

# EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE WELLBEING ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE: EVIDENCE FROM NORTH INDIAN TEXTILE SECTOR

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## ABSTRACT

*Employee wellbeing has grown in prominence as a focus of organisational research. As a result, the present study focuses on employee wellbeing and also its relationship with employee engagement and work-life balance. Data for this study has been collected through the use of a self-structured questionnaire. One hundred seventy (170) participants were considered for the study working in the textile industry. For analysing the impact and relationship between employee wellbeing, engagement and work-life balance, the correlation matrix and regression analysis were employed. The results indicated that employee wellbeing is a significant predictor of employee engagement and work-life balance. The study suggests that organizations should take steps to help employees achieve greater work-life balance, which in turn will boost employee wellbeing and productivity. As a result, managers should prioritise remote work arrangements that allow workers to balance work and family life in this new setting. Additionally, when employees believe that attempts are being done to improve their wellbeing, they will be more engaged and productive. These findings are vital for managers seeking to improve the performance of organisations through enhanced wellbeing and productivity.*

**Keywords:** Employee Engagement, Employee Wellbeing, Employee Productivity, Work-Life Balance, Textile Industry

## INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has revealed fragile economies and significant “political, economic, and social” difficulties globally, posing new demands for organisations to maintain vitality, survival, rapid response, and change in output and workforce management (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Organisations must make every effort to assist their employees in adjusting to their new transformed work styles and personal realms (Chawla *et al.*, 2020). Even though employee wellbeing, engagement and work-life balance have garnered considerable academic attention, current research in these areas is becoming vital.

The workplace is a significant part of an individual’s life that impacts both individual and community as a whole (Harter, Schmidt & Keyes, 2003). The average adult devotes a significant portion of his or her life at work, possibly a quarter

or even a third of his or her waking hours; it becomes their predominant community and for some personnel, work and peers have replaced family or social groups. For many people, the job has evolved into a focal point of the community. Wellbeing has become a key component of organisational research. Nonetheless, to keep people happy and productive at their jobs, it is vital to improve their overall wellbeing at work. The health and wellbeing of employees are in the best interests of both communities and businesses. Reduced wellbeing and the negative effects it has on people's lives and careers, including turnover, are very expensive for businesses, so managers work to create programmes that will improve employee wellbeing (Imran *et al.*, 2020). Employee wellbeing, engagement and work-life balance policies are important factors determining the organisations performance and productivity.

The present study is being conducted among textile employees as it is one of the oldest industries which employs around 45 million people in India. Therefore, it becomes important to study their work-life patterns and how much they find themselves committed, loyal and engaged towards their work. The aim of this research article is to determine the impact of employee wellbeing on employee engagement and work-life balance. Employee wellbeing is chosen as a predictor variable to see how well it predicts engagement and work-life balance.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Employee Wellbeing

The notion of employee wellbeing advocates the benefits to organisations of having productive and healthy personnel (Cooper & Robertson, 2001). It is a significant researchers and practitioners endeavour because of its relationship to performance and retention. It may also be used to assess the return on investment of wellbeing programmes. Page and Brodrick (2009) defined employee wellbeing in terms of subjective wellbeing, wellbeing at work, and psychological wellbeing. Similarly, Warr (1999) defined employee wellbeing as job-specific *i.e.*, how employees feel about themselves on the job (job satisfaction) and context-specific wellbeing, which encompasses feelings in any situation (life satisfaction). Further, wellbeing is categorised into psychological affective wellbeing which stresses the relevance of one's feelings about life and the

cognitive elements influencing one's quality of living which seem to be related to an individual's sense of his or her level of wellbeing (Warr, 2002). Employee wellbeing has been defined as "providing an environment that promotes a feeling of contentment, allowing an employee to develop and reach their maximum potential for themselves and their company" (CIPD, 2007). In another study, Currie (2003) defined employee wellbeing as the combination of a worker's happiness, physical health and mental wellbeing. To ensure an organisation's sustainability, it must promote employee wellbeing to improve the performance and productivity.

