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Does Perceived Organizational Support Affect Work Engagement among Academic Staff at Higher Education in Libya? An em.pirical study at Misurata University

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Does Perceived Organizational Support Affect Work Engagement among Academic Staff at Higher Education in Libya? An empirical study at Misurata University

Abstract : This research is based on the theoretical foundations of Social Exchange Theory and Organizational Support Theory to examine effects that Perceived Organizational Support (POS) have on Workplace Engagement (WE) in the context of higher education in Libya. It aims to bridge the knowledge and contextual gaps regarding effects of POS on WE, thereby interpreting and controlling WE in higher education institutions. A descriptive correlational study was designed by quantitatively measuring the both variables. Data were collected from 261 faculty members at Misurata University via a questionnaire. Results showed a moderate level of POS with an average of (2.95) and a high level of WE with an average of (3.72). Results highlighted a statistically significant positive effect of POS on WE among faculty members, with a correlation coefficient of ($R = 0.44$) and an adjusted coefficient of determination ($\text{Adjusted } R^2 = 0.193$). This indicates that POS explains approximately 19% of the variance in WE, as regression model showed statistical significance ($F = 63.246$, $p < 0.001$). Results also highlighted that the highest-ranking dimension of POS was "Supportive Leader Behavior" ($\text{Adjusted } R^2 = 0.235$), followed by Organizational Justice ($\text{Adjusted } R^2 = 0.113$), while the other two dimensions of Participation in Decision-Making and Work Environment Conditions each had an ($\text{adjusted } R^2 = 0.106$). These findings reinforce the importance of interactional social variables in explaining WE. Therefore, developing engagement among faculty members should be based on developing interactive variables such as Transformational Leadership and Supportive Leadership Behaviors.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Support, Work Engagement, Libyan universities, Misurata University, Social Exchange Theory, Organizational Support Theory, Higher Education, Libya.

هل يؤثر الدعم التنظيمي المُدرَك على الاندماج الوظيفي لدى أعضاء الهيئة التدريسية في مؤسسات التعليم العالي في ليبيا؟ دراسة ميدانية على جامعة مصراتة

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الملخص: تنطلق هذه الدراسة من أسس نظرية تركز على نظرية التبادل الاجتماعي ونظرية الدعم التنظيمي في تفسير العلاقة بين الدعم التنظيمي المدرك، والاندماج بالعمل في سياق التعليم العالي في ليبيا. لذلك، تسعى الدراسة إلى سد الفجوة المعرفية والسياقية المتعلقة باختبار تأثير الدعم التنظيمي المدرك في الاندماج بالعمل، وبالتالي تفسير ظاهرة الاندماج والتحكم بها في مؤسسات التعليم العالي. تم تصميم دراسة وصفية ارتباطية من خلال قياس المتغيرات كمياً، حيث تم تجميع بيانات (261) من أعضاء هيئة التدريس بكلية جامعة مصراتة عن طريق أداة الاستبانة. بينت النتائج مستوى متوسط من الدعم التنظيمي المدرك بمتوسط إجمالي بلغ (2.95) ومستوى مرتفع للاندماج بالعمل بمتوسط بلغ (3.72). كما بينت النتائج وجود تأثير إيجابي دال احصائياً للدعم التنظيمي المدرك في الاندماج بالعمل لدى أعضاء هيئة التدريس حيث بلغ معامل الارتباط ($R=0.44$) كما بلغ معامل التحديد المعدل ($Adjusted R^2= 0.193$) مما يدل على ان الدعم التنظيمي المدرك يفسر تقريباً 19% من التباين في الاندماج بالعمل. كما بينت نموذج الانحدار معنوية إحصائية ($F=63.246, p<0.001$). كما بينت النتائج أن أعلى بعد من أبعاد الدعم التنظيمي المدرك كان بعد "سلوك القائد المساند" الذي بلغ ($Adjusted R^2 = 0.235$) تلاه بُعد العدالة التنظيمية بقيمة بلغت ($Adjusted R^2 = 0.113$)، بينما كانت قيم بُعدي المشاركة في اتخاذ القرارات وظروف بيئة العمل بتأثير بلغ ($Adjusted R^2 = 0.106$) لكل منها. تعزز هذه النتائج أهمية المتغيرات الاجتماعية التفاعلية في تفسير ظاهرة الاندماج. لذلك فإن تطوير مستويات الاندماج لدى أعضاء هيئة التدريس بمؤسسات التعليم العالي يجب أن يركز على تطوير المتغيرات التفاعلية بين مثل القيادة التحويلية وسلوكيات القيادة الداعمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الدعم التنظيمي المدرك، الاندماج بالعمل، الجامعات الليبية، جامعة مصراتة، نظرية التبادل الاجتماعي، نظرية الدعم التنظيمي، التعليم العالي، ليبيا.

