

## Work Engagement And Behavioral Outcomes At Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs)

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### ABSTRACT

*The current research study examined the widely accepted belief that low work engagement leads to employee deviant behavior (DB) and increased turnover intentions (TI). To investigate the study hypothesis, this research selected 340 employees from recently formed higher educational institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan. Employee work engagement (EWE) was found negatively associated with deviant behavior (DB) and turnover intentions (TI) to leave the company. As per the study finding, PSS moderates the link between EWE and DB. Thus, an association between work engagement and turnover intentions were not moderated by PSS. Based on the findings, we concluded that PSS could be used as a reward for low levels of work engagement. Future research directions and suggestions are also discussed.*

**Keyword:** *Work Engagement, Deviant Behavior, Perceived Supervisor Support, higher educational institution, turnover intention.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

A growing body of research is glorifying the advantages of an engaged workforce. Previous research has discovered a positive association between engagement of employees in the workplace and task performance, job satisfaction, and workability (Pratama et al., 2021) and also found a negative link with employee deviant behavior, turnover intention, and absenteeism (Shantz et al., 2016). By considering these results, the researchers have been focusing on various methods to improve employee work engagement (EWE) (Bakker, 2011). Parker and Griffin (2011) found that low levels of work engagement do not always imply poor work outcomes (e.g., higher absenteeism, deviant behavior). The explanation for this association is that other factors at work may contribute to reducing the negative impacts of low engagement. present study investigates the that low level of employee work engagement which does not really recommend less favorable outputs, observing as dissatisfied employees can also show low level of DB and TI cause of other factors in role of job, which described in the above study (Parker & Griffin, 2011) and the results of study of Shantz et al., (2016).

The buffering hypothesis and the resources theory were utilized in this study to suggest that organizational resources such as PSS, perceived supervisor support, and perceived colleagues support can be used to moderate low levels of job commitment (Shantz et al., 2016). EWE describes how engaged personnel is in their jobs to help the firm

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achieve its objectives. It has been recognized that it is necessary to develop a competitive advantage and attain institutional success (Gruman & Saks, 2011). Employee engagement has a significant impact on a firm's profitability, which can lead to more growth and also more production (Bhattacharya Morgan, & Rego, 2021). The study also indicated that employees are poor in motivation while performing their duties, which results in poor performance. Demotivated employees are psychologically disconnected when it comes to their job performance, which can damage their output and efficiency (Kahn, 1990). It has been revealed that half of the workforce worldwide, and especially in America, is disengaged or under-engaged (Johnson, 2004).

The current research adds to this field in the following ways. First, we investigated a moderating variable which is perceived supervisor support (PSS), which has been proposed by prior research (Afzal et al., 2019) on the link between engagement and work outcomes. Even though relationships between work engagement and job-related variables have previously been reported (Hakanen & Lindbohm, 2008, 2007), exploring PSS as a moderating variable among workers participations and its outcomes could improve workers engagement concept as well as enhance the aforementioned consequences (Aktar & Pangil 2017). Additionally, a potential moderator that namely perceived support of the supervisor (PSS) has been investigated as a potential tonic for the association between EWE and work behavior, as when PSS is present as a moderator, institutions can diminish the process of DB which may come as a result of employee low-level engagement. PSS was also properly considered for allocating capital (Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2009). PSS is acknowledged as a societal exchange interaction, and yet it has been seen as an asset for businesses (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Afzal et al., 2019). As per conservation resource theory (CRT), we believed that low engaged would result in an inadequate job energy resource, which PSS may possibly pay compensation for.

In last, this research investigates in Pakistani higher educational institutions (HEIs), relationship among EWE and behavioral outcomes. Finally, the study looks further into relationship between work engagement and their behavioral outcomes in Pakistani universities (HEIs). But there were few studies on EWE and behavioural outcomes, mainly in Pakistan higher education institutions. As a result, further research is needed to design, analyze, and establish a breakeven point where employee engagement has a favorable impact on institutional outcomes, such as decreased levels of TI to quit, absenteeism, and DB. As a result, current research contributed to the body of knowledge concerning DB and TI by building on previous study that revealed that behavioural results were the key driver of workers participation.

