

# How Employee Well-being Mediates the Relationship between Employee Experience and Work Engagement?

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of employee experience on work engagement. A questionnaire consisting of both open-ended and multiple-choice items was administered to 308 respondents working in seven main insurance companies operating in Turkey. Employee experience is divided into three dimensions: the perceived importance of managers, work meaningfulness, and career-focused experience. According to the results of this study, employee experience has an important effect on work engagement. Employee well-being partially mediates the relationship between employee experience and work engagement. The importance of the research is that it shows that employee experience practices and welfare policies implemented by companies will ultimately result in work engagement. We emphasize the importance of providing employees with a positive experience throughout their journey, from recruitment to post-employment, as it leads to positive outcomes at both an individual and organizational level.*

**Keywords:** *employee experience; work engagement; employee well-being; human resources.*

**How to cite:** Özçinar, B., Esen, E., Karaca Varinlioğlu, S., & Başar, D. (2024). How employee well-being mediates the relationship between employee experience and work engagement?. *Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională*, 16(3), 352-374. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/16.3/897>

## Introduction

When analyzing companies' strategic approach to human resources, it is clear that the employee experience is an important factor in ensuring engagement at work (da Costa & Loureiro, 2018; Lemon, 2019). Employee experience refers to all the experiences, emotions and achievements of an employee from the recruitment to the leaving of an employee (Ghosh & Itam, 2020). The employee experience focuses on meaningful work, satisfaction and a strong alignment of work and personal priorities and projects (Cornelius et al., 2022). Employee experience is necessary because the increasing demand for qualified employees, the desire of employees to do meaningful work, problems such as increasing staff turnover rates, and the efforts of companies to attract new talents and protect their human capital make employee experience necessary. Employee experience is an engagement approach used by employers to achieve better work engagement outcomes and to increase employee satisfaction, productivity and engagement by providing positive experiences at work (Itam & Ghosh, 2020; Tucker, 2020). It can encourage employees to be more engagement about their work, improve the performance of organizations and provide competitive advantage (Saks & Gruman, 2014).

The experiences offered to employees by organizations are important determinants of work engagement. Factors such as perceived organizational support, rewards and recognition, collaborative leadership, social support, good relationships in the work environment, and career development are important for work engagement (Saks, 2006; Kumar & Sia, 2012; Muthuveloo et al., 2013; Saks, 2019; Liu et al., 2022). The efforts created by companies can lead to a more engaged workforce, which is beneficial for both employees and the organization as a whole. Engaged employees show more discretionary effort and are more likely to contribute to performance and innovation, resulting in faster time to market and higher customer satisfaction (Thompson et al., 2015; Turner, 2019; Saks & Gruman, 2020). Work engagement positively affects employee performance by strengthening emotional bonds with the organization and encouraging positive actions towards the organizations goals (Tanwar, 2017). Organizations that focus on creating well-being at work and building an internal experience for their workforce tend to have more engaged employees who are more likely to take ownership of their role and contribute positively to the organization. Ensuring employee well-being and developing an internal experience is very important for organizational success. When employees are well-being, they take more ownership of their

roles and focus more on the success of the company (da Costa & Loureiro, 2019). When employees' well-being levels are high, they become more engagement (Wieneke et al., 2019).

The study focuses on the impact of the employee experience on work engagement and the role of employee well-being in the workplace. The Harvard Model of Beer et al. (1984) was the basis for this analysis. According to this model, companies should prioritize stakeholder interests to be successful. As employees are the most important stakeholders that lead companies to deliver successful outcomes, it is important to provide them with a positive experience. Employee well-being was chosen because it can significantly affect work engagement (Shuck & Reio, 2014; Rahi, 2022). Understanding this relationship is crucial for organizations looking to improve their performance and foster a more productive and innovative workforce. In addition to contributing to the academic discourse, our manuscript will also offer practical implications for organization leaders and human resource practitioners aiming to optimize employee potential.

