

## Is engagement different from satisfaction and organizational commitment? Relations with intention to remain, psychological well-being and perceived physical health in volunteers

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**Título:** ¿Es el engagement diferente de la satisfacción y del compromiso organizacional? Relaciones con la intención de permanencia, el bienestar psicológico y la salud física percibida en voluntarios.

**Resumen:** En una muestra de voluntarios, que trabajan, aunque no por dinero, y cuyos gestores esperan que permanezcan en la organización por largo tiempo y sintiéndose bien ayudando a otras personas, el presente estudio analiza la distintividad entre tres conceptos frecuentemente relacionados entre sí en el área de la Psicología del trabajo: engagement, compromiso organizacional y satisfacción. Basándose en la literatura existente, se proponen relaciones entre ellos y respecto a tres resultados finales relevantes para la gestión del voluntariado: intención de permanencia, bienestar psicológico y salud física percibida. Tres modelos de ecuaciones estructurales dejan claro que el engagement en el voluntariado contribuye a explicar el compromiso organizacional, la satisfacción y el bienestar psicológicos de los voluntarios, al mismo tiempo que no parece explicar ni la intención de permanencia ni la salud física percibida. Por el contrario, el compromiso organizacional es el único predictor de la intención de permanencia y la satisfacción en el voluntariado es el único predictor de la salud física percibida. Este último resultado no era el esperado, según la bibliografía existente en el área del trabajo, aunque viene a reforzar la diferenciación entre los tres conceptos y puede además tener una explicación plausible en el área del voluntariado.

**Palabras clave:** Voluntariado; engagement; satisfacción; compromiso organizacional; intención de permanencia, bienestar psicológico y salud física percibida.

**Abstract:** In a sample of volunteers, who work, but not for money, and whose managers expect them to remain with the organization over the long term and to feel well by doing good, this study examines the distinctiveness between three concepts, usually related in the work field: Engagement, organizational commitment, and satisfaction. Based on the existing literature, they are related among them and regarding three relevant outcomes for management: Intention to remain, psychological well-being, and perceived physical health. Three structural equations models make it clear that volunteer engagement does contribute to the explanation of organizational commitment, volunteer satisfaction, and psychological well-being. At the same time, it does not seem to account for levels of intention to remain neither perceived physical health. On the contrary, organizational commitment is the only predictor of intention to remain, and volunteer satisfaction is the only predictor of perceived physical health. This last result was not expected, according to the literature on work, but reinforces the distinctiveness between the concepts and may have a plausible explanation in the volunteering field.

**Key words:** Volunteering; work engagement; volunteer satisfaction; organizational commitment; intention to remain; perceived physical health; and well-being.

### Introduction

In recent years work engagement has been the focus of considerable research in relation to the workplace, probably because today promoting positive effects is as much important as avoiding the negative ones (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Maslach & Leiter, 2008; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2004; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2009). Work engagement seems to be related to highly desirable outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Salanova, Schaufeli, Llorens, Peiró, & Grau, 2000), personal initiative (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008), motivation to learn (Salanova, Agut, & Peiró, 2005; Salanova, Martínez, Bresó, Llorens, & Grau, 2005) and subjective and psychological well-being (Durán, Extremera, Montalbán, & Rey, 2005). There is less information available regarding volunteer engagement, although it can be hypothesized that engagement is just as desirable among volunteers as it is in workers, since both perform activities requiring a commitment of time and effort, as well as responsible behavior within an organization. It can be assumed that engagement is even more important because volunteers work, although not for money, so they can quit at will. For this reasons, work engagement

may be offered as an explicative variable for desired results in the volunteering field. According to the literature (Chacón, Vecina, & Dávila, 2007; Wilson, 2000), that is to say: Strong organizational commitment, high satisfaction with the activities performed, and high levels of intention to remain.

