

TEACHER SOCIAL SUPPORT AND PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Dr. Gunjan Bajaj*

Assistant Professor, M.M. College of Education, Fatehabad, Haryana, India

Email ID: shonimareet@gmail.com

Accepted: 21.01.2022

Published: 28.02.2022

Keywords: Teacher engagement, social support, professional engagement.

Abstract

Poor teacher health, low social support, and occupational pressure significantly impact teacher engagement. Studies consistently show that engaged teachers perform better in their roles, demonstrating higher levels of enthusiasm, commitment, and effectiveness in their teaching practices. Recognizing the importance of teacher engagement, this study aims to foster positive psychological qualities and enhance social support among teachers to increase their work engagement. By improving teacher engagement, the study seeks to benefit teachers directly and potentially lead to improvements in secondary and national education outcomes. The research specifically focuses on the relationship between social support and work engagement among secondary school teachers in India. To gather data, a total of 386 secondary school teachers were selected through basic random sampling to participate in the study. These teachers completed online self-administered questionnaires, providing insights into their experiences and perspectives. To analyze the collected quantitative data, the study employed various descriptive statistical methods, including frequency, proportion, correlation, and normal Q-Q plot analysis. These methods helped to identify patterns and relationships within the data. Additionally, an independent t-test was conducted to

examine significant demographic differences among the participants, providing a deeper understanding of how various factors influence teacher engagement. The findings of this study on secondary school teachers' social support and work engagement have practical implications for educational leaders and policymakers. By highlighting the importance of social support in fostering teacher engagement, the study offers valuable insights for principals seeking to support their teachers and address psychological health challenges. Furthermore, the results can inform teacher management practices and policies, helping teacher training institutions, principals, teachers, parents, and students to create a more supportive and engaging educational environment. Ultimately, this study underscores the critical role of social support and psychological well-being in enhancing teacher engagement and improve the overall quality of education in secondary schools.

Paper Identification



*Corresponding Author

Background of the Study

The social support secondary school teachers receive and their ability to adapt to the current economic climate are reflected in their job satisfaction. Teachers' dedication to their work in secondary schools shows their importance during this time of social transition and meets national education development needs. It's crucial to hire and retain qualified teachers. Physical and mental health for teachers is poor. Poor job satisfaction and high occupational pressure affect teachers' dedication and ability to make ends meet. Therefore, increasing teachers' job satisfaction and health is a key strategy for fostering educators' growth and creating effective groups.

Teachers' emotional experiences have been shown to foster positive psychological traits and recognise negative emotions. It could improve teachers' workplace morale, productivity, and relationships with administrators and colleagues. Students' academic and professional performance will improve with the programme. Therefore, improving education nationwide is crucial.

Statement of the Problem

Spiritual incentives for knowledge-based workers can improve incentive effects, engagement, and job burnout compared to labour-intensive workers. Thus, to motivate teachers in the new era, non-material incentives should be strengthened and social support from the individual, organisational, and social levels should be explored. Thus, teacher performance can be targeted and improved. Social support encourages teachers to work hard.

To improve teaching team effectiveness, teachers need social support to work harder at school. Positive and constructive work-related emotions and cognitions enable high-quality work and full use of human capital. Work engagement is the most crucial factor in teaching performance. Work engagement connects motivation and performance. Work engagement is important, but

current research on how social support affects teachers' work engagement to improve performance is lacking. Thus, social support and work engagement are understudied. This study's secondary education research gap.

