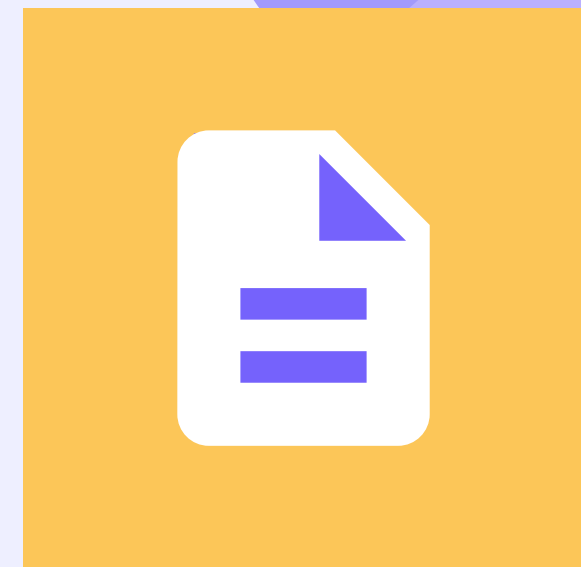# Validation Whitepaper

Deep dive into concepts of Employee Engagement (EE) and Employee Experience (EX), drivers of EX, and EngageRocket's methodology in developing our question bank

✏️ **Last updated: August 2021**

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Mission

Here at EngageRocket, we've gathered millions of data points on talent and their perceptions of their organizations across Asia, with the mission to enable a world where people thrive and organisations succeed.

Through our survey analytics platform, we can truly understand an intangible asset that many people organizations tend to miss — employee experience and engagement. The questions used in our platform's recommended surveys have been considered through active research in organization science, which allowed us to build a framework for understanding what drives employees' success in their workplaces.

This whitepaper illustrates our framework of employee experience through detailing each of the dimensions and drivers, which were derived through our structured literature review, pilot testing and rigorous analyses before building our final instrument to measure employee experience.

Introduction

Having a tool that is able to capture employee experience and engagement helps organisations understand its talent pool better by deep diving into how they interact with different aspects of their work and how they feel about those interactions. As work is inherently complex in the modern world, there are many dimensions and drivers that contribute to the employee experience and engagement. At this current moment where the Covid-19 pandemic is disrupting work for everyone around the world, elements of work have changed - some at a much greater scale than others. As an obvious example, most people have shifted to remote working and hence their physical work environment has shifted from the typical office to their personal home. This suggests that people's experience and engagement with their work can change as a result.

In this paper, we first begin with a discussion of the difference between the two main concepts of employee engagement and employee experience; from there, the focus on employee experience becomes clear and compelling. With the focus in mind, we then introduce a framework that encapsulates both concepts. The qualitative and quantitative analyses that went behind the task of conceptualization would be covered. Lastly, the processes underlying the development of the survey bank that measures all the different dimensions and drivers of employee experience and engagement would also be discussed.

Difference between Engagement and Experience

Employee Engagement (EE) has been a well-studied motivational concept since 1990, when William Kahn[1] first introduced it. Employee Engagement can be defined as a mix of psychological state, attitudes and behavior towards one's job and organisation. It encompasses the feeling of dedication, energy and absorption in work (i.e., work engagement), desire to make the best effort at work (i.e., work motivation), emotional attachment, loyalty and dedication towards organisation (i.e., commitment), as well as feeling of belonging and oneness with organisation (i.e., identification). In a systematic literature review of research between EE and business performance, it was found that EE supports organisational development and leads to improved business performance[2]. In addition, EE also impacts valued attitudes such as active learning, innovation, knowledge sharing and adaptability[3].

On the other hand, Employee Experience (EX) is a holistic view of how people interact with and perceive their work. Similar to the way companies approach the Consumer Experience (CX), the end-user's motivations, wants and needs are at the core of EX, and the critical objective is to find the intersection between those elements for each organisation. By deeply understanding the human aspects of working in the organisation, employers can design a tailored experience that demonstrates empathy towards employees, in turn building employee engagement, loyalty and performance. This is based on the belief that 'your employees are your brand'[4].

Employee Engagement (EE)

A mix of psychological state, attitudes and behaviour towards one's job and organisation.

Employee Experience (EX)

People's relationship with and perceptions of their organisation, defined by all the interactions throughout their employment journey.

EX takes into account the drivers of engagement all along the employment journey, with engagement being an outcome of EX. By focusing on the physical, cultural, digital, and work dimensions of the organisation, a positive EX drives engaged employees[5].

[1] Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. Academy of Management Journal, 33(4), 692–724. https://doi.org/10.2307/256287

[2] Błażej, M. (2018). Employee engagement and performance: a systematic literature review. International Journal of Management and Economics, 54(3),: 227–244. https://doi.org/10.2478/ijme-2018-0018

[3] Gorgievski, M. J., Moriano, J. A., Bakker, A. B. (2014). Relating work engagement and workaholism to entrepreneurial performance. Journal of Managerial Psychology, 29(2), 106–121. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-06-2012-0169

[4] Maylett, T, & Wride, M.(2017). The employee experience: how to attract talent, retain top performers, and drive results. John Wiley & Sons.

