

## Self Efficacy and Work Engagement Amongst Private Service Sector Employees

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of the present research study is to assess the relationship and the gender differences between self efficacy and work engagement amongst the private service sector employees. The age range of the employees was 25-35 years and a minimum experience of at least one year was required. Bandura (1997) had conceptualized self efficacy as, “one’s belief in one’s capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments.” Work engagement as elucidated by Kahn (1990) as “harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles: in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, emotionally and mentally during role performances.” The tools employed were The General Self Efficacy Scale by Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995 and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale by Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003. Correlational research design was employed. The results showed a significant and positive relationship between self efficacy and work engagement which implies that employees who scored higher on self efficacy, scored greater on work engagement too. Significant differences were also observed between male and female employees in self efficacy and work engagement levels respectively wherein male employees have scored higher in both the domains, respectively.

**Keywords:** *Self Efficacy, Work Engagement, Private Service Sector, Correlation, Gender Differences*

In recent times, due to globalization and the dynamic environment of the workplaces, there is extreme competition in the world of corporate especially the private service sectors to provide best service to the clients and customers present worldwide. Best service can only be provided if the employees are willing to engage actively with the work demands and have a strong sense of belief in their own skills and capabilities to perform efficiently at the workplace. This takes into play the key role of self efficacy which is an essential factor for driving growth in an organization.

### Self Efficacy

The concept of self efficacy was proposed by social psychologist Albert Bandura (1977). He defined it as, “the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations.” A theory in support of self efficacy is the Social

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Received: May 2, 2024; Revision Received: May 25, 2024; Accepted: May 28, 2024

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Cognitive Theory which was given to explain how an individual develops interest that drives performance of a person in a specific task. The goal-oriented behavior is governed by self efficacy which is therefore regarded as a predictor of how individuals incorporate various behavioral strategies and believe in their own abilities to succeed in a task.

Higher levels of self efficacy enhances the chances of successfully achieving a specific given assignment. Self efficacy is necessary for an employee to improve his/her performance at the workplace and engage with the daily occupational demands.

Bandura (1977) distinguished four experiences that help an individual to develop their self efficacy. The first is mastery experience, which means that one's self efficacy is built upon their accomplished past experience and their mastery in specific tasks. The second is vicarious experiences, that is when individuals observe other people doing a task successfully, it inculcates a sense of belief in them, that they can also complete the same task with success. The third is social persuasion which refers to receiving feedback from others after accomplishing a task boosts the self efficacy of the individual. The last factor is the physical and mental experiences, which are an outcome of the biological and emotional reactions that an individual experiences after the completion of the task.

Schunk (2012), examined that students who had higher levels of self efficacy were able to master the complex concepts effectively and adapt to the relatively new learning situations. Self efficacy also drives success in the workplace and research shows the impact of self efficacy on individual and organizational performance, thus it is an essential driver of success in the organization.

### ***Building employee's self efficacy at workplace***

Building employees' self efficacy at the workplace includes a mix of hierarchical methodologies and individual improvement drives pointed toward encouraging certainty, skill, and strength.

Offering projects and ability building workshops to upgrade employees information and mastery in their separate jobs. The goals should be clear, objective and time bound for the employees.

The bigger goals should be broken down into small achievable goals. When employees make progress in arriving at these achievements, their self efficacy enhances.

Employees should be provided with feedback about their work and recognizing them with the rewards and praises can contribute effectively to their connection with their organization and their work, thus encouraging a positive workplace. Employees should be matched with experienced mentors who can give them a sense of direction, backing, and consolation. Coaches can share their insight, offer important experiences, and act as good mentors and role models, moving employees to foster trust in their capacities and go after their objectives.

Self efficacy has an impact on the team performance in the workplace. Teams that have higher self efficacy are far more cohesive and collaborative. They exhibit better team performance, communication and are more goal specific. Chen et al., (2002) showcased that greater collective self efficacious teams are more likely to finish the projects within the stipulated time and budget. Self efficacy is indeed a very strong driving factor which impacts the performance of an individual, team and organization.

### **Work Engagement**

Work engagement is elucidated as the extent of the level of an individual's physical, emotional and cognitive connection to their work. People who are highly engaged in their work often find their work to be meaningful and interesting. Work engagement cultivates a positive work culture for the employees which in return produces potential benefits to the organization (Park & Gursoy, 2007). Schaufeli et al., (2002) alluded to work engagement, "as a positive, fulfilling, motivational state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption." The very first component is vigor which refers to high levels of physical energy that an individual has.

