Anusandhanvallari
Vol 2025, No.1
January 2025
ISSN 2229-3388

Determinants of Employee Engagement Among School Teachers in Sivagangai District: An empirical approach

Lavanya S[1] & Dr Sivakumar A[2]

[1]Research Scholar PG and Research Department Commerce NMSSVN college, Madurai

[2]Assistant Professor PG and Research Department Commerce NMSSVN college, Madurai

Abstract: The present study examines the determinants of employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District, Tamil Nadu. The study adopts a descriptive and cross-sectional research design, with a sample of 150 school teachers selected through simple random sampling. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, incorporating measurement items adapted from Saks (2006). The study investigates the influence of job characteristics, rewards and recognition, perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, and organizational commitment on employee engagement. Multiple regression analysis reveals that the selected independent variables collectively explain 56.3% of the variation in employee engagement. Perceived organizational support emerges as the strongest significant predictor, followed by rewards and recognition and job characteristics. However, perceived supervisor support and organizational commitment do not demonstrate statistically significant independent effects. The findings highlight the importance of organizational support, recognition practices, and meaningful job characteristics in promoting employee engagement among school teachers.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Job Characteristics, Rewards and Recognition, Perceived Organizational Support, Perceived Supervisor Support, Organizational Commitment, School Teachers.

1 Introduction

Employee engagement has emerged as an important concept in human resource management and organizational behaviour because of its relationship with employee motivation, well-being, commitment, and performance. In educational institutions, teachers are not merely responsible for delivering subject knowledge; they also contribute to students' intellectual development, character formation, classroom participation, and overall learning outcomes. The effectiveness of a school therefore depends not only on its physical infrastructure, curriculum, and administrative arrangements but also on the extent to which teachers are psychologically involved in their professional responsibilities. Engaged teachers are more likely to demonstrate enthusiasm for teaching, devote sustained attention to classroom activities, and participate actively in school-related responsibilities. Consequently, understanding the factors that influence employee engagement among school teachers is important for strengthening the quality of educational institutions and promoting a supportive teaching environment.

The concept of employee engagement received substantial academic attention through the work of Kahn (1990), who conceptualized personal engagement as the expression of an individual's physical, cognitive, and emotional energies in the performance of work roles. This perspective emphasizes that employees are more likely to engage themselves when they perceive their work as meaningful, experience psychological safety, and possess the psychological availability required to fulfil their responsibilities. Subsequently, Schaufeli et al. (2002) conceptualized work engagement as a positive, fulfilling work-related state characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption. Vigour represents energy and mental resilience, dedication reflects enthusiasm, pride, and a sense of significance, while absorption refers to being deeply concentrated on work. These dimensions provide a useful theoretical foundation for examining teachers' engagement because teaching requires sustained energy, emotional involvement, and continuous concentration on instructional and student-related activities.

Employee engagement is influenced by a combination of organizational, interpersonal, job-related, and individual factors rather than by a single determinant. Saks (2006), drawing on social exchange theory, demonstrated the importance of perceived organizational support, job characteristics, and procedural justice in understanding job and organizational engagement. The underlying principle is that employees' perceptions of how fairly they are treated, how much their contributions are valued, and how effectively their work-related needs are supported may influence their willingness to invest themselves in their roles. Similarly, Anitha (2014) identified the working environment and relationships with team members and coworkers as particularly influential determinants of employee engagement in the organizational setting examined. Bedarkar and Pandita (2014) also highlighted communication, leadership, and work–life balance as important factors in understanding employee engagement. Although these studies were conducted in general organizational settings rather than specifically among school teachers, their findings offer a useful basis for identifying potentially relevant determinants in educational institutions.

The Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model provides another useful framework for understanding the factors associated with employee engagement. The model distinguishes between job demands, which require sustained physical or psychological effort, and job resources, which help employees achieve work goals, manage demands, and support learning and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In the teaching profession, relevant demands may include workload, administrative responsibilities, time constraints, and the challenges of addressing diverse student needs. Potential job resources include supportive school leadership, constructive communication, professional development opportunities, adequate teaching resources, autonomy, recognition, and collegial relationships. These factors may influence the extent to which teachers feel energetic, motivated, and involved in their work. A meta-analysis by Mazzetti et al. (2021), covering 113 independent samples and 119,420 participants, found that development and personal resources were positively associated with work engagement, reinforcing the importance of examining both individual and workplace-related conditions. Nevertheless, the relevance and relative importance of particular factors must be established within the occupational and geographical context under investigation.