[5] Morgan, J. (2017). The employee experience advantage: how to win the war for talent by giving employees the workspaces they want, the tools they need, and a culture they can celebrate. John Wiley & Sons.
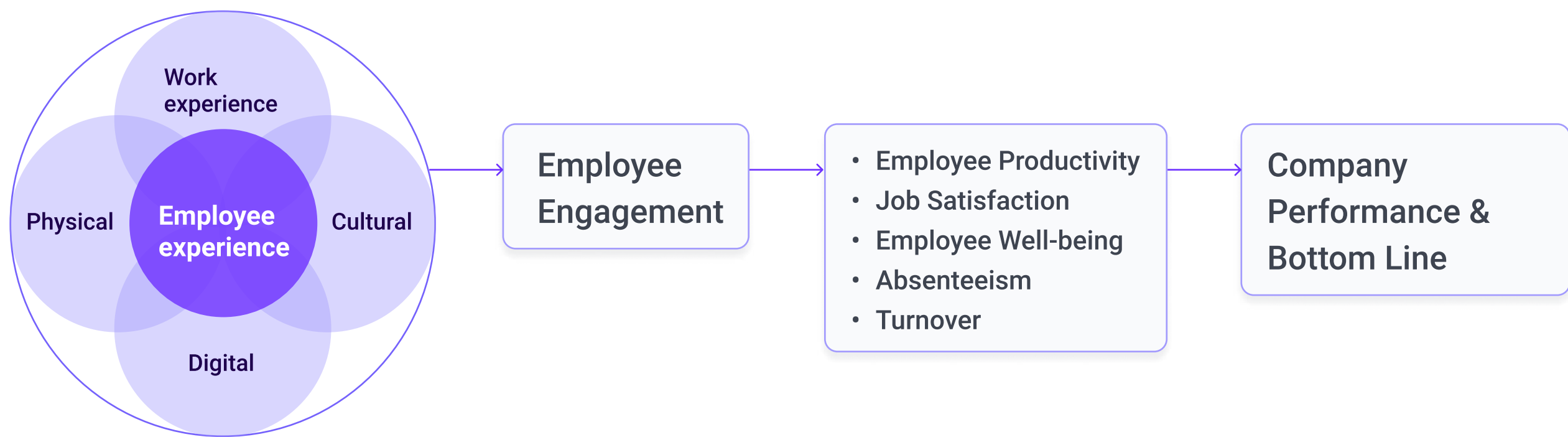
Dimensions of EX

<div align="center">

FIGURE 1

</div>

Building a positive EX is important not only for driving employee engagement, but also for boosting company performance (Figure 1). Creating an environment for people to feel engaged at work contributes to the bottom line through building stronger productivity, job satisfaction and well-being, while lowering absenteeism and turnover.

Transition from Engagement to Experience

Demands and desires of employees have evolved over the years. While compensation and benefits are important to employees, it is insufficient for employers to pin their hopes on that to retain and attract employees. There are other important factors that are commonly overlooked such as developmental opportunities, lifestyle and job fit, and a connection to a greater meaning and purpose[6].

To compete in the business marketplace with an increasing 'war for talent', multi-generational workforce and digitisation, companies have shifted away from just focusing on engagement towards a more holistic approach. Whereas the employment relationship used to be viewed in a transactional way, employees are now placed at the heart of designing the end-to-end employment journey. Tangible benefits or reward programmes are not enough to drive sustainable employee satisfaction and business performance – employers need to look at fundamental people needs throughout the employee lifecycle[7].

[6] Kohll, A. (2018, July 11). What Employees Really Want At Work. Forbes.
    https://www.forbes.com/sites/alankohll/2018/07/10/what-employees-really-want-at-work/?sh=b0d80215ad3b.

[7] Plaskoff, J. (2017). Employee experience: the new human resource management approach. Strategic HR Review, 16(3),136-141.https://doi.org/10.1108/SHR-12-2016-0108

Dimensions of Employee Experience

Physical

No matter whether people work in their own office, at client site or even remotely, they are embedded within the physical environment they are in. Physical environment consists of physical elements that surround the employee which should be safe for them to work with a peace of mind. The physical elements include everything they can take in with their five senses – be it the air they breathe, the chair they sit on, etc. However, the physical elements of the employee experience have been fundamentally changed by the Covid-19 pandemic. With many employees working from home most of the time, companies find themselves in less control of the physical aspect of the employee experience. Even as the tides of the pandemic shift to enable employees to return to office, companies may want to rethink their office design to accommodate employees' preference for hybrid work arrangements[8]. Some have created office hubs for employees to meet in-person close to their home when needed, providing opportunities for informal social interactions that are difficult to engineer virtually[9]. Health and safety is one of the priority concerns as people return to the physical office, with challenges around coordinating a hybrid workforce and ensuring safe distancing. It is also important to note that remote working has had an unequal impact on various demographic groups, depending on the suitability of individuals' home environment for juggling both work and personal responsibilities.

