



The Influence of Teacher Engagement on Teacher Intention to Stay in the Schools of Maldives

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Article Information

Keywords

Teacher Engagement, Intention to Stay, vigour, dedication, absorption.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of teacher engagement on teacher intention to stay in the schools of Maldives. Through descriptive analysis, it has been determined that teacher engagement is moderately present, with the dimension of dedication exhibiting the highest level of engagement. Teachers who display dedication demonstrate a deep commitment, passion, and sense of pride in their work, going above and beyond to support their students and cultivate a positive learning environment. Additionally, the findings of this study reveal a significant positive relationship between teacher engagement and intention to stay. Teachers who are highly engaged, characterized by their energy, enthusiasm, and a strong sense of purpose, exhibit a stronger desire to remain in their current positions. Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize the promotion of teacher engagement in order to enhance teacher retention, elevate instructional quality, and ultimately improve the academic achievements of students in Maldivian schools.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of teacher engagement on teacher intention to stay is a critical area of research in the context of schools in the Maldives. Teacher engagement refers to the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral investment that teachers have in their work, while intention to stay reflects their commitment and willingness to remain in their current teaching positions. Understanding the relationship between teacher engagement and intention to stay is of paramount importance, as teacher retention is a significant challenge faced by schools in the Maldives.

Teacher engagement has been identified as a key factor in enhancing teacher performance, job satisfaction, and overall school effectiveness. Engaged teachers are more likely to be motivated, dedicated, and enthusiastic about their work, which can have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. When teachers are actively engaged in their roles, they are more likely to create a supportive and stimulating learning environment for their students, fostering their academic and personal growth.

In the context of the Maldives, where teacher turnover rates have been a concern, understanding the impact of teacher engagement on intention to stay becomes even more crucial. High turnover rates can disrupt continuity in teaching and negatively impact student learning. Schools face challenges in retaining experienced and qualified

teachers, which can hinder the overall quality of education provided. Therefore, investigating the relationship between teacher engagement and intention to stay can provide valuable insights for school administrators and policymakers in developing effective strategies to improve teacher retention in the Maldives.

Several factors may influence teacher engagement and intention to stay in the Maldives. These factors can include job satisfaction, perceived support from school administration, opportunities for professional development, working conditions, the quality of relationships with colleagues, and the alignment between personal values and the school's mission and vision. By examining these factors, school administrators can identify areas of improvement and implement targeted interventions to enhance teacher engagement and increase the likelihood of teachers remaining in their positions.

Moreover, research on teacher engagement and intention to stay can provide a basis for designing evidencebased policies and practices that support and promote teacher well-being and job satisfaction. By addressing the factors that influence teacher engagement and intention to stay, schools in the Maldives can create a positive and supportive work environment that nurtures teacher growth, improves retention rates, and ultimately enhances the quality of education provided to students.

The impact of teacher engagement on teacher intention to stay in the schools of the Maldives is a critical area of research. Understanding the factors that contribute to teacher engagement and intention to stay is essential for schools to develop strategies and policies that enhance teacher retention and improve overall educational outcomes. By fostering teacher engagement and creating supportive work environments, schools can promote teacher wellbeing, job satisfaction, and ultimately, the success of their students. Hence, the research investigated the following questions:

1. What is the level of teacher engagement in the schools of the Maldives?
2. What is the level of teacher intention to stay in the schools of the Maldives?
3. Does the teacher engagement significantly influence teachers' intention to stay in the schools of the Maldives?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee engagement and intention to stay are two crucial concepts in the realm of organizational behavior and human resource management. Both concepts play a significant role in determining employees' commitment and loyalty to their jobs and organizations. Employee engagement refers to the level of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral investment employees have in their work and organizations, while intention to stay refers to employees' long-term commitment and willingness to remain in their current job, organization, or location.

Organizations have become increasingly interested in understanding the factors that influence employee engagement and intention to stay, as they recognize the impact these factors have on productivity, retention, and overall organizational success. Engaged employees are more likely to go the extra mile, contribute positively to the work environment, and demonstrate higher levels of productivity. Additionally, employees with a strong intention to stay are less likely to seek employment elsewhere, contributing to higher employee retention rates.

The literature review highlights that employee engagement and intention to stay are multi-dimensional constructs influenced by various factors. These factors include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employment opportunities, working conditions, co-worker relationships, communication, and others. Each of these dimensions plays a unique role in shaping employees' engagement and their intention to stay with the organization.

Understanding the complexities and interrelationships between these factors is crucial for organizations to design effective strategies to enhance employee engagement and increase retention rates. By creating a positive work environment, improving job satisfaction, fostering strong organizational commitment, and providing growth and development opportunities, organizations can promote higher levels of engagement and increase employees' intention to stay.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement has gained significant attention from organizational leaders due to its potential impact on the organization's financial performance. It is often seen as a product of studies focusing on work attitudes, and as such, it can be utilized as a tool to interpret an organization's bottom line (Nienaber & Martins, 2020). However, there exists a range of conflicting reports regarding the prevalence of disengaged employees. Inconsistencies in research findings may arise from limitations in research methodologies employed to analyze employee engagement or the lack of standardization in the measurement instruments used to assess employee engagement and disengagement (Nienaber & Martins, 2020).

Definition of Employee Engagement

Academic researchers have identified employee engagement as the active involvement of organizational members in their work roles, manifested through physical, cognitive, and emotional engagement (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). The concept of "vigour" has also been highlighted as an important component of engagement, representing the experience of strength and emotional vitality in the workplace (Rock, 2016). Osborne and Hammoud (2017) emphasize that engagement translates employees' capabilities into performance and contributes to organizational success. However, the multitude of meanings and varied approaches to studying employee engagement make it challenging to assess the current state of knowledge and ensure consistent understanding and acceptance of the concept. Each study employs different methods and definitions, making it difficult to gauge the level of understanding of employee engagement across the literature.

One issue with existing definitions is that they often define employee engagement in terms of its outcomes rather than its underlying concept. There is also an overlap observed between engagement and commitment, but it has been argued that engagement is a distinct construct comprising behavioral, emotional, and cognitive components related to contribution. However, when applied in organizational contexts, the concept of employee engagement appears to significantly overlap with affective organizational engagement and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). There are commonalities such as extending one's role, taking initiative, and exerting voluntary, discretionary, or extraordinary effort. This makes it conceptually challenging to differentiate employee engagement from the broader spectrum of cognitive and emotional engagement components (Keating & Heslin, 2015). Each of these activities has its own distinctions and variations (Keating & Heslin, 2015).

