

THE TRANSFORMATION OF WORK ENGAGEMENT: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF A DECADE (2015-2025)

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ABSTRACT

Work engagement has emerged as a significant construct in managerial and organizational behavior, particularly amid the VUCA environment, the COVID-19 pandemic, and wider global disruptions arising from geopolitical, economic, and technological changes. The changing landscape of work, characterized by the emergence of remote and hybrid work, increasing concerns around burnout and employee well-being, and evolving employee expectations, has further transformed the way work engagement is conceptualized and studied. Despite substantial growth in the literature, the field remains fragmented, warranting a systematic examination of its evolution and transformation.

This study examines the evolution and conceptual and thematic development of work engagement research during 2015–2025, with particular emphasis on pre- and post-pandemic shifts. It further aims to identify the intellectual and geographic structure of the field and map key thematic structures and relationships. A systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis were conducted using Scopus, following the PRISMA guidelines.

From an initial corpus of 2,970 records, 207 studies were included for bibliometric analysis and 62 studies were selected for systematic review. VOSviewer was employed to examine co-authorship networks, collaborative groups, keyword co-occurrence, and country-level patterns, while the TCCM framework was used to synthesize the theoretical, contextual, characteristic, and methodological dimensions of the literature. The findings reveal a notable shift in work engagement research from a predominant focus on performance and traditional HR practices towards employee well-being, psychological and emotional engagement, resilience, meaningful work, flexibility, and work–life balance following the pandemic. Leadership emerges as a prominent driver of engagement, while the Job Demands–Resources theory remains a dominant theoretical foundation alongside the growing adoption of broader and interdisciplinary perspectives. The review further highlights the increasing influence of remote and hybrid work, changing employee expectations, sustainable engagement, and methodological advancement. Green work engagement remains comparatively underexplored, highlighting substantial scope for future research at the intersection of employee engagement and sustainability-oriented work practices.

Keywords: *Work Engagement, Bibliometric Analysis, Systematic Literature Review, Job Demands-Resources Model*

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of Work Engagement

Work engagement has gained increasing attention as organizations navigate competitive and uncertain work environments. It reflects employees' energy, involvement, and willingness to invest effort in their work, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals. Despite growing research, the literature remains fragmented across disciplines, research designs, and time periods. Limited studies examine its evolution across the pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic periods while integrating bibliometric analysis with the TCCM framework. This study addresses this gap through a structured, time-based synthesis of work engagement research.

1.2 Background and Impact of Work Engagement

Work engagement reflects the growing focus on employee strengths, well-being, and meaningful work experiences. Factors such as job autonomy, supportive leadership, meaningful tasks, and learning opportunities can strengthen engagement. In turn, engaged employees tend to demonstrate better performance, stronger commitment, and lower intentions to leave, making work engagement an important consideration for organizations and HR practices. When employees feel valued and supported, they are more likely to show commitment, initiative, and discretionary effort in their work (Andrić, Ali, & Ramanathan, 2025). According to recent studies, corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs greatly contribute to this favourable atmosphere by fostering organisational trust and improving the organization's reputation among its employees (Hoang Nguyen D. &, 2025).

1.3 The Problem: Changing Nature of the Workplace (2015-2025)

Between 2015 and 2025, technological advancement, AI adoption, remote and hybrid work, and changing employee expectations significantly reshaped work engagement. While technology can increase workload and performance pressure, employees who actively use AI through job crafting may experience greater engagement and positive outcomes. (Li, 2024). AI use may also encourage creative behaviour among employees who are open to new experiences and challenging tasks (Ahn, 2025). At the same time, remote work, uncertainty, job insecurity, and emotional strain have increased the risk of disengagement (Radic, Singh, Singh, & Ariza-Montes, 2025).

Employees now place greater value on meaningful work, flexibility, psychological safety, and growth opportunities, requiring organizations to rethink traditional HR and leadership practices (Andrić, Ali, & Ramanathan, 2025). Overall, sustaining engagement requires better alignment between

evolving job demands and organizational support systems. Thus, the central problem lies not in the absence of engagement initiatives, but in the misalignment between evolving job demands and outdated HR and leadership systems, compounded by a lack of integrated, time-sensitive understanding of work engagement between 2015 and 2025.

