

## The impact of work engagement of different generations on organisational engagement

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**Abstract.** The aim of this paper is to examine the impact of work engagement of different generations on organisational engagement. In addition, the study seeks to determine whether there is a difference in work engagement and organisational engagement across generations. Data, gathered from a sample of 3 039 employees in Lithuania, were analysed through the Kruskal-Wallis test and the structural equation modelling (SEM). The non-parametric analysis (Kruskal-Wallis test) was performed to determine if there were statistically significant differences between the level of work engagement and the level of organisational engagement of employees across four different generation groups. The multi-group SEM analysis was used for testing the differences in the impact of work engagement of different generations on organisational engagement. The study confirmed the hypothesis that work engagement has a positive impact on organisational engagement for all generations. Moreover, statistically significant differences were found between the level of work engagement and the level of organisational engagement across generations. This study expands current knowledge on the interrelationship between work engagement and organisational engagement. Further, the level of work engagement and organisational engagement revealed

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in the context of generations makes for a novel contribution to the topic of employees' engagement in the perspective of different generations.

**Keywords:** generations, employees of different generations, work engagement, organisational engagement.

**JEL Classification:** J24, M12, M59

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement is still insufficiently exploited as a competitive advantage of an organisation (Gupta et al., 2019; Engagement report, 2021), even though employee engagement is related to the financial and operational success of any organisation (Gupta et al., 2019; Dhoopar et al., 2022) and affects performance outcomes such as profitability, productivity, absenteeism, wellbeing, the level of sickness and safety, etc. (Harter et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021). Moreover, employee engagement is associated with positive behaviours at work (Giancaspro et al., 2022; Szostek, 2022; Szostek et al., 2022), greater job satisfaction (Rayton and Yalabik, 2014; Grubert et al., 2022), work efficiency (Basit, 2019; Turner, 2020; Borisov & Vinogradov, 2022), enhanced individual and teamwork innovativeness (Afsar, 2021; Seppälä et al., 2018), individual employee creativity (Demerouti et al., 2015), increased well-being (Saks et al., 2022), benefits of employee training and development (Azeem et al., 2013), discovered talents, and career advancement (Onday, 2016; Pandita and Ray, 2018; Rózsa et al., 2023).

The multi-dimensionality of the concept of employee engagement has been confirmed through a wealth of insights from scholars from various fields. On the one hand, management scholars address the issues of work engagement and organizational engagement by disclosing the factors of employee attitudes toward work and behaviours that are focused on activity performance in the workplace, i.e., work engagement factors (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Parmar et al., 2022); they argue for the necessity of research on an employee's relationship with the organization when representing it. On the other hand, psychology researchers are more interested in the phenomenon of personal engagement and study the psychological markers and states of personal engagement (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004; Mihalca et al., 2021). Nevertheless, all scholars acknowledge that most research works focus on work engagement while organisational engagement still receives less attention (Farndale et al., 2014; Saks et al., 2022). After conducting a review of 40 studies, the researchers (Saks et al., 2022) stated that too little scholarly effort has been invested explaining the differences between work engagement and organisational engagement in terms of their interrelation and the antecedents and consequences that caused them. Meanwhile, empirical research on work engagement and organizational engagement in an intergenerational context is lacking, despite extensive study to describe and comprehend the phenomenon of engagement (Chawla et al., 2017; Huber and Schubert, 2019).

Due the dynamic change in the socioeconomic and technological environment resulted in the formation of a distinct context—various generations whose management in organisations stands in need of new management tools. This implied the relevance of research on work engagement and organisational engagement from an intergenerational perspective. Studies show that different generations have different work values and attitudes (Twenge et al., 2010; Huber and Schubert, 2019), motivation and expectations (Heyns and Kerr, 2018; Mahmoud, 2021), and leadership and behaviour (Rudolph et al., 2018; Bertsch, 2022). Brightenburg et al. (2020) emphasise that “there is little empirical research that has examined the implications of a generation-diverse workforce on employee engagement” (p. 111).

