

ANNA WÓJCIK-KARPACZ

**The research on work  
engagement: theoretical  
aspects and the results  
of researches in the  
company operating in the  
IT sector**

**1. Introduction**

More and more research findings indicate that employee engagement is one of the factors deciding on the competitive advantage. There is a positive relationship between employee engagement and the efficiency of their work and improvement of the company's results (MacLeod & Clarke, 2013).

However, the reports on the status of employee engagement in Poland present completely different view of this issue, which suggests that the employers approach the topic sceptically as if they did not notice the benefits from the behaviour of the employees which lead straight to business results. According to the Aon Hewitt's report on employee engagement, its level in Poland in 2017 was low, 52% of Polish employees did not feel engaged in the work they performed so thus the level of employee engagement in Poland in 2017 was only 48%. For a comparison, in Europe the same indicator was 62% and globally 63%. The difference between Poland and European countries was 14%. This is a large discrepancy considering the fact that this indicator increased in Europe in 2017 by

Prof. Anna Wójcik-Karpacz  
The Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce  
Faculty of Law, Administration  
and Management  
Poland

4% comparing with 2016 (from 58% to 62%). For example, in 2016 there were 51% engaged employees in Poland, while in 2015 there were 52%. When the engagement in Europe increases, in Poland it drops dramatically. Last year's researches are alarming because they show that it is the largest known disparity in history (Aon Hewitt, 2018).

Work engagement has also become a prevalent topic among management researches in recent years. However, there is a lack of knowledge on the level of work engagement in specific companies. Thus, the aim of this article is to exemplify the results of researches on the level of work engagement in the company operating in the IT sector. The decisive argument on the choice of the company was the largest employee engagement factor noted in the IT sector.

The project was founded by The National Science Centre in Poland allocated on the basis of a decision DEC-2014/15/B/HS4/04326.

## **2. The meaning and definition of *work engagement***

Work engagement differs conceptually from related constructs such as job embeddedness, workaholism, job satisfaction, or organizational commitment (Halbesleben, Wheeler, 2008, pp. 242-256; Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006, pp. 119-127; Karpacz, 2017, pp. 109-127; De Clercq, et al., 2014, pp. 183-212).

Therefore, before measuring *work engagement*, it is worthy to answer the question what *work engagement* is. An interesting approach is presented by Schaufeli and his colleagues, who define work engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli, et al., 2002, p. 74). The three dimensions of work engagement mentioned in this definition are described as follows:

- vigour - high level of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest one's effort in the work,
- dedication - being strongly involved in one's work, experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge,
- absorption - being fully focused and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from the work (Schaufeli, et al., 2006, pp. 701-716).

This is one of the most quoted and probably even the most popular conceptualization of work engagement (Fearon, et al, 2013, pp. 244-256). In this approach vigour, dedication and absorption are three different components of work engagement, namely physical, emotional and cognitive. According to this definition, work engagement can be perceived in the scope, in which the workers

are physically, emotionally cognitively related to its roles at work. Thus, this understanding of work engagement was accepted in the empirical approach, which results were presented in further parts of this article.

Work engagement is mainly expressed in in the employee behaviours such as the effort in work. Having in mind, that a physical component of work engagement such as vigour and its higher levels suggests an increased readiness to dedicate more effort into work without easily being tired and developing the tendency to remain persistent despite difficult tasks and failures (Chughtai & Buckley, 2009, pp. 574- 589).

Commitment is an emotional component of work engagement and it is often considered as putting one's own heart into work (Schaufeli et al., 2002, pp. 71-92). It is an individual sense of identification with work (Chughtai, Buckley, 2009, pp. 574- 589), and it also involves such feelings as enthusiasm, passion, pride and challenge (Schaufeli et al., 2002, pp. 71-92). It points to psychological commitment of individuals into working together with the feeling of significance (Geldenhuys, et al., 2014, pp. 1-10; Schaufeli et al., 2002, pp. 71-92).

Finally, the cognitive component of work engagement, often treated as a replacement for the absorption dimension, is characterized by people, who are completely devoted to their work and they forget about everything what is around them (Chughtai & Buckley, 2008, pp. 41-71; Schaufeli et al., 2002, pp. 71-92). This component of work engagement refers to full concentration, satisfaction and absorption of a person, who experiences that while performing his or her work tasks (it is also called eudaimonic approach). Such people are often not able to stop performing their work (Schaufeli et al., 2002, pp. 71-92). In this approach the engagement is connected to an enthusiastic attitude to duties, but for involved employees their work is something worthwhile, important, meaningful to achieve the goals. In this approach to engagement the attention is paid to its psychological aspects. It may be assumed that the described psychological state of engagement will be a state contributing to perform entrusted task in a precise and effective way.

