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# The Moderating Role of Forgiveness in the Relationship between Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction

Moderacyjna rola przebaczenia między zaangażowaniem w pracę a satysfakcją z niej

## SUMMARY

Employee satisfaction is significant both for the employer and for the employees. According to the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, the resources, and especially their interconnection, are important for increasing satisfaction with life in many areas, including job satisfaction. Work engagement combines a high level of pleasure (dedication) with high activation (vigour, absorption). The aim of this study was to analyse the relationships between work engagement, dispositional forgiveness and job satisfaction among employees in an organization. Polish versions of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (adapted by Chirkowska-Smolak), the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (adapted by Kaleta, Mróz, and Guzewicz) and the Satisfaction with Job Scale (developed by Zalewska) were used. The sample consisted of 94 employees aged 20 to 54. The results revealed relationships between work engagement and job satisfaction. In addition, we incorporated the moderating role of forgiveness in the analyses. The outcomes indicated that the association between work engagement and job satisfaction tends to be stronger for employees with high positive forgiveness than for employees with low positive forgiveness.

**Keywords:** Conservation of Resources theory; forgiveness; job satisfaction; work engagement

## INTRODUCTION

Employee satisfaction brings beneficial outcomes in many areas, for example job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001), mental and physical health (Bond & Bunce, 2003; Faragher, Cass, & Cooper, 2005), better functioning in other roles

(Saltzstein, Ting, & Saltzstein, 2001; Judge & Ilies, 2004). This is reflected in the literature where scholars have continued to explore this issue, and indicate that satisfaction with one's job is important for employees. Job satisfaction is defined as giving meaning and quality to professional duties. Generally speaking, definitions of job satisfaction have at least two aspects – emotional and cognitive. Firstly, job satisfaction is evaluated by respective feelings towards the work and feelings generated at work. Secondly, the cognitive aspect refers to what an individual thinks about and how he or she evaluates their work (Zalewska, 2003).

While exploring variables correlating with job satisfaction, the researchers converge around two areas: working conditions (job demands, remuneration, working time) and psychological variables (personality traits, engagement, self--esteem, optimism). The latter factors concern internal predisposition to deal with different adversities, and they have an impact on the environment. As regards the alignment/link with resiliency, these psychological variables could be referred to as resources. According to the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002), resources are defined as "those entities that either are centrally valued in their own right, or act as means to obtain centrally valued ends" (Hobfoll, 2002, p. 307). There are four types of resources, namely objects, conditions, personal characteristics, and energies. Personal resources are aspects of the self that are generally linked to resiliency and refer to individual's sense of ability to control and impact their environment successfully, especially in challenging circumstances (Hobfoll, Johnson, Ennis, & Jackson, 2003; Bakker, 2011).

Work engagement may be an example of beneficial resources for job satisfaction (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). Some authors regard work engagement as a positive resource (Yan, Yang, Su, Luo, & Wen, 2018). Schaufeli and colleagues proposed the most often used definition of work engagement – "positive, work--related state of mind in employees characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002, p. 74). Vigour is manifested by large amounts of energy, persistence and effort put into work despite any encountered difficulties. Dedication is related to the sense of pride, meaning and purpose, as well as inspiration and enthusiasm, and it makes work events feel like a challenge. The last dimension, absorption, refers to being completely focused on the job and having the feeling that time is running very fast. Work engagement is an ongoing process rather than an isolated event. By doing the work systematically, planning, meeting deadlines and obeying rules, employees are able to engage in tasks they were entrusted with and derive satisfaction from them. Some researchers have shown the positive relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction (e.g. Schaufeli, Taris, & van Rhenen, 2008; van Beek, Taris, Schaufeli, & Brenninkmeijer, 2014; Caesens, Stinglhamber, & Luypaert, 2014). Moreover, it has been examined using different research models. For example, work engagement mediated the effect of proactive personal-

ity on job satisfaction among middle school teachers in China (Li, Wang, You, & Gao, 2015), job resources on job satisfaction among German surgeons (Mache, Vitzthum, Klapp, & Danzer, 2014) and tourism involvement on job satisfaction among frontline hotel employees (Yeh, 2013). In other words, for instance, highly tourism-involved employees display a higher level of work engagement than less tourism-involved employees, and greater levels of satisfaction with their job. Additionally, Rayton and Yalabik (2014) tested the mediating role of job satisfaction between psychological contract breach and work engagement. Their results have indicated that employees are more engaged in their work when they feel that their organizations are meeting their obligations and when they are satisfied with their jobs.