At the present time there are currently five generations that are active in the labour market: Generation X is leading, Generation Y is solidifying its positions, Generation Z is just starting to work, and the Silent Generation has essentially left the workforce, the Baby Boom Generation is losing their representatives. Moreover, changes of cohorts in the labour market switch researchers' lens from the Silent Generation to Generation Z. This encourages attention to the new set of generations that covers Baby Boom Generation, Generations X, Y and Z. Scholars emphasize an increasing role of Generation Y (Brightenburg et al., 2020), which occupies an increasingly strong position values and market, whose representatives have different values and behaviour than Generation X and the Baby Boom Generation (Ng et al., 2018; Howe and Strauss, 2000), i.e., gradually the values and behaviour of Generation Y shape the common work style and values of organizations. Recently, research on Generation Z has emerged (Pandita and Kumar, 2022), however, given the uniqueness of digital environment in which this generation was formed, the studies often focus on understanding the work values, motivators, and behaviours of this generation. Nevertheless, cross-generational studies mostly include Silent – Y Generations (Lyons et al., 2012) or Baby Boom – Y Generations (Hoole and Bonnema, 2015; Brightenburg et al., 2020; Kurniawati, 2022), while a new set of Baby Boom – Z Generations is lacking.

Considering the research gaps mentioned above, the authors of this paper aim at examining the impact of work engagement of different generations on organisational engagement. In addition, the study seeks to reveal whether there is a difference in work engagement and organisational engagement across generations.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Link between work engagement and organisational engagement

Employee engagement is becoming an emerging field absorbing the insights of scholars from management, psychology, and human resource management. Although psychological researchers are more interested in the initial approaches to employee engagement, which emphasize the employee's psychological aspects (personal engagement) (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004), the later approaches are more focused on management issues, i.e., they reveal the impact of managerial factors on the employee's psychological state and how that state affects the employee's performance (work engagement) (Kahn, 1990; Saks, 2006, 2019; Dunlop and Scheepers, 2022) and on the employee's commitment to the organisation (organisational engagement) (Saks, 2006, 2019).

According to Schaufeli et al. (2002), work engagement is tied to the task-level viewpoint and emphasizes an employee's work attitude and performance-oriented behaviours at work. According to Newman and Harrison (2008), an employee's behaviour that influences their job is referred to as "engaged employee behaviour." According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2010), work engagement encompasses the qualities of vigour, devotion, and absorption and is a good work-related state that offers fulfilment and satisfies the need for development. Vigour is characterised by a high level of energy and the ability to quickly recover physical and mental strength while working, the intention to put effort into one's work and persistence even when faced with difficulties. Dedication refers to a high level of involvement in work, with a sense of importance, enthusiasm, pride, inspiration, and challenge. Absorption is described by full concentration and immersion in one's work (Schaufeli, 2015; Hakanen et al., 2019). Sonnentag (2017) asserts that job engagement develops during the working process and varies significantly depending on the various work tasks in addition to individual differences.

However, work engagement is a necessary but not sufficient condition for describing a fully engaged employee. Thus, organisational engagement can be identified with reference to an employee's relationship with the organisation when representing it and maintaining a healthy competition within the organisation

(Saks, 2006, 2019). The behaviour of an engaged employee should be strategically focused on organisational goals (Macey and Schneider, 2008; Mazzei, 2018). Rai and Maheshwari (2020) argue that organisational engagement differs from work engagement in its broader focus on engagement with the organisation and organisational goals. According to Saks et al., (2022) organisational engagement is not only an attitude, values or an intention to be cooperative and helpful. Rather, organisational engagement refers to the extent to which employees are fully involved in the accomplishment of organisational goals, tasks, activities, events, projects that they are expected to complete as members of their organisation (Saks et al., 2022). Organisational engagement manifests employees' linkage with the strategy, mission and vision of an organisation (Rai and Maheshwari, 2020).

Summing up, organisational engagement exposes an employee's relationship with an organisation, while work engagement discloses an employee's relationship with their place of employment. (Saks 2006, 2019). This means that employees may be engaged at different levels at the same time – engaged in the work and / or engaged in the organisation itself (Gupta et al., 2019).

Research by Saks (2006) also confirms that work engagement and organisational engagement are two different concepts. This is in line with the arguments of Kahn (1990) and Saks (2006, 2019) that work engagement refers to positive behaviour at work, enthusiastically performing daily tasks, but it does not necessarily mean that an employee is engaged in the organisation itself, i.e., it does not mean that an employee is concerned about the strategic goals of an organisation and identifies with the company's mission, which is an indicator of organisational engagement. According to Tenerife and Galingan (2018), work engagement has a positive effect on organisational engagement. This is also confirmed by recent studies. Rai and Maheshwari (2020) propose work engagement as a predecessor of organisational engagement that implies that the organisation needs to achieve work engagement first to realise the benefit of organisational engagement, which according to Saks et al. (2022), is important if not more important than work engagement. Later research by Rai and Chawla (2022) further strengthened the notion that organisational engagement is a consequence of work engagement.