Work engagement is described as an ability to learn who we are in our roles. It is a feeling one may experience while working. Thus, work engagement refers to voluntary behavioural aspects of work (Wójcik-Karpacz, 2017, pp. 207-220). From a methodical point of view, the most accurate definition of engagement of employees is to define it as a state, which is pointed out by many researchers. Among them are W. Schaufeli and others from Utrecht University, who claim that engagement should be defined and measured as a separate, relatively permanent state of affective and cognitive character,

which does not focus on a specific object, occurrence, person or behaviour (Schaufeli et al., 2002, pp. 71-92).

This approach helps to control the management of engagement through watching the cause and effect relationships. The management of engagement of employees is very important because the engaged employees show the range of behaviours, which directly lead to positive business results. Therefore, it is crucial to educate the managerial staff, also line managers, how to recognize an engaged employee. In table 1 some characteristics were presented which help the managers to distinguish engaged employees from non-engaged ones.

**Table 1. The characteristics of engaged employees**

Author / Authors	The characteristics of engaged employees
Schaufeli, Bakker 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• moving the work forward</li> <li>• energy on individual level</li> </ul>
De Clercq D., Rius I.B. 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enthusiasm at work</li> <li>• investing more effort in work as it is formally expected</li> <li>• energy on individual level</li> </ul>
Schaufeli, Taris, Van Rhenen 2008	investing more time in work as it is formally expected
Halbesleben, Wheeler 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support from the colleagues for one's own initiative</li> <li>• energy on individual level</li> <li>• enthusiasm at work</li> <li>• performing work precisely and effectively</li> </ul>
Macey, Schneider, Barbera, Young 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proactively reacting on threats and challenges (noticing the problems and offering solutions)</li> <li>• increasing their role at work</li> <li>• easier adapting to changes</li> </ul>
Bakker 2009	a high-level of feeling of <i>self-efficacy</i>

**Source:** Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004, pp. 293-315; Bakker, 2009; pp. 50-72; De Clercq & Rius, 2007, pp. 467-490; Schaufeli, et al., 2008, pp. 173-203; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008, pp. 242-256; Macey, et al., 2009, pp. 1-25

**Engaged employees** try to move their work forward and they put their energy into it (Schaufeli, Bakker, 2004, pp. 293-315). Individual-level energy to “a type of positive affective arousal, which people can experience as emotion short responses to specific events or mood longer lasting affective states that need not be a response to specific events” (Cole, et al., 2012, pp. 445-467).

Moreover, engaged employees are willing to work extra hours (Schaufeli, et al., 2008, pp. 173-203) and help their colleagues if there is a need (Halbesleben, Wheeler, 2008, pp. 242-256); they are also able to remain in a good health condition in stressful situations (Demerouti, et al., 2001, pp. 499-512). When employees are engaged, they fully inhabit their job roles, instead of just working. They are very present in doing their work (Kahn, 1992, pp. 321-349). According to W. H. Macey and his colleagues, engaged employees behave in more persistent ways, respond proactively to emerging threats and challenges, expand their roles at work, and adapt more readily to change (Macey, et al., 2009, pp. 1-25).

According to B. L. Rich, J. A. Lepine, E. R. Crawford (2010), when employees are engaged, they experience their work as something to which they really want to devote time and vigorous effort; as a significant and meaningful pursuit to which they feel genuinely dedicated; and as sufficiently absorbing to concentrate their full attention. Engaged employees harness themselves to what they are doing by fully investing their heads, hearts, and hands in performing their role (Rich, et al., 2010, pp. 617-635).

Apart from that Halbesleben and Wheeler assume that engaged employees are energetic and enthusiastic in their work, which leads to a better work performance comparing to non-engaged employees and they put more effort into work than it is formally expected (Halbesleben, Wheeler, 2008, pp. 242-256).

Engaged employees may perform their work more effectively - having the same supplies they can achieve much better results or they can have the same results using less supplies (Dromey, 2014).

Individual employee behaviours determine an organization's collective success over time. Performance is the sum of what every employee does every day across the organization. As a result, work engagement is one of the key predictors of an organization's performance, financial and otherwise (Heskett, 2012).

To sum up, an engaged employee is the one who concentrates on his or her work, has an enthusiastic approach to it and realizes or exceeds the business goals set for him working in the interest of the company. Moreover, an engaged employee generates the cycle of positive feedback on their positive attitude and high level of activeness (Bakker, 2009, pp. 50-72).

