

Impact of Working Patterns on Employee Engagement With the Mediating Role of Trust

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to find out the impact of working patterns on employee engagement with the mediating role of trust in the banking industry and financial institutes of Pakistan. The data is collected through a research survey with the help of Google Forms from the different workers of banks and financial institutes in Pakistan. A quantitative approach is adopted in this particular study. The 305-sample size is collected through bank and financial institution employees. For analysis of data SMART PLS-4 is used to analyze the relationship of dependent and independent variables. Our findings suggest that workload, Job Autonomy, and work environments have successfully predicted employee engagement with the mediator of trust, and Job crafting has an insignificant impact on employee engagement. This study contributes to the organization by examining practices that employees perceive as support that leads to engagement.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Job Crafting, Work Environment.

Introduction

The modern workplace is experiencing significant changes, influenced by developing technologies, globalization, and shifting employee expectations. One critical aspect of these changes is the variation in working patterns, including workload, Job Autonomy, work environments, and Job crafting. Understanding how these working patterns impact employee engagement is crucial for organizations aiming to enhance productivity, retain talent, and foster a positive workplace culture. Trust emerges as a pivotal mediator in this relationship, influencing how working patterns translate into employee engagement.

Employee Work Engagement is an enormous subject that has increased an organization's efficiency. Kahn (1990) first discussed the concept of Employee engagement. The whole concept of employee engagement is frequently confused with happiness or satisfaction. However, Kahn defines employee engagement as "The connection and bonding of organization members' identities of their work roles; in engagement, workers employ and express their selves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances."

Engaged employees are totally dedicated to their work. They are always open to innovative and creative ideas. Predictors of employee engagement are Job resources and personal resources. Employee engagement is also an essential factor in occupational well-being.

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Organizations should facilitate their employees in promoting their work engagements. Breevaart et al., (2014).

Current studies have identified some factors influencing employee engagement, including leadership styles, organizational culture, Job characteristics, and individual differences. For example, Macey and Schneider (2008) argued that transformational leadership improves employee engagement by fostering trust, vision, and support. Moreover, Zhao et al. (2020) demonstrated that perceived organizational support positively predicts employee engagement by signaling care and concern for employees' well-being. Employee engagement has been related to many positive results for individuals and organizations. Scholars have explored its effects on employee performance, turnover intentions, and organizational effectiveness. For instance, Furthermore, Saks and Gruman (2014) showed that higher levels of employee engagement are related to reduced turnover intentions and higher levels of Job satisfaction.

Harter et al. (2002) highlighted the role of strengths-based coaching in enhancing employee engagement by leveraging individuals' talents and interests.

Wang and Hsieh (2013) defines that employee engagement in the workplace and strong support from a supervisor are the things that will always come along with each other. Every individual seeks guidance and support from the manager. When an employee is satisfied with his supervisor or manager, the outcome of the work will automatically become better. If the manager is providing you proper support not verbally but through his actions also the work engagement will be positively affected. Suppose the supervisor is only giving his morale support and no action has been observed from him. In that case, there will be significantly fewer chances of high work engagement as employees apprise the actions more rather than the words. Organizations should take the initiative in this context also. They should be working on this kind of leadership from managers.

Recent research has highlighted the different effects of workload, Job crafting, work environment, and Autonomy on employee engagement. Still, there is an absence of a complete understanding of how these factors relate and influence engagement collectively. Furthermore, the role of "trust" as a mediator in the relationship between these variables and employee engagement remains understudied. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing effective strategies that increase employee engagement and organizational performance.

Past researchers have shown that organizational culture plays a vital role in boosting employee engagement. It relates to many outcomes, such as employee turnover and job performance. (Malinen et al., 2013).

Albrecht et al. (2021) explain that when employees feel engaged and involved in their work, it supports the company in different ways. They are happier regarding their job and work, they feel better overall, and they try to perform their tasks as well as they can. Therefore, companies need to make sure their employees are engaged and motivated.

An exceptional organization is made when an organization is providing trust and authority to employees. Poor communication and lack of recognition between an employee and a manager have become problematic in some organizations. When an employee and a manager have limited interactions and communications, the employee cannot be fostered in that environment. Usually, the issue occurs when the manager does not provide enough information to the junior and does not trust the employee; things become problematic (Haynie et al., 2016).