Employee wellbeing is an important aspect that not only determines the organisation's effectiveness in the long run but is also found to be significantly influencing the productivity of employees (Robertson & Cooper, 2010). Several researchers have linked employee wellbeing with intention to stay (Aboobaker *et al.*, 2018), job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Warr, 1999), workplace spirituality (Garg, 2017), reduced stress (McCarthy *et al.*, 2011) and psychological wellbeing (Shuck & Reio, 2014). Garg (2017) argued that for attaining employee wellbeing one has to be spiritually connected to it. Further, she added that commitment, contentment and work-life balance cannot be attained without spirituality at the workplace. The International Labour Organization show a clear association between output levels and the overall health and wellbeing of the workforce. Businesses and organisations are increasingly recognising the need of prioritising their employee's wellbeing. Successful organisations flourish because they recognise that their most valuable asset is their human capital, or personnel. Other firms are beginning to address these issues as many workplaces concern stem from employer's lack of commitment to their employee's needs. Employee wellbeing issues such as "stress, bullying, conflict, alcohol, drug misuse and mental health problems" can arise as a result of failing to prioritise employee wellbeing (International Labour Organization, 2009). Platts *et al.* (2022) in their study reported that employee wellbeing has been affected severely during COVID-19 pandemic. The employees were suffering from serious mental health problems, conflict at work, experiencing sleeping disorders and workplace stress. Further, they revealed that lockdown at home can be very different for different groups. Employers can use

this information to monitor employee wellbeing in times of crisis. While personal characteristics cannot be controlled, employee leadership and the structure of work can be positively regulated. Effective flexible work practices will contribute to the development of a more resilient workplace.

### **Employee Engagement and Employee Wellbeing**

Employee engagement is one of the important factors gaining a competitive advantage over other organizations. Employee engagement refers to the degree to which employees identify themselves cognitively and emotionally committed to their work (Anitha, 2014). The notion of employee engagement refers to “the psychological state that accompanies the behavioural investment of personal energy” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). There are several factors determining employee engagement including the work environment, teamwork, leadership, compensation, organisational policies, workplace wellbeing, training and development (Anitha, 2014). Moreover, employee wellbeing has been identified as one of the determinants of employee engagement.

The wellbeing of employees benefits not only the firm but also the community as a whole. Employees spend the majority of their waking hours at work, where they form close friendships, learn useful values and contribute significantly to society as a whole. Therefore, employers should promote employee wellbeing (Harter *et al.*, 2002) which encourages an organisation’s healthy and productive workforce (Cooper & Robertson, 2001). Increasing attention is being paid to the notions of employee wellbeing and engagement around the world. Employee engagement has been a key issue over the previous decade and survey-based research frequently verifies this (Cooper & Robertson, 2001). Employees who are engaged seems to be more productive, stay with their present organisation and interact well with consumers. Several studies suggested that there is a link between engagement and wellbeing (Shuck & Reio, 2013). Schaufeli (2015) asserted that identifying the essential aspects within a working atmosphere encourages the growth of engagement and inspire wellbeing which is a viable topic of immediate inquiry. The investigation of psychological workplace atmosphere and its relationship with engagement and performance is one such area of study. Psychological workplace climate research is aimed

at elucidating how employees perceive their organisation’s environment and how that perception determines results (Brown & Leigh, 1996). As a result, how employees perceive their workplace has a direct impact on their sense of wellbeing and level of engagement (Shuck *et al.*, 2013). Companies may suffer as a result of low morale and productivity among their workers experiencing low levels of engagement. Shuck and Reio (2013) argued that highly engaged employees experience greater psychological wellbeing and a sense of personal success, whereas less involved employees experience more emotional tiredness and a sense of disconnection. Jovanovic and Lugonjic (2022) discussed challenges brought by COVID-19 affecting the engagement and wellbeing of employees. They asserted that employees were experiencing anxiety, partly as a result of a menace to physical wellbeing and the inability to sustain a balance between work and life, which has been exacerbated by new conceptual frameworks, increased and hastened digitisation of work and economic insecurity.

