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# JOB DEMANDS AND JOB RESOURCES ON WORK ENGAGEMENT MEDIATING BY JOB SATISFACTION IN JORDAN HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

Adel Ali Yassin Alzyoud

Faculty of Economics and Administrative Science Hashemite University

### ABSTRACT

This paper aims to examine the relationship between job demands-resources and work engagement mediating by job satisfaction in a sample of academics staff in Jordan. Work engagement is one of the topmost five most significant challenges for management, according to a survey of 656 chief executive officers (CEOs) from countries around the world (Wah, 1999). Work engagement has become a hot issue in recent years among consulting firms and in the popular business press. However, work engagement has infrequently been studied in the academic literature. In this study the researcher examine the relationship between job demands-resources model and work engagement in Jordanian universities. A sample of 532 respondents was collected from Jordanian public universities. The sample comprised of academic staff from different public universities. The results confirmed the relationship between job demands-resources model and work Engagement, as well as confirmed that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between job demands and job resources on work engagement.

Keywords: Work Engagement, Job Demand, Job Resources, Job Satisfaction, Higher Education.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Engagement is a significant concept for employee well-being and work behavior for numerous reasons. Firstly, work engagement is associated to positive organizational outcomes such as motivation and low turnover intention (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2003; May et al., 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Secondly, work engagement is related to positive organizational

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behavior such as personal initiative and learning (Sonnentag, 2003). Thirdly, employees who are engaged in their jobs have a tendency to be committed to their organizations, whereas those who are disengaged tend to indicate low commitment to their organizations (Blizzard, 2002).

The higher education system in Jordan has been exposed to enormous changes during the last two decades. These changes have resulted from legislation, pressures at a global level which effect on Jordan as a member of the community, and social and economic shifts within the country (Maani, 2011). Several factors contributed towards problems in higher education in Jordan, namely inequities and distortions of the system, under-prepared students from poorly resourced socio-economic and academic contexts, and declining state subsidy (Alrai, 2010;Batikhi, 2012). The aforementioned factors contributed to an overload of demands and an under-supply of response capabilities in higher education institutions (Clark, 2000), which might affect individuals' psychological experiences of their work and accordingly their distress (Nelson & Simmons, 2003).

Work engagement has become a hot area in latest years. Despite this, there remains a scarcity of critical academic literature on the topic, and relatively little is known about how employee engagement can be influenced by management (Sahoo& Mishra, 2012). Although there is a lot of attention in engagement, there is likewise a good deal of confusion. At present, there is no stability in definition (William & Schneider, 2088, Chaudhary, 2011), with engagement having been operationalized and measured in various disparate ways. The review also identifies gaps and issues that have not so far been explored, making clear the focus of where further enquiry should be. It is apparent that there is a lack of research around the predictors of engagement and whether or not interventions.

Research on the subject of the psychological foundations of work engagement will empower researchers and practitioners to understand and predict why several academics psychologically identify with their jobs.

In the context of France in 2003, Gallup findings report that worker engagement increased to 12% which indicated a 6% increase from the year before. In addition, the number of actively disengaged workers also reported an increase from 26% to 31% in 2002 and 2003 respectively. These findings show an overview of French leaders and managers in both public and private sectors. Gallup proceeded to estimate that lower productivity of actively disengaged employees costs the economy of the country around 70-104 billion Euros every year.

There were no studies have been reported on work engagement of academic staff in higher education institutions of Jordan or the factors that affect it. Moreover, there are limited prior

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studies that endeavored to examine the mediating effect of academic satisfaction in Jordan, most of the past research on higher education in Jordan which is focused only on the satisfaction of academic and its direct effect (Alhawary & Aborumman, 2011; Khasawneh, 2013). Up till now, there is no study have been shown job satisfaction in the higher education field as a mediating in the relationship between job demands-resources model (JD-R model) and work engagement in Jordan.

Therefore, the objective of this study was to examine the relationship job demands and job resources on their work engagement mediating by job satisfaction among academics in selected Jordanian higher education institutions.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Work Engagement

Over the past ten years, work engagement has obtained growing research attention (Kahn, 1992; Leiter, 2005; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2003). The earliest concept of engagement includes personal engagement was introduced by Kahn in 1990, based on the view that concepts such as organizational commitment. Kahn (1990) defines engagement as the involvement of employees' in their work roles, physically, emotionally and psychologically to the point where they have a strong emotional connection and identification with their work. More recently, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) define work engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption, which is measured independently from burnout.

