

The Role of Psychological Capital in Work Engagement: A Study of Employees from a Public Sector Bank in India

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ABSTRACT

Psychological capital is a core construct studied in the domain of Organizational Behaviour. Increasingly, it has been remarked to impact important work outputs such as performance at work, organizational citizenship behaviour, organizational commitment etc. Work engagement is one such critical variable. This study aims to unravel the linkage between psychological capital, its four sub-dimensions (viz. optimism, resilience, hope, self-efficacy) and work engagement in employees working at State Bank of India. It also aims to ascertain the effect of population parameters (age and designation) on work engagement. Data was analyzed using One-way ANOVA, Pearson Product- Moment Correlation, and Simple Regression Analysis. Results established non-significant effects of demographic characteristics like age, designation on work engagement. However, a significant relationship was established between psychological capital and work engagement. The relationship between the sub-dimensions of psychological capital, viz. optimism, resilience, hope, self-efficacy and work engagement was established as positive and significant. Further, psychological capital was found to predict high variance in work engagement; hope predicted high variance in work engagement whereas optimism, resilience and self-efficacy predicted moderate variance in work engagement. The present study underlines the importance of recognizing the self-resources of the workforce in contributing to the organization's competitive edge.

Keywords: *Psychological Capital, Work Engagement, Optimism, Resilience, Hope, Self-Efficacy*

In today's ever-changing world, organizations are characterized by stiff competition and regularly changing environments. An organization's success depends on both psychological and physical engagement of employees. In such circumstances, effective management of human resources seems crucial to ensure the success of all kinds of businesses. Banks are an important component of the financial sector and acts as an economic pillar in the development of any country. Employees are rigorously working towards recovering bad loans at the same time, adding tremendous pressure to them. Positive organizational behaviour originated from the positive psychology movement, initiated by Martin Seligman and his colleagues in 1998. In the early twenty-first century, since World War II, Psychology has focused almost exclusively on "fixing" mental illness

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and dysfunctional behaviour, rather than on understanding and facilitating normal functioning, as well as growth and development in healthy individuals (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive Psychology postulates a shift in the focus in Psychology from addressing mental illness to promoting mental health, with a greater emphasis on enhancing human strengths, virtues, excellence, happiness, thriving, resilience, flow and optimal functioning. A visible action in this direction is the recent statement given by the Delhi government on the launch of 'Happiness Curriculum' in government schools for Nursery to Class VIII students with the motive to educate people that the purpose of education is not just pushing students to get good marks but to create an environment where a student is happy (Kundu, 2018). Although the importance of positivity has been given attention throughout the years, it was only recently proposed as a new approach in the field of organizational behaviour. By integrating Positive Psychology to organizational setting, Luthans pioneered the positive organizational behaviour research in 1999. The term Positive Organizational Behaviour can be defined as "the study and application of positively oriented human resources, strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace" (Luthans 2002, p. 59). A theory which gives emphasis to POB-based approach in organizational research is the Broaden-and-Build Theory of positive emotions proposed by Barbara Fredrickson at the University of Michigan in 2002. She sought to explain how positive affective experiences contribute to personal growth and development. Negative emotions such as anxiety or anger narrow people's momentary thought-action repertoires, so that they are ready to act in a particular self-protective way. Positive emotions, in contrast, broaden momentary thought-action repertoires. This broadening of momentary thought-action repertoires offers opportunities for building enduring personal resources, which in turn offers the potential for personal growth and transformation by creating positive or adaptive spirals of emotion, cognition and action.