### **3. Usefulness of researches on *work engagement*: the perspective of manager employees and nonmanagerial employees.**

The research on employee engagement is to certain extend the measurement of results of activities undertaken by the whole managerial staff. Therefore, the decrease/increase of the level of employee engagement partly reveals decrease/increase of caring by employees for their work environment, as well as, the comfort of work of employees. The change in the behaviour of employers in order to build a stable employee engagement requires on-going monitoring the opinions of employed persons and building the engagement all the time.

It may even be assumed that without research and subjective analysis of opinions of employees it is not possible to manage the employees successfully. Some of the problems related to the ability to maintain a relatively high level of employee engagement by managers is visible only from the perspective of nonmanagerial employees (in other words, staff members), who perform every day the tasks entrusted to them by their supervisors (manager employees). Nonmanagerial employees are the group, which understands the specificity of the work place and is capable of creating solutions that can be successfully introduced and are embedded in reality. Therefore, the information provided in the surveys on opinion of the staff members of different level in the company hierarchy can be the only chance to discover them by the managerial staff.

The questionnaires for the staff members, which help the managerial staff to know the feelings and views of employees are used for the in practice. However, the study on work engagement should be distinguished from the factors which determine it. These are separate problems, which can be realized simultaneously. Thanks to the knowledge on the factors affecting the level of engagement, it is possible to conduct the researches aiming to assess these factors. If any of these factors will be assessed low, it becomes a space for an improvement. This way, the level of work engagement is not de facto measured, but the level of conditions which may help its increase. It is assumed that in these companies, where there are conditions for employee engagement, its level is higher. However, these issues are not the topic of considerations at this moment.

In this part of the article, scientific researches are concentrated on determining usefulness of systematic measurements of work engagement level for a selected group of employees (see table 2).

**Table 2. The consequence of research on work engagement in the selected groups of employees**

Specification	The examples of consequences of research on <i>work engagement</i>
Managers employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• preparing the division of <i>work engagement</i> in the company with the criteria: nonengaged, poorly, cautiously, highly engaged,</li> <li>• identification of the indicator <i>work engagement</i> with the division on: gender, age, work experience, teams, size of the team, type of the job position, organizational units, etc.,</li> <li>• determining the difference between work engagement indicators for different groups of workers,</li> <li>• the possibility of planning and monitoring of activities of different employee groups and/or the whole company,</li> <li>• effective employer branding,</li> <li>• a <i>pulse check research for the whole or part of the company verifying the progress in creating work engagement</i>,</li> <li>• <i>linkage analysis</i> between indicators <i>work engagement</i> and business results (<i>financial result, sales growth, the level of client's satisfaction, absence, fluctuation, retention of key employees, the level of realization of business aims</i>) or motivators of specific groups of employees,</li> <li>• monitoring of trends and changes in the work environment basing on historic data on <i>work engagement</i>,</li> <li>• the possibility to set the company's position in relations to other companies in order to better interpret the results of the research on nonmanagerial employees.</li> </ul>
Nonmanagerial employees (staff members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in the case of simultaneous examination on work engagement and its determinants there is a possibility of reacting of staff members on work environment through suggesting their own solutions to the problems in their work place or in the whole company (improving career paths, trainings or the forms of organising time of working),</li> <li>• the satisfaction of the staff members because of their involvement in the decision-making process,</li> <li>• feedback in the relations employee-supervisor,</li> <li>• the feeling of staff members that they work in a company where they achieve their own goal,</li> <li>• the possibility of anonymous reporting of problems by nonmanagerial employees, who want to share the feelings and information which disclosure may result in termination of employment.</li> </ul>

**Sources:** own analysis based on: Dromey 2014; Schaufeli et al., 2002, pp. 71–92; Schaufeli et al., 2006, pp. 701-716; Szabowska-Walaszczyk, et al., 2011, pp. 57-74; Lewicka & Rakowska, 2016, pp. 102-115; Juchnowicz, 2010, pp. 57-66; Lipka, 2011, pp. 204-216; Moczyłowska, 2013; pp. 33-42; Macnar, 2017

Examining the opinions of nonmanagerial employees allows to determine the indicator of work engagement in different groups and answer the question about the placement of the company in its branch. Quite often the research on the level of work engagement is also connected to the assessments of motivators in order to identify which ones have the largest impact on the work engagement indicator. Then, the results of the research will show the order and scope of the activities of manager, so that they can quite quickly adapt workplaces for the needs of employees and at the same time improve business results. However, many of them make a mistake not noticing negative consequences of low work engagement, which precede the decrease of the company results (Macnar, 2017). Therefore, the opinions of the employees can be valuable and needed source of knowledge in the process of making decisions and working on solutions, which will be the answer to their expectations.

Moreover, well-conducted and properly used researches are helpful not only for the managerial staff, but for staff members themselves. Their participation in the surveys gives them the feeling of being needed in the company and gives them the real sense that they have an impact of its fate.