## **II. RELATED STUDY AND HYPOTHESIS**

### **2.1 Workplace Deviance**

Employees' intentional violation of formal rules, practices, and processes, impact the institutions as well as the employees' welfare (Morsch, van & Kodden, 2020). Withdrawal behavior (Tian et al., 2021), workplace bullying (Hogh et al., 2021), abusive behavior (Yong et al., 2020), Researchers examined studied two different sorts of deviance. One is constructive deviance, which happens when workers engage in productive practices. Second type is destructive deviance, which occurs when employees purposefully harm the institution (Zhou & Li, 2021). The present research study focuses mainly on negative deviance. Destructive deviance is divided into two categories: one is interpersonal deviance and the other type is organizational deviance. Interpersonal deviance is defined as irritating, blaming, and gossiping about your peers. These behaviors may appear insignificant, yet they have a negative impact on the institutions. There are some causes that why employees engage in interpersonal deviance, like spreading false stories about a teammate to achieve a better assignment or promotion.

Similarly, a supervisor may engage in deviant behavior by preferring one employee over another, taking credit for someone else's work, criticizing others, and ignoring competent workers. Employee morale may be harmed as a result of such gossip and unfair treatment. Backstabbing is mostly motivated by jealousy, ignoring others, revenge, and privileges for personal gain. Production and property deviance are elements of organizational deviance. Employees' involvement in deviant behaviors has a negative impact on organizational productivity. Production deviance is considered as intentionally disobeying organizational rules on the quality and quantity of work to be completed. To disrupt organizational production, several strategies including work, personal calls, and cyber loafing are used. Damage or acquiring of tangible goods (misallocation of funds, theft, knowingly causing errors, destruction) without proper authorization is considered property deviance. As per the study of Gross-Schaeffer (2003), 75% of employees reported stealing from the workplace at some point during their careers. Three out of every four employees engage in such activity and huge financial fraud has been reported in history, tarnishing the organization's company image. Moreover, Pakistani institutions face the same challenges, which have a negative impact on both the organization's and employees' performance (Nasir & Bashir, 2012). As aforementioned, today's managers emphasize the relationship between employees and the organization (Shin, Perdue, & Kang, 2019).

## **2.2 Turnover Intention**

Willingness of employees to leave an organization is referred to as turnover intention (Tett & Meyer, 1993). It is the result of a violation of a psychological contract, and it can have a negative impact on an organization's success. Employees become unhappy when their psychological contracts are violated, resulting in poor organizational commitment and a strong possibility of turnover (Gholami, Saki & Hossein, 2019). If an employee wants to resign from the institute but stays due to factors such as a lack of job opportunities, low pay, or a remote location, he or she will continue to be dissatisfied at not being properly compensated for their contributions to the company and will look for other possibilities (Shin, Perdue, & Kang, 2019).

## **2.3 Perceived supervisor support**

An employee's perception that their employer values their job and is concerned about their well-being is referred to as supervisor support. Perceived supervisor support (PSS) is a phenomenon in which employees believe their supervisor respects their commitment and takes steps to ensure their well-being (Lindawati, & Wulani, 2021). PSS is important for employee job pledge to the organization (Szyszko, (2021).

It concentrates on how extrinsic factors such as salary and allowances, bonuses, promotions, and other monetary term rewards, as well as intrinsic factors such as supervisor appreciation, affect employees' sense of duty and output. Employee's efforts with high motivation and try to improve their productivity when the organization works for their development and provides them with a peaceful and easy work environment, as well as adopt policies for their well-being. Employees want to know that their work and efforts are appreciated. . Based on how employees perceive organizational policies, they may have a favorable or unfavorable impact on employee performance (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Workers who are praised by their employers believe that the PSS is at a high level (Szyszko, (2021). Researchers have found that a supervisor's compassionate behavior toward their employees gives positive consequences.

Supervisors who are concerned about the needs of their employees can also motivate them (Humphrey, 2002). According to the precious study of Maertz et al., (2007), found that PSS is a state of consciousness in which employees believe their supervisors

respect their efforts and devotion to the institution. Workers feel that managers are acting in their roles as representatives of the company (Baran et al., 2012). In contrast to organizational support, support of managerial or supervisor is more useful to workers and has a straight impact on employee performance (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Zhang & Li, 2009) found that it is more result-oriented and has a significant impact on employee output.