## **2.2. Work engagement and organisational engagement in intergenerational perspective**

Each generation can contribute to an organisation's successes and cause failures (Coulter and Faulkner, 2014). Four generations are currently interacting in the labour market: Generation Z, Generation Y, Generation X, and the Baby Boom Generation. This is based on the concept of Generational Theory (Howe and Strauss, 2000). A generation is defined by the year of its birth as a group of individuals whose formation has been impacted by notable changes in social, economic, political, cultural, and technological spheres. These changes assume that a particular group of individuals maintain a common set of values, ways of thinking, and behaviours in both their personal and professional lives.

Younger generations (Generation Y and Generation Z) differ significantly from Baby Boom Generation and Generation X not only in terms of dominant personality traits and values, but also in terms of fundamental attitudes towards work (Twenge et al., 2010; Mencl and Lester, 2014; Troger, 2022). While Baby Boom Generation sees work as a meaningful part of their lives, Generation X strives to be valued, Generation Y is only willing to work hard at meaningful work (Aruna and Anitha, 2015). Whereas Baby Boom Generation is sufficiently loyal to an organisation; Generation X possesses loyalty to its profession rather than to organisation; Generation Y has low loyalty to a single organisation because they seek constant change and transformation (Valickas and Jakštaitė, 2017). While Baby Boom Generation is interested in hierarchy, Generation X values quality and personal freedom, prefers a flexible work style and schedule, likes to lead, and only when noticed achieves very good results; Generation Y likes to create, does not value

hierarchy, and seeks a relaxed and non-binding work environment (Weerarathne et al., 2022). Generation Z is the first global generation (Susanti and Natalia, 2018), characterised as by a lack of attentiveness, the ability to work on several tasks at once, creativity, disregard for authority, technological savvy, tolerance. According to Grodent and Peere (2013), Baby Boom Generation, Generation X and Generation Y differ in their views on work, private life, leisure, family life, social life, political commitment, gender equality, etc. The mix of different generations in the workforce can not only help to achieve the organisational vision and shared goals, but also cause difficulties (Coulter and Faulkner, 2014; Mencl and Lester, 2014). Meeting the needs of employees belonging to different generations and achieving a high level of work engagement and organisational engagement is a big challenge for managers (Srinivasan, 2012; Lyons et al., 2015).

Despite abundance of scientific research to disclose the concept of employee engagement, there are not many empirical studies examining work or organisational engagement in the intergenerational context (Chawla et al., 2017). Meanwhile, studies of work engagement or organisational engagement of different generations disclose challenges linked to different levels of engagement among different generations and demand a unique set of human resource management practices for increasing engagement of different generations.

For instance, given the aging workforce, some studies examined the effect of age on work and organisational engagement and found out that older workers are more engaged in work and in the organisation than younger workers (James et al., 2011; Ning and Alikaj, 2019). Recently, there has been an increase in research related to Generation Z (Nwachukwu et al., 2022; Pandita and Kumar, 2022). However, studies of single generations do not allow us to see the whole scope and understand how significant the differences in the level of engagement among generations really are. Meanwhile, after conducting a comparative study of three generations, Deschênes (2021, p. 1093) states that “one of the biggest challenges of today’s organisations is the management of multi-generational employees, while the current workforce is characterized by an unprecedented intergenerational cohabitation”. This is supported by Ning and Alikaj (2019), assuming that older employees, compared to younger employees, are engaged in work for different reasons and in different ways. In the light of the mentioned explanations, it is suggested that:

**H1. Work engagement and organisational engagement significantly differ among employees of different generations.**

According to Rothbard (2001) the type of engagement depends on the role performed by an individual, and therefore, the construct of engagement is defined in terms of a role, distinguishing between two specific separate roles – the role of an employee and the role of a member of the organisation. After conducting a literature review Saks et al., (2022) have found that work engagement and organisation engagement are moderately correlated, and that job engagement tends to be higher. Referring to the previous discussion on work engagement as a predecessor of organisational engagement (Tenerife and Galingan, 2018) and considering the insights from an intergenerational perspective (Chawla et al., 2017; Ning and Alikaj, 2019), the following hypotheses can be proposed:

**H2. Work engagement of employees of different generations directly affects the organisational engagement of employees.**

H2.1. Work engagement of employees of Generation Z directly affects the organisational engagement of Generation Z.

