

Article

# The Impact of Management Methods on Employee Engagement

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Received: 2 December 2019; Accepted: 2 January 2020; Published: 6 January 2020



**Abstract:** The aim of the paper is to present the findings of our own questionnaire-based quantitative study carried out in 2018. The research questionnaire was sent to companies in the databases of two universities (the database of enterprises cooperating with each university), which were selected according to the criterion of the number of employees (micro, small, medium, and large companies). The study attempted to identify the correlations among the following variables: people-oriented management, non-people-oriented management, direct active and passive participation, and engagement in work. Two research questions drove the research process: (RQ1) What are the links between people-oriented management and non-people-oriented management, direct (active and passive) participation, and work engagement? (RQ2) Does direct participation (active and passive) mediate the relationship between people and non-people-oriented management and employees' engagement? To this end, 1037 employees of companies operating in Poland reported the intensity of people-oriented management, non-people-oriented management, and direct (active and passive) participation. Research findings revealed that people-oriented management and active participation (i.e., co-deciding) are the most significant for work engagement. Not only does non-people-oriented management entail a low level of engagement but a lower level of direct participation as well. As far as the dimensions of engagement are concerned (i.e., vigour, dedication, and absorption), if one of them is more intense, the other are intense as well. People-oriented management translates into active participation and the latter into engagement in all the three dimensions. A structural equation model demonstrated that perceived people-oriented management and active participation were strong, positive, and significant predictors of work engagement.

**Keywords:** people-oriented management; non-people-oriented management; active participation; passive participation; employee engagement

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## 1. Introduction

The dynamically changing reality in which numerous companies operate constantly produces new challenges, forcing organisations to introduce changes while having no opportunity to prepare a strategy and preventive systems quickly enough. Companies striving for a competitive advantage while simultaneously struggling with an increasing global influence are prompted to seek answers to the question as to what they can do to increase the effectiveness of their employees and hence the organisation's effectiveness as well. The leading concern in this case is management. What management method is the most effective? Should employees be empowered in decision-making processes? Is it the way to enhance engagement?

Meeting the challenges mentioned above requires a reorientation of Human Resource Management (HRM) policies and practices towards sustainable human resource management [1], which refers to

the idea of sustainable development [2]. Characteristics of sustainable human resource management include people-oriented management in the work process, activity in the area of corporate social responsibility, presentation of environmental awareness in personnel policy, development of highly effective work systems, participation, and strengthening of trust as the basis for shaping social relations in work processes [3,4].

It is still a widespread concern as to how to adjust management methods so that they will stimulate employee effectiveness. Respecting the individuality of an employee creates conditions for building an organisational culture that encourages cooperation and openness, which is reflected with participation and fosters full employee engagement. People-oriented management may manifest itself with allowing employees to have direct influence over organisational decisions. However, it extends beyond passively waiting for the employee to have initiative.

Our aim in this paper is to untangle the links between people-oriented management, non-people-oriented management, direct active and passive participation, and engagement in work. The literature review (e.g., CITE) shows that the above correlations between the variables have not been studied among Polish companies so far. Although there are studies examining selected variables (e.g., CITE), to the best of our knowledge, the more complex model of the relationships between people-versus-non-people-oriented management and employees' engagement as mediated by their participation has not been tested so far.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. People-Oriented and Non-People-Oriented Management

Analysing the classic approach to management, Mahmood, Basharat, and Bashir defined management as a “process that includes strategic planning, setting objectives, managing resources, developing the human and financial asset needed to achieve objectives and measuring results” [5] (p. 513). Traditional management models are based on a Taylor's concept of “homo economicus”, according to which employees are supposed to work using the maximum of their physical and mental capabilities in order to obtain the highest possible remuneration [6] (p. 36). The main goal to achieve is “to change the system of management, so that the interests of the workmen and the management should become the same” [7] (p. 52). A company operating using this model is usually closed and formalized: A manager has the authority to give orders and expect complete obedience, and motivation is being built mainly through economic incentives or coercion. The role of the employee comes down to passive following of the managers' orders [8]. Striving for raising employee effectiveness without taking into consideration their expectations or needs puts this form of management into the non-people-oriented management method category.

A modern approach to management, however, tends to focus on employees' individuality, with an emphasis placed on cooperation based on partnership [9]. This is reflected in classic psychosocial management trends (Mayo, Likert, Argiris, and Herzberg). Organisations working accordingly with this model create conditions that encourage positive interpersonal relations and cooperation at all possible levels [10]. Employees are treated as a human capital and an important and necessary factor contributing to achieving good results and gaining a competitive edge [11,12].