Previous research has found that immediate supervisors have a strategic situation and have the power to influence employee attitude towards the company (Abbas, Ekowati, & Suhariadi, 2021; Rosen et al., 2011), influencing employee perceptions toward institutions systems and policies. Based on the employees' needs for support, supervisors can assist them in several ways (Abdullatif & Anindita, 2021).

During hectic training schedules, supervisors commit workers by lowering working hours, and they also help employees by offering them professional advancement possibilities, comprising on-the-job training at various levels. Employees develop trust in their institution and line supervisor, which establishes a good relationship between employer and their employees.

## **2.4 Work Engagement**

Work engagement is an incentive that encourages workers to go ahead and perform in their work. Employee engagement has been linked to a variety of distinct advantages of work, including increased innovation, motivation and performance (Hakanen and Koivumäki, 2014), and remunerations on the business level (Hakanen and Koivumäki, 2014; Teo et al., 2021). Employee work engagement is the desirable condition of performance that can be attained when individuals have high job satisfaction, a pleasant working environment, and a keen interest in their work, as well as positive relationships with their supervisors, colleagues, and the institution's vision and mission. As a result, employees are becoming more committed and encouraged to work voluntarily to increase productivity and help businesses succeed and define EWE as a significant and work-oriented mindset that is built on employee engagement and commitment (Aldabbas, Pinnington, & Lahrech, 2021).

Engagement of workforce is described in a variety of ways and has a variety of meanings; therefore the term has been described in a variety of ways by various authors. For example, work engagement is described by Harter et al., (2002) as "individuals' commitment, satisfaction, and enthusiasm for the job." Thus according to Hewitt (2004), EWE is a level of emotional and rational participation that stimulates employees to improve their routine in institutions. Employee engagement is the condition of workers' commitment to the organization and its value in attaining organizational objectives, as measured by their physical, cognitive, and emotional attraction. Psychological Contract Theory was first developed by Kahn (1990). The notion is based on cognitive state of mind that is essential to increase work engagement. They concluded that key psychological thoughts are need to motivate employees to participate in additional activities during his research work. Psychological safety, psychological availability, and psychological meaningfulness are three psychological conditions of awareness. In the context of workplace engagement, there seems to be a lot of researches; however, the SET model is more suitable for logically describing employee work engagement (Saks, 2006). The current study has used the same model as the majority of the previous studies based. So because an organization and its employees are more interdependent, the relationship is more reliable, practical, and committed. Most engaged employees will have a better opportunity of advancing their careers, which will benefit both the employees and the institutions (Saks, 2006).

## 2.5 Impact of work Engagement on TI and DB

Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) showed that employee engagement is the idea of energetic, positive, and engaged employees. "Vigor, dedication, and absorption" are three components of employee engagement. Employees with vigor have a high level of energy and are mentally comfortable; employees with a dedication to their jobs are fully engaged in their work and feel encouraged about it, and employees with absorption have full attention to their work. In the literature, the job demands-resources model (JD-R) is commonly used to explain employee stress and employee work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). As per the JD-R model, the motivating process indicates that job resources increase EWE, which has a significant impact on work behaviors. The present research concentrated on the JD-R model, which described how EWE is linked to organisational success, especially a lower turnover ratio and negative employee behaviour toward the institutions.

