Work disengagement: A Review of the Literature

Highlights:

- Disengagement a generally functional way of dealing with excessive work demands
- Disengagement antecedents include individual/job/organization/workplace attributes
- Little evidence work disengagement produces negative organizational outcomes
- Employee assistance programs are more beneficial than employee engagement programs
- Helpful to distinguish between engaged, not engaged, and disengaged work

Work disengagement: A Review of the Literature

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Abstract

Engagement with work has been one of the most influential management ideas of recent decades. A prevalent assumption is that engagement is inherently beneficial and disengagement is a problem to be addressed. Yet theory and research on disengagement show it may not have the assumed negative impact on organizations, and at times may be beneficial for employees. This research seeks to unpack the underlying assumptions of work disengagement through collating and reviewing studies of the phenomenon. The paper makes three contributions. First, it provides a clear argument for why disengagement is a concept worth studying in its own right, as a functional coping response. Second, it offers a typology of the antecedents that applies to current theoretical frameworks. Third, it suggests differentiating between engaged, not engaged, and disengaged to address various levels of dedication to work domains and provide a basis for more evidence-based HR interventions.

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Introduction

Over the past 30 years work engagement has become a key concept in contemporary HRM (Markoulli et al., 2017) and attracted considerable attention from scholars and organizations, leading to a substantial expansion in our knowledge of this phenomenon. Far less attention has been paid to work disengagement, which is a significant omission, as organizational interventions to enhance engagement are premised on the assumption that disengagement is a problem. Where disengagement from work is discussed in practice, it is too often treated as if it meant an absence of engagement (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Truss et al., 2013), which we know both theoretically and empirically is a misapprehension of the nature of disengagement (Demerouti et al., 2003; Demerouti, Mostert, & Bakker, 2010; Gillet et al., 2019).

The current article begins to address this gap between theory and practice by collating and reviewing existing studies of disengagement to increase their collective impact. We suggest distinguishing between engagement, disengagement, and *lack of engagement* (Gallup, 2017), the latter referring to the absence of engagement. This threefold distinction can better capture employees' experience at work and provide a platform for further research on disengagement. Such research is sorely needed because of the tendency to treat disengagement and engagement as a simple binary, with disengagement taken for granted as something inherently negative for organizations. In this article we call for researchers and practitioners alike to think more carefully about work disengagement, its antecedents, and its consequences. We highlight the functional importance of disengagement for employees and organizations, provide scholarly insights that can inform the design of appropriate HR interventions, and offer a platform for further research.

To date there has only been one review of the disengagement literature (Rastogi et al., 2018). Though helpful, it was limited to few theories, and thus reviewed only a subset of the articles reviewed here. It was also premised on two assumptions widely adopted in the practitioner literature, namely that disengagement is inherently negative for organizations, and can be measured by engagement surveys (i.e. that a survey showing low levels of engagement can be interpreted as indicating high levels of disengagement). As we will show, the first assumption is not supported by the empirical evidence and the second assumption is theoretically inaccurate. In addition to offering a more inclusive review, the present article provides a unique typology of the antecedents of disengagement. This typology transcends the different theoretical frameworks and helps explain the mechanisms by which the antecedents affect disengagement. This is a key step towards providing greater clarity on the nature of work disengagement.

The widespread interest in work engagement, from both scholars and practitioners, can be traced back to Kahn's seminal 1990 article (Bailey, 2016; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). Diverse approaches to study engagement developed by researchers allowed for useful dialogue between scholars and practitioners and brought some clarity to the field (Schaufeli, 2013; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010), with the result that scholars and practitioners mean broadly the same thing when they talk about engagement. By contrast, they mean very different things when they talk about disengagement. In the practitioner literature, disengagement is typically treated as something negative. Organizations often assume that employees will work harder if they are engaged with their work, which helps increase profits (Mackay, Allen, & Landis, 2017). Hence work disengagement has been regarded as an undesirable phenomenon, affecting performance, resulting in additional costs and needing to be addressed by engagement programs (e.g. Gallup, 2013, 2016a, 2016b, 2017). Organizations are encouraged to re-engage so-called disengaged workers, but what 'disengaged' actually

means, the reasons why employees disengage, and the impact of disengagement on organizations, may be very different from what is assumed.

A growing body of research notes that disengagement matters in its own right (Keating & Heslin, 2015; Mackay et al., 2017) and calls for further attention on why and under what conditions it occurs (Wollard, 2011). Our article responds to this call. We review the existing literature on work disengagement, examine the various ways in which it is defined, theorized, and measured, and evaluate the evidence on its antecedents and outcomes. Our collation and analysis of disengagement research offer an initial step towards clarifying what we know about disengagement and evaluating whether there is enough of an evidence base to support the prevalent assumption that it is harmful to organizations (Rastogi et al., 2018). We also develop a typology for the antecedents and mechanisms by which they influence disengagement and propose avenues for future research.

The contributions of this paper are threefold. First, this research reduces the gap between practice and theory by highlighting why and how disengagement is worth studying in its own right. Second, we develop a typology of the antecedents that help explain why and under what conditions work disengagement occurs. These antecedents cluster into three categories – individual characteristics, job attributes, and organizational and workplace conditions. The same antecedents are identified across the studies reviewed, regardless of the theoretical framework, reflecting the extent to which all theories treat work disengagement as being driven by lack of resources. Our typology explains what determines work disengagement, and through what mechanisms. This has important implications for how we theorize work disengagement by taking context into account. Disengagement has from the outset been conceptualized as context-related (Kahn, 1990), yet surprisingly few studies have considered this in their research design. Finally, by explaining what it means to be disengaged, we show it may be particularly important for HRM practice to distinguish

disengagement from lack of engagement. Going beyond engagement and disengagement will allow practitioners to consider how to work with disengagement in ways that can contribute to the performance and well-being of employees.

Disengagement as a concept

Key theories that seek to explain the phenomenon of disengagement include burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981), Job Demands-Resources (Demerouti et al., 2001), psychological theory (Kahn, 1990), and coping processes (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). All of theories conceptualize disengagement as distancing oneself emotionally, cognitively, or physically from work. This distancing, central to disengagement, should not be viewed as inherently negative. The lock downs introduced in many countries in response to the Covid-19 pandemic led to huge numbers of people having to work from home. This physical distancing from work was accompanied for many by a need also to have a degree of psychological distancing, as workers struggled to cope with an acute, *in situ* clash of work and home life. The Canadian federal agency Parks Canada sent out advice to staff which stated "*You are not 'working from home', you are 'at your home, during a crisis, trying to work'* ", and went on to emphasize that "*Your personal physical, mental, and emotional health is far more important than anything else right now.*" The message quickly went viral, with many other employers globally adopting the same message. Thus the lock down has created much greater awareness of the extent to which even highly engaged workers may sometimes need to disengage to some extent in order to be able cope with their situation. We now turn to consider the various theoretical approaches to disengagement.

