

## **Job Engagement: Antecedents and Outcomes**

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*The present research introduces three studies that examine antecedents of job engagement (JE). Our findings indicate that: 1) Personality traits (neuroticism and extraversion) are indirectly related to JE by mediation of burnout (Study 1); 2) A perception of organizational justice relates positively to JE, and contrary to our hypothesis – we found no significant relationship between organizational politics and JE (Study 2); 3) Leadership style moderates the relationship between LMX and JE, so that a positive relationship between the variables exists when the manager is perceived to have a high transformational leadership style (Study 3).*

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Job Engagement (JE)**

Job engagement (JE) is a relatively new concept in the research literature that is attracting a great deal of attention. Two main definitions are accepted by scholars (Drake, 2012). The first definition of JE is a positive mindset, self-fulfilment, determination, liveliness, high levels of energy and vigour, dedication characterized by feelings of meaningfulness, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. The employee feels happily invested and absorbed by work, finds it difficult to disengage, and feels that time passes quickly (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008; Chughtai & Buckley, 2011).

The second definition of JE is the physical, cognitive, and emotional energy and devotion that the employee invests in work (Kahn, 1990; Rich, LePine & Crawford, 2010). *Cognitive energy* is one's self, the energy that one can direct and invest at work and away from work, corresponding to one's roles (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008). Cognitively engaged workers focus their thoughts on work and construe more situations as opportunities to do something work-related (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006), the most common example being job involvement. *Emotional energy* is concerned with one's need to fulfil psychological needs and values, the evident example being job satisfaction. The positive emotions concerned with high job satisfaction create a positive assessment of what the organization provides, so that the employee is then willing to perform task-related behaviours and contribute to the organization's effectiveness (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Judge, Bono, Thoresen, & Patton, 2001). *Physical*

*energy* focuses on mission-driven activities and perseverance, rooted in the need to feel self-efficacy, autonomy and control at work; the clear example is intrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

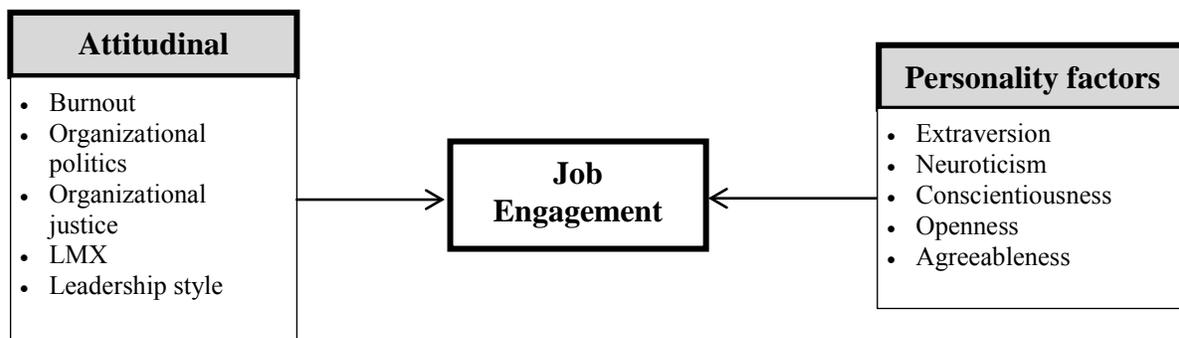
Kahn (1992) argued that JE is observed by means of one's behavioural investment in the abovementioned energies. Although there is a difference in the division of these energies and their intensity (Kanfer, 1990), the contention is that JE combines these energies and their investment into one entity (Kahn, 1992), so that JE is in fact a structure of multi-dimensional motivation, composed of three factors (Law, Wong, & Mobley, 1998). Employees high in JE work harder, are enthusiastic and more invested in their work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), and perceive the significance of their work as more than just a source of income (Kahn 1990). Nonetheless, differences in JE were found between countries, and it seems it is affected by culture (Shimazu, Schaufeli, Miyanaka & Iwata, 2010).

Workers who are engaged in their job typically exhibit higher initiative, motivation, and an active approach to acquiring knowledge (Sonnentag, 2003), have better output and greater success (Richman, 2006), demonstrate more OCB behaviors (Chernyak-Hai, & Tziner, 2013; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009; Saks, 2006), experience less work-family conflict (Li, Zhong, Chen, Xie & Mao, 2014), experience less stress at work (Choi, 2013), present more work satisfaction, organizational commitment, and less turnover intentions (Saks, 2006).

