

## Enhancing Work Engagement through Leadership Behaviour: A Study of School Teachers in Hyderabad, India

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**Abstract**— The impact of Human Resource Management policies and practices on the organizational outcome has been an important subject for researchers. Studies across countries demonstrated the impact of various HR practices in general, work engagement and leadership practices in specific, on organizational effectiveness in any industry and education sector is no exception. Research shows leadership and employee engagement practices are among the most significant HR practices in schools that impact the teachers' and students' performances directly and indirectly. The current study is an attempt to understand if these two important HR practices are mutually correlated. The researchers studied eight leadership behaviours of school leaders and their correlation with work engagement of the teachers. The researchers have used a self-constructed questionnaire to study the leadership behaviour as perceived by teachers. The teacher engagement is measured through Engaged Teacher Scale. The study employed correlational analysis that found a significant positive correlation between each of the eight leadership behaviours and work engagement levels of teachers.

**Keywords:** Leadership behaviour, work engagement, teacher engagement, organizational effectiveness.



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### INTRODUCTION

Human resource management (HRM) and the impact of its policies and practices on the organizational outcome has been an important subject for researchers for quite some time (Rafiei and Davari, 2015). Furthermore, school practices pertaining to good HR practices in general, and teacher engagement in specific, has been found to be positively correlated to teacher retention (Klassen et al., 2012). Therefore, schools that look for ways to achieve better employee retention should consider work engagement or teacher engagement as the top priority (Parker et al., 2012). Work engagement of teachers is positively correlated to job satisfaction, performance and also student engagement (Sokolov, 2017).

Teachers are the key to maintaining the quality of education and achieving success in the education system of any society (Leur, 2012). The central experiences of children in schools are the teachers who influence classroom learning of students significantly (Sokolov, 2017). The success rate of students increases when they are educated and mentored by qualified and strong teachers (Wilson, 2018, Allen et al., 2011, Clotfelter et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2000). Therefore, it is crucial for the schools to retain their strong and talented

teachers, which is often challenging for schools across nations (Yasmeen, 2019; Gallup, 2014; Hoigaard et al., 2012). Hence, schools must adopt human resource practices that can enhance job satisfaction and reduce teacher turnover.

Engaged teachers contribute to positive workplace culture thereby impacting the student learning effectiveness. There are many factors that contribute positively to the work engagement of teachers, among which school leadership is a very significant factor. Studies have found empirical evidence of leader's capability of improving the employee engagement (Wilson, 2018; Chaudhary et al. 2011; Gallup, 2013; Mastrangelo, 2009; Perlman & Leppert, 2013; Wang & Hsieh, 2013). The behaviour of the school leaders is a significant factor that contributes to the teacher engagement (Wilson, 2018) and competent supervisors enhance job satisfaction of teachers (Jackson, 2018). An example to signify the impact of leadership on employee satisfaction and engagement is a 2009 based study carried out in the United States. The study found employees were dissatisfied with the appraisal process, the reason being lack of support from the leadership (Flaniken, 2009).

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Research studies across countries have demonstrated a correlation between leadership and work engagement (Wilson, 2018., Bamford et al., 2013; Christian et al., 2011; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Martin & Schmidt, 2010; Shuck & Herd, 2012) and various leadership styles have been linked to work engagement of employees. While a 2018 study carried out in Dallas Baptist University has found a correlation between leadership behaviour and work engagement of teachers (Wilson, 2018) more studies should be carried out across schools from different geographical areas offering various levels of education before generalizing such a correlation (Shuck & Herd, 2012; Sokolov, 2017). The current study is an endeavour in this direction of study.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### HR Practices in Schools

It is discussed in the previous section that any nation that wants to have a competitive advantage and be on par with the world should maintain and work on its academic standards and build confidence through quality management of educational institutions (Dauda and Singh, 2017). Building a team of qualified and committed teachers' impact the quality of instruction directly or indirectly (Kwan, 2009). Recruiting, developing and retaining such good quality teachers depends on HRM practices of the schools. Though secondary to the HR (Human Resource) leadership skills, the HR leaders of schools should also have knowledge in educational settings as well as HR practices (Hunt, 2019). Studies in the area of school HR practices found their impact on the teacher satisfaction and retention. For example, a study carried out in University of Toledo investigated if educational practices are correlated to teachers' job satisfaction, and found that senior teachers were not satisfied with their progress. The researcher recommended more steps to the career ladder to enhance the employees' satisfaction with respect to their career development (Case, 2005). Another study that was carried out on primary school teachers in Taiwan identified four aspects of HR practices; recruitment and appointment, support in teaching and career development, communication and retention, performance appraisal, of having an effect on organizational citizenship behavior of the teachers (Chang et al., 2016).