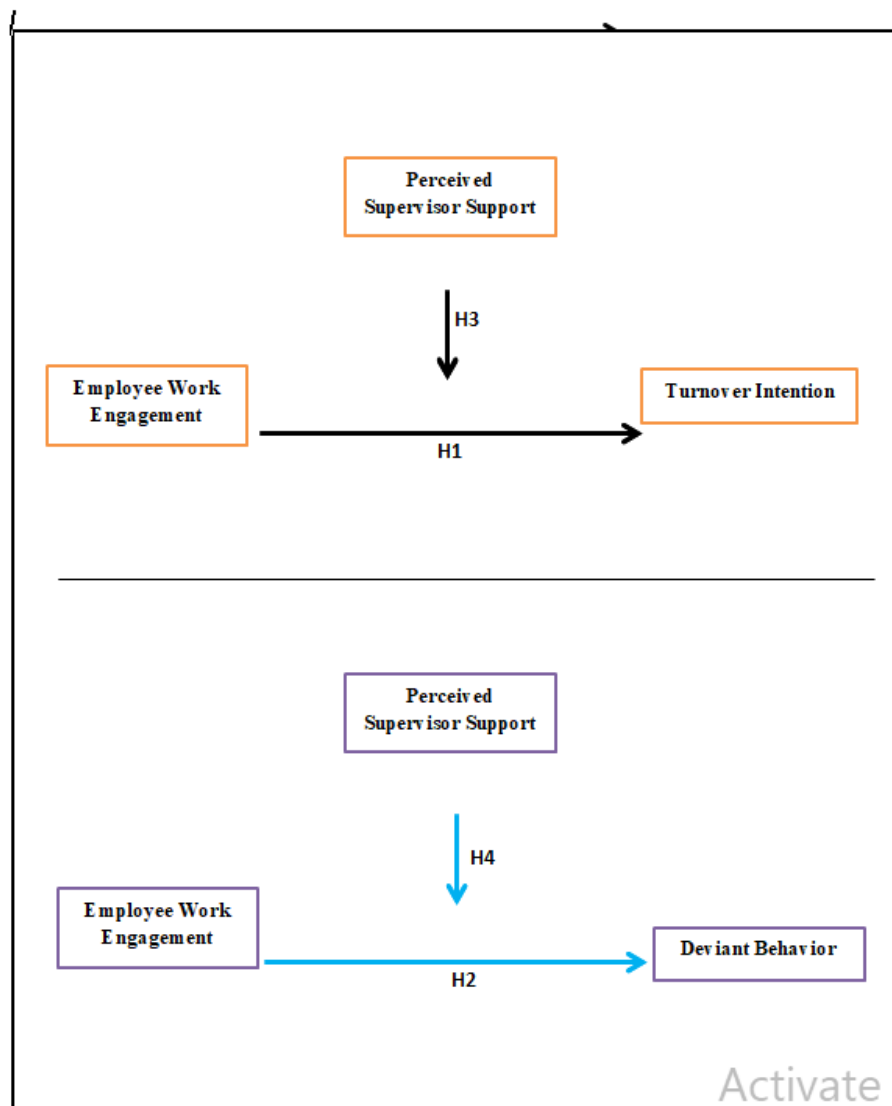


Figure 1: This Research Proposed Model

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**III. METHODOLOGY**

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
<b>Male</b>	278	<b>81.7%</b>
<b>Female</b>	62	<b>18.3%</b>
<b>Qualification</b>		
<b>BA/B.Sc</b>	23	<b>6.7%</b>
<b>MA/M.Sc</b>	69	<b>20.3%</b>
<b>MS/Mphil</b>	133	<b>39.1%</b>
<b>PhD</b>	115	<b>33.8%</b>
<b>Occupations</b>		
<b>Teaching Staff</b>	203	<b>59.7%</b>
<b>Administration Staff</b>	137	<b>40.3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>N- 340</b>	<b>100%</b>

Respondents of the present research are personnel of higher educational institutions (HEIs) of Pakistan. The survey questionnaires were distributed to both faculty and non-faculty staff i.e., teaching and administration. Seven public and private institution of higher education were chosen based on the higher turnover ratio in these established universities. The purpose of the current study was explained to the employees and they were guaranteed that their responses will keep confidential and only be used for research purposes. A total of 750 questionnaires were distributed between selected respondents through the convenience sampling technique. Out of which 388 questionnaires were returned. Finally, many questionnaires were not fully filled; only 340 responses of the participant were analyzed by the current study. Out of 340, two hundred-three (59.7%) respondents were teaching staff and 137 (40.3%) were from administration staff. Similarly, 278 (81.7%) respondents were male and 62 (18.3%) respondents were female. Likewise, a total of 115 (33.8%) study participants have Ph.D. degrees, 133 (39.1%) have MS/MPhil, 69 (20.3%) have MA/M.Sc. degree and 23 (6.7%) respondents have BA/B.Sc. qualifications.