As Blikle [13] highlights, the leader in people-oriented management controls the behaviours of the team members by referring to their need for virtue; he or she is not an arbitrary administrator of tangible benefits, but endeavours not to allow the ‘rat race’ to commence by stressing that there are no better and worse employees and that each worker is endowed with a specific talent. On the contrary, the leader in non-people-oriented management primarily administers the benefits and decides who deserves them. Thus, the members of the team are compared to one another, are being divided into better and worse—all the way to the atmosphere of rivalry and competition. In addition, Blikle identified supervisor's behaviour and company practices, in which he specifically included: being arrogant, insulting and accusing, ignoring, being rough and liconic, job rotation, broadening the scope

of work, and work enrichment. Whereas to supervisor's behaviour he included: being arrogant, insulting and accusing, ignoring, and being rough and liconic [13].

Empirical findings confirm that treating employees as partners and adopting the people-oriented approach to employees not only addresses their need for dignity and respect, but also builds their sense of agency and purposefulness of their actions, and their identification with the company [14].

## 2.2. Active and Passive Participation

There is a rich history of the scholarly interest in workers' participation. Trends in management that are formed under the influence of economic, political, and legal factors are reflected in various participation practices. A common ground for those practices is creating space for employees to undertake initiative in their respective fields [15], and the central idea of participation is to give employees' more authority but also greater responsibility. Consequently, both employee work satisfaction as well as organisational effectiveness improve [16].

Participation is defined in various ways, from a broad perspective to any form of delegating tasks to and consulting matters with employees; through a set of activities and tools that allow employees to take part in the process of decision-making in an organisation [17], to a very narrow perspective focusing on direct communication [18]. Considering various forms of participation, one may not leave out the way employees take part in the decision-making process. It may be achieved indirectly—i.e., through representatives/selected people—or directly, with employees being involved personally.

Participation is related to active soliciting for worker participation in organisation management and empowering them to take part in solving work-related problems [19]. It is considered to be a progressive method that brings about universal benefits in terms of rising effectiveness [20].

Predominantly, the range of solutions in participative management stems from four practices: sharing information, sharing knowledge, sharing power, and sharing responsibility [21]. It should be consistent with the desired extent of employee cooperation in business management. Marchington and Wilkinson [22] describe this extent with two dimensions: degree and level of participation; building a model extending from a small degree and narrow participation of employees when they are merely informed about decisions, through consultation and cooperation to the greatest degree and widest worker participation, where they personally exercise power.

Intensity of direct employee participation is addressed by Tegtmeier [23]. He created two categories: direct passive participation and direct active participation. Passive participation is employee cooperation described as the right to access information, the right to voice complaints, the right to speak up (give opinions), and the right to give advice. Active participation pertains to the right to object, expressing consent, and the right to resolve matters jointly. According to Tegtmeier, cooperation means that workers may affect the operation of the management, but only if the management finds their contribution relevant. Co-deciding, on the other hand, offers employees more real possibilities of exerting influence over organisation management [24–27].

Not every form of participation improves an organisation's functioning. Positive impact is possible, if authentic influence on management is ensured by way of e.g., defining objectives [28] or offering solution variants, planning changes, and evaluating the effects [29]. It is important to note that mere creation of formal structures for employee participation does not guarantee positive results. Thus, the managers' role is of crucial significance here as they are responsible for implementing and supporting those structures concerning participation [30]. Neither is introduction of direct participation dependent on a company's size or character. Although more formalized forms of direct employee participation are more common in large companies [31], small companies are not left behind in terms of the level of employee satisfaction with the degree of influence that they are able to exert on their work, and the quality of communication with their superior is often higher [32,33]. The flat structure of many small companies fosters effective communication between employees and their superiors. As Edwards and Ram [34] demonstrated, even in enterprises that operate under conditions marked by

fierce market competition (such as small restaurants), employees use influence to have their needs taken into consideration.

### 2.3. Employee Engagement

Employee engagement serves as a predictor of a company's ability to cope effectively with difficult situations [35]. Engagement pertains to building an emotional relationship between an employee and an organisation [36], which is reflected by identification with the objectives and values of the organisation on different levels [37]. In their everyday functioning, more engaged employees are more efficient, creative, more likely to provide constructive criticism and question the status quo (CITE). Such employees are also more open to initiate change, enjoy work and find it easier to adjust to new conditions, show willingness to produce good results at work [38]. Studies stress the motivational aspect of engagement [39,40] and show that employee engagement increases productivity and overall performance, creates a productive work environment, reduces non-attendance and employees leaving [41,42].

