

# Daily Uplifts, Well-Being and Performance in Organizational Settings: The Differential Mediating Roles of Affect and Work Engagement

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**Abstract** Affective events theory suggests that affective events at work arouse emotional reactions that influence employees' attitudes and behaviour in the workplace. In the present study, we apply this theoretical framework to clarify the interplay of variables that explain well-being and performance. We analysed the mediating role of positive affect and work engagement between daily uplifts and well-being, and between daily uplifts and performance. Results from a sample of 293 employees revealed that daily uplifts were positively associated with well-being and performance. While the effects of daily uplifts on well-being were fully mediated by positive affect and work engagement, the effects of daily uplifts on performance were only partially mediated by positive affect and work engagement. In both cases, the effect of positive affect was bigger than that of work engagement. The relations explored provide new theoretical elements for models that explain which variables influence well-being and performance in organizational contexts. The implications for employee health and organizational success are discussed.

**Keywords** Affective events theory · Emotions · Work engagement · Subjective well-being · Performance · Multiple mediation

## 1 Introduction

A day at work presents a multiplicity of intense uplifts that often increase employees' well-being and performance. The affective events theory (AET) is an appropriate framework for understanding this assertion because its authors suggest that affective events at work arouse

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emotional reactions that will influence employees' attitudes and behaviours in the workplace (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). As a working day is filled with positive daily events, it is not surprising that those events have positive consequences, not only for work-related well-being such as job satisfaction (Judge et al. 2005), but also for employees' performance (Bakker et al. 2008).

Recent research has emphasized the importance of daily uplifts in organizational contexts regarding diverse positive outcomes (Bono et al. 2013; Xanthopoulou et al. 2012). Both personal and organizational implications of work-related uplifts make understanding the antecedents of positive well-being and performance in work contexts crucial (Taris 2006; Taris and Schreurs 2009).

Regarding the study of the antecedents of well-being and performance, many studies have identified positive variables which influence employees' well-being and performance, like affective events and positive affect (Gross et al. 2011). However, not all of them focus on the processes through which daily uplifts affect employees' well-being and performance. Thus, there is a need to study processes which could influence the link between daily uplifts and well-being and performance like, for instance, positive affect or other variables, which have been linked to work engagement and positive states (Sonnentag et al. 2010a, b). Work engagement is a positive, active, affective state characterized by *vigor*, *dedication*, and *absorption* (Schaufeli and Bakker 2004).

In the majority of research about work engagement, it has been analyzed as an outcome and the potential mediating role it might play between affective events and positive outcomes, such as well-being or performance, has not been taken into account. However, some authors argue that work engagement is not only an outcome of diverse work characteristics. Indeed, they emphasize the importance of analyzing it as a process that might enhance positive outcomes in the workplace (De Carlo et al. 2014). Hence there is a need to broaden the study of work engagement and analyze it as a process in the workplace for many reasons. First, there are few investigations exploring how work engagement, with its positive and motivational character, influences attitudes and behavior (Ilies et al. 2007); and second, the relationship between daily uplifts, affect and work engagement remain to be proven (Sonnentag and Ilies 2011).

With evidence of a link between work engagement, well-being and performance, the logical next step would be a thorough examination of the variables that stimulate the experience of positive emotions as a leverage point for performance and well-being. As suggested by Schaufeli (2012), a promising area of immediate exploration is the identification of the central elements inherent to a working day that foster the development of engagement and stimulate well-being and performance. One such area of research is the exploration of daily uplifts and their association with positive emotions, work engagement, well-being and performance. And still under explored are questions about how engagement and affect potentially mediate the relation between daily uplifts, work related well-being and performance (Schaufeli et al. 2008).

In this study, we will consider the main ideas proposed by the AET to study how daily uplifts generate positive affect and work engagement in employees, and how both positive affect and engagement are related to their well-being and performance. Specifically, we aim to explore whether daily uplifts at work, positive affect and work engagement can be considered as antecedents of well-being and performance. Likewise, we intend to test whether positive affect and work engagement have a mediating role in the relationship between daily uplifts and well-being and performance.