Given the aforementioned considerations, we put forward the first hypothesis: Work engagement would be positively associated with job satisfaction.

## FORGIVENESS

Work engagement is a kind of motivation to work, which makes people work better, achieve better results, and be more satisfied with their job (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). However, working life is full of difficult situations that disturb regular work activities. Every employee needs to face conflicts with their co-workers, their own and others' mistakes, inadequate actions, circumstances one's beyond control (time pressure, excessive workloads, changed completion dates, etc.). These situations involve additional skills and resources, such as the ability to generate and implement alternative solutions to problems. One possible favourable strategy might be forgiveness – conceptualized as a single act of pro-social change toward a particular offender (McCullough, Pargament, & Thoresen, 2000), and as forgivingness – one's tendency to forgive across relationships, time, and situations (Roberts, 1995; Berry, Worthington, Parrott, O'Connor, & Wade, 2001; Brown, 2003). In cognitive conceptions, forgiveness is treated as a response to harm and a method of coping with negative thoughts, emotions, or behaviours which a person naturally manifests against the transgressor and consequences of a hurt (Flanigan, 1992; Gordon & Baucom, 1998; Thompson et al., 2005). Forgiveness is about reframing the perceived injustice and modifying person's assumptions about oneself, other people, and the world, so that one's reactions are transformed from negative to neutral, or even positive (Gordon & Baucom, 1998; Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2005; Thompson et al., 2005). It is an active way of restoring difficult relations and improving one's well-being (Wohl, DeShea, & Wahkinney, 2008; Macaskill, 2012), and it also might be conceived as a personal resource as it refers to individual's ability to control and impact their environment successfully (Hobfoll et al., 2003). Forgivingness, in particular, seems to be linked to resiliency.

Forgiveness is not commonly regarded as a potential response to problems in the workplace, whereas forgiving persons think flexibly (Thompson et al., 2005),

are optimistic (Szcześniak & Soares, 2011), and willing to abandon negative thoughts, feelings and behaviours, such as hostility (Thompson et al., 2005) or revenge (Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2001). They are effective in problem solving and conflict resolution and, consequently, more productive, and they cooperate with others in a positive and effective manner. Thus, forgiveness brings benefits both to employees and to the organization (Thompson, Shahen, 2003).

## FORGIVENESS AND JOB SATISFACTION

As regards job satisfaction, researchers have considered forgiveness as an organizational climate, as leaders' behaviour, and as employee tendencies or acts. Most researchers examining forgiveness in the workplace have focused on workplace relationships and interpersonal conflict (Aquino et al., 2001; Cox, 2011; Fehr & Gelfand, 2012). This approach is reasonable because when offences occur in the workplace, forgiveness is a method of restoring damaged relationships, and thus creates a more stable and satisfying workplace environment. According to Cox (2011, p. 2), a forgiveness climate in the organization or work-unit implies a willingness to "overlook offenses, not hold grudges, and work through problems that may arise". In this context, a forgiving work climate may be characterized in terms of cohesiveness, support, and trustworthiness (Cox, 2011). Such climate of forgiveness may influence the reaction of offended employees. Indeed, the study revealed that organizational climate of forgiveness was positively associated with employee tendency to forgive, measured with scenario-based survey for workplace offences. The more individuals perceived their workplace climate as forgiving, the more willing they were to forgive, when workplace offences occurred. Moreover, willingness to forgive was positively related to job satisfaction (Cox, 2011). The results suggest that willingness to forgive mediates the relationship between organizational climate and individual's performance.

Another understanding of an organizational climate of forgiveness is specifically related to workplace errors, and it integrates the concepts of error management and forgiveness (Guchait, Madera, & Dawson, 2016). It includes forgiveness of mistakes, errors, or offences in the workplace, early detection and quick error correction and prevention similar errors in the future. The study conducted in service-based organizations by Guchait, Madera and Dawson (2016) revealed that such perceived forgiveness climate translates into employee attitudes, i.e. job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention to leave. Employees who perceived their organization to be forgiving of mistakes, errors, and offences were more likely to be satisfied with their job, felt more connected to their organization and were less likely to leave their jobs.