**3.1 Scale Measurement****3.1.1 Independent Variable (EWE)**

Employee work engagement was ensured to use Utrecht Scale of work engagement. This scale has nine elements with a seven-point Likert scale ranging from one to seven. Shantz et al., 2017; Fairlie, 2011) used this scale to assess EWE in past studies. The items were found to have strong reliability as well as validity (Shantz et al., 2017; Schaufeli et al., 2006a). Three items were used to assess each component of EWE: absorption, devotion, and vigor. EWE was used as a composite variable in this study.

### 3.1.2 Moderating Variable (PSS)

Saks (2006) developed a four-item scale to measure perceived supervisor support (PSS). All items were rated on a seven-point Likert scale, with 1 representing "never" and 7 representing "always." Previous research studies of (Khan et al., 2015; Lindawati, & Wulani, 2021; Cole, Bruch, & Vogel, 2006) used the same scale and found it reliable.

### 3.1.3 Dependent Variable (TI)

A four-item scale was developed to measure turnover intentions, with two items obtained from the precious study of Boroff and Lewin (1997) and others two items established following significant literature analysis and assistance from subject experts and questionnaire development experts.

### 3.1.4 Dependent Variable (DB)

To investigate dependent variable DB, the study adopts a four items sale from Bennett and Robinson (2000). This scale has been used in previous studies and has been shown to be trustworthy (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Shantz et al., 2016).

## IV. RESULTS

**Table 1. Reliability**

Variables	Scale adopted	Items	Values
EWE .84	Seppala et al., (2009)	3	
TI .79	Boroff and Lewin (1997)	6	
DB .81	Bennett and Robinson (2000)	4	
PSS .87	Saks (2006)	4	

Table above shows reliability of independent and dependent variables. In the table above, values of alpha are appropriate and within the acceptable range. The Apha' values in social science research is. 6 are acceptable and good (Khattak et al., 2017). As a result, the values of all research variables are within acceptable range.

**Table 2. Regression Analysis**

Value	Part 1 (EWE: TI)	Part 2 (EWE: DB)
R <sup>2</sup>	.145	.152

<b>b (se)</b>	-381 (.031)	-390 (.051)
<b>F</b>	56.43	59.80
<b>T</b>	-751	-7.73
<b>P</b>	.000	.000
<b>Value of DW</b>	1.75	1.63

\*p < .05 \*\*p < .01

**Part 1 and part 2** showed regression analysis of the present study. The value R<sup>2</sup> is in the above part 1 is .145 which shows that employee work engagement which is independent variable explain 14.5% variation in dependent variable turnover intention.

Similarly, for the part 2, R<sup>2</sup> is .152 which shows that EWE explains 15.2% variation in the DV DB. Additionally, Values of (F statistics) for both parts shown that our model is significant. Part 1 illustrates a significant and adverse association of IV EWE and DV TI (t = -7.51, p = .000). Similarly, part 2 also shows a significant and negative association among employee work engagement and deviant behavior (value of t is -7.773, p is .000). The DW value for both models are lies on acceptable range, hence there is no autocorrelation issue. One possible explanation for this conclusion is because less engaged employees engage in activities such as taunting their colleagues, gossiping, envy, and backstabbing. Likewise, they also abuse resources of an organization and have enough of time to get engaged in other well-established organizations. The first two hypotheses (**H1**, **H2**) of the study, which EWE has a negatively and significantly related with TI and DB, are accepted based on regression and correlation analysis results.

**Table 3. Moderation Analysis**

	R-Square	F	β (S.E)	T	P
<b>Part 1</b>					
	.2	40.0			
Supervisor support .000			4 (.1)		6.3
Employee work engagement .000			-.2 (.0)		-4.6
Int_1 .2			. 0 (.0)		1.4



**Predictor EWE; Dependent TI****Supervisor Support****Part 2**

	.3	60.3	
Supervisor support .000		.7 (.1)	7.6
Employee work engagement .000		-.2 (.1)	-4.0
Int_1 .000		-.1 (.0)	-2.0

**Predictor EWE; Dependent DB****Supervisor Support**

**\* P < .05; \*\* P < .01**

The moderation analysis between employee work engagement (EWE) and turnover intention (TI) under the moderating impact of perceived supervisor support (PSS) is shown in the table above.