The employees have the possibility to improve their own workplaces. Creating a good image of the company is done with their participation. Making employees aware of mutual benefits allows to conduct reliable research which will have a real impact on functioning of the company. The employees will be more involved in the duties and good practices in the context of employee – supervisor relation in a friendly work environment and work comfort. Thanks to better procedures and motivated staff members, it will bring better results for the company.

Therefore, the starting point for the activities of managers should be a reliable diagnosis of the existing situation which will allow to identify the level of work engagement. The base for the diagnosis of work engagement are the results of regular research on the opinion of employees with an appropriate frequency, complexity and the level of customization.

#### **4. The diagnosis of the level of work engagement in a company operating in the IT sector**

##### *The characteristic of the company*

Examining the level of work engagement should be conducted in an IT company employing in 2017 almost 900 persons, with 17 years of work experience in providing software in the projects using various platforms, data bases and tools.



Since 2007 the company has been Certified Microsoft Partner, which proves its professionalism and the quality of its service. The company creates custom software i.e. it specializes in creating high quality of innovative solutions for business problems with the use of modern technologies. Apart from that, it offers interactive visualization with virtual, expanded and mixed reality and 3D in real time. To fully meet the expectations of the clients it goes beyond of simple defining of requirements. It uses its experience, technical knowledge, innovativeness and creativeness so that the clients receive the software fulfilling their requirements. To ensure stability and efficiency of software, after its implementation, the clients are able to use service and technical support.

The companies which operate in different work sectors all over the world are the clients of this company. The company implements activities improving processes, systems and tools through internal project teams engaging supervisors and employees in creating and implementing new solutions. The managerial staff in the company is confirmed that the best ideas and innovative solutions are created in a friendly atmosphere, in the teams full of passion and engagement. Therefore, the work conditions are created to foster creative thinking and strengthen the relations among the employees. There is a technological park in the company, where apart from the offices, there is a library, kindergarten for the children of employees and so called, fun rooms – the places for relax and entertainment, a modern complex including a spa, gym and restaurant with Mediterranean menu. Moreover, there is a unit in the company which coordinates the activities connected with supporting competences and building experts' teams, who using their knowledge and experience share with others. During regular meetings with project leaders, the team members of the teams propose their training needs and they describe roles, they would like to perform in the future. Thanks to this unit, team members can participate in the technical and managerial trainings, also the ones which develop interpersonal skills or team work or they can confirm their skills with certificates. Apart from that, there are activities implemented which improve processes, systems and tools through internal project teams engaging supervisors and employees into creating and implementing new solutions. They are conditioning the way of performing of everyday tasks, as well as, they have an impact on the decisions concerning the whole organization.

### **Measurement of work engagement and its results**

To find a proper form of examining work engagement was a very important issue. An on-line survey was used and the employees were invited to fill it in

via their e-mails. Considering the fact that on-line survey is a technique which helps the researchers to have an easier organization of the research, quicker collection of the data and lower costs and it gives for the respondents comfort and anonymity. Anonymity was the reason for reliability of the respondents' answers. Thanks to anonymity, it was possible to have not only positive answers, because they appear as people are afraid of punishment or they hope for the reward.

The research was preceded with a proper introduction of its aim to the employees. They were informed about reasons, why it was conducted and about expected effects. The staff was also informed about high rank and usefulness of such analysis. Another step was to prepare the employees for the research process, explaining its aim and the impact on the future functioning of the company. During the explanation of the aims the employees were introduced with the questions the managerial staff wanted to receive the answer to. It was really important, to underline that there were mutual benefits from honest answers in the questionnaires and mutual losses if they were disdained.

Collecting data with on-line method took 1 month. All the employees of the company received via their email the invitation to fill in the questionnaire. Each code could be used only once. For persons who did not fill in the questionnaire, at least two reminders were sent. Finally, 509 questionnaires were filled in.

The research was finished with a report. The full version of the report was presented to the company within a few days and it was published in the source which is available for the employees. The comments of employees were analysed with the idea to implement them, and the results of the research were to be the reason to implement specific actions. The measurement tool was suitable for the needs of the company, the managers were prepared for any kind of feedback. The managers of every organizational unit received the report from the research on engagement in order to present their own opinions about the possible reasons for the research results. Another step was to present most crucial issues on the board of teams, and then to confront the opinions of the teams with own ones.

Work engagement was measured with a 9-item scale, a shortened version of the original 17-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), which has excellent psychometric properties and provides a good indicator of work engagement (Schaufeli, et al., 2006, pp. 701-716). There is more and more evidence that Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) measures vigour, dedication and absorption as three aspects of engagement (Hakanen, et al., 2006, pp. 47-74). The assessment of engagement into work done by employees was conducted basing on the mentioned before tool translated with the forward-back translation method.