Shuck [43] described four main trends in defining and approaching engagement. The first was initiated in 1990 by Kahn, who defined engagement as "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviours that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence, and active full role performances" [44] (p. 700). Further research confirmed the relevance of three psychological antecedents of engagement as proposed by Kahn [44,45], namely: meaningfulness, safety, and availability [46,47]. A slightly different approach was proposed by Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter [48], who defined engagement in contrast to burnout, highlighting that it is "a persistent positive affective state ( . . . ) characterized by high level of activation and pleasure" [48] (p. 417). In line with this approach, engagement was described as the opposite of the three burnout dimensions: exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness [49]. Over time, engagement was recognised as a separate psychological condition comprising three components: vigour, dedication, and absorption. Schaufeli's and Bakker's concept of engagement [50], which describes the three components, has recently become very popular. Schaufeli, Salanova and colleagues [51] developed an instrument to measure engagement and assess the three components [52]. According to these authors, vigour is high energy and psychological resilience as well as readiness to make effort at times of difficulty. Dedication is related to a high level of commitment to work accompanied by pride, the sense of significance, inspiration, and challenge; and absorption is involvement in work to the point of complete immersion. Work engagement is defined as a positive state of mind that brings satisfaction with one's work.

The third trend in defining engagement stems from positive psychology movement (see e.g., Harter, Schmid, and Hayes) [53]. Based on the data retrieved from the database of Gallup Organisation, Harter, and colleagues [53] (p. 269), they defined engagement as: an "individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work". This model was used, among others, to determine the relationship between employee engagement and managerial self-efficacy and the perception of effective management practices [54]. Luthans and Peterson's [54] (p. 376) conclusion that "the most profitable work units of companies have people doing what they do best, with people they like, and with a strong sense of psychological ownership" reinforced the manner of thinking about the role of a manager, which is creating a supportive psychological climate [55].

The last trend represents the multidimensional perspective of employee engagement. In his definition, Saks [56] (p. 602) describes engagement as "distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioural components ( . . . ) associated with individual role performance". Research by Saks [56] develops further the model by Schaufeli, Salanova et al. [51], considering engagement in three dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and behavioural and treating development of engagement as absorption of an employee resources into the work.

### 3. Research Methodology

The objective of the study was to examine the relationship between people-oriented and non-people-oriented management with direct active and passive participation in company management, and engagement in work. The following research questions driven the research process:

RQ1: What are the links between people-oriented management and non-people-oriented management, direct (active and passive) participation, and work engagement?

RQ2: Does direct participation (active and passive) mediate the relationship between people- and non-people-oriented management and employees' engagement?

#### 3.1. Method

In 2018, a questionnaire-based quantitative study was carried out on a group of 1037 people. The respondents were selected by way of non-random sampling. The research questionnaire was sent to companies in the databases of two of our universities (the database of enterprises cooperating with each university), which were selected according to the criterion of the number of employees (micro, small, medium, and large companies). The authors adopted the company size criterion according to the distribution reflecting the structure of companies in the population of enterprises in Poland (divided into micro, small, medium, and large companies). Employees of companies that took part in the survey are a group of 1037 people. The self-employed persons were excluded from the research.

#### 3.2. Participants

The participants were 1037 employees (665 women and 372 men), of whom two-thirds (63.6%) were aged 20–29 and one-fourth (21.9%) 30–39, while older participants: aged 40–49 (11.8%), 50–60 (2.4%), and over 60 formed a minority in the sample.

A majority of participants ( $n = 526$ , 50.7%) hold a university or college diploma, while 506 participants (48.8%) declared having graduated from secondary education. One-third of participants held expert positions (30.2%), with a similar group (28.8%) of white-collar workers and slightly smaller (19.3%) group of managers. There were also 9.2% blue-collar workers and 8.2% traders. The largest group of the participants was employed in service companies (39.3%) and others in trade (21.6%), mixed (16.2%) and manufacturing (9.5%) companies, and in enterprises other than the options provided in the questionnaire (11.7%), which were not specified by the respondents. Most people worked in companies in the Polish capital (65.9%), while there were also people who worked for companies in a foreign (21.9%) or mixed capital (11.8%). Table 1 presents the frequency distribution for the type of company size in which the respondents worked.

