

## **Effect of demographics on teachers' work engagement at secondary level in Punjab**

### **1. Dr. Nazma Bibi,**

Assistant Professor Government Degree College Kot Khawaja, Saeed Lahore (Corresponding Author)

**Email:** [nazma.bibi@ymail.com](mailto:nazma.bibi@ymail.com)

### **2. Ahsaan Siddique,**

Ph.D. Scholar, Institute of Education and Research, University of Punjab Lahore

**Email:** [Ahsaansiddique1@yahoo.com](mailto:Ahsaansiddique1@yahoo.com)

### **3. Dr. Musarrat Habib,**

Assistant Professor, University of Lahore, Lahore

**Email:** [javaidmusarrat@gmail.com](mailto:javaidmusarrat@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

The main purpose of this article is to study the demographic factors that affect teachers' work engagement. The present research was quantitative and descriptive. The population comprised of 61762 secondary school teachers (SSTs) of Punjab. During the academic year 2019-2020, the study sample included 514 secondary school teachers of Punjab selected through multi-stage random sampling technique. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) measured teachers' WE levels. The alpha value of UWES was 0.87. Descriptive (mean and standard deviation) and inferential (Pearson  $r$ , independent sample t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Post-hoc Tukey) were applied to analyze the data. Age, job type gender, marital status, , experience, and academic qualification were not statistically significant effects on teachers' work engagement, but the impact of age was statistically significant. It was concluded that teachers with different age ranges had a substantial impact on sub-variable vigor of work engagement.

**Keywords:** Work engagement, Secondary school teachers (SSTs), demographic factors

### **Introduction**

Organizations rely increasingly on the abilities and talents of their employees in the fast growing professional domain where the faster transformations have been taking place. Modern firms with the objective to maintain their competitive status are energetic, devoted and involved. Employees that are engaged have a variety of "resources" to invest in their work. They are passionate, fully absorbed in their job tasks, and tenacious when faced with obstacles. Employees who are in better health can put their talents, abilities, and expertise to better use. They can also channel their energy into other employees, fostering teamwork throughout the company. As a result, engaged personnel can help the company achieve its objectives (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). According to meta-analytic analyses,

commitment in work is a significant predictor of job and organizational presentation that condenses the average effect seen in countless studies. Furthermore, recent research has revealed significant evidence that involvement contributes to critical organizational outcomes such as innovation and creativity, client happiness, improved financial performance, and reduced sick leave. (Bakker, 2017).

Work engagement (WE) and employee engagement are two phrases for engagement that are regularly and sometimes interchangeably used in literature. On the other hand, work engagement is all about the association of an employee with his work. In contrast, employee engagement involves the link between the worker, work, the employee, and the organization (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Engagement is comparatively long-lasting and likely to be well-known as affective-cognitive state which is quite opposite to emphasis on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior. (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Work engagement (WE) is an individual's gratifying and work-related approach with recognizable potency, devotion, and concentration in his work. Vigor is a high level of motivation, resilience, strength, and adaptability at work, and the ability to persevere in the face of hardship (Bakker et al., 2008). Dedication is a state of genuine enthusiasm and participation for one's work, as well as a realistic endeavor, love, respect, and a difficult assignment. Absorption occurs when a person has intensely focused concentration and is determinedly engaged in a task, despite time (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004). According to Schaufeli (2012), employees being engaged in their occupations first originated in the commercial world, and the Gallup Organization was the first to apply it. However, the origin of the concept is unknown. Work engagement, according to Saks (2006), is "an act of expressing preferred self through the simultaneous investment of cognitive and emotive energies into role performance that develops connections to work and with others" (p. 608).