Forgiveness is also identified as an important strategy of leaders who want to help the employee to become their best (Kurzynski, 1998; Caldwell &

Dixon, 2010). According to the authors of the Servant Leadership Survey (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011), the forgiveness factor includes accepting errors as a part of the job, forgiving people instead of punishing them and perceiving grudges as dysfunctional. The study by van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between leaders' forgiving style and job satisfaction. The participants of their study represented diverse occupations (e.g., finance, consultancy, health care, education, civil service). Akdol and Arikboga (2015), on the other hand, conducted their online study among employees of fast-growing technology companies. Among several leadership behaviours, only forgiveness had no significant effect on overall job satisfaction. It is possible that the discrepancies in the results lie in different samples, including or not service professions that involve ambiguous interpersonal situations and potential failures beyond employee control.

Taking individual's willingness to forgive and job contentment into consideration, scholars have considered episodic and dispositional forgiveness. The former was examined by Kachoie, Ahmari Tehran, Dehghani, Didehban, and Raisi (2016) who explored the relationships between quality of working life and interpersonal forgiveness in Iranian faculty members. No relationship was found between overall quality of working life and interpersonal forgiveness. Only safe and healthy working condition was correlated with the total score of interpersonal forgiveness and with one its particular components, namely realistic understanding. Law (2013), on the other hand, revealed an association between forgiveness and workplace satisfaction among part-time students from evening classes at universities in Hong-Kong. In her study, benevolence was positively related to workplace satisfaction, while revenge was negatively connected. As regards dispositional forgiveness, the only study we found was conducted by Cox (2011). Nevertheless, she assessed the individual's willingness to forgive varied workplace offences, not a general tendency to forgive across situations and relations. The study revealed positive association between willingness to forgive in the workplace and job satisfaction. As seen, research on dispositional forgiveness in the context of employee satisfaction has been scarce. Moreover, forgiveness in organizational research displays inconclusive associations with individual's quality of working life. Thus, we agree with Law (2013) who indicated the need to gain an in-depth understanding of forgiveness, in particular, its impact on different working outcomes.

## THE MODERATING ROLE OF FORGIVENESS

Based on the above-presented associations between work engagement and job satisfaction, and between forgiveness and job satisfaction, we posited that forgivingness may have a moderating effect on the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction. The moderating role of forgiveness in the pro-

posed model rests on contemporary research and COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002). One of the studied tenets of COR theory is the idea of resource investment (the second principle). People, who possess more resources, are less exposed to their loss and have more capabilities to gain resources in general. According to gain spirals, individuals who experience resource gains will be in a better position to gain even more resources. They are likely to experience increasing levels of resource gains, too. By contrast, people who lack resources are more exposed to their loss (Hobfoll, 1989). Gain spiral and loss spiral were both explained by researchers (Schaufeli et al., 2008; Bakker & Bal, 2010).

Additionally, resources form caravans due to their tendency to generate other resources (Hobfoll, 2002). Forgivingness can be considered as resource passageways that enrich and protect resources and make it possible to obtain, within a caravan, a new resource, which in turn leads to increased job satisfaction. For example, individuals who tend to reframe negative experiences (conflicts with co-workers, their own mistakes, time pressure, etc.) and who are forgiving, simultaneously engage in their tasks job and tend to perceive their organisation as a place where they can flourish, develop and move their career forward. This is compatible with the gain spiral and the caravan resources, in such a way that one resource – work engagement with another resource – tendency to forgive, support each other and lead to higher job satisfaction.

To the best of our knowledge, no study has examined forgiveness and work engagement simultaneously, as related to job satisfaction. Following the assumptions of caravan passageways and the second principle of COR theory, we expected that forgivingness would promote relationships between work engagement and job satisfaction. Work engagement and forgivingness have a stronger combined effect on job satisfaction than separately. In light of the above, we put forward our second hypothesis: Forgivingness will moderate the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction, namely this association will be stronger when forgiveness (general, positive and reduction of unforgiveness) is high, and weaker when forgiveness is low.