## 2 Well-Being and Performance at Work

Subjective well-being is a multidimensional construct comprising two distinct components: life satisfaction (cognitive component), and positive and negative affect (affective component) (Diener 1984). Accordingly, subjective well-being involves an evaluation of life circumstances consisting of cognitive assessments of satisfaction with life and the frequency of experiencing positive and negative affect (Diener et al. 1999). Subjective well-being should reflect the experience of a high level of positive affect, a low level of negative affect and a high degree of satisfaction with one's life (Deci and Ryan 2008).

An employee can be said to have low work-related well-being when he/she is unsatisfied with his or her job, infrequently experiences positive emotions, and frequently experiences negative emotions in work contexts (Bakker and Oerlemans 2011). To study subjective well-being at work, researchers have used diverse indicators such as job satisfaction (Judge et al. 2001) and happiness at work (e.g., Diener and Biswas-Diener 2008; Warr 2009).

Traditionally, organizational psychologists have examined the link between employees' well-being and performance (e.g., Judge et al. 2001). More recently, however, scholars have started to examine how affective states can enhance or diminish job performance (e.g., Bakker and Leiter 2010).

Research into the antecedents of well-being and performance at work has often focused on job demands and resources that may decrease or increase well-being and performance, respectively (Bakker et al. 2008). When demands appreciably exceed or fall below the resources available, employees experience negative affect (e.g., strain) that hinders the quality and quantity of their performance and well-being (Bakker and Demerouti 2009). However, when demands match or only slightly exceed resources, individuals experience positive emotional states (e.g., pleasure, joy, energy) and they perceive themselves as growing, productive and happier (Waterman 1993).

Besides job demands and resources, another area gaining attention in the study of workers' well-being and performance is affective states at work. For instance, Fredrickson (2001) proposed the broaden-and-build theory, arguing that positive emotions increase available affective and cognitive resources. This allows those who experience positive emotions to momentarily draw on an expansion of their human capital. For example, an individual who experiences pleasure is more likely to experience flexible, creative, and critical thinking processes than someone who is irritated (Shuck et al. 2013). These experiences of positive emotions are short-lived moments that yield a positive change in a person's available resources, and extend action repertoires, expectations, resources, motivation and resilience in the face of adversity. Moreover, the resources accumulated by the individual during such experiences of positive emotion are enduring and operate like emotional reservoirs to be drawn from at a later time (Fredrickson and Branigan 2005). The set of accumulated personal resources outlasts the short-lived experience of the emotion, thus highlighting the lasting, durable, resilient effect of experiencing positive affect.

Fredrickson (2001) suggested that positive emotions are connected to the most basic emotional needs in the workplace. Accordingly, the positive emotions that result when basic needs are met in the workplace serve to broaden the employees' attention, cognition, and action in areas related to the welfare of the business. The experience of positive emotions will, consequently, enhance performance and also employees' welfare in the workplace, as it induces them to contribute to an organization or larger entity (Fredrickson

2008). For instance, Fredrickson and Joiner (2002) showed that positive affect triggers upward spirals toward well-being, and that negative affect triggers a downward spiral toward feelings of depression and anxiety. The authors emphasized that positive emotion does not just feel good, but also has consequences that lead to enhanced well-being, and the broadening or limiting of available resources for an individual who contributes to performance. Moreover, Fredrickson and Branigan (2005) showed that individuals who experience positive emotions broaden their scope of attention and thought-action repertoires.

In the workplace, positive affective states occur through daily affective experiences that promote the frequency of positive emotions. The next section highlights how affective experiences can generate positive affect, and the links between affective experiences, well-being and performance.

## 2.1 Affective Events Theory

We shall be using the affective events theory (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996) as the basis for our explanation of how affective experiences influence well-being and performance. Affective experiences concern work-related daily events that provoke positive or negative emotional reactions, and it is these emotional reactions that will influence employees' work-related attitudes and behavior in the workplace (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). In consequence, we assert that employees' daily events are what make the difference in their day-to-day life, specifically regarding their subsequent affective reactions and resulting behaviors (e.g., work engagement, performance, etc.).

In the literature, affective events have been conceptualized as daily hassles and daily uplifts. Daily hassles are the tiny things that can somehow irritate or frustrate individuals at work (Lazarus 1993). Examples of daily hassles can be a lack of supervisor support or the quantitative workload. Daily uplifts, on the other hand, are the positive experiences arising from daily life in the workplace. Receiving positive feedback about performance or receiving support are examples of daily uplifts.