Moreover, helping others has been associated with many benefits for those who provide help, in terms of health (Li & Ferraro, 2006; Musick, Herzog, & House, 1999; Piliavin & Siegl, 2007; Young & Glasgow, 1998) and subjective and psychological well-being (Bowman, Brandenberger, Lapsley, Hill, & Quaranto, 2010; Greenfield & Marks, 2004; Morrow-Howell, Hinterlong, Rozario, & Tang, 2003; Piliavin, 2003; Schwartz, Keyl, Marcum, & Bode, 2009; Thoits & Hewitt, 2001). So, it can be assumed that engagement may also be related to such desirable outcomes among volunteers, who according to classic definitions freely chose to help strangers, over time, within an organizational setting, and without any payment (Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Penner, 2002).

Mainly based on research in the field of work, this article attempts to clarify the relationships between different, but related concepts, in the volunteering field: Engagement, commitment, and satisfaction. To account for distinctiveness between them, they will be studied in relation to three different outcomes, especially important to manage volun-

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teers in non-profit organizations: Intention to remain, psychological well-being, and perceived physical health.

### Engagement in the work field

There is a broad consensus among scientists to define work engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor (energy, resilience and a strong desire to work hard), dedication (involvement, enthusiasm, pride and challenge at work), and absorption (concentration and well-being during work) (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008; Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2011; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). Although recent research has investigated engagement as a variable that is subject to day-level variations (Sonnentag, Dormann, & Demerouti, 2010; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009), it seems to reflect a relatively stable phenomenon because of the continued presence of specific job and organizational characteristics (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

Despite the theoretical similarity shared with other concepts, it has been argued that work engagement is not the same thing as, for example, job satisfaction or organizational commitment, and that it is clearly more than simply not being burnt-out (González-Romá, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Lloret, 2006; Salanova & Llorens, 2008; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2004). Supporting the discriminant validity of the concept, some studies show that work engagement relates to the absence of health problems more than organizational commitment. In the same way, it seems that work engagement is related less to intention to leave a job than organizational commitment (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006). Finally, and with regard to its connection with job satisfaction, it has been argued that while engagement is based on worker affect *at* work, job satisfaction is about affect *about* or *towards* work, including therefore an evaluative (cognitive) element which would not be so much the case for engagement (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2009). Moderate correlations between the two concepts justify this differentiation (Salanova, et al., 2000).

According to Bakker, Albrecht, and Leiter (2011), it is time to put to bed the notion that engagement is nothing more than a conceptual cocktail consisting of commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. However, the way practitioners conceptualize engagement risks confusing different constructs and “putting old wine in new bottles” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010, p. 12). In addition, some controversial questions about its structure remain opened. Shirrom (2003) argues that there is no theoretical basis for defining engagement using the three dimensions proposed. The only differentiating concept would be “vigor,” understood to be a feeling of physical strength, emotional energy, and cognitive liveliness. In a study undertaken within a large sample of students, no empirical evidence was found to support the three-factor structure and it was concluded that the concept of engagement shed no light on the traditional concept of job satisfaction (Wefald & Downey, 2009).

Studying the concept of work engagement in samples of volunteers may be practical. On the one hand, it may contribute to clarify these remaining theoretical issues. And on the other hand, that would be something new and potentially useful for volunteer management.

### Engagement in the volunteering field

When talking about volunteering, explaining their level of satisfaction, their commitment to the organization and their intention to remain all takes on particular importance. This is because there is currently a great deal of emphasis on this type of active social participation, and non-profit organizations are faced with the challenge of managing in a professionalized way the goodwill and the initiative of many people who choose to get involved and take on responsibilities beyond the domain of their own personal life (Omoto, 2005; Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005). To be precise, they need to know why some individuals remain as volunteers for many years, while others give up their volunteering after only a short time, often dissatisfied or, on occasions, even deeply disappointed and having had enough.

Two separate research lines have been developed in the last decade to answer these questions, one focused on predictors of permanence, and another focused on its effects in terms of health and well-being. The first one has developed different models to explain the amount of time which volunteers remain within the organization (Cnaan & Cascio, 1999; Chacón, et al., 2007; Greenslade & White, 2005; Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998), while the latter has come to the conclusion that volunteering, as a kind of helping behavior, is highly beneficial physically and psychologically for those who provide help (Bowman, et al., 2010; Piliavin & Siegl, 2007; Plagnol & Huppert, 2009; Thoits & Hewitt, 2001).

