

Trends and Insights in Work Engagement Research: A Bibliometric Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Main Objectives: Work engagement is an important concept in human resource management that is closely related to employee productivity and job satisfaction, yet the research still leaves gaps in the understanding of global trends and collaboration among researchers. This study aims to map publication trends, major themes, and significant contributions from authors and institutions related to work engagement using a bibliometric approach. **Background Problems:** Previous studies emphasize leadership, organizational culture, and job resources as key factors in work engagement, with transformational leadership being a positive contributor, but gaps remain in understanding their interplay, especially in non-Western contexts, specific industries, and areas like digital transformation, gender dynamics, and alternative leadership styles. **Novelty:** This study provides a bibliometric analysis that highlights global collaboration, key topics such as digital transformation and the impact of COVID-19 on work engagement, and offers practical insights to help academics and practitioners improve employee engagement strategies. **Research Methods:** Data were analyzed from 1,626 articles in the Scopus database published in 1984-2024, with the help of VOSviewer software to analyze keywords, collaboration patterns, and geographical distribution. **Finding/Results:** The results show a significant increase in the number of publications since 2010, with themes such as transformational leadership and psychological empowerment being the main concerns, and the impact of the pandemic and digital technology on work engagement as the latest issues. This research makes an important contribution in identifying unexplored research areas, as well as providing guidance for academics and practitioners in designing strategies to improve employee engagement in an era of dynamic change.

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1. Introduction

Work engagement research has become a central focus within human resource management and organizational psychology. This concept pertains to employees' degree of engagement and commitment to their work, directly influencing productivity and job satisfaction. Recently, scientific publications on work engagement have increased substantially, demonstrating growing interest from both scholars and practitioners. Bibliometric analyses reveal a consistent annual rise in publications, employing diverse methodologies to deepen the understanding of this phenomenon (Pringgabayu & Rofaida, 2024)

This study examines factors influencing work engagement, including leadership, organizational culture, and working conditions. Prior research indicates that transformational leadership notably enhances employee engagement. Nonetheless, gaps remain regarding how these factors interact and affect both individual and organizational performance, warranting further investigation into their complex interrelationships (Sutopo et al., 2022)

Moreover, bibliometric analysis highlights that although research on work engagement is expanding, many studies remain confined to particular industries or geographical regions. This limitation results in literature gaps, leaving some dimensions of work engagement under-explored. Hence, further research in more varied and dynamic settings is necessary (Kişi, 2023).

This study's primary objective is to provide a comprehensive overview of contemporary trends and insights in work engagement research. Utilizing a bibliometric approach, it seeks to trace the evolution of key themes, identify major contributions by scholars and institutions, and uncover emerging areas requiring further investigation. Additionally, the research explores how factors like leadership, organizational culture, and job resources interact to influence work engagement. The goal is to generate insights that help future scholars address existing knowledge gaps and develop targeted strategies to improve employee engagement across diverse industries and cultural contexts. Furthermore, this research aims to enhance understanding of work engagement's progression over time and its importance in today's workplace, particularly in response to global challenges such as digital transformation and the COVID-19 pandemic.

This research provides significant benefits for the development of human resource management practices. By understanding the trends and patterns in *work engagement* research, organizations can formulate more effective strategies to improve employee engagement. In addition, the findings from this research can be used as a basis for designing better organizational development policies, with an emphasis on creating a work environment that supports optimal *work engagement*. (Kişi, 2023)

Overall, the bibliometric analysis of *work engagement* not only plays a role in addressing gaps in the existing literature, but also makes a significant contribution to the development of future managerial practices. This research is expected to be an important reference for academics and practitioners in understanding the dynamics of employee engagement in various industry contexts, while supporting efforts to create more effective strategies to improve *work engagement*. (Pringgabayu & Rofaida, 2024), (Sutopo et al., 2022).

Research on *work engagement* has grown rapidly in recent decades. However, there are a number of research gaps that need to be further explored, especially in terms of cultural contexts, industries, and methodological approaches. Most previous research has focused on Western countries, so generalization of findings to other cultural contexts is limited. Studies by (Altaf & Masrek, 2021) highlight the dominance of research from countries such as the Netherlands and the United States, while contributions from developing countries are minimal.

In addition, research within specific industries, such as hospitality and tourism, has also been sub optimal. (Han et al., 2023) found that despite an increase in research within these sectors, aspects such as the role of job resources and outcomes associated with work engagement remain under-explored. The relationship between work engagement and individual psychological factors, such as personality, has also not been researched in depth. For example, (Young et al., 2018) suggests a positive relationship between extroversion and conscientiousness with work engagement, but the mechanisms underlying this relationship require further research.

Interventions to improve work engagement are also an area that requires further research. (Knight et al., 2017) notes the effectiveness of group interventions on work engagement, but the effectiveness of individual interventions remains unclear. The impact of work engagement on employee performance and absenteeism has also not been comprehensively researched. Research by (Neuber et al., 2022) shows a positive relationship between work engagement and task performance and a negative relationship with absenteeism, but the factors influencing this relationship need to be better understood.

Research on work engagement in the public and private sectors also shows mixed results. (Borst et al., 2020) found that employees in the semi-public sector have higher levels of work engagement compared to the public and private sectors, but the reasons behind this difference are still not well understood.

Instruments to measure work engagement, such as the *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale* (UWES) developed by (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2006) have been widely used. However, the validity and reliability of these tools in various cultural and industrial contexts still require further adaptation and validation.

The majority of previous studies used qualitative approaches or systematic literature reviews. These approaches provide in-depth insights, but lack the ability to capture global collaboration patterns and trends. A bibliometric approach, such as the one used in this study, allows for a broader analysis of publication trends, collaboration patterns, and contributions from different countries and institutions. (Ramadan Wardiansyah et al., 2024) This provides a new perspective that has not been widely explored in the literature.

Other gaps include the lack of exploration into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the interaction between work engagement and digital technology, and the role of gender. A study by (Straus et al., 2023) explores how the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly influenced work engagement, emphasizing the importance of managerial support, work flexibility, and mental health in maintaining engagement during the crisis. Additionally, research by (Hartman & Barber, 2020) highlights the unique challenges faced by women in the workplace, revealing how gender dynamics can impact work engagement and career aspirations, particularly in the context of the shifting work environment during the pandemic. Studies such as (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), show the importance of technology in improving work engagement, but not many studies have explored the impact of digital transformation on work engagement. (Hartman & Barber, 2020) reveals that women face more workplace challenges that affect their engagement, yet empirical studies across cultures and industries are lacking.

Furthermore, research on other leadership styles, such as *servant leadership* and *authentic leadership*, is still limited despite their great potential in enhancing work engagement (Almager et al., 2021). In addition, the relationship between work engagement and organizational outcomes, such as innovation and business sustainability, still needs to be deepened.

The main contribution of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview of global trends in work engagement research and identify unanswered opportunities for exploration. The results of this analysis not only provide insights for academics to explore new areas of research, but also assist practitioners in designing more relevant and effective human resource management policies in an era of dynamic change. As such, this research seeks to provide a solid foundation for the development of organizational strategies to sustainably improve employee work engagement.

To identify existing research patterns and determine research gaps that can be focused on in the future. Bibliometric analysis can be an effective approach to understand publication trends, collaboration among researchers, as well as dominant themes developing in work engagement studies. Thus, this study aims to contribute to mapping the work engagement research landscape in a comprehensive and systematic manner.

This study uses a bibliometric approach to map global trends and patterns of work engagement research, while identifying the contributions of key researchers and institutions. In addition, this study also aims to analyze the geographical distribution, major themes, and collaboration among researchers in the field of work engagement. Through this approach, it is expected to reveal under-explored research areas, emerging topic trends, as well as leading journals that are the main platforms for publication. Thus, this study not only provides insights into the existing research landscape but also helps researchers formulate a more targeted and strategic research agenda in the future.

RQ 1: What are the dominant themes and trends in work engagement research over the past three decades based on bibliometric analysis?

RQ 2: Which countries, institutions and authors have made significant contributions to the development of work engagement research?

RQ 3: What research gaps and future directions can be identified in the work engagement literature?

