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Daily Relaxation Microbreaks and Work Engagement: The Mediating Role of Employee Well-Being

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Abstract

Micro-breaks have received increasing attention as a workplace recovery strategy that may help employees maintain positive psychological conditions and sustain work-related outcomes. This study examines the relationship between relaxation microbreaks and employee work engagement, with employee well-being as a mediating variable. Data were collected using repeated daily observations from employees over five consecutive workdays. A total of 220 observation episodes were obtained from 22 employees working in financial service institutions in Aceh, Indonesia. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings indicate that relaxation microbreaks were positively associated with employee well-being and work engagement. Employee well-being was also positively associated with work engagement and significantly mediated the relationship between relaxation microbreaks and work engagement. These results suggest that brief relaxation activities during work may contribute to employees' psychological recovery and foster stronger engagement by improving well-being. This study contributes to the employee recovery and engagement literature by highlighting the importance of microbreaks as a simple workplace practice that supports positive psychological and work-related outcomes. The findings also have practical implications for organizations, encouraging brief recovery opportunities during work to enhance employee well-being and engagement.

Keywords: *micro-breaks; employee well-being; work engagement; repeated daily observations; PLS-SEM*

1. INTRODUCTION

Technological developments, globalization, and increasingly intense business competition have forced employees to work harder and take on more demanding tasks. Jobs with continuous and demanding workloads require employees to devote more time to their work. When excessive workloads, time constraints, and the expectation of being perpetually available become habitual in the workplace, employees may experience chronic stress, leading to significant unhappiness and disengagement from their tasks, sometimes referred to as "burnout". Employees who experience high levels of distress due to excessive workloads tend to show lower work engagement (Amano et al., 2020; Hetzel-Riggin et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2021) and are more likely to experience negative emotions (Alkhawaldeh, 2024; McVicar,

2016). According to the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018), when individuals exhaust their resources, they often reduce their involvement in challenging tasks and prioritize the preservation and acquisition of additional resources to mitigate future losses.

Several studies have examined mechanisms by which employees with high job demands can work efficiently and feel more engaged in their work while maintaining their well-being at work, such as positive affect (Kim et al., 2018; Sonnentag et al., 2020). Organizational scholars and practitioners are exploring self-regulatory approaches to help employees maintain or enhance their occupational well-being (Zacher, Brailsford, et al., 2014; Zacher, Jimmieson, et al., 2014). They found that micro-breaks are one of the effective solutions for maintaining employees' vitality (Zacher, Jimmieson, et al., 2014) and increasing their work engagement (Bosch et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2022). Micro-breaks are informal short breaks employees take (Hunter & Wu, 2016) between main work activities (Bosch & Sonnentag, 2019) with the aim of recovery (Kim et al., 2017, 2018), such as restoring energy, increasing focus, and reducing physical or mental fatigue. Previous research suggests that by taking micro breaks, employees can regain their lost energy (Sonnentag & Kühnel, 2016), well-being (Albulescu et al., 2025), restore their day-specific positive feeling (Kim et al., 2018), and be motivated to engage more at work (Wang et al., 2022). By allowing employees to engage in microbreaks, managers ensure they perform at their best without feeling burned out or fatigued.

Research on energy management and micro-breaks has grown to examine their impact on employee behavior at work (Albulescu et al., 2025; Fritz et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2022). Prior research has demonstrated that micro-breaks play a significant role in enhancing employees' job performance (Kim et al., 2018). What still needs to be explored in the literature is the impact of micro breaks on work engagement. As suggested by Binnewies et al. (2009), subsequent research may investigate whether micro-break activities enhance significant work-related outcomes, including work engagement and job performance. Work Engagement is an important indicator of the extent to which employees feel involved in their work. Work engagement is the opposite of burnout at work, characterized by high energy, involvement, and job efficacy (Leiter & Maslach, 2017).