It's just the positive attitude and participation level of promised employees that they generate their own optimistic evaluation in terms of appreciation, recognition, and accomplishment. Even though, promised employees consider their exhaustion of a hectic long working day as a pleasant feeling linked with positive accomplishments. Lastly, a promised employee is also involved in activities other than his work. Promised employees do not involve them tough work like workhorse rather enjoy their work as exciting and strong inner desire for work. (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Furthermore, highly committed personnel are extra sensitive to organizational processes. Those employees are friendly and supportive for their coworkers; they are more likely to experience positive emotions in jobs, such as joy, enthusiasm, and supportiveness. These positive feelings play a crucial part in refining organizational efficiency and workers' eagerness to acquire novel evidence (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The value of employee involvement in this regard is critical for businesses. Finally, work engagement has a good impact on both individuals and companies (Kose, 2016).

Several factors influence workers' behavior in the workplace. These elements likewise influence workers' levels of involvement. They can be into four categories: organizational, personal, environmental, and task-related. According to Lockwood (2007), work engagement is influenced by various elements, including workplace culture, organizational reporting, management's entrust and confidence, administration, and the administration's prestige. When there is a reasonable degree of work engagement, empirical data have revealed that organizational commitment improves, employee

satisfaction increases, and absenteeism decreases. Work engagement contributes to enhanced health, more responsible employee behavior, excellent performance, practical actions that avert problems, and motivation (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). Employing people who are highly engaged at work has a beneficial impact on the bottom line. As a result, managers should focus on hiring individuals who are enthusiastic about their jobs. The main objective of this study is to explore the demographic variables those influence the work engagement behavior of employees.

## **Literature Review**

WE is said to be the quite reverse of burnout. Unlike those who are burned out, engaged workers feel an efficient and constructive relationship to their work tasks, and they believe they are capable of meeting the demands of their job. WE is a concept that encompasses the notions that involve different types of people, likewise the degree to set out struggle and devotion for doing their work (Kahn, 1999). It is described as the continued participation and perception of one's task, which promotes relationships with everyone else, an individual's survival and the consequence. More or less all the researchers agree on the subjective nature of WE. There were a variety of viewpoints on how it should be conceptualized. Engaging workforces possess advanced ranks of strength, are very enthusiastic and enthusiastic to make efforts, and also fully absorbed in their tasks, never realizing how quickly time passes (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008).

(WE) is distinct as of concepts such as job embedding (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008), overachiever, and thorough guarantee and dedication to the organization (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006). Since nearby is constant availability of a specific project and characteristics of an organization, the general idea of WE in research is pretty of a continuous flexible factor. However, it is possible to argue that there are transitory (daily or weekly) variations in work involvement (Sonnetag, 2003). Although the idea of WE interconnects with notions like work holism, immersion, work pleasure, work motivation, commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors, some studies about work engagement indicate these notions fluctuate with the idea of WE. Hence WE is suggested as a separate concept from work engagement (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Saks, 2006).

Work engagement is a psychological condition in which an individual performing a specific job is completely involved in the task at hand, feeling energized and enthusiastic about it (Bakker, 2017). Engagement can be defined as an optimistic, fulfilling, professional mental state styled by strength, devotion, and immersion (Schaufeli et al.2002).

When faced with challenges at work, vigor is defined as being very energetic, psychologically resilient, and unyielding (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2006). According to Wildermuth (2008), work engagement is a long-term condition that might manifest as excitement, passion, high levels of focus, and energy. Moreover, work engagement (WE) defines employees as having a good attitude toward their occupations. They are energetic, committed to their tasks, and fully immersed in their work (Kanten & Yesiltas, 2013).

Active individuals are keen to make consistent struggle to face the hardship."Being deeply interested in one's work and experiencing a feeling of pride, passion, pleasure, motivation, and challenge" are all characteristics of dedication (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). Lastly, captivation is "being fully

absorbed and deeply engaged in one's task, where time flies by and one finds it impossible to disengage oneself from work" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 75; Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2006, p. 166).

The six subscale items of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) determine potency. High levels of energy and flexibility, readiness to put forth effort, resistance to exhaustion, and perseverance in the face of adversity are all examples of vigor. When it comes to working, beings those possess high potency also possess lot of strength, passion, and determinations, while those possess low potency also possess low strength, passion, and determinations,

A feeling of association with one's work, feeling passionate and having pride about one's profession, and being motivated and pushed by it are among the five items used to measure dedication. Those who have a high level of dedication identify deeply with their work as it is expressive, inspiring, and demanding. Furthermore, they are frequently energetic and being honored of their work. Those who receive a low score do not be recognized with their work. Since it is irrelevant, inspirational, or challenging; they are also not enthusiastic or proud of their work.