Some HR practices are important in boosting employee engagement. One of them is maintaining trust between a manager and an employee. For any optimistic exchange relationship, trust is one of the most important factors. Different research has been done to find out the impact of trust. When an employee feels included in the workplace, it automatically increases employee engagement (Downey et al., 2015).

Usually, the managers who are senior and involved in leading teams make long-term decisions that affect an organization's culture. Partial personal connections with them, employees are

eventually influenced by decisions and actions that senior managers take (Barrick et al., 2015). When senior managers maintain healthy relationships with their employees and involve them in decision-making, they eventually strengthen their employees' managerial abilities. Research has shown that when an employee has trust in managers, their contribution and dedication cannot be matched (Abbas & Wu, 2021). Senior managers create a culture that highlights employee concerns and thereby conveys their goodwill.

It is considered to have a long-lasting and positive impact on employee engagement. The reputation and attitudes of organizational members create an effect on employees (Islam et al., 2018).

Some organizations do not give enough attention to an employee's necessities. If an individual lacks a Work environment, there may be a chance of disagreements, which ultimately leads to the employee feeling demotivated to achieve goals (Karanika-Murray et al., 2015).

Job Autonomy is also an important factor that can strongly impact employee engagement. It is referred to as the freedom, liberty, and independence given to an employee in his job. It has been considered an important job resource that promotes work engagement. If the level of job autonomy is restricted, it may lead to employee disengagement (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

As an essential characteristic, subordinates feel liable for accomplishments and failures when they have Autonomy (Gözükara, 2016).

Adequate workload on employees is usually helpful for increasing their level of productivity. If the tolerance level crosses, the level of productivity may not be decreased (Awan & Tahir, 2015). The banking industry is one of the core important and highly contributing sectors of industries. The employees of banks are usually under great Stress due to their workload. Usually, bank employees work long hours, which can cause physical and mental health issues, and the level of productivity and engagement also becomes low (Ehsan & Ali, 2019)

The research objective of this study is to investigate the impact of various working patterns on employee engagement, with a particular focus on understanding the mediating role of trust in this relationship. This study aims to determine how different working patterns (workload, work autonomy, work environment, job crafting) influence employee engagement levels and analyze the level at which trust mediates the relationship between workload, work autonomy, work environment, job crafting, and employee engagement.

This research answers the following question.

1. Can trust be considered as a mediator between workload and employee work engagement?
2. How does trust influence the connection between Autonomy and work engagement among employees?
3. What role does trust play in mediating the relationship between work environment and employee engagement?
4. In what ways does trust mediate the relationship between Job crafting and employee work engagement?

The significance of studying the Impact of working patterns on employee engagement with the mediating role of Trust has many aspects that hold implications for organizational performance, HR practices, trust-making efforts, and academic research, contributing valuable insights for building engaging and supportive work environments helpful to individual and organizational success also this study is beneficial for the organizations that are usually encouraging their employees at the workplace. This study explained how we can increase employee engagement, and the constructs that are used in this particular study involve (trust, work environment, job autonomy, workload, and job crafting).

Literature Review

Workload and Employee Engagement

Research shows that high workloads can negatively impact employee engagement by leading

to feelings of overwhelm, exhaustion, and disengagement. For example, Bakker et al. (2014) found that extreme workloads are related to higher levels of burnout and lower levels of work engagement among employees in a longitudinal study. Also, Li et al. (2020) demonstrated that workload overload negatively predicts employee engagement, mostly when individuals lack sufficient resources to cope with task demands.

Donna and Seohari (2024) find that when employees have a heavy workload and feel loyal to their organization, they tend to be more involved and perform much better at their jobs. Engaged employees directly increase their performance. Also, being engaged can be very helpful in decreasing the impact of heavy workloads and growing commitment to the organization on job performance.

The amount of work that causes stress and hard deadlines to individuals is considered workload. Anything that causes hindrances, fatigue, and stress while performing tasks is considered workload (Ahmed et al., 2017).

When job demands are high, employees automatically start reacting negatively. Job demands can be categorized as extensive workloads, which negatively impact employee engagement. (Bakker et al., 2007).