Dedication is the second component that indicates being involved in a particular task and experiencing a sense of enthusiasm, pride and inspiration. The third component is absorption referring to an individual's cognitive concentration in their work.

### ***Theoretical framework of work engagement***

Job demands resources (JD-R) model: This model, proposed by Bakker & Demerouti in late 1990s, explains that occupation requests (e.g., responsibility, time strain) and occupation assets (e.g., independence, social help) impact the work engagement of the employees. If the resources available are enough in comparison to the work demands, then it would lead to higher work engagement and increased efficiency at the workplace.

Self determination theory (SDT): proposed by Deci & Ryan in the late 1980s, states that individuals are more involved in their work when they feel a feeling of independence, competence, and relatedness at the workplace. When these cognitive requirements of the employees are met, the employees tend to connect, engage more profoundly with their work commitments and the organization as a whole.

Psychological Conditions of Engagement Model: Developed by Kahn in 1990, focussed on the three essential conditions that aids in creating an engaging workplace where employees are committed to their work. These conditions are meaningfulness, safety and physical security and availability. When an employee feels that these three factors are encountered, they are more engaged with their work.

### ***Building work engagement at workplace***

Building work engagement at work is urgent for cultivating a positive hierarchical culture, upgrading representative fulfillment, and driving efficiency and execution. This complex undertaking requires a comprehensive methodology that tends to different variables adding to employees inspiration, energy, and obligation to their work. Another part of building work engagement is establishing a strong and comprehensive workplace where employees feel esteemed and enabled. The point when employees feel associated and connected with their colleagues and the organization, they are motivated and bound to participate in their job duties effectively and also add to shared objectives of the organization.

### ***Relationship between self efficacy and work engagement at the workplace***

Self efficacy refers to the belief of an individual in their ability to arrange and execute activities important to accomplish wanted results. Inside the domain of work engagement, self efficacy fills in as a powerful indicator of an employee's degree of contribution, energy, and devotion to their undertakings and hierarchical objectives. This confidence in one's capacities significantly impacts different parts of work engagement, from inspiration and flexibility to work fulfillment and execution.

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Employees with high self efficacy see themselves as skilled in taking care of occupation requests, exploring difficulties, and accomplishing desired results. This insight creates a feeling of dominance and control, enabling people to move towards more work commitments with certainty and energy. Thus, they are bound to concentrate on their work, prompting more significant levels of engagement and commitment.

People's trust in their capacities empowers them to endure through difficulty, keeping up with elevated degrees of engagement and execution. Research by Salanova., et al (2011) focussed on the significance of self efficacy as a defensive variable against burnout and withdrawal.

Individuals who are high on self efficacy also engage fully in their work because they possess the confidence and also have belief in their capabilities which help them to overcome the challenges and accomplish the tasks successfully. Also, engaged employees develop a high level of self efficacy that leads to positive experiences and successfully performing the tasks. Employees high in self efficacy are resilient when it comes to setbacks and effectively navigate through obstacles which they encounter during work that enhances their engagement to work.

Organizations can also play a crucial part in leveraging the relationship between work engagement and self efficacy which is conducive for the growth and development of the employee as well as the organization. Skill building activities, training, feedback can enhance employees self efficacy and empower them to take more accountability of the tasks. Similarly, a culture that values employees efforts and gives them recognition and rewards can nurture employees sense of purpose that fosters high levels of work engagement among the employees.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Thakre & Joshi (2024) examined the impact of perceived organizational justice and the generational cohort on burnout and self efficacy and also the association between burnout and self efficacy. There were 120 representatives (60 Gen X and 60 Gen Y) who worked in India. The outcomes showed that workers with the impression of distributive equity had higher burnout while representatives who had views of procedural equity had higher self efficacy. The generational accomplices had no distinction in burnout and self efficacy.

A study conducted by Abdelwahed et al. (2023) focused upon work engagement, workaholism and self efficacy towards the innovative presentation among the business people of Saudi Arabia.

Snowball examination procedure was utilized to gather information from the business people. The example size consisted of 280 business visionaries. The outcomes showed a massive impact of work engagement on creative ways of behaving, business development and furthermore emotional business achievement. Self efficacy fundamentally anticipated imaginative ways of behaving, emotional business achievement, business development and work commitment.

