

The relationship between employee well-being and organisational effectiveness



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Orientation: The changing demands employees experience because of the turbulent and competitive world of work has increased their workload, necessitating a focus on their well-being to ensure their contribution to the effectiveness of organisations.

Research purpose: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between employee well-being (EWB) and organisational effectiveness (OE) in a South African bond origination company.

Motivation for the study: Organisations need to improve their effectiveness to remain competitive and are dependent on the well-being of their employees to achieve this. Understanding the effect of EWB on OE can assist organisations in managing this relationship.

Research design/approach and method: A quantitative cross-sectional approach was used in which a convenient sample of 203 employees completed five questionnaires to measure OE and the four underlying constructs of EWB. A correlation analysis was conducted to determine the statistical relationship between the four EWB constructs and OE.

Main findings: Results indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction, work engagement and OE and a statistically significant negative relationship between Burnout and OE, while no relationship was found between workaholism and OE.

Practical/managerial implications: Managers should implement interventions to increase job satisfaction and work engagement and decrease burnout to increase the performance of their organisations.

Contributions/value-add: This study provides managers with an understanding of how the performance of their organisations can be improved by managing the well-being of their employees.

Keywords: burnout; employee engagement; employee well-being; job satisfaction; organisational effectiveness; organisational performance; workaholism; work engagement.

Introduction

Orientation

Change has influenced all spheres of organisations, which are currently defined by volatility and turbulence, requiring them to adapt to function in the current business environment (Birshan et al., 2022; Cummings et al., 2019). Organisations have been forced to address changes to embrace the impact thereof included reshaping their strategies, scope and structure, as failure to make the necessary changes may incapacitate them from competing within their industry, leading to their demise (Yoon & Mormont, 2023). As the global work environment continues to change swiftly, the effectiveness of organisations has become increasingly vital, and most organisations place a high value on effectiveness, as it paves the way for profitability, fosters growth and promotes long-term sustainability (Cooks-Campbell, 2022; Iwu et al., 2015). Organisational effectiveness (OE) research has typically focused on various organisational factors that can contribute to their improved performance (Birshan et al., 2022; WalkMe Team, 2023). However, the level of effectiveness achieved by organisations is largely influenced by and depends on their human capital, as employees play a vital role in their ability to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage (Guest, 2017).

The mutual gains perspective proposes that the application of human resource management (HRM) strategies establishes an environment where employees are seen as valuable resources that can be utilised to boost the performance of the organisation. Consequently, it is believed that HRM strategies positively influence both the human capital of an organisation and its overall performance (Jo et al., 2020). However, despite the fact that this perspective sees the relationship

between an organisation and its employees as interdependent and mutually beneficial, employers are often torn between business strategies that promote organisational performance (OP) versus those that are favourable for employee well-being (EWB) (Ogbonnaya & Aryee, 2020). Although organisations need to focus on how performance can be improved to ensure their competitiveness and sustainability (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023), the implementation of certain OE practices can be exploitative, which result in employees suffering increased work demands and stress (Ogbonnaya & Aryee, 2020). This has led to an increase in the attention given to interventions that can increase EWB (Franco-Santos et al., 2022; Haddon, 2018; Sieberhagen et al., 2011).

Research relating to employee and organisational wellness experienced a rapid increase from the 1990s onwards (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2010). The surge in this research is linked to the global labour markets experiencing a significant paradigm shift because of major global trends such as digital transformation, climate change, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), migration and demographic changes (Rasool, 2021). These trends are drastically reshaping the way we work and live, as alterations in the scope, nature, task requirements, skill demands of jobs and the structure of work are transforming existing job roles and giving rise to new industries and professions (Rasool, 2021). As a result of these changes, employees are facing heightened job pressures and stress (Ogbonnaya & Aryee, 2020). Therefore, managing EWB has become crucial, as the success and competitive edge of organisations rely heavily on their employees' well-being and efficient performance (Guest, 2017). Through researching and understanding EWB, organisations may become more aware of the implications thereof on OE and understand how it can be addressed, which would be beneficial to both the individual employee and the organisation. Furthermore, organisations should regularly monitor the state of their employees' wellness in order to manage it effectively (Sieberhagen et al., 2011).

According to Property360 (2021), there is huge demand for property in South Africa, especially in the lower-to-middle markets, and first-time buyers make up 48% of all home buyers. The South African government has also implemented various policies and programmes to improve the access and affordability of housing for low-income and vulnerable groups (Department of Human Settlements, 2021). The real estate market also mirrors the economic and social trends and conditions in the country, such as inflation, interest rates, consumer confidence, migration patterns, urbanisation, demographic changes and environmental issues (Ooba Home Loans, 2023). These factors have resulted in the South African real estate market experiencing a significant increase in bonded properties over the past few years, resulting in an increased need for bond origination and the work of bond originator companies (Fourie, 2020). Bond origination came to South Africa in the late 1990s, with bond originators acting as intermediary between the buyer and the bank, submitting one application to multiple banks to secure the best possible

interest rate for a borrower (Property360, 2021). While consumers were originally hesitant to use a bond originator, by 2007, a total of 60% of all home loan applications were sourced through originators (Property360, 2021). The increased need for bond origination services in South Africa, coupled with the changing real estate market and shifts in technology that bond originators face, has amplified the pressure on bond originator companies to provide an efficient service that benefited customers (Fourie, 2020). Companies providing bond origination services thus need to become and remain effective to be competitive in the real estate bond market while also ensuring the well-being of its employees who are under pressure to deliver this competitive service to clients while complying with relevant comprehensive financial legislation and regulations (Fourie, 2020; Van Deventer, 2023).