Overburden amount of work can affect employees psychologically, which will lead to a negative outcome, and employee engagement will also become low (Ahmed et al., 2019).

H1: Workload has a significant relationship with work engagement.

H5: Trust mediates the relationship between workload and employee work engagement.

Autonomy and Employee Engagement:

Any Job that provides enough freedom of speech and work and liberty to the employees is considered Job autonomy. In short, when in any Job, the employee has adequate space, freedom to plan, the suitable to select their things, and the right to make decisions is considered Job autonomy. For example, Deci et al. (2017) demonstrated that autonomy-supportive leadership increases employee engagement by nurturing a climate of Autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Similarly, Nielsen et al. (2020) found that independence autonomy is positively related to employee engagement, Job satisfaction, and well-being in a longitudinal study of healthcare workers.

Richman et al. (2008) Employees who achieve high Autonomy are indeed more satisfied. When you have control over everything and the respondent is responding positively, this is considered Job autonomy.

Tim et al. (2013) found that the connection between Autonomy and engagement is more vital for employees with an active personality who energetically seek control and Autonomy in their work. Job characteristics such as task significance and task identity may also improve the positive effects of Autonomy on engagement.

H2: Work Autonomy has a significant relationship with work engagement.

H6: Trust mediates the relationship between Autonomy and work engagement.

Work Environment and Employee Engagement

The work environment includes both tangible and intangible features of the workplace that affect employee perceptions, behaviors, and well-being. Factors like organizational culture, leadership style, communication patterns, teamwork, and physical workspace play a vital role in shaping the overall work environment. So much research indicates that a helpful work environment improves employee engagement by providing chances for growth, recognition, collaboration, and Autonomy. For example, Kahn (2020) defined the concept of “personal engagement,” highlighting the critical role of a supportive work environment in nurturing employees’ sense of meaning, linking, and fulfillment. Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) found that Job crafting activities, like looking for resources and reducing burdens, buffer the adverse

effects of a poor work environment on employee engagement. Additionally, leadership style, organizational standards, and team dynamics may impact the direction and strength of the relationship between the work environment and engagement.

The extent to which an employee positively introduces their organization is a form of social identification (Anaza & Rutherford, 2012). The relationship between the Work environment and employee engagement is positioned by Social identity theory (Anaza & Rutherford, 2012). The eagerness of a person to associate him or herself with the organization he is working with is considered a Work environment. It is a connection that is formed between the mind of an employee with that organization or firm (Anaza & Rutherford, 2012).

Employees who show oneness to the organization, extra-role behaviors, and cooperative behavior have a positive work environment and contribute positively to their organization, which increases employee engagement (Ötken & Erben, 2010).

H3: Work Environment has a significant relationship with work engagement.

H7: Trust mediates the relationship between work environment and employee work engagement.

Job Crafting and Employee Engagement

Studies identify that various antecedents of Job crafting include individual differences, Job characteristics, leadership styles, and organizational climate. Zhang and Parker (2019) found that an active personality definitely predicts Job-crafting performances. Moreover, Tims et al. (2013) established that transformational management inspires staff to be involved in Job crafting by providing independence and provision (Laguía et al., 2024). When people are very engaged and interested in their work, they tend to shape their Job tasks to fit their strengths. It also says that those who are more extroverted, agreeable, conscientious, and imaginative are more likely to do this. Similarly, if someone is deeply absorbed in their work, they are likely to tailor their Job tasks to their interests.

Job crafting has been related to many optimistic consequences for people and governments. Researchers have discovered its effects on employee performance, well-being, and mental health of workers/employees. For example, Iida et al. (2024) claimed that Job crafting within a team is suggested as a way to help and improve the mental health of nurses.

Furthermore, Ananda et al. (2024) find that engaged employees can affect how much their relationships with their Managers, their willingness to help out at work, and their ability to modify their work tasks influence their performance within their assigned roles.

H4: Job crafting has a significant relationship with work engagement.

H8: Trust mediates the relationship between Job Crafting and employee work engagement.