Cultural

Company culture can be understood as 'the way we do things around here', which is underpinned by organisational values, attitudes and behaviours. It is the shared perceptions of the organisation and its work practices that employees hold, which is usually shaped by the company structure and leadership. It is the glue that holds employees together and motivates employees to commit to its objectives. It can encompass many elements, including relationship elements, such as organisational or managerial support and communication style, as well as process elements, such as action-orientation and empowerment. The pandemic has challenged employers' ability to build and maintain a strong sense of culture during remote working, especially since so much of this is created organically when staff interact with each other in the office. Ensuring managers and leaders are visible and approachable when working remotely is key to building trust, especially during periods of change and uncertainty. Some senior managers allocate regular time windows during the week when people can informally reach them for a chat or to ask any questions.

Digital

Work has evolved so much and will continue to evolve as more technological solutions and tools are developed. The digital readiness of each organisation can vary greatly however, and the tools that each role can leverage on can also differ. The tools can range from hardware like desktops and printers or to software like applications. With increased adoption of such tools, it comes as a necessary consequence to review processes in which work is done. If the new tools introduced do not benefit the work process, then the value of the new tools diminish. Hence, digitalisation comes hand in hand with process optimisation. To survive the disruption accelerated by the pandemic, investment in technology has rapidly increased – even for small businesses, despite lower revenue. Companies had found themselves immediately reliant on technological tools to enable work, making digital transformation a priority to ride the wave in the pandemic. This entails reframing the business model to create value through modern tools – bringing together technology, people and processes. Managing such a large-scale change programme is enabled by strong capability and use of data to coordinate across departments and adapt to problems along the way.

[8] Tan, S.-A., & Begum, S. (2020, October 31). Back to office, but it's so hard: Why some in Singapore are reluctant to return to the workplace. The Straits Times. https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/manpower/back-to-office-but-its-so-hard.

[9] Berg, N. (2021, May 3). How Salesforce, Spotify, and Okta are redesigning their offices after COVID-19. Fast Company. https://www.fastcompany.com/90629174/how-salesforce-spotify-and-okta-are-redesigning-their-offices-after-covid-19.

Work

The work dimension of the employee experience takes into account the fact that there are specific nuances for specific roles that go beyond what can be influenced by the organisation at large (i.e., cultural). For example, even for an organisation that focuses a lot on ensuring that employees have good development opportunities, certain job roles have a more limited career trajectory than others. What is defined as success also differs across different job roles, even if those roles sit within the same organisation. With the shift to hybrid work, companies have rapidly developed new norms and rules for how work gets done. The expectations required of employees may have changed and may be more difficult to convey with fewer face-to-face interactions. As people's work and personal lives have become more blended, it becomes harder for managers to ensure that employees follow processes and hence there is a greater focus on whether end goals and defined outcomes are met instead. The success and growth of different roles are defined distinctively based on the type of work and role people are in, and these could have been disrupted in varying degrees by the pandemic. While some roles slide into redundancy, others boom to be in greater demand and have greater growth trajectory.

Specific Drivers of Employee Experience

Some of the dimensions under EX (Physical, Cultural, Digital, Work) are multi-faceted and can be broken down into more specific sub-facets/drivers. For example, organisational cultural dimensions can include autonomy and fairness of rewards[10]. In addition, work characteristics can include elements like social support from supervisory relationships and role clarity[11].

To unravel the specific drivers, we carried out several qualitative and quantitative analyses on past literature in this field and also on data collected through our platform. As the key outcome of identifying the drivers was to improve employee engagement, we first conceptualised and did literature review around this topic. Our definition of an engaged employee is an employee who is involved in, enthusiastic about and committed to their work and workplace.

Development of Drivers (Analysis)

First, we collected as many academic discussions on the topic and synthesised it into a framework. Research that was found to be uncorrelated with measurable actionable issues for management was removed, resulting in a final database consisting of over 500 peer-reviewed articles from various journals. We conducted several preliminary methods to arrange and sift through the various data sources.

As the literature review allowed us to gather qualitative data on concepts surrounding employee engagement, we then had to quantify the data collected to find out themes and categories within this topic. Hence, the first method we employed was content analysis – it is a research method to gain systematic and objective means of quantifying any phenomena. This allows us to make replicable and valid inferences from research towards their context, building a representation of facts in a structure for a practical guide to action. Through this analysis, we yielded a conceptual system to organise categories within engagement.

Second, we used a visual illustration of the content analysis output to formulate the model of drivers more effectively. Concept mapping[12] was employed to develop this graphic representation of data points uncovered from the previous step. This allowed us to structure semantic connections between different ideas and to ascertain whether certain ideas or behaviours are antecedent or consequential. Through this graphic representation, we were able to present a conceptual model for the drivers of EX.

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[10] Van Den Berg, P. T., & Wilderom, C. P. M. (2004). Defining, measuring, and comparing organisational cultures. Applied Psychology, 53(4), 570-582. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2004.00189.x

[11] Fairlie, P. (2011). Meaningful work, employee engagement, and other key employee outcomes: Implications for human resource development. Advances in Developing Human Resources, 13(4), 508-525. https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422311431679

[12] Novak, J. D. (1995). Concept Mapping: A Strategy for Organizing Knowledge. Routlege.