It is widely accepted that JE can develop from both personal and environmental sources (Macey & Schneider, 2008), but there has not been much research on the relationships between personality factors and JE (Inceoglu & Warr, 2012). The few studies that were conducted focused on traits such as optimism and self-efficacy (Halbesleben, 2010). Even studies that examined the Big Five personality traits could not pinpoint which traits were relevant to JE (see: Kim, Shin & Swanger, 2009; Langelan, Bakker, Van Doornen & Schaufeli, 2006). Therefore, we believe that the theoretical knowledge about this subject should be expanded.

Figure 1 presents the attitudinal and personality factors in relation to JE for the present research.

**FIGURE 1**  
**PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDINAL ANTECEDENTS OF JE – OVERALL MODEL**



### **Antecedents of JE**

#### *The Big Five's Neuroticism and Extraversion*

The Five Factor Model (FFM), commonly known as the Big Five, consists of five broad dimensions of personality that are used to describe human personality (Costa & McCrae, 1992): neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness. Previous studies have found correlations between extraversion, conscientiousness, and job performance (Handa & Gulati, 2014), and job satisfaction (Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002).

Study 1 concentrated on two personality traits – extraversion and neuroticism, because of their focus on the emotional aspect. Negative moods and emotions (typical of neuroticism) tend to limit one's engagement in work. A sense of security, activism, and positive affect (typical of extraversion) are related to increased job engagement.

Neuroticism is the tendency to experience negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, poor deferred gratification, or helplessness, mood swings, anxiety, and insecurity (Costa & McCrea, 1992; Djurkovic, McCormack, & Casimir, 2006). Neurotics would be less engaged in work due to their inability to adjust emotionally to their work environment (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

*H1: A negative relationship will be found between neuroticism and JE.*

Extraversion is characterized by dominance, self-confidence, activism, and adventure seeking (Bakker, Van Der Zee, Lewig, & Dolard, 2006), exhibition of positive emotions, high tendency and intensity of inter-personal interactions, and a high need for stimuli. Extraverts generally tend to be optimistic, and can re-evaluate problems positively (Costa & McCrea, 1992; Judge et al., 2002), because they focus on the positive aspect of their experiences (Bakker et al., 2006). Extraverts are characterized by assertiveness, positivity, dominance, and self-esteem, and would be engaged in their work due to both their constant need for stimuli and their standing at work, assertiveness, and desire to express their feelings and beliefs consistently and emphatically.

*H2: A positive relationship will be found between extraversion and JE.*

### *Burnout*

Burnout is a psychological syndrome, an ongoing reaction to stressful emotional and interpersonal factors at work. Burnout is composed of three measures: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, 2003). It is characterized by the employee's reduced welfare, stress at work, and could even lead to depression (Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Hofmann, 2011). Previous studies have emphasized situational factors that affect burnout such as work overload, emotionally charged role, pressure, or even the nature of the job (Azeem, 2012; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Nevertheless, research about various types of occupations and demographic and psychological variables has not produced consistent results (see: Lent & Schwartz, 2012).

*Emotional exhaustion* is a chronic state of physical and mainly emotional emptiness. Lack of motivation and a sense of purpose are the result of depleted emotional resources or mental energy. *Depersonalization* is manifested by a negative and cynical attitude toward service recipients. They are treated as objects rather than people. Depersonalization is a defence mechanism that follows emotional exhaustion. *Personal accomplishment* is similar to self-efficacy, namely the worker's ability to evaluate his or her achievements positively. Reduced personal accomplishment, on the other hand, is accompanied by increased feelings of helplessness, loss of control, and negative evaluation of one's work (Bakker et al., 2006; Lee & Ashforth, 1990; Lent & Schwartz, 2012; Maslach, 2003).

Hence, we assume that burnout would generate a reduced capacity to exhibit energetic effort, devotion or engagement at work.