Statistical analyses were conducted in the SPSS program. First, the reliability of the research questionnaire was assessed using *alfa Cronbach* measurement which level was 0,932, which is quite high result showing high coherence of its issues and therefore high reliability. Consequently, the questionnaire which was used at the survey allowed an honest assessment of the level of work engagement.

The next stage was to analyse mean levels and standard deviations of individual issues. For the needs of the analyses, because of a big number of answers, they were averaged within individual items of a measurement tool.

Table 3 provides the descriptive statistics (i.e., means and standard deviations) of the scales used. Items had to be answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

**Table 3. Descriptive statistics of work engagement**

Dimensions	Mean	Standard deviation (sd)
Vigor	4,89	1,34
Dedication	5,32	1,29
Absorption	4,93	1,37
<b>Work Engagement</b>	<b>5,01</b>	<b>0,917</b>

Note: VI = Vigor scale; DE = Dedication scale; AB = Absorption scale. a. Shortened version (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-17 [UWES-17])

Scale: 0 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

**Source:** the results of the research on the level of work engagement is a big IT company

From the analysis of mean level and standard deviations of all three dimensions of work engagement there are following conclusions:

- generally, in every dimension of work engagement, the answers were exceeding the mid-point of the scale (4,0), which means a high level of work engagement, however it does not mean there is no possibility to increase it,
- standard deviations showing the diversity of employees' opinions oscillate around +/- from 1,29 to 1,37 which means that the diversity of the answers among the respondents is relatively small.

Generally, work engagement in all dimensions was high. The evidence of it were high levels in every dimensions of work engagement. On average, the level

of vigour was 4,89 points. This level deviated from the average level of +/- 1,34 points. The level of this indicator shows that the employees were happy and energetic while performing their work. In the relation to the second dimension – dedication, an average level was slightly higher than two others and it measured 5,32 points. This level deviated from the average level of +/- 1,29 points. The level of this indicator shows that the employees were devoted to work in this company. Then, the average level of absorption was on the similar level and it measured 4,93 points. This level deviated from the average level of +/- 1,37 points. The level of this indicator shows that the employees were fully concentrated and happily absorbed in their work, the time was passing quickly and they had a problem with stopping.

A composite score was calculated as the average of the individual items. With a high level of average work engagement (5,01) and at the same time with a small standard deviation (0,917) it can be assumed that the employees performed their work with enthusiasm and it brought them satisfaction. The results of descriptive analyses brought also valuable information on the components of work engagement (table 4).

**Table 4. Descriptive statistics of work engagement components**

Item	Dimen- sions	The num- ber of valid answers	Missing system	Mean	Stan- dard devia- tion (sd)	Min.	Max.
At my work, I feel bursting with energy. a (VI 1)	Vigour	505	4	4,4673	1,34939	1	7
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous. a (VI 2)	Vigour	502	7	4,7749	1,30527	1	7
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. a (VI3)	Vigour	506	3	4,7075	1,54325	1	7
I can continue working for very long periods at a time. (VI4)	Vigour	503	6	5,163	1,31845	1	7
At my job, I am very resilient, mentally. (VI5)	Vigour	497	12	5,1328	1,14761	1	7

At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well. (VI6)	Vigour	495	14	5,0525	1,34874	1	7
I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose. (DE 1).	Dedication	505	4	5,4238	1,28276	1	7
I am enthusiastic about my job. a (DE 2)	Dedication	503	6	5,2326	1,31781	1	7
My job inspires me. a (DE 3)	Dedication	503	6	4,9821	1,35585	1	7
I am proud of the work that I do. a (DE4)	Dedication	505	4	5,3347	1,27743	1	7
To me, my job is challenging. (DE5)	Dedication	504	5	5,379	1,21996	1	7
Time flies when I am working. (AB 1)	Absorption	505	4	5,7842	1,28905	1	7
When I am working, I forget everything else around me. (AB 2)	Absorption	505	4	4,6871	1,49905	1	7
I feel happy when I am working intensely. a (AB3)	Absorption	504	5	5,4127	1,22284	1	7
I am immersed in my work. a (AB4)	Absorption	505	4	5,0812	1,23898	1	7
I get carried away when I am working. (AB5)	Absorption	502	7	4,1633	1,51414	1	7
It is difficult to detach myself from my job. (AB6)	Absorption	503	6	4,4215	1,41467	1	7
<b>Work engagement</b>		<b>509</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5,0081</b>	<b>0,91703</b>	<b>1,65</b>	<b>7</b>

Note: VI = Vigour scale; DE = Dedication scale; AB = Absorption scale. a. Shortened version (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-17 [UWES-17])  
Scale: 0 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

**Source:** the results of the research on the level of work engagement is a big IT company

All the assessed aspects of work engagement were on similar, relatively high level. Considering a small standard deviation, it can be assumed that the employees consistently and positively assessed working in this company. This is the evidence of the fact that the aspects of professional life were generally positively and highly assessed.