While the traditional HRM research was focused on the effect of different HR practices individually, researchers from a strategic perspective examined the impact of bundles of HR practices on employee performance and organizational outcome. Such bundles of HR practices were referred to as high-involvement, high-commitment, or more often as High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) (Jiang, Lepak, Hu and Baer, 2012). Federici et al (2019) investigated and found that job crafting mediated the positive relationship between career adaptability and work engagement, provided, the high performing work systems (HPWS) are implemented such that they provide opportunities for employee development (Federici, Boon and Den

Hartog, 2019). A US based research carried out in 2004 studied correlation between HRM practices and teacher performance. The study found there was no strategic plan of HR practices in schools, and such alignment was there in isolated spurts of a few HR practices only (Heneman III and Milanowski, 2004).

Recognizing the importance of HR practices in schools, International Labour Organization (ILO) published a specific book on ideal HR practices in schools with the title 'The Handbook of Good Human Resource Practices in the Teaching Profession' (2012). While all the school HR practices impact teacher and student performance directly or indirectly, work engagement and leadership practices are significant to be discussed in the context of the current research.

### Work Engagement in Schools

According to Schaufeli and Bakker, work Engagement is a positive, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). It is a general affective-cognitive state that is characterized by dedication, absorption and high levels of energy, and willingness and persistence to invest it in work even in challenging situations. Engaged employees can relate to work and also colleagues cognitively, psychologically and emotionally (Salanova, Agut, & Peiró, 2005). Researchers who studied work engagement found engaged employees have carried out their job roles better (Halbesleben et al, 2009; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Rich et al, 2010; Salanova et al., 2005). Pawar (2014) conducted an empirical study on engagement of higher education teachers. The researcher tested the effect of perceived leadership support, organizational support, rewards and recognition on employee engagement that were significantly moderated by the type of university.

Organizations should work on achieving high levels of employees' perception of organizational support, because such perception positively affects productivity either directly or indirectly through employee commitment towards organization and turnover intention (Lew, 2009). Researchers over time have studied variables related to work engagement and their positive correlation with productivity and efficiency of employees. They also showed interest in seeking various ways by which job performance could improve through employee engagement. However, substantial interest is yet to be shown by researchers in education sector with respect to organizational behavior and teacher engagement and find out if and how school performance can be improved by working on these factors (Jackson, 2018).

### Leadership in schools

While students deserve teachers who are fully engaged with their work, teachers deserve leaders who focus on enhancing teacher engagement (Wilson, 2018). The job of a school superintendent is a complex one as the position not only acts as the face of the school district

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but also involves managing an organization successfully (Bull, 2018). While instructional leaders are expected to run schools as organizations free of errors (Emmil, 2011), studies have found empirical evidence of leader's capability of improving the employee engagement (Wilson, 2018; Chaudhary et al. 2011; Gallup, 2013; Mastrangelo, 2009; Perlman & Leppert, 2013; Wang & Hsieh, 2013).

Governments of various countries are recognizing the importance of efficient and effective leadership in schools and making the policies accordingly. For example, in America, through 'The No Child Left Behind Act' of 2001 (NCLB), school is held responsible if any student fails to advance to the required level or at the rate. This accountability caused an increase in conflicting job demands and responsibilities on part of the principals. As a result, the applicants for principal jobs have also come down (Emmil, 2011).

Research established relationships between principals' leadership behaviour and teachers' effectiveness (Malhotra, Hussain and Bhatia, 2019). Studies have also found statistically significant correlation between leadership behavior of principals and teachers' work engagement (Wilson, 2018; Zacharakis, 2017). In India, Joolideh (2008) carried out a descriptive cum comparative study on leadership behaviour, teacher commitment and work values of high school teachers of Bangalore in India with those of Sanandaj in Iran. The researcher conducted survey on 400 high school teachers each from Bangalore and Sanandaj and found the leadership behaviour, work values and organizational commitment in both the countries were moderate and more or less at the same level.

Researchers have not only been interested in studying educational leadership as a significant factor in teacher and student performance but also increasingly gaining interest in strategic human resource management (SHRM) in the sector of education (Vekeman, Devos and Valcke, 2016). According to Wright and McMahan, strategic human resource management (SHRM) is a pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable the firm to achieve its goals. The definition implies human resources are the primary resources that should be leveraged strategically as a source of competitive advantage. It also focuses on the HR programmes, policies and practices as the means to gain human resources competitive advantage. SHRM is a consistent pattern and plan or the strategy to achieve vertical and horizontal fit with the firm's strategy and various HR activities. The purpose of SHRM is goal achievement (Wright, 1998). The correlation between human resource management (HRM) and organizational performance has been the major focus of SHRM researchers for over two decades (Paracha, Wan Ismail and Amin, 2014). There has been empirical evidence of the value SHRM adds to the organizational performance through enhanced productivity, profitability and employee retention (Knies, Boselie, Gould-Williams and Vandenabeele, 2018). Lopez-Diaz

(2012) studied SHRM practices of schools in Chile and provided evidence of correlation between HRM practices and outcomes of Chilean schools. Through the mediation of Quality of Working Life (QWL), HPWS affects employee work behavior positively (Shen, Benson and Huang, 2014).