Although there are various studies on the effect of employee experience on work engagement, there are no studies analyzing the mediating factors in this effect (Anitha, 2014; Lemon, 2019; Tucker, 2020). Companies that want to have more engaged employees need to identify factors that can support them when designing employee experiences. Positive employee experience practices designed by companies increase the well-being of employees (Vignoli et al., 2021; Batat, 2022). Since high employee well-being is associated with high work engagement (Shuck & Reio, 2014; Rahi, 2022), employee well-being was considered as a mediating variable. The study provides an approach that companies should focus more on providing positive experiences to their employees and policies that enhance employee well-being when shaping their human resources strategies. Ensuring work engagement is very important in the insurance sector due to the importance of gaining customer satisfaction and trust, the intensity of competition between companies and complex regulations. It emphasizes that companies should focus more on employee experience practices and policies that increase employee well-being while shaping their human resources strategies.

## **Theory and hypothesis development**

In the world of human resources, the employee experience term refers to “the sum of an employee’s feelings across their interactions with an employer” (Tucker, 2020, 183). The Harvard Model, developed by Beer et al. in 1984, expresses a relationship demonstrating that situational factors and

stakeholder interests influence human resource management policy decisions and that these decisions lead to human resource outcomes such as commitment, which have long-term effects such as individual well-being (Beer et al., 2015). It encompasses the relationship between humans and their external environment as well as internal organizational factors (Rok & Mulej, 2014). The Harvard model is an inclusive model that sets out both the consequences and the premises of human resources policies to contribute to the development of these policies that play a role in achieving more positive outcomes and satisfying stakeholder interests (Beer et al., 1984). Harvard Model is important in terms of employee experience as it focuses on work systems and its effects on employees (Babalola et al., 2018). The model has been used because it addresses employees' emotional motivations such as acquisition, attachment, and passion (Nohria et al., 2008). Using the context of experiential theory, Batat (2022) brought attention to the necessity for employee experience research and expanded it to the human resources literature. In accordance with research requirements, unlike Batat's (2022) study, the current paper evaluates employee experience within the scope of the Harvard model, which is "the most popular model of the strategic human resource management process, that is, human resource activities" (Marzdashti et al., 2022). As Rok & Mulej (2014) stated, the model is the most prevalent and influential example of HRM models since it treats employees as resources but distinguishes them from other resources by considering them, significant stakeholders. The purpose of this research is to make a contribution to the existing model by illuminating the role of "employee experience practices" in the selection of human resources policies on "work engagement", which is an output of human resources, and "well-being", which is one of the long-term outcomes.

### ***The Effect of Employee Experience on Work Engagement***

Work engagement is the deep commitment and passion that employees have for their jobs and the companies they work for (Keller et al., 2020). Employee experience is also considered the work engagement approach, which has become an issue that businesses cannot ignore in recent years. For employers, employee experience plays an important role as a precursor to work engagement (Tucker, 2020). Employee experience, which has become a very important concept for companies that attach importance to employer branding and aim to offer a strong employee value proposition, is defined as the holistic perceptions obtained from interactions at all contact points throughout the employee's journey that starts before joining the organization and continues after leaving the organization (Plaskoff, 2017).

While work engagement deals with what has already been done and how satisfied employees are, employee experience is about design thinking, journey mapping, and creating a fully customized human experience (Sivathanu, 2019).

Engagement was first defined by Kahn (1990) as "the contribution employees make to their roles in relation to their work and the physical, cognitive and emotional expressions they make in the process". Under this definition, it is not enough for the worker to be physically present while performing his or her duties. At the same time, it must be present both cognitively and emotionally. Schaufeli et al (2002) define work engagement as achieving a satisfactory and positive mood at work and express it as the opposite of burnout.

Employees who have a positive employee experience have higher levels of engagement, according to Maylett and Wride (2017). Human resources practices that focus on employee experience such as training, compensation, job enhancement affect employee well-being (Rahi, 2022). It is seen that businesses with engaged employees are more profitable, grow faster, and have lower costs and employee turnover rates. Jalaja & Padashetty (2018) revealed that the organizational climate created within the enterprise, the implementation of internal policies, and the leadership style creating a positive employee experience led to work engagement. It has been stated that the positive employee experiences of the companies help them to retain talented employees and attract potential employees. According to Malik et al. (2023), employee experience practices improve work engagement, and this leads to increased employee productivity. The study defined dimensions related to work experience as a sense of belonging, a partnership between company and individual goals, and a sense of achievement, happiness and excitement. In line with these studies, the following hypothesis has been developed:

*H<sub>1</sub>: Employee experience positively affects work engagement.*

### ***The Role of Employee Well-Being in the Relationship Between Employee Experience and Work Engagement***

Well-being is defined as experiencing positive emotions about one's own life more often than negative emotions and getting high life satisfaction. The state of well-being is not only about eliminating negative situations. It is also about experiencing positive situations (Myers & Diener, 1995). Well-being consists of variables that cover a person's physical health, beliefs, social relationships, living conditions, and relationship with the environment (Vignoli et al., 2021).