Those employees who experience positive emotions stimulated by daily uplifts, such as having peer or managerial support are far less likely to experience negative emotion in the workplace (Sonnentag et al. 2010a, b). Such events can influence a person's well-being (Fisher and Noble 2004), and according to the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson 2001), employees are then more likely to expand their available emotional and cognitive energies toward work-related tasks and should score positively on measures of well-being. Ivancevich (1986) demonstrated that the frequency and intensity of daily uplifts accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in job performance. Thus, it seems probable that when experiencing daily uplifts at work, employees would report higher levels of well-being and performance. In the following section, we further elaborate on the relationship between daily uplifts and well-being, and between daily uplifts and performance outcomes, and we propose a multiple mediator model of these relationships.

The mediating role of positive affect and work engagement in the relationships between daily uplifts and well-being and performance.

Affective events stimulate affect in the workplace that will influence workers' attitudes and behaviors towards work (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). Positive affect and work engagement are two constructs that may arise when daily uplifts occur. Accordingly, we propose a multiple mediator model in which the indirect effects of daily uplifts on well-being and performance are spread through positive affect and work engagement.

## 2.2 Positive Affect

In the light of the affective events theory, these kinds of affective experiences have received attention in the study of workers' well-being and performance (Fisher and Noble 2004; Robert and Wilbanks 2012). Positive affect is a key focus of affective events theory, as espoused by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996). As we mentioned earlier, organizational members' affective reactions to environmental events are posited to determine diverse work-related behaviors, such as performance outcomes.

Relevant to the present work is the abundance of research that has linked positive affect to well-being and performance (Ashkanasy et al. 2002). Specifically, it has been argued that a high frequency of positive affect is needed not only for employees' well-being, but also for optimal job performance (Bakker and Oerlemans 2011). Plus, researchers have demonstrated that performance and well-being are enhanced through positive affect (e.g., Estrada et al. 1997; Fisher and Noble 2004). Similarly, high levels of negative affect were shown to be negatively related to well-being and performance (Lyubomirsky et al. 2005).

In the framework of the broad-and-build theory, Frederickson and Branigan (2005) underscored the positive relation between positive affect and performance outcomes. This suggests that experiencing positive affect broadens task-related thought processes and has strong implications for employees' work-related well-being (Shuck et al. 2011). In other words, a high frequency of experiences of positive affect will lead to higher levels of well-being and better performance outcomes.

## 2.3 Work Engagement

One construct that has been significantly and positively associated with positive affect in the workplace is work engagement (Bakker 2009). Work engagement is a positive, active, affective state characterized by *vigor*, *dedication*, and *absorption* (Schaufeli and Bakker 2004). Feelings of vigor concern high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, and persistence even in the face of adversity. Dedication refers to being strongly involved with work and experiencing a sense of significance and enthusiasm from work. And, absorption corresponds to being fully focused and happily engrossed in one's work. Engaged employees feel connected to their work (Kahn 1990) and are highly energetic, self-efficacious individuals who exercise influence over events that affect their lives (Bakker 2009).

Drawing on research into positive affect (Fredrickson 2001), the positive emotions experienced by engaged employees may serve to build personal resources such as energy. Indeed, other studies have demonstrated that work engagement can spur positive gain spirals that promote personal initiative in the workplace (Bakker et al. 2012) and enhance well-being (Schaufeli et al. 2002). Likewise, research has shown that work engagement was positively related to positive outcomes such as positive affect at work (Bakker and Bal 2010) job performance (Xanthopoulou et al. 2009), and citizenship behaviour (Bakker et al. 2004). Rich et al. (2010) suggested that engaged employees are not only more likely to work harder, but also more likely to experience positive, individual affective states, which influence their overall performance. These findings are consistent with the notion that work engagement builds personal resources than can promote positive outcomes, such as improved job performance.

Bakker (2009) has highlighted some reasons why engaged workers perform better than non-engaged workers. First, engaged workers experience better health, so they can focus

and dedicate all their energy resources to their work. Plus, engaged employees create their own job and personal resources and, when necessary, ask for performance feedback or ask colleagues for help (Bakker and Demerouti 2009).

