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Exploring Employee Disengagement Among Women in The UK Technology Sector

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Abstract

Employee disengagement represents a significant organisational challenge associated with reduced productivity, diminished employee well-being, and increased turnover costs. Within the UK, this phenomenon is particularly severe in the technology sector, where systemic, gendered workplace barriers place women at a disproportionate risk of psychological withdrawal. Although research has extensively explored women's representation, retention, and exit from technology, the disengagement experiences that may precede women's departure from the sector remain insufficiently understood. Existing disengagement research has predominantly focused on other industries and often lacks context-specific theorising of gendered experiences within high-demand technology environments. This qualitative study addresses this gap by exploring the lived experiences and workplace factors shaping employee disengagement among women in the UK technology sector. Guided by an integrated theoretical framework combining Job Demands-Resources theory, Gender Role Congruity theory, and Intersectionality theory, the study examines how job demands, resources, gender-related barriers, and diverse identities interact to influence disengagement experiences. The research adopts a qualitative design using semi-structured interviews and focus groups with women working across technology roles, including developers, project managers, testers, scrum masters, and technical leaders. Data will be analysed thematically using NVivo. As the study is ongoing, findings are not yet available. The research aims to contribute context-specific insights into women's disengagement in UK technology, highlighting within-group differences and informing more inclusive organisational strategies to support engagement, retention, and career sustainability.

Keywords: Employee Disengagement; Gender Role Congruity Theory; Intersectionality; Job Demands-Resources Theory; Women in Technology