

# **An Analysis of Professional Engagement Behavior of Teachers in Higher Education Institutions Based on Organizational Behavior Theory - Text Analysis**

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## **Abstract**

The study delves into the professional engagement behaviors of teachers in higher education institutions, analyzing these behaviors through the lens of organizational behavior theory. It posits that understanding and enhancing teacher engagement is crucial for the development of higher education. The research adopts a multidimensional approach, examining factors like job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior, and their impact on teachers' professional engagement. Furthermore, it explores the influence of organizational culture, leadership style, and reward systems on these behaviors. The findings suggest a strong correlation between supportive organizational environments and higher levels of teacher engagement. This study contributes to the field by providing actionable insights for educational administrators to foster a more engaging and productive academic environment. It emphasizes the importance of nurturing a positive organizational culture, implementing effective leadership strategies, and designing motivational reward systems to enhance teacher engagement in higher education settings. The implications of this research are significant for policy formulation and the strategic development of higher education institutions.

**Keywords:** College Teachers; Professional Behavior; Influence; Strategy

## Introduction

Higher education is an important part of national culture and knowledge education. In the new era, higher education is developing in a diversified direction, evolving from a single structure to a variety of structures, which is one of the prospects of higher education reform in the world today (Altbach et al., 2019). The high-quality economic development in the new era puts forward new requirements for the reform of higher education. The demand for talent in various countries is increasing day by day, including senior technical talents, managerial talents, and a large number of intermediate technical talents (Carlisle et al., 2023). The reasonable construction of the talent structure requires that today's higher education should establish a suitable talent cultivation strategy, continue to deepen educational reform and realize the diversification of the educational structure types (Xue & Li, 2022). The concrete performance is to expand the teaching ability of teachers in colleges and universities, to develop short-term universities and junior colleges with different schooling systems, to promote the coexistence of all kinds of colleges and universities, different training objectives, and flexible teaching methods, but also an urgent need to expand the latest education and teaching concept support. Therefore, the work mentality and work effectiveness of college teachers have an important impact on the individual development of college students and the improvement of higher education quality. In the past psychological research on college teachers, there are a lot of negative studies, such as work difficulties, burnout and mental health, pressure, and so on, but little attention to positive psychology, positive psychology focuses on people's excellent quality and involved in the subjective level of valuable subjective experience, such as happiness, satisfaction and satisfaction, hope and optimism, fullness and happiness. However, it does not pay attention to individual shortcomings and negative effects. When the negative psychological factors of teachers are eliminated, they will not necessarily generate positive work motivation. Therefore, the research on the positive psychology of employees is gradually replacing the negative psychological research on defects and moralities.

The shift from traditional, deficit-oriented approaches to a more affirmative, strength-based perspective is crucial for enhancing teacher engagement and effectiveness (Sjö et al., 2021). This research aims to bridge a critical gap in the existing literature by analyzing the influence of organizational factors - culture, leadership styles, and reward systems - on teachers' professional engagement in higher education settings. Integrating principles from organizational behavior theory with positive psychology, the study offers a unique approach to understanding and improving teacher engagement. Positive psychology emphasizes aspects like resilience, optimism, and personal growth, which are crucial for educators' and students' success (Alam, 2022). This approach can lead to improved job satisfaction, increased engagement, and better student outcomes. In an educational setting, where the well-being of educators directly impacts the quality of teaching and learning, this positive focus is especially important for creating a more effective and supportive academic community.

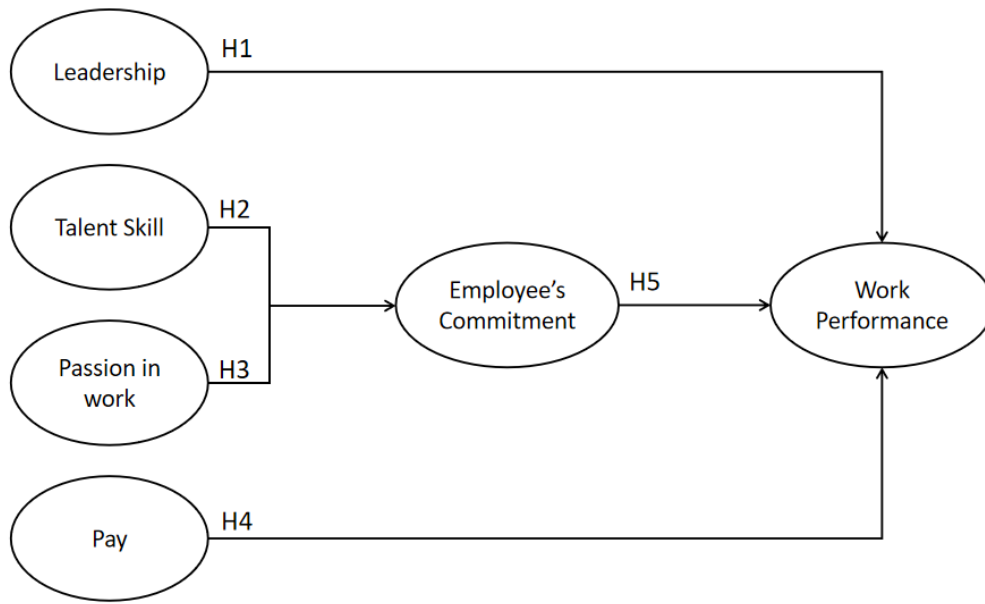
The introduction briefly references key studies and theories in positive psychology, highlighting its increasing relevance in educational contexts. This background provides a foundational understanding of why a positive psychology approach is essential for addressing current educational challenges.