To prove these assertions, the already considerable number of studies showing a positive relationship between employee engagement and job performance has further increased (Demerouti and Cropanzano 2010). For instance, Bakker et al. (2004) showed that engaged employees performed well and were willing to go the extra mile. In addition, Halbesleben and Wheeler (2008) showed that work engagement predicted a high proportion of variance in job performance. Salanova et al. (2005) demonstrated that organizational resources and work engagement predicted service climate which, in turn, predicted employee performance and then customer loyalty. And Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2012) showed that working days characterized by many job resources (e.g., supervisor coaching) contributed to employees' daily-levels of optimism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem which, in turn, explained daily work engagement.

## 2.4 The Present Study

On the basis of this rationale, we propose that when a worker experiences an uplift, the positive affect that might arise may facilitate a high level of work engagement (Sonnentag et al. 2010a, b). In turn, work engagement may increase employees' well-being and performance (Ouweneel et al. 2012). We expect this, because the positive affect that daily uplifts provoke at work may enhance work engagement which, in turn, may lead to potential positive consequences for an individual's well-being and performance. However, this framework has yet to be empirically explored. Thus, as a next step in advancing research and practice, we propose that positive affect and work engagement do play a mediating role between daily uplifts and well-being and performance. Accordingly, we expect there to be positive relationships between daily uplifts, positive affect, work engagement, well-being and performance in the workplace. Therefore, we state our hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1** Positive affect and work engagement fully mediate the positive relationship between daily uplifts and well-being.

**Hypothesis 2** Positive affect and work engagement fully mediate the positive relationship between daily uplifts and performance.

## 3 Method

### 3.1 Participants and Procedure

Two hundred and ninety-three employees (154 men and 139 women) participated in this research on a voluntary basis. The mean age was 24.34 years old ( $SD = 9.20$ ). In addition, 11 % of the participants were university graduates, and 89 % had a high school diploma. Participants had different job positions, including manager (14 %), administrative employee (32 %), operational employee (31 %) and sales personnel (23 %).

All participants filled out the daily events scale (Oishi et al. 2007) to measure the frequency of daily uplifts. Participants then completed measures of emotional experiences (Diener et al. 2010) and work engagement (Schaufeli et al. 2006) and, finally, completed

measures of subjective well-being (Diener et al. 1985) and performance. All the questionnaires were answered at the end of the day.

### 3.2 Materials

*Daily events* were measured through the scale of (positive and negative) daily events from Oishi et al. (2007). The scale comprised a list of 26 daily events, of which 13 events are positive (e.g., “I got complimented”) and the other 13 are negative (e.g., “Said something to someone, I deeply regretted afterwards”). Participants were asked to indicate how many of the events had happened to them that day. The daily positive and negative event scores were computed by adding the daily frequencies of the 13 positive and 13 negative events. We also computed the average daily positive and negative events, which indicated the chronic level of individual differences of positive and negative events (see Table 1 for descriptive statistics).

*Affect* was measured using the Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (Diener et al. 2010). It is a 12-item scale subdivided in two subscales that assess a participant’s positive and negative emotional experiences. Each item was scored based on how often they had experienced those feelings on that day, and ranged from 1 (very rarely or never) to 5 (very often or always). In this study, the Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  was .93 for the positive emotions’ subscale and .91 for the negative emotions’ sub-scale.

*Work engagement* was assessed using the short form of the *Utrecht Work -Engagement Scale* (Schaufeli et al. 2006). The scale includes nine items distributed across the following three underlying dimensions of engagement: *vigor* (three items; e.g., “At my job, I feel strong and vigorous”), *dedication* (three items; e.g., “I am enthusiastic about my job”), and *absorption* (three items; e.g., “I feel happy when I am working intensely”). Each item was rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). In the present study, Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of the composite scale was .93.

*Performance* was measured with two questions: “How was your performance today?” measured on a 7-point scale (1—*terrible* to 7—*excellent*), and “How productive were you today?” measured on a 7-point scale (1—not at all productive to 7—very productive). We combined responses to these items into a performance score ( $r = .91$ ).