*H3: A negative relationship will be found between burnout and JE.*

Neurotic individuals, characterized by negative feelings, mood swings, anxieties, and insecurity, would have a greater tendency toward dissociation, emotional exhaustion, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Extraverted individuals, characterized by assertiveness, positivity, control, and self-confidence, focus on the positive aspect of their experiences (Bakker et al., 2006); thus, their sense of personal achievement would reduce burnout. Furthermore, research has shown that the personal traits most consistent with burnout are neuroticism and extraversion (Bakker et al., 2006; Lent & Schwartz, 2012; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

*H4: A positive relationship will be found between neuroticism and burnout.*

*H5: A negative relationship will be found between extraversion and burnout.*

We put forward that the relationship between personality traits and JE is not only direct, but also indirectly mediated by the employee's degree of burnout. That is to say, personality traits might increase or reduce burnout, which, in turn, would reduce job engagement.

*H6: The relationship between personality traits (neuroticism and extraversion) and JE will be mediated by the degree of burnout.*

### *Organizational Justice*

The construct 'organizational justice' generally refers to three specific components, namely, distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2001). Traditionally, the notion of *distributive justice* is based on a general theory of fairness (Adams, 1965), which offers a broad explanation of the motives underlying the actions of individuals. The individual worker needs to believe that fairness exists in the allocation of rewards in the organization – such as an acceptable balance between employees' contributions and their compensation (Leventhal, 1980), compared to peers whose jobs are comparable to theirs (Cropanzano, Prehar, & Chen, 2002). In a similar fashion, *procedural justice* relates to perceived fairness in the processes through which decisions are reached (Folger & Folger, 1998). The third component of justice perception is *interactional justice*, which is defined by the degree to which employees are treated fairly and respectfully and given proper explanations regarding decisions reached (Tyler & Bies, 1990).

Research has shown that employees who perceive the workplace as fair are more satisfied with their work, are more committed to the organization, and are more likely to rely on their superiors and to display a greater desire to retain their jobs (e.g. Loi, Yang & Diefendorf, 2009). In contrast, employees who perceive injustice at work engender negative attitudes toward their organizations, suffer from reduced personal welfare, and achieve lower levels of daily functioning (Bobocel & Hafer, 2007). Specifically, research has pointed constantly to a positive association between perceptions of organizational justice and OCB (e.g. Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Scott & LePine, 2007).

A perception of organizational justice generates greater satisfaction with work, higher commitment to the organization, and more willingness to invest beyond what is expected; hence, the degree of one's job engagement would increase.

*H7: A positive relationship will be found between organizational justice and JE.*

### *Organizational Politics*

Organizational politics are the perceptions of employees of power games by individuals or groups within the organization, designed to protect and/or enhance self or collective goals, which run counter to broader organizational goals or interests of other individuals. These "games" include concealing valuable information, lobbying, favouritism, and taking credit for others' contributions (Elron & Vigoda-Gadot, 2006).

Previous research has shown that organizational politics are correlated with a variety of variables, such as distrust in the leader (Poon, 2006), fewer interactions with co-workers (Hochwarter, Witt, & Kacmar, 2000), feeling unable to overcome an organizational challenge (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006), low performance (Samad, 2011), low job engagement (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997), low job satisfaction, organizational injustice and higher turnover intentions (Harris, Andrews, & Kacmar, 2007), increased job anxiety and stress (Vigoda 2002), less voluntary contributions to the organization (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007), lesser feeling of independence in the organization (Conner, 2006), lower organization commitment and low quality leader-member exchange (Kimura, 2013), and bad perceptions of the management (Yilmaz, 2014).

As such, it is viable that when employees perceive enough politics in their organization, it will harm their justice perceptions, and decrease their fairness perceptions as well. We postulate that an employee, who knows that the goals and interests in his or her work environment are less just, will feel that there is less justice and less equal treatment, and that would reduce their justice perceptions.

*H8: A negative relationship will be found between organizational politics and organizational justice.*

An employee, who perceives such political interests in the organization, will find it difficult to be involved, satisfied, or engaged in his or her work. One would be disturbed by the political games on all sides, and would not be able to be immersed fully in one's work.

*H9: A negative relationship will be found between organizational politics and JE.*

#### *Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX)*

LMX theory focuses on the exchange between leaders and followers (Scandura, 1999). The nature of this relationship determines the distribution of resources and time between managers and employees (Yukl & Fu, 1999). A high quality relationship is characterized by a high level of information exchange, trust, respect, fondness, extensive support, interactions, mutual influence and numerous rewards. A low quality relationship is characterized by a low level of trust, formal relations, one-directional influence, limited support, a low level of interaction, and fewer rewards (Bauer & Green, 1996). High LMX also mandates mutual trust, support, and loyalty between leader and employees (Asgari, Silong, Ahmad & Abu Sama, 2008). Accordingly, in low LMX the manager-employee relationship is basically supervisory and less personal in nature.