Absorption means completely and willingly absorbed in one's job and having difficulty disconnecting him from it such that time goes swiftly, and one overlooks entirely everything. Those who score high on absorption are usually happily absorbed in their work, feeling submerged by it and finding it difficult to disconnect from it because it takes them away. Ultimately, all the rest fades into the background, and time seems to speed up. Those with a low absorption score do not feel absorbed or involved in their task, nor do they have trouble disconnecting from it. They also do not ignore everything around them, including time (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Previous research has repeatedly found that employment resources, including societal assistance from coworkers and controllers, performance appraisal, task diversity, self-sufficiency, and learning activities, are directly related to WE (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Recent research has begun to look into more proximal indicators of WE, such as those that can forecast work and individual's assets and affect concentration incidentally. Human resources methods such as job reform, for example, have been demonstrated in several studies to have a favorable impact on WE, notably through their effects on occupation characteristics (Alfes et al., 2013; Holman and Axtell, 2016). Sittar (2020) conducted a study titled "Relationship of Work Engagements and Job Performance of University Teachers." Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) was used to measure WE. The research revealed a weak positive link between university professors' work engagements and their job performance. Yancı and Dal (2020) looked into the impact of recreation meanings on the WE of instructors from various disciplines. A total of 514 instructors from Istanbul's public schools were included in the study. According to the findings, there is a substantial and optimistic link between the meaning of freedom and WE. In 2018, Agbionu, Anyalor, & Nwali led a study in Nigeria and concluded that employee engagement is a two-way path, and management should take steps to nurture and develop it.

Moreover, in Turkey, Kose (2016) studied the impact of demographics on WE and exposed that gender, family position, age, department, and education level were not statistically significant determinants of teachers' WE. Still, the effect of superiority was statistically significant. Furthermore, Kose (2016) also recommended that teachers with high seniority in counseling, mentoring, academic studies and school management may benefit from the findings that teachers' work involvement increases seniority.

According to Ugwu (2013), there is a minor dissimilarity in WE favoring male participants. This dissimilarity generates a meaningful link, and there is no positive association between job engagement and age. According to a study conducted by Kular et al. (2008), women are additional involved in their jobs than men, and women have higher job satisfaction. In contrast to the findings of this study, Kular et al. (2008) found that beginner employees exhibit the maximum ranks of WE. This could be due to the hopefulness and enthusiasm that comes with the beginning of a fresh profession, as the scholars point out. According to Agyemang and Ofei (2013), there is no correlation between seniority and worker devotion.

Similarly, Malekiha & Abedi (2014) found no significant association between work engagement and demographic characteristics. Moreover, Ozer, Saygili, and Ugurluoglu (2015) found substantial differences in worker engagement levels related to educational background and gender; however, there are no significant differences based on seniority, gender, or marital status. Gender and education affect just service sector workers' job commitment, according to Kuruuzum, Irmak, and Cetin (2010), whereas marital status, age, and working hours had no effect. A study conducted by Bostanci and Ekiyor (2015) found that job dedication scores are unaffected by gender, age, education level, or professional experience.

### **Objectives**

The study intends:

- to explore secondary school teachers' work engagement.
- to compare the difference in teachers' work engagement about their gender, job type, academic qualification, professional requirement, marital status, and teaching experience

### **Research Design**

The positivist paradigm was used by the researcher to conduct the current study. The study was a descriptive survey study, non-experimental and quantitative in nature. A cross-sectional survey was conducted for data collection procedures.

