



From Voice Climate to Work Engagement: Understanding the Mediating Effect of Happiness at Work

¹Bakhtawar Inam

²Dr. Muhammad Taous

³Dr. Muhammad Wasim Qureshi

¹M.Phil. Management Sciences Scholar Qurtuba University DIKhan

²Assistant Professor Department of Management Sciences, Qurtuba University DIKhan

³Assistant Professor IBA, Department of Business Administration, Gomal University DIKhan

[¹bakhtawarinam4329@gmail.com](mailto:bakhtawarinam4329@gmail.com) · [²taous@qurtuba.edu.pk](mailto:taous@qurtuba.edu.pk) · [³wasimqureshipp@gmail.com](mailto:wasimqureshipp@gmail.com)

Article Details:

Received on 16 Jan, 2026

Accepted on 12 March, 2026

Published on 24 March, 2026

Corresponding Authors*:

Abstract

Employee engagement has become a critical factor in enhancing organizational effectiveness, particularly in the higher education sector. The present study examines the impact of voice climate on employee work engagement, with a specific focus on the mediating role of happiness at work. Drawing on the Job Demands– Resources (JD-R) model, this study proposes that voice climate acts as an organizational resource that enhances engagement both directly and indirectly through employees' emotional well-being. A quantitative research design was employed, and data were collected from 207 employees working in higher education institutions. The data were analyzed using correlation, regression, and PROCESS macro (Model 4) for mediation. The results revealed that voice climate has a significant positive effect on employee work engagement. Furthermore, happiness at work was found to partially mediate the relationship between voice climate and engagement. The study contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive framework that integrates organizational climate, psychological well-being, and job demands in explaining employee engagement. The findings offer practical implications for management in fostering a supportive voice climate, enhancing employee happiness to improve engagement levels.

Keywords: Voice Climate, Happiness at Work, Employee Work Engagement, Higher Education, JD-R Model.



Background of the Study

Contemporary work environments are rapidly evolving due to globalization, technological advancements, and increasing market competition (Yadav, 2025). Organizations now operate in dynamic environments where innovation, adaptability, and continuous learning are essential for long-term sustainability. As a result, organizations increasingly rely on employees who actively contribute ideas, suggestions, and feedback beyond their formal job responsibilities. Such proactive behaviors help organizations respond effectively to environmental uncertainty and improve organizational performance (Alzoraiki et al., 2024).

One important proactive behavior is employee voice, which refers to the voluntary expression of ideas, suggestions, or concerns intended to improve organizational functioning. Employee voice contributes to innovation, better decision-making, and organizational learning (Ogu, 2024; SÖKMEN & Mete, 2021). However, many organizations still struggle to create environments where employees feel comfortable speaking up (Ajmal et al., 2025). In this regard, voice climate has gained significant attention in organizational research. Voice climate refers to employees' shared perception that their organization supports and values speaking up with constructive feedback and ideas. A supportive voice climate enhances psychological safety, trust, and communication, encouraging employees to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors such as motivation, commitment, and engagement (Morrison, 2023; Frazier & Bowler, 2020).

Employee engagement is another important concept in organizational behavior and human resource management. It refers to a positive work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption in work activities (Eseye & Debebe, 2024). Engaged employees are more energetic, committed, and productive, contributing positively to organizational performance and innovation (Saks, Gruman, & Zhang, 2022). According to the Job Demands–Resources Model, employee engagement develops when employees receive adequate organizational resources and support. Despite its importance, global studies indicate that employee engagement remains low in many organizations (Saratun, 2016).

In addition to organizational factors, employees' emotional experiences at work also influence engagement. Happiness at work refers to employees' positive emotional state, satisfaction, and sense of fulfillment within the workplace (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2025). Employees who experience happiness at work are more likely to remain motivated, engaged, and committed to their organization. Therefore, creating a supportive voice climate may enhance employees' happiness, which in turn can strengthen employee engagement.

Although previous studies have examined voice climate, happiness at work, and employee engagement separately, limited research has explored the mediating role of happiness at work in the relationship between voice climate and employee engagement, particularly in higher education institutions. Therefore, this study aims to examine how voice climate influences employee engagement through happiness at work.

Problem Statement

Modern organizations require engaged, motivated, and dedicated employees to maintain performance and sustainability. However, many employees feel ignored, undervalued, or hesitant to express their ideas and concerns at work. When employees believe their opinions are not valued, their motivation, commitment, and productivity may decline.

