CHAPTER – 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
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The construct of work engagement is truly multidimensional and its dynamics have been explored from various perspectives. In order to arrive at a lucid understanding of the construct from a holistic perspective a comprehensive review of literature was undertaken. The classic and the contemporary research studies clarifying various dimensions of work engagement have been carefully examined. Extant research studies have been categorized as follows:

2.1 Studies on Work Engagement as a unique construct
2.2 Studies on Measurement of work engagement
2.3 Studies on Factors affecting work engagement
2.4 Studies on Relationship of work engagement with job crafting, organizational commitment, work life balance and work stress
2.5 Studies on Engagement – performance link

Based on a careful review of previous studies, the research gaps were identified. Accordingly, the objectives of the study and hypotheses were framed.

2.1 STUDIES ON WORK ENGAGEMENT AS A UNIQUE CONSTRUCT

Engagement is an important issue, not only for academics and researchers but also for practitioners in organizations (May et al., 2004). Interest in engagement arose with the shift in focus in industrial psychology to positive organizational behavior (Rothmann & Storm, 2003; Strumpfer, 2003). Research by Schaufeli et al. (2002) stimulated studies regarding work engagement as the antipode of burnout. In order to gauge the construct validity of work engagement several definitions available in extant literature were examined and the same are presented in the following paragraphs according to similarity of content rather than chronology.

According to Bakker (2011), Kahn was one of the first to theorize about work engagement. Kahn (1990) coined the terms personal engagement and personal disengagement. The terms describe the behaviours depicting personal involvement or withdrawal during performance of work roles. He defined personal engagement as the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles. In a state of
engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally. He defined personal disengagement as the uncoupling of self from the work role. According to Kahn (1990) people can use varying degrees of their selves, in the roles they perform. The more people draw on their selves to perform their roles, the more stirring are their performances. Kahn (1990) based his theory upon the idea that people have an inherent tendency to protect themselves from both isolation and engulfment by alternately pulling away from and moving towards group memberships. Kahn’s conceptualization is based the premises of work redesign model of Hackman & Oldham (1980) stating that people's attitudes and behaviors are driven by the psychological experience of work. Secondly, it is also built upon individual, interpersonal, group, intergroup and organizational factors influencing organizational behavior (Alderfer, 1985). Thus, engaged employees put much effort into their work because they identify with it. According to Kahn (1990) a dynamic, dialectical relationship exists between the person who invests personal energies into one’s work role on the one hand and the work role that allows this person to express him or herself on the other hand.

Inspired by the work of Kahn (1990), Rothbard (2001) defined engagement as a motivational construct consisting of two dimensions namely attention and absorption. Attention refers to the duration of focus in work and remaining mentally preoccupied in the work role. It can be gauged from the time spent in thinking about and concentrating on the work role. Absorption refers to intensity of focus. It was characterized as loosing track of time and becoming engrossed in work role. It is noteworthy that the most contemporary research on work engagement has been stimulated by research on burnout. Maslach and Leiter (1997) termed engagement as the positive antipode of burnout. They rephrased burnout as an erosion of engagement with the job. In the view of these authors, work engagement is characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy, which are considered the direct opposites of the three burnout dimensions namely exhaustion, cynicism and lack of professional efficacy respectively.

Schaufeli et al. (2002) partly agreed with Maslach and Leiter’s (1997) description, but took a different perspective and defined work engagement in its own right. They stated that burnout and engagement are not perfectly negatively correlated. An employee who is not burned-out may score high or low on
engagement, whereas an engaged employee may score high or low on burnout. Furthermore, they considered burnout and engagement on two independent dimensions namely activation and identification. On the lowest end of activation continuum lies exhaustion and on its highest end lies vigour. Identification ranges from cynicism on the lowest end to dedication on the highest end. The state of burnout is characterised by a combination of low activation or exhaustion with low identification or cynicism. Engagement is characterised by a combination high activation or vigour with high identification or dedication. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined work engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is persistent and pervasive. It is not focused on any particular object, event, individual or behaviour. Work engagement consists of three dimensions namely vigour, dedication and absorption. Vigour at work is reflected in the form of high levels of energy and mental resilience, the willingness to make efforts, persistence even in the face of difficulties and not being easily fatigued. Dedication is characterised by deriving a sense of meaning from one’s work, feeling enthusiastic and proud of the job while being inspired as well as challenged by it. Absorption is manifested as the incumbent being totally and happily immersed in one’s work to the extent of having difficulties detaching oneself from it. In a state of absorption, one forgets everything else that is around, feels that time passes quickly, so much so that while at work one looses the sense of time.

Harter et al. (2002) defined engagement as the combination of individual’s involvement, satisfaction and enthusiasm for work. Colbert et al. (2004) defined engagement as a high internal motivational state. Wellins and Concelman (2005) considered it to be a synthesis commitment, loyalty, productivity and ownership. They termed it as an illusive force that motivates employees to higher levels of performance. They addressed it as a desirable energy similar to organizational commitment, job ownership, high levels of discretionary effort, passion and excitement for work. Fleming and Asplund (2007) drew a similarity between employee work engagement and customer engagement as both are characterized by confidence, pride, integrity and passion. In a joint survey by the consultants HR Anexi and Blessing White (2008) engagement was defined in terms of an individual’s personal satisfaction in the role and contribution to the company’s success. Full engagement represents an alignment of maximum job satisfaction with maximum job contribution.
Establishing a constructive critique of such definitions, Macey and Schneider (2008) observed that many HR consultants avoid defining the term, instead refer only to its presumed positive consequences. The question remains as to whether engagement is a unique concept or merely a repackaging of other constructs. Newman et al. (2011) stated that engagement actually commits the jangle fallacy, in which apparently similar constructs measuring like nomological networks are labeled unique from one another (Kelley, 1927). They raised a fundamental question as to whether employee work engagement is different from an overall job attitude. Macey and Schneider (2008) and Shuck et al. (2013) discretely established work engagement as a unique concept, despite its seeming similarity with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement and workaholism as detailed in the following paragraphs.

