources enhancing work engagement. They are thus conceptualised in this dissertation as a core route that organisations can use to increase employee engagement especially when incorporated with training and development and incorporated into an inclusive, supportive organisational culture.

2.5 Integrating T&D and Well-Being: A Holistic HR Approach

The body of employee engagement research is adding an uproar that training and development (T&D) and workplace well-being programmes are not to be considered as distinct, parallel HR functions, but rather as complementary elements of an integrated people strategy. Instead of emphasizing just the acquisition of skills or the isolated wellness initiatives, the most progressive organisations strive to create a comprehensive learning and well-being ecosystem, which would help employees develop, stay healthy, and engaged in the long term. This ecosystem goes hand in hand with the concept of learning culture that is built into a healthy work environment where development and well being are not an incidental response to an organisation but an integral aspect.

In terms of Job Demands Resources (JD-R), this kind of an integrated approach assumes that employees require a set of resources developmental, social, emotional and physical, to succeed at a level of growing job demands (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Sorensen et al., 2021). T&D offers cognitive and skill-based resources whereas well-being programs offer health-related, emotional and social resources. The combination of these resources drives

the motivational process which results in increased degrees of vigour, dedication and absorption. Job crafting and personal resource research highlight that more engaged employees have the opportunity to constantly expand their capabilities and that the environment must sustain their strength and energy (Van Wingerden et al., 2017; Gil-Beltran et al., 2020).

This holistic approach is based on a learning culture. Continuous improvement, openness to feedback, sharing of knowledge and contributing to experimentation characterise learning cultures. They provide the environment where employees are motivated not just to master new skills but to consult their experiences and introduce learning into their daily working practice. According to adult learning and experiential learning, these cultures hold employees as self-directed learners and give them the opportunity to engage in meaningful and relevant real-life and work-based learning. This meaning and development directly coincides with the psychological requirements of engagement, especially meaningfulness and availability, of Kahn (1990) and the dedication aspect of engagement of the Schaufeli and others (2002, 2006) model.

Simultaneously, the learning cultures are only possible to maintain in psychologically and physically healthy organisations. A healthy workplace is characterized by the following: Job demands are controlled, support systems are established, leadership actively encourages safety, fairness and respect (Sorensen et al., 2021; Giallouros et al., 2024). In cases where the conditions of learning (e.g., difficult tasks, new duties) are presented without sufficient support of well-being, employees can feel overloaded or stressed, which deteriorates the engagement and can result in burnout (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Rasool et al., 2021). On the other hand, when organisations combine developmental issues with strong well-being resources, including supportive supervision, flexible working options, mental health support and recognition practices, employees are more likely to perceive developmental issues as a growth opportunity instead of a threat, which enhances engagement (Shuck & Reio, 2014; Yu et al., 2024).

This synergy can be described as a learning and well-being ecosystem. Within this type of ecosystem, T&D and well-being practices are complementary and support each other as opposed to being disjointed. As an example, the development of a leadership programme can explicitly incorporate resilience, emotional intelligence, and inclusive leadership

modules, so the learning process can be combined with content that pays special attention to well-being (Giallouros et al., 2024). Career development and personal coping strategies are both aspects that can be tackled through coaching and mentoring to promote employability and psychological health (Otoo, 2022; Uddin et al., 2023). Not only technical courses can be offered on e-learning platforms, but also modules on stress management, mindfulness and work-life balance, indicating that learning about well-being is a matter as important as learning about technical skills (Tulucu et al., 2022).

Psychological contract and Social Exchange Theory can be used to understand why such integrated ecosystems are especially effective motivators of engagement. By having a stable history of investment in the employees and their welfare, employees would develop a sense that the organisation cares about them and has a long-term commitment to their relationship. Such an idea reinforces psychological contract and gives rise to the feeling of obligation and reciprocity (Saks, 2006; Nazir & Islam, 2020). Employees in a learning-well-being ecosystem will find it easier to consider such provisions as a subset of a more comprehensive relational response, as opposed to a transactional requirement and wellness programmes as a shallow perk. Consequently, they retaliate by being more engaged, discretionally working and being loyal (Ahmed et al., 2024; Alam et al., 2024).

The advantages of the combination of development and well-being are empirically supported. Literature on HRD and HRM practices indicates that with training and development integrated into larger supportive frameworks, such as equitable treatment, supportive leadership, and awareness of work-life balance, engagement is likely to increase; both performance and retention would be improved (Otoo, 2022; Niraula and Kharel, 2023; Ahmed et al., 2024). As an example, Ahmed et al. (2024) state that training and development and work-life balance are known to affect job performance through employee engagement, meaning that the development and well-being-related practices work together as job resources. On the same note, Alam et al. (2024) demonstrate that human resource management practices such as training have a positive relationship with engagement when they are perceived as belonging to a coherent system of support by employees.

Integrated strategies are also given importance in well-being-oriented studies. Gil-Beltran et al. (2020) prove that the physical exercise of the employees, which is taken into account along with job resources, predicts engagement and performance, and the health behaviour

and the resource-rich work environments have an effect on the positive states. Yu et al. (2024) discover that wellness programmes in hospitality sectors lead to engagement, whereas Duffy et al. (2024) reveal that employees who engage in relevant and meaningful corporate health and wellness programmes also become engaged. The results accentuate the importance of the well-being initiatives being systematically tied to the work experiences and developmental trajectories of the employees, as opposed to peripheral and ad-hoc activities.

The climate and culture of the organisation also signify a learning and well-being ecosystem. According to the research on the psychological climate and workplace happiness, employees feel happier and more engaged once they believe that the environment is supportive and fair and growth-oriented (Kavyashree & Kulenur, 2023; Shelke & Shaikh, 2023). A favorable climate is established by recognition practices, opportunities to engage in decision-making, inclusive leadership and meaningful corporate social responsibility programmes, which contribute to both well-being and engagement (Nazir and Islam, 2020; Gullekson et al., 2021; Jiang and Luo, 2024). Such climates in turn stimulate employees to engage more in learning opportunities and the learning, well-being and engagement cycle becomes vicious.

Conceptually, an integrated T&D and well-being implementation is potentially regarded as a component of a High Performance Work System (HPWS) or a so-called high-involvement HR architecture, in which packages of mutually supportive practices can be expected to evoke commitment and engagement, as opposed to compliance. In this regard, training and wellness are not separate cost elements but strategic investments in human capital and psychological resources that create a competitive advantage in terms of increased engagement and performance (Mackay et al., 2017; Rich et al., 2010). Research on the public sector and health care shows that, in a very challenging work environment, resource-rich job design, development opportunities and well-being support, engagement and organisational effectiveness are enhanced when leadership is deliberate (Giallouros et al., 2024; Sorensen et al., 2021; Meyenaar et al., 2021).

Overall, the combination of T&D and workplace well-being as part of a holistic HR strategy is a step beyond the disintegration of HR silos of the past. A healthy work environment with a learning culture, anchored on a learning well being ecosystem, gives employees the developmental, emotional and social resources they require to be energised, committed and

engaged in their work. The combination of theoretical frameworks of JD-R model, Social Exchange Theory and the psychological contract and empirical data on HRD, wellness programmes and engagement all lead to the same conclusion: organisations that make learning and well-being strategic and interrelated priorities will have a higher chance to promote sustainable employee engagement and, eventually, better organisational performance.

2.6 Linking Training, Well-Being and Employee Engagement

The above sections have revealed that training and development (T&D) as well as workplace well-being programs are both important job resources that may lead to employee engagement. The section incorporates these strands because it analyses the models that integrate the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework, the Social Exchange Theory, and the HR practices like High Performance Work Systems (HPWS). It subsequently examines empirical studies that investigate HR bundles, especially those incorporating practices related to T&D and well-being and their effects on engagement.

2.6.1 Integrative Models: JD-R, Social Exchange and HR Systems

JD-R model is a strong platform where HR practices are collectively analyzed to affect engagement. As per this model, job resources (e.g., development, supervisor support, wellness, etc.) contribute to a motivational process, which leads to a greater engagement, whereas an overwhelming demand without sufficient resources may lead to burnout (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). The key to the design of an engaged workforce is therefore the HR practices that increase the resources of employees, including quality training, supportive leadership, recognition, and health-promoting programmes (Van Wingerden et al., 2017; Gil-Beltran et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, the Social Exchange Theory (SET) focuses on relational dimension of HR practices. As workers feel that the organisation is interested in them and their welfare, they have a sense of giving back and responding positively with increased engagement (Saks, 2006; Nazir & Islam, 2020). T&D and well-being programs are viewed as an indication of

organisational concern and support and strengthen the psychological contract and motivate employees to provide their full selves (Otoo, 2022; Uddin et al., 2023).

Current HRM studies unite these concepts by considering T&D and well-being interventions to be part of larger HR systems. Specifically, High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and other so-called high-involvement HR architectures theorise the conceptualisation of HR practices as synergistic bundles and not individual practices. Such packages are usually characterized by stringent selection, rigorous training, performance based incentives, employee involvement, responsive leadership and care. The rationale behind it is that consistent, mutually supportive practices will build a robust, resource-rich environment that will increase employee competencies, motivation and avenues to act-and, most importantly, engage (Mackay et al., 2017; Rich et al., 2010).

In these types of integrative models, T&D gives the employees the ability to do (knowledge, skills, abilities), whereas the energy and resilience needed to maintain the high levels of investment in their jobs is provided by well-being programs and conducive climates. JD-R describes the resource-based, motivational process, and SET and the psychological contract approach describes how workers perceive these HR packages as signs of organisational care, which makes them reciprocate by increasing their engagement and commitment (Saks, 2006; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

2.6.2 HR Bundles (T&D + Well-Being) and Engagement: Empirical Evidence

The empirical research is slowly leading to the explanation that T&D and well-being-related practices patterns prove to be especially effective in forecasting engagement. Instead of considering individual HR practices, the scholars study HR bundles or systems and their combined influences on employee outcomes.

As a preliminary source of evidence, there is research on the practices of HRD and engagement. Otoo (2022) discovered that human resource development practices had a negative relationship with turnover intentions, and that employee engagement was the mediating factor in the relationship. This implies that development practices, including training, coaching and career growth opportunities, do not directly decrease turnover, but instead, they enhance engagement in the employees, which in turn causes reduced intentions

to leave. Equally, Niraula and Kharel (2023) found that engagement was positively related to HRD practices in Nepalese commercial banks, which shows that systematic development is a significant engagement driver in knowledge intensive and service oriented settings.