2. Literature Review

Research on *work engagement* has undergone significant development in the last two decades, with various studies highlighting aspects of employee engagement. (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) define *work engagement* as a positive condition characterized by energy, dedication, and deep involvement in work. Previous findings suggest a strong link between *work engagement* and positive performance outcomes, such as increased productivity and job satisfaction. (Kumari et al., 2025) However, despite this wealth of research, there are still gaps in understanding the factors that influence *work engagement* in various contexts, including in hybrid work environments that are becoming increasingly common.

One of the key challenges in *work engagement* research is understanding the influence of hybrid work environments on employee engagement. Recent studies have revealed that hybrid *work* models can support improved performance through increased *work engagement*. (Kumari et al., 2025) However, the relationship between these work models and other factors, such as organizational support and job demands, is still not fully explained. Therefore, further research is needed to explore how these elements interact with each other in the context of *work engagement*.

In addition, a systematic study conducted by (Günther et al., 2022) revealed a number of *antecedents* or driving factors that influence *work engagement*, particularly in the context of remote work. Individual resources, organizational support, and job demands play crucial roles in shaping employee engagement levels. (Choudhary & Jain, 2024) Nevertheless, existing literature insufficiently examines how these factors interact to influence work engagement, particularly within the unique challenges introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Another identified gap concerns the limited comprehension of job stress’s impact on work engagement. Studies indicate that while stress may hinder employee engagement, work engagement can also serve as a moderating factor that mitigates stress’s adverse effects. (Syafitri & Etikariena, 2023) These insights highlight the need to further investigate the interplay between stress and engagement to foster healthier and more productive workplaces.

In this regard, bibliometric analysis offers a powerful approach to reveal emerging research trends in work engagement. By mapping recent scholarly output and examining collaboration patterns among researchers and countries, this method identifies central themes and underexplored areas in the literature (Chairunnisa et al., 2023). Such findings provide valuable guidance for emerging scholars seeking to navigate the current research landscape and pursue novel avenues for investigation.

Consequently, this research contributes not only to academic knowledge but also to practical management. A thorough understanding of trends and patterns in work engagement research will assist organizations in developing more effective strategies to enhance employee engagement, ultimately leading to improved productivity and job satisfaction.

Table 1. Evolution of Work Engagement: Development Trends and Challenges 1984-2024

Period	Trends	Challenge
1984-1989	An initial exploration of job satisfaction and commitment	Lack of clear differentiation from other constructs such as job satisfaction
1990-1994	The conceptualization of engagement begins	Theoretical dispersion and the need for clear definitions
1995-1999	Engagement is associated with positive organizational outcomes	Overlap with burnout and other constructs
2000-2004	The emergence of engagement as a distinct Construct	Need for empirical validation and clear boundaries

2005-2009	Focus on vigor, dedication, and absorption	Theoretical inconsistent evidence	debate and empirical
2010-2014	Recognition of the impact of engagement on performance and well-being	The need for new theoretical frameworks and qualitative research	
2015-2019	Daily fluctuations and job crafting explored	Understand differences	task-level engagement and individual
2020-2024	AI and technology integration in HRM	Adapting to technological change	rapid job insecurity

Source: Author's Elaboration Results

The table outlines the evolution of work engagement from 1984 to 2024, noting key trends and challenges. In the early years (1984-1989), the focus was on exploring job satisfaction and commitment, facing challenges in differentiating from similar constructs. Between 1990 and 1994, engagement was conceptualized but lacked clear definitions. From 1995 to 1999, engagement was linked to positive organizational outcomes, although it overlapped with burnout. The period from 2000 to 2004 saw engagement emerge as a distinct construct but needed empirical validation. From 2005 to 2009, the focus shifted to vigor, dedication, and absorption, but theoretical debates persisted. Between 2010 and 2014, engagement's impact on performance and well-being was recognized, with a need for new frameworks. In 2015-2019, daily fluctuations and job crafting were explored, with a focus on understanding individual differences. Finally, in 2020-2024, AI and technology were integrated into HRM, with challenges related to adapting to technological change and job insecurity.

3. Method, Data, and Analysis

The data for this study was taken from the Scopus database, which is one of the largest and most trusted scientific databases, covering various disciplines. The data collection process was conducted by searching documents using the keywords "work engagement" in the title, abstract, and keywords of the article. For Scopus search, the keywords used were keywords ("Work and Engagement or Employee and Engagement"). "Business and Management and Accounting", document type "Article", Main keyword "Work Engagement". The retrieved articles were also selected based on the source type "Journal"; the language used was English. Using these criteria, we managed to collect 1,626 articles on January 5, 2025. This search process is expected to collect articles that provide in-depth insights into work engagement and highlight the latest trends and issues in the research.

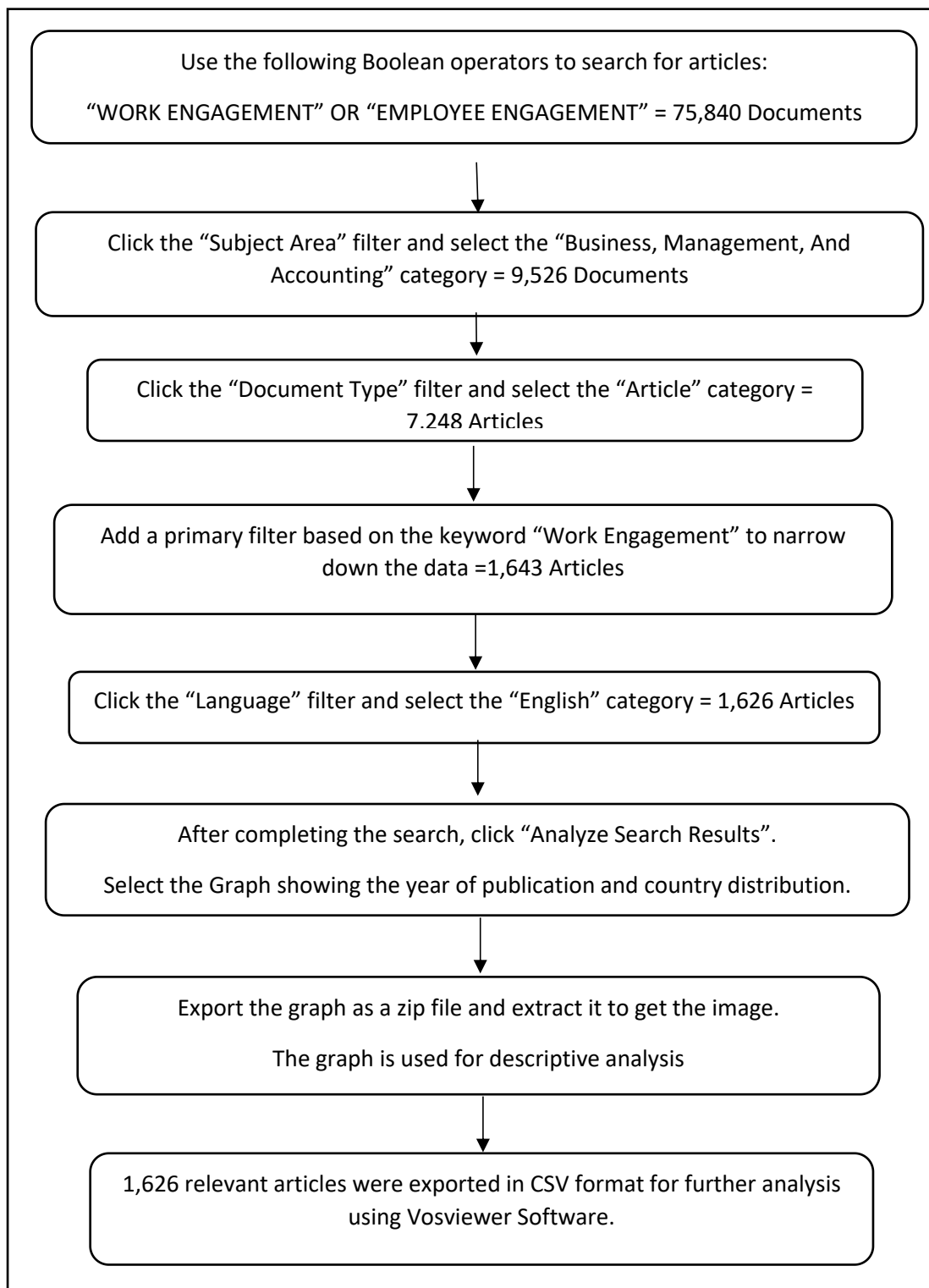


Figure 1. Steps for Retrieving and Filtering Research Data Using Scopus
Source: Author's Elaboration

The data used as a research source was taken from the Scopus database. The retrieval date was January 5, 2025, and a total of 1,626 articles covering publication years from 1985-2024 using the keyword work engagement and the criteria used were only English articles and then exported in CSV format. To determine the keywords that appear the most, the author must use the co-occurrence analysis type and then determine the minimum number of keywords. The smaller the minimum limit we set, the greater the threshold of keywords that will appear. In keyword verification, we determine the keywords that match the topic of *Work Engagement*, then right-click on the keywords we choose, then click export selected keywords and select the CSV type. After saving in CSV form we can open the file and can analyze it.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Result

The data for this study was taken from the Scopus database, which is one of the largest and most trusted scientific databases, covering various disciplines. The reason the researchers chose to use Scopus is the rigorous peer review process and also considering its reputation.