1.4 Positioning of the Present Study

To address these gaps, this study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to examine work engagement research published between 2015 and 2025. It brings together studies from different disciplines and examines how engagement research has evolved alongside changes in the workplace. Particular attention is given to shifts across different time periods and to the relationship between changing work conditions and engagement outcomes. By integrating these findings, the review provides a clearer understanding of the development of work engagement research and offers insights that may help organizations strengthen engagement in changing work environments.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work engagement has become a key concept in organizational and human resource research, representing employees' energetic, emotional, and cognitive connection to their work. Early studies mainly focused on whether engagement could be intentionally developed. This question was systematically explored in (C, M, & J, 2017) and further reintroduced by (C, M, & J., Work Engagement Interventions Can Be Effective: A Systematic Review, 2019), both studies revealed that interventions designed to increase engagement lead to significant increases when they integrate job resources, leadership support, and personal development programs. Recent studies have confirmed that such interventions are equally effective in digital environments, particularly when focusing on resilience and emotional intelligence (Masalat A. A.-D.-D., 2025)

Several theoretical models have been presented to explain the factors that influence work engagement. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, established by (Bakker A. B., 2007), the model suggested that engagement is influenced by both workplace resources, such as autonomy, feedback, and support from co-workers', and personal resources, such as self-confidence and optimism. Bakker and Demerouti (Bakker A. B., 2007) JD-R model's usefulness has been shown to extend beyond its original scope, demonstrating its relevance in numerous industries.

Another important framework is Social Exchange Theory (SET), which (Saks, 2006) in the context of work engagement, has been posited that individuals demonstrate greater engagement when they perceive favourable treatment from

their organizations. "Green HRM" initiatives foster engagement by aligning with employees' pro-environmental values (Zaman, 2025).

According to the paper (J., D., & A.B., 2017) stated that personal resources and job crafting was prominently noticed to improve engagement and performance outcomes. Evidences provided by (J., A.B., & D., 2017) were helpful to support the argument demonstrating long-term, consistent increases in engagement. One of the most important predictors of work engagement quickly came to light leadership. (A., D.N., & F.D., 2016) and (A., J.P., & J.A., 2020) & was further reinforced by (K., A.B., E., & D., 2016) and (A. & W., Leadership and Work Engagement: Exploring Explanatory Mechanisms, 2020), which stated that engagement changes based on frequent leadership-interactions. In the era of AI and automation, this leadership dynamic is evolving into "AI-driven servant leadership," which helps mitigate the stress of new technology (Radic A. S., 2025).

Engagement theory was further enhanced by ethical, genuine, and values-based leadership viewpoints. Records like (A.S., G., & B., 2017) and strong empirical evidence for authentic leadership has been found in research including as (B.-K., D.H., & S., 2016), (F. & A., 2018), and (R. & C., 2018), establishing engagement as a link between creativity and leadership authenticity. Studies like (X. & S., 2018), (A.A.Y., 2018), and (E.P., W.L., D.P., L.L., & M., 2017)

demonstrated again that HR systems improve performance indirectly through involvement. This was further studied in (C. M. , 2015) and (Y.M., Y., & R., 2023), which linked engagement to learning, retention, and knowledge sharing. At a strategic level, (S., M.S.A., A.S., N., & A.M., 2023) positioned engagement as a sustainability-mechanism.

Another significant motivator was training and growth. Studies including (L., 2016), (Y. & S., 2024), (M. & H.B., 2024), and (A. D. , 2023) shown that the efficacy of contemporary learning and communication techniques is mediated by participation. Innovative organizational models were focused in (M. & S., 2023) and (C., M., J., & J., 2017). An important contextual change in engagement research was brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research like (S. R. , 2023) and (S.E. & G., 2023) emphasized the significance of work-life balance, empowerment, and psychological health. This emphasis is consistent with more general work-life research, including (I., M.S., & M.S., 2023) and (E.E., et al., 2024), which portrayed engagement as a reason against exhaustion or burnout. Current research on "Quality of Work Life" (QWL) confirms that navigating human-AI collaboration is the next

frontier for maintaining this balance and preventing burnout (T.-J., R.-X., & Z., 2025).

Studies based on interventions continue to demonstrate that purposeful development of participation is possible. The study of the three-wave intervention (A., A., A., F., & R., 2019) emphasized that persistent growth in engagement is a result of improving self-esteem. This is similar to the findings from (P., J.J., A., & E., 2018) research demonstrated that during times of organizational transformation, engagement focused interventions are more successful.

At the same time (Bakker A. B., 2011) stated that additional research is required to understand how engagement varies over time and how contemporary workplace interventions, such as digital technology and remote work, affect the level of engagement.

Overall, the concept of work engagement has evolved from a straightforward notion of personal involvement to a thoroughly studied conception that encompasses organizational support, human characteristics, and workplace conditions. As workplaces continue to evolve, future research must focus on new opportunities and challenges to sustain employee motivation and engagement. Lastly, general HR viewpoints reiterate how important engagement is.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF RESEARCH

The research paper postulates that engagement does not happen on its own. This is due to the fact that it is influenced by a number of company elements, which in turn affect a number of aspects of the organization and the employee. Work involvement is the framework's primary goal. The degree to which an individual feels enthusiastic, involved, and dedicated to their work is known as work engagement.