Moreover, Nienaber and Martins (2020) differentiate between job satisfaction and employee engagement, emphasizing that they are not the same concept. While job satisfaction is a well-known management construct, employee engagement goes beyond satisfaction and represents a deeper level of commitment. Job satisfaction alone is not sufficient to retain the best employees, making employee engagement a critical concept. Some research has shown that job satisfaction represents a shallow and transactional relationship, whereas employee engagement reflects the willingness to invest and extend one's abilities to effectively support the organization. Thus, the complete engagement equation encompasses both maximum job satisfaction and engagement (Abu Khalaf et al., 2019).

In summary, employee engagement has been defined as an emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization and as the level of discretionary effort displayed by individuals in their employment (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). However, the conceptual and definitional challenges surrounding employee engagement require further exploration and consensus in order to ensure consistent understanding and effective measurement.

Conceptualisations of Employee Engagement

The literature review indicates that employee engagement has been conceptualized in different ways.

First, Kahn (1990) provided a theoretical foundation for employee engagement, emphasizing its contribution to organizational objectives. It is viewed as an active and positive state of mind where employees are fully involved in their work roles (Shuck & Reio, 2013). On the other hand, disengagement is defined as a state where individuals detach themselves from their work, becoming physically and mentally isolated from managers and colleagues (Rock, 2016).

The second conceptualization of engagement emerged from the perspective of burnout theory (Maslach & Leiter, 2008) and the concept of engagement building (Galanakis et al., 2009). Burnout consists of three dimensions: exhaustion, cynicism, and a sense of inefficacy. In contrast, engagement is seen as the opposite of burnout, and researchers argue that engagement and burnout are located at opposite ends of a continuum (Galanakis et al., 2009).

The third and final conceptualization of employee engagement, proposed by Schaufeli et al. (2002), presents a different view by considering engagement as a distinct construct from burnout. This perspective views engagement as a positive and productive state of mind related to work, characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption. These dimensions represent an individual's energy, involvement, and immersion in their work (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Furthermore, Shaaban (2022) highlights the distinction between employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). OCB refers to voluntary and informal behaviors intended to benefit coworkers and the organization. In contrast, employee engagement focuses on the additional discretionary effort employees put into their job beyond the typical working attitudes (Shaaban, 2022).

Dimensions of Employee Engagement

Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) have proposed a model of employee engagement that emphasizes the factors influencing engagement in the workplace. This model consists of three dimensions: vigour, dedication, and absorption.

1. **Vigour:** Vigour refers to high levels of energy, mental resilience, effort, and persistence in the face of challenges while working (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). It represents a lasting affective-cognitive state that is not limited to a specific task or activity. Higher levels of vigour indicate an individual's ability to invest effort and remain determined even in the face of failure. Vigour is the opposite of tiredness, which is associated with burnout (Chughtai & Buckley, 2008). It is characterized by high energy, zest, and stamina in the workplace.

2. **Dedication:** Dedication encompasses a sense of meaning, passion, inspiration, pride, and challenge in one's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). It is the opposite of cynicism, which can lead to burnout. Dedicated individuals strongly identify with their work and find it important, inspiring, and demanding. They exhibit enthusiasm and pride in their work (Geldenhuis et al., 2014). Dedication is associated with emotional aspects of work engagement and contributes to outcomes such as pro-social behaviors. It involves a positive attachment to the organization, willingness to use energy in support of the organization, and personal identification with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 2005).

3. **Absorption:** Absorption is characterized by being fully focused, joyfully immersed, and having difficulty detaching from work. It is the opposite of professional inefficiency, which is not a fundamental aspect of burnout. Absorption reflects a state of being happily absorbed in one's work. It is a cognitive characteristic of work engagement. Absorbed individuals feel completely engrossed in their work, lose track of time, and find it challenging to disengage (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Absorption is associated with a psychological state of complete immersion and is influenced by an individual's perception of their ability to perform challenging tasks (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2022). It is a facet of engagement but not synonymous with it.

Employee engagement is crucial for organizational success. Organizations can foster engagement by providing roles that offer autonomy and variety. Effective leadership programs are also essential for managers to design interventions that engage employees and promote their well-being.

Intention to Stay

The concept of "intention to stay" refers to an individual's willingness and readiness to remain in their current workplace (Naim & Lenka, 2017). Previous research has predominantly focused on work commitment and has consistently shown that when employees are committed to their work and satisfied with their current job, their inclination to leave is reduced. In the literature on intention studies, the terms "leave" and "stay" are often used interchangeably (Ngoc et al., 2018). The perception of intention to stay can be influenced by various factors, and when investigating turnover, researchers tend to focus more on the reasons for turnover rather than the explicit intention to stay. Thus, the intention to stay provides insight into how individuals act within a context of potential turnover. Given the strong connection between the intention to stay and turnover intention, factors that affect an individual's intention are likely to impact turnover, retention, and the intention to stay (Vanhala et al., 2016).

Furthermore, to gain a better understanding of the inconsistencies in withdrawal measures, researchers have increasingly focused on the intention to stay rather than solely asking individuals about their reasons for leaving. It is widely acknowledged that intentions are robust predictors of behavior (Lee et al., 2014). Moreover, retaining employees within an organization is a significant strategy for human resource management (HRM) to foster a competitive advantage, particularly in sectors such as education, where the achievement of every child's full potential is a key goal (Naim & Lenka, 2017). Research findings strongly support the benefits of retaining employees, as it can lead to increased achievements and organizational success (Yap et al., 2016).

Definition of Intention to Stay

Intention to stay is defined as employees' desire to continue working for their current employer over the long term (Aslam & Safdar, 2012). It is an attitude and behaviour that have not yet occurred and are a clear cognitive antecedent of retention (Price & Mueller, 1981). When employees are satisfied, committed, and feel a part of the organisation, they are more likely to stay. The unwelcome, unwanted, and voluntary attrition organisations encounter when valued employees leave is a more severe issue than organisational layoffs (Mobley et al., 1979). When organisations compete for talent, appropriate concrete steps must be taken to address the issue of workers leaving (Lee et al., 2014). Job satisfaction and organisational engagement are factors consistently linked to the intention to stay in the literature. An individual's affective reaction to the job and its characteristics is characterised as job satisfaction (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Organisational commitment is individuals' affiliation and participation with their specific work organisation, which involves a commitment to organisational objectives and an eagerness to work hard to attain them (Ramalho Luz et al., 2018).