Continuing on the topic of pure HRD, HRM system research indicates that training and development are the most efficient when integrated with other supportive practices. In a study conducted by Alam et al. (2024), human resource management practices in Bangladesh were considered, and the authors discovered that there was a significant relationship between human resource management practices (training, development, and fair HR policies) and employee engagement. Their results indicate that workers react to a larger trend of practices and not to individual initiatives; they are more involved when they feel that they are in a consistent system that invests in their growth and treats them fairly. Ahmed et al. (2024) also showed that the training and development and work-life balance practices had a combined effect on job performance through employee engagement as an intermediary. This directly connects a development-oriented practice (T&D) with a well-being-oriented practice (work-life balance) into one model in favor of the concept of HR bundles.

Research in high-stress industries, including the healthcare sector, also sheds light on the way bundled HR practices work. In their study of the public healthcare, Giallourous et al. (2024) discovered that employee engagement was greatly boosted by the combination of leadership and employee job resources (such as development and support). Their findings indicate that the engagement is greatest when the employees are also exposed to developmental opportunities as well as resourceful environments such as enabling leadership and healthy working conditions. Similarly, Meynaar et al. (2021) found that contextual resources affected resilience and work engagement among Dutch intensivists, indicating that the well-being support plays a significant role in engaging in high-strain jobs.

This image is reinforced by the literature on well-being initiatives. Gil-Beltran et al. (2020) demonstrated that, when combined with the job resources, physical exercise of employees predicted greater engagement and performance, which indicated that health behaviours and job resources interact. Yu et al. (2024) also discovered that overall wellness programmes in hospitality workplaces had a significant positive effect on engagement, especially where programmes addressed several aspects of well-being (physical, psychological and social).

Similar findings were obtained by Duffy et al. (2024) who found that employees who were exposed to corporate health and wellness programmes indicated greater engagement, particularly when the programmes were tailored in response to the unique stressors of communication-intensive work.

The other researches highlight the significance of psychological climate and workplace happiness as being a component of the bundle. Kavyashree and Kulenur (2023) demonstrated the positive correlation between positive psychological climate and engagement and Shelke and Shaikh (2023) indicated that workplace happiness mediated the relationship between organisational factors and engagement. The implication of these findings is that by integrating developmental practices with happiness- and climate-building activities, i.e., recognition, fairness and inclusion, organisations are likely to have a holistic environment where employees will be more inclined to feel energised, committed and engaged in their jobs.

An integrated HR bundle logic is also manifested in work on CSR and engagement. Nazir and Islam (2020) demonstrated that the activities of corporate social responsibility made meaningfulness, compassion and engagement more significant, indicating that when organisations are more concerned about not only the employees but also the society, the social exchange relationship is enhanced. According to Gullekson et al. (2021), increased engagement was correlated with international corporate volunteering programmes, which is a type of developmental and values-oriented experience. Such practices in the context of CSR tend to overlap with T&D (through the cultivation of skills and experiences) and well-being (through the facilitation of meaning and positive emotions), which once again demonstrates the interconnectedness of HR bundles.

JD-R perspective In JD-R view, these empirical results support the notion that the ability of employees to access to various and complementary resources is the most beneficial-developmental, emotional and social. Training and development make people more competent and self-efficacious; wellness and well-being programs make people more physically and psychologically energized; good climates, recognition and leadership make people have stronger social resources and meaning. In this case, the motivational route towards engagement is especially good when all these resources are established (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Van Wingerden et al., 2017).

In terms of Social Exchange and psychological contract, the HR bundles that involve T&D and well-being are a strong message: the organisation is investing in the overall professional and personal prosperity of the employees. Such investments will lead the employees to think that this is a long-term high-quality employment relationship that motivates the employees to respond with increased engagement, extra-role behaviours and loyalty (Saks, 2006; Uddin et al., 2023). On the other hand, the psychological contract can be perceived as incongruent or even violated when employees lack the support of well-being or wellness rhetoric does not imply real developmental investment, which restricts the engagement benefits (Rasool et al., 2021).

To conclude, the literature reveals that training, well-being, and engagement are closely related factors in the broader HR paradigms. Combinative models of the JD-R approach, Social Exchange Theory and HR systems approaches propose that combinations of practices, especially those involving the combination of T&D and well-being programs, can make resource-rich environments that contribute to engagement. This is backed up by empirical studies in various industries which indicate that employees are most active when organisations are investing in their skills, careers, health and psychological climate at the same time. This combined knowledge is the basis of the current dissertation that aims at investigating the mutual effect of training and development and workplace well-being programs on employee engagement within organisational settings.

Conceptual Model of the Study

Based on the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model and Social Exchange Theory, the present dissertation adopts a conceptual model that examines training and development and workplace well-being initiatives as important organisational resources related to employee engagement. Employee engagement is approached as a multidimensional construct, including vigour, dedication, and absorption, reflecting employees’ energy, involvement, and focus at work.

In this context, training and development is associated with employee engagement through the enhancement of skills, learning opportunities, and employees’ perceptions that the organisation invests in their professional growth. In a similar way, workplace well-being

initiatives are linked to engagement by supporting employees' physical and psychological well-being, as well as work–life balance.

Rather than examining these practices independently, this study considers training and development and workplace well-being initiatives jointly, adopting an integrated perspective. Specifically, it is assumed that the combined presence of these practices may contribute more strongly to employee engagement than each practice on its own. Demographic and job-related characteristics are also considered as control variables. Overall, this conceptual model forms the basis for the research questions and hypotheses presented in the following section.

2.7 Gaps in the Literature and Research Proposition

Although the literature on employee engagement is continually expanding, there are still a number of gaps in how the training and development (T&D) and well-being programs are explored in combination as engagement drivers.

To begin with, T&D, as well as well-being, is a subject of much of the empirical evidence, yet comparatively little research concentrates on the overall impact of the two as an integrated HR package on engagement. The literature on HRD and engagement demonstrates that engagement practices are associated with development practices in a positive manner, usually through engagement as a mediator (Otoo, 2022; Niraula and Kharel, 2023; Ahmed et al., 2024). Similar studies of well-being have shown that wellness programmes, psychological climate and health behaviours are associated with increased engagement and reduced burnout (Gil-Beltrana et al., 2020; Rasool et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2024; Duffy et al., 2024). Nonetheless, studies tend to focus on the two streams independently and little has been done to model T&D and well-being initiatives as complementary job resources to the same empirical framework.

Second, the current literature is often focused on particular industries and countries, including but not limited to healthcare, hospitality or banking within a particular country (Meynaar et al., 2021; Giallourous et al., 2024; Niraula & Kharel, 2023; Yu et al., 2024; Alam et al., 2024). Although such studies offer very useful information, they cast doubt on the

ability to generalise the findings in other industries and organisational types. It is necessary to conduct research that will focus on the impact of integrated T&D and well-being practices on engagement in various organisational contexts, including private-sector organisations that work in various cultural and institutional contexts.

Third, in spite of the fact that a range of studies realize the significance of moderators, including leadership, age, gender or family support, the mentioned factors are considered separately. The connection between HR practices and engagement has been found to be reinforced by leadership and job resources (Giallouros et al., 2024; Van Wingerden et al., 2017), and family social support seems to influence the experience of engagement and well-being amongst employees (Uddin et al., 2023). However, there is a lack of knowledge as to how such moderators precondition the connection between combined T&D and well-being programs and participation, or which demographic groups may be more beneficent of particular practices.

It is against this background that the current dissertation suggests to fill these gaps by empirically investigating the joint effects of training and development and well-being programs and initiatives on employee engagement in a given organisational environment. The study conceptualises the T&D and well-being initiatives based on the Job Demands Resources model as the major job resources that facilitate vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Van Wingerden et al., 2017). Based on Social Exchange Theory and the psychological contract, it then theorises that employees perceive such investments as indicators of organisational support and give back by increasing their engagement (Saks, 2006; Nazir & Islam, 2020; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

The conceptual model (textual description) that resulted places T&D and workplace well-being initiatives as two primary independent variables. They are both postulated to impact positively on employee engagement directly and in a positive way, operationalised in terms of vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002, 2006). As per the previous studies, employee engagement will be linked to positive results (performance, satisfaction, and reduced turnover intentions) (Rich et al., 2010; Mackay et al., 2017; Otoo, 2022). Control variables include age, gender, tenure and sector as well since the model includes evidence of those variables potentially affecting the degree of engagement and reaction to HR practices (Meynaar et al., 2021; Uddin et al., 2023).

In principle, the model can be represented as a collection of arrows:

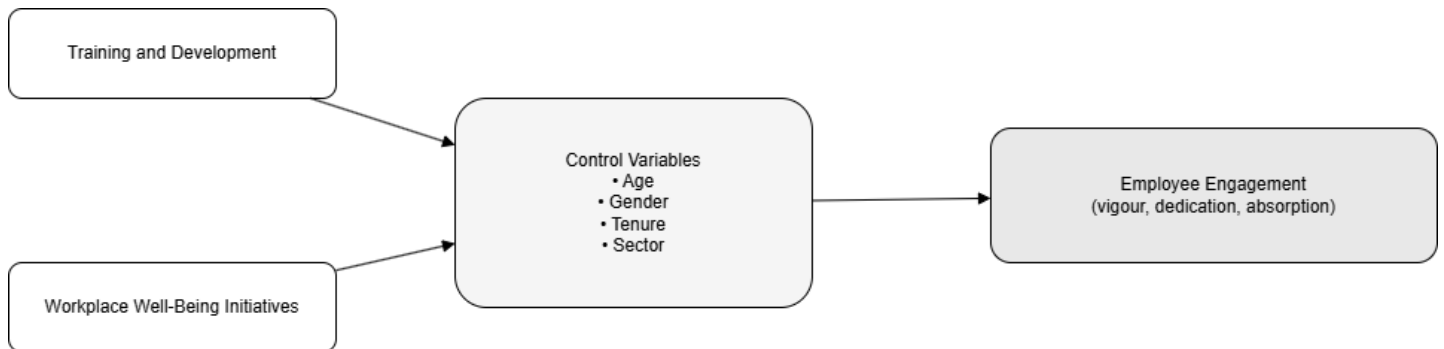


Figure 1. Conceptual Model Illustrating the Relationship between Training and Development, Workplace Well-Being Initiatives, and Employee Engagement

Through the empirical test of this model, the research will provide a more comprehensive picture of how integrated HR investments in learning and well-being can act as strategic resources and facilitate employee engagement to further the existing literature on HR bundles, JD-R, and social exchange-based explanations of engagement (Ahmed et al., 2024; Alam et al., 2024; Giallourous et al., 2024).