Liden, Wayne, and Sparrow's (2000) findings show that the quality of interpersonal relationships between managers and employees has an impact on the employees' sense of empowerment. Gomez and Rosen (2001) also found a significant relationship between LMX and employees' empowerment. Members of the in-group feel more empowered, since the manager, by delegating authority and responsibilities to members of the in-group, grants them support that is more emotional and includes them in the decision-making process. Moreover, employees who maintain high LMX demonstrate greater responsibility toward the organization, and therefore contribute more. When dealing with a high LMX, managers aim at the highest social needs of their employees, thus encouraging them to place the collective interest above and beyond short-lived gratitude (Uhl-Bien, 2003). Studies also show that the manager's fairness can create positive social exchanges (Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002).

LMX theory is fundamentally sociological, and based on the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which establishes human relationships on diverse exchanges. These exchanges may be economic, social, political, or emotional. Reciprocal relationships based on these types of exchange build a relationship between two parties on diverse levels of intensity, depending on the type of exchange. The LMX creates a relationship of mutual influence, while negotiating the role of the follower within the organization. The more the relationship develops, the more the freedom of action granted to the follower can expand. This freedom of action empowers employees. This notion is reinforced by Liden et al. (2000), who found a significant relationship between leader-follower exchange and employees' perception of their level of empowerment. Thus, it would seem that the leader-follower exchange is positively related to positive attitudes toward work, such as job engagement.

*H10: A positive relationship will be found between LMX and JE.*

#### *Leadership Styles*

Leader-follower outcomes are a specific type of performance that has received extensive attention (Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007). Furthermore, within the leadership literature many studies examine connections between traits and leader behaviours (De Hoogh, Den Hartog, & Koopman, 2005; Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005). However, there has been less work addressing the relationships between individual values and leadership behaviours (Szabo, Reber, Weibler, Brodbeck, & Wunderer, 2002). Also, whereas existing studies have examined connections between leadership behaviours and value structures, these connections have frequently been examined from the perspective of shared values (Schaubroeck, Lam, & Cha, 2007). With exception of several recent studies (i.e. Kark & Van Dijk, 2007),

there seems to be a need in the leadership literature to address the influence of personal values on managers' leadership styles.

In recent years, the balance of development in leadership theory has focused on a broad range of behaviours, to include both transactional and transformational leadership behaviours (De Hoogh et al., 2005; Offermann, & Hellmann, 1997).

Moreover, there is an increasing amount of research that suggests that both transactional and transformational leadership behaviours are related to effective leadership (Antonakis & House, 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transactional leadership behaviours, which focus on clarifying employee role and task requirements, providing performance-based reinforcement, and assisting employee self-regulation through goal setting and feedback seeking behaviours, often result in successful leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1991). However, transformational leadership behaviours, which are primarily focused on creating developmental changes in followers' values, personal identity, and psychological needs, can offer a contribution above and beyond transactional leadership behaviour (Antonakis & House, 2002). It is likely that this effect occurs through an emphasis on intrinsic motivation, which serves to augment the extrinsic elements within transactional leadership approaches.

Transactional leadership is based on differential rewards, meeting objectives and results, and we therefore assume that it would enhance the relationship between LMX and job engagement.

*H11: Transactional leadership will enhance the relationship between LMX and JE.*

Transformational leadership is based on a leader who is a role model, a mentor and guide, thus maximizing the employee's potential. We therefore assume that it would enhance the relationship between LMX and job engagement.

*H12: Transformational leadership will enhance the relationship between LMX and JE.*

## **STUDY 1**

Participants in Study 1 were employees of various organizations. This study aimed to examine personal traits as antecedents of job engagement, mediated by burnout, using two of the Big-Five personality traits: extraversion and neuroticism.

### **Method**

*Participants.* The participants were 139 employees, 42.3% males and 57.7% females, between the ages of 20 and 60 ( $M = 33.67$ ,  $SD = 8.39$ ), with tenure ranging between 0 and 43 years ( $M = 7.32$ ,  $SD = 7.85$ ). 44.2% were employed in a managerial position, and 55.8% did not hold a managerial position. 20.9% of the participants worked in the education sector, 47.2% in the services sectors, 4.9% in high-tech and engineering, 9.2% in the medical sector, and 17.8% in other sectors.