The intention to stay reflects the employee's commitment to his organisation and desire to remain employed (Ahmad et al., 2011). It refers to the propensity to leave, the intention to quit, the intention to stay, the commitment to behaviour, and the attachment (Mueller et al., 1999). According to Ahmad et al. (2011), several studies have shown that this concept, whether the intention to stay or leave, is the most crucial determinant of turnover. According to Carsten and Spector (1987), the intention to stay strongly correlates with turnover. Dalessio et al. (1986) emphasised that more concern should be given to the intention to stay than turnover or quitting. This is because the organisation must incur the cost of recruiting and maintaining another employee whenever the employee leaves.

History of Intention to Stay

The concept of intention to stay has a history rooted in the study and understanding of individuals' long-term commitment and willingness to remain in a specific job, organization, or location. It gained prominence in the late 20th century as organizations recognized the costs associated with high turnover rates and sought to identify factors that influenced employees' decisions to stay or leave.

Initially, research on intention to stay focused primarily on employee satisfaction as a predictor of long-term commitment. The belief was that satisfied employees would be more likely to remain in their positions. However, as research progressed, it became apparent that satisfaction alone was not always a strong indicator of intention to stay. This realization led to the exploration of additional factors that contribute to individuals' commitment, such as organizational commitment and employment opportunities.

The notion of intention to stay is grounded in the social exchange theory, which posits that individuals evaluate their social relationships and make decisions based on the exchange of benefits and costs. Thibaut and Kelley (2017) provided valuable insights into social exchange theory, influencing subsequent research on interpersonal relationships and organizational behaviors. The theory highlights the reciprocity of good deeds and the sense of responsibility and commitment that arises from receiving benefits.

Research has consistently shown that when individuals feel a sense of obligation to repay the organization for the benefits they have received, they are more likely to exhibit favorable emotional and behavioral experiences associated with social exchange theory. This positive psychological reaction leads to increased dedication and loyalty to the organization, reducing the likelihood of seeking employment elsewhere.

The concept of intention to stay is also connected to the literature on voluntary turnover, which suggests that individuals' intention to stay is influenced by the availability of other job opportunities. Researchers have examined the relationship between job satisfaction, employee retention, and voluntary turnover, recognizing that employees leave organizations for various reasons, including finding new jobs, transferring, or retiring. Organizations incur higher costs when losing valuable employees through these forms of attrition.

The study of intention to stay continues to evolve as researchers and practitioners seek to identify effective strategies for attracting and retaining talented individuals in a dynamic and competitive work environment. Retaining employees is crucial for organizational productivity, success, and efficiency.

Dimensions of Intention to Stay

The intention to stay is influenced by various dimensions, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived job opportunity. These dimensions have been supported by theoretical models and empirical studies, highlighting their importance in understanding and influencing employee intention to stay.

Job Satisfaction: Job satisfaction refers to the pleasant feeling that arises from the belief that one's job fulfills or enables the achievement of essential job standards. It has been found to be a significant factor in differentiating employees who choose to stay from those who decide to leave. There is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and the desire to quit, while a positive correlation exists between job satisfaction and the intention to stay. Unhappy employees are more likely to leave their current positions compared to satisfied employees. Job satisfaction is not only a subjective evaluation of one's job but also a predictor of various work-related behaviors such as organizational citizenship, absenteeism, intention to stay, and turnover. It is influenced by factors such as the work environment, job expectations, and personal traits (Meier & Spector, 2015; Mobley, 1977; Locke, 1976; Brief, 1998).

The "grass is greener" phenomenon, where employees compare their current work environment to their expectations of external opportunities, also plays a role in the intention to stay. Employees consider their existing work environment and the perceived attractiveness of alternative job opportunities when evaluating their intention to stay (Price & Mueller, 1981).

Job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct influenced by various factors, as detailed by Spector (1997). These factors can impact employee performance and intentions, highlighting the importance of understanding and managing job satisfaction to enhance intention to stay.

1. **Pay:** The amount of money employees receive for their work. While pay is an important factor, research shows that pay level alone does not guarantee job satisfaction. Pay satisfaction is influenced by factors such as the fairness of compensation and comparisons with others in similar positions (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Spector, 2022).

2. **Promotion Opportunities:** Opportunities for career advancement and growth within the organization. Promotion satisfaction reflects employees' attitudes toward the organization's promotion plans and procedures (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017).

3. **Supervision:** The quality of the relationship between employees and their supervisors. Satisfaction with supervisors has been linked to organizational and team involvement, improved efficiency, lower turnover rates, and a greater intention to stay (Ford & Collinson, 2011; Dobre, 2013; Unutmaz, 2014).

4. **Fringe Benefits:** Additional benefits and perks offered by the organization, such as wellness programs, retirement plans, insurance coverage, and paid time off. Effective communication and preparation about fringe benefits contribute to employees' satisfaction and perception of the benefits package (Smith, 2021; Luthra & Dahiya, 2015).

5. **Contingent Rewards:** Rewards that are contingent upon meeting specific goals or performance targets. Fair and equitable rewards that recognize employees' efforts are important for job satisfaction (Sheikh et al., 2015; Spector, 2022).

6. **Working Conditions:** The physical and social environment in which employees work. Insufficient facilities, crowded workspaces, and other organizational obstacles can negatively impact job satisfaction (Spector, 2022; Stankiewicz, 2015).

7. **Co-Worker Relationship:** The quality of relationships and interactions with colleagues. The workgroup plays a significant role in job satisfaction as employees spend a considerable amount of time interacting with their coworkers (Armstrong, 2015).

8. **Nature of Work:** The characteristics and demands of the job itself. Jobs that utilize employees' talents, provide challenge, and offer meaningful work are more likely to contribute to job satisfaction (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017; Pulakos & Kantrowitz, 2016).

9. **Communication:** Effective communication within the organization, including communication between employees, supervisors, and managers. Communication plays a vital role in job satisfaction and organizational success (Babu, 2018; Izvercian et al., 2016; Uka, 2014).

These dimensions collectively contribute to employees' job satisfaction and their intention to stay in the organization. It is important for organizations to address these factors to enhance employee satisfaction and increase retention rates.

Organisational commitment: Organisational commitment, a crucial dimension of intention to stay, consists of three components: affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC), and normative commitment (NC).