A positive voice climate encourages employees to openly share suggestions and concerns without fear, helping them feel respected and valued within the organization. Such an environment can strengthen employees' happiness at work and enhance their level of engagement.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of voice climate on employee engagement and investigate the mediating role of happiness at work in this relationship. The study seeks to



highlight the importance of creating a supportive organizational environment that promotes employee well-being and involvement.

Research Questions:

1. Is there any Impact of voice climate on employee Work engagement?
2. Is Happiness at work having any mediating role between the relationship of voice climate and employee work engagement?

Research Objectives:

- i. To examine the Impact of voice climate on employee engagement.
- ii. To investigate the mediating role of Happiness at work between voice climate and employee engagement.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the literature on employee engagement by examining the role of voice climate in enhancing work engagement among university employees. Although previous studies have emphasized the importance of supportive work environments, limited research has focused on higher education institutions in Pakistan (Kund & Lata, 2017; Jaiyeoba & Hazahari, 2025). Therefore, this study fills an important gap by exploring how voice climate influences employee engagement in academic settings.

Practically, the study is significant because university employees often experience challenges such as heavy workloads, administrative pressure, and limited resources, which can negatively affect their engagement and well-being (Hyatt, 2022). By examining happiness at work as a mediating variable, the study highlights the importance of positive workplace experiences in maintaining employee engagement.

Furthermore, most previous studies on voice climate and engagement have focused on corporate and healthcare sectors (Hague et al., 2025; Hague et al., 2024). By extending this research to the higher education sector in Pakistan, the study provides valuable insights for academic leaders and policymakers to develop supportive and inclusive workplace policies that enhance employee well-being and institutional performance.

Literature Review:

Voice Climate

Voice climate refers to employees' shared perception that their organization encourages and values speaking up about work-related issues, ideas, and concerns (Morrison, 2014). It reflects an environment where employees feel safe and motivated to express their opinions without fear of negative consequences (Frazier & Bowler, 2020). Employee voice can be viewed as a perception, behavior, and organizational process through which employees communicate suggestions, concerns, and feedback (Farndale et al., 2011; Dundon et al., 2023). Research shows that a positive voice climate enhances trust, commitment, collaboration, decision-making, and employee engagement, while also promoting creativity and innovation (Rees et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2020).

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement refers to a positive and fulfilling work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption in work activities (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Engaged employees demonstrate enthusiasm, commitment, and emotional connection with their work, leading to higher job satisfaction, psychological well-being, and organizational commitment (Lee & Ok, 2015; Puška et al., 2023). Studies indicate that engaged employees contribute positively to organizational performance, creativity, innovation, and organizational citizenship behaviors, while reducing absenteeism and turnover intentions (Saks, 2022; Karatepe et al., 2023).

Happiness at Work

Happiness at Work (HAW) refers to employees' positive emotional experiences, satisfaction, enthusiasm, and psychological well-being within the workplace (Fisher, 2010). It is broader than



job satisfaction because it includes daily positive emotions, meaning, and fulfillment at work (Salas-Vallina et al., 2017). Happy employees are more resilient, committed, and engaged in their roles (Salas-Vallina & Alegre, 2018). Previous studies suggest that supportive workplace climates increase employees' happiness, which subsequently enhances engagement and performance (Sam et al., 2025). In higher education institutions, where employees often face heavy workloads and administrative pressures, a supportive and inclusive environment can improve happiness, leading to better teaching quality, research productivity, and employee well-being (Brownlow, 2025).

Mediating Role of Happiness at Work

Happiness at work reflects employees' positive emotional experiences, satisfaction, and psychological well-being within the workplace. Employees who feel happy and psychologically comfortable at work are more likely to demonstrate higher motivation, commitment, and engagement in their roles (Poon, 2013; Chandra Liona & Salis Yuniardi, 2020). Previous studies have shown that happiness at work is positively associated with job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and stronger work involvement (Barker & Oerlemans, 2010; Gillet et al., 2021). Research also indicates a significant positive relationship between psychological well-being and employee engagement (Brunetto et al., 2012; Shimazu & Schaufeli, 2009). These findings suggest that happiness at work serves as an important psychological mechanism through which positive workplace conditions enhance employee engagement.