Feeling well by doing good may be the key answer for volunteers to remain within the organizations. Since they don't receive a salary, they need to experience at least positive feelings derived from their actions. So, the three ultimate outcomes to manage by the non-profit organizations would be: Permanence, well-being, and health.

Recent studies in the volunteering field have concluded that volunteers also experience high levels of engagement, that volunteer engagement can be understood as vigor, dedication and absorption, and that volunteer engagement is a relevant variable for explaining sought-after states in volunteering: Satisfaction in the new volunteers and organizational commitment in the veteran ones. At the same time, volunteer engagement seems not to be the best predictor for explaining intention to remain in the same organization two years later (Vecina, Chacón, Sueiro, & Barrón, 2012).

Psychological well-being and perceived physical health have never been studied in relation to volunteer engagement. It would therefore be relevant to research in social psychology and useful for non-profit organizations to devel-

op models that explain the relationships between all these related concepts, mainly studied in the work field.

### Objectives and Hypothesis

This study aims to explore the distinctiveness between engagement, satisfaction, and commitment to explain desired outcomes in the field of volunteering, such as intention to remain, psychological well-being, and perceived physical health. Distinctiveness will be demonstrated if they don't relate to the three different outcomes in the same way.

As work engagement appears to remain relatively stable over the long term (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Schaufeli, et al., 2002), and previous results, both in the work field and in the volunteering field, show that commitment and satisfaction are better conceptualized as outcomes of engagement (Bakker, et al., 2011; Vecina, et al., 2012), it would be expected that:

H1: Volunteer engagement will explain the levels of satisfaction with particular aspects of volunteering as well as the commitment felt towards the organization.

According to the Three-Stage Model of Volunteer's Duration of Service (Chacón, et al., 2007), organizational commitment is the best predictor of intention to remain in the medium term. Following this assumption, it should be organizational commitment rather than volunteer engagement or satisfaction that would explain the intention to remain for the next year within the organization. In the work field, work engagement shows only a weak association with intention to quit, while organizational commitment shows a stronger relationship (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006). So, the hypothesis would be:

H2: Organizational commitment will explain intention to remain for the next year within the organization, while engagement and satisfaction won't.

Regarding psychological well-being and perceived physical health, previous results show that work engagement is moderately correlated to subjective well-being (Durán, et al., 2005) and less correlated to the absence of health complaints than organizational commitment (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006). So, the hypotheses would be:

H3: Volunteer engagement will explain psychological well-being while organizational commitment and satisfaction won't.

H4: Volunteer engagement will explain perceived physical health while organizational commitment and satisfaction won't.

Finally, and since the Three-Stage Model of Volunteer's Duration of Service (Chacón, et al., 2007) assumes that high levels of satisfaction are needed in order to develop organizational commitment (Vecina, Chacón, & Sueiro, 2009), it would be expected that:

H5: Volunteer satisfaction will explain organizational commitment.

## Method

### Participants and Procedure

All of the study's volunteers were active members of one of the 5 non-profit organizations that took part in the study. Two of them were international organizations, and the other three worked only in Spain. Three of them worked in the social field and two in the environmental field. Different inspiring values were represented (religious – non religious; conservative - progressive), and all of them defined volunteerism as long-term, planned, prosocial behaviours that benefit strangers and occur within an organizational setting (Penner, 2002). The volunteers completed, over a period of six months starting January 2009, an anonymous online questionnaire, hosted on the web page [http://www.ucm.es/info/voluntariado\\_I+G/](http://www.ucm.es/info/voluntariado_I+G/)

The participants were 257 volunteers currently working in social (70%) or environmental (30%) fields. Sixty six percent were women and 34% men. Their average age was 31 (SD = 12.26), ranging from 16 to 78 years of age. The majority (64%) were university graduates, while the remaining 36% were high school graduates. They dedicated an average of 40 hours a month to volunteering (SD = 45.14) and had been part of the organization for an average of 37 months (SD = 43.18).