In this study, we applied a literature review to evaluate the available articles based on the year of publication. Literature review is one of the important elements in research progress. As illustrated in Figure 2, which shows the number of publications in Scopus in each year.

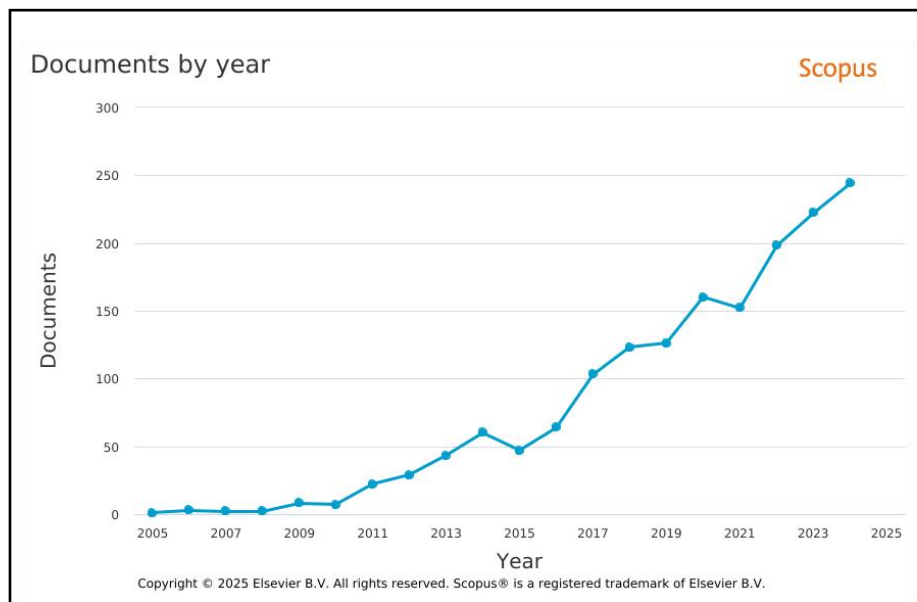


Figure 2. Steps for Retrieving

Source: Scopus

The significant upward trend in publications related to *work engagement* over the past two decades reflects the increasing attention of scientists to this topic. Based on the data shown, publications related to work engagement show a consistent increase, especially since 2015. This can be attributed to the growing importance of understanding work engagement in the context of modern organizations. As explained by (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), *work engagement* is a positive work condition characterized by dedication, passion, and involvement, whose relevance increases as the dynamics of the world of work change.

From 2005 to 2010, the number of publications was relatively low, reflecting the early stages of exploration of this topic in academia. However, the concept of work engagement began to gain attention with the emergence of the *Job Demands-Resources (JD-R)* model that broadened the scope of work psychology studies. This model, pioneered by (Demerouti et al., 2001) provides a strong theoretical foundation for researchers to explain work engagement as an interaction between job demands and job resources.

From 2011 to 2015, the graph shows a gradual increase in publications. This period marks the phase where research began to focus on the benefits of work engagement for individuals and organizations. The results show that work engagement contributes to increased productivity, organizational commitment, and employee well-being. This is supported by a study (Bakker et al., 2008), which revealed that employees with high levels of engagement tend to have greater job satisfaction.

A significant acceleration in the number of publications occurred after 2016, which can be attributed to the increasingly complex need for organizations to maintain an engaged workforce in the age of digitalization. A study by (Knight et al., 2017) highlights that new technologies create not only opportunities but also challenges, thus requiring organizational strategies to improve *work engagement* through optimal resource management.

Between 2020 and 2024, the graph shows a sharp spike in the number of publications. This period reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on research in this area. The pandemic has dramatically changed the work landscape, accelerated the adoption of remote working, and posed new challenges for *work engagement*. According to a study by (Straus et al., 2020), work engagement during the pandemic is strongly influenced by factors such as managerial support, work flexibility, and mental health.

Recent research has increasingly explored work engagement across diverse cultural and industry contexts. For instance (Puspita et al., 2018) examined the influence of organizational culture in Asian countries on work engagement, revealing that collectivist values frequently promote higher

levels of engagement. This trend indicates a growing emphasis on developing context-specific approaches in work engagement studies.

Overall, the graph illustrates heightened recognition of work engagement's significance across different work settings. Such studies broaden theoretical perspectives and provide practical recommendations for organizations to foster environments conducive to employee engagement. These advancements underscore work engagement as a continuing focal point in organizational psychology and human resource management research.

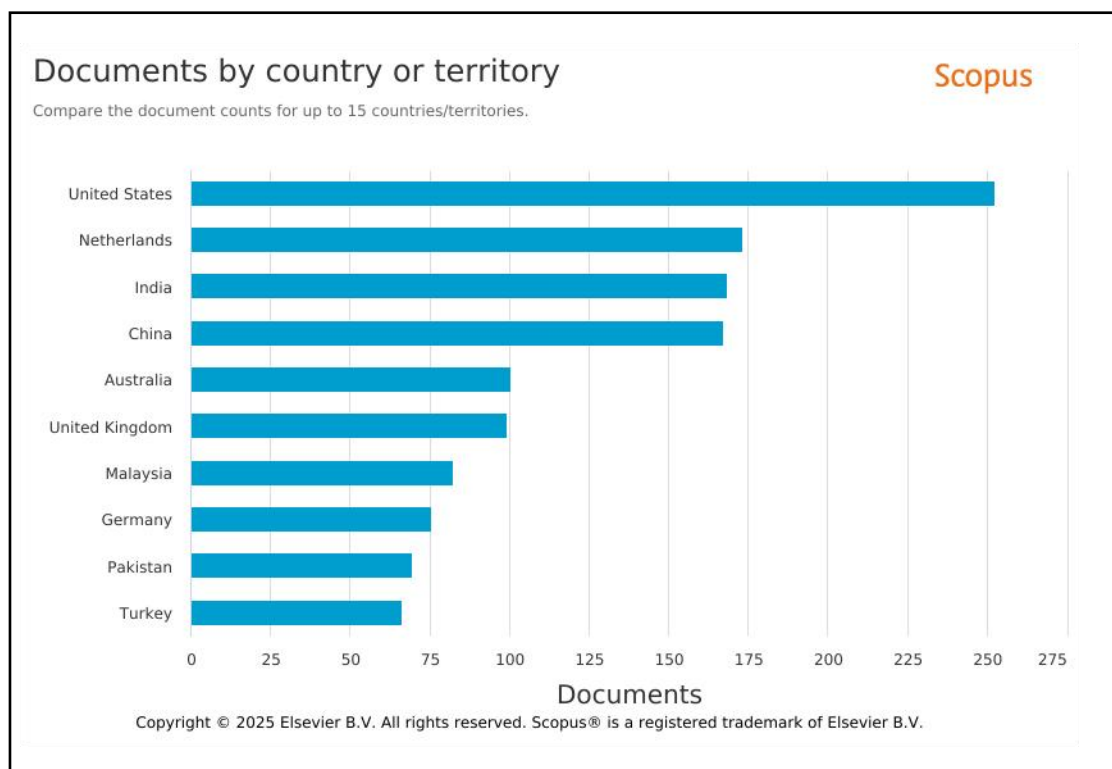


Figure 3. Number of Scopus Publications by Country

Source: Analyze Result Scopus

The figure above shows the distribution of documents related to *work engagement* by country or region in the Scopus database. The United States is the largest contributor, which shows the country's great attention to work engagement issues. As one of the countries with a mature research infrastructure, the United States has produced many key theories such as *Job Demands-Resources (JD-R)* that help explain the mechanisms of *work engagement*. According to (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) this approach makes it easier for organizations to understand how job demands and available resources can influence employee engagement. The US focus on this research also reflects increased attention to employee well-being and efforts to increase productivity through data-driven strategies.