As Wilson (2018) argued, it is the responsibility of school leaders to recruit motivated teachers and keep them engaged through their everyday work. It is important that school heads hone their leadership skills to create work environments that make teachers fully engaged with their work. Wilson conducted research on teachers' perceptions of their leaders' behaviors in terms of communicating a motivating vision; trust-building, involving teachers in decision-making process, supporting them in professional growth, ensuring teachers get the required resources and motivating teachers through rewards and recognition. She found all the leadership behaviors are significantly and positively correlated to teachers' work engagement (Wilson, 2018).

Research literature in the area of human resource (HR) practices in schools including engagement and leadership practices are recognized as having impact on teacher engagement, motivation and productivity, which in turn impact students' and schools' performances. Though HR practices in education sector are equally important as those of organizations, schools do not generally have well-defined HR policies and practices. While studies across countries have been directed towards the practices pertaining to teacher recruitment, training & development, job satisfaction and instructional leadership, a few studies are also carried out on leadership practices. Given the fact that the relationship between leadership practices and student achievement/ engagement can be both direct or mediated by the role of teachers in the classroom or by school contextual conditions, the search for the most suitable model to measure this association has yet to be concluded (Grissom et al., 2015; Hallinger and Heck, 2011; Hendriks and Scheerens, 2013; Witziers et al., 2003). In India, most of the research in the area of school HR practices is done on recruitment and selection practices and teacher job satisfaction. However, there is scope to explore crucial areas such as leadership behaviour that would impact work engagement and in turn teacher and student effectiveness. The current study is an attempt to address this research gap.

### Research Questions

Further to what has been discussed in the previous section, the researcher wanted to find answers to the following researcher questions.

Research Question 1 (RQ1): Does the behaviour of school leaders have any impact on the employee engagement of teachers?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): If there is an impact of leadership behaviours on teacher engagement, is the correlation positive or negative?

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Research Question 3 (RQ3): If and which leadership behaviours have positive correlation with teacher engagement in schools?

The current research is directed towards finding answers to the above research questions by studying correlation between leadership behaviour and work engagement of school teachers.

To carry out the study, the researcher has chosen private unaided schools running the city of Hyderabad in India. The study attempted to explore how teachers perceived their leaders' behaviour and if and how such perception impacts their work engagement. The study explored eight leadership behaviours—gaining trust; visionary leadership; participative management; giving autonomy; support in professional development; providing resources to the teachers; appreciative feedback; and motivating teachers through rewards and recognition.

### Objectives of the Study

The current study is intended to achieve the following research objectives.

- To understand the teachers' perceptions of leadership behaviours of the school leaders in private unaided schools in Hyderabad, Telangana state in India.
- To analyze if there is any correlation between the leadership behaviours and work engagement of the teachers working in private unaided schools in Hyderabad, Telangana state in India.
- To identify if and which leadership behaviours have positive correlation with the teacher engagement.

### Hypotheses

In order to achieve the above-mentioned research objectives, eight null hypotheses were formed, each pertaining to one leadership behaviour, that were tested through the study.

#### Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant correlation between the teachers' trust in their leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders having visionary leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 3:

There is no significant correlation between the teachers' perception of participative management of their leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 4:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders giving them autonomy at work and the level of teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 5:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders giving support in professional development and the level of teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 6:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders encouraging appreciative feedback and the level of teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 7:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders' providing resources to them and the level of teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 8:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders' motivating employees through rewards and recognition and the level of teachers' work engagement.

### METHODOLOGY

The current study employed correlational approach to determine if and how the leadership behaviour of school leaders impact work engagement of the teachers. A correlational study determines the extent of correlation between two or more variables (Kothari, 2004).

The study used a quantitative approach and the data was collected from schoolteachers as the respondents. The data collection was done through a survey of teachers' perceptions of their leaders' behaviours and their own work engagement levels. A questionnaire was constructed for this purpose. The survey instrument has three sections. First section contains questions and statements pertaining to the respondent's profile. The second section has 23 questions pertaining to the leadership behaviour perception of the teachers. The third section used Engaged Teacher Scale (ETS) (Klassen et al, 2013) to measure teacher engagement.