### **Work-Life Balance and Employee Wellbeing**

The relevance of employee wellbeing and work-life balance has been emphasised in prior research (Mishra & Kapoor, 2017). According to previous research, one key condition for enjoying wellbeing is employee’s work-life balance (Boxall, 2014) because it enhances their productivity. Similarly, firms that care about employees can improve, stabilising work and personal lives by implementing HRM policies, establishing effective work-life balance strategies and focusing more on factors that influence employees’ ability to achieve a balance between personal and professional life, thereby ensuring wellbeing (Ollier-Malaterre & Foucreault, 2017). With increased emphasis placed on employee wellbeing and work-life balance, understanding the connections between these areas and figuring out the best ways to offer the most benefits not just for the person but also for the organisation is crucial.

Work-life balance is a goal for both organisations and individuals since it promotes employee’s health and wellbeing, which in turn benefits performance and enhances productivity at the individual and organisational level. Earlier studies have shown an association between the wellbeing of employees, the ability of an individual to maintain the relationship between the work-life balance policies,

and the organisation's support for these policies (Stankeviciene, *et al.*, 2021). Likewise, Moen *et al.* (2016) in their study investigated the relationships between the team and individual-level employment situations, work-family conflict, and four mental health outcomes using multilevel data on 748 high-tech professionals who work in 120 teams. In their research, they establish that work-family conflict such as decreased job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion, has a social structure that is shared across teams. Individual beliefs about their workplace conditions are more predictive of work-family conflict and mental health than team beliefs about their job conditions. Work-family conflict can help to bridge the gap between job expectations and mental health results. Consequently, efforts to promote work-life balance, particular time patterns may emerge which will be beneficial to employee's wellbeing and productivity (Wood, 2018). Ayar *et al.* (2022) analysed the impact of work life balance and work addiction on the wellbeing of health care professional during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study demonstrated the loss of work-life balance has a big impact on the lives and behaviours of people who work in health care. They have been affected by various factors such as inflexible working hours, rotational shifts, conflicts, stress, absence of ergonomics and poor salaries. Moreover, research indicated that male healthcare practitioners faced major issues as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Stankeviciene *et al.* (2021) stated that dimensions of workplace culture played a substantial role in determining employee wellbeing, had a large significant impact on wellbeing and enhanced work-life balance. Similarly, the direct influence of organisational culture on wellbeing was much greater than the indirect effect of work-life balance. However, research indicates that family-friendly environments might help employees improve their work-life balance, resulting in increased job satisfaction and wellbeing.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study has been performed to assess the level and impact of employee wellbeing on employee engagement and work-life balance in the textile sector.

1. To identify the degree to which employee wellbeing affects the level of employee engagement.

2. To identify the degree to which employee wellbeing affects the level of employee work-life balance.

Based on the aforementioned objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated for testing:

**H<sub>a1</sub>:** There is a significant difference between employee wellbeing exhibited by male and female employees.

**H<sub>a2</sub>:** There is a significant difference between employee engagement exhibited by male and female employees.

**H<sub>a3</sub>:** There is a significant difference between work life balance exhibited by male and female employees.

**H<sub>a4</sub>:** Employee engagement is significantly related to employee wellbeing.

**H<sub>a5</sub>:** There is a significant impact of employee wellbeing on employee engagement.

**H<sub>a6</sub>:** Work-life balance is significantly related to employee wellbeing.

**H<sub>a7</sub>:** There is a significant impact of employee wellbeing on work life balance.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sample Framework