Based on the above, the following research hypotheses are investigated:

- A. Employees' perceptions of training and development are positively related to employee engagement.
- B. Employees' perceptions of workplace well-being initiatives are positively related to employee engagement.
- C. The combined effect of perceived training and development and perceived workplace well-being initiatives on employee engagement is stronger than the effect of each variable examined independently.

3 Chapter 3-Research Methodology

3.1 Aim of the study

The aim of the present research is to investigate the relationship between employees' perceptions of training and development and workplace well-being initiatives and their level of employee engagement. More specifically, the research focuses on whether the organizational practices affect the employees' engagement, according to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and Social Exchange Theory. Furthermore, the study analyzes whether the training and workplace well-being affects the employees' engagement.

Based on the above aims the following research questions are analyzed:

1. To what extent do employees' perceptions of training and development influence employee engagement?
2. To what extent do employees' perceptions of workplace well-being initiatives influence employee engagement?
3. Does the combined effect of perceived training and development and perceived workplace well-being initiatives explain higher levels of employee engagement compared to the effect of each factor examined separately?

3.2 Research Design

The method of quantitative analysis has the advantage of direct quantification of phenomena, converting them into manageable variables, even in cases with very complex concepts. In addition, it enables inductive study, ie generalization of the results obtained from the sample under study, to the wider research population. Finally, the use of a questionnaire gives also significant advantages. More specifically, due to its structure, the questionnaire is an easy-to-use and enjoyable tool to complete, especially compared to interview procedures that are both time-consuming and thought-provoking. Printed or especially electronic questionnaires (Google Forms) can reach an extremely large audience, which favors by definition a survey that requires a large amount of data.

3.2.1 Alignment of the Questionnaire with the Research Model

The questionnaire was designed to operationalise the constructs derived from the research questions and hypotheses, rather than to define them. Specifically:

Training and Development items capture employees' perceptions of access to training, learning opportunities, career development, and developmental support.

Workplace Well-Being initiatives items capture perceptions of organisational support for physical, psychological, and work–life well-being.

Employee Engagement items measure the three core dimensions of engagement—vigour, dedication, and absorption—as conceptualised in the literature.

Each section of the questionnaire is therefore directly linked to the conceptual model (Training and Development → Employee Engagement; Workplace Well-Being → Employee Engagement) and serves as an empirical means of testing the stated hypotheses.

3.3 Questionnaire of the research

In order to investigate the aims and goals of the research, a questionnaire consisted of 4 sections was used. The first section is consisted of 7 close-ended questions, which investigate the participants' demographic characteristics and job information. As for the second section is focuses on the participants' opinions about the training and development, via 7 Likert type questions, while the third section investigates the participants' opinions about the work-place well-being initiatives with 8 Likert type questions. The fourth and last section investigates the employees' engagement through 9 Likert type questions. Also, it should be mentioned that all the Likert type questions accept values 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disangree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree and 5-Strongly agree, with a higher mean representing a higher level of agreement to each statement.

3.4 Measurement Instruments

The questionnaire is based on validated scales and items adapted from established empirical research. Employee engagement is measured using items derived from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), capturing the dimensions of vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Schaufeli et al., 2006).

Training and development is assessed through adapted items reflecting employees' perceptions of access to training, relevance of learning opportunities, and developmental support, drawing on prior HRD and HRM studies linking training practices to employee engagement (Ahmed et al., 2024; Niraula & Kharel, 2023; Otoo, 2022; Alam et al., 2024).

Workplace well-being initiatives are measured using adapted items based on research examining organisational support for physical and psychological well-being, work-life balance, and wellness programmes in relation to engagement (Shuck & Reio, 2014; Rasool et al., 2021; Gil-Beltrán et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2024; Duffy et al., 2024).

Demographic and job-related variables are included as control variables, consistent with prior engagement research.

3.5 Data Collection and research sample

The non-probability convenience sampling method was applied in order to choose the participants. More specifically, the readily available participants that showcased interest in the survey were chosen. Analytically, the non-probability convenience sampling method was used, with the questionnaire being distributed online in social media platforms related to the subjects of the research. The final sample consisted of a total of 107 participants, that are over 18 years old and are currently employed in Greece. More specifically, the majority of the participants are females, 25 to 34 years old and have a masters' degree. Also,

more often the participants mention that they have more than 15 years of work experience and more than 7 years in their current organization, while they are occupied in the private sector as non-managerial employees. The inclusion criteria were the participants age, since they had to be at least 18 years old, and their current employment in Greece. So, unemployed or retired participants, or participants younger than 18 years old were excluded.

In order to collect all the needed data, the questionnaire was distributed online. For that cause, the researcher created a Google form that contained all the statements and the possible answers of each one. Also, it was accompanied by an introduction note, in which the aims of the research were explained. Furthermore, it made it clear that the participants will remain anonymous and that the data will only be used in the present research. Additionally, the participants were informed that the survey will only take 8 to 9 minutes to complete and that they can stop the survey whenever they wish to, without any consequences. Although, they were encouraged to reply to all the statements and to be truthful on their answers.

3.6 Data Analysis

To analyze the gathered data, the programs SPSS and Microsoft Excel were used. Through them, the data was coded, and then to present every statement, frequencies, percentages, valid percentages and cumulative percentages were calculated. Also, to investigate the research questions and hypothesis, the Pearson or Spearman correlation was chosen, based on the results of the normality tests KImgorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk. Additionally, a multiple linear regression was conducted to investigate the third and last research question. To present the above results both Table and graphs were created by the researcher in the programs mentioned.

4 Chapter 4-Research results

4.1 Demographic characteristics

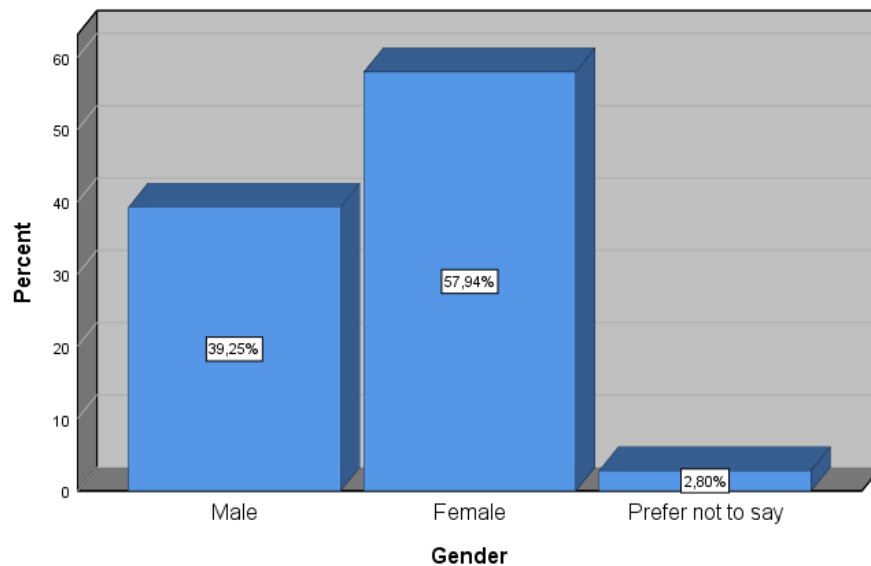
Continuing, demographic characteristics of the participants are presented.

In Table 1 and Graph 1. The participants' gender is investigated, as it seems 57.9% of the participants are female, 39.3% are males. Additionally, those who prefer not to say are 2.8%.

Table 1. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	42	39,3	39,3	39,3
	Female	62	57,9	57,9	97,2
	Prefer not to say	3	2,8	2,8	100,0
	Total	107	100,0	100,0	

Graph 1. Gender



In Table 2 and Graph 2, the age group that the participants belong to is investigated. 43.9% of them are 25-34 years old, 22.4% are 35 to 44 years old, and 19.6% are 45 to 54 years old.

Also, the participants over 54 years old occupy 10.3% of the sample, and 3.7% belong to those 18-24 years old.

Table 2. Age group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18–24	4	3,7	3,7	3,7
	25–34	47	43,9	43,9	47,7
	35–44	24	22,4	22,4	70,1
	45–54	21	19,6	19,6	89,7
	55+	11	10,3	10,3	100,0
	Total	107	100,0	100,0	

Graph 2. Age group

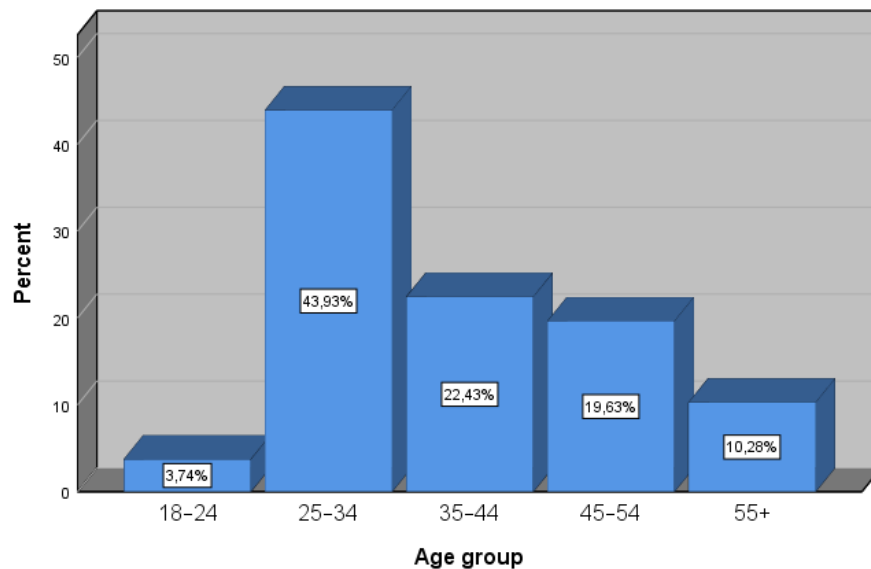
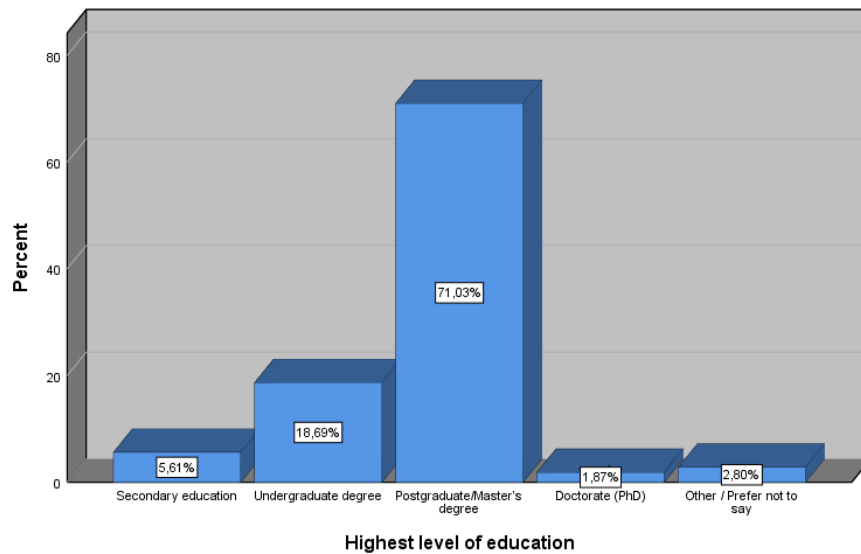


Table 3 and Graph 3 investigate the participants' highest education. 71% of them have a Master's degree, 18.7% an undergraduate degree, and 5.6% a secondary education. The participants that prefer not to say are 2.8%, and 1.9% have a doctorate.