The Netherlands, as the country with the second highest number of publications, is known as a center of innovation in *work engagement* research. Dutch researchers, such as Bakker and Demerouti, have developed innovative approaches that underpin work engagement practices. In this context, a work culture that favors flexibility and innovation, coupled with research funding support from the European Union, have been key drivers. For example, research (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) shows that *positive psychology-based* interventions have a significant impact on improving work engagement, especially in organizations oriented towards collaboration and innovation. This shows that research from the Netherlands is not only theoretical, but also highly applicable.

India and China, ranked third and fourth respectively, showed rapid growth in *work engagement* research. India, with its primary focus on the information technology and education sectors, highlights the importance of work engagement to maintain a qualified workforce amid global competition. Meanwhile, in China, research often links *work engagement* to a collective work culture that promotes organizational harmony. (Lyu, 2020) notes that this collectivism-based approach plays an important role in creating a supportive work environment. The growth of research in these two countries also reflects their governments' big push to improve global competitiveness through enhancing employee well-being.

Australia, which comes in fifth, offers a multidisciplinary approach to *work engagement*. Research in this country often integrates organizational psychology perspectives with broader issues such as sustainability and work-life balance. (Yoon et al., 2021) found that employee well-being programs implemented in the service and health sectors in Australia had a significant impact on increasing work engagement. This success is supported by government policies that promote work flexibility and sustainability, making Australia one of the countries with a work environment that supports high engagement.

Malaysia and Germany also stand out with their respective approaches to work engagement research. In Malaysia, much of the research focuses on the manufacturing and education sectors, where work engagement is often seen as key to improving workforce productivity. In Germany, which has a long tradition in industrial research, the focus is on developing flexible work models to support employee engagement amidst the dynamics of global change. (Gašić & Berber, 2021) shows that this approach helps German organizations to remain competitive while maintaining the well-being of their employees. Against this backdrop, both countries make important contributions in expanding global insights on work engagement.

Overall, this graph reflects global trends in *work engagement* research, showing differences in focus and approach between countries. The United States and the Netherlands lead with strong theoretical contributions, while Asian countries such as India and China stand out in their practical applications. This research is important for bridging the gap between theory and practice, and helping organizations in different countries understand how best to improve work engagement across different cultural and economic contexts. The results of this research are not only relevant to the academic world, but also to the practice of organizational management at the global level.

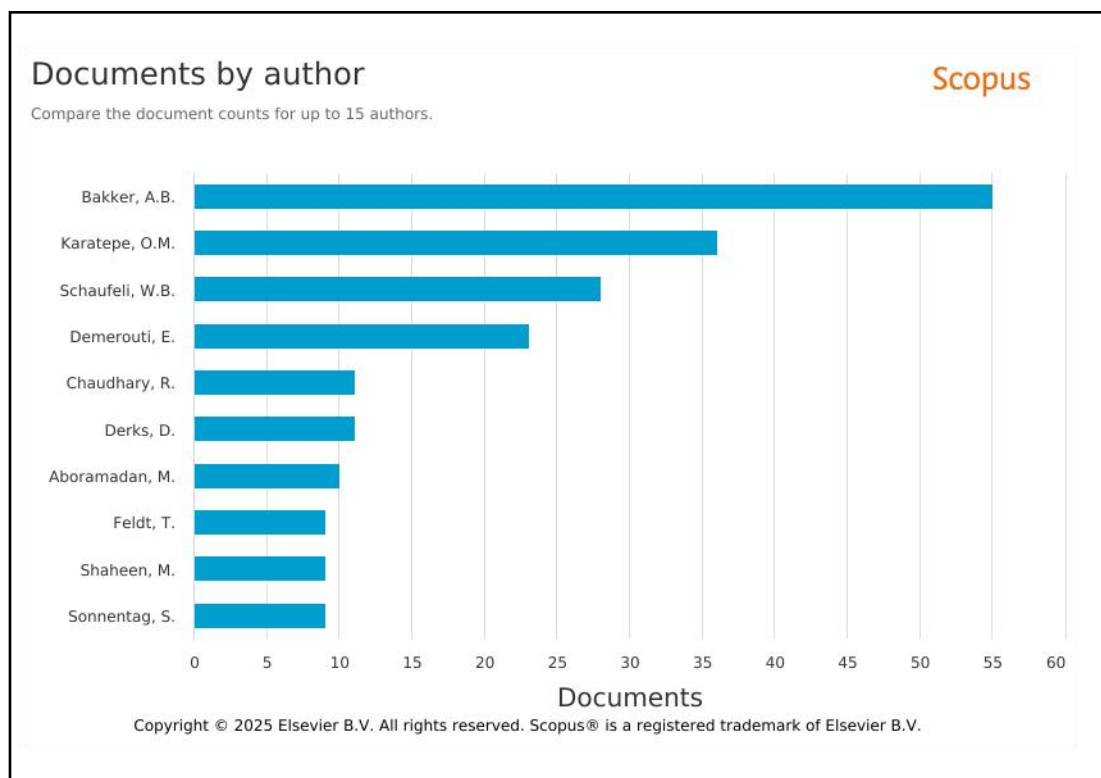


Figure 4. Top 10 Lead Authors in Work Engagement Research

Source: Scopus

This graph shows the distribution of documents produced by leading authors on the topic of *work engagement*, based on data from Scopus. The data includes the number of documents published by up to 15 authors, with A.B. Bakker as the most prolific author. A.B. Bakker's research productivity reflects significant contributions to the understanding of *work engagement*, such as in his research on the role of work and personal resources in enhancing employee engagement. (Bakker et al., 2011) describes the *Job Demands-Resources (JD-R)* model as an important framework for understanding work engagement.

Author O.M. Karatepe takes second place with a similarly significant number of publications. Karatepe's research focus tends to be on the hospitality industry, which highlights the relationship between work engagement, work-family balance, and organizational outcomes. For example,

(Karatepe & Demir, 2014) found that employees' core self-evaluations influence work engagement through work-family facilitation. This research is relevant for industries that rely heavily on employee performance.

W.B. Schaufeli, one of the pioneering researchers in this field, comes next. His contribution to the development of measurement tools such as the *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)* is significant. (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2006) provides a quantitative approach to measuring *work engagement* as a positive psychological construct, which is now widely used in various research contexts.

E. Demerouti, who was also involved in the development of the *JD-R* model, showed great contribution to the *work engagement* literature. In collaboration with Schaufeli, Demerouti highlighted how the interaction between job demands and resources can affect employee engagement. Demerouti's article is an important reference for understanding the balance between factors that support and inhibit work engagement.

Chaudhary R. and D. Derks have also contributed to the development of research related to *work engagement*, although their number of publications is lower. Chaudhary, for example, often discusses the link between *work engagement* and transformational leadership, as expressed in (Chaudhary & Sisodia, 2022) . Supportive leadership can increase work engagement through the creation of a positive work environment.

Other researchers such as M. Aboramadan focus more on the application of *work engagement* in the education and public service sectors. His research often links *work engagement* to strategic human resource practices, which are relevant in organizations with a focus on sustainability.

In conclusion, this graph illustrates not only individual productivity but also research trends focusing on the application, measurement, and factors that influence *work engagement* across different industries. This analysis shows how the literature has evolved through significant contributions from various authors.