This study examines the extent to which microbreak activities affect employee engagement. In addition, it is important to examine the mechanism underlying the mediating factor to understand the complex relationship between micro breaks and work engagement. The mediating of personal context, such as well-being, is still missing in the literature. This

study offers several important contributions to the literature on employee behavior and workplace recovery. First, the study extends prior research on micro-breaks by examining how relaxation micro-break activities are associated with employee work engagement in everyday work settings. By using repeated daily observations, this study provides a more dynamic understanding of how short recovery experiences relate to employees' psychological states at work. Second, this study highlights employee well-being as an important underlying mechanism that explains the relationship between micro-breaks and work engagement. In doing so, the findings contribute to the growing discussion of personal resource recovery and employee engagement by demonstrating the role of well-being in linking recovery experiences to positive work-related outcomes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Micro-breaks are short, unstructured, voluntary breaks of less than 10 minutes that employees take during work hours (Bosch & Sonnentag, 2019; Kim et al., 2017, 2018). Micro breaks are taken when employees feel tired or need to recharge while working. Micro breaks differ from scheduled breaks in that they are informal and can be taken at any time that suits an individual's needs (Sianoja et al., 2015). During micro breaks, employees typically divert their attention from work to other refreshing activities (Hunter & Wu, 2016), such as taking a short walk, engaging in casual conversation, or simply taking in the scenery. There are four major micro-break activities: relaxation, nutrition intake, socialization, and cognitive activities.

Subjective well-being is an individual's cognitive and affective evaluation of their life. It comprises three core components: life satisfaction (a cognitive appraisal of one's overall life), positive affect (the frequent experience of pleasant emotions), and negative affect (the infrequent experience of unpleasant emotions) (Diener, 1984),. In this study, we specifically emphasize the positive affect dimension of subjective well-being, which has been shown to mitigate the negative impacts of stress, strain, and work-related pressure. Moreover, positive emotions help create a more supportive and productive work environment, which in turn enhances employees' well-being and job performance (Russell & Daniels, 2018).

Employee well-being encompasses various aspects, including physical and psychological health, stress levels, motivation, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, morale, and workplace climate (Grawitch et al., 2006). Work engagement is 'a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind and characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption' (Schaufeli et al., 2002). (Kahn, 1990) explained engagement as a condition in which individuals are psychologically and physically present while carrying out their roles within the

organization. Work engagement is commonly represented through three main dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor reflects employees' high levels of energy, mental resilience, persistence, and willingness to invest effort in their work despite difficulties (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Dedication describes a strong sense of involvement characterized by enthusiasm, commitment, and readiness to take on challenges, while also perceiving work as meaningful and valuable (Jenaro et al., 2011). Meanwhile, absorption refers to a deep concentration and immersion in work activities, in which employees fully enjoy their tasks and often lose track of time because their work is highly engaging and enjoyable (Bakker, 2011; Çankır & Şahin, 2018).

2.1 Microbreaks and Work Engagement

Previous studies have found that micro-breaks are associated with work engagement. Micro-breaks can effectively mitigate the adverse impacts of job demands, correlating with reduced fatigue and negative emotions, as well as enhanced positive emotions and work engagement (Kim et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2019). Micro-breaks help employees manage fatigue by limiting the accumulation of fatigue-related risks (Tucker, 2003), reducing work-related stress (Engelmann et al., 2011), and increasing work engagement (Kühnel et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022). Participating in relaxing activities during breaks can alleviate afternoon fatigue and, in turn, enhance employees' work engagement by replenishing their personal energy and resources (Bosch et al., 2018).

According to the Conservation of Resources Theory proposed by (Hobfoll, 1989) Hobfoll (1989), individuals who continuously lose valuable resources tend to withdraw effort and show reduced involvement in their work activities (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Work engagement is strongly influenced by the availability of employees' personal energy and psychological resources (Bakker et al., 2014). Employees who can maintain or restore their resources are more likely to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, focus, and dedication at work (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007).

In this context, micro-breaks can serve as an effective recovery mechanism, helping employees regain depleted energy, reduce fatigue at the end of the workday, and enhance engagement throughout the day (Kim et al., 2022; Kühnel et al., 2017). By temporarily detaching from job demands, employees can recover mentally and emotionally from work-related strain (Barnes et al., 2007) and are better able to cope with workplace stressors that could otherwise diminish their engagement (Wang et al., 2022).

H1: Higher participation in relaxation microbreaks is positively associated with employee work engagement.