### Population

The population of the study included all the teachers working in 2,522 (DCEB, 2020) recognized, un-aided private schools in Hyderabad district of Telangana state in India.

### Sample

Sample units are the teachers working in the selected schools which are recognized and un-aided. A total of 450 teachers from 20 schools were surveyed for the purpose of the study. After filtering out the incomplete response sheets, 429 response sheets were remaining. Out of them 400 responses were considered for the study analysis.

### Sampling Technique

The study adopted purposive stratified random sampling technique. The respondents or teachers represented primary, upper primary and secondary levels and the



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schools' represented affiliations either central or state board of education in India

scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

### Tools for Collecting Data

The research design is a quantitative approach and hence primary data was collected through a survey questionnaire. A likert type scale survey questionnaire was developed to measure both leadership behaviour perception and teacher engagement levels. The questionnaire is divided into three sections. First section is about the respondent's profile. There are 7 items in this section. This section is intended to understand the demographics of the respondents. Second section has 23 questions on leadership perception. Questions in this section are constructed based on a similar study carried out in US by Wilson (2018). The 23 items of this section are framed in a likert scale type questionnaire in such a way that the respondents can rate their leadership behaviour on a

The third section was intended to measure the work engagement levels of the teachers. The researcher has used Engaged Teacher Scale (ETS) developed by Klassen et al (2013) for this section of the questionnaire. The scale measured four components of work engagement of teachers; cognitive component; physical component; social connect with students; and social connect with colleagues. There are 4 questions each that fall under each component of teacher engagement. The researcher has slightly modified the statements of the ETS so as to make them more descriptive as presented in Table 1. The statements used in the instrument of the current study are mapped with the statements of the ETS.

**Table 1: Mapping of Survey Questionnaire with Items of ETS**

Item No. in Section 3 of Survey Questionnaire (Work Engagement)	Question in Survey questionnaire	Question in Engaged Teacher Scale (Item number, Engagement factor and Coefficient values as per ETS included)
1	I enjoy the company of my co-faculty at school	At school, I connect well with my colleagues SEC .66
2	I am happy and absorbed while teaching.	I am excited about teaching EE .78
3	I connect well to my students in class.	In class, I show warmth to my students SES .71
4	I put my best efforts to be a good teacher.	I try my hardest to perform well while teaching CE .72
5	Teaching makes me happy.	I feel happy while teaching EE .75
6	I am aware of what my students feel in class.	In class, I am aware of my students 'feelings SES .69
7	I put my best efforts in helping my colleagues at school.	At school, I am committed to helping my colleagues SEC .68
8	I get completely absorbed into my work while teaching.	While teaching, I really throw myself into my work CE .80
9	I share cordial relationships with my colleagues at school. -	At school, I value the relationships I build with my colleagues SEC .85
10	I love my profession as a teacher.	I love teaching EE .85
11	I take each and every teaching session seriously and pay attention to the minute details while preparing for it.	While teaching I pay a lot of attention to my work CE .75
12	When my colleagues share their problems, I completely empathize with them.	At school, I care about the problems of my colleagues SEC .66
13	I enjoy teaching thoroughly.	I find teaching fun EE .80
14	I pay attention to the problems of my students in class.	In class, I care about the problems of my students SES .74
15	I give my hundred per cent to teaching.	While teaching, I work with intensity CE .74
16	While teaching, I know whether my students are enjoying the class.	In class, I am empathetic towards my students SES .81

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### Pilot Study and Scale Reliability Test

A scale reliability test was carried out on the data collected through pilot study carried out on 30 respondents so as to find out if the questionnaire is consistent. The questionnaire used in the survey has three sections. The first section pertains to the respondents' demographics. The second section of the questionnaire has 23 statements on leadership behaviour perception on a likert type scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The third section of the questionnaire is engaged teacher scale (Klassen et al, 2013). The scale is used to measure the work engagement levels of the teachers on a scale of 0 to 6. There are 16 questions in this section. Each item is a statement against which there are 7 options that indicate the respondent's level of agreement with the statement. The respondents were asked to choose one of the options to indicate their agreeableness to the statement as 0 = Never; 1 = rarely; 2 = Occasionally; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = Often; 5 = Frequently; 6 = Always.

The data collected through the pilot study was put to scale reliability test by employing Cronbach's Alpha test in SPSS 20. A Cronbach's Alpha value of .925 was obtained that validates the consistency of the questionnaire.

**Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.925	.929	39

### Administration of Survey for Primary Data Collection:

The researcher has administered a questionnaire survey on 400 respondents to understand the teachers' perceptions of their leaders' behaviours and also to measure their work engagement levels. Primary data collection was done through a blended approach of online and offline data collection. Online data collection was done by sharing the questionnaire with the respondents through Google forms. Offline data collection was done by physical administering of the survey questionnaire. Of the 400 responses, 199 respondents filled up the questionnaire and submitted online. 201 respondents have manually filled up the survey questionnaire.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

In order to find answers to these research questions, the study has tested eight hypotheses, each pertaining to a leadership behaviour as gaining trust, visionary leadership, participative management, giving autonomy, support in professional development, providing resources, appreciative feedback, employee motivation through rewards and recognition. The researcher has first run the data through SPSS to get the descriptive statistics.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of all the 8 Leadership Behaviours**

Descriptive Statistics								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Gaining Trust	400	4.531667	.5689423	.324	-1.897	.122	6.983	.243
Visionary Leadership	400	4.644	.5472	.299	-2.330	.122	9.400	.243
Participative Management	400	4.556667	.5585816	.312	-2.080	.122	8.225	.243
Giving Autonomy	400	4.341667	.6603186	.436	-1.534	.122	3.941	.243
Support in professional development	400	4.545000	.5670597	.322	-2.055	.122	7.598	.243
Appreciative Feedback	400	4.289167	.6952874	.483	-1.215	.122	2.727	.243
Providing resources	400	4.560833	.5556418	.309	-2.062	.122	7.896	.243
Employee Motivation	400	4.428750	.6291610	.396	-1.634	.122	4.352	.243

Total Engagement	400	5.838906	.2575534	.066	-2.789	.122	10.395	.243
Valid (listwise)	N 400							

Since the descriptive statistics found skewness in the data. Therefore, Spearman's rank correlation analysis was more suitable than Pearson's correlation. The data was run through IBM SPSS and Spearman's rank correlational analysis was carried out to determine the relationship between each of the eight leadership behaviours and work engagement of the teachers. The analytical findings revealed significant correlation existed between each of the eight leadership behaviours and the teacher engagement. The detailed analysis of the correlational findings is presented hereunder.

## HYPOTHESES-TESTING

The study was intended to find answers to the research questions by testing eight hypotheses. This section presents the findings of correlation analysis carried out to test each of these eight hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant correlation between the teachers' trust in their leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement

H10:  $\rho = 0$

H1:  $\rho \neq 0$

The null hypothesis (H10) stated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' trust in their leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement. The alternate hypothesis (H1) stated there was a significant correlation between the teachers' trust in their leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement.

The distributions of the data of both the variables, gaining trust and teacher engagement (TE), were non-normative. Therefore, the data was run through a Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis test. Based on the results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test, the results of which are reported in the Table 4, it was found that a significant positive correlation existed between teachers' trust in their leadership and their level of work engagementr(400) = .393,  $p < .01$ . Since the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.393, which is  $> .3$ , it was concluded that there was significant correlation between the two variables, gaining trust and total engagement of teachers.

**Table 4: Spearman's Correlation – Gaining Trust**

		Gaining Trust	Total Engagement
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.393**
	Gaining Trust Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	400	400
	Correlation Coefficient	.393**	1.000
	Total Engagement Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## Spearman's Correlations-Gaining Trust

Since the calculated p value is .000 which is less than the given value of 0.01, the null hypothesis H10:  $\rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis H1:  $\rho \neq 0$  is accepted. Since the Spearman's correlation coefficient is .393 which is above .3 (Yockey, 2011), it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between leaders' gaining trust and the teachers' work engagement, null hypothesis H10:  $\rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis H1:  $\rho \neq 0$  is accepted.

## Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders having visionary leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement.

H20:  $\rho = 0$

H2:  $\rho \neq 0$

The null hypothesis (H20) stated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders having visionary leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement. The alternate hypothesis (H2) stated there was a significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders having visionary leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement.

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The data was run through a Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis test. Based on the results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test, the results of which are reported in the Table 5, it was found that a significant positive correlation existed between teachers' trust in their leadership and their level of work engagement  $r(400) = .344, p < .01$ . Since the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.344, which is  $>.3$ , it was concluded that there was significant correlation between the two variables, visionary leadership and total engagement of teachers.

**Table 5: Spearman's Correlation-Visionary Leadership**

		Visionary Leadership	Total Engagement
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.344**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	400	400
	Correlation Coefficient	.344**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Since the calculated p value is .000 which is less than the given value of 0.01, the null hypothesis  $H_{20}: \rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis  $H_2: \rho \neq 0$  is accepted. Since the Spearman's correlation coefficient is .344 which is above .3 (Yockey, 2011), it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between leaders' visionary leadership and teachers' work engagement.

### Hypothesis 3:

There is no correlation between the teachers' perception of participative management of their leadership and the level of teachers' work engagement.