**Table 1.** Size of Companies that Participants Work in.

Number of Employees	n	%
1–9	142	13.7
10–49	267	25.7
50–249	233	22.5
>250	395	38.1
In total	1037	100

N-number of participants.

The biggest group (38.1%) of the participants worked for companies employing over 250 workers while 22.5% worked in companies employing between 50 and 249 people and 25.7% were employed in companies employing between 10 and 49 workers. The smallest number of the respondents worked for companies employing up to nine workers (13.7%).

### 3.3. Measures

The study was carried out with the use of an especially designed questionnaire. People-oriented management and non-people-oriented management were operationalized with 17 research statements, while direct (active and passive) participation were measured using eight items. People-oriented and non-people-oriented management were analysed using statements in the questionnaire, which reflected the way employees are treated in a company. As far as people-oriented management is concerned, the ten statements pertained to: treating workers as a value in itself and as partners; preference for cooperation in performing tasks as a team; placing trust in employees and respecting them; treating workers as creative and entrepreneurial individuals; the superiors' ethical conduct; stirring the willingness to act and supporting employees; appreciation of employees' work by the superiors and superiors delegating tasks, decision-making, and responsibility eagerly. Whereas non-people-oriented management referred to the following seven statements: treating employees in line with the rule that a man is worth as much as he or she earns for the business; holding a view that employees are generally lazy and dishonest so they must be controlled; treating employees as 'cogs in a machine'; ignoring workers; disregarding even small successes; dividing workers into better and worse ones by creating the atmosphere of the rat race; and superiors avoiding talking to employees. Supervisor's behaviour and company practices were operationalized with 7 research statements (due to Blikle's concept [13]). They were related to being arrogant, insulting and accusing, ignoring, being rough and liconic, job rotation, broadening the scope of work and work enrichment.

Reliability of the measurement was measured with the use of Cronbach's alpha coefficients and it was high for people-oriented management ( $\alpha = 0.85$ ) and for non-people-oriented management ( $\alpha = 0.82$ ). To assess the validity of the questionnaire correlations between the results acquired on both scales and supervisor's behaviour, job rotation, broadening the scope of work and work enrichment were computed. It was expected that both non-people-oriented management would correlate positively with such supervisor's as being arrogant, insulting and accusing, ignoring, being rough and liconic, while that people-oriented management would be correlated negatively. Correlations between non-people-oriented management and job rotation, broadening the scope of work and work enriching were supposed to be negative, while correlations between people-oriented management and these variables were supposed to be positive. The acquired correlation coefficients presented in Table 2 confirmed these assumptions.

**Table 2.** Correlation Coefficients between People-Oriented Management and Non-People-Oriented Management, Supervisor's Behaviour and Company Growth Practices.

Supervisor's Behaviour/Company Practices	People-Oriented Management	Non-People-Oriented Management
Being arrogant	-0.612 **	0.655 **
Insulting and accusing	-0.599 **	0.624 **
Ignoring	-0.649 **	0.651 **
Being rough and liconic	-0.616 **	0.640 **
Job rotation	0.461 **	-0.391 **
Broadening the scope of work	0.403 **	-0.365 **
Work enriching	0.496 **	-0.408 **

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

The questionnaire asked the respondents about direct participation (with eight statements). Participants reported their passive and active participation on four items each. Statements about passive participation were concerned with the possibilities that employees have for making complaints; giving advice in problematic situations, expressing one's opinion about the circumstances surrounding

the company and the department or decisions to be reached; and whether the superior informs employees about problems that a company or department is experiencing. While active participation was concerned with the statements about the possibilities of objecting to the proposed or reached decisions; expressing permission to the proposed or reached decisions; and solving problems or making decisions jointly. The statements pertaining to passive and active participation are based on the concept proposed by Tegtmeier [23] (p. 83). The reliability of the measurement was also measured with the use of Cronbach's alpha coefficients and it was high for active participation ( $\alpha = 0.74$ ) and for passive participation ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ). To assess the validity of the questionnaire, correlations between the results were also acquired on both scales and supervisor's behaviour, job rotation, broadening the scope of work and work enrichment were computed. It was expected that both active and passive participation would correlate negatively with such supervisor's as being arrogant, insulting and accusing, ignoring, being rough and liconic. The acquired correlation coefficients presented in Table 3 confirmed these assumptions. Correlations between active participation and job rotation, broadening the scope of work and work enriching were higher than between passive participation and these variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient between job rotation and passive participation was equal to  $r = 0.543, p < 0.001$ , while the correlation between job rotation and active participation was equal to  $r = 0.810, < 0.001$ . The difference was statistically significant,  $Z = -15.19, p < 0.001$ . The Pearson correlation coefficient between broadening the scope of work and passive participation was equal to  $r = 0.487, p < 0.001$ , while the correlation between broadening the scope of work and active participation was equal to  $r = 0.830, < 0.001$ . The difference was statistically significant,  $Z = -19.66, p < 0.001$ . The Pearson correlation coefficient between work enriching and passive participation was equal to  $r = 0.533, p < 0.001$ , while the correlation between work enriching and active participation was equal to  $r = 0.849, < 0.001$ . The difference was statistically significant,  $Z = -19.20, p < 0.001$ .