Although well-being on its own is a thoroughly researched topic, available EWB studies have mainly focused on the relationship between EWB and individual organisational variables. Some of the individual organisational variables that have been studied alongside EWB include performance in the workplace (Haddon, 2018), performance management (Franco-Santos et al., 2022), perceived organisational support (Roemer & Harris, 2018; Wattoo et al., 2018) and HRM (Zhang et al., 2020). However, the literature is devoid of research reporting on the relationship between EWB and the effective functioning of the entire organisation, which was identified as an important research need. Furthermore, no research is available on the role that EWB plays in ensuring the OE of bond origination companies in the South African environment, which makes this study unique.

Research purpose and objective

The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between EWB and OE within a bond originating company in South Africa.

Literature review

In the next section EWB, its four constructs, OE, seven approaches to OE as well as the relationship between EWB and OE are discussed.

Employee well-being

Bakker and Oerlemans (2011) and Mazzetti et al. (2018) state that EWB is a multidimensional phenomenon that focuses on an individual's optimal functioning and experience. This view is supported by Waida (2021) who defined EWB as the overall mental, physical, emotional and economic health of employees. Although several models related to EWB exist, this study is based on the Circumplex Model of Affect developed by Russel (1980), which is accepted by various authors as being the most comprehensive in explaining EWB (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011; Hakanen et al., 2017; Mazzetti et al. (2018). While the other models of EWB only address one or two types of well-being, the Circumplex Model of Affect,

which was adapted by Bakker and Oerlemans (2011), is more comprehensive, as it operationalises the concept of EWB as consisting of four constructs, namely (1) job satisfaction, (2) work engagement, (3) burnout and (4) workaholism. Job satisfaction and work engagement are deemed pleasant forms of well-being, whereas burnout and workaholism are classified as unpleasant forms of well-being (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011; Mazzetti et al., 2018).

The four constructs of employee well-being

The Circumplex Model of Affect (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011) operationalises the concept of EWB as consisting of the following four constructs.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been defined by Hakanen et al. (2017) as the pleasant state that an individual experiences regarding their job practices or the judgement of their job. In support of this viewpoint, Herrity (2022) defined job satisfaction as a measure of an employee's contentedness with their job, the feeling of enjoyment or fulfillment that a person derives from their job. Thus, should an employee like or enjoy their job or aspects thereof, they experience job satisfaction, whereas should an employee not like or enjoy their job or aspects thereof, they may experience job dissatisfaction (Ngidi & Ngidi, 2017).

Work engagement

Work engagement is described as a positive emotional and motivational condition characterised by high energy, strong dedication and a concentrated focus on work (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). It is more than just job satisfaction or enjoyment; it is a fulfilling mental state that embodies a resilient energy and a readiness to put effort into work tasks (Chen et al., 2020; Hakanen & Peeters, 2015). Schaufeli et al. (2002) proposed a conceptual model for work engagement as consisting of three dimensions, which are the dimensions measured in this study: (1) Vigour is characterised by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, not being easily fatigued, and persistence even in the face of difficulties, (2) Dedication is characterised by deriving a sense of significance from one's work, by feeling enthusiastic and proud about one's job, and by feeling inspired and challenged by it, and (3) Absorption is characterised by being totally and happily immersed in one's work and having difficulties detaching oneself from it. Time passes quickly and one forgets everything else that is around.

Workaholism

The term workaholism was historically introduced by Oates (1971, as cited in Andersen et al., 2023) who described it as an addiction to work and the compulsive and uncontrollable need to work incessantly. The concept of workaholism has been given a more detailed interpretation in newer definitions, which have built upon and broadened the dimensions initially proposed by Oates (Andersen et al., 2023). Hakanen

and Peeters (2015) state that workaholism is characterised by demands that individuals imposed on themselves and often affected their personal lives. Furthermore, Hakanen et al. (2017) explain that workaholics may take on tasks and challenges despite whether they have the necessary resources available or not, as they engaged in the work activities they deemed as necessary or important (Andersen et al., 2023; Hakanen et al., 2017). The two underlying dimensions of workaholism, namely working excessively and working compulsively, were introduced by Schaufeli et al. (2009) and used by researchers to measure workaholism (Andersen et al., 2023). Employees who work excessively work beyond what is expected of them to ensure the organisation's requirements are fulfilled, while employees who continually think about and are obsessed with their work are deemed to be working compulsively (Schaufeli et al., 2009).

Burnout

The mid-1970s saw the introduction of the term burnout by Herbert Freudenberger (Hillert et al., 2020) who indicated that emotional depletion and a loss of commitment and motivation are symptoms of burnout. Since then, burnout has become a global concern, and work-related stress a big challenge to organisations (Reis et al., 2021). Maslach and Leiter (2016) stated that burnout is a psychological syndrome that emerges because of a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job, while Koutsimani et al. (2019) added that it is characterised by emotional exhaustion, feelings of cynicism and reduced personal accomplishment. Employees who are burnt out do not make impactful contributions to their organisations and participate in activities that reduce the demands that they are confronted with (Hakanen et al., 2017). According to Maslach et al. (1996, as cited in Koutsimani et al., 2019), burnout is composed of three dimensions: (1) overwhelming exhaustion (chronic fatigue resulting from excessive work demands), (2) cynicism (an apathetic or a detached attitude towards work in general and the people with whom one works) and (3) a lack of professional efficacy (feelings of ineffectiveness and a lack of accomplishment). Maslach and Leiter (2016) argued that the significance of this three-dimensional model is that it clearly places the individual stress experience within a social context and involves the person's conception of both self and others. Although there are various instruments available to assess burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2016), the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) was developed by Demerouti et al. (2001) to measure the two main dimensions of burnout, namely: (1) exhaustion and (2) disengagement, the instrument used in this study.