### Measures

*Engagement.* The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) was used in its reduced version of 9 items (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006), adapted to Spanish volunteers (Vecina, et al., 2012). The seven-point scale (1: absolutely disagree; 7: absolutely agree) contained items of the type "I am enthusiastic about my voluntary work" (dedication), "I always feel like going to do my volunteering" (vigor), and "Time flies when I am doing my voluntary work" (absorption). Cronbach's alpha of the whole engagement scale was .90. Specifically, it was .79 for dedication, .79 for vigor and .78 for absorption.

*Volunteer Satisfaction.* The Volunteer Satisfaction Index (VSI) was used (Vecina, et al., 2009). It includes three subscales: Satisfaction of the main motivations ("My volunteering allows me to express my personal values"), satisfaction with the tasks performed ("I am satisfied because the tasks which I regularly carry out have clearly-defined objectives") and satisfaction with management of the organization ("I am satisfied with the way in which the volunteers are managed by the organization"). Responses ranged from totally disagree (1) to totally agree (7). Cronbach's alpha of the whole scale was .87.

*Organizational commitment.* The instrument used was that designed by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979), and subsequently adapted to Spanish volunteers (Dávila & Chacón, 2003). It contains 9 items (7-point scale) relating to the emotional link that volunteers have with their organization. It in-

cludes items such as: “I take an interest in the organization’s future”, “I find that the organization’s values and my own values are similar”, and “I am proud to say that I am a part of this organization”. Cronbach’s alpha was .88.

*Intention to remain.* It was measured by asking participants about the likelihood of continuing within the organization for the following year (7-point scale; 1: being no likelihood; 7 being maximum likelihood).

*Psychological Well-Being.* The Purpose in Life Scale from the Psychological Well-Being Scales (Ryff & Keyes, 1995) was used, as revised by Van Dierendonck (2004) and adapted to a Spanish sample by Díaz, Rodríguez-Carvajal, Blanco, Moreno-Jiménez, Gallardo, et al. (2006). It constitutes an eudemonic measure of psychological well-being (PWB), defined in terms of fulfillment and a sense of purpose or meaning. Responses ranged from totally disagree (1) to totally agree (7). Cronbach’s alpha was .84.

*Perceived Physical Health.* It was measured by asking participants to rate their overall physical health on a scale of 7 points (1: very bad; 7: excellent).

### Data Analyses

In order to analyze the discriminative validity of work engagement in the volunteering field, we used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) methods as implemented by AMOS (Arbuckle, 2003). Three structural models were proposed to test the relationships between the related variables (engagement, commitment, and satisfaction) and the three final outcomes (intention to remain, psychological well-

being, and perceived physical health). We used the three indicators for the concept of engagement (dedication, vigor, and absorption) to test the measurement model, and absolute and relative indices to assess the goodness-of-fit of the models.

### Results

Table 1 shows the mean scores, standard deviations and correlations of all variables studied. The engagement scores of the volunteers can be considered very high (5.59) if they are compared with normative data about samples of workers (very high  $\geq 5.54$ ) (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2009). This result is no surprise given that, although the activity in question is to a certain extent comparable to work in terms of the effort required, the responsibility it brings and the loss of leisure time that it supposes, in this case the people are doing it voluntarily. Regarding the correlations, it seems that engagement correlates to a greater extent with organizational commitment than with intention to remain, supporting the results obtained by Hallberg and Schaufeli (2006). The correlation between engagement and satisfaction is substantially equal to that obtained by Salanova et al. (2000) (.53), supporting the differences between engagement and satisfaction (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2009). The correlation between engagement and psychological well-being is .439, greater than that obtained by Durán et al. (2005) in workers. Finally, and contrary to our expectations, the correlation between engagement and perceived physical health is non-significant.