Several authors defined engagement as a satisfaction-related concept (Fleming & Asplund, 2007; Harter et al., 2002; Wagner & Harter, 2006). Harter et al. (2002) defined engagement as “satisfaction-engagement,” implying that engagement and satisfaction with one’s work are conceptually the same. Furthermore, practitioner based models (Towers Watson, 2014) defined engagement as having rational and cognitive elements, suggesting that engagement and satisfaction are similar. On the contrary Erickson (2005) pointed out that, engagement is a gradually forward moving state whereas satisfaction is stationary and indicates fulfillment. Satisfaction is characterized by contentment and the fulfillment of human needs through organizational means. This suggests that while satisfaction connotes fulfillment, engagement connotes urgency, focus, and intensity (Macey et al., 2009).

Fleming, et al. (2005), Gallup Organization researchers used the term ‘committed employees’ as a synonym for engaged employees. The Corporate Executive Board (2004) observed that engagement is the extent of employee commitment to someone or something in their organization, the level of hard work they put in and how long they stay in the organization as a result of that commitment. According to Saks (2006) commitment is a person’s attachment or attitude towards an organization. Engagement is not an attitude but rather a state and operationally speaking, it is the level upto which persons are attentive and absorbed in their work (Saks, 2006). Comparing both, Kahn (1990) observed that
organizational commitment is comparatively stable over time, while engagement is subject to variations as employees interpret and interact with a lot of environmental stimuli in the workplace.

Work engagement has been often likened with job involvement. According to Brown (1996), job involvement indicates a state of self engagement in the job. On the contrary, Salanova et al. (2005), observed that job involvement is a part of engagement but not equivalent to it. From the perspective of May et al. (2004), engagement is as an antecedent to job involvement indicating that individuals who experience high level of engagement in their roles should identify with their jobs. It was further observed that job involvement is a cognitive judgment about the job, which is anchored to self-image (Saks, 2006), whereas work engagement is a wider, more inclusive construct consisting of energy and enthusiasm towards the job (Christian et al., 2011; Kahn, 1990; Rich et al., 2010).

Another interesting investigation is that of the perceived similarity between work engagement and workaholism, thus, answering the question whether engaged employees are workaholics. The term workaholism was coined by Oates (1971), who described it as the urge, compulsion or the uncontrollable need to work persistently. Hence, workaholics tend to spend an exceptional amount of time to work and incessantly think about work, even when not working. Hence, it can be inferred that that workaholics are obsessed with their work. Simply opposite to these characteristics, the behavioral characteristics of engaged employees show that they are not addicted to work (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). Unlike workaholics, they enjoy doing things outside work, do not feel guilty when not working and do not work hard because of a strong and irresistible inner drive. Rather, the engaged employees work because they enjoy doing so.

Bakker (2011) clarified that work engagement is different from work-related flow. Engagement refers to a longer performance experience whereas flow typically refers to a peak experience that may last only an hour or even lesser than that. He further stated that work engagement is different from motivation as it refers to cognition and affect in addition to motivation.

Thus, on the basis of the comparison made in the preceding paragraphs, engagement is clearly established as a novel and unique concept. Studies quoted here provide substantial empirical evidence of employee work engagement being a
distinct construct. Further, it is worth mentioning that Rich et al. (2010) established that performance-related outcomes were better predicted by work engagement as compared to job involvement, job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation. They found that engagement is the concurrent investment of cognitive, affective and bodily energies into performance-related outcomes representing something exclusive, differentiating engagement from other potentially related variables. Engagement is now an established term in both managerial and academic literature and appears unlikely to be forsaken as a fad (Guest, 2013).

2.2 STUDIES ON MEASUREMENT OF WORK ENGAGEMENT

Measurement of any phenomenon is vital for framing mechanisms to increase its level or spread. For measuring employee work engagement, a 12 questions instrument developed was by Gallup Organization which has been referred by various authors as the Q12, Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA) or Gallup Engagement Index. The items measure four theoretical constructs namely, ‘what do I get?, what do I give?, do I belong? and how can we grow?’ (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999). Macey & Schneider (2008) observed that in the world of practice some measures of conditions for engagement are relabeled as measures of engagement (such as Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). Substantiating this argument further, Schiemann and Morgan (2006) observed that the focus of measurement should be on the construct of interest; if engagement is the target, then the measure should map the content of the construct. Unfortunately Gallup Workplace Audit, fails to measure up on these criteria.

Maslach and Leiter (1997) assessed work engagement by the opposite pattern of scores on the three dimensions of Maslach Burnout Inventory - General Survey (MBI-GS) developed by Schaufeli et al. (1996). The MBI-GS measures the three dimensions of the burnout-engagement range: exhaustion-energy, cynicism-involvement, and inefficacy-efficacy. The MBI-GS includes three subscales namely exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy. MBI-GS is a 16-item measure. The items are statements of job-related feelings. There are five items on exhaustion sub scale, five items on cynicism sub scale and six items on professional efficacy sub scale. All items are scored on a 7-point frequency rating scale ranging from “never” indicated by 0 to “always” indicated by 6. Example items are: “I feel emotionally
drained from my work” (exhaustion); “I have become more cynical about whether my work contributes anything” (cynicism); “At my work, I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done” (professional efficacy). Maslach and Leiter (1997) concluded that low scores on exhaustion and cynicism and high scores on professional efficacy indicate engagement. In other words, according to them engagement can be measured by opposite pattern of scores on MBI-GS.