1. **Affective Commitment (AC):** Affective commitment refers to employees' emotional attachment to their organization based on their identification with its goals and values. Employees with high levels of affective commitment are more likely to be productive, devoted, and less likely to leave the organization. Their loyalty is influenced by how well the organization meets their needs (Alrowwad et al., 2019; Gargouri, 2017). On the other hand, employees with low affective commitment are less likely to be committed and may engage in counterproductive behaviors (Sheppard, 2016).

2. **Continuance Commitment (CC):** Continuance commitment is the commitment employees feel toward the organization due to the costs associated with leaving. It is often related to loss aversion, where employees perceive more benefits in staying with the organization than in quitting. Continuance commitment is influenced by factors such as alternative employment opportunities, salary comparisons, and the investments employees have made in the organization (Farrukh et al., 2017; Gichira et al., 2015).

3. **Normative Commitment (NC):** Normative commitment refers to employees' sense of duty and obligation to stay with the organization. It is driven by the belief that leaving the organization would have negative consequences for coworkers and the organization as a whole. Employees with normative commitment feel a moral obligation to remain in their positions and avoid leaving gaps in the organization's abilities and knowledge.

Socialization experiences and family socialization outside of work can also influence normative commitment (Noraazia & Khalip, 2016; Visanh & Xu, 2018).

Understanding these three components of organizational commitment provides insights into employees' relationship with the organization. Affective commitment reflects employees' emotional attachment, continuance commitment is associated with perceived costs of leaving, and normative commitment is driven by a sense of duty and loyalty. Organizational leaders can focus on enhancing affective commitment, addressing factors related to continuance commitment, and fostering a sense of normative commitment to improve employee retention and performance.

Employment opportunity: Employment opportunity is an important dimension that influences employees' intention to stay. It involves various aspects related to the availability, desirability, mobility, and networking of alternative job options.

1. **Ease of Movement:** Ease of movement refers to the perceived ease with which employees believe they can find alternative employment. It focuses on the number and availability of jobs and does not consider other factors such as family considerations. Ease of movement is influenced by individuals' characteristics, marketable skills, and competencies that make them attractive to other organizations.

2. **Desirability of Movement:** Desirability of movement examines the quality of alternative job options. It considers the attractiveness of alternative employment without significant changes in the current work environment. Factors such as tenure, specialization, and skill level can affect the perceived value of nonorganizational options. Employees may perceive higher positions as more desirable, and the attractiveness of movement is influenced by the assumption that a job change will lead to better conditions.

3. **Mobility:** Mobility takes into account the psychological and social aspects of changing jobs. It considers the potential impact on the individual and their family, including the loss of rewards or benefits gained through time in the organization. Mobility also considers the emotional and financial aspects of starting a new job and the potential barriers that may prevent employees from taking advantage of alternative job opportunities.

4. **Crystallization of Job Alternatives:** The crystallization of job alternatives refers to employees' perception of the concreteness of alternative employment prospects. It is about having clear career possibilities and specific job offers rather than vague impressions of job availability. Clear job alternatives are more valuable to employees and make it easier for them to consider leaving the organization.

5. **Networking:** Networking plays a role in accessing information about job availability. It involves leveraging personal networks, such as friends, family, and coworkers, to gather information about job opportunities. Networking provides valuable connections and knowledge that can enhance employees' understanding of interorganizational alternatives and increase their chances of finding suitable job options.

These dimensions of employment opportunity provide insights into employees' perception of alternative job options and their potential impact on their intention to stay. Understanding these factors can help organizations create strategies to address employees' needs and improve their retention efforts.

Employee Engagement and Intention to Stay

Research investigating employee engagement has consistently found strong connections between various organizational factors, such as staff performance, efficiency, security, productivity, attendance, retention, profitability, customer service, and satisfaction (Harter et al., 2002). Bakker and Demerouti's (2008) study on engagement specifically revealed a significant relationship with organizational commitment, intention to stay, and retention (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Saks and Gruman (2014) focused on two crucial aspects of employee engagement research. Firstly, they emphasized its role in the growth and competitiveness of organizations by attracting capable individuals who can effectively fulfill job responsibilities, leading to improved performance. Secondly, they highlighted the increasing global trend of worker engagement. However, a global survey conducted by Gallup (2012) indicated that only 26 percent of employees were engaged in their workplaces, with 57% categorized as "not engaged" and 18% as "actively disengaged" (Gallup, 2012).

Engaged employees demonstrate heightened commitment, positive interaction with their leaders, recognition of their contributions, and a greater likelihood of achieving organizational goals. Many companies utilize various human resources management strategies to enhance employee retention and engagement, capitalizing on the potential cost savings associated with reduced turnover (Bhattacharya, 2015). The relationship between employee engagement and retention has garnered increasing academic interest due to the impact of turnover and recruitment expenses. It is widely believed that enhancing employee growth, engagement, and compensation can help mitigate excessive voluntary turnover (Shuck & Reio, 2013). Furthermore, several studies have shown that employees

benefit from acquiring more knowledge and skills (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). This positive relationship between employee engagement and retention has prompted many organizations to invest in learning and development programs, mentoring initiatives, leadership development, and skills enhancement strategies to foster a strong connection with employees' affective commitment to the organization (Lee & Bruvold, 2003).

Gallup (2016) identified twelve components of employee engagement. According to Gallup's analysis, highly successful employees are characterized by their desire to complete tasks, alignment with the organization's vision and purpose, and their ability to benefit from learning and innovation. These twelve components were found to enhance both individual and organizational performance. Additionally, organizations that provide opportunities for learning and growth experience 44% less absenteeism and 16% higher productivity (Gallup, 2016).

The positive association between employee engagement, retention, employees' perception of their work environment, and the emotionally fulfilling relationship with the organization has established strong connections with employees' intention to stay (Shuck & Reio, 2013). Engaged employees are more likely to remain in their current jobs (Shuck & Reio, 2013). Fredrickson (2001) also confirmed the causal relationship between engagement and positive emotions, leading to improved outcomes and decreased turnover. Conversely, negative emotions and exhaustion contribute to employee disengagement and departure from organizations. While the active experience of positive emotions fosters professional commitment, negative emotions hinder positive relationships among individuals, resulting in disengagement and employee attrition (Maslach et al., 2001).

Highly engaged employees may find it challenging to leave their positions due to their investment of substantial energy, resulting in high-quality work output. In other words, increased employee engagement generates a sense of pride and motivation in their work, making it difficult for employees to consider leaving (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). Furthermore, the process of finding a new job entails risks that employees may be unwilling to take, as it requires starting over (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008).