Purpose of the Study

Most studies on teachers' mental health, including burnout and depression, are negative. Teachers' work engagement research also examines teaching performance and related factors. Most study university teachers and counsellors, but few study front-line secondary school teachers. The study examines secondary school teachers' work engagement, social supports, demographic variables, and management strategies to improve work engagement. It influences teacher construction in other Chinese cities and levels. India secondary school teachers' social supports and work engagement were measured by an online self-administered questionnaire. Social support and work engagement in secondary school teachers may be linked. Social and emotional skills enhance classroom management and teaching. Society has raised education standards. Secondary school teachers often struggle to communicate with students. Some teachers are intimidated by students' problems, lack of work commitment, and only care about teaching, not learning. Positive psychology must inspire teachers. India secondary school teachers' social support and work engagement are surveyed online. It also examines how social support affects teachers' work engagement and suggests ways to boost it. Teacher psychology and behaviour research may benefit.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this quantitative study is to examine the relationship between teachers' levels of social support and work engagement in India's secondary schools. What we hope to accomplish with this research are the following:

- a) The goal of this study is to learn more about the social support and work engagement of India's secondary school teachers.
- b) Determine how social support influences teachers' dedication to their jobs.
- c) The purpose of this study is to deduce the connection between social networks and dedication at work.
- d) Examine how demographic factors affect differences in teachers' levels of enthusiasm for their work with secondary school students.
- e) Among India's secondary school teachers, low levels of social support and disengagement from their jobs are a serious problem.

Research Methodology

When conducting research, one of the most helpful frameworks to use is the onion model. The researcher should think about the transition from the outer ring to the inner ring of this model. A researcher must make numerous assumptions about reality, ontology, and prior and current knowledge at every stage of the research process, regardless of whether or not the researcher is aware of or even considering this fact. Furthermore, the researcher's own value assumptions influence the research process as a whole. Research questions, methods, and findings are all influenced by these presumptions. Credible research philosophy can guide, support, and even determine the choice of research method, provided that the assumptions underlying the research are well-thought-out and consistent. A number of decisions had to be made prior to beginning the research, including the selection of a strategy, the selection of a data collection method, the selection of an analysis method, and so on.

As can be seen in Figure 1, this investigation adopted an interpretivist worldview, a deductive methodology, a survey methodology, a cross-sectional time frame, a

single research methodology, and data collection procedures that involved questionnaires.

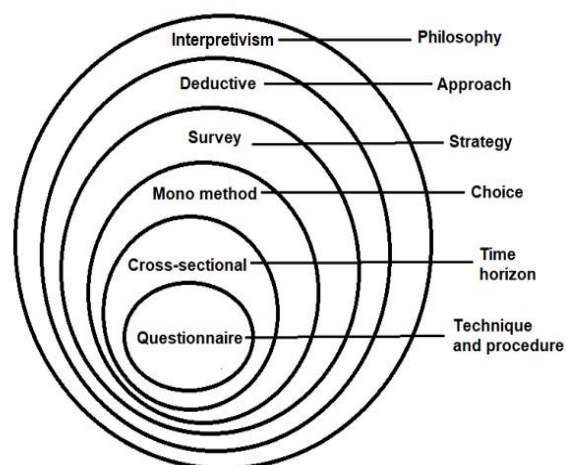


Figure 1: Strategies for Conducting Research Based on work by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019).

Research Design

A research design is a plan for gathering and analysing the data needed to answer a research question. It's a method for organising the information needed to answer research questions. Methodology and study design are broken down in great detail.

Research Approach

This survey-based quantitative research method was developed in the 1970s. Various research questions can be addressed by both quantitative and qualitative methods. There are advantages and disadvantages to using both quantitative and qualitative methods. A quantitative method, on the other hand, can handle a large number of samples and requires less time to analyse the data.

The social support and work engagement of India's secondary school teachers can be better understood through a survey. For further insight into the connection between high levels of social support and dedication at work, the study may also provide a useful interpretive lens. The participants' accounts serve to probe their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours in the context of providing and receiving social support at work. Teachers in India's secondary

schools have low rates of social support and job engagement, and this study aims to address those issues by providing recommendations for how to raise those numbers.

Research Strategy

India's secondary school teachers have a lot to offer as a research population, including insights into the social support they receive and the level of dedication they bring to the classroom and their work. It depends on the background and beliefs of the particular educator. It's a look at reality that can help us comprehend the current social support and work engagement of secondary school teachers. The findings are credible and can be extrapolated to a larger sample. It may also be used to examine differences in social support and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers based on factors like occupational status, age, level of education, and other similar characteristics. As a result, this investigation will employ a quantitative approach to research.