With reference to the measurement of work engagement, Schaufeli et al. (2002) disagreed with Maslach and Leiter (1997), who stated that engagement is effectively measured by the opposite pattern of MBI scores. Instead, Schaufeli et al. (2002) argued that, by using the MBI for measuring work engagement, it is not feasible to make an empirical study of its relationship with burnout since both concepts are considered to be opposite poles of a continuum that is covered by one single instrument i.e MBI. They stated that work engagement is the positive antithesis of burnout but the structure and hence measurement of both concepts differ. Hence, Schaufeli et al. (2002) developed the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale – UWES), a self-report questionnaire to measure work engagement. It includes three dimensions namely vigour, dedication and absorption. It includes items such as: “I am bursting with energy in my work” (vigour); “My job inspires me” (dedication); “I feel happy when I’m engrossed in my work” (absorption). As far as the number of items is concerned, different versions of UWES are available namely UWES – 17, UWES – 15 and UWES-9. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) is one of the often used instrument to measure engagement as it has been validated in many countries across the world (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Schaufeli et al. (2006) developed the nine-item version of the UWES and provided evidence for its cross-national validity. UWES, is a valid and reliable indicator of work engagement that can be used for future research (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Demerouti et al.(2010) proposed another instrument for the assessment of work engagement called Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI). This instrument was developed originally to assess burnout, but includes both positively and negatively phrased items. It can be used to assess work engagement as well by recoding the negatively framed items. The OLBI includes two dimensions namely exhaustion and disengagement (from work). Contrary to MBI-GS, the OLBI encompasses not only affective domain of exhaustion but also physical and cognitive domains. This
facilitates the application of the instrument to those workers who perform physical work as well as those whose job deals mainly with processing information. Disengagement in the OLBI refers to distancing oneself from one’s work. Disengagement items concern the relationship between employees and their jobs, specifically with respect to identification with work and desire to continue in the same occupation. Disengaged employees behold negative attitudes towards their work. The reliability and factorial validity of the OLBI has been confirmed in studies conducted in Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, the USA, and South Africa.

2.3 STUDIES ON FACTORS AFFECTING WORK ENGAGEMENT

Kahn (1990) did a pioneering qualitative study on personal engagement. He interviewed summer camp counselors and members of an architecture firm in order to enquire about their moments of engagement and disengagement at work. He found that these experiences are associated with three psychological conditions namely meaningfulness, safety and availability. Psychological meaningfulness is determined by characteristics of the task, role and interactions at work. People consider work to be meaningful when they feel that their tasks are worthwhile and making a difference in the lives of others. Work that is challenging, clearly outlined, varied, creative and somewhat autonomous is perceived to be meaningful. Meaningfulness is also determined by people’s liking or disliking for the role identities that they are required to assume. There is more liking for roles which made people feel important about their status in the organization and their influence on the external world. Psychological meaningfulness is experienced when there are gratifying interpersonal interactions with co-workers and clients during task performance. Such interactions boost self-respect, self-appreciation and a sense of being valuable. According to Kahn (1990), the second determinant of personal engagement namely, psychological safety is linked with nonthreatening and predictable social situations. It is experienced when people could engage themselves in work freely, without fear of negative results to self image, career or status. Psychological safety was indicated by interpersonal relationships depicting openness, flexibility, trust, support and lack of threat. The third determinant of personal engagement, namely, psychological availability is associated with the sense of possession of the physical, psychological and emotional resources necessary for
role performance. Thus, Kahn (1990) delved deep into the factors affecting personal engagement and was successful in identifying the same.

Kahn’s (1990) model was empirically tested by May et al. (2004) who substantiated the findings that psychological meaningfulness, safety, and availability are significantly related to engagement. They found that job enrichment and role fit are positive predictors of psychological meaningfulness. Gratifying co-worker relations coupled with supportive supervisor relations positively predict psychological safety. Adherence to co-worker norms and self-consciousness negatively predict psychological safety. Availability of resources positively predicts psychological availability. Participation in outside activities negatively predict psychological availability.

As per the school of thought propounded by Maslach et al. (2001) job engagement was described as the positive antithesis of burnout. According to them, engagement is determined by six aspects of work-life namely, rewards and recognition, workload, community and social support, degree of control, perceived fairness and values. Job engagement is positively associated with work that is both meaningful as well as valued, workload that is sustainable, sense of choice and control over work, suitable recognition and rewards, a helpful work community and a sense of fairness.

Saks (2006) remarked that Kahn’s (1990) and Maslach et al.’s (2001) models do explain the conditions necessary for engagement but they do not fully explain why individuals react to these conditions with dissimilar degrees of engagement. Theoretically, he found a stronger underlying principle for explaining employee work engagement in Social Exchange Theory (SET) proposed by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005). According to this theory when there is an interaction between two or more mutually dependent parties, mutual obligations are generated. Over a period of time, mutual commitments are developed, if they abide by certain rules of exchange. For example, when organization gives economic and socio-emotional resources like pay and recognition to the individuals, employees feel obliged to pay back to the organization through their level of engagement (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). In consonance with Social Exchange Theory, Robinson et al. (2004) also described engagement as a two-way relationship between the employer and employee. Adding finer details to the factors affecting engagement, Saks (2006)
found that employee work engagement can be distinguished into two forms namely job engagement and organizational engagement. Both the forms of engagement are determined by a common factor, namely, perceived organizational support. Employees who perceive higher organizational support are more likely to reciprocate with greater levels of engagement in their job and in the organization. Specifically, job engagement is predicted by job characteristics. Those who are provided with jobs that are high on the job characteristics are more likely to exhibit greater job engagement. Those who perceive higher procedural justice are more likely to experience greater organization engagement. Thus, Saks (2006) concluded that the level of physical, cognitive, and emotional resources invested by an individual during role performance is predicted by the economic and socio-emotional resources received from the organization. Engaged employees are also more likely to have a high-quality relationship with their employer leading them to also have more positive attitudes, intentions, and behaviors.