Psychological Capital

Psychological Capital integrates the four positive psychological resources namely hope, optimism, resilience and efficacy that best fit the POB inclusion criteria (Luthans et al, 2004; Luthans et al. 2015). Luthans et al. (2007, p. 3) defined psychological capital as "an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success." The four elements of psychological capital are stated as follows:

- a) *Optimism*: Luthans and Youssef (2004) defines optimism as "an explanatory style that attributes positive events to internal, permanent and pervasive causes and negative events to external, temporary and situation specific ones."
- b) *Resilience*: Resilience may be explained as people's ability to manipulate their environment successfully in order to protect them from the negative consequences of adverse events (Rutter, 1987)."
- c) *Hope*: Hope refers to "a positive motivational state based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a)agency (goal- directed energy) and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals)" (Snyder et al. 1991, p. 287).
- d) *Self- efficacy*: According to Stajkovic and Luthans (1998, p. 66), efficacy is defined as "the individual's conviction or confidence about his or her abilities to mobilize the

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motivation, cognitive resources or courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context.”

Work Engagement

The history of work engagement can be traced back to Goffman's work, who for the first time used the term “embracement” (Goffman 1959, 1961) to explain investment of individual self and his energy into one's role. He believed that role involvement includes one's attachment to his role which is important for an active engagement, visible in the form of individual's effort and attention for the assigned role. Inspired by Goffman's perspective of “role embracement”, Kahn (1990) developed a theoretical viewpoint to describe when and why individuals involve themselves at work in varying degree and show difference in their individual performance. Work engagement denotes “the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances” (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). The “cognitive component” includes employees' viewpoint about the organization, its leaders and work environment. The “emotional component” includes employees' feeling about their organization, their affirmative or unenthusiastic attitudes toward the organization and its leaders. The “physical component” of engaged employee includes the corporeal energies exerted by persons to achieve their goals (Kahn, 1990). Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002) define work engagement as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption” (p. 74).

There are few theoretical perspectives, each emphasizing a different aspect of work engagement. They are:

a) The Needs-Satisfying Approach (Kahn, 1990)

This approach, proposed by Kahn (1990), propounds that employees become engaged in workplace when three psychological conditions or needs are met: meaningfulness (i.e. the feeling of receiving return on investments of one's self in role performance), psychological safety (i.e. feeling able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences) as well as availability (i.e., the belief of having the physical and mental resources to engage oneself at work). Meaningfulness is shaped by the nature of the job, including its task and role characteristics. Psychological safety is determined by the social environment, which consists of interpersonal relationships, management style, and social norms. Availability is shaped by the personal resources individuals can bring to their role.

b) The job demands-resources model (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004)

This model advanced by Bakker and Schaufeli (2004) posits that work engagement emerges from the intrinsically motivating quality of resources, by which two forms of resources could be differentiated: a) job resources refer to those characteristics of the job that help achieve work goals and alleviate job demands, such as performance feedback, job control, and social support from colleagues as well as b) personal resources which refer to qualities within the individual that are connected to resilience and the ability to effectively manage one's environment, including traits like self-efficacy, optimism and emotional stability.

c) The affective shift model (Bledow et al. 2011)

According to this model proposed by Bledow et al. (2011), a key mechanism driving increase in work engagement is the transition from adverse to positive state of mind. Negative emotion holds motivational potential, as it indicates that something is wrong and

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prompts the need for corrective action. Ensuing effort then activates the driving potential of negative affect, thereby leading toward a more positive affective state.

Psychological Capital and Work Engagement

Among the work-related outcomes which are influenced by psychological capital, work engagement is one such variable. An engaged employee is connected to the task and is personally present and fully active in his/her own role (Kahn, 1990). Few studies have demonstrated that psychological capital is positively associated with work engagement in organisations. Pouramini and Fayyazi (2015) studied the linkage between positive organizational behaviour and job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviour, and employee engagement in Tehran, Iran. The sample comprised of 108 employees, senior managers, and supervisors from multiple departments. Results showed that POB has significantly positive relationship with job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviour and employee's engagement and these relationships were stronger when POB was high. Sihag and Sarikwal (2014) studied the correlation between psychological capital (hope, resilience, self-efficacy, optimism) and employee engagement on 420 middle-level IT professionals from various IT industries in India. The results demonstrated positive correlation between psychological capital and employee engagement with 0.67 standardized regression coefficient. Banerjee and Yadav (2016) examined the impact of psychological capital on employee engagement on 30 participants from a defence establishment of India. The results demonstrated that psychological capital was positively linked with employee engagement.