The research is descriptive in nature. The data has been collected through a self-structured questionnaire. To collect data, 250 questionnaires were distributed. One hundred seventy completed questionnaires were returned, with a 68 per cent response rate. The demographics of the participants were age, gender, and employment level. Consequently, the research included 170 employees working in the Panipat textile industry. There were 90 males (52.9 per cent) and 80 females (47.1 per cent) participants. According to data collected on levels of employment, 61 (35.9 per cent) of the respondents were middle-level employees, while 109 (64.1 per cent) of respondents were lower-level employees. The study discovered that approximately 7 per cent of the entire sample examined were under the age of 20. 47 per cent of respondents were between the age of 20–30 years, 14 per cent were between the age of 30–40 years, 24 per cent were between the age of 40–50 years, and the remaining 7 per cent were between the ages of 50–60 years. Sixty-seven per cent of participants were married, 32 per cent had 5–10 years of

experience, and 20 per cent were single. Additionally, 35 per cent of respondents were from the medium level, while 64 per cent were from the lower level.

### Instruments for Data collection

The demographics of the participants were age, gender, marital status and employment level. Additionally, they completed the "Utrecht Work engagement scale" (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003), Work-related wellbeing (Orsila *et al.*, 2011), and Work-life balance instrument (Brough *et al.*, 2009; Hill *et al.*, 2001). All the scales are assessed on a five-point Likert scale ("1 = strongly disagree; to 5 = strongly agree"). The Utrecht work engagement comprises 9 items to measure three dimensions "vigour, dedication, and absorption". The Work-related wellbeing (Orsila *et al.*, 2011) is a 16-item measure of nine factors (autonomy, innovation and flexibility, integration, performance feedback, supervisory support, and job satisfaction) is employed to measure employee wellbeing and the work-life balance scale was adapted from Brough *et al.* (2009) and Hill *et al.* (2001) comprise 8 items.

### DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

The study discusses the descriptive statistics for three variables, namely employee wellbeing, employee engagement, and work-life balance. The correlation matrix sheds light on the relationship between these variables. Regression analysis is used to assess the strength of correlations between variables and predict their future interactions. As a result, regression correlation analysis is frequently utilised to investigate the relationship between the dependent and independent variable i.e., employee wellbeing, engagement, and work-life balance.

### Descriptive Statistics

To understand the nature and level of employee wellbeing, employee engagement and work-life balance along with their demographics, descriptive statistics were used. Results in table 1 indicated that employee wellbeing increases with age while decreasing with the marital status of those who work for the organisation. This research suggests that as people age, their awareness and comprehension of employee wellbeing may improve. Perhaps, when employees were married, they were burdened with more added responsibilities which resulted in decreased employee wellbeing and engagement on contrary

contended with work-life balance policies. Additionally, it is noted that employee engagement is more important for lower-level employees. As a result, medium-level employees have a greater sense of wellbeing and work-life balance; as a matter of fact, lower-level employees were more committed and engaged than middle-level employees.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics and Nature of Organisation Based Statistics**

Variable	Category	Employee wellbeing	Employee Engagement	Work-life balance
Age	Above 18 years	3.75	3.42	3.25
	20-30 years	3.00	2.99	3.46
	30-40 years	3.13	2.96	3.38
	40-50 years	3.10	3.02	3.41
	50-60 years	3.58	3.58	2.92
Marital Status	Married	3.12	3.03	3.48
	Single	3.16	3.15	3.18
Employment	Middle level	3.41	2.98	3.45
	Lower level	2.98	3.11	3.35

In order to measure whether a significant difference exists between employee wellbeing, employee engagement and work life balance of male and female employees, independent t test was applied.

**Table 2: Independent T- test (IV- Gender, DV- Employee wellbeing, Employee engagement, Work-life balance)**

Variables	Gender	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	P-value
Employee Wellbeing	Female	3.34	.434	-.588	168	.918
	Male	3.38	.407			
Employee Engagement	Female	2.80	1.45	2.30	168	.022
	Male	3.30	1.36			
Work Life Balance	Female	3.44	1.29	-5.00	167	.676
	Male	3.34	1.31			

The results revealed that there was no significant effect for employee wellbeing,  $t(168) = -.588$ ,  $p = .91$ , despite male employees ( $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = .407$ ) attaining slightly higher wellbeing than female employees ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = .434$ ) rejecting the hypothesis 1.