Organisational effectiveness

In the complex business world, effectiveness has become central to organisations (Fedyk et al., 2021). Little wonder then that the concept of OE has been one of the most prominent research topics in organisational theory and has attracted scholarly attention for decades (Dhoopar et al., 2023; Gomide Júnior et al., 2022). Despite this attention, there

is still no consensus on a definition of the term nor on what constructs should be measured (Balduck & Buelens, 2008; Cameron, 2015; Cummings et al., 2019; Dhoopar et al., 2023; Van Vulpen, 2023). One of the reasons for the aforementioned is that OE is multidimensional (Fedyk et al., 2021; Gomide Júnior et al., 2022; Mikelsone & Leila, 2019) and grounded in the values and preferences of evaluators (Cameron, 2015; Dhoopar et al., 2023). The influence of globalisation further complicated the understanding of OE and agreeing on a universal definition thereof (Titus & Hoole, 2021). However, the common thread among all definitions is that to be successful, organisations should change with changing situations and definitions of OE, constituents of OE and methods to attain OE must also evolve (Holbeche, 2018). Despite the lack of a universally acceptable definition of OE, researchers have developed seven approaches to OE (Van Vulpen, 2023).

The goal approach to organisational effectiveness

The goal approach is one of the most common approaches to OE and is also referred to as the Goal Attainment Model (Mikelsone & Leila, 2019). This model focused on the output of organisations, such as profit, quality of products and modernisation (Ashraf & Kadir, 2012; Cummings et al., 2019). This approach is of the view that the extent to which an organisation sets and achieves its goals will determine its effectiveness (Van Vulpen, 2023). The advantage of this approach is that it is clear and objective, but the disadvantages are that it is difficult to identify the real goal and not the ideal goal while it also does not consider other aspects of OE, such as internal processes or stakeholder needs (Bhasin, 2023).

The system resource approach to organisational effectiveness

This approach to OE emphasises an organisation's input(s) and the external environment in which it operates (Ashraf & Kadir, 2012). An organisation is deemed more effective if it can secure resources it requires and can utilise them to create a competitive advantage over other entities (Cummings et al., 2019). This approach is valid when there is a relationship between the resources an organisation uses and the product or service it offers (Dimitrov, 2020). The advantage of this approach is that it considers the external environment and the constraints faced by the organisation, but the disadvantage is that it may not reflect the actual results or outcomes of the organisation (Bhasin, 2023).

The internal process approach to organisational effectiveness

This approach does not focus on the organisation's outcomes, but on what happens inside the organisation (Van Vulpen, 2023). Should top management lead and manage employees effectively (Ashraf & Kadir, 2012), it will lead to specific behaviours, such as communication and a positive work climate, which is deemed to increased effectiveness. Organisations will be effective should their members not

experience stress or strain because of the efficient processes of the company (Ashraf & Kadir, 2012). The advantage of this approach is that it considers the internal human and social aspects of organisational effectiveness, but the disadvantages are that it does not consider the external environment or the goals of the organisation (Bhasin, 2023).

The strategic constituency approach to organisational effectiveness

This approach assesses effectiveness by measuring the degree to which it satisfies those in the environment who can threaten the organisation's survival – that is, its strategic constituencies or interest groups (Van Vulpen, 2023). As the various stakeholders may have different or conflicting interests, balancing these may be challenging and is a disadvantage of this approach (Van Vulpen, 2023). However, these challenges can be overcome by providing each stakeholder with as much as possible, satisfying the expectations of the highest stakeholder first, attending to the stakeholders who are likely to be harmed as they are least favoured and responding to changing demand in a flexible and adaptable way (Van Vulpen, 2023). An advantage of this approach is that it has increased our knowledge regarding the complexity of assessing OE (Cameron, 2015).

The stakeholder approach to organisational effectiveness

This approach includes focusing on the interests of strategic constituencies but also on those who are indirectly affected by the organisation but that may not have power over it (Van Vulpen, 2023). These include the families of workers, activists and communities. The advantage of this approach is that it considers the multiple and diverse perspectives of OE, but the disadvantage is that it may be difficult to measure and compare across different stakeholder groups (Bhasin, 2023).

The competing values approach to organisational effectiveness

This approach assesses OE by the ability of the organisation to simultaneously promote competing values (Van Vulpen, 2023). There are two principles that are central to this approach: (1) there are several diverging criteria associated with assessing OE and (2) different stakeholders will have different priorities based on their values (Cameron, 2015). The ability of an organisation to reconcile these competing values is seen as the key to OE (Van Vulpen, 2023).

The abundance approach to organisational effectiveness

The abundance approach considers OE as the unlocking of the best possibilities of human systems (Van Vulpen, 2023). This means bringing out positive values and goodness or virtuousness (Cameron, 2015). To do this effectively, there has to be a balance between positive and negative values. For example, excellence and flourishing need difficult

challenges that involve both positive and negative aspects and emotions to enhance the potential of human systems (Van Vulpen, 2023).

Relationship between employee well-being and organisational effectiveness

Research by Van de Voorde et al. (2012) found a positive relationship between EWB and OE, while job satisfaction, a construct of EWB, was found to positively affect OE (Bakotić, 2016; Sibhoko, 2017). Sundaray (2011) found a relationship between employee engagement and OE, while Xu et al. (2021) found a relationship between workaholism and performance. Research pertaining specifically to burnout and OE was not evident and highlighted as future research areas.

From the literature review, the aim of this study and based on the Circumplex Model of Affect (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011), the following research hypotheses were formulated:

- H₁: There is a statistically significant relationship between the construct of job satisfaction and a composite OE score.
- H₂: There is a statistically significant relationship between the construct of work engagement and a composite OE score.
- H₃: There is a statistically significant relationship between the construct of workaholism and a composite OE score.
- H₄: There is a statistically significant relationship between the construct of burnout and a composite OE score.