This study is positioned as a distinct contribution to the field, offering new insights or approaches compared to existing literature. The study's significance in advancing the understanding of teacher engagement and well-being in the context of higher education (Boulton et al., 2019; Han et al., 2020). The academic tone is maintained throughout, avoiding colloquial language and ensuring that the introduction is both informative and aligned with scholarly standards.

## Literature review

Scholars around the country have conducted a large number of empirical studies on the workforce of college teachers, the purpose of which is to demonstrate how the workforce of college teachers affects their work performance. For example, many early studies focused on the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and job performance, believing that a teacher with a satisfied job is not necessarily a teacher with dedication and excellent performance (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2020). In other words, even if a teacher is satisfied with his or her job, he or she will not make efforts for the school. The two are only correlated, not causal. Later, scholars studied the relationship between organizational commitment and the job performance of teachers in colleges and universities, and the results showed that although there was a positive correlation between organizational commitment and job performance, the relationship was not strong (Jin et al., 2018). On the other hand, scholars discussed the relationship between job involvement and job performance of teachers in colleges and universities and found that the relationship between them has not reached a definite conclusion (Opoku et al., 2023). A comprehensive review of the research on teachers' work mentality shows that there is no consistency between these coefficient variables and teachers' job performance (Yin et al., 2019). At present, from the perspective of organizational behavior, 80% of scholars have conducted research on employee engagement. In order to understand the distribution and research status of scholars' research on employee engagement in the past 30 years, the author uses Citespace software to draw a keyword time zone chart, so as to reflect the time dimension and evolution of research on employee engagement in different stages in this field. Based on the data collection of related words in 300 kinds of literature on CNKI, it is analyzed that 2005 was the year with the highest research frequency in this field in the past 30 years. The rise of organizational behavior is a discipline that studies the behavior and attitude of people in the organization. It adopts the method of systematic analysis to study the law of people's behavior in a specific organization, so as to improve the ability of leaders to predict and guide the behavior of employees in the organization, so as to achieve the organizational goals more effectively. 80% of consulting companies using the theory of organizational behavior, through more than 100 enterprises conducted a survey, found that the high performance of the enterprise's employee engagement will be 20%~25% higher than the average, employee engagement and sales and profit returns have a significant positive correlation; Taking China Fat Donglai Company as an example, it is found that every 1% increase in employee engagement will lead to 0.5% increase in customer satisfaction.

Harter et al. (2002) conducted a survey on 7936 business units of 36 enterprises and found that employee engagement is closely related to organizational performance, and employee engagement plays a positive role in improving organizational performance, profit margin, and customer satisfaction. The research concluded that: Leadership, professional competence, job significance, salary, etc., are independent variables, engagement is an intermediary variable, and work performance is a dependent variable (Model 1). When the model is in positive correlation, the employee turnover rate, absenteeism rate, and safety accident rate will be greatly reduced, and the degree of correlation between employee engagement behavior and these work behaviors and outcomes is significantly higher than that of employee job satisfaction. In this context, through the study of college teachers, the author puts forward the concept of college teachers' engagement behavior, discusses the influencing factors of college teachers' engagement, and puts forward the measures of enabling management for college teachers, so as to improve the teaching level and education effectiveness.



**Model 1**

**Figure 1** Modelling the work performance

Figure 1 uncovers:

H1: Leadership positively affects the work performance.

H2: Talent skill positively affects work performance.

H3: Passion for work positively affects work performance.

H4: Pay positively affects the work performance.

H5: Employee commitment positively affects work performance.