**Part 1**, shown the moderating effect of PSS on the relationship between EWE and employee TI. Hence, the value of p of int\_1 found .20 which greater than .05, clearly shows that PSS has no interaction between EWE and employee TI.

**Part 2**, illustrates the moderating effect of PSS on the relationship between EWE and employee DB. The p value of int\_1 is found .000 in the above table that indicates that moderating variable PSS moderates the association among EWE and DB.

EWE has no interaction with employee TI, therefore H3 is rejected and the other hand, H4 is supported, because of moderating variable has significant relation among EWE and employee DB. Also, in both cases, the moderating effect is displayed in the diagram beneath. The current sample categorized into i.e., (low, medium, and high), low represented with 1, medium with 2, and 3 is used to indicate high. So, to the variable group, 111 times one, 112 times add two, and 112 times add three. After that moderator' values organized in order ascending. Thus, by doing that group' value also altered. Afterward, Then, on the graph, select simple scatter and set the DV on the Y-axis, on X-axis put IV, and the group on the set markers box. As a result, 3 types of dots will be generated which illustrates low, medium, and high. Next, click graph and choose Edit Content, which will open it in a new window. R2 values, as well as lines, will display on the graph. Compute the  $\sqrt{\text{r-square}}$ , which becomes R (correlation). In such a case, a higher R value indicates that the moderator moderate more. In this situation, the R' value is greater in a low group, suggesting that in the case of the EWE and TI relationship, PSS is low. While the R' value is high in the medium group, this indicates that PSS is greater and the link between EWE and DB is moderated.