Research design

Research approach

This study followed a quantitative methodology, which is based on the positivist research philosophy. A cross-sectional survey approach was utilised to gather data being the most suited for research when an overall picture of phenomena at a particular point in time is important and when data are required for exploring relationships between variables and testing hypotheses (Pallant, 2020). Epistemology wise the research followed a constructionism approach, which refers to the meaning that comes into existence in and out of human engagement with the realities in the world (Al-Ababneh, 2020), such as the one respondents in this research were exposed to.

Research method

Research participants

The population for this study consisted of all 388 managerial and non-managerial employees in all departments of a bond origination company operating in all provinces in South Africa. All the employees in the population were invited to participate in the study and a total of 203 consented, providing a 52% non-probability convenient sample, which was considered acceptable for the current study (Salkind, 2017). Considering the busy schedule of these employees, a convenient sampling strategy (voluntary participation by available employees) was deemed suitable. The questionnaires were distributed to the sample via an online link for completion online, and the composition of the sample is given in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Composition of the research sample (N = 203).

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Female	174	85.7
	Male	29	14.3
Age (years)	22–29	27	13.4
	30–39	51	25.1
	40–49	51	25.1
	50–60	62	30.5
	Older than 60	12	5.9
Position in company	Junior Management	13	6.4
	Middle Management	25	12.3
	Senior Management	16	7.9
	Non-Management	149	73.4
Years of service in company	Less than 5	66	32.5
	5–9	52	25.6
	10–14	35	17.2
	15–20	45	22.2
	More than 20	5	2.5

Table 1 indicates that the majority of the sample consisted of females (85.7%) that aligned with the company's demographics as the majority of consultants, which is the largest part of the business, are females. The majority of the sample were between the ages of 50 years and 60 years (30.5%) followed by 25.1% being 40–49 years old. The reason for the above may include the nature of the industry in which the respondents operate as a certain level of experience is required for this field, which usually corresponds to older personnel. The majority were also non-managerial personnel (73.4%), which is to be expected as a large part of the business comprises consultants, which are non-managerial. The majority of the sample also had less than 5 years of service in the company (32.5%).

Measuring instruments

The Organisational Performance Questionnaire: Previous literature has demonstrated the interchangeable use of the term OE and OP (Olivier, 2018; Saeed & Wang, 2013; Soni & Rastogi, 2017). In the current study, OE was operationalised as OP and measured using the organisational performance questionnaire (OPQ). The OPQ, developed by Olivier (2018), is based on the Burke–Litwin model of OP and included a Biographical Information Section, which measured gender, age, position in the company and years of service in the company. The OPQ consists of 67 items, which provides a composite OE score computed from the individual scores for the 12 constructs underlying the concept of OP or OE. Items were rated on a four-point Likert scale with 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree). Olivier (2018) reported internal consistency coefficients ranging from 0.74 to 0.94 for the 12 constructs and an overall reliability coefficient of 0.97, which indicated acceptable levels of reliability (Pallant, 2020). In a study by Olivier (2018) to determine the psychometric validity of the OPQ, data from a convenience sample of 398 employees, from various South African organisations (operations, finance, human relations, sales, technical and logistics functional groups), were utilised to conduct an exploratory factor analysis and item analysis. The positive results of this study confirmed that the OPQ is a

valid and reliable instrument for assessing OP in South African organisations.

The Job Satisfaction Questionnaire: The Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ) was developed by Hakanen et al. (2017) to measure the job satisfaction of Finnish dentists. The JSQ consists of two statements related to the participants' subjective job satisfaction, which were used to compute a Job satisfaction Score (Hakanen et al., 2017). Each of the statements was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied. While the standard rule suggests using at least three measures per factor for reliability calculation (Hair et al., 2022), several researches have shown that a single, clear item can be considered reliable if it is easily understood by the respondent (Sauro, 2018; Wanous et al., 1997) and directly pertains to the factor under measurement (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007; Rossiter, 2002; Sauro, 2018). Specifically regarding the construct of job satisfaction, Scarpello and Campbell (1983) found that a single five-point measure of job satisfaction was sufficient, suggesting that at least one important measure of satisfaction can be captured with a single item. This was supported by Wanous et al. (1997) who conducted a meta-analysis on 17 studies of job satisfaction and found single item measures performed sufficiently well leading them to conclude that single-item measures are more robust than the scale measures of overall job satisfaction. Furthermore, Sauro (2018) argued that the construct of job satisfaction can be measured with two items such as 'I am satisfied with my job' and 'I find my job fulfilling'. Each item can be rated on a scale (e.g. 1–5), and the scores can be averaged to provide a measure of job satisfaction. However, a requirement is that the items should be clear, unambiguous and directly related to the construct being measured (content validity). Given the support from the above-mentioned researchers, the two-item JSQ developed by Hakanen et al. (2017) was considered to be a reliable and valid instrument for measuring job satisfaction in the current study.

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale: The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002) was used to measure the construct of work engagement. This self-report instrument consists of 17 items and measures the three dimensions of work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) on a six-point Likert scale with ratings ranging from 0 = Never to 6 = Always. The UWES includes statements such as: 'I am bursting with energy in my work' (vigour); 'I find my work full of meaning and purpose' (dedication) and 'I am immersed in my work' (absorption). Schaufeli et al. (2002) reported reliability coefficients of the three scales of the UWES as ranging between 0.80 and 0.90, which are all above the acceptable level of reliability suggested by Pallant (2020). The confirmatory factor analysis conducted showed that the hypothesised three-factor structure of the UWES was superior to the one-factor model and fits well to the data of various samples from the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal. In a study to examine its reliability and validity in Chinese middle-school teachers,

the UWES was shown to be reliable and valid for use in China (Yi-wen & Yi-qun, 2005). In a study by Mills et al. (2012) with students in the architectural professional degree programme at a large public university in the Midwestern United States, the construct validation of the UWES was established.

