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Engagement climate in service settings: Construct domain, multidimensionality, and measurement

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This thesis is the result of the author's original research. It has been composed by the author and has not been previously submitted for examination which has led to the award of a degree.

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Contents

Abstract

This study explores the issue of drivers of service employee behaviour and performance, as antecedents of customer experiences that constitute key strategic outputs for service organizations. A proposed new construct, Engagement Climate, was developed and put forth as the "behavioural foundation" that the Service Climate model needs in the prediction of service employee behaviour and performance. The construct stems from the interpretation of engagement as an affect-based motivational process, and from the conceptualization of its antecedents as a specific type of psychological climate. Engagement Climate comprises a set of affectively charged psychological perceptions of the work environment, or engagement climate dimensions, which are conducive to the experience of engagement, a motivational state that triggers the investment of personal resources into the job role. Engagement Climate, as a latent social psychological construct, should virtually transcend the context of any one organisation or sector. However, given the nature of service work, Engagement Climate may most readily be observed (and fostered) in the context of services, in particular among front-line employees.

The empirical study, consisting of a cross-sectional statistical survey, aimed to develop and pilot-test a questionnaire measure of Engagement Climate and to investigate its factor structure within a service organization. Data were collected from a total of 544 travel agents from a leading travel group in Spain. The factorial validity of the model comprising ten dimensions, namely Autonomy, Supervisor support, Clarity, Cohesion, Fairness, Trust, Challenge, Recognition, Self-expression, and Overload, was demonstrated using confirmatory factor analyses (CFA). The scale and subscales comprising the measurement model all showed good internal consistency and reliability values. Also, the hypothesized direct effects of engagement climate on personal engagement, as well as the relatively weaker effect of engagement climate on job satisfaction, were both confirmed using structural equation modelling (SEM).

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Chapter 1. Overview

Introduction

This study was born out of an interest, accompanied by a sense of dissatisfaction, which this researcher experienced while working as a people management consultant for Tourism and Hospitality organizations in Spain. The interest was on understanding what drives service or frontline employees to "give their best" while performing their job roles, particularly in boundary or face-to-face situations with customers. As a hotel director once put it, service employees *perform* their roles as actors perform on a stage, not merely reading from a script but enacting it to produce a certain customer experience. As it happens with actors, enacting the script of a service role is not merely performing a task; it requires an emotional investment that is often more intense than the one required to perform other organizational roles that do not involve interaction with customers. Moreover, the issue of what drives service employees to "give their best" is of particular strategic relevance for service organizations. The customer experiences that emerge from service encounters are the intangible elements that constitute the core of the transaction. Specifically, service employee performance has been shown to influence a variety of organizational outcomes that are key components of service strategies, such as service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong, Liao, Hu, & Jiang, 2013; Subramony & Pugh, 2015), hence the influence of service employee performances on a service organization's bottom-line cannot be underestimated.

The relevance of service employee performances is particularly salient in Tourism and Hospitality. Companies operating in mature tourism markets have been facing considerable strategic challenges (Oxford-Research, 2009; UNWTO, 2013) such as increasing competition from emerging destinations in the Mediterranean, Asia and Eastern Europe, an ever- growing emphasis from customers on service quality and individualization, and increasing customer decision power and freedom of choice brought by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). In Spain, both private and public agents in the sector strongly agree that customer value propositions can no longer be exclusively based on low prices and natural resources, such as the Spanish traditional "sun & beach" tourist model, but rather on providing differential experiences to customers (Turespaña, 2012). The success in generating those “experiences” relies heavily on successful performances from service employees (Heskett, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1997; Schneider, Ehrhart, Mayer, Saltz, & Niles-Jolly, 2005).

The feeling of dissatisfaction stemmed from the "tools of the trade" that are available for Human Resource Management (HRM) practitioners to identify, understand and ultimately influence what drives service employees to "give their best" during service encounters. Achieving consistent performance standards from frontline employees is a major challenge for most service organizations. Service employees not only are required to display nonstandard, adaptive, and creative behaviours during service encounters (Gwinner, Bitner, Brown, & Kumar, 2005) but also to engage regularly in emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). They are required to push aside any personal emotions and focus positively toward the customer. They often face emotionally challenging service encounters as they have to deal with demanding, rude, or irate customers and, consequently, are extremely susceptible to performance adverse effects such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, and service misbehaviour (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Kim & Yoon, 2012).

The tools available to HRM professionals to face these challenges are, for the most part, designed around the concept of job attitudes, in particular job satisfaction, and in the shape of employee surveys or other type of diagnosis tools (e.g., A. Brown, Chris Forde, & Spencer, 2008; F. J. Smith, 2003). The common belief is that to diagnose and adopt measures that could result in greater overall employee satisfaction will lead, in turn, to important organizational and business outputs such as increase in productivity, a lower rate of absenteeism, reduced undesired rotation and greater customer satisfaction. Most practitioners would agree that, after decades of adopting job satisfaction surveys and related measures as a common currency in many HRM departments, their usefulness on driving organizational performance is very much under question.

In connection to the apparent failure of traditional employee satisfaction surveys, consulting firms have in recent years inundated managers with commercial HRM diagnosis surveys and tools around the concept of employee "engagement". Casual observation of these tools shows a common claim that employee engagement drives bottom-line results, hence directly implying that this new concept represents an evolution from job attitudes and adds value beyond the boundaries of those traditions (Schneider, Macey, Barbera, & Martin, 2009). Yet most of these supposedly new commercial tools have turned out to be, upon close examination, "old wine in a new bottle"(Newman & Harrison, 2008), namely a relabelling of existing employee opinion data as engagement (Saks, 2008; Schneider et al., 2005). In sum, engagement "has become a popularized term for the even more generic concept of employee attitudes" (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014, p. 13) and is regarded by many as a confused construct, subject to varying and imprecise interpretations.

Nevertheless, the notion of employee engagement does seem to point at something missing in the concept of job satisfaction, namely, the drive to act or behave (to engage). Indeed, to be "satisfied" implies satiation rather than activation (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008), an attitude towards a specific target that does not necessarily lead to any particular action (Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006). In that sense, the new breed of engagement-based commercial tools is indicative of an existing need among HRM practitioners for alternatives to the traditional job attitude-based approaches to tackle the managerial challenges around employee performance. Yet the products of commercially oriented research on these issues tend to be based, with a few exceptions, on thinly linked theoretical ideas, unpublished methodologies, vague and undocumented constructs, and inflated promises. A desire to address this gap is what provided the initial impulse for this research.

Turning these "practitioner" concerns into an academic endeavour entails a number of choices and trade-offs that give shape to this study. On the one hand, practitioners are usually in the lookout for applicable and cost-effective remedies that will contribute to relevant business-related outcomes in relatively short time spans. On the other hand, the academic community needs rigorous research in the examination of constructs, and historically verifiable strategies in the understanding and application of ideas, but these needs can often lead to research-heavy methodologies and slow, economically insensitive approaches to business problems (Zigarmi, Nimon, Houson, Witt, & Diehl, 2009). The ambition of this study is to contribute to the HRM practice with conceptually clear, theoretically supported and measurable constructs that can be ultimately acted upon and be related to organizational outcomes, i.e., tools to foster lasting organizational changes. Thus the approach to this study can be labelled as "normative", to the extent that it deals with a "technical" concern with finding solutions to management problems (Alvesson & Willmott, 2012). It can also be positioned within the mainstream HRM field and its longstanding concern with the question of how the management of people can lead to improved organizational performance outcomes (Huselid, 1995). Indeed, the effort to understand and operationalize the HRM-performance link has come to be seen as the overriding purpose of strategic human resource management (Bolton & Houlihan, 2007; Delbridge & Keenoy, 2010). Therefore there is a conscious choice, from the start, to side by those who have an interest in *managing people* in organizations, and thus making their interests ultimately prevail upon the interests of those who are *being managed*. But there is also a choice to embrace the belief that there are many unexplored areas were those conflicting interests can meet and work for their mutual benefit, and this belief inspires and drives this research effort. The

philosophical stance and the methodological choices that stem from this approach will be discussed in detail in the chapters ahead.

Research question, research rationale and research objectives

This thesis intends to address and explore the following research question, which reflects the interest in understanding a specific phenomenon but also a concern for applicability: what drives service employees to "give their best" while performing their work roles?

Addressing this question entails dealing with two long-standing and recurring concepts in both management practice and organizational literature. One refers to the intuitive notion of "the happy productive employee", or the relationship between work place attitudes, employee morale and productivity, which goes as far as the Hawthorne studies and the human relations movement (Mayo, 1933; Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939) and can still be traced in recent research (e.g., Kilic & Dursun, 2008; M. Riketta, 2008; Schleicher, Watt, & Greguras, 2004). The interest in this link has developed into a mainstream body of organizational literature and research on and/or around job attitudes, in particular job satisfaction, and their relationship with employee performance and other specific outputs, such as turnover or absenteeism (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; M. Riketta, 2008). The second concept refers to the equally popular and intuitive notion of "happy employees make happy customers", or the relationship between job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, which has been a major focus of interest in the services management literature since the early 1980s. This link, also referred to as the "satisfaction mirror effect" (Heskett et al., 1997) occupies a central place in the generic conceptual framework linking organizational, employee, and customer variables, that underpins the services management literature (S.P. Brown & Lam, 2008; Dean, 2004; Subramony & Pugh, 2015).

The results of decades of empirical studies on both the satisfaction-performance relationship and the employee satisfaction-customer satisfaction relationship have not been conclusive. With regard to the link between job satisfaction and performance, early reviews (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959; E. A. Locke, 1970; Vroom, 1964) already pointed out that the two variables did not appear to be significantly correlated, and periodical meta-analyses have arrived at similar results to those of previous reviews (e.g., Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Kilic & Dursun, 2008; M. Riketta, 2008). On the other hand, the satisfaction mirror effect in the services management literature has been deemed as "the less direct correlate of the link to customer experiences" (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014, p. 13), with research suggesting that there might be

"some" truth" in the employee satisfaction-customer satisfaction relationship, but not the whole truth: "(...) if it were that simple, then the primary objective of every company would be to make their employees ecstatic" (Keiningham & Aksoy, 2009, p. 69).

Yet the posited role of job satisfaction and other job attitudes as predictors of employee behaviours, and their performance-related outcomes, has continued to prove extraordinarily resilient both in the services management literature and in the broader field of organizational research. One conclusion, though, seems to have emerged regarding the elusiveness of the link between job attitudes and performance. Assuming that performance is understood as employee behaviours that are consistent with role expectations and that contribute to organizational effectiveness (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012), then it is important to consider that

> "(…) people at work don´t perform, they behave. Performance is the result of the fit between a person's behaviours and the demands of the job/task. Performance itself is not a psychological construct and therefore cannot be fully understood through psychological theory" (Weiss, 2002, p. 184).

In other words, the issue of employee behaviour and performance refers to two different types of phenomena that are intimately connected, but that need to be addressed separately. The former is an issue dealing primarily with psychological phenomena in work settings, i.e. the domain of organizational behaviour, while the latter is an issue concerning the management of organizations. Moreover, employee performances are a distal, rather than direct, consequence of employee behaviours, hence other mediating variables and contextual factors are likely to be needed to predict organizationally relevant outcomes.

When applying this view to the area of interest in this study, i.e. service employees, the review of the services management literature will reveal the existence of a rich conceptual framework, the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong et al., 2013), that includes proximal constructs to service employee performance, such as service climate, acting as key mediators in the behavioural sequence. In that sense, the model holds considerable potential as a framework of reference to address the (managerial) issue of drivers of service employee *performance*. However, as it will be argued, neither the service climate model nor the services management literature provide altogether a fully satisfactory answer to the (psychological) issue of drivers of service employee *behaviour*, hence the need to go "elsewhere", i.e. to look for answers in the broader field

of organizational behaviour (OB) literature, from which the services management literature borrows its theoretical underpinnings.

To put it differently, answering the question of what drives service employee behaviour will require answering, first, the question of what drives employee behaviour, beyond specific roles or industries. Once a satisfactory answer to this question is found in the broader field of organizational behaviour literature, the obtained knowledge could then potentially be applied, i.e. operationalized, as the "OB foundation" that the service climate model needs in the prediction of service employee behaviour and performance. Thus, while the services management literature provides the initial setting for this study, the bulk of the theoretical discussion takes place within the organizational and OB literatures. While both the managerial and the social psychological perspectives are relevant to the issue of service employee behaviour and performance, the study aims to provide a distinct theoretical contribution to the social psychological perspective, which could also open future research directions with a view to its application in the managerial arena.

Specifically, the research objectives are formulated as follows:

1) To propose a new social psychological construct, Engagement Climate, as the answer to the research question of what drives service employees to give their best while performing their roles.

2) To develop and pilot test a questionnaire measure of Engagement Climate.

3) To investigate the factor structure of Engagement Climate within a service organization.

This research rationale and objectives gives shape to the structure and contents of the thesis, which will be summarized next:

Literature review (Chapter 2): Proposing Engagement Climate as a social psychological construct.

- In *Chapter 2.1. The relationship between organizations, employees, and customers in services*, the services management literature will be approached, as the initial setting or location of the research question. This body of literature and research comprises a considerable amount of studies from different disciplines such as marketing, industrial-organizational psychology or consumer behaviour, focusing on the relationship between organizations, employees and customers in a variety of service settings. The review will lead to identifying the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong et al., 2013; Subramony & Pugh, 2015) as a potentially valid managerial framework of reference to

address the issue of service employee behaviours and performance, but with the acknowledgment of an unresolved theoretical issue or gap in the model concerning the behavioural foundations of service employee performance. This unresolved theoretical issue is related to the mainstream view, in this body of literature, of job attitudes as predictors of service employee behaviour (Grandey, Goldberg, & Pugh, 2011; Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Whitman, Van Rooy, & Viswesvaran, 2010), and it is also related to the role of engagement as a possible alternative to the mainstream approach, as suggested in a recent expansion of the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Schneider, Macey, Barbera, et al., 2009). It will be argued that a fully satisfactory answer to this theoretical gap cannot be found in the services management literature, hence the need to approach the broader field of organizational literature and research with the purpose of developing a solid "OB foundation" for the service climate model. Specifically, the following questions will be used as keynotes around which the review of the organizational literature is built in chapter 2.3: 1) what role do organizational climates and job attitudes play in the prediction of work behaviours and performance? 2) What does the affective/energizing element, that seems to be missing in job satisfaction, consist of? 3) Does the emerging employee engagement construct successfully conceptualize it?

- *Chapter 2.2. Predictors of work behaviour in organizational research*, will address the issue of social psychological predictors of work behaviour in organizational research, with a view to developing the behavioural "foundation" that seems to be missing in the service climate model. This will entail dealing with several streams of research that intersect and overlap at various points, providing the basis for an integrated theoretical perspective. They include, as their main bodies, theoretical and empirical research on organizational climates and job attitudes, the literature and research on affect at work, and the emerging body of OB literature on employee engagement. Also, while most of these studies belong to organizational research disciplines, such as organizational/industrial psychology and organizational behaviour, many are often grounded on socio-psychological research. In that sense, key contributions from social psychology will be identified but not extensively reviewed, as this would be beyond the scope of the study.

  As to what role organizational climates play in the prediction of work behaviours, the review of the literature will reveal that organizational work climates have been consistently linked to a variety of important organizational outcomes but they have not been posited as *direct*

predictors of work behaviours. Rather, they have been studied either as antecedents of job attitudes or as mediators of specific behavioural outputs. Work attitudes such as job satisfaction, affective commitment, or job involvement have often been advocated in climate research as mediators between climate perceptions and behavioural outputs. Thus, in order to explore the issue of behavioural predictors in work settings, a more detailed look into the role of job attitudes is required.

As to what role job attitudes play in the prediction of work behaviours and performance, the review of this body of literature will lead to the conclusion that job attitudes such as job satisfaction and affective commitment, as traditionally conceptualized and operationalized in organizational research, i.e. as evaluative judgements or cognitive appraisals, have significant limitations as behavioural predictors. Moreover, the deconstruction of job attitudes (Weiss, 2002) highlights the role of affect as a potential behavioural predictor in itself, and leads to reconsider (Bagozzi, 1992) the dominating cognitive-based paradigm that has traditionally sustained the attitude-behaviour link in social psychology.

In order to identify alternative constructs and/or theories beyond attitude research that have tapped in affect as a behavioural predictor, the literature on affect at work will be approached next. The review of this body of literature will suggest that both moods and emotions (Frijda, 1988) are equally needed to understand the affect-behaviour relationship, and that discrete emotions do not have a direct influence on behaviours but an indirect one, that is, mediated by moods. The review will also suggest that the conceptualization of mood as a single global construct, i.e. as positive affect (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) oversimplifies the variety of affective experiences in work settings and their equally varying behavioural outputs. In that sense, a promising route will be identified in theories that revitalize perspectives on motivation (George & Brief, 1996; Kahn, 1990) by focusing on a specific mood that stems from the classical notion of "self-realization" or "self-concept" (A. H. Maslow, 1943), and which is posited to relate to distinct behavioural outputs. Among these theories, Kahn's model of personal engagement (1990, 1992) will be identified as a suitable theoretical alternative to the mainstream view of job attitudes as behavioural predictors. While Kahn's theory of personal engagement is not aimed at any specific job role, it will be deemed as fully relevant to the issue of service employee behaviour, considering both the demanding nature of service roles in terms of personal resources (Gwinner et al., 2005; Hochschild, 1983; Pugh, 2001), and the relatively less favourable work

environments that characterize the service industry (Pienaar & Willemse, 2008). Moreover, Kahn's theory conceptualizes engagement both from a micro-perspective, i.e. as a psychological phenomenon, and also from a macro-perspective, i.e. as a systemic or recursive phenomenon, hence providing a sound theoretical platform from which to address the issue of employee behaviour and performance both from a psychological and a social/organizational perspective.

Lastly, the choice of engagement as the potential "foundation" of service employee behaviour and performance will lead to the review of the OB literature and research on this emerging construct. This body of literature is characterized by little consistency and much controversy regarding definitions, manifestations, and drivers of engagement, with several approaches competing as to how engagement should be conceptualized and measured (W. H. Macey, Schneider, Barbera, & Young, 2009; Newman & Harrison, 2008; Shuck, Ghosh, Zigarmi, & Nimon, 2012; A. Smith, 2006). It will be argued that the conceptual domain of engagement can be clearly defined by revisiting its original formulation (Kahn, 1990, 1992), complemented with contributions from research on state affect and the self-concept in motivational theories. According to this interpretation, engagement contains three distinctive elements: (1) it is (primarily) an affective, rather than cognitive, phenomenon, (2) its nature is motivational, rather than attitudinal, and (3) it is a process, not a state, that includes certain psychological antecedents or "conditions", a psychological state, and accompanying behaviours. This conceptual definition of engagement will serve as the base from which to approach the operationalization of the construct in chapter 2.3.

- In *Chapter 2.3. Engagement Climate*, a proposed new construct, engagement climate, will be developed and put forth as the "OB foundation" that the service climate model needs in the prediction of service employee behaviour and performance. First, it will be argued that the operationalization of the engagement process can be best approached by focusing on its salient and more "actionable" manifestations, i.e. its antecedents, as opposed to the element "in the middle" which is the most elusive of the three, as it refers to purely psychological phenomena. This approach has been labelled "main effects" engagement research (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008; Rich, LePine, & Crawford, 2010), implying that if certain specific conditions (work environment perceptions) are appropriately altered, engagement will follow. These antecedents in the engagement process will be conceptualized as a specific set of psychological climate perceptions, as a means to enable

the operationalization of these phenomena from a micro or psychological perspective but also from macro or systemic perspective. This approach exemplifies what has been referred to as "microfoundations" (Felin, Foss, Heimeriks, & Madsen, 2012), namely theoretical constructs supported by empirical examination that capture how the aggregation of micro-level phenomena (e.g. individual/psychological perceptions) leads to the emergence of macro-level phenomena (e.g. a collective climate construct). Therefore Engagement Climate will be posited as an Organisational-Level construct in which the unit of theory is the individual (i.e., psychological climate) but which allows for an organizational level of analysis through the aggregation of individual climate perceptions, assuming that a perceptual agreement among employees exists (Glisson & James, 2002; Härtel & Ashkanasy, 2011; Subramony & Pugh, 2015). Consideration will also be given to how Engagement Climate could also be a Group-Level construct as well as to the concept of Climate Strength and its implications for Engagement Climate.

The resulting construct from this approach, Engagement Climate, constitutes the main contribution of this study. Engagement climate will be defined as a specific set of affectively charged psychological perceptions that the individual elicits from his/her work environment, leading to a particular affective state or mood. This psychological state is motivational in nature and leads, in turn, to the investment of personal resources into the role or task, therefore influencing work behaviours and behavioural outcomes.

Engagement Climate, as a latent social psychological construct, should virtually transcend the context of any one organisation or sector, i.e. it could theoretically be found in any organizational context, not exclusively in service organizations. However, given the nature of service work, Engagement Climate may most readily be observed (and fostered) in the context of services, in particular among front-line employees.

Engagement Climate will be conceptualized as a higher order multidimensional construct, comprising a number of second-order dimensions or facets, namely *Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression,* and *Overload,* each reflecting a specific type of affectively charged perceptions of a work environment leading to the experience of engagement. These dimensions, as antecedents in the engagement process, provide a direct link to behaviours; therefore attitudinal constructs are not needed or can be "bypassed" in the explanation of the

behavioural sequence. Lastly, engagement climate will be positioned as the foundation of service climate within the service climate model, While service climate represents the different environmental elements that reinforce and give strategic focus to customer-oriented behaviours, engagement climate provides its foundation, i.e. the "contextual factors that sustain work behaviour" (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). The relationship of engagement climate with other variables in the model, such as HR/leadership practices and OCB will also be discussed and clarified.

- Lastly, *Chapter 2.4. Research framework and hypotheses*, will outline the overall research framework and the research hypotheses for the empirical study which aims to test the theoretical propositions emerging from the literature review.

Methodology (Chapter 3): Developing and pilot-testing a questionnaire measure of Engagement Climate.

- In *Chapter 3.1. Research design*, the different assumptions, trade-offs, and choices that give shape to the research design of the study will be discussed and justified, using as a framework of reference the three key questions for research design as suggested by Crotty (1998) and Creswell (2003), namely philosophical assumptions, strategy of enquiry, and data collection method. Also, the setting of the empirical study, i.e. travel agents working for a major travel group in Spain, will be described in detail.
- *Chapter 3.2. Questionnaire development and pilot-test*, will address the design process to obtain a measure of Engagement Climate, which represents the main methodological contribution of the thesis. The pilot-testing of the questionnaire as well as the survey administration and data collection procedures will also be described and discussed.
- In *Chapter 3.3. Analytical strategy*, the selected analytical procedure and sequence to exploit the obtained data through EFA and CFA will be described and justified, including a discussion on limitations and potential biases.

Findings (Chapter 4): Investigating the factor structure of Engagement Climate within a service organisation. The data findings in preliminary analyses, EFA and CFA will be reported, as well as the results regarding the test of the study hypotheses.

General discussion (Chapter 5) will address the evaluation of the findings, followed by the theoretical implications of the study. The limitations of the research, as well as the future research directions will also be addressed and discussed.

Conclusion (Chapter 6) will summarize the study's proposed answer to the Research Question, i.e. "what drives service employees to 'give their best' while performing their work roles?", re-cap the key contributions made by the dissertation and explore its managerial implications.

Expected contribution

This study aims to demonstrate a distinct contribution in each of the following three areas, corresponding to the stated research objectives: theoretical, methodological and empirical.

1. Theoretical contribution (proposing Engagement Climate as a social psychological construct): Engagement climate, as a microfoundation, is posited to exert its influence on employee behaviours and performance from two distinct yet complementary perspectives, i.e. a micro or psychological perspective and a macro or organizational perspective. As a psychological climate construct, engagement climate contributes to the domain conceptualization of the emerging engagement construct in the organizational behaviour (OB) literature and to the clarification of its role as a behavioural predictor (W. H. Macey et al., 2009; Newman & Harrison, 2008; Shuck et al., 2012; A. Smith, 2006). Specifically, engagement climate reflects a theoretically coherent and ontologically uniform approach to the issue of psychological inputs or antecedents of engagement. As an organizational climate construct, Engagement Climate addresses the gap in the service climate model concerning the psychological explanation of what drives or motivates employee *behaviour*, which is a pre-condition or foundation for employee *service-oriented behaviour.* More specifically, Engagement Climate contributes to clarify the role of engagement as a predictor of service employee performance within existing conceptual frameworks in the service management literature, in particular a recent extension of the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014) in which engagement climate fulfils the role of what is referred to in the model as the "foundation" for service climate. Within this conceptual framework, Engagement Climate provides the means for the measurement of the antecedents of service employee engagement within a systemic and recursive view of the engagement process. The service climate model, as the framework of reference, provides other key elements interacting within the system and creating the feedback loop that ultimately determines the

system's strategic outputs of interest, namely *service employee performances*. In sum, Engagement Climate, as a latent social psychological construct, contributes to Organizational Behaviour theory to the extent that it transcend the context of any one organisation or sector but, given the nature of service work, it is expected to be most readily observed and to have more salient behavioural manifestation and organizational impact within the context of services, thus representing a specific contribution to Services Management literature and research.

2. Methodological contribution (developing and pilot testing a questionnaire measure of Engagement Climate): The proposed construct domain of Engagement Climate as the antecedent of employee engagement provides a sound theoretical platform from which a measure of Engagement Climate will be developed. This involves the conceptualization of Engagement Climate as a multidimensional construct, the development of indicators for each of the hypothesized dimensions, the design of the instrument, i.e. Engagement Climate questionnaire, including elements such as structure, rating scale, wording, and translation procedures. It also includes the pre-tests and pilot-test of the instrument on selected samples from the population to which the empirical study will be directed, i.e. front-line employees in Tourism and Hospitality settings.
3. Empirical contribution (investigating the factor structure of Engagement Climate within an organisation): Overall, the results from the selected EFA and CFA procedures on the data obtained from the field study support the engagement climate model, which comprises ten subscales or engagement climate dimension, and engagement climate as their unifying theme or higher order construct, with overall robust reliability and validity values in all the scales. The study findings also support the posited role of Engagement Climate as an antecedent in the engagement process, with a moderate-to-strong direct effect of Engagement Climate on Personal engagement, thus providing support to the proposed conceptualization of engagement as an affect-based motivational process, with Engagement Climate acting as the psychological antecedent in the process, i.e. having a direct effect on the experience of engagement as a psychological state or mood.

Chapter 2. Proposing Engagement Climate as a social psychological construct

2.1 The relationship between organizations, employees, and customers in services

Introduction

Chapter 2.1 explores the services management literature, as the initial setting of the research question. This body of literature and research comprises a considerable amount of studies from different disciplines such as marketing, industrial-organizational psychology or consumer behaviour, focusing on the relationship between organizations, employees and customers in a variety of service settings. The review will lead to identifying the service climate model as a potentially valid managerial framework of reference to address the issue of service employee behaviours and performance, but with the acknowledgment of an unresolved theoretical issue or gap in the model concerning the behavioural foundations of service employee performance. This unresolved theoretical issue is related to the mainstream view, in this body of literature, of job attitudes as predictors of service employee behaviour, and it is also related to the role of engagement as a possible alternative to the mainstream approach. It will be argued that a fully satisfactory answer to this theoretical gap cannot be found in the services management literature, hence the need to approach the broader field of organizational literature and research with the purpose of developing a solid "OB foundation" for the service climate model.

Service management

In the last decades industrialized countries have experienced a dramatic growth of their service sector in both volume and complexity. Services account for over 63% of the world gross domestic product (GDP) and over 70% GDP in OECD countries (CIA, 2011). Also, of the workers employed in the manufacturing sector, 65–75% are estimated to be performing service tasks (Horwitz & Neville, 1996). Service industries compete at a global scale and the pace of innovation and change in businesses, markets and consumer preferences does not seem to lose momentum. It is therefore not surprising that research has given a considerable amount of attention to services management and more specifically to the antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction in service businesses.

Shostack (1977) introduced the now classic distinction between services and goods. Services are characterized by their intangibility and this suggests that services yield experiences rather than

possessions. From this initial distinction, several definitions of service have been developed, with three recurring facets (Schneider, 1990):

- *The tangibility-intangibility continuum* (or possession-experience continuum): this refers to the fact that the evaluation of a service is more difficult to the producer and the consumer because the outcome of a service is frequently more of an experience than a possession.
- *The simultaneity continuum*: this refers to the time lapse between the production and consumption of services compared to goods. Many services are produced and consumed simultaneously, e.g., a flight seat or a hotel room. This creates major challenges for the management of service organizations, such as the lack of inventory and the difficulty of quality control.
- *The customer participation continuum*: this refers to the fact that customers participate actively in the production of many of the services and can create problems for organizations because they penetrate the production core.

These three continua show how the interests of organizations and customers become intertwined in service contexts, as customers' evaluations and behaviours are largely influenced by the quality of their interaction with the organization and its representatives (Oliver, 1999; Schneider & Bowen, 1985). The features of services also highlight the importance of service employees, to the extent that they literally and symbolically represent the organization to the customer. Their performances, which result from the behaviours they display while serving and helping customers to address customer needs and interests, have been shown to influence a variety of organizational outcomes that are key components of service strategies, such as service quality, customer satisfaction or customer loyalty (Hong et al., 2013; Liao & Chuang, 2007). The managerial challenges regarding this collective cannot be underestimated as "in service business, you're dealing with something that is primarily delivered by people - to people. Your people are as much of your product in the consumer's mind as any other attribute of that service. People's performance day in and day out fluctuates up and down. Therefore, the level of consistency that you can count on and try to communicate to the consumer is not a certain thing" (Knisely, 1979, p.47).

These complexities in the nature of services show that the traditional focus on only the external consumer that prevailed in the early service marketing literature (see Fisk, Brown, & Bitner, 1993) was somehow short-sighted. Increasing contributions during the 1980s from other fields such as operations management (Chase, 1981) and organizational behaviour (K. Albrecht & Zemke, 1985; Norman, 1984) documented from different perspectives how the management of the internal

organization impacts the service delivered to the customer, and triggered the transition from a service *marketing* concept to a service *management* concept (Schneider, 1990). Also, the ever-growing sophistication and pace of changes in consumer behaviour that the majority of service industries have been experiencing in the last decades, coupled with fierce competition from rival firms and the reduction of profit margins, led practitioners to pay increasing attention to people management issues and their impact on the firm's ability to provide superior service (Heskett, Sasser, & Hart, 1990). Since then, several streams of management research have been focusing on the relationship between organizations, employees, and customers within the context of services from the different perspectives of marketing, operations, human resources and psychology.

The variables that have been considered in this body of literature are diverse and encompass a range of conceptual approaches and levels of analysis (see Dean, 2004; Subramony & Pugh, 2015). For example, micro-level studies in services contexts provide unique insights into various employee-related mechanisms influencing service delivery (A. M. Ryan & Ployhart, 2003), and are typically focused on understanding the antecedents of, and processes underlying, employee behaviour toward customers in a variety of boundary-spanning roles. A stream of micro-level research examines employee attitudes and workplace perceptions and their connections to customer satisfaction (S.P. Brown & Lam, 2008). Other studies have addressed the organizational processes that can affect customer outcomes at the unit level of analysis (Hong et al., 2013), with the emphasis shifting from the interactions between individual employees and customers to aggregate perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. A broad framework utilized for this research organizes service antecedents, processes (or mediators), and outcomes along a service-profit chain with organizational variables as the starting point and financial performance as the ultimate outcome of customer satisfaction (Heskett et al., 1997). The theoretical underpinnings across studies are equally diverse and often insufficient to support the relationships between the different constructs (Wangenheim, Evanschitzky, & Wunderlich, 2007).

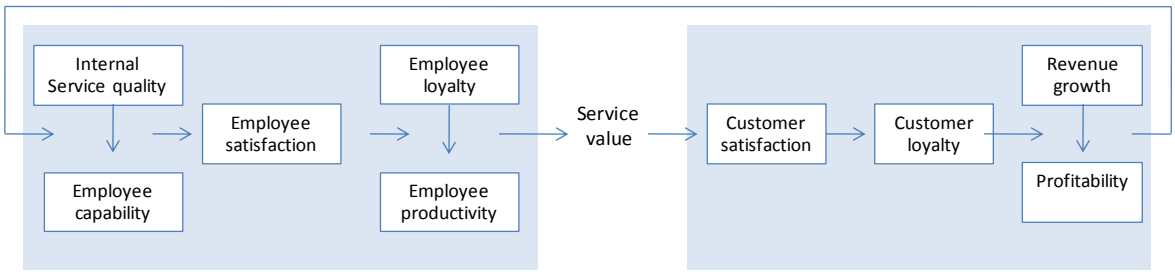
The heterogeneity of theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of services has led to calls (e.g., Ostrom et al., 2010; Subramony & Pugh, 2015) for a more integrated and multidisciplinary perspective that would encompass critical constructs, theories, causal mechanisms, and levels of analyses. In that sense, a comprehensive conceptual framework derived from the service-profit chain, linking internal organizational practices, service climate, customer experiences and business outputs, has been progressively taking shape in the literature (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong et al., 2013). This framework, or service climate model, supports and helps clarify many of the

empirical links between employee, customer, and organizational variables that have been identified in the literature, and to that extent it seems to hold considerable potential as a managerial model of reference for service firms aiming at improving their organizational performance. However, as it will be argued in the review that follows, neither the service climate model in particular nor the generic model linking organizational, employee, and customer variables that underpins the literature provide a fully satisfactory answer to the issue of what drives service employees to engage in those behaviours leading to satisfactory service performances. The review will focus, first, on the service-profit chain as the original "linkage" model upon which the service climate model is built.

The service-profit chain

The ideas underlying the service-profit chain (SPC; Heskett et al., 1997) are derived from the evidence of links between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction shown in early service management studies (e.g., Schlesinger & Zornitsky, 1991; Schneider & Bowen, 1985), as well as early research on the organization of work and its impact on quality, productivity and employee satisfaction (Lawler, 1973). The results of these early studies suggested that "in service settings the relationships were self-reinforcing. That is, satisfied customers contributed to employee satisfaction, and vice versa" (Heskett et al., 1997, p. 12). Hence the image or metaphor of a service-profit chain that represents mutually reinforced relationships between profitability, customer loyalty, and employee satisfaction, loyalty and productivity (see figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. The service-profit chain



Source: Heskett *et al*. 1997

The SPC represents a strong and rich managerial framework that interlinks and integrates many drivers of organizational performance in service settings. The central element that links customer and employee satisfaction in the model is the "satisfaction mirror" effect. In service encounters, the argument goes, customer satisfaction contributes to employee job satisfaction. Positive interactions with customers and the employee's freedom in exercising judgement in the relationship with the customer contribute, in turn, to the quality of the employee's working environment. This, in turn,

provides incentives for continued efforts to satisfy customers, continuing the "satisfaction mirror" effect that has no beginning or end (Heskett et al., 1997, p. 99) as it represents a mutual causality or virtuous cycle between employee and customer satisfaction. Heskett and his associates admitted that the inferred cause-effect relationship between customer and employee satisfaction was not clear since available data only showed statistically significant relationships between both variables. Nevertheless, this was not a deterrent to arrive at the bold conclusion that "in absence of data regarding either customer or employee satisfaction, one can be predicted from the other. Show us an operating unit with higher employee satisfaction than another and we can predict with a high degree of reliability that its customers will also be more satisfied" (Heskett et al., 1997, p. 101).

The evidence presented to support the SPC was fragmented and limited to a small number of companies. Moreover, the authors did not subject any single organization to a full analysis of the linkages in the chain. As an attempt to fill these gaps, several studies applied and comprehensively tested each of the linkages proposed in the SPC in a single service context (Loveman, 1998; Pritchard & Silvestro, 2005; Silvestro & Cross, 2000). For example, Loveman obtained statistical evidence of many of the linkages. However, other results in his study provided conflicting evidence for the prescriptions of the model and the satisfaction mirror effect. Employee satisfaction was found to be linked to employee loyalty but not to employee tenure, and employee loyalty did not appear to be linked to customer loyalty and financial performance. Loveman also acknowledged that, while the study showed strong correlations between many of the linkages, it did not make claims of causality.

This is true of most of the empirical work that has been carried out on the SPC. Possibly the only publicized example of a model that focused on causality is that of Sears, Roebuck and Company. Sears, a chain of department stores in the U.S., adopted a modified version of the SPC, which they termed the "employee-customer profit chain" (Rucci, Kirm, & Quinn, 1998). A number of causal links between employee measures, customer measures and revenues were identified. For instance, "employee attitude towards the job and company" was critical to employee loyalty and behaviour towards customers; "customer impression" was linked most strongly with components such as employee competency and employee helpfulness. However the model is much simpler than Heskett et al.'s SPC and does not (and was not meant to) fully test their conceptualization.

A study by Silvestro and Cross (2000) on a retail chain in the U.K. found support for several SPC linkages, such as financial performance and customer loyalty, customer loyalty and customer satisfaction, or service value and employee satisfaction, but not for others, such as financial

performance and employee satisfaction, or employee satisfaction and productivity. In other words, the data endorsed most of the links in the chain, but with the notable exception of employee satisfaction, which appeared not to be linked to the rest of the chain, thus showing a complete absence of the satisfaction mirror effect. "Contrary to the model, the least profitable stores were characterized by higher levels of employee satisfaction and loyalty" (p. 258). Interestingly, this did not come as a surprise to managers that knew that bigger size stores were more profitable but smaller size stores achieved higher employee satisfaction levels as their working environments were friendlier and less pressured. This suggests that "the relationship between employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction and business performance is contingent upon service context" (p. 264). In larger shops, the customer would be more concerned with price, product range and other aspects not directly connected with the customer's interface with the staff, hence the capacity of the larger shop to be more profitable despite showing lower employee satisfaction than smaller shops. Results from subsequent studies (Gelade & Young, 2005; Keiningham, Aksoy, Daly, Perrier, & Solom, 2006; Pritchard & Silvestro, 2005) also found insufficient empirical support for the satisfaction mirror effect, which led to the conclusion that "the relationship between the employee and customer satisfaction will be more complex than is implied by the rather simplistic notion of the "satisfaction mirror" (Pritchard & Silvestro, 2005, p. 346).

Other studies in the service management literature (e.g., Kamakura, Mittal, Rosa, & Mazzon, 2002; Reichheld, 1996; Rust, Zahorik, & Keiningham, 1995; Towler, Lezotte, & Burke, 2011) have provided a partial empirical support for the prescriptions in the "customer side" of the SPC, namely the linkages between customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and financial performance. However, reviews of the central relationship in the model, i.e. the satisfaction mirror, have reported conflicting conclusions, with Dean (2004) stating that the relationship is not unequivocally supported, but Brown and Lam (2008) concluding from their meta-analysis that it is generally true. Specific recent studies of the link also reveal a significant relationship (Evanschitzky, Groening, Mittal, & Wunderlich, 2011; Grandey et al., 2011).

In short, research seems to indicate that there is "some" truth" in the satisfaction mirror, but as Keiningham and Aksoy (2009) state, it is not the whole truth: " (. . .) if it were that simple, then the primary objective of every company would be to make their employees ecstatic"(p. 69). Indeed SPC research provides clear indications that "some of the concepts linked together in the chain are not single constructs which can be linked together in the simplistic way proposed by Heskett et al. model" (Silvestro & Cross, 2000, p. 262). Moreover, it is unclear as to how these constructs co-vary

and whether the relationships are mediated rather than direct ones. Also, the "service sequences" are not linear, many effects may be reciprocal and, at some time, in some context, all variables appear to have been linked to most other variables (Dean, 2004), which suggests, rather than a linear model, a model of causal loops in which each individual construct could be virtually related to different sets of antecedents and consequences.

Service climate

The service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong et al., 2013) also attempts to provide an overall framework for the myriad of relationships between employee and customer variables that populate the service management literature. The concept of service climate (Schneider, 1990; Schneider, Wheeler, & Cox, 1992) stems originally, as did the SPC, from early linkage studies that confirmed direct correlates between service employee satisfaction and customer perception of service quality (Parkington & Schneider, 1979; Schneider & Bowen, 1985; Schneider, Parkington, & Buxton, 1980). In this model, service climate acts as a key mediator between a series of employee-related antecedents and a series of customer-related outputs. In that respect, the model does not deviate from, but rather elaborates on, the core assumption in the SPC and the service management literature that there is an important link from service employee attitudes to customer reactions, and from customer reactions to business outputs.

The assumption of service climate, as a special form of organizational climate, is that, when interpreting their work environment, employees synthesize various micro perceptions of organizational events into macro perceptions of organizational climate (Dietz, Pugh, & Wiley, 2004). Climate is thus understood as "incumbents' perceptions of the events, practices, and procedures and the kind of behaviours that get rewarded, supported, and expected in a setting" (Schneider, 1990, p. 384). The events, practices and procedures are the *routines* of the setting; the behaviours that get rewarded, supported, and expected are the *rewards* of the setting. Routines and rewards serve a signalling and focusing function, signalling the outcomes that are valued in the setting and focusing energies and competencies on the attainment of those outcomes" (Schneider, 1990, p. 384). Prior research (e.g., Likert, 1967; Litwin & Stringer, 1968) had understood climate as an abstract construct that seemed to include *everything* that occurs in organizations. In contrast, service climate theory proposed a "focused" or "bound" alternative for the study of climate, namely choosing a focus of interest, such as service, and discovering the extent to which people in the organization perceive the organization to be enacting this focus.

Building on this notion, service climate targets a strategic reference - customer service -and conveys employees' perceptions of the particular events, procedures, and practices directed to customer service, as well as employees' expectations of the types of service behaviour that will be rewarded and supported (Schneider, 1990; Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998). Given its strategic focus on service quality, service climate should have a direct influence on service outcomes. It is a logical intermediate variable that depicts the core values and beliefs of the organization about service (Horwitz & Neville, 1996) and translates them into customer perceptions of service performance and quality (Salanova, Agut, & Peiro, 2005; Schneider et al., 1998). This approach has also important managerial implications. Due to the attributes of service (intangibility, simultaneity, and customer participation in production) the management of service organizations faces the challenge of ensuring high service quality without the ability to control and/or check what is delivered to customers. Once a service encounter has begun, the service is produced, delivered, consumed and experienced in an uninterrupted sequence. Lacking the ability to control the sequence once it has begun, service organization management must resort -the theory goes - to less immediate forms of environmental control. That is, management must create a service climate through the routines and rewards of the organization that emphasizes the importance of a positive experience for consumers. This climate serves as a guide to employee behaviour so that management intervention into the service sequence is unnecessary; therefore the climate for service serves as a substitute for management control (Schneider, 1990).

Elements in the service climate model

The strength of the service climate model lies in its conceptual and operational simplicity; that is, the connections between organization-level variables and business-relevant outcomes are both empirically based and practically applicable (Subramony & Pugh, 2015). Recent extensions of the model identify three sequentially arranged organizational drivers of customer outcomes - HRM and leadership practices, service climate, and employee attitudes and behaviours (Hong et al., 2013) - and list various moderators of the service climate - customer outcome relationship, such as service intangibility or service frequency (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014).

The role of HRM and leadership practices as antecedents of service climate is based on the notion that employees' experiences of routines that go "deeper" than service delivery routines *per se* might also be related to customer perception of service. HRM and leadership practices are posited to be instrumental in the creation of service climate both in a general sense, i.e. as facilitators of positive experiences for employees which would drive them to create positive experiences for customer, and

also in a explicit sense, i.e. as facilitators of employees orientation and commitment to service-quality.

With regard to HRM practices, many studies in the services management literature have pinpointed the importance of certain practices to promote service employees' satisfaction and customer orientation, such as *behaviour-based evaluations* (E. Anderson & Oliver, 1987; Hartline & Ferrell, 1996), *recruiting, staffing and training* (Hallowell, Schlessinger, & Zornitsky, 1996; Schneider & Bowen, 1995; Schneider et al., 1992), *employee reward policies* (Bush, Ortinau, Bush, & Hair, 1990; Hallowell et al., 1996; Heskett et al., 1997; Schneider & Bowen, 1995), and the effects of *role conflict and role ambiguity* in service employee's behaviours and attitudes (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996; Parkington & Schneider, 1979; Singh, 1993).

While some specific HRM practices have also been identified as antecedents of service climate, such as *training and autonomy* (Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005) and *employee self-management and flexibility* (de Jong, de Ruyter, & Lemmink, 2004; Seibert, Silver, & Randolph, 2004), most recent research has focused on packages or "bundles" of several combined general HRM practices or *high-performing work systems* (HPWS; Sienknecht & Van Aken, 1999) such as empowerment, skills training, or rigorous selection, that are viewed as directly or indirectly affecting customer outcomes. For instance, these practices have been found to influence customer outcomes indirectly through the organization's concern for customer climate (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Liao, Toya, Lepak, & Hong, 2009), and also through molar or multidimensional organizational climates (Rogg, Schmidt, Shull, & Schmitt, 2001), collective employee attitudes (Piening, Baluch, & Salge, 2013; Subramony, Krause, Norton, & Burns, 2008; Takeuchi, Chen, & Lepak, 2009), and unit-level service-related OCBs (Sun, Aryee, & Law, 2007).

With regard to leadership practices, their influence on service employee perceptions, job attitudes and customer-related outcomes has been also identified since early linkage studies, including aspects such as *management commitment to service* (Ahmed & Parasuraman, 1994; Borucki & Burke, 1999; Tornow & Wiley, 1991), *empowerment* (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Fulford & Enz, 1995), *management support* (Babin & Boles, 1996; Yoon, Beatty, & Suh, 2001) or *internal marketing* (W. R. George, 1990). More recent service climate research establishes effects for different contrasting leadership emphases (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014), such as *management of the "basics",* i.e. leaders' committed attention to everyday mundane tasks (Netemeyer, Maxham, & Lichtenstein, 2010; Salvaggio et al., 2007; Schneider et al., 2005), *transformational leadership* (Liao & Chuang,

2007; Walumbwa, Hartnell, & Oke, 2010; Wieseke, Krause, Alivi, & Kessler-Thones, 2011), and *service oriented leadership* (Hui, Chiu, Yu, Cheng, & Tse, 2007). Also, empowering service employees leadership has been found to increase employees' proactive behaviours toward customers (Martin, Liao, & Campbell, 2013).

As service climate signals the kinds of attitudes and behaviours that are encouraged and rewarded in a given environment, two types of outcomes are posited to follow in the model. First, service employee outcomes, in the shape of attitudes and behaviours, appear in response to the shared perceptions of a service climate (Hong et al., 2013). Service behaviours, in turn, act as mediators of customer experiences, i.e. service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014) and their related financial outcomes.

With regard to employee outcomes, perceptions of service climate have been shown to be related to collective employee attitudes, in particular job satisfaction and affective commitment (see Hong et al., 2013). The reasoning behind this relationship is that a high value for service encourages employees to afford meaning to their work; therefore, they enjoy their jobs to a greater extent (Ostroff, Kinicki, & Clark, 2002). Also, if employees are attracted, selected, and retained in a collective environment with a positive service climate (Schneider, Smith, & Goldstein, 2000), they are more likely to identify with the organization's value and be committed to the organization (Lenka, Suar, & Mohapatra, 2010). There has also been substantial recent research on job satisfaction and affective commitment as collective or group-level constructs and their links with unit-level performance in service settings. While there is evidence that collective employee attitudes are correlated with service-unit outcomes (e.g., N. Conway & Briner, 2012; Grandey et al., 2011; Netemeyer et al., 2010; Subramony et al., 2008; Whitman et al., 2010), longitudinal or cross lagged tests of the directionality of the collective attitudes-customer satisfaction relationship have, in totality, produced mixed results (see D. J. Koys, 2001; A. M. Ryan, Schmit, & Johnson, 1996; Winkler, König, & Kleinmann, 2012). Other employee outcomes that have been specifically associated with service climate include *positive emotional display* (Lam, Huang, & Janssen, 2010), *intention to stay* (Schulte, Ostroff, Shmulyian, & Kinicki, 2009), *service-oriented performance* (Borucki & Burke, 1999; Liao & Chuang, 2004; Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005), and *OCBs/contextual performance* (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Schneider et al., 2005; Walumbwa, Hartnell, et al., 2010; Way, Sturman, & Raab, 2010).

With regard to customer experiences and financial outcomes, much of the evidence for their relationship with service climate comes from the "linkage" literature (e.g., Kamakura et al., 2002;

Reichheld, 1996; Rust et al., 1995; Towler et al., 2011). Several summaries of this linkage reveal robust and consistent relationships (S.P. Brown & Lam, 2008; Dean, 2004; Hong et al., 2013). Studies specifically focused on service climate have also identified relationships between service climate and *customer perceptions of service quality* (Ehrhart, Schneider, Witt, & Perry, 2011; Gracia, Cifre, & Grau, 2010), *customer satisfaction* (Schneider et al., 2005), *customer loyalty* (Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005), and *sales and financial performance* (Schneider et al., 2005; Schneider, Macey, Lee, & Young, 2009). In addition to these direct links several studies have also examined the moderators that affect the relationships between service climate and customer outcomes, including different levels of *service intangibility* (D. M. Mayer, Ehrhart, & Schneider, 2009), *service frequency* (Dietz et al., 2004), *routines* (de Jong et al., 2004), and *service climate strength* (Schneider, Salvaggio, & Subirats, 2002).

The missing link in the service climate model

What the majority of studies produced within the linkage literature have in common is a tendency to focus on the "how", i.e. to make declarative statements about causal relationships between constructs, such as A leads to B, but to provide only partial answers, or none at all, to the "why" (Brief, 1998). In that sense, the service climate model makes a significant contribution by providing a comprehensive conceptual framework that supports and helps clarify many of these relationships. However, with regard to the core relationship between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, the service climate model does not fare much better than its predecessor, the SPC (see Wangenheim et al., 2007). Indeed primary research findings support the relationship between service climate and collective employee attitudes, in particular job satisfaction and affective commitment (see Hong et al., 2013), but these findings do not answer the question of whether job satisfaction or service climate best predicts service performance and customer experiences (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). For example, Way, Sturman, and Raab (2010) found a significantly stronger correlation between service climate and job performance than between job satisfaction and job performance, and Schneider, Parkington, and Buxton (1980) found that employee job satisfaction did not significantly relate to any customer experiences.

Moreover, the posited causal direction of the relationship between service climate and employee attitudes (i.e. attitudes as mediators between service climate and job performance) is ambiguous. Most of the variables in these studies were collected in a cross-sectional design thus the possibility of reverse causality cannot be ruled out (Hong et al., 2013, p. 254). In sum, as it was the case of the SPC and the satisfaction mirror, there is some empirical support for the link between employee attitudes and customer experiences; however, the evidence is not unequivocal and has been

challenged by studies and reviews that highlight the complexity and non-linearity of the relationships, and the possibility of reciprocal effects between organizational features, employee attitudes and customer experiences (see S.P. Brown & Lam, 2008; Dean, 2004).

What transpires from the examination of the employee-customer and employee-performance links in the service climate model and, by extension, in the linkage literature, is the absence of a solid theoretical underpinning to explain the employee behavioural sequence in the causal chain, which would support the proposed employee-customer links. While the service climate construct helps to connect service-oriented behaviours to customer experiences, it does so by providing a strategic direction to service employee behaviour, but it does not answer the question of what drives or *motivates* service employees to engage in those behaviours. A number of theories have been used in the literature but, as argued in the next section, none appears to provide a fully satisfactory answer to this issue.

Theories supporting the mediating role of job attitudes

The pivotal role that job attitudes play, in particular employee satisfaction, in determining employee performance in the service management literature is grounded on two distinct but complementary groups of theories (see S.P. Brown & Lam, 2008; Grandey et al., 2011; Whitman et al., 2010). One group focuses on service encounters and posits that employee satisfaction has a direct impact on customer satisfaction via affective mechanisms (emotional contagion); the other posits that employee satisfaction has an indirect impact on customer satisfaction via service performance behaviours or contextual/extra-effort service behaviours.

Emotional contagion during service encounters

Solomon et al., (1985) provided an early conceptual framework for the study of service encounters. The authors approached the service encounter using a "role performance" perspective or dramaturgical metaphor (Grove & Fisk, 1983) that was based, in turn, on role theory research from social psychology. According to role theory (Sarbin & Allen, 1968) any encounter contains learned and consistent behaviour patterns and each participant should enact certain behaviours in order for the transaction to proceed smoothly and make the participants feel satisfied with the encounter. "Each role that one plays is learned. One's confidence that one is doing the right thing leads to satisfaction with a performance (termed role validation) and success in interacting with others who are also playing their respective roles. One's role specific self-concept is formed by the reaction of others to the quality of one's role enactment" (Solomon et al., 1985, p. 102). Role discrepancies may arise when the role players are not reading from the same script. The "service script" contains

information about the role set, one's own expected behaviours and the expected complementary behaviour of others. This might lead to unfulfilled expectations and dissatisfaction with the service experience, either from the costumer's perspective, the employee's or both.

The dramaturgical metaphor seems very adequate to describe the service encounter with regard to the emotional involvement that it entails. A service performance, from the employee's perspective, is not just a repetition of tasks, but the enactment of a social interaction. Like actors, service employees are expected to give consistent performances that include emotions as a key element. In other words, "the emotional style of offering the service is part of the service itself" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 5). Building on Hochschild's pioneering research on emotional labour, Rafaeli and Sutton (1989) coined the term display rules to describe the emotional activities required of employees as part of their jobs. The consequences of customers reading the job attitudes of service providers is the "emotional contagion" (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994; Pugh, 2001), i.e. the tendency to converge emotionally or "catch" through interaction with another person that person's feelings. These displayed emotions include facial expressions, bodily gestures, tone of voice and language. Ekman (1985) also indicated that, even when people try to conceal or fake a particular emotion with their facial expressions, true emotions "leak" through. Thus, customers are likely to read rather accurately the job satisfaction levels of the employees with whom they come into contact. Hence the use of the emotional contagion theory to explain the link between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction (Barger & Grandey, 2006; Homburg & Stock, 2004; Pugh, 2001) as an "affective transfer" during the service encounter (Grandey et al., 2011). The emotional display of service employees is deemed to have a significant impact in building long-term service relationships with customers, because customers seek rapport and emotional bonding in such relationships (Berry, 1995). Employees who are more satisfied with their job are more likely to have positive moods and emotions at work and therefore are more likely to genuinely feel and display positive emotions while interacting with customers (Grandey, 2003).

The emotional contagion theory, in addition to its role in theoretically supporting the satisfaction mirror effect in the linkage literature, has led to the development of a distinct body of research in services literature, currently referred to as *emotion management*, i.e. the study of how employees and customers affect each other's moods and emotions during service encounters. This body of research usually consists on micro-level studies in services contexts that are typically focused on understanding the antecedents of, and processes underlying, employee behaviour toward customers (Subramony & Pugh, 2015). Employees engage in an active process of emotion

management (Grandey, 2003; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013) through deep acting (modifying feelings to match display) or surface acting (modifying verbal, facial, and bodily expressions or displays without altering the underlying feelings). Deep acting has been found to be significantly associated with customer satisfaction and related outcomes (Chi, Grandey, Diamond, & Krimmel, 2011; Groth, Hennig-Thurau, & Walsh, 2009), while surface acting tends to have a small negative effect on customer satisfaction (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011) and predicts employees' emotional exhaustion (Grandey, 2003). Recent meta-analyses (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013) show that surface acting emotion regulation strategies have a pattern of negative relationships with work outcomes such as job satisfaction, well-being and stress/exhaustion (but not with job performance), whereas deep acting emotion regulation strategies have a pattern of positive relationships with all of these work outcomes (Z. Chen et al., 2012; Goodwin, Groth, & Frenkel, 2011).

Emotional contagion theory and its offspring of emotion management research have significantly contributed to highlight and address the affective phenomena that occur during service encounters and the varying (positive and negative) effects for the participants enacting them. However, as an "affective" explanation (Grandey et al., 2011) to sustain the employee satisfaction-customer satisfaction link, it is based on a conceptualization of job satisfaction, and by extension job attitudes, that is highly debatable. Job satisfaction is posited to lead to a certain positive affective state or mood, often described as a "general sense of well-being" or simply as "positive affect" (e.g., Barger & Grandey, 2006; Grandey et al., 2011). While socio-psychological research has long established the affective component in attitudes, many scholars (e.g., Abelson, Kinder, Peters, & Fiske, 1982; Brief, 1998; Crites, Fabrigar, & Petty, 1994; Millar & Tesser, 1986; Weiss, 2002) have argued that, in fact, attitudes (including job satisfaction) are evaluations or evaluative judgments made with regard to an attitudinal object, but they are not affective reactions. This "is no small semantic distinction (since) affective states, moods, and emotions have causes and consequences distinguishable from the causes and consequences of evaluative judgments" (Weiss, 2002, p. 176).

In other words, one cannot infer that service employees who are satisfied with their job will, *necessarily*, feel and display positive emotions during a service encounter, as the appraisal or evaluative judgment (job satisfaction) and the positive affective state or mood are two distinct and separated psychological phenomena. On the other hand, even if we were to concede that employee satisfaction is what originates the emotional contagion during the service encounter, there still remains the issue of what originates the service-oriented behaviours that are also needed for a

satisfactory customer experience. A second group of theories, which will be reviewed next, attempt to fill this theoretical gap by positing the indirect impact of employee satisfaction on customer satisfaction via service performance behaviours or contextual/extra-effort service behaviours.

Job satisfaction as a determinant of service performance

While emotional contagion highlights the key role of emotions in determining the outcomes of a service encounter, the theory in itself is not sufficient to explain why and how service employees engage in those behaviours that are also needed, together with certain displayed emotions, to achieve successful service performances. The "performance" explanation is grounded on a more or less explicit conceptualization of job satisfaction as a motivational construct, i.e. a behavioural predictor. Indeed since the SPC (Heskett et al., 1997) suggested the association between satisfied employees and customer satisfaction, studies exploring this link in the service management literature have carried the assumption (e.g., D. J. Koys, 2001; Liao & Chuang, 2007; Whitman et al., 2010) that job satisfaction is a source of motivational energy directed towards organizational goals, such that satisfied employees are more inclined to "give their services wholeheartedly to the organization than dissatisfied employees, who will be more likely to satisfy minimum expectations of required behaviour" (Ostroff, 1992, p. 965). As previously mentioned, empirical findings in SPC research and early service management literature on the role of job satisfaction as a predictor of service performance were, in totality, inconclusive (see S.P. Brown & Lam, 2008; Dean, 2004). This led some scholars to question the traditional reliance on individual-level measures of job satisfaction, and to turn their attention to the role of aggregate or "collective" employee attitudes as proximal predictors of customer outcomes.

The concept of collective job attitudes stems from the attraction-selection-attrition theory (ASA; Schneider, 1987; Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995), which was developed as a supporting organizational theory to early findings in service climate research. It is based on the assumption that, over time, people within an organization become more similar in their dispositions and, consequently, more homogeneous in attitudes, developing a homogeneous affective mode within groups or organizational units (A. M. Ryan et al., 1996). This is achieved as a natural outcome of an attraction-selection-attrition cycle. The attraction process comes as a result of people's preferences for particular organizations based on their implicit judgements of the congruence between the organization's goals and their own personality. The selection process refers to the formal and informal selection procedures used by organizations in the recruitment and hiring of people with the attributes that the organization desires. Finally, the attrition process refers to the idea that people

will leave an organization they do not fit. As a result of the ASA cycle, and other supporting factors such as shared demographic characteristics (Klein, Conn, Smith, & Sorra, 2001), similar interpretations and evaluations of a shared work environment become increasingly salient and collective attitudes arise within a given service unit or setting. To put it simply, the ASA theory predicts that, in the long run, service employees who stay in a service organization will be those that show a desire to give good service. Service employees motivation or desire to give good service is "taken for granted" since it is understood that they are attracted in the first place to a service role (Schneider, 1987). From this perspective the problem is not one of motivating employees, since they are, in generic terms, motivated a priori, but one of producing "goal congruence" between energized employees and the organization (Schneider et al., 2005; Schneider et al., 1995). Hence the ASA theory provides support for the concept of service climate, but it does not address the issue of why and how job attitudes act as behavioural predictors and determinants of service performances.

The "performance" explanation, i.e. the indirect impact of employee satisfaction on customer satisfaction via service performance, has also been used to support the linkages between job attitudes, service employee extra-role behaviours, and customer experiences. The reasoning (e.g., D. J. Koys, 2001; Liao & Chuang, 2007; Whitman et al., 2010) is that service employees, in order to provide nonstandard, customized service, need to exercise their discretion in deciding what behaviours to undertake to best serve customers' diverse needs. This complex and autonomous job nature creates an uncertain, "weak situation" in which job satisfaction has a strong potential to affect behaviours (Judge et al., 2001). In such context, extra-role behaviours, i.e. supporting organizational functioning but "beyond the call of duty", and usually conceptualized as organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB; Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006), act as key mediators to produce the customer experiences of interest (Borucki & Burke, 1999; Liao & Chuang, 2004; N. P. Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Bhume, 2009; Schneider et al., 2005), particularly those OCB that are specifically customer-focused (Bettencourt, Gwinner, & Meuter, 2001; Chuang & Liao, 2010; Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005). Several studies (e.g., Liao & Chuang, 2004; Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005; Walumbwa, Hartnell, et al., 2010; Way et al., 2010) have shown that OCB at least partially mediate the link between service climate and customer experiences. However, the role of job attitudes, in particular job satisfaction, as antecedents of OCB has not received conclusive empirical support. While studies have reported the existence of a relationship between OCB and job satisfaction (see Organ et al., 2006), only limited support has been found for the predicted

direction of causality, namely, OCB as a route through which satisfaction has an impact on performance (see Whitman et al., 2010).