Through our concept mapping and analysis of content from the literature of employee engagement, we found 9 constructs to be measuring issues that were actionable for managers and supervisors. These 9 constructs (in green) are termed as drivers and are mapped onto the 4 broad dimensions of EX, as seen in Figure 2. The other constructs (in purple) have been theoretically conceptualised but are still undergoing development for a more holistic framework in future versions.

LEGEND: New drivers under validation (In progress)   Validated drivers

Employee Experience

Physical
- Environment
- Physical

Cultural
- Rewards
- Recognition
- Manager Support
- Autonomy
- Relationships at work
- Value & Purpose (Mission)
- Action
- Communication
- Decision Making
- Employee Voice
- Fairness
- Innovation
- Integrity & Ethics
- Teamwork
- Trust

Digital
- Process Optimisation
- Digitalisation

Work
- Relationships at work
- Manager Support
- Autonomy
- Integrity & Ethics
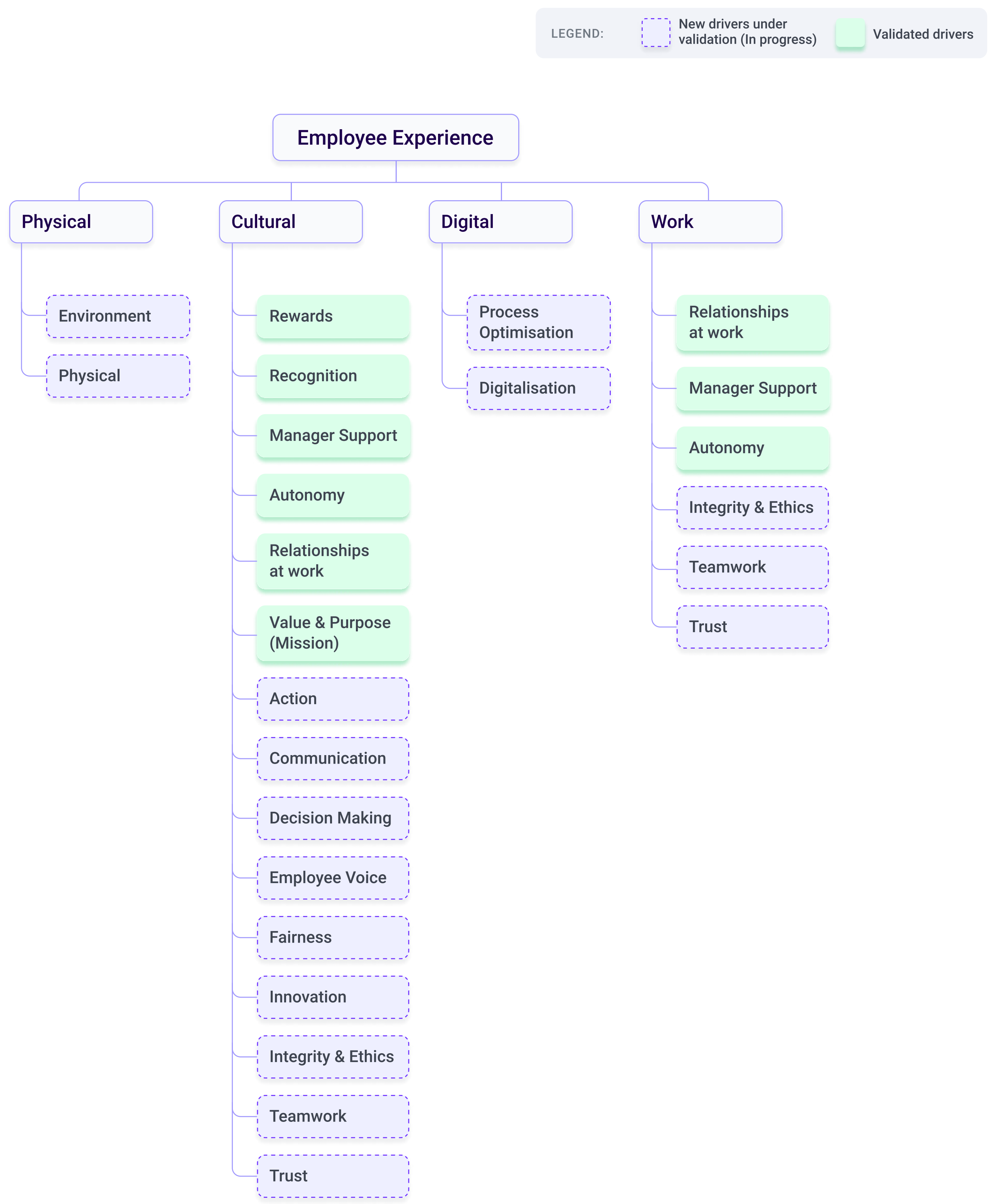- Teamwork
- Trust

FIGURE 2

Drivers of Employee Experience

🏆 Accomplishment

William Kahn's (1990)[1] qualitative research on engagement is one of the most cited works in the engagement literature. Based on his model, one of the main antecedents of engagement at work is psychological meaningfulness; the sense of return on investments of the self in performance at one's role. In a similar vein, meaningful work has been identified as one of the the five elements that drive engagement[13]. Direct research supporting this idea showed that the experience of meaningfulness within work roles results in individuals making greater personal investments in the pursuit of organizational goals[14] [15].