The consequences of work engagement principally include positive attitudes towards work and the organization (Demerouti et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Similarly, engagement leadsto positive organizational behavior, such as displaying personal initiative, a strong motivation to learn (Sonnentag, 2003) and proactive conduct (Salanova et al., 2003).When employees are engaged with their work, there is similarity between the employees' priorities and the organizations' goals. There are indications that the degree of workengagement is positively associated with job performance (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2007). Schaufeli and Salanova (2007) conclude that engaged individuals have a well-developed ability to adequately respond to change, quickly adapt to a new environment and easily switch from one activity to another.

The review of the engagement literature reveals that there are four valid measures of work engagement. The most widely used measure of work engagement is the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli and his co-researchers (2002). Presently,

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UWES is available in 19 languages and has been used to measure work engagement in almost a hundred studies.

UWES is the most reliable and psychometrically sound measure of work engagement available to-date (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2008). Therefore, in the present study, UWES was used to assess work engagement.

In 2005, Towers Perrin published the findings from a survey of 85,000 employees from around the world Towers Perrin (2005). The detailed findings revealed a wide range in engagement levels between countries: Mexico (40%) and Brazil (31%) had the highest percentage of their workforce who were highly engaged, followed by the United States (21%) and Canada (17%), with Europe (11%) and Asia (7%) having the lowest levels of employee engagement.

The Towers Perrin Global Workforce Study conducted in May and June 2007 and released in October showed that just 21% of employees surveyed around the world are engaged in their work while 38% are either disenchanted or disengaged and the remaining 41% are only partly engaged. Clearly, employees are not exerting their full discretionary effort to meet their companies' goals and agendas and there is a significant reservoir of untapped potential, a gap which Towers Perrin has labeled the "engagement gap". A lack of employee engagement can lead to disloyalty and organizational failure (Khan, 2007).

The wide range in engagement level across countries suggests that examining cross-cultural differences in work engagement is an opportunity for further research.

### 2.2 Job Demand

Job demands are defined as those aspects of the work context that tax employees' personal capacities and are, therefore, associated with certain psychological and/or physiological costs (Bakker, Demerouti, Taris, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2003; de Jonge & Dormann, 2006).

The relationship between job demands and work engagement is less clear, due to inconsistent findings (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Some studies report positive relationships between work engagement and job demands (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003; 2005; Bakker, Van Emmerik, &Euwema, 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2008). In contrast, a number of studies have also found that job demands did not impact on future levels of engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003; Demerouti, Bakker, De Jonge, & Janssen, 2001; Hakanen, Schaufeli &Ahola, 2008; Schaufeli et al., 2009).

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Limited information is obtainable on the topic of the relationship between job demands and work engagement. However, it looks that individuals could experience work engagement despite high demands. For example, Watts et al. (1991) stated that academics were very satisfied with their jobs - despite long working hours, work overload and a shortage of support. Furthermore, Doyle and Hind (1998) found that despite long working hours and high levels of burnout amongst a sample of university lecturers, 40% of the respondents found their work intrinsically motivating, enjoyable and potentially rewarding. Kinman and Jones (2003) also pointed out that academics thrive on the fact that their work is stressful.

As indicated previously, job demands are part of the energizing process that underlines the JD-R model. This is supported by the proposition that employees who have high job demands with a lack of resources are likely to produce burnout and experience a decrease of engagement respectively (Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006). This can arise in all kinds of jobs and professions (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004). A negative relationship was found between work engagement and job demands (Fourie, Rothmann & Van de Vijver, 2008). It should also be noted that job demands (academic workload and work pressure), have been very seldom studied as antecedents of work engagement(Mauno, Kinnunen, & Ruokolainen, 2007). So, we consider that academic workload and work pressure suitable variables in this study.

In the academic context, the emergence of a so-called "knowledge economy" has changed the traditional role of the academic in a fundamental way (Blackmore, 2001). Besides teaching and research, academics have to act as entrepreneurs, facilitators, marketers and managers (Winter, Taylor and Sarros, 2000). Fisher (1994) has suggested that such a plethora of roles might simply result in role overload, a particular salient stressor for the modern academic.

Moreover, although not unequivocal, a comparison between nine countries revealed that Finnish school teachers and academic teaching staff scored the highest on work engagement (Schaufeli& Bakker, 2003). Clearly, these results warrant a further investigation into the positive work experiences of academics.