Trust as a Mediator and Employee Engagement

Alshaabani et al. (2021) find that good diversity management creates a trustworthy environment and delivers outstanding working conditions. Employees are more involved and feel less insecure about their jobs. This supports the social exchange theory, which suggests that when employees think they are appreciated and supported by their organization, they are more likely to be engaged and productive. So, the research recommends that managers help their employees by applying effective diversity management practices and nurturing trust within the organization.

Nuryanto and Pratiwi (2024) reveal that trust and engagement among employees in the organization lead to higher levels of voluntary and positive behaviors that support the organization.

Islam et al. (2024) highlight that ethical and proper leadership boosts employee engagement, with trust in leaders being a critical factor in this relationship. Also, employees with a robust and vibrant passion for their work are significantly influenced by ethical leadership.

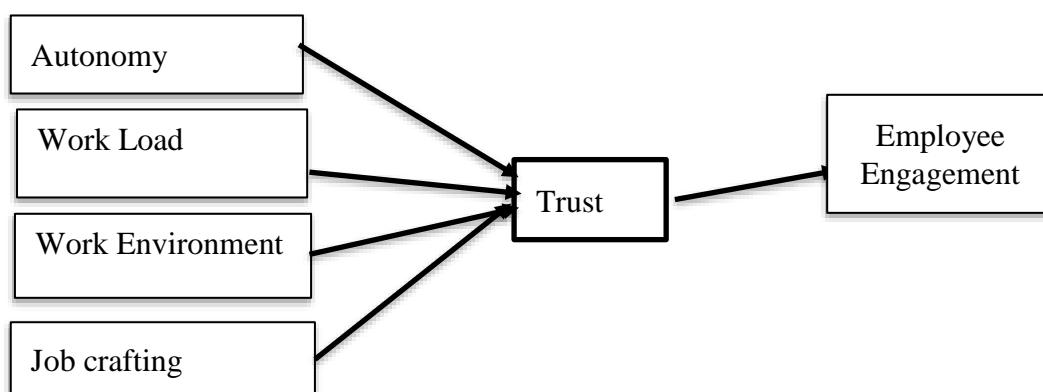
Methodology

For this study quantitative approach has been used to explore the relation between independent and dependent variables. The reason behind adopting this approach is together a large amount of easily. This research used a cross-sectional study because it is best to examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables, as it gives a whole image of the result at a particular time. There are a number of data collection methods: Impact of Trust, Work Environment, Job Crafting, Autonomy, and Workload on Employee Engagement, which includes interviews, observations, questionnaires, etc. In this research, data has been gathered through close-ended questionnaires. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), data collection is a framework in which a researcher decides how variables will be measured and analyzed. Non-probability sampling has been used. Despite multiple attempts, the author remained unsuccessful in fetching the exact number of elements in the sampling frame. The author could not even get an approximation of numbers, which is why the author was compelled to use non-probability sampling. We have collected 305 samples. Through this sample and target audience perceptions, we will be able to know the effects of our independent variables on dependent variables.

In this study, we focus on four independent variables: workload, work autonomy, work environment, and Job crafting. Trust acts as a mediator, and employee engagement is the dependent variable. We developed our research instruments by selecting relevant questions from different research papers. Specifically, workload instruments were sourced from Malik et al. (2016), while work autonomy instruments were derived from Morgeson and Humphrey (2006). To measure the work environment, we adapted instruments from Ramli (2019), and for Job crafting, we utilized the work of Slep & Vella-Brodrick (2013). Trust, serving as a mediator, was measured using instruments from Podsakoff et al. (1990), and for employee engagement, our dependent variable, we take instruments from Rasool et al. (2021). All the other details, like questions, along with their references, are mentioned in Appendix 1.

The statistical approach used in this study is to represent the data, investigate, and determine the relationship between all variables (Leech, 2005). The variables included dependent, mediating, and independent variables (Workload et al., and Employee engagement). For this research, we analyzed PLS-4 to determine the validity of the Likert scale items. The test was performed on 41 items.

Figure 1: Research Model & Conceptual Framework



Results

The main study is the result of workload, work autonomy, work environment, job crafting, trust on employee engagement. Data has been gathered through google forms. Reliability,

Composition of data and authenticity is being collected to do statistical evaluation. Through the smart PLS calculation out of the range values test has been performed. On main study researcher has performed Exploratory Factor Analysis, Composition of data and Multiple regression analysis.