3.1 Critical Determinants Affecting Work Engagement

Leadership style, HR practices, and job characteristics play an important role in shaping work engagement. Servant, ethical, and supportive leaders can strengthen engagement through effective communication, empathy, and employee support (Haile, 2025) (S., B., C., & E.P.M., 2024). Similarly, fair policies, workplace flexibility, and opportunities for training and development can help employees feel valued and supported (Bujisic, Li, & Bilgihan, 2025). While excessive workload and pressure may reduce engagement, resources such as autonomy, organizational support, and learning opportunities can help employees remain motivated and engaged (Ahmad & Rasheed, 2025).

3.2 Role of Work Engagement

Work engagement acts as a link between organizational practices and outcomes. Positive leadership, HR practices, training, flexibility, and support can strengthen employees' energy, commitment, and involvement (T.-J., R.-X., & Z., 2025). In turn, engaged employees contribute to better performance, productivity, teamwork, innovation, and lower turnover (Madaan, Jain, & Sharma, 2025). Thus, HR and leadership practices influence organizational outcomes through employee engagement.

4. SCOPE & OBJECTIVES

4.1 Scope

The scope of this research is strictly defined by the following boundaries:

4.1.1 Thematic Scope: The study focuses on Work Engagement within Organizational Behaviour and HRM, particularly in relation to HR strategies and leadership styles. Student and customer engagement are excluded.

4.1.2 Temporal Scope: The study covers 2015–2025, examining how work engagement research has evolved alongside changing workplace and management practices.

4.1.3 Methodological Scope: The study uses secondary data from Scopus and includes only peer-reviewed English-language journal articles. Conference papers, book chapters, and grey literature are excluded.

4.2 Objectives of the Study

- To **examine the evolution of work engagement research** and its conceptual and thematic development within the existing scholarly literature.
- To **identify and analyse the intellectual and geographic structure of the field**, including influential authors, leading countries, and dominant research themes.
- To **map and interpret thematic structures and relationships** within the work engagement literature, highlighting patterns of construct evolution.

4.3 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the evolution of work engagement research from 2015 to 2025, particularly in response to COVID-19, digitalization, and hybrid work. The study combines bibliometric analysis with a PRISMA-guided Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and uses the TCCM framework to synthesize findings. It also examines how key theories, including Kahn's Engagement Theory, the JD-R Model, and Social Exchange

Theory, have evolved alongside changing HR practices, leadership approaches, and workforce needs.

4.4 Research Questions

- RQ1: How has the understanding and management of work engagement changed across the pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic periods?
- RQ2: Which authors, countries, and publication sources have played a major role in shaping the global body of research on work engagement?
- RQ3: What key thematic developments and emerging research clusters can be identified through keyword co-occurrence and Theory-Context-Characteristics-Methodology based analysis (TCCM)?

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to provide a structured and transparent synthesis of work engagement research while reducing researcher bias. Bibliometric analysis complements the review by mapping key research trends, influential authors, and citation networks that have shaped the field over the past decade.

5.2 Data Source

Scopus was used as the primary data source due to its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed literature in management and social sciences. Its rigorous indexing standards provide a reliable foundation for reviewing and analysing research on work engagement.

5.3 Data Collection Process

The studies were identified through a systematic, multi-stage selection process, beginning with a broad search followed by title, abstract, and full-text screening. This ensured that only relevant and methodologically appropriate studies addressing the research objectives were included.

5.4 Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted using Scopus with the Boolean search string: ("Work Engagement" AND ("HR Strategy" OR "Human Resource Practice" OR "Leadership" OR "Intervention" OR "Training")). The search was limited to English-language journal articles published between 2015 and 2025, ensuring that the final dataset remained relevant to the objectives of the review.

5.5 Tools Used for Filtering and Analysis

Microsoft Excel was used for screening, sorting, and removing duplicate records, while the PRISMA 2020 flowchart documented the study selection process. VOSviewer supported bibliometric analysis through keyword co-occurrence, bibliographic coupling, and thematic mapping. Finally, the TCCM framework guided the systematic synthesis of findings across Theory, Context, Characteristics, and Methodology.