2.2 Relaxation Micro Breaks and Employee Well-being

Increased break frequency throughout the day correlates with enhanced employee well-being at the end of the workday (Kim et al., 2017, 2018). Relaxation microbreaks can play an important role in improving employee well-being by providing opportunities to temporarily recover from work demands and psychological strain. Researchers indicate that psychological detachment correlates favorably with employee well-being, since short-term disengagement from work enables individuals to "let go" of their professional responsibilities (Boekhorst et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022). When employees feel fatigue or stress, they may take some relaxation activities, such as walking around, stretching, or short exercising, which may increase their well-being at work (De Bloom et al., 2014; Sianoja et al., 2018).

Based on the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), employees continuously use physical, cognitive, and emotional resources while performing their tasks. When these resources are excessively depleted without adequate recovery, employees are more likely to experience stress, fatigue, and lower well-being. Relaxation microbreaks, such as listening to music, stretching, deep breathing, or engaging in brief enjoyable activities, help employees restore depleted resources and reduce work-related tension (Kim et al., 2022).

In addition, relaxation activities allow employees to psychologically detach from work pressures for a short period of time, which is essential for mental recovery (Barnes et al., 2007). Through this temporary disengagement, employees can regulate their emotions more effectively, reduce exhaustion, and regain positive affect (Zhu et al., 2019). As employees feel more refreshed and emotionally balanced after taking relaxation microbreaks, they are more likely to experience higher levels of well-being, including greater happiness, reduced stress, and improved emotional health at work. Therefore, relaxation microbreaks can be considered an effective recovery strategy that supports employees' overall well-being in the workplace.

H_2: Higher relaxation microbreak participants are positively associated with employees' well-being

2.3 Well-being and Work Engagement

Previous studies found that subjective well-being, such as positive affect at work, increases work engagement (Bosch & Sonnentag, 2019; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Kim et al., 2018; Telu & Potnuru, 2024a). Based on the Build and Broaden Theory (Fredrickson, 2001,

2004; Telu & Potnuru, 2024a), having positive emotions will lead to specific actions and thoughts, such as seeking new knowledge or gaining energy. The thoughts and actions increase physical strength and intellectual resources, thereby promoting higher levels of engagement at work (Telu & Potnuru, 2024a). Employees get positive well-being from healthy mental, emotional, and physical well-being, which leads to better engagement at work. Previous studies by George & Brief (1992) and Russell & Daniels (2018) found a positive correlation between subjective well-being and work engagement. Individuals with elevated subjective well-being possess a sense of mastery and profound self-regard, which propels them toward the attainment of their objectives (Diener et al., 1998). Employees with emotional well-being may build resources, minimize the negative impacts of work demands, shape perceptions of available job resources, and support increased levels of work engagement. In addition, individuals with emotional well-being show greater work engagement (Engelbrecht et al., 2020). Studies from school teachers also highlight that teachers and higher education teachers who score higher in positive emotion have better work engagement (Hamzah & Nordin, 2022; Zeng et al., 2019). People who experience positive emotions tend to feel more optimistic, resilient, and self-efficacious.

H_3: Higher daily employee well-being is positively associated with daily work engagement.

2.4 Mediation by Well-being (Micro-breaks - Well-being - Work Engagement)

Several previous studies have found that well-being is positively correlated with work engagement (Garg & Singh, 2020; Telu & Potnuru, 2024a). When a person's mental state begins to stabilize and function, they may feel that their body condition has returned to optimal after taking a short break, leading them to discover their true self and increase their potential and engagement while working (Conlin et al., 2021).

Past studies also suggest a positive association between microbreaks and well-being (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007) as well as low weariness and high vigor (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012; Ten Brummelhuis & Trougakos, 2014). For example, engaging in frequent micro-breaks during work influences employee well-being at the end of the day (Kim et al., 2017, 2018). Similarly, Wang et al. (2022) showed that there is a significant connection between microbreaks and well-being. Microbreaks allow a brief psychological detachment from work, during which individuals shift their attention away from their work (Boekhorst et al., 2017). Engaging in physical, social, and creative leisure activities is more beneficial for promoting well-being (Kuykendall et al., 2020). Volunteering and other leisure activities that provide purpose have also been linked to increased happiness (Mojza et al., 2010; Thoits & Hewitt,

2001). Consequently, employees may regain their energy and mood and stabilize their mental health.