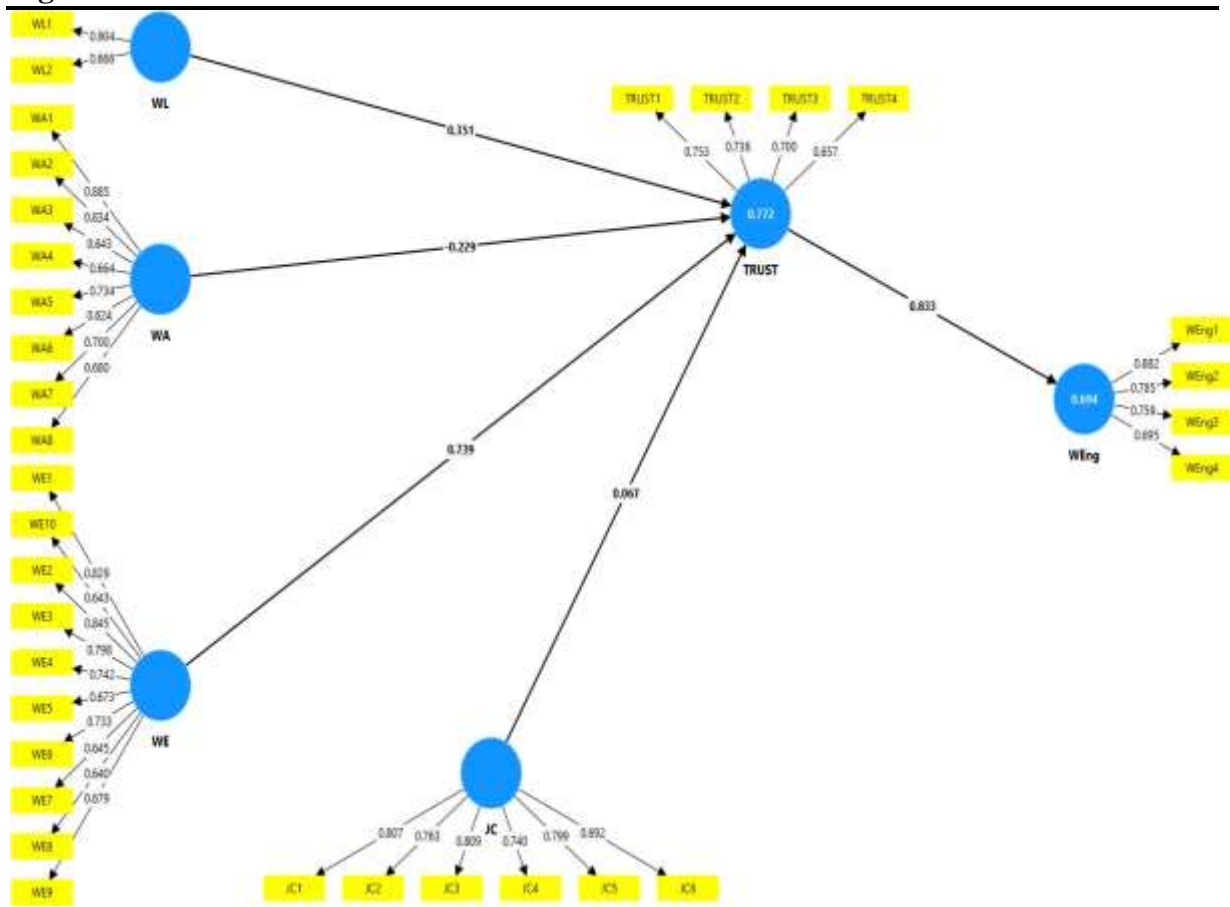
Composition of Data

Respondents for the study were employees of banking sector. No discrimination exists in gender. 25.6% were male and 74.4% were female. Age of respondent the criteria for the qualification was starting from undergraduate which was 16.3%, Graduate from 52.2%, Post-Graduate from 21.2% others 10.3%.