In the scope of sub-scales UWES the results of the researches were also high and all the answers exceeded the mid-point of the scale (4,0 level) which suggests that employees showed a lot of energy for work, they felt happiness from it and at the same time they were persevere and they could perform it for a long period of time without getting tired. Also, the respondents were devoted to work, they identified with it because they perceived it as meaningful and inspiring. Usually, they spoke about their work with enthusiasm and pride and at the same time they were happy they could do this work.

In this company almost all the employees were equally active, they were willing to show their own initiative, they undertook additional duties. The results of the researches show that employees experienced satisfying work place and they could do their best at work. If the standard deviation was high, then it would indicate visible discrepancies among different employees or their groups, which should be alarming for supervisors, however this kind of situation was not noticed among the employees of the company.

Moreover, relatively high level of engagement maybe the evidence of caring by the employer for the work environment and for a high work comfort, realizing good practices in the context of the relation employee - supervisor and about adequate high level of salary. However, to determine it, the relations between categories should be examined as a next step.

The cyclic researches on the state of engagement in the company allow to have a regular observation of the level of engagement and at the same time to monitor the effectiveness of introduction of improving activities. The knowledge on the structure of engagement among the employees of the company is necessary to undertake the activities directed to its increasing and maintaining at the high level.

However, the knowledge on the state of engagement of managerial staff is not enough to manage with engagement. In order to get the employees engaged into creating their work place and tell about their needs, the managerial staff turns the conclusions from the research into real activities and shows that is it important for them.

Regular analysis of the opinions of employees allows the supervisors to react quickly to challenges which appear in this company, positively influence the

atmosphere and what is most important to decrease the risk of losing good employees. The ability to maintain the engagement on the stable level in the further period of employment may be the proof of reliable recruitment process and a coherent image of the company presented outside and inside of the organization. There is a complex program of building the engagement, so called road map, which includes the researches on employee engagement in order to successfully turn the conclusions from researches into real activities allowing to achieve better business results.

## 5. Conclusion

Work engagement is a generally stable state depending on the interaction of expectations and work conditions (an engagement determinant). That is why, its level can be determined and then formed with specifically chosen activities. Building of the employee engagement is based on the many aspects of work environment and it may require to undertake many activities in different areas. Examining employees' opinions (the interorganizational communication method) allows to learn about the views of persons from different levels of the company hierarchy.

On the grounds of such results, managers may undertake more aware decisions which elements should be improved and which should be limited, in order to improve the work engagement in their organizations.

The results of the research on work engagement allow to plan and monitor the activities undertaken to maintain it on a proper high level in a longer period of time. At the same time, such researches are the contribution to strategic and operational planning. However, incorrectly designed and unreliably interpreted results of the research are not the base for formulating effective actions but they are just wasting company's money. Many mistakes may appear even at the moment of creating the questions and the scale of answers. Apart from that, the questionnaire may be poorly designed to achieve the aims of the research and the specificity of company's performance. Therefore, the questionnaires should be properly prepared to be the data base and then the researches should be included into a wider system of management of human resources. This means, that researches should be conducted in order to collect information and not to be a manifestation of the company as a modern work place. In the business practice, the tools used for measuring work engagement should be compatible with each other in order to ensure data comparability and their analysis. The possibility of comparing the results of research on work engagement in subsequent periods

of time is possible thanks to using a normalised tool, such as an original 17-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES).

In the opinion of the author, manager employees should be involved in building engagement. The supervisors of the inferiors are considered as the representatives of the employer. It is not possible to talk about engaged employees without engaged supervisors. Therefore, it is reasonable to research on engaging managers' as an enabler of the engagement of nonmanagerial employees. The results of such researches may be found useful in order to answer the question how to solve the problem of maintaining adequate high level of engagement of nonmanagerial employees.

### Summary

#### **The research on work engagement: theoretical aspects and the results of researches in the company operating in the IT sector**

The aim of this article is to exemplify the results of researches on work engagement in the company operating in the IT sector. The research methodology includes the studies of scientific literature and the quantitative method (survey questionnaire). The sample in the study comprises 509 employees of a company operating in the IT sector. Work engagement was measured with of the original 17-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Using in the research a standardized tool gives the opportunity to compare different results obtained in subsequent periods of time in the company, as well as, it can be the point of reference in the assessment of work engagement in other companies of the IT and other sectors. The results of the research show a relatively high level of work engagement in the composite aspect and its individual dimensions and subdimensions in the company operating in the IT sector. The scientific literature studies provide the managers with information on how various issues are related to the level of work engagement and on the usefulness of periodic researches in the company. However, the results of the empiric research help the managers to diagnose of the work engagement and to take more conscious decisions how to improve or maintain it on the same level. The research findings give the overview on the topic of work engagement level in a big IT company.