*Subjective well-being* was measured by the five items of the *Satisfaction with life scale* (SWLS; Diener et al. 1985) which evaluates the quality of one’s life. One example of the items is “in most ways my life is close to my ideal”. Items were scored on a 7-point scale,

**Table 1** Descriptive statistics and correlations between variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Daily uplifts	6.07	2.38	1						
2. Daily hassles	2.45	1.73	.125*	1					
3. Positive affect	3.75	.68	.499**	-.079	1				
4. Negative affect	2.00	.73	-.193*	-.313**	-.471**	1			
5. Work engagement	4.52	.99	.134*	-.049	.269**	-.192**	1		
6. Well-being	4.59	1.07	.300**	-.072	.512**	-.306**	.245**	1	
7. Performance	4.51	1.34	.266**	-.122*	.323**	-.167**	.279**	.195**	1

In bracket (Cronbach’s alpha). N = 293

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). In this study, the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was .89.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

In order to test the significance of the mediation effect, we used the bootstrapping approach (using 5000 bootstrapping samples) for multiple mediators as described by Preacher and Hayes (2008), to contrast the level of significance of the diverse estimated parameters. This procedure applies a nonparametric resampling procedure to estimate the size of indirect effects using adjusted percentile (asymmetrical) confidence intervals (CIs). In addition, this strategy is mainly advantageous when applied to the case of multiple mediation, because it allows us to determine not only whether an indirect effect exists, but also which mediator contributes meaningfully to that effect. Bootstrapping allows us to estimate the individual indirect effects, and distinguishes between the indirect effects without potential problems due to collinearity that could pose a problem for a path analysis (Preacher and Hayes 2008). The analyses were performed using the SPSS 22.0 statistical package, and we also used Preacher and Hayes' indirect macro. Ninety-five percent CIs were employed and 5000 bootstrapping resamples were conducted. CIs were adjusted for bias (bias corrected and accelerated, BCa).

To control for the influence of common method bias in this study, we followed established recommendations (Conway and Lance 2010; Podsakoff et al. 2003). Thus, we carried out a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) on the data set. We calculated four fit indices to determine how the model fitted our data (Hair et al. 2006). The  $\chi^2/df$  values of less than 2.5 indicate a good fit (Arbuckle 2006). For the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), incremental fit index (IFI) and comparative fit index (CFI), values  $>.9$  represent a good model fit (Bentler 1990), and for the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), values of  $<.08$  indicate a good model fit (Browne and Cudeck 1990; Hu and Bentler 1998). We initially carried out a CFA on the full measurement model, in which all items loaded onto their latent factors as intended (Anderson and Gerbing 1988; Hair et al. 2006). Overall, the measurement model exhibited good psychometric properties. Moreover, all path estimates were significant ( $p < .05$ ). To further test for common method variance, we conducted Harman's single-factor test, which involves a CFA in which all variables were allowed to load onto one general factor. The model exhibited a very poor fit, which provided a good indication that a single factor did not account for most of the variance in our data.

## 4 Results

A summary of descriptive statistics and the correlations between all the present variables is presented in Table 1. All were positively and significantly related to daily uplifts and positive emotions, and negatively and significantly related to daily hassles and negative emotions.

### 4.1 Hypotheses Testing

Our hypotheses stated that positive emotions and work engagement would mediate the relationship between daily uplifts, well-being and performance.



## 4.2 The Indirect Effect of Positive Affect and Work Engagement on the Link Between Daily Uplifts and Well-Being

Hypothesis 1 stated that positive affect and work engagement would mediate the relationship between daily uplifts and well-being. To assess the significance of the mediation, we followed the bootstrapping approach (Hayes and Preacher 2010) for multiple mediators. We found evidence, that there are indirect effects of daily uplifts on well-being via positive affect (.71, 95 % CI [.513, .908]) and via work engagement (.14, 95 % CI [.005, .266]) (Fig. 1). Thus, we found support for both hypotheses.

Finally, using the aforementioned bootstrapping approach, we tested the difference between the two mediators: positive affect and work engagement. The estimate was .22 ( $SE = .03, p < .001$ ), which indicates that the indirect effect of daily uplifts on well-being via positive affect was significantly greater than the indirect effect via work engagement. Overall, the multiple mediator model was highly significant,  $F_{(3,259)} = 36.41, p < .001$ , with  $R^2 = .53$ , and  $Adj. R^2 = .28$ .