5.6 PRISMA Flow Diagram

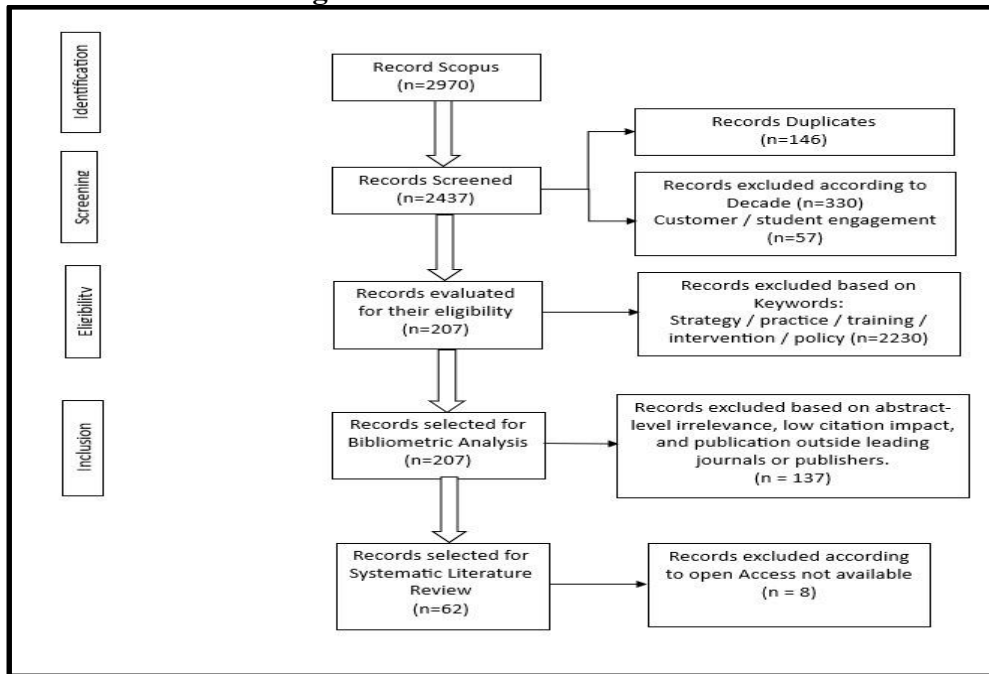


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram

Source: Authors' Compilation

The PRISMA-guided screening process identified 2,970 records from Scopus. After removing duplicates and studies outside the defined scope, 2,437 records were screened, resulting in 207 articles for bibliometric analysis. Further screening based on relevance and full-text accessibility produced a final sample of 62 articles for the systematic literature review and qualitative synthesis.

5.6.1 Inclusion Criteria

The review included open-access, peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2015 and 2025, with *Work Engagement* as a central focus. These criteria ensured the relevance, quality, and accessibility of the selected studies.

5.6.2 Exclusion Criteria

Studies were excluded if they had limited relevance, restricted access, non-workplace contexts, or lacked an HR/managerial focus. Duplicates and non-journal publications were also removed. Citation impact was considered flexibly for recent studies to avoid recency bias

5.6.3 Final Sample Selection

The screening approach produced a final sample of 207 peer-reviewed publications for bibliometric qualitative analysis and 62 journal articles for Systematic Literature Review after applying these strict inclusion and exclusion criteria to the initial pool of records (n = 2970).

6. DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

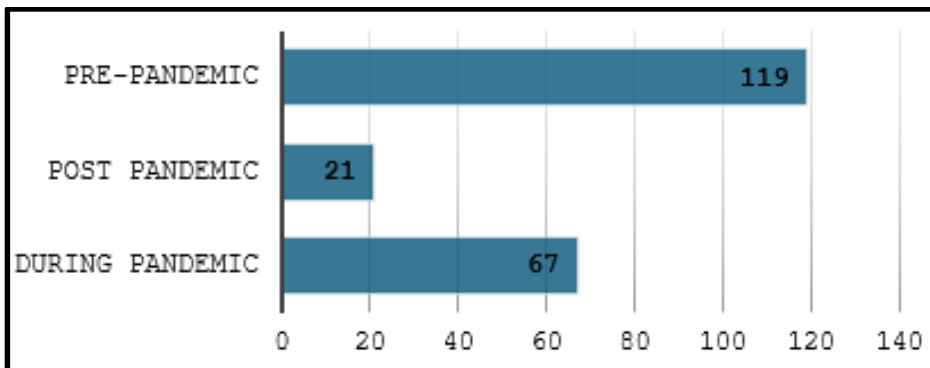


Figure 2: Era wise bar graph of published papers

Era	Year	No. of Papers published
During Pandemic	2020	39
During Pandemic	2021	16
During Pandemic	2022	12
During Pandemic Total		67
Post Pandemic	2023	13
Post Pandemic	2024	4
Post Pandemic	2025	4
Post Pandemic Total		21
Pre-Pandemic	2015	13
Pre-Pandemic	2016	17
Pre-Pandemic	2017	26
Pre-Pandemic	2018	34
Pre-Pandemic	2019	29
Pre-Pandemic Total		119

Table 1.No of Publications each year for the decade

6.1 Analysis and Justification of Publication Trends

Dividing the study into pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic periods helps explain how work engagement research evolved with changing workplace conditions. The pre-pandemic period (2015–2019) recorded 119 papers, focusing mainly on leadership, job resources, motivation, and performance. Publications declined to 67 during the pandemic (2020–2022) and 21 post-pandemic (2023–2025), while research attention shifted towards well-being, adaptability, flexible work, sustainability, and changing employee expectations.