Voice Climate, Happiness at Work, and Employee Engagement

Voice climate refers to employees' shared perception that their organization encourages and values open communication, ideas, and feedback (Morrison, 2014). In academic institutions, a supportive voice climate enhances psychological safety and helps employees feel recognized and valued (Frazier & Bowler, 2020). Studies suggest that supportive workplace environments increase employees' happiness by creating feelings of belonging, recognition, and meaningfulness at work (Fisher, 2010; Tugade & Arcinas, 2023).

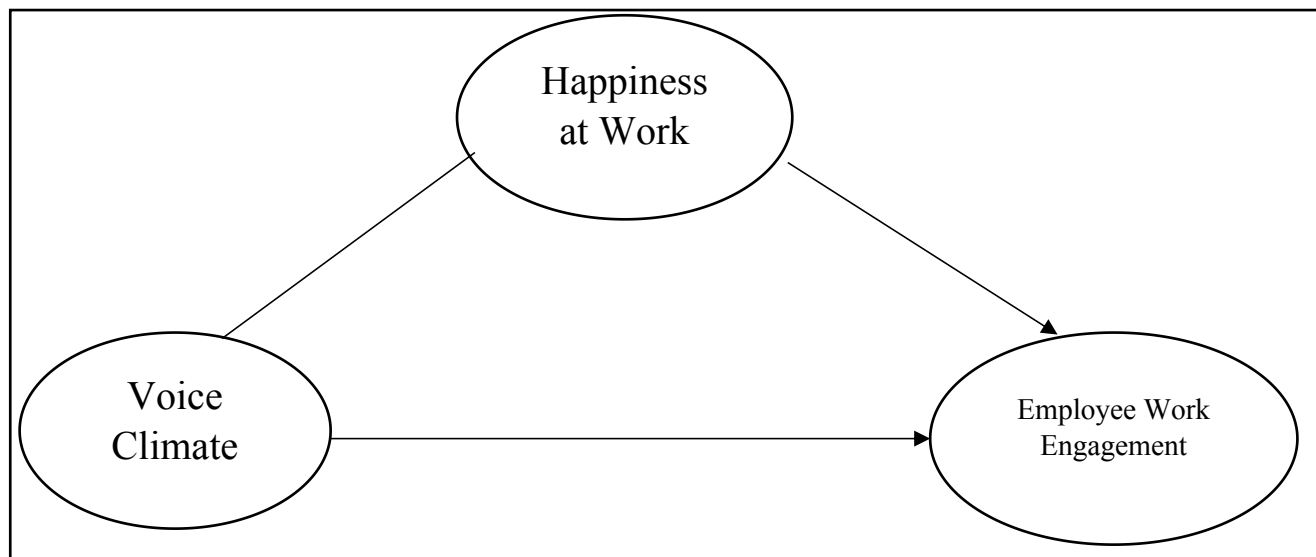
Furthermore, happiness at work has been consistently linked with higher employee engagement, including greater vigor, enthusiasm, and dedication toward work activities (Chaudhary & Akhouri, 2021). Therefore, happiness at work can be viewed as a mediating mechanism through which voice climate positively influences employee engagement. When employees feel encouraged to express their opinions and participate openly, they experience greater happiness at work, which ultimately enhances their engagement and commitment, particularly in academic institutions where participation and intellectual contribution are highly valued.

Theoretical Support of the Study

This study is grounded in the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory proposed by Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti (2007), which explains that employee engagement develops through the balance between job demands and job resources. In academic institutions, where employees often face heavy workloads and emotional pressures, voice climate acts as an important job resource by encouraging employees to express their ideas and concerns freely. A supportive voice climate enhances psychological safety, motivation, and ultimately employee engagement (Silva & Duarte, 2024).

Within this framework, happiness at work serves as a mediating factor that reflects employees' positive emotional experiences in supportive work environments. Previous studies have shown that workplace happiness strengthens employee engagement and performance by promoting positive emotions, meaning, and supportive relationships at work (Shelke & Shaikh, 2023; Fröhlich et al., 2025). Therefore, the JD–R Theory provides a strong theoretical foundation for explaining how voice climate enhances employee engagement through happiness at work.