Fairlie (2011)[11] compared a number of meaningful work characteristics to other work characteristics as correlates and predictors of employee engagement. The findings showed that jobs that offer a sense of accomplishment was one of the work characteristics that were categorized as meaningful, and that such characteristics accounted for a substantive amount of variation in employee engagement.

🚩 Autonomy

The Demand-Control theory[16] made a case for the enabling role of autonomy in engagement. According to this model, people have the ability to think and solve problems, and want to have the opportunity to make choices and decisions. In other words, they want to have some input into the process of achieving the outcomes for which they will be held accountable. Hence, employees' perceived capacity to influence decisions that affect their work and to exercise professional autonomy is a critical element of employee engagement[17] [18].

The very process of making a decision has a durable impact on employees' experience of participating in organizational life and the responsibility they take for its outcomes[19]. Participative decision making is a foundation of job enrichment strategies[20], because of its power to engender commitment as well as its capacity to make good use of knowledge and experience within a group of colleagues[19]. Active participation in organizational decision making has been consistently found to be related to higher levels of efficacy and lower levels of exhaustion[21] [22]. When employees are encouraged to participate in decision making, they tend to be more engaged, invest more effort in their work, and feel less strain[17]. In a study conducted on 279 frontline employees in a hotel and restaurant in Southern Norway[23], the results showed that job autonomy is an antecedent of employee engagement, which in turn leads to employees' innovative behaviour.

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[21] Lee, R. T., & Ashforth, B. E. (1993). A further examination of managerial burnout: Toward an integrated model. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 14(1), 3–20. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030140103

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[23] Slåtten, T., & Mehmetoglu, M. (2011). What are the drivers for innovative behavior in frontline jobs? A study of the hospitality industry in Norway. Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism, 10(3), 254-272. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332845.2011.555732

✈ Clear Expectations (Alignment)

One driver of engagement revolves around job clarity and helping an employee understand what is expected of him or her at work[24]. If an employee has been shown how what one does fits with the company, has a clearly communicated set of fundamental responsibilities, and understands not only what he or she needs to do, employee engagement will follow. Research around the contribution of setting clear expectations and providing resources to employee engagement support this idea[25].

In the burnout literature, researchers have found that greater role conflict is strongly and positively associated with greater exhaustion[26] [27]. Contradictory demands interfere with people's capacity to set priorities or to commit themselves fully to their work. Studies have also examined role ambiguity – the absence of direction in work. Generally, role ambiguity is also associated with greater burnout, and lower levels of engagement[26] [27].

🎉 Fairness

Fairness is the extent to which decisions at work are perceived as being fair and people are treated with respect. It communicates respect and confirms people's self-worth. In turn, mutual respect between people is fundamental to a shared sense of community[19]. Fairness is also central to equity theory[28], which posits that perceptions of equity or inequity are based on people's determination of the balance between their inputs, such as time, effort, and expertise, and outputs, such as rewards and recognition[19].

Research based on this theoretical framework has found that a perceived inequity is predictive of burnout[29] [30]. Employees who perceive their supervisors as being both fair and supportive are less susceptible to burnout, and are more accepting of major organizational change[31] [32]. Research in Asia has identified organizational justice[33] and equal opportunities and fair treatment[34] as drivers of employee engagement.

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[34] Sundaray, B. K. (2011). Employee engagement: a driver of organizational effectiveness. European Journal of Business and Management, 3(8), 53-59. doi: 10.12691/jbms-3-5-1

📈 Growth

Researchers have theorised that opportunities for learning[35] and talent management systems[36] that involve employee and organisational development initiatives are antecedents to engagement. Training and career development helps the employee to concentrate on a focused work dimension[37]. When an employee undergoes training and learning development programmes, his/her confidence builds up in the area of training, and this motivates them to be more engaged in their job.

Alderfer (1972)[38] suggested that when an organisation offers employees a chance to grow, it is equivalent to rewarding people. He emphasised that "satisfaction of growth needs depend on a person finding the opportunity to be what he or she is most fully and become what he or she can." Lai et al. (2015)[39] carried out a study among a convenience sample of 400 employees working at three to five star hotels in Penang, Malaysia found that training and development have a significant relationship with employee engagement. In a series of other studies conducted, researchers corroborated on the direct link between employee perceptions of growth and development to employee engagement in Asian contexts[34 40 41].

👉 Manager Support

Perceived organisational support develops through employee interactions with organisational agents such as managers, and reflects employees' beliefs concerning the extent to which the organisation they work for values their contributions and looks after their well-being[42 43]. Supportive, emotionally positive workplace climates have been operationalised to include the perception of supportive management[44]. Relevant research by various other researchers have corroborated the role of the manager in creating a supportive climate[45 46].