Table 3. Highest level of education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Secondary education	6	5,6	5,6	5,6
	Undergraduate degree	20	18,7	18,7	24,3
	Postgraduate/Master's degree	76	71,0	71,0	95,3
	Doctorate (PhD)	2	1,9	1,9	97,2
	Other / Prefer not to say	3	2,8	2,8	100,0
	Total	107	100,0	100,0	

Graph 3. Highest level of education

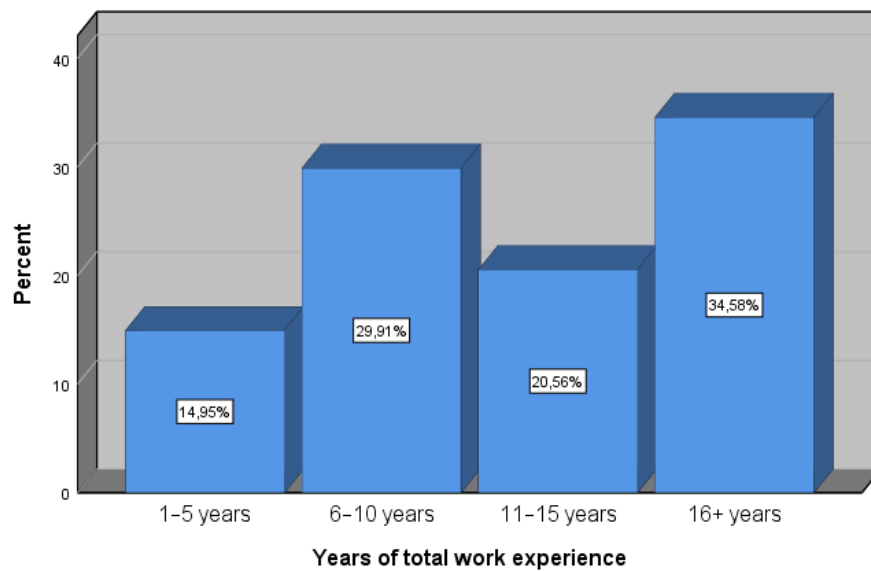


According to the results in Table 4 and Graph 4, the years of total work experience are investigated. 34.6% of the participants mention more than 15 years of work experience, 29.9% 6 to 10 years, and 20.6% 11 to 15 years. Additionally, 15% have up to 5 years of experience.

Table 4. Years of total work experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1–5 years	16	15,0	15,0	15,0
	6–10 years	32	29,9	29,9	44,9
	11–15 years	22	20,6	20,6	65,4
	16+ years	37	34,6	34,6	100,0
Total		107	100,0	100,0	

Graph 4. Years of total work experience

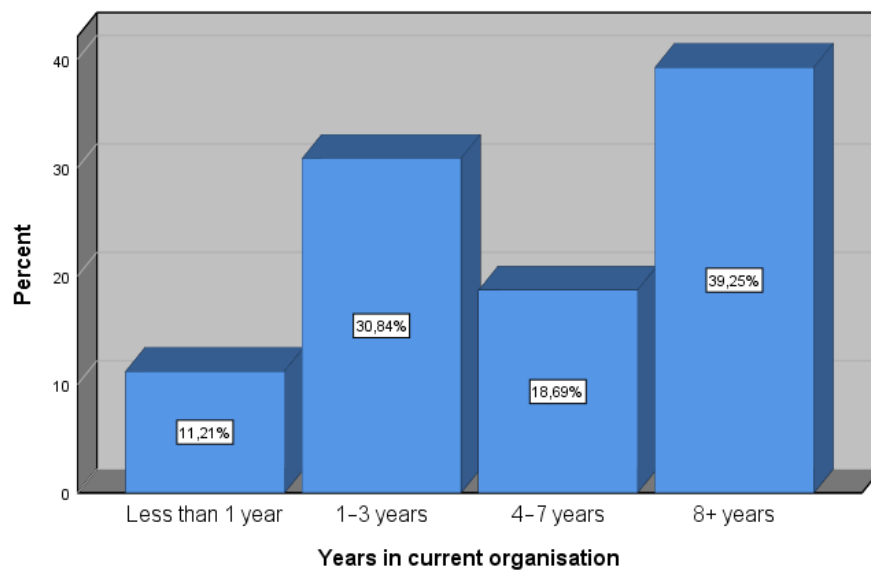


In Table 5 and Graph 5, the years that the participants are working in the current organisation are investigated. 39.3% mention 8+ years, 30.8% 1 to 3 years, and 18.7% 4 to 7 years. Also, 11.2% less than 1 year.

Table 5. Years in current organisation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 year	12	11,2	11,2	11,2
	1–3 years	33	30,8	30,8	42,1
	4–7 years	20	18,7	18,7	60,7
	8+ years	42	39,3	39,3	100,0
Total		107	100,0	100,0	

Graph 5. Years in current organisation



In Table 6 and Graph 6, the participants' employment sector is investigated. 87.9% of participants mention they are occupied in the private sector, 7.5% in another sector, and 3.7% in the public sector. Additionally, 0.9% mention that they work for a non-profit organisation.

Table 6. Employment sector

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Private sector	94	87,9	87,9	87,9
	Public sector	4	3,7	3,7	91,6
	Non-profit/NGO	1	,9	,9	92,5
	Other	8	7,5	7,5	100,0
	Total	107	100,0	100,0	

Graph 6. Employment sector

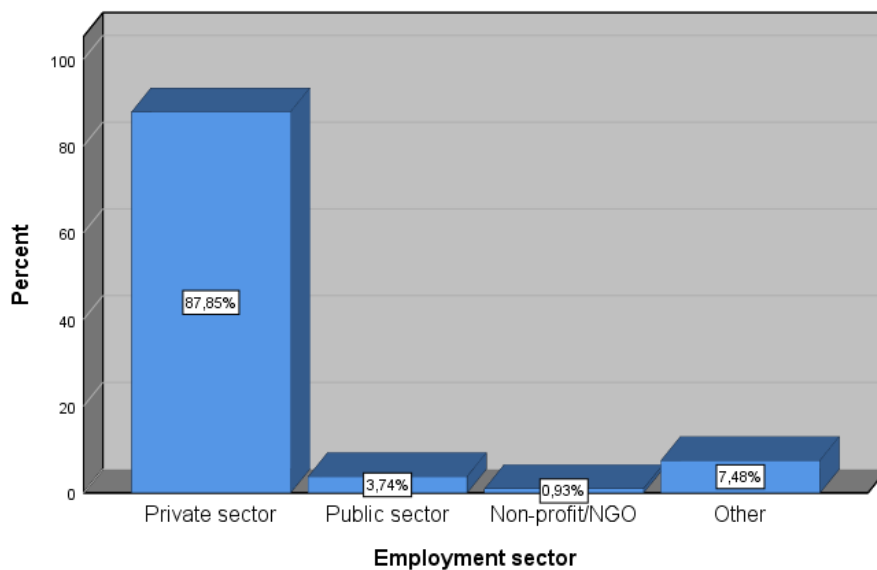


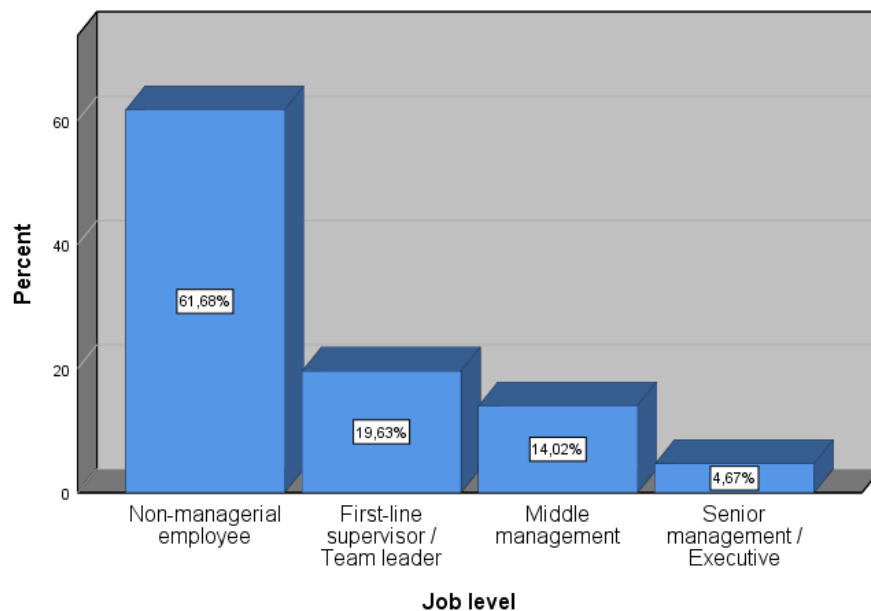
Table 7 and Graph 7 investigate the participants' job level. 61.7% are non-managerial employees, 19.6% are first-line supervisors or team leaders, while 14% are in the middle management level. Also, 4.7% are in executive positions.