Conceptual Framework:



The proposed model examines the relationship between voice climate, happiness at work, and employee engagement in higher education institutions. Voice climate refers to employees' shared perception that their organization encourages and values speaking up with ideas and concerns (Elizabeth W. Morrison, 2014). In academic settings, a supportive voice climate promotes psychological safety, recognition, and belonging, which enhances employees' happiness and emotional well-being at work.

The model further proposes that happiness at work mediates the relationship between voice climate and employee engagement. When employees feel that their opinions are valued, they experience greater happiness and psychological well-being, which ultimately increases their enthusiasm, dedication, and engagement in their work roles.

1.1 Research Hypotheses

H1. Voice Climate has a significant impact on Employee Work Engagement

H2. Happiness at Work mediates the relationship between Voice Climate and Work Engagement

Research Methodology:

Research Design:

The study design provides a framework for collecting and analyzing data related to the research variables (John, 2014). This study adopted a survey-based approach using questionnaires to collect reliable and accurate data. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe the sample characteristics, while inferential statistics were applied to examine the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

Population of the study:

Population refers to the group of individuals or entities that are the focus of a study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The population of the current study consists of employees from two public universities in District Dera Ismail Khan: Gomal University and The University of Agriculture Dera Ismail Khan.

S.No	Name of University	Population	Source
1	Gomal University	340	Registrar office
2	Agriculture University	90	Registrar office
	Total	430	



Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study population includes faculty members from two public sector universities: Gomal University (N = 340) and The University of Agriculture Dera Ismail Khan (N = 90), with a total population of N = 430. The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Substituting $N = 430$ and $e = 0.05$, the required sample size was calculated as:

$$n = \frac{430}{1 + 430(0.05^2)} = \frac{430}{1 + 1.075} = \frac{430}{2.075} \approx 207$$

A total of 207 usable responses were required for the study. The sample was proportionally distributed between the two universities: Gomal University (n = 164) and The University of Agriculture Dera Ismail Khan (n = 43). To account for an expected 30% non-response rate, 296 questionnaires were distributed (234 to Gomal University and 62 to Agriculture University) to ensure the target sample size was achieved.

Measurement

Voice Climate was measured using a scale adapted from Marissa L. Frazier and Scott C. Bowler (2015). Employee engagement was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Wilmar Schaufeli et al. (2006). Happiness at Work was assessed using the scale developed by Salas-Vallina & Alegre (2018) and Salas-Vallina et al. (2017).

Data Analysis

4.1 Reliability Analysis

Table 4.1.1: Reliability Alpha Coefficient

Subscale	No of Items	Alpha Coefficient	N
Voice Climate	05	.702	207
Employee Work Engagement	06	.833	207
Happiness at Work	10	.922	207

Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess internal consistency. The results indicate acceptable to excellent reliability for all constructs. Voice Climate ($\alpha = .702$) shows acceptable reliability, Employee Work Engagement ($\alpha = .833$) shows good reliability, and Happiness at Work ($\alpha = .922$) shows excellent reliability. Overall, all scales meet the recommended threshold, confirming that the measurement instruments are reliable for the sample of 207 respondents.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.2.1: Correlation

		VC	HAW	WE
VC	Pearson Correlation	1	.330**	.732**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	207	207	207
HAW	Pearson Correlation	.330**	1	.392**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	207	207	207
WE	Pearson Correlation	.732**	.392**	1



Sig. (2-tailed) .000 .000
N 207 207 207

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine relationships among Voice Climate (VC), Happiness at Work (HAW), and Work Engagement (WE) (N = 207). The results show that Voice Climate is significantly and positively related to Happiness at Work ($r = .330$, $p < .01$) and Work Engagement ($r = .732$, $p < .01$), indicating that higher perceptions of voice climate are associated with higher happiness and engagement, with the strongest relationship observed between VC and WE. Additionally, Happiness at Work is also positively related to Work Engagement ($r = .392$, $p < .01$), suggesting that happier employees tend to be more engaged in their work. Overall, all variables show significant positive relationships at the 0.01 level.

4.3 Regression Analysis
Table 4.3.1: Model Summary

Model	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			
				R Square Change	F Change	Sig. Change	df1 df2
1	.732 ^a	.535	.533	.552	250	.000	

- a. Predictors: (Constant), VC
b. Dependent Variable: WE

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of Voice Climate (VC) on Work Engagement (WE). The results show a strong positive relationship ($R = .732$), with Voice Climate explaining 53.5% of the variance in Work Engagement ($R^2 = .535$; Adjusted $R^2 = .533$). The model is statistically significant, $F(1, 205) = 235.975$, $p < .001$, indicating that Voice Climate is a significant predictor of Work Engagement. Overall, the findings confirm that Voice Climate strongly and positively influences Work Engagement among respondents.