Dedication first appeared in "Respect to Work and Joy Group" in "Book of Rites · Book of Learning". A moral category is the attitude of a person to be responsible for the work he does. It is an individual's basic respect for their work, that is, dedication means to concentrate on and treat their work seriously (Austin & Gregory, 2021). The modern Chinese dictionary also has a definition of "dedication", that is, to concentrate on occupation and work. However the real in-depth theoretical research on dedication has been carried out in the past two decades, and the definition of dedication has not been uniformly determined. At present, the research on engagement mainly focuses on the theoretical and empirical research of researchers in the field of organizational behavior and the investigation and research carried out from the perspective of organizational behavior by several well-known management consulting firms around the world. However, there are still differences in the dimension division of engagement behavior, and the research methods are single, so the research on engagement behavior is still advancing. In the early stage, Kahn (1990), an American scholar, conducted theoretical research on engagement. The author summarized the concept of employee engagement by studying the relationship between self and job role. He believed that self and job roles are dynamic and interactive, and employee engagement behavior is the behavior of individuals investing themselves in job role-playing. Including physiological involvement, cognitive involvement, and emotional involvement. When employee engagement is high, they put themselves into work situations and perform well; When engagement behavior is low, employees will disengage from their work roles, resulting in frequent employee turnover. Maslach and Leiter (2017) regard engagement and job burnout as two complete opposites. He regards energetic,

engaged, and productive as the three continuous dimensions of engagement, which is exactly opposite to the three dimensions of burnout: burnout, cynicism, and inefficiency.

Hakanen et al. (2006) verified that employee engagement and job burnout are completely opposite through the empirical survey of 2000 teachers. The results showed that: work standards lead to job burnout, and proximity leads to low efficiency of workability; School resources enhance teacher engagement performance, on the contrary, the lack of work resources will lead to teachers' job burnout.

Researchers believe that engagement behavior is the concrete expression of employees' devotion to their work, that is, when the boss can provide an ideal working environment and hard-working facilities to meet the needs of employees, give play to their strengths, enhance their career growth space, build their sense of ownership, and form a strong sense of responsibility for the organization (Mone et al., 2018). A research Consulting evaluates employee engagement behavior from three perspectives and puts forward the 3S model of employee engagement, namely, Say (praise) -- is the supporter and advocate of the organization, and praises its organization to the outside world; Stay -- eager to become a member of the organization, hoping to work in the organization for a long time; Strive -- to go above and beyond the most basic requirements of the organization and work hard to achieve outstanding results (Zhou, 2018).

## Method

The study utilized text analysis to examine 89 articles that discuss various aspects of job performance. This comprehensive analysis draws from diverse industries to understand employee engagement behaviors. Applying these insights to the context of higher education institutions (HEIs), the paper aims to explore the professional engagement behavior of teachers in HEIs. By leveraging research across various sectors, the study seeks to identify unique and common factors that influence teacher engagement in the academic setting, providing a nuanced understanding of what drives performance and commitment among educators in higher education.

## Results

The professional identity and significance of teachers have a positive impact on work engagement behavior. Britt et al. (2001) study shows that: if the cognitive awareness of the professional identity of teachers in colleges and universities is high, the professional engagement behavior of teachers is high even when the working conditions are unfavorable. Theoretically, this concept aligns with the self-determination theory, which posits that when individuals find personal relevance and identity in their work, their intrinsic motivation is bolstered. This implies that a teacher's sense of professional identity acts as an internal driving force, enhancing engagement even in less-than-ideal work conditions. This heightened engagement, in turn, could lead to better job satisfaction and performance, potentially creating a positive feedback loop reinforcing their professional identity. Practically, these insights offer significant implications for educational institutions and policy-makers. Institutions could foster a strong professional identity in teachers through development programs, emphasizing the value and impact of their role in shaping future generations. This might involve targeted training sessions that not only upgrade pedagogical skills but also focus on building a sense of community and shared purpose among educators. Policies that support teacher autonomy and acknowledge their professional contributions could further reinforce this identity.

For example, giving teachers more control over curriculum design or classroom methodologies could make them feel more invested in their work, thus increasing engagement.



Moreover, creating a supportive work environment that acknowledges and addresses the challenges teachers face, especially in less favorable conditions, can also be crucial. This could include measures like providing adequate resources, ensuring reasonable workloads, and offering emotional and professional support.

The significance of these findings extends beyond individual teachers and institutions. A teaching workforce that is highly engaged and strongly identifies with their profession is likely to positively impact student outcomes. Engaged teachers are more likely to be innovative in their teaching methods, more committed to their students' learning, and better at creating an inclusive and stimulating learning environment. This, in turn, can elevate the overall quality of education, which is a key determinant of societal progress and economic development. Therefore, investing in strategies that enhance teachers' professional identity and engagement is not only beneficial for the teachers themselves but also for the broader educational landscape and society as a whole.