## METHOD

### 1. Participants

The sample was selected purposefully and consisted of 94 participants performing service jobs from southern Poland (Kielce area). Women accounted for 90.50% (N = 124) of the group and men for the remaining 9.5% (N = 13). The subjects' age ranged from 20 to 54 with the mean of 37.18 (SD = 10.19), whereas their work experience ranged from 1 to 33 years (M = 18.12; SD = 7.41). All study participants were economically active and they were employed in service indus-

tries (41% in commercial and 59% in non-commercial sectors). Their professions included, e.g., a nurse, waitress, receptionist, seller, guide, coach, account advisor. The sample included both commercial and non-commercial service providers as this approach made it possible to acquire results concerning service professions in general. 50.7% of the participants completed secondary education, 21.3% – college education, whereas 27.9% higher education. Participants most often described their financial situation as average (46.7%) or good (41.6%); 64.7% of the respondents were married, 2.9% were widowed, 5.9% were divorced, whereas the remaining 26.5% were single.

## 2. Measures

Forgiveness. Disposition to forgive was measured with the Polish version (adapted by Kaleta, Mróz, & Guzewicz, 2016) of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson & Shahen, 2003; Thompson et al., 2005). HFS is a multi-dimensional tool assessing dispositional forgiveness of self, others, and situations beyond anyone's control. Participants rate their responses to 18 items on a 7-point scale. Sample items: 'With time I am understanding of myself for mistakes I've made', 'If others mistreat me, I continue to think badly of them', 'I eventually make peace with bad situations in my life'. The original version consists of three subscales (forgiveness of self, forgiveness of others, and forgiveness of situations). However, in the Polish version, the authors obtained a different structure of the scale. The results of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses showed that the hierarchical nine-factor model exhibited the best fit. Consequently, the scale is made of two scales (P scale and N scale) that allow to measure forgiveness in two separate domains – positive (as benevolent thoughts, feelings, and behaviours) and negative (as reduction of hostile thoughts, feelings, and behaviours), and six subscales with the distinction of forgiveness of self, of others, and of situations (P-self, P-others, P-situations, N-self, N-others, N-situations). In the present study, we used three indices: general forgiveness (from 18 to 126 points), and positive and negative dimension (from 9 to 63 points per each). Higher scores on each scale reflect a higher level of forgiveness in every domain. The Total HFS score indicates how forgiving a person tends to be. Reliability and validity of the tool were satisfactory. Cronbach's alpha (internal consistency) values were found as follows: for overall HFS 0,76, for P scale 0,70, and for N scale 0,81.

Work engagement. Work engagement was assessed using the Polish version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-17) (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006) adapted by Chirkowska-Smolak (2012). The UWES is a 17-item scale (full version) and the items are scored on a 7-point scale from 0 (never) to 6 (everyday). Sample items: 'When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work' (vigour – from 0 to 36 points), 'I am enthusiastic about my work' (dedication

– from 0 to 30 points), 'I am immersed in my work' (absorption – from 0 to 36 points). During the adaptation process, Chirkowska-Smolak (2012) tested a one-factor and a three-factor solution. Both models had a good fit. Therefore, the UWES may be treated as a three-factor and a one-factor scale in terms of the total score. In the present study, the full version was used. The scale describes three aspects of engagement: vigour, dedication, absorption. Scale reliability was also confirmed, Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0,77 to 0,92.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was assessed using the Satisfaction with Job Scale developed by Zalewska (2003). It is a 5-item scale measuring general, subjective level of job satisfaction in terms of the cognitive aspect. Each item is rated on a 7-point scale, where 1 means 'I completely disagree', and 7 – 'I absolutely agree'. The internal consistency of the scale is satisfactory (Cronbach's alpha from 0,81 to 0,88).

## RESULTS

Table 1 shows mean values of the variables, standard deviations, and correlations between work engagement, dispositional forgiveness and job satisfaction. As shown, work engagement (vigour, dedication, absorption) and positive forgivingness (general, of others, of situations) were positively correlated with job satisfaction. However, we found no relationship between forgiveness total, overcoming unforgiveness and job satisfaction. Also, only positive forgiveness correlated with work engagement and vigor.

Table 1. Pearson's correlations between the variables

|   |   | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Work engagement | 67.23 | 14.04 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 2 | Vigor | 23.39 | 5.30 | 0.91*** | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 3 | Dedication | 21.29 | 4.83 | 0.90*** | 0.75*** | – | – | – | – | – |
| 4 | Absorption | 22.55 | 5.44 | 0.90*** | 0.71*** | 0.70*** | – | – | – | – |
| 5 | Job satisfaction | 21.44 | 5.41 | 0.43*** | 0.43*** | 0.41*** | 0.34*** | – | – | – |
| 6 | Forgiveness | 79.34 | 10.98 | 0.12 | 0.13 | 0.05 | 0.13 | 0.16 | – | – |
| 7 | Positive forgiveness | 43.15 | 6.03 | 0.20* | 0.23* | 0.13 | 0.19 | 0.21* | 0.69*** | – |
| 8 | Reducing of unforgiveness | 36.19 | 8.11 | 0.00 | 0.00 | –0.03 | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.84*** | 0.19 |

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$
Source: own study.