Therefore, when employees engage in microbreak activities such as relaxation or brief connection with others, the feeling of tiredness, stress, pressure, or fatigue that arises when work demands are high can be reduced. Then, they will have better well-being because their mood is better. When employees experience better well-being, they will be more enthusiastic, energetic, and ready to re-engage in work. Previous studies have found a significant relationship between well-being, such as positive affect, and work engagement (Bosch & Sonnentag, 2019). They found that positive affect provides employees with the enthusiasm to engage at work (Bledow et al., 2011) and to pursue their goals (Bindl & Parker, 2012). In conclusion, microbreaks promote well-being, leading to greater engagement, productivity, and overall job satisfaction among employees (Albulescu et al., 2025; Sonnentag et al., 2022).

H_4: Relaxation Microbreak affects Employee Work Engagement mediated by Employee Wellbeing

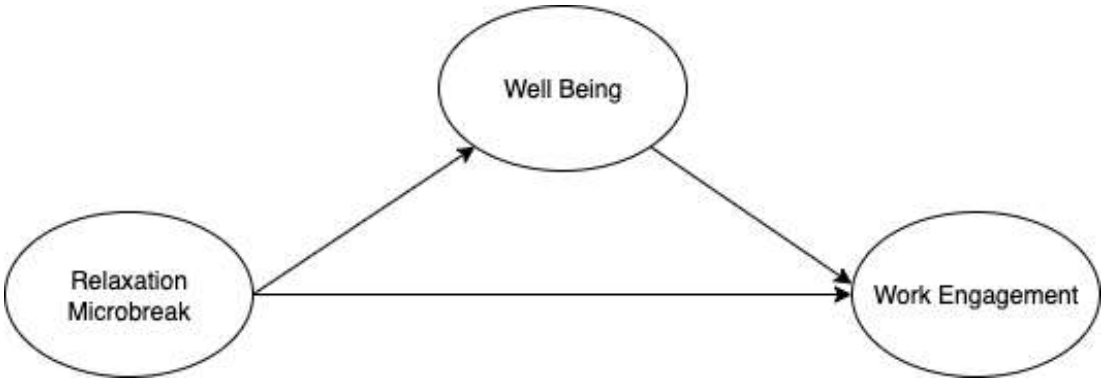


Figure 1. Research Model

3. METHOD

This study employed a daily diary approach, analyzing repeated observations from employees over five consecutive workdays to investigate the effect of microbreaks on job engagement, with psychological well-being as a mediating variable. The study involved 22 employees working as customer service staff, tellers, and financial employees in financial companies located in Aceh Province. A total of 220 observation episodes were collected across the five-day period.

Before the data collection process began, participants were informed about the study's objectives, confidentiality procedures, and incentives for completing the survey. Data were collected via an online questionnaire distributed via WhatsApp. The survey was conducted twice daily, Monday to Friday, during lunch breaks and after working hours. Respondents

were asked to report the microbreak activities they engaged in during both the morning and afternoon work periods. Because the dataset contained repeated observations from the same individuals, the study captured employees' day-to-day experiences more accurately. For predictive exploration and hypothesis testing, the collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

In this study, relaxation microbreaks were measured using a scale developed by Fritz et al. (2011) consisting of 7 questions related to relaxation microbreak activities. Work engagement was measured using the 9-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli et al., 2006), with responses on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. An example item is "At my work, I feel bursting with energy"; "I am enthusiastic about my job" and "Time flies when I am working". Finally, well-being was measured using the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), which consists of a three-item scale developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) and administered on a Likert scale, with example items such as "In general, I consider myself a very happy person."

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to examine the influence of relaxation microbreaks on work engagement mediated by employee well-being. Respondents' demographic profiles were included. The demographic information of the respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 1. Respondent Demography

No	Indicator	Amount	Percentage
1	Gender		
	Men	12	55%
	Women	10	45%
2	Age		
	22 – 30	5	23%
	31 – 35	6	27%
	36 - 40	6	27%
	40 - 45	2	9%
	46 - 50	1	5%
	> 50	2	9%
3	Education		
	Associate Degree	1	5%
	Bachelor	20	90%
	Master	1	5%
4	Marriage status		
	Single	5	23%
	Marriage	16	72%
	Widow	1	5%

Source: Processed data 2026

The demographic characteristics of the research participants consisted of 22 people, with a slightly higher proportion of men (55%) than of women (45%). The age distribution of participants was quite varied, with the majority in the 31-to-40-year age range (54%), followed by the 22-to-30-year age group (23%), and a smaller proportion in the over-40-year age group (23%). In terms of education, the majority of participants have a Bachelor's degree (90%), while those with a Diploma 3 and Master's degree are 5% each. Regarding marital status, the majority of respondents were married (72%), while the rest were single (23%) and widows/widowers (5%). These demographic variables provide a comprehensive picture of participant profiles that is important for understanding the context of research results.