**Table 1.** Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation among the variables (N = 257).

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 UWES-9	5.59	.888	1							
2 VI	5.49	.990	.875**	1						
3 DE	5.72	1.00	.879**	.706**	1					
4 AB	5.53	1.01	.896**	.690**	.684**	1				
5 VSI	5.50	.754	.558**	.486**	.517**	.481**	1			
6 COMM	5.46	.988	.624**	.564**	.618**	.517**	.622**	1		
7 INT	6.14	1.32	.354**	.344**	.359**	.254**	.307**	.477**	1	
8 PWB	5.57	.946	.439**	.418**	.407**	.342**	.288**	.343**	.177**	1
9 PPH	5.83	.976	.062	.056	.028	.029	.200**	.048	.048	.206**

*Note.* \*\* The correlation is significant at 0.01, two-tail. \* The correlation is significant at 0.05, two-tail. UWES-9 (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale); VI (vigor); DE (Dedication); AB (Absorption); VSI (Volunteer Satisfaction Index); COMM (Commitment); INT (Intention to Remain at one year); PPH (Perceived Physical Health).

**Table 2.** Fit indexes of the structural models relating engagement, satisfaction and organizational commitment regarding three outcomes (intention to remain, well-being, and perceived physical health) (N=257).

Models	Global Fit indexes			Incremental Fit Indexes					
	<i>DF</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>GFI</i>	<i>AGFI</i>	<i>RMR</i>	<i>RMSA</i>	<i>NFI</i>	<i>CFI</i>	
M1: Intention to remain	6	7.54 <i>p</i> = .274	.990	.965	.022	.032	.989	.998	
M2: Well-being	6	6.65 <i>p</i> = .353	.991	.969	.014	.021	.990	.999	
M3: Physical Health	6	5.32 <i>p</i> = .503	.993	.974	.012	.000	.992	1.000	

The three causal models proposed to explain separately (1) the intention to remain of the volunteers for the next

year, (2) their psychological well-being, and (3) their perceived physical health fit the data well as all the fit indices

meet their respective criteria (Table 2). If we analyze firstly the measurements of comparative goodness-of-fit of the model, we can see that the values of the Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (*AGFI*) indicate an acceptable level of fit ( $> .900$ ). The Comparative Fit Index (*CFI*), which takes into account the parsimony of the model, would also appear to be adequate ( $> .900$ ). The Normed-Fit Index (*NFI*) also indicates a good fit (Hu & Betler, 1999). Finally, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (*RMSEA*) and the Root Mean Square Residual (*RMR*) are within acceptable limits ( $< .08$ ).

Figure 1 shows the standardized regression coefficients of the relationships between the variables, the percentages of variance explained, and the factor loadings. The lambdas for dedication, vigor and absorption are high enough, indicating a good measurement model for the three factor model of engagement.