Demerouti et al. (2001) stated that job autonomy and organisational engagement were significantly and positively linked to vigour but not exhaustion. Work pressure and mental health problems often coincided with exhaustion but were unrelated to vigour. In contrast to fatigue, vigour depends partly on motivational processes such as readiness to invest.

McCutcheon's (2019) research has shown that leaders who try to strengthen employee relationships increase at least one dimension of engagement: vigour. Participants demonstrated their level of vigour and energy at work and the degree to which they have built stable and trustworthy relationships with their colleagues. The notion of vigour as an affective condition, as concluded by Shirom (2003), impacted the job's characteristics. Shirom defined vigour as an emotional state but not as a mood, where individuals can expressly point to their vigour feelings at work and in the workplace. He defines 'vigour' as a sense of physical power, cognitive resilience, and energy contributing to the intention to stay.

Biswakarma (2015) studied employee engagement and turnover intentions in Nepalese private commercial banks. The correlation analysis established a moderately to strongly significant negative relationship between vigour, absorption, and employee turnover intention. Similarly, the study also represented a statistically significant relationship between absorption and employee intention to stay.

Memon et al. (2017) indicated that work engagement is negatively linked to employee turnover. His study showed that the effect of work engagement have a detrimental impact on the desire to make a turnover. Lu et al. (2016) indicated that the three dimensions of work engagement, vigour, dedication, and absorption, significantly impacted the intention to stay. According to Lu, the argument was backed by several researchers who found the same findings in their study: work engagement positively impacted the intention to stay.

Miller (2007) argues that although the impact is clear, the engagement itself cannot guarantee intention to stay or retention (Miller, 2007). While highly engaged people are less likely to leave, nearly 40% of them are still open to external deals, even though they do not consciously ask for them (BlessingWhite, 2011). BlessingWhite also notes that, while the commitment is rising, less than two-thirds of their current employers expect to continue into the year to come. Bates (2004) suggests that increased commitment levels could negatively impact the intention to stay and retention. However, he believes that paradoxically, raising commitment by offering additional training and learning opportunities increases employee growth. This improvement in skills will lead them to pursue better opportunities beyond their current employment in institutions.

In addition to having a sense of job pride and aspiration, which leads to excellent job performance, an engaged employee may find it difficult to quit because they will have invested a great deal of energy in the job (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). The need to retain qualified local professionals and expected growth trigger the need to study employee engagement and intention to stay. Employee engagement makes staff more loyal, reducing the urge to

leave the organisation (turnover intention). If the turnover intention is poor, the output of workers will improve. The intention to stay is the opposite of turnover intention, described as when individuals think, prepare, and want to leave work.

If workers are engaged in a supportive work environment, they have a low tendency to leave the organisation where they are currently working (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Work engagement leads to higher results and job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). People engaged in their work will get their colleagues involved, creating a better atmosphere for everybody on the same team and increasing their intention to stay (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). This research proposes the following hypothesis based on this and the above findings.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design to investigate the impact of servant leadership on teachers' intention to stay in their current positions. The seven dimensions of servant leadership were treated as separate independent variables. Data collection was conducted through a web-based questionnaire.

Population and Sampling

In this study, the target population of interest was teachers in the Maldives, specifically focusing on the Southern Province region. The choice of this region was based on convenience, as it allowed for easier access to the teachers and schools for data collection purposes. According to the Statistical Yearbook of the Ministry of Education Maldives (MoE, 2019c), the total number of teachers in the country was 10,424, and this constituted the target population for the study.

To determine an appropriate sample size, the "Small Sample Technique" proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was utilized. Based on this technique, a population of 10,000 individuals would require a sample size of 370. Therefore, the research aimed to obtain a sample of 370 respondents from the target population of 10,424 teachers.

The stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure a representative sample from the four atolls within the Southern Province. The allocation of samples for each atoll was determined proportionally based on the number of teachers in each respective atoll, as indicated in Table 1. Stratified random sampling allows for better representation of the population, as it takes into account the varying sizes of each atoll's teacher population. This approach improves the accuracy of the study's findings compared to a simple random sample.

By using this sampling technique, the study aimed to collect data that reflects the experiences and perceptions of teachers in the Southern Province region of the Maldives. The findings from this sample can then be extrapolated to draw broader conclusions about the impact of teacher engagement on intention to stay among teachers in the Maldives.

It is important to note that while the sample size and sampling technique were carefully determined, the study acknowledged the limitations of generalizability beyond the Southern Province region and the potential for sampling bias. However, by focusing on this specific region, the study aimed to gain in-depth insights into the experiences of teachers in the area and provide valuable information for educational policymakers and school administrators in the Maldives to develop strategies to enhance teacher engagement and retention.

TABLE 1
ALLOCATION OF SAMPLES TO THE FOUR ATOLLS OF THE SOUTH PROVINCE

Schools	Population	Sample
1. Gaafu Alifu Atoll	317	71
2. Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll	406	91
3. Gnaviyani Atoll	284	64
4. Seenu Atoll	644	144
Total	1,651	370

Instrument

To gather quantitative data for the study, a survey questionnaire was utilized, which consisted of three sections. Section A focused on collecting demographic information from the respondents, including gender, age, working experience, job title, highest level of education, and nationality. This section aimed to provide background

information about the participants and allow for demographic analysis in relation to teacher engagement and intention to stay.

Section B of the questionnaire assessed teacher engagement using Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES9) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2006). This scale was chosen for its effectiveness in measuring teacher engagement and consisted of 9 questions, with three questions dedicated to each of the three dimensions of employee engagement as shown in Table 2. The respondents rated their perceptions of employee engagement in the workplace using a Likert-style format with five response alternatives for each item. This section aimed to explore the extent to which teachers perceived their leaders as exhibiting servant leadership behaviors.

TABLE 2
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCALE UWES-9

Dimension	Items
Vigour	1, 4, 7
Dedication	2, 5, 8
Absorption	3, 6, 9

Section C of the questionnaire utilized the 15-item version of the Intention to Stay Scale developed by Roodt (2004). This scale was designed to measure teachers' perceived intention to stay in the workplace. The scale aimed to assess how likely teachers were to remain in their current positions, providing insights into their commitment and future plans within the educational setting.