After data collection, the next stage was to test the quality of the research instruments using validity and reliability tests. Validity tests were conducted to ensure that the instruments used accurately measure the variables in question and are consistent with the concept being studied. Meanwhile, the reliability test aims to assess the consistency of the instrument's measurement results, ensuring that, when used repeatedly under the same conditions, it provides stable, reliable results.

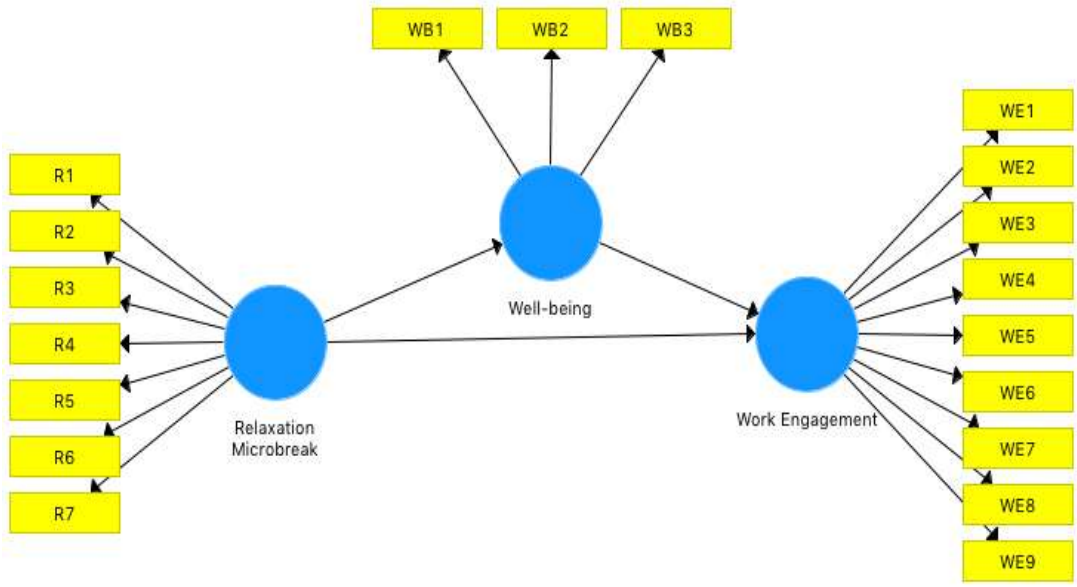


Figure 2. Early Model

4.1 Outer Model

The outer model is assessed through validity and reliability testing. Convergent validity is determined by examining the outer loading values of the indicators, while

discriminant validity is evaluated using cross-loading comparisons. Reliability is measured by assessing composite reliability.

4.2 Convergent Validity Test

An indicator fulfills the criteria for convergent validity when its outer loading value exceeds 0.7.

Table 2. Outer Loading Results

	Relaxation Microbreak	Well-being	Work Engagement
R1	0,472		
R2	0,862		
R3	-0,003		
R4	0,779		
R5	-0,043		
R6	0,243		
R7	-0,436		
WB1		0,866	
WB2		0,806	
WB3		0,719	
WE1			0,697
WE2			0,733
WE3			0,898
WE4			0,765
WE5			0,818
WE6			0,782
WE7			0,728
WE8			0,578
WE9			0,459

Source: Processed data 2026

Five indicators were found to have outer loading values below 0.7 in the Relaxation Microbreak variable, namely R1, R3, R5, R6, and R7; four indicators from the Work Engagement variable, namely WE1, WE7, WE8, and WE9. Consequently, these nine indicators were removed. After the reduction, the outer loading values of all remaining indicators were above 0.7, as shown in Table 3, indicating that the assumption of convergent validity was satisfied. Several indicators with loading values below the recommended threshold were removed to improve convergent validity and measurement reliability, consistent with PLS-SEM guidelines.