### 2.3 Job Resources

Job resources is defined as those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the work context that (1) can reduce the health-impairing impact of job demands, (2) are functional in achieving work goals, and (3) stimulate personal growth, development, and learning (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), work engagement is strongly influenced by job resources. Empirical researches have revealed that job resources are vital correlates of engagement (Mauno, Kinnunen, & Ruokolainen, 2007; Saks, 2006;

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Halbesleben, 2009), particularly under conditions of high job demands (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007). Also Job resources have been discovered to be the foremost predictors of work engagement (Bakker et al., 2008; Rothmann & Jordaan, 2006; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to the JD-R model, job resources are not only necessary to deal with job demands, but they contribute uniquely to employees' wellness.

Particularly, job resources initiate a motivational process that may lead to high work engagement and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Also, high job resources, such as social support and feedback, may reduce the effects of job demands (Demerouti et al., 2001). In previous studies, job resources, such as performance feedback have indeed been related to increased work engagement (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004; Mauno, Kinnunen, & Ruokolainen, 2007). Besides, Parker, Jimmieson and Amiot (2010) revealed that when individuals perceived high job resources, they experienced greater engagement.

In regard to the connection between job resources and work engagement; a number of studies have exposed a positive relationship between job resources which include social support, performance feedback and autonomy and work engagement in numerous settings and countries (Bakker & Demeroutti, 2007, 2008; Buys & Rothmann, 2010; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Lin, Oiling, Kan & Xin-wen, 2009; Korunka, Kubicek, Schaufeli & Hoonakker, 2009; Nahrgang, Morgeson & Hofmann, 2011; Rothmann & Joubert, 2007; Saks, 2006; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Taipale, Selander, Antilla & Natti, 2011). In contrast, in past studies, there is no study was conducted in Jordan context, particularly among academics staff. This is the main reason to study this linkage.

The JD-R model of work engagement assumes that access to a set of job resources will start leading to increase work engagement. It is strongly recommended that future research investigate the relationships between job resources and work engagement (Barkhuizen & Rothmann, 2006).

### 2.4 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as "an attitude that individuals have about their jobs, it results from their perception of their jobs and the degree to which there is a good fit between the individual and the organization" (Ivancevich et al., 1997, p.91). Several empirical studies have found satisfaction to associate positively with individuals' optimal functioning in terms of well-being, attitudes, and behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Lynch, Plant, & Ryan, 2005).

The present research aims to extend the research on job satisfaction in the work context by examining whether job satisfaction can explain the relationships between different types of job demands and job resources and work engagement. Specifically, following Schaufeli and Bakker

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(2004), we suggest that job satisfaction can explain the association between job demands, job resources and engagement. Notably, as satisfaction to be a necessary condition for individuals to thrive, it is likely that the stimulating influence of job demands, job resources on work engagement can be explained by job satisfaction. As job demands and the absence of job resources are considered to be health-impairing, satisfaction is considered to represent individuals' psychological energetic resource and to fuel individuals' well-being and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Moller, Deci, & Ryan, 2006).

In the prior literature found that job satisfaction is closely associated with organizational commitment (Clugston, 2000; Meyer et al., 2002; Yousef, 2002; Bateman and Strasser, 1984). Numerous researchers have found that job satisfaction mediates the influence of several other variables on organizational commitment (For example, William and Hazer, 1986; Mathieu and Hamel, 1989; Lok and Crawford, 2001; Yousef, 2002).

Limited studies examine job satisfaction as mediator in the relationship between job demands and work engagement. This study includes job satisfaction as a mediator in Jordanian higher education setting.

### 4. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

In general, job demands and resources are negatively related, since job demands, such as a high work pressure and emotionally demanding interactions with clients, may preclude the mobilization of job resources. Also, high job resources, such as social support and feedback, may reduce the effects of job demands (Demerouti et al., 2001). According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), work engagement is strongly influenced by job resources. The COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 1998) is a relevant theory for understanding the effects of job resources (or the lack thereof) on employees. The COR theory's central tenet is that people strive to obtain, retain and protect what they value. Examples of job resources include social support, autonomy and feedback (Hobfoll, 1989; Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Academic workload and work pressure in general are examples of job demands (Wright & Hobfoll, 2004).

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Blau, 1964) perspective is that employees who are provided with enriched and challenging jobs will feel obliged to respond with higher levels of engagement. Thus, when academicians believe that the supervisor is concerned about their welfare, has confidence in their abilities and treats them with respect, they may feel obligated to reciprocate by approaching their work with greater work engagement (Saks, 2006).