Quantitative information is collected via an online self-administered survey with closed-ended questions and multiple-choice responses. Data was analysed using SPSS Version 25. Secondary school educators who were willing to participate voluntarily provided the study's data.

Research Steps of the Study

Each phase of the research process is connected to the others. They entail a methodical approach to zeroing in on the study's aims and collecting the data needed for analysis to reach a reliable and meaningful conclusion. They are free to use in any study, regardless of methodology.

1. The first and most crucial stage of any research project is formulating the research problem. Helps the researcher get where they need to go and conveys that info to the audience.
2. Through reading widely in the field, the researcher can learn enough to engage in meaningful discourse with others about the research project. It's useful for honing in on a manageable research problem, settling on clear goals, developing a working research hypothesis, and constructing study-specific questions.
3. Construct study questions - Creating good research questions is often more valuable than actually answering them. It is important that they are both manageable and applicable to the research problem at hand.
4. The researcher's ability to articulate a plan for answering research questions is aided by developing a research design. Everything from the study's theoretical foundation to its methodology, tools, and procedures, sampling strategy and size, data analysis, and time frame are all part of this section. The success of a research project hinges on picking the right methodology. Otherwise, it will not be able to draw trustworthy conclusions based on its findings.
5. In order to provide answers to the questions posed by the study's researchers, data collection entails the systematic gathering and measurement of relevant information about the study's variables of interest. It's a crucial part of any study you're planning to conduct. The work required to accomplish this is strenuous. First, you'll need to figure out what kind of information you'll need, then you'll need to choose a tool to collect that information, and finally, you'll need to pick a sampling strategy and a population size that will yield useful results.
6. In order to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data at hand, it must first be analysed. It takes some work to extrapolate

conclusions from data analysis. Quantitative data analysis using statistics is just a tool; it is no substitute for careful thought. Quantitative data can be analysed in a number of ways, each of which is best suited to a particular kind of research question.

7. Interpretation and Generalization - In quantitative research, there are two models for making broad generalisations. Most quantitative studies rely on statistical generalisation, while analytic generalisation can be used in either qualitative or quantitative settings.
8. The researcher's interpretation of the study's findings is shaped by the study's data, the theory's foundation, and the study's prior findings.
9. Thesis Report Writing - Before writing the final report, the researcher must make connections back to the research questions. All of the information needed to answer the study's questions must be laid out in detail. The success of the research in meeting its aims should be assessed, and the study's advantages and disadvantages should be outlined. This may lead the researcher to suggest additional studies or make other suggestions.

Research Methodology

A quantitative approach was used for the proposed study. It's an essential tool for gauging the morale and dedication of India's secondary school teachers. Educators' perspectives and sentiments may be probed in a narrowed context. In addition, it is a useful method for determining whether or not secondary school teachers have a connection between social support and work engagement. It may also be used as a mirror to reflect the significance of social support and work

engagement for principals, teachers, parents, students, and society as a whole.

Participants' opinions will be used to gain insight into their networks and the extent to which they are invested in their jobs. Examines the connection between secondary school teachers' social networks and their dedication to the job. Using a survey as a tool for exploring how people's experiences are interpreted is common in social science. It has the potential to act as a mirror for the views and emotions of educators, providing insight into their inner worlds. This study aims to contribute useful data and serve as a foundation for future studies of India's educators.

Instrumentations and Procedures

If possible, though, it's better to have an odd rather than an even number of options for each response. The study's aims and the responses to these questions will dictate the next steps. By the time we reach the halfway point, the odd number of choices ensures an answer that will be considered socially acceptable. In reality, it can increase the trustworthiness of data analysis by eliminating the inaccuracy caused by wrong responses.