1. Introduction:

Higher education institutions play a vital role in societies and contribute directly to achieving the desired societal transformations. They work to prepare and cultivate a generation capable of working, contributing, and giving back, possessing the skills and abilities necessary to keep pace with modern era (Black, 2015). This, therefore, requires faculty members who possess the ability and desire to accomplish academic tasks efficiently and effectively. University leaders' understanding of factors motivate and drive staff engagement and contribution to projects, tasks, and activities, implemented by the university, is one of the most important pillars for achieving their goals (Mather and Bam, 2025). Furthermore, the pursuit of developing and the acquiring quality accreditations and international recognition by higher education institutions, necessitates, first and foremost, the development of effective strategies to fosters high levels of participation and engagement from faculty members in all programs and projects. As their voluntary engagement accompanying by strong belief of their role, as active contributors, would highly lead to achieving organizational objectives (Hassan et al., 2024; Assefa et al., 2025).

Scholars, such as Eisenberger et al. (2016) and McDaniel (2025), have observed a general trend of decreased WE among employees. Therefore, they highlighted that exploring causes of this phenomenon requires further research, particularly in diverse occupational and cultural contexts. Differences in context and profession may lead to variations in the relationship between POS and WE (Zargar et al., 2025), highlighting the need to examine unstudied contexts and professions such as higher education in Libya. However, a review of previous literature revealed a scarcity of research addressing the relationship between POS and WE in the Libyan context, especially research published in international research platforms (Aljarid and Azam, 2024). Furthermore, the role of faculty members in raising quality of education is vital and prominent, as they are providers of educational services and facilitators of learning and skills acquisition. Therefore, their high level of engagement reflects motivations that enhance performance and productivity. Consequently, the scarcity of studies on their engagement, and the factors associated with them, represents a research gap that requires further investigation and analysis. On the other hand, the exposure of higher education institutions in Libya to diverse economic, political, and legislative

environmental changes, accompanying with pressure of improving and developing the quality of education (Bribesh et al., 2024), reinforces the need to understand and analyze how to raise WE. For its part, lack of tangible material, suggests that Misrata University likely lacks the substantial material and financial resources necessary to raise faculty members' perceptions of organizational support.

On the other hand, according to Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Organizational Support Theory (OST), the relationship between POS and WE could be explained through the exchange of perceived values between the organization and its employees. Organisational support works as a starting point in igniting a strong relational ship with the employees, as the organization provides organizational support in different ways including material and relational support. However, staff would feel obligated to give back what they have seen as a support (Mehrizi and Nasiri, 2022). Both theoretical frameworks argue that POS fosters a sense of duty among employees, strengthening their social, material, and intellectual attachment to the organization and their commitment to its goals. Furthermore, providing appropriate organizational support enhances employee engagement, which in turn motivates the volume and value of efforts made to fulfill job responsibilities (Opoku and Boateng, 2024). However, WE has a social and relational nature that focuses on interpreting it as a social phenomenon occurring within organizations. It is also a dynamic variable, changing according to situations and circumstances. It enhances the individual's sense of well-being and boosts performance. This explains the added value that engagement creates for both parties involved in social exchange (Özdemir and Yalçınkaya, 2019; Khan and Dukhaykh, 2022; McDaniel, 2025).