Linear regression was conducted to investigate the work engagement and forgiveness (general, positive and reducing negative) on the measured of job satis-

faction, we used Model 1 according to Hayes (2013). The findings indicated that general forgivingness was the moderator of the relationship between work engagement (also vigor, dedication and absorption) and job satisfaction (Table 2). Positive forgivingness was the significant moderator in the work engagement (also vigor, dedication and absorption) and job satisfaction link (Table 3). Reducing unforgiveness was not a moderator between work engagement and job satisfaction.

Table 2. Moderated regression analysis predicting job satisfaction from interaction work engagement (general, vigor, dedication, and absorption) and forgiveness total

|  | B | SE | t | LLCI | ULCI | F | $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work engagement | 0.413 | 0.093 | 4.419 | 0.227 | 0.599 | 10.835 | 0.27 |
| Forgiveness | −0.001 | 0.084 | −0.022 | −0.168 | 0.160 | | |
| Work engagement x Forgiveness | 0.349 | 0.122 | 2.851 | 0.105 | 0.592 | | |
| Vigor | 0.380 | 0.089 | 4.260 | 0.202 | 0.557 | 10.428 | 0.26 |
| Forgiveness | 0.070 | 0.078 | 0.905 | −0.084 | 0.225 | | |
| Vigor x Forgiveness | 0.305 | 0.109 | 2.782 | 0.087 | 0.522 | | |
| Dedication | 0.426 | 0.096 | 4.416 | 0.234 | 0.618 | 9.693 | 0.24 |
| Forgiveness | −0.005 | 0.091 | −0.064 | −0.186 | 0.174 | | |
| Dedication x Forgiveness | 0.321 | 0.121 | 2.642 | 0.079 | 0.562 | | |
| Absorption | 0.306 | 0.096 | 3.185 | 0.115 | 0.497 | 5.875 | 0.16 |
| Forgiveness | 0.023 | 0.091 | 0.259 | −0.156 | 0.203 | | |
| Absorption x Forgiveness | 0.244 | 0.122 | 1.991 | 0.001 | 0.487 | | |

Source: own study.

Forgiveness as a moderator there was a significant relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction, whereby the higher forgiveness the stronger the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction. When forgiveness was low there was not a significant relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction (Table 4). Positive forgiveness moderated the relationship between work engagement (also vigor, dedication, and absorption) and job satisfaction in the same way as in the case of general forgiveness. In the case of a high level of positive forgiveness, the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction was significant and strongest than in case of other levels of positive forgiveness. When positive forgiveness was low there was not a significant association between work engagement (also vigor, dedication, and absorption) and job satisfaction (Table 5).

Table 3. Moderated regression analysis predicting job satisfaction from interaction work engagement (general, vigor, dedication, and absorption) and positive forgiveness

|  | B | SE | t | LLCI | ULCI | F | $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work engagement | 0.414 | 0.096 | 4.303 | 0.223 | 0.605 | 9.595 | 0.24 |
| Positive Forgiveness | 0.069 | 0.081 | 0.852 | −0.092 | 0.230 |  |  |
| Work engagement x Positive Forgiveness | 0.177 | 0.082 | 2.144 | 0.013 | 0.341 |  |  |
| Vigor | 0.395 | 0.092 | 4.281 | 0.211 | 0.578 | 9.011 | 0.23 |
| Positive Forgiveness | 0.085 | 0.080 | 1.062 | −0.074 | 0.244 |  |  |
| Vigor x Positive Forgiveness | 0.165 | 0.083 | 1.987 | 0.001 | 0.330 |  |  |
| Dedication | 0.414 | 0.098 | 4.222 | 0.2197 | 0.610 | 8.938 | 0.23 |
| Positive Forgiveness | 0.093 | 0.081 | 1.146 | −0.068 | 0.255 |  |  |
| Dedication x Positive Forgiveness | 0.180 | 0.087 | 2.056 | 0.006 | 0.354 |  |  |
| Absorption | 0.286 | 0.096 | 2.961 | 0.094 | 0.477 | 6.412 | 0.18 |
| Positive Forgiveness | 0.078 | 0.085 | 0.911 | −0.092 | 0.248 |  |  |
| Absorption x Positive Forgiveness | 0.182 | 0.088 | 2.068 | 0.007 | 0.357 |  |  |

Source: own study.