Workaholism is likewise a critical negative indicator of creative ways of behaving, business development, and emotional business achievement.

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Mejia et al. (2021) conducted a research which expected to evaluate the association between self efficacy and work engagement of the educators in instructive establishments. The sample size consisted of 375 instructors around the Public Capital Locale and the data was gathered through a virtually based overview. The results showed that there is a positive and huge connection between the self efficacy and work engagement among the educators.

A study conducted by Nandakumar (2020) aimed to understand the difference between the variables self efficacy and motivation on job satisfaction on workplace trainers. The sample consisted of 60 trainers of different sectors. General self efficacy scale, work motivation questionnaire and job satisfaction scales were used. The results showed that self efficacy and motivation have an impact on the level of job satisfaction of the trainers.

Majumdar & Kumar (2021) conducted a study on organizational and personal predictors of work engagement in India. The researchers concentrated on the job of psychological capital of representatives in organizational climate, organizational justice and psychological capital of employees in explaining work engagement. 212 representatives were taken for the review who were situated in Mumbai, India. Various relapses were utilized with a diminished example of 195 workers after expulsion of 17 exceptions. Results showed that all the three indicator factors made sense of work engagement and out of them, psychological capital was the most grounded indicator of work engagement.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### *Purpose*

The purpose of the research is to find the correlation that self efficacy and work engagement have, whether high self efficacious individuals score high on the work engagement domain and vice versa. Also, the second cause of conducting this research was to examine the gender differences in the level of work engagement and self efficacy among the employees working in the Indian context.

#### *Research Objectives*

1. To assess the correlational relationship between self efficacy and work engagement.
2. To examine the gender differences in the level of self efficacy between male and female employees.
3. To examine the gender differences in the level of work engagement between male and female employees.

#### *Hypothesis*

1. There will be a significant relationship between self efficacy and work engagement.
2. There will be a significant difference in the level of self efficacy between male and female employees.
3. There will be a significant difference in the level of work engagement between male and female employees.

#### *Sample*

Purposive sampling was employed and the sample comprised employees working in the private service sector in India within the age range of 25-35 years and a minimum experience of at least one year. The sample consisted of 150 employees wherein 75 were male employees and other 75 were female employees.

**Measures**

**1. The General Self Efficacy Scale (GSES):**

It was developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem in 1995. The scale was intended for the overall grown-up population that included youths additionally and the principal objective of the scale is to assess the general feeling of self efficacy. It is a uni-layered scale that comprises 10 items and four classifications of reactions on a four point Likert scale "1-not at all true, 2- hardly true, 3- moderately true, 4- exactly true". The scale is self directed and normalized. The standard related reliability and validity with the Chronbach's alpha going from is 0.76 to 0.90 and the larger high is 0.80.

**2. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-17):**

It was developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) which comprises 17 things falling into various subscales that contain subscales that contain six items of the vigor dimension, five items of the dedication dimension and six items of absorption dimension respectively. It is a six point Likert scale which goes from 0 (never) to 6 (always). The psychometric properties of the scale have been closed by 23 distinct examinations and all were finished somewhere in the range of 1999 and 2003 in the nine nations. The items have good psychometric properties in judgemental validity, item convergent validity and also the item discriminant validity. The three subscales have high inner consistency with Cronbach's alpha coefficient esteems that are of ".66-.87 for vigor", ".83-.92 for dedication" and ".79-.88 for absorption", and ".88-.95 for absolute total engagement cores" in different examinations.

**Procedure**

The participants were given the questionnaire. Purposive sampling technique was employed in the research study to collect the data. Total 150 responses were collected. Out of the 150 responses, 75 were female employees and the other 75 were male employees. The scoring for both the scales was done and then analysis was conducted, followed by writing of the report.

**Statistical Analysis**

Pearson correlation was conducted to investigate the correlation between self efficacy and work engagement and independent sample t tests were conducted to discover the gender differences in the level of self efficacy and work engagement between male and female private service employees.