Companies have begun investing in improving the well-being of their workforce as part of improving the employee experience. Employee wellbeing and engagement, one of the key research areas of positive psychology, are at the top of the list of possible attitudes that can result from a positive employee experience. In the study conducted by BCG & WFPMA (2021) with 6600 participants in 113 countries, it is seen that employee well-being and work engagement are among the top priorities of human resources today and in the future.

Employee experience practices of companies increase employee well-being (Lessire, 2021). Vignoli et al. (2021) stated that employee experience practices created using the design thinking approach will increase employee well-being. Batat (2022) established a framework that three dimensions of employee experience, personal, social, and cultural, affect employee well-being. The personal dimension consists of cognitive, affective, conative, and spiritual values. The social dimension consists of organizational socialization and sharing, and the cultural dimension consists of workplace symbolism and organizational narratives.

Employee well-being affects the behaviors that lead to work engagement with the job and the organization (Rasool et al., 2021). It has been noted that employee well-being is important to the development of sustainable levels of employee work (Marin-Garcia et al., 2020). He et al. (2019) state that employees with high engagement levels may have a broader source of employee well-being benefits. In the “2021 Global Well-being Survey”, it is stated that employee well-being is effective in work engagement, attracting new talents, and retaining employees (AON, 2021). For this reason, businesses need to create a strategy that prioritizes employee well-being at every stage of the employee journey.

Schaufeli et al. (2002) revealed that employee well-being is an important predictor to work engagement. Work engagement leads to higher job and life satisfaction, psychological and physical well-being, and reduces job stress and burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001; Schaufeli et al., 2009; Demerouti et al., 2010). Employee experience directly impacts employee engagement and well-being. Work engagement leads to increased employee well-being (Lessire, 2021). As a result of the studies in the literature, the following hypothesis has been developed:

*H<sub>2</sub>: Employee well-being mediates the relationship between employee experience and work engagement.*

The effect of employee experience on employee engagement and the mediating role of employee well-being in this relationship were analysed. Employee experience is the independent variable and consists of three

dimensions. Work engagement is the dependent variable and employee well-being is the mediating variable. The research model is shown in Figure 1.

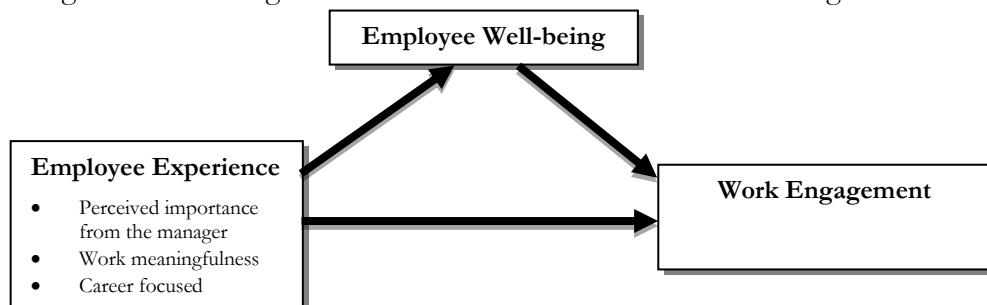


Figure 1: Research Model

## Methodology

### *Participants and procedure*

The research population consists of employees of companies operating in the insurance sector in Turkey. In this context, the research was conducted with a sample of 308 people. Participants were asked various demographic questions and were given a multiple choice questionnaire to measure the research variables. The majority of the participants were women (62.3%), aged between 35-44 years (45.1%), bachelor's degree graduates (81.5%), working in Istanbul (34.7%) and working between 6-10 years in the company (36.4%).

### *Measures*

Data were collected through questions focusing on employee experience, employee passion and employee well-being, which were designed to test the hypotheses above. Employee experience measured with a questionnaire consisting of 32 multiple-choice statements. The questionnaire was subjected to a test before it was distributed and expert opinions were obtained. Participants were given options on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' for items on the research scales. These statements aim to measure the level of employee experience and its impact on the empirical study. In addition, employees were asked various questions about their expectations from their employers and asked to answer these questions. We consulted with experts in the field during the preparation of the questions.