Respondents' ranks, genders, ages, marital statuses, educational attainment levels, family monthly incomes, numbers of children, years of work experience, school bands in which their children are enrolled, and average work hours are collected in the first section of the questionnaire to facilitate comparisons between different groups of respondents. As for the second part of the survey, it is a modified version of the Support for Workers with Disability Scale that measures social support for persons with disabilities in the workplace. Support is measured at the organisational, managerial, collegial, familial, educational, and parental levels using a 30-item Likert scale survey. If the score is high, then the majority of respondents report feeling supported by their local communities.

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale was used as a tool to gauge workers' commitment to their positions. The survey assesses interest, dedication, and concentration through the use of 17 Likert-scale questions. Employees who reported higher levels of involvement in their work were more likely to report being totally committed to their jobs.

Results and Data Analysis

The purpose of this research is to examine the attitudes of India's secondary school teachers toward social support and workplace engagement. The study's goal is to identify any differences in social support and work engagement among secondary school teachers based on their position, gender, marital status, level of education, family monthly income, number of children, years of teaching experience, salary, salary band, and number of hours worked per week. The study also intends to investigate the usefulness of the job engagement measure for secondary school educators. Accordingly, it makes some suggestions for boosting teachers' morale and productivity in the classroom. Respondents range in age from 21 to 60; all are Hindi-speaking secondary school teachers from the nearby area.

Teachers in India's secondary schools would benefit from better recruitment, training, and development of their programme if they had a better grasp of their students' and colleagues' attitudes toward social support and workplace involvement. Teachers' sense of competence can be boosted by providing a positive work environment and encouraging social support.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

From September 1st to October 31st, 2021, 386 India secondary school teachers participated in a survey. India secondary school educators took part. They were randomly chosen to participate, and their time was completely donated. There is no time limit on their ability to leave.

The entire online survey process should take no more than 10 minutes. It consists of both open-ended and closed-ended questions to help narrow down the scope of investigation. There are 10 questions about basic information, 30 on social supports, and 17 about how engaged in work one feels.

Table 1 displays the demographic information of the survey's respondents. Contract teachers made up 14.2 percent of the workforce, while PGMs and SGMs accounted for 13.2 percent. Both GMs and GMs accounted for 72.5% of the workforce. The gender ratio of males to females in this study was flipped from that of India's secondary school teachers (Census and Statistics Department, 2021).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of participants for questionnaire

Characteristics of participants (n = 386)		Number	Percentage (%)
Rank	PGM / SGM	51	13.2
	GM	280	72.5
	Contract Teacher	55	14.2
Gender	Male	203	52.6
	Female	183	47.4
Age	≤ 30	68	17.6
	31–40	142	36.8
	41–50	127	32.9
	≥ 51	49	12.7
Marital status	Single	175	45.3
	Married	188	48.7
	Widowed	23	6.0
	Divorced		
Qualification	Certificate of Education or Associate degree	0	0
	Bachelor's degree	212	54.9
	Master's degree or above	174	45.1

Family monthly income	≤ \$40,000	92	23.8
	\$40,001–\$70,000	96	24.9
	\$70,001–\$100,000	102	26.4
	≥ \$100,001	96	24.9
Number of children	None	205	53.1
	1	79	20.5
	2	87	22.5
	≥ 3	15	3.9
Teaching experience	≤ 3 years	90	23.3
	4–10 years	124	32.1
	11–20 years	130	33.7
	≥ 21 years	42	10.9
School banding	Band 1	124	32.1
	Band 2	137	35.5
	Band 3	125	32.4
Working hours per week	≤ 40 hours	8	2.1
	41 – 50 hours	274	71.0
	≥ 21 hours	104	26.9

Source: Data from questionnaire

87.3 percent of the participants were between the ages of 21 and 50. Participants' marital status was virtually evenly split between those who were unmarried and those who were married (94.0 percent). All participants had either a bachelor's degree or above; the percentage of master's degree and above holders was very close to 100%. There are 99.4 percent of secondary school instructors having a bachelor's degree or above (Census and Statistics Department, 2021).