**RESULTS**

*Table 1: showing the correlation between self efficacy and work engagement*

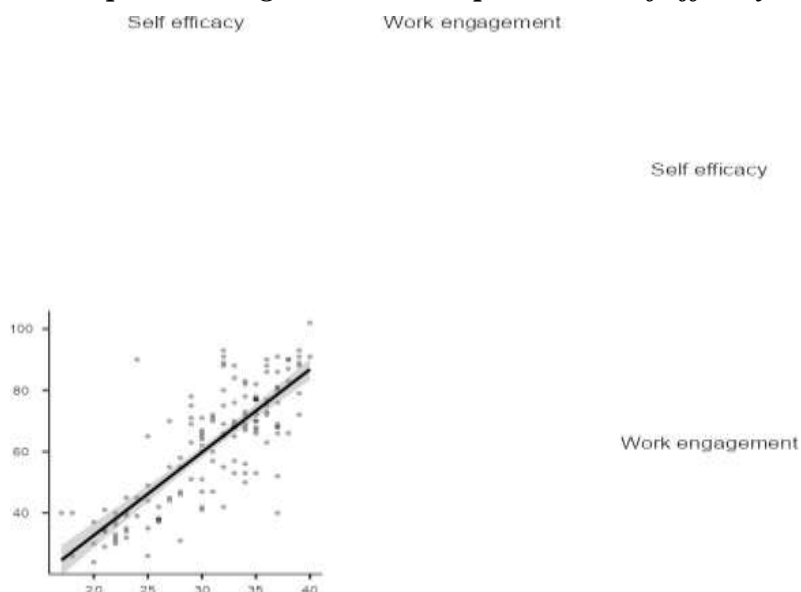
Correlation Matrix

		Self efficacy	Work engagement
Self efficacy	Pearson's r	—	
	df	—	
	p-value	—	
	N	—	
Work engagement	Pearson's r	0.799 ***	—
	df	148	—
	p-value	< .001	—
	N	150	—

Note. \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

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### *Scatterplot showing the relationship between self efficacy and work engagement*



**Table 2: showing the gender difference in the level of self efficacy amongst the employees**

#### Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p	Mean difference	SE difference
Self Efficacy	Student's t	4.86*	148	< .001	4.17	0.859

Note.  $H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$

#### Group Descriptives

		Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Self Efficacy	1		75	32.9	34.0	4.95	0.572
	2		75	28.7	29.0	5.54	0.640

**Table 3: showing the gender difference in the level of work engagement amongst the employees**

#### Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p
Work engagement	Student's t	4.09	148	< .001

Note.  $H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$

#### Group Descriptives

		Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Work engagement	1		75	68.1	70.0	18.0	2.07
	2		75	55.9	55.0	18.4	2.12

### DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to assess the relationship and gender differences between self efficacy and work engagement amongst the private service sector employees. The objectives of the study were to find the correlational relationship between self efficacy and work engagement, the second objective was to examine the gender differences in the level of self efficacy between male and female private service sector employees and the third objective was to examine the gender differences in the level of work engagement between male and female private service sector employees.

The tools used were the General Self Efficacy Scale by Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995) and The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale by Schaufeli & Bakker (2003). The sample size was of 150 private sector employees within the age range of 25-35 years and an experience of at least one year. Out of the 150 employees, 75 employees were females and the other 75 were males.

Purposive sampling was employed and the data was collected through the utilization of google forms. The data was analyzed using the Jamovi software (version 2.3).

Result table 1 shows that there is a significant and a positive relationship between self efficacy and work engagement as Pearson's  $r=0.799$  ( $p>0.05$ ). This depicts a strong positive association is found between the variables, self efficacy and work engagement, which means as the self efficacy increases, the work engagement also increases. Participants who scored higher in the self efficacy domain also maintained a high score in the work engagement domain as well.

David (2011) looked at the relationship between work commitment, self efficacy and optimism among the employees who worked in call places in a retail association in Western Cape. The example consisted of 93 call place representatives who worked in the client care administration division. The outcomes showed that a critical relationship was found between work commitment, self efficacy and optimism. An average degree of optimism and work commitment was shown by the representatives however the self efficacy was more noteworthy.

Mejia, et al (2021) evaluated the relationship between self efficacy and work engagement of the educators in instructive establishments. The sample consisted of 375 instructors around the Public Capital Locale. The findings showed that there is a positive and huge connection between these two variables among the educators. The significant and positive correlation obtained between self efficacy and work engagement is justified with the research conducted earlier and is in line with the hypothesis one which states, that there will be significant correlation between self efficacy and work engagement.