Teachers in colleges and universities are faced with great pressure from scientific research and teaching. When the professional identity of college teachers is consistent with their own practical experience and individual background, and the expectation of a professional role given by society is also recognized, the professional performance of teachers will not be reduced even when they encounter setbacks in work.

Achievement motivation acts as an intermediary variable between teacher teaching performance and teacher engagement behavior, that is, personal efficacy can be positively correlated with teacher engagement, and can indirectly affect teacher engagement behavior by influencing teacher achievement motivation (Chen et al., 2020). Theoretically, this study resonates with the concept of self-efficacy from Bandura's social cognitive theory, suggesting that a teacher's belief in their ability to perform effectively (personal efficacy) not only directly enhances their engagement but also indirectly does so by boosting their achievement motivation. This implies a dynamic interplay where high personal efficacy fuels a teacher's drive to achieve, which in turn reinforces their engagement in their professional role. This relationship underscores the importance of self-perception and motivation in educational settings, suggesting that teachers who see themselves as capable and are motivated by their achievements are more likely to be deeply engaged in their work.

In practical terms, this study offers valuable insights for educational policy and administration, particularly in the context of teacher training and development. To leverage this relationship, educational institutions could implement programs and workshops aimed at enhancing teachers' self-efficacy. Such programs could include mentorship opportunities, where experienced teachers guide less experienced colleagues or professional development courses focused on building specific teaching skills and classroom management techniques. Additionally, recognizing and rewarding teaching performance could further boost teachers' achievement motivation, thereby indirectly fostering greater engagement. This could be through formal recognition programs, performance-based incentives, or opportunities for professional advancement based on teaching excellence.

Furthermore, the implications of these findings extend to curriculum design and student engagement. Teachers who feel efficacious and are motivated by achievements are likely to create more engaging, innovative, and effective learning environments. This could lead to improved student outcomes, as engaged teachers are better able to motivate and inspire their students. Thus, investing in strategies that enhance teachers' personal efficacy and achievement motivation is not just beneficial for the teachers themselves; it is also critical for enhancing the quality of education and student learning experiences.

Overall, the study highlights the intricate relationship between teacher self-efficacy, achievement motivation, and engagement, offering a valuable framework for both theoretical exploration and practical application in the field of education. By focusing on these areas, educational institutions can create a more dynamic, motivated, and engaged teaching workforce, leading to positive outcomes for teachers, students, and the broader educational system.

In addition to teachers' own factors, the teaching environment will have an impact on professional engagement behavior. According to research, support from colleagues, leaders, organizations, and society has a clear influence on employee engagement behavior. In the working environment of teachers, maintaining good interpersonal relationships with colleagues, such as team harmony and cooperation, has a positive radiation on teachers' morale and satisfaction, and work attitude is positively correlated with teachers' professional behavior (Soelton, 2023). Scholars also believe that building a teacher environment that can give full play to teachers' talents is positively correlated with teachers' professional performance (Paul et al., 2020). A flexible working environment and an organizational culture that encourages innovation can fully tap into teachers' talents. Meanwhile, education and teaching are committed to continuous improvement and innovation, providing teachers with a broad learning space and growth platform (Richardson et al., 2020).

Secondly, the professional performance of teachers cannot be separated from social support. In today's humanistic value system, focusing on money, power, and status, teachers are prone to professional inferiority, which affects the work effort and organizational commitment. Therefore, factors such as social support, school and government's attention to and investment in education, as well as teachers' treatment and status are all important factors influencing teachers' professional behavior.

All in all, H1-H5 should be confirmed and supported by this research. The results indicate that Leadership, Talent skill, Passion, Pay, and Employee commitment are related to work performance, especially in HEIs.

The research findings confirming hypotheses H1-H5 offer a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing work performance in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Theoretically, this aligns with various organizational behavior models which posit that factors like leadership, talent skill, passion, pay, and employee commitment are crucial in determining job performance. Leadership, often seen as the cornerstone of organizational effectiveness, plays a pivotal role in shaping the work environment and influencing employee motivation and performance. Talent skill emphasizes the importance of having the right skills for specific roles, which is particularly relevant in the academically driven environment of HEIs. Passion, or intrinsic motivation, is known to drive individuals to go beyond basic job requirements, fostering innovation and creativity. Pay, as a tangible reward and recognition, is a critical factor in employee satisfaction and retention. Lastly, employee commitment reflects the degree of emotional and professional investment an individual has in their organization, directly impacting their performance and overall contribution to the institution.