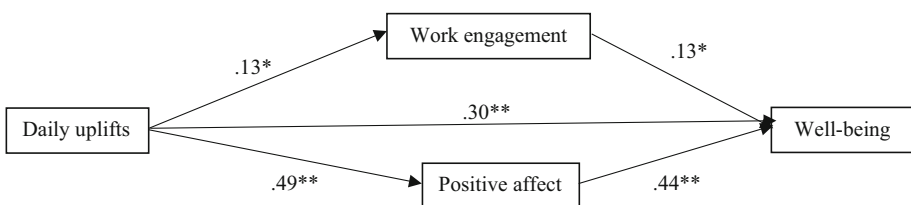
## 4.3 The Indirect Effect of Positive Affect and Work Engagement on the Link Between Daily Uplifts and Performance

Hypothesis 2 stated that positive affect and work engagement would mediate the relationship between daily uplifts and performance. To assess the significance of the mediation, we followed the bootstrapping approach (Hayes and Preacher 2010) for multiple mediators. We found evidence that there are indirect effects of daily uplifts on well-being via positive affect (.38, 95 % CI [.13, .64]) and via work engagement (.28, 95 % CI [.10, .46]) (Fig. 2). Thus, we found support for both hypotheses.

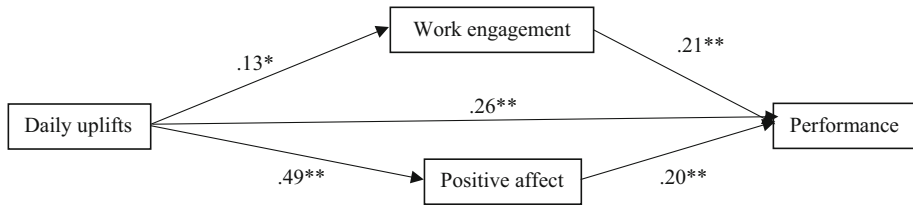
Finally, using the afore-mentioned bootstrapping approach, we tested the contrast of the two mediators, positive affect and work engagement. The estimate was .71 ( $SE = .27, p < .001$ ) which indicates that the indirect effect of daily uplifts on performance via positive affect was significantly greater than the indirect effect via work engagement. Overall, the multiple mediator model was highly significant,  $F_{(3,280)} = 18.16, p < .001$ , with  $R^2 = .40$ , and  $Adj. R^2 = .16$ .

## 5 Discussion

According to the affective events theory, daily events exert an influence on affective experiences, which in turn impacts attitudes and organizational behaviours toward work (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). Specifically, the theory emphasizes that daily uplifts



**Fig. 1** Coefficients representing effects of daily uplifts on mediators (work engagement and positive affect) and well-being. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$



**Fig. 2** Coefficients representing effects of daily uplifts on mediators (work engagement and positive affect) and performance. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

stimulate positive affect on employees. Hence, the authors highlight a mediating role of positive affect between daily uplifts and certain attitudes and behaviours. Based on that theory, this study extends the current knowledge about antecedents of well-being and performance in several ways. The present study also adds to our knowledge about the role work engagement plays in these relationships.

The present findings contribute to our understanding of the antecedents of well-being and performance in the workplace. Specifically, the results of our study suggest that daily uplifts are associated with well-being and performance. Consistent with predictions, daily uplifts are associated with higher levels of well-being and performance in the workplace. Moreover, we found that positive affect and work engagement fully mediated the effect of daily uplifts on employees' well-being. We also found that positive affect and work engagement partially mediated the effect of daily uplifts on performance. The results support AET's explanations of how affective daily events arouse affective reactions and how affect influences some attitudes and behaviors in the workplace. In addition, this research adds a contribution to the study of how work engagement is related to affective daily events and to well-being and performance under the affective events theory framework. Specifically, results show that daily uplifts arouse positive affect that facilitate feelings of vigor, dedication and absorption at work. Moreover, higher levels of work engagement serve to enhance the effects of positive affective experiences for employees, as far as their well-being and performance are concerned.

We explored the role of work engagement as a mediator of the link between affective daily events, positive affect, well-being and performance. Thus expanding the scope of research which, up until now, has seen work engagement explored mainly as an outcome variable of diverse antecedents, such as organizational practices (e.g., Alfes et al. 2013), or job resources (Xanthopoulou et al. 2009). The broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson et al. 2003) proposes that positive affect broadens task-related thought processes and has strong implications for employees' work-related well-being (Shuck et al. 2011) and performance (Fredrickson and Branigan 2005). Drawing on research into positive affect (Fredrickson 2001), the positive affect experienced by engaged employees may serve to build personal resources that can promote positive outcomes, such as job performance (e.g., Schaufeli et al. 2002) or well-being (Bakker et al. 2012). In light of these conclusions, we considered that it would be insightful to explore whether this could be predicted by daily uplifts and, as a consequence, influence well-being and performance. Moreover, we contribute with evidence to our hypothesis, showing the mediating role of work engagement on these links.