Kahn (1990) conceptualized both engagement and disengagement as temporary states, with engagement being linked to psychological flow. However, based on their meta-analysis Mackay et al. (2017) suggest engagement can be viewed as a global attitude towards one's

job, with strong links to outcomes such as performance, turnover, and absenteeism, and potential utility as an overall predictor of employee effectiveness. This emerging attitudinal approach to engagement only underlines the need to examine disengagement on its own terms. If engagement is attitudinal, then logically *lack of engagement* might also be attitudinal – some employees are likely to engage, others are likely not to engage. In contrast, disengagement seems unlikely to be attitudinal – it is a temporary choice to take distance from work in order to deal with a situation in which demands exceed resources. Employees who are usually engaged with their work might need to take distance and disengage to deal with situational demands. If we assume their attitudes to their job remain the same, then it is possible these temporarily disengaged employees would be identified as engaged on the measures examined by Mackay et al. (2017). This might be particularly likely if the demands are coming from non-work sources. Logically non-work factors are much more likely to have an impact on disengagement than engagement, which is another reason why it is crucial to focus on disengagement and its consequences.

Both coping theory (Lazarus, 1993) and the psychological theory of disengagement (Kahn, 1990) view disengagement as a context-dependent variable and hence a variable that changes over time when the context and conditions change. However, only a handful of studies have paid attention to this fundamental idea (though see Gillet et al., 2019; Innstrand et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2013). Consequently the literature, and the practice that builds on it, draw supposedly enduring conclusions from a snapshot of episodes that are context-specific and time-bound. The temporary nature of work disengagement is vitally important because HR interventions are targeted towards those employees who seem to be disengaged, which in reality, may have been largely overlooked. Practicing managers, should, necessarily seek beyond engaged-disengaged labels aiming instead at a more comprehensive view of work to improve performance and well-being of the workers.

Building on previous reviews of engagement (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010; Halbesleben, 2010; Mackay et al., 2017), and anticipating the findings from our review of the disengagement literature detailed below, Figure 1 maps the antecedents and outcomes of both engagement and disengagement. The model reveals the difficulty inherent in conceptualizing the relationship between the two concepts, which under some conditions appear as essentially a continuum, but in others show as having different antecedents and outcomes.

Having made a case for viewing disengagement as distinct from engagement, and the need for research to address its relative neglect, we turn now to review the limited but valuable studies undertaken thus far.

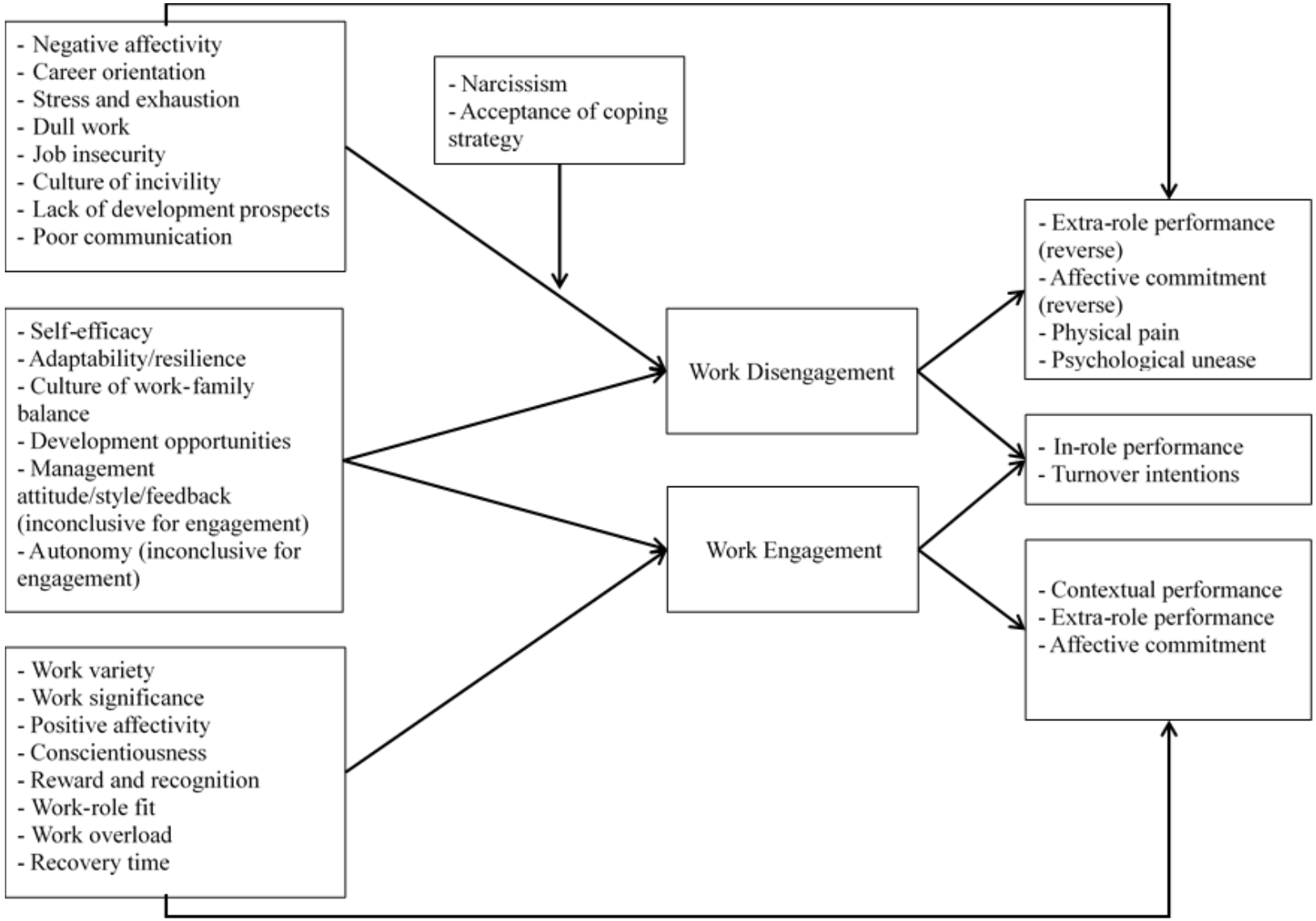

Figure 1: Comparative assessment of work disengagement and engagement and their antecedents, processes, and outcomes

Methodology

To provide an overview of the literature on work disengagement we conducted a systematic review. We followed the Tranfield, Denyer, and Smart (2003) guidelines for conducting a systematic review in the management field. This includes setting the conceptual boundaries and identifying keywords for searching and selecting studies, screening the selected studies, assessing their eligibility against the conceptual boundary, and finally synthesizing the selected articles (Table 1).

Table 1: Criteria for inclusion

Criteria	**Framework applied**
Publication	Journal publications, working papers, conference proceedings, and book chapters; dissertations are excluded
Period	Until January 2021
Method	Searching the title, abstract, or keyword of the articles
Research design	Empirical
Language	English
Source	Searched: EBSCO Host; Emerald; Pro-Quest; Science Direct; Web of Science
Content	Conceptual boundary condition: Relevance to work disengagement, moral disengagement is excluded, non-relevant papers from other fields such as medical research on disengagement from addiction are excluded

We identified the conceptual boundary of the systematic review by conducting a preliminary study of the literature to identify relevant keywords to include when searching for articles. Given the relative neglect of disengagement, we included potentially relevant alternative terms, such as “detachment” and “withdrawal”. We therefore searched for articles that included any form of these terms (e.g. “disengaged”, “disengaging”, “detached”, “detachment”, “detaching”, “withdraw”, “withdrawn”, and “withdrew”).