In South Africa, Storm and Rothmann (2003) conducted a study to validate the UWES for the South African Police Service and to determine its construct equivalence and bias in different race groups. Storm and Rothmann (2003) reported alpha coefficients for internal consistency and reliability for the three subscales of 0.78 (vigour), 0.89 (dedication) and 0.78 (absorption). These were all above the acceptable level of reliability suggested by Pallant (2020). The study also reported that the data strongly suggested that the one-factor model better fits the data than the three-factor model. However, there is, as yet, insufficient evidence to suggest that a one-factor model is superior to a three-factor model. Thus, although a one-factor model fits the data better, a three-factor model will also fit the data well. Regarding racial bias, Storm and Rothmann (2003) found that no uniform or non-uniform bias existed regarding the items of the UWES for whites, blacks, mixed race and Indians. Therefore, it seems acceptable to use the UWES to compare work engagement of different race groups.

In a study by Simon and Buitendach (2013) among call centre employees from one call centre situated in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, a reliability coefficient for the UWES of 0.95 was reported while the three constructs of vigour, dedication and absorption had internal reliabilities of 0.90, 0.86 and 0.85, respectively. These were all above the acceptable level of reliability suggested by Pallant (2020). Confirmatory factor analyses of the UWES showed that three factors could be extracted.

Given the above-mentioned research on the UWES, it was considered to be a reliable and valid instrument for measuring employee engagement in this study.

The Dutch Work Addiction Scale (English version): The Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS-10; English version) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2009) was used to measure workaholism. The scale includes a total of 10 items with two 5-item subscales measuring working excessively (e.g., 'I spend more time working than on socializing with friends, on hobbies, or leisure activities') and working compulsively (e.g., 'I feel obliged to work hard, even when it is not enjoyable'). The DUWAS-10 is scored on a four-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (Almost never) to 4 (Almost always). In a study by De Beer et al. (2022) to investigate the reliability and validity of the DUWAS within the South African financial services context, reliability coefficients of 0.72 were obtained for working excessively, 0.64 for working compulsively and 0.78 for an overall workaholism score. Except for working compulsively (0.64), these were all above the acceptable level of reliability suggested by Pallant

(2020). However, this reliability statistic did not affect the acceptable reliability score obtained for an overall workaholic score (0.78), and as only the overall workaholism score was used for the correlation calculations in this study, the reliability score for the working excessively dimensions was deemed to be acceptable. Regarding the construct validity of the DUWAS, De Beer et al. (2022) found that a second-order one-factor model, as opposed to the original two-factor model propagated by Schaufeli et al. (2009), indicated by an overall workaholism score made up of the individual workaholism component factors (working compulsively and working excessively) is the model of choice. A study by Engelbrecht et al. (2020) within the South African engineering sector found the same construct validity challenges. Because of the validity challenges of the DUWAS identified in the above-mentioned studies, only a composite workaholism score was used in further correlational calculations in this study.

The Oldenburg Burnout Inventory: The OLBI was conceptualised in Germany by Demerouti and Nachreiner in 1998 and was further validated and refined by Demerouti and his colleagues in 2001 (Bowman, 2023). The OLBI measures two core dimensions of the construct of burnout, namely exhaustion and disengagement from work (Demerouti et al., 2001). The OBI includes eight items per dimension, four positively framed items and four negatively framed items, thus consisting of 16 items in total. The instrument used a four-point Likert scale where 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree and 4 = Strongly Disagree. An example of an item to measure Exhaustion is 'There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work', while an example of an item to measure Disengagement is 'It happens more and more often that I talk about my work in a negative way'.

A study by Demerouti et al. (2001) to establish the factorial validity of the OLBI used participants from the northern part of Germany who were employed in three occupational fields: human services, industry and transport. The study produced internal reliability measures of 0.82 for the Exhaustion scale and 0.83 for the Disengagement scale. These were both above the acceptable level of reliability (0.70) suggested by Pallant (2020). Regarding construct validity, results confirmed the two-factor structure (exhaustion and disengagement) and suggested that this structure is essentially invariant across occupational groups.

A study by Reis et al. (2021) using a sample of Portuguese Aircraft maintenance technicians produced reliability scores for the first-order factors as follows: Disengagement was 0.88 and Exhaustion was 0.82. The reliability estimate obtained for the second-order Burnout factor was 0.79. These were all above the acceptable level of reliability (0.70) suggested by Pallant (2020). Furthermore, results of the study confirmed the two-factor structure of the OLBI for the Portuguese sample (Exhaustion and Disengagement) as well as the second-order latent factor (Burnout).

In a South African study by Lekutle and Nel (2014) using employees from a cement factory in the North West province of South Africa, internal reliability scores obtained for the OLBI were 0.68 for Disengagement and 0.69 for Exhaustion. These scores were just slightly below the Pallant (2020) suggested cut-off point of 0.70 for acceptability. Results also indicated that the construct validity of the OLBI was acceptable for research purposes, as Burnout was shown to have a two-factor structure with Disengagement and Exhaustion as separate yet correlated dimensions. Given the above-mentioned research on the OLBI, it was considered to be a reliable and valid instrument for measuring burnout in this study.

Research procedure

Written permission to conduct the study within the relevant organisation was obtained from the Head of Human Resources (HR). Thereafter, ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP) at the University of South Africa (UNISA). Once ethical clearance for the study had been received, data collection commenced.

The Head of HR provided the researcher with a list of the company's 388 employees operating in all provinces in South Africa, which included their names and email addresses. An email explaining the research as well as their expected role was sent to all employees included on the list. The email contained a link that took the employees to an informed consent form and the five questionnaires. Those who agreed to partake in the study completed the informed consent form and all the questionnaires online, and these data were stored electronically on a central server and remained confidential at all times. A total of 203 employees were willing to participate in the study and completed the questionnaires and these data were downloaded onto the researcher's computer, which was then cleaned and analysed accordingly.