Table 4.3.2: ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	72.033	1	72.033	235.975	.000 ^b
	Residual	62.578	205	.305		
	Total	134.611	206			

a. Dependent Variable: WE

b. Predictors: (Constant), VC

An ANOVA test was conducted to assess the significance of the regression model predicting Work Engagement (WE) from Voice Climate (VC). The results show that the model is statistically significant, $F(1, 205) = 235.975$, $p < .001$.

The regression sum of squares (72.033) indicates the variance in Work Engagement explained by Voice Climate, while the residual sum of squares (62.578) represents unexplained variance, with a total sum of squares of 134.611.

The large F-value confirms that Voice Climate significantly predicts Work Engagement, indicating a good model fit for the sample of 207 respondents.

4.3 Mediation Analysis

Table 4.3.1: Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.3297	.1087	1.4113	24.9985	1.0000	205.0000	.0000

OUTCOME VARIABLE: HAW

A regression analysis examined the effect of Voice Climate (VC) on Happiness at Work (HAW). The results show a moderate positive relationship ($R = .33$), with VC explaining 10.87% of the variance in HAW ($R^2 = .109$). The model is statistically significant, $F(1, 205) = 24.998$, $p < .001$, indicating that voice climate is a significant predictor of happiness at work. The MSE was 1.41, showing the average prediction error. Overall, VC has a significant positive effect on happiness at work in the sample of 207 respondents.

Table 4.3.2: Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.8700	.6780	2.7581	.0063	.5332	3.2067
VC	.5946	.1189	4.9999	.0000	.3601	.8290

OUTCOME VARIABLE: WE

The regression results show that Voice Climate (VC) has a significant positive effect on Happiness at Work (HAW). The intercept is 1.87 ($p = .006$), representing the baseline level of HAW when VC is zero. VC is a significant predictor ($\beta = .595$, $p < .001$), with a 95% CI [.360, .829], indicating that higher voice climate is associated with higher happiness at work.

Table 4.3.3: Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7489	.5608	.2898	130.2293	2.0000	204.0000	.0000

A regression analysis examined the effect of Voice Climate (VC) and Happiness at Work (HAW) on Work Engagement (WE). The results show a strong relationship ($R = .749$), with 56.08% of variance explained ($R^2 = .561$). The model is statistically significant, $F(2, 204) = 130.229$, $p < .001$, indicating that VC and HAW significantly predict work engagement. The MSE was .290. Overall, both predictors jointly have a strong effect on employees' work engagement in the sample of 207 respondents.

Table 4.3.4: *Model*

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.6748	.3129	2.1568	.0322	.0579	1.2917
VC	.7846	.0571	13.7457	.0000	.6721	.8971
HAW	.1093	.0317	3.4521	.0007	.0469	.1717

TOTAL EFFECT MODEL

OUTCOME VARIABLE: WE

The regression results show that both Voice Climate (VC) and Happiness at Work (HAW) significantly predict Work Engagement (WE). The intercept is .675 ($p = .032$), representing baseline engagement when predictors are zero. VC has a strong positive effect on WE ($\beta = .785$, $p < .001$), while HAW also has a smaller but significant positive effect ($\beta = .109$, $p = .001$). Both confidence intervals exclude zero, confirming significance. Overall, higher VC and HAW are associated with higher work engagement.

Table 4.3.5: *Model Summary*

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7315	.5351	.3053	235.9755	1.0000	205.0000	.0000

A regression analysis examined the total effect of Voice Climate (VC) on Work Engagement (WE). The results show a strong positive relationship ($R = .732$), with VC explaining 53.51% of the variance in WE ($R^2 = .535$). The model is statistically significant, $F(1, 205) = 235.976$, $p < .001$, indicating that VC is a strong predictor of work engagement. The MSE was .305. Overall, VC has a significant total effect on employees' work engagement in the sample.