**Table 3.** Correlation Coefficients between Passive and Active Participation and Supervisor's Behaviour.

Supervisor's Behaviour	Passive Participation	Active Participation
Being arrogant	-0.363 **	-0.379 **
Insulting and accusing	-0.357 **	-0.347 **
Ignoring	-0.405 **	-0.402 **
Being rough and liconic	-0.378 **	-0.368 **

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

Work engagement was measured accordingly with the theoretical concept of Schaufeli and Bakker [50], who define work engagement as a positive, fulfilling feeling towards work, which is connected with the state of mind comprised of three dimensions: the sense of vigour experienced by an employee, dedication to work, and absorption. The authors of the above concept define these dimensions as:

- vigour—experiencing a high level of energy and mental endurance at work, willingness to go the extra mile, resilience, especially in the face of adversities;
- dedication—working with enthusiasm, with the sense that one's work is important, taking pride in being able to do one's job, being enthusiastic, and welcoming challenges;
- absorption—the sense of full concentration on and involvement in work accompanied by experiencing unnatural passing of the time and with difficulty to stop working.

Work Engagement was operationalized with the Polish version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) containing nine statements.

#### 4. Plan of Statistical Analysis

The description of the people under examination was drawn up based on frequency distributions of the responses to survey questions.

The first stage of the study was analysis of the correlations among all the variables, i.e., the level of people-oriented management, the level of non-people-oriented management, the level of direct participation and its two forms—active and passive participation, and the level of engagement and its three dimensions—vigour, dedication, and absorption.

The second stage of the study was regression analysis conducted in order to establish which form of direct participation, i.e., the active or passive one, was correlated with the level of work engagement to a larger extent.

The final stage was verification of the expected model of correlations between the variables, which was carried out with path analysis based on the highest probability method and carried out with the use of fit indices CFI, GFI, and RMSEA.

#### 5. Results

Statistically significant positive correlations were observed between people-oriented management and direct (passive and active) participation; whereas statistically significant negative correlations were found between non-people-oriented management and direct (passive and active) participation (see Table 4). People-oriented management was also positively correlated with all the dimensions of work engagement and non-people-oriented management—negatively correlated with all the dimensions of work engagement. Direct (passive and active) participation was positively correlated with all the dimensions of work engagement (i.e., vigour, dedication, and absorption).

Subsequently, hierarchical regression analysis was carried out in order to examine which form of direct participation—active or passive and what type of management—people- versus non-people-oriented better predict employees' engagement. In the first block, the levels of people-oriented and non-people-oriented management were introduced, while in the second block, passive and active participations were added to the model (see Table 5). The dependent variables analysed in the next three models were the three dimensions of work engagement—vigour, dedication, and absorption.

Statistically significant positive effects of people-oriented management and negative effects of non-people-oriented management were obtained in all the three models. Active participation—but not passive participation—served as a positive predictor of engagement in all regression models. It should be noted that with management controlled, active participation only accounts for about 1% of the variance. It is thus only a weak predictor of engagement, especially if separated from management that accounts for between 13% and 23% of engagement's variability.

A model was analysed in which active participation was modelled as a mediator of the link between management and work engagement.

Out of the two forms of direct participation—active and passive—only the active one was entered into the model since this form of participation was indicated by the results of regression analysis as the one that is most strongly correlated with engagement.

The path analysis was performed with the maximum likelihood method. The model is presented in Figure 1.

**Table 4.** A Matrix of Correlations among the Variables under Analysis, i.e., Management Methods, Types of Participation, and the Dimensions of Work Engagement.