Bakker and Demerouti (2008) proposed Job Demands and Resources Model of Work Engagement. This model is another important contribution to literature and the field of practice alike as it identifies the factors affecting work engagement. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) found that engagement is determined by typical job resources and personal resources.

Job Demands and Resources model of work engagement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008) draws upon two assumptions from the Job Demands - Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). The first assumption is that job resources result in work engagement and higher performance. The second assumption is that job resources particularly impact work engagement when job demands are high. It was built upon the work of Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) which established personal resources to be independent determinants of work engagement.

Job demands are those aspects of the job that require persistent effort or skills and are therefore related with certain physiological and/or psychological costs (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). The nature of job demands may be psychological, social, physical or organizational for example emotionally
demanding communication with clients, high work pressure and an adverse physical environment. Job resources are those aspects of the job that are imperative for reducing job demands, achieving work goals and enhancing personal development (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Demerouti et al. (2001) explained that the source of job resources may be the organization as far as pay, career opportunities and job security is concerned. Alternately, job resources may be provided by interpersonal and social relations for example support from co-workers and team climate. The manner of organizing work for example giving role clarity and participation in decision making are other forms of job resources. A job providing task significance and identity, variety of skills, autonomy and performance feedback is considered to be rich in job resources. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) found that job resources are essential for meeting job demands and important in their own right. Job resources are positively associated with work engagement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli and Salanova, 2007). Job resources namely job control, climate, supervisor support, innovativeness, information and appreciation were positively related to work engagement (Demerouti et al., 2001; Hobfoll, 2001). In comparison with other job resources tested, appreciation appeared to be the strongest predictor of all work engagement dimensions.

Personal resources are positive self-evaluations about individuals’ perception of their ability to successfully control and influence their environment (Hobfoll et al., 2003). Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) found that work engagement was predicted by three specific personal resources namely self-efficacy, organizational-based self-esteem and optimism. Results showed that engaged employees are highly self-efficacious, thus believing they have the capacity to meet a variety of job demands. Engaged workers are optimistic and resilient thus perceiving that they will generally experience positive results and bounce back soon even after meeting failures. The level of their organizational-based self-esteem is generally high due to which they believe that can gratify their needs by performing roles within the organization (Mauno et al., 2007).
The Job Demands and Resources Model of Work engagement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008) is synchronized with job characteristics theory of Hackman and Oldham (1980) which states that job resources such as autonomy, feedback and task significance lead to intrinsic motivation. This model is in agreement with Conservation of Resources (COR) theory of Hobfoll (2001). This theory states that people seek to find, protect and retain what they value. Actual or potential loss of resources results in individual stress. Job resources become more important when employees are faced with high job demands because they can help in work goal achievement.

Macey and Schneider (2008) proposed a framework illuminating the unique attributes of employee work engagement, in terms of trait, state and behavioral engagement and the factors predicting these. They found that trait engagement can be regarded as an inclination to experience the world positively with a feeling of enthusiasm. Trait engagement gets reflected in psychological state engagement. They conceptualized psychological state engagement as a precursor of behavioral engagement. Behavioral engagement is defined in terms of discretionary effort within or outside the assigned role (Erickson, 2005 and Towers Watson, 2014). According to this framework proposed by Macey and Scheider (2008), work engagement is determined by factors such as workplace environment, work attributes like autonomy, challenge, variety and transformational leadership. This is also in line with the earlier findings of Kahn (1990) and McGregor’s (1960) Theory Y, advocating a participative management style allowing people to explore their full potential. Macey & Schneider (2008) beautifully concluded that organization that get these conditions right will have an engaged workforce, which surely is a sustainable competitive edge.

Based on the studies cited in the preceding paragraphs, the commonalities in factors affecting work engagement were deduced. The common factors across all the studies came out to be job characteristics, personal resources, interpersonal relations and organizational support. Various studies used specific terms having some factors in common. Table 2.1 depicts the common factors deduced from all the studies cited in this section:
Table 2.1: Comparison of Studies on Factors Affecting Employee Work Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Common factor</th>
<th>Specific Terms used</th>
<th>Source Author</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Job Characteristics</td>
<td>Psychological meaningfulness: work that is challenging, clearly outlined, varied,</td>
<td>Kahn (1990)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>creative and somewhat autonomous is perceived to be meaningful.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Degree of control and workload</td>
<td>Maslach et al. (2001)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Job Enrichment</td>
<td>May et al. (2004)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job Characteristics</td>
<td>Saks (2006)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job Resources such as task significance and identity, variety of skills, autonomy</td>
<td>Bakker and Demerouti (2008)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work Attributes for example autonomy, challenge and variety</td>
<td>Macey and Scheider (2008)</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Personal Resources</td>
<td>Psychological availability: sense of possession of the psychological and emotional</td>
<td>Kahn (1990)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>resources necessary for role performance.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Role fit</td>
<td>May et al. (2004)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Resources for example self-efficacy, organizational-based self-esteem and</td>
<td>Bakker and Demerouti (2008)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>optimism.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Interpersonal Relations</td>
<td>Psychological safety: interpersonal relationships depicting openness, flexibility,</td>
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<td>trust, support and lack of threat.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Community and social support</td>
<td>Maslach et al. (2001)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gratifying co-worker relations coupled with supportive supervisor relations</td>
<td>May et al. (2004)</td>
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<td>Job Resources: interpersonal and social relations for example support from co-workers and team climate</td>
<td>Bakker and Demerouti (2008)</td>
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<td>S.No.</td>
<td>Common factor</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Organizational Support</td>
<td>Psychological availability associated with the sense of possession of the physical resources necessary for role performance.</td>
<td>Kahn (1990)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Suitable recognition and rewards, workload that is sustainable</td>
<td>Maslach et al. (2001)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Economic and socio-emotional resources; procedural justice</td>
<td>Saks (2006)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job Resources: source of job resources may be the organization as far as pay, career opportunities and job security is concerned.</td>
<td>Bakker and Demerouti (2008)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conditions of workplace</td>
<td>Macey and Scheider (2008)</td>
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### 2.4 STUDIES ON RELATIONSHIP OF WORK ENGAGEMENT WITH JOB CRAFTING, WORK LIFE BALANCE, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND WORK STRESS