Table 4. Conditional indirect effects of work engagement through job satisfaction at different levels of forgiveness

| Forgiveness as Moderator | Work engagement | Vigor | Dedication | Absorption |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Conditional effects / 95% Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval | Conditional effects / 95% Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval | Conditional effects / 95% Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval | Conditional effects / 95% Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval |
| Low | 0.056/−0.264;0.376 | 0.068/−0.229;0.376 | 0.098/−0.212;0.408 | 0.056/−0.266;0.379 |
| Moderate | 0.428/0.243;0.614 | 0.393/0.216;0.569 | 0.440/0.248;0.632 | 0.316/0.126;0.507 |
| High | 0.712/0.442;0.982 | 0.641/0.395;0.886 | 0.701/0.417;0.985 | 0.515/0.241;0.789 |

Source: own study.

## DISCUSSION

This study explores the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction, and the moderating role of forgivingness between these variables.

The first aim was to investigate the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction. As we expected, our results strongly supported this hypothesis. Additionally, they correspond with prior research which found that greater work engagement is

Table 5. Conditional indirect effects of work engagement through job satisfaction at different levels of positive forgiveness

| Positive forgiveness as Moderator | Work engagement | Vigor | Dedication | Absorption |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Conditional effects / 5% Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval | Conditional effects / 95% Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval | Conditional effects / 95% Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval | Conditional effects / 95% Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval |
| Low | 0.235/–0.025;0.490 | 0.224/–0.020;0.470 | 0.229/–0.031;0.489 | 0.098/–0.176;0.373 |
| Moderate | 0.422/0.231;0.614 | 0.403/0.219;0.586 | 0.423/0.227;0.619 | 0.294/0.103;0.486 |
| High | 0.584/0.338;0.831 | 0.553/0.307;0.801 | 0.588/0.326;0.849 | 0.461/0.2175;0.704 |

Source: own study.

related to a higher level of job satisfaction (van Beek et al., 2014; Caesens et al., 2014). The outcomes are consistent with the second principle of COR, stipulating that when an individual has a lot of resources, he or she will accumulate even more. Employee engagement is a positive resource that involves job satisfaction. Employees are not only positively motivated, immersed in their work, but also satisfied with their job.

The second aim was to examine the moderating role of forgiveness in the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction. The moderating analyses showed support for this hypothesis as and when general forgivingness and positive forgivingness were moderators between work engagement and job satisfaction. No such relationship was found for the negative dimension of forgiveness, which involved only neutralizing resentment after transgression and decreasing negative affect (e.g. bitterness, anger, hostility), negative cognitions (e.g. thoughts of revenge), and negative motivation (e.g. tendency to avoid contact with the offender) (McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997; Rye & Pargament, 2002). By contrast, positive strategy of forgiveness requires positive regard (love, compassion, sympathy, pity, benevolent motivation, approach behaviour) of the person toward him- or herself and others (Enright, 1996; Sells, Hargrave & 1998; Fincham, 2000; Wade & Worthington, 2005). It involves the process of generating new positive thoughts, feelings, and actions based on one's capability to change one's own perspective (Worthington, Witvliet, Pietrini, & Miller, 2007; Toussaint & Friedman, 2009). Our findings suggest that the ability to reframe offences via internal shift to positivity intensifies positive experiences related to job satisfaction. However, this consequence of positive forgiveness occurs only in those employees who are vigorous, dedicated, and absorbed by their work. This complies with the COR theory stipulating that people invest their resources especially in the face of losing something. Individuals who are more engaged in their work have more to lose than those who have invested less. They invest energy, time and they expect to achieve results, therefore, they are more involved in launching other resources, such as positive forgiveness, in order not to lose sight of what they have already achieved.