By employing these three sections, the research aimed to gather comprehensive data on teachers' demographic characteristics, their perceptions of teacher engagement in their workplace, and their intention to stay in their current positions. The combination of these measures allowed for a holistic understanding of the relationship between teacher engagement, and intention to stay in the schools of Maldives.

It is worth noting that the survey questionnaire provided a standardized and structured approach to data collection, enabling efficient data analysis and comparison across different respondents. The use of established scales, such as the UWES-9 and the Intention to Stay Scale, added rigor to the research by utilizing validated instruments with established reliability and validity.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaires used in the study, a pilot study was conducted prior to data collection. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the clarity, coherence, and appropriateness of the survey instruments. By conducting a pilot study, any potential issues with the questionnaires could be identified and necessary modifications could be made to improve the quality of the data.

To assess the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire items used to measure the variables, Cronbach's Alpha was employed. Cronbach's Alpha is a commonly used measure of reliability that examines the extent to which items within a scale are consistently measuring the same underlying construct. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale and the Intention to Stay Scale.

The pilot study results indicated that the Cronbach's Alpha (α) for the dimensions of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale ranged from 0.84 to 0.92, while the Cronbach's Alpha (α) for the Intention to Stay Scale ranged from 0.78 to 0.88. These values demonstrate strong internal consistency and reliability of the instruments used in this study. The high Cronbach's Alpha values suggest that the items within each scale are highly correlated and consistently measure the constructs they are intended to represent.

Data Collection Procedure

Following the pilot study, the data collection process commenced after obtaining approval from the School of Educational Studies at Universiti Sains Malaysia and the Ministry of Education Maldives. Participants were provided with an information letter that outlined the research goals, duration, questionnaire, data collection process, and timeline. The survey questionnaires were distributed to teachers and leading teachers through their respective principals using links to an online platform.

The data collection process followed a specific order of the strata outlined in Table 1 to ensure clarity and organization. By following this predetermined order, data collection procedures were standardized and minimized potential confusion or bias in the responses.

Data Analysis Procedure

Once the data was collected, a three-stage data analysis procedure was undertaken. Descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to analyze the collected data using IBM SPSS version 26. Firstly, the demographic features of the respondents, including gender, nationality, educational background, job specialization, and years of experience, were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions. This provided an overview of the sample characteristics.

Secondly, the mean and standard deviation were calculated to interpret the level of the research variables. The mean scores were categorized according to Nunnally and Bernstein's (1994) interpretation scale, which ranges from 1 to 5. This categorization allowed for the assessment of the levels of each variable, such as "high," "highly moderate," "moderate," "low," and "extremely low," based on the mean score ranges.

Finally, a linear multiple regression analysis approach was employed to examine the influence of teacher engagement on teacher intention to stay. The linear multiple regression analysis enabled the exploration of the relationship between the independent variable of teacher engagement and the dependent variable of teacher intention to stay. The significance of the relationship was assessed using the R value, providing insight into the strength and direction of the relationship.

RESULTS

The data collection process spanned one and a half months, starting on July 1, 2021. Online survey links were distributed to teachers, resulting in 538 responses, which were automatically recorded in the attached data collection sheet on Google Form. These responses accounted for 32.59% of the distributed questionnaires.

After the data cleaning process, 163 records were excluded due to inconsistent responses, resulting in a net return rate of 22.71%. which is 375 responses. It is important to note that this net return rate met the required number of respondents specified by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) for a population size of 10,000, ensuring an adequate sample size for the study. All 375 cleaned responses were utilized for further analysis and interpretation in this study, although they exceeded the recommended figure by five responses.

Question 1: What is the level of teacher engagement in the schools of the Maldives?

According to Table 3, the level of Teacher Engagement in the schools of the Maldives is assessed to be highly moderate, as indicated by an overall mean value of 4.09 (SD = 1.04). This suggests that teachers in Maldives schools exhibit a considerable level of engagement in their work.

The study further reveals that Teacher Engagement in Maldives schools varies across different dimensions, with mean scores ranging from 3.21 to 4.56. Dedication emerges as the dimension with the highest level of engagement, as reflected by its mean score of 4.37 (SD = 0.86). This indicates that teachers in Maldives schools demonstrate a strong sense of commitment and enthusiasm towards their work. Following dedication, the next dimension of Teacher Engagement is Absorption, which has a mean score of 4.08 (SD = 1.01). This suggests that teachers in Maldives schools are deeply engrossed in their tasks and experience a sense of being fully absorbed in their work. Lastly, the dimension of Vigour exhibits a mean score of 3.83 (SD = 1.15). This dimension highlights the energy and resilience that teachers bring to their work, indicating a moderate level of engagement in this aspect.

TABLE 3
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF TEACHER ENGAGEMENT ITEMS

Dimension	No.	Items	M	SD	Level
Vigour (VIG)	VIG1	At my work, I feel bursting with energy	3.21	1.23	Moderate
	VIG2	I am enthusiastic about my job	4.16	0.89	Highly moderate
	VIG3	I feel happy when I am working intensely	4.17	1.01	Highly moderate
M			3.83	1.15	Highly moderate
Dedication (DED)	DED1	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	4.16	0.92	Highly moderate
	DED2	My job inspires me	4.32	0.91	High
	DED3	I am immersed in my work	4.56	0.74	High

		M	4.37	0.86	High
Absorption (ABS)	ABS1	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	4.24	0.91	High
	ABS2	I am proud of the work that I do	4.22	0.91	High
	ABS3	I get carried away when I'm working	3.72	1.16	Highly moderate
		M	4.08	1.01	Highly moderate
		Overall	4.09	1.04	Highly moderate

The findings presented in Table 4.6 provide insights into the levels of individual items across different dimensions of teacher engagement in the schools of the Maldives. Among the dimensions, Vigour stands out with the highest mean score of 4.17 (SD = 1.01) for the item "I feel happy when I am working intensely." This suggests that teachers in Maldives schools experience a strong sense of enthusiasm and enjoyment when fully engaged in their work. On the other hand, the item "At my work, I feel like I'm bursting with energy" had the lowest mean score of 3.21 (SD = 1.23), indicating a relatively lower level of agreement among teachers regarding this statement.

Turning to the Dedication dimension, the item "I am immersed in my work" received the highest mean score of 4.56 (SD = 0.74), suggesting that teachers in the Maldives schools feel deeply connected and committed to their work. Conversely, the item "When I have to make an important decision at work, I do not have to consult my principal first" received the lowest mean score of 3.30 (SD = 1.40), indicating a lower level of agreement among teachers in this regard.