Table 7. Job level

				Cumulative	
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent

Valid	Non-managerial employee	66	61,7	61,7	61,7
	First-line supervisor / Team leader	21	19,6	19,6	81,3
	Middle management	15	14,0	14,0	95,3
	Senior management / Executive	5	4,7	4,7	100,0
	Total	107	100,0	100,0	

Graph 7. Job level



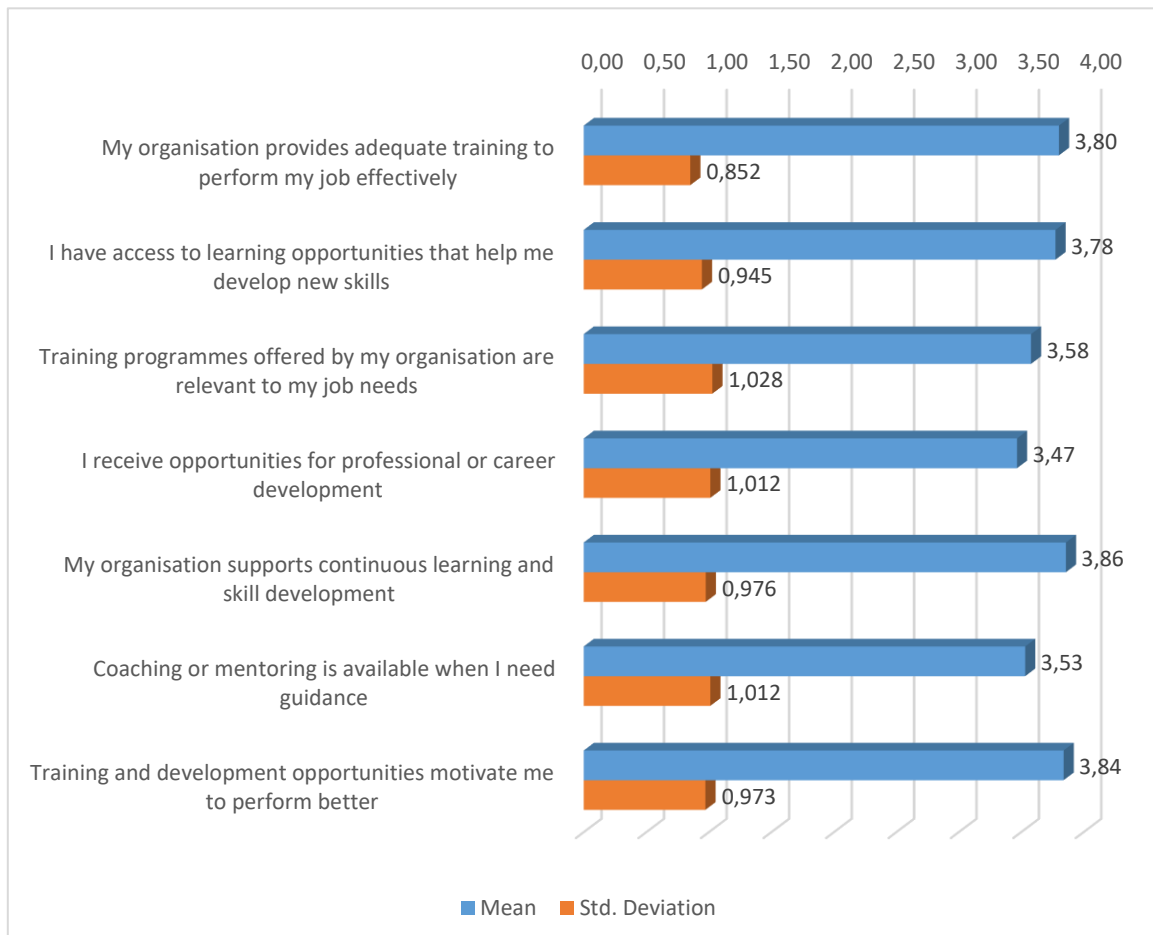
4.2 Training and Development

Furthermore, the extent in which the organisation where the participants work view training and development as important is investigated. According to the participants' views, based on the results in Table 8 and Graph 8, it seems that the participants agree on a higher level that the organisation supports continuous learning and skill development (3.86), and that training and development opportunities motivate them to perform better (3.84). Although they seem to agree a bit less that they receive opportunities for professional or career development (3.47).

Table 8. Importance of training and development

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My organisation provides adequate training to perform my job effectively	3.80	0.852
I have access to learning opportunities that help me develop new skills	3.78	0.945
Training programmes offered by my organisation are relevant to my job needs	3.58	1.028
I receive opportunities for professional or career development	3.47	1.012
My organisation supports continuous learning and skill development	3.86	0.976
Coaching or mentoring is available when I need guidance	3.53	1.012
Training and development opportunities motivate me to perform better	3.84	0.973

Graph 8. Importance of training and development

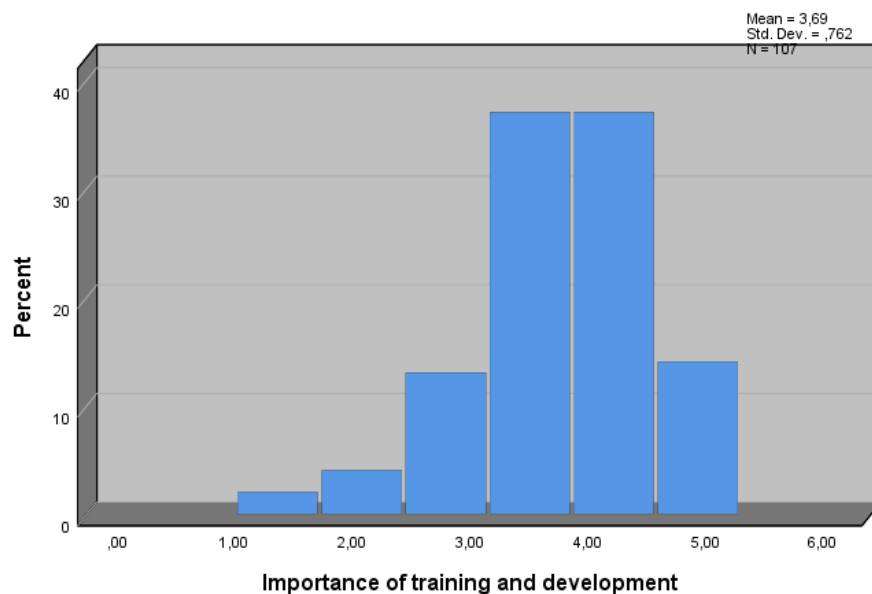


In Table 9 and Graph 9, the variable score regarding the importance of training and development is investigated. The variable is created from the means of the 7 above statements and also receives values from one up to 5, with a higher mean representing a higher level of importance of training and development both of the organisation and the participants. As it seems, the average importance of training and development is above average (3.69).

Table 9. Importance of training and development

N	Valid	107
	Missing	0
Mean		3,6943
Std. Deviation		,76188
Minimum		1,29
Maximum		5,00

Graph 9. Importance of training and development



4.3 Workplace Well-Being Initiatives

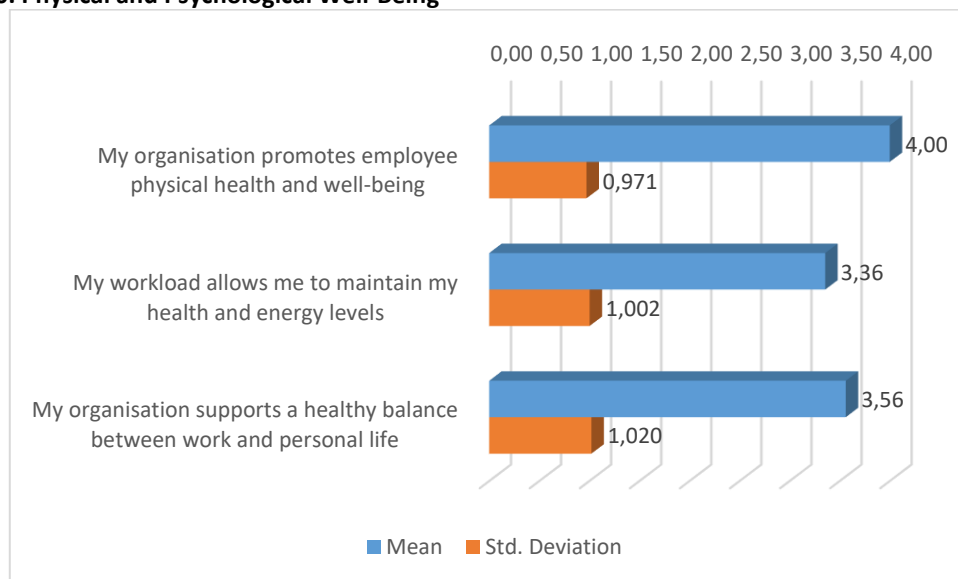
In the following chapter, the participants' opinions regarding the workplace well-being initiatives that the organisation takes are investigated.

As presented in Table 10 and Graph 10. The participants agree that the organisation promotes and looks after physical health and well-being (4.00), and that the organisation supports a healthy balance between work and personal life (3.56). However, they seem to be neutral regarding whether their workload allows them to maintain their health and energy levels (3.36).

Table 10. Physical and Psychological Well-Being

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My organisation promotes employee physical health and well-being	4.00	0.971
My workload allows me to maintain my health and energy levels	3.36	1.002
My organisation supports a healthy balance between work and personal life	3.56	1.020

Graph 10. Physical and Psychological Well-Being



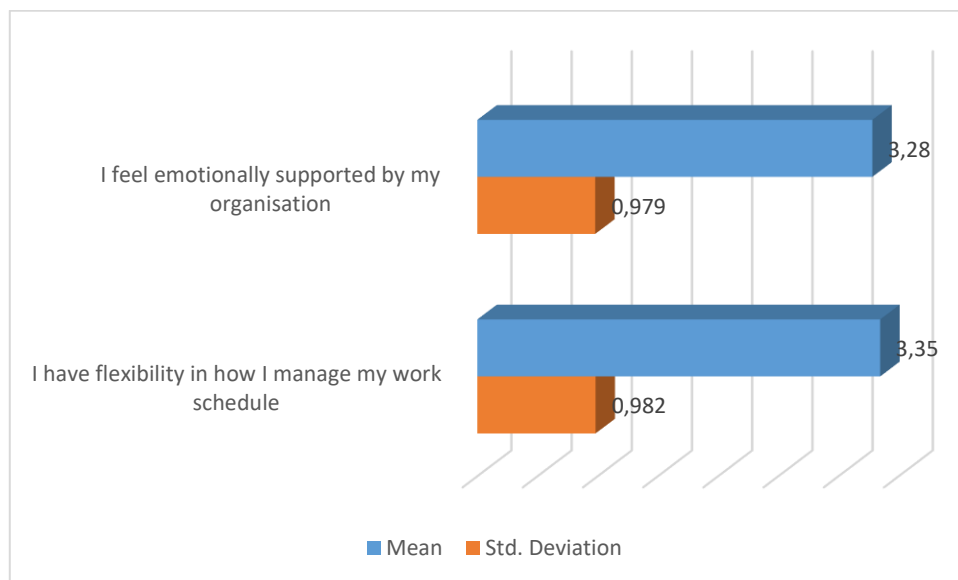
In Table 11 and Graph 11, the work-life balance and flexibility that the organisation offers is investigated according to the participants' opinions. As it seems, the participants tend to

be neutral regarding having flexibility in how they manage their work schedule (3.35) and regarding feeling emotionally supported by the organisation (3.28).