In the face of different transgressions, highly engaged workers might decide to activate the process of forgiveness, in order not to lose their work pleasure and motivation. They want to stay fully physically, cognitively, and emotionally connected with their work roles (Bakker, 2011), therefore, they strive to reorient their perception, vision and feelings about the offence and the offender. This pro-social change enhances their job satisfaction. However, positive forgiveness was found to be a more effective strategy for improving employee contentment. Similarly and Law (2013) revealed a positive association between benevolence and workplace satisfaction. Positive aspect of forgiveness might also be considered as a dimension of moral (Pakdel & Sharifi, 2016) or spiritual intelligence (Isfahani & Nobakht, 2013) which refers to the ability to act consistently with the universal values and one's own principles/ideas, and to act wisely (see Koražija, Šarotar Žižek, & Mume, 2016). In the workplace this may mean fairness, respect, acceptance of rights and responsibilities (Pakdel & Sharifi, 2016), and the capacity to engage in virtuous behaviour, i.e. to show forgiveness, to express gratitude, to display compassion (Emmons, 2000). The forgiveness aspect of moral intelligence means letting go of one's own and others' mistakes and learning from them (Lennick & Kiel, 2008), and such conceptualized forgiveness was found to be positively related to job satisfaction among employees of sport and youth offices (Pakdel & Sharifi, 2016). Isfahani and Nobakht (2013) examined the influence of spiritual intelligence on happiness (among others, job satisfaction) of the staff of a petrochemical company. They measured components of spiritual intelligence: spiritual experience, transcendental consciousness, forgiveness, and patience. The findings revealed a positive relationship between forgiveness and rewarding job.

From the point of view of an organization, it would be beneficial to promote forgiveness as a method of coping with negative workplace events, e.g., different conflicts, mistakes, injustices. This helps not only to maintain a stable workplace environment but also to increase employee job satisfaction. Organizational aspects such as a forgiveness climate and forgiving style promoted by the leaders are proved to be positively related to a rewarding job (Cox, 2011; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011; Guchait et al., 2016). They might also be helpful in improving individual's tendency to forgive.

## LIMITATION OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Our findings should be viewed with consideration of the limitations. Firstly, the study failed to consider gender. For example, Wei and Ran (2019) indicated that forgiveness of corporate wrongdoing is associated with the gender of both the apologizer and the victim. Secondly, future research should also explore mutual forgiveness of the offender and the offendee. It could also be fruitful to consider forgiveness as a single act including various offenders (supervisors, co-workers, subordinates, clients) and various situations (mobbing, disobedience, dishonesty). Research has shown that

there are differences between forgivingness and forgiveness (Fehr, Gelfand, & Nag, 2010), and, additionally, that transgressions may be perceived as unforgivable.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the present findings add to the group of studies considering forgivingness in the workplace. In the future, researchers could develop specific programs to help individuals cultivate greater forgivingness in the workplace, in service professions in particular. A greater tendency to forgive evoking positive emotions, motivations or behaviours against the abuser, can create a positive and favourable work climate.

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## STRESZCZENIE

Zadowolenie pracowników jest istotne zarówno dla pracodawcy, jak i dla pracowników. Zgodnie z teorią zachowania zasobów (COR) zasoby, a zwłaszcza ich wzajemne związki, są ważne dla zwiększenia satysfakcji z życia w wielu obszarach, w tym satysfakcji z pracy. Zaangażowanie w pracę łączy w sobie wysoki poziom przyjemności (poświęcenie) z wysoką aktywnością (wigorem, absorpcją). Celem niniejszego badania było przeprowadzenie analizy relacji między zaangażowaniem w pracę, przebaczeniem dyspozycyjnym i satysfakcją z pracy wśród pracowników organizacji. Wykorzystano polskie wersje Skali Utrecht Work Engagement (zaadaptowanej przez Chirkowską-Smolak), Skalę Przebaczenia Heartland (zaadaptowaną przez Kaletę, Mróz i Guzewicz) oraz Skalę Satysfakcji z Pracy opracowaną przez Zalewską. Badanie zostało przeprowadzone wśród 94 pracowników w wieku od 20 do 54 lat. Wyniki wskazały na związki między zaangażowaniem w pracę a satysfakcją z niej. Ponadto uwzględniono moderującą rolę przebaczenia w analizach. Wyniki wskazują, że związek między zaangażowaniem w pracę a satysfakcją z pracy jest zazwyczaj silniejszy dla pracowników o wysokim przebaczeniu ogólnym i przebaczeniu pozytywnym niż dla pracowników o niskim przebaczeniu ogólnym i przebaczeniu pozytywnym.

**Słowa kluczowe:** teoria zachowania zasobów; przebaczenie; satysfakcja z pracy; zaangażowanie w pracę