However, Organizational Behavioral, Human Resource Management, Performance Management, and other management fields focus on how to raise levels of individual job performance (Khan and Dukhaykh, 2022). Therefore, most research focuses on examining the relationships between various individual, group, and organizational variables to understand how performance can be controlled and, consequently, organizational goals achieved. Among these areas of interest is WE, which is viewed as a powerful expression of desire, interest, and transformation of all capabilities to serve individual and organizational objectives (Clack, 2021; Gumilang and Indrayanti, 2022). WE represents value for both parties involved in the exchange—the employee and the organization—and indicates a phenomenon that ensures a balance between the desires

and interests of individuals and the organization. In addition, the concept of POS emerges as one of the most important organizational variables affecting WE (Badwan et al., 2022; Park and Kim, 2024). The relationship between POS and WE is still under consideration. Even though, previous research has identified several links between POS and WE, other research still skeptical about their relationship. In addition, organizational culture, organizational identity, and organizational reputation are seen as WE motivators (Meira and Hancer, 2021; Bonaiuto et al., 2022). Organizational support provided by management in various forms—material, moral, psychological, or social—remains central to the individual's perception that influence their level of engagement. The importance and value of organizational variables increase in proportion to their influence on organizational outcomes (Sack, 2006; Park and Kim, 2024).

Conversely, studies based on diverse cultural and sectoral contexts indicate a weak effect of POS on WE. For example, Ghaniyyaturrahmah and Djamhoer (2023) found that the effect of POS on WE was (0.10), indicating a weak impact. This finding is attributed to the influence of other factors on WE level in the healthcare sector. Furthermore, Badwan et al. (2022) demonstrated a weak correlation between POS and WE among a sample of nurses in the healthcare sector. Similarly, Mehrizi and Nasiri (2022) found a weak to moderate correlation between POS and WE among nursing staff in Iranian hospitals, with statistically significant differences in results between males and females.

Several points regarding knowledge research gap can be drawn: (1) Numerous studies demonstrate the strong relationship between POS and WE across various contexts, professions, and cultural environments. (2) The strength of this relationship depends on a large number of mediating variables those either strengthen or weaken such relationship. (3) The diversity of contexts in which this relationship has been studied suggests that it can be investigated in different settings, where results have been somewhat contradictory. (4) The emergence of weak relationships between the two variables underscores the need for a deeper understanding of their relationship and its contextualization. (5) Different conceptual frameworks such as; social exchange theory and resource conservation theory could have a deep view of the relationship between POS and WE (Yang et al., 2020; Zagenczyk et al., 2021). Therefore, this study focuses on examining how dimensions of POS; organizational fairness, participation in

decision-making, supportive leadership behavior, and favorable work environment conditions, affect WE levels?

Based on the aforementioned knowledge and context gaps, this study focuses on examining effects of POS on WE among faculty members at Misurata University. POS is considered as one of variables contributing to faculty engagement. Therefore, the study aims to determine the levels of POS and WE among faculty members at Misurata University. It also seeks to examine the effects of the dimensions of POS (organizational justice, supportive leader behavior, participation in decision-making, and favorable working conditions) on WE of faculty members at Misurata University.

This study reinforces the theoretical relationship between the two variables and provides research evidence supporting the effects of organizational justice, supportive leader behavior, participation in decision-making, and work environment conditions on WE among university faculty members. Therefore, it strengthens the theory of organizational support and the theory of social exchange, demonstrating their role in explaining the relationships occurring within organizational phenomena. However, the study provides a comprehensive set of evidence-based practices. Exploring the relationship between organizational variables and WE enhances the possibility of activating and controlling it through HRM strategies and guidance. It also opens a wide door for university administration to control and manage engagement through a work strategy based on strengthening POS. This, in turn, leads to increased performance, satisfaction, and active participation of faculty members in institutional development programs, such as; programs for obtaining institutional and program accreditations.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Imran et al. (2020) demonstrated significant impact of POS on employee motivation and satisfaction, thereby enhancing their engagement levels. The relationship between the two variables involves a motivational process that drives intrinsic motivation for engagement. Furthermore, other researchers reinforce the positive correlation between POS and WE. Findings indicate that when employees feel their basic psychological needs are met and that their work requirements and necessities are provided, it enhances their engagement and active participation (Ni et al., 2023; Ruzain, 2025; Sulistiyani et al., 2022). These studies further suggest that the positive relationship between POS and engagement leads to desirable outcomes, with engagement mediating the relationship