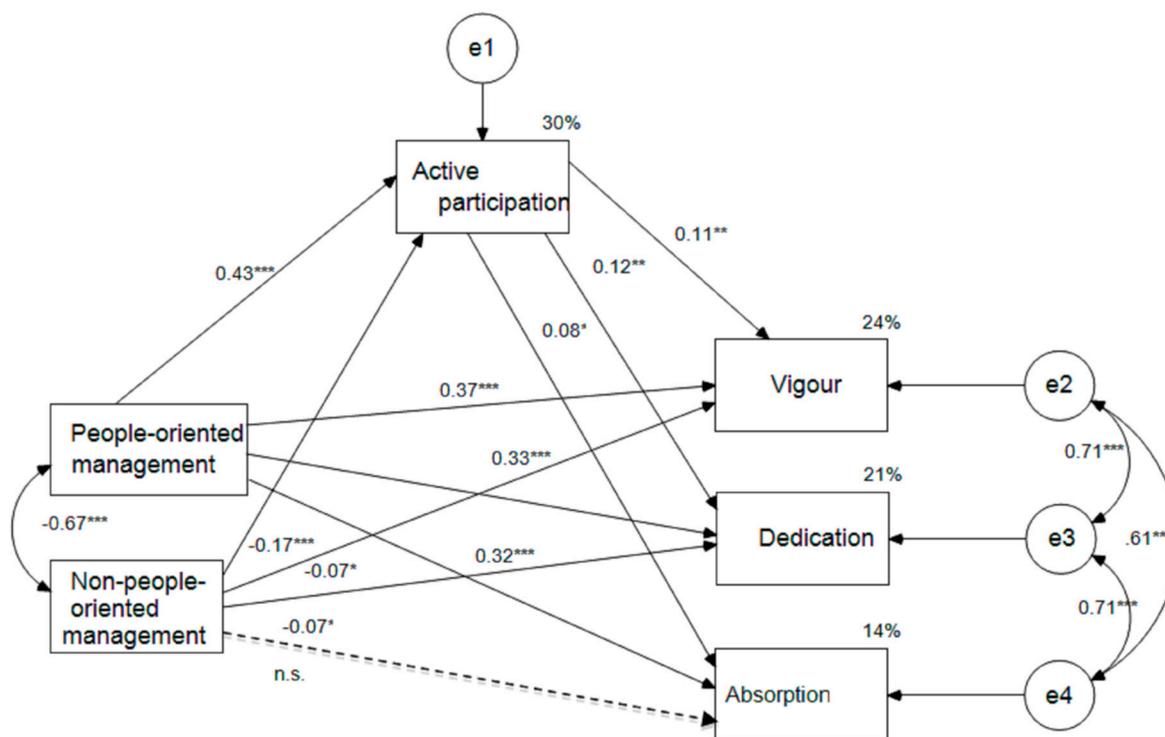
	Passive Participa-tion	Active Partici-pation	Direct Participa-tion	People-Oriented Manage-ment	Non-People-Oriented Management	Vigour	Dedica-tion	Absorp-tion	Engage-ment
Passive participation	-	0.597 **	0.901 **	0.497 **	-0.426 **	0.289 **	0.261 **	0.218 **	0.282 **
Active participation		-	0.886 **	0.538 **	-0.453 **	0.344 **	0.326 **	0.252 **	0.339 **
Direct participation			-	0.578 **	-0.491 **	0.353 **	0.327 **	0.263 **	0.346 **
People-oriented management				-	-0.673 **	0.478 **	0.443 **	0.362 **	0.471 **
Non-people-oriented management					-	-0.373 **	-0.346 **	-0.252 **	-0.357 **
Vigour						-	0.774 **	0.673 **	0.898 **
Dedication							-	0.756 **	0.930 **
Absorption								-	0.893 **
Engagement									-

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . Source: Work based on our own study.

**Table 5.** Dimensions of Engagement Regressed on Participation and Management.

		Beta	T	P	ΔR2
Vigour	People-oriented management	0.41	11.25	0.000	0.23
	Non-people-oriented management	−0.09	−2.57	0.010	
	People-oriented management	0.36	9.15	0.000	0.01
	Non-people-oriented management	−0.07	−2.01	0.045	
	+Passive participation	0.01	0.36	0.720	
	Active participation	0.11	2.95	0.003	
Dedication	People-oriented management	0.38	10.18	0.000	0.20
	Non-people-oriented management	−0.09	−2.36	0.019	
	People-oriented management	0.33	8.24	0.000	0.01
	Non-people-oriented management	−0.07	−1.85	0.065	
	+Passive participation	−0.01	−0.18	0.857	
	Active participation	0.12	3.19	0.001	
Absorption	People-oriented management	0.35	8.95	0.000	0.13
	Non-people-oriented management	−0.02	−0.41	0.684	
	People-oriented management	0.31	7.36	0.000	0.01
	Non-people-oriented management	0.00	−0.02	0.985	
	+Passive participation	0.02	0.51	0.609	
	Active participation	0.07	1.88	0.061	

Beta—standardized regression coefficients; t—statistical significance test value; p—statistical significance; ΔR<sup>2</sup>—percentage change of variance. Source: Work based on our own study.