H2.2. Work engagement of employees of Generation Y directly affects the organisational engagement of Generation Y.

H2.3. Work engagement of employees of Generation X directly affects the organisational engagement of Generation X.

H2.4. Work engagement of employees of the Baby Boom Generation directly affects the organisational engagement of employees of the Baby Boom Generation.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Measures**

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003) and Saks's (2006) multi-dimensional scale were used when compiling a quantitative research questionnaire.

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003) is perhaps the most widely used scale in scientific research when employee work engagement is assessed based on three components: vigour, dedication to work and absorption in work. The scale consists of 17 statements, 6 of which are intended for measuring vigour, 5 for measuring dedication and 6 for absorption. A 7-point Likert Scale is applied for measuring work engagement, where 0 is never and 6 – always (every day).

The research questionnaire uses Saks's (2006) Organisational Engagement Assessment Scale, which consists of 6 statements. A 5-point Likert Scale is applied for measuring organisational engagement, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 – strongly agree.

The questionnaire contains demographic information: age, according to which all respondents were assigned to different generations, gender, type of activity of the organisation (economic entities), sector, position in the organisation, work experience in the organization.

#### **3.2. Research sample**

1 378 100 Lithuanian citizens who work for economic entities and 105 093 economic entities that operate in Lithuania make up the broad population of the quantitative research. The quantitative research was carried out: initially, 90,195 email addresses of economic enterprises functioning in Lithuania were invited to participate in the research, along with an online link to the research questionnaire. Employees in Lithuanian enterprises and organizations of all generations were questioned directly using a written questionnaire survey, which served as the research's quantitative data gathering approach.

The respondents were categorized into the appropriate generation according to the age range they provided on the study questionnaire, in accordance with the guidelines of Neil Howe and William Strauss' Generational Theory (Howe and Strauss, 2000). A total of 3 039 questionnaires have been totally completed and are appropriate for data analysis. These comprise 410 respondents from Generation Z (13.5%), 986 from Generation Y (32.4%), 1248 from Generation X (41.1%), and 395 from the Baby Boom Generation (14.0%).

#### **3.3. Data analysis**

Using IBM SPSS AMOS macro extension for structural equation modelling, together with IBM SPSS Statistics 25.0 software, statistical data analysis for quantitative research was carried out.

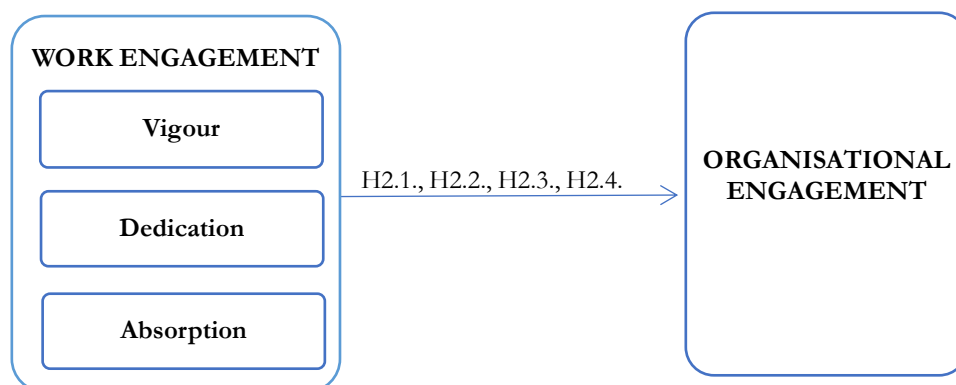
The research used the primary data analysis techniques listed below. First, the study data were analysed using descriptive statistics. Secondly, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated that the results do not have a normal distribution.

The reliability of the empirical research was also assessed applying Cronbach's alpha criterion. In the research, the scales for measuring the constructs of work engagement and organisational engagement are compatible and reliable ( $\alpha=0.941$  and  $\alpha=0.948$ , respectively). In addition, high reliability, and compatibility of the scales of work engagement individual components (vigour  $\alpha=0.869$ , dedication  $\alpha=0.885$  and absorption  $\alpha=0.902$ ) were determined.