Work engagement was measured with the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2006). There are 9 items on the scale. 3 items measure vigor (eg, "I feel very energetic at

work.”), 3 items commitment (eg, “My work inspires me.”), and 3 items concentration (eg, “I am focused on my work.”).

The formula "Satisfaction with Life + Positive Affects - Negative Affects" will be used in the measurement of employee well-being. “Satisfaction with Life Scale” consists of five statements developed by Diener et al. (1985) and was used to measure general life satisfaction. The adaptation of the life satisfaction scale into Turkish was also done by Dagli & Baysal (2016). “Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale” was developed by Watson et al. (1988). The scale, which consists of 10 items reflecting positive effects and 10 items reflecting negative effects, was adapted into Turkish by Gencoz (2000).

In addition, various descriptive questions were asked, such as gender, age, educational status, city of work, and working experience in the company in order to analyze the demographic of the research employees.

## Findings

### *Validity and Reliability Analysis*

Respondents were asked various statements to measure their employee experience, engagement, and well-being and were asked to rate these statements. The validity and reliability of the scales used in the study were tested by means of confirmatory factor analysis. The results regarding the items of in the Employee Experience Scale were found to be adequate  $\chi^2/df= 3.053$ , CFI = 0.903, IFI = 0.897 and root mean RMSEA = 0.071. As a result of these values, research variables have acceptable fit values (Munro, 2005; Wang & Wang, 2019). Following a confirmatory factor analysis, it was found that the Employee Experience Scale consists of 3 factors: perceived importance of the managers, work meaningfulness, and career-focused experience. The scale has sufficient validity and reliability values and is shown in Table 1.



**Table 1:** Validity and Reliability of the Employee Experience

	Item	CR	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
Perceived importance (15 items)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager encourages me to give feedback.</li> <li>• I feel comfortable giving feedback to my manager.</li> <li>• Managers respect.</li> <li>• My manager supports me in my job.</li> <li>• I think my manager gives importance to my work.</li> <li>• Managers care about my opinion.</li> <li>• I think my managers are transparent</li> <li>• I think my managers are reliable.</li> <li>• I think there is a positive change as a result of the feedback.</li> <li>• I think my manager took an action as a result of the feedback he received.</li> <li>• I think I can give feedback to my manager.</li> <li>• My manager sets clear goals.</li> <li>• I think I get enough feedback about my job from my manager.</li> <li>• I am satisfied with the current feedback system.</li> <li>• I am seen as a significant contributor by my manager and I am treated accordingly.</li> </ul>	0,933	0,661	0,816

Work meaningfulness (19 items)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I clearly understand the purpose of my company.</li> <li>• I clearly understand my role in achieving goals.</li> <li>• After 2 years, I see myself working here.</li> <li>• I am having fun at work.</li> <li>• I think my job provides me with a sense of meaning and purpose.</li> <li>• I think that my colleagues and I are connected and respectful to each other.</li> <li>• I think I've grown professionally at work.</li> <li>• I see my company's goals in line with my own.</li> <li>• I think my job is interesting.</li> <li>• I think I have all the resources to do my job.</li> <li>• I think my co-workers respect each other.</li> <li>• I do my work efficiently, with flexibility and positive integration into my life.</li> <li>• I am happy with the balance between work and private life.</li> <li>• I think my work is appreciated enough.</li> <li>• I can't wait to come to work.</li> <li>• I am happy to work with my team.</li> <li>• I am satisfied with my fringe benefits (health insurance, personal accident insurance, communication allowance, food and roadside assistance, etc.).</li> <li>• I feel that my work is accepted and respected.</li> <li>• I am satisfied with my salary.</li> </ul>	0,897	0,612	0,798
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Career focused (15 items)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I clearly understand the purpose of my company.</li> <li>• My company has a purpose that aligns with my goals and processes to which I can contribute.</li> <li>• I think that during the recruitment process, a clear and concise statement was made regarding the company's expectations.</li> <li>• I find the current employee development efforts positive.</li> <li>• At the company I work for, I am given incentives and opportunities that help my learning and growth process.</li> <li>• I don't think there is a difference between the culture displayed during the recruitment phase and the company culture.</li> <li>• I have clear information about my career and promotion process.</li> <li>• The company I work for has the resources I need to fulfill my responsibilities and be successful in my job.</li> <li>• My company's technology allows me to work efficiently.</li> <li>• I think that my company supports me about the problems I encountered during the onboarding process.</li> <li>• The people I work with; they trust and care for each other to create a collaborative and innovative working environment..</li> <li>• I feel welcome and belong in the company.</li> <li>• I think my company is a suitable place to develop my career.</li> <li>• My work environment; It is safe, comfortable and people-centered.</li> <li>• I am generally satisfied with the Human Resources practices and approach.</li> </ul>	0,895	0,633	0,843
$\chi^2= 3.053$ , CFI= 0.903, IFI= 0.897, RMSEA= 0.071				

Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) consists of nine items. The results regarding the items in the work engagement scale were found to be appropriate  $\chi^2/df= 2.783$ , CFI = 0.891, IFI = 0.878 and RMSEA = 0.073. As a result of these values, research variables have acceptable fit values and is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Validity and Reliability of the Work Engagement

	Item	CR	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
Work Engagement	• When I'm doing my work as a student, I feel full of energy.	0,947	0,751	0,837
	• I feel energetic and capable when I'm studying or going to class.			
	• I am enthusiastic about my studies.			
	• My studies inspire me.			
	• When I get up in the morning, I want to go to class.			
	• I feel happy when I study hard.			
	• I am proud of my studies.			
	• I immerse myself in my studies.			
	• I get carried away when I study.			
$\chi^2= 2.783$ , CFI= 0.891, IFI= 0.878, RMSEA= 0.073				

Composite reliability of 0.70 or higher (Hair et al., 2009) and AVE of 0.60 or higher (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) are recommended. Accordingly, the research scales have the necessary validity and reliability values. Table 3 shows the correlation analysis conducted to measure the relationships between the dimensions of employee experience, which are the research variables, and the levels of engagement and well-being of employees.

**Table 3:** Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

The Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	
<b>EX - Perceived importance of managers</b>	(1)	-					
<b>EX – Work meaningfulness</b>	(2)	0,799*	-				
<b>EX – Career focused experience</b>	(3)	0,805*	0,896*	-			
<b>Work Engagement</b>	(4)	0,630*	0,813*	0,665*	-		
<b>Life Satisfaction</b>	(5)	0,528*	0,698*	0,632*	0,732*	-	
<b>Positive &amp; Negative Affect</b>	(6)	0,473*	0,550*	0,505*	0,534*	0,539*	
<b>Mean</b>		4,066	4,038	3,834	4,269	3,742	3,951
<b>Standard Deviation</b>		0,989	0,817	0,955	0,825	0,967	1,103
<b>AVE</b>		0,661	0,612	0,633	0,751	0,683	0,613
<b>Composite Reliability</b>		0,933	0,897	0,895	0,947	0,915	0,877

\*There is correlation at a significance level of 0.01.

### ***The Effect of Employee Experience on Work Engagement***

The research hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. Table 4 shows perceived importance from the manager ( $\beta = 0.630$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), work meaningfulness ( $\beta = 0.813$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and career focus ( $\beta = 0.665$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) affect work engagement. All of the dimensions of the employee experience were found to have a high and significant impact on the engagement at work. Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> is supported by these results.

**Table 4:** Effects of Employee Experience on Work Engagement

Total Effects of Emp. Experience on Work Engagement	B	t	Sig.
Perceived importance from the manager	0,630	14,206	0,00
Work meaningfulness	0,813	24,394	0,00
Career focused	0,665	15,570	0,00

Table 5 shows the direct and indirect effect of employee experience on work engagement. According to the mediation regression analysis conducted via SPSS PROCESS Macro 4, it is understood that employee well-being plays a partial mediating role in the relationship between employee experience and work engagement. These results support the hypothesis H<sub>2</sub>.