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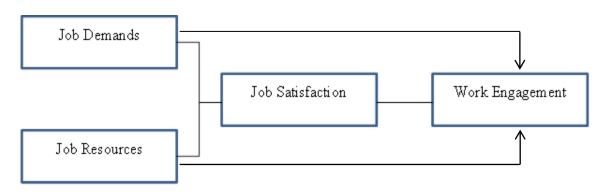


Figure: 4.1 the Research Model

### 5. METHOD

### **5.1 Participants**

The participants were academic staff from four Jordanian higher education universities (N = 532). 430 male and 102 respondents participated in this study. The average age 51.In addition, the majority of the respondents (459) were married, followed by unmarried respondents, which were 73. 223 of the respondents had below \$2000, while 286 of them had a salary amid \$2001-\$3000, but only 23 had from \$3001-\$4000. A majority of the respondents 295 respondents worked with university from 1-3 years. In addition, most of the respondents 226 were in present position from 1-3 years. All respondents were PhD degree.

### 5.2 Measuring instrument

Work engagement was measured by 17 items developed by Schaufeli and Baker (2003). In addition, academic workload was measured by 10 items developed by Boyd, Bakker, Wine field, Gillespie & Stough, 2010; Houston, Meyer & Paewai, 2006). While, work pressure was measured by 5 items developed by Karasek and Theorell (1990).

On the other hand, autonomy was measured by 3 items developed by Karasek (1985),social support was measured by 8 items developed by Karasek (1985),and feedback performance was

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measured by 4 items developed by Sims, Szilagyi, and Keller (1976). Job satisfaction was measured by using 20 items developed by Weiss, Dawis, England and Lofquist (1967).

### **6. RESULTS**

Table 1 shows the sample, mean scores, standard deviations, reliability and correlation coefficients of the study variables. The table shows that the reliability of allvariables were 0.73 and higher. The majority of the correlation coefficients were significant. Overall job demands correlated negatively with job satisfaction and work engagement, while overall job resources were positively correlated with job satisfaction and work engagement.

|   |                          | Ν   | Mean | S.D.  | α  | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5       | 6      | 7      | 8      | 9      |
|---|--------------------------|-----|------|-------|----|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1 | Overall (job<br>demands) | 532 | 2.06 | 0.517 | 86 | 1      |        |        |        |         |        |        |        |        |
| 2 | Overall (job resources)  | 532 | 3.6  | 0.49  | 73 | 200**  | 1      |        |        |         |        |        |        |        |
| 3 | Academic<br>workload     | 532 | 2.06 | 0.517 | 88 | 1.00** | .200** | 1      |        |         |        |        |        |        |
| 4 | Work<br>Pressure         | 532 | 2.42 | 0.906 | 90 | .268** | 300**  |        | 1      |         |        |        |        |        |
| 5 | Autonomy                 | 532 | 3.76 | 0.819 | 82 | -0.048 | .387** | -0.048 | 299**  | 1       |        |        |        |        |
| 6 | Social<br>Support        | 532 | 3.56 | 0.78  | 83 | 117**  | .768** | 117**  | -124** | 061     | 1      |        |        |        |
| 7 | Performance<br>Feedback  | 532 | 3.53 | 0.759 | 77 | 201**  | .601** | 201**  | -0.195 | .096*   | .118** | 1      |        |        |
| 8 | Job<br>Satisfaction      | 532 | 3.67 | 0.712 | 95 | 325**  | .380** | 325**  | 749**  | 0.279** | .194** | .271** | 1      |        |
| 9 | Work<br>Engagement       | 532 | 3.71 | 0.462 | 75 | 394**  | .394** | 394**  | 508**  | .529**  | .250** | .227** | .535** | .434** |

#### Table 1 ...

~0.03, \*\*p~0.01.

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### 6.1 Job Demands, job resources and Work Engagement

Results in the Table 2 shows that the variables found to have significant influence on the work engagement are academic workload (p .000,  $\beta = -.265$ ). Work pressure (p = .000,  $\beta = -.264$ ).

| Independent variables | Dependent variable | t     | Sig.  | Tolerance | VIF  |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|-----------|------|
|                       | Work engagement    |       |       |           |      |
|                       | Std Beta           |       |       |           |      |
| Academic workload     | 265**              | -8.5  | 0.000 | 0.901     | 1.11 |
| Work Pressure         | 264**              | -8.11 | 0.000 | 0.826     | 1.21 |
| Autonomy              | .446**             | 14.27 | 0.000 | 0.900     | 1.11 |
| Social support        | .263**             | 6.78  | 0.000 | 0.959     | 1.04 |
| Performance feedback  | .063*              | 2.07  | 0.038 | 0.945     | 1.05 |
| R <sup>2</sup>        | 0.54               |       |       |           |      |
| Adj.R <sup>2</sup>    | 0.534              |       |       |           |      |
| F change              | 122.71             |       |       |           |      |
| Sig F change          | 0.000              |       |       |           |      |
| Durbin-Watson         | 1.757              |       |       |           |      |