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A research study found that supervisor relations were positively linked to psychological safety and engagement[15]. These findings are in line with research showing positive relationships between perceptions of various forms of support in an organisation and conceptualisations of job engagement[47][48][49]. Saks' (2005)[50] study indicated that perceived organisational support predicts both job and organisation engagement. He posited that the reason for this positive relationship is the norm of reciprocity, which refers to the extent to which employees are likely to respond to the support and care from the organisation through trying to perform well on their duties and responsibilities at work. In Asia, other researchers have also substantiated the positive impact of perceptions of manager trust and integrity[41] and perceived supervisor support[31] on employee engagement.

🧭 Value & Purpose (Mission)

Values, mission and purpose encompass the ideals and motivations that connect the employee and the workplace in a way that goes beyond the utilitarian exchange of time for money or advancement[19]. Contributing to a meaningful purpose is a powerful motivator for individuals. When the values of the organisation and that of an employee are mutually compatible, it produces a self-perpetuating dynamic that supports engagement. However, when there is a conflict of values on the job, it can undermine people's engagement with work. The greater the gap between individual and organisational values, the more often staff members find themselves making a trade-off between work they want to do and work they have to do[19].

The dominant role of value conflicts in the burnout and engagement process is indicated by the associated distress and the lengths to which people go to reduce the associated tension. Research has found that a conflict in values is related to all three dimensions of burnout[31]. According to the 2014 global workforce study conducted by Towers Watson, the second highest determinant of employee engagement is goals and objectives, which refers to an understanding about how one's job contributes to the goals of the organisation.

🏷️ Recognition

A lack of recognition from service recipients, colleagues, managers, and external stakeholders devalues both the work and the workers, and is closely associated with feelings of inefficacy[26][27]. What keeps work engaging for most people is the pleasure and satisfaction they experience with the day-to-day flow of work that is going well[22]. Recognition from others is the source of an enjoyable workflow, which supports both psychological well-being and physical health[19].

In testing a model of engagement through surveying 102 employees in a variety of jobs and organisations, a study found that job characteristics, such as rewards and recognitions, were predictive of engagement[49]. In an Asian context, another piece of research found that rewards and recognition are positive antecedents of employee engagement[33].

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:busts_in_silhouette: Relationships at Work

Kahn (1990)[1] found that supportive and trusting interpersonal relationships, as well as a supportive team, promote employee engagement. An open and supportive environment is essential for employees to feel safe in the workplace and engage fully with their responsibilities. Supportive environments enable members to experiment and try new things and even fail without fear of the consequences.

Co-worker social support is also a significant component of dedication-vigor-absorption model of work engagement[51]. The authors argued that team members' interactions "facilitated feelings of energy and enthusiasm in individual members, independent of the demands and resources" they were able to obtain. In a similar vein, studies by various researchers[52] [53] provided empirical support for the relationships between engagement and social support from co-workers and supervisors. Research in Asia has also clearly delineated co-worker support[39] and relationships among co-workers and team members[46] as key drivers of employee engagement. Regardless of its specific form, social support has been found to be associated with greater engagement[41].

In one of very few studies to utilize qualitative, semi-structured interviews and observations, Shuck et al. (2011)[54] conducted a study that explored employee engagement from the perspectives of employees. Findings from their case study revealed 3 key themes emerged when employees shared their experience of work engagement, one of which being development of relationships in the workplace.

Development of Question Bank

Questionnaires are then built deductively after conceptualising the drivers, which are each operationalised as one or more questions in the survey instrument. We conducted a review of published survey instruments measuring employee engagement. Through this review of the engagement constructs, we assembled a question bank of 198 items aimed at measuring employee engagement, after eliminating duplicates. A list of references can be found in Appendix 1.

To build a strong instrument for predicting engagement, we needed to select items to include in our EX Instrument which were predictive of specific drivers. Thus, we set out on our goal to systematically sample all content that is relevant to any of the drivers. Through this process, a total of 42 non-redundant items were generated from the question bank.

Response Format - Likert Scales

In the surveys that we run, respondents would be required to respond to the question with a rating from 1 through 5. This response format is called a Likert scale and is often used as a measure for how an individual feels, or thinks about their level of engagement. Scales capture the intensity of an item and Likert scales specifically reflect the degree with which they either agree or disagree with a statement. They are the most widely used in survey instruments worldwide. Other than Likert scales, there are many question response formats which we may but rarely use, such as Thurstone scales, Borgadus social distance, semantic differentials and Guttman scales.