Table 3. Outer Loading Results after reduction

	Relaxation Microbreak	Well-being	Work Engagement
R2	0,936		
R4	0,849		
WB1		0,856	
WB2		0,794	
WB3		0,747	
WE2			0,774
WE3			0,907
WE4			0,804
WE5			0,843
WE6			0,869

Source: Processed data 2026

4.3 Discriminant Validity Test

A variable is considered to demonstrate discriminant validity when the cross-loading value of each of its indicators is higher than the corresponding values of the same indicators in other variables within the model. All indicators within the observed variable exhibit higher cross-loadings than those in other variables in the model, indicating that the model satisfies the assumption of discriminant validity, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Cross Loading Results

	Relaxation Microbreak	Well-being	Work Engagement
R2	0,936	0,490	0,435
R4	0,849	0,351	0,260
WB1	0,423	0,856	0,541
WB2	0,344	0,794	0,448
WB3	0,389	0,747	0,350
WE2	0,156	0,359	0,774
WE3	0,406	0,597	0,907
WE4	0,370	0,479	0,804
WE5	0,288	0,452	0,843
WE6	0,418	0,442	0,869

Source: Processed data 2026

4.4 Reliability Test

A variable is considered reliable when its Cronbach's Alpha, Rho A, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values all exceed 0.7. In this research model, the values of Cronbach's Alpha, Rho A, Composite Reliability, and AVE for each variable are above 0.7, indicating that all variables employed are reliable, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Relaxation Microbreak	0,757	0,846	0,888	0,798
Well-being	0,720	0,738	0,842	0,640
Work Engagement	0,897	0,917	0,923	0,707

Source: Processed data 2026

4.5 Inner Model

The inner model is evaluated using two measurement indicators: R-squared and the F-statistic.

Table 6. R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Well-being	0,232	0,229
Work Engagement	0,343	0,337

Source: Processed data 2026

Table 7. f Square

	Relaxation Microbreak	Well-being	Work Engagement
Relaxation Microbreak		0,303	0,034
Well-being			0,273
Work Engagement			

Source: Processed data 2026

Table 8. R Square and f Square Comparison

Inner Model Evaluation Criteria	Mark	Influence
R-square		
Work Engagement	0.337	Weak
Well-being as a mediator	0,299	Weak
f-square		

Relaxation microbreak -> Work Engagement	0,034	Small
Relaxation microbreak -> Well-being	0,303	Small
Well-being -> Work Engagement	0,273	Small

Source: Processed data 2026

The structural model evaluation indicates that the proposed model has moderate explanatory power. The R-square value for Work Engagement was 0.337, suggesting that relaxation microbreaks and employee well-being jointly explained 33.7% of the variance in work engagement. In addition, the R-square value of 0.299 for employee well-being indicates that relaxation microbreaks accounted for 29.9% of the variance in well-being. Although substantial portions of the variance remain unexplained by the model, these findings suggest that the proposed variables meaningfully contribute to understanding employees' psychological experiences at work.

Further examination of the effect sizes (f^2) provides deeper insight into each predictor's relative contribution. The direct effect of relaxation microbreaks on work engagement was relatively small ($f^2 = 0.034$), indicating that microbreaks alone may not strongly influence engagement. However, relaxation microbreaks had a moderate effect on employee well-being ($f^2 = 0.303$), while employee well-being also contributed meaningfully to work engagement ($f^2 = 0.273$). These findings suggest that the relationship between relaxation microbreaks and work engagement operates more strongly through employee well-being, highlighting well-being as an important psychological mechanism linking short recovery activities with positive work-related outcomes.

Table 9. Results of Direct Relationship Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Relaxation Microbreak-> Well-being	0,482	0,485	0,070	6,892	0,000
Relaxation -> Work Engagement	0,172	0,171	0,042	4,130	0,000
Well-being -> Work Engagement	0,483	0,487	0,054	8,871	0,000

Source: Processed data 2026

The path analysis results showed that relaxation microbreaks had a significant effect on well-being, with a path coefficient of 0.482 and a t-statistic of 6.892 ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This indicates that the more frequently employees engage in relaxation microbreaks, the higher

their perceived psychological well-being. This finding confirms that brief breaks from work activities can provide tangible benefits for restoring energy and improving employees' psychological well-being.