Finding also in the Table 2 shows that variables found to have significant influence on the work engagement, autonomy (p = .000,  $\beta$  = .446), social support (p = .000,  $\beta$  = .263) and Performance feedback (p = .000,  $\beta$  = .063).

### 6.2 Job Demands, Job resources and Job Satisfaction

This result from table 3 shows an R<sup>2</sup> value of .601, which means that job demands (academic workload and work pressure) and job resources (autonomy, social support, performance feedback), explains 60.1 percent of the variance in job satisfaction. The results in Table 3 show that the Beta value is -.111 for academic workload, while -.670 for work pressure, Beta value is .037 for autonomy, for social support is .090 and for Performance feedback Beta value is .100, which indicates that academic workload and work pressure as well as job resources have a contribution to explaining job satisfaction, In addition, academic workload and work pressure have a significant value .000, which is less than .05, which confirms that there is a significant relationship between academic workload, work pressure and job satisfaction, which also confirms that there is a significant relationship between job resources and job satisfaction. The R<sup>2</sup> is statistically significant with F = 158.44 and p <.000 as shows in table 3.

Table 2

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### Table 3

| Independent variables | Dependent<br>variable | t      | Sig.  | Tolerance | VIF  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------|-----------|------|
|                       | Job satisfaction      |        |       |           |      |
|                       | Std Beta              |        |       |           |      |
| Academic workload     | 111**                 | -3.84  | 0.000 | 0.901     | 1.11 |
| Work Pressure         | 670**                 | -22.11 | 0.000 | 0.826     | 1.21 |
| Autonomy              | .073*                 | 2.52   | 0.012 | 0.900     | 1.11 |
| Social support        | .090**                | 3.19   | 0.001 | 0.959     | 1.04 |
| Performance feedback  | .100*                 | 3.52   | 0.000 | 0.945     | 1.05 |
| R <sup>2</sup>        | 0.601                 |        |       |           |      |
| Adj.R <sup>2</sup>    | 0.60                  |        |       |           |      |
| F change              | 158.44                |        |       |           |      |
| Sig F change          | 0.000                 |        |       |           |      |
| Durbin-Watson         | 1.67                  |        |       |           |      |

Model summary of job demands-resources variables and job satisfaction

### 6.3 Job Satisfaction and Work Engagement

This result from table 6.3 shows an R<sup>2</sup> value of .286, which means that job satisfaction, explains 28.6 percent of the variance in work engagement. The finding in Table 6.3 show that the Beta value is .535 has a contribution to explaining work engagement. In addition, job satisfaction has a significant value .000, which is less than .05, which confirms that there is a positive significant relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement. The R<sup>2</sup> is statistically significant with F = 212.45 and p < .000 as shows in table 6.3. As a whole result, the predictor variable affected the dependent variable in the way hypothesized.

| Table | 3 |
|-------|---|
|-------|---|

| Independent variables | Dependent<br>variable<br>Work Engagement<br>Std Beta | t          | Sig.         | Tolerance | VIF  |
|-----------------------|--|------------|--------------|-----------|------|
| Job satisfaction      | .535**   | 14.57      | 0.00         | 1.00      | 1.00 |
| R <sup>2</sup>        | 0.286  |            |              |           |      |
| Adj.R <sup>2</sup>    | 0.285  |            |              |           |      |
| F change              | 212.45   |            |              |           |      |
| Sig F change          | 0.00   |            |              |           |      |
| Durbin-Watson         | 1.78   |            |              |           |      |
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### 6.4 Mediation

This study use regressions to test the research hypotheses. A hierarchical regression analysis was carried out in order to examine the mediating effect. The study proposed that job satisfaction mediates between job demands, job resources and work engagement.