All in all, the interpretations of job satisfaction, either as an affect-based construct leading to emotional contagion during the service encounter, or as a behavioural predictor leading to service employee performance, have not received conclusive empirical support. While the linkage literature provides a great amount of data indicating the existence of a relationship between service employee satisfaction and customer experiences, there are strong indications that the relationship is non-linear, i.e. suggesting reciprocal rather than causal relationships between the variables, regardless of whether job satisfaction is measured at the individual or the aggregate level (see Winkler et al., 2012). Moreover, several recent findings in the emotions management literature (e.g., Grandey, Fisk, & Steiner, 2005; Kim & Yoon, 2012; K. L. Wang & Groth, 2014) also suggest, rather than a linear relationship, a feedback loop between customer evaluations and behaviours (output) and employees' perceptions of the work context, emotions, and emotion management strategies (input and processes), and highlight the intertwined and reciprocal nature of employee–customer exchanges.

The foundations of service climate

The review of the employee-customer and employee-performance links, within the generic model linking organizational practices, service climate, job attitudes, customer experiences and business performance that underpins the services management literature, clearly indicates that job attitudes, in particular job satisfaction, are "the less direct correlate of the link to customer experiences" (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014, p. 13). Moreover, the interpretations of job satisfaction as an affect-based construct and as a behavioural predictor have been challenged from within the literature (e.g., D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Kilic & Dursun, 2008) and also from general research on job attitudes (e.g., Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; M. Riketta, 2008; Warr, 2007; Weiss, 2002). In sum, the theoretical and empirical support provided by the literature for the posited role of job attitudes as determinants of service employee behaviour and performance appears to be insufficient, both at the micro-level and the macro-level of analysis (i.e. collective attitudes).

On the other hand, the service climate model seems to hold considerable potential, as a managerial framework of reference linking organizational, employee, and customer variables, to address the issue of drivers of service employee *performance*. However, the model does not provide a fully satisfactory answer to the (psychological) issue of drivers of service employee *behaviour.* Service climate theory and research helps explain how employees' perceptions (routines and rewards) of

certain organizational practices create a "climate of interest" that gives strategic direction to their performances, by signalling desired/expected service behaviours. But what organizations *desire* is hardly ever the same as what their employees *desire,* and "employees need to feel that their own needs have been met within the organization before they can become enthusiastic about meeting the needs of customers" (Schneider & Bowen, 1993, p. 43). In other words, a psychological explanation of what drives or motivates employee *behaviour* is needed as a pre-condition or foundation for those (strategically oriented) employee *service-oriented behaviours* that are promoted by the service climate, and lead to desired/expected service performances. Therefore "behind service climate must be a climate that promotes the conditions in which a service climate may exist" (Schneider, 1990, p. 398).

This idea has been referred to in a recent extension of the service climate model as the "foundations" that must exist in organizations for a service climate to develop (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). As to what these foundations consist of, the authors point at employee engagement as an alternative to the mainstream view of job attitudes as the key mediators between employee-related variables and customer experiences (Hong et al., 2013; Subramony & Pugh, 2015; Whitman et al., 2010). Research on the emerging engagement construct in the OB literature has been most intense to date but there still remains much controversy around its definition and conceptual domain (see W. H. Macey et al., 2009; Shuck et al., 2012; A. Smith, 2006) and, in some ways, employee engagement has become a popularized term for the even more generic concept of employee attitudes (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008). Nevertheless the concept of engagement appears to tap at some sort of affective or energizing element that would be missing in the concept of satisfaction, which infers satiation and contentment rather than activation and behaviour (Warr, 2007). Hence its appeal as an alternative to job attitudes in the explanation of the behavioural sequence that links employee-related variables to customer experiences in the service climate model, as "engaged employees are more willing to do the kinds of things a service climate asks of them, and, similarly, a service climate is more easily built on a foundation of engaged employees" (Schneider, Macey, Barbera, et al., 2009, p. 24).

Thus, assuming that the service climate model is a valid managerial framework of reference for this study, the research question of what drives or motivates service employee behaviour relates directly to the gap in the model concerning the (unresolved) issue of the foundations of service climate. As to what these foundations consist of, the services management literature does not appear to provide a fully satisfactory answer, hence the need to look "elsewhere", i.e. to examine the different

bodies of organizational behaviour literature and research from which the service management literature borrows its theoretical underpinnings regarding this issue. In other words, to address the research question of what drives service employees to "give their best" while performing their roles will require exploring the broader issue of what drives people to "give their best" at work, beyond specific job roles, types of organization, or industries. More specifically, the following questions will be the keynotes around which the review of the OB literature will be built: 1) what role do organizational climates and job attitudes play in the prediction of work behaviours and performance? 2) What does the affective/energizing element, that seems to be missing in job satisfaction, consist of? 3) Does the emerging employee engagement construct successfully conceptualize it?

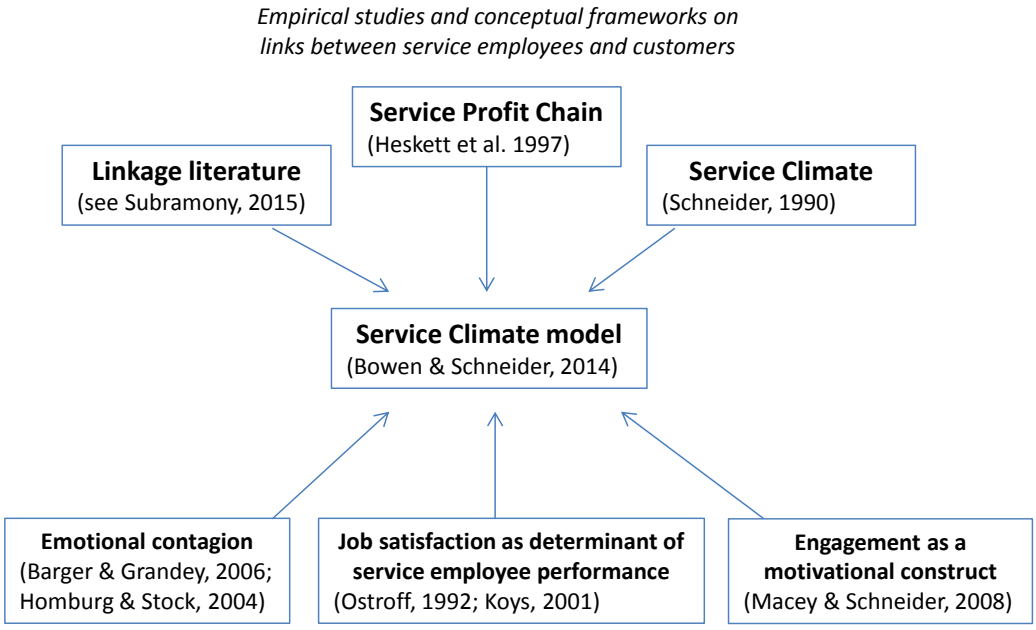
Addressing these questions will require examining, in the next chapter, the issue of predictors of work behaviour and performance in organizational research. Specifically, the bodies of literature and research on organizational climates, job attitudes, on affect at work, and on the emerging engagement construct will be reviewed. As it will be argued, these groups of studies and research traditions intersect and overlap at various points, providing the basis for an integrated theoretical perspective to develop a social psychological or behavioural "foundation" for the service climate model.

Summary of chapter 2.1

The review of the service management literature (see figure 2.2 below), as the initial setting or location of the research question, led to identifying the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong et al., 2013; Subramony & Pugh, 2015) as a potentially valid managerial framework of reference to address the issue of service employee behaviours and performance, but with the acknowledgment of an unresolved theoretical issue or gap in the model concerning the behavioural foundations of service employee performance. This unresolved theoretical issue is related to the mainstream view, in this body of literature, of job attitudes as predictors of service employee behaviour (Grandey et al., 2011; Judge et al., 2001; Whitman et al., 2010), and it is also related to the role of engagement as a possible alternative to the mainstream approach, as suggested in a recent expansion of the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Schneider, Macey, Barbera, et al., 2009). It was argued that a fully satisfactory answer to this theoretical gap cannot be found in the services management literature, hence the need to approach the broader field of organizational literature and research with the purpose of developing a solid "OB foundation" for the service climate model. Specifically, the following questions will be used as

keynotes around which the review of the organizational literature is built in chapter 2.3: 1) what role do organizational climates and job attitudes play in the prediction of work behaviours and performance? 2) What does the affective/energizing element, that seems to be missing in job satisfaction, consist of? 3) Does the emerging employee engagement construct successfully conceptualize it?

Figure 2.2 Service management literature review



2.2. Predictors of work behaviour in organizational research

Introduction

Chapter 2.2 addresses the issue of social psychological predictors of work behaviour in organizational research, with a view to developing a behavioural "foundation" for the service climate model. Job attitudes such as job satisfaction, affective commitment, or job involvement have often been advocated in climate research as mediators between climate perceptions and behavioural outputs, while organizational work climates have been studied either as antecedents of job attitudes or as mediators of specific behavioural outputs. However, job attitudes, as traditionally conceptualized and operationalized in organizational research, i.e. as evaluative judgements or cognitive appraisals, have significant limitations as behavioural predictors. On the other hand, the review of the literature on affect will identify a promising route in theories that revitalize

perspectives on motivation by focusing on a specific mood that stems from the classical notion of "self-realization" or "self-concept" (A. H. Maslow, 1943), and which is posited to relate to distinct behavioural outputs. Among these theories, Kahn's model of personal engagement (1990, 1992) will be identified as a suitable theoretical alternative to the mainstream view of job attitudes as behavioural predictors. While Kahn's theory of personal engagement is not aimed at any specific job role, it will be deemed as fully relevant to the issue of service employee behaviour, considering both the demanding nature of service roles in terms of personal and the relatively less favourable work environments that characterize the service industry.

Lastly, the choice of engagement as the potential "foundation" of service employee behaviour and performance will lead to the review of the OB literature and research on this emerging construct. It will be argued that the conceptual domain of engagement can be clearly defined by revisiting its original formulation (Kahn, 1990, 1992), complemented with contributions from research on state affect and the self-concept in motivational theories. According to this interpretation, engagement contains three distinctive elements: 1) it is (primarily) an affective, rather than cognitive, phenomenon, 2) its nature is motivational, rather than attitudinal, and 3) it is a process, not a state, that includes certain psychological antecedents or "conditions", a psychological state, and accompanying behaviours. This conceptual definition of engagement will serve as the base from which to approach the operationalization of the construct in chapter 2.3.

Climate research

Beginning with Lewin et al.'s (1939) discussion of "social climates", the concept of climate has received considerable attention in organizational research. Initially, climate researchers were interested in a broad global conceptualization of work climate and its influence on employees. In this early work (Litwin & Stringer, 1968), climate was viewed as a molar construct that would allow researchers to examine broadly based determinants of employee behaviours. This concept of global climate did not have a strong theoretical foundation and presented methodological issues regarding the approach to its analysis and was thus challenged as a fuzzy and ambiguous construct of questionable value (see Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009). However, recent theoretical and methodological developments such as the growing interest in multilevel theorizing and modelling have renewed researchers' interest in the impact of organizational context on individuals in the workplace. With this renewed interest, the focus of climate research has changed, as researchers have switched their focus from global to facet-specific climates. This switch in focus was suggested by Schneider (1975) as a way to deal with the confusion over definitional and conceptual issues with the global climate

construct and to improve the validity of the climate construct by focusing on specific strategic outcomes of organizations. Facet-specific climates differ from global climates in that they are related to a particular aspect of the organizational context such as climates for justice (Naumann & Bennett, 2000), safety (Zohar, 2000), innovation (N. R. Anderson & West, 1998), service (Schneider et al., 1998), or diversity (P. F. McKay, Avery, & Morris, 2008).

While facet-specific climate research has been almost entirely subsumed under particular topical areas (e.g., literatures related specifically to service, justice, or safety) and does not stem from a shared theoretical foundation, there appears to be a consensus about three distinct features of climate (Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009): 1) a perceptual phenomenon, rather than an objective characteristic of the organization, 2) a collective phenomenon; this definition helps address the question whether organizational climate should be treated as an individual-level construct or as a unit-level construct. Distinguishing between psychological and organizational climate helps to clarify this distinction. Psychological climate reflects an individual's perceptions of the psychological impact of the work environment on his or her own well-being (L. A. James & James, 1989). Organizational climate represents shared perceptions among unit employees regarding their perceptions of the work environment. When perceptions of a work unit's employees are aggregated (typically after establishing some adequate level of agreement exists between employees), they reflect organizational climate. Thus, the origins of organizational climate lie in individual perceptions; however, it is a property of the unit. 3) Distinct from culture; while the theoretical and methodological boundaries between culture and climate research have not always been clear, these two research traditions, as Denison (1996) suggests, should be viewed as differences in interpretation rather than differences in the phenomenon, which is in both instances the creation and influence of social contexts in organizations (p. 346). While culture research provides a perspective on the evolution of social processes over time, climate research provides a "snapshot view", which is highly useful when attempting to conceptualize "a particular type of social process involving the influence of an established context on organizational members who are in subordinate positions of power" (Denison, 1996, p. 636).

Methodological issues, level of analysis

Climate has been studied at different levels, such as group climate and organizational climate (Härtel & Ashkanasy, 2011). James (1982) proposed a composition theory for climate, in which it was suggested that the unit of theory (i.e., the unit on which a theory is based) for climate is the individual, but that the aggregation of individual climate perceptions (i.e., psychological climate) can

serve as a powerful explanatory tool of higher levels of analysis. Organizational climate is frequently considered to be a summary of the perceptions shared by organization's employees about procedures, practices and occurrences, and, as a concept, has, over the years, been subjected to conflicting definitions and inconsistencies in terms of operationalization (Patterson et al., 2005).The current consensus is that organizational climate exists when psychological climate perceptions are shared among employees of a work unit. An aggregate measure of organizational climate or a related climate construct can be computed and employed as an organization level measure of climate only when perceptual agreement among employees exists (Glisson & James, 2002; Härtel & Ashkanasy, 2011; Subramony & Pugh, 2015). Climate strength measures the extent of agreement among individuals' climate perceptions (Gonzalez-Roma, Peiro, & Tordera, 2002). On the other hand, weak climate strength or high variance in employees' climate perception is likely to result in inconsistent employee behaviour which will be largely determined by individual differences. Thus, in case of weak and ambiguous climates, prediction of behaviours is likely to be less reliable as opposed to that in strong climates. However, there is little agreement over the role that climate strength plays in determining varying attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (see Dawson, Gonzalez-Roma, Davis, & West, 2008). Moreover, it is unclear whether climate strength should be considered a perquisite for behavioural outputs, e.g. a weak climate could in some instances be a source of negative behavioural predictions.

Also some scholars (e.g., N. R. Anderson & West, 1998; Dansereau & Alutto, 1990; Liu, Härtel, & Sun, 2014) point out that it is unlikely that shared climates exist at the overarching level of the organization in its entirety, particularly where the organization is large, with many divisions and layers, and advocate that climate is a team-level phenomenon. However, understanding climate exclusively as a team-level phenomenon impoverishes the construct meaning and scope and underestimates the influence of organization-wide policies, practices, routines and so forth in the emergence and development of organizational cultures and climates (see Ferris et al., 1998; Schein, 1990). Nevertheless, organizational contexts are likely to play a key role in determining the relative strength and reach of organization-wide climates versus unit-level or team-level climates.

Climate as a behavioural predictor

In general, organizational work climates have been consistently linked to a variety of important organizational outcomes but they have not been posited as direct predictors of work behaviours. Rather, they have been studied either as antecedents of job attitudes or as mediators of specific behavioural outputs. For example, at the individual level, work climates have been reliably

associated with employee attitudes such as satisfaction, commitment, and turnover intentions and behaviours such as absenteeism and OCBs (see Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009). Also direct relationships between facet-specific climates (e.g., service, safety, or innovation) have demonstrated strong relationships with parallel facet-specific outcomes (e.g., customer satisfaction, safety violation rates, and innovation). More recently, research has moved beyond examining straightforward main effects of climate on outcomes to explore the numerous mediating and moderating effects that may come into play when trying to understand the impact of climate on outcomes. With regard to mediating effects, a wide range of mediators of climate–outcome relationships has emerged in the literature, including relational-social processes at different organizational levels (Darr & Johns, 2004; Maynard, Mathieu, Marsh, & Ruddy, 2007), behavioural outputs such as OCBs and service quality behaviours (Salvaggio et al., 2007; Schneider et al., 2005), and organizational practices such as policies and procedures (Klein, Conn, & Sorra, 2001). Regarding moderating effects, researchers have also examined the role of moderators of climate-to-outcome relationships, such as climate strength (Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2002). Finally, climate has also been shown to play an important mediating role between other organizational variables such as leadership and OCBs (Walumbwa, Hartnell, et al., 2010) or between performance and its various antecedents (Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005).

The concept of service climate as a key mediator between a series of employee-related antecedents and a series of customer-related outputs fits within these recent trends in climate research. The service climate model also advocates a mediating role of work attitudes such as job satisfaction, commitment, or job involvement, between climate perceptions and behavioural outputs, which is coherent with the classical definition of attitudes. Thus, in order to explore the issue of behavioural predictors in work settings, a more detailed look into the role of job attitudes is required, which will be addressed next.

Job attitudes as behavioural predictors

The relationship between people's motivational drives, work behaviours and performance has occupied a central place in organizational literature and research since its early days. Interest in the link between work place attitudes, employee morale and productivity goes as far as the Hawthorne studies and the human relations movement (Mayo, 1933; Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939). During this early period a causal relationship between satisfaction and performance was assumed, i.e. the popular intuitive notion of "the happy productive employee", hence research focused on "what makes people happy with their jobs" (Herzberg et al., 1959) under the assumption that improvements in employee satisfaction would lead to improvements in employee productivity and

performance. Since then, the study of job attitudes as predictors of employee behaviours, performance, and/or more specific outputs, such as turnover, absenteeism, or customer satisfaction, has become a mainstream body of organizational research.

Research on and around job attitudes, in particular job satisfaction, was grounded for the most part of the last century on classical theories of motivation at work and the need-satisfaction models (Adams, 1965; McClelland, 1965; Vroom, 1964) that stemmed from Maslow's (1943; 1954) need hierarchy theory. Beyond their distinct contributions, these classical theories share a common "cognitive judgment approach" (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), namely a representation of the work environment as a set of objective features (either concrete or abstract) such as job characteristics, pay levels, or promotion opportunities, which the job incumbent compares against certain individual standards (values, needs or goals), and the resulting match of this cognitive process or "calculus" has a direct influence on his/her job attitudes which, in turn, influence job behaviours and behavioural outputs.

This cognitive judgement approach has presided over most of the empirical research on job attitudes (see Judge, Hulin, & Dalal, 2011), in particular the relationship between job satisfaction and performance. Also, the role of job attitudes as behavioural predictors has been implicitly supported by the broader socio-psychological literature on attitudes, with its well established notion that attitudes carry with them behavioural implications. For example, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) define attitude as a "learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object (p. 6). Another widely accepted definition of attitude by Eagly and Chaiken (1992) describes it as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour" (p. 1) that has behavioural consequences, as "in general, people who evaluate an attitude object favourably tend to engage in behaviours that foster or support it, and people who evaluate an attitude object unfavourably tend to engage in behaviours that hinder or oppose it" (p. 12). Thus both evaluation and behavioural consequences are the unifying themes in attitude research (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012) upon which most studies on the job satisfaction-job performance relationship have been traditionally grounded.

However, the intuitive appeal of the job satisfaction-job performance relationship has not lived up to its expectations in empirical research, with early reviews (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Herzberg et al., 1959; E. A. Locke, 1970; Vroom, 1964) already pointing out that the two variables did not appear to be significantly correlated and that the subject was inconclusive. Despite those early doubts, the

interest of research in the satisfaction-performance relationship has continued to prove extraordinarily resilient regardless of the amount of contradictory evidence and periodical meta-analyses arriving at similar results to those of previous reviews (e.g., Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Kilic & Dursun, 2008; M. Riketta, 2008). As summarized by Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985) three decades ago, "the amount of empirical support for the satisfaction-performance relation does not approximate the degree to which this relation has been espoused in theories of organizational design" (p. 268).

Another job attitude that has been the subject of numerous organizational studies, i.e. affective commitment (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979), has not fared better as a predictor of employee performance. While affective commitment has been found to correlate modestly with certain organizational behaviours, most prominently OCB, and various types of withdrawal behaviours such as absenteeism, intention to leave and turnover (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002), its correlation with job performance has been confirmed as weak in several meta-analyses (Cohen, 1991; Randall, 1990; M. Riketta, 2002; 2008). Affective commitment has also been posited as a predictor of service employee performance and customer experiences such as service quality (e.g. N. Conway & Briner, 2014; Liao & Chuang, 2007; Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004) on the assumption that a high level of commitment in service employees would transfer into employee effort to provide superior service to customers. Findings from this group of studies also indicate that the correlations are weak or moderate at best.

All in all, the results of decades of investigation on the role of job attitudes as behavioural predictors have not been conclusive. The apparent limitations of the traditional approach to the issue of predictors of work behaviour and performance have led researchers to increasingly turn their attention to the role of affective experiences at work. More specifically, the deconstruction of job attitudes (Weiss, 2002) helps highlight the role of affect as a potential behavioural predictor in itself, and leads to reconsider the dominating cognitive-based paradigm that has traditionally sustained the attitude-behaviour link in social psychology, as it will be argued next.

The deconstruction of job attitudes

Brayfield and Crockett (1955) had concluded their early review of the satisfaction- performance relationship with the following thoughts:

> "Once again the question arises as to what is meant by satisfaction. It maybe that extremely high satisfaction is indicative of a certain amount of complacency, a satisfaction with the job

> as it is, which may be only slightly related to job performance, if it is related at all. On the other hand, individuals who are highly motivated may perceive productivity as a path to their goals, but may also be more realistically critical of whatever deficiencies exist within the organization" (p. 421).

Despite these early warnings, the definition of job satisfaction has only become a controversial issue in relatively recent times. A classical and often quoted definition of job satisfaction by Locke (1976) describes it as " the pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p. 1300). This view of job satisfaction as "an affective (that is, emotional) reaction to one's job, resulting from the incumbent's comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired" (Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992, p. 1) represents a long-standing consensus definition of the construct that is still being embraced by many (e.g., Grandey et al., 2011; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2007). Yet the definition of job satisfaction as a measure of affect is rather paradoxical if we consider the prevailing cognitive judgement approach under which research on job satisfaction has been traditionally grounded.

The interpretation of job satisfaction as an emotional response to one or more features of an individual's job stems from a classic tripartite model of attitude structure in social psychology, in which attitudes are understood to include three components, i.e. affective responses, cognitions (or evaluations or beliefs) of the object, and behaviours in relation to the object (Breckler & Wiggins, 1989). Most classic attitude theorists would also agree (see Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012) that a) evaluation constitutes a central aspect of attitudes, b) attitudes are represented in memory, and c) affective, cognitive, and behavioural antecedents of attitudes can be distinguished, as well as affective, cognitive, and behavioural consequents.

Assuming that job satisfaction entails what people feel and think about their jobs, an examination of conventional measures of job satisfaction reveals, however, that they tend to capture only the cognitive evaluations, and rarely the affective components (Organ & Near, 1985) - a conclusion that "is almost shocking given the conventional definition of job satisfaction as an emotional state" (Brief, 1998, p. 87). Weiss (2002), building on extant attitudinal research (Abelson et al., 1982; Crites et al., 1994; Millar & Tesser, 1986), argued that there is, in fact, no mismatch between conceptualization and measurement of attitudes, since traditional measures are consistent with the definition of attitudes as evaluations or evaluative judgments rather than as affective reactions. Basic attitude measures ask respondents to place the attitude object along a scale of evaluation and this

evaluation is the attitude. "Those scales may sometimes be phrased in ways that make them seem like they are tapping affective states but make no mistake, evaluation is the essential construct being measured" (Weiss, 2002, p. 175).

The conceptual separation of evaluative judgments from affective reactions that Weiss (2002) advocates does not contradict the idea that attitudes can be more or less affectively or cognitively driven. The key difference is that, while the classic tripartite model views affect, cognition and behaviour as components of the attitude, Weiss views them as causes and consequences of the evaluation. In other words, evaluation constitutes a central aspect of attitudes, and affective, cognitive and behavioural antecedents and/or consequences of the evaluation can be distinguished. Affective states may certainly influence evaluative judgments, but they are not the same thing as those judgments. By treating satisfaction as affect, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) would argue, we have simultaneously misunderstood what we are assessing while measuring job satisfaction and discouraged the study of true affective responses at work.

The deconstruction of job satisfaction, i.e. the conceptual distinction between affective reactions, cognitions, and evaluative judgments, is important in the sense that it leads to reconsidering the attitude-behaviour causal sequence that supports the job satisfaction-job performance relationship. If affective states, cognitions and evaluative judgments each may have distinct sets of antecedents and distinct sets of behavioural consequences, then the traditional concept of job attitudes as determinants of behaviours is not so clear-cut.

The MODE model

Recent developments in basic attitude research have shed some light regarding the role of attitudes as behavioural predictors. Specifically, the model of Motivation and Opportunity as Determinants of the attitude-behaviour process (MODE; Fazio, 1986; Fazio & Olson, 2003) focuses on the processes by which attitudes influence judgments and behaviour. The model proposes that attitudes can exert influence on behaviours through relatively spontaneous or more deliberative processes. The basic difference between the two types of processes is "the extent to which deciding on a particular course of action involves conscious deliberation about or a spontaneous reaction to one's perception of the immediate situation. (...) In either case, attitudes are impacting on behaviour, but the process by which they are doing so differs markedly" (Fazio, 1990, p. 78). Spontaneous processes involve judgments of, or behaviour toward, an object (i.e. attitudes) that are automatically activated. In contrast, deliberative processing involves a more effortful, cost-benefit analysis of the utility of a particular behaviour (Fazio & Olson, 2003, p. 301). In addition to

delineating two distinct classes of attitude-behaviour processes, the MODE model explicitly postulates the possibility of processes that are neither purely spontaneous nor purely deliberative, but instead are “mixed” processes that involve both automatic and controlled components.

The MODE model provides a plausible explanation to the apparent failure of traditional job attitude constructs to predict behaviours. Since attitudes can be activated automatically, the explicit attitude measures of generalized job attitudes are not likely to correlate with behaviours under certain response conditions, i.e. those where deliberative processing would be absent. Moreover, job attitudes are most commonly measured through direct self-reports, which are prone to response biases. Indirect, or "implicit", measures of psychological constructs, such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998) have been shown to help avoid these problems (see Fazio & Olson, 2003).

Notwithstanding the contributions of the MODE model to basic attitude research, the distinction between spontaneous behaviour versus deliberative/reasoned behaviour does not dispute the essentially cognitive nature of the attitude-behaviour relationship that underpins the mainstream organizational research on job attitudes. The difference in the two types of processes is based on the effort involved in the activation process. Spontaneous behaviour is the result of an "automatic" cognitive process, i.e. an evaluative judgement that is already stored in memory and does not need to be "formed" or articulated explicitly but which nevertheless remains an evaluative judgement in essence. In that sense, the MODE model does not deviate from, but rather elaborates on, the classical judgement- centric view of the attitude-behaviour relationship, as originally formulated by Fishbein & Azen (1975) in their theory of reasoned action. In Fazio’s own words, “(…) there is little question that the (Ajzen and Fishbein) model’s attitudinal and normative components generally provide an excellent prediction of behaviour.” (Fazio, 1990, p. 91)

As an alternative to the judgement-centric view, other research has explored the affective component of attitudes and contributed with innovative approaches to their conceptualization and measurement, such as the study of the affective-cognitive consistency of attitudes (ACC; Schleicher et al., 2004) and its moderating role in the prediction of behaviours (see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Talaska, Fiske, & Chaiken, 2008; Zhou, Dovidio, & Wang, 2013), or the study of the affective components of job satisfaction as they vary over time (e.g., Ilies & Judge, 2002; Miner, Glomb, & Hulin, 2005; Weiss, Nicholas, & Daus, 1999).

However, this group of studies have also encountered significant obstacles. As some have argued in the attitudes literature (e.g., Fazio & Olson, 2003), the tripartite nature of attitudes, i.e. affect, cognition, and behaviour, although an important heuristic representation, has its problems. Affect and cognition are not easily separable. Neuropsychology has shown us that the thinking and feeling parts of the brain, although separable in architecture, are inextricably linked in operation (Adolphs & Damasio, 2001). Evidence indicates that when individuals perform specific mental operations, a reciprocal relationship exists between cerebral areas specialized for processing emotions and those specialized for processing cognitions (Drevets & Raichle, 1998). Even measures of affect are substantially cognitive in nature (e.g., Ashby, Isen, & Turken, 1999). As applied to job attitudes, when we think about our jobs, we have feelings about what we think. When we have feelings while at work, we think about these feelings. Cognition and affect are thus intimately related, and this connection is not easy to separate for psychology in general and job attitudes in particular. Research (see Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012) suggests that attitudes can form as a result of any one of these three factors in isolation, and that an affectively based attitude, for example, functions quite differently from a cognitively based attitude, as ACC research has pointed out (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Talaska et al., 2008; Zhou et al., 2013). Another problem is the assumption that all three components must be consistent with one another, which also is not supported by findings from ACC research (Schleicher et al., 2004), that show how even strongly held attitudes may not be manifested in behaviour.

It can be argued that addressing and eventually overcoming these obstacles is a task that belongs, for the most part, to socio-psychological disciplines and basic attitude research. In the meantime, the immediate conclusion for organizational research and practice is that job attitudes, as traditionally conceptualized and operationalized, are ill-suited constructs to predict employee behaviours. On the other hand, their deconstruction helps highlight the role of affect as a potential behavioural predictor in itself, which leads to reconsider the dominating cognitive-based paradigm that has traditionally sustained the attitude-behaviour link in social psychology. This is precisely what Bagozzi (1992) did in his critique of the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) that will be discussed next.

Critique of the theory of reasoned action

The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) has been the dominant paradigm for the study of attitudes in social psychology since its original formulation in the 1970s

and, in that sense, it represent the second "pillar" sustaining the mainstream view in organizational research of job attitudes as behavioural predictors.

Essentially, the theory is built around the concept of *intention* (the conscious plan to carry out behaviour) which is understood to be the critical determinant of action or *behaviour*. While behaviour is determined directly by one's intention to perform the behaviour, intention, in turn, is influenced by *attitude* (one's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behaviour). Finally, attitude results from *beliefs* that performing that behaviour will lead to specific outcomes, combined with *evaluations* of the outcomes. Eagly and Chaiken (1992) further expanded the theory, in a model that clarifies how attitudes are formed and lead to intentions and behaviours. Attitudes originate from the activation of habits and the evaluation of three classes of anticipated outcomes of behaviours: utilitarian, normative, and self-identity.

For example, if we take a specific action/behaviour such as "going to work", the elements and interplays that concur for the behaviour to take place (or not) could be illustrated as follows: the evaluation (attitude) of whether going or not going to work will be influenced by *habit*, i.e. a sequence or repetition of behaviours that have become relatively automatic (going to work every day). It will also be influenced by the evaluations of the various outcomes of the behaviour, which includes *utilitarian outcomes* such as potential drawbacks associated with not going to work, like being fired, losing financial security or other long term career wise benefits; *normative outcomes,* such as feelings of guilt or shame toward colleagues, the organization, or family, and *self-identity outcomes* such as incongruence with the self-concept of being a "good soldier" or a "dedicated professional". Also, the antecedents of an attitude towards behaviour (i.e., habits, utilitarian outcomes, normative outcomes, and self-identity outcomes) all influence each other as well. For instance, the habit of coming to work every day should also influence self-identity (e.g., "I come to work every day, so I must be a dedicated professional") or imagined utilitarian outcomes of leaving (e.g., "I am so used to working for this organization, that the cost of leaving is too high"). Once the attitude is formed ("I should go to work"), the intention follows, i.e. the conscious plan to go to work, and from the intention follows the actual behaviour/action.

Thus the key assumption underlying the theory of reasoned action is that "a thought of some sort must be formed to activate behaviour" (Solinger, van Olffen, & Roe, 2008, p. 79). At a minimum, intention must be formed to direct behaviour, and intention is determined by attitude, which is the result of a calculus or series of evaluations/appraisals, i.e. a purely cognitive-judgement process.

However Bagozzi (1992), in his critique of the theory, would argue that attitudes are not sufficient determinants of intentions, nor intentions are sufficient impetus for action, and that a key missing element is needed to understand the behavioural sequence, i.e. *desire*. The concept of desire stems from the work of Lazarus (1982, 1991) that linked appraisal processes, emotional reactions, and coping responses (behaviours) in a sequential chain, and it is understood to be a distinct, affect-based mental event that should be separated from intention. Although intentions presuppose desire, desire does not imply intention. Also, and more importantly, desire implies a "motivational commitment to act" (Bagozzi, 1992, p. 185), whereas an attitude does not.

These assumptions form the basis of the model that Bagozzi proposes as an alternative to the theory of reasoned action. Bagozzi suggests that the appraisal process that precedes intention involves the assessment of "outcome-desire units". Outcome-desire conflicts occur when one fails to meet a goal or experiences an unpleasant event, and outcome-desire fulfilment occurs when a goal is met or one has a pleasant experience. The outcome-desire experiences are followed, respectively, by negative or positive emotional responses. In turn, negative responses are followed by coping intentions to reduce the conflict, and positive responses are followed by the coping intent to maintain, increase, or share the outcome. Finally, behaviour comes from intent. In other words, attitude and intention are central but not sufficient elements to explain action; they both need to be *energized* by self-regulatory mechanisms that encompass the following sequence: appraisal – emotional reaction – coping response (Bagozzi, 1992, p. 200).

Returning to the example of "going to work", this means that all the cognitive or purely calculative elements that concur in the evaluation (attitude) do not lead, by themselves, to intention nor to action. What triggers the behavioural sequence is the presence (or absence) of desire, i.e. "I feel/don´t feel like going to work", or "I look forward to/can´t bear the thought of going to work". The appraisal consists on evaluating the behavioural consequences of that desire (outcome-desire outputs), e.g., "I´d rather not go to work, but..." (conflict), or "I want to go to work, besides..."(fulfilment) which eventually leads to intention and action. Certainly, habit, utilitarian, normative, or self-concept considerations will be key elements of the evaluation and any of them could, ultimately, be the decisive influence on forming the intention, but the behavioural "activator" of the sequence is the original "raw" desire to go (or not to go) to work. Findings in ACC research (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Talaska et al., 2008) indicating that more affectively-based attitudes often drive consumatory behaviours, whereas more cognitively-based attitudes tend to drive instrumental behaviours, support this view. Consumatory behaviours, i.e. those that are engaged in for their own

sake and affectively driven, would be, in Bagozzi's model, the result of desire/affect superseding other cognitive considerations in the appraisal process. On the other hand, instrumental, cognitively driven behaviours, would be the result of cognitive considerations superseding the desire/affect to engage (or not to engage) in those behaviours *per se*.

In sum, Bagozzi's model helps highlight the key role of a mediating variable of affective/emotional nature, i.e. desire, that represents the "missing motivational link" (p. 184) in the traditional explanation of the attitude-behaviour sequence under the cognitive-judgment paradigm. In other words, notwithstanding the role of evaluation/appraisal, a feeling (rather than a thought) of some sort must be formed to activate behaviour. This reinforces the idea that job attitudes, as traditionally conceptualized in organizational research, have significant limitations as behavioural predictors, particularly with regard to heavily affect-driven behaviours, such as those needed to achieve successful service delivery performances during a service encounter. As to what the "missing motivational link" or affective mediator in the behavioural sequence consists of, it leads to the question of whether alternative constructs and/or theories beyond attitude research have tapped in affect as a behavioural predictor, which will be explored next. It will be argued that contributions from the literature on affect at work, from renewed perspectives on classical theories of motivation, and from the literature on the emerging engagement construct, complement each other in a number of ways and provide the basis for an integrated theoretical perspective from which a psychological or behavioural "foundation" for the service climate model could be developed.

Affect as a behavioural predictor

The study of affect in work settings was subsumed, for the most part of the last century, in "the normal science of affect as job satisfaction" (Barsade, Brief, & Spataro, 2003, p. 3), and was often viewed, not as a central outcome or variable in its own right, but either as an additional source of information in judgments (e.g., Wilson & Hodges, 1992) or as a moderator of cognitive processes (e.g., J. P. Forgas, 1995). As already discussed, this "judgment centric" view (Pirola-Merlo, Härtel, Mann, & Hirst, 2002) or "cognitive-judgement approach" (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) has been extremely influential, which may be due to "the pervasive influence of tayloristic perspectives of organizations, with organizations and their members viewed as rational systems and operators, respectively, and affect viewed as a mediator or distracter of the really important processes" (Pirola-Merlo et al., 2002, p. 563). After a long period of neglect, research on affect in organizational contexts has developed into a major field over the past 15 years. The development of the literature

has been fragmented and characterized by scholars pursuing a diversity of topics with little attempt at integration. In that sense affect is used as an umbrella term to describe a broad range of emotions, moods, and dispositions (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011; Barsade & Gibson, 2007).

With regard to the role of affect as a behavioural predictor, an important distinction in the literature is whether it is conceptualized as a dispositional variable or a transient experience (Shockley, Ispas, Rossi, & Levine, 2012). Dispositional/trait affect is a relatively stable personality variable that reflects an individual's predisposition to react with certain transient emotional experiences across situations. Transient experiences are referred to as state affect, i.e. a person's affective feelings at a given time (Watson & Tellegen, 1985). Both state and dispositional affect have been posited as predictors of work behaviours, usually within conceptual models in which state affect acts as a mediating mechanism between dispositional affect and performance (see Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2008; Shockley et al., 2012). In a recent meta-analysis Shockley et al. (2012) confirmed the existence of a positive relationship between state affect and behaviour that benefits the organization, such as task performance and OCB. Moreover, state affect was found to relate to these behaviours more strongly than trait affect, which appeared "to play a more distal role in shaping environmental perceptions" (p. 399). In other words, affect as an emotional response to specific work situations (state affect) has been found to be more directly related to behaviours than personality traits predisposing the individual to certain emotional reactions (dispositional affect).

The distinction between dispositional and state affect is also relevant from an organizational or "managerial" perspective of the affect-behaviour relationship. Individual traits are, by definition, employee personality variables that cannot be easily modified, although they certainly can be "sought after" (e.g., recruitment) or micro-managed (e.g., leadership, coaching). In contrast, transient affective experiences occur as a result of the interaction of the employee with the organizational context, therefore they can, in principle, be influenced and modified through the "shaping" of that context. When the interest of the research, as it is the case of this study, resides in finding more or less general or "universal" principles with predictive value that could inform people and organizational strategies, then the phenomena of interest is state affect. In that sense, the role of dispositional affect as a (distal) behavioural predictor is fully acknowledged but it will not be explored in depth, since the research purpose is to identify, among the vast heterogeneity of individual variables that can play a part in the affect-behaviour relationship, those that can be *systemically* influenced or acted upon.

Moods and emotions

State affective experiences have been categorized in the socio-psychological literature as emotions or moods (M. S. Clark & Isen, 1982; J. P. Forgas, 1995). Emotions tend to be a reaction to a specific cause or target and are relatively short-lived (Frijda, 1988; Larsen, Diener, & Lucas, 2002). In contrast, moods are "low-intensity, diffuse and relatively enduring affective states without a salient antecedent cause"(J. P. Forgas, 1992, p. 230). It is generally agreed that moods and discrete emotions interact and fluctuate considerably within individuals. However, the boundary between emotions and moods is fuzzy and the understanding of their reciprocal interactions is still incomplete (see Gooty, Gavin, & Ashkanasy, 2009). Organizational research addressing the relationship between state affect and behaviours has developed in different directions, depending on whether the focus was set on discrete emotions or on moods. A major and distinct line of research that places emotions, rather than moods, as the main focal point has derived from Affective Events Theory (AET; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Conversely, another distinct line of research (see Barsade et al., 2003; Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Shockley et al., 2012) stemming from the PANAS scale (Watson et al., 1988) has focused on moods, which are conceptualized as a single global pleasant (positive) or unpleasant (negative) affective state. While both groups of studies contribute with unique insights and methodological approaches to the study of affect at work, none provides a fully satisfactory answer to the issue of affect as a behavioural predictor, as it will be discussed next.

AET, on the one hand, postulates that individuals at work experience discrete "affective events" as daily hassles and uplifts that result in affective responses which, in turn, lead to immediate behavioural outcomes, as well as to attitudes that influence longer term outcomes (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996, p. 11). Because emotions have a target - the theory goes - they are likely to be triggered by actual events in the work place, and should be more readily recalled than vague and diffuse moods experienced while on the job, but not necessarily due to the job. Therefore emotions at work are more relevant as behavioural predictors than are moods, though both are related to behaviours and attitudes. AET also adds time as an important parameter when examining affect. Both moods and emotions are transient and, therefore, difficult to measure accurately long after they have occurred. Subjective well-being (SWB; Diener, 1994) research provides some evidence that people who are happiest overall are at least slightly happy most of the time (frequency), while being extremely happy some of the time (intensity) is not sufficient to guarantee overall happiness (see Diener, 2012). SWB research also suggests that people over-estimate the frequency with which they have experienced both positive and negative emotions when reporting retrospectively

compared to reporting in real life. This has lead AET-inspired research to focus on the frequency of affective experiences rather than their intensity, and to capture real time reports, rather than retrospective data of the affective experiences.

Empirical AET-based research has helped clarify some of the longstanding issues in OB literature concerning affect and job satisfaction. Studies by Fisher (2000, 2002), Ilies and Judge (2002), and Fuller et al. (2003) confirmed that job satisfaction and affect at work are related but separate constructs. More recent studies have moved away from job satisfaction to study the effects of affect on emotional labour and counterproductive behaviours through the lens of AET (e.g., Beal, Trougakos, Weiss, & Green, 2006; Dalal, Lam, Weiss, Welch, & Hulin, 2009; Rodell & Judge, 2009). However, the focus on discrete emotions rather than moods, and on their frequency rather than their intensity, creates considerable challenges for empirical research addressing the posited affect-behaviour causal sequence, which might explain the lack of AET studies, with few exceptions, specifically focused on this area (see Shockley et al., 2012). On one hand, discrete emotions need to be singled out and operationalized as distinct variables in order to determine their corresponding behavioural outputs; for example, Fisher (2000) explored the relationship of no less than 16 specific positive and negative emotions with job satisfaction, such as pride, happiness, anger, frustration, and so on. On the other hand, because emotions are so transient, if they are only experienced infrequently they may not persist long enough to have a meaningful effect on cumulative assessments of performance (George & Brief, 1992; T. A. Wright, Cropanzano, & Meyer, 2004) therefore they need to be related to temporal measures of behavioural outputs or temporal calibrations of a performance measure (Shockley et al., 2012). Also, assuming that these methodological obstacles are removed, the managerial implications are hardly practical. If some emotions are found to be more strongly related to some desired behavioural outputs, "this may suggest ways of modifying the work environment or work processes to reduce the incidence of emotions which are most negatively related (to the desired output), and increase the incidence of those which are most positively related" (Fisher, 2000, p. 188). From a managerial perspective, the described approach seems too mechanistic and behaviouristic in its conception and also extremely difficult to implement.

Moreover, and beyond pragmatic considerations, the central assumption in AET that the frequency of the affective experience is a more relevant behavioural predictor than its intensity is highly debatable. For example, psychological contract theory and research (S. L. Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1995) clearly shows that singular and intense affective events, i.e. a violation of the

psychological contract, may have long-lasting behavioural consequences. Frequency does seem to play a role with regard to how emotions feed into moods, but the assumption that the frequency of the affective experience is a stronger behavioural determinant than its intensity is counter-intuitive and based solely on SWB research on the general concept of "happiness". There is no lack of anecdotal evidence concerning situations in which individuals have to endure frequent irritations without apparent effect on their performances, whereas in other situations a single affectively-charged incident is enough to trigger significant and lasting behavioural changes. It would appear that, by dealing primarily with discreet emotions and their frequency, without a clear reference to the underlying affective background or mood against which these emotions are projected, AET focuses on emotions at the expense of moods when, in fact, both are better understood as aspects of a single dyadic phenomenon.

The influence of moods on behaviours at work has been, on the other hand, an area of interest in the literature since its early days (e.g., George, 1991; George & Jones, 1997; Isen & Baron, 1991). The reason to focus on moods rather than emotions when exploring affect at work, these early researchers would argue, is that moods reflect the work experience as a whole as opposed to emotions that are more intense but transitory experiences. While not denying the importance of emotions in the workplace, work moods capture more of the day-to-day feelings people experience on the job and are a prime indicator of the experience of work in an affective sense (M. S. Clark & Isen, 1982; George, 1989; George & Brief, 1992). In everyday language, mood is typically viewed as a one-dimensional concept ranging from good to bad or positive or negative. However research has long established, particularly through SWB studies (see Diener, 2012), that mood is best characterized, rather than by a single dimension, by two dominant and independent dimensions, positive mood and negative mood (Watson & Tellegen, 1985). Watson et al. (1988) developed a positive and negative affectivity measure -the PANAS scale- that was grounded on this dimensional approach, namely, that discrete emotions share underlying variance that can be explained by a two-dimensional model of moods.

Empirical studies stemming from this approach (e.g., Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2008; Kaplan, Bradley, Luchman, & Haynes, 2009; Spector & Fox, 2005) have found positive (negative) correlations between positive (negative) affect and behaviours benefiting the organization, such as task performance and OCB. Also in these studies, negative affect has been shown to be correlated with harmful or counterproductive work behaviours (CWB; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). Recent meta-analyses (Kaplan et al., 2009; Shockley et al., 2012) have confirmed the existence of these

relationships. Nevertheless, most of these studies were cross-sectional and correlational therefore precluding any causal inference that would support the assumption that a global pleasant affective state (mood) leads to the behaviours of interest. It is likely that these correlations indicate a reciprocal relationship rather than a causal one (Shockley et al., 2012, p. 403).

It would appear that, by focusing on a single conceptualization of moods as a global positive (or negative) measure of affect, the PANAS model avoids the "entanglement" of dealing with the vast array of highly transient and elusive affective phenomena that are emotions. However, by doing so, it oversimplifies the concept of moods. Positive moods can reflect an assortment of feelings as varied as those reflected by emotions, e.g. attentive, interested, alert, excited, enthusiastic, inspired, proud, determined, strong, and active, while negative moods can entail feeling distressed, upset, hostile, irritable, scared, afraid, ashamed, guilty, nervous, or jittery (Watson & Tellegen, 1985). That these adjectives can also be used to describe positive or negative emotions only punctuates the fact that the boundary between emotions and moods is often difficult to determine. More importantly, if moods reflect a variety of affective states, then a variety of behavioural outputs should also be expected, e.g. one positive mood might be a feeling of contentment that does not lead to specific behaviours while other positive mood might prompt or predispose to action. Thus the behavioural implications of moods cannot be subsumed in the concept of a single global pleasant (or unpleasant) affective state.

Upon examining and comparing the two poles addressing the affect-behaviour relationship in the literature, namely AET research with its focus on emotions, and PANAS studies with their focus on global positive and negative affect (mood), a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, it would appear that both moods and emotions are equally needed to understand the affect-behaviour relationship, as they are both intertwined aspects of a dyadic phenomenon. Discrete emotions may have long term effects and influence or change moods. Moods, in turn, may influence or change the way events are interpreted and, therefore, the emotional reactions that these events elicit. In metaphoric terms moods are the undercurrents while emotions are the waves, both being distinct yet inseparable aspects of a single dyadic phenomenon, i.e. the sea in motion.

Secondly, within this perspective, discrete emotions do not have a direct influence on behaviours but an indirect one, i.e. mediated by moods. The emotion that a specific event might trigger cannot be truly understood without taking into consideration the affective background or mood against which that event is projected/interpreted and the consequent changes on that mood after the

affective experience has taken place. It could be argued that the individual may experience a mood without being fully conscious of the particular affective event that influenced it, but this does not preclude the mood from influencing behaviours. Likewise, the individual may suddenly recall from memory a past affective event that left a strong imprint, and this recollection will immediately change the individual's mood. Thus, an investigation of moods or general affective tones could in some circumstances be a more accurate predictor of behaviours than the investigation of a longitudinal sequence of discrete emotions/affective events. In this sense, a retrospective approach, as opposed to real time reports on frequency of affective experiences, might prove useful, to the extent that it would help identify those past affective experiences that are still showing some type of effect, since the individual can recall them.

Thirdly, conceptualizing mood as a single global construct oversimplifies the variety of affective experiences in work settings and their equally varying behavioural outputs. Hence addressing the affect-behaviour relationship through the lenses of specific moods and the specific behaviours that are expected to follow should lead to a better understanding of that relationship. In that sense, several authors, building on the literature and research on moods and emotions, have focused on a specific mood that stems from the notion of "self-realization" or "self-concept" in classical theories of motivation, and which is posited to relate to distinct behavioural outputs. These studies, as it will be argued next, provide a more satisfactory answer to what the "missing motivational link" (Bagozzi, 1992), or affective mediator needed in the prediction of behaviour, consists of.

New perspectives on motivation

While examining the classical literature on motivation at work, Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) noted, as other scholars (e.g., George & Brief, 1996; Pirola-Merlo et al., 2002; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), that it portrayed an over rationalized view of individuals. For example, one of the most influential process theories of motivation -VIE theory (Vroom, 1964)- essentially holds that individuals are motivated to the extent that their behaviour is expected to lead to desired outcomes. "The image is that of rational exchange: the employee essentially trades effort for pay, security, promotions, and so forth" (p. 109). Ashforth and Humphrey pointed out that a critical element is missing in these theories, namely, the emotional connection of the individual to the content and context of the work. Even concepts such as "valence" (i.e., the perceived attractiveness of an outcome) and "intrinsic motivation" (i.e., the drive that results from the perception that the task per se is rewarding) are implicitly understood as cognitive abstractions and rational calculations.

Interestingly, the original theory of human needs (A. H. Maslow, 1943; 1954), from which most classical theories of motivation stem, contains key elements that do not fit this over rationalized view. Maslow asserted that human motives emerge according to a hierarchy of five need levels: (1) physiological needs, (2) safety needs, (3) affiliation needs, (4) achievement and esteem needs, and (5) self-actualization. Once a need is satisfied, it ceases to act as a motivator of behaviour, thus the importance of higher needs increases as lower needs become satisfied. A unique contribution of this theory, and one that has been frequently overlooked by some of its critics (e.g., Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977), is the concept of self-actualization, which refers to the needs for self-realization, continuous self-development, and the process of becoming all that a person is capable of becoming. Self-actualization has often been interpreted as the higher-end instinct that arises when all the other needs have been satisfied. In fact, self-actualization is a concept that describes the permanent lack of satisfaction and search for something higher within human nature. It is a continuous process, not and end state, and it cannot be gratified or satiated like the other needs. Instead, it tends to increase in potency as individuals engage in self-actualizing behaviours. Maslow viewed human beings as recipients of a vast potentiality that is never fully actualized in their lives, and those who succeed in tapping this potentiality only do it marginally. To interpret Maslow's concept of self-actualization as representing the failure to fully satisfy human needs since they are limitless is too simplistic. In that sense, self-actualization as a motivational driver cannot be described in terms of a purely calculative process but rather as an affective state in which the individual is driven by "higher order" goals or aspirations related to his/her self-concept.

George and Brief (1996), building on previous research on moods and emotions and on the possible selves theory in socio-psychological research (Markus & Nurius, 1986), developed a motivational theory that is closely related to Maslow's original concept of self-realization. George and Brief argue that traditional theories of work motivation do not adequately capture the notions that people have motivational agendas at work that go beyond being a high performer, and that feelings influence those motivational agendas, by guiding actions towards realizing any particular possible self that may be the focus of attention. Possible selves are what people want to become or avoid becoming: they function as incentives for future behaviours and as means for evaluating and interpreting current views of the self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Individuals may strive to be, for example, a caring parent, a loving partner, a devoted child, a good friend, an involved citizen, a happy person as well as an accomplished job performer. These possible self-representations cannot be given motivational attention simultaneously, but at any one time a subset of these possible selves is accessed and

invoked to regulate or accompany the individual's behaviour. In that sense, workers can be motivationally focused on a possible self that is completely detached from their on-going, job-related behaviours yet they may perform their jobs in a routine fashion. However, when the individual is motivationally focused on his/her "high performer" self-representation, the resulting performances are expected to be qualitatively superior.

As to how and when this specific motivational focus comes into play, affect is posited to exert two types of influences. On one hand negative or positive events can be responsible for causing shifts in motivational focus of attention. These feelings are relatively intense and are commonly referred to as emotions. Feelings also play a more subtle role; in this case, "they do not so much cause a shift from one possible self to another but rather impact the nature of motivation within a possible self" (p. 84). These types of feelings are less intense than emotions and are commonly referred as moods. Emotions can also feed into moods. Once an event has prompted a specific emotional response and the individual has gotten used to the idea of the event or habituated to the emotion experienced, the event can still have lingering effects on feelings in the form of moods (Frijda, 1988). While moods are not necessarily tied to a particular event or occurrence, they are subject to a multitude of influences. Many of these stem from the context within which behaviours occur (state affect) while other influences derive from internal factors, and their interaction with the context or situation (dispositional/trait affect). Contextual factors affecting moods in work settings can emanate (George & Brief, 1992) from individual affective experiences, from the affective tones of the proximal work-group, and from the wider organizational context (e.g., reward systems or organizational culture).

George and Brief's theory revitalizes perspectives on motivation through the lenses of affective phenomena and the self-concept. Among all possible selves, the "high performer" self-representation describes a specific mood that prompts the individual to focus his/her attention on the job role, therefore leading to qualitatively superior behavioural outputs. The idea of a specific mood related to the notion of "self-realization" or "self-concept", and which is posited to lead to distinct behavioural outputs is also at the core of Kahn's (1990) original conceptualization of engagement as "the behaviours by which people bring in or leave out their personal selves during work role performances" (p. 694). Kahn refers to the same phenomenon of how and why individuals in a work setting "give themselves to" or "distance themselves from" their job or task, and the subsequent impact on their behaviours and behavioural outputs as "presumably, the more people draw on their selves to perform their roles (…), the more stirring are their performances" (1990, p. 692). Individuals experiencing personal engagement or, in George and Brief's (1996) terms, focusing

their motivational attention on their accomplished job performer self-representation, have a stronger desire to invest their physical, cognitive and/or emotional resources into the job/task than those who are personally disengaged or focused on other possible selves. While Kahn refers to certain "psychological conditions" that create "critical psychological states" leading to personal engagement (1990, p. 703), George and Brief refer to feelings (emotions and moods) which create or contribute to "shifts in motivational focus of attention"(1996, p. 84). Thus both theories contemplate experiences of affective nature that are triggered by individuals' perceptions of their work contexts, and feed into a specific mood or psychological state that has, in turn, behavioural implications.

Kahn's theory of personal engagement and psychological presence (1990, 1992) provides a rich and compelling framework from which to elaborate on the "missing motivational link" or affective mediator needed in the prediction of behaviour (Bagozzi, 1992). While organizational research around job attitudes emphasizes the generalized states that employees experience (i.e., general evaluative judgments) with regard to the roles they occupy, it fails to address, Kahn would argue, the actual processes of people experiencing and behaving within particular work situations. People can use varying degrees of their selves, physically, emotionally, and cognitively, in the roles they perform, even as they maintain the boundaries between who they are and the roles they occupy. Thus, individuals bring in and leave out various depths of their selves during the course of their work days. These concepts are rooted in the idea that people need both self-expression and self-employment in their work lives as a matter of course (Alderfer, 1969; A. H. Maslow, 1954).

Kahn's theory aims to identify variables that could explain how and when people bring themselves into or remove themselves from particular task behaviours or, in other words, adjust their selves-in-roles. A number of psychological conditions or momentary circumstances of people's experiences can create critical psychological states that lead to greater or lesser degrees of engagement and disengagement. Kahn (1990) identified, in the course of his ethnographic research, three psychological conditions that shaped how people "inhabited their roles". Participants "seemed to unconsciously ask themselves three questions in each situation and to personally engage or disengage depending on the answers: (1) How meaningful is it for me to bring myself into this performance?; (2) how safe is it to do so?; (3) How available am I to do so?"(p. 703):

1) Psychological meaningfulness is associated with work elements that create incentives or disincentives to personally engage. It can be seen as a "feeling that one is receiving a return

on investments of one's self in currency of physical, cognitive, or emotional energy" (p. 704). People experience such meaningfulness when they feel worthwhile, useful, and valuable – as though they made a difference and were not taken for granted. Factors that generally influence psychological meaningfulness are task characteristics, role characteristics, and work interactions.

2) Psychological safety is associated with elements of social systems that create more or less nonthreatening, predictable, and consistent social situations in which to engage. People feel safe in situations in which they trust that they will not suffer for their personal engagement. When situations become unclear, inconsistent, unpredictable, or threatening, personal engagement is deemed too risky or unsafe. Factors that influence psychological safety most directly are interpersonal relationships, group and intergroup dynamics, management style and process, and organizational norms.
3) Psychological availability is associated with individual distractions that preoccupy people to various degrees and leave them more or fewer resources with which to engage in role performances. It refers to the feeling of having the physical, emotional, or cognitive resources to personally engage at a particular moment. Distracting factors influencing psychological availability are depletion of physical energy, depletion of emotional energy, individual insecurity, and outside lives.

Kahn (1992) further developed his theory through the concept of psychological presence, which refers to the experiential state that accompanies personally engaging behaviours. Psychological presence manifest itself by physical, verbal, and behavioural cues and contains several dimensions such as *attentiveness* (being open, or non-defensive, to others), *connection* (exercising empathy with another person and/or the task itself), *integration* (experiencing a sense of wholeness in a situation), and *focus* (concentrating on the here and now of the experience). The manifestation of psychological presence is an indication to others that the individual is personally engaging in a given task or situation. This has systemic implications. Systems are directly influenced by people driving greater expanse of energies into, for example, completing assigned tasks, creating products and procedures, questioning unproductive or unethical habits of thought and action, or creating collaborative communities. When individuals are open to change and connecting to work and others, are focused and attentive, and complete rather than fragmented, their systems adopt the same characteristics, collectively.

From a dynamic perspective individual and systemic demands move people both forward and away from psychological presence. Organizations desire such presence because they benefit when their members fully engage they work; they save money, obtain innovations, work collaboratively or, in other words, improve one way or another the quality of their performance. But also, organizations exert demands that move their members away from being psychologically present at various moments. For example, leaders may experience the self-expressions of their members as questioning and ultimately undermining the status quo of power, policies, and procedures. Social systems may be threatened by groups of members who question basic assumptions, voice dissatisfactions, and blow whistles on illegitimate behaviours. Or they simply may prefer members to "absent themselves" if full presence involves unnecessary costs of time, energy, and money, or if the aim is rather to reinforce predictability and routine of the operations. Individuals also may have desires to withdraw from the risks and vulnerabilities of being fully present. To absent one's personal self is the safer path in many task situations. To be fully connected to others at work may be experienced as threatening, and it can be psychologically draining. Also, psychological presence is relatively exhausting in terms of the vigilance and personal effort it requires and thus may not always be possible. The inevitable results of these conflicting demands from the organization and the individual are "people's cycles of psychological presence and absence across role performance situations" (1992, p. 332) which are influenced or shaped by both external (systemic) and internal (individual) factors.

Thus, Kahn´s model is recursive in the sense that people's behaviours create performance outcomes and experiences that, in turn, engender various types of feedback which then influence future experiences and behaviours. Outcomes include the quality of people's work, their own experiences of doing that work, and the growth and productivity of their organizations. System feedback occurs formally and informally. Personally engaging behaviours are reacted to by others in ways that may reinforce or sanction those behaviours. These reactions, in turn, shape future work elements, such as the design of jobs and roles, and social system dynamics, such as group and intergroup relations. Within this systemic view of the motivational process as a "feedback loop", expectations are confirmed, modified, or corrected through the feedback that the individual receives regarding his/her work-related behaviours. Hence feedback is a key systemic mechanism which refers not only to its most obvious manifestations, e.g., a verbal reinforcement or criticism from the immediate manager, but also to any symbolic interaction of the individual with the work environment that is interpreted as feedback by that individual, e.g., a perception of fairness. Through the feedback loop

the individual interprets and reinterprets affectively his/her work environment and consequently adapts his/her work-related behaviours. In that sense, the view of human nature that emerges is adaptive but also full of potentiality, as the individual will, by nature, aspire to personally engage in the work, or self-actualize (A. H. Maslow, 1954), but only if certain psychological conditions that the individual has learned to reasonably expect, are felt.