*Procedure and measures.* The electronic version of the research questionnaire was sent to many workers in various organizations utilizing both email and Facebook platforms. Those who wished to participate and answer the questionnaire, replied that they did and were included in the total sample.

*Job Engagement* was assessed using the Job Engagement Scale (JES; Rich et al., 2010), consisting of 18 Likert-type items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), e.g.: "I strive as hard as I can to complete my job". Cronbach's alpha of the original questionnaire was .95 (Rich et al., 2010). In the present study, there was adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .82$ ,  $M = 5.07$ ,  $SD = 0.52$ ).

*Big-Five traits.* To assess personal traits, we used the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrea, 1992), which consists of 60 Likert-type items. However, in the present study only two traits – extraversion and neuroticism – were examined, and thus we used only 24 items of the original 60, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree): 12 items for extraversion (e.g.: "I'm a talkative person") and 12 for neuroticism (e.g.: "I often feel inferior to others"). For each trait, half of the items were

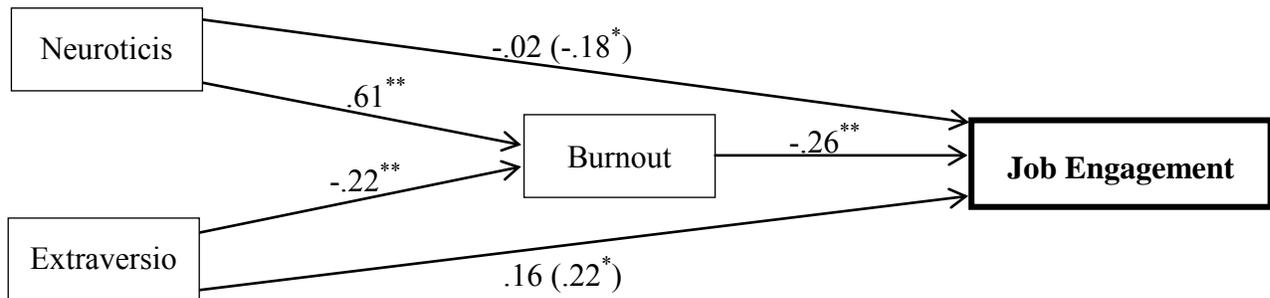
reverse-coded. In the present study, there was adequate reliability for the extraversion trait ( $\alpha = .71$ ,  $M = 4.11$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ), as well as for neuroticism ( $\alpha = .75$ ,  $M = 2.79$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ).

*Burnout* was assessed using Maslach's Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach & Jackson, 1981), consisting of 22 Likert-type items ranging from 1 (a few times a year) to 6 (every day), e.g.: "I feel emotionally exhausted by work". Cronbach's alpha of the original questionnaire ranged from .71 to .90 (Sabbah et al., 2012). In the present study, the reliability was high ( $\alpha = .95$ ,  $M = 2.30$ ,  $SD = 0.89$ ).

### Results and Conclusions

We performed a multiple linear regression analysis in order to test the model. Extraversion negatively predicted burnout ( $\beta = -.22$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and neuroticism positively predicted burnout ( $\beta = .61$ ,  $p < .01$ ), as shown in Figure 2. To test the model further, we employed a two-step hierarchical regression. In the first step, we tested the direct effects of extraversion and neuroticism on JE, without the addition of burnout. Extraversion positively predicted JE ( $\beta = .22$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and neuroticism negatively predicted JE ( $\beta = -.18$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In the second step, after including burnout as the mediator, no significant relationship was found between extraversion and neuroticism with JE ( $\beta = -.02$ ,  $p > .05$ , and  $\beta = .16$ ,  $p > .05$ , accordingly). Moreover, burnout negatively predicted JE ( $\beta = -.26$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Using Sobel's Z test to test the significance of the indirect paths, there is a significant mediation effect in the extraversion-through-burnout path ( $Z = 1.87$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and a significant mediation effect in the neuroticism-through-burnout path ( $Z = 2.19$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These results indicate that burnout fully mediates the relationship between neuroticism and JE, and between extraversion and JE.

**FIGURE 2**  
**REASERCH MODEL FOR STUDY 1**



*Note: The standardized regression coefficients are depicted on the paths of figure 2. The direct effects are depicted in parenthesis.*

## STUDY 2

Participants in study 2 were employees of various organizations. This study aimed to examine perceptual-organizational variables as antecedents (perceptions of organizational politics and justice) of job engagement.