### Table 4

| Predictors           | Std Beta | Std Beta | Std Beta                          |  |
|----------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|--|
|                      | IV→ DV   | IV→M     | $IV \rightarrow M \rightarrow DV$ |  |
| Academic workload    | 265**    | 111**    | 246**                             |  |
| Work pressure        | 264**    | 670**    | 146**                             |  |
| Autonomy             | .446**   | .073*    | .433**                            |  |
| Social support       | .263**   | .090**   | .189**                            |  |
| Performance Feedback | .063*    | .100*    | 0.046                             |  |
| Job satisfaction     |          |          | 0.177**                           |  |
| R <sup>2</sup>       | 0.54     | 0.601    | 0.551                             |  |
| adjR <sup>2</sup>    | 0.534    | 0.60     | 0.546                             |  |
| F change             | 122.71   | 158.44   | 107.341                           |  |
| Sig F change         | 0.00     | 0.00     | 0.00                              |  |
| Durbin-Watson        | 1.757    | 1.67     | 1.8                               |  |

<u>Results of mediated regression analysis for job resources, job satisfaction, work engagement</u> Predictors Std Beta Std Beta Std Beta

However, the significant relationship between job demands and work engagement decreased when job satisfaction was added to the model, academic workload ( $\beta$  change from -.265\*\* to -.246\*\*), work pressure ( $\beta$  change from -.264\*\* to -.146\*\*). Job satisfaction therefore partially mediated the relationship between job demands and work engagement.

Similarly, the significant relationship between job resources and work engagement decreased autonomy ( $\beta$  change from .446\*\* to .433\*\*), social support ( $\beta$  change from .263\*\* to .189\*\*), and Performance Feedback ( $\beta$  change from .063\*\* to .046). when job satisfaction was added to the model. Job satisfaction therefore partially mediated the relationship between job resources (autonomy and social support while performance feedback full mediated) and work engagement.

### 7. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which job satisfaction mediated the relationship between job demands-resources and work engagement of academic staff. The findings showed that job demands-resources were not only directly related to work engagement but also indirectly through their job satisfaction. The purpose of this study also was to determine the relationship between job demands and job resources on work engagement. The findings

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showed that job demands were directly related to work engagement. The result as was expected that job demands are negatively related to work engagement. The negative link between job demands and work engagement concur with past studies (Hakanen, Bakker & Demerouti, 2005; Tomic & Tomic, 2011). The findings showed that job resources were directly related to work engagement. The positive link between job resources and work engagement correspond to past studies (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, 2008; Bakker et al., 2004; Demerouti et al., 2001; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2006). The results of the study make an important theoretical contribution in this respect as no results were reported in previous studies. The finding that job resources impacted strongly on the work engagement of academics at higher education institutions provides support for the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1998). When higher education institutions do not provide sufficient job resources (e.g. autonomy, social support, and performance feedback), the consequences include withdrawal from work and reduced motivation and commitment (Hobfoll, 1998). Academics at higher education institutions are likely to be able and willing to invest in their jobs; they must have the necessary resources available. When resources are lacking, individuals cannot reduce the potentially negative influence of high job demands and they cannot achieve their work goals. Therefore, they will defend themselves against resource lost, by disengaging from their jobs. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that job resources play a significant role in the work engagement of academics at higher education institutions. Our results also add to the dearth of literature on the significant relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement of academic staff. The findings suggest that academics are likely to engage well if they have autonomy over their jobs and if they receive social support and performance feedback. Likewise, if academics staffs have these resources, they would be more satisfied in their work and achieve their personal and organizational goals.

The results from this study confirmed past intuition of some employers that if academics are engaged in their work, they would be able to contribute more towards the organization. Indeed, when academics find their work meaningful and interesting, they would be enthusiastic and happy to immerse themselves in their work and persevere to complete even the most difficult assignment. Engaged academics would be bursting with energy to complete any job that inspires them. In summary, employers should provide academics with the appropriate job resources and to satisfy them if they want academics to engage.

### 8. CONCLUSION

This study revealed that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between job demandsresources and work engagement of academics. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the relationship between job demands and work engagement were negatively

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strong predictors. Furthermore, it can be concluded also that job resources play a significant role in the work engagement of academics at higher education institutions. Three types of job resources were strong predictors of work engagement of academics, namely (autonomy, social support, and performance feedback). It seems that academics are more inclined to invest themselves in their work roles when these resources are perceived to be present in their work.

In this article, we intended to put work engagement on the research agenda by showing that engagement is predicted by typical job demands, is related to job resources and leads to higher job performance. Thus, work engagement is an important indicator of occupational well-being for both employees and organizations. Human resource managers can do several things to facilitate work engagement among their employees. This can help them not only to achieve better performance but also to increase their chances for a better career development.

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