6.2 Relevance of decade with methodology

The TCCM framework was integrated with the SLR to examine work engagement across pre-, during-, and post-pandemic periods. While earlier research focused on leadership and the JD-R model, the pandemic shifted attention towards crisis-related challenges, and post-pandemic studies increasingly explore hybrid work, sustainability, and changing employee expectations. SLR and bibliometric analysis further helped capture these theoretical, contextual, and methodological shifts over time.

6.3 Strategic Aspect of Era

6.3.1 Era 1: Pre-Pandemic Strategies (2015-2019)

Before the pandemic, work engagement strategies largely focused on leadership, organizational culture, training, and employee development. Transformational and supportive leadership, along with trust, collaboration, and learning opportunities, helped strengthen employee commitment, performance, and engagement.

6.3.2 Era 2: Crisis Adaptation Strategies (2020-2022)

During the pandemic, engagement strategies shifted towards remote work, employee well-being, resilience, and organizational support. Access to technology, autonomy, clear communication, and empathetic leadership became important for maintaining engagement and reducing isolation and stress.

6.3.3 Era 3: Post-Pandemic Strategies (2023-2025)

Post-pandemic research increasingly focuses on hybrid work, AI, flexibility, and emerging forms of disengagement. Hybrid working can support work-life balance and engagement, while responsible AI adoption requires a balance between technology, employee autonomy, and human connection. Overall, the

focus has shifted towards creating flexible, meaningful, and sustainable work experiences.

6.4 Theory Context Characteristics Methodology Framework Analysis (TCCM)

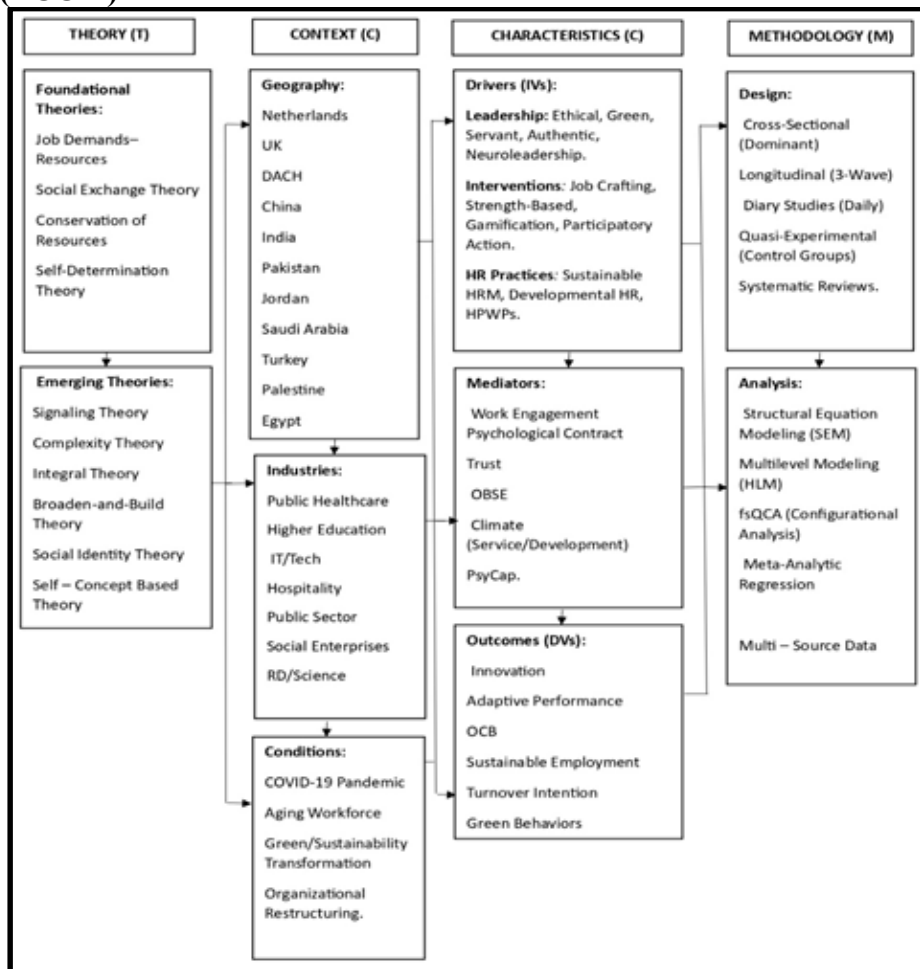


Figure 3: TCCM Framework
Source: Authors' Compilation

The TCCM framework was used to systematically organize and synthesize the diverse work engagement literature across theory, context, characteristics, and methodology. The theoretical dimension is largely guided by the JD-R Theory, Social Exchange Theory, Conservation of Resources Theory, and Self-Determination Theory, alongside emerging perspectives such as Signalling and Social Identity theories.