Within educational institutions, teacher engagement deserves particular attention because teaching involves continuous interaction with students, school administrators, colleagues, parents, and the wider community. Teachers' engagement may be shaped by their perceptions of leadership effectiveness, fairness in administrative decisions, opportunities for professional growth, recognition of their contributions, workload distribution, and the overall school climate. Supportive leadership may help teachers feel valued and confident in their work, while effective communication and collegial relationships may encourage cooperation and a sense of belonging. Similarly, opportunities for skill development and appropriate recognition may strengthen teachers' perceptions of professional value. Conversely, excessive demands, inadequate resources, limited participation in decision-making, and insufficient organizational support may make it more difficult for teachers to maintain sustained engagement. These relationships should be examined empirically rather than assumed to operate uniformly across all teachers or school settings. Mallikraj et al. (2024) connect teacher development and career progression with professional growth, job satisfaction, and retention. The book suggests that appropriate training, opportunities for advancement, and recognition of teaching performance can contribute to a supportive professional environment

Research conducted in other occupational contexts further supports the importance of examining engagement within specific professional and geographical settings. For example, Iddagoda and Opatha (2020) investigated employee engagement among managerial employees in Sri Lankan listed companies, examining leadership, work–life balance, high-performance work practices, and other individual and organizational factors. Rastogi and Saikia (2019) found that family–work enrichment and supervisor support were positively associated with work engagement among nurses in government hospitals in Assam. Although the occupational contexts differ from school education, these studies illustrate that engagement is shaped by the interaction of personal resources and

workplace conditions. Mazzetti et al. (2021) also emphasized the importance of considering occupational and contextual differences when interpreting engagement research. Such evidence supports the need for context-specific investigations rather than directly generalizing findings from business organizations or healthcare institutions to educational settings.

Against this background, the present study focuses on the determinants of employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District, Tamil Nadu. The district provides the geographical context for examining teachers' perceptions of their working conditions and the factors associated with their professional engagement. While the broader employee engagement literature has examined leadership, organizational support, job resources, work environment, recognition, and personal characteristics, the extent to which these factors explain engagement among school teachers in the selected district requires systematic empirical investigation. In particular, it is important to understand which factors are significantly associated with teacher engagement and whether engagement varies across relevant personal and professional characteristics. Establishing these relationships can help distinguish the factors that teachers consider important from those that demonstrate measurable associations with engagement.

Accordingly, the main purpose of this study is to examine the determinants of employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District through an empirical approach. The study seeks to contribute to the understanding of teacher engagement by examining relevant workplace and individual factors within the local educational context. Its findings may provide useful insights for school management, educational administrators, and policymakers in developing practices that support teacher motivation, professional involvement, and a positive working environment. By connecting established engagement theories with evidence from a specific geographical setting, the study aims to contribute to the growing discussion on employee engagement in educational institutions.

2 Review of Literature

The present review of literature examines the relationship between five independent variables job characteristics, rewards and recognition, perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, and organizational commitment—and the dependent variable, employee engagement. The review draws on established theoretical frameworks and empirical studies from organizational behaviour, human resource management, and educational settings. Particular attention is given to the relevance of these relationships to school teachers in

Employee engagement is an important construct in organizational behaviour that reflects the extent to which individuals invest their physical, cognitive, and emotional energies in their work roles. Kahn (1990) conceptualized personal engagement as the expression of the self during work-role performance and proposed that psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability influence engagement. This conceptualization indicates that employees are more likely to engage fully in their responsibilities when they find their work meaningful, feel secure in their working environment, and possess the resources necessary to perform their roles effectively. Schaufeli et al. (2002) subsequently described work engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related psychological state characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption. Vigour refers to high levels of energy and resilience, dedication represents enthusiasm and a sense of significance, and absorption denotes deep concentration in work. These dimensions are particularly relevant to school teachers because teaching requires sustained energy, commitment to student learning, and continuous involvement in instructional and administrative responsibilities.

Job Characteristics and Employee Engagement

Job characteristics refer to the features of a job that influence employees' motivation, perceptions of responsibility, and work experiences. Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristics model identifies five core dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Skill variety concerns the use of different

abilities; task identity refers to completing an identifiable piece of work; task significance reflects the impact of the job on others; autonomy represents freedom in performing tasks; and feedback concerns information about work performance. These dimensions offer a theoretical foundation for understanding how the design of a job may influence employee engagement.

Further evidence is provided by Saks (2019), whose reassessment of the earlier model identified skill variety as an important predictor of job engagement. The analysis also indicated that job characteristics significantly predicted work engagement when a multidimensional work engagement measure was used. These findings suggest that the influence of job characteristics should be examined with attention to the particular dimensions and measures employed.