**Table 5:** Direct and Indirect Effects of Employee Experience on Work Engagement

Total Effects of Emp. Experience on Work Engagement		Unstand. Coeff.	SE	LLCI	ULCI	
		0,7233	0,0366	0,6513	0,7953	
Direct Effects of Emp. Experience on Work Engagement						
		0,4760	0,0453	0,3869	0,5652	
Indirect Effects of Emp. Experience on Work Engagement						
Independent	Mediator	Dependent	Unstand. Coeff.	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Employee Experience	Employee Well-being	Work Engagement	0,2473	0,0421	0,1707	0,3359

Employees were asked various questions about their expectations from their employers, and they were asked to answer these questions. First, the employees were asked about the factors that kept them in their current

job. When these factors are considered within the scope of the organizational commitment classification made by Allen & Meyer (1990); It is seen that the majority of employees experience emotional attachment for reasons such as the feeling of belonging, loving the working environment, establishing good relations with colleagues and managers, doing their job with love, and providing social benefits. In addition, it has been observed that there are also employees who have continuance commitment due to career development opportunities, high financial opportunities, and fear of unemployment and who plan to stay in their current workplace. A small proportion of employees, on the other hand, experience normative commitment because they have already been working for the company for a long time and have gained experience.

Employees generally cited their career goals, their thinking that the sector would develop, the corporate structure of the company they worked for, the quality of the work done, the compatibility of the work itself, and the benefit to people as reasons for choosing their current job. It also shows that compulsory reasons such as wages, suitability for the department graduate, and unemployment cause some employees to choose the job.

When the suggestions of the employees about the existing training and development programs in the workplace are examined; In general, it is understood that they demand more and face-to-face training. It was also stated that this training should be prepared specifically for the development journey of the employee. Employees recommend that they be offered career planning opportunities, clear promotion processes, reasonable targets, and a motivation-enhancing training and development program. They demanded that insurance sector employees receive practical training on subjects such as banking, insurance, financial literacy, design thinking, and fund management.

Employees participating in the research were asked whether they were satisfied with their current job. Of the participants who answered the question, 251 stated that they were satisfied, 26 were partially satisfied, and 19 were not satisfied. It can be said that this is one of the factors affecting the high level of engagement and well-being of employees.

Employees were asked why feedback is important to them. The vast majority of employees stated that feedback is very important for self-development and the development of the company. It has been stated that feedback contributes to the elimination of deficiencies, recognizing and correcting errors. In addition, employees stated that when they receive feedback, they feel valued, raise awareness, gain motivation, and better understand where they are in the business process. The vast majority of employees stated that they receive feedback on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. It was also stated that

the feedback intervals differ according to the needs, the problems that arise, and the decrease in performance. However, approximately 20% of the employees stated that they did not receive feedback or that the feedback they received was rarely realized. Considering the above-mentioned positive outcomes of the feedback given to the employees, increasing and regularizing the frequency of feedback will benefit employees and businesses.

Employees were asked to describe their company's culture in three words and state their core values. The expressions most used by the employees while describing the company culture are trust, innovation, employee focused, respect, strength, success, and sensitivity. Core values are mostly expressed as reliability, employee focused, self-confidence, virtue, ethics, and being a strong company in its sector.

## **Discussions**

The study aims to identify the relationship between employee experience and work engagement. In addition to identifying the impact of employee experience on work engagement, the impact of employee well-being on this relationship is also discussed. In this context, a conceptual model was created by considering employee experience with the dimensions of perceived importance, work meaningfulness, and career focus. The decrease in work engagement today is one of the most important reasons for the establishment of this research model.

### ***Theoretical implications***

As a result of the research conducted with 308 participants working in the insurance company, various hypotheses were formed, and it was concluded that the research data accepted these hypotheses. First, it was concluded that employee experience positively affects work engagement. Previous studies have shown similar results, so our findings are consistent with the literature. Tucker (2020) states that having a positive employee experience makes a more engaged workforce. Durai & King (2018) found that employee experience is positively related to variables defined for work engagement, such as pride, engagement and satisfaction.

Work meaningfulness, perceived importance from the manager and career focused were identified as dimensions of employee experience. Employee experience is more focused on the importance that managers give to employees and the employee journey is designed accordingly (da Costa & Loureiro, 2018). Moreover, the meaningfulness that employees find in their work is one of the most important antecedents of positive experiences (Cohen-Meitar et al., 2009). Employees who experience that work is

meaningful increase their well-being and engagement levels (Dik et al., 2013; Whittington et al., 2017; Albrecht et al., 2021). At the same time, it has been stated that career-focused employment practices offered by companies to their employees are reflected as a positive experience and have a strong relationship with the psychological contract (Gaertner & Nollen, 1989).