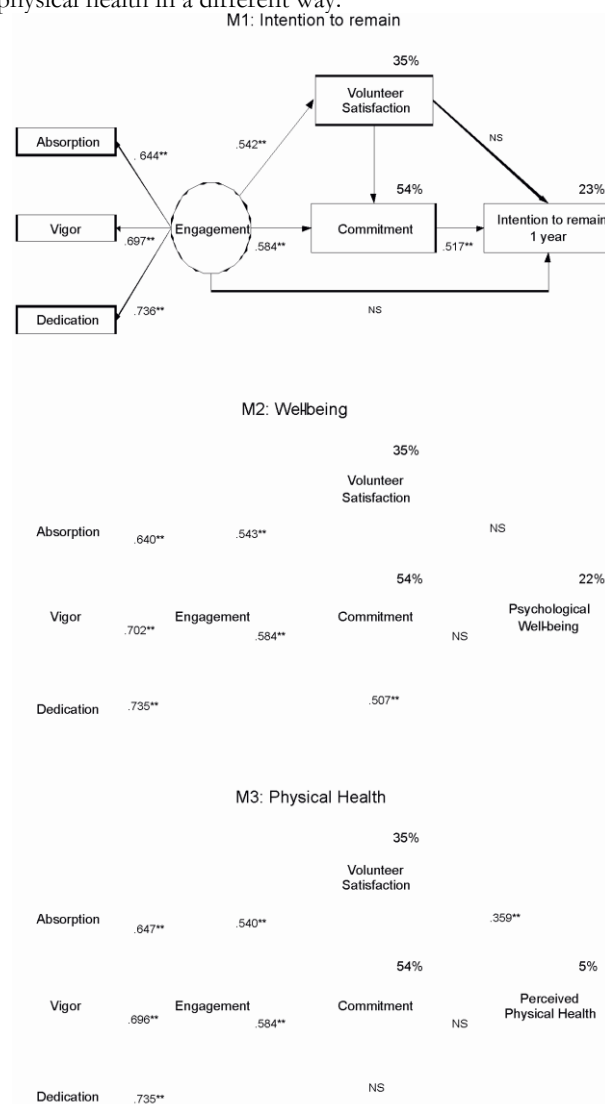
Regarding the relationships proposed in the models, we can see significant paths both from volunteer engagement to volunteer satisfaction and from volunteer engagement to organizational commitment (Figure 1). These results confirm Hypothesis 1 in relation to the predictive role of engagement, supporting previous results in the work field (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006) and in the volunteering field (Vecina, et al., 2012).

Also as expected according to Hypothesis 2, the path from organizational commitment to intention to remain is significant but the paths from volunteer engagement to intention to remain and from volunteer satisfaction to intention to remain are not (Model 1: Intention to remain). As was expected in accordance with the assumptions of the Three-Stage Model of Volunteer's Duration of Service (Chacón et al., 2007), organizational commitment alone is explaining 23% of the variance of intention to remain within the organization. However, when it comes to explaining psychological well-being, the path from volunteer engagement to psychological well-being is significant but the paths from organizational commitment to psychological well-being and from volunteer satisfaction to psychological well-being are both non-significant (Model 2: Well-being). These results confirm Hypothesis 3 and support correlated results from Duran et al. (Durán, et al., 2005). Volunteer engagement explains 22% of the variance of psychological well-being, represented by the purpose in life scale.

Contrary to Hypothesis 4, engagement is not related to perceived physical health, while satisfaction is. A bare 5% of the variance of perceived physical health is explained by volunteer satisfaction. This result was unexpected and does not support that obtained by Hallberg et al. (2006) in a sample of workers.

Finally, we can see in Figure 1 that volunteer satisfaction explains significantly organizational commitment (Model 3: Physical health). This last result confirms Hypothesis 5 and previous results from the of the Three-Stage Model of Volunteer's Duration of Service (Chacón et al., 2007; Vecina, Chacón, & Sueiro, 2010).

All these results reveal even a more different predictive pattern of relationships, in such a way that (1) volunteer engagement is directly related to organizational commitment, volunteer satisfaction, and psychological well-being; (2) organizational commitment is directly related to intention to remain for the next year; and (3) volunteer satisfaction is directly related to perceived physical health and to organizational commitment. The fact that the causal relationships proposed fit satisfactorily with the empirical data, along with the level of significance of all the causal paths ( $p < .001$ ), allows us to conclude that volunteer engagement, volunteer satisfaction and organizational commitment show enough distinctiveness. They seem to contribute to explaining intention to remain, psychological well-being, and perceived physical health in a different way.



**Figure 1.** Regression coefficients and explained variance in the three models relating engagement with satisfaction and organizational commitment regarding three outcomes (intention to remain, well-being, and perceived physical health) (N=257)

Note. \*\* The correlation is significant at 0.01 two-tail.

## General Discussion

Only recently work engagement has been studied in the volunteering field, although there are enough reasons to think that it is at least as important as it is in the work field. On the one hand, there is a great emphasis today to manage organizations towards positive states and not simply towards avoiding undesired ones (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2009). That makes work engagement relevant to predict desired states, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and low levels of intention to leave the organization (Salanova & Llorens, 2008). On the other hand, volunteers, unlike workers, receive no economic remuneration, yet experience both the rewards and the costs present in all organizations. These circumstances require similar management, since, by definition, financial incentives are not an option for trying to keep them as volunteers.