between perceived support and employee innovation (Zarger et al., 2025). Furthermore, several previous studies (Eljaaidi, 2016; Boccoli et al., 2022) have shown that positive relationship between POS and WE depends on a number of organizational and personal variables, those either strengthen or weaken the relationship. For example, Fridayanti et al. (2022) demonstrated that having a meaningful job and tasks strengthens the relationship between support and engagement by approximately half, as a meaningful job represents value to individuals.. Bonaiuto et al. (2022) showed that organizational identity mediates this relationship, in addition to supervisory and colleague relationships, which are among the most important mediating factors in the impact of POS on engagement, especially for those with low organizational identity and high psychosocial risk. On the other hand, the importance of personal variables in determining the relationship between POS and WE is highlighted. A review of previous literature has shown that employee competence and self-reliance mediate the relationship between POS and WE (Hassan et al., 2024). Furthermore, some variables related to learning, growth, and self-development also influence the relationship between the two, such as; psychological capital, training, autonomy, psychological empowerment, and employee esteem (Gumilang and Indrayanti, 2022; Yang et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2024; Yamuna, 2024). Ruzain's (2025) study also indicated that psychological contracts mediate the relationship between POS and engagement. Further, Zagenczyk et al. (2021) found that emotional commitment mediates the relationship between the two variables; the stronger the emotional commitment, the stronger the relationship between the two. Thus the main hypothesis could be highlighted as follows:

H1: Perceived Organizational Support has a positive and significant effect on Work Engagement of academic staff

The first dimension of POS at this study is organizational justice. This dimension represents multi-faceted concept. Research refers to justice as perception of employees that they had fair treatment in outcomes, process and interpersonal treatment (Colquitt et al., 2005; Colquitt et al., 2023). SET supports the effect of justice on WE, as employees are highly expected to engage in their job tasks when they feel they have been treated fairly (Gomes and Marques, 2025). Thus, fair treatment of management obliges employees to reciprocate through higher engagement. However, employees usually interpreted fair treatment at the organization as an organizational support, in which the organization cares about their well-being. Furthermore, recent research

finding reaffirmed that organizational justice leads to higher engagement over time (Ho, 2024). based on this discussion the first sub-hypothesis is highlighted as:

H1a: Organizational Justice has a positive and significant effect on Work Engagement of academic staff

Other studies further show that the impact of support on engagement tends to be higher for women than for men (Mascarenhas et al., 2022). On the other hand, results show that engagement partially mediates the relationship between POS and job performance in small and medium enterprises in Indonesia, which raises the question of the relationship between support and engagement in the SME sector (Hasani and Churiyah, 2024). Umbara and Dwarawati (2024) found that the behavior of the direct supervisor plays a significant role in influencing engagement levels of academic staff in Indonesia, with an impact exceeding 40%. They further noted that there is a need to examine the dimensions of POS individually to determine which have the greatest impact on engagement. Relevant literature supports the direct and positive impact of POS on WE, as employees' feelings of support and appreciation enhance their well-being, commitment, and engagement in work activities (Suarez-Albanchez et al., 2022). Therefore, the second sub-hypothesis is highlighted as follows:

H1b: Supportive Leader Behaviour has a positive and significant effect on Work Engagement of academic staff

By contrast, participation in decision making point to the extent to which staff are involved in organizational decision those affect their job duties, roles and work environment (Behraves et al., 2021; Islam et al., 2023). Recent research highlights a strong relationship between participation and different work attitudes such as WE. However, drawing on social exchange theory (SET), it's arguing that when organizations, the first party, involve its staff, as second party, in decision making, staff perceive positive outcomes, such as; trust, respect and personal value (Madison et al., 2025; Boccoli et al., 2022). Therefore, such perception encourages entering a reciprocal relationship with their organization leading to higher engagement. However, if participation in decision making is symbolic or staff do not have the right capabilities such relationship is weakened (Zheng et al., 2025). Therefore, the third sub-hypothesis emphasizes this notion as follows:

H1c: Participation in decision making has a positive and significant effect on Work