In addition, it has been understood that employee well-being partially mediates the relationship between employee experience and work engagement. In many studies, it has been stated that the quality of life of individuals with a high level of well-being increases, and they are more energetic and more successful in work environments (Diener & Seligman, 2002; Lyubomirsky et al. 2005). According to De-la-Calle-Durán & Rodríguez-Sánchez (2021), conciliation, confidence, cultivation, compensation, and communication activities of companies are factors that increase employee well-being. Aiello & Tesi (2017) stated that employee well-being affects work engagement, and this effect is mediated by job resources. Considering that job resources are the physical, organizational, and social factors that enable the employee to achieve certain goals, employee experience is likely to increase work engagement through employee well-being.

### ***Practical implications***

Our research has several practical implications. The study is instructive both for employees' expectations of their employers and for managers to ensure work engagement. Companies need to rethink their human resource strategies in terms of employee experience (in terms of perceived importance, job meaning and career orientation). The empirical study shows that it is possible to increase work engagement through policies that provide positive experiences for employees. Therefore, it is important for companies to conduct employee-based employee experience processes.

In addition, open-ended interviews with employees revealed what kind of employee experience they would like to have. It was understood that employees are looking for an experience that offers career development opportunities, establishes good relationships with their colleagues, allows them to provide feedback, is in line with their qualifications and where they feel they belong.

Employees who maintain a high level of well-being are more likely to be engaged. Various strategies and practices can be used to increase employee well-being. As Bakker & Demerouti (2007) argue, workplace resources are known to increase work engagement. These resources include factors such as flexible working hours and a supportive work environment. In addition, Greenhaus & Allen's (2011) work on work-life balance emphasizes the



importance of employees balancing their work and personal lives. However, measures such as psychological support and stress management programs can also be taken to support employees' well-being. Wright & Cropanzano's (2000) research show that such programs can enhance employee well-being. The combination of all these factors can increase employee well-being and thus increase work engagement (Saks, 2006).

### ***Limitations and future research***

We point out that despite the strengths of our study, there are some limitations and opportunities for future research. In our research, we used data from insurance employees to measure the impact of employee experience on work engagement. Future research could focus on more comprehensive studies to better understand how employee experience practices operate in different industries and cultural contexts.

We considered employee experience as a construct consisting of three dimensions (perceived importance, work meaningfulness & career focused) rather than a process. Gheidar & Zanjani (2021) also examined employee experience as a concept consisting of different dimensions. In future studies, employee experience can be examined as a journey. As in the studies conducted by McKelvey & Frank (2018) and Horváth & Kenesei (2023), employee experience can be evaluated as a journey from recruitment to the post-employment period and a different perspective can be offered. Additionally, the relationships between the research variables can be analyzed from the perspective of managers using qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods may also be used to analyses relationships between research variables from a management perspective and to examine the impact of various predictors on the employee experience and engagement relationship.

### **Conclusion**

In order for businesses to continue their existence and achieve sustainable success in today's intensely competitive environment, they need to have rare, imitative and non-substitutable, valuable human resources. For this reason, businesses need to have a strong employer brand and employee value proposition, retain qualified human resources, and attract potential employees to the business. In order to meet these requirements, it is very important for businesses to have a positive experience for their employees. As noted by Turner (2019), certain factors such as flexible working arrangements, motivating work roles and opportunities to find meaning at work are important to consider as enablers of work engagement and the overall employee experience.

As a result of the data obtained from the employees participating in the research, it is understood that the employee experience affects work engagement. In addition, it is seen that employee well-being plays a partial mediator role in this relationship. Creating the employee experience in line with personal needs and expectations, adopting a career-oriented approach, prioritizing person-job harmony, and making the employee feel valuable; It is important for the existence of engagement and well-being employees within the enterprise. For this reason, providing a good experience to their employees in the process from recruitment to post-employment will lead to positive outcomes in individual and organizational terms.

In conclusion, this study has taken an important step forward in understanding the relationships between employee experience, work engagement and employee well-being. The research highlights the need for organizations to focus more on employee experience practices and policies when developing HR strategies.

### **Acknowledgment**

This study was financially supported by Yıldız Technical University Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit within the scope of research project number SBA-2021-4434.

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