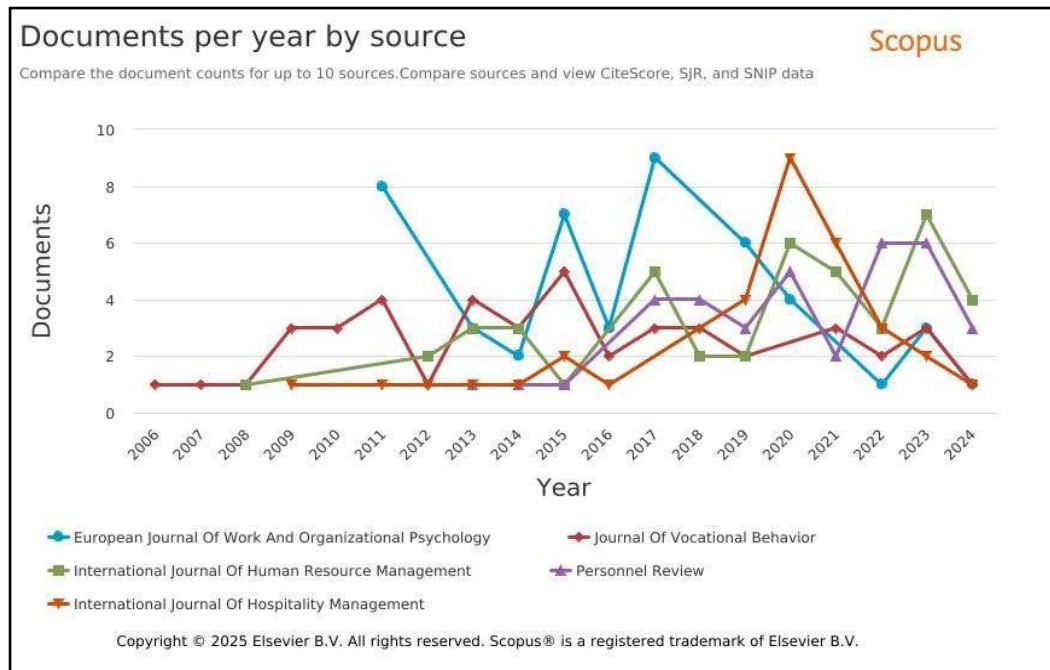


Figure 5. Number of Documents per year by Journal source

Source: Scopus

Based on the graph depicting the number of documents per year based on sources in Scopus, it can be seen that the topic of work engagement experienced significant growth in various academic journals from 2006 to 2024. Journals such as European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, Journal of Vocational Behavior, International Journal of Human Resource Management, Personnel Review, and International Journal of Hospitality Management show fluctuations in the number of publications that reflect research trends and academic focus in a particular period.

The European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology is one of the main sources with an increase in the number of documents in certain years, especially in 2015 and 2018. This shows that work engagement is an important issue in work and organizational psychology. Studies by (Bakker et al., 2011) emphasize the role of work and personal resources in improving work engagement, which is relevant to the articles in this journal.

Meanwhile, the Journal of Vocational Behavior shows a consistent pattern of publications related to work engagement. The journal's focus on vocational behavior allows exploration of the relationship between work engagement and factors such as career development and job satisfaction. For example, (Hirschi, 2012) discusses a career resource model that highlights the importance of career adaptability in maintaining high work engagement.

The International Journal of Human Resource Management has also seen an increase in publications related to work engagement over the years, confirming the importance of the human resource management perspective in this research. Studies by (Alfes et al., 2013) found that perceptions of human resource management practices are closely related to the level of employee engagement.

On the other hand, Personnel Review shows a more stable publication pattern. The journal's focus on managerial and strategic issues supports more pragmatic articles, such as research (Kahn, 1990) that formulated the concept of psychological states of engagement and disengagement in work roles, becoming the basis of the modern understanding of engagement.

For the International Journal of Hospitality Management, document contributions have increased in recent years. This reflects greater attention to work engagement in the hospitality industry, which faces unique challenges such as high turnover rates and consistent customer service needs. Studies by (Karatepe & Demir, 2014) link core self-evaluations and work engagement to work-family facilitation in this industry.

Overall, these fluctuations in the number of publications show that *work engagement* is a dynamic topic that is constantly evolving, with contributions from a wide range of disciplines. This variation reflects the unique focus of each journal in addressing this topic from a different perspective.

Future research can utilize this analysis to identify under-explored research gaps, as well as encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration in the study of *work engagement*. Research on work engagement has grown rapidly, but there are still some gaps that need to be explored further. One of the main gaps is the lack of consensus on the definition and measurement of work engagement. Different studies use different concepts and measurement tools, which can lead to inconsistencies in research results. (Iddagoda & Opatha, 2016) identified seven gaps in employee engagement research, including conceptual confusion that could be minimized by formulating clearer working definitions.

In addition, research on work engagement often focuses on organizational contexts in Western countries, thus paying less attention to cultural differences and local contexts. (Akter et al., 2021) highlights the need for more in-depth research on employee engagement in the financial sector, particularly in developing countries, to understand the unique dynamics in such contexts.

The research methods used in work engagement studies also tend to be homogenous, with the dominance of quantitative approaches. (Priyashantha et al., 2023) recommends the use of qualitative methods and mixed methods designs to explore a deeper understanding of the

phenomenon of work engagement, as well as to capture nuances and complexities that may be missed by quantitative approaches alone.

Furthermore, the impact of innovation-focused human resource management practices on work engagement is under-researched. (Lenart-Gansiniec et al., 2023) emphasizes the need for research that explores how such practices can drive employee engagement, as well as the implications for overall organizational performance.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly changed the work landscape, with increased remote working affecting work engagement. (Makowski, 2023) highlights the need for further research on how remote leadership can affect work engagement, as well as effective strategies to maintain and improve engagement in this changing work context.

In addition, the literature on work engagement needs to be updated to show how methods and outcomes can contribute to better employee engagement. (Priyashantha et al., 2023) emphasizes the importance of research that identifies gaps in employee engagement research methods and outcomes, which can help determine future research directions.

Finally, (Khalid, 2021) identified four major gaps in work engagement research, including the lack of a comprehensive conceptual framework. He developed a conceptual framework that covers the identified gaps for use in future empirical studies, which can help enrich the understanding of employee engagement and its implications for organizations.

The findings from (Khalid, 2021) shed light on significant gaps in work engagement research, notably the absence of a comprehensive conceptual framework. By addressing this gap, Khalid developed a robust framework that consolidates various factors influencing employee engagement, such as job characteristics, personal resources, and organizational culture. The implications of this development are profound, both for academic research and organizational practice.

First, from a theoretical perspective, the development of a comprehensive conceptual framework allows for a more structured approach to understanding work engagement. Previous studies have often looked at isolated aspects of engagement, such as job satisfaction or organizational commitment. Khalid's framework integrates these elements, offering a holistic view that can enhance future research by providing a unified model to explore engagement across different contexts and industries.

For organizations, the practical implications are clear. This framework serves as a guide for designing interventions that target multiple engagement drivers. For instance, improving job characteristics like task variety or providing personal resources such as autonomy can increase employee engagement. Moreover, a focus on organizational culture and leadership can contribute to

sustaining higher engagement levels. By aligning engagement strategies with the insights provided by the framework, organizations can expect improved productivity, lower turnover, and greater employee well-being.

When comparing Khalid's findings to previous research, we see a significant shift in the way work engagement is conceptualized. Early studies on work engagement, such as those by (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), focused on specific aspects like job demands and resources, resulting in models such as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. While influential, these frameworks often lacked integration across different engagement factors. Khalid's framework expands upon existing models by addressing additional dimensions, such as personal and organizational elements, thus offering a more comprehensive understanding of engagement. This integrated approach marks a shift from fragmented to cohesive models in work engagement research.

The observed trend of developing more comprehensive frameworks can be attributed to several factors. First, the evolving nature of the workplace, with the rise of remote work and digital transformations, has made engagement more complex. Traditional models may not fully capture the diverse influences on engagement in modern work environments. As a result, researchers, including Khalid, have recognized the need for broader frameworks that can accommodate these new dynamics.

Another reason for this trend is the increasing recognition that work engagement is multi-faceted and influenced by various individual, organizational, and external factors. The complexity of engagement necessitates a more integrated approach, one that acknowledges the interplay between different engagement drivers. Khalid's framework reflects this complexity, offering a more nuanced understanding of how engagement can be fostered across different work contexts.