Similarly, there was significant effect for employee engagement,  $t(168) = 2.30$ ,  $p = .02$  despite male employees ( $M = 3.30$ ,  $SD = 1.36$ ) attaining higher level of engagement than female employees ( $M = 2.80$ ,  $SD = 1.45$ ) indicating male employees were

emotionally committed and loyal towards their jobs. Thus, accepting the hypothesis 2.

On the other hand, there was no significant effect for work life balance,  $t(167) = -.500, p = .676$ , despite female employees ( $M = 3.44, SD = 1.29$ ) attaining higher work life balance than male employees ( $M = 3.34, SD = 1.31$ ) rejecting the hypothesis 3 as shown in table 2. This indicates that female employees were more satisfied with prevailing work life balance policies in organisation than male employees. This finding is consistent with Ayar *et al.* (2022).

**Inferential Statistics**

**Table 3: Correlation Matrix, Mean, SD and Cronbach alpha**

Variable	Mean	SD	EW	EE	WLB
EW	3.14	1.41	(0.72)		
EE	3.06	1.42	.924**	(0.77)	
WLB	3.38	1.30	.427**	.484**	(0.76)

Source: Primary Data  
Notes: 1. EW: Employee Wellbeing; EE: Employee Engagement; WLB: Work-life  
2. Cronbach's alpha is in parentheses, \*\* $p < 0.01$ .

The correlation matrix and Cronbach alpha values are shown in Table 3. Cronbach alpha values greater than 0.70 are considered reliable. The correlation matrix shows that all the variables are correlated and significant. The correlation between employee engagement (EE) and employee wellbeing (EW) is .924, significant at  $p$ -value-0.000. Thus, the hypothesis 4 is accepted. Likewise, the correlation between work-life balance (WLB) and employee wellbeing (EW) is .427 which is also significant at  $p$ -value – 0.000. Therefore, alternative hypothesis 6 is accepted. The correlation between employee engagement and work-life balance is .484 and significant. It implies that an increase in the level of employee wellbeing will lead to a higher level of employee engagement and work-life balance. As a result, hypothesis 5 is accepted. Moreover, to measure the impact of employee wellbeing on employee engagement and work-life balance, multiple regression was employed.

**Multiple Regression Analysis (Employee Engagement and Employee Wellbeing)**

The regression results are depicted in table 4, the value of  $R^2$  is .854 suggesting that employee wellbeing accounts for 85.4 percent of the variation in employee engagement. On the other hand, the ANOVA results show that F value ( $F = 981.8$ ) with a sig. value of .000 less than 0.005, indicating that

employee wellbeing predicts employee engagement.

**Table 4: Regression and ANOVA results**

Model Summary				ANOVA	
R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Errors of the Estimate	F	Sig. F
.924 <sup>a</sup>	.854	.853	2.94097	981.988	.000

a. Dependent variable: Employee engagement

**Table 5: Regression Coefficients for Employee Engagement**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
	B	SE			
(Constant)	16.452	1.346		12.220	.000
EW	1.612	.051	.924	31.337	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee wellbeing (EW)

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement (EE)

Employee Engagement predicted =  $16.452 + 1.612*$ , as seen in table 5, suggests a significant relationship between employee wellbeing and employee engagement. So, for every unit increase in employee wellbeing, a 1.612 unit increase in employee engagement is predicted. Employee wellbeing was shown to be statistically significantly related to employee engagement. This leads to the acceptance of an alternative hypothesis 6. The results depicted that employee engagement impacts employee wellbeing. These findings are in line with previous studies (Truss *et al.*, 2013; Shuck & Reio, 2013; Soh *et al.*, 2016).