**Keywords:** *Work engagement, engaged employees, IT sector, UWES.*



## Streszczenie

### **Badanie zaangażowania w pracę: aspekty teoretyczne i rezultaty badań w firmie działającej w sektorze IT**

Celem artykułu jest egzemplifikacja rezultatów badania poziomu zaangażowania w pracę w firmie działającej w sektorze IT. Metodyka badań obejmuje studia literatury przedmiotu i metodę ilościową (kwestionariusz ankietowy). Próba w badaniu obejmuje 509 pracowników firmy działającej w sektorze IT. Zaangażowanie w pracę było mierzone za pomocą oryginalnej 17-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Użycie w badaniu znormalizowanego narzędzia daje możliwość porównywania uzyskanych wyników w kolejnych okresach w tej firmie, jak również może być punktem odniesienia w ocenie *zaangażowania w pracę* w innych firmach z sektora IT i pozostałych. Rezultaty badań pokazują relatywnie wysoki poziom zaangażowania w pracę w ujęciu kompozytowym i poszczególnych jego wymiarów i podwymiarów w firmie działającej w sektorze IT. Studia literatury dostarczają menedżerom informacji o tym, jak różne kwestie są związane z poziomem *zaangażowania w pracę* i o użyteczności cyklicznych badań w firmie. Natomiast wyniki badania empirycznego pozwalają menedżerom na diagnozę zaangażowania w pracę i podejmowanie bardziej świadomych decyzji dotyczących tego, jak go polepszyć lub utrzymać na istniejącym poziomie.

Ustalenia badawcze dają wgląd na temat poziomu zaangażowania w pracę w konkretnej dużej firmie informatycznej.

## Słowa

**kluczowe:** *Zaangażowanie w pracę, zaangażowanie pracownicze, sektor IT, UWES.*

## JEL

**Clasification:** M540; M510

## References

1. Aon Hewitt, 2018, [www.aon.com](http://www.aon.com) (20.05.2018 - access date).
2. Bakker A.B. (2009), *Building engagement in the workplace*. In C. Cooper & R. Burke (Eds.), *The peak performing organization* (pp. 50–72). London, England: Routledge. [In:] De Clercq D., Bouckennooghe D., Raja R., Matsybońska G. (2014), *Servant Leadership and Work Engagement: The*

- Contingency Effects of Leader-Follower Social Capital*, "Human Resource Development Quarterly", Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 183-212.
3. Chughtai A.A., Buckley F. (2008), *Work engagement and its relationship with state and trait trust: A conceptual analysis*, "Institute of Behavioural and Applied Management", Vol. 1, pp. 47-71.
  4. Chughtai A.A., Buckley F. (2009), *Linking trust in the principal to school outcomes: the mediating role of organizational identification and work engagement*, "International Journal of Educational Management", Vol. 23, pp. 574- 589.
  5. Cole M.S., Bruch H., Vogel B. (2012), *Energy at work: A measurement validation and linkage to unit effectiveness*, "Journal of Organizational Behavior", Vol. 33, pp. 445-467.
  6. De Clercq D., Bouckenoghe D., Raja R., Matsyborska G. (2014), *Servant Leadership and Work Engagement: The Contingency Effects of Leader-Follower Social Capital*, "Human Resource Development Quarterly", Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 183-212.
  7. De Clercq D., Rius I.B. (2007), *Organizational commitment in Mexican small and medium-sized firms: The role of work status, organizational climate, and entrepreneurial orientation*, "Journal of Small Business Management" Vol. 45, p. 467-490.
  8. Demerouti E., Bakker A.B., Nachreiner F., Schaufeli W.B. (2001), *The job demands-resources model of burnout*, "Journal of Applied Psychology", Vol. 86, pp. 499-512.
  9. Dromey J. (2014), *MacLeod and Clarke's Concept of Employee Engagement: An Analysis based on the Workplace Employment Relations Study*; Research Paper; [www.ipa-involve.com](http://www.ipa-involve.com), p. 10-12.
  10. Fearon C., McLaughlin H., Morris L. (2013), *Conceptualising work engagement*, "European Journal of Training and Development", Vol. 37, Iss. 3, pp. 244-256.
  11. Geldenhuys M., Laba K., Venter C. M. (2014), *Meaningful work, work engagement and organisational commitment*, "Journal of Industrial Psychology", Vol. 40, Iss. 1, pp. 01-10.
  12. Hakanen J.J., Bakker A.B., Schaufeli W.B. (2006), *Burnout and work engagement among teachers*, "Journal of School Psychology", Vol. 43, pp. 495-513;
  13. Halbesleben J.R.B., Wheeler A.R. (2008), *The relative roles of engagement and embeddedness in predicting job performance and intention to leave*, "Work & Stress", Vol. 22, pp. 242-256.
  14. Hallberg U., Schaufeli W.B. (2006), *"Same same" but different: Can work engagement be discriminated from job involvement and organizational commitment?* "European Journal of Psychology", Vol. 11, pp. 119-127.
  15. Heskett J.L. (2012), *The culture cycle. How to shape the unseen force that transforms performance*, New Jersey: FT Press.