All in all, Kahn's concept of personal engagement provides a compelling theoretical alternative to the mainstream view of job attitudes as predictors of work behaviours and performance. Also, while Kahn is concerned with motivational and behavioural phenomena in work settings, regardless of specific job roles or industries, his theoretical contributions appear to be particularly applicable to service employees. Considering both the nature of service roles and the characteristics of the service industry, engagement can be expected to exert a non-negligible influence in service employee behaviours and performance. Service employees not only are required to display nonstandard, adaptive, and creative behaviours during service encounters (Gwinner et al., 2005) but also to engage regularly in emotion management (Grandey et al., 2011; Hochschild, 1983), and to regularly display behaviours that would be considered discretionary for many other job roles (Vey & Campbell, 2004). They are required to push aside any personal emotions and focus positively toward the customer. They often face emotionally challenging service encounters as they have to deal with demanding, rude, or irate customers and, consequently, are extremely susceptible to performance adverse effects such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, and service misbehaviour (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Kim & Yoon, 2012). Moreover, service employees often have to respond to these role demands in comparatively less favourable work environments than those normally present in other industries. Tourism and hospitality, in particular, is characterized by relatively unfavourable work conditions, including long working hours and unstable shift work, working on weekends and holidays, low wages, and lack of employment stability, all of which are likely to have a negative impact on service employees' perceptions and emotional interpretations of their jobs and their work environments (Pienaar & Willemse, 2008). Last but not least, Kahn's model provides a sound theoretical approach to the concept of engagement both from a micro-perspective, i.e. engagement as a psychological phenomenon, and also from a macro-perspective, i.e. engagement as a systemic recursive phenomenon. Hence it provides a solid theoretical platform from which to address the gap, in the service climate model, concerning its foundations, or "the conditions in which a service climate may exist" (Schneider, 1990, p. 398).

Kahn did not attempt to operationalize his theory of personal engagement and psychological presence. The model, with few exceptions (e.g., S. P. Brown & Leigh, 1996), did not receive much attention in the following years after its publication, After the turn of the century, however, a growing interest in the concept of employee engagement, from both management practitioners and academics, has led to the development of a substantial body of organizational literature and research, characterized by much debate and controversies regarding the construct (see W. H. Macey et al., 2009; Shuck et al., 2012; A. Smith, 2006). While most of these studies acknowledge Kahn's pioneering research, none of them, arguably, has conceptualized and/or operationalized his theoretical contributions fully successfully. The existing debate and competing research directions around employee engagement will be reviewed next, with a view to clarifying the conceptual domain of the construct. This, as it will be argued, can be achieved by revisiting Kahn's original formulation (1990, 1992), complemented with contributions, previously identified in this chapter, from research on state affect and the self-concept in motivational theories. Lastly, a conceptual definition of engagement resulting from this approach will be put forth as the theoretical basis for the operationalization of the construct and its "fit" in the service climate model, which will be addressed in the following chapter.

The conceptual domain of employee engagement

Much of the controversy around the concept of employee engagement stems from the imprecise definitions of the construct that have been put forth in commercially oriented research, and their tendency to overlap with existing constructs such as job satisfaction, affective commitment, job involvement, or intrinsic motivation (see Newman & Harrison, 2008; Saks, 2008). For example, research by the Gallup Organization refers to employee engagement as occurring when individuals are emotionally connected to others and cognitively vigilant, and also as "the individual's involvement and satisfaction as well as enthusiasm for work" (J. K. Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002, p. 269). This definition exemplifies the "bleeding" into the construct of other established work-related attitudes. An examination of the items composing the instrument used in these studies, i.e. the Gallup Workplace Audit (J. K. Harter et al., 2002; J.K. Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2003) reveals that it actually represents a global measure of employee satisfaction (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008). Other definitions of engagement in commercial research are even more spurious, e.g. "the extent to which employees commit to something or someone in the organization and (...) the extent to which people enjoy and believe in what they do and feel valued for doing it" (Wellins, Bernthal, & Phelps, 2005, p. 2); or "an engaged employee experiences a blend of job satisfaction, organizational

commitment, job involvement and feelings of empowerment. It is a concept that is greater than the sum of its parts" (Macleod & Clarke, 2010, p. 9).

Blurred and overlapping definitions of engagement in commercial research have also led to equally heterogeneous and poorly justified commercial "engagement models" positing a vast array of people management practices as "engagement drivers" that, put together, would represent a comprehensive description of the HRM mission in contemporary organizations. For example, Mercer's employee engagement survey (2012) includes up to 13 "engagement dimensions" that capture employee perceptions of work processes, quality and customer focus, benefits, communication, work/life balance, teamwork, performance management, leadership, training, compensation, and so on.

While commercial research on engagement has shown a tendency to present "old wine in a new bottle" (Newman & Harrison, 2008), there is agreement among academic researchers (e.g., Christian et al., 2011; E. R. Crawford, Rich, Buckman, & Bergeron, 2014; W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008) that engagement represents a distinct concept that should be differentiated from other potentially related constructs such as job involvement, job satisfaction, and affective commitment. For example, Rich et al. (2010) showed that engagement affects task performance positively even after controlling for job involvement, job satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation. Christian et al. (2011) also found in their review that engagement exhibits discriminant validity from, and criterion related validity over, job attitudes. Nevertheless, there seems to be no common model in academic research to explain or account for the formation of an individual's sense of engagement. Nor is there any common agreement on a framework to delineate what is an antecedent and/or a consequence to the concept of engagement. Existing approaches include interpretations of engagement as a (mainly) cognitive construct (Ho, Wong, & Lee, 2011; Rothbard, 2001), as well-being or positive affect (Kazén, Kaschel, & Kuhl, 2008; Zigarmi et al., 2009), as the opposite of burnout (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002), as a psychological connection with the performance of work tasks (Christian et al., 2011), or as investment on the self (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008). With regard to its operationalization, the most widely used measure to date is the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2002), which stems from research around the concept of "work engagement", and which will be discussed next.

Work engagement

Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) approach to engagement stems from a shift in burnout research towards its opposite (see Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Instead of looking exclusively to the negative

phenomena of burnout as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, attention was given to the opposite pole of worker's well-being. From this perspective, burnout was rephrased as an erosion of engagement with the job. Schaufeli et al. (2002) took a different perspective by considering burnout and engagement to be opposite concepts that should be measured independently with different instruments. This was based on the well-established notion in research (see Diener, 2012; Watson & Tellegen, 1985) that positive and negative affective states or moods are better understood, not as poles of a single continuum but as separate and distinct dimensions, i.e., a dyadic rather than a symmetrical phenomenon. In similar vein, Schaufeli and his associates argued that instead of being two opposite poles, burnout and engagement are independent, yet negatively correlated states.

Work engagement is defined by these authors as a "persistent, pervasive and positive affective-cognitive state of fulfilment in employees that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). *Vigour* is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. *Dedication* is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Finally, *absorption* is characterized by being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work. Several studies (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2002) have confirmed both the factorial validity of the independent engagement measure (UWES) and its negative correlation with the burnout scale (MBI).

Empirical studies around work engagement have shown relationships of the construct with positive outcomes such as job satisfaction, affective commitment, low absenteeism, low turnover, OCB, service climate, customer loyalty, and performance (Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005; Salanova, Llorens, Cifre, Martínez, & Schaufeli, 2003; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Also, the Job Demands–Resources model (JD-R; A.B. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001) has often been used in this line of research as a framework to explore the antecedents of work engagement. Several job resources, i.e. physical, social, psychological and/or organizational aspects of the job such as autonomy, social support, supervisory coaching, performance feedback, and opportunities for professional development, have consistently been identified as antecedents of work engagement in cross-sectional studies (J. J. Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) as well as longitudinal studies (Llorens, Bakker, Schaufeli, & Salanova, 2006; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009). Also, interestingly, some of these studies have identified the existence of reciprocal relationships

between work engagement, job resources, and efficacy beliefs (Llorens, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2007), and between work engagement, job resources, personal initiative, and work-unit innovativeness (J.J. Hakanen, Perhoniemi, & Toppinen-Tanner, 2008), which suggests a systemic view or "feedback loop" (Kahn, 1992) rather than direct causalities.

In recent years, the number of empirical studies around engagement using the UWES measure has significantly increased. This recent body of organizational research on engagement "linkages" tends to hypothesize and test linear relationships between work engagement and other constructs with conflicting and confusing interpretations of causality. For example, in some studies attitudes are antecedents of work engagement (Barnes & Collier, 2013) while in others engagement is the antecedent of attitudes (Scrima, Loritob, Parryc, & Falgares, 2013; Yalabik, van Rossenberg, Kinniea, & Swarta, 2014). In some studies, engagement mediates the relationship between attitudes and outcomes (Yalabik, Popaitoon, Chowne, & Rayton, 2013), or between attitudes and a third construct of interest (Yeh, 2013), while in other studies attitudes mediate the relationship of engagement with a third construct of interest (Poon, 2013; Rayton & Yalabik, 2014).

Despite the widespread utilization of work engagement and the UWES measure in empirical studies, there still remains controversy regarding the conceptual definition of the construct. For example, two of the three posited dimensions of work engagement, i.e. vigour and dedication, share some conceptual similarity with other existing constructs. Specifically, vigour seems to overlap with the concept of intrinsic motivation (R. Ryan & Deci, 2000), and dedication is similar to the concept of job involvement (Avery, McKay, & Wilson, 2007). Moreover, it is unclear whether Schaufeli and his associates understand work engagement as an attitudinal construct with both affective and cognitive elements, i.e. an evaluative judgement, as another type of cognitive state, or as state affect, i.e. mood.

Upon examining the shorter, refined version of the UWES scale (Schaufeli et al., 2006) some of the items seem to reflect accurately Kahn's (1990) description of personal engagement as an affective state, e.g. "At my work, I feel bursting with energy", or "I get carried away when I am working", while other items show a close resemblance to appraisals or evaluative judgements, e.g. "I am proud of the work that I do", or "My job inspires me". The definition of work engagement as a "persistent, pervasive and positive affective-cognitive state" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74) seems to point at the concept of attitude (see also Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005). However, many scholars have argued (e.g., E. R. Crawford et al., 2014; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012; W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008)

that, while the concept of engagement reflects investment of one's physical, cognitive, and emotional energy in work performance, one's evaluations of these investments is not assessed—only the existence or nonexistence of these investments; therefore it should be differentiated from job attitudes. Other authors have argued, instead, that engagement necessarily contains some attitudinal component that overlaps with job attitudes (Newman & Harrison, 2008; Shuck et al., 2012) but it is nevertheless a distinct construct in the sense that it comprises an energetic component and a component that reflects high involvement of the self (Sonnentag, Dormann, & Demerouti, 2010). Last but not least, other authors (Kazén et al., 2008; Zigarmi, Houson, Diehl, & Witt, 2010; Zigarmi et al., 2009) have moved away from the attitudinal debate and interpreted Schaufeli et al.'s work engagement construct purely in terms of general positive affect or well-being, as reflecting "enthusiasm, satisfaction, absorption, affect, emotion, and positive state of mind" (Zigarmi et al., 2009, p. 308) but not reflecting "intense desire and intentionality" (Perrewé, Hochwarter, Ferris, Mcallister, & Harris, 2014).

All in all, engagement "has become a popularized term for the even more generic concept of employee attitudes" (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014, p. 13) and is regarded by many scholars as a confused construct, subject to varying and imprecise interpretations. However, as it will be argued next, the conceptual domain of engagement can be clearly defined by revisiting its original formulation (Kahn, 1990, 1992) complemented with contributions, previously identified in this chapter, from research on state affect and the self-concept in motivational theories.

Engagement as an affect-based motivational process

The conceptual domain of engagement that is hereby proposed contains three distinctive elements: (1) it is (primarily) an affective, rather than cognitive, phenomena, (2) its nature is motivational, rather than attitudinal, and (3) it is a process, not a state, that includes certain psychological antecedents or "conditions", a psychological state, and accompanying behaviours.

(1) Kahn's theory of personal engagement and psychological presence has been misleadingly categorized by some (e.g., Ho et al., 2011; Rothbard, 2001; Zigarmi et al., 2010) as "cognitive engagement", based on his description of psychological presence as a positive, fulfilling, and persistent cognitive state where an employee is focused on the job and its related activities. However, it is important to differentiate between the investment of cognitive resources by the individual when experiencing a state of psychological presence, and the desire to invest those resources, which is purely affective and precedes the investment and the resulting behaviours. Personal engagement refers to a psychological process that is essentially triggered by affect and

includes antecedents (feelings of safety, meaningfulness and availability), a resulting state or mood (psychological presence), and behavioural outputs. Those behavioural outputs, in turn, are expected to lead to superior performance, as individuals who are psychologically present or "cognitively alert" are less easily distracted by matters that are peripheral to the job, are better able to overcome problems or challenges that arise in the course of work, and thus become more successful and effective in getting work done (Sonnentag, 2003). Moreover, the concept of "cognitive engagement" also fails to address the importance of investing not only cognitive but also physical and emotional resources (Christian et al., 2011) to perform successfully in many job roles, most particularly in boundary service-related job roles, as research on emotion management has extensively shown (e.g., Chi et al., 2011; Grandey, 2003; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013).

Engagement has also been interpreted from the opposite pole, i.e. as reflecting an individual's global positive affect or sense of well-being with regard to work (e.g., Kazén et al., 2008; Zigarmi et al., 2009). According to this perspective positive affect functions as a signal to approach and to continue along a line of action (Elliot, 2006). When experiencing positive affect people set high goals for a task and expect that engaging in a task yields positive outcomes (J. J. Hakanen et al., 2006; Ilies & Judge, 2005). Thus positive affect is posited to play a role for initiating goal-directed action, a precondition for engagement (Kazén et al., 2008). However, as discussed in the review of the literature on affect, the concept of global positive affect oversimplifies the role of affective phenomena as behavioural predictors. Different positive affective states or moods can be expected to lead to different types of behaviours, or to no behaviours at all (e.g., a feeling of contentment or satiation). In that sense, engagement is best conceptualized as a specific (positive) mood that carries with it specific behavioural implications, as opposed to global positive affect or a general sense of well-being that does not (necessarily) initiate action. In sum, the conceptualization hereby adopted of engagement as a specific mood underlines both the importance and centrality of positive affectivity and the uniqueness of the construct in the sense that it represent a "energetic state" (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008) directed towards one's job.

(2) The notion of energy directed towards behaviours, or "desire to act" (Bagozzi, 1992), is also the element that characterizes engagement as a motivational rather than an attitudinal construct. While job satisfaction or affective commitment include affective components, they represent in essence evaluative judgements or appraisals that "specify a target but do not specify any particular action" (Harrison et al., 2006, p. 316), i.e. they do not lead, by themselves, to behaviours (E. R. Crawford et al., 2014; W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008). The motivational element that characterizes engagement

is the focus on a specific self-concept (George & Brief, 1996), or the desire for self-realization (A. H. Maslow, 1954), that drives people to express themselves physically, emotionally, and cognitively during role performances (Kahn, 1990). Engagement as a motivational concept refers to the investment of the self in the person's work and the perceived importance of work outcomes and organization membership to that person's identity (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008). Therefore it represents a richer or broader concept than just a psychological connection, or "job involvement", with the performance of work task (e.g., Avery et al., 2007; Christian et al., 2011; Maslach et al., 2001) since it "reflects bringing forth increasing depths of the self in the service of one's broadly defined role" (Rich et al., 2010, p. 619). Although individuals can be more or less involved in their work roles physically, cognitively, or emotionally, engagement refers to maintaining these involvements simultaneously in a connected rather than fragmented manner (Kahn, 1992).

(3) Finally, engagement is best described as a fluctuating process (Kahn, 1990, 1992) rather than a more or less permanent or pervasive "state of mind" (e.g., Christian et al., 2011; Schaufeli et al., 2002). This process is referred to as "people's cycles of psychological presence and absence across role performance situations" (Kahn, 1992, p. 332) and as "the behaviours by which people bring in or leave out their personal selves during work role performances" (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). The process includes certain psychological conditions as antecedents of, or conducive to, an affective state or mood (psychological presence) which triggers the investment of personal resources into the job or task (personal engagement) leading to qualitatively superior behavioural outputs. Hence conceptualizing and measuring engagement as a single "isolated" construct, whether it is understood as a psychological state (Schaufeli et al., 2002), an evaluation or appraisal (Zigarmi et al., 2009), or as a psychological connexion with the job tasks (Christian et al., 2011; Shuck et al., 2012), would only help, at best, to grasp the "tip of the iceberg", i.e. a peripheral manifestation of the phenomena.

The interpretation of engagement hereby proposed helps to make sense of the highly diverse and heterogeneous approaches to the issue of its antecedents in the OB literature. A myriad of constructs, models, or collections of constructs have been proposed and/or studied as antecedents of engagement, each based on its particular "school of thought". For example, studies on work engagement and its related measure, the UWES scale (Schaufeli et al., 2002) have explored its antecedents using the job demands-resources model (JD-R; Demerouti et al., 2001), and found work engagement to be correlated with personal resources such as self-efficacy, and optimism, and with job resources such as job characteristics and autonomy (e.g., Menguc, Auh, Fisher, & Haddad, 2013;

Schaufeli, Bakker, & Van Rhenen, 2009; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007; Xanthopoulou et al., 2009). Other studies have explored, instead, a variety of climate-related constructs as antecedents of engagement (e.g., Devi, 2009; Lee & Ok, 2015; Nair, 2006; Nimon & Zigarmi, 2015; Shuck & Reio, 2014), while others have suggested a variety of HRM practices (e.g., Chaudhary, Rangnekar, & Barua, 2014; Rana, Ardichvili, & Tkachenko, 2014; Valentin, 2014).

The approach to engagement as a process (rather than a state), and as an affect-based motivational (rather than cognitive-based and/or attitudinal) phenomenon, provides some clarifying criteria to the issue of its antecedents. First, it helps differentiate between antecedents *in* the engagement process from antecedents *of* the process itself. The former are psychological variables, i.e. interpretations or representations of the organizational/social context that are conducive to a certain psychological state. The latter are distal antecedents of the process, outside its conceptual domain, and thus they can reflect heterogeneous, and not necessarily psychological, phenomena such as HRM practices, organizational policies and procedures, or job characteristics. Secondly, it provides criteria to identify, among all possible psychological representations that an individual might elicit from a given work environment, those that can be considered as antecedents *in* the engagement process, namely those that are primarily affective rather than cognitive and, among these, only those that create the psychological conditions leading to a certain motivational state or mood.

In sum, the conceptualization of engagement as an affect-based motivational process addresses the gap in the extant OB literature regarding the conflicting interpretations of the construct, and helps highlight and clarify its role as a behavioural predictor in work settings. However, while the concept of engagement provides a potential theoretical approach to the question of drivers of service employee behaviour, there still remains the issue of how to approach its operationalization with a view to its managerial application in the context of services, i.e. with a view to address the issue service employee performance. This refers directly to the gap in the service climate model concerning the role of employee engagement as the "foundation" of service climate. As to how engagement can be operationalized and incorporated into the service climate model, i.e. how it would relate to other variables such as HRM and leadership practices, service climate, and customer experiences, will be the subject of the next chapter. It will be argued that the operationalization of the engagement process can be best approached by focusing on its psychological antecedents. This approach will lead, in turn, to the introduction of a proposed new construct, engagement climate, and the delineation of its conceptual domain.

Summary of chapter 2.2

Chapter 2.2 addressed the issue of social psychological predictors of work behaviour in organizational research, with a view to developing a behavioural "foundation" for the service climate model. This entailed dealing with several streams of research that intersect and overlap at various points, providing the basis for an integrated theoretical perspective. They include, as their main bodies, theoretical and empirical research on organizational climates and job attitudes, the literature and research on affect at work, and the emerging body of OB literature on employee engagement (see figure 2.3 for a summary view).

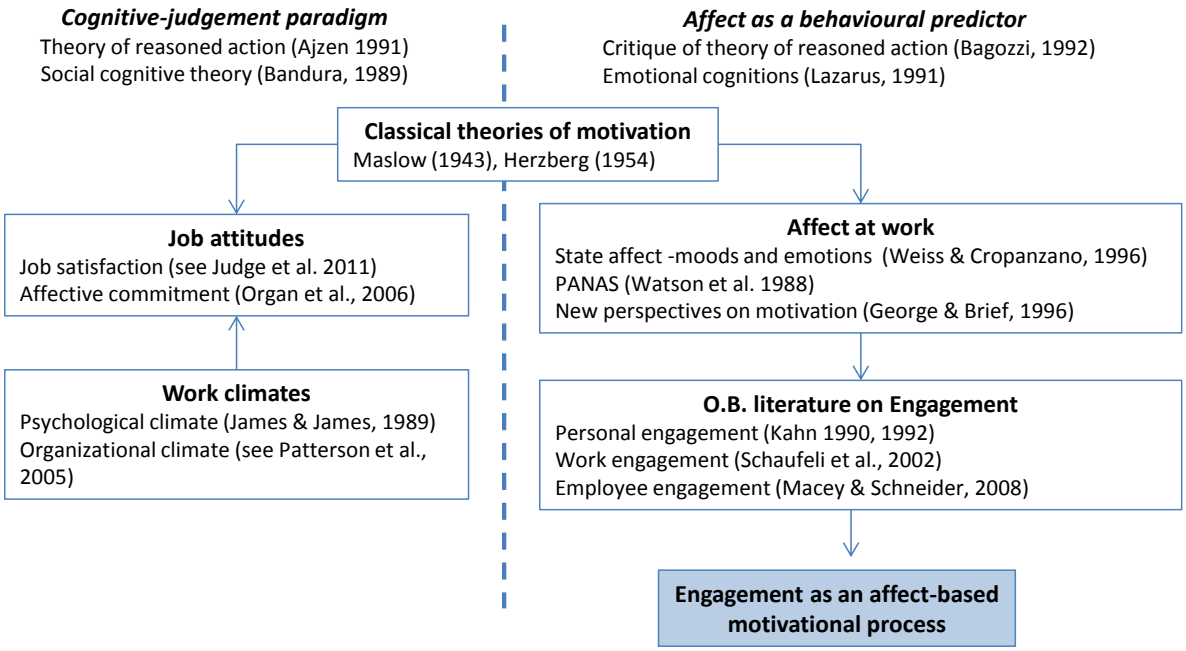
The review of the literature reveals that organizational work climates have been consistently linked to a variety of important organizational outcomes but they have not been posited as *direct* predictors of work behaviours. Rather, they have been studied either as antecedents of job attitudes or as mediators of specific behavioural outputs. Work attitudes such as job satisfaction, affective commitment, or job involvement have often been advocated in climate research as mediators between climate perceptions and behavioural outputs. However, job attitudes, as traditionally conceptualized and operationalized in organizational research, i.e. as evaluative judgements or cognitive appraisals, have shown significant limitations as behavioural predictors, particularly with regard to heavily affect-driven behaviours, such as those needed to achieve successful service delivery performances during a service encounter. Moreover, the deconstruction of job attitudes (Weiss, 2002) highlighted the role of affect as a potential behavioural predictor in itself, and led to reconsider (Bagozzi, 1992) the dominating cognitive-based paradigm that has traditionally sustained the attitude-behaviour link in social psychology.

As to what alternative constructs and/or theories beyond attitude research have tapped in affect as a behavioural predictor in work settings, the review suggested that both moods and emotions are equally needed to understand the affect-behaviour relationship, and that that discrete emotions do not have a direct influence on behaviours but an indirect one, that is, mediated by moods. The review also suggested that the conceptualization of mood as a single global construct, i.e. as positive affect (Watson et al., 1988) oversimplifies the variety of affective experiences in work settings and their equally varying behavioural outputs. In that sense, a promising route was identified in theories that revitalized perspectives on motivation (George & Brief, 1996; Kahn, 1990) by focusing on a specific mood that stems from the notion of "self-realization" or "self-concept" and which is posited to relate to distinct behavioural outputs.

Among these theories, Kahn's model of personal engagement (1990, 1992) was deemed as a suitable theoretical alternative to the mainstream view of job attitudes as predictors of work behaviours and performance. Also, while the theory was not aimed at any specific job role, it was found to be fully relevant to the issue of service employee behaviour, considering both the demanding nature of service roles in terms of personal resources, and the characteristics of the service industry, with their relatively less favourable work environments. Moreover, Kahn's theory presented a sound theoretical approach to the concept of engagement both from a micro-perspective, i.e. engagement as a psychological phenomenon, and also from a macro-perspective, i.e. engagement as a systemic or recursive phenomenon, hence providing a solid theoretical platform from which to address the gap, in the service climate model, concerning its foundations.

The choice of engagement as the potential approach to the issue of the foundations of service employee behaviours and performance led, in turn, to the review of the OB literature and research on this emerging construct. This body of literature is characterized by little consistency and much controversy regarding definitions, manifestations, and drivers of engagement, with several approaches competing as to how engagement should be conceptualized and measured. It was argued then that the conceptual domain of engagement can be clearly defined by revisiting its original formulation (Kahn, 1990, 1992), complemented with contributions from research on state affect and the self-concept in motivational theories. According to this interpretation, engagement contains three distinctive elements: (1) it is (primarily) an affective, rather than cognitive, phenomena, (2) its nature is motivational, rather than attitudinal, and (3) it is a process, not a state, that includes certain psychological antecedents or "conditions", a psychological state, and accompanying behaviours.

Figure 2.3 Predictors of work behaviour in organizational research



2.3. Engagement climate

Introduction

In Chapter 2.3 a proposed new construct, engagement climate, will be developed and put forth as the "OB foundation" that the service climate model needs in the prediction of service employee behaviour and performance. It will be argued that the operationalization of the engagement process can be best approached by focusing on its salient and more "actionable" manifestations, i.e. its antecedents, as opposed to the element "in the middle" which is the most elusive of the three, as it refers to purely psychological phenomena. These antecedents in the engagement process will be conceptualized as a specific set of psychological climate perceptions, which act as "microfoundations" (Felin et al., 2012), namely theoretical constructs supported by empirical examination that capture how the aggregation of micro-level phenomena (e.g. individual/psychological perceptions) leads to the emergence of macro-level phenomena (e.g. a collective climate construct). Therefore Engagement Climate will be posited as an Organisational-Level construct in which the unit of theory is the individual (i.e., psychological climate) but which allows for an organizational level of analysis through the aggregation of individual climate perceptions.

Engagement climate will be defined as a specific set of affectively charged psychological perceptions that the individual elicits from his/her work environment, leading to a particular affective state or

mood. This psychological state is motivational in nature and leads, in turn, to the investment of personal resources into the role or task, therefore influencing work behaviours and behavioural outcomes. Engagement Climate, as a latent social psychological construct, should virtually transcend the context of any one organisation or sector. However, given the nature of service work, Engagement Climate may most readily be observed (and fostered) in the context of services.

Engagement Climate will be conceptualized as a higher order multidimensional construct, comprising a number of second-order dimensions or facets, namely *Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression,* and *Overload,* each reflecting a specific type of affectively charged perceptions of a work environment leading to the experience of engagement.

The approach to the operationalization of engagement

The definition of engagement as a process rather than a state has important implications with regard to the approaches to its operationalization. For instance, consider the statements "I am satisfied with my work" or "I am committed to my work" and the apparently similar statement "I am engaged with my work". The first two denote a more or less stable thought or psychological state (i.e., I am *generally* satisfied, committed...) that is not associated with any specific behaviour whereas the third is, in fact, describing a concrete psychological experience that includes both a psychological state and its behavioural manifestations (i.e., I am *now* engaged...). Thus measuring engagement as a process in a single construct would require capturing simultaneously both the psychological state and its accompanying behaviours. Furthermore, the operationalization of engagement as a permanent or pervasive psychological state without a reference to its accompanying behaviours, as is the case of the UWES measure (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2002), erodes the distinctiveness of the construct and creates a "bleeding" or overlap with job attitudes, which might explain the conflicting and confusing interpretations of causality between work engagement and job attitudes in the recent engagement "linkage" literature (e.g., Barnes & Collier, 2013; Scrima et al., 2013; Yalabik et al., 2013).

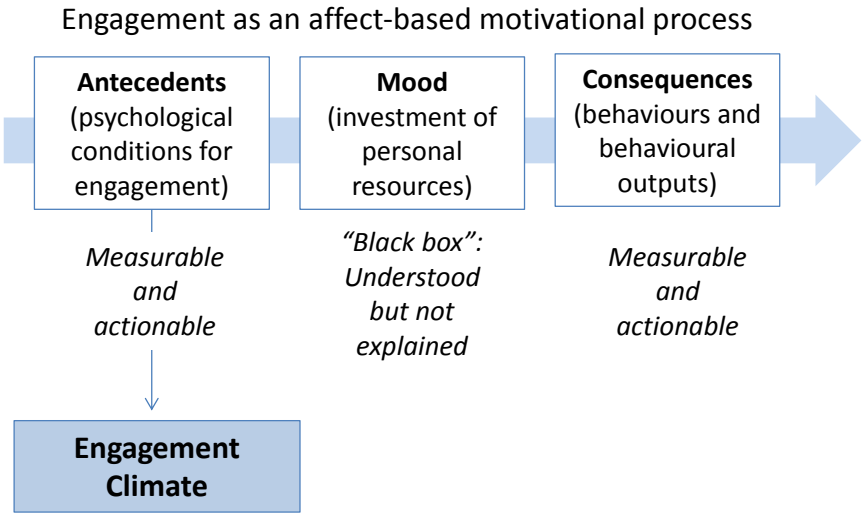
The measurement of engagement as single construct reflecting both a state and accompanying behaviours could be achieved, for example, by asking the individual to recall the frequency of past engagement experiences, i.e. situations in which the individual felt "engaged", energized, immersed, or absorbed in the job or task, as opposed to eliciting general evaluations or appraisals. However, this information would not tell us anything about the nature of the process, only of its occurrence, as the psychological conditions that lead to the experience of engagement will remain unexplored.

Some scholars (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008; Rich et al., 2010) have suggested alternatively that researchers should focus on sources of motivational energy within an employee's environment that lead to the experience of engagement and its distinctive behaviours rather than focusing on the experience and/or behaviours alone. This approach has been labelled ''main effects'' engagement research (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008), implying that if certain specific conditions (work environment perceptions) are appropriately altered, engagement will follow. Other scholars (e.g., Shuck et al., 2012; Zigarmi et al., 2010) have disputed this approach, on the premise that engagement involves primarily performance on immediate, work-related tasks, not attitudinal functions about or perceptions of the work environment and, therefore, the focal point of engagement research should be the "experience and interpretation of work during the ephemeral moment that work is underway" (Shuck et al., 2012, p. 15). Thus, while perceptions of the work environment are, for these authors, valuable to understand antecedents of engagement, they are excluded from the conceptual domain of the construct.

The view adopted here (see figure 2.4) is that the "antecedents" of engagement, as an affect-based motivational process, are an integral part of its conceptual domain. Therefore, any approach to its operationalization should necessarily take into account the three distinct "moments" or elements that define the process, i.e. psychological conditions (antecedents), a psychological state, and the actual investment of personal resources into work behaviour (outputs). Also, when approaching the operationalization of this process, it can be argued that the element "in the middle" is the most elusive of the three, as it refers to purely psychological phenomena, as opposed to what precedes it (psychological perceptions of an external environment) and what follows (behaviours and behavioural outputs). In that sense, "main effects" engagement research presents the advantage of focusing on those elements in the process that are more readily accessible to measurement and which can also be modified or acted upon through organizational interventions. In contrast, the operationalization of the element "in the middle", i.e. the psychological experience of engagement, would likely require a complex model containing a number of abstract and deeply intricate psychological variables, such as cognitions, appraisals, intentions, or affect, that could certainly lead to a better understanding of the phenomena, but of very limited applicability from a managerial perspective. Hence, the approach hereby adopted is to operationalize the phenomena of engagement based on the salient and more "actionable" manifestations of the process, i.e. its antecedents, as well as on its measurable outputs or consequences. What occurs in between is a "black box" inside of which it is *assumed* that a certain psychological experience takes place, and

which can be described as a connection between the individual and his/her work on multiple levels, or as a personal investment of multiple dimensions, i.e. physical, emotional, and cognitive (Christian et al., 2011; Kahn, 1992; Rich et al., 2010).

Figure 2.4 Approach to the operationalization of engagement



The antecedents *in* the engagement process or, in Kahn's (1990) terms, the psychological conditions for personal engagement, consist of certain momentary circumstances of people's experiences (emotions) that feed into the psychological state of engagement (mood). These affective experiences emanate from the individual's interaction with a given work environment. In Kahn's theory, work environment factors influencing the experience of engagement include elements of the job/role such as task characteristics, role characteristics, and work interactions, elements of the social system such as interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, management style, and organizational norms, and also individual distractions that impact the availability of personal resources with which to engage in role performances.

The view of the antecedents in the engagement process as a series of affectively charged perceptions of the work environment appears to be intimately related to the concept of psychological climate. Psychological climate has been defined as "a shared and enduring molar perception of the psychologically important aspects of the work environment" (Ashforth, 1985, p. 837) or as a molar construct comprising an individual's psychologically meaningful representations of proximal organizational structures, processes, and events (Rousseau, 1988). Several psychological climate models or molar constructs that have been put forth in organizational research

acknowledge, directly or indirectly, the role of affect in the genesis of certain "global beliefs" (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), "global perceptions" (S. P. Brown & Leigh, 1996) or "emotional cognitions" (L. A. James & James, 1989) that the individual elicits from his/her work environment. For example, Brown and Leigh (1996) describe them as perceptions of the organizational environment that take on "motivational or emotional significance" (p. 359), and Eisenberger et al. (1986) describe how these perceptions "create a positive emotional bond or affective attachment between the employee and the organization" (p. 501).

What these models also have in common is an understanding that those psychological climate perceptions, while affectively "charged", do not lead by themselves to behaviours, but rather influence job attitudes which, in turn, trigger the behavioural outputs of interest. For example, James and James (1989) suggest that positive perceptions of psychological climate will evoke feelings of satisfaction and identification with the job and the organization, and those positive work attitudes will in turn influence employee performance. Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) perceived organizational support is posited to influence affective commitment. Other models (e.g., Burke, Borucki, & Hurley, 1992; Kopelman, Brief, & Guzzo, 1990) similarly maintain that the relationships between psychological climate and behavioural outcomes such as performance, citizenship, tenure, or attendance are mediated by attitudes such as job satisfaction, affective commitment, and job involvement.

The view adopted here, which stems from the interpretation of engagement as an affect-based motivational process, is that certain affectively "charged" psychological climate perceptions, or emotional cognitions (Lazarus, 1982, 1991) can be differentiated from other perceptions associated with global affective concepts, such as well-being or perceived organizational support, which are also affectively "charged", but not *motivational*, i.e. they do not lead by themselves to behavioural outcomes. This specific category or group of psychological climate perceptions are best understood as conceptualizations of affective experiences that feed into a specific mood, rather than affective appraisals or evaluations that feed into attitudes. In other words, they reflect how individuals feel, rather than what they think, while interacting with their work environment. In that sense, these affective experiences are antecedents *in* the engagement process that provide a direct link to behaviours; therefore attitudinal constructs are not needed or can be "bypassed" in the explanation of the behavioural sequence.

Engagement climate as an organizational-level construct

Conceptualizing the antecedents in the engagement process as a specific set of psychological climate perceptions, namely as "engagement climate", also presents a distinct advantage with a view to its operationalization and fit within the service climate model. As already established during the review of Kahn's (1990, 1992) model, engagement can potentially be approached both from a micro-perspective, i.e. as a psychological phenomenon, but also from a macro-perspective, i.e. as a recursive social phenomenon or systemic "feedback loop". Hence, Engagement climate is being proposed as an organizational-level construct.

It is generally accepted in the organizational literature and research on climates (e.g., Glisson & James, 2002; Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009; Patterson et al., 2005) that, while the unit of theory for climate is the individual (i.e., psychological climate), the aggregation of individual climate perceptions can serve as a powerful explanatory tool of higher levels of analysis, such as the work group (Härtel, Gough, & Härtel, 2008; Liu et al., 2014), the business-unit, or the organization as a whole (Härtel & Ashkanasy, 2011; Takeuchi et al., 2009). While the issue of how to operationalize organizational climates has been a subject for debate and controversies (see Patterson et al., 2005), the mainstream view is that organizational climate exists when psychological climate perceptions are shared among employees of a work unit. An aggregate measure of organizational climate or a related climate construct can be computed and employed as an organization level measure of climate when perceptual agreement among employees exists (Glisson & James, 2002; Härtel & Ashkanasy, 2011; Subramony & Pugh, 2015).

Operationalizing the antecedents in the engagement process as a climate construct enables their study not only from a micro or psychological perspective but also from macro or social organizational perspective. Engagement climate as an organizational-level construct would reflect a shared perceptual agreement, among individuals interacting within a given work setting, with regard to the psychological conditions for personal engagement that are collectively felt/experienced in that setting. This approach exemplifies what has been referred to as "microfoundations" (Felin et al., 2012), namely theoretical constructs supported by empirical examination that capture how the aggregation of micro-level phenomena (e.g. individual/psychological perceptions) leads to the emergence of macro-level phenomena (e.g. a collective climate construct). Detailed descriptions of construct emergence in management literature include, for example, *organizational climate*, that is, employees' shared perceptions emerging from "unambiguous messages communicated to employees about what is appropriate behaviour" (D. E. Bowen & Ostroff, 2004), *service climate*, i.e.

the perceptions of the events, practices, and behaviours that get rewarded and expected in a setting with regard to service (Schneider, 1990), or *collective attitudes*, which are expected to emerge due to shared work environments and common employee dispositions (Whitman et al., 2010). In sum, collective constructs are built upon individual-level foundational constructs and require certain enabling conditions, such as common employee experiences, social interactions, or situational cues and signals, for their formation. Microfoundations have been specifically identified as a promising future research direction with regard to the service climate model and its theoretical groundings (Subramony & Pugh, 2015).

Engagement climate as a group-level construct

Organizational climate has been defined as shared perceptions among members of an organization with regard to organizational policies, procedures, and practices (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). A multilevel interpretation of this definition suggests (Zohar, 2000) that policies define strategic goals whereas procedures provide tactical guidelines for action related to these goals. Practices, on the other hand, relate to the implementation of policies and procedures in each subunit. In other words, top managers are concerned with policy making and the establishment of procedures to facilitate policy implementation, whereas at lower hierarchical levels, supervisors execute these procedures by turning them into specific action directives. This suggests that sources of climate perceptions relate to two levels of analysis, that is, policies and procedures relate to the organization level and supervisory practices relate to the group level of analysis. Assuming that these sources can be discriminated on the basis of between-groups variation in a single organization, it then becomes possible to speak of separate organization-level and group-level climates (Zohar, 2000, p. 587).

Hence following Zohar's (2000) recommendations, a prerequisite for positing Engagement climate as a group-level climate would be that individuals discriminate between, and form separate perceptions of, instituted procedures and supervisory practices in a given setting (p. 588). Next, the conditions necessary for a group-level engagement climate (p. 589) should include a) within-group homogeneity (i.e., whether members of subunits supervised by the same individual have shared perceptions concerning their supervisor's practices), and b) between-groups variance (i.e., whether group-level engagement climates differ significantly between subunits in a single organization).

However, Engagement climate, as a group-level construct, would differ conceptually and methodologically from certain climate constructs based on shared perceptions of proximal work groups, such as work-group emotional climate (N. R. Anderson & West, 1998; Härtel et al., 2008; West, 1990). These constructs carry the assumption that the appropriate level of analysis at which

to examine those shared perceptions is not the individual or the organization but the work group (Liu et al., 2014). Proximal work groups, i.e. teams "to which individuals are assigned, whom they identify with, and whom they interact with regularly in order to perform work-related tasks" (N. R. Anderson & West, 1998, p. 236), are posited in this line of research, to be the primary medium through which shared climates evolve through social construction processes, as a certain "affective group tone" (J. M. George, 1990) develops within a work-group if group members experience similar kinds of affective states at work. This collective or shared sense of affect is posited, in turn, to influence the job attitudes and subsequent performances of the group members (Härtel et al., 2008).

Engagement climate differs both conceptually and methodologically from this approach. On the one hand, Engagement climate does not refer to perceptions of general affective experiences but rather, as already discussed, to a specific sub-group among those, which are conducive to the motivational process of engagement. On the other hand, Engagement climate, as a specific subset of psychological climate, reflects individual perceptions, hence the individual, and not the proximal work-group, is the relevant unit of theory, measurement and analysis, i.e. the microfoundation of the construct. This does not preclude from approaching Engagement climate as a multi-level construct, namely as organizational or group-level climate, depending on the particular research interests. However, an approach to Engagement climate exclusively as a team-level phenomenon would impoverish the meaning and scope of the construct at the aggregate level of analysis, and would ignore the possibility, for example, of exploring the decisive influence of organization-wide policies, practices, routines and so forth in the emergence and development of organizational cultures and climates (Ferris et al., 1998; Schein, 1990).

Engagement climate and the concept of climate strength

As already discussed, shared perceptual agreement at the individual level of analysis has traditionally been accepted as the defining condition for the existence of a multi-level construct. Organizational climate, then, is the average or most typical way that people in the organization describe it, and within-group agreement in this model serves as a prerequisite for the group-level variable (Chan, 1998). The absence of shared perception, or high within-group variability, implies that a group-level construct does not exist; in other words, the group has no shared meaning (Klein, Conn, Smith, et al., 2001).

The concept of climate strength (Schneider et al., 2002), however, suggests that the average aggregate scores typically used to index climate perceptions will not have the same effects, and that

effects vary as a function of the variability of those averages. Thus climate strength is not only related to specific outcomes but it may also moderate the association between organizational climate and outcomes.

Strong climates are created when people perceive events the same way and induce uniform expectations about the most appropriate behaviour. By contrast, people in weak climates do not perceive events the same way, and expectations about appropriate behaviour are inconsistent or even non-existent. Thus when climate is both positive and strong, one would expect the most consistently positive behaviour from employees; further, when climate is both negative and strong, one would expect the most consistently negative behaviours. However, when climate is positive and weak, the consistency of the resultant behaviour may suffer; this is similar for the condition when climate is negative but weak. In other words, in weak climate conditions, regardless of the level of the climate perceptions, predictions of behaviour would be less reliable than when the climate is strong (Schneider et al., 2002, p. 221).

Climate strength is operationalized in terms of within-group variability in climate perceptions—the less within-group variability, the stronger the climate. This has important implications for multilevel research on climate, which traditionally proceeds in two steps. First, researchers determine whether there is appropriate within-group agreement in their measures by using statistics such as the intraclass correlation coefficient; then they aggregate their measures to the appropriate level of analysis (e.g., L. R. James, 1982; Klein, Conn, Smith, et al., 2001). However, if these statistics reach a threshold that indicates aggregation is appropriate, this does not mean the absence of variability. In fact, the degree of within-group variability may have very different effects, depending on context (Schneider et al., 2002, p. 227).

Within-group variability or climate strength will be likely to moderate the relationship between Engagement climate and its behavioural outcomes. A positive and strong Engagement climate will be expected to correlate more strongly with positive behavioural and organizational outputs associated with the experience of personal engagement. A negative and strong Engagement climate, on the other hand, would be likely associated with specific negative behavioural outputs related to burnout or role stress. Lastly, weak Engagement climates, i.e. ambiguous or contradictory perceptions regarding the psychological conditions for personal engagement in a given setting, will be likely less reliable behavioural predictors but, nevertheless, useful for the purpose of organizational diagnosis.

Engagement climate: construct domain

Engagement climate is defined as a specific set of affectively charged psychological perceptions that the individual elicits from his/her work environment, leading to a particular affective state or mood. This psychological state is motivational in nature and leads, in turn, to the investment of personal resources into the role or task, therefore influencing work behaviours and behavioural outcomes.

Engagement Climate, as a latent social psychological construct, should virtually transcend the context of any one organisation or sector, i.e. it could theoretically be found in any organizational context, not exclusively in service organizations. However, given the nature of service work, Engagement climate will be expected to exert a non-negligible influence in service employee behaviour and performance, considering both the nature of service roles and the characteristics of the service industry. Service roles are particularly demanding in terms of the personal resources they require to be performed successfully. Service employees not only are expected to display nonstandard, adaptive, and creative behaviours during service encounters (Gwinner et al., 2005) but also to engage regularly in emotion management (Grandey et al., 2011; Hochschild, 1983), and to regularly display behaviours that would be considered discretionary in many other job roles (Vey & Campbell, 2004). They are required to push aside any personal emotions and focus positively toward the customer. They often face emotionally challenging service encounters as they have to deal with demanding, rude, or irate customers and, consequently, are extremely susceptible to performance adverse effects such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, and service misbehaviour (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Kim & Yoon, 2012). Moreover, service employees often have to respond to these role demands in comparatively less favourable work environments than those present in other industries. Tourism and hospitality industry, in particular, is characterized by relatively unfavourable work conditions, including long working hours and unstable shift work, working on weekends and holidays, low wages, and lack of employment stability, all of which are likely to have a negative impact on service employees' perceptions and emotional interpretations of their jobs and their work environments (Pienaar & Willemse, 2008).

Engagement climate, as a microfoundation (Felin et al., 2012), is posited to exert its influence on service employee behaviour and performance from two complementary perspectives, i.e. a micro or psychological perspective and a macro or social perspective:

(1) As a psychological climate construct, engagement climate contributes to the domain conceptualization of the emerging engagement construct in the organizational behaviour (OB) literature and to the clarification of its role as a behavioural predictor. Specifically, engagement

climate reflects a theoretically coherent and ontologically uniform approach to the issue of psychological inputs or antecedents of engagement.

(2) As an organizational climate construct, engagement climate provides the means for the measurement of the inputs or antecedents of engagement within a systemic and recursive view of the engagement process, i.e. as a mapping of perceptions about certain aspects or dimensions of the internal environment of an organization, or an organizational setting, constituting a diagnosis of the situation for the purpose of disclosing problems or dysfunctions deserving of correction.

Engagement climate dimensions

Engagement climate is understood to be a molar or multidimensional construct that captures a series of work environment facets or dimensions, each reflecting a specific type or group of affectively charged perceptions or emotional cognitions (Lazarus, 1982, 1991). These dimensions (see Figure 2.5) are *Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression,* and *Overload*. Their conceptualization is based on Kahn's "thick descriptions" in his ethnographic research (1990, 1992), and also on other psychological climate dimensions or constructs in the extant literature that fit into the conceptual domain of engagement climate. The twelve engagement climate dimensions are meant to capture the experiential components and types of influence in a given work environment that create the psychological conditions for engagement, that is, meaningfulness, psychological safety, and availability (Kahn, 1990, 1992).

Figure 2.5 Engagement climate dimensions

Contribution The perception that one's work significantly affects organizational processes and outcomes.	**Support** The perception that management allows one to try and fail without fear of reprisals, and helps achieve one's work role objectives.
Recognition The perception that the organization appreciates and acknowledges one's efforts and contributions.	**Cohesion** The perception of togetherness and sharing within the work-group, including the willingness to cooperate and maintain friendly relations.
Challenge The perception that the work requires one's best efforts and resources to be accomplished, and involves the use of creativity and a variety of skills.	**Trust** The perception that the organization is sincere, open, and consistent with regard to its motives and intentions towards the employee, and can be expected to honour the promises made.
Autonomy The perception that one has the ability to self-	**Fairness** The perception that organizational practices aim

determine work procedures, goals, and priorities with regard to one's work role.	to be equitable and non-arbitrary regarding what is decided and how decisions are made.
Clarity The perception that role expectations and work situations are clear, consistent, and predictable with regard to demands, criteria or relationship with other tasks.	**Participation** The perception that one has the ability to influence, participate in, or make decisions concerning organizational policies and practices
Self-expression The perception that expressions of individuality in one's work role, such as personality, creativity, sense of humour, feelings, personal values and self-concepts, are accepted by the organization.	**Overload** The perception that one has sufficient time, training, or resources to complete assigned tasks according to standards.

The above described approach to the operationalization of Kahn's antecedents of personal engagement differs from the one adopted in some studies (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004; Rich et al., 2010), in which the psychological conditions for engagement, i.e. meaningfulness, psychological safety, and availability, are conceptualized as three distinct constructs, each related to a different set of work environment perceptions. In May et al.'s (2004) study, all three conditions were found to be positively related to a self-developed measure of engagement, with meaningfulness displaying the strongest positive relation. Rich et al.'s study (2010), on the other hand, identified moderate relationships between engagement (also a self-developed measure) and three antecedent constructs, based on Kahn's determinants, i.e. *value congruence* (meaningfulness), *perceived organizational support* (safety), and *core self-evaluations* (availability).

The view adopted here, however, is that Kahn's three psychological conditions for personal engagement are *descriptors* of the type of psychological perceptions that lead to the experience of engagement, rather than a categorization of those perceptions into three separate groups. In other words, meaningfulness, psychological safety, and availability can be better understood as descriptive, intertwined aspects of a single psychological phenomenon, rather than independent constructs each of them reflecting a distinct dimension or associated to a specific and exclusive set of work environment perceptions. Their intertwined nature is particularly evident in the case of meaningfulness and psychological safety; for example, feelings or perceptions of clarity regarding role expectations can lead to both or either a sense of meaningfulness (clear purpose) and a sense of psychological safety (absence of ambiguity); feelings or perceptions of challenging work can elicit a sense of meaningfulness but also of psychological safety (e.g., allowance to take risks or make

mistakes), and so forth. Thus, the psychological conditions for personal engagement are best understood as guiding concepts rather than as independent constructs.

The approach hereby adopted also differs from other existing approaches to molar climate constructs, consisting of summarized or categorized employee perceptions of organizational procedures, practices and occurrences (Patterson et al., 2005). If we were to follow this type of conceptualization, engagement climate dimensions could be broadly structured as reflecting different types of organizational influences, such as job and role characteristics (contribution, recognition, challenge, autonomy, clarity, and overload) and social system characteristics (self-expression, support, cohesion, trust, and fairness) or, following a common structure in molar climate models, as characteristics related to the job/role (contribution, recognition, challenge, autonomy, clarity, and overload), to the management style or leadership (support, trust, and self-expression), to the work group (cohesion), and to the organizational subsystems (fairness and participation).

However, the boundaries in this type of classifications are often blurred. For example, feelings or perceptions of job/role clarity will most likely be influenced by the way the job was designed and the nature of the tasks, but also by its relative position in the organizational structure, by aspects of the social system such as cooperation and teamwork, and most certainly by the role of the supervisor in providing clear goals and direction. Perceptions of fairness can stem from organizational norms and processes, but also from management behaviours. Perceptions of work group cohesion can stem from the social interactions among group members, but other influences such as the organizational structure or the role of the manager could also be accounted for, and so forth.

The above examples show that, while structuring the dimensions according to the type of influence may serve for general descriptive purposes, it can also be misleading. Engagement climate dimensions are intended to reflect systemic properties and, in that respect, they cannot be associated exclusively with one type or another of organizational features but rather as salient manifestations of how system members (emotionally) perceive the system in which they operate. This does not deny the possibility that certain influences might play a more determining role than others with regard to certain dimensions. For example, it is likely that the perceived leadership style of the immediate superior will be a more determining influence of support than other perceptions related e.g. to the job content or the interaction with co-workers. However, it is equally likely that the perceived leadership style in the given example will not be the only influence to be accounted for with regard to perceptions or feelings of support. In sum, engagement climate dimensions are

not meant to identify specific organizational features in a given work environment, but rather to highlight the emerging properties of a given system regarding the psychological conditions for engagement experienced by its members.

Engagement climate as psychological climate

Engagement climate can be subsumed under the general concept of psychological climate, to the extent that it contains psychologically meaningful representations of the work environment. However, it constitutes a distinct type of psychological climate in the sense that, among all possible psychological representations (be they purely cognitive or affective) that an individual might elicit from his/her work environment, those constituting Engagement climate are expected to have a distinct and direct influence on the individual's motivational focus and subsequent in-role behaviours, as opposed to other perceptions that may influence attitudes, i.e. evaluations, but not necessarily the individual's motivational focus and behaviours. The chosen denomination for the construct reflects both a common origin and a fundamental distinction with other climate-related constructs, as it will be discussed next.

Since Engagement climate is defined as a distinct subset of the more global concept of psychological climate, Engagement climate perceptions can also be expected to relate to a higher order factor or schema concerning the degree to which the environment is personally beneficial or detrimental to one's well-being (L. A. James & James, 1989; Lazarus, 1982). However, while Engagement climate perceptions can be interpreted in terms of concern for one's well-being, not all psychological climate perceptions are relevant in the engagement process. In other words, Engagement climate does not include all possible representations of the work environment that are associated with positive affect (or a general sense of well-being) or as generally positive or beneficial for the self, but only those among them that have a distinct impact on the individual's motivational focus and subsequent behaviours.

Engagement climate also differs from other climate constructs based on a multiple-stakeholder perspective, such as "concern for customers" (e.g., Burke et al., 1992; Chuang & Liao, 2010; P. M. Wright, Gardner, Moynihan, & Allen, 2005), or focused on a strategic area of organizational functioning, such as service climate (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Schneider et al., 1992). These perceptions of organizational practices and procedures with regard, for example, to service quality (Schneider et al., 1998) or the well-being of customers (Burke et al., 1992) do not constitute Engagement climate to the extent that they reflect, in Ortony et al.'s (1988) terms, "fortunes-of-others" (i.e. customers) as opposed to "fortunes-of-self" (i.e. the service employee). However, they

are likely to have an important role to play, albeit an indirect one, with regard to the engagement process and its behavioural outcomes, as critical elements of the feedback loop, or the process by which people's behaviours create performance outcomes and experiences that, in turn, engender various types of feedback which then influence future experiences and behaviours (Kahn, 1990). For example, a service employee will personally engage in his/her role and do his/her best cognitively, emotionally, and physically to obtain customer satisfaction on the premise that certain psychological conditions in the work environment that are important for the employee (not for the customer) are met. Thus, at this point, the motivational drive is exclusively the employee's self-concern. However, the likelihood of this behaviour to be repeated in the future will depend heavily on feedback. If the service employee's behavioural investment is not reinforced, acknowledged or appreciated, whether directly or indirectly, the employee will modify accordingly his/her predisposition to personally engage in the future. Therefore, a service climate, or a climate of concerns for customers, represents the different environmental elements that reinforce customer-oriented behaviours, but they are not the same as the affective antecedents of such behaviours, namely, the psychological perceptions that trigger the engagement process. These systemic implications will be further explored next, when discussing the fit of Engagement climate in the service climate model.

Engagement climate as the foundation of service climate

The major distinctiveness of engagement climate with regard to other climate constructs is that it reflects certain environmental perceptions that trigger a motivational/behavioural process, as opposed to other psychological perceptions associated, for example, with a general sense of well-being, or with appraisals of the work environment, that do not lead by themselves to behaviours. However, as to whether engagement climate can be posited as an antecedent of service employee performance, it is worth taking into account Weiss's (2002) observation that

> "people at work don´t perform, they behave. Performance is the result of the fit between a person's behaviours and the demands of the job/task. Performance itself is not a psychological construct and therefore cannot be fully understood through psychological theory" (p. 184).

Performance can be defined (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012) as employee behaviours that are consistent with role expectations and that contribute to organizational effectiveness. Hence the importance to differentiate between the service employee's desire to behave, which is a precondition but not a direct determinant of performance, and the effectiveness of those behaviours from the perspective of the organization. In other words, behaviours as psychological

outcomes that are personally relevant are not necessarily the same as those that are organizationally relevant (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008). Thus the issue of service employee performance needs to be addressed from the systemic or "macro-perspective" of engagement climate as a collective or aggregate construct, rather than from its psychological or "micro-perspective".

The systemic nature of the engagement process is what Kahn refers to as "people's cycles of psychological presence and absence across role performance situations" (1992, p. 332) or as "the behaviours by which people bring in or leave out their personal selves during work role performances" (1990, p. 694)., i.e. a recursive phenomenon or "feedback-loop" of people's behaviours creating performance outcomes and experiences that, in turn, engender various types of feedback which then influence future experiences and behaviours. The approach to engagement climate as a systemic variable allows for the exploration of its relationship with a series of behavioural and performance-related outcomes, with the understanding that (1) these relationships are reciprocal, rather than linear, as individual's behavioural outputs are, in turn, inputs for others within the system that attach to them meaning that either reinforces or erodes their perception of the setting (feedback-loop), and (2) performance outcomes are a distal, rather than direct, consequence of those behaviours and other mediating variables will be needed to predict organizationally relevant outcomes.

In that sense, the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014) provides a more comprehensive approach to the issue of service employee performance by introducing key mediating variables that explain the transition from energized behaviours (engagement climate) to strategically oriented behaviours (service climate) and finally to performance outcomes (customer experiences). Acting as a bridge between engagement climate and performance, service climate represents the different environmental elements that reinforce and give strategic focus to customer-oriented behaviours. This could be illustrated as follows: a) engagement climate would reflect those affectively charged perceptions of the work environment that influence service employees' desire to give their best while performing their role, which includes, as in any service role, the aim of satisfying the customer; b) service climate would reflect perceptions in that work environment (routines and rewards) through which employees interpret not only that efforts to satisfy the customer are valued and appreciated (feedback) but also which specific service behaviours are expected and desired (strategic focus).

The dynamic interaction between engagement climate and service climate is critical to determine service employee performances. For example, one might expect to find work environments reflecting a strong service climate, i.e. organizations that go to great lengths to promote and reward customer-oriented behaviours, but reflecting also a weak engagement climate, e.g. lack of autonomy or insufficient support from the supervisor, that would inhibit engaged behaviour. Conversely, one might expect to find work environments with a highly positive engagement climate, but not necessarily translated into successful service performances, because the organization does not provide sufficient feedback or symbolic cues that customer-oriented behaviours are expected and valued.

Engagement climate fulfils the role, within the service climate model, of what has been referred to as the "foundation" for service climate (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). In early service climate research, Schneider and his associates had already pointed out that "behind service climate must be a climate that promotes the conditions in which a service climate may exist" (Schneider, 1990, p. 398), or that "climate for employee well-being serves as a foundation for a climate for service. Employees need to feel that their own needs have been met within the organization before they can become enthusiastic about meeting the needs of customers" (Schneider & Bowen, 1993, p. 43). Later on this foundation would be directly associated with the concept of engagement as "engaged employees are more willing to do the kinds of things a service climate asks of them, and, similarly, a service climate is more easily built on a foundation of engaged employees" (Schneider, Macey, Barbera, et al., 2009, p. 24). In this model of service climate (see D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014) it is suggested that the foundation of employee engagement is built upon the following inputs: the resources that support and facilitate people's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), the challenging and involving work they do (Coelho & Augusto, 2010), and the fairness and resulting trust they experience (Li & Cropanzano, 2009; W. H. Macey et al., 2009).

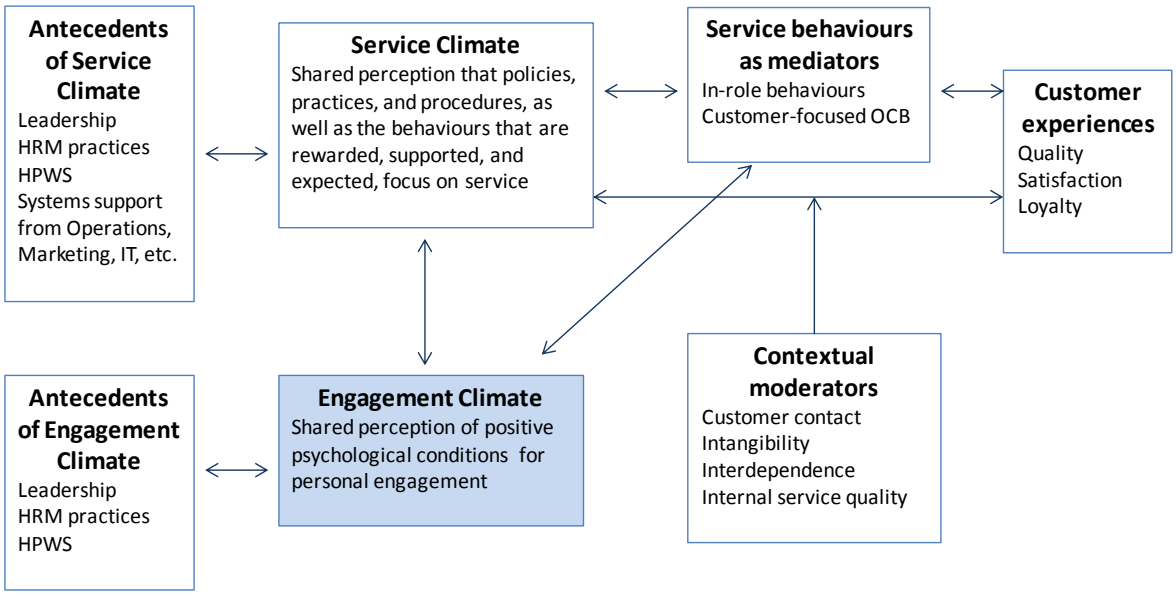
The Engagement climate construct integrates these inputs but also incorporates other dimensions that are deemed to contribute to the psychological experience of engagement. For example, antecedents of engagement in JD-R based studies, i.e. job resources such as supervisor support, autonomy and co-worker support, can also be interpreted as Engagement climate dimensions, to the extent that they are perceptions of the work environment that supply certain psychological resources leading to engagement. Engagement climate can also help integrate other seemingly heterogeneous variables such as emotional exhaustion (i.e. overload), supervisor support, internal service (i.e. support), or employee psychological capital, that have been shown to influence service

performance and customer experiences through the mediation of service climate (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Ehrhart et al., 2011; Lam et al., 2010; Simbula & Guglielmi, 2013; Walumbwa, Peterson, Avolio, & Hartnell, 2010). These studies also suggest that the relationships between the main constructs in the service model are generally reciprocal, rather than linear, thus giving support to the notion of a systemic feedback loop.