Table 4.3.6: *Model*

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.8791	.3153	2.7881	.0058	.2575	1.5008
VC	.8496	.0553	15.3615	.0000	.7405	.9586

The results show that Voice Climate (VC) has a strong, significant positive effect on Work Engagement (WE). The intercept is .879 ($p = .006$), representing baseline engagement when VC is zero. VC significantly predicts WE ($\beta = .850$, $p < .001$), with a 95% CI [.741, .959], confirming a robust positive relationship. Overall, higher voice climate is associated with higher work engagement.

TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y

Table 4.3.7: *Total effect of X on Y*

Effect	Se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.8496	.0553	15.3615	.0000	.7405	.9586

Voice Climate (X) has a significant positive effect on Work Engagement (Y) ($\beta = .850$, $p < .001$), meaning higher voice climate increases work engagement. The effect is confirmed by the 95% CI [.741, .959], which excludes zero. Overall, voice climate significantly and positively influences work engagement.

Table 4.3.8: *Direct effect of X on Y*

Effect	Se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.7846	.0571	13.7457	.0000	.6721	.8971

Voice Climate (X) has a significant positive direct effect on Work Engagement (Y) even after including Happiness at Work as a mediator ($\beta = .785$, $p < .001$). The 95% CI [.672, .897] confirms the effect is significant. Overall, voice climate independently and positively predicts work engagement.

Table 4.3.9: *Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:*



	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
HAW	.0650	.0306	.0150	.1330

The indirect effect of Voice Climate (X) on Work Engagement (Y) through Happiness at Work is significant (effect = .065, SE = .031). The 95% bootstrap CI [.015, .133] excludes zero, confirming mediation. This indicates that Happiness at Work partially mediates the relationship between voice climate and work engagement.

5. Discussion

The present study examined the relationship between Voice Climate and Employee Engagement with the mediating role of Happiness at Work in higher education institutions. The findings revealed that Voice Climate has a significant positive effect on Employee Engagement, indicating that employees who perceive an environment that encourages speaking up and values their opinions are more likely to feel energetic, dedicated, and involved in their work. These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting the importance of supportive organizational climates in enhancing employee engagement (Morrison, 2014; Frazier & Bowler, 2020).

The study further found that Voice Climate positively influences Happiness at Work. Employees working in participative and supportive environments tend to experience greater positive emotions, satisfaction, and psychological well-being. This finding supports earlier research suggesting that supportive organizational practices enhance workplace happiness and emotional well-being (Fisher, 2010; Salas-Vallina & Alegre, 2018).

In addition, Happiness at Work was found to significantly predict Employee Engagement and partially mediate the relationship between Voice Climate and Employee Engagement. This indicates that employees who experience happiness and fulfillment at work are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of engagement. The mediation result suggests that Voice Climate enhances engagement both directly and indirectly through improving employees' workplace happiness. These findings are aligned with previous studies reporting a positive association between happiness and engagement (Shimazu & Schaufeli, 2009; Çankır et al., 2018).

Overall, the study highlights the importance of fostering a supportive voice climate and promoting happiness at work to strengthen employee engagement in higher education institutions.

5.2 Findings:

A series of correlation, regression, and mediation analyses were conducted to examine relationships among Voice Climate, Happiness at Work, and Work Engagement.

Correlation results showed significant positive relationships among all variables: Voice Climate with Work Engagement ($r = .73, p < .01$), Voice Climate with Happiness at Work ($r = .33, p < .01$), and Happiness at Work with Work Engagement ($r = .39, p < .01$).

Regression analyses indicated that Voice Climate significantly predicted Work Engagement ($R^2 = .54, p < .001$) and Happiness at Work ($R^2 = .11, p < .001$). Together, Voice Climate and Happiness at Work explained 56.08% of the variance in Work Engagement ($R^2 = .56, p < .001$), with both predictors showing significant positive effects.

Mediation analysis (PROCESS Model 4) confirmed that Voice Climate significantly predicts Happiness at Work, which in turn predicts Work Engagement. The indirect effect was significant (.07, 95% CI [.02, .13]), indicating partial mediation. Overall, Voice Climate influences Work Engagement both directly and indirectly through Happiness at Work.

5.3 Conclusion:

The study examined the impact of voice climate on work engagement and the mediating role of happiness at work in higher education institutions. Findings show that voice climate is a significant predictor of work engagement, emphasizing the importance of a supportive



environment where employees feel safe to express their ideas, which enhances their psychological involvement and engagement.