Statistical analysis

All data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 29 (Garcia, 2022). Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the mean, standard deviation and frequencies of responses. For the JSQ, which used a 1–5 rating scale, the mean cut-off score of 3.2 was used to differentiate between potential positive and negative responses, with scores of 3.2 and above indicating a positive perception and scores below 3.2 indicating a negative perception of that dimension, as recommended by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (Castro & Martins, 2010).

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to determine the internal consistency of all five measuring instruments. Reliability was accepted as satisfactory if scores were 0.70 and above (Pallant, 2020). Correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the statistical relationship between the four EWB constructs, and a composite OE score and the cut-off point to determine statistical significance was set at

$p \leq 0.05$ (Pallant, 2020). Effect sizes were used to determine the practical significance of the correlations. Pallant's (2020) classification for practical effect was used where $r \leq 0.10$ (small practical effect), $r > 0.10$ but ≤ 0.29 (low practical effect), $r \geq 0.30 \leq 0.49$ (medium practical effect) and $r \geq 0.50$ (large practical effect).

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Research Committee of the Department of IOP at UNISA. The approval number was 2019_CEMS/IOP_008. Written informed consent was obtained from participants before proceeding with the research, and this included their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Confidentiality and privacy of the participants were maintained at all times as the questionnaires were anonymously stored on a central server to protect the identity of participants.

Results

Descriptive and reliability statistics

Descriptive and reliability statistics were calculated for all five measurement instruments. A level of internal reliability of 0.70 and above was considered acceptable, as suggested by Pallant (2020).

Organisational Performance Questionnaire

Table 2 provides the 12 OE constructs, their means, standard deviations, the range of scores from the lowest (minimum) to the highest (maximum), a composite OE score and the Cronbach's alpha coefficients per construct.

As reflected in Table 2, the mean scores of the OPQ constructs on the four-point scale ranged from a low of 2.83 for individual needs and values (71%) to a high of 3.76 for

mission and strategy (94%). All the constructs, including the composite OE score (3.13% or 78%), thus scored above average on the OPQ, which showed that respondents had positive perceptions regarding the effectiveness of their organisation.

The internal consistency of the OPQ constructs ranged from a low of 0.67 (skills and job match) to a high of 0.94 (management practices), while the overall internal reliability coefficient for the OPQ was 0.98. As this study only utilised a composite OE score (Cronbach's alpha = 0.98), the low of 0.67 for skills and job match, which was slightly below the 0.70 cut-off score suggested by Pallant (2020) as being acceptable internal reliability did not affect the overall reliability of the OPQ, which was considered a reliable instrument for assessing OE in this study. The reliability for three scales on the OPQ, namely mission and strategy, structure and individual needs and values, could not be statistically calculated in this study as each of these scales consisted of only one item. Although the guideline is to have at least three measures per factor to calculate reliability (Hair et al., 2022), various studies have indicated that when a single item is unambiguous to the respondent (Reichers & Hudy, 1997; Sauro, 2018; Wanous et al., 1997) and is clearly related to the factor being measured (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007; Rossiter, 2002), such single item measures can be accepted as reliable. This was applicable to the three items mentioned above, and they were accepted as reliable, confirming the overall reliability of the OPQ. For this study, the OPQ was thus considered a reliable instrument for measuring the construct of OP.

The Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

Table 3 provides the two JSQ questions asked, their means, standard deviations, the range of scores from the lowest (minimum) to the highest (maximum), a composite job

TABLE 2: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha for the Organisational Performance Questionnaire obtained for this study ($N = 203$).

OE constructs	Number of items	<i>M</i>	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Cronbach's alpha
External environment	4	3.33	0.60	1	4	0.73
Mission and strategy	1	3.76	0.45	1	4	-
Leadership	9	3.16	0.68	1	4	0.93
Culture	5	3.19	0.73	1	4	0.82
Structure	1	3.01	0.84	1	4	-
Management practices	14	3.00	0.80	1	4	0.94
Systems	16	2.89	0.86	1	4	0.93
Work unit or section climate	3	3.25	0.72	1	4	0.75
Skills and job match	3	3.10	0.86	1	4	0.67
Individual needs and values	1	2.83	0.98	1	4	-
Motivation	5	3.32	0.62	1	4	0.79
Individual and OP	5	3.20	0.70	1	4	0.78
Composite OE score	67	3.13	1.05	1	4	0.98

OE, organisational effectiveness; OP, organisational performance; *M*, mean; SD, standard deviation.

TABLE 3: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha for the job satisfaction questionnaire obtained in this study ($N = 203$).

Job satisfaction questions	<i>M</i>	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Cronbach's alpha
Overall, how satisfied are you with your present job?	3.79	0.95	1	5	-
How satisfied are you with your present competence in relation to the demands of your job?	4.04	0.82	2	5	-
Composite JS score	3.92	0.89	1	5	0.70

JS, job satisfaction; *M*, mean; SD, standard deviation.

satisfaction (JS) score and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the composite JS score.

Table 3 indicates that respondents are more satisfied with their present competence in relation to their job ($M = 4.04$) than their overall level of satisfaction with their job ($M = 3.79$). However, respondents are positive regarding both aspects of their job as well as with their overall job satisfaction (Composite JS Score = 3.92 or 78%), as these means are all above the HSRC suggested 3.2 cut-off scores for positive perceptions on a 5-point scale (Castro & Martins, 2010). Although it was not statistically possible to calculate the reliability coefficients for each of the two separate questions relating to job satisfaction (Hair et al., 2022), Table 3 indicates that the overall internal reliability coefficient calculated for the JSQ as an instrument was 0.70, which indicates an acceptable level of reliability (Pallant, 2020). For this study, the JSQ was thus considered a reliable instrument for measuring the construct of job satisfaction.