In order to determine whether there are statistically significant differences between work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) and organisational engagement of the groups of employees of four different generations, the non-parametric analysis Kruskal-Wallis test of independent samples was applied.

In order to use the research data for structural modelling, normalisation was performed – the Rankit transformation method was applied for data normalisation.

In the next stage, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were performed, which helped to assess the structure of the construct, its most appropriate model, and relationships among the variables of the construct (Thompson, 2004). To check the validity of the constructs, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) of the obtained data was performed applying the Principal Components Analysis with Varimax rotation to determine the factor loadings. Discriminant validity was evaluated through inter-construct correlation coefficients. Data suitability for factor analysis is tested using Bartlett's Test / Criterion of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy. It was found that the quantitative research data are suitable for the Exploratory Factor Analysis when Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant, since the KMO coefficient of the work engagement construct is 0.942 and that of the organisational engagement is 0.920. Several statements with factor weights  $< 0.4$  were excluded from further data analysis due to too small factors (Raubenheimer, 2004). After that, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed. In the next stage, the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) – Multi-Group Structural Equation Model Analysis with SPSS AMOS was performed. In this stage, path analysis was deployed to verify the hypothetical causal relationship between exogenous and endogenous latent variables.



**Figure 1. The measurement model for SEM**

Source: own evaluation.

After performing the Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the work engagement construct and its components, a modified measurement model of the work engagement construct satisfying the data suitability criteria ( $\chi^2/df=4.471$ ,  $TLI=0.943$ ,  $CFI=0.966$ ,  $GFI=0.979$ ,  $RMSEA=0.034$ ) was designed. After performing the Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the organisational engagement, a measurement model of the organisational engagement construct satisfying the data suitability criteria (Fig. 1) ( $\chi^2/df=1.552$ ,  $TLI=1$ ,  $CFI=1$ ,  $GFI=0.999$ ,  $RMSEA=0.013$ ) was designed.

## 4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

### 4.1. Descriptive results

For the study 3 039 representatives of four generations were selected. Each participant was attributed to one of the four generations (the Baby Boom Generation, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z) based on the recommendations provided by the Generational Theory (Howe and Strauss, 2000). Demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the participants

Characteristics	Categories	Mean	SD
Age (average)	Generation Z	18.76	0.80
	Generation Y	29.69	4.71
	Generation X	47.25	5.98
	BB Generation	63.40	4.02
Characteristics	Categories	Count (N)	Percentage
Generation	Generation Z	410	13.49
	Generation Y	986	32.44
	Generation X	1248	41.07
	BB Generation	395	13.00
Gender	Male	853	28.07
	Female	2186	71.93
Type of activity of the organisation (economic entities)	Production	269	8.85
	Information and communication	131	4.31
	Services	885	29.12
	Trade	386	12.70
	Construction	173	5.69
	Health	217	7.14
	Education. Scientific activities	522	17.18
	Transport	90	2.96
Sector	Other	366	12.04
	Private	1687	55.51
Position	Public	1352	44.49
	Employee	2213	72.82
Work experience in the organization	Manager	826	27.18
	Up to 1 year	692	22.77
	1-5 years	918	30.21
	6-10 years old	438	14.41
	11-20 years old	542	17.83
	More than 20 years	449	14.77

Source: own evaluation.

### 4.2. Work engagement and organisational engagement among different generations

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated that the results do not have a normal distribution, therefore, a non-parametric analysis was chosen for the analysis. The Kruskal Wallis test with  $\alpha=0.05$  was used to assess the statistical significance of the differences between the level of work engagement (vigour, dedication, absorption) and the level of organisational engagement in different groups of respondents. Statistical differences were analysed comparing four groups of respondents – Generation Z, Generation Y, Generation X, and the Baby Boom Generation. The results of applying the Kruskal Wallis H test are shown in Table 2.



Table 2

Comparison of work engagement and organisational engagement across generations

Generation	N	Vigour	Dedication	Absorption	Work engagement (general)	Organisational engagement
		Mean Rank				
Generation Z	410	1215.14	1049.97	928.46	<b>1001.24</b>	<b>1041.37</b>
Generation Y	986	1387.68	1463.74	1430.81	<b>1414.69</b>	<b>1500.96</b>
Generation X	1248	1643.26	1660.39	1715.99	<b>1693.89</b>	<b>1631.94</b>
BB Generation	395	1777.29	1704.74	1737.43	<b>1771.95</b>	<b>1710.66</b>
Test Statistics <sup>a,b</sup>						
<i>Kruskal-Wallis H</i>		131.010	171.918	283.836	239.213	162.621
<i>df</i>		3	3	3	3	3
<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>		<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.0000</b>	<b>0.000</b>

a. *Kruskal-Wallis Test*

b. *Grouping Variable: Generations*

Source: own evaluation.