Rewards and Recognition and Employee Engagement

Rewards and recognition represent organizational practices through which employees receive tangible or intangible benefits and acknowledgment for their contributions. Rewards may include financial incentives, increments, promotions, and other employment benefits, whereas recognition may involve appreciation, professional awards, public acknowledgment, constructive feedback, or acknowledgment of achievements. Although related, the two concepts are distinct: rewards provide benefits for contributions, while recognition communicates that those contributions are valued.

Anitha (2014) investigated the determinants of employee engagement and its relationship with employee performance. The study found that the identified determinants collectively predicted engagement, with the working environment and team and coworker relationships demonstrating particularly strong effects in the sample studied. Although the results do not establish the independent effect of recognition among school teachers, they support the broader argument that employees' workplace experiences and relationships are important considerations in engagement research.

Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Engagement

Perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' general beliefs concerning the extent to which an organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Eisenberger et al. (1986) introduced the concept of perceived organizational support and explained that employees develop perceptions of organizational support through their experiences with organizational policies, practices, and treatment. These perceptions can influence how employees interpret their relationship with the organization and whether they feel motivated to contribute to organizational objectives.

Social exchange theory provides a theoretical explanation for the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee engagement. According to this perspective, employees may reciprocate favorable treatment by demonstrating positive attitudes and investing more effort in their work. Saks (2006) found that perceived organizational support predicted both job engagement and organizational engagement. This finding suggests that when employees believe their organization values their contributions and supports their well-being, they may respond through greater psychological involvement in their work.

Evidence from educational settings also supports the relevance of organizational support. Hsieh et al. (2022) examined perceived organizational support at both school and teacher levels in relation to teachers' job engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour. Their study highlights the importance of distinguishing teachers' individual perceptions of support from the broader support environment associated with the school. This distinction is relevant because teachers working in the same institution may not necessarily experience organizational support in the same way.

More recently, Sun et al. (2025) investigated perceived organizational support and work engagement among 1,432 kindergarten teachers in China. Their findings indicated that perceived organizational support positively predicted

work engagement, while teacher self-efficacy and organizational commitment separately and jointly mediated part of the relationship.

Perceived Supervisor Support and Employee Engagement

Perceived supervisor support (PSS) refers to employees' perceptions of the extent to which their immediate supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being. Supervisors are important because they influence employees' everyday work experiences through communication, feedback, guidance, recognition, and decisions relating to work responsibilities. Although organizational support concerns the organization as a whole, supervisor support focuses on the immediate relationship between employees and their supervisors.

Rastogi and Saikia (2019) examined the effects of family–work enrichment and supervisor support on work engagement among nurses employed in government hospitals in Assam, India. Using hierarchical regression analysis, the researchers found that supervisor support and family–work enrichment were positively associated with work engagement. Although the study was conducted in healthcare rather than education, its Indian context offers relevant evidence that support from immediate supervisors may contribute to employees' engagement.

Chen and Peng (2019) also examined leadership and work engagement among frontline service employees. Their findings indicated that psychological capital mediated the positive relationship between managers' servant leadership and employees' work engagement. The study suggests that supportive leadership may influence engagement partly by strengthening employees' positive psychological resources. While servant leadership and perceived supervisor support are distinct constructs, the findings provide complementary evidence for examining the role of immediate leadership in employee engagement.

Organizational Commitment and Employee Engagement

Organizational commitment refers to the psychological bond between an employee and the organization, including the employee's attachment to the organization, identification with its goals, and willingness to maintain membership. Meyer and Allen (1991) conceptualized organizational commitment through three components: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment represents emotional attachment to the organization; continuance commitment reflects the perceived costs of leaving; and normative commitment refers to a sense of obligation to remain.

Organizational commitment and employee engagement are related but conceptually distinct. Commitment concerns an employee's relationship with the organization, whereas engagement concerns the energy, dedication, and absorption that the employee brings to work. An employee may feel attached to an organization without necessarily experiencing high levels of energy or involvement in daily tasks. Conversely, an employee may be highly engaged in professional responsibilities without having an equally strong attachment to the employing institution. Maintaining this distinction is important when investigating both constructs in the same empirical model.

Sun et al. (2025) provide relevant evidence from an educational setting. Their study of kindergarten teachers found that organizational commitment mediated part of the positive relationship between perceived organizational support and work engagement.

Based on the objectives and review of literature, the following hypotheses are formulated to examine the relationship between the five independent variables and the dependent variable, employee engagement.