Table 1: Factor Loading Analysis

	JC	TRUST	WA	WE	WEng	WL
JC1	0.807					
JC2	0.763					
JC3	0.809					
JC4	0.74					
JC5	0.799					
JC6	0.692					
TRUST1		0.753				
TRUST2		0.736				
TRUST3		0.7				
TRUST4		0.657				
WA1			0.885			
WA2			0.834			
WA3			0.643			
WA4			0.664			
WA5			0.734			
WA6			0.624			
WA7			0.7			
WA8			0.68			
WE1				0.829		
WE10				0.643		
WE2				0.845		
WE3				0.798		
WE4				0.742		
WE5				0.673		
WE6				0.733		
WE7				0.645		
WE8				0.64		
WE9				0.679		
WEng1					0.882	
WEng2					0.785	
WEng3					0.759	
WEng4					0.695	
WL1						0.904
WL2						0.666

Figure 1: Measurement model



This factor loading result from table 1 received from Smart PLS 4.0 for the result according to the researcher Vinzi et al., (2010) the value of item should be greater than 0.7. This factor analysis shows how various items load onto six latent factors: Job Crafting, Trust (TRUST), Work Autonomy (WA), Work Engagement (WE), Work Engagement - another aspect (Work Engagement), and Workload (WL). The loadings for JC range from 0.692 to 0.809, representing a strong association between the items and the Job Commitment factor. Trust items load from 0.657 to 0.753, showing moderate to strong associations. Work Autonomy loadings, ranging from 0.624 to 0.885, represent varying strengths, with most items strongly related to the factor. Work Engagement items show moderate to strong loadings between 0.64 and 0.845. The loadings for another aspect of Work Engagement (WEng) range from 0.695 to 0.882, suggesting strong associations. Lastly, the Work-Life Balance items load at 0.666 and 0.904, indicating moderate to strong associations. Overall, higher loadings represent strong correlations between items and factors, while lower loadings suggest weaker correlations.

Table 2: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	JC	TRUST	WA	WE	WEng	WL
JC						
TRUST	0.759					
WA	0.751	0.592				
WE	0.879	0.817	0.808			
WEng	0.774	0.832	0.682	0.772		
WL	0.639	0.724	0.526	0.608	0.495	

We have tested the discriminant validity of our instruments. The results of HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) shows in table 2. According to Ramayah et al., (2017) the threshold of 0.9 is acceptable in HTMT. HTMT is a measure used in structural equation modeling to assess the discriminant validity of constructs. In the provided HTMT matrix, the constructs are JC, TRUST, WA, WE, WEng, and WL. The matrix values indicate the HTMT ratios between pairs of constructs: for instance, the HTMT between JC and TRUST is 0.759, and between WA and WE is 0.808. High HTMT values (generally above 0.90) suggest potential issues with discriminant validity, meaning the constructs may not be distinct from each other. In this matrix, values are below the 0.90 threshold, suggesting acceptable discriminant validity among the constructs.

Table 3: Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Average variance extracted (AVE)
JC	0.897	0.592
TRUST	0.805	0.508
WA	0.901	0.527
WE	0.918	0.528
WEng	0.864	0.613
WL	0.752	0.631