Various studies reveal that high levels of work engagement are associated with high levels of performance, citizenship behaviour and individual wellbeing (Christian et al., 2011). Engaged employees are passionate and always try to go an extra mile in doing their work. It necessitates a deeper analysis of the relationship of work engagement with job crafting, organizational commitment, work life balance and work stress.

An important aspect of engaged employees behavior is their tendency for job crafting. Grant and Ashford (2008) found that employees try to affect what happens in their work lives rather than just letting work life take its course. Employees may change their job design by negotiating for a different job content or attaching a meaning to their tasks or jobs (Parker & Ohly, 2008). Specifically, engaged employees behave in such a manner. The process of employees shaping their own jobs was termed as job crafting by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001). According to Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) job crafting involves the modifications people make in
their tasks or relational boundaries. The nature of change may be physical or cognitive or both. A physical change refers to an alteration in the number, scope or the form of job tasks. A cognitive change refers to one’s perception of the job. Relational boundaries pertain to job incumbent’s discretion or choice over their social interactions at work. The advantage of job crafting lies in its potential to create a better person–job fit by enhancing the balance of job demands with resources. Employees who derive a sense of enjoyment or fulfillment in their work are more likely to engage in job crafting (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Job crafting is a particular type of proactive work behavior that employees engage in to fine-tune their job to their requirements, skills and preferences. Grant and Parker (2009) proposed that job crafting can be classified under proactive person-environment fit behaviors. While trying to craft their jobs employees try to change the situation or oneself for better person-job fit. For example trying to increase work efficiency by devising smarter ways of working and developing new skills required by the job. Tims & Bakker (2010) defined individual job crafting as proactively increasing or decreasing the job demands and resources. Job demands can be of two types namely hindering job demands and challenging job demands (LePine et al., 2005). Hindering job demands are those which interfere with work goal achievement. Challenging job demands are those demands which appear to be difficult or stressful but have positive results such as better skills and personal growth (Crawford et al., 2010). In the face of job demands, the work environment may provide job resources that not only help meet the demands but also kindle self growth, learning and development (Demerouti et al., 2001). On the basis of this framework of job demands and resources, Tims et al (2012) proposed that individual job crafting includes four dimensions namely increasing social job resources for example, seeking feedback from supervisor and peers; increasing structural job resources for example requesting for greater autonomy; increasing challenging job demands for example initiating new projects and decreasing hindering job demands for example re-organizing work to avoid continuous sitting for long hours. In order to investigate the effects of job crafting behaviours on employees' self-reported engagement, Chan (2013) conducted a longitudinal study using daily diary method. The results revealed that when job demands were high, increasing structural resources improved engagement further as compared to a situation when demands were low. When
autonomy was high, increasing structural resources improved engagement further as compared to when autonomy was low.

The term “time bind” was coined by Hochschild (1997) to describe a number of situations in which workers prefer dividing their time between work and personal life in a manner which is different from the current state but find it difficult to do so or are unable to do so. Tausig and Fenwick (2001) suggested that time bind can be understood as a perceived imbalance between work and family/personal life. The opposite of a time bind is a sense of work-life balance. Montgomery et al. (2003) observed that employees who carry positive feelings from their work life to personal life or vice versa demonstrate significantly higher levels of engagement in comparison with employees experiencing no such cross-over. Bakker et al. (2003) conducted a study of work engagement amongst working couples and showed that wives' levels of vigor and dedication for work exclusively contributes to husbands' levels of the same parameters. Thornthwaite (2004) reported that employees’ desire for work-life balance is on the increase and employers have begun to offer active support in this direction. Emslie & Hunt (2009) observed that employers responded to their employees’ work-life balance needs by providing supplementary benefits such as on-site childcare service and paid maternity leave. Organizational assistance for work life balance is one of the criteria of Fortune magazine to declare its list of the 100 best companies to work for (Muse et al., 2008). Both employees and organizations benefit from effectively balanced work and family life. When employees experience a harmony between their professional and personal lives, they are able to devote themselves fully to their work roles. Hence, work-life balance improves work engagement, which is associated with organizational performance enhancement (Hammer et al., 2005; Greenhaus and Powell, 2006; Carlson et al., 2008). Bakker et al. (2014) found that work engagement is positively associated with work-family facilitation. Hence, it can be said that work engagement is positively associated with work-life balance.

As managers look for ways to enhance employee performance and retention, the concept of employee commitment to organizations has become all the more important in research literature. Porter et. al (1974) defined organizational commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification with the organization and involvement in its activities. Committed employees charac-
teristically possess a strong belief in the organization's goals and values, have a willingness to exert substantial effort on behalf of the organization and a firm desire to maintain membership in the organization. Highly committed employees may outperform their less committed companions indicating that organizational commitment may be a helpful indicator of the organizational effectiveness (Mowday et. al, 1974). Hakanen et al. (2006) in a study of Finnish Teachers proved that work engagement plays a mediating role in the relationship between job resources and organizational commitment. There is a positive relationship between work engagement and affective emotional commitment (Richardsen et al., 2006; Llorens et al., 2006; Hakanen et al., 2006; Saks, 2006; Demerouti et al., 2001; Maslach et al., 2001; Brown and Leigh, 1996).