Following previous results, mainly in the work field, that relate work engagement to both satisfaction and commitment (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006), and taking into account that volunteering has been related to numerous benefits in terms of health and well-being for those who provide help (Piliavin & Siegl, 2007), this study clarified the relationships between three related concepts (engagement, commitment, and satisfaction) regarding three final outcomes (intention to remain, psychological well-being, and perceived physical health), especially desirables to manage people who freely chose to help strangers over time and within an organizational context (Penner, 2002). In other words, this research accounts for distinctiveness between engagement, commitment and satisfaction by demonstrating that they do not relate to different other concepts in the same way.

The three structural models tested showed a clear and different pattern of relations. Firstly, they show that commitment and satisfaction are outcomes of engagement, just as it have been argued in the work field (Bakker, et al., 2011) and shown in one study with volunteers (Vecina, et al., 2012). Secondly, and regarding the ultimate outcomes, results show that only organizational commitment is related to intention to remain for the next year, supporting one of the main assumptions of the Three-Stage Model of Volunteer's Duration of Service (Chacón, et al., 2007). Only volunteer engagement is related to psychological well-being, as it was expected for the first time in this study, and only volunteer satisfaction is related to perceived physical health. This last result was not expected, although reinforces even more the distinctiveness between engagement, commitment, and satisfaction, since each one predicts a different outcome. In any case, our Hypothesis 4 wasn't confirmed and that doesn't support results obtained by Hallberg et al. (2006), who found that work engagement was consistently related to a wide range of lack of health measures, including depressive symptoms, somatic complaints, and sleep disturbances. This could be due to two reasons: (1) Using as a dependent variable "absence of health problems" instead of "perceived physical health" can be explaining the difference, (2) Using a

sample of volunteers, who work but have no obligation, instead of a sample of workers can be explaining the difference. In any case, it could be said that work engagement is related to the absence of health problems in workers samples, but it is volunteer satisfaction which is related to perceived physical health in the present sample of volunteers. More studies are needed to confirm this result, but it seems plausible that volunteer satisfaction, understood as satisfaction of the motivations to be a volunteer and satisfaction with the tasks performed and the management strategies of the organization, mediates the relationship between engagement and perceived physical health.

On a practical level, it can be concluded that non-profit organizations need to pay attention to this feeling of engagement, or an energetic and affective connection with their work, if they want volunteers to feel commitment to the organization and satisfied towards work. If so, they will be increasing the probability of having permanent, happy and healthy volunteers.

## Study Limitations

The greatest limitation of this research is that data are cross-sectional and, therefore, it is impossible to establish a causal link between variables. Longitudinal data are needed to connect engagement with volunteer satisfaction, organizational commitment, psychological well-being, and perceived physical health. However, results serve to explore new ideas in the volunteering field such as those that link engagement with well-being in volunteering, which is of clear practical interest for the management of non-profit organizations.

Another potential limitation of the present research is the use of an Internet sample. Although increasingly common in psychological research, samples obtained from the Internet may limit generalisability. However, some authors claim that Internet methods are as reliable and valid as more traditional strategies of gathering data, and furthermore that Internet samples are usually more diverse (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004). In our case, a considerable number of non-profit organizations participated in the study. All of them shared the same concept of volunteerism but worked in very different areas and supported different values. This provides sample diversity while at the same time shares a minimum common denominator that allows for a certain degree of generalization.

## Conclusions

Generally, results fit the idea (1) that engagement is a relevant variable for explaining sought-after states in volunteers: Volunteer satisfaction, organizational commitment, and psychological well-being, (2) that for explaining intention to remain in the medium term, organizational commitment is the best predictor, and (3) that for explaining perceived physical health, is volunteer satisfaction the only predictor, and not volunteer engagement as it was expected.



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