### Method

*Participants.* The data were collected from 116 respondents in the work market, of which 58% were low-level employees, 32% mid-level managers and 10% senior managers. The sample included 38% females and 62% males. About 10% had a high school diploma, 3% held a sub-engineer's degree, and the rest had a university education.

*Procedure and measures.* The participants for this study were asked to fill out a paper-and-pencil questionnaire regarding "employee's attitudes towards work". The participants were expected to give honest answers. After completing the measures, all participants were debriefed.

*Organizational Justice* was measured using a 20-item questionnaire (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993) on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), e.g.: "I consider my work load to be quite fair". Cronbach's alpha of the original questionnaire was .87. In the present study, we found high reliability ( $\alpha = .93$ ,  $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ).

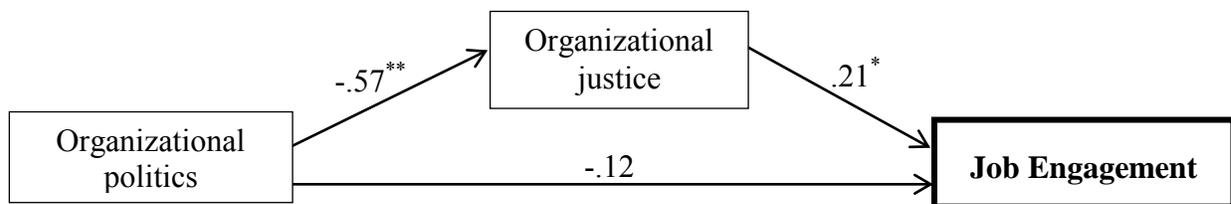
*Job Engagement* was assessed using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, a 17-item questionnaire (UWES; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), e.g.: "I'm immersed in my work". Cronbach's alpha of the original questionnaire was .85. In the present study, we found high reliability ( $\alpha = .94$ ,  $M = 4.31$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ).

*Organizational Politics* was measured with a 14-item questionnaire (Kacmar & Carison, 1997), on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not true) to 6 (very true). Half of the items were reverse-scored. Cronbach's alpha of the original questionnaire was .87. In the present study, there was adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .83$ ,  $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ).

### Results and Conclusions

We performed a multiple linear regression analysis in order to test the model. No significant relationship was found between organizational politics perceptions and JE ( $\beta = -.12$ ,  $p > .05$ ), therefore organizational justice cannot be mediate the relationship between politics and JE. Organizational politics were negatively correlated with organizational justice ( $\beta = -.57$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Moreover, organizational justice were positively correlated with JE ( $\beta = .21$ ,  $p < .05$ ), see Figure 3.

**FIGURE 3**  
**REASERCH MODEL FOR STUDY 2**



Note: The standardized regression coefficients are depicted on the paths of figure 3.

### STUDY 3

Participants in study 3 were employees in different organizations. This study aimed to examine whether leadership style (transactional vs. transformational) moderates the relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX) and JE.

#### Method

*Participants.* The participants were 120 employees, 61.67% males and 38.33% females, between the ages of 26 and 73 ( $M = 39.80$ ), with an average tenure of 8.10 years. 53.33% of them are ordinary employees, 35.83% hold interim management jobs, and 10.83% are positioned in top managerial jobs. 36.67% of the participants have a matriculation certificate, 9.17% are practical engineers, 43.33% have a BA degree, 9.17% have an MA degree, and 1.17% have a PhD degree.

*Procedure and measures.* The participants of this study were asked to fill out a paper-and-pencil questionnaire regarding "employees' attitudes towards work". The participants were expected to give honest answers. After completing the measures, all participants were debriefed.

*Job Engagement* was assessed using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale consisting of 17 items (UWES; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003), on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), e.g.: "I'm immersed in my work". In the present study, there was adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .76$ ,  $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = 0.42$ ).