Our examination of these articles showed that while studies of disengagement referred to the way employees took emotional, cognitive, or physical distance from work, studies of withdrawal referred only to the behavioral aspect of disengagement (Koslowsky, 2009; Pindek, Kessler, & Spector, 2017), and those on detachment referred to mental distance during time off work, or outside work (Alam, Ezzedeen, & Latham, 2018; Cooper & Lu, 2019). We therefore felt confident in focusing solely on disengagement and searched for outputs containing the root "disengage*" in the title, abstract, or keywords, thus capturing all combinations such as "work disengagement", "disengaged workers", "worker disengagement", "job disengagement", "disengaged employees" and "employee disengagement".

Following the establishment of a conceptual boundary for including articles, we searched EBSCO Host, Emerald, Pro-Quest, Science Direct, and Web of Science, databases that together cover a broad variety of journals, working papers, conference proceedings, and book chapters. We also searched the grey literature using the Open Grey database and found two outputs, both doctoral dissertations. Doctoral dissertations are generally excluded from systematic literature reviews, as the work involved in reviewing them is so substantial, and any significant findings are likely to be published as articles (Adams, Smart, & Huff, 2016).We therefore omitted the dissertations from this review. Our search returned 4,140 documents published up to January 2021. We screened these articles for relevance to work disengagement, excluding non-relevant papers from other fields – for example medical research on addiction disengagement.

The remaining 919 articles were then evaluated. We designed a data extraction form and conducted a preliminary review of papers to ensure consistency. We excluded articles focusing on moral disengagement, as these related to justification and rationalization of unethical decisions and actions to pursue personal goals (Wooten, 2001), which is very

different to work disengagement. The remaining articles were assessed against our inclusion and exclusion criteria. We read the abstracts and conclusions, and in many cases, the introduction or even the entire article if the information provided in the abstract and conclusion was not revealing. In addition, we searched the reference lists of the selected articles and contacted authors who have contributed to the field to find additional publications. Based on our conceptual boundary for the systematic review of work disengagement which is the articles that explicitly study disengagement from work; we selected 41 articles (Appendix 1).[1]

Although our search included articles published at any time, the final selection of studies comprised research published since 1990, reflecting the seminal nature of Kahn's 1990 article. Most articles were published since 2008, and of the 41 studies, 35 used quantitative methods. The remaining six studies used qualitative methods, mostly case studies, with some presenting a single case and some multiple cases.

We analyzed the content in the articles using NVivo 11 software, which allowed us to code the text and generate matrices of different thematic categories. We then studied the articles by sensitizing perceptions and identifying the emerging themes in the literature. In this process, we interrogated the texts, refined some of the thematic categories, and developed connections between emerging ones. Following sections present the findings of the review.

Definitions, theories, and measures of work disengagement

The core idea of disengagement, common to all theories, is the distancing of oneself emotionally, cognitively, and physically from work (Figure 2). In practical terms, theories of

[1] The focus on disengagement means some of the studies that used measures for engagement and burnout may have been excluded. This is an area deserving future research since those studies may also describe the relationships between disengagement as a subdimension of burnout with other variables.

work disengagement agree that work resources encourage engagement and work demands induce work disengagement, either because they are stress stimuli (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), or they alter the psychological safety and meaningfulness of work (Kahn, 1990).

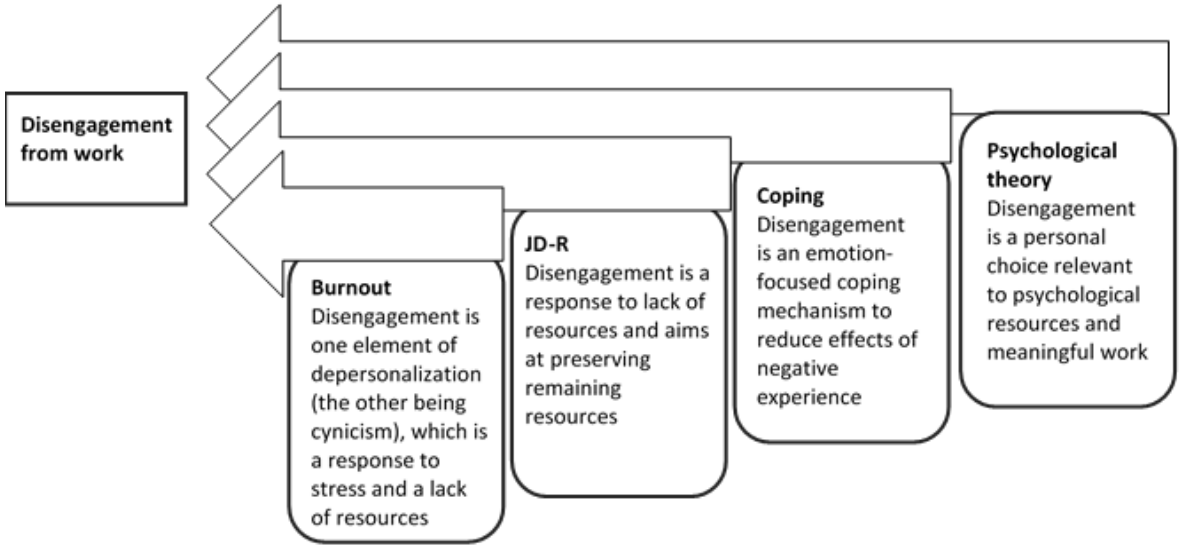

Figure 2: Conceptualization of work disengagement by different theories

1.1 Job Demands-Resources and Burnout

The most widely used definition (cited in 14 of the 41 studies) is that offered by Demerouti et al. (2001, p. 501), which defines disengagement as "distancing oneself from one's work, and experiencing negative attitudes toward the work object, work content, or one's work in general". Theoretical models used with this definition are often burnout theory or the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R), where disengagement is regarded as an aspect of burnout.

Burnout theory, developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981), suggests three separate but related dimensions define burnout: exhaustion (feeling emotionally drained and overextended), disengagement (cynical and negative attitudes and feelings), and ineffectiveness (negative evaluation of self at work and feeling unhappy about self). The model sees burnout as erosion of engagement and posits that the three aspects of burnout contrast with engagement's three aspects, which are energy, involvement, and effectiveness.

Different psychological processes account for producing each experience (Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009) with depersonalization and disengagement occurring as a result of the stress caused by depleted resources.