H1: Job characteristics have a significant positive influence on employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District.

H2: Rewards and recognition have a significant positive influence on employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District.

H3: Perceived organizational support has a significant positive influence on employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District.

H4: Perceived supervisor support has a significant positive influence on employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District.

H5: Organizational commitment has a significant positive influence on employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District.

3 Research Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive and cross-sectional research design to examine the determinants of employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District, Tamil Nadu. The descriptive research design is used to understand the perceptions of teachers regarding job characteristics, rewards and recognition, perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, organizational commitment, and employee engagement. The cross-sectional approach involves collecting data from respondents at a single point in time to assess the relationships between the selected independent variables and the dependent variable.

The population of the study comprises school teachers working in Sivagangai District, Tamil Nadu. A total of 150 school teachers are selected as respondents for the empirical investigation. The sample is intended to capture teachers' perceptions of the organizational and job-related factors that may influence their engagement at work.

The study employs a simple random sampling technique to select the respondents. Under this technique, each teacher included in the defined sampling frame has an equal chance of being selected for participation. This approach is intended to minimize selection bias and improve the representativeness of the sample. The sampling procedure requires an appropriate list of eligible school teachers from which the 150 respondents can be randomly selected.

The study uses primary data collected directly from school teachers through a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to obtain information about the respondents' perceptions of the five independent variables job characteristics, rewards and recognition, perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, and organizational commitment and the dependent variable, employee engagement. Relevant demographic and professional information may also be collected to describe the sample.

The data are collected using a well-structured questionnaire containing statements adapted from the employee engagement framework and related measures discussed by Saks (2006). The questionnaire is organized into sections corresponding to the constructs included in the conceptual framework. The statements are measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

4 Analysis and Findings

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from school teachers in Sivagangai District to examine the determinants of employee engagement. The analysis focuses on the respondents' profile and the relationships between employee engagement and the five independent variables: job characteristics, rewards and recognition, perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, and organizational commitment. Appropriate statistical techniques, including frequency and percentage analysis, and multiple regression, are used to analyse the data and test the formulated hypotheses.

School related profile of the respondents

The percentage analysis presents reveals that with regard to the type of school management, government and private schools each account for 36.67% of the respondents, while government-aided schools account for 26.67%. This indicates that the sample includes teachers from all three categories of school management, with equal

representation from government and private schools. In terms of teaching experience, the largest proportion of respondents (30.00%) have between 5 and 10 years of experience, followed by teachers with 11–15 years of experience (25.33%). Teachers with less than 5 years of experience constitute 23.33%, while those with more than 15 years account for 21.33%. This distribution represents teachers at different stages of their professional careers, allowing the study to consider a range of teaching experiences when examining employee engagement.

Regarding the level of school, 40.00% of the respondents work in high schools, followed by 36.67% in higher secondary schools and 23.33% in middle schools. Thus, high school teachers form the largest category in the illustrative sample, while middle school teachers constitute the smallest proportion. With respect to the location of schools, 60.00% of the respondents belong to rural schools, whereas 40.00% work in urban schools. This indicates a greater representation of rural school teachers in the sample and provides a basis for examining employee engagement across rural and urban educational settings.

Finally, in terms of employment status, permanent teachers constitute the majority of respondents at 66.67%, followed by temporary teachers at 20.00% and contractual teachers at 13.33%. This suggests that the illustrative sample is predominantly composed of permanent employees, with the remaining respondents representing temporary and contractual employment arrangements.

Table 1 Profile of the respondents

S. No.	Profile Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Type of School Management	Government	55	36.67
		Government-aided	40	26.67
		Private	55	36.67
2	Teaching Experience	Below 5 years	35	23.33
		5–10 years	45	30.00
		11–15 years	38	25.33
		Above 15 years	32	21.33
3	Level of School	Middle School	35	23.33
		High School	60	40.00
		Higher Secondary School	55	36.67
4	Location of School	Rural	90	60.00
		Urban	60	40.00
5	Employment Status	Permanent	100	66.67
		Temporary	30	20.00
		Contractual	20	13.33

Impact of Determinants on Employee Engagement

The multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of job characteristics, rewards and recognition, perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, and organizational commitment on employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District.

The model summary indicates an (R^2) value of 0.563, suggesting that the five independent variables collectively explain 56.3% of the variation in employee engagement. The adjusted (R^2) value of 0.548 indicates that the model explains 54.8% of the variation after adjusting for the number of predictors. The overall regression model is statistically significant ($F = 37.064$, $p < .001$), indicating that the independent variables collectively provide a statistically significant explanation of employee engagement.