### **Population and Sampling Procedure**

In Punjab, there are 36 districts. The study's population comprised of 61762 (Male = 32986, Female = 28776) secondary school teachers working in the 7084 (Boys =3739, Girls = 3345) secondary schools of the Punjab (School Education Department, 2016). The sample used a multi-stage random sampling technique. Punjab province is divided into three zones in the first stage, and two districts were randomly chosen from each zone. The selected districts included Attock and Sargodha (from the north zone), Hafizabad and Okara (from the central zone), and Multan and Layyah (from the south zone). Twenty public secondary schools (e.g., ten male and ten female schools) were taken randomly from each district at the second stage. At the third stage, all schoolteachers working at the secondary level in these selected schools were included in the study's sample. Hence, 514 teachers from 120 secondary schools designed the sample size of the study.

### **Research Instrument**

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) was used to explore teachers' WE levels. It was a 5-point Likert type scale and included three sub-variables: vigor, dedication, and absorption. The alpha value of the UWES was 0.87. Data collection was done through contacts by mail and during personal visits to the schools.

Table 1.

Position of items subscales in WE scale

Main Variable	Subscales	Items
WE	Vigor	1-6 (6 items)
	Dedication	7-11 (5 items)
	Absorption	12-17 (6 items)

### Data Analysis

Descriptive (mean and standard deviation) and inferential (Pearson *r*, independent sample t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Post-hoc Tukey) were applied to analyze the data.

Table 2

*Teachers' views regarding overall work engagement*

No.	Factors of Work Engagement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Vigor	24.93	3.690
2	Dedication	21.15	3.285
3	Absorption	24.84	4.510
	Total (Work Engagement)	70.94	10.25

N=514

Table 2 indicates the teachers' perceptions regarding overall work engagement. Teachers' work engagement contains three sub-scales such as vigor, dedication, and absorption. It is evident from the results that the sub-variable "vigor" shown the highest Mean Score ( $M = 24.93$ ) and followed by the domain "absorption" ( $M = 24.84$ ). At the same time, the Minimum Mean Score was shown by the factor "Dedication" ( $M = 21.15$ ). The Mean Score range (21.15 to 24.93) indicates that teachers agreed on the overall work engagement ( $M = 70.94$ ).

Table 3

*Correlation of WE with its sub-variables*

Sub-scales of WE and overall WE	1	2	3	4
Vigor	1	.749**	.649**	.885**
Dedication		1	.694**	.896**
Absorption			1	.896**
Work Engagement				1

\*\*  $p < .001$  (2-tailed),  $n = 514$

Table 3 indicated that the correlation of sub-scales of WE with the overall WE of secondary school teachers. The sub-variables of teachers' WE such as: Vigor ( $r = .885^{**}$ ), Dedication ( $r = .896^{**}$ ), and Absorption ( $r = .896^{**}$ ) were having positive significant relationship with overall WE. All sub-variables of WE had a strong and positive significant correlation with overall WE.

Table 4

*Teachers' differences in sub-scales of WE: Gender wise*

Factors of WE	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	P
Vigor	Male	269	25.1747	3.48064	1.507	491.167	.023
	Female	245	24.6816	3.89891			
Dedication	Male	269	21.3383	2.86266	1.306	459.188	.001
	Female	245	20.9551	3.69010			
Absorption	Male	269	25.1190	4.66577	1.438	512	.162
	Female	245	24.5469	4.32241			

An independent sample t-test was applied to compare mean scores of vigor, dedication, and absorption concerning their gender in Table 4. The results show a statistically significant difference in sub-scales of WE, such as vigor and dedication, at a  $p \leq 0.05$  level of significance. The table further described those male teachers were vigorous and dedicated than female teachers. The only two factors of vigor and dedication had a significant difference regarding their teachers' gender.

Table 5

*Teachers' differences in dimensions of WE: Marital status wise*

Sub-variables of WE	Marital Status	N	Mean	SD	t	df	P
Vigor	Single	79	25.1392	3.17334	.522	512	.229
	Married	435	24.9034	3.77902			
Dedication	Single	79	20.8987	3.23282	-.755	512	.923
	Married	435	21.2023	3.29649			
Absorption	Single	79	24.8228	6.47829	-.037	89.455	.020
	Married	435	24.8506	4.06210			

Table 5 revealed that the results of the independent sample t-test regarding teachers' marital status. The results reported that only one sub-variable of WE. Absorption had significant differences based on their marital status. The table further explained that a slight difference existed in mean scores of absorption concerning their marital status. The other sub-scales of WE vigor and dedication had no significant difference with respect to their marital status.