**Figure 1.** Model analysed with path analysis. \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; n.s.—statistically insignificant. Source: Our work based on our own study.

The obtained model was characterized by a very good fit, according to usually applied criteria, so not-significant  $\chi^2$  test ( $\chi^2(1) = 0.01, p = 0.950$ ), high comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.99 and low root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.01.

As demonstrated at Figure 1, people-oriented management was positively related with active participation and the latter was in turn positively linked to all three dimensions of engagement. People-oriented management was also directly and positively related with the dimensions of

engagement. Active participation is a partial mediator of the correlation between people-oriented management and engagement. Indirect effect confidence interval acquired with the use of bootstrap method was  $0.01 \div 0.05$  for absorption,  $0.02 \div 0.06$  for dedication to work and  $0.02 \div 0.06$  for vigour. Hence people-oriented management may have a direct effect on work engagement in all the three dimensions, although this effect may also occur indirectly through active participation. What is more, people-oriented management translates into active participation and the latter into engagement in all the three dimensions.

Whereas non-people-oriented management was negatively correlated with active participation, though the strength of this correlation was significantly weaker than the strength of the correlation between people-oriented management and active participation. The bootstrap confidence interval for the association between non-people-oriented management and active participation was  $-0.23 \div -0.17$ , while the bootstrap confidence interval for the association between people-oriented management and active participation was  $0.37 \div 0.43$ . Non-people-oriented management was also directly negatively linked with two of the three dimensions of engagement, i.e., vigour and dedication. The direct correlation between non-people-oriented management and absorption was not statistically significant. Thus, active participation was also a partial mediator of the correlation between non-people-oriented management and vigour and dedication. Indirect effect confidence interval acquired with the use of bootstrap method was  $-0.02 \div -0.01$  for absorption,  $-0.03 \div -0.01$  for dedication to work and  $-0.03 \div -0.01$  for vigour. What is more, the model under analysis accounted for 24% of the variance of vigour, 21% of the variance of dedication, and 14% of the variance of absorption. As the results demonstrate, the situation is completely different, if non-people-oriented management is considered. Non-people-oriented management is negatively correlated with active participation, which means that the more intense non-people-oriented management in an organisation, the lower the active participation and consequently, work engagement is also lower since as Figure 1 shows, the presence of active participation influences work engagement. It is also worth noting that in contrast to people-oriented management, there is no direct correlation between non-people-oriented management and absorption, which is one of the dimensions of work engagement. While people-oriented management influences engagement in three dimensions (i.e., vigour, dedication, and absorption), non-people-oriented management only exerts influence on two dimensions (vigour and dedication).

## 6. Discussion and Conclusions

As demonstrated by the findings of the study, people-oriented management seems to play very relevant role for work engagement. Hence, if an organisation treats employees as partners, pays attention to cooperation in teamwork, places trust in employees, and shows respect towards them as well as treats them as creative and enterprising people while cultivating their willingness to act, make decisions and take responsibility, and at the same time acts ethically, employees will be engaged in work. Such engagement should be understood in line with the accepted model of the three dimensions: vigour, dedication, and absorption. It may thus be assumed that if people-oriented management is present in a company, employees are more eager to put in effort into their work, showing high energy levels and psychological resilience to adversity. Moreover, they show enthusiasm in work, have the sense of importance and purposefulness, take pride in what they do, and do not see challenges as barriers or problems. They concentrate fully and become absorbed by their work paying no attention to the passing time.