Over three-quarters (76.2%) of participants had monthly household incomes of Rs. 40,000 or more. About half of the study's subjects are childless. Twenty-one percent of the participants had one child, and twenty-two and a half percent had two. Over half (44.6%) of the participants had been employed for more than a decade. The distribution of participants among band 1 (the lowest), band 2 (the middle), and band 3 (the highest) schools was nearly equal. The

vast majority of people (71%) were working between 41 and 50 hours each week.

Data Analysis

After the respondents submitted the completed survey, the quantitative data were analyzed with the SPSS statistical software package. SPSS allowed the researcher to calculate the mean and standard deviation scores for each group on each subscale of the social support and work engagement. Hence, a t-test is used to compare the differences of each group on each subscale. The results from the t-tests indicate the perceptions for each group to answer the research questions.

This study contributes to the literature concerning the levels of social support and engagement among secondary school teachers in India and sheds light on the secondary schools have concerning why teachers do not commit with their job. It will try to identify some useful strategies to improve the teachers' social support and work engagement in secondary school to enhance their job performance in schools.

Statistical analysis of the data was conducted using descriptive statistics, analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by comparisons to determine differences among secondary school teachers in relation to their independent variables such as rank, gender, age, marital status, education level, family monthly income, number of children, working experience, school banding, and working hours per week.

Conclusion

The findings from the study showed that the six subscales of social support related to work engagement are valid for measuring the secondary school teachers perceptions towards social support. It has a moderate positive correlation with work engagement.

According to the analysis results of this study, it is found that social support has a positive impact on work engagement, and social support from school,

supervisors, colleagues, and family members expressing care, understanding, listening, and comfort will increase teachers' work engagement. Support from students and parents also has a positive impact on work engagement,

From the results of this study, social support will increase teachers' work engagement, and the influence of emotional support is greater than that of informational support. Teachers may concentrate on their teaching job with a happy and good mentality.

Teachers' work engagement is a psychological state, it will fluctuate with the changes of the individual's social support in the working environments. When teachers' social supports in the working environment are favorable, their level of work engagement is higher. Work engagement is a relatively stable emotional and cognitive state.

There are differences among teachers in their sense of work engagement. Some teachers are devoted to their work because they like to stay with students, while others are because they like the feeling of teaching. Some teachers may enjoy their work more, and the level of work engagement may be higher. Moreover, teachers get social support from school, supervisor, or colleagues can have a positive impact on their sense of work engagement. It is possible to improve the level of teachers' work engagement by improving teachers' social support from school, supervisor, colleagues, family, students, and parents.

References

1. Aggarwal, D. (2018). Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) to the classroom: A technology to promote green education. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 5(3), 354-358.
2. Al-Bahrani, M. A., Allawati, S. M., Abu Shindi, Y. A., & Bakkar, B. S. (2020). Career aspiration and related contextual variables. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 25(1), 703-711.
3. Alsubaie, M. M., Stain, H. J., Webster, L. A. D., & Wadman, R. (2019). The role of sources of social support on depression and quality of life for university students. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 24(4), 484-496.
4. Amor, A. M., Vazquez, J. P. A., & Faína, J. A. (2020). Transformational leadership and work engagement: Exploring the mediating role of structural empowerment. *European Management Journal*, 38(1), 169-178.
5. Arifin, Z., Nirwanto, N., & Manan, A. (2019). Analysis of bullying effects on job performance using employee engagement and job satisfaction as mediation. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 9(6), 42-56.
6. Arasanmi, C. N., & Krishna, A. (2019). Employer branding: perceived organisational support and employee retention—the mediating role of organisational commitment. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 51(3), 174-183.
7. Aslam, W., Hafeez, M., Shahzad, A. K., Ahmad, A., Maenuddin, Din, M. U., & Khan, M. (2020). Evaluating the impact of marital status on employees' job performance: Moderating role of hired hand's gender. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(11), 1699-1706.
8. Avanzi, L., Fraccaroli, F., Castelli, L., Marcionetti, J., Crescentini, A., Balducci, C., & van Dick, R. (2018). How to mobilize social support against workload and burnout: The role of organizational identification. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 69, 154-167.