Relationship with other variables in the service climate model

In addition to its role as a foundation of service climate, Engagement climate will be expected to correlate with other variables in the model, specifically to influence contextual performance or OCB, and to be influenced by HRM/leadership practices, as depicted in figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6 Engagement Climate in the service climate model



Source: Adapted from Bowen and Schneider., 2014

First, engagement climate will be expected to influence OCB both directly and through the mediation of service climate. Behaviour supporting organizational functioning but beyond the call of duty is usually referred to as organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB; Organ et al., 2006; P. C. Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983) or as the broader concept of contextual performance that includes OCB and also other constructs such as prosocial organizational behaviour (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; George, 1991; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986), organizational spontaneity (George & Brief, 1992) or extra role behaviours (Van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean Parks, 1995). Such behaviour specifically directed at customers has also been referred to as customer-focused OCB (Bettencourt et al., 2001; Schneider et al., 2005). Accumulated evidence from quantitative studies suggests that high levels of

engagement are associated with high levels of contextual performance, usually in the shape of OCB (see Christian et al., 2011; Rich et al., 2010; Soane, 2013). Contextual performance, on the other hand, has been shown in the services management literature to be strongly correlated to customer experiences both as generic OCB (Borucki & Burke, 1999; O.M. Karatepe, 2013; Liao & Chuang, 2004; N. P. Podsakoff et al., 2009; Schneider et al., 2005) and as customer-focused OCB (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005).

What characterizes OCB and other contextual performance related behaviours, rather than the in-role/extra-role distinction that may change over time and/or across employees, organizations, and situations (e.g., Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004; Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994; Vey & Campbell, 2004), is their spontaneous and discretionary nature, which suggests that a certain affective mood (George & Brief, 1992) or motivational focus (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008) is required for their display. In that sense, OCB can be interpreted as behavioural outcomes of engagement, to the extent that "engaged behaviour is a behaviour that, given specific frames of reference, goes beyond what is typically or normally displayed or expected and that attributions about whether the behaviour was discretionary or not are unnecessary" (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008, p. 16). For example, Meyer et al. (2004) suggested that under circumstances where failure to perform a task as usual might be excused because of extraordinary conditions, otherwise in-role behaviours might be considered extra-role. This implies that certain conditions allow for freedom of choice as to whether to engage in certain task behaviours; engagement, as in "doing something extra" or "going above and beyond" would be considered doing what is normal (i.e., in-role) when normal conditions do not apply. Thus, OCB can be considered as a specific type of behavioural outputs that, because of their discretionary nature, would not take place unless the individual was in a state of personal engagement towards his/her job (Kahn, 1990).

Focusing on engagement climate as an antecedent of OCB or contextual performance, instead of focusing on the behaviours themselves (whether as extra-role or as discretionary), presents an additional advantage from a managerial perspective. The increasing amount of OCB-related studies since they were introduced in the early 1980s is but an indication that organizations place a high value in this type of behaviour and understand too well its impact on organizational effectiveness in today's complex and ever-changing business environments (W. H. Macey et al., 2009). As a way to encourage, monitor and manage these behaviours, many organizations, mostly through their HRM departments, have been increasingly incorporating them into roles by means of competency inventories or values management (e.g., Blanchard & O'Connor, 1997; Buchko, 2007; Dolan &

Richely, 2006); in other words, they have sought to turn them into role behaviours by letting the job occupant know, one way or another, that these behaviours are expected to some extent. For example, Vey and Campbell (2004) showed how conventional forms of OCB, such as conscientiousness and courtesy, have practically become in-role behaviours, explicitly stated through service role descriptions or competency inventories.

The absence of discretionary behaviours, e.g., not being helpful enough to co-workers, not showing enough initiative to suggest innovation, or not showing enough interest in self-development, have also become recurring examples of sub-standard or less than optimal performance in competency inventories across all types of organizations and industries. However, by turning extra-role behaviours into in-role, i.e. into expected, controllable and rewarded behaviours, organizations have somehow deprived them of their essence. One of the key aspects of OCB and other contextual/discretionary behaviours is that they stem from social exchange relationships (Blau, 1964), namely social norms of reciprocity in which the equivalence of return to both parties is not an issue. When these discretionary behaviours become in-role/expected, the "quid pro quo" element becomes salient and therefore the relationship becomes purely economic or transactional. However, this "trap" could be avoided if the managerial focus was directed not towards promoting the behaviours themselves –or at least not exclusively – but mostly towards promoting the environmental conditions that make them possible, i.e. the Engagement climate.

Secondly, Engagement climate will be expected, in the service climate model, to be influenced by the organization's HRM/leadership practices. The concept of Engagement climate helps differentiate between distal antecedents of the engagement process in service settings, i.e. HRM/leadership practices, and the posited effects of such practices (e.g., autonomy, clarity, challenge...), which constitute the psychological antecedents *in* the process, i.e. Engagement climate dimensions. Service climate research has focused, in particular, on certain packages or "bundles" of several combined general HRM practices or high-performing work systems (HPWS; Sienknecht & Van Aken, 1999). For example, Chuang and Liao (2010) suggested that HPWS enhance a business unit's market performance by facilitating two types of strategically targeted organizational climate: concern for employees and concern for customers (Burke et al., 1992), which further encourage employees to engage in cooperative behaviours with customers (service performance) and co-workers (OCB). The study confirmed that climate of concern for customers mediated the relationship between HPWS and employee service performance, and climate of concern for employees mediated the relationship between HPWS and employee helping behaviour provided to co-workers. Similarly, a study by

Karatepe (2013) on hotel employees showed work engagement acting as a full mediator of the effects of HPWS on job performance and extra-role customer service.

These studies support the notion that employees' perceptions and interpretations of HRM practices, rather than the actual practices themselves, are the key mediators in the behavioural sequence, in other words, that climates mediate the relationship between HPWS and service employee performance (P. M. Wright et al., 2005). In that sense, certain HRM practices or HPWS may be targeted to influence perceptions of service climate as "fortunes of others" i.e. customers. However, they will only be effective if there are also HRM practices or HPWS contributing to perceptions of engagement climate as "fortunes of self".

With regard to leadership practices, research has shown both in general OB studies (Kozlowski & Doherty, 1989; Patterson et al., 2005) and in services management (Subramony & Pugh, 2015) that leader behaviour has considerable potential to affect climates. Leaders serve as interpretive filters of relevant organizational processes and practices for all group members, thus contributing to common climate perceptions. In service settings, leaders play a key role in creating the social context within which employees' service behaviour is enacted, thereby influencing customer outcomes. For instance, there is evidence linking service-focused leadership (Schneider et al., 2005), transformational leadership (Liao & Chuang, 2007), and effective leadership (Hui et al., 2007) with service climate. Leader behaviours in service units have also been linked with a variety of employee proactive behaviours towards customers (Martin et al., 2013). Conversely, abusive supervision perpetuated by leaders has been linked with counterproductive behaviours of service employees (Detert, Treviño, Burris, & Andiappan, 2007). As in the case of HRM practices or specific HPWS, leadership practices that are targeted to influence perceptions of service climate as "fortunes of others", i.e. customers, will only be effective if there are also leadership practices contributing to perceptions of engagement climate as "fortunes of self".

Therefore service climate, as a "climate of interest" that gives strategic direction to service employee performances by signalling desired/expected service behaviours, i.e. as a climate of concern for customers (Burke et al., 1992), emerges, among other factors, from certain HRM/leadership practices and influences customer experiences through the mediation of service-oriented OCB. However, this sequence can only take place if it occurs upon a foundation of Engagement climate, i.e. a climate of concern for employees, which will also be emerging from certain HRM/leadership practices, and will influence OCB both directly and through the mediation of

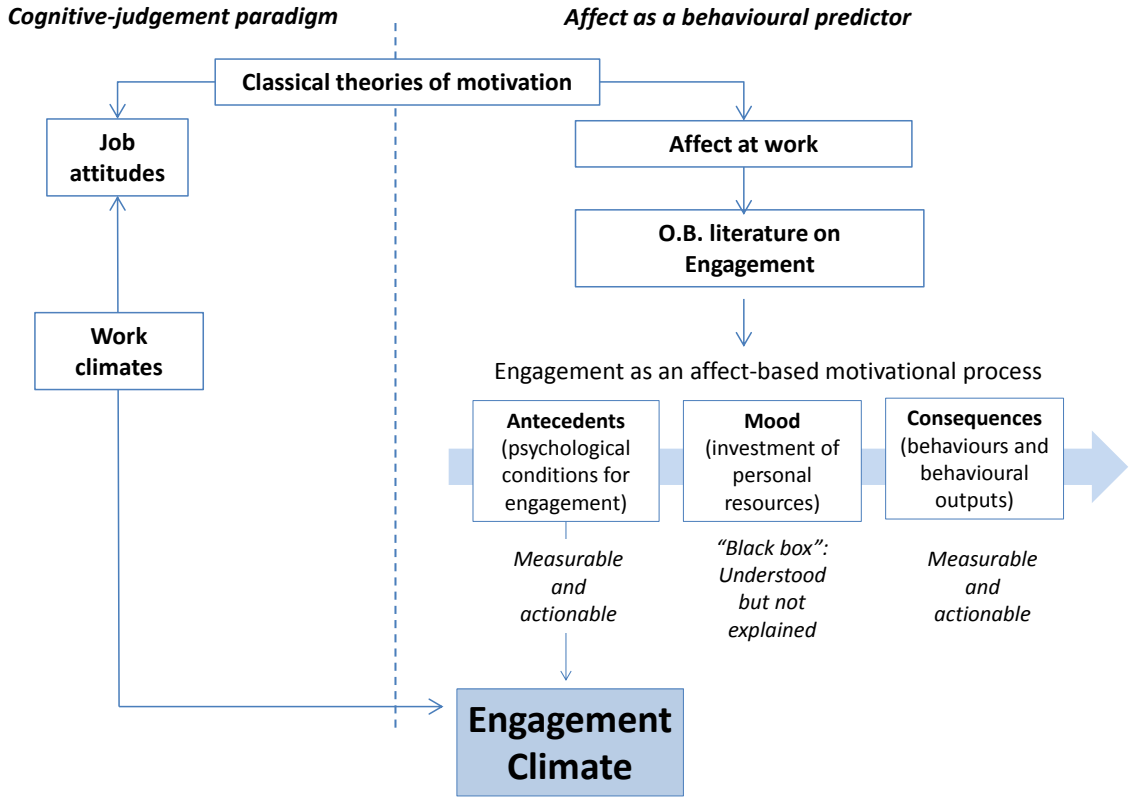
service climate. Thus, while engagement climate provides the foundation, or "contextual factors that sustain work behaviour" (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014), i.e. the psychological conditions for the service employee to desire to engage, service climate provides the strategic direction of the engagement that leads to performance, i.e. to organizationally effective behaviours.

Summary of chapter 2.3

The definition of engagement as an affect-based motivational process was adopted as the theoretical base from which to approach its operationalization, with a view to address the gap in the service climate model concerning its behavioural "foundations". It was then argued that the operationalization of the engagement process can be best approached by focusing on the salient and more "actionable" manifestations of the process, i.e. its antecedents, as opposed to the element "in the middle" which is the most elusive of the three, as it refers to purely psychological phenomena. This approach has been labelled "main effects" engagement research (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008; Rich et al., 2010), implying that if certain specific conditions (work environment perceptions) are appropriately altered, engagement will follow. This approach led, in turn, to the conceptualization of these antecedents as a specific set of psychological climate perceptions that feed into the specific mood or psychological state of engagement, hence enabling the operationalization of engagement not only from a micro or psychological perspective but also from macro or systemic perspective. The approach exemplifies what has been referred to as "microfoundations" (Felin et al., 2012), namely theoretical constructs supported by empirical examination that capture how the aggregation of micro-level phenomena (e.g. individual/psychological perceptions) leads to the emergence of macro-level phenomena (e.g. a collective climate construct).

Engagement climate, as the resulting construct from this approach (see figure 2.7), is defined as a specific set of affectively charged psychological perceptions that the individual elicits from his/her work environment, leading to a particular affective state or mood. This psychological state is motivational in nature and leads, in turn, to the investment of personal resources into the role or task, therefore influencing work behaviours and behavioural outcomes. Engagement Climate, as a latent social psychological construct, should virtually transcend the context of any one organisation or sector. However, given the nature of service work, Engagement Climate may most readily be observed (and fostered) in the context of services.

Figure 2.7 Theoretical foundations of engagement climate



Engagement climate, as a microfoundation, is posited to exert its influence on service employee behaviour and performance from two complementary perspectives, i.e. a micro or psychological perspective and a macro or systemic perspective:

(1) As a psychological climate construct, engagement climate contributes to the domain conceptualization of the emerging engagement construct in the organizational behaviour (OB) literature and to the clarification of its role as a behavioural predictor. Specifically, engagement climate reflects a theoretically coherent and ontologically uniform approach to the issue of psychological inputs or antecedents of engagement. This theoretical approach addresses the gap in the service climate model concerning what drives or motivates employee *behaviour*, which is a pre-condition or foundation for employee *service-oriented behaviour.*

(2) As an organizational climate construct, engagement climate provides the means for the measurement of the inputs or antecedents of engagement within a systemic and recursive view of the engagement process. The service climate model, as the managerial conceptual framework of reference, provides the key elements interacting within the system and creating the feedback loop

that ultimately determines the system's strategic outputs of interest, namely, *service employee performances*.

Engagement climate is conceptualized through a number of dimensions or facets, each reflecting a specific type of affectively charged perceptions of a work environment leading to the experience of engagement. These dimensions are *Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression,* and *Overload*. These dimensions, as antecedents in the engagement process, provide a direct link to behaviours; therefore attitudinal constructs are not needed or can be "bypassed" in the explanation of the behavioural sequence.

Engagement climate is posited to act as the foundation of service climate within the service climate model. While service climate represents the different environmental elements that reinforce and give strategic focus to customer-oriented behaviours, engagement climate provides its foundation, i.e. the "contextual factors that sustain work behaviour" (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). Service climate, as a "climate of interest" that gives strategic direction to service employee performances by signalling desired/expected service behaviours, emerges from certain HRM/leadership practices and influences customer experiences through the mediation of service-oriented OCB. However, this sequence can only take place if it occurs upon a foundation of engagement climate, which will also be emerging from certain HRM/leadership practices, and will influence OCB both directly and through the mediation of service climate.

2.4. Research framework and hypotheses

Introduction

Chapter 2.4 outlines the research objectives, the research hypotheses and the overall research framework for the empirical study which aims to test the theoretical propositions emerging from the literature review. Specifically, once Engagement Climate has been proposed as the answer to the research question of what drives service employees to give their best while performing their roles, the objectives for the empirical research are 1) To develop and pilot test a questionnaire measure of Engagement Climate that includes its twelve representative dimensions, 2) to investigate the factor structure of Engagement Climate within a service organization, and 3) To examine the relative strength of the relationship between Engagement Climate and personal engagement compared to the relationship between Engagement Climate and job attitudes. The research hypotheses corresponding to these research objectives are justified and formulated next.

Research objectives

The ambition of this thesis is to contribute to organizational behaviour theory and practice with a conceptually clear, theoretically supported, and operationalized construct that can assist in the development of service employee performances. Specifically, the first research objective was to propose a new social psychological construct, Engagement Climate, as the answer to the research question of what drives service employees to give their best while performing their roles. Once the theoretical and nomological domain of Engagement Climate has been established, the objectives for the empirical research are formulated as follows:

1) **To develop and pilot test a questionnaire measure of Engagement Climate** that includes its twelve representative dimensions, i.e. *Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression,* and *Overload*, and provides valid indicators for each of these dimensions.

2) **To investigate the factor structure of Engagement Climate within a service organization** by means of a statistical enquiry on a sample from the population of interest, i.e. service employees. Specifically, the internal consistency reliabilities and validity of a hierarchical reflective model with twelve first-order constructs/subscales (engagement climate dimensions) and a higher-order construct/scale (engagement climate) are explored.

3) **To examine the relative strength of the relationship between Engagement Climate and personal engagement compared to the relationship between Engagement Climate and two job attitude constructs**, i.e., job satisfaction and affective commitment, as an additional means to establish the distinctiveness and nomological validity of Engagement Climate. First, Engagement Climate, as reflecting the psychological antecedents in the engagement process, will be expected to have a direct effect on the experience of personal engagement as a psychological state or mood. Secondly, Engagement Climate, as a distinct subset of the more global concept of psychological climate, is presumed to relate also to a higher order factor or schema concerning the degree to which the environment is personally beneficial to one's well-being (L. A. James & James, 1989). The relationship between job attitudes and subjective well-being has been well documented in research (Bowling, Eschleman, & Wang, 2010; Meyer & Maltin, 2010), therefore a positive relationship between Engagement Climate and both job satisfaction and affective commitment will also be expected. However, the effect of Engagement Climate on personal engagement (i.e. the psychological state of engagement) will be expected to be comparatively stronger than its effect on job attitudes. On the one hand, Engagement Climate only influences the affective component of job

attitudes but not the element of appraisal or cognitive judgement that is central in attitudinal constructs. On the other hand, its effect on the affective components of attitudes refers to the broader concept of well-being, whereas its effects on personal engagement refers to a set of specific affective experiences that lead to engagement as a particular, i.e. motivational, affective state or mood.

Research hypotheses

The research hypotheses corresponding to the research objectives that were set for the empirical study are justified and formulated next:

Engagement Climate is a molar or multidimensional construct that captures a series of work environment facets or dimensions, each reflecting a specific type or group of affectively charged perceptions or emotional cognitions (Lazarus, 1982, 1991). These dimensions reflect each a distinct experiential component and type of influence in a given work environment contributing to create the psychological conditions for engagement.

- *Contribution*: Perceptions or feelings of contribution, namely that one's work significantly affects organizational processes and outcomes, is part of what Kahn (1990) describes as the experience of psychological meaningfulness, or the "feeling that one is receiving a return on investments of one's self in currency of physical, cognitive, or emotional energy" (p. 703). Contribution has also been referred to, as a psychological climate dimension, as job importance (L. A. James & James, 1989) or "the extent to which the person feels his job makes a meaningful contribution and is important to the organization". A feeling of contribution is likely to add to the perceived meaningfulness of work and enhance employees' engagement and involvement in their work roles (S. P. Brown & Leigh, 1996; Kahn, 1990; Shuck & Reio, 2014). Conversely, a non-existent, weak, or diffuse sense of contribution is likely to lead the individual to "personally disengage" or to distance himself psychologically from the work role.

- *Support*: Support refers to the perceptions or feelings that management (in general) and/or the immediate superior (in particular), allows one to try and fail without fear of reprisals, is aware of and responsive to one's needs, and helps achieve one's work role objectives through such activities as scheduling, coordinating, planning, and providing resources. Kahn (1990) defined psychological safety as the employee's "sense of being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career" (p.

708). Supportive management contributes to psychological safety and this sense of security is likely to enhance employees' engagement in their work roles (S. P. Brown & Leigh, 1996; L. A. James & James, 1989; Kahn, 1990; D. J. Koys & DeCottis, 1991). Conversely, a perceived lack of support from management and/or the immediate supervisor will most likely have a negative effect on the experience of psychological safety and lead the individual to distance him/herself psychologically from the work role. Support has been associated with meaningfulness (Gersick, Bartunek, & Dutton, 2000), psychological safety (May et al., 2004; R. Ryan & Deci, 2000) and engagement (Chaudhary et al., 2014; Freeney & Fellenz, 2013; Lee & Ok, 2015). Support from the immediate supervisor has also been identified as an antecedent of engagement and related motivational constructs (Deci & Ryan, 1985; DeConinck, 2010; Rana et al., 2014; Saks, 2006). Also, JD-R research (A.B. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Menguc et al., 2013; Schaufeli et al., 2009) has identified supervisory support as a key resource that motivates employees to be engaged in their workplace.

- *Recognition*: Perceptions or feelings of recognition, namely that the organization appreciates and acknowledges one's efforts and contributions, is likely to increase the experience of meaningfulness at work (S. P. Brown & Leigh, 1996; Kahn, 1990; D. J. Koys & DeCottis, 1991; Steers, 1977). Employees who feel that their contributions are appropriately recognized will be more inclined to personally engage in their work roles. Conversely, employees who feel that their contributions are not being adequately acknowledged will be more prone to distance themselves psychologically from their work roles. Recognition can be experienced in a variety of ways (e.g., verbal or non-verbal feedback, monetary and non-monetary awards, reward decisions, career promotions) and from a variety of sources (e.g., management, immediate supervisor, co-workers, and customers). Recognition, also referred to as rewards or feedback, has been identified as an antecedent of engagement and other related constructs (Nair, 2006; Nimon & Zigarmi, 2015; Saks, 2006; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

- *Cohesion*: Cohesion refers to perceptions or feelings of togetherness and sharing within the organization setting (in general) and the work group (in particular), including the willingness of co-workers to cooperate, maintain friendly relations and keep open communications. Interpersonal, group, and intergroup dynamics provide experiences of more or less support, trust, openness, flexibility, or lack of threat, and also lead to informal, often unconscious roles that leave more or less room to safely express various parts of self (Kahn, 1990). A sense of cohesion contributes to psychological safety and is likely to enhance personal

engagement in the work role, whereas inter and intra-group conflict is likely to lead the individual to distance him/herself psychologically from the work role (L. A. James & James, 1989; Kahn, 1990; D. J. Koys & DeCottis, 1991; Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Payne & Pugh, 1976). Supportive co-worker relations have been found to be positively linked to psychological safety and engagement (May et al., 2004; Nimon & Zigarmi, 2015; Ologbo & Saudah, 2012; Rana et al., 2014). Also, JD-R research (A.B. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Freeney & Fellenz, 2013; Schaufeli et al., 2009) has identified co-worker support as a key resource that motivates employees to be engaged in their workplace. While feelings of friendliness, cooperation, and "team spirit" are likely to occur more often within the proximal work group (N. R. Anderson & West, 1998; Härtel et al., 2008), the perception of cohesion needs to be extended also to intergroup dynamics in order to contribute to the experience of psychological safety. In other words, being part of a cohesive and "self-protective" team in a context of intergroup or interdepartmental conflict is not likely to contribute to psychological safety.

- *Challenge*: Perceptions or feelings of challenge, namely that the work requires one's best efforts and resources to be accomplished, and requires the use of creativity and a variety of skills, are essential for personal growth in the work role (S. P. Brown & Leigh, 1996; L. A. James & James, 1989; Kahn, 1990). Challenge is also related to Koys and DeCotiis's (1991) psychological climate dimension of innovation, or the perception that change and creativity are encouraged, including risk-taking into new areas where the employee has little or no prior experience. Challenging work induces employees to invest greater amounts of their physical, cognitive, and emotional resources in their work and is likely to result in greater perceived meaningfulness of the work experience. Conversely, unchallenging work is likely to lead to routine or mechanical performances during which the employee will distance him/herself psychologically from the role (Chanowitz & Langer, 1981; Langer, Blank, & Chanowitz, 1978). Challenge has also been referred to as task variety (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), skills variety (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), or the opposite of routinization (Curry, Wakefield, Price, & Mueller, 1986), and it is also closely related with the concepts of job enrichment and job design. Research on job design (Johns, Xie, & Fang, 1992; Renn & Vandenberg, 1995) has shown that enrichment of jobs in the five core job dimensions of the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) can significantly influence the meaningfulness experienced by employees. Challenge has also been correlated to

engagement (Coelho & Augusto, 2010; May et al., 2004; Nimon & Zigarmi, 2015; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

- *Trust*: Trust refers to perceptions or feelings that management, or the organization in general, is sincere, open, and consistent with regard to its motives and intentions towards the employee, can be relied upon to honour the promises made to the employee, and can be expected to fulfil its obligations in the employment relationship (be they legal, implied, or perceived as part of the psychological contract). Trust refers to "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor" (R. C. Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995, p. 712). Trust in the organization, as the personified "other party" in the employment relationship (Rousseau, 1989) emerges from beliefs regarding its integrity, motives and intentions, behavioural consistency, openness and discreteness (Gabarro & Athos, 1976), and contributes to the experience of psychological safety. Conversely, a perceived violation of trust as a result, for example, of unmet expectations, or a perceived lack of integrity or sincerity by the part of management, is likely to lead the individual, at best, to distance him/herself psychologically from the work role, or even to more drastic behavioural adjustments such as turnover or reduced performance (Wanous, Poland, Premack, & Shannon, 1992). Trust has been positively related to engagement (Agarwal, 2014; Hofmann, Lei, & Grant, 2009; Lin, 2010), and has also been shown to moderate the relationship between positive affect and OCBs (Menges, Walter, Vogel, & Bruch, 2011). Psychological contract breach, which can be interpreted as breach of trust (Rousseau, 1995) has been linked with negative outcomes of in-role performance, OCBs (N. Conway & Briner, 2005; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007), engagement (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014), and lower customer satisfaction (Bordia, Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, 2010).

- *Autonomy*: Perceptions or feelings of autonomy, namely that one has the ability to self-determine work procedures, goals, and priorities with regard to one's work role, are likely to contribute to the experience of psychological meaningfulness (S. P. Brown & Leigh, 1996; L. A. James & James, 1989; Kahn, 1990; D. J. Koys & DeCottis, 1991). Research has also shown that job autonomy influences the appearance of citizenship behaviours (Bell & Menguc, 2002) and facilitates positive moods or focused attention (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Spector & Fox, 2005) and emotion regulation (Grandey et al., 2005). A sense of autonomy with regard to one's job is likely to add to the perceived meaningfulness of work and enhance employees'

engagement in their work roles. Conversely, a perceived lack of autonomy, or an excess of standardization, is likely to lead the individual to "personally disengage" or distance himself/herself psychologically from the work role. Job autonomy has been identified as a major antecedent of engagement (S. Albrecht, 2010; Chaudhary et al., 2014; E. R. Crawford et al., 2014; Nimon & Zigarmi, 2015; Rana et al., 2014). Also, JD-R research (A.B. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Freeney & Fellenz, 2013; Menguc et al., 2013) has identified autonomy as a key resource that motivates employees to be engaged in their workplace.

- *Fairness*: Fairness refers to perceptions or feelings that organizational practices and decision-making processes (in general) and/or management behaviours (in particular) that are of concern for the employee, aim to be equitable, consistent, and non-arbitrary or capricious both with regard to what is decided (distributive justice) but also with regard to how decisions are made (procedural justice). Perceptions of fairness contribute to the experience of psychological safety to the extent that they reinforce the sense of security, predictability, and clarity with regard to the expected consequences of one's behaviour (Kahn, 1990). Thus, an employee that feels treated fairly, and expects to be treated fairly in the future, will be more likely to invest his/her own self in the work role (L. A. James & James, 1989; Kahn, 1990; D. J. Koys & DeCottis, 1991). Conversely, the experience of unfairness is likely to contribute to psychological uncertainty and lead to psychological withdrawal from the work role. Fairness has also been interpreted as a manifestation of organizational civil and social rights (Graham, 1991) that influences the appearance of citizenship behaviours (Bell & Menguc, 2002) and it has been positively correlated with outcome variables such as OCBs (Colquitt, 2007; DeConinck, 2010; Li, Cropanzano, & Bagger, 2013; Walumbwa, Hartnell, et al., 2010) as well as engagement (Agarwal, 2014; Biswas, Varma, & Ramaswami, 2012; Saks, 2006; Strom, Sears, & Kelly, 2014).

- *Clarity*: Perceptions or feelings of clarity, namely that role expectations and work situations are clear, consistent, and predictable with regard to demands, criteria or relationship with other tasks, are likely to contribute to the experience of both psychological meaningfulness and psychological safety. When role expectations and work situations are ambiguous, conflicting, inconsistent, or unpredictable, psychological safety is undermined and personal engagement is likely to be low. In contrast, clear expectations and consistent, predictable work norms create a psychologically meaningful and safe environment that creates the conditions for personal engagement (S. P. Brown & Leigh, 1996; L. A. James & James, 1989;

Kahn, 1990). Research on the effects of role conflict, role ambiguity or role stress (e.g., Babin & Boles, 1996; Hartline & Ferrell, 1996; Singh, 1993) is also supportive of this view. Role clarity, also referred to as role expectations, has been identified as an antecedent of engagement (Nair, 2006; Nimon & Zigarmi, 2015; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

- *Participation*: Participation refers to perceptions or feelings that one has the ability, to some extent, to influence, be heard, participate in, or make decisions concerning organizational policies and practices ranging from the details of doing one task to the mission of the organization as a whole. A sense of participation in the organization's affairs and decision-making processes adds to the experience of psychological meaningfulness, as it reinforces one's feelings of being valued and valuable, and of giving to and receiving from others in the course of work (Kahn, 1990). Thus, a perception of "being part of" the organization is likely to contribute to personal engagement in the work role. Conversely, a weak or non-existent sense of participation is likely to contribute to psychological withdrawal or personal disengagement from the work role. Participation has also been interpreted as a manifestation of organizational political rights (Graham, 1991) that influences the appearance of citizenship behaviours (Bell & Menguc, 2002).

- *Self-expression*: Self-expression refers to perceptions or feelings that expressions of individuality in one's work role, such as personality, creativity, sense of humour, feelings, personal values and self-concepts, are accepted by the organization. When employees expect that they will incur organizational sanctions for expressions of individuality in their work roles, they are likely to distance themselves psychologically from their roles. When psychological safety is lacking, employees are likely, at best, to carry out their work role in a scripted and perfunctory manner (Kahn, 1990). Conversely, when employees feel psychologically safe in their work roles, they are more likely to infuse their personalities, creativity, feelings, and self-concepts into their work roles. Under such conditions, the work role is internalized, personalized, and treated as an expression of the self-concept. Employees will be more likely to personally engage in their work roles when they feel safe in expressing core aspects of their self-concepts (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Kahn, 1990; A. H. Maslow, 1954). In the case of service employees' emotional labour, self-expression does not necessarily entail the display of "authentic" emotions (or deep acting), as opposed to "inauthentic" emotions (or surface acting), but rather the ability of the employee to express his/her own "emotional style" within certain parameters or display rules that are required

for the service role (Bolton & Boyd, 2003). Self-expression has been identified as an antecedent of engagement (Shuck & Reio, 2014). Also, self-determination theory (Bono & Judge, 2003; R. Ryan & Deci, 2000) posits that employees who see their work as consistent with their personal values will be more engaged.

- *Overload*: Overload - more precisely, the absence of overload - refers to perceptions and feelings that one has sufficient time, training, or resources to complete assigned tasks according to standards. A sense of overload has a negative effect on the individual's psychological availability (Kahn, 1990), namely the feeling of possessing the physical, emotional, and/or cognitive resources to personally engage at a particular moment in the work role. Psychological availability is associated with individual distractions that preoccupy people to various degrees and leave them more or fewer resources with which to engage in role performances. A perception of work overload is likely to contribute to the individual feeling psychologically unavailable, i.e., incapable of driving physical, intellectual, and emotional energies into role performance and, therefore, leading to personal disengagement from the role. The negative effects of work overload on attitudes and behaviours has also been documented in the role stress literature (Babin & Boles, 1996; Singh, 1993). Conversely, the perception of reasonable work load, namely, that time demands and task requirements are reasonable, and the resources are adequate, is likely to enhance the individual's psychological availability for personal engagement. Overload has also been referred as workload balance, i.e. the extent to which individuals perceive that their work load is reasonably proportioned for the time they have to accomplish their work (L. A. James & James, 1989; Katz & Khan, 1966) and it has been correlated with outcome variables such as absenteeism or turnover intentions in a variety of job roles and industries (see Jones, Chonkob, Rangarajan, & Roberts, 2007). Also, Sonnentag (2003) demonstrated the positive impact of off-work recovery on engagement.

Based on the above, the following is hypothesized for this study:

*Hypothesis 1 (**H1**): Twelve independent constructs derived from theory, i.e. Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression, and Overload can be confirmed as distinct psychological climate dimensions or facets each reflecting a specific set of psychologically meaningful and affectively charged representations of the work environment.*

These twelve hypothesized dimensions constitute a specific set of affectively charged psychological perceptions that the individual elicits from his/her work environment, leading to a particular affective state or mood, i.e. engagement. This psychological state is motivational in nature and leads, in turn, to the investment of personal resources into the role or task, therefore influencing work behaviours and behavioural outcomes. As antecedents in the engagement process or, in Kahn's (1990) terms, as the psychological conditions for personal engagement, these dimensions constitute a distinct type of psychological climate in the sense that, among all possible psychological representations (be they purely cognitive or affective) that an individual might elicit from his/her work environment, they are expected to have a distinct and direct influence on the individual's motivational focus and subsequent work behaviours, as opposed to other perceptions that may influence attitudes, i.e. evaluations, but not necessarily the individual's motivational focus and behaviours. Thus the following is hypothesized:

> *Hypothesis 2 (**H2**): An independent construct derived from theory, i.e. Engagement Climate, is a higher-order factor or unifying theme for the twelve hypothesized psychological climate dimensions or facets, reflecting the degree to which the overall work environment creates the psychological conditions for personal engagement.*

Engagement is conceptualized in this study as containing three distinctive elements: (1) it is (primarily) an affective, rather than cognitive, phenomena, (2) its nature is motivational, rather than attitudinal, and (3) it is a process, not a state, that includes certain psychological antecedents or "conditions", a psychological state, and accompanying behaviours. The conceptualization of engagement as a specific mood underlines both the importance and centrality of positive affectivity and the uniqueness of the construct in the sense that it represent a "energetic state" (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008) directed towards one's job.

This notion of energy directed towards behaviours, or "desire to act" (Bagozzi, 1992), is also the element that characterizes engagement as a motivational rather than an attitudinal construct. While job satisfaction or affective commitment include affective components, they represent in essence evaluative judgements or appraisals that "specify a target but do not specify any particular action" (Harrison et al., 2006, p. 316), i.e. they do not lead, by themselves, to behaviours (E. R. Crawford et al., 2014; W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008). The motivational element that characterizes engagement is the focus on a specific self-concept (George & Brief, 1996), or the desire for self-realization (A. H.

Maslow, 1954), that drives people to express themselves physically, emotionally, and cognitively during role performances (Kahn, 1990).

Finally, engagement is best described as a fluctuating process (Kahn, 1990, 1992) rather than a more or less permanent or pervasive "state of mind" (e.g., Christian et al., 2011; Schaufeli et al., 2002). This process is referred to as "people's cycles of psychological presence and absence across role performance situations" (Kahn, 1992, p. 332) and as "the behaviours by which people bring in or leave out their personal selves during work role performances" (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). The process includes certain psychological conditions as antecedents of, or conducive to, an affective state or mood that, in turn, triggers the investment of personal resources into the job or task leading to qualitatively superior behavioural outputs. Therefore Engagement Climate, as reflecting the psychological antecedents in the engagement process, will be expected to have a direct effect on the experience of engagement as a psychological state or mood. Thus the following is hypothesized:

*Hypothesis 3 (**H3**): Engagement Climate has a direct effect on personal engagement.*

Engagement Climate, as a distinct subset of the more global concept of psychological climate, is presumed to relate also to a higher order factor or schema concerning the degree to which the environment is personally beneficial to one's well-being (L. A. James & James, 1989). On the other hand, the relationship between job attitudes and subjective well-being has been well documented in research (Bowling et al., 2010; Meyer & Maltin, 2010), therefore a positive relationship between engagement climate and both job satisfaction and affective commitment will also be expected, to the extent that job attitudes also tap into the broader affective notion of well-being. However, the effect of engagement climate on personal engagement will be expected to be comparatively stronger than its effect on job attitudes. On the one hand, engagement climate only influences certain affective component of job attitudes but not the element of appraisal or cognitive judgement that is central in attitudinal constructs. On the other hand, its effect on the affective components of attitudes refers to the broader concept of well-being, whereas its effects on personal engagement refers to a more specific set of specific affective experiences that lead to engagement as a motivational state or mood. Based on the above, the following hypotheses are formulated:

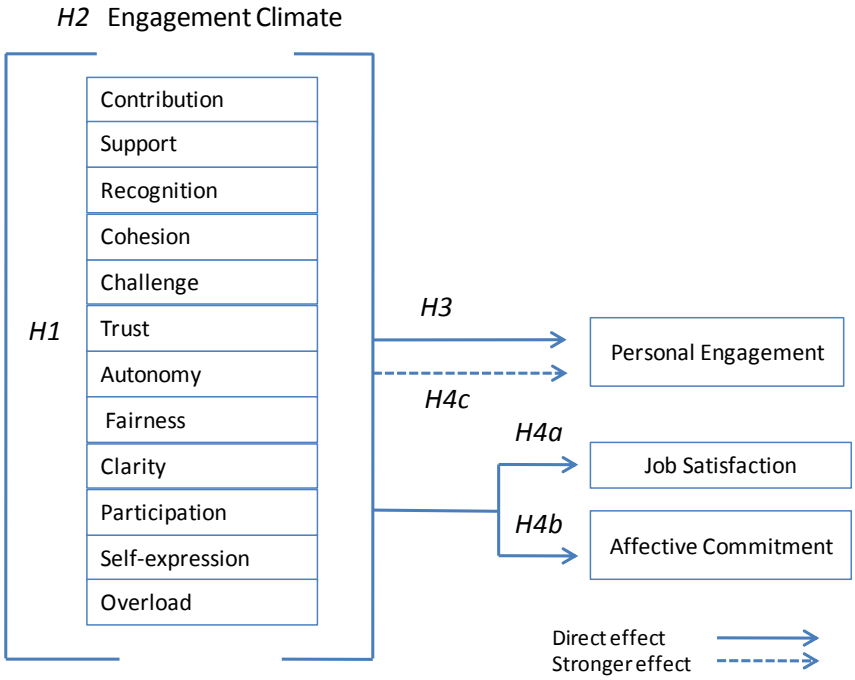
*Hypothesis 4a (**H4a**): Engagement Climate has a direct effect on job satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 4b (**H4b**): Engagement Climate has a direct effect on affective commitment.*

*Hypothesis 4c (**H4c**): The direct effect of Engagement Climate on personal engagement will be relatively stronger than the direct effect of Engagement Climate on either job satisfaction or affective commitment.*

The research framework corresponding to the research hypotheses for the empirical study is displayed graphically in Figure 2.8 below.

Figure 2.8 Research framework



Summary of chapter 2.4

Once Engagement Climate has been put forth as the theoretical answer to the research question of what drives service employees to give their best while performing their roles, the objectives for the empirical research are 1) to develop and pilot test a questionnaire measure of Engagement Climate that includes its twelve representative dimensions, i.e. *Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression,* and *Overload;* 2) to investigate the factor structure of Engagement Climate within a service organization, and 3) To examine the relative strength of the relationship between Engagement Climate and personal engagement compared to the relationship between Engagement Climate and two job attitudes, namely, job satisfaction and affective commitment. The research hypotheses corresponding to these research objectives are:

- *Hypothesis 1 (**H1**): Twelve independent constructs derived from theory, i.e. Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression, and Overload can be confirmed as distinct psychological climate dimensions or facets each reflecting a specific set of psychologically meaningful and affectively charged representations of the work environment.*
- *Hypothesis 2 (**H2**): An independent construct derived from theory, i.e. Engagement Climate, is a higher-order factor or unifying theme for the twelve hypothesized psychological climate dimensions or facets, reflecting the degree to which the overall work environment creates the psychological conditions for personal engagement.*
- *Hypothesis 3 (**H3**): Engagement Climate has a direct effect on personal engagement.*
- *Hypothesis 4a (**H4a**): Engagement Climate has a direct effect on job satisfaction.*
- *Hypothesis 4b (**H4b**): Engagement Climate has a direct effect on affective commitment.*
- *Hypothesis 4c (**H4c**): The direct effect of Engagement Climate on personal engagement will be relatively stronger than the direct effect of Engagement Climate on either job satisfaction or affective commitment.*

Chapter 3. Developing and pilot-testing a questionnaire measure of Engagement Climate

3.1. Research design

Introduction

As Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) pointed out, it is the research question, rather than considerations of either method or paradigm, what should determine the design of a study and related decisions concerning, for example, the data collection approach or the type of analysis. This view is most applicable with regard to the research question, upon which this thesis is built, as it already contains, within its formulation, certain choices that influence from the start the theoretical approach to the phenomena of interests and also predispose to certain methodological decisions. As discussed in Chapter 1, the question of what drives service employees to give their best while performing their work roles reflects both a theoretical and a "technical" concern with finding solutions to a management challenge, which leads to a normative approach to the phenomena of interest (Alvesson & Willmott, 2012) that greatly influences the review and evaluation of the

literature, as well as the theoretical conclusions, and the range of possible methodological approaches.

Thus the research question contains, in itself, decisions on how to approach the phenomena of interest which inevitably influence the approach to the research design; it provides a clear direction to the research endeavour but also, inevitably, narrows down the understanding of the phenomena, and limits or restricts the methodological alternatives for its research.

The different assumptions, trade-offs, and choices that give shape to the research design will be discussed and justified next, using as a framework of reference the three key questions for research design as suggested by Crotty (1998) and Creswell (2003), namely philosophical assumptions, strategy of enquiry, and selected method.

Lastly, the setting of the empirical study, i.e. travel agents working for a major travel group in Spain, will be described in detail.

Philosophical assumptions

Since this study was born out of certain interests and concerns related to this researcher's personal experiences in managerial practice, it seems adequate to unveil the philosophical assumptions underlying the "practitioner perspective" that preceded the study, and refine them from a "researcher perspective".

The distinction that is being proposed here between both perspectives is of epistemological nature. There is a shared ontology in both instances. For example, "organizations" exist whether we approach them from a practitioner or a researcher perspective, but our understanding of them can change considerably from one perspective to the other. The question of whether they exist outside one's own acknowledgement of their existence is, on the other hand, irrelevant. What matters is whether others will acknowledge what one refers to when using the concept "organizations" in the discourse. The mutual acknowledgement of what an organization is could be no more than a vague reference in a common cognitive map or it could include sophisticated references to one or several paradigms, theoretical contexts, rules of use, fields of validity, etc. but in all instances there will be a shared acknowledgement of a reality or, in Foucault's terms (1972), a positivity around which a discourse can be articulated and become inter-subjective.

This view entails rejecting a specific positioning within the subjective-objective ontological debate in social sciences (Hughes, 1997; Morgan & Smircich, 1980; Punch, 2005). For example, the

phenomena of interest in this thesis reflects socially constructed realities that are products of human activity (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) but nevertheless as objective as, say, the realities of physics. There is also a clear phenomenological stance (Husserl, 1965) since "my" acknowledgment of what is real stems from "my" personal experience. In other words, the genesis of knowledge (A. H. Maslow, 1966) stems from purely subjective experiences to sharing experiences with others and, finally, to external reality, being the original subjective experience the *conditio sine qua non* of the sequence. Also, the positivities within the discourse are not a result of one's own subjectivity, they are "historical *a prioris*" (Foucault, 1972) that one inherits when entering the realm of the discourse. In that sense, reality is "already there", before the subjective experience of it (positivism/realism), it is historically constructed (hermeneutics) and it can be traced within the linguistic structures of the discourse (structuralism).

Within this view, the range of ontological assumptions along the objective-subjective spectrum in social sciences can be considered as taxonomy in itself of the different "entities" that populate research in this field and therefore contributing to group them under the common label of "social sciences". This thesis deals with several of these different entities; some can be classified as social constructs (e.g., service employees, customers) or systems (e.g., organizations), other as psychological constructs (e.g., climate dimensions, moods, attitudes, intentions), or experiences (e.g., customer satisfaction, service quality), as observable behaviours, or as empirical facts (e.g., performance). Clearly these heterogeneous entities cannot receive the same epistemological treatment regarding the knowledge that can be obtained from each of them and the manner or method to obtain it. Nevertheless there is no doubt concerning their existence or reality, whether they are approached by a layman, a practitioner or a researcher and, because they are all being considered as potentially relevant to the research questions, any paradigm whose ontological assumptions do not allow access to each and all of them needs to be rejected.

While the researcher and practitioner perspectives share a common ontology, the epistemological assumptions are not necessarily the same. A management practitioner generally acts as a "specialist" in understanding and dealing with certain organizational phenomena, with the purpose of finding technical solutions to management problems. This inevitably forces the practitioner to focus (both conceptually and experientially) on certain areas, leaving in the background or ignoring others. The areas being ignored are simply those that do not belong to the predefined problem area and/or those who do not seem to lead to any potential solution to the issue at hand. In this sense, there is always a more or less explicit trade-off between depth of analysis and problem-solving

efficiency. But even if this trade-off was hypothetically removed, and the analysis were to be carried out in full depth, the practitioner's approach would still be epistemologically constrained by its purpose, that would force to dismiss or ignore any knowledge or promise of knowledge, perhaps valuable in itself, but not applicable to the problem or to the problem area. Moreover, the practitioner's observations and interpretations of the selected phenomena are generally done through the lenses of the prevailing paradigm of his/her trade, or area of management expertise.

In that respect, some of the key assumptions underpinning the HRM practice can be easily traced in the research questions of this study. There is the goal to achieve both the control and consent of employees in supporting the company's strategy and objectives, which is HRM's *raison d'être* as a normative discipline (Alvesson & Willmott, 2012; Huselid, 1995). There is the underlying promise of HRM as a "strategic partner" and the effort to provide empirical links between its techniques and company performance (Bolton & Houlihan, 2007; Delbridge & Keenoy, 2010). There is also a clear positioning within the "softer" version of the paradigm -more concerned with gaining employee's consent through motivation, development, and commitment - as opposed to the "hard" functionalistic approach –more concerned with achieving employee's control through efficient people management processes. These concerns, and the resulting techniques to address them, are based, in turn, on certain assumptions regarding human nature and people behaviour in organizational contexts, such as motivation theories or the nature of employee-employer relations. Last but not least, there is an underlying ideology that legitimizes the existence of HRM and its techniques and the view of the employee "as an individual resource unit to be optimally configured and managed" (Bolton & Houlihan, 2007, p. 4), therefore both dependable and disposable.

When adopting a researcher perspective, it is initially tempting to believe that the epistemological constraints described above cease to play a part, since a researcher is free of purpose and therefore able to approach the study of the organization from a detached or neutral perspective, as Weber would argue through his notion of "value-free science" (see Weber, 1994). However, this "spectator" approach to knowledge, albeit suitable for the world of physics, has serious limitations when one has to deal with human beings who have goals of their own (A. H. Maslow, 1966), and interact within socially constructed realities that require understanding of meanings (Bandura, 1986; Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This does not imply that, when dealing with certain types of phenomena or "entities", a distanced, purely behaviouristic approach could not prove useful, or even necessary. But even in those cases the approach would not be purpose-free. Scientific knowledge is far from being impersonal and it necessarily involves degrees of personal judgement, taste, commitment,

responsibility or connoisseurship (Polanyi, 1961). Any use of theory, and therefore any epistemological stance, involves a choice and that choice is driven by a more or less explicit value-motivated purpose.

With regard to this thesis, some of the assumptions, underlying values and ideologies that framed the practitioner perspective are still present in the researcher perspective, and they all account to personal choices. There is the choice of approaching the phenomena of interest from the normative perspective of management sciences, and its implied trade-off between depth of analysis and applicability. Both the practitioner and researcher perspectives share in this case a common concern for applicability, although the practitioner's statements will be "recipes for action" whereas the researcher's statements will carry some inherent or explicit claim for universality. Lastly, there is a conscious choice to side by those who have an interest in *managing people* in organizations, and thus making their interests ultimately prevail upon the interests of those who are *being managed*. But there is also a choice to embrace the belief that there are many areas were those conflicting interests can meet and work for their mutual benefit, and this belief inspires and drives the research effort.

In sum, the philosophical stance that underpins the research design could be described as "ontological inclusiveness" and "epistemological relativity". The ontological and epistemological heterogeneity that characterizes the chosen area of study is clearly reflected in the sources that provide the theoretical foundation of the Engagement Climate construct and its research framework. Each of the reviewed bodies of literature often reflect different research traditions, with varying and competing paradigms, methodological approaches, as well as different combinations of quantitative and qualitative research methods. In that sense, the adopted research framework (see figure X.X in chapter 2.4) is intended to provide some sense or "graspability" (A. H. Maslow, 1966) of this complex and heterogeneous reality, and also an insight that holds a promise of system coherence and identification of causalities (Tsoukas, 1991). But, as with any theoretical construct, the conceptual framework has an inherent partiality, creating both ways of seeing and not seeing (Morgan, 1997), as the theory through which we observe a situation decides what we can observe (Popper, 1959). In this respect the research design reflects an effort to balance off comprehensiveness, i.e. "describe and accept the 'way things are', meaningful or not, explainable or not" (A. H. Maslow, 1966, p. 77), and "sense making" within a theory or conceptual framework.

Strategy of enquiry

The research question of what drives service employees to give their best while performing their job roles refers to certain psychological phenomena and to the influence of these phenomena on certain systems, i.e. service organizations. Either type of phenomena (psychological and systemic) could be potentially explored from different methodological approaches, ranging from purely qualitative, to purely quantitative, or a mixture of both. For example, psychological phenomena is a natural area for interpretivist approaches, as detached observations alone are usually insufficient to grasp the richness and complexity of individual psychological experiences, but these experiences could also be explored through their salient, and quantifiable, behavioural manifestations. Systemic phenomena, on the other hand, could be explored through quantitative approaches, such as conceptual frameworks and measurement models, but also through qualitative approaches, such as detailed case studies, or narratives regarding the development of system properties, e.g. organizational cultures.

However, when there is an explicit interest on operationalizing the obtained knowledge with the view to help service organizations foster their service employees' performances, this restricts the possible strategies of enquiry to those that can potentially lead to "actionable" systemic knowledge from a managerial perspective. While this does not preclude from exploring the phenomena of interest through either quantitative or qualitative methods as *intermediate* steps, it limits the possible choices of enquiry to those that can *ultimately* lead to knowledge in the shape of predictive managerial models containing measurable, quantifiable, systemic variables, and the relationships and causalities among them.

This deliberate and conscious trade-off between depth of analysis and applicability exerts its influence from the start of the study and, in that sense, certain methodological choices that inform the strategy of enquiry can be traced back to the literature review. Very early on the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014), as a conceptual framework linking internal organizational practices, service climate, customer experiences and business outputs, was identified as a valid systemic/managerial model of reference, to the extent that the review of the literature that followed was built around the issue of addressing a specific gap in the model, i.e. the foundations of service climate, that relates directly to the research question. In similar vein, the choice to focus on the antecedents of the engagement process was motivated by methodological concerns regarding the operationalization of the engagement concept and its "fit" within the managerial model of reference. It was then argued that, when considering the three distinct "moments" or elements that

define the engagement process, i.e. psychological conditions (antecedents), a psychological state, and the actual investment of personal resources into work behaviour (outputs), the element "in the middle" is the most elusive of the three from a systemic perspective, as it refers to purely psychological phenomena, as opposed to what precedes it (psychological perceptions of an external environment) and what follows (behaviours and behavioural outputs). Certainly, the psychological experience of engagement could have been explored through interpretive approaches, as Kahn (1990) did in his ethnographic research, and this type of approach would have likely led to a better understanding of the phenomena in the population of interest, i.e. service employees. Instead, a trade-off was made between the benefits of carrying on the analysis in depth, and the benefits of focusing on those aspects of the phenomena, or manifestations of the engagement process, that are more readily accessible to measurement and which can also be modified or acted upon through organizational interventions.

The conceptualization of the antecedents in the engagement process as a specific type of psychological climate is also a methodological choice. Exploring these psychological perceptions of an external environment could have been approached, for example, through the concept of organizational culture (Schein, 1990), which has often been used to address the phenomena of the creation and influence of social contexts in organizations. However, culture refers to the deep structure of organizations, which is rooted in the values, beliefs, and assumptions held by organizational members (Rousseau, 1988), and provides a dynamic or narrative perspective on the evolution of social processes over time, whereas climate refers to organizational environments, as the emerging properties of the organization's value system, that can be described in relatively static terms, i.e. as a fixed and broadly applicable set of dimensions (Denison, 1996).

Climates analytically separate the individual from the social environment, which makes them ill-suited to address the issue of how that social environment evolves; however, they are particularly suitable constructs for managerial models or frameworks or, in other words, when the interest is "in conceptualizing a particular type of social process involving the influence of an established context on organizational members who are in subordinate positions of power" (Denison, 1996, p. 636). Instead of an evolutionary description, they provide a "snapshot view", which is highly useful when a time lag is expected to occur between the systemic stimulus (engagement climate perceptions) and the individual response (behavioural and performance-related outcomes). Lastly, climate constructs also offer the advantage of being potentially approached as microfoundations (Felin et al., 2012), namely theoretical constructs supported by empirical examination that capture how the aggregation

of micro-level phenomena (e.g. individual/psychological perceptions) leads to the emergence of macro-level phenomena (e.g. a collective climate construct). The operationalization of engagement climate as a microfoundation enables different levels of analysis through the aggregation of individual measures, provided that certain methodological conditions are met (Felin et al., 2012; Glisson & James, 2002; Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009), therefore allowing for the transformation of psychological data into systemic or organizational data within a managerial framework or model.

In sum, the selected strategy of enquiry involves, in essence, a statistical or quantitative approach to the research question, which includes two phases. The first phase (exploratory) addresses the development and pilot test of a measure of Engagement Climate as a social psychological climate construct. In the second phase (confirmatory), the factor structure of Engagement Climate is investigated within a sample of travel agents from a single organization:

1. **Exploratory phase**. This includes the review and evaluation of the literature leading to the conceptual definition and domain specification of Engagement Climate, and the establishment of the basis for its operationalization through the development of indicators and the specification of the measurement model. It involves the following steps (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011):
    1.1. **Conceptualization**. Domain specification/conceptual definition of the multidimensional construct and its sub-dimensions within a theoretical framework, through the review of the relevant literature.
    1.2. **Development of measures**. Generation of a pool of items to represent each sub-dimension, assessment of content validity of items and selection of indicators.
    1.3. **Model specification**. Formal specification of the measurement model and questionnaire design, including questionnaire pre-tests and translation procedures.

2. **Confirmatory phase**. This includes the data collection process, scale purification and refinement, the assessment of the internal consistency reliabilities and validity of the scales and the overall measurement model, as well as the confirmation of the role of the multidimensional higher-order construct in the prediction of personal engagement. Additionally, it includes the test of the hypothesized effects of Engagement Climate on job attitudes (job satisfaction and affective commitment), as additional criteria of the construct's nomological validity. This involves the following steps:
    2.1. **Data collection, scale purification and refinement**.

2.2. **Assessment of internal consistency reliabilities and validity** of the obtained scale and subscales within the hierarchical measurement model through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), i.e. test of **H1** and **H2**.

2.3. **Test of predicted direct effects** and relative strength of relationships through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), i.e. test of **H3**, **H4a**, **H4b**, and **H4c**.

Data collection method

The chosen instrument to gather quantitative data for the statistical enquiry is a questionnaire intended to measure Engagement Climate dimensions as perceived by the respondents. Engagement climate is understood to be a particular type, or subcategory, of psychological climate, which has been defined as a molar construct comprising an individual's psychologically meaningful representations of proximal organizational structures, processes, and events (Rousseau, 1988), and it is generally accepted that the individual is the appropriate level of theory, measurement, and analysis (e.g., Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009; Parker et al., 2003). Therefore, the validity of the Engagement Climate model is tested through the analysis of data at the individual level.

The use of a cross-sectional statistical survey as the method of choice is grounded on the conceptualization of engagement as a specific state affect or mood, i.e. a "low-intensity, diffuse and relatively enduring affective state without a salient antecedent cause" (J. P. Forgas, 1992, p. 230). In this sense a retrospective approach, as opposed, for example, to real time reports, helps identify those recurrent and salient emotional cognitions of the work environment that feed into, or are antecedents of, the affective experience of engagement as a relatively permanent affective tone or mood. The cross-sectional perspective, as a relatively stable "snapshot" of the phenomena, also allows for the statistical assessment of Engagement Climate as the construct of interest, as opposed to longitudinal perspectives, which would be more suitable if the interest was on the evolutionary or dynamic aspects of the phenomena.

Setting of the study

The statistical survey is directed at a sample from the population of interest, i.e. service employees working in large Tourism and Hospitality companies located in Spain. Service employees are defined as those employees occupying jobs that require performances vis-à-vis the customer during "formal" and easily identifiable service encounters.

There are two main justifications to target a single large Tourism and Hospitality company. First, it provides a sufficient sample-size to carry out the intended statistical analyses and, secondly, as a

single large organization it provides a relatively homogeneous background for the research in terms, for example, of employee working conditions, role/job descriptions, or corporate culture, therefore minimizing the risk of contaminating data with unaccounted variables.

As for the population of interest, i.e. service employees, there are several reasons that justify this choice.

Firstly, as already discussed, Engagement Climate is expected to exert a non-negligible influence in service employee performance, considering both the nature of service roles and the characteristics of the service industry. Service employees not only are required to display nonstandard, adaptive, and creative behaviours during service encounters (Gwinner et al., 2005) but also to engage regularly in emotion management (Grandey et al., 2011; Hochschild, 1983), and to regularly display behaviours that would be considered discretionary for many other job roles (Vey & Campbell, 2004). They are required to push aside any personal emotions and focus positively toward the customer. They often face emotionally challenging service encounters as they have to deal with demanding, rude, or irate customers and, consequently, are extremely susceptible to performance adverse effects such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, and service misbehaviour (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Kim & Yoon, 2012). On the other hand, the customer experiences that emerge from service encounters are the intangible elements (Shostack, 1977; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996) that constitute the core of the transaction, hence the importance and strategic relevance of service employee performances for the organization's business performance (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong et al., 2013; Subramony & Pugh, 2015).

Secondly, the impact of Engagement Climate on service employees is expected to be particularly salient in Tourism and Hospitality, where the service being sold is often a certain "experience", and the perceived quality of that experience stems largely from the memory that the customer has of the interactions with service staff during service encounters (O.M. Karatepe, 2013; Yeh, 2013). Moreover, service employees in Tourism and Hospitality often work under unfavourable work conditions, such as long working hours and unstable shift work, working on weekends and holidays, low wages, and lack of employment stability, all of which are likely to have a negative impact on service employees' perceptions and emotional interpretations of their jobs and their work environments (Pienaar & Willemse, 2008). Also, service employee performance is a key issue for Tourism and Hospitality firms in mature Western European markets, who face considerable strategic challenges (Oxford-Research, 2009; UNWTO, 2013) such as the increased competition from

emerging destinations in the Mediterranean, Asia and Eastern Europe, the increasing customer emphasis on individualization of service, new customer concerns regarding health, climate, and the environment, or the increasing customer decision power and freedom of choice through the use of ICT and the internet. Due to these trends, customer value propositions in this sector are increasingly focusing on the intangible elements of service as a means of differentiation, as opposed to traditional price-based strategies, and this, in turn, increases the strategic importance of service employees and their performances in the organization's success.

Lastly, the importance of the Tourism and Hospitality sector for the Spanish economy cannot be underestimated. Traditionally the sector accounted on average for over 10% of GDP and employed around 1,200 000 people (12% of the workforce). Although these figures have seen a sharp decline in the past few years, and notably after 2008 (OECD, 2012), the current trend since 2014 is one of strong recovery. At present, the Spanish strategy for tourism is set out in the policy document National and Integral Tourism Plan 2012 – 2015 (Turespaña, 2012) which follows up on the previous strategy of 2008 Tourism Plan Horizon 2020 (Turespaña, 2008). The strategy aims to innovate Spanish tourism and increase its attractiveness by shifting from standards/basic products in traditional markets to specialised products addressing new markets and different consumers' preferences. Innovation, technological change, environmental responsibility and investment in human resources are key axes of the strategy. With regard to the human resources axe of the plan, one of its stated objectives is the adoption, by companies operating in the sector, of HRM policies and practices that could enhance employee contribution to service quality as perceived by customers. The central contribution of this study, i.e. Engagement Climate, is intended to help develop managerial tools that address the issue of service employee behaviour and performance.

Travel agency industry in Spain

The travel agency industry is facing a revolution, in Spain and elsewhere, as a result of the growing importance of the online channel. Internet operators are rapidly gaining presence and travelling already represents the leading expense for Spaniards on the web. Online travel retail sales have been rapidly increasing in recent years whereas offline sales have seen a slow but steady decline. Since 2012, there has been a shift towards mobile travel applications and the use of such devices is expected to grow rapidly in the coming years, especially given the appearance of low cost mobile operators (Euromonitor, 2012). Travel agencies in Spain provide over 55.000 jobs of which approximately 10.000 are seasonal (SEPE, 2012). The industry structure is highly fragmented, with more than 5.500 companies and over 14.000 retailer outlets (Amadeus, 2012). The ratio of travel

agencies per 10.000 inhabitants in Spain is higher than that of countries of reference such as Germany or the UK. SME represent approximately 45% of the total number of outlets, while the remaining 55% corresponds to large companies (Amadeus, 2012).