Table 11. Work–Life Balance and Flexibility

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have flexibility in how I manage my work schedule	3.35	0.982
I feel emotionally supported by my organisation	3.28	0.979

Graph 11. Work–Life Balance and Flexibility

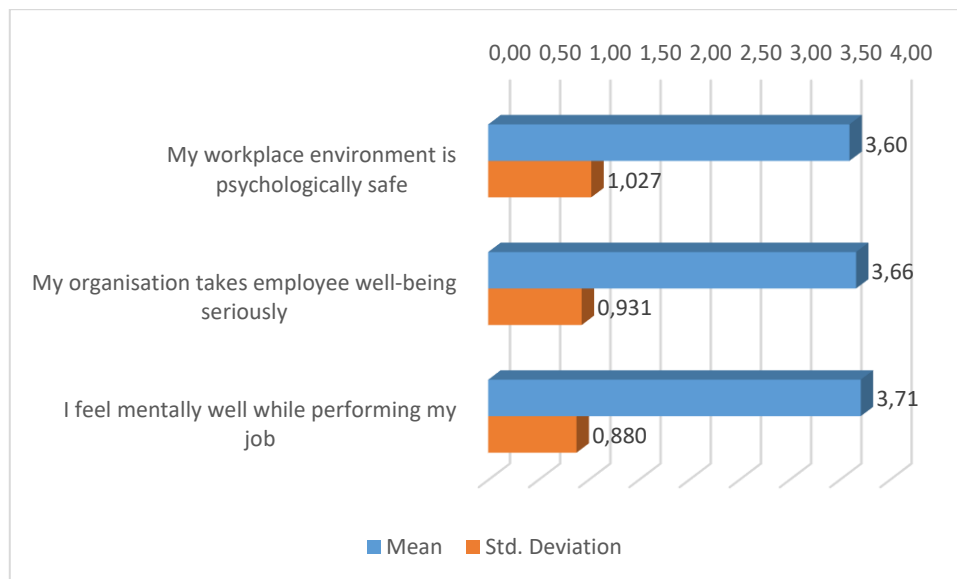


Through Table 12 and Graph 12, the support and climate of the organisation is investigated. The participants seem to agree that they feel mentally well while performing their job (3.71), that the organisation takes employee well-being seriously (3.66), and that the workplace environment is psychologically safe (3.60).

Table 12. Support and Climate

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My workplace environment is psychologically safe	3.60	1.027
My organisation takes employee well-being seriously	3.66	0.931
I feel mentally well while performing my job	3.71	0.880

Graph 12. Support and Climate

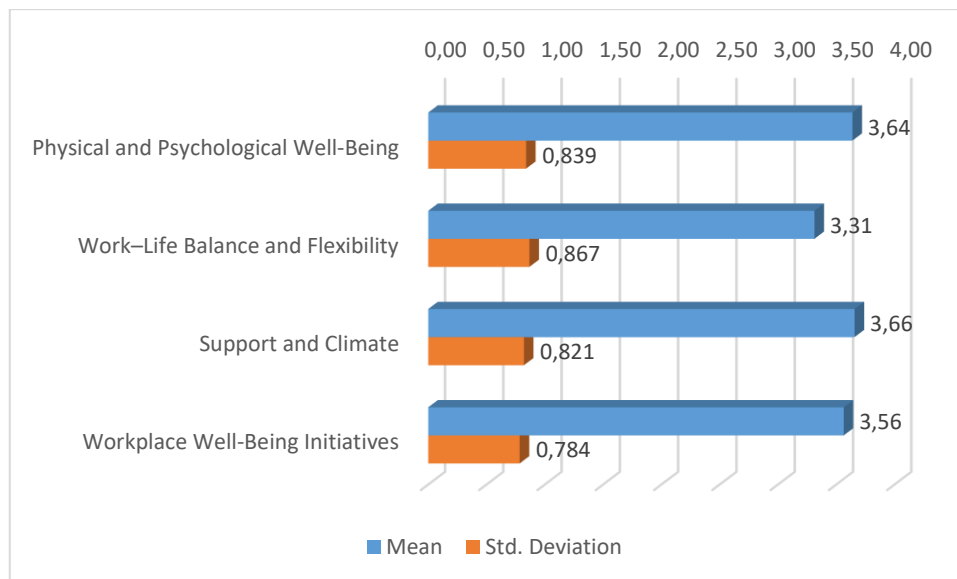


In Table 13 and Graph 13, the variables and scores regarding the workplace well-being initiatives are presented. The scores are created by the means of the above groups of questions, while the total level of workplace well-being initiatives is created by the mean of all the above statements. All of the variables also accept values from one up to 5, with a higher mean representing a higher level in which the workplace takes well-being initiatives according to the participants. As it seems, the participants believe that at a higher level there is support and good climate (3.66) and physical and psychological well-being in the workplace (3.64). However, they are neutral regarding the work-life balance and flexibility that the organisation offers (3.31). Overall, the total level of workplace well-being initiatives seems to be above average (3.56).

Table 13. Variables-scores regarding workplace well-being initiatives

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Physical and Psychological Well-Being	3.64	0.839
Work–Life Balance and Flexibility	3.31	0.867
Support and Climate	3.66	0.821
Workplace Well-Being Initiatives	3.56	0.784

Graph 13. Variables-scores regarding workplace well-being initiatives



4.4 Employee Engagement

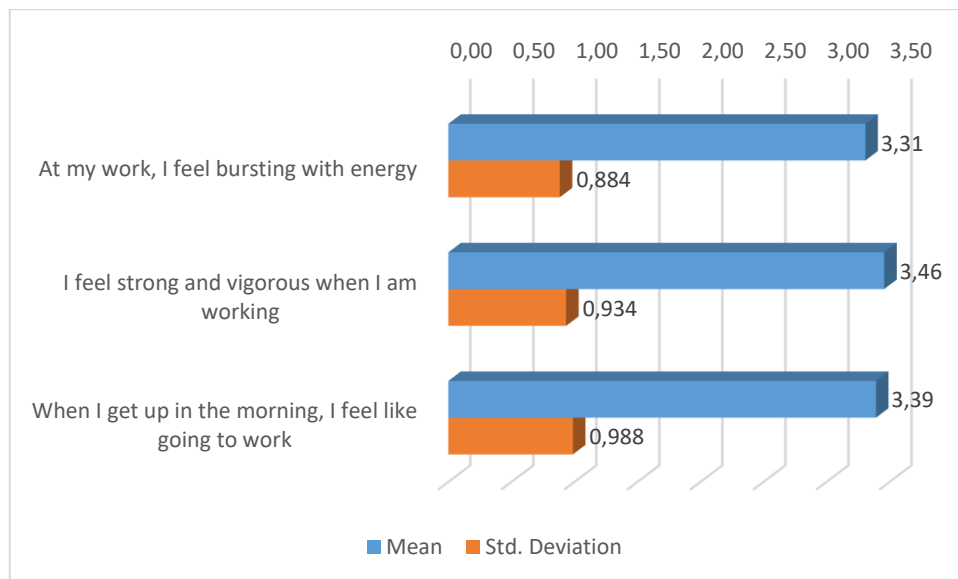
Continuing, in the following chapter, employee engagement is investigated.

In Table 14 and Graph 14, the statements regarding the participants' vigour are investigated. As it seems, the participants seem to agree at a higher level that they feel strong and vigorous when they are working (3.46) and that when they get up in the morning they feel like going to work (3.39). However, they seem to agree less that at work they feel bursting with energy (3.31).

Table 14. Vigour

	Mean	Std. Deviation
At my work, I feel bursting with energy	3.31	0.884
I feel strong and vigorous when I am working	3.46	0.934
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	3.39	0.988

Graph 14. Vigour

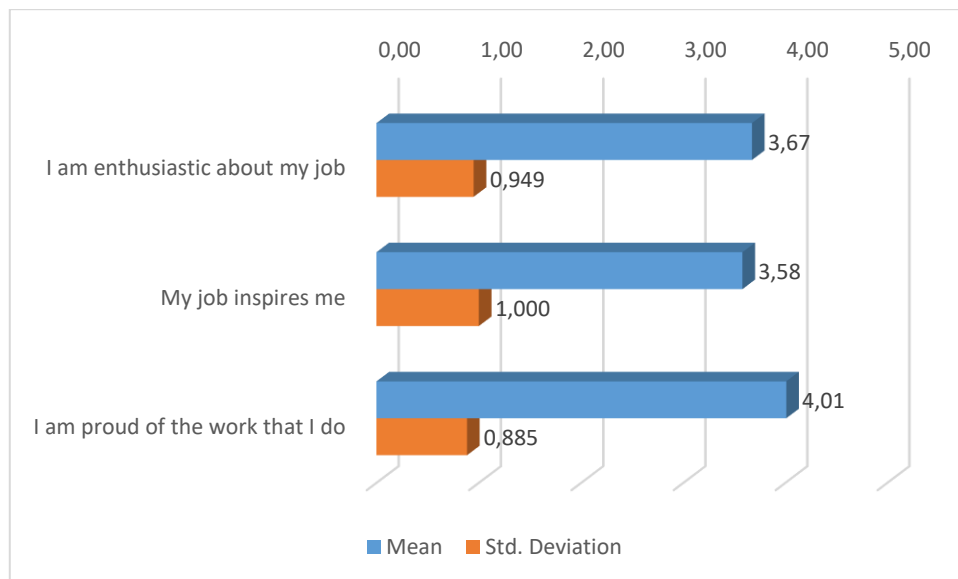


Continuing, the participants' dedication is investigated through Table 15 and Graph 15. The participants agree that they are proud of the work that they do (4.01) and that they are enthusiastic about their job (3.67). However, they agree less that their job inspires them (3.58).