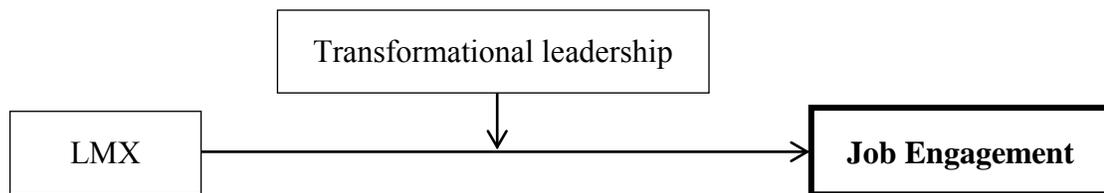
*LMX* was measured using a 7-item questionnaire (LMX7; Grean & Uhl-Bien, 1995), on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 6 (always), e.g.: "Do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?". In the present study, there was moderate reliability ( $\alpha = .64$ ,  $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = 0.56$ ).

*Leadership Style* was assessed using a 36-item questionnaire (MLQ; Avolio & Bass, 1991), on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). *Transactional leadership* was gauged by 12 items, e.g.: "Your leader assists you based on effort". In the present study, we found very low reliability ( $\alpha = .35$ ). *Transformational leadership* was measured by 24 items, e.g.: "Your leader teaches and coaches" (Cronbach's alpha = .96). In the present study, there was adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .79$ ,  $M = 3.27$ ,  $SD = 0.34$ ). The low reliability of *Transactional leadership* was deemed too low to be applicable for further analysis. As such, only the transformational leadership items were retained and used in further analyses.

### Results and Conclusions

We performed hierarchical regression analysis in order to test the moderation effect of transformational leadership style on the relationship between LMX and JE (see Figure 4). As such, there was need to center the predictor and the moderator variables first.

**FIGURE 4  
REASERCH MODEL FOR STUDY 3**



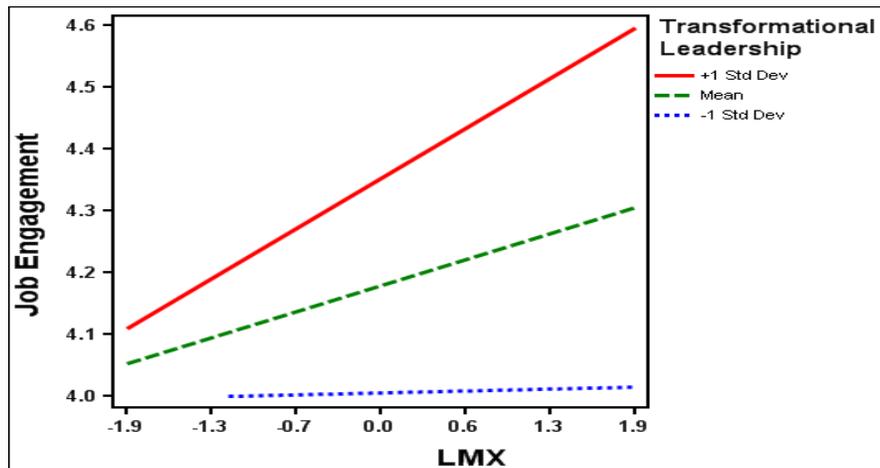
The interaction effect was statistically significant ( $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < .05$ ), suggesting that there is a moderation effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between LMX and JE (see Table 1). The interaction is depicted graphically in Figure 5, which indicated that only for *high* level transformational leadership is the relationship between LMX and JE *positive* and *significant* ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $p < .01$ ), while for low and moderate transformational leadership, this relationship is not statistically significant.

**TABLE 1  
STANDARDIZED REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS AND MODEL SUMMARY FOR  
PREDICTING JE (STUDY 3)**

Predictors	$\beta$	$t$	Model summary
LMX	.09	0.88	$F(3, 114) = 16.30^{**}$ $R^2 = .30$
Transformational leadership	.42	4.13 <sup>**</sup>	
LMX*Transformational leadership	.19	2.33 <sup>*</sup>	