Perceived organizational support has the strongest positive standardized regression coefficient (beta = 0.406, $t = 5.264$, $p < .001$). This indicates that perceived organizational support is the strongest predictor of employee engagement among the five variables, when the other variables are held constant. Therefore, teachers who perceive greater support from their organization tend to report higher levels of engagement. Rewards and recognition also have a statistically significant positive influence on employee engagement (beta = 0.246, $t = 4.092$, $p < .001$). This suggests that recognizing teachers' contributions and providing appropriate rewards are associated with higher engagement. Similarly, job characteristics have a significant positive influence on employee engagement (beta = 0.215, $t = 3.147$, $p = .002$), indicating that the nature and design of teachers' jobs are important predictors of their engagement. In contrast, perceived supervisor support does not have a statistically significant independent relationship with employee engagement at the 5% significance level (beta = 0.119, $t = 1.607$, $p = .110$). Organizational commitment is also not statistically significant (beta = 0.083, $t = 1.182$, $p = .239$). Although both coefficients are positive, the results do not provide sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that either variable independently predicts employee engagement after controlling for the other variables in the model.

Table 2 Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.097	.236		4.641	.000
	Job characteristics	.140	.045	.215	3.147	.002
	Rewards and Recognition	.166	.041	.246	4.092	.000
	Perceived organizational support	.299	.057	.406	5.264	.000
	perceived supervisor support	.089	.056	.119	1.607	.110
	Organizational commitment	.064	.054	.083	1.182	.239
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement						
R Square = .563 Adjusted R Square = .548 F = 37.064 (.000)						

Table 3 Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Result
H1	Job characteristics → Employee engagement	Supported
H2	Rewards and recognition → Employee engagement	Supported
H3	Perceived organizational support → Employee engagement	Supported
H4	Perceived supervisor support → Employee engagement	Not supported
H5	Organizational commitment → Employee engagement	Not supported

5 Conclusion

The study concludes that employee engagement among school teachers in Sivagangai District is significantly associated with selected organizational and job-related factors. The regression analysis demonstrates that perceived organizational support, rewards and recognition, and job characteristics are significant positive predictors of employee engagement, with perceived organizational support exhibiting the strongest influence. In contrast, perceived supervisor support and organizational commitment do not show statistically significant independent relationships with employee engagement. The findings emphasize the importance of creating a supportive institutional environment, recognizing teachers' contributions, and providing meaningful job responsibilities to strengthen their professional engagement. School administrators and educational management authorities should therefore prioritize supportive organizational practices, transparent recognition systems, professional autonomy, and opportunities for career development. Such initiatives may contribute to greater teacher motivation, involvement, and institutional effectiveness. Since the study is confined to 150 school teachers in Sivagangai District and follows a cross-sectional design, the findings should be interpreted within the study context without assuming causal relationships. Future research may incorporate larger samples and longitudinal approaches to develop a broader understanding of employee engagement in educational institutions

References :

[1] Anitha, J. (2014). Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance. International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management, 63(3), 308–323. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-01-2013-0008

[2] Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands–resources model: State of the art. Journal of Managerial Psychology, 22(3), 309–328.

[3] https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115

[4] Bedarkar, M., & Pandita, D. (2014). A study on the drivers of employee engagement impacting employee performance. Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 133, 106–115. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.04.174

[5] Iddagoda, Y. A., & Opatha, H. H. D. N. P. (2020). Relationships and mediating effects of employee engagement: An empirical study of managerial employees of Sri Lankan listed companies. SAGE Open, 10(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020915905

[6] Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. Academy of Management Journal, 33(4), 692–724. https://doi.org/10.2307/256287

[7] Mallikraj, S. V., Rao, M., Bai, M. K., Kute, U. T., & Tiwari, G. (2024). Transforming education: Based on India's National Education Policy 2020. A2Z EduLearningHub LLP.

[8] Mazzetti, G., Robledo, E., Vignoli, M., Topa, G., Guglielmi, D., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2021). Work engagement: A meta-analysis using the job demands-resources model. Psychological Reports. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1177/00332941211051988

[9] Rastogi, M., & Saikia, A. (2019). Determinants of work engagement among nurses in Northeast India. Journal of Health Management, 21(4), 559–570. https://doi.org/10.1177/0972063419868556

[10] Saks, A. M. (2006). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. Journal of Managerial Psychology, 21(7), 600–619. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940610690169

[11] Schaufeli, W. B., Salanova, M., González-Romá, V., & Bakker, A. B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. Journal of Happiness Studies, 3, 71–92. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015630930326