Over the last decade, the structure of the industry has experienced a process of concentration in large networks, which accelerated substantially during the peak of the economic crisis (2008-2010). After this period of heavy adjustments the industry stabilized. Nevertheless, the number of travel retailer outlets is expected to continue to decline over the coming years, with the online channel set to grow in importance. Travel agencies will continue to restructure in the short term by reducing their workforces or starting bankruptcy proceedings and the introduction of direct online booking systems for traditional retailers (Euromonitor, 2012). Despite the achieved concentration process and the decline in the total number of retail outlets in recent times, the issue of adjusting and renewing the traditional business model will still remain the main challenge for the industry in the coming years. This entails addressing key business challenges such as being able to respond to new traveller profiles and demands, to deliver products or services with higher margins, and to add value to customers by turning traditional travel agents into travel "consultants", as well as being able to optimize ICT solutions as a means to provide superior customer services prior to, during, and after the travel.

The company

The travel agency that provided the setting of the empirical study was part of a leading business group in the Spanish tourism sector, and also one of the largest tourism-based groups in the European market. The group was a vertically integrated tour operator comprising six business lines: wholesale, retail, hotel, airline, receptive and online divisions. It had, in 2011, a turnover of 2,500 million euros, and more than 5,000 employees in the 22 countries and 70 destinations where the group was active. The travel agency, founded in 1930 and ranked among the top 3 travel retailers in Spain, was considered the flagship company of the group's retail division. It had a network of over 950 retail outlets in Spain and Portugal, of which 140 were franchises, and 250 associated agencies. The company had four business areas; holidays, business, online and conferences, and a number of strategic alliances with other companies in the sector. By the end of 2011, the company had over 1,900 employees and produced revenue of 960 million euros, with a net benefit of 17, 5 million euros.

A total of three joint interviews with the company's HR Director and Sales Director were conducted prior to, during, and after the statistical enquiry. After the initial contacts to secure the company's

participation in the study, a first interview helped obtain an overall impression of the company's current organizational context and challenges from both the HRM and the business perspective. The company was, at the time, immersed in an ambitious redefinition of its business model, which included:

- a new "sales philosophy" to align the commercialization of its products and services with the trends, needs, and demands of the consumers of the 21st century;
- a physical and aesthetic redefinition of the company's retail outlets, to transform them into "travel shops", i.e., spaces highlighting the travelling experience;
- an aggressive rebranding of the company image, to convey the new sales philosophy and changes in the business model;
- a structural reorganization of the four business areas (holidays, business, online and conferences), including the appointment of new business area directors for each of them;
- a new operational strategy, to streamline and simplify sales and post-sales processes, and to leverage multichannel approaches.

The travel agency's network of retail outlets consisted of small offices/agencies in main urban areas with typically 1 to 3 travel agents, one of which acted also as the office manager. The network was organized into 12 regional divisions, of which 10 were in Spain and 2 in Portugal. The main role of the travel agents reflected the standard in the industry, i.e. to give well-informed, appropriate advice to clients about where and when to travel based on their needs, promoting and selling the company's travel related products and services. Other duties included arranging flights, insurance and accommodation, using a booking system to secure holidays, collecting and processing payments, advising clients on travel arrangements such as visas and passports, sending out tickets to clients, and dealing with complaints or refunds. Travel agents acting as office managers had additional responsibilities regarding the office's sales development, financial and operational management. At the time of the study, employee morale was perceived as positive by the company's management. Organizational adjustments due to the economic crisis had already been implemented in 2009-2010, the company's financial performance in 2011 had been good, and there was a renewed sense of optimism regarding the undergoing changes in the company's business model. In this context, the invitation to participate in the study was seen by top management as an opportunity to obtain detailed data from their front-line employees that could be used to inform future HRM initiatives supporting the undergoing business change process.

A second meeting with the company's HR Director and Sales Director took place prior to the survey launch to discuss survey administration issues and the communication strategy, the details of which will be described further on when addressing the survey administration procedure. Lastly, a third meeting took place in which the results of the survey were presented by the researcher and discussed by the HR Director and Sales Director. The discussion helped establish contextual references and possible interpretation criteria for the obtained survey data, and it also included a first attempt at identifying managerial challenges and possible interventions. The contextual interpretation of the results will be addressed at length during the discussion regarding the managerial implications of the study in chapter 5.

Summary of chapter 3.1

In Chapter 3.1 the different assumptions, trade-offs, and choices that give shape to the research design of the study were discussed and justified, using as a framework of reference the three key questions for research design, namely philosophical assumptions, strategy of enquiry, and data collection method:

- The philosophical stance that underpins the research design could be described as "ontological inclusiveness" and "epistemological relativity".
- The strategy of enquiry consists on a statistical or quantitative approach to the research question, which includes two phases. The first phase (exploratory) addresses the development and pilot test of a measure of Engagement Climate as a social psychological climate construct. In the second phase (confirmatory), the factor structure of Engagement Climate is investigated within a sample of travel agents from a single organization.
- The chosen instrument to gather quantitative data for the statistical enquiry is a questionnaire intended to measure Engagement Climate dimensions as perceived by the respondents. The use of a cross-sectional statistical survey as the method of choice is grounded on the conceptualization of engagement as a specific state affect or mood, hence a retrospective approach, as opposed, for example, to real time reports, helps identify those recurrent and salient emotional cognitions of the work environment that feed into, or are antecedents of, engagement as a relatively permanent affective mood.

Lastly, the setting of the empirical study, i.e. travel agents working for a major travel group in Spain, was described in detail. The choice of a single large Tourism and Hospitality company was justified as it provides both a sufficient sample-size and a relatively homogeneous background for the research,

therefore minimizing the risk of contaminating data with unaccounted variables. The choice of population of interest, i.e. service employees, was justified as Engagement Climate is expected to exert a non-negligible influence in service employee performance, considering both the nature of service roles and the characteristics of the service industry.

3.2. Questionnaire development and pilot-test

Introduction

Chapter 3.2 addresses the design process to obtain a measure of Engagement Climate, which represents the main methodological contribution of the thesis. First, the questionnaire development process is described including, as its main landmarks, the selection of items/indicators, the selection of demographic control variables, the decisions on rating scale, wording and question order as well as on the overall structure of the questionnaire. Secondly, the English/Spanish translation procedure for the instrument is described and discussed in detail. Thirdly, the pilot testing procedure of the questionnaire is addressed, which includes the description of the three questionnaire pre-tests that were sequentially carried out in order to assess the instrument's face validity and to identify issues that could have a negative impact on its overall reliability and validity, Lastly, the survey administration and data collection procedures are described and discussed, as well as the obtained response rates and the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Questionnaire design

The questionnaire design process had, as its starting point, the already specified domain of the twelve hypothesized dimensions that comprise the Engagement Climate construct. The conceptualization of these dimensions (see Figure 2.5 in chapter 2.3) is based on Kahn's "thick descriptions" in his ethnographic research (1990, 1992), and also on other psychological climate dimensions or constructs in the extant literature that fit into the conceptual domain of engagement climate.

Another important criterion that influenced the selection of items was the intended level of analysis for the Engagement Climate measure, namely the organization, rather than the proximal work-group, or the organizational sub-unit, as the interest in this study is on the systemic nature of the phenomena. This entailed focusing on indicators that could be apt to capture perceptions (emotional cognitions) that the individual would associate with the organization in the general sense, as opposed to singular elements of his/her work experience, or to perceptions that could be ascribed to the proximal work-group but not necessarily reflecting the organizational climate. Thus

while it would be theoretically possible to measure Engagement Climate at the group level of analysis, it would require focusing on Engagement Climate perceptions related to supervisory and proximal work-group practices as opposed to perceptions related to organization level policies and procedures (Zohar, 2000), but nevertheless the conceptual domain of the Engagement Climate dimensions would still be fully applicable.

Item selection

Using these definitions as the guiding reference in the design process (see figure 3.1), the next task involved creating a pool of questionnaire items from existing instruments in the extant literature that could potentially be used as indicators of the hypothesized constructs.

Figure 3.1 Kahn's dimensions of psychological conditions for personal engagement

Dimensions	Meaningfulness	Safety	Availability
Definition	Sense of return on investments of self in role performances	Sense of being able to show and employ self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career	Sense of possessing the physical, emotional, and psychological resources necessary for investing self in role performances
Experiential components	Feel worthwhile, valued, valuable; feel able to give to and receive from work and others in the course of work	Feel situations are trustworthy, secure, predictable, and clear in terms of behavioural consequences	Feel capable of driving physical, intellectual, and emotional energies into role performance
Types of influence	Work elements that create incentives or disincentives for investment of self	Elements of social systems that create situations that are more or less predictable, consistent, and nonthreatening	Individual distractions that are more or less preoccupying in role performance situations
Influences	Tasks: Jobs involving more or less challenge, variety, creativity, autonomy, and clear delineation of procedures and goals	Interpersonal relationships: Ongoing relationships that offer more or less support, trust, openness, flexibility, and lack of threat	Physical energies: Existing levels of physical resources available for investment into role performances
	Roles: Formal positions that offer more or less attractive identities, through fit with a preferred self-image, and status and influence	Group and intergroup dynamics: Informal, often unconscious roles that leave more or less room to safely express various parts of self: shaped by dynamics within and between groups in organizations	Emotional energies: Existing levels of emotional resources available for investment into role performances
	Work interactions: Interpersonal interactions with more or less promotion of dignity, self-appreciation, sense of value, and the inclusion of personal as well as professional elements	Management style and process: Leader behaviours that show more or less support, resilience, consistency, trust, and competence	Insecurity: levels of confidence in own abilities and status, self-consciousness, and ambivalence about fit with social systems that leave more or less room for investments of self in role performances
		Organizational norms: Shared system expectations about members behaviours and emotions that leave more or less room for investments of self during role performances	Outside life: Issues in people's outside lives that leave them more or less available for investments of self during role performances

Source: Kahn, 1990

Engagement climate dimensions are understood to reflect a specific subgroup of emotional cognitions within the general concept of psychological climate, which have a distinct and direct influence on the individual's motivational focus and subsequent in-role behaviours. Thus, existing instruments and measures in psychological climate research, as well as other well-established and tested climate related instruments, provided a solid starting point for the operationalization of the

constructs. Specifically, there was an initial selection of existing items/indicators from Brown and Leigh's (1996) operationalization of psychological climate based on Kahn's model (see figure 3.2), and from Koys and DeCotiis's (1991) measure of psychological climate (figure 3.3), which included several dimensions that were proximal to the ones hypothesized for Engagement Climate.

Figure 3.2 Brown and Leigh's operationalization of Psychological Climate based on Kahn's model

Higher order factors	Dimensions	Items
Meaningfulness	**Contribution**: The perception that one's work significantly affects organizational processes and outcomes	I feel very useful in my job
		Doing my job well really makes a difference
		I feel like a key member of the organization
		The work I do is very valuable to the organization
	Recognition: The belief that the organization appreciates and recognizes one's efforts and contributions	I rarely feel my work is taken for granted
		My superiors generally appreciate the way I do my job
		The organization recognizes the significance of the contributions I make
	Challenge: The perception that the work is challenging and requires the use of creativity and a variety of skills	My job is very challenging
		It takes all my resources to achieve my work objectives
Safety	**Supportive management**: The perception that management allows one to try and fail without fear of reprisals and allows self-control over one's work and the methods to accomplish it	My boss is flexible about how I accomplish my job objectives
		My manager is supportive of my ideas and ways of getting things done
		My boss gives me the authority to do my job as I see fit
		I'm careful in taking responsibility because my boss is often critical of new ideas (R)
		I can trust my boss to back me up on decisions I make in the field
	Role Clarity: The perception that one's role expectations and work situations are clear, consistent, and predictable	Management makes it perfectly clear how my job is to be done
		The amount of work responsibility and effort expected in my job is clearly defined
		The norms of performance in my department are well understood and communicated
	Self-expression: The perception that expressions of individuality in one's work role, such as personality, creativity, feelings, and self-concepts, are accepted by the organization	The feelings I express at work are my true feelings
		I feel free to be completely myself at work
		There are parts of myself that I am not free to express at work (R)
		It is okay to express my true feelings in this job

Source: Adapted from Brown and Leigh, 1996

Figure 3.3 Koys and DeCotiis's Psychological Climate indicators

Dimensions	Items
Autonomy The perception of self-determination with respect to work procedures, goals, and priorities	I make most of the decisions that effect the way my job is performed
	I determine my own work procedure
	I schedule my own work activities
	I set the performance standards for my job
	I organize my work as I see best
Cohesion The perception of togetherness or sharing within the organization setting, including the willingness of members to provide material aid	(Company name) people pitch in to help each other out
	(Company name) people tend to get along with each other
	(Company name) people take a personal interest in one another
	There is a lot of "team spirit" among (Company name) people
	I feel like a have a lot in common with the (Company name) people I know
Trust The perception of freedom to communicate openly with members at higher organizational levels about sensitive or personal issues with the expectation that the integrity of such communications will not be violated	I can count on my boss to keep the things I tell him confidential
	My boss has a lot of personal integrity
	My boss is the kind of person I can level with
	My boss follows through on his commitments to me
	My boss is not likely to give me bad advice
Pressure The perception of time demands with respect to task completion and performance standards	I have too much work and too little time to do it in
	(Company name) is a relaxed place to work (R)
	At home, I sometimes dread hearing the telephone ring because it might be someone calling about a job-related problem
	I feel like I never have a day off
	Too many (Company name) employees at my level get "burned out" by the demands of their jobs

Source: Adapted from Koys and DeCotiis, 1991

Figure 3.3 Koys and DeCotiis's Psychological Climate indicators (cont.)

Dimensions	Items
Support The perception of the tolerance of member behaviour by superiors, including the willingness to let members learn from their mistakes without fear of reprisal	I can count on my boss to help me when I need it
	My boss is interested in me getting ahead of the company
	My boss is behind me 100%
	My boss is easy to talk to about job-related problems
	My boss backs me up and lets me learn from my mistakes
Recognition The perception that member contributions to the organization are acknowledged	I can count on a pat on the back when I perform well
	The only time I hear about my performance is when I screw up (R)
	My boss knows what my strengths are and lets me know it
	My boss is quick to recognize good performance
	My boss uses me as an example of what to do
Fairness The perception that organizational practices are equitable and non-arbitrary or capricious	I can count on a fair shake from my boss
	The objectives my boss sets for my job are reasonable
	My boss is not likely to give me a "greasy meal"
	My boss does not play favourites
	If my boss terminates someone, the person probably deserved it
Innovation The perception that change and creativity are encouraged, including risk-taking into new areas where the member has little or no prior experience	My boss encourages me to develop my ideas
	My boss likes me to try new ways of doing my job
	My boss encourages me to improve on his methods
	My boss encourages me to find new ways around old problems
	My boss "talks up" new ways of doing things

Source: Adapted from Koys and DeCotiis, 1991

Next, the following sources were used to create a pool of 219 items in total that could potentially be used, either literally or slightly modified, as indicators for each of the twelve Engagement Climate dimensions:

- Koys and DeCottis's (1991) psychological climate measure: 40 items
- Brown and Leigh's (1996) psychological climate measure: 21 items
- Salanova et al.'s (2006) survey of psychosocial risks at work (RED-WoNT): 19 items
- Rizzo et al.'s (1970) role conflict and role ambiguity measures: 13 items
- Bienstock et al.'s (2003) measures of organizational rights: 12 items
- Schneider and Alderfer's (1973) measures of need satisfaction: 11 items
- Singh and Rhoads's (1991) role ambiguity MULTIRAM scale: 10 items
- Babin and Boles's (1996) measures of co-worker and supervisor support: 10 items
- Sergeant and Frenkel's (2000) measure of organizational support: 9 items
- Payne and Pheysey's (1971) business organization climate index: 9 items
- Robinson and Rousseau's (1994) measures of trust: 7 items
- Singh's (1993) compilation of measures of organizational factors: 7 items
- Eisenberger et al.'s (1990) survey of perceived organizational support: 6 items
- Anderson and West's (1998) team climate inventory: 6 items
- Spreitzer's (1995) measure of empowerment: 6 items
- Wharton's (1993) measure of job-related emotional exhaustion: 6 items
- Salanova et al.'s (2005) measures of burnout: 6 items
- Moorman's (1991) measures of procedural and distributive justice: 4 items
- Hackman and Oldham's (1976) measure of job characteristics: 4 items
- Beehr et al.'s (1976) measures of work overload: 4 items
- Jackson et al.'s (1993) measures of job control: 4 items
- Babakus et al.'s (2003) measures of empowerment: 3 items
- Hartline and Ferrell's (1996) service employee management model measures: 2 items

A total of 102 items were selected from the initial pool, the criteria for selection being how accurately the items reflected the domain specification of the hypothesized dimensions, and whether each dimension was sufficiently represented in terms of number of items. Also, there were practical considerations regarding the final number of items to be included in the questionnaire. A well-documented fact in surveys design and administration is that the longer the survey, the lower the response rate and the quality of the answers (Lietz, 2010; Schwarz & Sudman, 1992). On the

other hand, the recommended minimum number of items per dimension or factor in the extant literature, for the purposes of factor analysis, is 2 to 3, and the typical number of items per factor ranges from 4 to 10 (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The final number of items per dimension ranged from 7 to 9, thus providing some margin for measure purification and refinement while keeping a reasonable total number of items to optimize response rates and quality of answers.

In addition to the 102 items pertaining to the twelve engagement climate dimensions, items pertaining to existing measures of work engagement, job satisfaction, and affective commitment were also selected to create ad-hoc measures for each of these three constructs/variables:

- Personal engagement (5 items). The items selected as potential indicators of personal engagement were obtained from Schaufeli et al.'s (2006) short version of the UWES scale. As discussed in the review of the literature, some of the items in the scale seem to accurately reflect Kahn's (1990) description of personal engagement as a psychological state or mood, whereas other items show a close resemblance to appraisals or evaluative judgements. Thus the selected items were those that best captured Kahn's original conceptualization of personal engagement as a state affect or mood, e.g. "At my work, I feel bursting with energy", or "I get carried away when I am working".

- Job satisfaction (5 items). The items selected as potential indicators of Job satisfaction were obtained from Salanova et al.'s (2006) measure of psychosocial risks at work (RED-WoNT). The items reflected commonly used facets of job satisfaction, i.e. satisfaction with the tasks, the company, the co-workers, the work in general, and had the added advantage of being available in English and Spanish.

- Affective commitment (5 items). The items selected as potential indicators of affective commitment were also obtained from Salanova et al.'s (2006) RED-WoNT measure. The items pertained to Mowday et al.'s organizational affective commitment measure (1979), and had the added advantage of being available in English and Spanish.

Demographic control variables

Questions pertaining to the following demographic characteristics: gender, age, organizational tenure, job role, type of employment, and working hours, were included in the questionnaire as control variables, i.e. with a view to ensure that relationships between the key variables in the study were not confounded.

Age, organizational tenure, and job role have been shown to influence employee engagement (see Van den Broeck, Van Ruysseveldt, Smulders, & De Witte, 2011), also specifically in service and hospitality contexts. For example, several studies show that age and job role can significantly affect levels of employee engagement (Avery et al., 2007; J. B. James, Mckechnie, & Swanberg, 2011; O. M. Karatepe, Keshavarz, & Nejati, 2010; Koyuncu, Burke, & Fiksenbaum, 2006; Lee & Ok, 2015; Park & Gursoy, 2012). Also, Karatepe and Olugbade (2009) reported that hotel employees with longer tenure with the organization were relatively less engaged in their work. Job tenure has also been shown to influence employee emotion management strategies in service contexts (M. Wang, Liao, Zhan, & Shi, 2011), while gender has been shown to influence work engagement (e.g., J. Hakanen, Bakker, & Demerouti, 2005). With regard to type of employment, Kular et al.'s (2008) review indicated that full-time employees tend to be more engaged than part-time employees. Lastly, gender, age, organizational tenure, and job role have often been used as control variables in psychological climate research, with varying results (e.g., Forte, 2004; Hershberger, Lichtenstein, & Knox, 1994; Mayhew, Grunwald, & Dey, 2006).

Gender (male/female), type of employment (full-time/part-time), and job role (travel agent/office manager) were coded as binary variables; organizational tenure and working hours were measured via 3-point ordinal scales, while age was measured using a 4-point ordinal scale.

Selected rating scale

Regarding the rating scale, there appears to be no standard for the number of points, and common practice varies widely (e.g., Likert, 1932; Miller, 1982; Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957; J. P. Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1999). Nevertheless, there is a consensus on the elements that must be present for a rating scale to be effective, i.e. the rating scale should cover the entire measurement continuum, the points should progress from one end of the continuum to the other, avoiding overlaps, and respondents should share a relatively precise and stable understanding of the meaning of each point on the scale (Krosnick & Presser, 2009).

Notwithstanding the variety of practices, the literature suggests that some scale lengths are preferable to maximize reliability and validity. Regarding the issue of reliability, although there is some variation in the patterns yielded by these studies (e.g., Bendig, 1954; Givon & Shapira, 1984; Komorita & Graham, 1965; Lissitz & Green, 1975), they generally support the notion that reliability is lower for scales with only two or three points compared to those with more points, but suggest that the gain in reliability levels off after about 7 points. Also, many studies (e.g., Green & Rao, 1970; Matell & Jacoby, 1971; T. W. Smith, 1988; Wedell & Parducci, 1988) support the notion, as with

research on reliability, that validity is higher for scales with a moderate number of points than for scales with fewer, with the suggestion that validity is compromised by especially long scales. Overall, the review of the literature suggests that 7-point scales are probably optimal in many instances. Regarding the labelling of rating scale points, various studies suggest that reliability is higher when all points are labelled with words than when only some are (see Krosnick & Berent, 1993). Also, reliability and validity are higher when the rating scale questions display the full attitude dimension explicitly, by selecting labels that divide up the continuum into approximately equal units (e.g., from "extremely bad" to "extremely good", or from "dislike a great deal" to "like a great deal") as opposed to those of agree/disagree, true/false, and yes/no questions that focus on only a single point of view (Ebel, 1982; Mirowsky & Ross, 1991).

Following the recommendations in the literature, a 7-point rating scale was designed for the items pertaining to the engagement climate dimensions, displaying a frequency continuum with the points labelled as follows: (1) Never, (2) Almost never, (3) Rarely, (4) At times, (5) Quite a lot, (6) Frequently, (7) Always. The question format was also the same for all items pertaining to the engagement climate dimensions, as well as the 5 items pertaining to personal engagement: *"Indicate the frequency with which you have FELT the following in your work, during the LAST 6 MONTHS"*. The use of capital letters was intended to stress that the expected answers were feelings, not opinions or judgments, and also that those feelings should reflect general affective tones experienced by the respondent in his/her present work, as opposed to occasional discreet emotions triggered by specific events.

With regard to job satisfaction and affective commitment, a 7-point rating scale was also used. In the case of job satisfaction items, question format was: *"At present, how satisfied are you with (job satisfaction facet)?",* and the rating scale was: (1) Completely dissatisfied, (2) Very dissatisfied, (3) Dissatisfied, (4) Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, (5) Satisfied, (6) Very satisfied, (7) Completely satisfied. In the case of affective commitment items, question format was: *"Next there are some questions about the company you work for. Please use the following response scale ...",* and the rating scale was: (1) I completely disagree, (2) I disagree, (3) I rather disagree, (4) I neither disagree or agree, (5) I rather agree, (6) I agree, (7) I completely agree.

Wording and question order

The wording of each of the 102 items pertaining to the engagement climate dimensions was modified so that each and all of them reflected statements about a feeling, not opinions or

judgments. That involved, in most cases, adding the words "I feel" to the original item as the opener of the statement, and eliminating openers such as "I think ..." or "In my opinion ..." when they were present in the original wording. In some cases, items worded as questions were rephrased to become statements. Also, in order to control for an agreement response bias, approximately two thirds of the statements were positively worded and one third was negatively worded.

Regarding the question order, research has shown (see Krosnick & Presser, 2009) that both serial order (location in a sequence of items) and semantic order (location in a sequence of meanings) may affect measurement by influencing the respondents' cognitive processes. All questionnaire items, with the exception of the demographics section, share the same format, i.e. multiple-choice questions using a 7-point rating scale, and a similar level of response "difficulty", thus no significant issues regarding serial order that could potentially affect respondents' motivation or fatigue were initially predicted. Regarding semantic order, it is generally recommended (Knowles, 1988; Knowles & Byers, 1996; Krosnick & Presser, 2009) that items on related topics be grouped together so that they flow coherently and facilitate respondents' cognitive processing. Thus, the structure of the questionnaire was designed as follows:

- Part I (items 1 to 7): Demographic characteristics
- Part II (items 8 to 16): Job satisfaction and affective commitment
- Part III (items 17 to 118): Engagement climate dimensions
- Part IV (items 119 to 124): Personal engagement

Additionally, items pertaining to engagement climate were grouped per dimension, under the heading of the dimension label (e.g., "Support") to reinforce the semantic grouping.

Translation procedure

To obtain the highest quality data, the questionnaire needed to be accurately translated into Spanish and also be culturally sensitive to potential language issues within the selected population for the study. Choice of translation method and procedure was made based on best practices (Alwin, Braun, Harkness, & Scott, 1994; Brislin, 1976; Hulin, 1987; Van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996) as well as practical considerations. A distinction can be made among three types of bias (Van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996) or factors that can jeopardize the validity and/or reliability of the translated version of an instrument. Construct bias occurs when the construct that is measured by an instrument shows non-negligible differences across cultures. Method bias refers to validity-threatening factors that are related to instrument administration, e.g. differences in social desirability or familiarity with response format. Finally, item bias refers to instrument anomalies at

the item level such as poor wording, inappropriateness of item content in a cultural group, and inaccurate translations. Simple translation/back-translation procedures (see Sechrest, Fay, & Hafeez Zaidi, 1972) are meaningful only when construct and method bias do not play a role. When these play a role, more instrument adaptations are required (Hambleton, 1994). A review of the extant literature shows that there are no standard procedures to identify and/or eliminate construct or method bias. Rather, it is the translator's awareness as well as his/her linguistic and psychological expertise what will often suffice to yield high quality translations.

With regard to the Engagement Climate questionnaire, this researcher (Spanish national, qualified English-Spanish translator, and experienced people management consultant both in Spain and the UK) considered that the risk of construct and method bias was negligible. This judgment was based, firstly, on the fact that Engagement Climate dimensions are, for the most part, adapted from existing measures often used in climate-related and employee morale surveys by researchers and practitioners both in Spain and the UK. Service employees in medium and large firms in Spain are routinely exposed to work climate concepts through job satisfaction surveys and other HRM-related instruments, many of which are in fact Spanish translations of original English/American instruments. Therefore, no significant cross-cultural differences in the conceptualization of the Engagement Climate dimensions and their indicators were expected to be found in the target samples. Secondly, the chosen questionnaire format and administration procedures (be they web-based or paper-based) did not deviate significantly from standards widely used by researchers and practitioners for work climate surveys and related instruments in Spain and the UK. Therefore, the risk of method bias with regard to the target samples was also considered to be negligible. Thus, a simple translation/back-translation procedure was considered sufficient to obtain a high quality translation, involving the following steps:

(1) Identification of existing - and tested - Spanish translations of the original English items that were used during the questionnaire design process. Out of the 112 items contained in the English version of the questionnaire that resulted from the first pre-test (expert review) a total of 32 translated items were identified, all pertaining to Salanova et al.'s (2006) Spanish version of the RED-WoNT scale, and including all job satisfaction, affective commitment, and personal engagement items, as well as other items pertaining to Engagement Climate dimensions, which were slightly reworded following the pattern used for their English versions.

(2) Translation and back-translation of items. A total of 80 items, plus questions pertaining to the demographics section, were directly translated by this researcher. The resulting translation was then back-translated into English by a British national working in Spain as a qualified language teacher/translator, with no background in social sciences or survey research, and also uninformed that the source text was in fact a translation. The purpose of the back-translation (see Brislin, 1976; Werner & Campbell, 1970) was to compare/contrast it with the source text, with a view to assessing the quality of the Spanish translation. While the source text and the back-translation were not identical, as expected, the comparison did not show any significant differences regarding meaning, appropriateness or equivalence between both texts.

(3) Bilingual expert assessment (see Hulin, 1987). The full Spanish translation of the questionnaire together with the full English version were reviewed and compared by two researchers from the Departamento de Psicología Evolutiva, Educativa, Social y Metodología at the Universitat Jaume I, Castellón, Spain. Both researchers were Spanish nationals, proficient in English, experienced in survey design and translation methods, and with no ties to this research. The researchers reviewed the translation independently, compared notes, and provided a unified assessment of the translation. With the exception of some minor suggestions that were duly incorporated into the final version, the Spanish translation was considered by both researchers as "adequate" and “equivalent" to the source text.

(4) Monolingual comprehension assessment (see R. B. McKay et al., 1996). One-on-one interviews that were part of the pre-test activities with target groups were used to probe the participants' comprehension of specific items or wordings in a purely monolingual Spanish context. 21 interviews took place during the pre-test of the paper-based survey and 12 interviews during the pre-test of the web-based survey. The following section on questionnaire pre-tests provides a full description of results and changes made to produce the final Spanish version of the questionnaire.

Questionnaire pre-tests

Three questionnaire pre-tests were sequentially carried out to identify issues that could have a negative impact on the instrument reliability and validity, such as specific wording choices, serial and semantic orderings of questions, questionnaire length and completion times, or differences in interpretation of questions. Choice of types of pre-test and procedures were made based on best practices in the literature (Krosnick & Presser, 2009; Presser et al., 2004; Willis, 2005) as well as practical considerations.

The pre-tests also served to explore face validity of the questionnaire items, namely, the extent to which the items and the questionnaire as a whole were subjectively viewed as covering the concepts they purported to measure and, in general, the transparency or relevance of the questions as they appeared to pilot-test participants (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). While face validity is only considered to be a superficial measure of validity, unlike construct validity and content validity, it provides a valuable indication of whether the selected instrument appears to measure what it measures from the participant's view. The following follow-up questions after questionnaire completion were used as probes for face validity during the different pre-tests:

- What do you think the purpose of the questionnaire was?
- What do you think is being measured?
- Do you feel the questions were adequate to capture how you have felt at work in recent times?

Pre-test 1: expert review without data collection (March 2010). The questionnaire, in its original English version, was distributed to 4 experts from Strathclyde Business School, with ample experience in survey methodology applied to social science research and attitude measurement, who reviewed it in detail and provided subsequent feedback during individual interviews of approximately 20 minutes duration. All reviewers considered that the face validity of the questionnaire was overall adequate. As a result of the experts' feedback, 5 items pertaining to Engagement Climate dimensions were eliminated, due to semantic overlap with other items, and 6 items, also pertaining to Engagement Climate dimensions, were slightly reworded to avoid divergences in interpretation. Feedback regarding other issues, such as questionnaire structure, semantic and serial order, questionnaire length, or rating scale, was positive and no additional problems that could impact negatively on the instrument reliability or validity were detected.

Pre-test 2: conventional pre-testing with data collection (June 2010). The reviewed questionnaire, in its Spanish version, was administered to a sample of 21 service employees from a major Spanish hotel chain, distributed in 4 hotels in Madrid. The sample included 7 receptionists, 9 waiters, and 5 cleaning staff, 13 female and 8 male, all Spanish nationals, their ages ranging from 29 to 48 years old. During the course of three days, the questionnaire was administered on paper-and-pencil format to each participant in their respective hotels/workplaces, with no prior instructions, to set a similar context to the one expected for the main survey. A one-on-one cognitive interview with the researcher, of approximately 30 minutes duration, took place immediately after the participant completed the survey. In addition to face validity probe questions, the cognitive interview entailed

eliciting the following information from the participant: evaluations on how the subject selected his or her answers, explanations on what the subject interpreted the questions to mean, and reporting of any difficulties the subject had in answering the questions, including fatigue issues due to the length of the questionnaire. Regarding Engagement Climate dimensions, probe questions such as “in your own words, what is this question asking?” or “how did you arrive at your answer?” were used to assess the critical issue of whether the subject was referring to feeling states as opposed to opinions or judgements, and also whether those feeling states were general affective tones as opposed to occasional discrete emotions. The analysis of the 21 interviews provided the following insights:

- No fatigue issues were detected regarding questionnaire length or overall difficulty of the questions. All subjects considered that the majority of questions were clear and could be answered relatively quickly. Also, the questionnaire was often described as somewhat long but within reasonable parameters. Total completion time ranged from 17 to 28 minutes, the average completion time being approximately 24 minutes.
- Regarding face validity, all participants felt after completion that the purpose of the questionnaire was as stated initially by the researcher and that the items, generally speaking, measured how they felt at work. Several participants pointed out, however, that in some cases they felt uncertain regarding what a specific question/item intended to capture. These items were discussed in more length during the interview.
- Regarding items pertaining to the Engagement Climate dimensions, answers to probe questions indicated, in all 21 cases, that the subject had clearly understood that he/she was asked about frequency of affective tones/moods at work, not about singular/specific emotional episodes, nor opinions or judgments. The time reference in the question, i.e. "...during the LAST 6 MONTHS" was often referred to as helpful and/or appropriate to focus the answer on the general affective tone at work in recent times, as opposed to discrete emotional episodes or to feelings pertaining to past situations that were no longer applicable.
- All subjects stated that they felt comfortable with the 7-points rating scale applied to engagement climate dimension items, both in terms of the labelling and the intervals of options at their disposal to describe the frequency of the feeling. In the case of statements that the subject considered not applicable, equivalent to the conventional "No-opinion" or

"Don't-Know" filter (Krosnick & Presser, 2009), the selected answer was "Never", which was consistent with the questionnaire design purpose.

- A number of items/questions pertaining to the Engagement climate Dimensions were identified during the course of the 21 interviews as producing divergent interpretations among respondents, as not being fully understood, or as showing overlaps in meaning with other items/questions. As the interviews progressed, items previously identified within those categories were specifically checked in following interviews. Within that group of potentially problematic items, those highlighted by at least 2 subjects out of the total sample were taken into consideration for further revision. As a result, 3 items were slightly reworded and a total of 7 items were eliminated.

Pre-test 3: web-based pre-testing with data collection (December 2011). The reviewed questionnaire, in its Spanish version, was edited online and administered to a small sample of travel agents, out of the main sample to whom the survey was to be administered. Questionnaire administration was carried out in identical manner as the expected one for the main survey, i.e. each subject received an email at his/her workstation with an invitation to participate in the web-based survey, including a link to access the site where the survey was hosted. The purpose of the pre-test was both to identify potential technical issues that could have a negative impact in the online administration and data collection of the main survey, and also to identify possible questionnaire issues from the actual sample of the main survey, that might have not been detected in the previous pre-tests. The sample consisted of 12 travel agents from the company participating in the study, all Spanish nationals, distributed in 5 travel outlets in Madrid, Spain. The sample included 5 office managers and 7 travel agents, 9 female and 3 male, ages ranging between 32 and 45 years old. Demographic characteristics of the group were roughly similar to those of the main sampling frame regarding distribution of job roles, age range, and gender. Online completion of survey and data collection was achieved in all 12 cases without major technical issues. One-on-one cognitive interviews, following the same procedure as in the previous pre-test, took place during the course of 2 days in the participants' respective work centres/outlets. The analysis of the 12 interviews provided the following insights:

- Findings from the previous pre-test regarding questionnaire length and overall difficulty of the questions were confirmed. Total completion time was shorter than in the previous pre-test, ranging from 15 to 23 minutes, the average completion time being approximately 20 minutes. This was partly due to the fact that the questionnaire was 7 items shorter

compared to the previous version, and partly because web-based surveys tend to be completed at higher speeds than paper-and-pencil ones (Gwaltney, Shields, & Shiffman, 2008).

- Findings from the previous pre-test regarding face validity, clarity of statements, wordings, rating scale and labels were also confirmed.
- No issues were detected regarding divergence in interpretation of items, unclear meanings or overlaps in meaning with other items.
- Some minor modifications were suggested by nearly all subjects regarding specifics wordings in the demographic characteristics items, to better contextualize certain general terms to their specific job environment (e.g., "agency" instead of "workplace"). The demographics section was adapted accordingly and no further changes were deemed necessary for the remaining of the questionnaire. A final version of the questionnaire (see appendixes for both English and Spanish versions) with a total of 112 items was produced and edited online.

Sample and survey administration

Sample selection and survey administration procedures were done in close coordination with the company's Sales and HR Directors. The small sample of 12 travel agents from 5 outlets in Madrid that participated in the questionnaire pre-test was excluded from the sampling frame. Travel agents working in the company's franchised or associated outlets were also excluded, as they were not strictly, in the general and legal sense, company employees and their links with the company's culture, policies, business and HRM practices were more diffuse than those of travel agents working in the company's owned retail outlets. Travel agents from outlets in Portugal were also excluded for purely linguistic reasons.

An additional requirement for the sample selection was to include only those travel agents who had been company employees for at least 6 months, to avoid possible response bias from recently hired employees with limited experience or exposure to the organization's climate. After consultation with the company's Sales and HR Directors, it was agreed that this specific group of employees, which represented a very small number (16 in total), should also be invited to participate in the survey, to avoid creating a sense of marginalization or of "being left out". It would be the researcher's task to identify, ex-post, responses from that specific group, and eliminate them from the final dataset. Thus, the sampling frame to which the engagement climate survey was administered consisted, initially, of 1,083 employees, of which 667 were travel agents, and 416 office managers. After

eliminating responses from travel agents with less than 6 months employment history, the final sampling frame that was used for the present study consisted of 1,067 employees, all Spanish nationals, employed in the company's network of owned retail outlets in Spain for at least 6 months prior to the survey administration date, of which 651 were travel agents, and 416 office managers.

Web-based survey administration: methodology issues and procedure

It was agreed with the company's Sales and HR Directors that the survey would be hosted in an independent website and administered electronically. Web-based surveys have a number of benefits over conventional paper or face-to-face methods: their overall cost is significantly lower, speed of data collection and completion time is faster, and the data are captured directly in electronic format, making analysis faster and cheaper. The two key disadvantages of web-based surveys concern the generality and validity of their results (Wyatt, 2000). The generality of the results is clearly restricted to those who are keyboard and Internet literate. Also, because of simple preference or shortage of time in the office, some participants will prefer to print off the survey document to complete on the train, on a plane, or at home. Unless this is allowed, such participants will be excluded from the group, potentially biasing the results. Other possible threats to generality are those of keen participants responding multiple times to a survey, shifting the average results in their favour, or participants being reluctant to complete the survey unless there is a guaranteed anonymity. With regard to validity issues, simply translating the format from paper to the web may lead to significant changes in the perception of what the questions and answers mean (e.g., Schleyer & Forrest, 2000) and thus affect the validity of the survey. Simple errors that may reduce data validity are more likely in web than paper surveys, including participants' not scrolling down to see a whole page of questions or list of options in a list box and not understanding how to correct a mistaken response.

With regard to response rates, research on the effectiveness of web-based or electronic surveys is conflicting. Some reports indicate that electronically administered surveys show consistently lower response rates than other forms of surveys (Spijkerman, Knibbe, Knoops, van de Mheen, & van den Ejinden, 2009) while others indicate that electronic surveys result in similar response rates (Archer, 2008) or even higher response rates (Baruch & Holton, 2008) than other formats. Researchers recommend a number of interventions that, combined, yield better response rates for web-based surveys, such as using incentives, increasing the number of contacts with participants, personalizing invitations or communicating through trustworthy senders (e.g., Fan & Yan, 2010; Marcus, Bosnjak,

Lindner, Pilischenko, & Shutz, 2007). Some of these interventions are not possible in every instance, but such decisions depend largely on the setting in which the survey is developed and administered.

Generality and validity threats pointed out in the literature, as well as best practices regarding optimization of response rates were taken into consideration in the development and administration of the web-based survey for this study. The questionnaire was edited in HTML format using web survey software from CVENT, a software company specialized in online solutions for events and surveys, with clients in over 100 countries worldwide. Questionnaire format was equivalent, in terms of contents, structure, and layout, to the paper-based questionnaire that had been previously designed, translated into Spanish, and pre-tested. The web-based survey was hosted in an independent server, and its welcome page could be accessed by entering an internet address. Not hosting the web-based survey in the Company's own servers was meant to reinforce among participants the sense of anonymity/confidentiality as their responses were being received and processed by a neutral third party. No issues regarding keyboard and Internet literacy were anticipated, as all participants had individual workstations and used ITC technologies intensively in their work.

Participants in the survey were sent an email with the internet link to the welcome page and the follow-up instructions to enter the survey. No individual passwords were distributed, as the technical features of the web survey software allowed for the identification of each participant through his/her unique IP address, thus eliminating the possibility of multiple responses by a single participant. Technical features of the web survey software also allowed for a gradual completion of the questionnaire in different sessions, as long as the respondent used the same computer, i.e. the same IP address, on every session. Also, the web survey software included certain alerts or warning messages that were displayed automatically during survey completion to prevent common errors such as missed questions or mistaken responses. Prior to survey launch, a pre-test of the web-based survey was conducted with a small sample of 12 travel agents, working in 5 outlets in Madrid. During the one-on-one interviews that followed the completion of the survey, probe questions were asked to check potential problems regarding the web-based format of the questionnaire. No issues that could affect validity were identified.

A communication plan for the administration of the survey, including key messages, channels, and timings, was devised and put into motion in coordination with the company's Sales and HR Directors. The objectives of the plan were to maximize response rate by reinforcing among

participants a sense of transparency, confidentiality, and also of the initiative's relevance for the business. The communication plan included an initial message by email from the Sales Director to all area managers or supervisors of the travel agents participating in the survey (10th of January 2012), describing the objectives of the study, introducing the researcher and the supporting institution, explaining the company's interest in the study results, giving assurances regarding confidentiality of responses, and asking for their support to encourage participation within their teams. The message included an invitation to contact the Sales Director and/or this researcher if the area manager desired further information. A personalized second email was sent a few days later by the HR Director to all participants (13th of January 2012), with the invitation to participate in the survey, including the study description and objectives, assurances regarding anonymity/confidentiality of responses, and concluding with the internet link to the survey's welcome page and the follow-up instructions to enter the survey. The message also included this researcher's contact details should the participants encounter any technical difficulty during the completion of the survey. A follow-up email from the HR Director was sent a week after (20th of January 2012) to encourage participation from those that had not visited the survey site to date. Finally, approximately two weeks after launch date (31st of January 2012), an email from both the Sales Director and the HR Director was sent to all participants, thanking them for their efforts and sharing the survey's overall response rates. In terms of the data collection process, respondents data were gradually registered and downloaded into the web-survey software database during the survey completion period, which was from the 13th of January (launch date) until the 27th of January (final deadline).

Response rates and demographic characteristics of the sample

From the 1,067 travel agents that were invited to participate in the survey, a total of 552 responses were obtained, of which 8 were partially completed surveys, and 544 were fully completed surveys. Thus, after discarding partial responses, total usable response rate reached 50,98%. The demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 6.1 below.

Table 3.4 Demographic characteristics

N: 544	Characteristics	Response percent	Response Total
Gender			
	Female	82.17%	447
	Male	17.83%	97
Age			
	Less than 30 years old	16.36%	89
	Between 30-39 years old	47.06%	256
	Between 40-49 years old	27.21%	148
	50 or more years old	9.38%	51
Job role			
	Travel agent	57.72%	314
	Office manager	42.28%	230
Tenure			
	From 6 months to 2 years	17.46%	95
	Between 2 and 5 years	20.96%	114
	More than 5 years	61.58%	335
Employment			
	Full time	89.52%	487
	Part-time	10.48%	57
Working hours			
	Straight-through working day	11.76%	64
	Split working day	84.01%	457
	In shifts	4.23%	23

Comparison of demographic characteristics from the sampling frame to the characteristics in the sample indicated no apparent non-response bias. Fifty-eight percent of respondents were travel agents and forty-two percent were office managers. This distribution was similar to the distribution in the framing sample, which consisted of sixty-one percent of travel agents and thirty-nine percent of office managers. Eighty-two percent of the survey respondents were women and eighteen percent were men, also mirroring the gender distribution of the sampling frame. This greater proportion of women is representative of the gender composition of employees in the travel agencies sector in Spain, where approximately 75% of them are women (SEPE, 2012). Almost fifty percent of the respondents were between 30-39 years old, and over thirty-five percent were 40 or more years old. Distribution of age groups in the sample was similar to that present in the company's total number of employees. This was largely the result of the company's employment policies and culture, which promoted long tenures and job stability, as opposed to the general situation in the industry, where high turnover figures and thus "flatter" age pyramids are frequent.

Over sixty-percent of respondents had been employed in the company for more than 5 years, and twenty percent of respondents had been company employees between 2 and 5 years. This distribution was similar to that present in the total sampling frame, and reflected the company's employment culture, rather than the average distribution of tenure in the industry in Spain, where only a third of the total figure of employees in travel agencies show a length of service of more than 5 years (SEPE, 2012). Nearly ninety percent of respondents worked full-time, which was a similar result to the composition in the company, but not fully indicative of the composition in the industry, where seasonal and part-time employment are more frequent (SEPE, 2012). Lastly, nearly eighty-five percent of respondents' working hours consisted on a split working day in two periods (from 9am to 2pm, and from 5pm to 8pm). Split working day is the standard in the travel agencies sector in Spain and elsewhere.

Summary of chapter 3.2

Chapter 3.2 addressed the design process to obtain a measure of Engagement Climate, which represents the main methodological contribution of the thesis. The questionnaire design process had, as its starting point, the already specified conceptual domain of the twelve hypothesized dimensions that comprise the Engagement Climate construct. Using these definitions as the guiding reference, a pool of 102 questionnaire items was created from existing instruments in the extant literature. In addition, items pertaining to existing measures of work engagement, job satisfaction, and affective commitment were also selected to create ad-hoc measures for each of these three constructs/variables. Other key elements in the questionnaire design process were the selection of demographic control variables, rating scale, wording and question order, as well as overall structure of the survey.

To obtain the highest quality data, the questionnaire needed to be accurately translated into Spanish and also be culturally sensitive to potential language issues within the selected population for the study. The translation procedure consisted on a sequence that included 1) identification of existing translations, 2) translation and back-translation of items, 3) bilingual expert assessment, and 4) monolingual comprehension assessment.

Three questionnaire pre-tests were sequentially carried out to assess its face validity and to identify issues that could have a negative impact on the instrument's overall reliability and validity, such as specific wording choices, serial and semantic orderings of questions, questionnaire length and completion times, or differences in interpretation of questions. The pre-tests were 1) expert review without data collection, 2) conventional pre-testing with data collection on sample of 21 service

employees from a major Spanish hotel chain, and 3) web-based pre-testing with data collection on a small sample of travel agents, out of the main sample to whom the survey was to be administered. As the outcome of the testing process, a final version of the questionnaire with a total of 112 items was produced and edited online.

Lastly, the survey administration and data collection procedures were described and discussed, as well as the obtained response rates and the demographic characteristics of the sample.

3.3 Analytical strategy

Introduction

Chapter 3.3 describes and justifies the analytical procedure adopted to test the research hypotheses on the obtained data, and which consists on the following sequence: 1) An exploratory factor analysis (EFA), 2) A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the obtained factor solution, or first-order measurement model, 3) A CFA of a hierarchical reflective model, or second-order measurement model, that included the first-order measurement model (Engagement Climate dimensions) and a higher-order construct/variable, i.e. Engagement Climate, (4) A structural model containing the second-order measurement model and its relationships with the variables of interest in the theoretical framework, namely, personal engagement and job attitudes. A discussion on limitations and potential biases closes the sub-chapter.

Factor analysis

As the focus of this research is on social-psychological constructs that cannot be directly observed, namely, latent variables, factor analysis (exploratory and confirmatory) and structural equation modelling are the selected statistical techniques for the analysis of data. These techniques are useful when the goal is to reduce the number of observed variables into a smaller number of latent variables by examining the covariation among the observed variables.

With regard to exploratory factor analysis (EFA), its use is generally recommended when the primary goal is to identify latent constructs and there is insufficient basis to specify an a priori model (or small subset of models). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), on the other hand, should be used when the goal is to identify latent constructs and a substantial basis exists to specify an a priori model or small subset of models (Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, & King, 2006). While CFA, as a theory-driven confirmatory technique, is the appropriate technique to confirm the validity and reliability of the hypothesized multidimensional construct, i.e. Engagement Climate, EFA was also used, not for purely exploratory purposes but rather as a preparatory stage (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010)

for the CFA, and as a means to refine and purify the scales by selecting those indicators or items showing the best psychometric properties.

The use of factor analysis, despite its long history and wide application in psychological research, has often been criticized. Some critics have raised concerns about fundamental limitations of factor analysis for contributing to theory development (e.g., Armstrong, 1967). Other critics have not challenged the fundamental utility of factor analysis but have instead criticized the manner in which it is sometimes applied. In fact, these two issues appear to be intertwined and the utility of factor analysis for theory development is heavily dependent on the manner in which it is implemented (Fabrigar et al., 1999). EFA requires a researcher to make a number of important decisions with respect to how the analysis is performed. Specifically, there are five major methodological issues to consider (Fabrigar et al., 1999): 1) what variables to include in the study and the size and nature of the sample on which the study will be based, 2) whether EFA is the most appropriate form of analysis given the goals of the research project, 3) assuming that EFA is appropriate, a specific procedure to fit the model to the data must be selected, 4) how many factors should be included in the model, and 5) selecting a method for rotating the initial factor analytic solution to a final solution that can be more readily interpreted.

CFA, on the other hand, is the technique selected to determine the goodness of fit between the hypothesized model and the sample data. The issue of how the model that best represents the data reflects underlying theory, known as model fit, is by no means agreed. The Chi-square value is the traditional measure for evaluating overall model fit and it "assesses the magnitude of discrepancy between the sample and fitted covariances matrices" (Hu & Bentler, 1999, p. 2). A good model fit would provide an insignificant result at a 0.05 threshold (Barrett, 2007). For models with about 75 to 200 cases, the Chi-square test is a reasonable measure of fit, but for models with more cases (400 or more), the Chi-square is almost always statistically significant (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Chi-square is also affected by the size of the correlations in the model: the larger the correlations, the poorer the fit. For these reasons alternative measures of fit have been developed. For the current study the following indexes were selected, as suggested by Hu and Bentler (1999) for continuous data:

- Relative Chi-square fit index, or the ratio of the Chi-square statistic and the associated degrees of freedom. An acceptable relative Chi-square fit index is usually set at a 3:1 ratio, while some researchers consider a relative Chi-square fit index as high as 5 as adequate model fit (Kline, 1998; Maruyama, 1997).

- Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The RMSEA is a measure of discrepancy per degree of freedom. RMSEA above 0.10 is considered a poor fit, RMSEA of 0.08 is considered an acceptable fit, and RMSEA of 0.06 or below is considered a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Ullman, 2001).
- Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI, or Tucker-Lewis Index TLI). The CFI and NNFI, as well as the RMSEA, do not measure absolute model fit as does the relative Chi-square fit index; rather these measures evaluate model fit in comparison to the independence model. The independence model is a null model that assumes that relationships between the observed variables are zero (Ullman, 2001). Thus, these indices indicate whether the model fit is an improvement over the null model, which assumes that the variables are uncorrelated. Studies suggest that NNFI and CFI are among the best-performing fit indices under a variety of conditions (see Hu & Bentler, 1999). Because the NNFI and CFI are highly correlated only one of the two should be reported. CFI was selected in this study as it is reported much more frequently. A CFI above 0.90 is considered an acceptable fit and a CFI of 0.95 or above is considered a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).
- Root mean square residual (RMR) and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). The RMR (or SRMR when a questionnaire contains items with varying levels/scale points) is the square root of the difference between the residuals of the sample covariance matrix and the hypothesized covariance model. The RMR is defined as the difference between the observed correlation and the predicted correlation. Because the RMR is an absolute measure of fit, a value of zero indicates perfect fit. The RMR has no penalty for model complexity. A value less than 0.09 is generally considered a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).
- P of close fit (PCLOSE). This measure provides a one-sided test of the null hypothesis that the RMSEA equals 0.05, what is called a close-fitting model. The alternative, one-sided hypothesis is that the RMSEA is greater than 0.05. So if the p is greater than 0.05, i.e. not statistically significant, then it is concluded that the fit of the model is "close". If the p is less than 0.05, it is concluded that the model's fit is worse than close fitting, i.e. the RMSEA is greater than 0.05 (Kenny & McCoach, 2003).

Absolute fit indexes GFI and AGFI were not selected as they are affected by sample size and the current consensus is not to use them (Sharma, Mukherjee, Kumar, & Dillon, 2005). It is also worth mentioning the widely acknowledged anecdotal evidence that models with many variables do not

fit. Kenny and McCoach (2003) show that RMSEA improves as more variables are added to the model. NNFI and CFI are relatively stable, but tend to decline slightly.

Lastly, another important decision to inform the analytical strategy is the treatment of Engagement Climate as a multidimensional construct. Multidimensional constructs are widely used to represent several distinct dimensions as a single theoretical concept. Their utility has generated considerable debate in the OB literature (see Crede & Harms, 2015; J. R. Edwards, 2001). Advocates of multidimensional constructs argue that they provide holistic representations of complex phenomena, allowing researchers to match broad predictors with broad outcomes, and to increase explained variance. Critics point out that multidimensional constructs are conceptually ambiguous, explain less variance than explained by their dimensions taken collectively, and confound relationships between their dimensions and other constructs.

Multidimensional superordinate constructs, namely those whose dimensions act as reflective indicators, are common in organizational climate and psychological climate research. These constructs are often operationalized by summing scores on their dimensions. This widespread approach, however, disregards measurement error and fails to capture differences in the relationships between the construct and its dimensions (J. R. Edwards, 2001). While these problems can be avoided by specifying the superordinate construct as a first-order factor and treating dimension scores as observable variables (e.g., L. A. James & James, 1989), this leads to ignoring the relationships between each dimension and its indicators. To overcome this limitations it is generally recommended in the literature (Hair et al., 2010) to treat the superordinate construct as a second-order factor, its dimensions as first-order factors, and indicators of the dimensions as observed variables. Also, SEM analyses should examine the strength and variability of the relationships between the multidimensional construct and its dimensions, as these analyses have important implications regarding the interpretation of the construct (J. R. Edwards, 2001).

Analytical procedure

Based on the previous discussion and recommendations in the literature, the following analytical procedure was adopted to test the research hypotheses on the obtained data:

(1) An EFA was conducted on the total sample of 544 participants in order to determine the number and strength of factors present in the dataset and to assess whether the observed variables loaded together as predicted in **H1**, i.e. as factors reflecting the twelve engagement climate dimensions of C*ontribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity,*

Participation, Self-expression, and *Overload*. Principal axis factoring (PAF) was chosen to conduct the EFA in order to determine unique variance among items and the correlation between factors. While PAF and Principal Components (PC) often yield similar results, the conceptual approach involved in PAF, namely trying to understand the *shared* variance in a set of measurements through a small set of latent variables, was more adequate for the present study than the mathematically simpler PC approach, which sets out to represent *all* of the variance through a small set of latent components (T. A. Brown, 2006). EFA procedure included adequacy, reliability, and validity analyses of the obtained factor solution.

(2) A CFA of the obtained factor solution, or first-order measurement model, was conducted on the total sample as the means to test **H1**. The procedure in this phase included the assessment of model fit as well as reliability and validity analyses for the first-order measurement model.

(3) A CFA of a hierarchical reflective model, or second-order measurement model, that included the first-order measurement model (engagement climate dimensions) and a higher-order construct/variable, i.e. *Engagement Climate*, was conducted on the total sample as the means to test **H2**, i.e. Engagement Climate as the unifying theme of the identified independent constructs (H1), reflecting the degree to which the overall work environment creates the psychological conditions for personal engagement. The procedure included assessment of model fit, as well as reliability and validity analyses for the second-order measurement model.

(4) A structural model was built, containing the second-order measurement model and its relationships with the variables of interest in the theoretical framework, as a means to test the hypothesized direct effects of *Engagement Climate* on *Personal engagement* (**H3**) and on job attitudes (**H4a** and **H4b**), as well as the relative strength of these effects (**H4c**). The procedure included assessment of model fit and computation of direct effects for the structural model.

(5) Additionally, as a means to cross-validate the findings, the total sample was randomly split into two, and EFA and CFA procedures were replicated simultaneously for both half samples. This should not be interpreted as a fully satisfactory cross-validation procedure, as it is clear in the literature and recommended practices that effective cross-validation requires new samples from another population to which the construct would be expected to apply (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012; MacKenzie et al., 2011). An alternative approach was initially considered, consisting on using a randomly split half sample to conduct the EFA and CFA analyses, and using the second split sample to cross-validate the findings. However, this would have entailed sacrificing statistical power in exchange for a still

imperfect cross-validation procedure; therefore the decision was made to conduct the analyses on the full sample. Notwithstanding this limitation, the replication of the analyses on the two half samples provided an indication of the robustness of the factor solution and model fits obtained from the overall sample.

Limitations and potential biases

As discussed in chapter 3.1, while addressing the research design of the study, any methodological choice reflects a more or less explicit trade-off between comprehensiveness/depth of analysis regarding the phenomena of interest, on the one hand, and sense-making/applicability, on the other. In addition to these inherent limitations of the study, there are also a number of limitations arising from the methodological choices regarding data collection and from the fact that the study was carried out on only one organization and one sample.

First, with regard to the data collection method, all data obtained for the purpose of testing the study hypotheses consisted of self-reports, collected in a cross-sectional research design with a single instrument, which raises the concern of possible common method bias (J. M. Conway & Lance, 2010; P.M. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). While reliance on self-reports may be problematic in certain contexts, in this study it was justifiable, and probably even necessary, since the constructs of interest were self-referential respondent perceptions (Chan, 2009), i.e. individuals were best placed to report their perceptions of Engagement Climate, as well as their attitudes towards their jobs. At any rate, measures were taken at the design stage of the study to mitigate the risk of common method bias, and to ensure optimum validity and reliability of the obtained data. These measures included best practices and recommendations in the literature regarding questionnaire design, such as scale length, labelling of points, display of a full frequency continuum in the scale, the use of negatively worded items to avoid agreement response bias, as well as the serial and semantic order of questions to avoid fatigue and to facilitate the respondents cognitive processing.

Questionnaire translation and back-translation procedures, as recommended in the literature, were also adopted to avoid construct, method, or item biases related to cultural or language issues. Questionnaire pre-tests were conducted to identify issues that could have a negative impact on the reliability and validity of the instrument capturing the data, such as specific wording choices, serial and semantic orderings of questions, questionnaire length and completion times, or differences in interpretation of questions.

Generality and validity threats, as well as best practices regarding optimization of response rates, were taken into consideration in the development and administration of the web-based survey. A specialized survey software package was used, which included technical features that prevented issues such as multiple responses by a single participant or completion errors. Also, the survey administration procedure and communication plan were aimed at reinforcing among participants a sense of transparency and confidentiality/anonymity, with a view to encourage participation and to reduce evaluation apprehension. Partial indications of the success of these measures were the high response rate obtained (over fifty percent), as well as informal feedback from participants, shared by the company's HR and Sales Directors with this researcher, regarding how the survey exercise was generally perceived and approached.

Also, there were not non-response issues that could have affected the quality of the obtained data. After discarding a small number (8) of partially completed surveys, the final dataset contained no missing values. Comparison of demographic characteristics from the sampling frame to the characteristics in the sample also indicated no apparent non-response bias.

Secondly, the field study was carried out on a single organization and a single sample, which raises the question of potential biases and limitations that could affect the quality and interpretation of findings. The use of a single large organization was intended to provide both a sufficient sample-size to carry out the intended statistical analyses and also a relatively homogeneous background for the research in terms, for example, of employee working conditions, role/job descriptions, or corporate culture, therefore minimizing the risk of contaminating data with unaccounted variables. However, there are obvious limitations in this approach regarding the extent to which generalizations to other industries or type of organization could be made while interpreting the results. Moreover, certain characteristics of the sample such as job role (travel agents) and gender (predominantly female) were relatively homogeneous, which calls for caution regarding to what extent the results can be applicable to the population of interest, i.e. service employees.

The use of a single sample to carry out the analytical procedure also limits the external validity of the findings. While single sample studies sometimes resort to split-sample procedures as a means to cross-validate findings (e.g., Kupeli, Chilcot, Schmidt, Campbell, & Troop, 2013; Revicki et al., 2014; Rhodes & Arceo, 2004), the literature warns that effective cross-validation requires new samples from another population to which the construct would be expected to apply (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012; MacKenzie et al., 2011). Because items are often added, dropped, or reworded in the scale

purification process, a new sample of data helps re-estimate the measurement model and assess the extent to which the psychometric properties of the scale may have been based on idiosyncrasies in the first sample; hence, the need of new samples to cross-validate the psychometric properties of the scale. However, it is also acknowledged (MacKenzie et al., 2011; Nunnally, 1978) that practical limitations may prevent researchers from being able to complete the external validation of a scale or measurement model within a single study, as it was the case for this research. In those instances, it is recommended to focus more attention on the "front-end" of the process, i.e. on providing a clear conceptual definition and developing indicators that adequately tap the construct domain and properly specify the measurement model, rather than on cross-validating the scale and developing norms for it (MacKenzie et al., 2011, p. 329).