In recent times, organizational environment, which is characterized by stiff competition, challenging and regularly changing environment, employers are more focused on developing and maintaining human capital rather than focusing on financial capital and physical capital. Hendricks (2002) stated that in a world defined by knowledge and growing customer communication, human capital that encompasses volume of knowledge, technical expertise, creativity and work experience has occupied significant importance. Psychological Capital which is also abbreviated as PsyCap, has emerged as the most important element of human capital of employees and is considered as an important concept to be studied in the field of Organizational Behaviour. In contemporary times, the banking industry, especially the public sector, has undergone dynamic changes. Digital transformation has enabled banking to extend its reach to rural and remote locations by emphasizing customer focus and driving innovation. At the same time, the target-driven culture in banks and meeting customer expectations on a regular basis has increased the workload for bank employees exponentially. Is there a possibility for the employees, bestowed with self-belief, optimism regarding the future as well as bearing the capability to bounce back from adversity, to be better able to deal with such turbulent times? This study seeks to unknot the relationship between psychological capital (its various sub-dimensions viz. hope, resilience, optimism and self-efficacy), demographic characteristics (age and designation) and work engagement in the State Bank of India.

Research Questions

1. Are there any significant effects of demographic characteristics (age and designation) on work engagement?
2. What is the relationship between psychological capital (its various sub-dimensions, viz. optimism, resilience, hope and self-efficacy) and work engagement?

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3. To what extent does psychological capital (and its four sub-dimensions, viz. optimism, resilience, hope and self- efficacy) predict work engagement?

Objectives of the study

- a) To evaluate the difference in work engagement of employees by age and designation.
- b) To evaluate the relationship between psychological capital (and its four sub-dimensions viz. optimism, resilience, hope and self- efficacy) and work engagement of the employees.
- c) To evaluate the extent to which psychological capital (its four sub- dimensions viz. optimism, resilience, hope and self-efficacy) predicts work engagement.

Hypotheses

Based on the research questions and the objectives guiding the present study, the following hypotheses have been framed for this study.

- **H1A:** There will be no significant difference in work engagement levels of employees by age.
- **H1B:** There will be no significant difference in work engagement levels of employees by different levels of management.
- **H2:** There will be a positive and significant relationship between psychological capital and work engagement of employees.
- **H2A:** Optimism will have a positive and significant relationship with work engagement.
- **H2B:** Resilience will have a positive and significant relationship with work engagement.
- **H2C:** Hope will have a positive and significant relationship with work engagement.
- **H2D:** Self-Efficacy will have a positive and significant relationship with work engagement.
- **H3:** Psychological capital (optimism, resilience, hope and self-efficacy) will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement.
- **H3A:** Optimism will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement.
- **H3B:** Resilience will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement.
- **H3C:** Hope will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement.
- **H3D:** Self- efficacy will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement.

The following are the operational definitions of the two variables:

Psychological capital (PsyCap)

Psychological capital can be described on operational terms as “an individual’s positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success” (Luthans et al. 2007, p. 3).

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Work Engagement

Work engagement could be stated operationally as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption” (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2003).

Design

For this study, online survey was used to gather data from 111 employees from State Bank of India. A total of 111 participants were recruited by the method of convenience sampling. All the participants were at a lower, middle or upper managerial post. The sample included 91 males and 20 females.

Descriptive analysis was employed to derive the mean and S.D of the variables. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to study the differences in work engagement by age, tenure and designation. Correlational analysis was used to study the relationship between Psychological Capital and Work Engagement, the dimensions of Psychological Capital and Work Engagement. Linear Regression was utilized to measure if Psychological Capital and its dimensions viz. Hope, Optimism, Resilience and Self-Efficacy predicted Work Engagement.