The JD-R framework (Demerouti et al., 2001) expands upon burnout theory and proposes disengagement and exhaustion as core dimensions of burnout, with vigor, absorption, and dedication being the core dimensions of engagement. Work demands are the main drivers of burnout, and work resources are the primary drivers of engagement. As with the burnout model, JD-R considers burnout and engagement to be distinct concepts related to employees' well-being. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) argue that while in practice burnout and engagement are likely to be negatively related, they may not be the perfect mirror image of one another. If employees are not engaged, it does not necessarily mean they are burned-out and vice versa – the fact they are not burned-out does not necessarily imply they are engaged. In addition, if burnout and engagement are measured by the same questions, their relationships or their validity cannot be analyzed simultaneously (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

The distinctiveness of disengagement in burnout is further emphasized by the instruments typically used to measure it, namely the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). The OLBI developed by Demerouti et al. (2003) comprises two subscales, disengagement and exhaustion, which together represent burnout. Each scale includes negatively and positively worded questions to measure different ends as disengagement-dedication and vigor-exhaustion. UWES has three sub-scales for dedication, vigor, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002) and two sub-scales for exhaustion and disengagement. Scoring low on dedication, vigor, and absorption, and high on exhaustion and depersonalization is indicative of disengagement. The factor structure for this instrument indicates disengagement is a subdimension of burnout, and burnout and engagement scales are negatively related (Demerouti et al., 2010).

1.2 Coping

Another approach to defining disengagement from work (cited in eight of the 41 studies) derives from coping theory. In this definition work disengagement is viewed as an adaptive coping effort that helps people deal with the undesirable conditions and demanding or negative emotional experience (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Articles that used the coping definition consistently drew upon the stress and coping theory of Lazarus and Folkman, and framed coping as adaptive behavioral, emotional, and cognitive efforts in response to stressful events caused by the imbalance between demands and resources (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus, 1993; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). To measure disengagement as a coping effort, researchers often used the coping inventory (COPE) developed by Carver, Scheier, and Weintraub (1989). This instrument measures coping style and process, personality disposition, and temporary choices of coping.

Some studies (six of the 41 selected) linked JD-R and coping frameworks with the conservation of resources theory (e.g. Innstrand et al., 2008). Conservation of resources theory suggests "individuals strive to obtain, retain, foster, and protect those things they centrally value [resources]" (Hobfoll, 2011, p. 117). Resource constraints (e.g. lack of self-confidence) will thus be a stressor that causes people to disengage in order to prevent further loss of resources and preserve remaining resources (Fila, Purl, & Griffeth, 2017).

1.3 Psychological theory of disengagement

The psychological theory (also called the theory of personal disengagement from work), defines disengagement as an "uncoupling of selves from work roles; in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances" (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). This definition is cited in six of the 41 studies. As with the JD-R framework and coping theory, the psychological theory of disengagement suggests

lack of resources affect work disengagement, but it goes further in proposing that lack of resources create the psychological conditions that cause work disengagement. The theory suggests perception of three psychological conditions – "meaningfulness", "safety", and "availability" – affect people's decisions on whether to invest themselves in work, or take distance and disengage from it (Kahn, 1990, p. 703). Psychological meaningfulness is the feeling individuals experience because of investing themselves in what they do. Psychological safety is the feeling individuals receive when they bring their true selves i.e. their ideas, opinions, feelings – the person they are and want to be without fear of negative consequences to their status, self-image, or career (Kahn, 1990). Psychological availability is the individual's belief that they have enough resources (e.g. physical, psychological) to invest themselves at work. Kahn suggests disengaged individuals continue to perform the tasks but will choose to take cognitive, emotional, and physical distance and will not invest their true selves into the work (Kahn, 1990, 1992, 2013). Those articles that used the psychological theory of disengagement (Kahn, 1990) mostly applied qualitative methods. Where quantitative methods were applied, researchers used the UWES to assess disengagement (Chen et al., 2013).[2]

1.4 Other definitions and measures of work disengagement

Some researchers used other definitions and measures than those mentioned above. For example, Gaillard and Desmette (2008) refer to psychological disengagement as "a detachment of self-esteem from external feedback or outcomes in a particular domain, such that feelings of self-worth are not dependent on successes or failures in that domain'' (Major

[2] Two other measures have been developed for the psychological disengagement theory, by (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004) and Rich, Lepine, and Crawford (2010), but none of the studies reviewed here use either of these measures.

and Schmader, 1998, cited in Gaillard & Desmette, 2008, p. 220). Measures such as the intention to leave (e.g. Duxbury & Halinski, 2014), Motivation and Engagement Scale – Work, MES-Work (Collie, Granziera, & Martin, 2018), and the Ways of Coping Checklist, WCC (e.g. Long, 1993) have also been used by scholars who study work disengagement. Finally, some studies did not state a definition for work disengagement in the manuscript but conceptually relied on the coping theory and JD-R (e.g. Chen & Cunradi, 2008; Petrou & Demerouti, 2010). Table 2 summarizes how disengagement from work is theorized and measured across the literature and illustrates the commonalities and differences in conceptualizing it.

Table 2: Definitions, theoretical frameworks, and measures of disengagement used in the reviewed articles

Definition of work disengagement used in the study	**Framework applied for study**	**Measure used**	**Study**
Distancing oneself from work, and experiencing negative attitudes toward the work object, work content, or work in general	Burnout	OLBI	Bakker and Heuven (2006); Demerouti et al. (2014); Innstrand et al. (2008); Karatepe (2011); Karatepe et al. (2012); Løvseth et al. (2013); Pundt and Venz (2017) Thanacoody et al. (2014)
	JD-R	OLBI	Bakker et al. (2004); Demerouti et al. (2001); Peterson et al. (2008)
	Social influence	OLBI	Hunter et al. (2013); Koch and Binnewies (2015)
	Demand-Control	UWES	Rubino et al. (2012)
Cognitive and behavioral efforts to master, reduce, or tolerate the internal and external demands that are created by a stressful event	Coping	COPE	Day and Livingstone (2001); Kaiseler et al. (2014); Nielsen and Knardahl (2014); Riolli and Savicki (2010); Smith et al. (2013)
		Other survey[3]	Goussinsky (2012)
Limited investment in one's work, withdrawing and defending oneself physically, cognitively, or emotionally during work role performances	Psychological conditions	Qualitative	Kahn (1990); Parkinson and McBain (2013); Shuck et al. (2011)
	Self-enhancement	UWES	Chen et al. (2013)
	Social exchange theory	UWES	Umer Azeem et al. (2020)

[3] Denotes when researchers devise their own survey, rather than using OBLI, COPE or UWES

Definition of work disengagement used in the study	Framework applied for study	Measure used	Study
	JD-R	MES-Work	Collie et al. (2018)
Distancing (defending) from work to protecting oneself	Stereotype threat/ discrimination	Other survey	Emerson and Murphy (2015); Gaillard and Desmette (2008); Tougas et al. (2005)
	Life-span theory of control	Other survey	Körner et al. (2012)
No definition specified	Coping	COPE	Chen and Cunradi (2008); Lowe and Bennett (2003)
		Other survey	Morimoto et al. (2015)
		Qualitative	Boyd et al. (2014); Plester and Hutchison (2016)
		UWES	Cheng et al. (2014)
		WCC	Long (1993)
	Psychological conditions	Qualitative	Keeble-Ramsay and Armitage (2015)
	JD-R	OLBI	Petrou and Demerouti (2010)
	Organizational commitment	Other survey	Duxbury and Halinski (2014)
	Self-regulation	COPE	Niessen et al. (2010)

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Antecedents of work disengagement

Despite using different theoretical frameworks, the reviewed studies tended to identify a similar set of variables – either work resources or demands – as antecedents of work disengagement. We have clustered these variables into three groups of factors:

(1) Individual characteristics

(2) Job Attributes

(3) Organizational and workplace conditions

Developing this typology allows us to identify commonalities in the empirical findings that transcend the different theoretical frameworks used in the research, and helps explain the mechanisms by which these antecedents affect disengagement (Table 3).