**H<sub>a7</sub>:** There is a significant impact of employee wellbeing on work life balance.

The regression results are depicted in table no.6, the value of  $R^2$  is .182, suggesting that employee wellbeing explains 18per cent of the variation in work-life balance, but the significant value is .000 smaller than 0.05, indicating that employee wellbeing predicts work-life balance.

**Table 6: Regression and ANOVA Results**

Model Summary				ANOVA	
R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Errors of the Estimate	F	Sig. F
.427 <sup>a</sup>	.182	.178	6.32446	37.501	.000

a. Dependent variable: Work-life balance

**Table 7: Regression Coefficients for Work-Life Balance**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
	B	SE			
(Constant)	11.485	2.895		3.967	.000
EW	.678	.111	.427	6.124	.000

a. Predictors: Employee Wellbeing (EW)

b. Dependent Variable: Work-life Balance (WLB)

As demonstrated in Table 7, the value of work-life balance in unstandardised coefficients is 11.485

+0.678\*employee wellbeing), showing a positive relationship between employee wellbeing and work-life balance. The findings indicated that employee wellbeing is significant and has a beneficial effect on work-life balance. As a result, accepting the hypothesis 7. The results of this study are in line with Kossek *et al.* (2013) and Fan & Smith, (2017).

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The results suggest that there is a positive and significant association between employee wellbeing and engagement. The findings of this study are consistent with Soh *et al.* (2016). Similarly, the findings demonstrating a significant linkage between work-life balance and employee wellbeing is consistent with Kossek *et al.* (2013). In several studies, it has been noted that the importance of employee wellbeing, engagement and work-life balance in the workplace has become increasingly recognised. However, a review of the research shows that the wellbeing of employees, their engagement level and ability to maintain a work-life balance are all related. The study established that employee wellbeing is significantly related to employee engagement and work-life balance. According to our findings, organisations should take steps to help employees achieve greater work-life balance, which in turn will boost employee wellbeing and productivity. As a result, managers should prioritise remote work arrangements that allow workers to balance work and family life in this new setting. Additionally, when employees believe that attempts have been made to improve wellbeing, they will be more engaged. These findings are crucial for practitioners who want to improve employee wellbeing in order to improve organisational performance.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The current study includes several limitations. To begin with, the researcher faced the challenges of collecting data from textile employees. The sample size is not representative of whole population and the area of sampling is also small. Therefore, findings of this study cannot be generalised for whole population.

### **MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Managers need to recognise that one effective way to increase employee wellbeing and engagement is to introduce a compensation policy that is responsive to the new work environment, including both monetary and non-monetary entitlements that are more economically feasible given the current economic environment. Secondly, companies should make it easier for employees to communicate with one another, share information and build informal relationships with their co-workers and superiors. There is evidence that suggests organisational policies such as reporting high levels of wellbeing and work-life balance, are critical to improving employment outcomes. As a result, organisations must foster a culture of concern and consideration for individual employee matters. The organisations should not only make work-life balance policies available to all employees but also encourage using them in order to address different circumstances and requirements. To achieve total employee wellbeing, work-life balance policies should work in conjunction with human resource policies and organisational philosophy such as workforce planning and job redesign. Employers would be better served by helping employees build their effective coping mechanisms rather than implementing more work-life balance programs.

### **FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

Employees who are more satisfied with their lives may have a better idea of what they want to do in the future. It is necessary to have a greater understanding of the elements that influence employee wellbeing, as well as to adopt a more preventive and corrective approach to enhancing performance through mental health interventions. Another thing that needs to be done is to look into how to make work life balance better and employees more excited about their jobs. It also urges employers to explore all aspects of remote working. Thus, management must guarantee that necessary regulatory frameworks are in position, and the firm's risk is minimised while delivering company performance. Future research can be conducted on employee wellbeing in different work settings.

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