Any discussion on the behavioral aspects of engaged employees would be incomplete without explaining the results of over indulgence in work. Although work engagement is a virtuous concept, over indulgence in work might lead to some unwanted / unforeseen negative consequences for the engaged employees. In a survey study conducted by Bakker et al. (2004) amongst the Dutch workforce it was found that work engagement was positively associated with working overtime and taking work home. Further, the work-life balance literature reveals that work-home interference slows recovery from stress and may lead to health related issues (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). Specifically, the absorption component of work engagement appears to lead to unhealthy behavior. The term ‘stress’ is quietly widely used, yet its meaning remains vague. Modern definitions of stress clarify that it is a personal experience caused by work demands or pressure which influences the individual’s coping ability or perception of the same Blaug et.al, 2007). The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (1999) defined stress as the harmful emotional and physical responses that occur when job requirements do not match workers’ capabilities, resources and needs. According to the demands–control model (Karasek, 1979), job stress is specifically caused by the coupling of high job demands particularly work overload and time pressure with low job control. Further research on job stress and burnout revealed a list of job demands and job resources whose deficiency leads to stress namely low social and supervisory support, emotional demands and lack of performance feedback (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992; Lee & Ashforth, 1996). The Health and Safety Executive (2006) identified six categories
of factors that can be identified as potential causes of work-related stress namely control, demands, inter-personal relationships, change and role support. Palmer et. al (2004) added a seventh driver of stress namely culture of the organization stating that what matters is how work-related stress is approached and managed. Upon a comparison of the factors affecting work engagement and the potential causes of stress many commonalities can be noticed for example job demands, job resources, inter-personal relationships and role support. The commonality in the causative factors behind the two phenomena is the rationale for a deeper examination of the relation between the two.

Pines et al. (1981) found that employees who are more vulnerable towards falling in the ‘over engagement trap’ are the ones who have been “on fire” at one time. Employees who are so much absorbed in their work life that they forget to rest and recoup, may develop health problems, disturb their work-life harmony and fall into the trap of ‘presenteeism’ or ‘workaholism’. Thus it can be said that there is a thin line between engagement and over-engagement and by crossing it, one does more harm than good to self as well as the larger system. Too much stress may lead to a state of burnout. Burnout is defined as a condition of exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). According to the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model (Bakker et al.,2003) job demands and job resources may give rise to two different, but related processes. On the positive side there is a motivational process in which job resources promote engagement and organizational commitment (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). On the flip side, there is an energetic process in which high job demands wear out or exhaust employees’ mental and physical resources therefore leading to burnout and eventually to ill health. In a specific study of burnout and work engagement amongst Finnish teachers, Hakanen et. al (2006) proved that teachers’ job demands would predict ill health through their impact on burnout and that teachers’ job resources would predict organizational commitment through work engagement. They proved that burnout is inversely related to work engagement.

2.5 STUDIES ON THE ENGAGEMENT – PERFORMANCE LINK

The study of work engagement would not be complete till the engagement – performance link is thoroughly investigated. Only a few studies have investigated
the relationship between work engagement and job performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Nevertheless, their results are promising. Bakker et al. (2004) reported that engaged employees received higher ratings from their colleagues on in-role and extra-role performance. It shows that engaged employees perform well and are willing to go the extra mile. They outshine others in both in-role and extra-role performance. They were more often asked to carry out additional task of particular significance to the organization. Salanova et al. (2005) in a study among personnel working in Spanish restaurants and hotels, concluded that organizational resources and work engagement predicted service climate, which in turn predicted employee performance and customer loyalty. Bakker et al. (2006) conducted a study on engagement and performance among school principals and teachers. Their study showed a strong association between engagement and performance in terms of creativity. The higher school principals’ levels of work engagement, the better they were able to come up with a assortment of ways to handle work-related problems. The engaged school principals were seen as transformational leaders, able to inspire and coach their co-workers.

Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) made a strong case of work engagement as a predictor of daily performance, on the basis of their study among Greek employees working in a fast-food restaurant. Results proved that employees were more engaged on days on which they possessed many job resources as well as personal resources thus clearly showing that engaged employees perform better on a daily basis.

Thus, on the basis of various studies cited herein, it can be said that work engagement has a positive impact on job performance. Bakker et al. (2008) observed that employees who are engaged are able to create their own resources, which creates a positive gain spiral. Engaged employees outperform the less engaged ones as the former often experience positive emotions, better psychological and physical health, create their own job and personal resources and transfer their engagement to others. Fredrickson (2001) established that positive emotions broaden people’s thought-action repository. Employees who create their own resources are better able to deal with their job demands and to achieve their work goals (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Organizational performance is the result of the combined effort of individual employees. It is therefore conceivable that the crossover of engagement among members of the same work team increases performance.
According to Westman (2001), crossover or emotional contagion is the transmission of positive or negative experiences from one person to another. An innovative laboratory study was conducted by Barsade (2002) to study the transfer of moods among people in a group and its impact on performance. It was concluded that the pleasant mood of a colleague influenced the mood of the other team members. More cooperative behaviour and better task performance resulted from the transfer of positive moods. On similar lines, Sy et al. (2005) found that team members coordinated better when leaders were in a positive mood, thus saving on efforts as compared to groups with leaders in a negative mood. Bamford et.al (2013) studied the role of managers in promoting work engagement among their team mates. In a sample survey of nursing staff working in acute care hospitals, they found that nurses who work for managers with higher levels of authentic leadership reported greater work engagement. To add significantly to these findings, Bakker et al. (2006) proved that engaged workers who communicate their sanguinity and proactive behaviors to their colleagues, develop a positive team climate, irrespective of the job demands faced and resources available to them.