The context spans diverse countries and sectors, including healthcare, education, technology, hospitality, and the public sector, with recent studies increasingly addressing COVID-19, sustainability, and organizational change. The characteristics dimension highlights HR practices, leadership styles, job design, employee participation, psychological resources, and work engagement, with outcomes including innovation, adaptability, lower turnover intentions, and sustainable employee behaviour.

Methodologically, cross-sectional studies remain dominant, although longitudinal, diary, quasi-experimental, and systematic review approaches are emerging. Advanced techniques such as SEM, fsQCA, multilevel analysis, and meta-analysis also indicate a shift towards more rigorous research designs. Overall, the TCCM analysis shows that work engagement research is becoming more diverse, context-sensitive, and methodologically sophisticated.

6.6 Research Opportunities and Future Directions

Future research should focus on longitudinal and cross-country studies, particularly in emerging and non-Western economies, to better understand changes in work engagement over time. Greater attention should also be given to AI-enabled HRM, digital leadership, and remote work. Using diverse research methods can further explain how organizational practices and contextual factors interact to influence employee and organizational outcomes.

6.7 Bibliometric Analysis

6.7.1 Co-Authorship Network

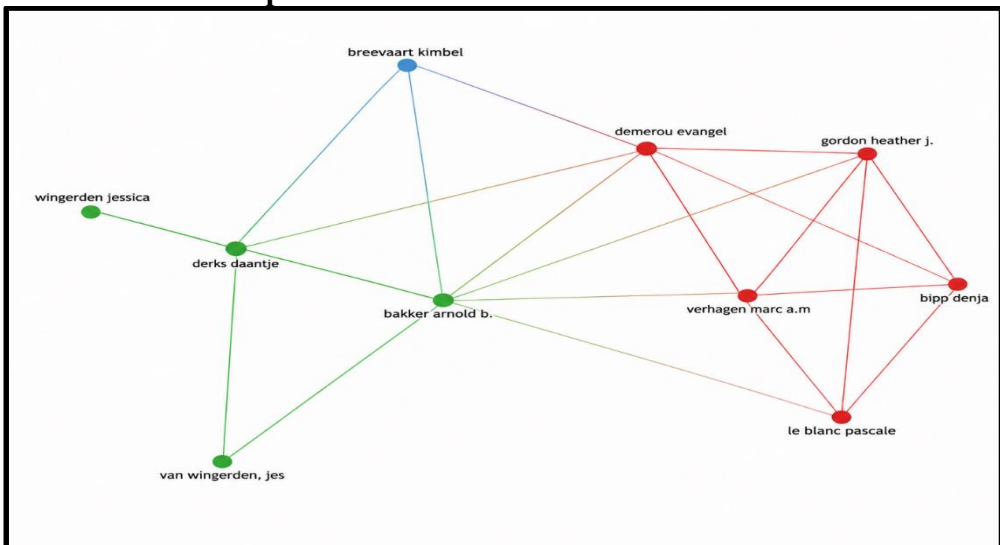


Figure 4: Co-Authorship analysis on Vosviewer
Source: Authors' Compilation

The co-authorship network highlights Arnold B. Bakker as a central contributor, with extensive collaborations across the network. Evangelia Demerouti also holds an influential position, particularly through contributions associated with the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model and employee well-being (Muh25).

Three major collaborative clusters are visible. The green cluster, led by Bakker, focuses on job crafting, leadership, and personal resources. The blue cluster, associated with Demerouti, emphasizes job demands, resources, recovery, and well-being. The red cluster largely examines outcomes such as employee performance and psychological well-being.

Overall, the network reflects a well-connected and collaborative research field, with Bakker and Demerouti occupying prominent positions in the development of work engagement research.