$H_{30}: \rho = 0$

$H_3: \rho \neq 0$

The null hypothesis ( $H_{20}$ ) stated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders' participative management and the level of teachers' work engagement. The alternate hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) stated there was a significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders' participative management and the level of teachers' work engagement.

The data put the data through a Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis test. The results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis are reported in Table 6. Based on the results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test, it was found that a significant positive correlation existed between teachers' perception of their leaders' participative management and the total level of teachers' work engagement  $r(400) = .396, p < .01$ . Since the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.396, which is  $>.3$ , it was concluded that there was significant correlation between the two variables, participative management and total engagement of teachers.

**Table 6: Spearman's Correlation-Participative Management**

		Participative Management	Total Engagement
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.396**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	400	400
	Correlation Coefficient	.396**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Since the calculated p value is .000 which is less than the given value of 0.01, the null hypothesis  $H_{30}: \rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis  $H_3: \rho \neq 0$  is accepted. Since the Spearman's correlation coefficient is .396 which is above .3 (Yockey, 2011), it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between leaders' participative management and teachers' work engagement.

### Hypothesis 4:



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There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders giving them autonomy at work and the level of teachers' work engagement.

H40:  $\rho = 0$

H4:  $\rho \neq 0$

The null hypothesis (H40) stated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders giving them autonomy and the level of teachers' work engagement. The alternate hypothesis (H4) stated there was a significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders giving them autonomy and the level of teachers' work engagement.

A Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis test was done in SPSS to determine if there is a significant correlation between leaders giving autonomy and teacher engagement. Based on the results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test, the results of which are reported in Table 7, it was found that a significant positive correlation existed between teachers' perceptions of their leader's giving autonomy and their level of their own work engagement ( $r(400) = .471, p < .01$ ). Since the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.471, which is  $>.3$ , it was concluded that there was significant correlation between the two variables, giving autonomy and total engagement of teachers.

**Table 7: Spearman's Correlation-Giving Autonomy**

		Giving Autonomy	Total Engagement
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.471**
	Giving Autonomy		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	400	400
	Correlation Coefficient	.471**	1.000
	Total Engagement		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Since the calculated p value is .000 which is less than the given value of 0.01, the null hypothesis H40:  $\rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis H4:  $\rho \neq 0$  is accepted. Since the Spearman's correlation coefficient is .471 which is above .3 (Yockey, 2011), it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between leaders giving autonomy and teachers' work engagement

#### Hypothesis 5:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders giving support in professional development and the level of teachers' work engagement.

H50:  $\rho = 0$

H5:  $\rho \neq 0$

The null hypothesis (H50) stated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders giving support in professional development and the level of teachers' work engagement. The alternate hypothesis (H5) stated there was a significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders giving support in professional development and the level of teachers' work engagement.

The data was run through a Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis test. Based on the results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test, the results of which are reported in Table 8, it was found that a significant positive correlation existed between teachers' perceptions of their leaders giving support in professional development and their total engagement ( $r(400) = .391, p < .01$ ). Since the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.391, which is  $>.3$ , it was concluded that there was significant correlation between the two variables, support in professional development and total engagement of teachers.

**Table 8: Spearman's Correlations-Support in Professional Development**

		Support in professional development	Total Engagement
Spearman's rho	Support in professional development		
	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.391**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	400	400
	Total Engagement		
	Correlation Coefficient	.391**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Since the calculated p value is .000 which is less than the given value of 0.01, the null hypothesis H50:  $\rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis H5:  $\rho \neq 0$  is accepted. Since the Spearman's correlation coefficient is .391 which is above .3 (Yockey, 2011), it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between leaders' support in professional development and the teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 6:

There is no significant correlation between teachers' perception of their leaders encouraging appreciative feedback and the level of teachers' work engagement.

H60:  $\rho = 0$

H6:  $\rho \neq 0$

The null hypothesis (H60) stated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders encouraging appreciative feedback and the level of teachers' work engagement. The alternate hypothesis (H6) stated there was a significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders encouraging appreciative feedback and the level of teachers' work engagement.

The data was put through Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis test. The results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis are reported in Table 9. Based on the results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test, it was found that a significant positive correlation existed between teachers' perception of their leaders encouraging appreciative feedback and the total level of teachers' work engagement  $r(400) = .427, p < .01$ . Since the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.427, which is  $> .3$ , it was concluded that there was significant correlation between the two variables, appreciative feedback and total engagement of teachers.