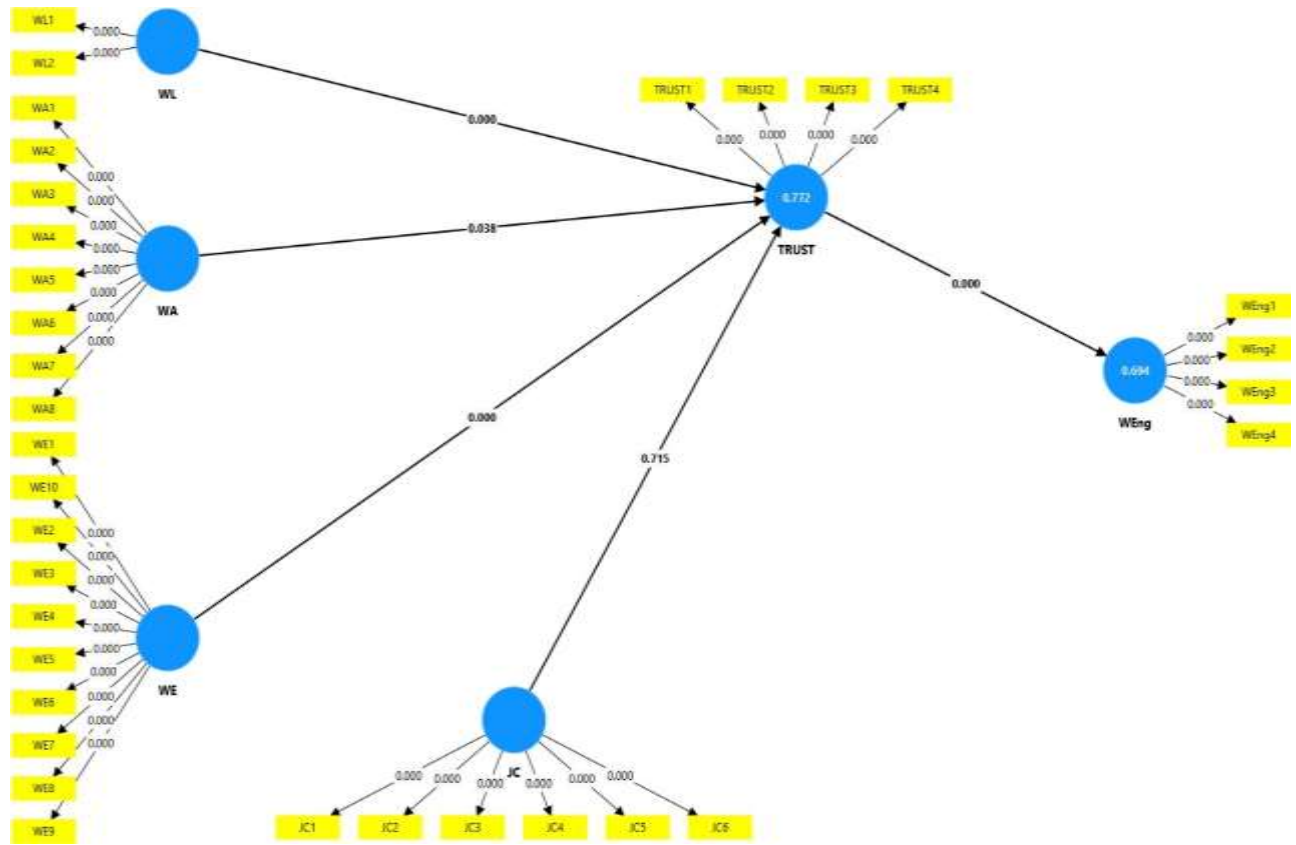
The construct reliability and validity table assess the internal consistency and convergent validity of six constructs: Job Crafting (JC), Trust (TRUST), Work Autonomy (WA), Work Engagement (WE), Work Engagement (WEng), and Workload (WL). Internal consistency, measured by Cronbach's alpha, shows strong reliability for all constructs, with values ranging from 0.752 (WL) to 0.918 (WE), all surpassing the acceptable threshold of 0.70. Convergent validity, assessed via Average Variance Extracted (AVE), shows that each construct describes more than half of the variance of its indicators, with AVE values from 0.508 (TRUST) to 0.631 (WL), all exceeding the minimum acceptable value of 0.50. These metrics confirm that the constructs are measured reliably and possess good convergent validity, ensuring they accurately reflect their respective theoretical concepts.

Table 4: Indirect Effect

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P values	Results
H1:WorkLoad -> Work Engagement	0.293	0.293	0.073	4.021	0	Accepted
H2:Work Autonomy -> Work Engagement	-0.191	-0.179	0.092	2.081	0.037	Accepted
H3:Work Eenvironment -> Work Engagement	0.616	0.6	0.137	4.511	0	Accepted
H4:Job Crafting -> Work Engagement	0.056	0.065	0.154	0.361	0.718	Rejected
H5:Work Load -> TRUST -> Work Engagement	0.351	0.353	0.092	3.833	0	Accepted
H6:Work Autonomy -> TRUST-> Work Engagement	-0.229	-0.215	0.11	2.078	0.038	Accepted

H7:Work Environment -> TRUST-> Work Engagement	0.739	0.72	0.162	4.559	0	Accepted
H8:Job Crafting -> TRUST-> Work Engagement	0.067	0.075	0.183	0.365	0.715	Rejected

Figure 2: Measurement model



In this table 4 the results of hypothesis testing, describing the original sample values (O), sample means (M), standard deviations (STDEV), T statistics, P values, and the conclusions for Eight hypotheses (H1 to H8). The first four tested hypotheses from (H1-H4) on the impact of work-related factors on work engagement. The H1 in table 4 shows that Work load significantly positively affected work engagement (T=4.021, p=0), that indicates that a well-structured workload can build trust within the workplace. This suggests that when employees are given clear and manageable tasks, it fosters a sense of reliability and trust between employees and the organization. Therefore, organizations should carefully design workloads to enhance trust and, consequently, improve overall workplace dynamics.