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[52] Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: a multi-sample study. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 25(3), 293–315. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.248

[53] Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Van Rhenen, W. (2009). How changes in job demands and resources predict burnout, work engagement, and sickness absenteeism. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 30(7), 893–917. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.595

[54] Shuck, M. B., Rocco, T. S., & Albornoz, C. A. (2011). Exploring employee engagement from the employee perspective: Implications for HRD. Journal of European Industrial Training, 35(4), 300-325. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090591111128306

We chose a 5 point Likert scale to respond to our surveys as we found that scales with a higher number of categories to choose from did not introduce stronger predictive power and introduced complexity to the survey instead. Another advantage of picking a 5 point scale over other other scales is its presence of a precise midpoint. This allows for clarity when the respondent has a 'neutral' response. As visualised in Figure 3 below, when using the 5 point scale, '3' is clearly the midpoint of the scale, while in the '10' point scale, there is no option for a clear 'neutral' response. Many respondents may mistake '5' as the midpoint, but on a scalar plane, '5.5' is the actual midpoint. Thus, an odd-numbered scale is usually the best choice for most Likert scales.
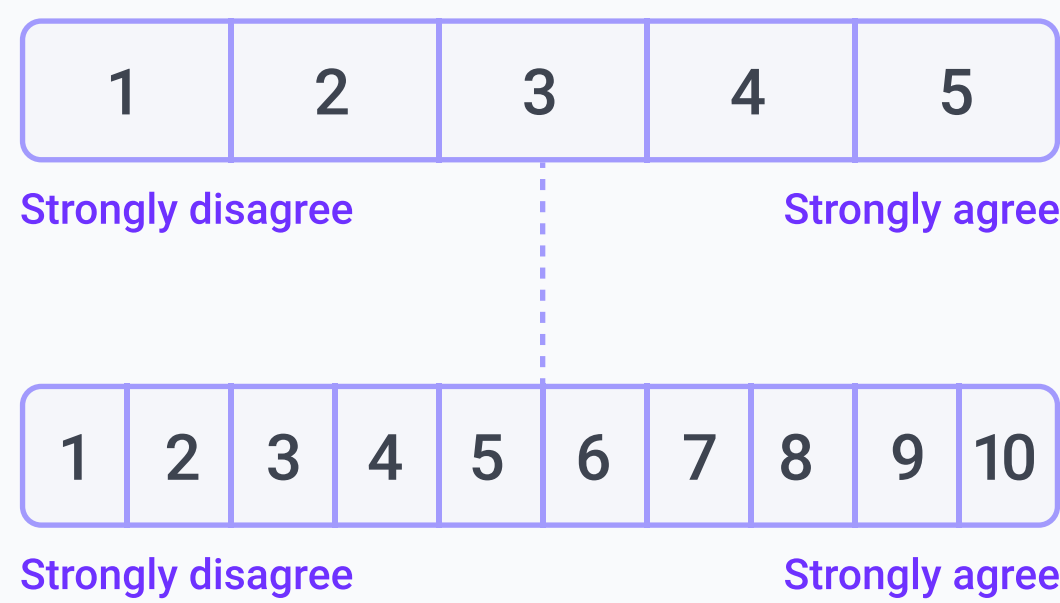
1	2	3	4	5

Strongly disagree   **Strongly agree**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Strongly disagree   **Strongly agree**

FIGURE 3

Additionally, we find meaningful differences between the '4' point responses and the '5' point responses, leading us to conclude that introducing more categories to the Likert scale just increases complexity in analyzing the data, as 5 points are sufficient to yield predictive power.

Pilot Tests

Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to ensure that the questions in the question bank are clear in terms of language (Pilot Test 1) as well as reliable and valid in terms of psychometric properties (Pilot Test 2).

Pilot Test 1

Survey questions were reviewed for comprehension with a sample of respondents, to ensure the choice of words do not create misinterpretation and are not too sensitive in nature.

PARTICIPANTS

We recruited 20 local job incumbents from Singapore, who were selected to be representative of the demographic profile of the population in Singapore - they were ethnically diverse in proportion to the actual proportions from the 2010 Singapore census. The participants were equally represented in terms of gender. All participants were also proficient in English.

All participants were also representative of different industries in Singapore, such as manufacturing, banking, shipping, hospitality, F&B, automotive, etc. The participants' education was also similarly profiled, with an equal proportion of O/N Levels certificate holders, A Levels/Diploma certificate holders and Bachelor's Degree and above certificate holders.

PROCEDURE

In small focus groups, participants underwent cognitive interviews where they verbalised their thought processes while answering our filtered question bank of 42 survey items. Probes were utilised to detect misunderstandings and assessing question sensitivity, such as:

> **Could you tell me in your own words what that question means to you? Were there questions asked that seemed similar to each other? Were there any questions that you felt uncomfortable answering?**

Summaries of respondents' verbal reports were reviewed to reveal both general strategies for answering survey questions and difficulties with particular questions. Following the interviews, a debrief session was further conducted for respondents to discuss how they answered or interpreted specific questions. Following the findings from the pre-test, 6 survey items were dropped if the participants had any difficulties in any of the 3 criteria: comprehension, similarity or discomfort.

Pilot Test 2

PARTICIPANTS

For pilot test 2,500 local job incumbents from Singapore were recruited. These participants were selected to be representative of the demographic profile of the population of Singapore. All the participants were ethnically diverse in proportion to the actual proportions from the 2010 Singapore census. The sample was composed of 270 males and 230 females, with an average age of 35 within the age group of 24 to 60. All the participants were also proficient in English.