1.5 Individual characteristics

Unsurprisingly individual characteristics – for example demographics and traits – can affect work disengagement. Age for example, is an important characteristic in studies that compare the employees over the age of 50 with their younger peers, with the former group being more disengaged from new programs and practices introduced into the organizations. Here disengagement may originate from cognitive identification with older colleagues instead of younger peers (Gaillard & Desmette, 2008) and act as a coping effort in response to work uncertainty, work continuation, and perceived discrimination and prejudice (Duxbury & Halinski, 2014; Gaillard & Desmette, 2008). Education is another antecedent of work disengagement, with a lower level of education increasing it (Karatepe, 2011). It serves as a resource, helping to acquire self- understanding, gaining skills, and having greater confidence.

1 Table 3: Typology of work disengagement antecedents and their mechanism of effect

Antecedents (resources/demands)	**Influence**	**Studies**
Individual characteristics		
Age (above 50)	Creates feelings of exclusion and higher cognitive identification with similar age colleagues	Gaillard and Desmette (2008); Duxbury and Halinski (2014)
Education (reverse)	Adds to self-knowledge, skills, self-confidence	Karatepe (2011)
Negative affectivity	Drains and consume available resources	Goussinsky (2012); Karatepe, Babakus, and Yavas (2012); Shuck, Rocco, and Albornoz (2011)
Self-efficacy (reverse)	Generates the belief that one's skill and abilities are enough to cope with work demands and succeed	Goussinsky (2012)
Career orientation	Encourages safety and prevents resource loss	Petrou and Demerouti (2010)
Adaptability (reverse)	Helps responding to change and uncertainty	Collie et al. (2018)
Job Attributes		
Stress and exhaustion	Consumes resources and can be caused by: Emotional dissonance, work overload, difficult tasks, job ambiguity, traumatic event at work, time pressure	Bakker and Heuven (2006); Karatepe (2011); Chen and Cunradi (2008); Day and Livingstone (2001); Goussinsky (2012); Long (1993); Lowe and Bennett (2003); Løvseth et al. (2013); Morimoto, Shimada, and Tanaka (2015); Nielsen and Knardahl (2014); Riolli and Savicki (2010); Rubino et al. (2012); Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke (2004)
	Stress can also cause exhaustion then disengagement	Thanacoody, Newman, and Fuchs (2014)
Line management attitude and behavior/ management style	Threatens workers' positive self-image and their identity caused by: - Lack of support, feedback, and communication from line managers	Keeble-Ramsay and Armitage (2014); Petrou and Demerouti (2010); Smith et al. (2013); Shuck et al. (2011); Kahn (1990)
	- Supporting work-life balance resource (reverse)	Koch and Binnewies (2015); Körner et al., 2012

Antecedents (resources/demands)	**Influence**	**Studies**
	- Servant leadership, empowering management, and using humor in leadership style (reverse) - Micromanagement/autocratic management style	Hunter et al. (2013); Peterson et al. (2008); Pundt and Venz (2017) Parkinson and McBain (2013); Keeble-Ramsay and Armitage (2014)
Lack of autonomy and control/nature of work	Threatens self-determination, feeling of competence, psychological needs, meaning, and psychological safety	Bakker et al. (2004); Kahn (1990); Løvseth et al. (2013); Peterson et al. (2008); Rubino et al. (2012); Collie et al. (2018); Kahn (1990); Parkinson and McBain (2013)
Job insecurity	Creates mistrust and a need to protect one's self from future damage or negative consequences for career	Cheng, Mauno, and Lee (2014); Parkinson and McBain (2013)
Organizational and workplace conditions		
Culture and climate	Threatens self-identity, self-confidence, positive self-image, and organizational identity; can be caused by: - Supportive co-workers/social network (reverse) - Incivility and aggression/ work discrimination/violation of psychological contract - Social validation at work (reverse) - Culture of work-family - Not gaining workgroup membership; being outsider - Organizational culture that undermines people ability to progress	Bakker et al. (2004); Duxbury and Halinski (2014); Kahn (1990); Long (1993); Løvseth et al. (2013); Peterson et al. (2008); Shuck et al. (2011) Chen et al. (2013); Tougas et al. (2005); Umer Azeem et al. (2020) Kahn (1990); Smith et al. (2013) Innstrand et al. (2008); Kahn (1990) Duxbury and Halinski (2014); Gaillard and Desmette (2008) Emerson and Murphy (2015)
Lack of development opportunities	Threatens sense of achievement and meaningfulness	Bakker et al. (2004)
Poor communication	Diminishes trust and reliability, creates fear, and creates a threat to self-image and career	Plester and Hutchison (2016); Parkinson and McBain (2013); Boyd, Tuckey, and Winefield (2014); Kahn (1990)

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Negative affectivity and self-efficacy also have an impact on work disengagement, although in different contexts. Individual differences in experiencing negative emotions and a negative view of themselves (negative affectivity) increases work disengagement (Goussinsky, 2012; Karatepe et al., 2012; Shuck et al., 2011). Negative emotions are encouraged by external stimuli, for example exposure to aggressive customers (Goussinsky, 2012) and people use disengagement as a coping effort to deal with their experience. In contrast, self-efficacy – an individual's self-confidence in successfully performing behaviors to produce an outcome (Gruman & Saks, 2011) – reduces work disengagement (Goussinsky, 2012). Self-efficacy determines whether people can cope with or need to avoid situations that exceed their skills and abilities. Adaptability and resilience towards work uncertainties also reduce work disengagement. People who cope with work uncertainty and deal with the challenging situations, for example by adapting their activities, are better equipped to handle work demands, and hence see less need to disengage from it to protect themselves (Collie et al., 2018). These findings are consistent with the broaden-and-build perspective where trait positive affectivity and resilience serve to regulate the negative emotions and help people find positive meanings in what they do (Fredrickson, 2013).

Individuals' career orientation also affects disengagement. Comparison of the 'promotion' and 'prevention' work preference shows that people are less disengaged from work when their focus is 'promotion', that is, they are looking for improvement at work. Individuals with 'prevention' preferences, however, seek safety at work and thus take more distance from their work especially in the face of change (Petrou & Demerouti, 2010).

1.6 Job attributes

Disengagement can also be caused by job attributes that exceed workers' resources, presumably because of stress and exhaustion. Stress can be related to day to day work such as time pressures to deliver to targets (Løvseth et al., 2013; Rubino et al., 2012) or the

emotional dissonance (Bakker & Heuven, 2006; Karatepe, 2011). These situations act as stressors because they place extra demands on people and exceed their available resources (Chen & Cunradi, 2008; Long, 1993; Morimoto et al., 2015). So employees use disengagement as behavioral, cognitive, and emotional effort to manage the demands (Lazarus, 1993).