Tools

The Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ)-24 developed by Luthans et al. (2007) was used to assess psychological capital of employees in the present study. It is a four-dimensional scale, comprising of aspects, namely Self-Efficacy, Optimism, Hope as well as Resilience. The reliability of PCQ-24 Scale accounted by Avey, Patera and West (2006) was 0.90. In relation to the individual dimensions, the following values were reported: self-efficacy $\alpha = 0.82$, hope $\alpha = 0.81$, resilience $\alpha = 0.78$ and optimism $\alpha = 0.65$.

To assess work engagement of employees, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), consisting of 17 items, developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002) was used. The reliability of the scale is 0.90.

A demographic sheet was employed to know the employees' gender, age, marital status, highest educational qualification, tenure in the present organization, total work experience and current working position.

Sample

Matched sample was selected so that control over some variables could be achieved.

Characteristics of the sample:

- a. All the participants of the study worked in State Bank of India.
- b. Employees who participated in the study included managers regardless of lower, middle or higher level.

RESULTS

Data was collected through online survey from 111 employees working in State Bank of India. Analysis was conducted at four levels: descriptive analysis, correlational analysis, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and simple regression analysis.

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Demographic variables and work engagement

Table 1: Mean and SD of work engagement for different age groups of employees

Age	N	Mean	SD
Below 30 years	26	77.38	19.24
31-40 years	44	80.52	11.97
41-50 years	18	80.55	9.66
Above 51 years	23	73.30	14.51

Table 1 showed that the highest mean on work engagement was reported by the age group above 41-50 years (80.55) and the lowest mean was reported by the age group above 51 years (73.30).

Table 2: Analysis of variance for work engagement across different age groups

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Sq	F	Sig
Between groups	904.74	3	301.58	1.49	0.22
Within groups	21642.44	107	202.26		
Total	22547.18	110			

Table 2 showed that F ratio calculated for the entire sample across different age groups on work engagement was 1.49 which is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance for the current sample ($F=1.49, p > 0.05$). Thus, hypothesis H1A which states that there will be no significant difference in work engagement levels of employees with different age groups stands accepted.

Table 3: Mean and SD of work engagement for different levels of management of employees

Levels of management	N	Mean	SD
Senior managers	25	78.64	12.92
Middle managers	14	81.50	12.61
Lower managers	72	77.55	15.14

Table 3 showed that the highest mean on work engagement was reported by the middle level managers (81.50) and the lowest mean was reported by lower-level managers (77.55).

Table 4: Analysis of variance for work engagement across different levels of management in the organization

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	186.15	2	93.07	.45	0.63
Within groups	22361.03	108	207.04		
Total	22547.18	110			

Table 4 showed that the F ratio calculated for the entire sample across different levels of management on work engagement was 0.45 which was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance for the current sample ($F= 0.45, P > 0.05$). Thus, hypothesis H1B which states that there will be no significant difference in work engagement levels of employees with different levels of management stands accepted.

Psychological capital and work engagement

Table 5: Mean and SD of psychological capital, its four sub-dimensions and work engagement

Variable	Mean	SD
Total Psychological Capital	110.40	13.99
Optimism	26.58	4.15
Resilience	25.65	3.96
Hope	28.93	4.30
Self- efficacy	29.22	4.31
Work Engagement	78.29	14.31

Table 5 depicts the means and standard deviations of the present sample selected for the study. Out of the four dimensions of Psychological Capital, self-efficacy has the highest mean (29.22) while resilience has the lowest mean (25.65).