Utrecht Work Engagement Scale

Table 4 provides the three dimensions of work engagement, their means, standard deviations, the range of scores from the lowest (minimum) to the highest (maximum), a composite work engagement (WE) score and the Cronbach's alpha per dimension. Ratings were on a six-point Likert scale (0 = Never, 6 = Always).

Table 4 indicates that the dedication dimension achieved the highest mean (4.56% or 76%), whereas absorption, although only by a 0.03 difference, achieved the lowest mean (4.35% or 73%). However, respondents rated all three engagement dimensions and the composite WE score (4.42% or 74%) as above average, indicating that respondents perceived work engagement in their organisation to be above average. Table 4 also indicates that the internal consistency of the WE dimensions ranged from a low of 0.88 (absorption) to a high of 0.92 (dedication), while the overall internal reliability coefficient for the UWES was 0.96, all indicating an acceptable level of reliability (Pallant, 2020). The UWES was thus

considered a reliable instrument for measuring the construct of work engagement for this study.

The Dutch Work Addiction Scale and the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory

Table 5 provides the two workaholism and two burnout dimensions, their means, standard deviations, the range of scores from the lowest (minimum) to the highest (maximum), a composite WA score and a composite WA score and the Cronbach's alpha coefficients per dimension.

Table 5 indicates that, on average, working compulsively achieved a slightly higher mean (3.05% or 76%) than working excessively (2.94% or 74%). However, both WA dimensions and the composite WA score (3.0 or 75%) were above average, with the lowest being working excessively (2.94% or 74%), indicating that respondents perceived workaholism as being an issue of concern in their organisation. Table 5 also indicates that the internal consistency of the DUWAS dimensions ranged from a low of 0.68 (working excessively) to a high of 0.76 (work compulsively) while the overall internal reliability coefficient for the DWS was 0.82, all indicating an acceptable level of reliability (Pallant, 2020). For this study, the DUWAS was thus considered a reliable instrument for measuring the construct of workaholism.

Table 5 also provides the two burnout dimensions, their means, standard deviations, the range of scores from the lowest (minimum) to the highest (maximum), a composite burnout (BO) score and the Cronbach's alpha coefficients per dimension. Table 5 indicates that both the BO dimensions (disengagement = 2.61% or 65%; exhaustion = 2.39% or 60% and the composite BO score (2.45% or 61%) were above average, indicating that all respondents perceived burnout to be at an above-average level in their organisation. This shows that burnout is an issue of concern in this organisation. Table 5 also indicates that the internal consistency of the OBI dimensions ranged from a low of 0.72 (Exhaustion) to a high of 0.77 (Disengagement), while the overall internal reliability coefficient for the OBI was 0.84, all indicating an acceptable

TABLE 4: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha for the Utrecht work engagement scale obtained in this study ($N = 203$).

Work engagement dimensions	Number of items	<i>M</i>	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Cronbach's alpha
Vigour	6	4.38	1.31	0	6	0.89
Dedication	5	4.56	1.32	0	6	0.92
Absorption	6	4.35	1.40	0	6	0.88
Composite WE score	17	4.42	1.35	0	6	0.96

WE, work engagement; *M*, mean; SD, standard deviation.

TABLE 5: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha for the Dutch workaholism scale and the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory obtained in this study ($N = 203$).

Workaholism dimensions	Number of items	<i>M</i>	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Cronbach's alpha
Working excessively	5	2.94	0.92	1	4	0.76
Working compulsively	5	3.05	0.98	1	4	0.68
Composite WA score	10	3.0	0.95	1	4	0.82
Burnout dimensions	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disengagement	8	2.61	0.97	1	4	0.77
Exhaustion	7	2.39	0.98	1	4	0.72
Composite BO score	32	2.45	0.95	1	4	0.84

WA, workaholism; BO, burnout; No., number; *M*, mean; SD, standard deviation.

TABLE 6: Intercorrelations between the four constructs of employee well-being and a Composite Organisational Effectiveness Score ($N = 203$)

Variables	COES	JS	WE	WA	BO
COES	1.000	0.667**	0.587**	-0.060	-0.452**
JS	0.667**	1.000	0.672**	-0.008	-0.508**
WE	0.587**	0.672**	1.000	0.253**	-0.555**
WA	-0.060	-0.008	0.253**	1.000	0.206**
BO	-0.452**	-0.508**	-0.555**	0.206**	1.000

COES, composite organisational effectiveness score; JS, job satisfaction; WE, work engagement; WA, workaholism; BO, burnout.

** Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); Practical effect: $r \leq 0.10$ (small practical effect); $0.10 < r \leq 0.29$ (low practical effect); $0.30 \geq r \leq 0.49$ (medium practical effect); $r \geq 0.50$ (large practical effect).

level of reliability (Pallant, 2020). For this study, the OBI was thus considered a reliable instrument for measuring the construct of burnout.

Correlation coefficients

The intercorrelations between the four underlying constructs of EWB and a composite OE score are indicated in Table 6.

Table 6 indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between both job satisfaction and work engagement and a composite OE score (job satisfaction: $r = 0.667$; large practical effect; $p \leq 0.01$; work engagement: $r = 0.587$; large practical effect; $p \leq 0.01$). This implies that when job satisfaction and work engagement increases, so does the organisation's effectiveness. Table 6 also indicates that there is a statistically insignificant and negative relationship between workaholism and a composite OE score ($r = -0.060$; low practical effect; $p = 0.394$), indicating that workaholism has no effect on OE. Burnout and a composite OE score have a statistically significant but negative relationship ($r = -0.452$; medium practical effect; $p \leq 0.01$), indicating that as individuals experience increased burnout, the organisation's effectiveness is reduced (Pallant, 2020).