As to how the validation process for the scale could be completed, there are a number of options. A replication of the study on different types of service employees from different organizations and with varying demographic characteristics would help assess content and discriminant validity of the scale. A study exploring the relationship of Engagement Climate with other variables in the service climate model would help, on the other hand, establish the nomological validity of the construct/measure, i.e. whether the indicators of the focal construct relate to measures of other constructs in the manner expected (MacKenzie et al., 2011). Finally, it is important to control for common method biases when conducting these tests (DeVellis, 2003). This can be achieved (or rather partially controlled) either using a variety of techniques (P.M. Podsakoff et al., 2003) either procedurally (e.g. questionnaire design aspects) or statistically (e.g. one factor test).

Summary of chapter 3.3

Chapter 3.3 described and justified the analytical procedure adopted to test the research hypotheses on the obtained data, and which consisted on the following sequence: 1) An EFA on the total sample of 544 participants in order to determine the number and strength of factors present, 2) a CFA of the obtained factor solution, or first-order measurement model, 3) a CFA of a hierarchical reflective model, or second-order measurement model, that included the first-order measurement model (Engagement Climate dimensions) and a higher-order construct/variable, i.e. Engagement Climate, 4) a structural model containing the second-order measurement model and its relationships with the variables of interest in the theoretical framework, namely, personal engagement and job attitudes, and 5) additionally, as a means to cross-validate the findings, the total sample was randomly split into two, and EFA and CFA procedures were replicated simultaneously for both half samples.

Limitations regarding the data collection method and the chosen analytical procedure were discussed. With regard to the data collection method, i.e. self-reports in a cross-sectional survey, measures were taken at the design stage of the study to mitigate the risk of common method bias, and to ensure optimum validity and reliability of the obtained data. With regard to the analytical procedure, it was acknowledged that the procedure for external validation of the Engagement Climate measure could not be considered complete, as the study used a single sample. Consideration was given to how the validation process could be completed.

Chapter 4. Investigating the factor structure of Engagement Climate within a service organization

Introduction

In Chapter 4 the data findings of the field study on a service organization to investigate the factor structure of Engagement Climate are reported. In Chapter 4.1, results of preliminary analyses assessing suitability of data for the intended analytical procedures are reported. Chapter 4.2 addresses the detailed procedure and reporting of results of the EFA, including factorability of data, factor extraction approach, as well as reporting of adequacy, reliability, and validity values of the obtained factor solution. Chapter 4.3 addresses the detailed procedure and results of the CFA for the first-order measurement model, namely, the ten Engagement Climate dimensions and their respective reflective indicators, including model fit, reliability and validity values. Chapter 4.4 addresses the detailed procedure and results of the CFA for the second-order measurement model, namely, the ten Engagement Climate dimensions and Engagement Climate as the superordinate construct, including model fit, reliability and validity values. In Chapter 4.5 results for the structural model are reported, including model fit, direct effects of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* and on *Job satisfaction*, as well as results for multi-group moderation analyses. In Chapter 4.6 results of the split-samples analyses are reported. Lastly, chapter 4.7 reports and summarizes the results regarding the test of the study hypotheses.

4.1. Preliminary analyses

The dataset obtained from the web-based survey was exported to SPSS 22 version 22 (Burns & Burns, 2008) and edited so that each variable could be clearly identified. Reverse scores were calculated for a total of 32 variables, corresponding to those statements in the questionnaire that had been negatively worded to avoid positive response bias. The codebook for the 90 variables and

the 32 reverse scored variables can be consulted in the Appendix. Data screening and preliminary analyses were conducted to assess whether the data met univariate and multivariate assumptions and requirements for the intended analytical procedures.

(1) Univariate analysis. Data met the requirements of absence of missing values and extreme value outliers, as well as the assumption of normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). As partially completed surveys had been previously discarded, the final dataset contained no missing values. Also, all variables were on ordinal scales with seven intervals, thus extreme value outliers did not exist. With regard to the assumption of normality, since all the variables in the study were based on Likert-type scales, there were no reason to exclude variables based on skewness unless they exhibited no variance. Thus rather than testing skewness, the focus of the analysis was set on kurtosis. Kurtosis greater than or less than +/- 1.00 indicates potentially problematic kurtosis (and therefore, lack of sufficient variance). Several items (sel28, sel30, coh50, coh51, sat8, sat9, sat11, and sat12) showed borderline kurtosis issues, i.e. absolute values between 1 and 2. These are fairly borderline values and they are simply flagged for potential future issues in subsequent analyses; eng111, com15, and com16, however, had kurtosis values near or above 3.0, showing insufficient variance to retain them, and were, accordingly, dropped[1].

(2) Multivariate analysis. The assumption of linearity, as well as the absence of singularity and extreme multicollinearity in the data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) were assessed. Regarding the assumption of linearity, the scatterplots of several randomly selected combinations of variables were checked, as suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). No evidences of curvilinear relationships were found. Additionally, linearity was tested after the measurement model was obtained, by examining the scatterplots of each bivariate relationship in the model, using the composite variables. No evidences of curvilinear relationships were found either. Upon inspection of the correlation matrix during the initial EFA, no singularity issues were detected as there were no correlation coefficients among variables greater than 0.9. Also upon inspection of the correlation matrix, four cases of extreme multicollinearity were detected, with correlation coefficients greater

[1] The three remaining indicators for affective commitment showed, in subsequent analyses, poor internal consistency and weak convergent and discriminant validity (Coefficient alpha lower than 0.60, weak corrected item-total correlations, and AVE lower than 0.40). As the construct was relatively peripheral to the study, and there was another available attitude construct (job satisfaction) for the purposes of nomological validity, a decision was made to remove the affective commitment construct from the analysis.

than 0.8, i.e. sup20/sup24, sup21/sup24, coh50/coh48, and fai75/fai77, which raised questions about the particular choice of items in these instances[2]:

- sup20: I feel that my supervisor is interested in me getting ahead in the company
- sup21: I feel that my supervisor backs me up and lets me learn from my mistakes
- sup24: I feel that my supervisor tries to help me develop new skills

Extreme multicollinearity of sup24 with both sup20 and sup21 suggests that the vast majority of respondents interpreted that their supervisor trying to help them develop new skills is equivalent to the supervisor's interest in them getting ahead in the company and/or backing them up (and vice versa). Therefore sup24 was dropped.

- coh48: I feel that there is a lot of "team spirit" among people in my company
- coh50: I feel that in my work people are cooperative

Extreme multicollinearity of coh48 and coh50 suggests that the vast majority of respondents interpreted feelings of "team spirit" among co-workers, and feelings of people being cooperative as being equivalent. Coh50 was dropped, as this item had previously shown potentially problematic kurtosis.

- fai75: I feel fairly rewarded considering my responsibilities
- fai77: I feel fairly rewarded for the amount of effort I put in

Extreme multicollinearity of fai75 and fai77 suggests that the vast majority of respondents felt that reward according to responsibilities and reward according to effort were equivalent. Therefore fai75 was dropped, as fai77 had a slightly higher communality value.

Absence of multicollinearity issues was also assessed after the measurement model was obtained. A simultaneous test of the variance inflation factor (VIF) was conducted for the composite exogenous variables of *Engagement climate*, *Personal engagement*, and *Job satisfaction*. The VIFs were all less than 2.0, indicating absence of multicollinearity issues in the relationships among these variables (Hair et al., 2010). Lastly, upon inspection of the communalities table during the initial EFA, 4 variables (con64, fai74, Rsel 32, and Rcon66) showed extremely low communalities after extraction (< 0.3), and were consequently dropped, as they failed to capture feeling states related to any of the hypothesized latent dimensions. Thus, after eliminating those variables that showed extreme

[2] While the survey was originally administered in Spanish language, references to specific items are done using the English version, for the reader's ease of use.

multicollinearity (3) and extremely low communality values upon factor extraction (4), the remaining number of variables for the subsequent EFA was 83.

4.2 Exploratory factor analysis

The dataset being used for the EFA included the remaining 83 items/potential indicators of engagement climate dimensions, and excluded the items measuring job satisfaction (5 items) and personal engagement (4 items). EFA through principal axis factoring (PAF) and related procedures were computed using SPSS version 22.

Regarding sample size adequacy for factor analysis there are varying opinions in the literature. General guides include Tabachnick and Fidell's (2001) rule of thumb that suggests that at least 300 cases are needed for factor analysis. Hair et al. (2010) suggest that sample sizes should be 100 or greater. Comrey's (1973) guide to sample sizes categorizes 100 cases as poor, 200 as fair, 300 as good, 500 as very good, and 1000 or more as excellent. The same varying recommendations also occur for sample to variable ratios (*N: p* ratio). For example, rules of thumb range anywhere from 3:1, 6:1, 10:1, 15:1, or 20:1 (see Williams, Brown, & Onsman, 2010) while other research suggest that sample to variable ratio criteria do not provide altogether an accurate guide to assess the suitability of data (e.g., Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988; Hogarty, Hines, Kromrey, Ferron, & Mumford, 2005; MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang, & Hong, 1999). Thus, both the sample size of 544 cases and the final *N: p* ratio of 15:1 after scale purification and refinement (N: 544; p: 36), can be considered adequate for the purpose of factor analysis.

Regarding the initial approach for factor extraction, a simultaneous use of multiple extraction criteria was adopted, as recommended in the literature (e.g., Hair et al., 2010; Thompson & Daniel, 1996). An unrotated analysis was performed initially without specifying factor solutions. Kaiser criterion of eigenvalues (Kaiser, 1974), parallel analysis (Horn, 1965), and scree-test (Cattell, 1966) were simultaneously used to identify the number of dimensions or factors that made up the best solution. The initial unrotated analysis produced, using the Kaiser criterion of retaining only those components with eigenvalues of 1.0 or more, a 15 factors solution accounting for 65.49 % of the total variance. Horn´s (1965) parallel analysis was carried out to compare the size of the eigenvalues with those obtained from a randomly generated data set of the same size, as Kaiser's criterion tends to overestimate the number of factors (Hubbard & Allen, 1987; Zwick & Velicer, 1986). Following parallel analysis criterion, only 8 components should be retained, accounting for 55.12% of the total variance. Cattell's (1966) scree test was also used to try to determine the point in the plot at which

the shape of the curve changes direction and becomes horizontal. Although the cumulative increases in total variance explained were fairly small from the 3rd component onwards (< 5%), the inflection point appeared to be located somewhere between the 8th and the 12th component.

Next, to aid in the interpretation of results and produce a more parsimonious solution, several analysis with Direct Oblimin rotation were conducted specifying for each of them a different factor solution. Oblique rotation, unlike orthogonal Varimax rotation, produces factors that are correlated. Correlation among factors was expected in the current study, as they are all understood to be reflective dimensions or facets of the overall engagement climate construct. Since the extraction criteria used in the unrotated analysis diverged, the pattern matrixes of 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 factor solutions were examined in order to find the rotated solution that exhibited "simple structure" (Thurstone, 1947). Items that showed repeated patterns of relatively low communality values, weak factor loadings and/or producing cross-loadings, were systematically dropped during the analysis. Finally, a 10 factor solution of 36 variables was identified as the one exhibiting a simple structure with an unambiguous pattern of item loadings, and providing a sound basis for the reconceptualization of the engagement climate construct into 10 distinct dimensions.

The 10 factor solution included 9 factors that reflected the initially hypothesized engagement climate dimensions of *Autonomy, Clarity, Cohesion, Self-expression, Trust, Fairness, Challenge, Overload*, and *Recognition*. A 10th factor comprised items referring to feelings of *Support* with regard to the supervisor. Items pertaining to *Contribution* and *Participation* had shown strong cross-loadings with *Recognition*, which clearly indicated a conceptual overlapping among the three constructs. A separate EFA including only items from these three dimensions showed that a one factor solution with *Recognition* items was the optimum alternative. Finally, items referring to feelings of *Support* with regard to the company also showed strong cross-loadings with several other factors and insufficient unique variance, and were thus dropped. The 10-factor solution with 36 variables (see Table 4.1 next) accounted for 73.75% of the total variance.

Table 4.1. EFA 10-factor solution (N: 544; p: 36)

Item codes	Items	Factors 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
tru58	I feel that my company follows through its commitments to me	.706	.038	.062	-.023	-.070	-.005	.027	.013	-.057	.060
tru62	I feel that management in my company honour the promises they make	.680	.035	.004	-.020	-.023	-.023	.055	.088	-.006	.151
tru59	I feel that my company is honest and upfront with me	.670	-.014	.082	-.003	-.038	-.083	.012	.018	-.055	.146
tru61	I feel that managers in my company have high integrity	.503	-.068	-.033	-.072	-.010	-.177	.082	.091	.014	.131
Rove104	I feel emotionally drained at the end of a day's work (r)	.060	.911	.042	-.019	-.020	.044	-.023	-.058	.025	.000
Rove105	I feel so tired after a day's work that I don´t feel up to doing other things (r)	-.089	.816	-.004	-.048	.052	.013	.015	.065	-.004	.037
Rove103	I find it hard to relax after a day's work (r)	-.064	.752	.025	.013	-.053	-.011	.012	-.074	-.026	.039
Rove101	I dread getting up in the morning and having to face another day on the job (r)	.147	.533	.007	.016	-.004	-.134	.026	.073	-.014	-.065
coh48	I feel that there is a lot of "team spirit" among people in my company	-.055	.057	.864	.008	-.008	-.002	-.011	.030	.034	.086
coh51	I feel that in my work people are friendly	-.017	-.016	.830	.047	-.021	-.020	.010	.058	-.045	.034
coh54	I feel that my work group tries to integrate its new members	.002	-.003	.769	-.057	-.039	-.033	.020	-.006	.023	-.017
coh53	I feel that I have the trust and the respect of my co-workers	.146	.036	.743	.016	.022	.006	.059	-.013	-.125	-.073
aut35	I feel that I am allowed to use personal initiative in carrying out the work	.039	-.004	-.038	-.791	-.085	.004	.090	-.001	-.019	-.052
aut34	I feel that I have a sufficient freedom of action in my job	.063	.004	-.022	-.777	.012	-.017	.058	-.034	-.027	.021
aut38	I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to do my work in the way I believe is most convenient	-.049	.040	-.042	-.700	-.002	-.054	.009	.020	-.075	.012
aut40	I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to make decisions about incidences or unforeseen events	-.017	.013	.085	-.693	-.032	-.008	-.056	-.011	.020	.091
sup21	I feel that my supervisor backs me up and lets me learn from my mistakes	-.035	.030	-.008	-.031	-.900	-.018	-.007	.032	-.049	.031
sup20	I feel that my supervisor is interested in me getting ahead in the company	-.007	.004	-.028	.010	-.753	-.005	.065	.060	-.020	.107
sup25	I feel that my supervisor is approachable and easy to get on with	.059	-.016	.114	-.016	-.662	-.086	.059	-.034	-.005	.018
tru56	I feel that I can trust my supervisor to back me up on decisions I make in the field	.147	.026	.127	-.213	-.535	-.079	.004	.034	.009	-.106

Table 4.1. (continued). EFA 10-factor solution (N: 544; p: 36)

Item codes	Items	Factors 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Rclar46	I feel that I am expected to work without knowing very well how to do things (r)	-.009	-.006	.022	.006	-.026	-.884	.019	-.072	-.023	-.028
Rclar47	I feel that I am expected to work without knowing what my exact responsibilities are (r)	.105	.029	.052	.040	-.063	-.696	.011	.003	-.060	-.022
Rclar45	I feel uncertain about what is expected of me in my job (r)	-.013	-.034	.063	-.097	-.020	-.532	.036	.057	.052	.005
Rclar42	I feel that some of the objectives of my job are incompatible with one another (r)	.027	.157	-.130	-.024	.009	-.452	.021	.079	-.066	.128
rec92	I feel that my achievements are sufficiently highlighted either privately or before others	-.036	.030	.004	.057	.019	-.017	.986	-.018	-.013	.000
rec91	I feel that I am respected for my skills	.052	-.021	.120	-.177	.029	-.071	.544	.044	-.035	-.007
rec88	I feel that I can count on a pat on the back when I perform well	.052	-.016	-.026	-.047	-.209	.017	.493	.043	.033	.145
Rcha95	I feel that my job is too easy and does not provide sufficient challenge (r)	-.052	-.126	.082	-.033	.041	-.016	.004	.723	.000	.036
Rcha99	I feel that my job consists on routine tasks (r)	.122	.070	-.009	.008	-.050	.046	.027	.551	.008	-.087
Rcha97	I feel that I am overqualified for the job I am doing (r)	-.023	.037	-.006	.040	-.038	-.048	-.004	.522	-.038	.070
sel30	I feel that I can express my personality when I am at work	-.061	-.023	.043	.063	-.054	-.036	-.008	.043	-.856	.044
sel28	I feel that I can be myself when I interact with customers	.088	.063	-.015	-.186	.122	-.041	.010	.044	-.526	-.005
sel31	I feel that my sense of humour is appreciated at work	.085	.009	.106	-.086	-.197	.047	.096	-.098	-.506	-.048
fai72	I feel that employees at this company receive equal treatment when it comes to evaluating job performance	.095	.017	.051	.024	-.032	-.032	.070	-.028	-.047	.782
fai71	I feel that employees are treated fairly when being considered for promotions in my company	.127	.023	.049	-.061	-.065	-.020	-.013	.040	.018	.672
fai73	I feel that this company recognizes those employees that work best	.084	.042	-.003	-.123	-.053	.017	.088	.040	-.013	.644
Eigenvalue		12.16	2.78	2.36	2.15	1.63	1.31	1.18	1.06	.98	.90
Percentage of variance		33.78%	7.73%	6.57%	5.97%	4.54%	3.66%	3.28%	2.95%	2.73%	2.50%

Total Variance Accounted for = 73.75%. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. (r): Reverse scored item

The communalities, structure matrix, item correlations matrix and scree plot of the factor solution can be consulted in the Appendix (Tables 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, and figure 10.1 respectively). Adequacy, reliability and validity of the model are addressed next.

(1) Adequacy. Bartlett's (1954) test of sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO; Kaiser, 1974) were used to assess the factorability of the data (N: 544; p: 36). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0.05$). The KMO index was 0.926, well above the recommended minimum value of 0.6 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The communalities for each variable (Table 10.1. in the Appendix) were sufficiently high, i.e. all above 0.300 and most above

0.600, thus indicating the chosen variables were adequately correlated for a factor analysis. Additionally, the reproduced matrix had only 4 (0.0%) non-redundant residuals greater than 0.05, further confirming the adequacy of the variables and the 10 factor solution.

(2) Reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the resulting item set for each factor was used to compute reliability. Cronbach's alpha indicates the precision of measurement conducted, by assigning each respondent an attribute score based on the summed (or averaged) responses across the items in the set. The Cronbach's alphas for the extracted factors, as well as their descriptive statistics and correlations, are shown in Table 4.2 below. All alpha's were above the 0.70 limit of acceptable reliability (Burns & Burns, 2008), except Challenge which was 0.632. Challenge was retained, despite showing sub-optimal reliability, due to its importance in the theoretical model of engagement climate. The factors are all specified as reflective since their indicators are highly correlated and are largely interchangeable (Jarvis, Mackenzie, Podsakoff, Mick, & Bearden, 2003).

Table 4.2. Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Correlations - 10 factor solution (N:544; p:36)

	Factor	Descriptives				Factor correlation matrix								
		n -items	Mean score	*S.D.*	Coefficient alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Trust	4	20.36	4.86	0.90									
2	Overload	4	18.62	4.74	0.85	0.22								
3	Cohesion	4	23.68	4.74	0.90	0.30	0.10							
4	Autonomy	4	19.44	4.80	0.86	-0.35	-0.22	-0.20						
5	Supervisor support	4	20.07	5.73	0.90	-0.41	-0.15	-0.46	0.40					
6	Clarity	4	20.15	4.68	0.79	-0.45	-0.32	-0.26	0.42	0.35				
7	Recognition	3	13.43	3.80	0.81	0.44	0.15	0.34	-0.44	-0.51	-0.40			
8	Challenge	3	14.93	3.38	0.63	0.36	0.06	0.22	-0.07	-0.20	-0.31	0.22		
9	Self-expression	3	17.28	3.00	0.75	-0.31	-0.26	-0.35	0.41	0.25	0.32	-0.30	-0.14	
10	Fairness	3	11.74	3.99	0.88	0.46	-0.19	0.17	-0.32	-0.39	-0.30	0.38	0.28	-0.13

(3) Validity. The factors demonstrate sufficient convergent validity, as their loadings (see Table 7.1) are all above the recommended minimum threshold of 0.4 for a sample size of 544 (Hair et al., 2010). The factor correlation matrix (see Table 7.2) shows multiple large correlations (above 0.25) between factors, confirming that the selected Oblimin rotation approach was adequate. The factors also demonstrate sufficient discriminant validity, since there are no problematic cross-loadings or high (i.e. above 0.7) inter-factor correlations.

Factor 1 comprises four items from the original Trust dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Trust*.

tru58: I feel that my company follows through its commitments to me

tru59: I feel that my company is honest and upfront with me

tru61: I feel that managers in my company have high integrity

tru62: I feel that management in my company honour the promises they make

Factor 2 comprises four items from the original Overload dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Overload*:

Rove101: I dread getting up in the morning and having to face another day on the job

Rove103: I find it hard to relax after a day's work

Rove104: I feel emotionally drained at the end of a day's work

Rove105: I feel so tired after a day's work that I don´t feel up to doing other things

Factor 3 comprises four items from the original Cohesion dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Cohesion*.

coh48: I feel that there is a lot of "team spirit" among people in my company

coh51: I feel that in my work people are friendly

coh53: I feel that I have the trust and the respect of my co-workers

coh54: I feel that my work group tries to integrate its new members

Factor 4 comprises four items from the original Autonomy dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Autonomy*.

aut34: I feel that I have a sufficient freedom of action in my job

aut35: I feel that I am allowed to use personal initiative in carrying out the work

aut38: I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to do my work in the way I believe is most convenient

aut40: I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to make decisions about incidences or unforeseen events

Factor 5 comprises three items from the original Support dimension, and one item from the original Trust dimension. All four items relate to feelings or perceptions that the supervisor encourages and supports the employee's efforts to learn and grow professionally, and is approachable and sincere with regard to his/her motives and intentions towards the employee. Therefore factor 5 is labelled *Supervisor support*.

sup20: I feel that my supervisor is interested in me getting ahead in the company

sup21: I feel that my supervisor backs me up and lets me learn from my mistakes

sup25: I feel that my supervisor is approachable and easy to get on with

tru56: I feel that I can trust my supervisor to back me up on decisions I make in the field

Factor 6 comprises four items from the original Clarity dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Clarity*.

Rclar42: I feel that some of the objectives of my job are incompatible with one another

Rclar45: I feel uncertain about what is expected of me in my job

Rclar46: I feel that I am expected to work without knowing very well how to do things

Rclar47: I feel that I am expected to work without knowing what my exact responsibilities are

Factor 7 comprises three items from the original Recognition dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Recognition*.

rec88: I feel that I can count on a pat on the back when I perform well

rec91: I feel that I am respected for my skills

rec92: I feel that my achievements are sufficiently highlighted either privately or before others

Factor 8 comprises three items from the original Challenge dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Challenge*.

Rcha95: I feel that my job is too easy and does not provide sufficient challenge

Rcha97: I feel that I am overqualified for the job I am doing

Rcha99: I feel that my job consists on routine tasks

Factor 9 comprises three items from the original Self-expression dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Self-expression*.

sel28: I feel that I can be myself when I interact with customers

sel30: I feel that I can express my personality when I am at work

sel31: I feel that my sense of humour is appreciated at work

Factor 10 comprises three items from the original Fairness dimension and is conceptually unambiguous. Therefore it is labelled *Fairness*.

fai71: I feel that employees are treated fairly when being considered for promotions in my company

fai72: I feel that employees at this company receive equal treatment when it comes to evaluating job performance

fai73: I feel that this company recognizes those employees that work best

4.3 Confirmatory factor analysis of the first-order measurement model

A CFA using Maximum Likelihood Estimation was conducted on the total sample (N:544; p:36) to confirm the obtained exploratory model of engagement climate dimensions, or first-order measurement model, and to determine whether the factor solution required any adjustments. CFA and related procedures were computed using Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 22 (Arbuckle, 2013).

Regarding sample size adequacy for CFA techniques there is a debate in the literature. A general conservative rule in structural equation modelling (SEM) is 15 cases per parameter estimate (Stevens, 1996). Bentler and Chou (1987) note that researchers may go as low as five cases per parameter estimate in SEM analysis (*N:p* ratio of 5:1) with sample sizes greater than 200 preferable, but only if the data are perfectly well-behaved (i.e. normally distributed, with absence of missing data or outlying cases). Similarly, the number of items per latent variable, or *p:f* ratio, is also a consideration (Marsh, Hau, Balla, & Grayson, 1998). For estimation and model identification purposes, a minimum of three observed variables for each latent variable is recommended (Bollen, 1989). With CFA, parameters and fit indices are calculated by an estimation technique, which requires a match between the data analysed and the requirements of the technique. The most widely used estimator, Maximum Likelihood, requires continuous and multivariate normally distributed data to obtain accurate parameter estimates, standard errors of parameter estimates, and model fit indices (Bollen, 1989). In the current study, the *N:p* ratio is over 6:1 (544 cases for 85 parameters), the data is continuous and meets the requirements for normality, i.e. Likert-type data with no kurtosis issues, and for the recommended *p:f* ratio, i.e. no less than three observed variables per latent variable.

First-order measurement model fit

All reflective indicators in the initially obtained CFA measurement model were examined in order to identify nonsignificant or weak loadings as an indication of a lack of validity, as well as measurement error covariances as a possible sign of multidimensionality (Gerbing & Anderson, 1984). There were no indicators with weak relationships with their respective latent variable as all the standardized regression weights were higher than 0.5. However, the following indicators showed somewhat low loadings: Rclar42 (0.589), Rcha97 (0.559), and Rcha99 (0.595). Rclar42 was removed but Rcha97 and Rcha99 were retained since their factor (Challenge) had only three indicators. Rove101, aut40, tru56, tru61, and coh53 were also removed as these indicators showed strong and significant measurement error covariances, i.e. modification indexes greater than 3.84 and large expected

change estimates (Hair et al., 2010). After removing these six items in total, all of the essential aspects of the constructs domains were considered to be captured by the remaining items (MacKenzie et al., 2011). Modification indices were also consulted to determine if there was opportunity to improve the model. A number of error terms between indicators within the same construct could have been covaried to improve the model fit; however, there was no apparent theoretical justification to do so (Bollen, 1989; Gerbing & Anderson, 1984) therefore no error terms were covaried. The goodness of fit for the resulting first-order measurement model with 10 factors and 30 indicators was adequate, as shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3. Goodness of fit for the First-order Measurement Model (N:544; p:30)

Goodness of fit statistics	Calculated values	Referential values
Relative Chi-square fit index (cmin/df)	1.904	Between 1 and 3
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.078	< 0.080
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.965	> 0.900
Root mean square residual (RMR)	0.041	< 0.090
P of close fit (PCLOSE)	1.000	> 0.050

Validity and reliability

The test for convergent validity of the ten first-order latent constructs was done by examining the average variance extracted (AVE) in each construct, which can be calculated by averaging the squared multiple correlations for its indicators (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). An AVE greater than 0.50 is desirable because it suggests that the latent construct accounts for a majority of the variance in its indicators on average. All factors showed adequate values for convergent validity, i.e. AVE above 0.50, except Challenge, whose AVE was at 0.38 (see Table 4.4 next).

The test for discriminant validity, namely whether the indicators of each latent construct are distinguishable from the indicators of the other constructs, was done by comparing the square root of the AVE (on the diagonal in Table 4.4) to all inter-factor correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). All factors demonstrated adequate discriminant validity since the diagonal values are greater than the correlations.

The composite reliability (CR) for each factor was also computed. Because coefficient alpha tends to be viewed as a lower bound on true reliability, CR is often used as an alternative estimator in SEM (Peterson & Kim, 2013). In all cases the CR was above the minimum threshold of 0.70, except for Challenge, which was 0.65, a similar value to its coefficient alpha (0.63) and thus confirming this

factor's sub-optimal reliability. Challenge was retained, despite showing both weak convergent validity and sub-optimal reliability, because it is a distinct construct and an important element in the engagement climate theoretical model. The construct's reliability issue is flagged for potential future issues in subsequent analyses. In addition to CR and coefficient alphas as indicators of construct reliability, mean inter-item correlations and corrected item-total correlations of the remaining 9 dimensions/subscales also show good internal consistency values (see Table 7.4 in the Appendix).

Table 4.4. Reliabilities, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity for the First-order Measurement Model (N: 544, p: 30)

Factor	Reliability		Convergent Validity	Discriminant Validity through the Square Root of AVE (**on diagonal**)									
	CR	Coefficient alpha	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Supervisor support	0.90	0.89	0.75	**0.87**									
2 Autonomy	0.86	0.85	0.68	0.51	**0.82**								
3 Clarity	0.81	0.78	0.59	0.49	0.50	**0.77**							
4 Cohesion	0.89	0.87	0.72	0.52	0.24	0.37	**0.85**						
5 Self-expression	0.76	0.75	0.51	0.50	0.57	0.49	0.49	**0.71**					
6 Fairness	0.89	0.88	0.72	0.59	0.47	0.46	0.34	0.38	**0.85**				
7 Recognition	0.83	0.81	0.61	0.66	0.60	0.54	0.44	0.52	0.61	**0.78**			
8 Overload	0.87	0.86	0.68	0.22	0.26	0.32	0.15	0.31	0.27	0.20	**0.83**		
9 Trust	0.90	0.89	0.74	0.59	0.49	0.60	0.44	0.53	0.74	0.63	0.28	**0.86**	
10 Challenge	0.65	0.63	0.38	0.31	0.13	0.35	0.34	0.22	0.38	0.34	0.02	0.47	**0.62**

CR: Composite reliability. AVE: Average Variance Extracted

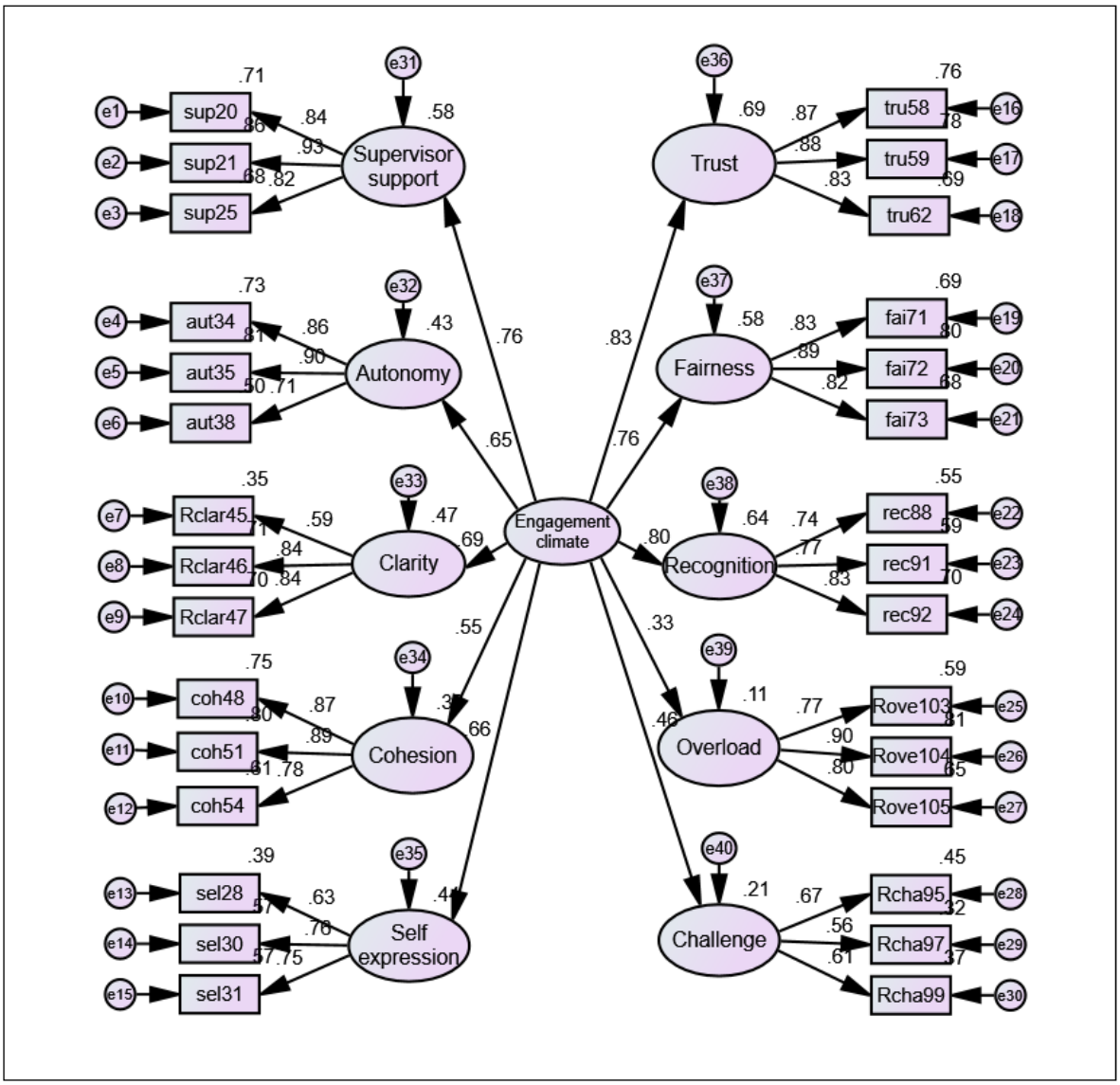
Lastly, because the data was collected using a single instrument (online survey), Harman's single factor test (see P.M. Podsakoff et al., 2003) was used to determine if a common method bias (CMB) was affecting the results of the first-order measurement model. If CMB is an issue, a single factor will account for the majority of the variance in the model. All 30 independent variables were entered into an unrotated EFA, constraining the number of factor extracted to just one. The one-factor solution accounted for 33.7% of the total variance thus CMB did not appear to be an issue.

4.4 Confirmatory factor analysis of the second-order measurement model

Second-order measurement model fit

The second-order measurement model, as depicted in Figure 4.1, included the second-order latent construct, i.e. *Engagement climate*, and the ten first-order latent constructs as its reflective indicators. The full measurement model incorporated two additional latent constructs measuring, respectively, *Personal engagement*, and *Job satisfaction*, with their corresponding reflective indicators.

Figure 4.1. Second-order Measurement Model with standardized estimates (N: 544; p:30)



Upon examining the indicators pertaining to *Personal engagement* and *Job satisfaction*, eng112 was removed due to very low loading (0.33), and sat9 was also removed due to somewhat low loading (0.58) and strong measurement error covariances. Lastly, sat10 was also removed due to strong measurement error covariances. Table 4.5 below shows the goodness of fit for both the second-order measurement model (*Engagement climate* and its sub-dimensions), and the goodness of fit of the full measurement model incorporating the two additional constructs (*Personal engagement* and *Job satisfaction*). Although the RMR index does not show optimum values in either models, the remaining indices show acceptable values thus indicating, overall, sufficient goodness of fit for both models.

Table 4.5. Goodness of fit for the Second-order and Full Measurement Models (N:544; p:30)

Goodness of fit statistics	Calculated values		Referential values
	Second-order Measurement Model	Full Measurement Model	
Relative Chi-square fit index (cmin/df)	2.272	2.197	Between 1 and 3
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.048	0.047	< 0.080
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.946	0.938	> 0.900
Root mean square residual (RMR)	0.111	0.107	< 0.090
P of close fit (PCLOSE)	0.730	0.924	> 0.050

Validity and reliability

Reliabilities, convergent validity and discriminant validity were computed for *Engagement climate* and the two additional constructs, *Job satisfaction* and *Personal engagement*, as shown in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6. Reliabilities, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity for the Full Measurement Model (N: 544, p: 30)

	Factor	Reliability		Convergent Validity	Discriminant Validity through the Square Root of AVE (**on diagonal**)		
		CR	Coefficient alpha	AVE	1	2	3
1	Engagement climate	0.88	0.92	0.45	**0.67**		
2	Job satisfaction	0.81	0.79	0.60	0.43	**0.77**	
3	Personal engagement	0.87	0.85	0.70	0.50	0.33	**0.84**

CR: Composite reliability. AVE: Average Variance Extracted

For the second-order latent construct with reflective indicators, i.e. *Engagement climate*, AVE was calculated by averaging the squared multiple correlations for the first-order sub-dimensions (MacKenzie et al., 2011). Values greater than 0.50 mean that, on average, a majority of the variance in the first-order sub-dimensions is shared with the second-order latent construct. Also, the degree of validity of each sub-dimension was assessed by examining the unique proportion of variance in the sub-dimension accounted for by the second-order construct. Its value (the standardized regression weight of the sub-dimension loading on the second-order construct) should be greater than 0.50 (see Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The AVE for *Engagement climate* was a sub-optimal 0.45. Standardized regression weights from eight of its sub-dimensions were greater than 0.50, specifically *Trust* (0.83), *Recognition* (0.80), *Fairness* (0.76); *Supervisor support* (0.76), *Clarity* (0.69), *Self-expression* (0.66); *Autonomy* (0.65), and *Cohesion* (0.55). However, *Challenge* (0.46), and *Overload* (0.33) failed to achieve the recommended value. For the two additional constructs, *Job satisfaction* and *Personal engagement*, the AVE was above 0.50.

All three constructs, i.e. *Engagement climate*, *Job satisfaction* and *Personal engagement*, demonstrated adequate discriminant validity as the diagonal values were greater than the correlations. Reliability indexes (CR and coefficient alpha) also showed acceptable values in all three cases. In addition, mean inter-item correlations and corrected item-total correlations of the three constructs also show good internal consistency values (see Table 10.5 in the Appendix).

Invariance tests

With the view to explore possible moderating effects from demographic characteristics on the hypothesized relationships in the structural model, configural and metric invariance tests were conducted for the control variables that had been selected for the study, i.e. *Gender*, *Age*, *Tenure*, *Type of employment*, and *Job role*.

(1) Configural invariance. The test for configural invariance, i.e. that the same factors and pattern of factor loadings explains the variance-covariance matrices associated with the groups' responses, was conducted by examining the model fit of the unconstrained measurement models, with groups loaded separately. If the model has adequate fit, it serves as indication that the model is configurally invariant for that particular group (Schmitt & Kuljanin, 2008). Table 4.7 below shows the model fit of each of the five groups. *Gender*, *Tenure*, *Type of employment*, and *Job role* showed adequate values in four of the five selected metrics thus they were judged to be configurally invariant. *Age*, however, only showed adequate values in three of the metrics thus it was considered configurally unstable and accordingly discarded.

Table 4.7. Configural invariance

Goodness of fit statistics	Calculated group values					Referential values
	Gender	Age	Tenure	Type of employment	Job role	
df	1.784	1.639	1.672	1.939	1.710	Between 1 and 3
RMSEA	0.038	0.034	0.035	0.042	0.036	< 0.080
CFI	0.921	0.878	0.901	0.906	0.928	> 0.900
RMR	0.153	0.184	0.156	0.192	0.122	< 0.090
PCLOSE	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	> 0.050

df : Relative Chi-square fit index. RMSEA: Root mean square error of approximation. CFI: Comparative Fit Index. RMR: Root mean square residual. PCLOSE: P of close fit

(2) Metric invariance. The test for metric invariance, i.e. that the values of the factor loadings of each variable on each factor are the same across groups, was conducted calculating the Chi-square difference between the unconstrained model and the fully constrained model for each group. A non-significant value (pval>0.05) indicates metric invariance (Schmitt & Kuljanin, 2008). The Chi-square

difference test was non-significant for *Gender* and *Type of employment*, thus these two categories were retained for further multi-group analysis; however the Chi-square difference test was significant for *Tenure* and *Job role*. Following Mackenzie et al.'s recommendation (2011), critical ratios for differences were examined in *Tenure* and *Job role* groups. Since at least one item per factor/construct (aside from the constrained one) was metrically invariant in all the groups' combinations from both categories, it was concluded that the measurement model also met criteria for metric invariance across *Tenure* and *Job role*, thus these two demographic control variables were retained, together with *Gender* and *Type of employment,* for further multi-group analysis.

4.5 Structural model

Structural model fit

A composite variable of the second-order construct, i.e. *Engagement climate*, was created using factor scores in AMOS, in order to simplify the structural model, as shown in Figure 4.2 below, and the subsequent multi-group moderation analyses. The simplified structural model demonstrated adequate fit (see Table 4.8).

Figure 4.2. Simplified structural model with standardized estimates

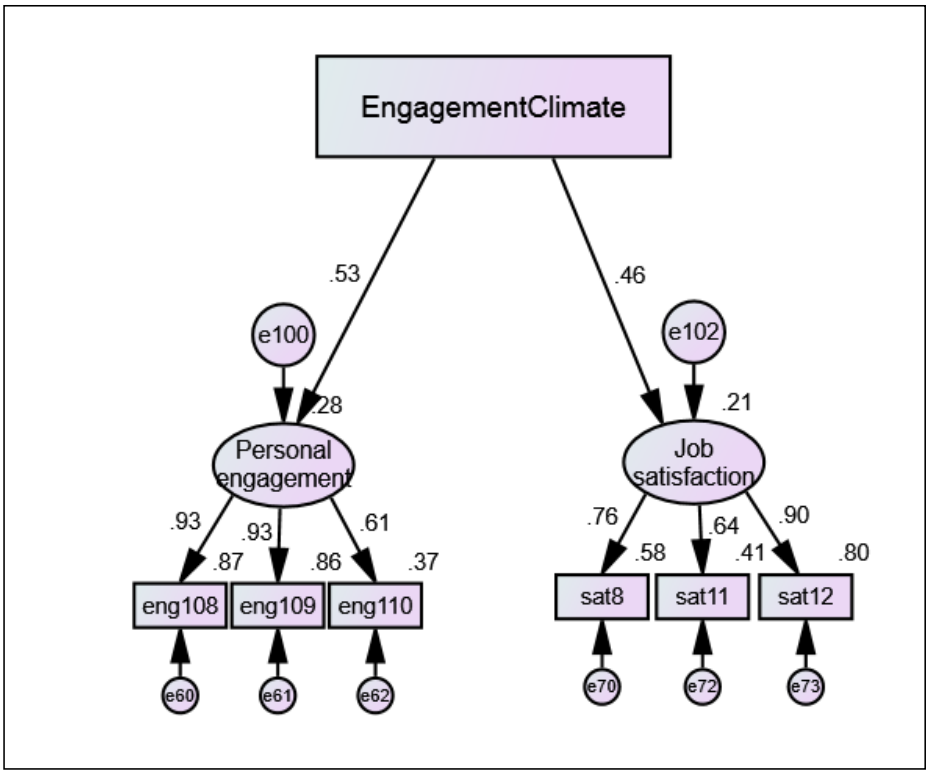


Table 4.8. Goodness of fit for the simplified structural model

Goodness of fit statistics	Calculated values	Referential values
Relative Chi-square fit index (cmin/df)	1.848	Between 1 and 3
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.040	< 0.080
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.994	> 0.900
Root mean square residual (RMR)	0.045	< 0.090
P of close fit (PCLOSE)	0.734	> 0.050

Direct effects

The hypothesized direct effects of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* and on *Job satisfaction* were both confirmed on the structural model (see Table 4.9), with standardized regression weights of 0.533 and 0.455 respectively. The relative strength of the direct effect of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* over the direct effect on *Job satisfaction* was also confirmed (0.533 > 0.455).

Table 4.9. Structural model path coefficients of the direct effects

Direct effect	Path coefficient (standardized regression weights)
Engagement climate → Personal engagement	0.533***
Engagement climate → Job satisfaction	0.455***

*** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed)

Multi-group moderation

To explore possible moderation effects from the selected demographic variables, i.e. *Gender*, *Tenure*, *Type of employment*, and *Job role*, the critical ratios for the differences in regression weights between groups were computed. Next, *p*-values from these critical ratios were calculated to determine the significance of the difference (MacKenzie et al., 2011). Neither *Gender, Tenure, Type of employment*, or *Job role* showed significant moderation effects (i.e. *p*-values < 0.10) on the *Engagement climate - Job satisfaction* relationship. Neither *Gender, Tenure*, nor *Job role* showed significant moderation effects on the *Engagement climate - Personal engagement* relationship. However, with regard to *Type of employment*, the direct effect of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* (z-score: -2.1; *p*-value < 0.05) was stronger for full-time employees than for part-time employees, with standardized regression weights of 0.541 and 0.470 respectively. Multi-group moderation tests are shown in Tables 10.6, 10.7, 10.8, and 10.9 in the Appendix. Results will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.6 Split-samples analysis

The overall sample of 544 participants was randomly split into two half samples, split sample A (N: 262), and split sample B (N: 282), using the randomization function on SPSS 22. EFA and CFA procedures were replicated simultaneously for both half samples, as a means of assessing the robustness of the factor solution and model fits obtained from the overall sample.

With regard to the factor structure, the main results of the EFA using Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) and Direct Oblimin rotation on both half samples are depicted in Table 4.10. Values show that the selected factor solution is, overall, adequate (communalities), reliable (Coefficient alpha) and factorially valid (loadings) in both half samples. Sub-optimal alpha values of *Challenge* in both half samples confirm the reliability issue for this factor that was previously detected and flagged in the full sample.

Regarding model fit, Tables 4.11 and 4.12 show the respective goodness of fit for the first-order and second-order measurement models, as well as for the simplified structural model, in both half samples. The majority of selected indexes show acceptable values in both half samples, with the exception of the second-order measurement model in split sample B, with only three acceptable values out of five. Overall, the goodness of fit of the measurement and structural models in both half samples is considered sufficient.

Table 4.10. EFA 10-factor solution for split samples

Split sample A (N: 262; p:30)					Split sample B (N: 282; p:30)				
Factor	Variables	Coefficient alpha	Loadings	Communalities after extraction	Factor	Variables	Coefficient alpha	Loadings	Communalities after extraction
Supervisor support		0.90			Supervisor support		0.89		
	sup20		0,76	0.77		sup21		0.96	0.95
	sup21		0.75	0.83		sup20		0.68	0.67
	sup25		0.61	0.68		sup25		0.63	0.65
Overload		0.87			Overload		0.84		
	Rove104		0.89	0.83		Rove104		0.86	0.79
	Rove105		0.82	0.71		Rove105		0.79	0.64
	Rove103		0.78	0.65		Rove103		0.74	0.59
Fairness		0.87			Fairness		0.89		
	fai72		-0.87	0.87		fai72		0.79	0.79
	fai71		-0.77	0.72		fai71		0.72	0.67
	fai73		-0.65	0.62		fai73		0.58	0.78
Cohesion		0.87			Cohesion		0.87		
	coh48		0.88	0.77		coh51		0.94	0.86
	coh51		0.80	0.75		coh48		0.87	0.77
	coh54		0.77	0.67		coh54		0.67	0.57
Clarity		0.83			Clarity		0.75		
	Rclar46		0.94	0.86		Rclar46		0.88	0.76
	Rclar45		0.66	0.52		Rclar47		0.80	0.69
	Rclar47		0.59	0.62		Rclar45		0.39	0.30
Self expression		0.76			Self expression		0.74		
	sel30		-0.79	0.67		sel30		-0.90	0.78
	sel31		-0.56	0.54		sel28		-0.49	0.39
	sel28		-0.56	0.52		sel31		-0.46	0.58
Autonomy		0.86			Autonomy		0.85		
	aut35		0.86	0.83		aut34		0.88	0.82
	aut34		0.76	0.68		aut35		0.85	0.77
	aut38		0.71	0.54		aut38		0.55	0.51
Challenge		0.63			Challenge		0.63		
	Rcha95		0.75	0.60		Rcha95		0.62	0.46
	Rcha99		0.57	0.36		Rcha97		0.58	0.39
	Rcha97		0.47	0.33		Rcha99		0.51	0.49
Recognition		0.82			Recognition		0.8		
	rec92		0.83	0.82		rec92		-0.69	0.72
	rec91		0.60	0.66		rec88		-0.53	0.63
	rec88		0.47	0.55		rec91		-0.38	0.52
Trust		0.90			Trust		0.89		
	tru58		-0.79	0.78		tru58		-0.69	0.82
	tru59		-0.78	0.81		tru62		-0.52	0.69
	tru62		-0.56	0.70		tru59		-0.45	0.75
Total Variance Accounted for = 78.38%. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.					Total Variance Accounted for = 77.25%. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.				

Table 4.11. Goodness of fit for Split Sample A (N: 262)

Goodness of fit statistics	Calculated values: First-order measurement model	Second-order measurement model	Simplified structural model	Referential values
df	1.436	1.614	2.175	Between 1 and 3
RMSEA	0.041	0.048	0.067	< 0.080
CFI	0.966	0.947	0.983	> 0.900
RMR	0.097	0.134	0.070	< 0.090
PCLOSE	0.976	0.634	0.181	> 0.050

df : Relative Chi-square fit index. RMSEA: Root mean square error of approximation. CFI: Comparative Fit Index. RMR: Root mean square residual. PCLOSE: P of close fit

Table 4.12. Goodness of fit for Split Sample B (N: 282)

Goodness of fit statistics	Calculated values: First-order measurement model	Second-order measurement model	Simplified structural model	Referential values
df	1.713	1.945	0.820	Between 1 and 3
RMSEA	0.050	0.058	0.000	< 0.080
CFI	0.947	0.924	1.000	> 0.900
RMR	0.101	0.137	0.035	< 0.090
PCLOSE	0.456	0.017	0.952	> 0.050

df : Relative Chi-square fit index. RMSEA: Root mean square error of approximation. CFI: Comparative Fit Index. RMR: Root mean square residual. PCLOSE: P of close fit

Convergent and discriminant validity, as well as composite reliability of all constructs showed, in both half samples, similar values to the ones obtained in the full sample (see Tables 4.13 and 4.14). Weak CR and AVE values from *Challenge* in both half samples confirm the reliability and convergent validity issue for this construct that was previously detected and flagged in the full sample. Sub-optimal convergent validity for the *Engagement climate* construct was also confirmed in both half samples.

Lastly, as shown in Table 4.15, the hypothesized direct effects of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* and on *Job satisfaction* were both confirmed on the structural models of the two half samples. Standardized regression weights between *Engagement Climate* and *Personal engagement* were 0.600 (split sample A) and 0.474 (split sample B). Standardized regression weights between

Engagement climate and *Job satisfaction* were 0.488 (split sample A) and 0.422 (split sample B). The relative strength of the direct effect of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* over the direct effect on *Job satisfaction* was also confirmed in both half samples.

Table 4.13. Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity in Split-sample A (N: 262)

	Construct	CR	AVE	Discriminant Validity through the Square Root of AVE (**on diagonal**)												
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Engagement climate	0.88	0.44	**0.66**												
2	Personal engagement	0.79	0.56	0.46	**0.75**											
3	Job satisfaction	0.88	0.71	0.56	0.42	**0.84**										
4	Supervisor support	0.90	0.76				**0.87**									
5	Autonomy	0.86	0.68				0.49	**0.83**								
6	Clarity	0.84	0.63				0.47	0.56	**0.80**							
7	Cohesion	0.88	0.72				0.57	0.26	0.36	**0.85**						
8	Self-expression	0.77	0.52				0.45	0.55	0.50	0.46	**0.72**					
9	Fairness	0.88	0.71				0.60	0.39	0.42	0.32	0.44	**0.84**				
10	Recognition	0.84	0.63				0.65	0.59	0.56	0.47	0.54	0.50	**0.80**			
11	Overload	0.88	0.71				0.26	0.28	0.33	0.11	0.30	0.31	0.24	**0.84**		
12	Trust	0.90	0.75				0.52	0.46	0.59	0.38	0.59	0.68	0.61	0.33	**0.87**	
13	Challenge	0.65	0.38				0.22	0.17	0.37	0.25	0.27	0.36	0.24	0.06	0.48	**0.62**

CR: Composite reliability. AVE: Average Variance Extracted

Table 4.14. Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity in Split-sample B (N: 282)

	Construct	CR	AVE	Discriminant Validity through the Square Root of AVE (**on diagonal**)												
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Engagement climate	0.89	0.45	**0.67**												
2	Personal engagement	0.83	0.62	0.40	**0.79**											
3	Job satisfaction	0.87	0.69	0.45	0.26	**0.83**										
4	Supervisor support	0.90	0.74				**0.86**									
5	Autonomy	0.86	0.68				0.51	**0.83**								
6	Clarity	0.79	0.56				0.50	0.42	**0.75**							
7	Cohesion	0.89	0.73				0.48	0.21	0.37	**0.85**						
8	Self-expression	0.75	0.50				0.55	0.58	0.46	0.51	**0.71**					
9	Fairness	0.89	0.73				0.59	0.54	0.47	0.34	0.32	**0.86**				
10	Recognition	0.81	0.60				0.67	0.60	0.52	0.42	0.51	0.71	**0.77**			
11	Overload	0.85	0.66				0.18	0.23	0.29	0.18	0.32	0.25	0.16	**0.81**		
12	Trust	0.89	0.74				0.64	0.53	0.58	0.48	0.48	0.79	0.65	0.23	**0.86**	
13	Challenge	0.65	0.38				0.40	0.10	0.33	0.42	0.21	0.40	0.46	0.00	0.48	**0.62**

CR: Composite reliability. AVE: Average Variance Extracted

Table 4.15. Structural model path coefficients of the direct effects for split samples

Direct effect	Path coefficients (standardized regression weights)	
	Split-sample A (N: 262)	Split-sample B (N: 282)
Engagement climate → Personal engagement	0.600***	0.474***
Engagement climate → Job satisfaction	0.488***	0.422***

*** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed)

4.7 Hypothesis summary

Engagement climate dimensions

To test the twelve hypothesized first-order constructs, or Engagement climate dimensions (**H1**), the internal consistency reliability, unidimensionality and validity of each construct was assessed, using the following criteria:

(1) Criteria for internal consistency reliability at the construct level was coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951), mean inter-item correlation (L. A. Clark & Watson, 1995), composite reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and goodness of fit of the CFA first-order measurement model (indicating stability of the factor structure). Criteria for internal consistency reliability at the indicator level was the squared multiple correlation for the indicator (Bollen, 1989), the corrected inter-total correlation (L. A. Clark & Watson, 1995), and goodness of fit of the CFA first-order measurement model (indicating measurement consistency of the selected items). Criteria for construct unidimensionality was also goodness of fit of the CFA first-order measurement model (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012).

(2) Criteria for construct validity included convergent validity or AVE, discriminant validity or AVE for each construct greater than the square of the correlation between the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), goodness of fit of the CFA first-order measurement model (indicating a proper solution and consistent relationships with the sample data), and nomological validity, i.e. the indicators of the construct are related to the measures of other constructs as specified in the construct's theoretical network (Bagozzi, 1980). Criteria for validity at the indicator level was the square of the indicator's completely standardized loading[3], indicating whether the relationship between the indicator and its hypothesized latent construct is large and statistically significant (Bollen, 1989).

The following eight hypothesized dimensions: *Recognition, Cohesion, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Self-expression*, and *Overload,* evidenced adequate values for all internal consistency reliability, unidimensionality, and validity criteria. *Support* was re-labelled "Supervisor support" to reflect the change in the conceptual domain of the construct as a result of the exploratory factor analysis, substituting the original broader concept of "management" for "supervisor". The re-defined construct evidenced adequate values for all internal consistency reliability, unidimensionality, and validity criteria. *Challenge* evidenced adequate values for several criteria, including internal

[3] In the engagement climate model each indicator loads on only one construct, therefore the squared multiple correlation and the square of the completely standardized loading are equal.

consistency of its indicators, goodness of fit, discriminant and nomological validity. However the construct's reliability (coefficient alpha: 0.63; CR: 0.64) and convergent validity (AVE: 0.38) are somewhat weak. *Contribution* and *Participation* were both found to be factorially invalid, as their indicators tended to integrate into, or overlap with, *Recognition* during the initial EFA. Therefore **H1** is partially supported.

Engagement climate

To test the internal consistency reliability, multidimensionality, and validity of the higher-order construct, i.e. *Engagement climate* (**H2**), the following criteria were used:

(1) Criteria for internal consistency reliability at the construct level was coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951), mean inter-item correlation of the overall scale (L. A. Clark & Watson, 1995), composite reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and goodness of fit of the CFA second-order measurement model (indicating stability of the hierarchical factor structure). Criteria for internal consistency reliability at the indicator level was the squared multiple correlation for the first-order latent variable (Bollen, 1989), and goodness of fit of the CFA second-order measurement model (indicating measurement consistency of the selected variables). Criteria for construct multidimensionality was also goodness of fit of the CFA second-order measurement model (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012).

(2) Criteria for construct validity included convergent validity or AVE, discriminant validity or AVE for each construct greater than the square of the correlation between the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), goodness of fit of the CFA second-order measurement model and structural model (indicating a proper solution and consistent relationships with the sample data), and nomological validity, i.e. the indicators of the construct are related to the measures of other constructs as specified in the construct's theoretical network (Bagozzi, 1980). Criteria for validity at the indicator level was the square of the first-order variable's completely standardized loading, indicating whether the relationship between the first-order construct and the higher-order construct is large and statistically significant (Bollen, 1989).

Engagement climate as the hypothesized higher-order, multidimensional construct, evidenced adequate values for nearly all internal consistency reliability, unidimensionality, and validity criteria. However, its convergent validity was sub-optimal (AVE: 0.446), due mostly to the relatively weak relationship of the construct with two of its indicators or first-order variables, namely *Challenge* and *Overload*, with standardized loadings of 0.46 and 0.33 respectively. While a higher AVE for

Engagement climate would have been desirable, the obtained value is only marginally below the recommended threshold (0.50), therefore **H2** is supported.

Direct effects

Hypothesized direct effects of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* (**H3**) and Job satisfaction (**H4a**) were confirmed on the structural model, with standardized regression weights of 0.533 and 0.455 respectively, hence indicating a moderate-to-strong direct effect of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement*, and a moderate direct effect of *Engagement climate* on *Job satisfaction*. The direct effect of *Engagement Climate* on *Personal engagement* was comparatively stronger (0.533 > 0.455) than the direct effect of *Engagement climate* on *Job satisfaction* (**H4c**). Therefore **H3**, **H4a**, and **H4c** are supported. The hypothesized direct effect of *Engagement climate* on *Affective commitment* (**H4b**) could not be tested, as this construct was removed from the analysis due to poor psychometric properties of its available indicators. Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among the study variables are shown in Table 4.16, and the hypothesis summary is shown in Figure 4.3.

Table 4.16. Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations of the study variables (N: 544)

	Variables	Mean score	*S.D.*	Intercorrelations											
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Engagement climate	149.00	24,70	–											
2	Trust	15.16	3.86	0.83	–										
3	Overload	13.33	3.85	0.33	0.28	–									
4	Cohesion	17.71	3.76	0.55	0.42	0.14*	–								
5	Autonomy	14.76	3.67	0.65	0.49	0.26	0.23	–							
6	Supervisor support	14.89	4.65	0.76	0.59	0.22	0.51	0.51	–						
7	Clarity	15.63	3.87	0.69	0.60	0.32	0.36	0.50	0.49	–					
8	Recognition	13.43	3.80	0.80	0.63	0.20	0.43	0.60	0.66	0.54	–				
9	Challenge	14.93	3.38	0.46	0.47	0.02**	0.32	0.13**	0.31	0.35	0.34	–			
10	Self-expression	17.28	3.00	0.66	0.53	0.31	0.48	0.57	0.50	0.49	0.52	0.22	–		
11	Fairness	11.74	3.99	0.76	0.74	0.27	0.32	0.47	0.59	0.46	0.61	0.38	0.38	–	
12	Personal engagement	16.01	2.97	0.53	0.43	0.31	0.28	0.33	0.32	0.37	0.42	0.33	0.38	0.30	–
13	Job satisfaction	15.58	2.98	0.46	0.41	0.15*	0.28	0.22	0.29	0.34	0.23	0.34	0.27	0.34	0.33

All correlations are statistically significant with $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed), except for * $p < 0.01$ and ** $p < 0.5$

Figure 4.3. Hypothesis summary

Engagement climate dimensions	**Supported?**
H1: Twelve independent constructs derived from theory can be confirmed as distinct psychological climate dimensions or facets each reflecting a specific set of psychologically meaningful and affectively charged representations of the work environment	**Yes, partially**
Recognition	Yes
Cohesion	Yes
Trust	Yes
Autonomy	Yes
Fairness	Yes
Clarity	Yes
Self-expression	Yes
Overload	Yes
(Supervisor) Support	Yes
Challenge	Yes, partially
Contribution	No
Participation	No
Engagement climate	**Supported?**
H2: An independent construct derived from theory is a higher-order factor or unifying theme for the twelve hypothesized psychological climate dimensions or facets, reflecting the degree to which the overall work environment creates the psychological conditions for personal engagement	**Yes**
Direct effects	**Supported?**
H3: Engagement climate has a direct effect on Personal Engagement	**Yes**
H4a: Engagement climate has a direct effect on Job satisfaction	**Yes**
H4b: Engagement climate has a direct effect on Organizational commitment	**Not tested**
H4c: The direct effect of Engagement climate on Personal Engagement will be relatively stronger than the direct effect of Engagement climate on Job Satisfaction	**Yes**

Summary of chapter 4

In Chapter 4 the data findings of the field study on a service organization to investigate the factor structure of Engagement Climate were reported. This included results of preliminary analyses

assessing suitability of data for the intended analytical procedures, results of the EFA, including factorability of data, factor extraction approach, as well as reporting of adequacy, reliability, and validity values of the obtained factor solution; results of the CFA for the first-order measurement model, namely, the ten Engagement Climate dimensions and their respective reflective indicators, including model fit, reliability and validity values; results of the CFA for the second-order measurement model, namely, the ten Engagement Climate dimensions and Engagement Climate as the superordinate construct, including model fit, reliability and validity values; results for the structural model, including model fit, direct effects of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* and on *Job satisfaction*, as well as results for multi-group moderation analyses; results of the split-samples analyses and, lastly, a summary of the results regarding the test of the study hypotheses.