The results of H2 in table 4 explains that Work autonomy has also significant impact on work engagement because T statistic is significant (greater than 1.96) and the P value is less than 0.05, indicating a significant impact of work autonomy on work engagement. This finding is that autonomy is considered beneficial, work autonomy can positively impact work engagement. This suggests that employees may require a certain level of structure and guidance to remain effectively engaged in their work. Therefore, organizations should find a balance in providing autonomy, ensuring that employees have enough direction to stay focused and motivated.

A positive work environment greatly enhanced work engagement. The H3 statistics i.e. T=4.511, p=0 show that work environment has a positive impact on work engagement and

shows a strong positive impact of work environment on work engagement which means that a positive work environment significantly contributes to increased work engagement. This suggests that creating a supportive, conducive, and positive work environment is essential for fostering employee engagement. Therefore, organizations should prioritize efforts to improve and maintain a positive work environment, as it directly influences employee engagement and, consequently, organizational success. However, job crafting did not have a significant impact on work engagement. This suggests that while giving employees the ability to modify their tasks might have other benefits, it is not a key driver in building trust. Organizations should explore other strategies and factors beyond job crafting to effectively foster trust among employees.

The results of mediation analysis show that the TRUST significantly mediates the relationship between work engagement with Work load, Work autonomy and work environment, thus accepting H5, H6 and H7 with the T value of 3.833 and p value of 0 for work load, $T=2.078$, $p=0.038$ for work autonomy and $T=4.559$, $p=0$ for work environment. However, trust does not mediate the relationship between job crafting and work engagement, thus rejecting H8.

Table 5: Model Fit

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Model	0.694	0.693

The table 5 shows the R and R squared value to explain the model fit. The results show that the model is 69% explained, thus showing the robustness of the model.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables. The respondents of this research were employee of banks and financial institutes which shows their engagement by participating in this research. The sample of 305 was used for examining the impact workload, work autonomy, work environments, job crafting on employee engagement with trust as a mediator. The study was conducted through employees of different hierarchy.

Optimist attitude by an employee towards its organization is employee engagement. Any employee who has this kind of attitude is considered as most engaged employee in organization. Implementation of employee engagement can bring changes to the organization but managers have to be more vigilant in order to prosper the practice of employees being engaged.

Conclusion is based on how different working patterns effect on employee engagement. Results showed that workload, work autonomy, work environments, are significantly related to employee engagement and job crafting is insignificantly related to employee engagement. Main reason of insignificant impact of job crafting is that in Pakistani context there are less job and also the level of morality and ethics are also low so employees have to compromise and continue the jobs. There are many factors which can lead to disengagement but a manager should be able to increase the level of engagement always high.

Recommendations

The results show that workload, work autonomy, work environments with trust have a positive impact in boosting employee engagement. So, organizations should adopt these in increasing employee engagement.

The organizations have to trust their employees they must have to empower them by giving opportunity to communicate openly their ideas, they should empower them so that employees

can get the best out of their talents so that effective decisions can be made. In an organization employee require a subtle form of motivation and appreciation for increasing the productivity level and enthusiasm for work.

Employee wants to feel valued by their institutions because it will improve employee engagement through which constructive outcomes of a supportive and employee-friendly working environment can be achieved.

Freedom of work should be provided. It is perhaps the most important factor for nurturing engagement in an organization. In Pakistani culture micromanagement is common in organization but a manager should know that micromanagement is not at all conducive for nurturing engagement.

As workload plays a crucial part in employee engagement employees should be allowed working for flexible working hours in order to balance workload. proper reallocation of workload among employees should be a part of the culture in order to increase the level of engagement.

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