Maku (2014) found that employee work engagement is a primary indicator of innovative performance. This study of library staff postulated that creativity and innovation are spurred by employee work engagement practices such as job enrichment, commitment to employees, work life balance, transparent appraisal, opportunities for continuous learning and engagement evaluation systems predict organizational performance. Engaged employees are more productive, work safer, keep healthier and are less likely to leave their employer (Fleming & Asplund, 2007; Wagner & Harter, 2006). Thus it can be said that research strongly supports the link between work engagement and performance.

2.6 THE RESEARCH GAPS

Review of literature revealed that most of the studies on work engagement used a cross-sectional design which cannot explain why even highly engaged employees may have an off day and sometimes show below average or poor performance. Daily changes in work engagement can be examined using longitudinal studies.
Various studies have shown that interaction between job demands, job resources and personal resources plays a critical role in determining work engagement. From the point of view of framing human resource management policies, it could be meaningful to conduct engagement studies on individuals from various professions in order to address specific needs of a profession.

As reported by several authors, employees try to shape their jobs, making physical or cognitive changes in order to establish a better person-job fit and this process is termed as job crafting (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997; Grant and Ashford, 2008; Parker & Ohly, 2008; Tims & Bakker, 2010; Tims et. al, 2012). Although a few studies (e.g. Chan, 2013) investigated the relationship between work engagement and job crafting, further studies in this area may answer the question whether engaged employees really create virtuous cycles.

It is more likely that work engagement will be sustainable when employee well being is also high (Robertson and Cooper, 2010). Further research exploring the links between work engagement and well being is required. Work-life balance is a significant indicator of employee well being. Since, work engagement is known to crossover from work to family setting (Montgomery et al., 2003; Bakker et al., 2003; Bakker et al., 2014), it is vital to examine the relationship between work engagement and work life balance.

Although work engagement is a virtuous concept, over indulgence in work might lead to some negative consequences for the engaged employees (Geurts and Demerouti, 2003 and Bakker et. al, 2004). They may also fall in the ‘over engagement trap’ (Pines et al.,1981) and eventually face situations of stress or even burnout. Hence, research studies are required to examine the relationship between work engagement and work stress.

In the corporate world managers continually look for ways to enhance employee performance and retention. In this context, employee commitment to organizations and its relationship with work engagement has become the subject of research interest. Extant research proved that work engagement plays a mediating role in the relationship between job resources and organizational commitment (Hakanen et. al, 2006). Further research to investigate the relationship between employee work engagement and organizational commitment could be instrumental in development of HR policies on a sound theoretical base.
Paying attention to the geographical spread of work engagement studies, it is noteworthy that very few studies have been conducted in India. There is a requirement to conduct such studies in India in order to map the perception of Indian population in the light of its culture and value system. The review of literature revealed the need to conduct a comprehensive study of work engagement of faculty members in the higher education sector, as very few such studies existed. One of the less researched areas was an exploration of the factors affecting work engagement of faculty members particularly in the Indian higher education sector, having its unique size and challenges. Very few studies explored the relationship of work engagement with phenomena like job crafting, work life balance, organizational commitment and work stress. Hence, it was found to be a subject of research gap and interest. Based on these, measures for enhancement of work engagement were sought to be identified. Hence, according to these research gaps, the study objectives and hypotheses were framed.

2.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study attempts to address some of the research gaps through its objectives:

1) To measure the level of work engagement amongst the employees (faculty members) working in organizations under the study.

2) To study the relationship (if any) between the level of work engagement and personal variables.

3) To identify factors affecting the level of work engagement amongst employees (faculty members).

4) To identify the measures required for enhancement of work engagement amongst the employees (faculty members).

5) To study the relationship (if any) between the level of work engagement amongst employees (faculty members) and
   - job crafting initiatives
   - work - life balance
   - level of work stress
   - level of organization commitment
2.8 HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis is an unproven statement or proposition about a factor or phenomenon (Malhotra and Dash, 2011). In the context of the study objectives, the following null hypotheses were framed:

H0(1) : Work engagement does not differ across the type of institution.
H0(2) : Work engagement does not differ across faculty work areas.
H0(3) : Work engagement does not vary with posting.
H0(4) : Work engagement does not differ across districts.
H0(5) : Work engagement does not vary with designation.
H0(6) : Work engagement does not vary with total experience.
H0(7) : Work engagement does not vary with experience in current organization.
H0(8) : Work engagement does not differ across age groups.
H0(9) : Work engagement does not vary with gender.
H0(10) : Work engagement does not vary with educational background.
H0(11) : Work engagement does not vary with salary.
H0(12) : There is no significant relationship between job crafting and work engagement.
H0(13) : There is no significant relationship between work life balance and work engagement.
H0(14) : There is no significant relationship between work stress and work engagement.
H0(15) : There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and work engagement.