As Table 2 shows, when assessing the distribution of all levels of work engagement (vigour, dedication, absorption) and organisational engagement in four groups of employees of different generations,  $p=0.000$  was found, when  $\alpha=0.05$ , i.e., the differences in the engagement of employees belonging to different generational groups are statistically significant. **The obtained results confirm the hypothesis H1. Work engagement and organisational engagement significantly differ among employees of different generations.**

The lowest Mean Rank of the levels of work engagement (vigour, dedication, absorption) and organisational engagement was found in the group of Generation Z employees (1215.14; 1049.97; 928.46; 1001.24; 1041.37, respectively), the highest – in the group of the Baby Boom Generation employees (1777.29; 1704.74; 1737.43; 1771.95; 1710.66, respectively). Since a higher Mean Rank indicates that the group has also a higher level of engagement, it can be concluded that the younger generation, the lower work engagement (vigour, dedication, absorption) and organisational engagement.

#### 4.3. Results of the multi-group structural equation modelling analysis of the impact of work engagement of employees of different generations on organisational engagement

Composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were utilized to estimate the factors within the proposed model's reliability and convergent validity.

Table 3

Construct reliability, convergent and discriminant validity

Constructs	Factor correlation matrix with $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ on the diagonal					
	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	WE	OE
Work engagement (WE)	0.913	0.779	0.604	0.169	<b>0.883</b>	
Organisational engagement (OE)	0.946	0.747	0.604	0.187	0.777	<b>0.864</b>

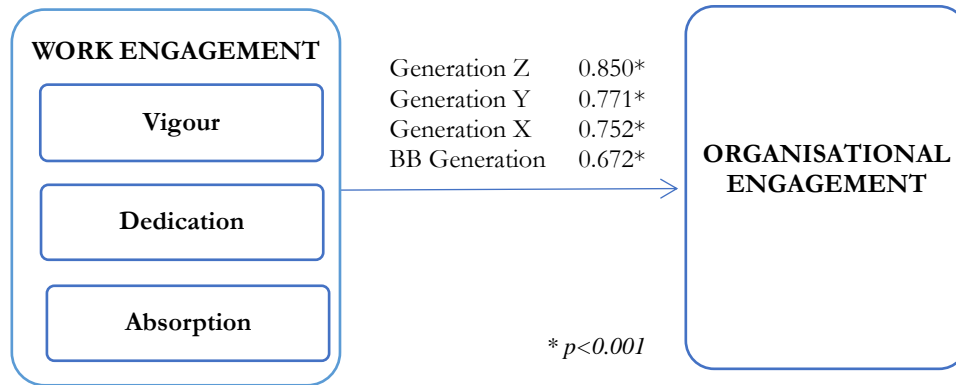
Numbers in bold are the square root of average variance extracted from observed variables (items)

Source: own evaluation.

As can be shown in Table 3, AVE were all above 0.747 and above 0.913 for CR (Convergent Validity  $\text{AVE} > 0.5$  and  $\text{CR} > 0.70$ ; Discriminant Validity  $\text{AVE} > \text{MSV}$ ,  $\text{AVE} > \text{ASV}$ ; Reliability (Internal Reliability

Cronbach’s Alpha > 0.7, CR > 0.60, AVE > 0.50) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017). Therefore, all constructs have adequate reliability and convergent validity.

The multi-group structural model (Fig. 2) of the interaction of the impact of work engagement of employees of different generations on organisational engagement was assessed by five suitability criteria; the obtained index values ( $\chi^2/df = 2.518$ , TLI=0.981, CFI=0.960, GFI=0.960) indicate a good compatibility between the model and the data; RMSEA=0.022 represents a good root mean square error of approximation and indicates a good suitability of the model to the data.



**Figure 2. A structural model of the interaction of the impact of work engagement of employees of different generations (multi-group SLM analysis with AMOS)**

$\chi^2/df = 2.518$ , TLI=0.981, CFI=0.986, GFI=0.960, RMSEA=0.022

Source: own evaluation.