Table 6: Correlation and Simple Regression Analysis

Independent Variable/Predictor	Dependent Variable/Criterion	R	Adjusted R ²	Beta	F
Psychological Capital	Work Engagement	0.50	0.24	0.50	37.23
Optimism		0.38	0.14	0.38	19.39
Resilience		0.39	0.14	0.39	20.28
Hope		0.46	0.20	0.46	29.21
Self-Efficacy		0.44	0.18	0.44	26.30

***Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)*

Table 6 depicts the correlation between Psychological Capital, its subdimensions and Work Engagement. The relationship between psychological capital and work engagement is significant and positive ($r= 0.50, p< 0.01$). Thus, H2 which states that there will be a significant and positive relationship between psychological capital and work engagement of employees stands accepted. The correlation between optimism and work engagement is significant and positive ($r=0.38, p< 0.01$). Thus, H2A which states that there will be a significant and positive relationship between optimism and work engagement of the employees stands accepted. The correlation between resilience and work engagement is significant and positive ($r= 0.39, p< 0.01$). H2B which states that there will be a significant and positive relationship between resilience and work engagement of employees stands accepted. The correlation between hope and work engagement is significant and is positive ($r= 0.46, p< 0.01$). H2C which states that there will be a significant and positive relationship between hope and work engagement of employees stands accepted. The correlation between self-efficacy and work engagement is significant and is positive ($r= 0.44, p< 0.01$). H2D which states that there will be a significant and positive relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement of employees stands accepted. The table also denotes the extent to which Work Engagement is predicted by Psychological Capital and its sub-dimensions, viz. Optimism, Resilience, Hope and Self-Efficacy. It was found that 24% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by psychological capital, remaining 76% is caused by other factors not included in the present study. Therefore, H3 which states that psychological capital will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement stands

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accepted. Further, it was found that 14% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by optimism, remaining 86% is caused by other factors not included in the present study. H3A which states that optimism will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement stands accepted. It was found that 14% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by resilience, remaining 86% is caused by other factors not included in the present study. H3B which states that resilience will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement stands accepted. 20% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by hope, remaining 80% is caused by other factors not included in the present study. Therefore, H3C which states that hope will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement stands accepted. It was found that 18% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by self- efficacy, remaining 82% is caused by other factors not included in the present study. The obtained F value of 26.30 was found to be significant at $p < 0.001$. Therefore, H3D which states that self-efficacy will explain a significant proportion of the variance in work engagement stands accepted.

DISCUSSION

The goal of the research was to investigate the linkage between psychological capital (and its various sub-dimensions) and work engagement of employees. One-way analysis of variance has been used to measure the effect of age and designation on work engagement respectively. Data analysis using ANOVA revealed that work engagement levels did not differ significantly across the four categories of age groups, viz. below 30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years and above 51 years. It shows that employees irrespective of their age showed equal levels of work engagement at SBI. It seems that all employees irrespective of their age, want to feel valued in the organization and hence prove their worth. A possible reason why employees below 30 years were seen to be actively involved in their work could be due to the desire for growth trajectory in their respective roles. As youth, they tend to put in more effort in execution of tasks, and are continuously involved in the structure and decision-making processes of the organization. A reason why employees in the age range of 41-50 and 51 years above also showed involvement with their work could be that with the increase in the seniority levels, employees yearn to give more to the organization. This aligns with a study conducted by Manikandan et al. (2022) which stated that teachers who had more than ten years of teaching experience had higher work engagement levels. Also, with seniority, the status of an employee enhances.

The results of ANOVA revealed that levels of work engagement did not vary significantly across the three different managerial levels viz. senior managerial levels, middle managerial levels and lower managerial levels. This implies that regardless of their designation, the workers were equally engaged in the organization chosen for the study. One reason could be that regardless of managerial positions, employees are equally devoted to put in their full potential in order to be fully recognized by their organization. Lower-level employees are highly motivated and more engaged when the company invests in their future success and their sense of purpose. Managers have the most direct influence on employees as they carry the responsibility for aligning the performance of their department and its staff with overarching organizational goals. This also signifies that at senior levels, employees have to play the role of a leader as well as a mentor, so that they feel more responsible towards their organization. A study conducted by Perrin (2003) showed that employees working at senior levels were found to be highly engaged maybe due to income level. Since in SBI the income disparity is not very high between various levels of management, perhaps all employees have reported similar levels of engagement.