Examining the link between daily uplifts, affect and work engagement enables us to explore variables that emerge in the relationship between characteristics of the work context and the personal characteristics of workers that influence an individual's well-being and performance.

The present findings are consistent with other studies and models that explain well-being and performance. For example, the impact of daily events on well-being has been documented by several researchers. Oishi et al. (2007) showed that positive daily events were associated with daily well-being. Ivancevich (1986) demonstrated that daily events, not only predicted well-being, but also performance outcomes. The positive relationship found between positive affect and well-being is empirically supported by Sonnentag et al.'s research (2010a, b), which stated positive affect as a proximal predictor of employees' well-being. Likewise, Ilies et al. (2011) showed that positive daily events influenced well-being through positive affect. The positive link between work engagement and certain behaviours, such as performance, is shown in diverse studies (e.g., Alfes et al. 2013; Xanthopoulou et al. 2009). Our findings are also in agreement with research that demonstrates a positive association between work engagement and well-being. For instance, Bakker and Sanz-Vergel (2013), showed that work engagement was a predictor of individuals' flourishing, and Shuck et al. (2013) demonstrated that work engagement was associated with higher levels of employees' psychological well-being in the workplace. Our results allow us to conclude that daily uplifts are proximal variables of positive affect and work engagement, and distal causes of workers' well-being and performance. That is, employees facing daily uplifts at work, tend to experience positive affect (for example, joy or contentment), which in turn facilitates their work engagement. As a result of this association, well-being and performance tend to increase.

Thus, the present study provides new insights into the study of affective events, affect and work engagement. Specifically, this study relates the more proximal effects of positive affect and work engagement on well-being and performance to more distal, situational antecedents (daily uplifts) and offers a novel mediation model that elucidates these effects. Our results are consistent with the notion that work engagement builds personal resources that can promote positive outcomes, such as job performance (e.g., Schaufeli et al. 2002) or well-being (Bakker et al. 2012). In addition, the findings are consistent with the association between positive affect and work engagement (e.g., Xanthopoulou et al. 2009), in which the higher frequency of positive affect has been associated to more engaged, happier employees with higher performances.

Likewise, our study adds an empirical contribution to the predictors of well-being and performance as it considers the integration of work engagement as a consequence of daily uplifts and positive affect and as an antecedent of employees' well-being and performance in the workplace.

As far as we know, this is the first research that considers work engagement as a mediator with a role similar to that of positive affect, proposed by the AET, in the link between affective daily events and well-being and performance. Our results show that work engagement seems to be influenced by the affective experiences produced by daily uplifts. From these results, work engagement can be considered as a mediator when studied under the AET framework. We claim this is important since even the AET model is a referent in the research of affect, attitudes and behaviours in the workplace, yet the entire chain has not been demonstrated empirically.

Moreover, to our knowledge, this is the first study that considers work engagement as an affective state similar to the states that AET classifies as affective-driven behavior like, for example, transient effort. Such states are influenced by the affective experiences produced by work events in an immediate manner. So, work engagement can be considered, in the future, as an affect driven state when studying it using the AET approach.

## 5.1 Practical Implications

This study offers important practical implications for both workers and organizations. Our findings contribute to understanding and identifying processes that can facilitate employees' well-being and performance. In particular, our results highlight the importance of promoting positive affect and work engagement in organizations on a daily basis, since we found empirical evidence that daily uplifts facilitate work engagement which, in turn, influences employees' well-being and performance. This is especially important given that the consequences of experiencing well-being can extend well beyond the work context for individuals. For instance, individuals who have higher levels of well-being and work engagement have better physical health (Salovey et al. 2000). These connections underscore the relevance of applying findings from this study to increase well-being in the workplace. In particular, a focus on increasing the engagement of workers offers a point of intervention. For instance, encouraging workers to participate in off-work activities would create a sense of psychological detachment from work (Sonnentag et al. 2010a, b), thus reducing stress and enhancing work engagement. Higher engagement, in turn, would facilitate well-being and enhance job performance.