4.2. Discussion

The analysis of work engagement research over the past three decades reveals a significant increase in publications since 2010, with key themes evolving over time. The early years (1984-1999) focused on defining engagement and distinguishing it from similar constructs like job satisfaction and commitment. From 2000-2009, research increasingly linked work engagement to positive organizational outcomes, and by 2010-2014, studies explored its impact on employee performance, well-being, and organizational success. More recently, from 2015-2024, attention has shifted to the effects of digitalization, work-life balance, and the COVID-19 pandemic. As work environments have evolved, the literature has progressively focused on understanding how factors like leadership, organizational culture, and working conditions contribute to employee engagement. The emergence

of studies addressing the hybrid work model and the role of psychological empowerment highlights ongoing changes in research trends.

The United States and the Netherlands are the most significant contributors to work engagement research, reflecting the strong theoretical foundation developed there, including the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. Institutions such as Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam and Universiteit Utrecht have led the way with groundbreaking research. The authors who have most influenced the field include A.B. Bakker, W.B. Schaufeli, and E. Demerouti, whose work on the JD-R model and tools like the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) has shaped how engagement is understood and measured. Furthermore, countries like India and China have recently seen a surge in work engagement studies, focusing on the cultural context of employee engagement and contributing to a more global understanding of the topic.

Despite the growth in work engagement research, several gaps remain. First, there is a lack of consensus on the definition and measurement of work engagement across various cultures and sectors, particularly in non-Western contexts. Research on the impact of digital transformation and remote work on engagement is still in its infancy, with limited studies addressing the specific challenges of remote leadership and engagement during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, while the JD-R model has been widely adopted, future research should explore other leadership styles, such as authentic and servant leadership, and how they influence engagement in diverse industries. Additionally, the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving work engagement—especially at the individual level—requires further investigation, as does the impact of innovation-driven HR practices on employee engagement.

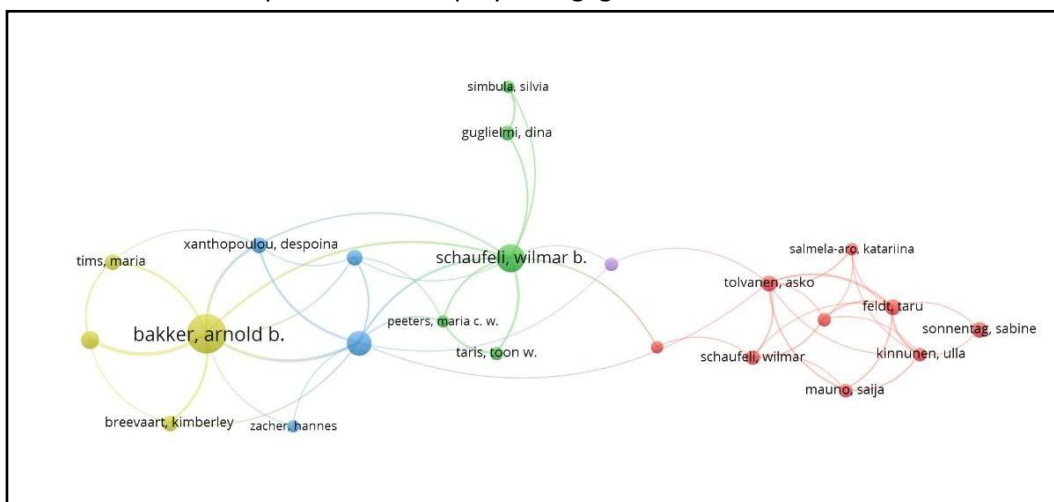


Figure 6. Co-Authorship Unit Of Analysis

Source: VOSviewer

The figure above shows a cluster of research focused on a few key authors, such as Arnold B. Bakker and Wilmar B. Schaufeli, who were pioneers in this topic. Both authors have contributed greatly to the academic literature by discussing theoretical models such as Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) and developing measurement instruments such as the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Studies by (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2006) for example, introduced the UWES as a work engagement measurement tool that has been validated in various countries. This study provides a solid foundation for future research related to work engagement.

Arnold B. Bakker and his colleagues extensively discussed the JD-R model that explains the relationship between job demands, organizational resources, and work engagement. One important study by (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) states that the availability of job resources can mitigate the negative impact of high job demands, while increasing employee work engagement. This model has been used extensively in various organizational contexts to understand and improve work engagement.

Another group of authors, such as Maria Tims and Despoina Xanthopoulou, focused on psychological aspects and interventions that can enhance work engagement. Research by (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009) discusses the role of personal resources, such as self-efficacy and resilience, which can contribute to increased work engagement. This study shows that work engagement is not only influenced by external factors but also by individual employee characteristics.

Wilmar B. Schaufeli also has close collaborations with researchers such as Katariina Salmela-Aro and Asko Tolvanen in studies that further highlight work engagement from a cross-cultural perspective. For example, the study (Bakker, 2006) addresses the relationship between work-life balance and work engagement, especially in the context of Nordic culture. The results of this study provide new insights into how organizational culture affects work engagement.

One other important contribution comes from research by (Simbula & Guglielmi, 2010), which explores the relationship between organizational interventions and work engagement, particularly in the education sector. This research highlights the important role of well-designed interventions to increase teacher engagement in the teaching process.

The results of this bibliometric analysis show that the literature on *work engagement* is rich and structured, with strong inter-author collaboration and a focus on various aspects such as theoretical models, measurement, interventions, and cross-cultural perspectives. This reflects the global relevance of this topic in improving organizational performance and employee well-being.

In Figure 7, the unit of analysis countries showing bibliographic relationships between countries based on the similarity of the cited literature. Bibliographic Coupling using the unit of analysis countries. This technique is different from co-authorship, where bibliographic coupling measures the similarity of cited sources, not the collaboration between authors.

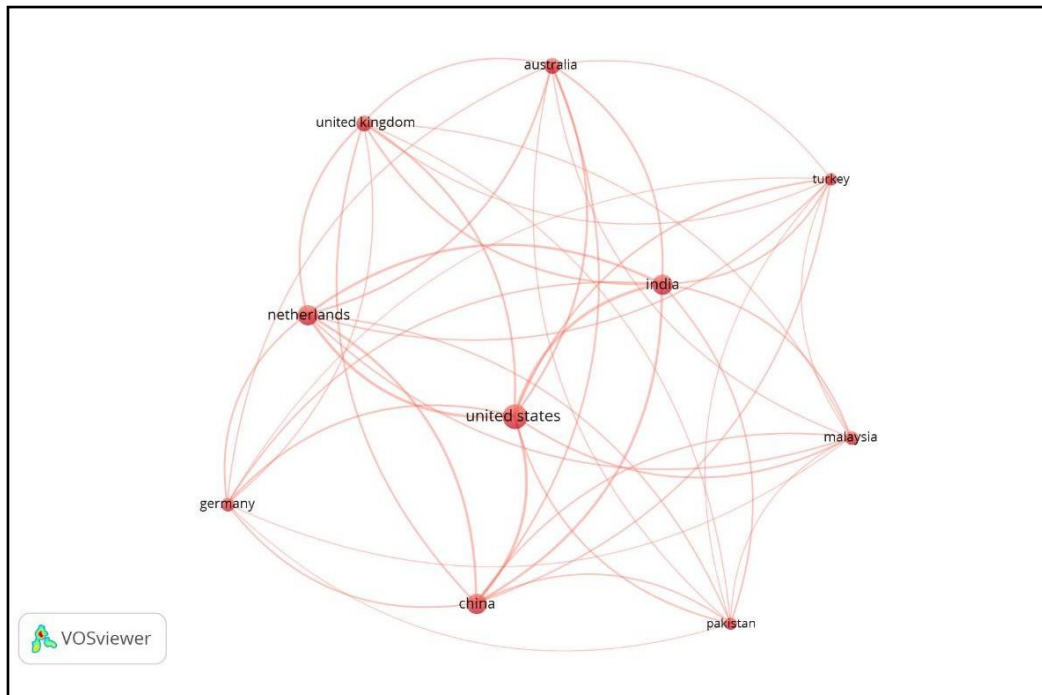


Figure 7. Relationship Between Countries

Source: VOSviewer

The bibliocoupling analysis on the theme of work engagement shows the relationships and linkages between several countries in related research. The visualization shows a strong connectivity between countries such as the United States, China, India, and several European countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. These connections show that work engagement research tends to involve cross-country collaboration, both in the form of co-authorship and similarity of topics studied. For example, a study by (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2006) that discusses the concept of work engagement and its measurement instruments, such as the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), has a global impact with contributions from various parts of the world.