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The correlation between psychological capital and work engagement has been found to be significant and positive, indicating a positive relation between the two. Further, simple regression analysis showed that 24% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by psychological capital. This implies that psychological capital strongly predicts employees' involvement, satisfaction and enthusiasm for work. Several researches in the past have indicated a similar relationship between psychological capital and work engagement (Banerjee & Yadav, 2016; Sihag & Sarikwal, 2014). Employees with high psychological capital may intensify their energy in their work activity and boost their efforts to achieve and become more engaged in their work (Luthans & Borgogni, 2017). Employees who possess high level of psychological capital are more likely to have higher self-confidence, more resilient to adverse situations, and optimism in the face of difficult situations. The results can be explained using the Social Exchange Theory developed by Homans (1961), which states that when employees receive particular resources from their organization in the form of decent salary, recognition or opportunities of development, they feel obliged to respond in kind and "repay" the organization. Following this, Saks (2006) argued that one way for individuals to repay their organization is through engagement. In the context of SBI, it is possible that because employees get recognized for their hard work, receive fringe benefits in the form of bonuses, incentives and enjoy considerable degree of autonomy, they feel more and more engaged to work for the success of the organization.

The relationship between all the sub-dimensions of psychological capital and work engagement was also found to be significant and positive. Among the sub-dimensions, the correlation between optimism and work engagement was found to be 0.38, implying that optimism is highly related to work engagement levels of employees. Simple regression analysis showed that 14% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by optimism, which means that optimism modestly predicts engagement of employees. Luthans et al. (2015, p. 2) define optimism as "making a positive attribution about succeeding now and in the future." It implies that employees who are high on optimism tend to approach work and job challenges with the expectation to succeed. At SBI, the provision of various allowances and benefits such as home loans, education loans, public provident fund etc. help the employees not only meet their current needs but also help them remain positive about their future. It is also possible that because they are respected and are recognized for good work in the organization, they hold a positive outlook towards their job and hence feel the need to give more and more to the organization. In a study conducted on Chinese factory workers, Luthans, Avolio, Walumbwa and Li (2005) found that optimism was significantly correlated with supervisory rated performance. This implies that optimistic employees always strive for positive outcomes and are likely to believe in their potential regardless of previous failures (Sweetman & Luthans, 2010).

The correlation between resilience and work engagement was found to be strongly related to work engagement. Simple regression analysis revealed that 14% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by resilience. This indicates that work engagement is modestly predicted by the employees' ability to persevere through hardship. The positive correlation between resilience and work engagement could be elucidated through the affective shift model proposed by Bledow et al. (2011) which advocates that a core mechanism underlying the emergence of high work engagement is a shift from negative to positive affect. At SBI, irrespective of the fact that employees are overloaded with work which sometimes lead to increased stress levels, they have a feeling of job security and trust in an environment of risk-taking. When one feels accountable for one's work and is respected, a person is likely to

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put in more effort towards working for the success of the organization. In that sense, working under pressure would act as the negative affect that might motivate employees to show greater work engagement levels. After a negative affective event, a person may reflect about the problematic situation and may perceive the necessity to invest additional effort (Carver & Scheier, 1990; Kuhl, 2000).

Among the sub-dimensions, hope was found to have the highest correlation with work engagement, which means that hope is most strongly related to work engagement. Simple Regression revealed that hope showed the maximum predictive variance of 20% in explaining work engagement. This implies that work engagement is strongly predicted by the employees' expectations of positive outcomes with respect to circumstances in one's life. Hopeful individuals tend to be recognized as risk-takers and they are determined in pursuing goals to identify the supreme means to implement and reach their aims (Tibbs et al., 2015). In SBI, the sense of belonging to a large and reputed organization provide a sense of pride and responsibility, thereby motivating the employees to work harder amidst immense workload and pressure.