Table 6

*Teachers' differences in factors of WE with regard to job type*

Sub-variables of WE	Job Type	N	Mean	SD	t	df	P
Vigor	Permanent	405	24.8370	3.68407	-1.216	512	.508
	Contract	109	25.3211	3.70655			

Dedication	Permanent	405	21.1012	3.31993	-.723	512	.934
	Contract	109	21.3578	3.16088			
Absorption	Permanent	405	24.7951	4.64854	-.496	512	.506
	Contract	109	25.0367	3.96729			

An independent sample t-test was performed to the mean scores of sub-scales of WE regarding teachers' job type. The results revealed no significant difference in WE factors such as vigor, dedication, and absorption. It was concluded that contract and permanent teachers showed no difference in mean scores of WE.

Table 7

*Teachers' comparisons in sub-variables of WE based on academic qualification*

Sub-variables of WE		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Vigor	Between Groups	44.668	3	14.889	1.094	.351
	Within Groups	6942.462	510	13.613		
	Total	6987.130	513			
Dedication	Between Groups	21.119	3	7.040	.651	.583
	Within Groups	5516.430	510	10.817		
	Total	5537.549	513			
Absorption	Between Groups	40.285	3	13.428	.659	.578
	Within Groups	10394.573	510	20.382		
	Total	10434.858	513			

One-way analysis of variance was used to explore teachers' work engagement in terms of academic qualification. The sub-scales of WE were such as vigor, dedication, and absorption. The results revealed that academic qualification had no significant difference with vigor [ $F(10, 513) = 1.094$ ,  $p = .351$ ], dedication [ $F(10, 513) = .651$ ,  $p = .583$ ] and absorption [ $F(10, 513) = .659$ ,  $p = .578$ ] at  $p \leq 0.05$  level of significance in terms of academic qualification. However, it was concluded that all three factors of WE, such as vigor, dedication, and absorption had no significant difference with regard to teachers' academic qualifications.

Table 8

*Teachers' differences in factors of WE concerning their teaching experience*

Factors of WE		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Vigor	Between Groups	61.781	5	12.356	.906	.477
	Within Groups	6925.349	508	13.633		
	Total	6987.130	513			
Dedication	Between Groups	112.165	5	22.433	2.100	.064
	Within Groups	5425.384	508	10.680		
	Total	5537.549	513			
Absorption	Between Groups	86.960	5	17.392	.854	.512

Within Groups	10347.898	508	20.370
Total	10434.858	513	

One-way analysis of variance was conducted to explore teachers' work engagement in terms of academic qualification in table 8. The sub-scales of WE were such as vigor, dedication, and absorption. The results directed that experience had no significant difference with vigor [ $F(10, 513) = .906, p = .477$ ], dedication [ $F(10, 513) = 2.100, p = .064$ ] and absorption [ $F(10, 513) = .854, p = .512$ ] at  $p \leq 0.05$  level of significance in terms of teaching experience. So, it was concluded that all three factors of WE, such as vigor, dedication, and absorption had no significant difference concerning teachers' teaching experience.

Table 9

*Teachers' comparisons in WE based on age ranges*

Sub-scales of WE		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Vigor	Between Groups	139.802	3	46.601	3.471	.016
	Within Groups	6847.328	510	13.426		
	Total	6987.130	513			
Dedication	Between Groups	35.982	3	11.994	1.112	.344
	Within Groups	5501.567	510	10.787		
	Total	5537.549	513			
Absorption	Between Groups	30.447	3	10.149	.497	.684
	Within Groups	10404.411	510	20.401		
	Total	10434.858	513			

One-way analysis of variance was applied to explore teachers' work engagement in terms of academic qualification. The sub-scales of WE were such as vigor, dedication, and absorption. The results indicated that age had no significant difference with vigor [ $F(10, 513) = 3.471, p = .016$ ], dedication [ $F(10, 513) = 1.112, p = .344$ ] and absorption [ $F(10, 513) = .497, p = .684$ ] at  $p \leq 0.05$  level of significance in terms of age ranges. Thus, it was concluded that only one factor, such as vigor, out of all three factors of WE had a significant difference in age ranges.