6.7.2 Keyword co-occurrence network

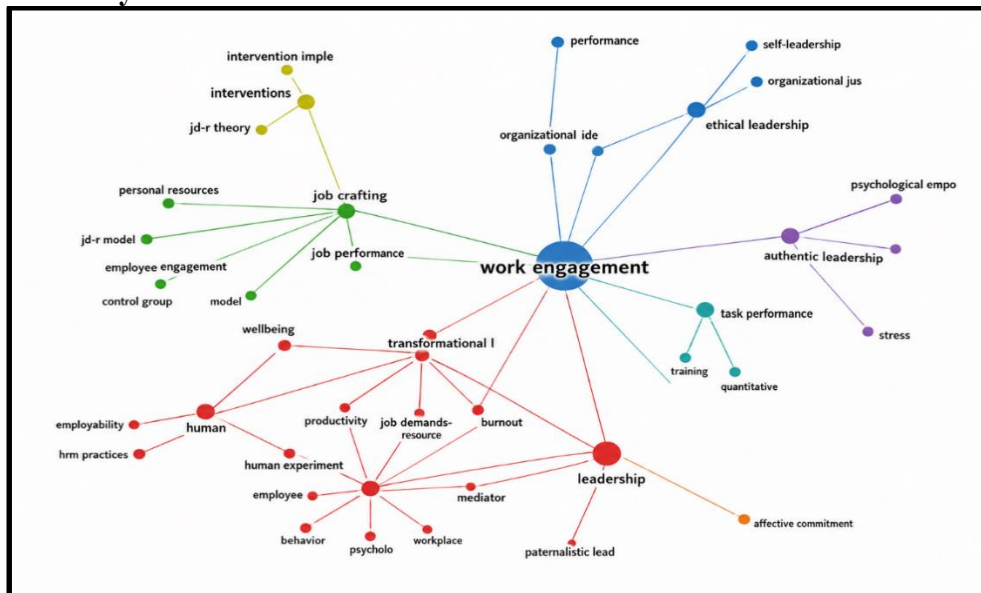


Figure 5: Keyword Co-occurrence on Vosviewer
Source: Authors' Compilation

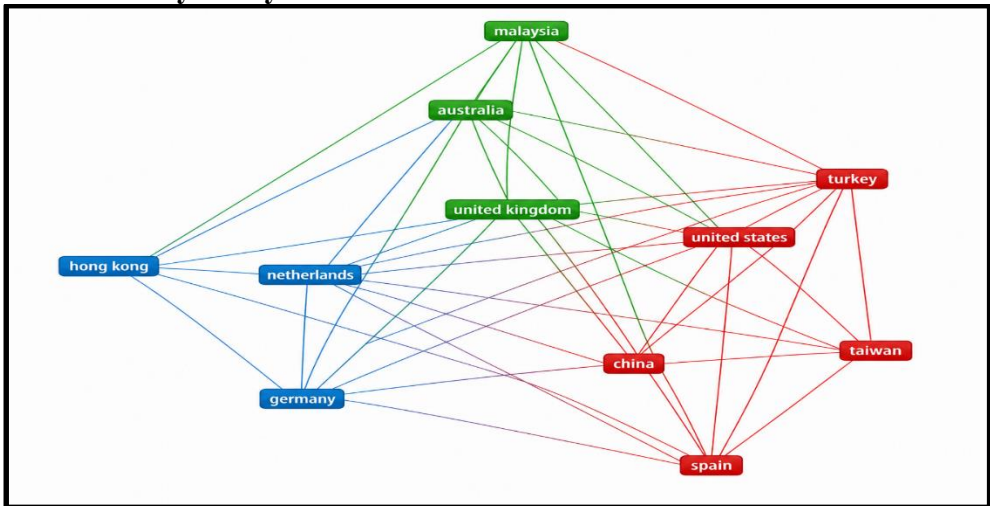
The keyword network identifies work engagement as the central theme, strongly connected with job performance, task performance, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB). This indicates that engagement is increasingly examined as an important contributor to employee and organizational outcomes.

Three major themes emerge from the network. The first relates to the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, including job demands, resources,

personal strengths, and job crafting. The second focuses on leadership, particularly transformational, ethical, authentic, and servant leadership. The third centres on employee well-being, including stress and burnout.

The presence of keywords such as training, intervention, HRM practices, and quantitative research also reflects a growing emphasis on practical and evidence-based applications. Overall, the network shows that work engagement has developed into an interdisciplinary research area connecting leadership, performance, well-being, and HRM practices.

6.7.3 Country Analysis



*Figure 6: Regional analysis on Vosviewer
Source: Authors' Compilation*

The country network shows that work engagement research has strong international collaboration. The United Kingdom and United States appear as important contributors, with links across multiple countries.

Three broad collaborative clusters are visible: Germany, the Netherlands, and Hong Kong; Australia, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom; and China, Taiwan, Turkey, and Spain. These connections demonstrate collaboration across Europe, Asia, and the Asia-Pacific region.