The correlation between self-efficacy and work engagement has also been found to be significant and positive, which implies that self-efficacy is strongly related to work engagement. Simple regression analysis revealed that 18% of the variance in work engagement was accounted by self-efficacy. It indicates that work engagement is modestly predicted by employees' confidence in their ability to achieve a specific objective in a specific condition. According to Kittredge (2010), self-efficacious individuals believe that they are capable of mastering tasks and coping well with adversity due to which they become involved with personally fulfilling activities and thus, are expected to become engaged (Kittredge, 2010). The significant influence of self-efficacy towards work engagement in this study implies that personal factors function as reciprocal determinants of work engagement behaviors and contribute in shaping the environment. The extent of goal selection, magnitude of effort required to reach the selected goal, and the way one perseveres when problems are encountered in progressing toward the goal all seem to be greatly affected by self-efficacy. Another possible explanation for the positive correlation between self-efficacy and work engagement could be the employee's confidence in his/her ability to adequately command the work situation which is helpful for fully immersing in one's work and thus, dedicating oneself to the task. When goals are self-set, individuals possessing high self-efficacy set bigger goals than individuals with low self-efficacy (Locke & Latham, 2002). Tim et al. (2011) stated that personal traits like self-efficacy is regarded as important antecedents of work engagement. Self-efficacy was found to be significantly and positively correlated with entrepreneurial spirit, emotional engagement and physical engagement. This finding is also in line with a study conducted by Chaudhary, Rangnekar and Barua (2013), which showed that occupational self-efficacy plays a significant role in distinguishing the groups of engaged employees from non-engaged ones with occupational self-efficacy and its dimensions significantly predicting work engagement.

The current study also demonstrates that although demographic characteristics do not have any effect on work engagement, psychological capital influences work engagement. The employees from State Bank of India enjoy a special position in the society as it constitutes India's largest commercial bank in terms of assets, profits, branches and employees as well as offers a lot to its employees through job security and pay (Chilumuri, 2013). Above all, it places strong importance on gender diversity and takes special care of its women employees.

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It is indeed the only public sector bank where women employees can take 2 years leave for personal commitments like childcare, education etc. Hence, it is easy to see why employees in SBI are so dedicated to work for the organization. Also, higher psychological capital implies personal resources of employees as inevitable for fuelling one's growth and performance in the long run. A strong relationship between psychological capital and work engagement implies that personal resources facilitate goal attainments and stimulate growth and development over time. It has been found that employees with high levels of personal resources can manage stress-related factors like job demands better at work than colleagues who do not possess high levels of personal resources (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli, 2007). Staw and colleagues (1994) have revealed that employees who experience more frequent positive emotions are generally more socially integrated within the organization, which results in higher levels of engagement and citizenship compared to those who experience fewer positive emotions. Thus, it could be stated that workers possessing higher levels of psychological capital may intensify their investment of energy at their job and boost their efforts to become more and more involved in their work.

Future implications

Since hope was found to be highly correlated with work engagement, the emphasis on hope in intervention studies could be made. Pre and post comparison of scores could be done to assess the impact of intervention programs designed to enhance hope. Psychological capital could have a crucial role in the selection of human resources. Additionally, assessing a person's belief in himself/herself to execute a task could be a valuable input into the selection decision. The four elements of psychological capital (optimism, resilience, hope and self-efficacy) could be targeted to design interventions related to enhancing personal resources. Researchers, such as Luthans et al. (2017) are already designing gamification and recommending use of apps such as "Happify" to enhance psychological capital, which can eventually result in increased work engagement levels as well.

CONCLUSION

This study assessed the linkage between psychological capital, its sub-dimensions and work engagement; the effect of demographic characteristics (age and designation) on work engagement. Results revealed that the relationship between psychological capital along with its sub-dimensions was positive and significant with work engagement. Among the sub-dimensions, hope was a highly correlated variable and the best predictor of work engagement. However, the linkage between demographic characteristics (age and designation) and work engagement was non-significant. This indicates that psychological capital has a significant role in the engagement levels of the employees regardless of the differences in demographic factors like age and designation. It is crucial for an organization to recognize the personal resources of the workers as powerful contributors to a company's competitive position.

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Conflict of Interest

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