The United States and Europe, including Germany and the Netherlands, have a close relationship in *work engagement* research that focuses on the influence of organizational factors on employee engagement. Research by (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) through the *Demands-Resources (JD-R)* model explains how the balance between job demands and organizational resources can increase *work engagement*. This model has become one of the main references in research in various countries, including Asia.

India and Malaysia show a strong relationship with research that emphasizes more on the cultural context and the role of local values in influencing work engagement. For example, research by (Jena et al., 2018) investigated the relationship between work engagement and work culture and organizational trust in the IT sector in India. The study identified that a supportive work culture is an important factor in improving employee engagement.

China and other East Asian countries tend to contribute to research that integrates work engagement with psychological factors such as work-life balance and coping strategies. A study by (Wood, 2020) explores the impact of *work-life balance* on *work* engagement in the context of collective culture, which is an important concern in countries such as China.

Pakistan and Turkey also play a role in work engagement research with a focus on the education and health sectors. A study by (Rehman et al., 2024) investigated how the work environment in the education sector in Pakistan affects work engagement through the role of mediators such as social support and performance recognition.

The relationships that exist between these countries indicate that collaboration and knowledge exchange are expanding, strengthening the literature on work engagement. For example, research by (Albrecht et al., 2015) presents a cross- cultural meta-analysis that evaluates the determinants of work engagement in various work contexts.

In conclusion, the bibliocoupling of work engagement shows that this topic has global relevance with significant contributions from both developed and developing countries. The article by (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006) which became a classic reference in defining the concept and measurement of work engagement, also reflects the global influence of this literature. Through connections across countries and disciplines, research on work engagement will continue to grow, offering new insights relevant to individuals and organizations around the world.

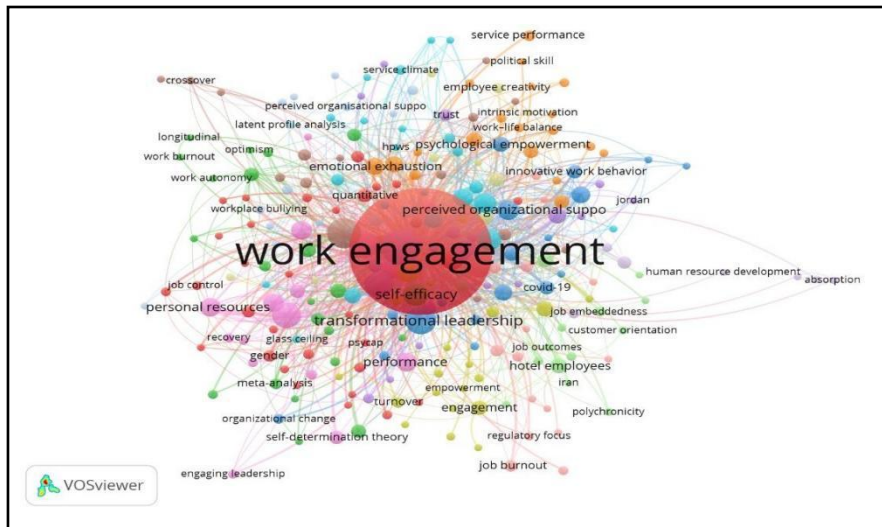


Figure 8. Network Map showing keywords (Network Visualization)

Source: VOSviewer (2024)

The figure is a concept network visualization using VOSviewer software, which displays the relationship between keywords related to the topic of work engagement. The main keyword, work engagement, is in the center with a larger size, indicating that this term is the main focus of the research. Other smaller keywords, such as "self-efficacy," "transformational leadership," "emotional exhaustion," and "personal resources," are directly linked to "work engagement," indicating a close relationship. The different colors of the keyword groups reflect interconnected clusters or themes, such as the topics of leadership, work-life balance, burnout, and work behavior innovation.

This map also reveals various factors that influence work engagement, such as *perceived organizational support*, *psychological well-being* (*psychological empowerment*), and *employee creativity*. In addition, contextual issues, such as COVID-19, hotel employees, and organizational change, show how research on work engagement can be applied across different sectors and situations. In other words, this figure not only maps the relationships between concepts but also provides insights into the complexity and multidimensional scope of the topic of *work engagement*.

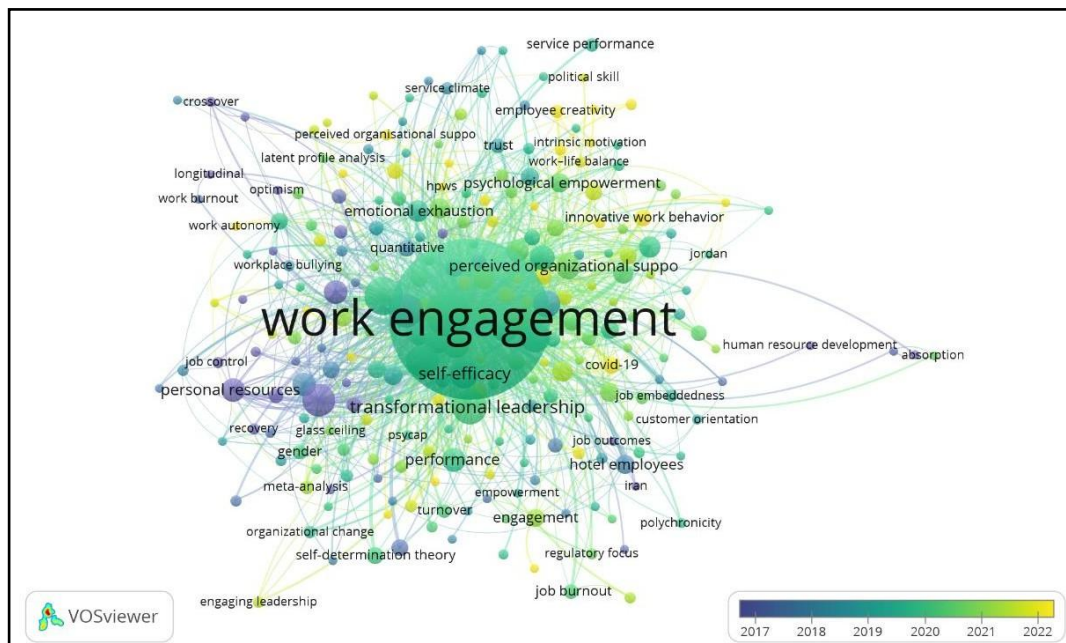


Figure 9. Network Map Showing Keywords (Overlay Visualization)

Source: Scopus

This figure is a visualization of the temporal evolution of research topics on work engagement created using VOSviewer software. This figure shows the distribution of keywords related to work engagement by time, where the color of each element reflects the year of the corresponding publication, according to the time scale at the bottom. The yellow color indicates terms that are frequently discussed in the most recent publications (2022), while the blue color indicates research focusing on the earlier period (2017 and before),

The term work engagement appears as the central keyword, extensively linked to concepts such as self-efficacy, transformational leadership, and psychological empowerment. Terms like COVID-19, innovative work behavior, and employee creativity are highlighted in yellow, reflecting their prominence in recent research driven by the evolving work dynamics amid the global pandemic. Conversely, terms like work burnout and personal resources, appearing in blue and green, represent earlier-discussed themes that remain significantly connected to current studies.

This figure aids in understanding the annual shifts in research focus, highlighting emerging trends while identifying enduring topics of concern within work engagement. It also offers valuable insights into how global events and organizational priorities shape the progression of research in this field.