Overall, the network suggests that work engagement has developed into a globally researched field with increasing cross-country collaboration.

7. FINDINGS

There were significant changes to the idea of work engagement in this decade from performance to psychological safety and employee well-being. Before COVID-19 during the pandemic and after, leadership was the most important

factor influencing work engagement. Employee perceptions of work engagement were positively impacted by transformational ethical servant and authentic leadership styles.

Engagement strategies prior to COVID-19 were centered on growth and stability. Since the pandemic engagement has been understood in a whole new way. Psychological engagement, mental health emotional well-being and resilience were among the components during this period. Telecommuting and hybrid models of working affected the aspect of work engagement in a different manner wherein providing freedom, trust, technology, and caring leadership, translated into improved work engagement. The potential of cutting-edge technological applications to improve engagement in these novel settings is currently being assessed (Badraoui, 2025). Research during this pandemic has moved emphasis from encouraging workers to work at all times at their best to promoting sustainable work engagement promoting work-life balance, meaningful work, flexibility, and giving workers more choice in work. Analysing "push-pull" elements that influence a person's decision to stay or disengage is now necessary to comprehend these changes (Fenitra, 2025).

The JD-R model is currently the most often used model in engagement. A more thorough and human centred view of the topic of work engagement is being provided by the integration of theories such as Self-Determination Theory Conservation of Resources Theory Neuro-leadership and Social Identity Theory. Studies have found work engagement to play a role of a connecting factor for leadership/HR practices and their respective outcomes related to innovation, organizational citizenship behaviour, job performance, employee retention, and employment sustainability. Although most studies in this domain still collect data through cross-sectional studies and questionnaires, there appears to be an improvement in the methods of conducting the studies like adopt long-term study designs and analysis techniques such as SEM and HLM. Leading nations, the United Kingdom the United States the Netherlands and Australia Asian and Middle Eastern countries are increasingly participating in Global engagement at work

8. LIMITATIONS

The Scopus database was the only one used in the study. Only English-language publications were taken into account. Important studies from non-English-speaking nations may have been overlooked. To guarantee quality, articles with few citations (for publications published prior to 2023) were eliminated. Trends in publications and citations are the main focus of bibliometric study. Certain theoretical insights, qualitative results, or practical viewpoints might not be properly conveyed as a result. Most of the reviewed

studies used cross-sectional survey methods. These studies identify relationships between variables but cannot clearly establish cause-and-effect relationships.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Since one of the key components of work engagement is leadership businesses must train their leaders to be understanding moral and supportive. When work-related responsibilities and demands are kept at a manageable level and assistance is offered employees stay dedicated. The company must remove unneeded stressors and provide tools like autonomy managerial support and growth opportunities.

Emphasis on employee well-being and mental health concerns through Flexible working patterns, wellness initiatives, and emotional support. It is now a crucial time for organizations to establish clear and flexible policies that promote collaboration and facilitate a sense of togetherness among employees irrespective of where they work. Establishing guidelines about when to work and use technology can reduce the likelihood of burnout.

A passion for ongoing training and development initiatives helps employees manage change boost their self-esteem and sustain their level of engagement. Think long-term not just performance in order to attain a sustainable level of engagement through employee retention development and well-being organizations should look beyond short-term results.

10. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

People are more likely to feel appreciated and inspired when leaders actively listen, communicate openly, and show faith in their staff. Excessive workloads and inadequate management assistance are major causes of employee burnout and can be reduced with proactive managerial support. Work-life balance and mental health support are becoming major organizational initiatives rather than optional advantages.

In order to avoid employee disengagement and isolation, hybrid work arrangements necessitate careful planning through maintaining cohesiveness in teams with clear role expectations, regular communication, inclusive team practices, and social contact opportunities. Unrealistic demands, can have a detrimental effect on engagement and well-being in AI time. Workers are looking for more autonomy in task execution and meaningful work. Intrinsic motivation can be increased and disengagement can be decreased by giving workers autonomy over their working techniques and promoting job crafting.

11. CONCLUSION

This study examines how work engagement evolved between 2015 and 2025 amid digitalization, remote work, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings indicate a shift from a traditional focus on productivity and performance towards employee well-being, flexibility, work-life balance, and sustainable engagement.

While pre-pandemic engagement centred on leadership, culture, and HR practices, the pandemic increased the importance of flexibility, communication, and employee support. Post-pandemic research further emphasizes hybrid work, autonomy, meaningful work, and sustainability. Across all periods, supportive leadership and adequate job resources remain important drivers of engagement.

Overall, the SLR, bibliometric analysis, and TCCM framework demonstrate that sustaining work engagement requires organizations to combine flexible HR practices, effective leadership, and a people-focused approach.

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