Table 15. Dedication

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am enthusiastic about my job	3.67	0.949
My job inspires me	3.58	1.000
I am proud of the work that I do	4.01	0.885

Graph 15. Dedication

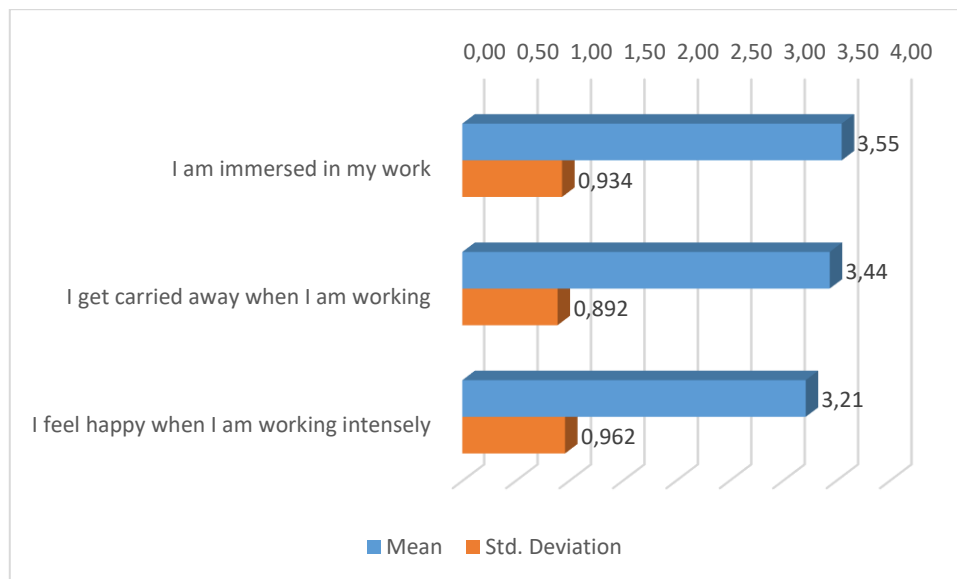


In Table 16 and Graph 16, the statements regarding the participants' absorption are investigated. As it seems, at a higher level the participants agree that they are immersed in their work (3.55) and that they get carried away when they are working (3.44). However, they agree less that they feel happy when they are working intensely (3.21).

Table 16. Absorption

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am immersed in my work	3.55	0.934
I get carried away when I am working	3.44	0.892
I feel happy when I am working intensely	3.21	0.962

Graph 16. Absorption

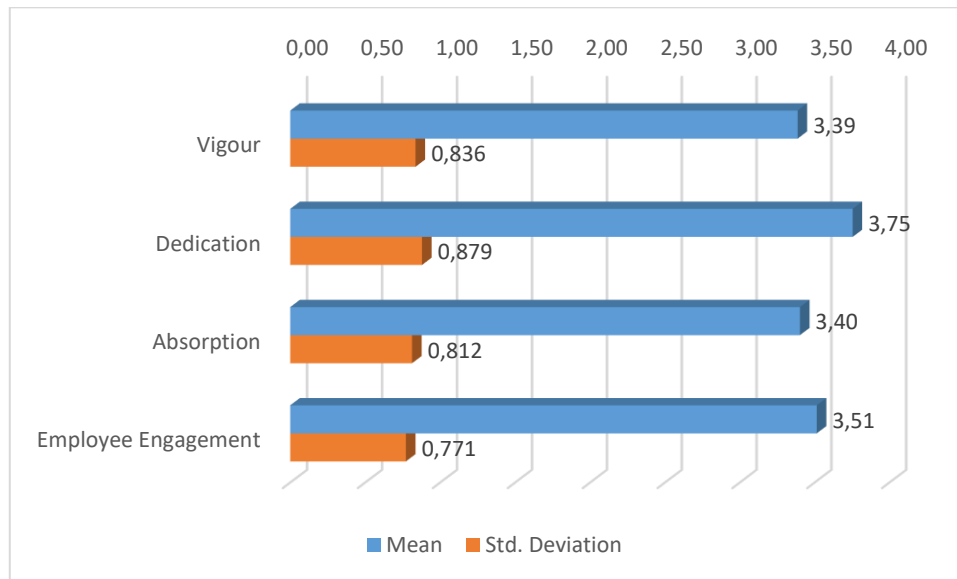


In Table 17 and Graph 17, the variables and scores created by the above groups of questions, but also the total employee engagement, are investigated. All of the scores and variables accept values from one up to 5, with a higher mean representing a higher level of employee engagement. As it seems, higher is the participants' dedication (3.75), while lower is placed their level of absorption (3.40) and their vigour (3.39). As for the participants' employee engagement, it seems to be above average (3.51).

Table 17. Variables-scores of employee engagement

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Vigour	3.39	0.836
Dedication	3.75	0.879
Absorption	3.40	0.812
Employee Engagement	3.51	0.771

Graph 17. Variables-scores of employee engagement



4.5 Research questions-hypotheses

Continuing, the research hypotheses are investigated in the following chapter. Before that, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk were used in order to investigate the variables distribution. As it seems, all of the variables do not follow the normal distribution ($p < 0.05$), and for that reason the non-parametric Spearman correlation was used.

Table 18. Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Importance of training and development	,109	107	,003	,962	107	,004
Workplace Well-Being Initiatives	,106	107	,005	,953	107	,001
Employee Engagement	,103	107	,007	,959	107	,002

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Investigating the first research question, the Spearman correlation results are presented in Table 19. As it seems, there is a statistically significant high correlation between the

importance of training and development that the organisation the participants present and employee engagement ($r = 0.605$, $p < 0.001$), so the first hypothesis mentioning that Employees' perceptions of training and development are positively related to employee engagement, is confirmed.

Table 19. Correlations of importance of training and development and employee engagement

		Importance of training and development
Employee Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	,605**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	107

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

Continuing with the second research question, the Spearman correlation between workplace well-being initiatives and employee engagement is presented in Table 20. As it seems, this is a statistically significant positive correlation between the variables ($r = 0.586$, $p < 0.001$), so the second hypothesis (Employees' perceptions of workplace well-being initiatives are positively related to employee engagement) is also confirmed.

Table 20. Correlations of workplace well-being initiatives and employee engagement

		Workplace Well- Being Initiatives
Employee Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	,586**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	107

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

In order to investigate the third and last research hypothesis (The combined effect of perceived training and development and perceived workplace well-being initiatives on employee engagement is stronger than the effect of each variable examined independently), multiple linear regression was used. According to the results in Table 21, the model explains 58.7% of the variance of the dependent variable, which is employee engagement. Additionally, the results of the model seem to be statistically significant according to Table

22 ($p < 0.001$). Continuing, in Table 23 it seems that both the importance of training and development ($b = 0.402$, $t = 5.013$, $p < 0.001$) and the workplace well-being initiatives ($b = 0.449$, $t = 5.751$, $p < 0.001$) can statistically significantly predict the level of employee engagement. They seem to have positive influence as well. The above results show that both variables predict on a higher level employee engagement, confirming the last research hypothesis as well.

Table 21. Model Summary as of employee engagement

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,766 ^a	,587	,579	,50024

a. Predictors: (Constant), Workplace Well-Being Initiatives, Importance of training and development

Table 22. ANOVA as of employee engagement

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	36,976	2	18,488	73,882	,000 ^b
	Residual	26,025	104	,250		
	Total	63,001	106			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Workplace Well-Being Initiatives, Importance of training and development

Table 23. Coefficients as of employee engagement

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	,428	,260		1,650	,102
	Importance of training and development	,402	,080	,398	5,013	,000

Workplace Well-Being Initiatives	,449	,078	,456	5,751	,000
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a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

Last, in order to further examine the explanatory contribution of each predictor, additional simple regression analyses were conducted. The results indicated that the perceived importance of training and development alone explained 45.6% of the variance in employee engagement. Similarly, workplace well-being initiatives explained 48.7% of the variance of employee engagement. When both predictors were included simultaneously in the regression model, the explained variance increased to 58.7% (Table 21). This finding indicates that the combined contribution of training and development and workplace well-being initiatives explains a larger proportion of the variance in employee engagement compared to the effect of each variable examined independently.

4.6 Research results

The present research aimed to investigate the relationship between employees' perceptions of training and development and workplace well-being initiatives and their level of employee engagement. Analytically, a sample of 107 employees participated in the research, most of them being female, from 25 to 34 years old and with a postgraduate degree. Additionally, the majority of the participants mention more than 15 years of total work experience and more than 7 years of experience in the current organization, in which they hold a non-managerial employee job level and they work in the private sector.

Through the research evidence, it was revealed that at a high level the organization supports continuous learning and skill development and that they have opportunities that motivate them to perform better, with the importance of training and development for both the organization and the participants being placed above average. Additionally, the participants agree more that the organization promotes and looks after physical health and well-being, that they have flexibility in how they manage their work schedule, and that they feel mentally well while performing the job. It was revealed that at a high level the participants

believe that their organization offers support and climate, with the total workplace well-being initiatives being placed above average.

As for employee engagement, the participants agree more that they feel strong and vigorous when they are working, that they are proud of the work that they do, but also that they are immersed in their work. Generally, it seems that the higher level belongs to dedication and not to absorption or vigour, which are placed a little lower. However, their total employee engagement is placed above average as well.

Investigating the first research question, it seems that a higher level of importance of training and development of the organization in the workplace is connected to a higher level of employee engagement, confirming the first hypothesis. Continuing, it was evidenced that the higher the workplace well-being initiatives of the organization are, the higher is the level of the participants' engagement in the work, confirming the second hypothesis as well. Additionally, in the third research question it was evidenced that both the level of importance of training and development and the level of workplace well-being initiatives can statistically significantly predict the level of employee engagement, while their combined effect seems to explain higher levels of employee engagement, so the third hypothesis is also confirmed.

Finally, the control variables (age, gender, tenure in the organisation and employment sector) were examined in order to control for possible demographic influences on employee engagement. The results indicated that none of the control variables had a statistically significant effect on employee engagement and their inclusion did not alter the significance of the main predictors, while training and development and workplace well-being initiatives remained significant predictors of employee engagement.