**Table 9: Spearman's Correlations-Appreciative Feedback**

		Appreciative Feedback	Total Engagement
Spearman's rho	Appreciative Feedback		
	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.427**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	400	400
	Total Engagement		
	Correlation Coefficient	.427**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Since the calculated p value is .000 which is less than the given value of 0.01, the null hypothesis H60:  $\rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis H6:  $\rho \neq 0$  is accepted. Since the Spearman's correlation coefficient is .427 which is above 0.3 (Yockey, 2011), it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between leaders encouraging appreciative feedback and teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 7:

There is no relationship between teachers' perception of their leaders' providing resources to them and the level of teachers' work engagement.

H70:  $\rho = 0$

H7:  $\rho \neq 0$

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The null hypothesis (H70) stated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' perceptions of their leaders' providing resources and the level of teachers' work engagement. The alternate hypothesis (H7) stated there was a significant correlation between the teachers' perceptions of their leaders' providing resources and the level of teachers' work engagement.

The data was run through a Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis test. Based on the results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test, the results of which are reported in Table 10, it was found that a significant positive correlation existed between providing resources and the total work engagement( $r(400) = 0.422$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Since the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.422, which is  $> 0.3$ , it was concluded that there was significant correlation between the two variables, providing resources and total engagement of teachers.

**Table 10: Spearman's Correlations-Providing Resources**

		Providing resources	Total Engagement
Spearman's rho	Providing resources		
	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.422**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	400	400
	Total Engagement		
	Correlation Coefficient	.422**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Since the calculated p value is .000 which is less than the given value of 0.01, the null hypothesis H70:  $\rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis H7:  $\rho \neq 0$  is accepted. Since the Spearman's correlation coefficient is .422 which is above .3 (Yockey, 2011), it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between leaders providing resources and the teachers' work engagement.

#### Hypothesis 8:

There is no significant relationship between teachers' perception of their leaders' motivating employees through rewards and recognition and the level of teachers' work engagement.

H80:  $\rho = 0$

H8:  $\rho \neq 0$

The null hypothesis (H80) stated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders' motivating through rewards and recognition and the level of teachers' work engagement. The alternate hypothesis (H8) stated there was a significant correlation between the teachers' perception of their leaders' motivating through rewards and recognition and the level of teachers' work engagement.

The data was run through Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis test. Based on the results of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test, the results of which are reported in Table 11, it was found that a significant positive correlation existed between employee motivation and total engagement( $r(400) = .367$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Since the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.367, which is  $> .3$ , it was concluded that there was significant correlation between the two variables, employee motivation and total engagement of teachers.

**Table 11: Spearman's Correlations-Employee Motivation**

		Employee Motivation	Total Engagement
Spearman's rho	Employee Motivation		
	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.367**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	400	400
	Total Engagement		
	Correlation Coefficient	.367**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Since the calculated p value is .000 which is less than the given value of 0.01, the null hypothesis H80:  $\rho = 0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis H8:  $\rho \neq 0$  is accepted. Since the Spearman's correlation coefficient is 0.367 which is above 0.3

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(Yockey, 2011), it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between leaders motivating employees through rewards and recognition and the teachers' work engagement.

## FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current study was intended to study if there is any correlation between the leadership behaviours and the work engagement of the teachers. The researcher studied 8 leadership behaviours as: gaining trust, visionary leadership, participative management, giving autonomy, support in professional development, encouraging appreciative feedback, providing resources and motivating employees through rewards and recognition. The researcher has tested 8 null hypotheses, each pertaining to one of the 8 leadership behaviours. Each of the null hypotheses stated that there is no correlation between the leadership behaviour and the work engagement of the teachers. The researcher has collected data through survey questionnaire to understand the teachers' perceptions of their leaders' behaviours and also to measure the respondents' work engagement levels. After filtering the data, 400 responses were complete in all aspects. The 400 data points were run through SPSS to obtain Spearman's correlational analysis. The correlation in Spearman's rank correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. While the Spearman's correlation coefficient obtained in each of the cases is above 0.3, the p value obtained was less than 0.01. Therefore, all the 8 null hypotheses are rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between all the 8 leadership behaviours and the level of teachers' work engagement. Therefore, the objectives of the study have been achieved by obtaining answers to the initial research questions as discussed hereunder.

The work engagement of the teachers is measured using ETS on a scale of 0 to 6 where 0 indicates least engaged and 6 indicates most engaged. The summated scale score of the total engagement of the teachers that includes cognitive, emotional, social connect with colleagues and social connect with students is 5.8. This indicates the teachers working in private unaided schools of Hyderabad in India are highly engaged with their work. Further, answers to the initial research questions were found as following.

Research Question 1 (RQ1): Does the behaviour of school leaders have any impact on the employee engagement of teachers working in private unaided schools?