Furthermore, relaxation microbreaks also had a direct effect on work engagement, with a path coefficient of 0.172 and a t-statistic of 4.130 ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$), although the effect was smaller than that through well-being. Meanwhile, well-being was shown to have a greater contribution to work engagement, with a path coefficient of 0.483 and a t-statistic of 8.871 ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). These findings indicate that well-being is an important determinant that strengthens employee work engagement and acts as a key mechanism explaining the relationship between relaxation microbreaks and work engagement.

Table 10. Results of Direct Relationship Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Relaxation Microbreak -> Well-being_ -> Work Engagement	0,233	0,236	0,045	5,189	0,000

Source: Processed data 2026

The path analysis results indicated that relaxation microbreaks were positively associated with employee well-being, as reflected by a path coefficient of 0.482 and a t-statistic of 6.892 ($p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that employees who reported more frequent engagement in relaxation microbreak activities also tended to report higher levels of psychological well-being. This supports the view that brief recovery experiences during work may help employees restore psychological resources and maintain positive emotional states throughout the workday.

In addition, relaxation microbreaks demonstrated a positive direct association with work engagement ($\beta = 0.172$, $t = 4.130$, $p < 0.05$), although the magnitude of this relationship was relatively smaller than that of the indirect pathway through employee well-being. Employee well-being showed a stronger relationship with work engagement ($\beta = 0.483$, $t = 8.871$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that employees with higher levels of well-being were more likely to experience greater energy, enthusiasm, and involvement in their work. Overall, these findings suggest that employee well-being serves as an important psychological mechanism linking relaxation microbreaks with higher levels of work engagement.

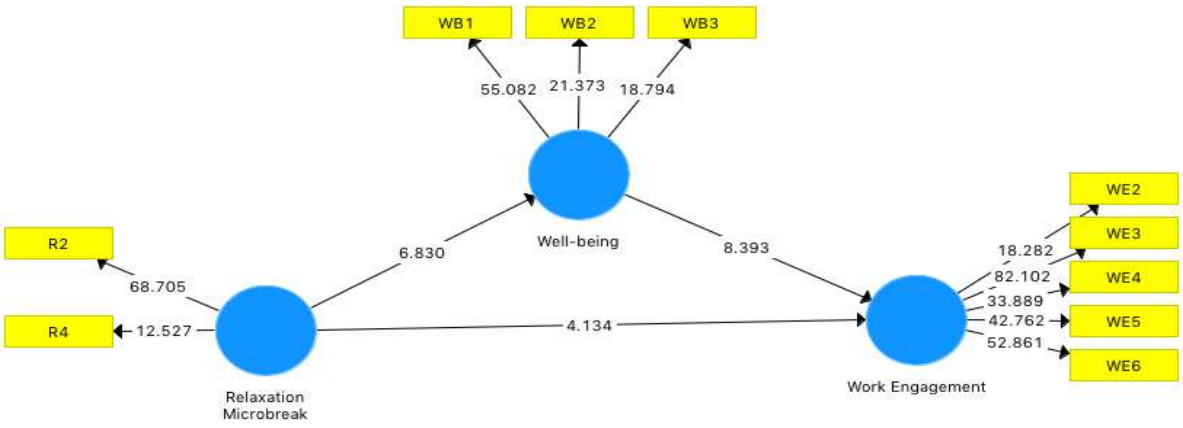


Figure 3. Output Display of the measurement model

Table 11. Hypothesis Description

No	Hypothesis	Result
1	Relaxation Microbreaks Influence Work Engagement	Accepted
2	Relaxation Microbreak Influences Well-being	Accepted
3	Well-being influences Work Engagement	Accepted
4	Well-being mediates the relationship between Relaxation Microbreak and Work Engagement	Accepted

This study examined the relationships among relaxation microbreaks, employee well-being, and work engagement using repeated daily observations collected over five consecutive workdays. The findings demonstrate that relaxation microbreaks were positively associated with employee well-being and work engagement. In addition, employee well-being was found to play an important mediating role in explaining the relationship between relaxation microbreaks and work engagement. Overall, the results suggest that brief recovery activities during work may contribute to more positive psychological experiences and stronger engagement.

The findings showed that relaxation microbreaks were positively associated with employee well-being. This result indicates that employees who engaged more frequently in short relaxation activities during work tended to report higher levels of psychological well-being. These findings are consistent with recovery theory, which suggests that short breaks help employees restore depleted psychological and emotional resources accumulated during work demands. Brief relaxation activities may provide employees with opportunities to temporarily detach from work-related pressure, reduce tension, and regain mental energy, ultimately contributing to improved emotional states and psychological functioning

throughout the workday. The findings also support previous studies indicating that microbreaks can help employees recover from fatigue and maintain positive psychological conditions during work (Kim et al., 2022).