Chapter 5. General discussion

Introduction

Chapter 5 addresses, first, the evaluation of the findings (5.1) which, overall, support the Engagement Climate model. The theoretical implications of the study are discussed next (5.2), specifically the key theoretical contributions of the Engagement Climate model to the OB and service management literatures, as well as the potential innovative approaches for climate research stemming from the model. Next, the limitations of the research are discussed (5.3), notably the concern for possible common method bias, the need to complete the external validation process for the Engagement Climate measure, and the aspects in the model that need further research/refinement. Lastly, future research directions (5.4) are discussed. Some of these address the limitations of the research; others include a possible research agenda for Engagement Climate within the service climate model, the use of longitudinal approaches to explore causalities, and the assessment of Engagement Climate and service climate simultaneously for their potential complementarity or competitive Interaction.

5.1 Evaluation of findings

Overall, the findings support the Engagement Climate model, comprising ten subscales or Engagement Climate dimension, and Engagement Climate as their unifying theme or higher order construct.

Specifically, ten independent constructs derived from theory, i.e. *Supervisor support*, *Recognition, Trust, Cohesion, Fairness, Self-expression*, *Challenge, Clarity, Autonomy,* and *Overload* were

confirmed as distinct psychological climate dimensions or facets, each reflecting a specific set of psychologically meaningful and affectively charged representations of the work environment (**H1**). Each of these dimensions reflect a distinct experiential component and type of influence in a given work environment contributing to create the psychological conditions for engagement. They reflect perceptions or feelings that the immediate superior is aware of and responsive to one's needs (*Supervisor Support*), that the organization appreciates and acknowledges one's efforts and contributions (*Recognition*), and is sincere, open, and consistent with regard to its motives and intentions towards the employee (*Trust*); feelings of togetherness and sharing within the organization setting and the work group (*Cohesion*), and the perception that organizational practices aim to be equitable, consistent, and non-arbitrary (*Fairness*); the feeling that expressions of individuality in one's work role, such as personality, sense of humour, or personal values, are accepted by the organization (*Self-expression*), that the work requires one's best efforts and resources to be accomplished (*Challenge*), that role expectations are clear, consistent, and predictable (*Clarity*), that one has the ability to self-determine work procedures, goals, and priorities with regard to one's work role (*Autonomy*) and, lastly, the feeling that one has sufficient time, training, or resources to complete assigned tasks (*Overload*).

Results also confirmed that an independent construct derived from theory, i.e. Engagement Climate, is a higher-order factor or unifying theme for these psychological climate dimensions, reflecting the degree to which the overall work environment creates the psychological conditions for personal engagement (**H2**). *Engagement climate* is a unique and distinct psychological climate construct to the extent that (1) it captures feelings rather than thoughts, affective representations rather than evaluations or appraisals and (2), among all possible affective representations that an individual might elicit from his/her work environment, it captures those that lead to engagement, a motivational state or mood that triggers the investment of personal resources into the role or task, which leads, in turn, to superior work-related behavioural outputs.

Some of the findings concerning the Engagement Climate model, however, did not meet expectations, which led to a reconceptualization of the model into ten dimensions, as opposed to the twelve dimensions that had been initially hypothesized:

(1) The *Support* dimension was redefined as *Supervisor support*, as the items that comprised the factor solution clearly indicated feelings or perceptions of support with regard to the supervisor, such as encouraging the employee's efforts to learn and grow professionally, and being

approachable. Broader feelings of support with regard to management or the company showed strong cross-loadings with several other factors, as well as insufficient unique variance, and were consequently dropped. This suggests that general feelings regarding company support are likely to be the consequence of, or subsumed under, other dimensions reflecting feelings or perceptions towards management or the company in general. The reconceptualization of *Support* into *Supervisor support* is coherent with the engagement literature. Supervisor support has been identified as an antecedent of engagement and other related motivational constructs, as well as psychological safety (DeConinck, 2010; May et al., 2004; Rana et al., 2014; Saks, 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2009). Also, job demands-resources (JD-R) research (A.B. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Menguc et al., 2013) has identified supervisory support as a key resource that motivates employees to be engaged in their workplace.

(2) The hypothesized dimensions of *Contribution*, referring to feelings that one's work significantly affects organizational processes and outcomes, and *Participation*, referring to feelings that one has the ability to influence, be heard, or participate in decisions concerning organizational policies and practices, were found to be factorially invalid. Items pertaining to these two dimensions showed strong cross-loadings with *Recognition*, which clearly indicated a conceptual overlapping among the three constructs. A separate EFA including only items from these three dimensions showed that a one factor solution with *Recognition* items was the optimum alternative. These results suggest that feelings of contribution or participation are aspects or facets of a broadly defined *Recognition* dimension, reflecting feelings or perceptions that the organization appreciates and acknowledges one's efforts and contributions. As noted by Brun and Dugas (2008), recognition is a complex notion in the management world that can take different forms such as personal recognition, recognition of results, recognition of work practice, or recognition of job dedication. Hence recognition may consist of an evaluation and celebration of results produced by the employee and valued by the organization, but it can also be an act of judgment on the worker's professional endeavours (contribution) and dedication (effort), or recognition of the person as a valuable and unique individual whose experience and opinions are worth taking into consideration (participation). While the selected indicators for the *Recognition* dimension are probably insufficient to capture all the facets of the concept, they do reflect its essential elements, as the factor analytic results for this dimension suggest.

(3) Results regarding the reliability and validity of the scales in the Engagement Climate model showed overall robust values with two exceptions: *Challenge* and *Overload*. With regard to

Challenge, results showed sub-optimal reliability values (CR: 0.65; coefficient alpha: 0.63) as well as weak convergent validity (AVE: 0.38). *Challenge* also showed a somewhat low contribution to the AVE of *Engagement climate*, with a standardized regression weight of 0.46. These results may simply be due to a lack of sufficiently robust indicators, but they may also reflect a theoretical issue regarding the conceptualization of this dimension, which may be more prone to contextual differences than other engagement climate dimensions.

Recent JD-R based research (A. B. Bakker & Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Kane-Frieder, Hochwarter, & Ferris, 2014; LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005; Van den Broeck, De Cuyper, De Witte, & Vansteenkiste, 2010) has distinguished between two types of job demands: challenge demands and hindrance demands. Challenge demands are viewed by workers as obstacles to be overcome in order to learn and achieve. In contrast, hindrance demands are viewed by workers as unnecessarily thwarting personal growth and goal attainment. While both types of demands require energy, challenge demands contain potential gains. Crawford, LePine, and Rich (2010) tested the meta-analytic relationship of both types of job demands with work engagement. Their results revealed a positive relationship between challenge demands and engagement, and a negative relationship between hindrance demands and engagement. Some of these studies (A. B. Bakker & Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Van den Broeck et al., 2010) also suggest that whether a specific job demand is interpreted as challenging or hindering may depend on the occupational sector. For example, emotional job demands may be perceived as challenges when they are an essential element of the role, such as a service employee or a nurse, but may be perceived as hindrances by other occupational groups. Also, certain occupations may attract individuals with a relatively higher or lower need for work challenge to sustain their level of engagement. All in all these studies seem to indicate that, in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the scale, *Challenge* may require a further refinement so that its meaning and conceptual domain becomes unequivocal, i.e. not biased by possible occupational or other contextual factors affecting its interpretation.

With regard to *Overload*, while the dimension showed acceptable reliability and validity values, its low contribution as an indicator of the higher order construct, with a standardized regression weight of 0.33, is the main reason behind the sub-optimal convergent validity of *Engagement climate* (AVE: 0.45). *Overload* aims to capture Kahn's (1990) concept of availability of personal (physical, cognitive, and emotional) resources as a key psychological condition for personal engagement, i.e. scores from this dimension should indicate the extent to which the individual feels that personal resources are

available for investment into the role or task. The relatively weaker fit of this dimension in the engagement climate model may be due to a number of reasons.

On the one hand, the conceptual domain and operationalization of this dimension have often proved elusive in OB research, with a degree of overlapping among constructs such as role stress and strain (Spector & Jex, 1998), work overload (Beehr et al., 1976), emotional exhaustion (Wharton, 1993), or burnout (Salanova, Llorens, et al., 2005), and a tendency in most of these constructs to display inconsistent relationships with job attitudes, turnover intentions, or performance measures (see Jones et al., 2007). For example, the JD-R model (A.B. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) refers to the concept of occupational stress, which is explained by two core processes: (1) the strain process, or the additional exertion required by an employee to manage negative job demands while maintaining job performance, and (2) the motivational process, or the availability of resources that directly assist employees to perform their job and to be psychologically engaged with their work. High demands and low resources are posited to produce the highest levels of psychological burnout and strain, whereas high demands and high resources lead to high motivation/engagement (A. B. Bakker, Van Veldhoven, & D., 2010). While the motivational process in the JD-R model has been empirically confirmed (A. B. Bakker et al., 2010; Xanthopoulou et al., 2009), other studies (P. Bowen, Edwards, Lingard, & Cattell, 2014; Brough et al., 2013) have found limited support for the strain process. In our study, the items that showed the best psychometric properties as indicators of *Overload,* among the initial pool of tested items, were those adapted from existing measures of emotional exhaustion (Wharton, 1993) and burnout (Salanova, Llorens, et al., 2005). Thus it is possible that indicators reflecting burnout and/or psychological exhaustion may not be entirely adequate to capture the concept of availability as a psychological condition for engagement, despite configuring a robust scale.

On the other hand, *Overload* may reflect a particularly asymmetrical relation with personal engagement, i.e. a high *Overload* score might have a strong (negative) influence on personal engagement but a low *Overload* score (absence of overload) might contribute only mildly to personal engagement. In other words, the availability of personal resources may act as an hygiene factor (Herzberg, 1954) rather than a motivator in the engagement process. This would help explain the dimension's relatively low relationship with Engagement Climate in the study sample, as *Overload* scores were, on average, low (i.e. absence of overload was high). Lastly, it may also be the case that *Overload*, while being an antecedent or psychological condition for personal engagement, is not strictly a psychological climate dimension, as the construct might reflect an "almost

physiological" state (the experience of being more or less depleted of psychological resources) rather than an affective representation or interpretation of the work environment, and therefore it would require to be measured as an independent or moderating variable within the engagement process. In sum, further refinement and/or reconceptualization of the *Overload* scale, and future tests with different samples will be needed, to clarify the role of this dimension in the Engagement Climate model and in the overall engagement process. Improvements with regard to this issue should help, in turn, to improve convergent validity values of the *Engagement Climate* construct.

The study findings also support the posited role of Engagement Climate as an antecedent in the engagement process, with a moderate-to-strong direct effect (0.53) of *Engagement climate* on *Personal engagement* (**H3**). This result gives support to the proposed conceptualization of engagement as an affect-based motivational process, with engagement climate acting as the psychological antecedent in the process, i.e. having a direct effect on the experience of engagement as a psychological state or mood.

Results also showed, as predicted, the existence of a moderate (**H4a**), but relatively weaker (**H4c**), direct effect (0.45) of *Engagement climate* on *Job satisfaction*. These findings provide a degree of support for the proposed nomological network of the study. Engagement climate perceptions, as a distinct subset of the more global concept of psychological climate, are expected to relate to a higher order factor or schema concerning the degree to which the environment is personally beneficial or detrimental to one's well-being (L. A. James & James, 1989; Lazarus, 1982). On the other hand, the relationship between job satisfaction and subjective well-being has been well documented (see Bowling et al., 2010). Therefore a positive relationship between *Engagement climate* and *Job satisfaction* was expected (H4a). The relationship between *Engagement climate* and *Personal engagement* was expected to be comparatively stronger (H4c), to the extent that engagement climate perceptions constitute the psychological conditions for a specific affective state or mood that is motivational in nature, namely engagement, and refer essentially to "how people feel about their work environment". The relationship between *Engagement climate* and *Job satisfaction* was expected to be comparatively weaker, to the extent that engagement climate perceptions influence the affective component of job satisfaction but not the element of appraisal or cognitive judgement that is central in attitudinal constructs, i.e. they do not refer to "what people think about their work environment".

However, while the study results are encouraging with regard to the hypothesized direct effects in the engagement climate model, they cannot be viewed as conclusive. The difference of the direct effect on the two variables is a meagre 0.08, which suggests that affect and cognition cannot be easily captured separately, i.e. feeling is never totally free of thought nor thought free of feeling (Adolphs & Damasio, 2001; Ashby et al., 1999). When asking the participants about their feelings regarding their work environment (engagement climate perceptions), they inevitably think about these feelings; when asking the participants about their thoughts regarding their jobs (job satisfaction), they inevitably have feelings about what they think. In this respect, a more definite criterion for the nomological validity of the relationship between Engagement Climate and job attitudes could be obtained by exploring their relative strength as behavioural/performance predictors. This will be discussed further on when addressing future research directions.

Lastly, with regard to the moderating role of demographic variables in the hypothesized relationships in the study, only *Type of employment* showed significant moderation effects on the relationship between *Engagement climate* and *Personal engagement*, with full-time employees' level of engagement being more strongly influenced by their perceptions of Engagement Climate than part-time employees. These findings are consistent with previous studies (see Kular et al., 2008; Van den Broeck et al., 2011) suggesting that full-time employees tend to be comparatively more engaged than part-time employees, i.e. they tend to invest their personal resources into their job roles more regularly and/or intensely, and they also tend to be more involved in their jobs and their organizations.

The lack of significant moderating effects of *Type of employment* on the relationship between *Engagement climate* and *Job satisfaction* is also consistent with previous studies (see Thorsteinson, 2003) indicating little difference between full-time and part-time employees on job attitudes such as job satisfaction and affective commitment. Absence of significant moderating effects of *Job role* on either *Personal engagement* or *Job satisfaction* was expected to some extent in this study, as the difference between travel agents and office managers was negligible in terms of job content. Office managers were essentially, despite the misleading job title, travel agents with additional administrative responsibilities. Thus it is likely that the findings regarding *Job role* reflect absence of actual job role differences in the sample, rather than absence of moderating effects of this demographic variable.

The lack of moderating effects of *Gender* on either *Personal engagement* or *Job satisfaction* was also expected, to a certain extent. Studies (e.g., Heilman & Okimoto, 2007) have found that women often suffer the consequences of gender stereotyping when they work in teams with men, which is likely to have negative effects on their experience of psychological safety and thus on their level of engagement (Badal & Harter, 2014). However, this is unlikely to occur in the context of travel agencies, which are not "male-dominated" work environments and where the proportion of female employees in the industry is substantially larger (Ali, Kulik, & Metz, 2009), as it was the case in the study sample, with over 82 percent of participants being women.

The lack of moderating effects of *Tenure* on *Personal engagement* was not anticipated, as previous studies in service contexts have reported differences in levels of engagement for different tenure groups of service employees. Nevertheless, it is unclear how job tenure influences service employee engagement, with some studies indicating that service employees with longer tenure are relatively less engaged in their work (O. M. Karatepe & Olugbade, 2009), and other studies suggesting that service employees with longer tenure resist burnout better (C. Chen & Kao, 2012) or manage emotionally better the service encounter (M. Wang et al., 2011). In that sense, it is likely that the effects of tenure on engagement may vary depending on other contextual factors. For example, the organization that was the focus in the current study was characterized by adopting policies and practices favouring long-term employment, thus giving equal treatment in terms of employment stability to all their travel agents. This might explain the absence of moderating effects of tenure in this particular organizational context as opposed, for example, to other organizational contexts where employment stability differs from one tenure group to another thus possibly influencing the relative level of engagement for each group.

5.2 Theoretical implications

Theoretical contribution of Engagement Climate

Answering the research question of what drives service employees to give their best while performing their work roles required answering, first, the question of what drives employee behaviour, beyond specific roles or industries. Once a satisfactory answer, namely Engagement Climate, was found in the broader field of organizational behaviour literature, then the obtained knowledge was posited as the "OB foundation" that the service climate model needs in the prediction of service employee behaviour and performance. Thus, while the services management literature provided the initial setting for this study, the bulk of the theoretical discussion took place

within the organizational and OB literatures. In this respect, Engagement Climate, as a latent social psychological construct, should virtually transcend the context of any one organisation or sector, i.e. it could theoretically be found in any organizational context, not exclusively in service organizations. The Engagement Climate dimensions are intended to capture the psychological conditions or antecedents of personal engagement for any individual, regardless of the specific job role, industry, or type of organization. However, given the nature of service work, Engagement Climate may most readily be observed (and fostered) in the context of services, in particular among service employees, who are required to display nonstandard, adaptive, and creative behaviours during service encounters (Gwinner et al., 2005) and to engage regularly in emotion management under often challenging circumstances (Grandey et al., 2011; Hochschild, 1983). These two complementary perspectives also represent the two distinct research fields, organizational behaviour and services management, to which the study contributes theoretically:

1) With regard to the contribution to the OB literature, the Engagement Climate model helps clarify the domain conceptualization of the emerging engagement construct. A great deal has been written on the concept of employee engagement in the past decade from both commercial consulting firms and the academic community, with little consistency and much controversy regarding the construct and a lively discussion about definitions, manifestations, drivers of engagement, and competing approaches as to how engagement should be operationalized and measured (see W. H. Macey et al., 2009; Shuck et al., 2012; A. Smith, 2006).

Much of this controversy stems from the imprecise definitions of the construct that have been put forth in commercially oriented studies, and their tendency to present "old wine in a new bottle" (Newman & Harrison, 2008; Saks, 2008), i.e. to overlap with existing constructs such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement, or intrinsic motivation. Blurred and overlapping definitions of engagement in commercial research have also led to a myriad of equally heterogeneous and poorly justified commercial "engagement models". Academic researchers, on the other hand, have written on the topic through a variety of approaches with no common model to explain or account for the formation of an individual's sense of engagement or any common agreement on a framework to delineate its antecedents and/or consequences. Existing approaches include interpretations of engagement as a (mainly) cognitive construct (Ho et al., 2011; Rothbard, 2001), as well-being or positive affect (Kazén et al., 2008; Zigarmi et al., 2010), as the opposite of burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2002), as a psychological connection with the performance of work tasks (Christian et al., 2011), or as investment on the self (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008).

The view put forth in this study is that the conceptual domain of engagement can be clearly defined by revisiting its original formulation (Kahn, 1990, 1992), complemented with contributions from research on state affect and the self-concept in motivational theories. According to this interpretation, engagement contains three distinctive elements: (1) it is (primarily) an affective, rather than cognitive, phenomena, (2) its nature is motivational, rather than attitudinal, and (3) it is a recurring process, not a state, that includes certain psychological antecedents or "conditions", a psychological state, and accompanying behaviours.

The conceptualization of engagement as a specific mood underlines both the importance and centrality of positive affectivity, as opposed to cognitive interpretations of the construct (e.g., Ho et al., 2011; Rothbard, 2001), and its uniqueness as a motivational construct, in the sense that it represents a particular "energetic state" (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008) directed towards one's job, as opposed to reflecting global positive affect or a general sense of well-being with regard to work (e.g., Kazén et al., 2008; Zigarmi et al., 2010). The notion of energy directed towards behaviours, or "desire to act" (Bagozzi, 1992), is also the element that characterizes engagement as a motivational rather than an attitudinal construct. While job satisfaction or affective commitment include affective components, they represent in essence evaluative judgements or appraisals that "specify a target but do not specify any particular action" (Harrison et al., 2006, p. 316), i.e. they do not lead, by themselves, to behaviours (E. R. Crawford et al., 2014; W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008). The motivational element that characterizes engagement is the focus on a specific self-concept (George & Brief, 1996), or the desire for self-realization (A. H. Maslow, 1954), that drives people to express themselves physically, emotionally, and cognitively during role performances (Kahn, 1990).

Lastly, engagement is best described as a recurring or fluctuating process rather than a more or less permanent or pervasive "state of mind" (e.g., Christian et al., 2011; Schaufeli et al., 2002). This process, in its social or systemic manifestation, is referred to as "people's cycles of psychological presence and absence across role performance situations" (Kahn, 1992, p. 332) and as "the behaviours by which people bring in or leave out their personal selves during work role performances" (Kahn, 1990, p. 694), i.e. a systemic phenomenon or "feedback-loop" of people's behaviours creating performance outcomes and experiences that, in turn, engender various types of feedback which then influence future experiences and behaviours.

The interpretation of engagement as an affect-based motivational process rather than a state also helps differentiate between antecedents in the process from antecedents of the process itself. The

former are psychological variables, i.e. interpretations or representations of the organizational/social context that are conducive to a certain psychological state. The latter are distal antecedents of the process, outside its conceptual domain, and thus they can reflect heterogeneous and not necessarily psychological phenomena such as HRM practices, organizational policies and procedures, or job characteristics. In that sense, the Engagement Climate model represents the antecedents in the engagement process, i.e. an integral part of its conceptual domain, and also the elements in the process that are more readily accessible to measurement and which can also be modified or acted upon through organizational interventions. As a multidimensional construct comprising those affect-based psychological representations of the work environment that are antecedents of or conducive to the experience of engagement, Engagement Climate helps clarify and make sense out of the myriad of competing and heterogeneous variables that have been posited and/or shown to influence engagement and engagement-related constructs, ranging from HRM practices (e.g., Chaudhary et al., 2014; J. K. Harter et al., 2002) to job characteristics (e.g., A. B. Bakker & Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Nimon & Zigarmi, 2015) or psychological climates (e.g., Devi, 2009; Nair, 2006; Shuck & Reio, 2014), as well as other heterogeneous collections of constructs (e.g., Rana et al., 2014; Shuck, Rocco, & Albornoz, 2011).

2) The Engagement Climate model also contributes to clarify the role of engagement as a predictor of service employee behaviour and performance within existing theoretical frameworks in the service management literature, in particular the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Grandey et al., 2011; Hong et al., 2013; Subramony & Pugh, 2015; Way et al., 2010). Engagement Climate addresses the gap in the service climate model concerning the psychological explanation of what drives or motivates employee *behaviour*, which is a pre-condition or foundation for employee *service-oriented behaviour.* In other words, it fulfils the role, within the service climate model, of what has been referred to as the "foundation" for service climate (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). Employees need to feel that their own needs have been met within the organization before they can become enthusiastic about meeting the needs of customers" (Schneider & Bowen, 1993, p. 43). In that sense, "engaged employees are more willing to do the kinds of things a service climate asks of them, and, similarly, a service climate is more easily built on a foundation of engaged employees" (Schneider, Macey, Barbera, et al., 2009, p. 24).

In this model of service climate (see D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014) its authors suggest that the foundation of employee engagement is built upon the following inputs: the resources that support and facilitate people's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), the challenging and involving work they do

(Coelho & Augusto, 2010), and the fairness and resulting trust they experience (Li & Cropanzano, 2009; W. H. Macey et al., 2009). The Engagement Climate model integrates these inputs but also incorporates other dimensions that are deemed to contribute to the psychological experience of engagement. For example, antecedents of engagement in JD-R based studies, i.e. job resources such as supervisor support, autonomy and co-worker support, can also be interpreted as engagement climate dimensions (*Supervisor support*, *Autonomy*, and *Cohesion*), to the extent that they are perceptions of the work environment that supply certain psychological resources leading to engagement. Engagement Climate also helps integrate a number of seemingly heterogeneous variables that have been shown to influence customer experiences through the mediation of service climate, such as emotional exhaustion, i.e. *Overload* (Lam et al., 2010), leadership support, i.e. *Supervisor support* (Chuang & Liao, 2010) , procedural justice, i.e. *Fairness* (Walumbwa, Hartnell, et al., 2010), or internal service, i.e. *Supervisor support* and *Cohesion* (Ehrhart et al., 2011).

The inclusion of Engagement Climate in the service climate model at the macro-level of analysis provides, theoretically, a comprehensive approach to the issue of service employee performance. Engagement Climate represents a new key variable in the behavioural sequence explaining the transition from energized behaviours to strategically oriented behaviours and finally to performance outcomes. Acting as a bridge between Engagement Climate and performance, service climate represents the different environmental elements that reinforce and give strategic focus to customer-oriented behaviours, while Engagement Climate provides the "conditions in which a service climate may exist" (Schneider, 1990, p. 398), or the contextual factors that sustain work behaviour (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). This also represents a more satisfactory explanation than the traditional mediating role of job attitudes. Engagement Climate dimensions are conceptualizations of affective experiences that feed into a specific mood, rather than affective appraisals or evaluations that feed into attitudes. In other words, they reflect how individuals feel, rather than what they think, while interacting with their work environment. In that sense, these affective experiences are antecedents in the engagement process that provide a direct link to behaviours; therefore attitudinal constructs are not needed or can be "bypassed" in the explanation of the behavioural sequence.

Also, the Engagement Climate model helps differentiate between distal antecedents of the engagement process in service settings, such as HRM practices, and the posited effects of such practices, i.e. the Engagement Climate dimensions, which constitute the psychological antecedents in the process. Moreover, it also helps differentiate between HRM practices that are conducive to

the development of Engagement Climate, and HRM practices that encourage employees to engage in cooperative behaviours with customers (e.g., Chuang & Liao, 2010; O.M. Karatepe, 2013). The latter, which are targeted to influence perceptions of service climate as "fortunes of others", i.e. customers, will only be effective if they rest upon a "foundation" of HRM practices contributing to perceptions of engagement climate as "fortunes of self".

Engagement Climate as a work climate construct

In addition to its main theoretical contributions to the organizational behaviour and services management literatures, the Engagement Climate model also contributes to the literature and research on work climates. As discussed during the review of Kahn's work (1990, 1992), engagement can potentially be approached both from a micro-perspective, i.e. as a psychological phenomenon, and also from a macro-perspective, i.e. as a recursive social phenomenon or systemic "feedback loop". Engagement Climate as an organizational-level climate measure provides a potential means to explore both perspectives.

While the issue of how to operationalize organizational climates has been a subject for debate and controversies (see Patterson et al., 2005), the mainstream view is that organizational climate exists when psychological climate perceptions are shared among employees of a work unit. An aggregate measure of organizational climate or a related climate construct can be computed and employed as an organization level measure of climate when perceptual agreement among employees exists (Glisson & James, 2002; Härtel & Ashkanasy, 2011). Engagement Climate as an organizational-level construct would reflect a shared perceptual agreement, among individuals interacting within a given work setting, with regard to the psychological conditions for personal engagement that are collectively felt/experienced in that setting. This approach exemplifies what has been referred to as "microfoundations" (Felin et al., 2012), namely theoretical constructs supported by empirical examination that capture how the aggregation of micro-level phenomena (e.g. individual/psychological perceptions) leads to the emergence of macro-level phenomena (e.g. a collective climate construct). Microfoundations have been specifically identified as a promising future research direction with regard to the service climate model and its theoretical groundings (Subramony & Pugh, 2015). These collective constructs are built upon individual-level foundational constructs and require certain enabling conditions. In the case of Engagement Climate, these conditions, in addition to the methodological perquisite of a shared perceptual agreement, would be the existence of a common social-organizational context and social interactions, as well as a shared

exposure to situational cues and signals reflecting organizational policies, procedures, and practices (Schneider & Reichers, 1983).

Also, following Zohar's (2000) multilevel interpretation of work climates, Engagement Climate could also be approached/operationalized as a group-level construct. While policies and procedures reflect strategic goals and tactical guidelines at the organizational level of analysis, practices, on the other hand, relate to how middle managers and supervisors execute these procedures by turning them into specific action directives within their subunits and work-groups. Assuming that these supervisory practices can be discriminated on the basis of between-groups variation in a single organization, it then becomes possible to speak of separate organization-level and group-level climates (Zohar, 2000, p. 587). Hence, to measure Engagement Climate at the group level of analysis would require focusing on Engagement Climate perceptions related to supervisory and proximal work-group practices as opposed to perceptions related to organization level policies and procedures, but nevertheless the conceptual domain of the Engagement Climate dimensions would still be fully applicable. In terms of the specific enabling conditions,, a prerequisite for positing Engagement Climate as a group-level climate measure would be that individuals discriminate between, and form separate perceptions of, instituted procedures and supervisory practices in a given setting. Next, the conditions necessary for a group-level engagement climate should include a) within-group homogeneity, i.e. whether members of subunits supervised by the same individual have shared perceptions concerning their supervisor's practices), and b) between-groups variance, i.e., whether group-level engagement climates differ significantly between subunits in a single organization (Zohar, 2000, pp. 587-588).

However, it should be noted that approaching Engagement Climate exclusively as a group-level work climate would impoverish the meaning and scope of the construct, as it would ignore the possibility of exploring the decisive influence of organization-wide policies, practices, routines and so forth in the emergence and development of Engagement Climate. Perhaps more importantly, Engagement Climate at the group-level of analysis would fail to capture the systemic properties of the phenomenon, i.e. the feedback loop within a given system (organization) of people's behaviours creating performance outcomes and experiences that, in turn, engender various types of feedback which then influence future experiences and behaviours.

The Engagement Climate model can also contribute to potential innovative approaches in work climate research. First, as an affect-based organizational climate construct, Engagement Climate

helps address a gap in the organizational literature and research on emotions, which has generally focused either on individual, interpersonal, or group levels of analysis (see Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011) with few studies exploring the phenomena from an organizational or systemic perspective. Also, while some studies in the literature on climates have explored affective facets of organizational climate through the lens of global positive affect or well-being (e.g., Carr, Schmidt, Ford, & DeShon, 2003; Menges et al., 2011), the literature on the relationship between climate and work motivation is relatively weak compared to the extensive literature exploring the relationship between climate and job attitudes (Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009). Yet, as Kopelman et al. (1990) suggested, climate's influence on performance occurs primarily through its effect on work motivation.

Secondly, the inclusion of Engagement Climate in the service climate model illustrates how the simultaneous assessment of two distinct work climates, i.e. Engagement Climate and Service Climate, can be approached in order to investigate their potential complementarity or competitive Interaction. It has often been argued in climate research that it is meaningless to apply the concept of climate without a particular referent. As a result of this widespread view (see Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009; Zohar, 2008), the study of molar climate constructs has been displaced in recent times by a proliferation of studies on facet-specific climates such as climate for safety (Zohar & Luria, 2005), ethical work climate (Victor & Cullen, 1988), climate for innovation (N. R. Anderson & West, 1998), climate of diversity (X. P. Chen, Liu, & Portnoy, 2012), justice climate (Li et al., 2013) or indeed service climate. A logical examination suggests (Zohar, 2008) that a facet-specific perspective implies co-existence of various climates, each associated with a key facet of the organizational environment, yet this issue has been overlooked in climate research. Given the expected emergence of co-existing climates in organizations, "the key question is whether specific climates might interact in ways that would allow better prediction of relevant outcome criteria" (Zohar, 2008, p. 381).

Engagement Climate is particularly apt to interact with other facet-specific climates, to the extent that it reflects "fortunes-of-self" perceptions that often constitute a behavioural foundation for "fortunes-of-others" related perceptions and behaviours (Ortony et al., 1988). In other words, employees will be more likely to adopt certain behaviours desired by the organization, such as those related to customer focus, safety, or innovation, when they feel that their own needs are being met. Therefore exploring the interaction between Engagement Climate and other facet-specific Climates that lead to organizationally desirable outcomes such as safety, innovation, or customer focus, is likely to yield better predictions of those outcomes. Moreover, Engagement Climate measures the extent to which employees will be likely to invest themselves (cognitively, emotionally and

physically) into the job role, which is a strong indicator for discretionary, extra-role, and citizenship behaviours. These behaviours “beyond the call of duty” are often needed to achieve the desired outcomes in areas such as safety (Zohar, 2008) or customer service (Burke et al., 1992).

In sum, the simultaneous assessment of Engagement Climate and other facet-specific climates would be a type of exercise that has only occasionally been attempted in the literature. Yet, as Kuenzi and Schminke (2009) noted in their review, "exploring single climates in isolation is unlikely to be the most productive path to creating a full and accurate understanding of how work climates affect individual and collective outcomes within organizations" (p. 706).

5.3 Research limitations

Although the findings of this study are generally supportive of the hypothesized engagement climate model, there are a number of limitations that need to be acknowledged:

1) All constructs included in the study were assessed by self-reports and data were collected in a cross-sectional research design with a single instrument, which raises the concern of possible common method bias (see J. M. Conway & Lance, 2010; P.M. Podsakoff et al., 2003). While reliance on self-reports may be problematic in certain contexts, in this study it was justifiable and probably even necessary since the constructs of interest were self-referential respondent perceptions (Chan, 2009), i.e. individuals were best placed to report their perceptions of Engagement Climate. At any rate, several steps were taken at different stages of the study to mitigate the risk of common method bias. As already discussed in chapter 3, recommendations for questionnaire design were followed (P.M. Podsakoff et al., 2003), including reverse coding of items, wording and question order, and protecting respondent anonymity to reduce evaluation apprehension. Techniques were also applied in the translation of the questionnaire to avoid method or item bias, and in the survey administration procedure to avoid selection or non-response bias. In addition to these, Harman's one factor test (P. M. Podsakoff & Organ, 1986) was conducted during the study's analytical stage and no single factor emerged accounting for most of the variance, thus suggesting that common method bias was not an issue.

2) Results should be interpreted with caution when making generalizations since the data was collected from a single service organization in Spain, and certain characteristics of the sample such as job role (travel agents) and gender (predominantly female) were relatively homogeneous. Future research might examine, in order to enhance the reliability and external validity of the engagement climate model, whether the findings of this study would occur in samples from a variety of service

roles, service organizations and geographical locations. Also, with regard to the managerial application of the model, it has long been acknowledged in organizational research that the nature of HRM and its link with organizational performance depend critically on firm size and the industry context (Way, 2002). The tourism sector, in particular, is highly fragmented and heterogeneous, covering a wide range of industries, with many demonstrating a dual structure characterised by a very small group of large companies combined with a large group of SME/micro-businesses (Haxton, 2015). Certain HRM practices have been shown to have a particularly strong link with service SME performance (e.g., Georgiadis & Pitelis, 2012; Zehrer, 2009), which suggests there might also be systemic differences regarding how the Engagement Climate model applies to small size firms. Besides size, organizational structure is also likely to be a relevant factor regarding differences in Engagement Climate strength. For example, shared perceptions of Engagement Climate are likely to develop and manifest differently within a network of physically independent and geographically dispersed retail outlets, such as in the current study sample, as opposed to work environments that are physically shared by many service employees performing diverse service roles, such as hotels.

3) As it was discussed during the evaluation of findings, the dimensions of *Challenge* and *Overload* in the engagement climate model may require further refinement. *Challenge* showed sub-optimal reliability values (CR: 0.65; coefficient alpha: 0.63), weak convergent validity (AVE: 0.38) and a somewhat low contribution to the AVE of *Engagement climate*, with a standardized regression weight of 0.46. *Overload*, on the other hand, while showing acceptable reliability and validity values, contributed poorly as an indicator of *Engagement climate*, with a standardized regression weight of 0.33. The suboptimal contribution of these two dimensions as indicators in the engagement climate model is the main reason behind the sub-optimal convergent validity of *Engagement climate* (AVE: 0.45). Future research should revisit the conceptualization and operationalization of these two scales, developing and testing new items in order to improve their fit in the Engagement Climate model. Improvements in this area should help, in turn, to improve convergent validity values of the *Engagement Climate* construct.

4) While the study results are encouraging with regard to the hypothesized direct effects in the Engagement Climate model, they cannot be viewed as conclusive. On the one hand, the ad hoc measure of job satisfaction used for this study was composed of three items showing the strongest psychometric properties, but it is unclear whether other job satisfaction measure, among the many existing in organizational research, would yield similar results. On the other hand, the difference of the respective direct effects on *Engagement climate* of *Job satisfaction* and *Personal engagement*

was a meagre 0.08, which suggests that affect and cognition cannot be easily captured separately. Future research should help obtain more definite criteria for the nomological validity of the relationship between Engagement Climate and job attitudes by exploring their relative strength as behavioural predictors. Furthermore, although SEM provides some information about directionality of relationships, the cross-sectional study design does not allow drawing firm conclusions regarding the causal order of variables.

5) While the replication of the analyses on two half-split samples provided an indication of the robustness of the study findings, this should not be interpreted as a fully satisfactory cross-validation procedure. Single sample studies sometimes resort to split-sample procedures as a means to cross-validate findings, but the literature warns that effective cross-validation requires new samples from another population to which the construct would be expected to apply (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012; MacKenzie et al., 2011). Because items are often added, dropped, or reworded in the scale purification process, a new sample of data helps re-estimate the measurement model and assess the extent to which the psychometric properties of the scale may have been based on idiosyncrasies in the first sample; hence, the need of new samples to cross-validate the psychometric properties of the scale.

5.4 Research directions

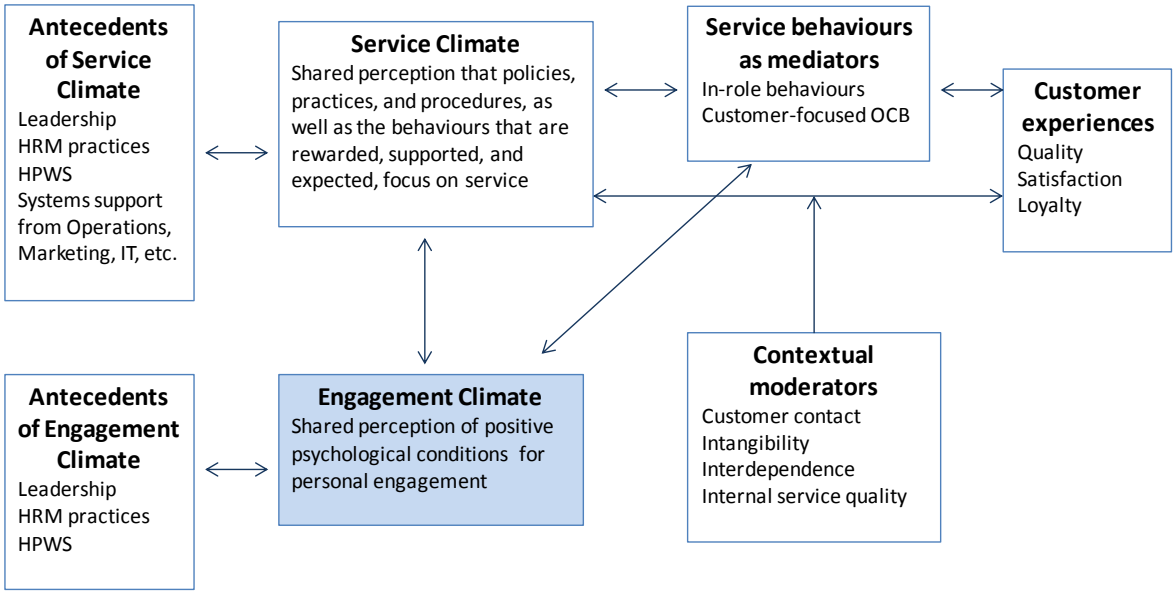
Most of the issues that have been discussed with regard to the limitations of the study act as a guide to future inquiry and to the development of a research agenda for the Engagement Climate model:

1) The issue of the external validity of the Engagement Climate model should be a priority in future enquiries. An effective cross-validation procedure (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012; MacKenzie et al., 2011) would require a replication of the study on a new sample of service employees. To enhance reliability as well as content and discriminant validity of the findings, the new sample should ideally include a variety of service roles, different type of service organization and/or a different geographical location from the ones present in the original study. The study replication could also be used to refine the two subscales in the model, i.e. *Challenge* and *Overload*, which showed suboptimal convergent validity values, by testing refined conceptual approaches and new indicators for these scales. Improvements in these areas should help, in turn, improve the convergent validity of the overall model. Exploring the relationship of Engagement Climate with other variables in the service climate model would help, on the other hand, establish the nomological validity of the

construct/measure, i.e. whether the indicators of the focal construct relate to measures of other constructs in the manner expected (MacKenzie et al., 2011).

2) The posited role of Engagement Climate, at the organizational level of analysis, as a key variable within the service climate model (see figure 2.6), remains to be empirically tested. Future enquiries should help establish the predictive power of Engagement Climate, as an aggregate measure, with regard to service employee performance and customer-related organizational outputs, as well as its relationship with other variables in the model, in particular service climate. This could involve more or less partial approaches, focusing on the behavioural sequence from *Engagement climate* to *Customer experiences*, and including *Service climate* and *Service behaviours* as mediators, or more comprehensive approaches that would also include *HRM/leadership practices* as antecedents to both climates, extra-role behaviours or *OCB*, and other contextual moderators.

Figure 2.6. Engagement climate in the service climate model



Source: Adapted from Bowen and Schneider., 2014

Exploring Engagement Climate as a macro-level construct will require methodological changes in its operationalization, as a unit or organizational level engagement climate will only be expected to emerge if perceptual agreement exists among employees in the focal unit (L.R. James et al., 2008). These changes would include, for example, obtaining multiple respondents from different work groups or other alternative methods to assess the degree of agreement between unit members prior to obtaining an aggregate -unit-level- measure of the construct (Chuang & Liao, 2010). Service

climate, as the other microfoundation in the model, would be subject to similar methodological requirements to be operationalized as a macro-level construct.

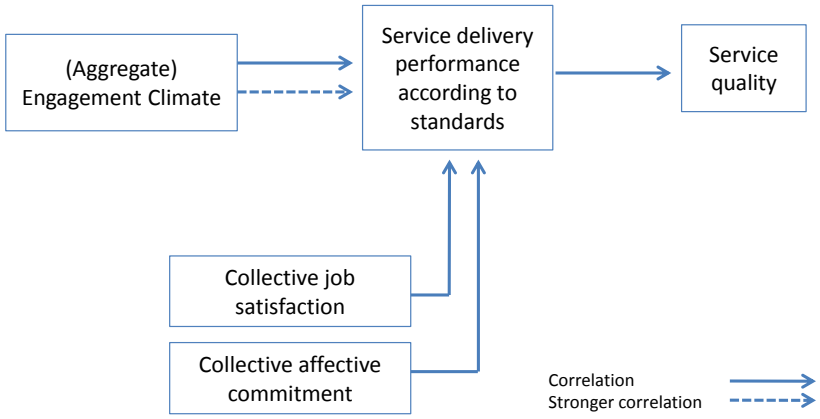
Approaching Engagement Climate as a macro-level construct will also provide an opportunity to explore within-group variability or climate strength as a moderator of the relationship between Engagement climate and its behavioural outcomes. A positive and strong Engagement climate will be expected to correlate more strongly with positive behavioural and organizational outputs associated with the experience of personal engagement. A negative and strong Engagement climate, on the other hand, would be likely associated with specific negative behavioural outputs related to burnout or role stress. Lastly, weak Engagement climates, i.e. ambiguous or contradictory perceptions regarding the psychological conditions for personal engagement in a given setting, will be likely less reliable behavioural predictors but, nevertheless, useful for the purpose of organizational diagnosis.

3) With regard to other key variables in the service climate model, i.e. service employee performances and customer experiences, a possible approach to their operationalization could be based on Parasuraman et al.'s (1985) model for service quality, The model predicts a positive relationship between service employee's delivery of service according to organizational standards and customers' perceived service quality, hence providing a direct path between service employee performance and a key customer-related organizational output, i.e. service quality. Measures for these variables could consist on existing organizational data or on data captured via ad-hoc instruments. Alternatively, customer experiences other than service quality could be selected if these are deemed more relevant outputs for the specific service context of the enquiry. For example, in the case of service organizations focusing on long-term relationship building, rather than on the short-term impact of service encounters, customer loyalty would likely be a strategically more relevant indicator of customer experiences (Subramony & Pugh, 2015).

Future research on Engagement Climate at the macro level within the service climate model could also include collective job attitudes, as a means to reinforce the construct's nomological validity (see figure 5.1). A major distinctiveness of Engagement climate is that it constitutes the antecedent of a motivational process that leads to behaviours; therefore attitudinal constructs are not needed or can be "bypassed" in the explanation of the behavioural sequence leading to service employee performance. An examination of the relative strength of the relationship between engagement climate and service employee performance, compared to the relationship between job attitudes and

service employee performance would shed light on this theoretical claim. Collective attitudes, as microfoundations, would also be subject to certain methodological requirements, such as perceptual agreement, to be operationalized as aggregate constructs (Piening et al., 2013; Whitman et al., 2010).

Figure 5.1 A research framework for the macro-level of analysis



3) An area of particular promise for future enquiry is the study of leadership and HRM practices as antecedents of Engagement Climate. Research on organizational climates has traditionally focused on their consequences and considerable less attention has been paid to the antecedents of work climates (Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009).

Firstly, with regard to leadership, research has often shown that leader behaviour strongly influences work climates. Leaders serve as interpretive filters of relevant organizational processes and practices for all group members, thus contributing to common climate perceptions (Kozlowski & Doherty, 1989). In service contexts, unit-level service outcomes have been shown to be influenced by the type and quality of leadership within the unit (Subramony & Pugh, 2015). Leaders play a key role in creating the social context within which employees' service behaviour is enacted, thereby influencing customer outcomes. For instance, there is evidence linking service-focused leadership (Schneider et al., 2005), transformational leadership (Liao & Chuang, 2007), and effective leadership (Hui et al., 2007) with service climate. While supervisor support is a dimension of Engagement Climate, the broader concept of leadership in all its forms is likely to play a key role in the creation of Engagement Climate. Future research in this area, as Bowen and Schneider (2014) suggest, should measure the effects of leadership from all levels, not just senior leadership. Future studies focusing on leadership in all manifestations (mundane, visionary) - exercised at all levels of the organization,

could help identify those leader's behaviours, as well as leadership policies and practices that have the strongest impact on the promotion of engagement climate.

Also, the effect of leadership on engagement climate could be approached not only from macro perspectives but also through studies of how leadership from individual actors impact on firm-level climate and its related outputs (Subramony & Pugh, 2015). Such research might include qualitative studies of how individual leaders display engagement-oriented behaviours and how these behaviours align with existing HRM practices. Quantitative studies could also be conducted to examine the effects of micro-level actors or phenomena, such as organizational or team leader characteristics.

Secondly, with regard to HRM practices, work climates have been posited as intermediate linkages between them and organizational outcomes. Specifically, the social context model (Ferris et al., 1998) asserts that packages or bundles of HRM practices determine organizational climates, such as service climate (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Hong et al., 2013; Rogg et al., 2001), as well as collective attitudes (Kehoe & Wright, 2013; Piening et al., 2013). HRM theory and research have increasingly emphasized how HRM systems of practices (D. E. Bowen & Ostroff, 2004) or HRM ‘"bundles" of practices (Subramony, 2009) influence organizational outcomes through different mediating variables. For example, Subramony’s (2009) meta-analysis found that HRM bundles have significantly greater effects on outcomes than do their constituent individual practices. Research specifically focused on service settings (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Hong et al., 2013) suggests that bundles of HRM practices, or high performance work systems (HPWS) facilitate both a climate of concern for customers and a climate of concern for employees. Thus future research on the role of HRM practices as antecedents of engagement climate could help identify those HRM bundles or practices that have a stronger influence in the creation of engagement climate, whether as its generic antecedents or as specific antecedents of one or several engagement climate dimensions.

4) Future research on Engagement Climate could also benefit from a "complex system's approach" (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014), i.e. the assessment of Engagement Climate and service climate simultaneously for their potential complementarity or competitive Interaction. As Kuenzi and Schminke (2009) put it in their extensive review of the literature on work climates, "exploring single climates in isolation is unlikely to be the most productive path to creating a full and accurate understanding of how work climates affect individual and collective outcomes within organizations" (p. 706). They note that while different climates may be simultaneously studied because they have

similar antecedents (e.g. leadership, HRM practices), such climates can also compete and interact or feed each other. Interactive effects between climates and their combined and/or competing effects on outcomes present a rich opportunity for scholars to understand how these contextual influences operate in organizational settings (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). Or, as Carr et al. (2003) suggest, "much could be gained by simultaneously examining multiple climates such that different configurations of climate are likely to be related to effectiveness of outcomes in different domains" (p. 614). This notion is also defended by Zohar (2008) as, given the expected emergence of co-existing climates in organizations, "the key question is whether specific climates might interact in ways that would allow better prediction of relevant outcome criteria" (p. 381).

This complex system's approach entails understanding organizations as large systems in which the parts influence each other, making causal priority difficult to establish, as the parts are in reciprocal causality. With regard to Engagement Climate, Kahn himself seemed to hold this view, when he called for future research that would develop dynamic process models explaining how the antecedent psychological conditions combine to produce moments of personal engagement within a recursive/systemic feedback-loop (Kahn, 1990, pp. 717-718).

Thus linear prediction models and cross-sectional approaches, while potentially useful and methodologically simpler for initial tests of Engagement Climate within the service climate model, are clearly insufficient to assess the complexity and consequences of multiple climates. Alternative, more suitable approaches could consist on longitudinal studies addressing causality by estimating models with longitudinal data, and/or using multivariate techniques, such as profile analysis or multivariate partial least squares (MPLS), as suggested by Bowen and Schneider (2014). For example, with regard to profile analysis, Schulte et al. (2009) suggested that it is the overall profile of focused climates in organizations that yield increased understanding and predictability. Profile analysis allows for nonlinear estimates of the influence of variables on outcomes, thereby avoiding the implicit linear prediction assumption. Another possibility, exemplified in the work of Cooil et al. (2009), is to study simultaneously a number of possible consequences (e.g. service employee performance, customer experiences) and their potential antecedents (service climate, engagement climate, HRM practices) using MPLS for data analysis. The procedure can be viewed as one in which all variable data are entered into an exploratory factor analysis with the set of factor loadings indicating the relative weights among the variables of interest. Cooil et al. showed that hypothesized "causes" of the outcomes were differentially related to them in complex ways, suggesting again that service organization effectiveness, generally conceived, will benefit from a complex system's

approach (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). In short, alternatives to simple linear prediction models exist and should be explored.

5) Lastly, Engagement Climate, as a latent social psychological construct, claims to transcend the context of any one organisation or sector, i.e. it could theoretically be found in any organizational context, not exclusively in service organizations, as the Engagement Climate dimensions are intended to capture the psychological conditions or antecedents of personal engagement for any individual, regardless of the specific job role, industry, or type of organization. A test of whether Engagement Climate is universally applicable would require exploring the reliability and validity of the Engagement Climate model on samples from industries other than services, as well as from different job roles. This research direction will most certainly lead to a deeper understanding of the contextual variables that might affect Engagement Climate. In this sense, the relationship between the "universal" model and its contextualization is expected to be dynamic. For example, while exploring Engagement Climate in industries and/or job families other than services, contextual variables may become generalizable and incorporated in the model. Conversely, some original elements of the model may be eventually excluded or revisited, if they are shown to be too context-dependent. Hence as the model is tested in different organizational contexts, potential insights could be gained and used to inform future research.

Summary of chapter 5

Chapter 5 addressed, first, the evaluation of the findings (5.1) which, overall, support the Engagement Climate model, comprising ten subscales or Engagement Climate dimension, and Engagement Climate as their unifying theme or higher order construct. Results regarding the reliability and validity of the scales showed overall robust values with two exceptions: *Challenge* and *Overload* both showing sub-optimal convergent validity values. These results may be due to a lack of sufficiently robust indicators, but they may also reflect a theoretical issue regarding the conceptualization of these two Engagement Climate dimensions.

The theoretical implications of the study were discussed next (5.2), specifically the key theoretical contributions of Engagement Climate to the OB and service management literatures, as well as the potential innovative approaches for climate research stemming from the model. With regard to the contribution to the OB literature, the Engagement Climate model helps clarify the domain conceptualization of the emerging engagement construct as an affect-based motivational process, within which Engagement Climate captures the psychological conditions or antecedents in the

process. The Engagement Climate model also contributes to clarify the role of engagement as a predictor of service employee behaviour and performance within existing theoretical frameworks in the service management literature, in particular the service climate model. Also, the Engagement Climate model, as an affect-based organizational climate construct, helps address a gap in the organizational literature and research on emotions, which has generally focused either on or group levels of analysis with few studies exploring the phenomena from an organizational or systemic perspective. Lastly, the inclusion of Engagement Climate in the service climate model illustrates how the simultaneous assessment of two distinct work climates, i.e. Engagement Climate and Service Climate, can be approached in order to investigate their potential complementarity or competitive Interaction.

Next, the limitations of the research were addressed (5.3), notably 1) the concern for possible common method bias and the measures taken to mitigate it at the design stage of the questionnaire and also during data analysis; 2) the need to complete the external validation process for the Engagement Climate measure on new samples; and 3) the aspects in the model that need further research/refinement, such as the *Challenge* and *Overload* subscales.

Lastly, future research directions (5.4) were discussed. Some of these address the limitations of the research; others include a possible research agenda for Engagement Climate within the service climate model, the use of longitudinal approaches to explore causalities, and the assessment of Engagement Climate and service climate simultaneously under a “complex system” approach.

Chapter 6. Conclusions

This thesis set out to address the following research question: what drives service employees to "give their best" while performing their work roles? Answering this question required answering, first, the question of what drives employee behaviour, beyond specific roles or industries. Once a satisfactory answer was found in the broader field of organizational behaviour literature, the obtained knowledge was then conceptualized and operationalized as a new social psychological construct, i.e. Engagement Climate, which fulfils the role of the "OB foundation" that the service climate model needs in the prediction of service employee behaviour and performance. Thus, Engagement Climate contributes to Organizational Behaviour theory to the extent that it transcend the context of any one organisation or sector but, given the nature of service work, it is expected to be most readily observed and to have more salient behavioural manifestation and organizational

impact within the context of services, thus representing a specific contribution to Services Management literature and research.

With regard to its contribution to the OB literature, the study helps clarify the domain conceptualization of the emerging engagement construct by identifying its three distinctive elements: 1) it is (primarily) an affective, rather than cognitive, phenomena, 2) its nature is motivational, rather than attitudinal, and 3) it is a recurring process, not a state, that includes certain psychological antecedents or "conditions", a psychological state, and accompanying behaviours. Engagement Climate aims to capture the antecedents in the engagement process, namely the psychological conditions that lead to the experience of personal engagement. With regard to its contribution to the service management literature, Engagement Climate helps clarify the role of engagement as a predictor of service employee performance within recent extensions of the service climate model (D. E. Bowen & Schneider, 2014). In this conceptual framework, Engagement Climate provides the means for the measurement of the antecedents of service employee engagement within a systemic and recursive view of the engagement process.

The proposed construct domain of Engagement Climate as the antecedent of employee engagement provided a sound theoretical platform from which a measure of Engagement Climate was developed, which represents the main methodological contribution of the thesis. The conceptualization of Engagement Climate as a multidimensional construct was based on Kahn's "thick descriptions" in his ethnographic research (1990, 1992), and also on other psychological climate dimensions or constructs in the extant literature that fit into the conceptual domain of Engagement Climate. Twelve Engagement Climate dimensions i.e. Contribution, Support, Recognition, Cohesion, Challenge, Trust, Autonomy, Fairness, Clarity, Participation, Self-expression, and Overload were initially hypothesized to capture the experiential components and types of influence in a given work environment that create the psychological conditions for engagement, that is, meaningfulness, psychological safety, and availability (Kahn, 1990, 1992). Using the definitions of the Engagement Climate dimensions as the guiding reference, a pool of 102 questionnaire items was created from existing instruments in the extant literature. Other key elements in the questionnaire design process were the selection of demographic control variables, rating scale, wording and question order, as well as overall structure of the survey.

To obtain the highest quality data, the questionnaire needed to be accurately translated into Spanish and also be culturally sensitive to potential language issues within the selected population

for the study. The translation procedure consisted on a sequence that included 1) identification of existing translations, 2) translation and back-translation of items, 3) bilingual expert assessment, and 4) monolingual comprehension assessment.

Three questionnaire pre-tests were sequentially carried out to assess its face validity and to identify issues that could have a negative impact on the instrument's overall reliability and validity, such as specific wording choices, serial and semantic orderings of questions, questionnaire length and completion times, or differences in interpretation of questions. The pre-tests were 1) expert review without data collection, 2) conventional pre-testing with data collection on sample of 21 service employees from a major Spanish hotel chain, and 3) web-based pre-testing with data collection on a small sample of travel agents, out of the main sample to whom the survey was to be administered. As the outcome of the testing process, a final version of the questionnaire with a total of 112 items was produced, edited online, and administered to a sample of travel agents working in a single organization in Spain.

With regard to the empirical contribution of the thesis, the investigation of the factor structure of Engagement Climate through EFA and CFA procedures on the obtained data yielded results that, overall, support the hypothesized Engagement Climate model. The superordinate construct comprises ten subscales or Engagement Climate dimension, and Engagement Climate as their unifying theme or higher order construct, with overall robust reliability and validity values in all the scales. The study findings also support the posited role of Engagement Climate as an antecedent in the engagement process, with a moderate-to-strong direct effect of Engagement Climate on Personal engagement, thus providing support to the proposed conceptualization of engagement as an affect-based motivational process, with Engagement Climate acting as the psychological antecedent in the process, i.e. having a direct effect on the experience of engagement as a psychological state or mood.

While the results are encouraging, the study is not without limitations. Notably, there is a need to complete the external validation process for the Engagement Climate measure on new samples, other than travel agents and from diverse service industries/organizations. Also, while measures were taken to mitigate the possibility of common method bias, both at the design stage and during data analysis, the use of self-reports with a single data collection instrument carries an inherent risk of common method bias that cannot be fully discarded. Lastly, some aspects in the model, i.e. the *Challenge* and *Overload* subscales will require further research and refinement.

Despite these limitations which should be addressed in future research, the Engagement Climate Model opens several promising directions for future enquiries. These include: 1) exploring the predictive power of Engagement Climate, as an aggregate measure, with regard to service employee performance and customer-related organizational outputs, as well as its relationship with other variables in the model, in particular service climate. This could involve more or less partial approaches, focusing on the behavioural sequence from Engagement climate to Customer experiences, and including Service climate and Service behaviours as mediators, or more comprehensive approaches that would also include HRM/leadership practices as antecedents to both climates, extra-role behaviours or OCB, and other contextual moderators; 2) the assessment of Engagement Climate and service climate (or other facet-specific climates such as safety climate or climate for innovation) simultaneously for their potential complementarity or competitive Interaction within a "complex system approach", and 3) exploring the universal applicability of Engagement Climate on samples from industries other than services, as well as from different job roles.

Managerial implications

As already discussed, achieving consistent performance standards from service employees remains a major managerial challenge for most service organizations. As summarized by Knisely (1979):

> "in service business, you're dealing with something that is primarily delivered by people - to people. Your people are as much of your product in the consumer's mind as any other attribute of that service. People's performance day in and day out fluctuates up and down. Therefore, the level of consistency that you can count on and try to communicate to the consumer is not a certain thing" (p. 47).

This managerial challenge is particularly salient in Tourism and Hospitality organizations, where service employees often have to respond to the physical, cognitive, and emotional demands of their roles (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Gwinner et al., 2005; Hochschild, 1983; Kim & Yoon, 2012) in comparatively less favourable work conditions, such as long hours and unstable shift work, working on weekends and holidays, low wages, or lack of employment stability (Pienaar & Willemse, 2008).

In Tourism and Hospitality organizations the situation is aggravated by the fact that HRM practices in the industry are, to a large extent and with some illustrious exceptions, underdeveloped when compared to other industries (see Baum, 2007, 2015; Kusluvan, Kusluvan, Ilhan, & Buyruk, 2010; Tracey, 2014). While there are indications of an increasing concern about people issues by managers

and other stakeholders in the industry (e.g., Baum, 2015; Enz, 2009), the overall picture remains bleak, with a substantial number of minimum wage earners working in the industry, scarce evidence of adoption of progressive or "state of the art" HRM practices, and widespread deficits with regard to people management culture and skills. Moreover, Tourism and Hospitality organizations rarely adopt a strategic approach to the management of human resources, and the relationship between their business strategies and HRM practices is often unclear or simply absent (Kusluvan et al., 2010).