Beyond the implications for individuals, our findings highlight the association of work engagement, well-being and organizational performance. This association has also been demonstrated in the literature (e.g., Warr 2009) and there is growing evidence linking poorer work engagement to poorer well-being and performance (e.g., Lang et al. 2007). In light of these findings, organizations might benefit from actions that facilitate workers well-being and, consequently their performance. For instance, employers can increase job resources that promote positive affect and work engagement, such as leader and colleague support and/or job control.

It is important to realize that interventions that occur on a daily basis could be fundamental to promoting well-being and productivity within the workforce, although some events may require more attention in order to foster work engagement. For instance, when introducing new or complex tasks, when events encompass high adversity, mergers or other kinds of negative events, and where employees might be required to go beyond their average level of engagement. Thus, interventions designed as short or mid-term programs, might be more effective in such situations.

Additionally, our results show the importance of daily uplifts as antecedents of employees' work engagement. These kinds of events matter because their occurrence can enhance vigor, dedication and absorption in the workplace. Thus, some variables posited as contributing to well-being in the workplace gain significance; for instance, receiving positive feedback about work, or knowing what is expected from his/her performance, adopting a learning vision even when some negative feedback is received (Ohly and Schmitt 2015). These daily uplifts could help to enhance positive affect and work engagement in the organization which, in turn, could improve an employee's sense of well-being and their performance at work.

Considering the evidence that daily uplifts predict higher levels of well-being and performance, if an organization wanted to enhance well-being and job performance it would be worthwhile to increase the likelihood of those events occurring on a daily basis at work. As suggested by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), workplace characteristics are a key factor that predisposes the occurrence of certain types of daily events. As a result, a job relatively enriched (e.g., autonomy, a supporting leader) might facilitate the occurrence of daily uplifts. For instance, it would be advisable to implement procedures that advise

employees' about specific work-related goals and also acknowledge their progress in those defined goals. It is worthwhile to give information about the progress in pursuing goals as often as possible, even when progress is smaller than it was supposed to be, because it can improve positive affect, which in turn can enhance employees' work engagement with their tasks.

## 5.2 Limitations and Future Research

We used a cross-sectional design and thus cannot make inferences about the causality of the studied variables, nor can we explore the effects over time. To explore the causality among these variables we should have measured it at different points in time (e.g., Sonnentag et al. 2010a, b). Thus, further studies should analyse this, for instance through an experience sampling methodology (Hektner et al. 2007). Another limitation is the self-reporting nature of the data, which can be a source of measurement bias (Spector 2006).

Another limitation concerns performance measure. We considered a subjective self-evaluation of one's performance which could be influencing our results, since it might be biased. In future studies, objective measures of performance or even reports from supervisors about their workers' performance, might be used in order to obtain a more objective evaluation of it.

Lazarus (1991) suggested that cognitive appraisals mediate the link events-emotions; future studies might explore the role of cognitive appraisals in the relationship between daily uplifts, positive affect and work engagement. It would be insightful to understand how cognitive appraisals of daily uplifts are configured and which are more likely to influence positive affect and work engagement in organizations. For instance, some cognitive appraisals considered as relevant, such as an agency or an event's importance (e.g., Kiffin-Petersen et al. 2012) could be included in the analysis in order to understand when they lead employees to feel positive affect and more vigor, dedication and absorption at work. Hence, it could help understand better how and when daily uplifts influence employees' well-being and performance.

Likewise, we recommend that future research explores the relationships between variables of the full model that AET suggests: affective daily events (hassles and uplifts), cognitive events' appraisals, emotions and well-being and performance. In fact, there are few studies that test the AET model, integrating all those variables.

Lastly, personality traits or emotional contagion could be included as moderators of the link between affective daily events, affect and work engagement. Considering these variables in the AET model, it would help to understand in depth, which factors contribute to creating work contexts that facilitate both well-being and performance, in organizations.

## 6 Conclusions

The relations explored in this study provide new theoretical elements that may enrich previous models that explain employees' well-being and performance in the workplace. Specifically, in future models, daily uplifts, positive affect and work engagement should be considered as variables positively related to work-related well-being and job outcomes, such as performance. Specifically, daily uplifts provoke the experience of positive affect and, therefore, enhance work engagement, which in turn, facilitates well-being and

employees' performance. From the practical point of view, this study suggests several ways that may be used.

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