9. Azim, M. T., & Al-Halawani, F. M. J. (2020). Perceived non-work social support and employee engagement: the mediating role of self-efficacy. *Middle East Journal of Management*, 7(2), 166-184.
10. Balogun, A. G., & Afolabi, O. A. (2019). Examining the moderating roles of job demands and resources on the relation between work engagement and work-family conflict. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 49(4), 479-490.
11. Baptiste, M. (2019). No teacher left behind: The impact of principal leadership styles on teacher job satisfaction and student success. *Journal of International Education and Leadership*, 9(1), 1-11.
12. Basinska, B. A., & Daderman, A. M. (2019). Work values of police officers and their relationship with job burnout and work engagement. *Frontiers in psychology*, 10, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00442>.
13. Batubara, B. M. (2021). The problems of the world of education in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute (BIRCI-Journal): Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4(1), 450-457.
14. Bloom, J. R. (1990). The relationship of social support and health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 30(5), 635-637.
15. Borst, R. T. (2018). Comparing work engagement in people-changing and peopleprocessing service providers: A mediation model with red tape, autonomy, dimensions of PSM, and performance. *Public Personnel Management*, 47(3), 287-313.
16. Briglauer, W., Stocker, V., & Whalley, J. (2020). Public policy targets in EU broadband markets: The role of technological neutrality. *Telecommunications Policy*, 44(5), 1-36.
17. British Psychological Society. (2009). *Code of Ethics and Conduct Guidance*. Leicester: Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society. Cai, W., Lian, B., Song, X., Hou, T., Deng, G., & Li, H. (2020). A cross-sectional study on mental health among health care workers during the outbreak of Corona Virus Disease 2019. *Asian journal of psychiatry*, 51, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2020.102111>.
18. Cai, Y., Wang, L., Bi, Y., & Tang, R. (2021). How Can the Professional Community Influence Teachers' Work Engagement? The Mediating Role of Teacher Self-Efficacy. *Sustainability*, 14, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su141810029>.
19. Cairney, P., & Wellstead, A. (2021). COVID-19: effective policymaking depends on trust in experts, politicians, and the public. *Policy Design and Practice*, 4(1), 1-14.
20. Census and Statistics Department. (2021). *India Annual Digest of Statistics*. India: Government Printer.
21. Chang, W. C., Wu, C. H., & Weng, L. C. (2019). The effect of perceived organizational support on work engagement and performance: A Study of international assignees. In *Cross-Cultural Business Conference 2019*, 313-321.
22. Chiu, T. K. (2020). Six key principles in designing Artificial Intelligence (AI) curriculum for middle schools. *Rdannual*, 2, 383-392.
23. Chung, G. S. K., Chan, X. W., Lanier, P., & Wong, P. Y. J. (2021). Associations between Work-Family Balance, Parenting Stress, and Marital Conflicts during COVID-19

- Pandemic in Singapore. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 19-28.
24. Cobb, S. (1976). Social support as a moderator of life stress. *Psychosomatic medicine*, 38(5), 300-314.
25. De Stasio, S., Fiorilli, C., Benevene, P., Boldrini, F., Ragni, B., Pepe, A., & Maldonado Briegas, J. J. (2019). Subjective happiness and compassion are enough to increase teachers' work engagement? *Frontiers in psychology*, 10, DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02268.
26. Demeshchenko, V. (2021). Socio-philosophical context of the history of the cultural and anthropological paradigm. *The Culturology Ideas*, 20, 44-56.
27. Dewitt, B., Fischhoff, B., Davis, A. L., Broomell, S. B., Roberts, M. S., & Hanmer, J. (2019). Exclusion criteria as measurements I: Identifying invalid responses. *Medical Decision Making*, 39(6), 693-703.
28. Di Stefano, G., & Gaudiino, M. (2019). Workaholism and work engagement: How are they similar? How are they different? A systematic review and meta-analysis. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 28(3), 329-347.
29. Dogru, C. (2018). The relationship between perceived support and innovative behavior: Analyzing the mediating role of work engagement. *Isletme Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 10(2), 384-402.