Some researchers argue for a reciprocal relationship between work disengagement and work stress (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2014) but Bakker et al. (2004) and Thanacoody et al. (2014) suggest the relationship is unidirectional – work stress causes exhaustion, which in turn results in disengagement. Similar effects on disengagement are produced by significant negative or traumatic event at work (acute stress) or by role ambiguity, responsibility for others, role overload, or lack of job motivation which are considered to pose acute stress (Day & Livingstone, 2001; Lowe & Bennett, 2003; Riolli & Savicki, 2010).

Supervisors and line managers play a key role in work disengagement too. This could be related to their management style, attitude, or the quality of support and feedback they provide to employees. Supervisors are representatives of the organization, and their care, support, and feedback indicate to employees how the organization views them and their performance. Listening and providing helpful feedback also help employees feel competent and involved. Regardless of workers' personal preferences, those who receive feedback and support from their supervisors are less disengaged from their work (Collie et al., 2018; Petrou & Demerouti, 2010). Lack of validation, communication, guidance, and caring from supervisors, however, result in employees disengaging from their work or the organization (Kahn, 1990; Keeble-Ramsay & Armitage, 2014; Shuck et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2013) to maintain and protect their positive self-image. As a result, employees with supervisors who support a balanced work-life relationship experience higher wellbeing and are less disengaged and exhausted (Koch & Binnewies, 2015).

Management style also affects employees' sense of freedom to make choices and take independent decisions, which in turn, reinforces or threatens employees' positive self-identity (Pundt & Venz, 2017). Management style also serves to magnify or reduce the sense of social inequality between managers and employees in the organization and affect employees' self-image (Hunter et al., 2013). Taking emotional and cognitive distance from work (i.e. disengaging) allows employees to protect and defend their positive self-image and identity. Examples include higher disengagement in organizations where supervisors are autocratic and intimidating (Keeble-Ramsay & Armitage, 2014) or when they micromanage people (Parkinson & McBain, 2013). Servant leadership and an empowering management style, on the other hand, reduce work disengagement (Hunter et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2008). Work disengagement is also lower where the managers embed humor in their behavior and communication style (Pundt & Venz, 2017).

The relationship between work disengagement and employees' lack of control and decision making (Bakker et al., 2004; Collie et al., 2018; Kahn, 1990; Løvseth et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2008; Rubino et al., 2012) arises logically from the JD-R framework's identification of autonomy as a resource that encourages self-determination and a sense of competence, and reduces the feeling of being emotionally drained and consumed and subsequent disengagement (Collie et al., 2018). An alternative interpretation is that autonomy reduces disengagement through its role as a prerequisite for psychological safety.

Where is work is unchallenging, uncreative or dull, this may serve to increase work disengagement, as work will not fulfill the psychological needs and meanings that are important to people (Kahn, 1990; Parkinson & McBain, 2013). Job insecurity and uncertainty about future work in the organization also encourages disengagement from work because they damage trust in the organization, so employees take behavioral, cognitive, and

emotional distance and disengage to protect themselves and maintain their self-identity (Cheng et al., 2014; Parkinson & McBain, 2013).

1.7 Organizational and workplace conditions

Disengagement can also be influenced by the work environment, including how employees are recognized and appreciated at their workplace, and how organizational practices, policies, and climates affect them. Work disengagement is generally higher where organizational cultural assumptions view people's abilities and intellect to be unchangeable, compared to organizations that nurture people's development (Emerson & Murphy, 2015). Employees' perception of negative feedback, as well as the potential threat to their identity can make them decide to disengage from work to protect themselves (Emerson & Murphy, 2015).

Workplace incivility and betrayal, and being exposed to aggressive social behaviors at work, also creates a threat to workers' identity and the positive self-image that they seek to maintain. Workplace incivility inhibits opportunity for self-enhancement, so employees who experience such behaviors disengage from work to protect themselves (Chen et al., 2013). Betrayal on the other hand (for example when organizations violate their psychological contract with the employees) makes employees feel their efforts are not reciprocated (Umer Azeem et al., 2020). Discrimination is also a threat to one's positive image, identity, and self-esteem, and hence increases work disengagement (Tougas et al., 2005).

Work group relationships also affect disengagement. Employees who do not gain membership of a work group could protect their positive self-image by disengaging from the work domain either as a coping (Long, 1993) or a defensive effort (Kahn, 1990). Disengagement allows them to lessen the importance of work in the social validation of their success and failure. Not surprisingly, having a close social relationship with co-workers and receiving support and positive feedback from them reduces work disengagement (Bakker et al., 2004; Duxbury & Halinski, 2014; Kahn, 1990; Long, 1993; Løvseth et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2008; Shuck et al., 2011). Indeed the social validation from peers contributes to the development of organizational identification that in turn, discourages work disengagement (Kahn, 1990; Smith et al., 2013).

Innstrand et al. (2008) found work disengagement declined in organizations that facilitated work-family balance. Therefore, although work-family conflict is a stressor and can increase employees' tendency to disengage from their work, organizations can facilitate the segmentation of professional and personal life and hence reduce work disengagement among their employees. Lack of opportunities for professional development equally increases work disengagement. Career prospects serve as a meaningful purpose and in its absence individuals tend to become disengaged from work (Bakker et al., 2004; Körner, Reitzle, & Silbereisen, 2012).

Finally, organizations that are characterized by hierarchy, and bureaucracy create fear of negative consequences, and thus eliminate the conditions necessary for psychological safety. Not surprisingly, to protect their self-image (Kahn, 1990; Parkinson & McBain, 2013) employees take distance and disengagement from work. Work disengagement can also be a byproduct of poorly communicated plans and policies which (Plester & Hutchison, 2016). Effective communication creates trust and reduces stress particularly during the

organizational change, which in turn, decreases work disengagement (Boyd et al., 2014; Kahn, 1990).

Outcomes of work disengagement

We identified relatively fewer studies examining the outcomes of work disengagement. In considering the possible impact of disengagement on employee performance, Demerouti, Bakker, and Leiter (2014) argue that performance is a multi-dimensional construct, and while role demands guide task behaviors, people do not necessarily psychologically engage with the task (Kahn, 1990). Individuals could thus perform their tasks well, despite taking cognitive and emotional distance and not investing all their emotions and energy into their work. This could explain why research on disengagement-performance relationship produces inconsistent findings. In some studies there is no evidence that disengagement results in poor performance (Demerouti et al., 2014; Kahn, 1990) and in others (Bakker et al., 2004; Bakker & Heuven, 2006) it is negatively related to "in-role" and doing required tasks or "extra-role" performance and going beyond the requirements.

Studies of disengagement that examined turnover intentions as their outcome variable were carried out in different contexts – banking professionals, (Umer Azeem et al., 2020), healthcare professionals with an average tenure of nearly eight years (Thanacoody et al., 2014) and newly-recruited organizational members with less than one year's tenure (Smith et al., 2013). In both relationships, disengagement was a coping effort and a reaction to a stressor as theories on coping and burnout assert, and it predicted turnover intentions.

Disengagement also predicted affective commitment (Thanacoody et al., 2014). It reduces effort and emotional attachment to work, which is regarded as a reduced affective commitment towards the organization. Here disengagement was a coping effort in response to lack of work resources and aimed to prevent further loss of resources. Understandably,

greater organizational commitment was an outcome of low work disengagement which was motivated by managers' support (Collie et al., 2018). Previous work-role disengagement also resulted in a higher pursuit of learning for the new role (Niessen, Binnewies, & Rank, 2010). It could be argued that individuals who change their career due to disengagement can benefit in the long run, insofar as such a career change is in their interests.