Discussion

Outline of the results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the concept of EWB as operationalised by its four constructs of: (1) job satisfaction, (2) work engagement, (3) workaholism and (4) burnout and the concept of OE, operationalised by a composite OE score.

The results indicate that all five instruments used in the study have acceptable levels of internal consistency within a South African bond-originating company. The results also indicate that three of the four constructs of EWB, namely job satisfaction ($r = 0.667$; $p \leq 0.001$), work engagement ($r = 0.587$; $p \leq 0.001$) and burnout ($r = -0.452$; $p \leq 0.001$) were found to be statistically significantly related to a composite OE score. The negative but statistically significant relationship between the construct of burnout and a composite OE score indicates that as individuals experienced increased burnout, their effectiveness was reduced. H1, H2 and H4 were thus accepted. The construct of workaholism and a composite OE

score ($r = -0.060$, $p = 0.394$) were not statistically significantly related (H3 rejected).

The significant relationship between job satisfaction and OE reported in this study (H1 accepted) is consistent with the findings reported by Mishra (2013), Latif et al. (2013), Sibhoko (2017), Miah (2018) and Pang and Lu (2018). This positive relationship can be explained by studies that found that satisfied employees have a positive attitude towards their job, are willing to commit to their organisations and extend more effort to their jobs, thus increasing the organisation's effectiveness (Latif et al., 2013; Miah, 2018; Sibhoko, 2017; Wu et al., 2013). This is consistent with the finding of Pang and Lu (2018), who found that when employees experienced a high level of job satisfaction, their work attitudes improved and they were able to complete more tasks, thus improving OP.

The significant relationship between work engagement and OE reported in this study (H2 accepted) is supported by the results of a meta-analysis in 36 companies conducted by Harter et al. (2002), who found generalisable relationships large enough to have a substantial practical value between engagement and business outcomes ($r = 0.380$). These results are consistent with the findings reported by Baumruk (2004), Hoole and Bonnema (2015) and Diogene (2017) who found that work engagement led to an increase in OP. The relationship between work engagement and OE is supported by research which indicated that a highly engaged employee will consistently deliver beyond expectations, which subsequently improves OP (Baumruk, 2004; Diogene, 2017; Harter et al., 2002). An employee who feels valued and sees themselves as an integral part of the organisation is the one that is more likely to contribute towards the success of that organisation (Hoole & Bonnema, 2015). In a study of IT employee in the Jordanian banking sector, it was found that work engagement increased productivity, created a better and more productive work environment, reduced non-attendance and turnover and increased OP (Al-Dalameh et al., 2018).

The negative but significant relationship between Burnout and OE reported in the current study (H4 accepted), implies that a decrease in burnout experienced by employees will lead to an increase in OE. This result could not be compared to previous research as none could be found which studied the relationship between these two variables. Although it has been argued that burnout can have negative consequences for the entire organisation (Maricutoiu et al., 2017; Taris, 2006), there are no research results available to support this argument, as the focus of burnout research has been on the relationship between burnout and individual performance and not the organisation's performance. The assumption is made that burnout has negative consequences for individuals such as very low levels of energy, increased absenteeism, job dissatisfaction, depression and diseases, which in turn affect OE (Maricutoiu et al., 2017; Taris, 2006). For this reason, Xu et al. (2021) made a plea for more research regarding burnout

and its relationship to OE and the current study provides more insight into this relationship with its emphasis on OE.

The research on burnout and individual performance has reported mixed results. Taris (2006), in a meta-analysis involving 16 studies dealing with the burnout-individual performance relationship, found that the evidence for the relationships was inconclusive. Maslach and Leiter (2016) found that high levels of burnout among employees are associated with reduced job performance, higher absenteeism and increased turnover, while Pan (2017) found that burnout has a significant negative impact on job performance.

The insignificant relationship between workaholism and OE reported in this study (H3 rejected) is consistent with the results obtained by Gorgievski et al. (2014), who found that workaholism did not relate significantly to business performance. She et al. (2021) also found that the relationship between workaholism and firm performance was non-significant. The insignificant relationship between workaholism and OP reported on in research could be because of the fact that this relationship is complex and moderated by various factors, such as workload, perfectionism, work engagement, affect and power distance (Gorgievski et al., 2014; She et al., 2021; Spagnoli et al., 2020).

Practical implications

This study provides managers with an understanding of how the performance of their organisations can be improved by managing the well-being of their employees. The implementation of appropriate interventions to increase the job satisfaction and engagement of their employees will contribute to an increase in OE, as will the elimination of conditions that lead to the burnout of their employees.

Limitations and recommendations

This study had several limitations. Firstly, a large body of the available literature regarding OE and the approaches to OE are outdated, and more recent research could not be consulted. Secondly, the study was conducted in a South African bond origination company, and the results are not generalisable to other industries in South Africa. Thirdly, a convenience sample was used for this study, and such a sample cannot be claimed to be representative of the population.

Firstly, the recommendation for future research is to investigate the relationship between the constructs of EWB and OE in other organisations besides the bond origination industry, including the public sector. Secondly, research pertaining to workaholism and its relationship to other variables should be conducted to expand on both the theoretical and empirical research aspects of this variable. Thirdly, the moderating effect of biographical variables such as gender, age, educational level and years of service, which could affect the strength of the relationship between EWB and OE, should be investigated.

Conclusion

In the complex business world, effectiveness has become central to organisations, which is largely influenced by and dependent on the role of employees to achieve this. Research has revealed that high levels of job satisfaction and employee engagement and the elimination of factors causing burnout can increase the well-being of employee and lead to increased OP.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationship that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Authors' contributions

C.P.v.d.M. was the project leader for this study and reviewed the literature, gathered and analysed the data, and compiled the draft manuscript. B.H.O. was the supervisor of the project and assisted with the finalisation of the manuscript.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study can be made available by the corresponding author, B.H.O., upon a motivated request.

Disclaimer

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