Engagement of academic staff

In relation to the fourth sub-hypothesis, Anitha (2014), Cotič et al., (2025), Eljaaidi (2016) and Boccoli et al., (2022) have identifies a variety of work environment conditions effecting WE, such as; supportive work environment, transformational, servant, and authentic leadership, work teams, training and development, compensation and rewards, policies and procedures, organizational structures, social interaction, intensity of workloads, a work-life balance imbalance, poor psychological well-being. However, such these variables represent a considerable part of POS. Regarding the indirect relationship between POS and WE, a literature review indicates that social support in a positive work environment is typically associated with enhanced employee well-being, which in turn leads to higher levels of engagement and reduced employee burnout (Ashfaq et al., 2023; Ren et al., 2024). Moreover, literature review shows that organizational culture influences WE, as a participatory and supportive organizational cultures typically promotes engagement through alignment between organizational and individual values (Srimulyani and Hermanto, 2022). To reinforce the role of the work environment, findings of Rasool et al., (2021) showed that the absence of trust, as a variable of the work environment, mediates the relationship between the two variables and leads to less engagement, as absence of trust, in toxic environments, in management and supervisors, reduces positive attitudes among employees. Additionally, Balkar's (2015) study highlights that organizational climate and culture play a significant role in influencing WE through vitality, dedication, and engagement. However, the relationship between POS and WE also increases with the availability of several organizational and personal variables, including communication channels, working conditions, and rewards (Holistika, 2024; Rasool et al., 2021). Howerev, the fourth sub-hypothesis could be highlighted as follows:

H1d: work environment conditions have a positive and significant effect on Work

Engagement of academic staff

3. Theoretical Framework

POS represents a driving force, while WE is seen as a positive and motivating psychological state toward both the job and the organization. This section discusses the theoretical frameworks for these two variables as follows:

3.1 Organizational Support Theory (OST)

OST posits that an organization's willingness to reward effort, and meet social and emotional needs of its employees, is generally perceived by employees as a sign that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being at work. POS reassures employees that the organization will provide the necessary support when needed to perform their job effectively and reinforced employees' positive attitudes toward the humanistic practices and interactions within the organization (Chen et al., 2025). Consequently, decisions, instructions, and policies adopted by managers are generally perceived as indicators of the organization's direction and intentions, rather than solely as individual managerial pronouncements. This perception is further reinforced by other components, such as ethical, legal, and financial responsibilities assigned to managers, which in turn influence their behavior toward employees. This representation is also evident in the policies, norms, and organizational culture that provide continuity to management behavior and offer explanations for desired behavioral model within the organization (Eljaaidi and Alshalbah, 2025). Employees typically perceive their treatment (positive or negative) as an indicator of the organization's acceptance or disapproval of them (Ria and Koodamara, 2025). Based on the norms of social exchange, POS generates a compelling sense of belonging to the organization and the necessity of helping it achieve its goals (Meira and Hancer, 2021). Furthermore, POS, through feelings of care, agreement, and respect, implicitly signifies the fulfillment of the employee's social and emotional needs. Thus, leading employees to integrate their organizational membership and job roles into their social identity. Moreover, POS reinforces employees' belief that the organization values and rewards high performance, a process that must involve positive outcomes for both parties (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

3.2 Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Theoretical frameworks those explain WE in the fields of organizational behavior, psychology, and management encompass a number of frameworks. In a comprehensive review of literature, Boccoli et al. (2022) summarizes these frameworks to include; Job

Demands-Resources Theory, Conservation of Resources Theory, Self-Determination Theory, Broaden & Build (B&B) Theory, Affective Events Theory, and Social Exchange Theory. They argue that engagement arises from interaction with others and working conditions to which an individual is exposed. Therefore, they advocated for the use of Social Exchange for explaining WE as a socio-structural phenomenon characterized by three features: interaction, exchange, and social recognition. SET is based on the concept of reciprocity as one of the most important aspects explaining the relationship between employees and organizations. Proponents of this theory assert that employment is a process of relinquishing benefits (namely; rewards, material and moral incentives) in exchange for other benefits from the employee (namely; loyalty and effort). They reaffirm that good treatment within the exchange mechanism usually compels the other party to reciprocate with positive treatment (Madison et al., 2025). According to this theory, resources obtained from others are more valuable, if they come from willingness of the first party, than those come from outside its control (the donor). This suggests that the donor truly values and respects the second party (the recipient). Therefore, organizational rewards and working conditions—salary, promotion, and job duties—when perceived as originating from the organization, usually have a greater impact on employee performance than if they are mandated by law, labor unions, or international organizations (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Meira and Hancer, 2021). When employees feel supported by the organization, they accept responsibilities, tasks, and goals and willingly contribute to the organization. This stems from employees' belief that their investment in the organization is valuable and important to them, and they feel responsible for it. Furthermore, their sense of being supported by the organization typically reflects the fulfillment of their psychological, social, and professional needs. Therefore, when work environment provides care, fairness, and appreciation for employees, it meets their social, psychological, and emotional needs, which in turn motivates them to exert effort to meet those needs. Perceived lack of recognition fosters trust and productivity through equitable compensation systems (Opoku and Boateng, 2024; Sacks, 2006).