Finally, disengagement as a coping strategy worsened the relationship between work stressors (acute and chronic) and health, for example causing symptoms such as physical pain and psychological unease (Cheng et al., 2014; Day & Livingstone, 2001; Kahn, 1990; Kaiseler et al., 2014; Long, 1993; Nielsen & Knardahl, 2014).

Implications for research

Having reviewed the existing research on work disengagement, we can now address the question of why and under what conditions disengagement occurs. We have offered a typology of antecedents ("individual characteristics", "job attributes" and "organizational and workplace conditions"), which can be applied regardless of the underpinning theory (Table 3). An important insight offered by this typology is that all theoretical frameworks offer similar mechanisms to explain the effect of antecedents on work disengagement. These mechanisms are a) striving to find meaning and psychological safety at work, b) protecting self-image and identity, and c) minimizing the experience of exhaustion and negative emotions. This suggests the antecedents do not differ in their mechanism of effect, but they do differ in the contexts in which they cause work disengagement. In other words, some antecedents may be more important than others in some contexts. This is a useful step towards achieving some degree of integration within the field and offering a platform to develop fresh research on work disengagement. Future research can, for example, study whether personality traits mediate the effect of job attributes and workplace conditions.

Traits such as self-efficacy may regulate the negative emotions as described by broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2013) and make individuals more prepared to deal with the work demands.

There is a need for more internal consistency in research designs, to ensure the definition, theoretical framework, and measure used all align. The bulk of the studies reviewed here draw upon theoretical frameworks which treat disengagement as an aspect of burnout, a broader phenomenon that also includes exhaustion and ineffectiveness, while engagement comprises dedication, absorption, and vigor. This distinction is critical, theoretically and empirically, and needs to be borne in mind when designing studies. The three aspects of burnout (disengagement, exhaustion, and ineffectiveness), and three dimensions of engagement (dedication, vigor, and absorption) can be measured independently (e.g. by the OLBI or MBI), and workers' scores may vary on each variable, reflecting different patterns of well-being. For example, workers may score high on exhaustion but low on disengagement.

Greater rigor can also be supported by using measures such as OLBI and UWES, which treat disengagement as a distinct variable for which the discriminant validity is well-established (Demerouti et al., 2003; Demerouti et al., 2010). Theoretically, a continuing state of burnout will result in poor health and diminished well-being. Nonetheless, in many occupations – for instance nursing, medicine, and teaching – we see evidence of workers who continue to perform their tasks and do not take distance or disengage from work despite being exhausted and feeling burned out (Campbell Jr et al., 2001; Farber, 2000; Gopal et al., 2005; Martins Pereira, Fonseca, & Sofia Carvalho, 2011). Rather than studying this phenomenon in isolation, we encourage study designs which include all aspects of burnout (disengagement, exhaustion, and ineffectiveness), and engagement (dedication, vigor, and absorption). The inclusion of these variables, which are theoretically and empirically distinct from one

another, helps researchers directly evaluate the relationships between them and assess the conditions under which people score particularly high on work disengagement. This will also address the methodological problem that measures of burnout and engagement are aligned with their underlying framework only when all dimensions are included (Cole et al., 2012; Viljevac, Cooper-Thomas, & Saks, 2012). We noted earlier the value of thinking in terms of engagement, lack of engagement and disengagement (Gallup, 2017), and we recommend far greater use of this distinction. Although we stress the importance of studying disengagement as a separate phenomenon, that does not one should ignore engagement. On the contrary, research on disengagement could contribute to more nuanced practitioner approaches to engagement.

Paying attention to the theories of disengagement indicates a need for further research to examine disengagement in its organizational context, since it is a context related phenomenon (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Kahn, 1990). Different theoretical frameworks may be more suited to different contexts. For example, where the risk of burnout is a concern, it would make sense for researchers to draw upon the JD-R and burnout theories, as these offer better insight to why employees take distance from their work and disengage. Where the reasons for disengagement are more linked to the motivational or relational aspects of work, other theories may be more applicable. For example, Gaillard and Desmette (2008) used JD-R to examine the relationship between disengagement and work group membership. Using JD-R led them to treat membership as a resource, but an alternative explanation, grounded in the psychological theory of disengagement, is that membership and sense of belonging enhance meaning and purpose, the conditions necessary for remaining engaged with work (Allan, 2017; Bailey et al., 2017; Lysova et al., 2019; Walsh & Gordon, 2008). Despite its role in originating the field (Kahn, 1990) we observe that the psychological theory of disengagement has been somewhat neglected, yet it offers significant

insights for developing further understanding of disengagement, being broadly consistent with existing research but offering additional explanations which can cover a broader range of situations.

An important insight from our review is the limited research on the consequences of work disengagement. This is concerning given the prevalent assumption that disengagement from work is negative and costly for the organizations (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Truss et al., 2013), which has resulted in widespread adoption of organizational policies and practices aimed at dealing with 'disengaged' employees (Kulik, Perera, & Cregan, 2016). We need further research on the outcomes of disengagement, which can explain the reasons for variable findings on its impact, for example, on organizational performance (Bakker et al., 2004; Bakker & Heuven, 2006; Demerouti et al., 2014).

Implications for practice

Adopting an approach that distinguishes disengagement from engagement is also important for practice, to avoid drawing simplistic conclusions such as assuming productivity falls if workers are not engaged. We encourage practitioners to move away from thinking in terms of engaged versus disengaged employees, at the very least drawing upon the threefold distinction between engaged, not engaged and disengaged (Gallup, 2017) They could also think in terms of levels of engagement and disengagement, and the potential for employees to have differing levels in different domains. This view is in line with Saks and Gruman (2014), who suggested workers may be disengaged from only some of their work domains among their numerous work roles, job tasks, and responsibilities.

In terms of HR practice, if an organizational environment recognizes employees' skills and abilities and promotes psychological safety, it is less likely individuals will take distance and disengage from their work. Most studies suggest job attributes and workplace

conditions largely account for work disengagement, which ignores the possibility that non-work factors might trigger it. We can readily imagine a highly engaged employee feeling it necessary to disengage temporarily in order to cope with unexpected additional demands on their resources created by life events such as bereavement, ill-health, family problems, etc. Future engagement intervention need to be built upon an understanding that even the most high performing employees may at times need to disengage to protect themselves from high demands and exhaustion, which would otherwise damage their health and well-being (Schaufeli et al., 2009).

While availability of work resources drives engagement, a broader set of resources may be required to prevent disengagement. We therefore encourage organizations to establish a genuine dialogue with their employees to understand their needs for resources. Engagement surveys could be developed to provide a more comprehensive picture of the organization by tapping in to different aspects of burnout (including disengagement) as week as engagement. This could enrich the organization's understanding of individuals and their needs and aim at improving their employees' conditions based on genuine efforts to understand them. Even if the organization cannot always provide enough resources, such efforts create trust and convey to employees their employer's concern for their well-being.