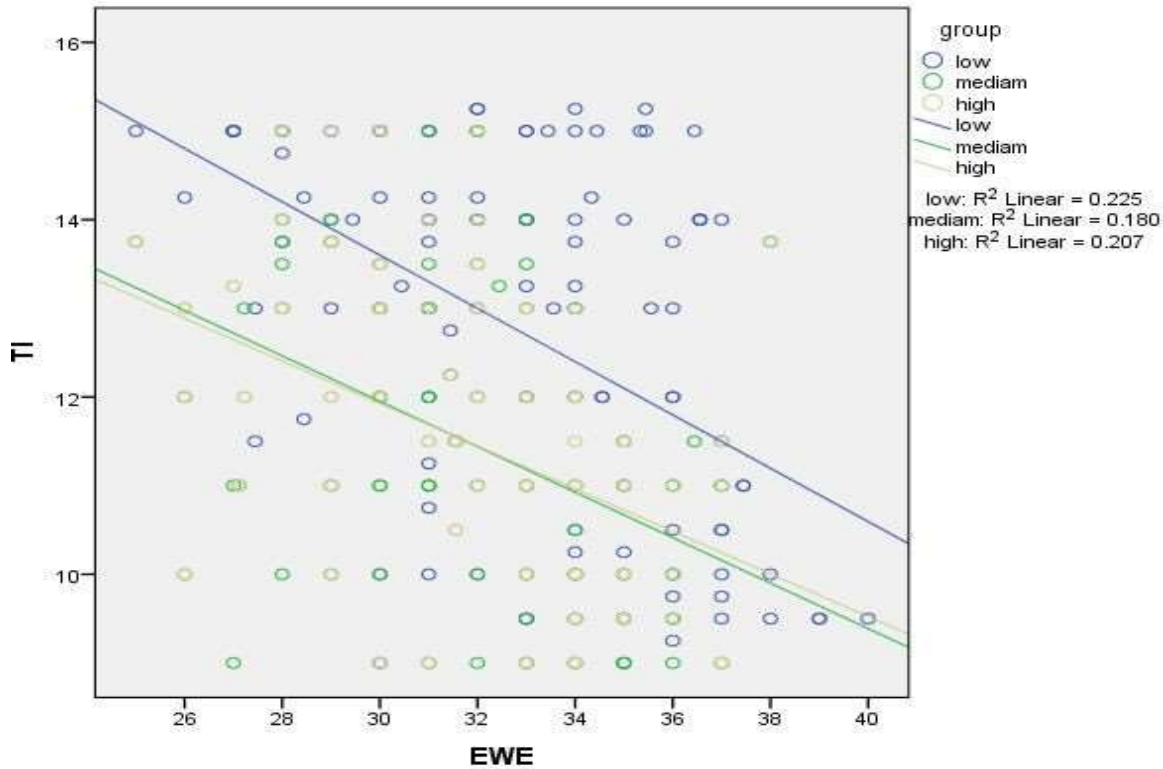


Figure 2: Link among independent variable EWE and dependent variable TI

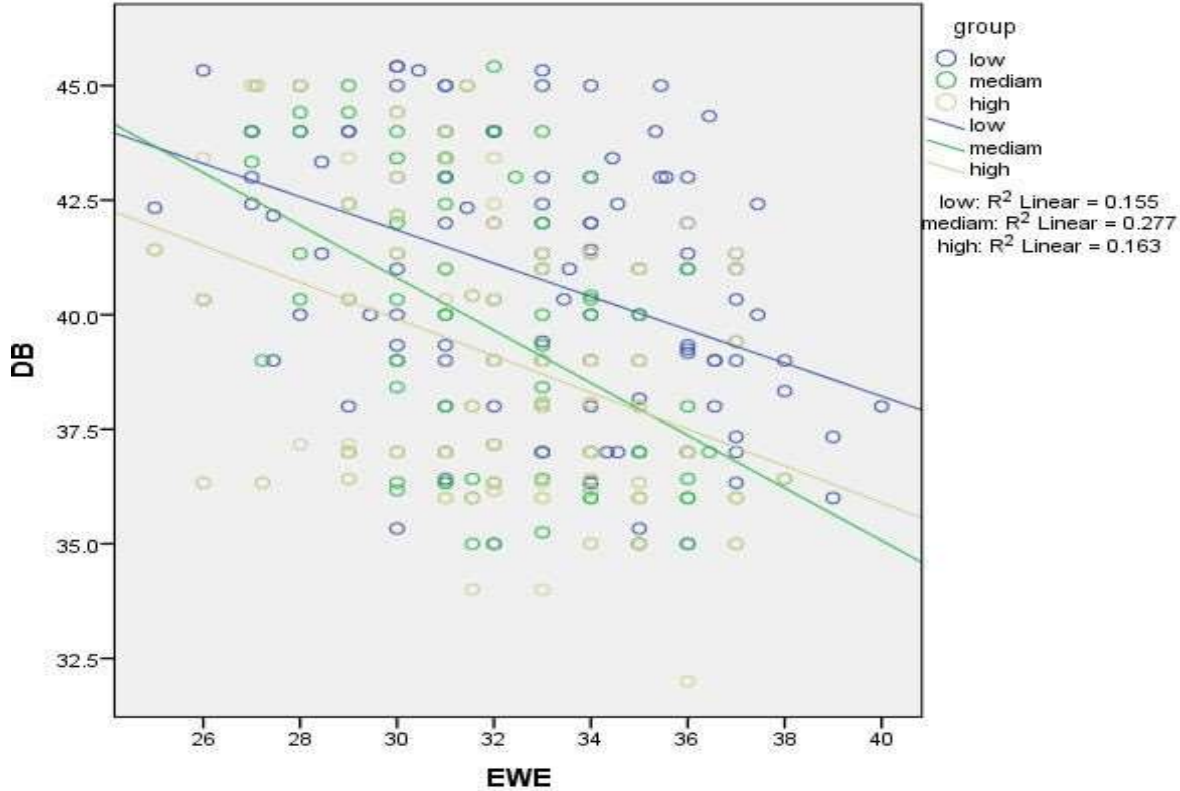


Figure 3: Link among independent variable EWE and dependent variable DB

## V. DISCUSSIONS

This research study concludes that SS work for low levels of work engagement (specially deviant behavior). When disengaged employees perceive their supervisor supports them, they are less likely to report deviant behavior. Likewise, disengaged employees may be motivated to participate in workplace deviance or leave the organization if they receive little or no support from their supervisor. These results support the substitution hypothesis specifically, and conservation resource theory in general. The main concept of conservation resource theory is to replace limited resources in such a way that they counterbalance the damage of extra resource (Hobfoll et al., 1990). This study finding also recommends SS will be utilized as a reward for low levels of engaged employee in the education institutions.