5 Chapter 5 – Discussion

The current research explored the correlation between the perceptions of training and development to employees and the workplace well-being programs and the extent of employee engagement according to Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model and Social Exchange Theory. Further to be more precise, training and development and well-being programs were considered the primary independent variables, whereas employee engagement was considered using its three dimensions that are established, namely, vigour, dedication, and absorption. The results showed that training and development program and workplace well-being program are positively and statistically significantly correlated to employee engagement. In addition, the results of the regression analysis indicated that when the two variables are analyzed jointly, they have a significant predictive value of employee engagement and they explain a large percentage of its variance.

The initial significant discover of the research is that employees that experience greater training and development opportunities are more engaged. This implies that employees who feel that their organisation invests in their learning, skill development and career advancement have more chances of feeling energized, committed and psychologically engaged in their work. This result is corroborated by the JD-R model, which states that developmental opportunities are significant job resources that increase the competence, motivation, and readiness to work hard among employees (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). It also concurs with the Social Exchange Theory which postulates that employees will pay back organisational investment with good attitudes and behaviours such as increased engagement (Saks, 2006). Thus, training and development is not only enhanced when it comes to the technical performance of the employees, but also enhances the emotional and psychological attachment of the employees to their job. This meaning aligns with other empirical studies that indicated a positive relationship between human resource development practices and engagement and other desirable employee outcomes (Otoo, 2022; Ahmed et al., 2024).

The second significant result is that employee engagement also has a positive and significant relationship with workplace well-being initiatives. When employees believe that their organisation is supportive of their physical and psychological well-being, work-life balance,

and overall wellness at the workplace, they are more likely to report greater vigour, commitment, and absorption. This finding is also consistent with the JD-R framework, as the well-being initiatives can be viewed as job and organisational resources that lessen strain, help in recovery, and maintain energy and motivation of employees (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). Equally, the research is in line with other studies that have indicated that health-promoting behaviors, psychological safety, and supportive working environments are linked to reduced burnout and increased engagement (Gil-Beltran et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2024). This, in a practical sense, implies that employees will be more inclined to be involved in their work more profoundly in case they consider that their organisation cares about their welfare and provides the conditions that can enable them to operate successfully and sustainably.

Nevertheless, the greatest contribution of the current research is not only in validating the independent positive impacts of training and development and workplace well-being programs, but demonstrating the interrelation and the reinforcing effect of the two on predicting the engagement of employees. It is here that the study gets its most distinguishing value. The regression analysis showed that both variables together are more effective in explaining engagement as compared to when the variables are analyzed individually. This implies that training and development and workplace well-being are not two separate practices in HR, but two organisational resources that complement each other.

To be more exact, the results suggest that the training and development will probably be more effective when it is incorporated into the favorable and healthy working environment, and well-being programs will be more significant when the employees also have the chances to learn and develop. This is to say that training and development equips employees with the abilities, self-confidence, and sense of advancement that they need to feel competent and appreciated, and well-being initiatives furnish the psychological security, emotional nurturing, and work environments that all of that developmental possibility can be employed. When the two domains are present together, the employees are not only better placed to carry out their work, but also willing and capable of investing themselves in the work. Thus, the current paper indicates that growth without well being can be perceived as pressure and well being without growth can be perceived as support without growth. It seems that the engagement is best when employees feel that they are developing and are being supported at the same time.

This interpretation builds up on the existing literature in a more narrow sense than the general statement that bundles of HRM practices enhance engagement. The current results suggest that the correlation between training and development and employee engagement is likely to be enhanced in case the workplace well-being initiatives are also available, and vice versa. Therefore, the value of this research is to emphasize a synergistic reasoning: the opportunities to develop and well-being support do not simply contribute to the positive effects independently, but they act in a manner that generates a more favorable motivation climate among the employees. In terms of the JD-R model, this can be interpreted as a resource accumulation process, in which several complementary resources enhance the possibility of engagement more effectively than a single resource (Van Wingerden et al., 2017). In terms of Social Exchange Theory, this integrated impact can be interpreted to the employees as an indication that the organisation is not only interested in them as performers but also as individuals and hence enhance the quality of employee-organisation relationship and promote more reciprocity through engagement (Saks, 2006).

The current results are generally in line with the empirical research that indicates that integrated HR systems are more effective compared to isolated interventions. Indicatively, Alam et al. (2024) endorse the argument that the HR practices work well when they are seen as a coherent and supportive system than when they are perceived as disconnected activities. On the same note, Ahmed et al. (2024) demonstrate that work-related outcomes can be impacted by developmental and supportive practices together, via employee engagement. The present research is based on this literature by showing in a more specific sense that training and development and workplace well-being programs collectively develop a more efficient foundation on which to maintain employee engagement.

Practically, the results indicate that organisations must not consider training and well-being as two different policy areas that are managed by HR independently. Rather, organisations ought to develop a more integrated people-management approach where learning opportunities, professional development, psychological safety, health support and work-life balance are interconnected. As an illustration, resilience and stress-management aspects might be part of leadership development programmes, whereas employee well-being policies might be linked to career support, coaching, and development planning. Such combined strategy will yield more robust and competent engagement than the application of independent HR initiatives. Therefore, the findings of the current research indicate that

employee engagement is reinforced, not only due to the fact that employees are being trained or feel supported, but also due to the fact that they are in the kind of a workplace where growth and well-being support each other.

6 Chapter 6 – Conclusion

The purpose of the current research was to examine the association between the perception of training and development and workplace well-being programs and the degree of employee engagement and the joint effect of these two variables on employee engagement than the individual ones. This study was valuable in that despite the fact that past research revealed that both development opportunities and well-being practices are positively related to engagement, limited studies have been carried out to study them as a unit in the same empirical study as complementary and reinforcing organisational resources.

The results of the research indicated that training and development as well as well-being initiatives at the workplace are positively and significantly correlated to employee engagement. Employees who feel greater learning and development prospects report greater levels of vigour, dedication, and absorption, and workers who feel greater well-being support by their organisation also report greater involvement. Above all, the findings have shown that a combination of the two variables, when considered simultaneously, is a significant predictor of employee engagement and contributes a significant percentage of its variance. This implies that individual HR activities do not produce the greatest engagement, but a work environment where development and well-being interact.

The greatest value of the research, however, is that it demonstrates that training and development programs and well-being programs are related and mutually supporting as opposed to independent resources. This makes the study more specific to the literature, than the general argument that HR bundles are better at improving employee outcomes. The findings indicate that more development opportunities translate into engagement in cases where the employees also receive a healthy and supportive workplace climate, whereas well-being initiatives are more effective when the employees also feel that they receive growth, progression, and future investment. In this regard, the research promotes a holistic HR approach where organisations ought to foster learning, professional development, and employee well-being at the same time in an attempt to increase engagement.

The implications of the findings are also of significant practical use. Training programmes and well-being policies alone are not the solution organisations should use in order to enhance engagement. Rather, they need to follow an integrated strategy that incorporates

developmental opportunities in conjunction with practices that promote the physical and psychological health of employees. HR managers and organisational leaders are thus encouraged to develop systems that bring about employee development, work-life balance, health promotion, psychological safety, and supportive leadership. This way, organisations will be able to establish a more sustainable workplace where employees are able to grow and are encouraged to grow.

The study has some limitation in spite of its contributions. First, non-probability convenience sampling restricts the external validity of the results to the sample of employees, which was used in the study. Second, the cross-sectional design fails to draw causal inferences on the direction of observed relationships. Third, all the variables were measured using self-reported data, which can lead to common method bias and social desirability bias.

The limitations can be overcome in future research through larger and more varied samples, different sampling methods, and longitudinal or experimental research designs that would enable more conclusive causality findings. Future research would also be beneficial in investigating potential mediating and moderating factors, including leadership style, organisational climate or personal employee traits. Moreover, cross-cultural and sectoral comparisons might help to gain a better insight into the potential variability of the overall impact of training, development, and well-being initiatives in various organisational and institutional settings.

On the whole, the current research finds that employee engagement can be best facilitated in organisational cultures where the employees have the chance to develop, and at the same time are assisted in sustaining their well-being. This is why training and development and workplace well-being initiatives are to be perceived not as independent HR tools, but as complementary pillars of engaged and sustainable workforce.

Appendix A: Survey

Instructions to participants:

This questionnaire examines perceptions of training and development, workplace well-being, and employee engagement. There are no right or wrong answers. All responses are anonymous and confidential.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement using the following scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

Section A: Demographic Information (Control Variables)

1. Gender

Male Female Prefer not to say

2. Age group

18–24 25–34 35–44 45–54 55+

3. Highest level of education

Secondary Undergraduate Postgraduate Doctorate

4. Years of work experience

Less than 1 year 1–5 6–10 11–15 16+

5. Years in current organisation

Less than 1 year 1–3 4–7 8+

6. Employment sector

Private Public Non-profit

7. Job level

Non-managerial First-line management Middle management Senior management

Section B: Training and Development (T&D)

8. My organisation provides adequate training to perform my job effectively.
9. I have access to learning opportunities that help me develop new skills.
10. Training programs offered by my organisation are relevant to my job needs.
11. I receive opportunities for professional or career development.
12. My organisation supports continuous learning and skill development.
13. Coaching or mentoring is available when I need guidance.
14. Training and development opportunities motivate me to perform better.

Section C: Workplace Well-Being Initiatives

Physical & Psychological Well-Being

15. My organisation promotes physical health and well-being.
16. I feel mentally well while performing my job.
17. My workload allows me to maintain my health and energy levels.

Work–Life Balance & Flexibility

18. My organisation supports a healthy balance between work and personal life.
19. I have flexibility in how I manage my work schedule.

Support & Climate

20. I feel emotionally supported by my organisation.
21. My workplace environment is psychologically safe.
22. My organisation takes employee well-being seriously.

Section D: Employee Engagement

Vigour

23. At my work, I feel full of energy.

24. I feel strong and vigorous when I am working.

25. I can continue working for long periods when needed.

Dedication

26. I am enthusiastic about my job.

27. My job inspires me.

28. I feel proud of the work that I do.

Absorption

29. I am deeply absorbed in my work.

30. I feel happy when I am working intensely.

31. I get carried away when I am working.

Section E: Perceived Organisational Support

32. My organisation values my contribution.

33. My organisation cares about my well-being.

34. I feel that my organisation invests in my future.

Optional Outcome Variables

35. I intend to stay with this organisation for the foreseeable future.

36. I am satisfied with my job overall.

37. I am willing to put in extra effort beyond what is required.

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