The current research employed correlation analysis in SPSS to determine if leadership behaviour of the school leaders has any correlation with employee engagement of the teachers. Individual correlation analysis was done between teacher engagement and each of the 8 components of leadership behaviour – gaining trust; visionary leadership; participative management; giving autonomy; providing resources; support in professional development; encouraging appreciative feedback; motivating through rewards and recognition. The data was put through Spearman's rank correlation coefficient in SPSS. All the eight leadership behaviors have shown a correlation coefficient of greater than 0.3. A correlation coefficient above 0.3 is significant correlation (Yockey, 2011). Therefore, it is concluded that overall leadership behaviour has a significant positive correlation with work engagement levels of the teachers and thus the answer to the first research question RQ1 is obtained.

**Table 12: Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient – 8 Leadership Behaviours with TE**

Leadership Behaviour	Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient with TE
Gaining Trust	0.393
Visionary leadership	0.344
Participative management	0.396
Giving autonomy	0.471
Support in professional development	0.391
Appreciative feedback	0.427
Providing resources	0.422
Employee motivation	0.367

### **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

The value of p obtained in all the above cases was .000, which is less than 0.01 and hence the correlation is significant. The Spearman's rank correlation analysis has given highest correlation coefficient of .471 for the variables 'Giving autonomy' and 'Total engagement of teachers. The least coefficient was found between employee motivation and teacher engagement with a coefficient of 0.367. Coefficients of all the other variables lie in between.

The above report of correlation analysis clearly shows the behaviour of school leaders has a significant impact

on employee engagement. Therefore, the RQ1 is satisfactorily answered.

Research Question 2 (RQ2): If there is an impact of leadership behaviours on teacher engagement, is the correlation positive or negative?

The Spearman's correlation analysis has given the coefficients of greater than 0.3 for all the leadership behaviours with respect to their correlation with teacher engagement. A value of above .3 is considered significant correlation (Wilson, 2018, Yockey, 2011). Therefore, it can be determined that all the eight

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leadership behaviours studied in this research are positively correlated to teacher engagement and therefore, the answer to the second research question RQ2 is satisfactorily obtained.

Research Question 3 (RQ3): Which leadership behaviours have positive correlation with teacher engagement in schools?

The Spearman's correlation analysis of the data has shown coefficients of above .3, which is significant correlation (Wilson, 2018, Yockey, 2011). The p value obtained in all the above cases is .000 which is less than 0.01 that shows the correlation is significant. Therefore, all the eight leadership behaviours are found to have positive correlation with the teacher engagement. Thus, the answer to the third research question RQ3 has also been obtained satisfactorily from the findings of the study.

### Suggestions

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that the schools leaders work on the 8 leadership behaviours so as to create optimum engagement in the schoolteachers. It is also recommended that the HR departments of the schools should consider these behaviours while recruiting and selecting school heads. It is also recommended that the HR departments of private schools should consider these 8 leadership behaviours and include them in their leadership development training programmes.

School leaders are also advised to measure their teachers' work engagement periodically. If the engagement levels are found unsatisfactory, it is advisable to consider the leadership behaviours of the heads of the departments all levels. Leadership behaviour training is advisable to be given to such heads of the departments and senior teachers at all levels so as to prepare them for succession planning.

### Scope for Further Research

There is a lot of scope for further research in this area of study. The current research has been carried out on private unaided schools of Hyderabad. The leadership behaviour perception might vary based on the governance and management of the schools. Therefore, the study should be repeated on private aided schools, family run schools and minority schools separately. Similar studies should also be carried out on government schools also. Studies found teacher engagement to be significant for the teacher and student performance. The work engagement might be impacted by many factors. The current research studied leadership behaviours as one of the impacting factors of teacher engagement. However, there could be many other factors that impact work engagement of the teachers. Research should be done on identifying and studying other factors of the work engagement too. It would also be interesting to identify leadership behaviours other than studied in this research and study their impact on work engagement.

### Limitations of the Study

The research has been carried out extensively to find out if and which leadership behaviours are correlated and have an impact of the work engagement of the teachers. However, the research has also identified the limitations of the study which are listed hereunder.

- The study is limited to private unaided schools only. This study did not cover private aided schools, family-run schools and government schools
- The geographic area of study is limited to the private unaided schools of Hyderabad and Secunderabad of Telangana in India.
- Teachers having less than six months experience was not considered for this study.
- Data was collected only from the full-time teachers excluding part-time and contract teachers.
- The study was based on teachers' perceptions of the school heads' leadership behaviour and hence there is scope of perceptual bias.
- Since the scope of the study included leadership behaviours, it was challenging to get the cooperation from the school managements.
- Another major challenge was that most of the schools down-sized their teaching staff strength due to Covid-19 pandemic. Most of the small schools did not have physical presence of the teachers. And the administrators refused to share the online link with their teachers. Schools also discouraged outsiders meeting their heads due to Covid protocol.

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