Work engagement has a direct impact on the organizational engagement of employees across all generations, according to the results of a multi-group SLM analysis with AMOS, as indicated in Table 4. The path coefficients of the structural model of the interaction of the constructs of the impact of work engagement on organizational engagement are statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

Across generations, the impact of work engagement of Generation Z employees on organisational engagement is the strongest (standardised regression weight is 0.850), meanwhile, the impact of work engagement of the Baby Boom Generation employees on organisational engagement is the weakest (standardised regression weight is 0.672).

Table 4

Standardised regression weights (estimates) of the interaction model of the impact of work engagement of employees of different generations on organisational engagement

Generations	Path	Standardised estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label	Note
Generation Z	OE <--- WE	0.850	0.071	14.18	***	b1_1	<b>H2.1. supported</b>
Generation Y		0.771	0.039	20.59	***	b1_2	<b>H2.2. supported</b>
Generation X		0.752	0.038	22.99	***	b1_3	<b>H2.3. supported</b>
BB Generation		0.672	0.064	11.10	***	b1_4	<b>H2.4. supported</b>

\*\*\* specifies that  $p < 0.001$

Source: own evaluation.

Hypothesis H2 posits that there is a direct correlation between work engagement and organizational engagement for employees across all generations, including Generation Z (H2.1), Generation Y (H2.2), Generation X (H2.3), and Baby Boomers (H2.4). As it is seen in Table 4 hypotheses H2.1., H2.2., H2.3.,

and H2.4. have been confirmed, since the critical ration C.R. of standardised regression estimates for all generations is higher than  $\pm 2.58$ , when  $p=0.01$  (Byrne, 2006) (respectively, standardised regression weight of Generation Z is 0.850, C.R.=14.18; standardised regression weight of Generation Y is 0.771, C.R.=20.59; standardised regression weight of Generation X is 0.752, C.R.=22.99; standardised regression weight of the Baby Boom Generation is 0.672, C.R.=11.10), when  $p < 0.001$ . Employee engagement at work has a direct positive impact on organizational engagement across all generations.

Table 5

The results of multi-group SLM analysis of the model paths of the impact of work engagement of employees of different generations on organisational engagement, applying Chi-square difference test

Model	Model description	Model suitability assessment					Comparison of models				Model comparison result	
		$\chi^2/df$	TLI	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	$\chi^2$	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$		Statistically significant difference condition of models
Unconstrained model	Unconstrained primal model; no comparison among generations	2.518	0.981	0.986	0.96	0.022	1057.579	420	115.98	48	$\Delta\chi^2 \geq 67.50^*$	Models <b>are</b> statistically significantly different
Structural weights model	All factor weights are equalised among different generations	2.508	0.981	0.984	0.956	0.022	1173.555	468				
All generations WE--->OE	$b1\_1=b1\_2=b1\_3=b1\_4$	2.527	0.981	0.985	0.96	0.022	1069.04	423	11.461	3	$\Delta\chi^2 \geq 7.81^*$	Models <b>are</b> statistically significantly different

\* when the significance level  $p=0.05$

Source: own evaluation.

Having carried out a multi-group SLM analysis of the model paths of the interaction between work engagement and organisational engagement of employees of different generations, applying Chi-square difference test (Table 5), it was discovered that there are statistically significant generational disparities in the impact of work engagement on organizational engagement.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of work engagement of different generations on organisational engagement. The study revealed that work engagement and organisational engagement significantly differ among employees of different generations. The study revealed that the younger the generation, the lower the engagement in both work and organisational engagement. This is in line with previous studies that found that Generation X and Generation Y are more engaged in the workplace than Generation Z (Statnické et al., 2019). Although lower engagement (both work and organisational) of Generation Z was observed in all the examined studies, however, different studies emphasise the greater engagement of one or another 'older' generation (Douglas, Roberts, 2020). For instance, a study by Martins and Nienaber (2018) explored that employees born between 1978 and 2000 (Generation Y) were significantly more engaged than the other generations, while a study by Coetzee et al., (2017) revealed that compared to the other two generational cohorts (Generations X and Y), the Baby Boom Generation demonstrated higher levels of work engagement. According to Hoole and Bonnema (2015), employees of the Baby Boom Generation are the most engaged in work, Generation X is less engaged, and Generation Y is even less engaged, although the differences between Generations X and Y were no longer statistically

significant. This is also not contradicted by Hisel's (2020) study that found that veteran-aged employees were the most engaged, followed by the Baby Boom Generation, Generation X and Generation Y.