This study's findings are similar with the study of Shantz et al., (2017). They concluded that POS moderates the links among employee work engagement (EWE) and behavioral i.e. turnover intention and deviant behavior. They also recommended that POS pay off for low levels of work engagement like that disengaged workers may not be left the organization and could not be involved in deviance. The finding of the current study is also consistent with the study of Caplan's (1974) buffering hypothesis. Hence, Calpin's theory defines the impact of support on stress outputs.

Furthermore, the latest study's findings supported Calpan's hypothesis.

Current study findings contribute to the literature on engagement of employee, deviancy, and employee TI. Also, two Meta-analyses also found a significant and supportive relationship among engagement, job performance, and behaviors (Halbesleben, 2010; Christian et al., 2011). Several researches have revealed a relationship among workers engagement and behavioral outcomes (i.e. TI and DB). Moreover, the current research adds to the previous literature by exploring how the institution and job-related resources explain the variability of DB and TI.

### 5.1 Study Implications

This study finding suggested that there is a direct link between employee work engagement, turnover intention, and deviant behavior. Thus, it is the responsibility of the Human resources manager/competent authority of higher education institutions (HEIs) to inspect the engagement level of employees for good performance and to attain institutional goals. The competent authority of higher educational institutions (HEIs) may get an advantage from this research study is specific to know about association among EWE and behavioral outcomes in educational institutions, while Human resources managers may get benefits by knowing that several studies found some conclusions between study variables in manufacturing and other service organizations. The HR departments of the selected organizations may use a questionnaire to measure employee engagement levels and, as a result, take the necessary and remedial action to reduce workplace deviance and intention to leave.

Hence, they really should not focus on work engagement since it has been revealed that disengaged workers who think they have supervisor support are less likely to participate in deviant behavior. Even though a consequence, HR managers must take the initiative to ensure their workplace is more supportive, as this is an effective way for disengaged employees to think about and keep good attitudes about their employer. HR managers may show their support for workers by utilizing its assets are allocated effectively and following organizational guidelines and standards. For example, when implementing specific actions or making decisions that influences them, workers should be informed

promptly, be included in the decision-making process, and be given the chance to voice their concerns openly. Furthermore, reasonable efforts should be taken to ensure that employees have access to health care and other amenities such as childcare facilities. Employee training, freedom, recognition programs, rewards, and compensation for performance are all great ways that HR managers may show their employees that their boss cares about their well-being (Fortney, et al., 2020).

## **5.2 Study Limitations and Directions**

Even though the research study makes major contributions, no study is without limitations. The current research has several serious limitations. Firstly, this research investigated work engagement as a compound variable rather than examining the influence of parts of work engagement respectively (like as vigor, commitment, and interest). Investigators or researchers may investigate the influence of all factors of work engagement on outcomes of employee in the future. Secondly, present study only focused on two behavioral outcomes: DB and TI. Thirdly, investigators may enhance the same research study to explore other prospective consequences, such as absenteeism, to strengthen the association. Moreover, exogenous variables like team spirit, colleague support, and family support may act as buffering in the association between work engagement and employee outcomes. Future researchers may examine the mitigating impact of these variables on the relationship between work engagement and workers output or outcomes. Fourthly, the current research used a convenience sampling method, the data' generalizability may be an issue. To report this limitation, researchers may apply probability sampling techniques. Last but not least, the research is focused on Pakistani higher education institutions. Researchers may repeat the study in the future using different sectors and cultures.

## **5.3 Conclusions**

The objective of this research study was to investigate the general misconception that employee low levels of work engagement shows bad outcomes such as TI and DB. The results of the current study back up the aforementioned assumption, concluding that EWE has a negative association with behavioral outcomes such as TI and DB. The current study also found that perceived supervisor support (PSS) moderates the association among EWE and behavioral outcomes. This research also found that education institutions should focus on initiatives to enhance EWE levels since It is important for the success of an institution, so that is not the only factor. Institutions may enhance EWE while lowering deviant behavior of the employee and turnover intentions with PSS.

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