Whereas if the non-people-oriented management style is preferred in an organisation, i.e., when employees are treated only as a source of profit and seen as mere 'cogs in a machine' that need to be constantly supervised, their successes, even the smallest ones, are being ignored and overlooked in an atmosphere of fierce competition, while being baselessly convinced that employees are lazy and dishonest, the level of engagement will be considerably smaller. Active participation is also important in building work engagement in contrast to passive participation that pays no role whatsoever. Thus, engagement is influenced by the presence of active participation (i.e., co-deciding) pertaining to

the possibility of objecting to the proposed or reached decisions; expressing permission to the proposed or reached decisions; and solving problems or making decisions jointly. Passive participation does not have such importance for engagement. This form of direct participation (i.e., cooperation) is only concerned with the employees' right to make complaints, give advice in problematic situations, express their opinions about the circumstances surrounding the company and the department or decisions to be reached, and to be informed by the superior about problems that a company or department is experiencing—and as demonstrated by the results of this study, it does not influence work engagement in any of its three dimensions.

It should also be added that non-people-oriented management not only entails a low level of engagement but direct participation in such a company is also lower.

Moreover, work engagement seems to be directly predicted by people-oriented management, but it may also be strengthened indirectly through active participation. Thus, whether an employee is engaged or not depends on both people-oriented management and active participation. It is, therefore, appropriate to assume that the mere presence of active participation in a company does not influence work engagement in all its three dimensions, if unaccompanied by people-oriented management. Part of the correlation between management and engagement exists through the agency of active participation and part of it occurs directly. People-oriented management translates into active participation and the latter into engagement in all the three dimensions.

Furthermore, a sense of return on investments can come from external rewards and recognition in addition to meaningful work. Therefore, one might expect that employees' will be more likely to engage themselves at work to the extent that they perceive a greater amount of rewards and recognition for their role performance. Maslach and colleagues [48] (pp. 397–422) also suggested that while a lack of rewards and recognition can lead to burnout, appropriate recognition and reward is important for engagement. When employees receive rewards and recognition from their organisation, they will feel obliged to respond with higher levels of engagement.

If non-people-oriented management is preferred in a company and it is intense, active participation will definitely be weaker and it does influence work engagement. As demonstrated by research results, if there is non-people-oriented management style exercised in an organisation, it may only exert influence on two dimensions of engagement (i.e., vigour and dedication) but not on absorption. This means that in such a situation the employee does not fully concentrate on or engage in work, possibly controls the time, and awaits the end of a working day.

It should also be noted that according to research results, the two management methods are not concurrent in an organisation. If people-oriented management is more intense, then non-people-oriented management is less intense, and the other way around—if non-people-oriented management is more intense, then people-oriented management is less intense. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that as far as the dimensions of engagement are concerned (i.e., vigour, dedication, and absorption)—if one of them is more intense, then the others are intense as well. Hence if employees put in a lot of effort and energy in doing their job, they are resilient, especially in the face of adversity—they are more enthusiastic about their work, it is more important to them, carries sense and is a source of pride; thus they focus more strongly on the work and become absorbed by it, paying no attention to the time passing by. Work engagement by Schaufeli is embedded in Hobfoll's theory of resources. There is a positive relationship between resources and commitment regarding aspects such as: help in achieving goals, reduction of requirements and control, support from superiors [57]. Demerouti found that job resources (such as performance feedback, supervisor support) were predictors of engagement [58] (pp. 499–512).

In conclusion, managers should pay attention to the way the human capital is managed in an organisation and prefer the people-oriented management style that gives the employee the right to co-decide. An important practical implication for managers is the need for them to understand the importance of social exchange for employee engagement. In particular, managers need to provide employees with resources and benefits that will oblige them to reciprocate in kind with higher levels

of engagement. Although the results of this study highlight the importance of job characteristics and social support, there might be other factors that are more important for different employees. Thus, a “one size fits all” approach to employee engagement might not be the most effective. Managers should find out what resources and benefits are most desired by employees and most likely to create a sense of obligation that is returned with greater levels of engagement.

The findings of this study should be read in light of its limitations that should be addressed by future studies. First, this study relied heavily on self-report measures and was conducted on a convenience sample. It may have inflated the associations among the study variables due to common method variance or the wish to answer consistently. The studied sample, although quite numerous, cannot be considered representative of the general population of Polish employees. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings obtained is not without questions. Despite this, however, the findings obtained may bring some new insights for practitioners, since they widen managerial knowledge about the approach to the human capital [26]. The authors are well aware of the fact that the paper does not exhaust the research problem and is merely a trigger for further research on the complex issue of human capital management processes in organisations.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, B.S., M.B.; methodology, B.S., M.B.; software, M.B.; validation, B.S., M.B.; formal analysis, B.S., M.B.; investigation, B.S., M.B.; resources, B.S.; writing—original draft preparation, B.S., M.B.; writing—review and editing, B.S., M.B.; visualization, B.S., M.B. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** The research received no external funding.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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