Meanwhile Mahmoud's (2021) study disclosed that if Generation X and Generation Y prioritize intrinsic motivation, while Generation Z prefers extrinsic motivation. Thus, Generation X and Generation Y are engaged because they consider the activity exciting and pleasurable, while Generation Z is interested in reward or recognition. It can be assumed that the different motivators and their possible insufficient satisfaction determine that younger generations have lower levels of work engagement and organizational engagement.

The narrative review of 40 studies conducted by Saks et al., (2022) allows us to conclude that work engagement scores tend to be higher than organisational engagement. The results of our study support these claims and we tend to agree with the authors (Tenerife and Galingan, 2018; Rai and Maheshwari, 2020; Saks et al., 2022; Rai and Chawla, 2022) who propose work engagement as a predecessor of organisational engagement. Furthermore, our research showed that, across all generations, work engagement positively affects organisational engagement. Research indicates that there is a positive correlation between work engagement and organisational engagement among younger generations. Employees from Generation Z exhibit the largest direct positive impact of work engagement on organisational engagement. Additionally, employees of Generation Y and Generation X have a substantial influence on organisational engagement from their work, while employees of the Baby Boom Generation have a somewhat strong direct impact.

On the one hand, the younger the generation, the greater the impact of work engagement on organisational engagement, which is an aspiration for financial and operational success of any organisation (Gupta et al., 2019; Dhoopar et al., 2022). However, the younger the generation, the lower both work engagement and organisational engagement. Thus, it is very important to understand the factors that operate each case. Especially, taking Generation Z into account, since it is rapidly entering the labour market, and, as the study shows, its work engagement is the lowest; nevertheless, the impact of work engagement on organisational engagement tends to be the highest. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the factors that promote the engagement of Generation Z and to form relevant human resource management practices. At the same time, we must not forget that the organisation's staff consists of a pool of different generations, and they are all important for the organisation's success. Therefore, a unique set of human resource management practices for increasing engagement of different generations is necessary.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The empirical research revealed A statistically significant direct positive influence of work engagement on organisational engagement was found in the empirical study examining the relationship between work engagement and the engagement of employees across four generations. There are notable differences in work engagement and organisational engagement between employees belonging to various generations. Research has shown that work engagement directly improves organisational engagement more strongly in younger generations. Employees of Generation Z exhibit the strongest direct positive influence of work engagement on organisational engagement, whereas those of the Baby Boom Generation exhibit the least strong direct impact.

Future research is required to identify the elements of the work environment that increase work engagement and, concurrently, organisational engagement of different generations. This is because the identified differences in work engagement and organisational engagement of different generations encourage reconsideration of how to improve the engagement of employees of different generations in work and in the organization.

**Theoretical and practical implications.** By highlighting two more significant generational differences – work engagement and organisational engagement – the research advances our understanding of the generational phenomenon and how it manifests in the workplace and advances the field of generational theory. The research presented here adds to the generational research works based on the principles of William Strauss and Neil Howe's Generation Theory, as it was found that employees of different generations differ significantly in their levels of work engagement and organisational engagement. The idea of employee engagement is extended in a generational context by the confirmation of the hypothesis that work engagement directly affects organisational engagement in the case of employees of all generations.

The research findings have practical implications for organizational leaders and human resource professionals. Specifically, the differences between work and organisational engagement between generations can help them better understand their workforce and develop HRM practices that take these differences into account. This can help to reduce workplace tensions between generations, which is something that every organisation needs to manage.

**Limitation and future research.** The paper has several limitations to consider when interpreting the mentioned findings. The study was conducted in Lithuania, meaning that only respondents from that nation took part in the multi-group structural equation model analysis of the impact of work engagement on organisational engagement of employees of different generations. It is conceivable that research done in a different nation, area, or continent will yield different results due to cultural, economic, social, and technical differences. As a result, additional study might be conducted in other areas. Additionally, the study's findings about the influence of employee engagement on organisational engagement across generations are the only ones included in the report. It is crucial to investigate the factors that influence the involvement of different generations, even after it has been established that work engagement has an impact on organizational engagement and the degree of work and organisational engagement varies among generations.

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