This study also found that relaxation microbreaks had a positive direct relationship with work engagement, although the effect size was smaller than that of the indirect pathway through employee well-being. This finding suggests that engaging in brief relaxation activities may help employees remain more energetic, enthusiastic, and psychologically connected to their work. However, the relatively modest direct effect indicates that microbreaks alone may not automatically lead to higher engagement levels. Instead, the positive influence of microbreaks appears to operate more strongly through employees' psychological conditions. In other words, microbreaks become more meaningful for work engagement when they successfully improve employees' well-being. The results support previous studies that found that relaxing activities during breaks can alleviate feelings of exhaustion in the afternoon and, subsequently, enhance employees' work engagement (Bosch et al., 2018).

Furthermore, employee well-being demonstrated a strong positive relationship with work engagement. Employees with higher well-being tended to report greater enthusiasm, dedication, and involvement in their work. This finding supports the view that psychological well-being represents an important personal resource that enables employees to invest more energy and attention into their work roles. Employees who experience positive emotional conditions are more likely to maintain motivation, concentration, and persistence while performing their job responsibilities. This result also aligns with previous studies that emphasize that positive psychological states contribute significantly to employee engagement and other desirable work-related outcomes (Telu & Potnuru, 2024).

Importantly, the mediation analysis confirmed that employee well-being acts as a key psychological mechanism linking relaxation microbreaks and work engagement. The findings indicate that relaxation microbreaks may contribute to higher engagement primarily by improving employees' psychological well-being. This result strengthens the argument that the effectiveness of microbreak activities should not be evaluated solely on productivity outcomes, but also on their ability to support employees' psychological recovery and emotional functioning at work. By facilitating brief recovery experiences, organizations may help employees maintain more positive psychological states, which, in turn, encourage stronger work engagement.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examined the effect of microbreaks on job engagement, with psychological well-being as a mediating variable. Drawing on the Conservation of Resources Theory, the findings provide empirical support for the notion that short, intentional breaks during work hours positively contribute to employee engagement, primarily by enhancing psychological well-being. Specifically, microbreaks were found to replenish personal resources, reduce strain, and foster a more energized and focused mindset, which, in turn, led to higher levels of engagement at work.

The findings of this study reinforce the literature on conservation of resources theory and recovery theory, which emphasize the importance of restoring psychological resources through brief breaks at work. The analysis shows that the effect of relaxation microbreaks on work engagement is largely mediated by well-being. Thus, this study makes a theoretical contribution by confirming that well-being is not merely an outcome of recovery interventions but also a key mechanism linking recovery activities to employee work engagement. This advances academic understanding of how simple practices, such as microbreaks, can have long-term effects on work engagement.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that organizations should pay greater attention to the role of brief recovery activities in supporting employee well-being and engagement. Managers and organizations may encourage employees to take short relaxation breaks during work, particularly in highly demanding work environments. Simple activities such as stretching, brief rest breaks, relaxation exercises, or temporarily stepping back from work tasks may help employees maintain their psychological energy throughout the day. Creating a work environment that supports healthy recovery experiences may therefore lead to more engaged, psychologically healthy employees.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the data were collected from a relatively limited number of employees within a specific work context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, although the study used repeated daily observations, the analysis was conducted at the observation level using PLS-SEM. Consequently, the nested nature of repeated observations within individuals may not have been fully captured. Future studies are encouraged to employ multilevel modeling approaches to better examine within-person fluctuations across time. Third, this study focused only on relaxation microbreaks, while other forms of microbreak activities, such as social, nutritional, or cognitive breaks, may also influence employee well-being and

engagement. Future research may therefore explore broader forms of recovery activities and examine additional contextual variables that may strengthen or weaken these relationships.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of relaxation microbreaks as a simple yet meaningful recovery strategy in the workplace. The findings emphasize that employee well-being serves as an important psychological pathway through which brief recovery experiences may foster stronger work engagement. These results contribute to the growing literature on employee recovery and engagement by providing evidence that short recovery experiences during work are associated with positive psychological and work-related outcomes.

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