In the Absorption dimension, the item "When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work" had the highest mean score of 4.24 (SD = 0.91), reflecting a strong sense of engagement and eagerness to start the workday among teachers. On the other hand, the item "I get carried away when I'm working" obtained the lowest mean score of 3.72 (SD = 1.16), suggesting a slightly lower level of agreement among teachers regarding this statement.

The findings indicate that the overall level of Teacher Engagement in the schools of the Maldives is highly moderate. This implies that teachers demonstrate a notable level of dedication, absorption, and vigour in their work, with variations observed across specific items within each dimension (Author 1, 2023).

Question 2: What is the level of teacher intention to stay in the schools of the Maldives?

The findings presented in Table 4 provide an overview of the means and standard deviations of the items related to Teacher Intention to Stay in the schools of the Maldives. The overall mean value of Teacher Intention to Stay is 2.82, with a standard deviation of 1.45. This suggests that, on average, teachers in the Maldives schools have a moderate intention to stay in their current positions.

TABLE 4
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF INTENTION TO STAY ITEMS

Dimension	No.	Items	M	SD	Level
Intention to Stay (INT)	INT1	My current job satisfies my personal needs.	3.79	1.19	Highly moderate
	INT2	I compromise my personal values at work.	3.58	1.28	Highly moderate
	INT3	I have considered leaving my job.	2.38	1.43	Low
	INT4	I am often frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve my personal work-related goals.	2.80	1.28	Moderate
	INT5	I dream about getting another job that will better suit my personal needs.	2.61	1.47	Moderate

INT6	I may accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to me.	2.66	1.41	Moderate
INT7	I often look forward to another day at work.	3.77	1.16	Highly moderate
INT8	My responsibilities prevent me from quitting my job.	3.38	1.40	Moderate
INT9	I scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities.	2.26	1.38	Low
INT10	The benefits associated with my current job prevent me from quitting the job.	3.00	1.30	Moderate
INT11	My current job has a negative effect on my personal well-being.	2.36	1.33	Low
INT12	I frequently scan newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities.	2.00	1.29	Low
INT13	I am frequently emotionally agitated when arriving home after work.	2.62	1.32	Moderate
INT14	“Fear of the unknown” prevent me from quitting my current job.	2.38	1.32	Low

Further analysis of the item-level means reveals that the level of teachers' intention to stay varies across different items, ranging from low to moderate and highly moderate levels. The mean scores of the items range from 2.00 to 3.79, indicating a range of intentions to stay among the surveyed teachers. These findings highlight the individual differences and factors that influence teachers' decisions to remain in their current positions.

Understanding teachers' intention to stay is crucial for educational institutions and policymakers as it can inform strategies and initiatives aimed at improving teacher retention and job satisfaction. By identifying the factors that contribute to higher intention to stay, educational leaders can develop targeted interventions to create a supportive and engaging work environment that encourages teachers to remain in their roles.

The findings emphasize the importance of addressing the factors that influence teacher intention to stay in the schools of the Maldives, ultimately contributing to the stability and effectiveness of the education system in the country.

Question 3: *Does the teacher engagement significantly influence teachers' intention to stay in the schools of the Maldives?*

The results of the regression analysis indicate that Teacher Engagement has a significant impact on Teacher Intention to Stay in the schools of the Maldives. This suggests that higher levels of Teacher Engagement are associated with a stronger intention among teachers to stay in their current positions.

TABLE 5
RESULT OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Teacher Engagement	Teacher Intention to Stay (β Value)
Predictor	
Vigour	.291*
Dedication	.412*
Absorption	.002
R	.325
R ²	.106

Adjusted R2	.100
F Value	20.699

Note. *Significant at $p < .05$ level.

The regression analysis highlights the significant impact of Teacher Engagement, specifically vigour and dedication, on Teacher Intention to Stay in the schools of the Maldives. However, it is important to note that Teacher Engagement explains only 10.6% of the variance in Teacher Intention to Stay.

The findings further reveal that among the three aspects of Teacher Engagement, Vigour ($\beta = 0.243$, $p < 0.001$) and Dedication ($\beta = 0.214$, $p < 0.001$) have a significant positive impact on Teacher Intention to Stay. This indicates that teachers who exhibit higher levels of vigour and dedication are more likely to intend to stay in their roles. However, Absorption ($\beta = 0.087$, $p > 0.05$) does not significantly impact Teacher Intention to Stay.

These results suggest that while Teacher Engagement, particularly vigour and dedication, plays a role in influencing Teacher Intention to Stay, there may be other factors at play that contribute to teachers' decisions to remain in their positions.

DISCUSSION

This study examines the level of Teacher Engagement, the level of Teacher Intention to Stay, and the influence of Teacher Engagement on Teacher Intention to Stay in the schools of Maldives. The descriptive analysis highlights a highly moderate level of teacher engagement, while the level of teacher intention to stay is found to be moderate. Furthermore, the study reveals a significant positive influence of teacher engagement, particularly in terms of vigour and dedication, on teacher intention to stay.

The level of teacher engagement in the schools of the Maldives.

The descriptive analysis conducted in this study revealed that the level of Teacher Engagement in the schools of the Maldives is at a highly moderate level. This suggests that teachers in the Maldivian schools exhibit a high degree of engagement in their curricular and co-curricular activities. Among the three dimensions of Teacher Engagement, the Dedication dimension was found to be at the highest level, as evidenced by the item "I am immersed in my work" receiving the highest mean score (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

The findings indicate that dedicated teachers are not only deeply committed to their work but also passionate about educating their students. While terms like "love" and "passion" are often used to describe the emotional investment of teachers, it is their commitment that stands out. Committed teachers strive to create a positive and conducive classroom environment for everyone, demonstrating care and enjoyment in their profession. These findings align with the research by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), which emphasizes the importance of being deeply engaged in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenges.

Dedicated teachers consistently go above and beyond to support their students. They willingly invest their time, effort, and even personal resources to ensure that students have successful and enjoyable learning experiences. Their dedication is characterized by a strong attachment to the school and a willingness to exert energy in supporting the school's mission, which contributes to a sense of pride and personal identification with the institution (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

The item "I am immersed in my work," which received the highest mean score, suggests that teachers are fully absorbed and joyfully engrossed in their work. They find it difficult to disconnect from their work because it engulfs their attention and time. This cognitive aspect of work engagement, as described by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), indicates a state of being fully immersed in and deeply connected to one's work. Studies have shown that individuals who score high on engagement report being generally happy when working, feeling fully absorbed in their tasks, and experiencing difficulty disengaging from their work due to its captivating nature (Brown, 1996).