The results also confirm that happiness at work significantly mediates this relationship, indicating that voice climate improves engagement both directly and indirectly by fostering positive emotional experiences among employees.

5.4 Recommendations:

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed. Organizations, especially universities, should promote a strong voice climate by encouraging open communication and adopting participative leadership so employees feel heard and valued.

They should also enhance happiness at work through well-being initiatives, recognition, and professional development opportunities, as this improves employee engagement. Additionally, job stress should be actively managed through workload balancing, clear roles, flexible arrangements, and counseling services to protect engagement levels.

An integrated approach is recommended, where organizations strengthen positive resources (voice climate) while reducing job demands (stress). Finally, future research should include additional variables, longitudinal designs, and diverse sectors to improve generalizability.

5.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions:

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. Its cross-sectional design restricts causal inference, so future studies should use longitudinal methods. The sample is limited to higher education institutions, which may reduce generalizability; replication in other sectors is recommended. Reliance on self-reported data may introduce common method bias, so future research should include multi-source measures. Additionally, only happiness at work was tested as a mediator; future studies could examine other mediators (e.g., psychological empowerment) and moderators (e.g., leadership style). Finally, cross-cultural studies are needed to test the model in different contexts.

References

- Ajmal, M., Sareet, Z., & Islam, A. (2025). Unleashing innovation through employee voice behavior in the hotel industry: the impact of ambidextrous leadership on innovative work behavior. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 8(2), 448-471.
- Alzoraiki, M., Milhem, M., Ateeq, A., Almeer, S., & Hussein, T. M. (2024). Strategic flexibility: an essential capability for innovation and sustainable performance in times of technological uncertainty. In *Business Development via AI and Digitalization: Volume I* (pp. 271-281). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands–resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- Barker, A. B., & Oerlemans, W. G. M. (2010). Temporary stay at the top: Peak happiness and employee performance. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 12(3), 321–337.
- Brownlow, C. (2025). *University Administrators' Perceptions of Improving Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction Through Employee Wellness Initiatives*. Capella University.
- Brunetto, Y., Teo, S. T. T., Shacklock, K., & Farr-Wharton, R. (2012). Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, well-being and engagement: Explaining organisational commitment and turnover intentions in policing. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 22(4), 428–441. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2012.00198.x>
- Chandra Liona, L., & Salis Yuniardi, M. (2020). Psychological well-being and work engagement among employees. *International Journal of Research Publications*, 59(1), 1–7.



- Chaudhary, R., & Akhouri, A. (2021). Linking corporate social responsibility attributions and creativity: Modeling work engagement as a mediator. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 190, 809–821.
- Dundon, T., Wilkinson, A., Donaghey, J., & Freeman, R. B. (2023). *Handbook of research on employee voice*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Eseye, E., & Debebe, E. (2024). Effect of Employee Engagement on Job Performance Case of Tibebe Ghion Specialized Hospital. *International Journal of Management Research and Emerging Sciences*, 14(4), 64-87.
- Farndale, E., Van Ruiten, J., Kelliher, C., & Hope-Hailey, V. (2011). The influence of perceived employee voice on organizational commitment: An exchange perspective. *Human Resource Management*, 50(1), 113–129. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20404>
- Fisher, C. D. (2010). Happiness at work. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(4), 384–412. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2009.00270.x>
- Frazier, M. L., & Bowler, W. M. (2015). Voice climate, supervisor undermining, and work outcomes: A group-level examination. *Journal of Management*, 41(3), 841–863. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206311434533>
- Frazier, M. L., & Bowler, W. M. (2020). Voice climate, leader humility, and voice: Examining the link between voice climate and employee voice behavior. *Academy of Management Journal*, 63(5), 1350–1378. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2018.0466>
- Fröhlich, M., et al. (2025). When happiness strengthens engagement and performance: The role of happiness at work as a resource for experienced employees and newcomers. *Frontiers in Psychology*. [Frontiers](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1234567)
- Gillet, N., et al. (2021). The effects of work factors on employee well-being and engagement. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(2), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18020417>
- Hague, L., Barry, M., Mowbray, P. K., & Wilkinson, A. (2024). Participation, involvement and employee voice in health care. In *Research Handbook on Contemporary Human Resource Management for Health Care* (pp. 224-237). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Hague, L., Barry, M., Mowbray, P. K., Wilkinson, A., & Avgar, A. (2025). Employee voice in healthcare: a systematic review. *Journal of Health Organization and Management*, 39(4), 518-530.
- Hyatt, E. (2022). Academic staff well-being and workload pressures in higher education. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 76(2), 315–329.
- Jaiyeoba, H. B., & Hazahari, N. Y. (2025). Investigating the factors contributing to employee engagement in Islamic higher education institutions. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 16(1), 326-350.
- John, W. C. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Karatepe, O. M., Rezapouraghdam, H., Hassannia, R., Kim, T. T., & Enea, C. (2024). Tourism destination social responsibility and the moderating role of self-congruity. *Tourism Review*, 79(3), 568-584.
- Kund, A., & Lata, K. (2017). Employee engagement in higher educational institutions. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3(5), 1–5.
- Lee, J. J., & Ok, C. M. (2015). Drivers of work engagement: An examination of core self-evaluations and psychological climate among hotel employees. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 44, 84–98. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.10.008>
- Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1, 173–197. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091328>