The support obtained for the Engagement Climate model in this study implies, from a managerial perspective, the availability of an alternative route to identify key drivers of service employee performance within a systemic/strategic perspective of the service organization. The Engagement Climate model aims to capture or highlight certain phenomena "as an emergent property of an interrelated whole" (Flood, 2010, p. 269), namely the psychological conditions for engagement experienced by the members of a given system. Engagement climate is understood as a systemic antecedent of behavioural outputs that influence, in turn, key systemic outcomes for the service organization. The systemic approach to Engagement Climate entails differentiating between two separate knowledge domains: the "mental", i.e. the psychological experience of engagement, and the "behavioural". While the first needs to be *understood*, the second needs to be *explained* (Johannessen, 1996). Hence the focus on the antecedents in the engagement process (engagement climate) and its "main effects" (W.H. Macey & Schneider, 2008; Rich et al., 2010) as the elements that allow for an explanatory approach to the phenomena.

Also, the systemic approach entails understanding the organization as a series of interconnected "business processes and procedures" (Ray, Barney, & Muhanna, 2004) or actions that the service organization engages in to accomplish some business purpose or objective (Porter, 1991). Among these, HRM processes and procedures are expected to exert a significant influence on Engagement Climate as a property or feature of the system. In that regard, most HR practitioners would agree on the difficulty in achieving any sustained systemic change by implementing ad hoc isolated HR interventions, as opposed to interventions stemming from an understanding of the organization as a whole. Non systemic approaches to HRM tend to deal largely with surface behaviour and do not reach the underlying systemic structures driving behaviour (Senge, 1990). Researchers have also noted that attempts to introduce best HRM practices are often piecemeal (e.g., P. Edwards & Wright, 2001; Harney & Dundon, 2006) and do not bring about sustained change, as piecemeal introduction of individual HR practices can "neutralize rather than reinforce one another" (Monks & McMackin, 2001, p. 58).

The alternative to the above is to identify practices that mutually reinforce one another within a systemic approach to HRM, as it has often been suggested in the literature (e.g., Chow & Liu, 2009; Graetz & Smith, 2010; Peña & Villasalero, 2010; Ray et al., 2004). One of the key systems approaches to HRM is the use of high performing work systems (HPWS; Sienknecht & Van Aken, 1999), which appear in the literature as "bundles" of HRM practices that are implemented together with some strategic purpose. A large number of studies (see Rabl, Jayashinge, Gerhart, & Kühlmann, 2014; Subramony, 2009) have found a positive link for HPWS in improving organizational performance, and also observed the interactive or additive effects of these bundles, which reinforce and enhance the potential effects of single practices. With HPWS, however, there is a clear emphasis on the uniqueness of each organization, and this would indicate that managers need to decide on what practices are best suited to their particular business context and strategy (Molineux, 2013). For some contexts, some practices will be more evident in producing the desired changes than in other contexts, yet whichever practices are chosen, they will need to be embedded in the structures of the organization, i.e. exerting some degree of systemic influence, to enable change to be sustained. Thus both the need for a systemic approach to HRM and the issue of context are critical elements for the managerial applications of the Engagement Climate model.

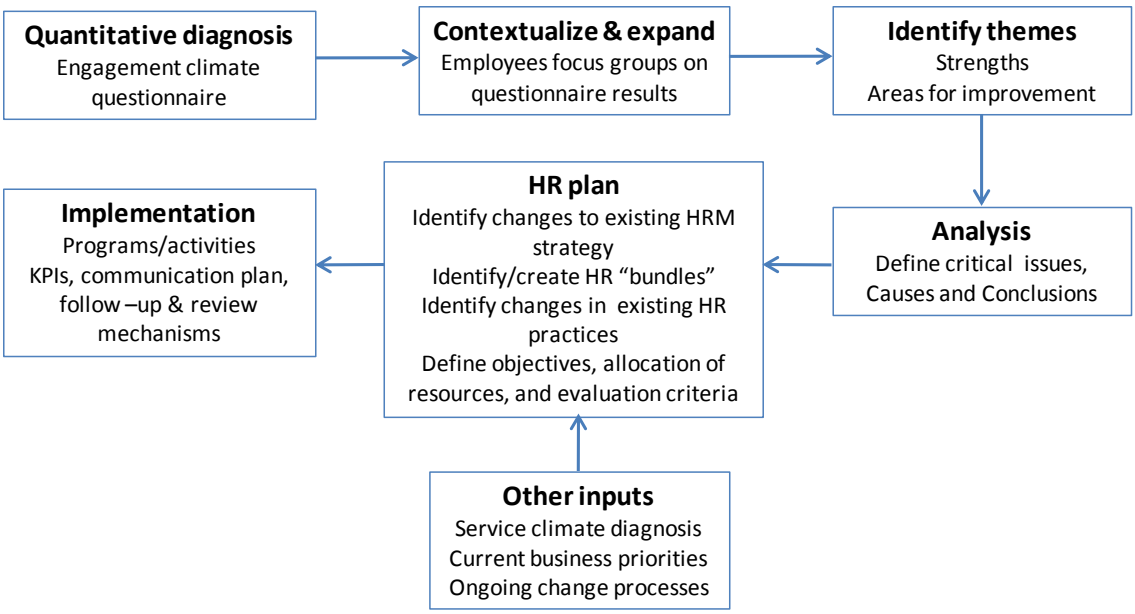
Context has been defined (Johns, 2006) as "situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organizational behaviour as well as functional relationships between variables" (p. 386). These might include situational factors concerning who (demographic, occupational), where (economic, social, racial, geographic), how, and why, as well as discrete contextual features in the task/job or the social and organizational systems. The influence of context is often unrecognized or underappreciated in organizational research, yet context is likely responsible for one of the most recurring problems in the field: study-to study variation in research findings. Context is also implicated in the "missing linkages" (Goodman, 2000) that are often needed to explain how individual or team activity gets translated into larger organizational outcomes (e.g., the traditionally elusive relationship between job satisfaction and performance). In the field of organizational behaviour, a dichotomy exists in which qualitative researchers immerse themselves in context and quantitative researchers concentrate on the study of generic phenomena and constructs. As it often happens, some qualitative researchers get so immersed in context that they fail to recognize universal phenomena. Conversely, some quantitative researchers seem almost desperate to ensure that reviewers and readers see their results as generalizable (Johns, 2006).

With regard to this study, the Engagement Climate model provides an initial framework that claims to be generalizable, i.e. virtually applicable to a wide range of organizations, yet context plays a key role in its managerial application. Also, the relationship between the "universal" model and its contextualization is expected to be dynamic. As the model is applied in different organizational contexts, contextual variables may become generalizable and incorporated in the model. Conversely, some original elements of the model may be eventually excluded or revisited, if they are shown to be too context-dependent.

In a hypothetical managerial application of the Engagement Climate model (see figure 6.1), the results of the survey would need to be contextualized in more detail and expanded by the employees themselves, by means of several focus groups with participants representing the collective, in which the results of the engagement climate survey would be presented and discussed. Typical questions to lead the groups discussions would be: Do these results surprise you?, what do you think they mean?, why these scores? Additional interviews with supervisors and/or top management could also be included in the diagnosis process if deemed useful.

The obtained qualitative data would then be processed in order to identify overarching themes, groups of ideas within themes, as well as relationships among them. The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data would follow to produce a final diagnosis of engagement climate strengths and areas for improvement, critical issues, causes and conclusions. The approach to the design of the HR plan would depend on the intended scope and objectives of the intervention, i.e. it could be restricted to improvements in engagement climate or aimed at improvements in other variables in the service climate model, in which case additional inputs and analyses would be required. Regardless of the scope of the plan, an assessment of potential changes in the company's HR strategy should be conducted to ensure the strategic fit of the plan with the current business strategy. Specific or ad hoc business priorities and/or ongoing change processes could also be relevant inputs. The HR plan would contain identified "bundles" or groupings of HR interventions aimed at both reinforcing/consolidating strengths and correcting weaknesses in the company's engagement climate. Those bundles could be identified through a gap analysis of existing versus desired HR practices and then translated into specific objectives, which would inform, in turn, specific programs and activities to achieve them.

Figure 6.1. Framework for the Managerial Application of the Engagement Climate Model



In sum, the described intervention model aims to provide a comprehensive diagnosis that would lead to a strategically focused HRM plan, rather than piecemeal collections of best practices such as those that have often been cited in the literature as contributors to employee engagement (e.g., Shuck & Rocco, 2014; Valentin, 2014). On the other hand, HRM bundles of practices that have been shown to influence employee and/or customer related variables in service settings (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Hong et al., 2013; Subramony, 2009) should certainly be taken into consideration. But even in the case of these HPWS, which generally include different combinations of HRM practices such as selective hiring, training, self-managed teams, decentralized decision making, information sharing, performance-based compensation, employment security, broad job design, flexible job assignments, employee participation or internal promotion (Way, 2002; Zacharatos, Barling, & Iverson, 2005), no consensus exists on which are the most appropriate bundles that create the desired consequences in terms of employee, customer, and organizational outcomes (Warech & Tracey, 2004). Therefore, there are no "favoured" HRM practices as all can potentially be useful in influencing engagement climate in the organization. The effectiveness of HRM practices will be dependent on how "well knitted" together the bundles are and how well they fit into the specific business and organizational context to which they are applied, rather than on pre-selections of specific practices or HPWS bundles.

Appendix

Additional tables and figures

Figure 7.1. Scree Plot for EFA (N: 544; p: 36)

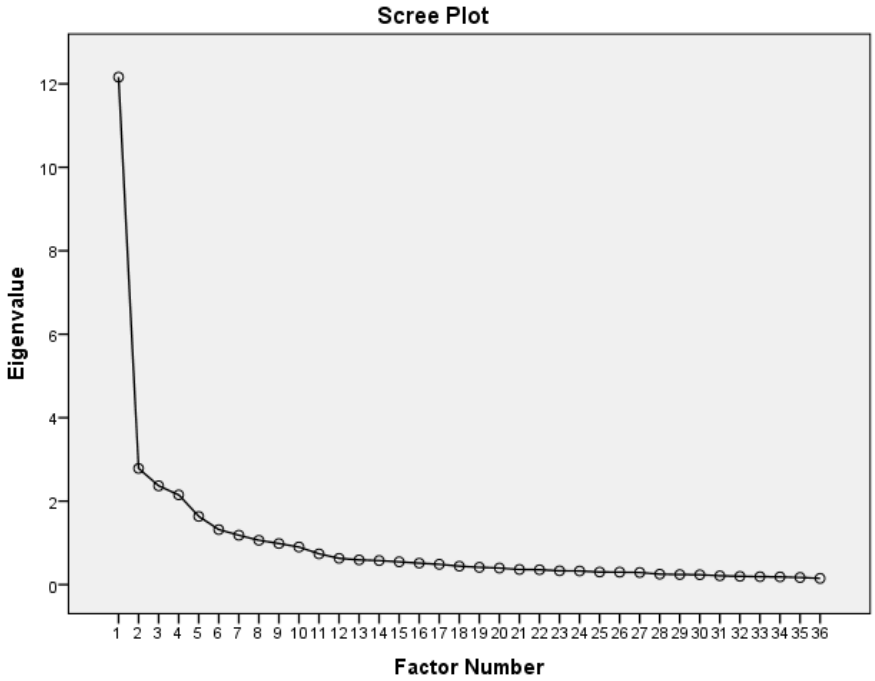


Table 7.1. Communalities EFA 10-factor solution (N: 544; p: 36)

Item	Initial	Extraction	Item	Initial	Extraction
sup20	.69	.71	tru62	.71	.76
sup21	.77	.88	fai71	.65	.68
sup25	.67	.68	fai72	.70	.81
sel28	.41	.45	fai73	.64	.69
sel30	.48	.75	rec88	.55	.54
sel31	.50	.54	rec91	.58	.58
aut34	.67	.71	rec92	.60	.90
aut35	.69	.75	Rclar42	.41	.41
aut38	.52	.57	Rclar45	.38	.38
aut40	.50	.53	Rclar46	.61	.77
coh48	.69	.75	Rclar47	.62	.65
coh51	.71	.76	Rcha95	.35	.54
coh53	.67	.73	Rcha97	.29	.32
coh54	.61	.65	Rcha99	.29	.35
tru56	.63	.65	Rove101	.44	.44
tru58	.70	.73	Rove103	.54	.59
tru59	.72	.76	Rove104	.69	.83
tru61	.61	.60	Rove105	.60	.66

Extraction method: Principal Axis Factoring

Table 7.2. Structure Matrix EFA 10-factor solution (N: 544; p: 36)

	Factor									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
tru62	.85	.25	.31	-.38	-.44	-.46	.47	.41	-.30	.55
tru59	.84	.22	.38	-.38	-.46	-.49	.46	.37	-.35	.53
tru58	.84	.25	.37	-.38	-.47	-.44	.46	.34	-.36	.47
tru61	.72	.15	.25	-.39	-.39	-.51	.46	.38	-.26	.48
Rove104	.23	.91	.13	-.22	-.17	-.27	.14	.02	-.24	.18
Rove105	.13	.81	.06	-.20	-.09	-.25	.12	.09	-.21	.16
Rove103	.14	.76	.11	-.19	-.17	-.24	.14	-.01	-.23	.16
Rove101	.34	.61	.16	-.22	-.20	-.39	.22	.20	-.25	.18
coh51	.29	.09	.87	-.17	-.43	-.26	.32	.26	-.34	.19
coh48	.26	.14	.86	-.18	-.42	-.24	.30	.23	-.28	.22
coh53	.39	.17	.83	-.24	-.41	-.29	.37	.21	-.44	.15
coh54	.28	.10	.80	-.24	-.43	-.27	.33	.19	-.30	.16
aut35	.36	.20	.20	-.86	-.43	-.40	.47	.09	-.38	.28
aut34	.37	.21	.18	-.84	-.36	-.40	.43	.07	-.38	.31
aut38	.27	.22	.14	-.75	-.30	-.37	.35	.08	-.37	.25
aut40	.29	.18	.23	-.72	-.35	-.33	.32	.08	-.30	.31
sup21	.40	.20	.44	-.42	-.93	-.37	.50	.23	-.30	.41
sup20	.40	.16	.38	-.36	-.83	-.34	.50	.26	-.24	.44
sup25	.43	.16	.48	-.39	-.81	-.40	.50	.20	-.28	.37
tru56	.49	.21	.48	-.51	-.74	-.44	.48	.24	-.33	.31
Rclar46	.39	.28	.26	-.39	-.33	-.88	.37	.21	-.31	.24
Rclar47	.47	.30	.31	-.36	-.38	-.79	.39	.29	-.35	.28
Rclar45	.31	.16	.23	-.33	-.28	-.60	.31	.25	-.19	.23
Rclar42	.35	.35	.08	-.32	-.23	-.58	.29	.26	-.26	.33
rec92	.38	.17	.32	-.38	-.46	-.38	.95	.19	-.28	.34
rec91	.43	.16	.38	-.49	-.44	-.43	.72	.25	-.35	.32
rec88	.43	.13	.28	-.39	-.54	-.34	.68	.24	-.21	.45
Rcha95	.23	-.07	.21	-.06	-.14	-.21	.17	.72	-.09	.21
Rcha99	.30	.11	.16	-.07	-.18	-.20	.18	.57	-.11	.15
Rcha97	.24	.10	.15	-.07	-.18	-.24	.17	.56	-.13	.23
sel30	.27	.21	.36	-.32	-.28	-.31	.28	.18	-.86	.15
sel31	.35	.21	.41	-.43	-.44	-.29	.40	.07	-.65	.18
sel28	.31	.26	.21	-.42	-.15	-.32	.26	.15	-.63	.15
fai72	.54	.22	.27	-.35	-.45	-.37	.46	.28	-.23	.88
fai71	.52	.21	.25	-.36	-.44	-.35	.39	.31	-.18	.80
fai73	.51	.23	.23	-.43	-.45	-.35	.46	.29	-.23	.79

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

Table 7.3. Correlation Matrix EFA 10-factor solution (N: 544; p: 36)

	sup2	sup2	sup2	sel28	sel30	sel31	aut34	aut35	aut38	aut40	coh4	coh5	coh5	coh5	tru56	tru58	tru59	tru61	tru62	fai71	fai72	fai73	rec88	rec91	rec92	Rclar	Rclar	Rclar	Rclar	Rcha	Rcha	Rcha	Rove	Rove	Rove	Rove
sup20	1.00	0.79	0.67	0.17	0.25	0.38	0.32	0.39	0.28	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.36	0.61	0.46	0.46	0.40	0.43	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.51	0.42	0.45	0.24	0.26	0.30	0.38	0.19	0.20	0.18	0.14	0.17	0.16	0.13
sup21	0.79	1.00	0.77	0.20	0.30	0.45	0.38	0.43	0.34	0.34	0.41	0.40	0.41	0.40	0.70	0.43	0.46	0.40	0.44	0.44	0.46	0.46	0.49	0.44	0.45	0.24	0.31	0.35	0.36	0.15	0.19	0.18	0.24	0.18	0.20	0.13
sup25	0.67	0.77	1.00	0.20	0.29	0.40	0.36	0.40	0.29	0.33	0.43	0.47	0.43	0.42	0.64	0.45	0.44	0.41	0.46	0.41	0.42	0.43	0.51	0.45	0.44	0.27	0.28	0.37	0.41	0.12	0.14	0.19	0.23	0.16	0.16	0.08
sel28	0.17	0.20	0.20	1.00	0.53	0.42	0.40	0.37	0.35	0.28	0.18	0.19	0.30	0.18	0.23	0.32	0.31	0.27	0.31	0.18	0.21	0.24	0.19	0.32	0.22	0.27	0.19	0.28	0.31	0.09	0.12	0.12	0.23	0.19	0.24	0.22
sel30	0.25	0.30	0.29	0.53	1.00	0.57	0.29	0.30	0.31	0.25	0.28	0.34	0.41	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.32	0.24	0.27	0.19	0.24	0.22	0.20	0.30	0.27	0.23	0.19	0.28	0.32	0.13	0.15	0.11	0.22	0.18	0.19	0.17
sel31	0.38	0.45	0.40	0.42	0.57	1.00	0.38	0.42	0.33	0.34	0.35	0.38	0.42	0.35	0.44	0.39	0.39	0.27	0.33	0.26	0.27	0.25	0.33	0.39	0.38	0.20	0.19	0.30	0.30	0.05	0.07	0.10	0.23	0.20	0.20	0.13
aut34	0.32	0.38	0.36	0.40	0.29	0.38	1.00	0.77	0.60	0.58	0.15	0.17	0.22	0.21	0.44	0.39	0.36	0.36	0.37	0.38	0.34	0.39	0.36	0.45	0.38	0.30	0.30	0.36	0.34	0.04	0.05	0.12	0.23	0.19	0.19	0.16
aut35	0.39	0.43	0.40	0.37	0.30	0.42	0.77	1.00	0.63	0.58	0.17	0.18	0.23	0.22	0.50	0.40	0.37	0.36	0.36	0.33	0.33	0.39	0.40	0.48	0.41	0.27	0.32	0.35	0.36	0.07	0.10	0.08	0.21	0.16	0.20	0.17
aut38	0.28	0.34	0.29	0.35	0.31	0.33	0.60	0.63	1.00	0.59	0.14	0.13	0.16	0.16	0.38	0.28	0.30	0.33	0.29	0.25	0.26	0.34	0.29	0.38	0.31	0.29	0.26	0.34	0.30	0.06	0.08	0.06	0.18	0.18	0.21	0.21
aut40	0.30	0.34	0.33	0.28	0.25	0.34	0.58	0.58	0.59	1.00	0.21	0.16	0.24	0.24	0.44	0.29	0.32	0.31	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.36	0.32	0.36	0.27	0.25	0.25	0.29	0.28	0.09	0.06	0.04	0.18	0.15	0.18	0.15
coh48	0.35	0.41	0.43	0.18	0.28	0.35	0.15	0.17	0.14	0.21	1.00	0.78	0.69	0.67	0.39	0.32	0.35	0.22	0.27	0.28	0.28	0.23	0.27	0.32	0.29	0.08	0.21	0.22	0.30	0.20	0.18	0.14	0.19	0.13	0.15	0.10
coh51	0.35	0.40	0.47	0.19	0.34	0.38	0.17	0.18	0.13	0.16	0.78	1.00	0.70	0.69	0.42	0.34	0.35	0.26	0.31	0.25	0.27	0.23	0.26	0.34	0.31	0.14	0.19	0.24	0.31	0.23	0.18	0.17	0.14	0.10	0.10	0.06
coh53	0.34	0.41	0.43	0.30	0.41	0.42	0.22	0.23	0.16	0.24	0.69	0.70	1.00	0.69	0.46	0.41	0.42	0.29	0.36	0.23	0.25	0.25	0.26	0.42	0.35	0.11	0.25	0.28	0.33	0.19	0.14	0.17	0.21	0.15	0.19	0.11
coh54	0.36	0.40	0.42	0.18	0.31	0.35	0.21	0.22	0.16	0.24	0.67	0.69	0.69	1.00	0.45	0.33	0.33	0.23	0.28	0.22	0.25	0.22	0.29	0.36	0.29	0.11	0.25	0.26	0.27	0.17	0.11	0.15	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.07
tru56	0.61	0.70	0.64	0.23	0.33	0.44	0.44	0.50	0.38	0.44	0.39	0.42	0.46	0.45	1.00	0.51	0.52	0.43	0.46	0.36	0.40	0.40	0.47	0.45	0.43	0.27	0.34	0.40	0.44	0.16	0.21	0.18	0.26	0.17	0.22	0.14
tru58	0.46	0.43	0.45	0.32	0.31	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.28	0.29	0.32	0.34	0.41	0.33	0.51	1.00	0.78	0.58	0.72	0.53	0.53	0.49	0.46	0.43	0.40	0.32	0.31	0.38	0.48	0.21	0.22	0.30	0.32	0.19	0.25	0.16
tru59	0.46	0.46	0.44	0.31	0.32	0.39	0.36	0.37	0.30	0.32	0.35	0.35	0.42	0.33	0.52	0.78	1.00	0.65	0.73	0.55	0.57	0.54	0.44	0.44	0.42	0.37	0.37	0.42	0.47	0.26	0.27	0.25	0.31	0.16	0.23	0.13
tru61	0.40	0.40	0.41	0.27	0.24	0.27	0.36	0.36	0.33	0.31	0.22	0.26	0.29	0.23	0.43	0.58	0.65	1.00	0.72	0.48	0.50	0.52	0.39	0.47	0.40	0.37	0.32	0.44	0.47	0.25	0.27	0.25	0.25	0.10	0.14	0.12
tru62	0.43	0.44	0.46	0.31	0.27	0.33	0.37	0.36	0.29	0.32	0.27	0.31	0.36	0.28	0.46	0.72	0.73	0.72	1.00	0.54	0.59	0.56	0.45	0.44	0.42	0.39	0.31	0.38	0.44	0.27	0.27	0.29	0.33	0.16	0.24	0.18
fai71	0.46	0.44	0.41	0.18	0.19	0.26	0.38	0.33	0.25	0.34	0.28	0.25	0.23	0.22	0.36	0.53	0.55	0.48	0.54	1.00	0.75	0.67	0.45	0.32	0.36	0.30	0.25	0.31	0.35	0.23	0.21	0.21	0.23	0.16	0.20	0.17
fai72	0.46	0.46	0.42	0.21	0.24	0.27	0.34	0.33	0.26	0.32	0.28	0.27	0.25	0.25	0.40	0.53	0.57	0.50	0.59	0.75	1.00	0.74	0.48	0.41	0.40	0.32	0.28	0.31	0.35	0.20	0.23	0.17	0.24	0.19	0.21	0.19
fai73	0.46	0.46	0.43	0.24	0.22	0.25	0.39	0.39	0.34	0.36	0.23	0.23	0.25	0.22	0.40	0.49	0.54	0.52	0.56	0.67	0.74	1.00	0.46	0.42	0.41	0.36	0.26	0.28	0.33	0.19	0.24	0.17	0.21	0.19	0.24	0.18
rec88	0.51	0.49	0.51	0.19	0.20	0.33	0.36	0.40	0.29	0.32	0.27	0.26	0.26	0.29	0.47	0.46	0.44	0.39	0.45	0.45	0.48	0.46	1.00	0.50	0.64	0.28	0.25	0.30	0.33	0.19	0.13	0.21	0.19	0.11	0.12	0.09
rec91	0.42	0.44	0.45	0.32	0.30	0.39	0.45	0.48	0.38	0.36	0.32	0.34	0.42	0.36	0.45	0.43	0.44	0.47	0.44	0.32	0.41	0.42	0.50	1.00	0.67	0.27	0.35	0.38	0.39	0.18	0.17	0.18	0.21	0.12	0.13	0.16
rec92	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.22	0.27	0.38	0.38	0.41	0.31	0.27	0.29	0.31	0.35	0.29	0.43	0.40	0.42	0.40	0.42	0.36	0.40	0.41	0.64	0.67	1.00	0.27	0.29	0.35	0.36	0.14	0.17	0.14	0.22	0.15	0.15	0.11
Rclar42	0.24	0.24	0.27	0.27	0.23	0.20	0.30	0.27	0.29	0.25	0.08	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.27	0.32	0.37	0.37	0.39	0.30	0.32	0.36	0.28	0.27	0.27	1.00	0.38	0.48	0.47	0.12	0.25	0.16	0.33	0.30	0.28	0.26
Rclar45	0.26	0.31	0.28	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.30	0.32	0.26	0.25	0.21	0.19	0.25	0.25	0.34	0.31	0.37	0.32	0.31	0.25	0.28	0.26	0.25	0.35	0.29	0.38	1.00	0.53	0.46	0.18	0.22	0.11	0.20	0.12	0.17	0.10
Rclar46	0.30	0.35	0.37	0.28	0.28	0.30	0.36	0.35	0.34	0.29	0.22	0.24	0.28	0.26	0.40	0.38	0.42	0.44	0.38	0.31	0.31	0.28	0.30	0.38	0.35	0.48	0.53	1.00	0.71	0.17	0.13	0.16	0.33	0.21	0.24	0.23
Rclar47	0.38	0.36	0.41	0.31	0.32	0.30	0.34	0.36	0.30	0.28	0.30	0.31	0.33	0.27	0.44	0.48	0.47	0.47	0.44	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	0.39	0.36	0.47	0.46	0.71	1.00	0.19	0.21	0.21	0.37	0.23	0.24	0.22
Rcha95	0.19	0.15	0.12	0.09	0.13	0.05	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.09	0.20	0.23	0.19	0.17	0.16	0.21	0.26	0.25	0.27	0.23	0.20	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.14	0.12	0.18	0.17	0.19	1.00	0.38	0.42	0.07	-0.10	-0.09	-0.01
Rcha97	0.20	0.19	0.14	0.12	0.15	0.07	0.05	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.18	0.18	0.14	0.11	0.21	0.22	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.21	0.23	0.24	0.13	0.17	0.17	0.25	0.22	0.13	0.21	0.38	1.00	0.32	0.13	0.06	0.06	0.10
Rcha99	0.18	0.18	0.19	0.12	0.11	0.10	0.12	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.14	0.17	0.17	0.15	0.18	0.30	0.25	0.25	0.29	0.21	0.17	0.17	0.21	0.18	0.14	0.16	0.11	0.16	0.21	0.42	0.32	1.00	0.21	0.05	0.08	0.07
Rove101	0.14	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.23	0.23	0.21	0.18	0.18	0.19	0.14	0.21	0.13	0.26	0.32	0.31	0.25	0.33	0.23	0.24	0.21	0.19	0.21	0.22	0.33	0.20	0.33	0.37	0.07	0.13	0.21	1.00	0.42	0.56	0.49
Rove103	0.17	0.18	0.16	0.19	0.18	0.20	0.19	0.16	0.18	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.15	0.12	0.17	0.19	0.16	0.10	0.16	0.16	0.19	0.19	0.11	0.12	0.15	0.30	0.12	0.21	0.23	-0.10	0.06	0.05	0.42	1.00	0.69	0.62
Rove104	0.16	0.20	0.16	0.24	0.19	0.20	0.19	0.20	0.21	0.18	0.15	0.10	0.19	0.12	0.22	0.25	0.23	0.14	0.24	0.20	0.21	0.24	0.12	0.13	0.15	0.28	0.17	0.24	0.24	-0.09	0.06	0.08	0.56	0.69	1.00	0.73
Rove105	0.13	0.13	0.08	0.22	0.17	0.13	0.16	0.17	0.21	0.15	0.10	0.06	0.11	0.07	0.14	0.16	0.13	0.12	0.18	0.17	0.19	0.18	0.09	0.16	0.11	0.26	0.10	0.23	0.22	-0.01	0.10	0.07	0.49	0.62	0.73	1.00

Table 7.4. Descriptive Statistics and Item Reliabilities for the First-order Measurement Model (N: 544, p: 30)

Scales	Indicators	Mean	*S. D.*	Corrected item-total correlation	Mean inter-item correlation	Skewness*	Kurtosis*
Supervisor support		14.89	4.65		0.74	-0.45	-0.54
	sup20	4.60	1.80	0.77			
	sup21	4.93	1.70	0.85			
	sup25	5.36	1.61	0.75			
Autonomy		14.76	3.67		0.66	-0.47	-0.18
	aut34	4.85	1,39	0.75			
	aut35	5.00	1.38	0.78			
	aut38	4,91	1.38	0.65			
Clarity		15.63	3.87		0.56	-0.38	-0.51
	rclar45	5.03	1.64	0.52			
	rclar46	5.26	1.42	0.72			
	rclar47	5.33	1.54	0.65			
Cohesion		17.71	3.76		0.71	-1.29	1.09
	coh48	5.69	1.59	0.78			
	coh51	6.10	1.23	0.80			
	coh54	5.91	1.35	0.72			
Self-expression		17.28	3.00		0.50	-0.76	0.49
	sel28	6.02	1.10	0.53			
	sel30	5.78	1.31	0.65			
	sel31	5.49	1.23	0.57			
Fairness		11.74	3.99		0.71	-0.01	-0.08
	fa71	3.80	1.53	0.76			
	fai72	3.99	1.48	0.81			
	fai73	3.95	1.41	0.75			
Recognition		13.43	3.80		0.60	-0.02	-0.39
	rec88	4.02	1.69	0.63			
	rec91	5.08	1.28	0.63			
	rec92	4.33	1.46	0.75			
Overload		13.33	3.85		0.68	-0.07	-0.20
	rove103	4.43	1.47	0.70			
	rove104	4.29	1.39	0.78			
	rove105	4.60	1.46	0.73			
Trust		15.16	3.86		0.74	-0.52	-0.01
	tru58	5.21	1.44	0.80			
	tru59	4.97	1.44	0.81			
	tru62	4.99	1.36	0.77			
Challenge		14.93	3.38		0.37	-0.29	-0.03
	rcha95	5.42	1.31	0.49			
	rcha97	4.75	1.70	0.41			
	rcha99	4.76	1.42	0.43			

* Skewness and kurtosis are computed from the composite variable

Table 7.5. Descriptive Statistics and Item Reliabilities for Full Measurement Model (N: 544; p: 30)

Scales	Indicators	Mean	*S. D.*	Corrected item-total correlation	Mean inter-item correlation	Skewness*	Kurtosis*
Engagement climate		149.00	24,70		0,29	-0.27	-0.12
Job satisfaction		15.58	2.98		0.58	0.96	1.83
	sat8	5.18	1.08	0.65			
	sat11	5.18	1.33	0.57			
	sat12	5.22	1.10	0.71			
Personal engagement		16.01	2.97		0.66	-0.34	-0.52
	eng108	5.33	1.07	0.80			
	eng109	5.22	1.12	0.79			
	eng110	5.46	1.18	0.58			

* Skewness and kurtosis are computed from the composite variable

Table 7.6. Metric Invariance for Gender

	Sample size	Regression weight	z-score
Engagement climate → Personal engagement			
Women	447	0.349	0.403
Men	97	0.384	
Engagement climate → Job satisfaction			
Women	447	0.332	0.670
Men	97	0.388	

*** p -value < 0.01; ** p -value < 0.05; * p -value < 0.10

Table 7.7. Metric Invariance for Type of employment

	Sample size	Regression weight	z-score
Engagement climate → Personal engagement			
Full -time	487	0.382	-2.1**
Part-time	57	0.212	
Engagement climate → Job satisfaction			
Full -time	487	0.345	-0.282
Part-time	57	0.318	

*** p -value < 0.01; ** p -value < 0.05; * p -value < 0.10

Table 7.8. Metric Invariance for Tenure

	Sample size	Regression weight	z-score
Engagement climate → Personal engagement			
From 6 months to 2 years	95	0.384	-0.464
Between 2 and 5 years	114	0.337	
From 6 months to 2 years	95	0.384	-0.349
5 years or more	335	0.355	
Between 2 and 5 years	114	0.337	0.215
5 years or more	335	0.355	
Engagement climate → Job satisfaction			
From 6 months to 2 years	95	0.365	-0.141
Between 2 and 5 years	114	0.350	
From 6 months to 2 years	95	0.365	-0.261
5 years or more	335	0.339	
Between 2 and 5 years	114	0.350	-0.137
5 years or more	335	0.339	

*** p -value < 0.01; ** p -value < 0.05; * p -value < 0.10

Table 7.9. Metric Invariance for Job role

	Sample size	Regression weight	z-score
Engagement climate → Personal engagement			
Travel agents	314	0.372	-1.226
Office managers	230	0.294	
Engagement climate → Job satisfaction			
Travel agents	314	0.370	-0.808
Office managers	230	0.312	

*** p -value < 0.01; ** p -value < 0.05; * p -value < 0.10

Engagement climate measure

Autonomy

1. I feel that I have a sufficient freedom of action in my job.
2. I feel that I am allowed to use personal initiative in carrying out the work.
3. I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to do my work in the way I believe is most convenient.

Clarity

1. I feel uncertain about what is expected of me in my job.
2. I feel that I am expected to work without knowing very well how to do things.
3. I feel that I am expected to work without knowing what my exact responsibilities are.

Challenge

1. I feel that my job is too easy and does not provide sufficient challenge.
2. I feel that I am overqualified for the job I am doing.
3. I feel that my job consists on routine tasks.

Supervisor support

1. I feel that my supervisor is interested in me getting ahead in the company.
2. I feel that my supervisor backs me up and lets me learn from my mistakes.
3. I feel that my supervisor is approachable and easy to get on with.

Cohesion

1. I feel that there is a lot of "team spirit" among people in my company.
2. I feel that in my work people are friendly.
3. I feel that my work group tries to integrate its new members.

Trust

1. I feel that my company follows through its commitments to me.
2. I feel that my company is honest and upfront with me.
3. I feel that management in my company honour the promises they make.

Self-expression

1. I feel that I can be myself when I interact with customers.
2. I feel that I can express my personality when I am at work.
3. I feel that my sense of humour is appreciated at work.

Recognition

1. I feel that I can count on a pat on the back when I perform well.
2. I feel that I am respected for my skills.
3. I feel that my achievements are sufficiently highlighted either privately or before others.

Fairness

1. I feel that employees are treated fairly when considered for promotions in my company.
2. I feel that employees receive equal treatment when it comes to evaluating job performance.
3. I feel that this company recognizes those employees that work best.

Overload

1. I find it hard to relax after a day's work.
2. I feel emotionally drained at the end of a day's work.
3. I feel so tired after a day's work that I don´t feel up to doing other things.

Engagement climate questionnaire. English version

Introduction

Most of us spend a great deal of our time at work. During that time, we have many different experiences related to our work conditions, our tasks, our work roles, and our interactions with colleagues and management, that affect, either positively or negatively, our moods and feelings at work. How we feel at work influences, in turn, our motivation towards the work itself.

This questionnaire covers these aspects and includes questions about you and your work. Most of the questions refer to **how you have felt at work during the last 6 months**. Questions are answered by selecting from among a series of alternative responses which we propose on a scale. You must select the response you believe best suits your case.

This questionnaire contains a total of 112 items, which can be easily answered. The average time it takes to complete is about 20 minutes.

Your responses will help to build more positive, meaningful, and engaging work environments for us all. All the data will remain anonymous and **we fully guarantee confidentiality**. The data collected will be used to better understand how the engagement climate affects work engagement and motivation.

Thank you for collaborating!

PART 1

1. Age:

Less than 30 years old ☐ Between 30-39 years old ☐

Between 40-49 years old ☐ 50 or more years old ☐

2. Sex:

Female ☐ Male ☐

3. Regional Department your agency belongs to:

1	ANDALUCIA Y EXTREMADURA	7	CATALUÑA
2	ARAGON, NAVARRA	8	CENTRO
3	BALEARES	9	GALICIA, ASTURIAS
4	CANARIAS	10	LEVANTE
5	CASTILLA LA MANCHA	11	NORTE
6	CASTILLA LEON		

4. Your current job is:

Travel agent ☐ Agency manager ☐

5. Type of employment: (please tick one box only)

Full-time (35 hours or more per week) ☐ Part-time (less than 35 hours per week) ☐

6. Working hours: (please tick one box only)

Straight-through working day ☐ In shifts ☐

Split working day ☐

7. Length of service in the company you work now for:

Between 6 months and 2 years ☐ Between 2 and 5 years ☐

More than 5 years ☐

PART 2

At present, how satisfied are you with … (Please circle the appropriate number)

Completely dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Completely satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8	… the tasks your job post entails?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	… your work colleagues and your work group?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	… the company you work for?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	… your agency/workplace?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	… your work in general?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Next there are some questions about the company you work for. Please use the following response scale.

I completely disagree	I disagree	I rather disagree	I neither disagree or agree	I rather agree	I agree	I completely agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13	I enjoy telling people about the company I work for	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	The problems that my company faces are "my" problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	The company I work for is of great importance for me personally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	I really care about the fate of this company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	For me this is the best of all possible companies for which to work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PART 3

Indicate the frequency with which you have FELT the following in your work, during the LAST 6 MONTHS (Please circle the appropriate number)

SUPPORT

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

18	I feel that help is available from my company when I have a problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	I feel that my company would forgive an honest mistake on my part	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	I feel that my supervisor is interested in me getting ahead in the company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	I feel that my supervisor backs me up and lets me learn from my mistakes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	I feel that I have at my disposal sufficient resources and materials to do my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	I feel that I have my company's support when I deal with customers' conflicts and complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	I feel that my supervisor tries to help me develop new skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	I feel that my supervisor is approachable and easy to get on with	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SELF-EXPRESSION

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

26	I feel that my company respects my personal values	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	I feel understood and accepted at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	I feel that I can be myself when I interact with customers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	I feel that I need to hide my deeper feelings towards others at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	I feel that I can express my personality when I am at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	I feel that my sense of humour is appreciated at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	I feel that this work is making me harsher emotionally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	I feel that I have to show emotions at work that do not match my true feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

AUTONOMY

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

34	I feel that I have a sufficient freedom of action in my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	I feel that I am allowed to use personal initiative in carrying out the work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36	I feel that I am expected to do things that could be done better in another way	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	I feel that I am expected to do things which I do not agree with	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to do my work in the way I believe is most convenient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to decide how to organize my work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to make decisions about incidences or unforeseen events	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CLARITY

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

41	I feel that there are clear objectives for my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42	I feel that some of the objectives of my job are incompatible with one another	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43	I feel certain about how much decision-making authority I have in my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44	I feel that I receive enough information from my supervisor about my job performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45	I feel uncertain about what is expected of me in my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46	I feel that I am expected to work without knowing very well how to do things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47	I feel that I am expected to work without knowing what my exact responsibilities are	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

COHESION

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

48	I feel that there is a lot of “team spirit” among people in my company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

49	I feel that in my company it's hard to get people to volunteer or do any extra work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50	I feel that in my work people are cooperative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51	I feel that in my work people are friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52	I feel that people here tend to hide their deepest feelings from each other	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53	I feel that I have the trust and the respect of my co-workers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54	I feel that my work group tries to integrate its new members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55	I feel that my company tries to integrate and make everybody feel part of the team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

TRUST

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

56	I feel that I can trust my supervisor to back me up on decisions I make in the field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57	I feel that I can count on my supervisor to keep the things I tell him/her confidentially	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58	I feel that my company follows through its commitments to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59	I feel that my company is honest and upfront with me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60	I feel that I cannot fully trust my company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
61	I feel that managers in my company have high integrity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62	I feel that management in my company honour the promises they make	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CONTRIBUTION

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

63	I feel useful in my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64	I feel that doing my job well really makes a difference	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65	I feel that I am a valuable member of my company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66	I feel that almost anyone could really do my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

67	I feel that my company hardly takes notice of my contribution at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68	I feel that my innovative and creative ideas are accepted at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69	I feel proud of the work I do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
70	I feel that my work has little value or importance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

FAIRNESS

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

71	I feel that employees are treated fairly when being considered for promotions in my company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
72	I feel that employees at this company receive equal treatment when it comes to evaluating job performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
73	I feel that this company recognizes those employees that work best	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
74	I feel that there are no favourites in my company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
75	I feel fairly rewarded considering my responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
76	I feel that my rights as an employee are being respected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
77	I feel fairly rewarded for the amount of effort I put in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
78	I feel that my supervisor doesn´t treat me fairly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PARTICIPATION

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

79	I feel that my company cares about my opinions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
80	I feel excluded when work problems are discussed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
81	I feel that my company should allow me to have a say with regard to certain decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
82	I feel that my opinion counts in work group decision making	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
83	I feel that my opinion on decisions pertaining to my work is valued	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
84	I feel that in my company only the opinion of some people counts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

85	I feel that management in my company only asks for my opinions to save face, since decisions are already made	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

RECOGNITION

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

86	I feel that my supervisor appreciates the way I do my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
87	I feel that my company values the contributions I make	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
88	I feel that I can count on a pat on the back when I perform well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
89	I feel that the only time I hear about my performance is when I mess up	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
90	I feel that I am over criticized over minor things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
91	I feel that I am respected for my skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
92	I feel that my achievements are sufficiently highlighted either privately or before others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CHALLENGE

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

93	I feel that I need to perform up to my abilities to do my job successfully	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
94	I feel that my job gives me opportunities for personal growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
95	I feel that my job is too easy and does not provide sufficient challenge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
96	I feel that I have so much to do that I hardly have time to get bored	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
97	I feel that I am overqualified for the job I am doing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
98	I feel that I can use many different skills and talents in my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
99	I feel that my job consists on routine tasks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

OVERLOAD

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

100	I feel confident about my ability to do my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
101	I dread getting up in the morning and having to face another day on the job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
102	I feel frustrated by my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
103	I find it hard to relax after a day's work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
104	I feel emotionally drained at the end of a day's work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
105	I feel so tired after a day's work that I don´t feel up to doing other things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
106	I feel that I am expected to do excessive work, which I can´t do well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
107	I feel that I am expected to do more work than I can do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Finally, indicate the frequency with which you have FELT the following during the last 6 months:

Never	Almost never	Rarely	At times	Quite a lot	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

108	At my work, I feel bursting with energy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
109	At my job I feel strong and vigorous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
110	I feel happy when I am working intensely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
111	I am immersed in my work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
112	I get carried away when I am working	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Thank you for your collaboration!

Engagement climate questionnaire. Spanish version

Introducción

La mayoría de las personas pasamos una gran parte de nuestro tiempo en el trabajo. Durante ese tiempo vivimos diferentes experiencias relacionadas con las condiciones del trabajo, las funciones y tareas que desempeñamos, y las relaciones con nuestros compañeros y jefes, que afectan, ya sea de forma positiva o negativa, a nuestras emociones y a nuestros estados de ánimo. Cómo nos sentimos en el trabajo influye, a su vez, en nuestra entrega y motivación hacia el trabajo mismo.

El siguiente cuestionario tiene que ver con estos aspectos e incluye preguntas sobre Ud. y su trabajo. La mayoría de las preguntas se refieren a **cómo se ha sentido Ud. en el trabajo en los últimos 6 meses**. Las preguntas se contestan escogiendo entre una serie de alternativas de respuesta que le proponemos en una escala. Usted debe escoger aquella respuesta que crea que más se ajusta a su caso particular.

El cuestionario tiene un total de 112 ítems, que se responden muy fácilmente. El tiempo medio para rellenarlo suele ser de 20 minutos.

Sus respuestas ayudarán a construir ambientes de trabajo más positivos, con mayor sentido, y más motivadores para todos. Los datos son anónimos y le **garantizamos su confidencialidad**. La información obtenida será exclusivamente utilizada para comprender mejor el efecto que tiene el clima en la entrega y la motivación hacia el trabajo.

¡Gracias por su colaboración!

PARTE 1

1. Edad:

Menos de 30 años ☐ Entre 30-39 años ☐

Entre 40-49 años ☐ 50 o más años ☐

2. Sexo:

Mujer ☐ Hombre ☐

3. Dirección Regional a la que pertenece su agencia:

1	ANDALUCIA Y EXTREMADURA	7	CATALUÑA
2	ARAGON, NAVARRA	8	CENTRO
3	BALEARES	9	GALICIA, ASTURIAS
4	CANARIAS	10	LEVANTE
5	CASTILLA LA MANCHA	11	NORTE
6	CASTILLA LEON		

4. Su puesto de trabajo actual es:

Agente de viajes ☐ Jefe de oficina ☐

5. Modalidad de empleo: (señale sólo una casilla)

Tiempo completo (35 horas o más por semana) ☐ Tiempo parcial (menos de 35 horas por semana) ☐

6. Horario de trabajo: (señale sólo una casilla)

Jornada continua ☐ Por turnos ☐

Jornada partida ☐

7. Antigüedad en el centro /agencia donde usted trabaja actualmente:

Entre 6 meses y 2 años ☐ Entre 2 y 5 años ☐

Más de 5 años ☐

PARTE 2

Actualmente, ¿cómo de satisfecho/a está … (utilice la siguiente escala de respuesta)

Muy insatisfecho/a	Bastante insatisfecho/a	Insatisfecho/a	Ni insatisfecho/a ni satisfecho/a	Satisfecho/a	Bastante satisfecho/a	Muy satisfecho/a
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8	… con las tareas que realiza en su puesto?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	… con sus compañeros y/o grupo de trabajo?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	… con su empresa?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	… con su agencia/centro de trabajo?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	… con su trabajo en general?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

A continuación, algunas cuestiones referentes a su empresa/centro de trabajo (utilice la siguiente escala de respuesta)

Totalmente en desacuerdo	Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo	Totalmente de acuerdo
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13	Me gusta decir a los demás en qué empresa trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Los problemas de mi empresa/centro de trabajo son "mis" problemas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	Mi empresa/centro de trabajo es de gran importancia personal para mí	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Me importa realmente el futuro de mi empresa/centro de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Para mí, ésta es la mejor empresa entre todas las posibles para trabajar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PARTE 3

Para el resto de preguntas del cuestionario, indique por favor con qué frecuencia ha SENTIDO lo siguiente en el trabajo DURANTE LOS ÚLTIMOS 6 MESES (utilice la siguiente escala de respuesta)

APOYO

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

18	Siento que hay ayuda disponible en mi empresa/centro de trabajo cuando tengo un problema	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo me perdonaría un error si lo cometí con buena intención	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	Siento que a mi supervisor le interesa que yo progrese en mi empresa/centro de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	Siento que mi supervisor me apoya y me permite aprender de mis errores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	Siento que tengo los suficientes recursos a mi disposición para hacer mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Siento que tengo el respaldo de mi empresa/centro de trabajo cuando trato con problemas y quejas de clientes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Siento que mi supervisor intenta ayudarme a desarrollar nuevas habilidades	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	Siento que mi supervisor es accesible y fácil de tratar con él/ella	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

AUTO-EXPRESIÓN

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

26	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo respeta mis valores personales	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	Siento que en el trabajo se me comprende y se me acepta	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	Siento que puedo ser yo mismo/a cuando trato con los clientes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	Siento que debo ocultar mis verdaderos sentimientos sobre otras personas en el trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	Siento que puedo expresar mi personalidad cuando estoy en el trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	Siento que se aprecia mi sentido del humor en el trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

32	Siento que este trabajo me está endureciendo emocionalmente	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	Siento que en el trabajo debo expresar emociones que no coinciden con mis verdaderos sentimientos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

AUTONOMÍA

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

34	Siento que tengo suficiente libertad de acción en mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	Siento que se me permite usar mi iniciativa personal a la hora de hacer mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36	Siento que se me exige hacer cosas que se harían mejor de otra manera	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	Siento que se me exige hacer cosas con las que no estoy de acuerdo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	Siento que tengo la suficiente autonomía para hacer mis tareas de la forma que crea más conveniente	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	Siento que tengo la suficiente autonomía para decidir cómo organizarme mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	Siento que tengo la suficiente autonomía para tomar decisiones sobre incidencias o imprevistos que puedan ocurrir	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CLARIDAD

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

41	Siento que están claros los objetivos que tengo en mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42	Siento que algunos de los objetivos de mi trabajo son incompatibles entre sí	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43	Siento que tengo claro de cuánta autoridad dispongo en mi trabajo para tomar decisiones	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44	Siento que recibo la suficiente información de mi supervisor respecto a mi desempeño en el trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45	No estoy muy seguro/a de lo que se espera de mí en mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46	Siento que se me exige trabajar sin tener muy claro cómo hacer las cosas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47	Siento que se me exige trabajar sin tener muy claras cuáles son mis responsabilidades	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

COHESIÓN

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

48	Siento que existe "espíritu de equipo" entre las personas que trabajan en mi centro de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49	Siento que en mi centro de trabajo es difícil conseguir que la gente se ofrezca voluntaria o haga trabajo extra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50	Siento que las personas que trabajan en mi centro de trabajo son cooperativas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51	Siento que las personas que trabajan en mi centro de trabajo son amistosas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52	Siento que las personas aquí tienden a ocultarse unos de otros sus verdaderos sentimientos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53	Siento que tengo la confianza y el respeto de mis compañeros de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54	Siento que mi grupo de trabajo hace lo posible por integrar a los nuevos miembros	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo hace lo posible por integrar a todo el mundo y hacer que se sientan parte del equipo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CONFIANZA

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

56	Siento que puedo confiar en que mi supervisor respaldará las decisiones que tomo en mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57	Siento que puedo confiar en mi supervisor si le hablo de asuntos confidenciales	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo respeta los compromisos adquiridos conmigo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo es honesta y va de cara conmigo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60	Siento que no puedo confiar totalmente en mi empresa/centro de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
61	Siento que los jefes en mi centro de trabajo actúan con integridad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62	Siento que la dirección en mi centro de trabajo cumple las promesas que hace	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CONTRIBUCIÓN

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

63	Me siento útil en mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64	Siento que existe realmente una diferencia entre hacer bien mi trabajo o simplemente hacerlo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65	Siento que soy un empleado valioso de mi empresa/centro de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66	Siento que prácticamente cualquiera podría hacer mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo apenas se da cuenta de lo que aporto con mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68	Siento que en el trabajo se aceptan mis ideas creativas e innovadoras	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69	Me siento orgulloso/a del trabajo que hago	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
70	Siento que mi trabajo tiene poco valor o trascendencia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

JUSTICIA

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

71	Siento que los empleados reciben un trato justo a la hora de ser considerados para promociones o ascensos en mi centro de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
72	Siento que en mi centro de trabajo se trata igual a los empleados a la hora de evaluar su desempeño en el trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
73	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo reconoce a sus mejores trabajadores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
74	Siento que en mi empresa/centro de trabajo no hay favoritismos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
75	Siento que recibo una compensación justa teniendo en cuenta mis responsabilidades	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
76	Siento que en mi empresa/centro de trabajo se respetan mis derechos como trabajador	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
77	Siento que recibo una compensación justa por el esfuerzo que pongo en el trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
78	Siento que mi supervisor no es justo conmigo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PARTICIPACIÓN

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

79	Siento que a mi empresa/centro de trabajo le interesan mis opiniones	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
80	Me siento excluido/a cuando se discuten problemas de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
81	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo no me permite expresar mi opinión respecto a decisiones que me afectan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
82	Siento que mi opinión cuenta cuando se toman decisiones dentro de mi grupo de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
83	Siento que se valora mi opinión en las decisiones que se toman sobre mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
84	Siento que en mi empresa/centro de trabajo sólo cuenta la opinión de algunos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
85	Siento que la dirección de mi centro de trabajo sólo pide mi opinión para guardar las apariencias, ya que las decisiones están ya tomadas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

RECONOCIMIENTO

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

86	Siento que mi supervisor aprecia el trabajo que hago	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
87	Siento que mi empresa/centro de trabajo valora mi aportación en el trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
88	Siento que puedo contar con una felicitación cuando hago bien mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
89	Siento que sólo se habla de mi desempeño cuando hago algo mal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
90	Siento que se me critica demasiado por asuntos de poca importancia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
91	Siento que en el trabajo se me respeta por mis habilidades profesionales	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
92	Siento que en el trabajo se reconocen lo suficiente mis logros, ya sea en privado o delante de otros	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

RETO

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

93	Siento que tengo que utilizar al máximo mis habilidades para realizar mi trabajo con éxito	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
94	Siento que mi trabajo me da oportunidades para crecer personal y profesionalmente	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
95	Siento que mi trabajo es demasiado fácil y no me proporciona el suficiente reto	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
96	Siento que tengo tantas cosas que hacer que no me da tiempo a aburrirme	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
97	Siento que estoy sobrecualificado/a para el trabajo que hago	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
98	Siento que puedo utilizar una amplia variedad de habilidades y destrezas en mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
99	Siento que mi trabajo consiste en hacer tareas rutinarias	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SOBRECARGA

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

100	Siento confianza respecto a mi capacidad para hacer mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
101	Me siento agobiado/a al levantarme por la mañana y tener que enfrentarme a otro día en el trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
102	Me siento frustrado/a con mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
103	Me resulta difícil relajarme después de un día de trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
104	Me encuentro emocionalmente agotado/a al final de la jornada laboral	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
105	Después de un día de trabajo, me encuentro tan cansado/a que no puedo dedicarme a otras cosas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
106	Siento que al tener exceso de trabajo no puedo hacerlo bien	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
107	Siento que se me exige más trabajo del que puedo hacer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Finalmente, indique por favor con qué frecuencia ha SENTIDO lo siguiente en el trabajo durante los últimos 6 meses:

Nunca	Casi nunca	Raramente	Algunas veces	Bastantes veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

108	En el trabajo me siento lleno de energía	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
109	En el trabajo me siento fuerte y vigoroso/a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
110	Me siento feliz cuando estoy trabajando intensamente	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
111	Estoy concentrado/a en mi trabajo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
112	Cuando estoy trabajando olvido todo lo que pasa a mi alrededor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

¡Gracias por su colaboración!

Codebook for questionnaire items

Item n.	Item code	Item. (r) indicates reverse scored item
8	sat8	How satisfied are you with the tasks your job post entails?
9	sat9	How satisfied are you with your work colleagues and your work group?
10	sat10	How satisfied are you with the company you work for?
11	sat11	How satisfied are you with your agency/workplace?
12	sat12	How satisfied are you with your work in general?
13	com13	I enjoy telling people about the company I work for
14	com14	The problems that my company faces are "my" problems
15	com15	The company I work for is of great importance for me personally
16	com16	I really care about the fate of this company
17	com17	For me this is the best of all possible companies for which to work
18	sup18	I feel that help is available from my company when I have a problem
19	sup19	I feel that my company would forgive an honest mistake on my part
20	sup20	I feel that my supervisor is interested in me getting ahead in the company
21	sup21	I feel that my supervisor backs me up and lets me learn from my mistakes
22	sup22	I feel that I have at my disposal sufficient resources and materials to do my job
23	sup23	I feel that I have my company's support when I deal with customers' conflicts and complaints
24	sup24	I feel that my supervisor tries to help me develop new skills
25	sup25	I feel that my supervisor is approachable and easy to get on with
26	sel26	I feel that my company respects my personal values
27	sel27	I feel understood and accepted at work
28	sel28	I feel that I can be myself when I interact with customers
29	rsel29	I feel that I need to hide my deeper feelings towards others at work (r)
30	sel30	I feel that I can express my personality when I am at work
31	sel31	I feel that my sense of humour is appreciated at work
32	rsel32	I feel that this work is making me harsher emotionally (r)
33	rsel33	I feel that I have to show emotions at work that do not match my true feelings (r)
34	aut34	I feel that I have a sufficient freedom of action in my job
35	aut35	I feel that I am allowed to use personal initiative in carrying out the work
36	raut36	I feel that I am expected to do things that could be done better in another way (r)
37	raut37	I feel that I am expected to do things which I do not agree with (r)
38	aut38	I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to do my work in the way I believe is most convenient
39	aut39	I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to decide how to organize my work
40	aut40	I feel that I have sufficient autonomy to make decisions about incidences or unforeseen events
41	clar41	I feel that there are clear objectives for my job
42	rclar42	I feel that some of the objectives of my job are incompatible with one another (r)
43	clar43	I feel certain about how much decision-making authority I have in my job
44	clar44	I feel that I receive enough information from my supervisor about my job performance
45	rclar45	I feel uncertain about what is expected of me in my job (r)
46	rclar46	I feel that I am expected to work without knowing very well how to do things (r)
47	rclar47	I feel that I am expected to work without knowing what my exact responsibilities are (r)
48	coh48	I feel that there is a lot of “team spirit” among people in my company
49	rcoh49	I feel that in my company it's hard to get people to volunteer or do any extra work (r)
50	coh50	I feel that in my work people are cooperative
51	coh51	I feel that in my work people are friendly
52	rcoh52	I feel that people here tend to hide their deepest feelings from each other (r)
53	coh53	I feel that I have the trust and the respect of my co-workers

Item n.	Item code	Item. (r) indicates reverse scored item
54	coh54	I feel that my work group tries to integrate its new members
55	coh55	I feel that my company tries to integrate and make everybody feel part of the team
56	tru56	I feel that I can trust my supervisor to back me up on decisions I make in the field
57	tru57	I feel that I can count on my supervisor to keep the things I tell him/her confidentially
58	tru58	I feel that my company follows through its commitments to me
59	tru59	I feel that my company is honest and upfront with me
60	rtru60	I feel that I cannot fully trust my company (r)
61	tru61	I feel that managers in my company have high integrity
62	tru62	I feel that management in my company honour the promises they make
63	con63	I feel useful in my job
64	con64	I feel that doing my job well really makes a difference
65	con65	I feel that I am a valuable member of my company
66	rcon66	I feel that almost anyone could really do my job (r)
67	rcon67	I feel that my company hardly takes notice of my contribution at work (r)
68	con68	I feel that my innovative and creative ideas are accepted at work
69	con69	I feel proud of the work I do
70	rcon70	I feel that my work has little value or importance (r)
71	fai71	I feel that employees are treated fairly when being considered for promotions in my company
72	fai72	I feel that employees receive equal treatment when it comes to evaluating job performance
73	fai73	I feel that this company recognizes those employees that work best
74	fai74	I feel that there are no favourites in my company
75	fai75	I feel fairly rewarded considering my responsibilities
76	fai76	I feel that my rights as an employee are being respected
77	fai77	I feel fairly rewarded for the amount of effort I put in
78	rfai78	I feel that my supervisor doesn´t treat me fairly (r)
79	par79	I feel that my company cares about my opinions
80	rpar80	I feel excluded when work problems are discussed (r)
81	rpar81	I feel that my company should allow me to have a say with regard to certain decisions (r)
82	par82	I feel that my opinion counts in work group decision making
83	par83	I feel that my opinion on decisions pertaining to my work is valued
84	rpar84	I feel that in my company only the opinion of some people counts (r)
85	rpar85	I feel that management in my company only asks for my opinion to save face (r)
86	rec86	I feel that my supervisor appreciates the way I do my job
87	rec87	I feel that my company values the contributions I make
88	rec88	I feel that I can count on a pat on the back when I perform well
89	rrec89	I feel that the only time I hear about my performance is when I mess up (r)
90	rrec90	I feel that I am over criticized over minor things (r)
91	rec91	I feel that I am respected for my skills
92	rec92	I feel that my achievements are sufficiently highlighted either privately or before others
93	cha93	I feel that I need to perform up to my abilities to do my job successfully
94	cha94	I feel that my job gives me opportunities for personal growth and development
95	rcha95	I feel that my job is too easy and does not provide sufficient challenge (r)
96	cha96	I feel that I have so much to do that I hardly have time to get bored
97	rcha97	I feel that I am overqualified for the job I am doing (r)
98	cha98	I feel that I can use many different skills and talents in my job
99	rcha99	I feel that my job consists on routine tasks (r)
100	ove100	I feel confident about my ability to do my job
101	rove101	I dread getting up in the morning and having to face another day on the job (r)

Item n.	Item code	Item. (r) indicates reverse scored item
102	rove102	I feel frustrated by my job (r)
103	rove103	I find it hard to relax after a day's work (r)
104	rove104	I feel emotionally drained at the end of a day's work (r)
105	rove105	I feel so tired after a day's work that I don´t feel up to doing other things (r)
106	rove106	I feel that I am expected to do excessive work, which I can´t do well (r)
107	rove107	I feel that I am expected to do more work than I can do (r)
108	eng108	At my work, I feel bursting with energy
109	eng109	At my job I feel strong and vigorous
110	eng110	I feel happy when I am working intensely
111	eng111	I am immersed in my work
112	eng112	I get carried away when I am working

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