The descriptive analysis underscores the highly moderate level of Teacher Engagement among teachers in the Maldivian schools, with a particular emphasis on the Dedication dimension. Dedicated teachers demonstrate a strong commitment to their work and students, going above and beyond to create a positive learning environment. Their immersion in their work signifies a high level of engagement and contributes to their overall job satisfaction and fulfillment (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Brown, 1996).

The Level of teacher intention to stay in the schools of the Maldives?

The level of Teacher Intention to Stay in the schools of the Maldives is reported to be at a moderate level, based on the descriptive analysis conducted in this study. This indicates that teachers in the Maldivian schools possess a moderate degree of intention to remain in their current school or within the teaching profession. Among the items

assessed, "I often look forward to another day at work" received the highest mean score, suggesting that teachers who experience job satisfaction and maintain a positive outlook are more likely to exhibit a stronger intention to stay (Smith, 2019).

Job satisfaction plays a critical role in influencing teachers' loyalty and commitment to their organization. When teachers are satisfied with their job, they tend to exhibit greater dedication and active engagement in school activities. This satisfaction also impacts their job performance, ultimately contributing to their intention to stay and the overall success of the school. Job satisfaction is closely associated with the achievement of job-related goals and the experience of positive emotions, both of which contribute to a higher intention to stay (Judge et al., 2001).

Organizational commitment is another significant factor influencing teacher intention to stay. Teachers with higher levels of organizational commitment demonstrate behaviors such as punctuality, minimal absenteeism, and a reduced likelihood of seeking employment in other schools or leaving the teaching profession entirely. These committed teachers prioritize the success of the school over personal considerations and are more motivated to provide quality instruction and support student academic success. Increased organizational commitment has been linked to improved job performance and a higher intention to stay among teachers (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Teacher turnover poses a significant concern, particularly among early-career educators who may leave the profession prematurely, before reaching their full potential. This turnover can result in a loss of expertise and have a detrimental impact on the quality of instruction, particularly in schools that serve disadvantaged students. The consequences of teacher turnover extend beyond individual classrooms, affecting the teaching and learning process as a whole. The disruptions caused by teacher mobility can negatively impact student learning outcomes and overall school operations. The loss of instructional strategies, collaborative relationships, and knowledge of students' learning needs further contribute to the negative consequences of teacher turnover on student learning (Ingersoll & Strong, 2018).

The descriptive analysis highlights the significance of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and teacher retention in fostering a positive teaching and learning environment. By cultivating job satisfaction and organizational commitment among teachers, schools can increase their intention to stay, leading to enhanced instructional quality and improved student outcomes. Efforts to promote teacher satisfaction and commitment should be considered as crucial components of educational policies and school leadership practices (Hochschild, 2019).

The Influence of teacher engagement on teacher intention to stay in the schools of the Maldives.

The quantitative findings of this study provide significant evidence of the impact of Teacher Engagement on Teacher Intention to Stay in the schools of the Maldives. The results indicate that Teacher Engagement, specifically the dimensions of Vigour and Dedication, has a positive influence on Teacher Intention to Stay. When teachers are highly engaged and demonstrate energy, enthusiasm, and pride in their work, they are more likely to have a strong intention to remain in their current positions.

The findings align with previous research by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), which emphasizes the importance of employee engagement in enhancing job performance and reducing turnover intention. Engaged teachers who feel a sense of belonging to their school and have positive perceptions of their work environment are more committed to achieving school goals and fostering student achievement. They exhibit favorable feelings about their students' accomplishments and are more open to employment options while remaining confident in their roles and responsibilities. Teacher engagement also positively influences the well-being of teachers and contributes to overall school performance.

Vigour, as a dimension of Teacher Engagement, plays a significant role in teachers' performance and student attainment. Teachers who approach their tasks with energy, mental resilience, and perseverance are more likely to achieve optimal results and positively impact student achievement. This finding is supported by the work of Schaufeli and Salanova (2007), who argue that highly vigorous individuals find it challenging to quit their positions due to their invested energy and commitment, resulting in high-quality work output. Vigour motivates teachers to go the extra mile, perform at a higher level, and engage in constructive behaviors that benefit the school.

Dedication, another dimension of Teacher Engagement, also exerts a strong influence on Teacher Intention to Stay. Teachers who exhibit dedication are mentally stable, demonstrate professional behavior, and possess a positive perspective about their employment. They are committed to achieving personally important outcomes aligned with their professional requirements. Committed teachers have a deeper understanding of and support for the school's ideology and are willing to invest additional effort to protect the school's reputation. The research

conducted by Lu et al. (2016) further supports the positive effect of dedication on employee performance and intention to stay.

In conclusion, this study underscores the significance of Teacher Engagement, particularly the dimensions of Vigour and Dedication, in shaping Teacher Intention to Stay in the schools of the Maldives. Engaged teachers who exhibit high levels of energy, enthusiasm, and commitment are less likely to quit their jobs and contribute to the overall success of their schools. These findings highlight the importance of fostering teacher engagement through supportive work environments, opportunities for professional growth, and recognition of teachers' contributions. By promoting Teacher Engagement, educational institutions can enhance teacher satisfaction, commitment, and retention, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Lu et al., 2016).

CONCLUSION

This study focuses on examining the level of Teacher Engagement, the level of Teacher Intention to Stay, and the influence of Teacher Engagement on Teacher Intention to Stay in the schools of Maldives. The descriptive analysis revealed that teachers in Maldivian schools exhibit a highly moderate level of engagement, with a particular emphasis on the Dedication dimension. This indicates that teachers are deeply committed to their work and demonstrate enthusiasm, pride, and a sense of significance in their roles. Additionally, the study found that the level of Teacher Intention to Stay is at a moderate level, suggesting that teachers have a moderate inclination to remain in their current positions. Furthermore, the research indicated a significant positive influence of Teacher Engagement, particularly in terms of Vigour and Dedication, on Teacher Intention to Stay. This implies that teachers' high levels of energy, enthusiasm, and commitment positively impact their intention to remain in the teaching profession. Understanding these aspects is essential for creating strategies and interventions that promote teacher engagement and foster a supportive and fulfilling work environment in Maldivian schools.

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