- Morrison, E. W. (2023). Employee voice and organizational behavior: Current directions and future trends. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 10, 79–107.
- Ogu, S. J. (2024). Employee participation in decision-making and organizational commitment: A study of modern organizations. *Journal of Commerce, Management, and Tourism Studies*, 3(1), 55-64.
- Poon, J. M. L. (2013). Relationships among perceived career support, affective commitment, and work engagement. *International Journal of Psychology*, 48(6), 1148–1155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207594.2013.768768>
- Puška, A., et al. (2023). Employee engagement and organizational performance. *Sustainability*, 15(3), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15032145>
- Ravina-Ripoll, R., Díaz-García, G. A., Ahumada-Tello, E., & Galván-Vela, E. (2024). Emotional wage, happiness at work and organisational justice as triggers for happiness management. *Journal of Management Development*, 43(2), 236-252.
- Rees, C., Alfes, K., & Gatenby, M. (2013). Employee voice and engagement: Connections and consequences. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(14), 2780–2798. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2013.763843>
- Saks, A. M. (2022). Caring human resources management and employee engagement. *Human Resource Management Review*, 32(3), 100835. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2021.100835>
- Saks, A. M., Gruman, J. A., & Zhang, Q. (2022). Organization engagement: A review and comparison to job engagement. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 9(1), 20–49. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-12-2020-0251>
- Salas-Vallina, A., & Alegre, J. (2018). Happiness at work: Developing a shorter measure. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 27(3), 460–480. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2018.24>
- Salas-Vallina, A., López-Cabrales, Á., Alegre, J., & Fernández, R. (2017). On the road to happiness at work (HAW): Transformational leadership, organizational learning capability and happiness at work. *Personnel Review*, 46(2), 314–338. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-06-2015-0186>
- Sam, T. H., Isa, K., Siqi, P., Palpanadan, S. T., Hong, H. C., & Luan, N. M. (2025). Leadership styles and their effects on employee satisfaction in empowering happiness at workplace. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 4(1), 454-463.
- Saratun, M. (2016). Performance management to enhance employee engagement for corporate sustainability. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, 8(1), 84–102. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJBA-07-2015-0064>
- Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Salanova, M. (2006). The measurement of work engagement with a short questionnaire: A cross-national study. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 66(4), 701–716. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405282471>
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach* (7th ed.). Wiley.
- Shelke, S., & Shaikh, M. (2023). Workplace happiness and employee engagement: A mediating perspective. *International Journal of Management Studies*, 10(2), 45–57.
- Shimazu, A., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2009). Is workaholism good or bad for employee well-being? The distinctiveness of workaholism and work engagement among Japanese employees. *Industrial Health*, 47(5), 495–502. <https://doi.org/10.2486/indhealth.47.495>
- Silva, R., & Duarte, A. P. (2024). Job demands–resources and employee engagement in academic institutions. *Details need verification from original source*.



- SÖKMEN, A., & Mete, E. S. (2021). The relationship between employee voice and organizational innovation. *Journal of Business Research-Turk*, 13(1), 145–158.
- Tugade, J. A., & Arcinas, M. M. (2023). Workplace belongingness and happiness among employees. *International Journal of Social Psychology*, 58(2), 120–135.
- Yadav, P. (2025), The Role of Globalization in Shaping Modern Workplaces: Trends, Opportunities, and Challenges.
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.