16. Juchnowicz M. (2010), *Zarządzanie kapitałem ludzkim a poziom zaangażowania pracowników*, „Zarządzanie Zasobami Ludzkimi”, nr 3-4, pp. 57-66.
17. Kahn W.A. (1992), *To be fully there: Psychological presence at work*, „Human Relations”, Vol. 45, pp. 321-349.
18. Karpacz J. (2017), *The proposal of the researchers and practitioners: What is employee engagement?*, „Advances in Business-Related Scientific Research Conference, Conference Proceedings”, Venice, pp. 109-127.
19. Lewicka D., Rakowska A. (2016), *Wpływ praktyk ZZL na zaangażowanie pracowników w innowacyjnych przedsiębiorstwach*, „Nauki o Zarządzaniu”, No. 2 (27), pp. 102-115.
20. Lipka A. (2011), *Employee Relationship Management (ERM) jako trend rozwoju w obszarze funkcji personalnej*, „Problemy Zarządzania”, Vol. 9, No. 4 (34), pp. 204-216.
21. Macey W.H., Schneider B., Barbera K.M., Young S.A. (2009), *Employee engagement: Tools for analysis, practice, and competitive advantage*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell [In:] Shuck B., *Four emerging perspectives of employee engagement: An integrative literature review*, „Human Resource Development Review”, Vol. XX, Iss. X, pp. 1-25.
22. MacLeod D., Clarke N. (2009), *Engaging for success: Enhancing performance through employee engagement*, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, United Kingdom; <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/1810/1/file52215.pdf>; [28.05.2018]
23. Macnar A. (2017), *Wskaźniki efektywności działań employer brandingowych*
24. Moczydłowska J.M. (2013), *Zarządzanie relacjami z pracownikami (ZRzP) - nowe spojrzenie na relacje organizacji z pracownikami*, „Przedsiębiorczość i Zarządzanie”, Vol. 14, Iss. 12, part 2, pp. 33-42;
25. Rich B.L., Lepine J.A., Crawford E.R. (2010), *Job engagement: Antecedents and effects on job performance*, „Academy of Management Journal”, Vol. 53, Iss. 3, pp. 617-635.
26. Schaufeli W.B., Bakker A.B. (2003), *Test manual for the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale*. Unpublished manuscript, Utrecht University, the Netherlands. Retrieved from [www.schaufeli.com](http://www.schaufeli.com).
27. Schaufeli W.B., Bakker A.B., Salanova M. (2006), *The measurement of work engagement with a short questionnaire. A cross-national study*, „Educational and Psychological Measurement”, Vol. 66, Iss. 4, pp. 701-716.
28. Schaufeli W.B., Bakker, A.B. (2004), *Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study*, „Journal of Organizational Behavior”, Vol. 25, Iss. 3, pp. 293-315.
29. Schaufeli W.B., Salanova M., González-Roma V., Bakker A.B. (2002), *The measurement of engagement and burnout and a confirmative analytic approach*, „Journal of Happiness Studies”, Vol. 3, pp. 71-92.

30. Schaufeli W.B., Taris T.W., van Rhenen W. (2008), *Workaholism, burnout, and work engagement: Three of a kind or three different kinds of employee well-being?* "Applied Psychology: An International Review", Vol. 57, pp. 173-203.
31. Szabowska-Walaszczyk A., Zawadzka A.M., Wojtaś M. (2011), *Zaangażowanie w pracę i jego korelaty: Adaptacja skali UWES autorstwa Schaufeliego i Bakker'a*, „Psychologia Jakości Życia” No. 10, pp. 57-74.
32. Wójcik-Karpacz A., *Zaangażowanie pracownicze i podobne konstrukty: eksploracja niuansów konceptualnych (I)*, *Przedsiębiorczość i Zarządzanie*, Vol. XVIII, Book 11, Part III, pp. 207-220.