The participants' education was profiled with a proportion of 10% O/N Levels certificate holders, 60% A Levels/Diploma certificate holders and 30% Bachelor's Degree and above certificate holders. All participants were also representative of different industries in Singapore, such as manufacturing, banking, shipping, hospitality, F&B, automotive, etc.

PROCEDURE

The data was collected in a cross-sectional study. The survey consisted of the 36 items retained from pilot test 1. Employees rated the degree to which they felt that they experienced the level of engagement represented in each of the items. Responses were made on a Likert scale with the anchors being strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

RESULTS

Reliability - Internal Consistency

Each of the drivers is shown to have a high internal consistency, signifying that the measures possess adequate scale reliability. Through the data obtained from the pilot study, we examine the correlation between each item and the other items in the same subscale - that gave us an idea of how similar the particular item and the other items are. Items that were dissimilar were omitted. We also eliminated items which did not match our hypothesis about which driver they belonged to, leading to a scale with reduced items. For more details, please see Appendix 2.

Construct Validity – Construct Adequacy

Following research in construct measurement theory, we conducted a content adequacy test to determine the validity of the selected items. Through this test, items were eliminated that did not discriminate between drivers, or have an average score that was not sufficiently different from other drivers. A detailed explanation can be found in the Appendix 3.

Construct Validity – Factor Structure

We performed a confirmatory factor analysis with latent variable structural equation modelling, using maximum likelihood estimation. We found that the overall model fit for a second-order structure with 9 constructs as latent indicators of a higher order engagement factor was very strong. Additional details can be found in the Appendix 4.

Appendices

Appendix 1

List of Survey Instruments

The Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA)[24]

Towers Watson Employee Engagement Survey

Kenexa Employee Engagement Survey

The Utrecht Work Engagement Survey (UWES)[55]

The Psychological Engagement Measure[15]

The Job and Organization Engagement Scales[49]

The Job Engagement Measure[43]

The Employee Engagement Survey[56]

The Intellectual, Social, Affective (ISA) Engagement Scale[57]

Appendix 2

Cronbach's Alpha and Subscale Correlations

Each of the drivers had Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.74$. Items were examined for its consistency with the rest of the subscale with corrected item-to-total subscale correlations - those that did not meet the threshold above 0.50 were deleted. Correlations among the items that structure each subscale (Intra-Subscale Correlations) were systematically higher than items of different subscales (Inter-Subscale Correlations), indicating that the items that were hypothesized under each driver belonged together than items hypothesized to be under other drivers.

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[57] Soane, E., Truss, C., Alfes, K., Shantz, A., Rees, C., & Gatenby, M. (2012). Development and application of a new measure of employee engagement: the ISA Engagement Scale. Human Resource Development International, 15(5), 529-547. https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2012.726542

Appendix 3

Content Adequacy Test

The mean score of the responses on each item provided was calculated for each driver. In order to be retained, an item's mean had to pass two tests. First, an item's highest mean had to correspond to the intended engagement driver. In addition, to eliminate items that, an item's highest mean had to be sufficiently different from the ratings obtained for the other categories. If the difference between the highest and the next highest mean was not at least .20, the item was discarded.

Appendix 4

Structural Equation Modelling

A confirmatory factor analysis was performed with latent variable structural equation modeling (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993) using maximum likelihood estimation in AMOS 18.0 (Arbuckle, 2006). The overall model fit for a second-order structure with 11 drivers as latent indicators of a higher order factor was very strong: 2 = 64; df = 24; GFI = .95; SRMR = .04; RMSEA = .08; CFI= .98. Model fit is usually considered good when   2 / df falls below 3, and acceptable when   2 / df is below 5. GFI and CFI values greater than .9 represent a good model fit, and for SRMR and RMSEA, values less than .08 indicate a good, and values between .08 and 1 indicate an acceptable model fit[58] [59] [60].

All items loaded strongly on the intended facet with standardized factor loadings ranging from .82 to .94. Moreover, each dimension facet loaded strongly on the general latent factor with standardized factor loadings of .73 for autonomy, .60 for clear expectations, and .98 for manager support, etc. The inter-facet correlations were statistically significant at the p<.0001 level, which indicates that the general factor is influencing each facet with a similar strength. The reliability of our measure was strong for the overall construct (α = .91) as well as for each facet, where the Cronbach alpha values were .90 for autonomy, .92 for clear expectations, .94 for manager support, etc.
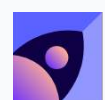
EngageRocket

[58] Browne, M. W., & Cudeck, R. (1993). Alternative ways of assessing model fit. In K. A. Bollen & J. S. Long (Eds.), Testing structural equation models (pp. 136-162). Sage.

[59] Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1998). Fit indices in covariance structure modeling: Sensitivity to underparameterized model misspecification. Psychological methods, 3(4), 424-453. https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.3.4.424

[60] Kline, R. B. (2005). Principles and practice of structural equation modelling. The Guilford Press.