Table 9 (a)

*Post-hoc test of difference among age ranges by factor of vigor*

Factor	(I) Age Ranges	(J) Age Ranges	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Vigor	20-30	31-40	.21592	.43602	.960
		41-50	1.24631*	.47529	.044
		51-60	-.15390	.51100	.991
	31-40	20-30	-.21592	.43602	.960
		41-50	1.03039	.42723	.076
		51-60	-.36982	.46662	.858

41-50	20-30	-1.24631*	.47529	.044
	31-40	-1.03039	.42723	.076
	51-60	-1.40021*	.50351	.029
51-60	20-30	.15390	.51100	.991
	31-40	.36982	.46662	.858
	41-50	1.40021*	.50351	.029

Table 9(a) revealed the outcomes of Post-Hoc (Tukey HSD) that were applied to explore teachers' opinions about work engagement regarding age ranges. The results indicated that there was a significant difference concerning vigor ( $p$  (.044, .044, .029, .029) < 0.05 between different groups of their teachers' age ranges of 20-30 vs. 41-50, 41-50 vs. 20-30, 41-50 vs. 51-60 and 51-60 vs. 41-50 respectively). It was concluded that teachers with different age ranges had a significant impact on sub-variable vigor of work engagement.

## Discussion

This segment of the research reveals the outcomes of data assembled from a descriptive study. The focus of this research was if teachers' work engagement behaviors differed based on various demographic characteristics. The results have shown that overall work engagement has a mean score of 70.94 and the subscale of 'vigor' has the highest mean, followed by 'absorption' and the least mean score of subscale 'dedication.' As a result of research, the data shows that there is no significant association between teachers' behaviors of WE and their qualification, marital status, job type, experience, and a slight difference regarding gender exist. It could be simply the nature of their commitments outside of their organizations, including caring for their children, doing household tasks, looking after their parents, societal standards, cultural barriers, and so on. However, work engagement (WE) has a significant difference with the subscale of age. The results showed that teachers with different age ranges had a significant impact on the sub-variable vigor of WE. The results showed that vigor and dedication subscales have significant differences regarding gender. Male teachers were more vigorous and dedicated than female teachers, according to the data. The results are similar to Ugwu's (2013) study that found a minor difference in favor of males. Concerning marital status, a slight difference exists in the mean score of absorption. Our results share findings of Malekiha & Abedi (2014), who also found no difference in the mean score of WE regarding marital status.

Regarding job type, qualification, and experience, teachers had no difference in mean scores of all subscales of WE. This data confirms previous findings in the literature that there is no significant difference in gender, marital status, qualification, and experience (Kose, 2016; Bostanci & Ekiyor, 2015; Ozer, Saygili, & Ugurluoglu, 2015). In terms of age, only one subscale of WE has a significant difference, i.e., vigor. Post Hoc Tukey was applied to explore teachers' opinions about work engagement with regard to age ranges.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Work engagement is crucial for all organizations as practical approaches support to improve work culture, reduce turnover rate, boost efficiency, develop work and client relationships, and influence business profits. A teacher may agree to spend concentrated effort into an association to stay with a strong desire or aim. This study was conducted to find out teachers' WE based on demographics. The

outcomes have shown that WE are significant differences regarding age only, and all other demographics have found no significant results.

To improve their teachers' sense of accomplishment, organizations having problems with their faculty members' work engagement may implement incentives and prizes. Data from teachers' daily diaries would aid in determining whether they report upper ranks of engagement and comfort on times when they feel happier than adverse sentiments. Future research into the everyday dynamic forces of teachers' sentiments could help us better understand the ascending curved of optimistic sentiments; instructors' commitment could forecast further rises in optimistic emotions, which would benefit their comfort and happiness.

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