Result table 2 shows the difference in the level of self efficacy between male and female employees working in the private service sector. The mean and standard deviation of males in the self efficacy scale were found to be 32.9 and 4.95 respectively while the mean and standard deviation of females were found to be 28.7 and 5.54 respectively and  $p<.001$ . A significant difference in the level of self efficacy wherein male employees have scored higher than female employees has been found.

A study done by Robinson (2020) examined the jobs of self efficacy for logical tasks and also scholarly self efficacy while being in the last year of school. The findings showed that



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the two sorts of self efficacy anticipated profession expectations and life fulfillment. The self efficacy of females was found to be lesser than men. Ebil (2018), explored the relationship among orientation and worker voice in a male overwhelmed area. In study 1, they examined whether gender voice association is mediated by general self efficacy beliefs or not and in study 2, the researchers examined whether there is an indirect effect on supportive leadership. At medium and low degrees of steady authority, females have less self efficacy than males.

These researches highlight a significant gap in gender differences in self efficacy, in which males have scored significantly higher than females and the findings obtained also leads to the affirmation of the second hypothesis of the investigation. There can be other reasons for females scoring low on the self efficacy like very less recognition and appreciation is given to the females for their work, glass ceiling effect prevails in the workplaces which further leads to lower self efficacy beliefs. Females are not able to make up to the higher executive positions in the organization.

Result table 3 highlights the differences in the level of work engagement between male and female employees working in the private service sector. The mean and standard deviation of males were found to be 68.1 and 18.0 respectively while the mean and standard deviation of females were found to be 58.9 and 18.4 respectively. This shows a significant difference between males and females in their level of work engagement as male employees scored higher than female employees.

An examination was conducted by Banihani, (2017) focussing on gendered work engagement; experiences from Jordan. Gendered association hypothesis was utilized to investigate the gendered idea of work engagement. 36 representatives from three distinct Jordan telecom organizations were consulted and it was observed that the thought of work engagement isn't sexually unbiased and there is presence of disparity which implies that women have less of an open door to work engagement and this open door shifts across different situational circumstances. Rozman et al., (2021) did a review which investigated the distinctions in work satisfaction, work engagement and work efficiency among the representatives who telecommute during the pandemic of Coronavirus and furthermore the distinctions in sexual orientation. The overview was finished on 785 representatives in Slovenian organizations. The outcomes showed that there are huge contrasts in these three factors. It was additionally observed that male representatives were more drawn in working than female workers. Male representatives are more involved in working on the nature of work to get effective business results during the outbreak of the pandemic.

A Representative Commitment White Paper was delivered by Carnegie, showing that 39% of females were completely engaged at work than their 50 % male partners. Indian male representatives were definitely more engaged at work than females. The report presumed that the assumptions Indian females have from their working environments are for the most part not met in contrast with their male companions. This neglected assumption prompts low efficiency and lower maintenance of females at work.

These examinations support the results obtained in the investigation and the findings also align with the stated third hypothesis of the research conducted. An unconscious bias also curates a significant impact for lower work engagement of women as they are underestimated for their capabilities and this creates a feeling of being not valued which leads to lower productivity and engagement. Thus, these reasons can be the cause of low

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work engagement scores amongst female employees in comparison to male employees working in the private service sector.

### CONCLUSION

The study assessed the relationship between self efficacy and work engagement and investigated the gender differences in the level of self efficacy and work engagement. The age range of the employees was 25-35 years with a minimum working experience of at least one year in the private service sector. The results showcased that there is a significant and positive correlational relationship between self efficacy and work engagement and the differences in the male and female self efficacy scores and work engagement scores is also significant and noteworthy, wherein male employees have scored higher than female employees in both the self efficacy and work engagement domains.

### Limitations

The few limitations of the research could be that it was conducted only in the private service sector, the age range was also restricted to 25-35 years and the questionnaire was close ended. The sample size was limited to 150 employees, thus generalization of results to a larger and diverse population could be significantly hindered.

### Future implications

The results observed can be employed to develop interventions to enhance the self efficacy and work engagement of the female employees. Specific reasons could be looked out at workplace which lead to lower self efficacy and work engagement in female employees. The positive association between self efficacy and work engagement can be used as a development strategy to increase productivity by helping employees to build either of these factors.

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### **Acknowledgment**

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

**How to cite this article:** Chopra, M. & Srivastava, A.S. (2024). Self Efficacy and Work Engagement Amongst Private Service Sector Employees. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(2), 2702-2713. DIP:18.01.234.20241202, DOI:10.25215/1202.234