In practical terms, these findings have significant implications for the management and administration of HEIs. To optimize work performance, HEIs should focus on developing strong, inspiring leadership that can effectively guide and motivate staff. This could involve leadership training programs or adopting leadership styles that are more collaborative and inclusive. Additionally, investing in the professional development of staff to enhance their talent and skills is crucial. This not only improves job performance but also aids in personal and professional growth, aligning individual goals with institutional objectives.

Moreover, fostering an environment that nurtures passion and intrinsic motivation can lead to more innovative and dedicated staff. This could be achieved by creating a work culture that values creativity, supports risk-taking, and provides opportunities for meaningful work. In terms of compensation, HEIs need to ensure that their pay structures are competitive and fair, reflecting the value and contributions of their employees. This is particularly important in retaining high-performing staff and attracting top talent in a competitive academic landscape.

Lastly, strategies to enhance employee commitment are vital. This could include employee engagement initiatives, transparent communication practices, and opportunities for employees to contribute to decision-making processes. By creating a sense of belonging and demonstrating the value of each employee's contribution, HEIs can cultivate a committed and high-performing workforce.

In conclusion, the research supports the interconnectedness of leadership, talent skill, passion, pay, and employee commitment with work performance in HEIs. By understanding and strategically addressing these factors, HEIs can create a conducive environment for high performance, which is essential for achieving their educational and institutional goals. This holistic approach not only benefits the institutions and their staff but also positively impacts the quality of education and the overall academic experience for students.

## Conclusion

Love and dedication is an important condition for teachers to devote themselves to their work. Studies by scholars have shown that sense of meaning has a positive impact on employee engagement behavior. It is suggested to cultivate a positive organizational culture in higher education institutions to improve teacher engagement. This involves creating an environment that values autonomy, collaboration, and respect. Leadership within these institutions should be supportive and transformational, fostering a sense of inclusion and motivation. Additionally, implementing reward systems that align with teachers' intrinsic motivations can further enhance their commitment. Providing opportunities for professional development and focusing on work-life balance is also crucial for reducing burnout and increasing job satisfaction, thereby contributing to a more engaged and effective teaching workforce.

Only when teachers realize the value of work can they experience the meaning of work and have a sense of identity. When the sense of meaning is strong, they have more recognition of teacher identity and high performance of professional behavior. Therefore, in the management of colleges and universities, on the basis of ensuring the economic income of teachers, it is necessary to deepen the value cognition of college and university teachers to the educational cause through training, organizing activities, and individual commendation.

Teacher achievement motivation is an important part of teacher professional performance, and how to cultivate is very important. On the one hand, it can be achieved through skill training to help teachers improve their professional skills and social skills. Professional skills can achieve teaching effects, and social skills can help teachers adapt to the working environment more quickly. On the other hand, the school organizes mental health education to teach the correct attribution way, so that teachers can attribute success to their own ability and efforts, and form the belief that they can succeed only through efforts. Positive attribution way plays a key role in teachers' teaching efficacy; Finally, setting appropriate goals, too high goals will increase the frustration of teachers, simple goals can not really play the teacher's potential, so to set appropriate goals according to the teacher's own ability and conditions.

First, improve the social status of teachers, build a campus atmosphere where teachers are respected and education is valued, increase their income, and protect their professional



rights; Secondly, school administrators should create good working conditions, including improving teaching conditions and infrastructure, in order to meet the teaching needs of teachers; Finally, administrators create civilized and healthy campus culture, as the recessive education of campus culture, can standardize, edifying and infecting teachers' behavior, have an infection effect on teachers' professional behavior. On the hardware facilities, the school's appearance, spacious and bright classrooms, and strict school standards, the school motto is to create a good campus culture.

School leaders should do something to set up an incentive mechanism for teachers. First, let teachers participate in decision-making and establish a fair evaluation mechanism. The performance result is related to the salary level of teachers. In the decision-making closely related to teachers' interests, teachers should be given more rights to participate in decision-making, listen to the meaning of teachers, achieve fairness in process and result, and increase teachers' sense of responsibility and mission to the school. Secondly, an effective communication mechanism should be established. Active communication between managers and teachers will make teachers feel valued and trusted, and enhance their work morale. Finally, the school management mechanism, according to the characteristics of teachers varies from person to person, to assist teachers in doing a good job planning, can mobilize the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of work. The school management team focuses on strengthening teaching construction, cultivating academic leaders, backbone teachers, and excellent teacher talent pool, and implementing echelon training of teachers with ability and potential, so as to improve the working motivation and dedication of teachers.

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