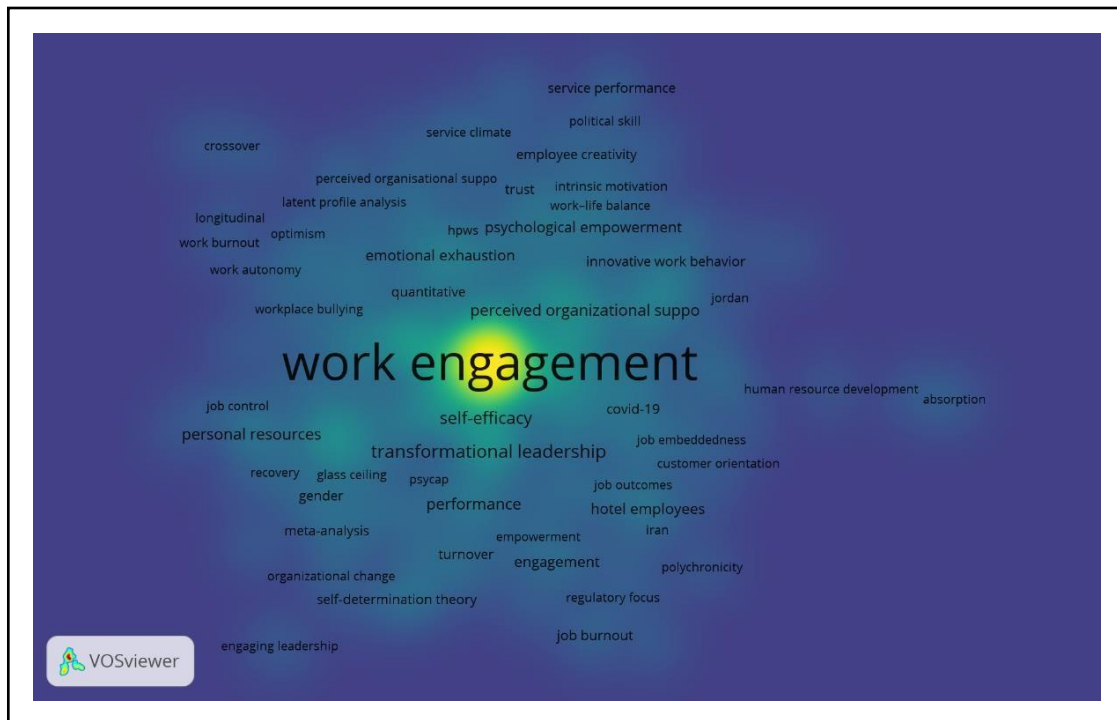


Figure 10. Network Map Showing Keywords (Density Visualization)

Source: Scopus (2024)

The figure is a visualization of the density of research topics related to "*work engagement*" generated using VOSviewer software. In this figure, the term "*work engagement*" is in the center with the highest density, marked by the bright yellow area. This color indicates that the concept is the main focus of research and has a high frequency and connectedness with other keywords. Further away from the center, the color shifts to dark blue, reflecting a lower level of density or weaker relatedness.

Terms connected to "*work engagement*" include concepts such as "*self-efficacy*," "*transformational leadership*," "*personal resources*," and "*psychological empowerment*," all of which are closely related to building or affecting work engagement. Other factors, such as "*emotional exhaustion*," "*job burnout*," and "*work-life balance*," reflect negative aspects or challenges that can hinder work engagement. In addition, organizational contexts, such as "*perceived organizational support*," "*job embeddedness*," and "*human resource development*," show how the work environment can affect the level of employee engagement.

This visualization provides a comprehensive overview of the research map in the field of work engagement, showing the relationships between key concepts and their relevance in various contexts, both individual and organizational. It can help researchers understand the dominant themes and identify areas that require further exploration.

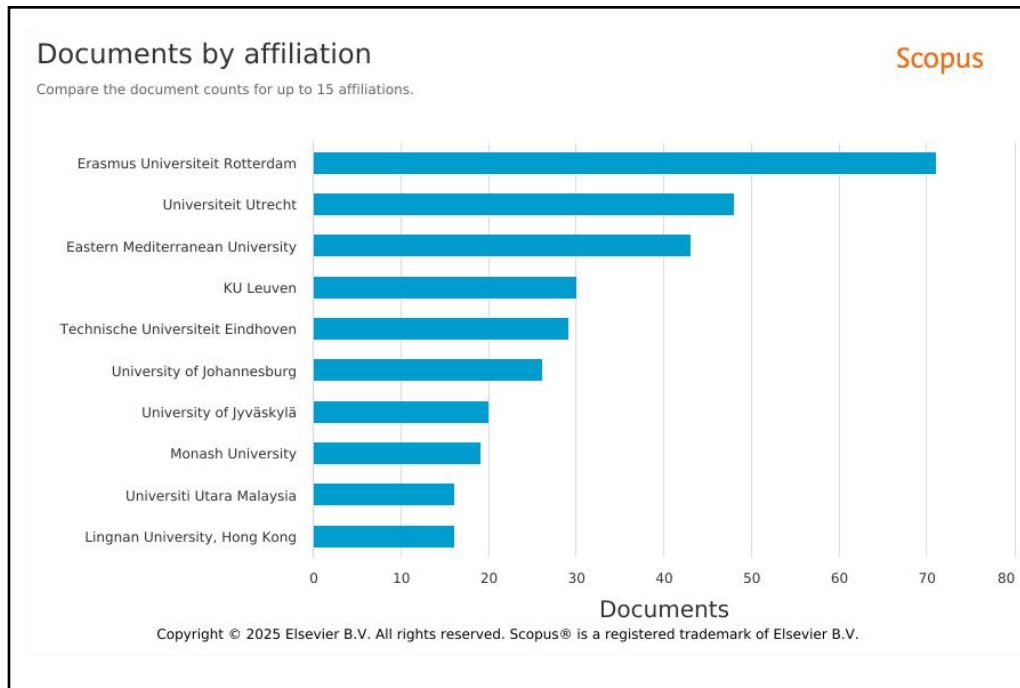


Figure 11. Institutional Contribution

Source: Scopus

This graph illustrates the number of documents related to *work engagement* based on the affiliation of academic institutions indexed in the Scopus database. *Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam* is the highest contributing institution, producing almost 70 documents. The second position is occupied by *Universiteit Utrecht* with more than 50 documents, followed by *Eastern Mediterranean University* which contributed around 40 documents. Meanwhile, institutions such as *KU Leuven*, *Technische Universiteit Eindhoven*, and *University of Johannesburg* showed significant contributions with between 30 and 40 documents. On the other hand, institutions such as *Lingnan University*, Hong Kong and *Universiti Utara Malaysia* had smaller contributions, each with under 20 documents.

The results indicate that work engagement has garnered significant attention from academic institutions, particularly in European countries like the Netherlands and Belgium, which lead in the number of published documents. Nevertheless, contributions from regions such as South Africa, Malaysia, and Hong Kong demonstrate that the significance of work engagement extends globally. This research underscores the growing importance of work engagement, both in academic discourse and practical application, across diverse regions worldwide.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

Research on work engagement has significantly advanced over recent decades, with a notable increase in annual publications since 2010. Key research areas focus on the effects of leadership, organizational culture, and working conditions on employee engagement. The United States and the Netherlands lead in scholarly contributions, followed by India, China, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Emerging contributions from developing countries like Malaysia indicate a broadening of the research landscape into non-Western contexts. Influential scholars such as A.B. Bakker, O.M. Karatepe, and W.B. Schaufeli have made substantial contributions, especially through frameworks and instruments like the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), which remains a foundational tool in this field.

Despite these advancements, several research gaps persist. Much of the existing literature concentrates on Western cultural settings and select industries, leaving other sectors underexplored. Furthermore, the effects of digital transformation, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the interplay of gender with work engagement have not been sufficiently examined. Additional investigation is needed into how work stress affects engagement, the dynamics between individual and organizational factors, and the cultural validity of measurement tools like the UWES.

Work engagement has emerged as a key topic within academia, particularly in Europe, where Dutch and Belgian institutions dominate publication output. Nonetheless, contributions from regions like South Africa, Malaysia, and Hong Kong highlight the global relevance of this subject. Research not only emphasizes the academic significance of work engagement but also its practical implications in enhancing workforce productivity and employee well-being across industries. This underscores the necessity for ongoing research to foster broader global application and understanding.

Future studies should broaden their scope to include non-Western cultural contexts and under-researched sectors like hospitality and tourism. Moreover, there is a need for deeper analysis of how digital technologies and the COVID-19 pandemic have influenced work engagement, particularly regarding the links between innovative leadership, employee engagement, and organizational outcomes such as innovation and sustainability. Promoting international collaboration is vital to enrich global perspectives and develop effective strategies for enhancing employee engagement. This research offers valuable insights for academics and practitioners aiming to close existing knowledge gaps and craft more impactful management practices.

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