Note: <sup>\*</sup> $p < .05$ , <sup>\*\*</sup> $p < .01$

**FIGURE 5**  
**INTERACTION GRAPH (STUDY 3)**



**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

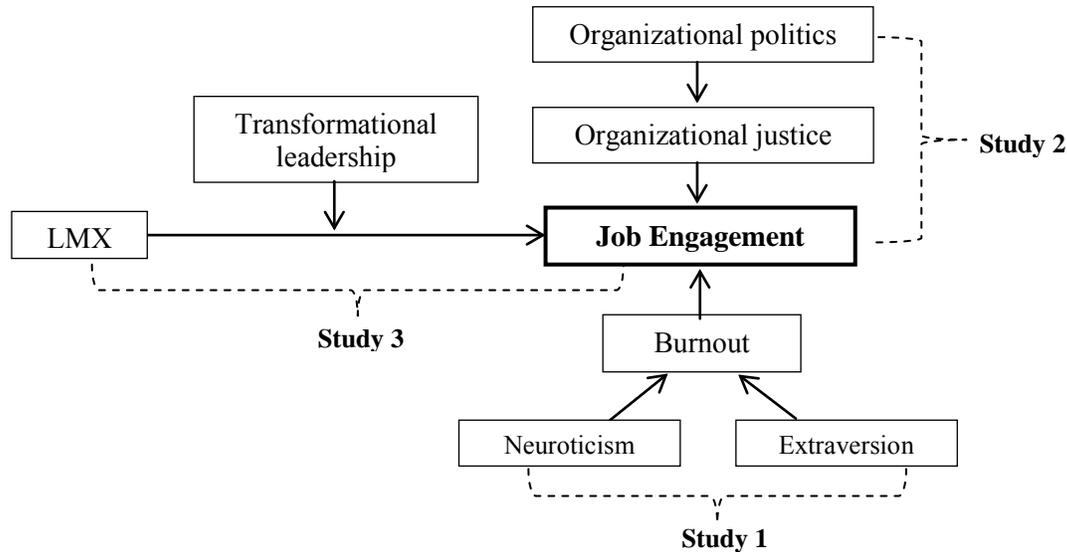
Study 1 found that the examined personality traits – neuroticism and extraversion – are indirectly linked to JE by means of burnout, with no significant direct link between personality traits and JE. Because of the abovementioned personality of neurotic individuals they are thus prone to increased burnout, which is negatively related to job engagement. In contrast, extraverted individuals are less likely to experience burnout. These findings are consistent with previous research, which emphasized the importance of employees' emotional energy and positive feelings toward work which fulfils psychological needs and motivates to greater investment and job engagement (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Judge et al., 2001), especially the effects of one's personality on work-related behaviours (Staw & Cohen-Charash, 2005).

Study 2 shows, in contrary to our hypothesis, no significant correlation between organizational politics and JE. Furthermore, those who are involved in organizational politics and benefit from it would have no reason to reduce their job engagement. This follows the work of Porter, Angle, and Allen (2003), which shows that organizational politics could be deemed normative, as the employee interprets the 'political reality', but it depends on time and place, and, in any case, the identification and interpretation of politics and its effect on other issues is procedural. This study has also shown that perceptions of organizational politics negatively correlated with perceptions of organizational justice. The employee who understands that decision-making processes in the organization are based on political considerations, interprets it as organizational injustice (see Poon, 2006), and eventually is less engaged in the job (see Cropanzano et al., 1997). This is supported by our study so as perceptions of organizational justice are positively correlated with JE.

Study 3 reveals that transformational leadership style moderates the relationship between LMX and JE. When the leader is perceived as high in transformational leadership style, the correlation between LMX and JE is positive and significant. Otherwise, no significant correlation was found between LMX and JE. A good relationship between the manager and subordinates does not necessarily increase job engagement, but if the manager is perceived as transformational, namely inspiring, empowering, guiding, and motivating, the employee is encouraged to become more engaged with the job. This finding is supported by previous research, which has shown that the perception of transformational leadership is related to satisfaction, motivation, performance, and so on (Hamstra, Van Yperen, Wisse, & Sassenberg, 2014; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Figure 6 presents the revised research model, based on the findings of the three studies.

**FIGURE 6**  
**PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDINAL ANTECEDENTS OF JE – OVERALL**  
**ADJUSTED MODEL**



### Limitations

This research has a number of limitations. First, the model was examined by means of three separate studies rather than one comprehensive study, because there are many factors that relate the main variable – JE. Examining the entire model in one study is impossible. This limitation prevents us from examining the relative strength of each of the variable to predict JE. Second, like many other field studies in organizational psychology, we were unable to establish causal effects. Third, Study 1 used one tool (JES) to measure JE, while Study 2 and Study 3 used a different tool (UWES) to assess the same variable.

### Contribution of this Research

The present research adds to the existing body of knowledge on JE concerning the following aspects: personality traits, perceptions of work, perceptions of managers, and burnout. We have generally studied antecedents of JE in an attempt to clarify the intricate associations of this issue.

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