2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter deals with the review of literature that was relevant to the subject matter of the thesis. The review began with general literature regarding employee well being and work engagement followed by specific studies classified into the following sections:

2.1 Studies on Work Engagement as a unique construct – Conceptualization of work engagement according to the pioneering academic study on personal engagement by Kahn (1990) was analyzed based on the premises of
work redesign model of Hackman & Oldham (1980) and the factors influencing organizational behavior (Alderfer, 1985). The construct of work engagement was examined according to several definitions given by Maslach and Leiter (1997), Rothbard (2001), Harter et al. (2002), Schaufeli et al. (2002), Colbert et al. (2004), Wellins and Concelman (2005), Fleming and Asplund (2007), HR Anexi and Blessing White (2008) and Towers Watson (2014). A fundamental question raised by many authors like Newman et al. (2011) as to whether engagement is different from an overall job attitude was addressed in the light of studies by Macey and Schneider (2008) and Shuck et al. (2013) who discretely established work engagement as a unique concept, despite its seeming similarity with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement and work holism. Studies by Erickson (2005) and Macey et al. (2009) were cited to bring out the uniqueness of work engagement with respect to job satisfaction. A study by Saks (2006) distinguished engagement from commitment as against Fleming, et al. (2005) and The Corporate Executive Board (2004) who used the terms engagement and commitment almost as synonyms. Studies by Kahn (1990), May et al. (2004), Salanova et al. (2005), Saks (2006), Rich et al. (2010), Christian et al. (2011) were cited for distinguishing engagement from job involvement thus clarifying the seeming overlap appearing in the definition of job involvement given by Brown (1996). The perceived similarity between work engagement and workaholism was clarified on the basis of a study by Bakker and Demerouti (2008). A study by Bakker (2011) was cited to distinguish work engagement from work-related flow. Finally, a study by Guest (2013) was cited to establish engagement as a novel and unique concept accepted in both managerial and academic literature and unlikely to be forsaken as a fad.

2.2 Studies on Measurement of work engagement: This section of the review helped in identifying the various scales available for measurement of work engagement. Four widely used scales identified were Q12 or Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA) or Gallup Engagement Index developed Gallup organization researchers and reported by Buckingham and Coffman (1999); Maslach Burnout Inventory - General Survey developed by Maslach and Leiter (1997); Utrecht Work Engagement Scale – UWES developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002) and Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) designed by Demerouti et al. (2010). Details of the dimensions and applicability of each scale were discussed in this section.
2.3 **Studies on Factors affecting work engagement**: Studies by Kahn (1990); Maslach et al. (2001); May et al. (2004); Saks (2006); Bakker and Demerouti (2008); Macey and Scheider (2008) were discussed to bring out the factors affecting work engagement. To sum up these studies concur that work engagement is predicted by factors such as job characteristics wherein, work that is challenging, clearly outlined, varied, creative and somewhat autonomous is perceived to be meaningful. Personal resources for example self-efficacy, organizational-based self-esteem and optimism are vital antecedents of work engagement. Interpersonal relationships depicting openness, flexibility, trust, support and lack of threat are associated with high degree of work engagement. Organizational Support in the form of economic and socio-emotional resources like recognition, rewards, procedural justice have a positive impact on employee work engagement.

2.4 **Studies on Relationship of work engagement with job crafting, work life balance, organizational commitment and work stress**: The relationship of work engagement and job crafting was explored on the basis of studies by Wrzesniewski et al. (1997), Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), Demerouti et al. (2001) Grant and LePine et al. (2005); Ashford (2008); Parker and Ohly (2008); Tims and Bakker (2010); Crawford et al. (2010); Tims et. al (2012); Chan (2013). To sum up, these studies concluded that work engagement is positively associated with job crafting or employees’ efforts to make changes in self and / or work environment to establish a better person-job fit. The relationship of work engagement and work life balance was explored on the basis of studies by Hochschild (1997); Tausig and Fenwick (2001); Thornthwaite (2004); Hammer et al. (2005); Greenhaus and Powell (2006); Muse et al. (2008); Carlson et al. (2008); Emslie and Hunt (2009). Studies by Montgomery et al. (2003); Bakker et al. (2003); Bakker et al. (2014) focussed on the cross-over of work engagement from work life to personal life, thus establishing that work engagement is positively associated with work-family facilitation. To sum up these studies concluded that work-life balance is a shared responsibility of the employer and employees. Most contemporary organizations make huge investments in establishing a better work life balance for the employees as it improves role-related engagement. The relationship of work engagement and organizational commitment was explored on the basis of studies
by; Mowday et. al (1974); Porter et. al (1974); Brown and Leigh (1996); Demerouti et al. (2001); Maslach et. al. (2001); Hakanen et al. (2006); Richardsen et al. (2006); Llorens et al. (2006); Hakanen et al. (2006); Saks (2006). In a nutshell, these studies established a positive association between work engagement and affective organizational commitment. The relationship of work engagement and work stress was explored on the basis of studies by Karasek (1979); Pines et al. (1981); Kahn and Byosiere (1992); Lee and Ashforth (1996); Maslach et al. (1996); Geurts & Demerouti (2003); Bakker et al.(2003); Bakker et al. (2004); Palmer et. al (2004); Schaufeli and Bakker (2004); The Health and Safety Executive (2006); Hakanen et. al (2006); Blaug et.al (2007). On the whole these studies concluded that work stress is inversely related to work engagement.

2.5 Studies on the engagement – performance link: This section dealt with the vital issue of exploring whether there is a link between work engagement and performance of individuals, teams and the organization as a whole. Studies by Westman (2001); Barsade (2002); Fredrickson (2001); Bakker et al. (2004); Salanova et al. (2005); Sy et al. (2005); Bakker et al. (2006); Wagner and Harter (2006); Bakker & Demerouti (2007); Xanthopoulou et al. (2007); Fleming and Asplund (2007); Bakker et al. (2008); Gopal (2010); Bamford et.al (2013) were cited in this context. All the studies converged on a common conclusion that there is a significant positive association between work engagement and performance of individuals, teams and organization as a whole.

Finally, on the basis of review of literature, the research gaps were identified and accordingly the study objectives and hypotheses were framed.