Where organizational resources are limited, priority can be given to a gradual improvement of the conditions by focusing on different aspects of burnout/engagement (Saks & Gruman, 2014). For instance, they could direct interventions towards reducing exhaustion and improving vigor, key aspects of burnout and engagement respectively. Once these aspects are improved, they could direct their efforts towards improving dedication and reducing disengagement. Since disengagement is the result of a gap between resources and work demands, by implication, organizations either need to provide enough resources to close the gap or be more pragmatic in the demands they make of their employees. Providing

enough resources to employees not only helps against work strain and depletion of their mental and physical resources but also prevents burnout and improves their well-being (Gruman & Saks, 2011).

These interventions have an overlapping effect on other aspects of employees' work conditions and contribute towards their resources. For example, an intervention that aims at increasing perception of autonomy simultaneously improves employees' self-image and strengthens their organizational identification, which in turn increases their work resources and hence, their well-being (Knight, Patterson, & Dawson, 2017). Also group interventions are shown to be more effective than individual interventions (Maricuţoiu, Sava, & Butta, 2016). Group interventions also help develop relationships across organizational levels and among employees and managers. So it improves organizational climate and support and sense of identity and belonging with the group, all of which provides resources which should reduce disengagement (Knight et al., 2017).

Conclusion

Engagement has become one of those management concepts which break through to the public consciousness, while disengagement has been largely viewed as something negative for organizations. Yet our review of theory and research shows unequivocally that disengagement and engagement can have different antecedents and affect different organizational outcomes (Figure 1), and hence both are important in their own right. The disengaged employee is someone who has temporarily taken distance from work because work related demands are more than the individual can cope with at the time. Disengagement is thus a way of dealing with demands that exceed resources and helps in preserving the remaining resources. Logically then currently disengaged workers are more likely to have been previously engaged with their work, since the 'not engaged' worker is directing fewer

resources towards their employment, and thus has less need to disengage to protect those resources. If we assume the disengaged employee is making a functional, self-protective choice to disengage temporarily, then efforts aimed at increasing their engagement are not merely misplaced, they are potentially harmful. The disengaged employee is more likely to be in need of an employee assistance program than an employee engagement program. The use of more sophisticated interventions, based on research on disengagement as well as engagement, holds out the promise for organizations of being able to enhance engagement while supporting employees in ways which will also minimize the need for disengagement.

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Appendix A

Table A1

Articles selected for review

	Author (Year). ***Journal***	**Population**	**Sample**	**Method/ Measure**
1	Bakker et al. (2004). *Human Resource Management*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, The Netherlands	146	OLBI
2	Bakker and Heuven (2006). *International Journal of Stress Management*	Nurses and police officers, The Netherlands	209	OLBI
3	Boyd et al. (2014). *Stress and Health*	Employees of an organization at different positions, Australia	4	Case study
4	Chen and Cunradi (2008). *Work and Stress*	Transit operators, U.S.	1231	COPE
5	Chen et al. (2013). *Academy of Management Journal*	Technicians/sales clerks, China	235/204	UWES
6	Cheng et al. (2014). *Economic and Industrial Democracy*	Health and social care and service employees, Finland	2764	UWES
7	Collie et al. (2018). *Teaching and Teacher Education*	Secondary school teachers, Australia	164	MES
8	Day and Livingstone (2001). *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*	Military personnel, Canada	620	COPE
9	Demerouti et al. (2001). *Journal of Applied Psychology*	Human services, industry, and transport employees, Germany	374	OLBI
10	Demerouti et al. (2014). *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, The Netherlands	294	OLBI
11	Duxbury and Halinski (2014). *Journal of Organizational Change Management*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, Canada	5588	Other survey[4]
12	Emerson and Murphy (2015). *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*	Undergraduates, U.S.	144/172	Other survey
13	Gaillard and Desmette (2008). *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, Belgium	152	Other survey

[4] Denotes when researchers devise their own survey, rather than using OBLI, COPE or UWES

	Author (Year). *Journal*	Population	Sample	Method/ Measure
14	Goussinsky (2012). *Journal of Service Management*	Call center employees at different positions/employees with various service roles, Israel	187/516	Other survey
15	Hunter et al. (2013). *Leadership Quarterly*	Employees of a retail organization, U.S.	224	OLBI
16	Innstrand et al. (2008). *Work and Stress*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, Norway	2235	OLBI
17	Kahn (1990). *Academy of Management Journal*	Summer camp counselors and members of an architecture firm, U.S.	186	Observation, in-depth interviews, self-reflection, document analysis
18	Kaiseler et al. (2014). *Psychological Reports*	Male police recruits enrolled in the police academy, Portugal	387	COPE
19	Karatepe (2011). *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*	Frontline employees at a hotel, Turkey	620	OLBI
20	Karatepe et al. (2012). *International Journal of Hospitality Management*	Frontline employees at a hotel, Turkey	620	OLBI
21	Keeble-Ramsay and Armitage (2014). *Journal of Workplace Learning*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, UK	62	Focus groups
22	Koch and Binnewies (2015). *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, Germany	312	OLBI
23	Körner et al. (2012). *Journal of Vocational Behavior*	German adults, Germany	1751	Other survey
24	Long (1993). *Journal of Vocational Behavior*	Male managers at different positions from different sectors, Canada	82	Other survey
25	Løvseth et al. (2013). *Stress and Health*	Physicians, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Italy	2095	OLBI
26	Lowe and Bennett (2003). *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*	Female nurses, UK	107	COPE

	Author (Year). *Journal*	Population	Sample	Method/ Measure
27	Morimoto et al. (2015). *Japanese Psychological Research*	healthcare professionals working in hospitals, Japan	373	Other survey
28	Nielsen and Knardahl (2014). *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, Norway	3738	COPE
29	Niessen et al. (2010). *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, Germany	131	COPE
30	Parkinson and McBain (2013). *Book section*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, UK	24/33	Focus groups, interviews
31	Peterson et al. (2008). *International Journal of Stress Management*	County council employees, Sweden	3719	OLBI
32	Petrou and Demerouti (2010). *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*	Teachers, The Netherlands	352	OLBI
33	Plester and Hutchison (2016). *Employee Relations*	Employees at different positions from different sectors, New Zealand	59	Ethnography
34	Pundt and Venz (2017). *Journal of Organizational Behavior*	Employees in different positions from different sectors, Germany	142	OLBI
35	Riolli and Savicki (2010). *International Journal of Stress Management*	Soldiers, U.S.	632	COPE
36	Rubino et al. (2012). *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*	Employees from a social welfare organization and a hospital, Germany	1033	UWES
37	Shuck et al. (2011). *Journal of European Industrial Training*	Employees in service corporation, U.S.	3	Case study
38	Smith et al. (2013). *Journal of Management*	Employees in a large public-sector organization, Australia	139	COPE
39	Thanacoody et al. (2014). *International Journal of Human Resource Management*	Health professionals, Australia	302	OLBI
40	Tougas et al. (2005). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*	Policewomen, Canada	142	Other survey

	Author (Year). *Journal*	Population	Sample	Method/ Measure
41	Umer Azeem et al. (2020) *Employee Relations*	Banking employees, Pakistan	200	UWES