3.3 Perceived Organizational Support:

POS is a one-dimensional concept, encompassing shared beliefs about the organization's commitment to meeting individual and professional needs and requirements. It involves several processes: the first party, usually management, provides services, the second

party, usually the employee, recognizing the importance of those services. Then, the second party reciprocating services in other forms, and the first party recognizing the results of the services provided to the second party (Boccoli et al., 2022). Furthermore, previous literature identifies three key roles for fostering POS in organizations: (1) building a sense of alignment between the two parties, which is usually based on the quality of the stronger party's behavior (the organization's) towards the weaker party (the employee). (2) developing interpersonal relationships to identify problems both inside and outside of work. (3) treating employees fairly by allowing them to anticipate what is expected of them and by familiarizing them with the system's regulations (Chen et al., 2025; Opoku and Boateng, 2024). Additionally, POS refers to employees' general belief in the degree to which the organization values their contributions and efforts and cares about their well-being at work. When an organization listens to its employees' complaints, it demonstrates concern for them, and when it works to resolve their problems, it reinforces their perception of support. In other words, POS is manifested through the overall perception of how fairly the organization treats its employees (Assefa et al., 2024). Employees compare the treatment and reward they receive with their efforts and capabilities, thus, engaging in a kind of carefully calculated, interactive exchange between return and cost (Park and Kim, 2024). In more depth, POS encompasses preventive and proactive functional components those can influence a large number of variables within the organization. This function is characterized by its broad scope, touching upon several organizational and social variables, thus highlighting its role as a tool that expresses the organization's commitment to its employees. POS is, therefore, divided into two types: socio-emotional support, which refers to intangible support such as; respect and appreciation for employees' dedication and efforts; and instrumental support, which encompasses all tangible, material support resulting from the performance of job duties (Park and Kim, 2024). Bonaiuto et al. (2022) identify two dimensions of POS: perceived support from colleagues and perceived support from direct supervisor. The first dimension focuses on colleagues' material support during job performance and their provision of necessary information. The second dimension refers to the employee's perception of the support they receive from their supervisor, reflecting appreciation, concern, and a commitment to their well-being at work. Ghaniyyaturrahmah and Djamhoer (2023) present several dimensions of POS, including perceived fairness, direct supervisor support, organizational rewards,

and work environment conditions. Additionally, Al-Ansi et al. (2023) identify four main dimensions of organizational support: employee-supervisor engagement, rewards and promotions, and extrinsic motivation.

Emphasizing the active role of POS, Park and Kim (2024) assert that higher levels of POS lead to increased feelings of belonging, commitment, and engagement in organizational citizenship behaviors. It also enhances job satisfaction and competency development. They argue that when levels of POS within an organization rise, so do levels of positive attitudes and a sense of belonging. Consequently, employees experience greater overall engagement within the organization, and extra-role behaviors emerge as a logical and structured exchange of employee feelings of support and reinforcement. Furthermore, POS raises awareness of belonging and loyalty to job and organization, thereby fostering intrinsic motivation to perform work tasks. These findings stem from the direct impact of POS on individual employee self-efficacy and commitment levels.

On the other hand, achieving high perceptions of organizational support requires adherence to effective human resource management practices in dealing with employees, effective leadership, organizational justice in all its forms, and the provision of a positive work environment and appropriate infrastructure (Caesens et al., 2017). From the employee's perspective, the relationship between employees and their managers is the most important indicator of POS, as managers represent the organization. Therefore, interaction between employees and their managers directly affects perception of that support. Furthermore, all fair treatment provided by the organization usually reflects high perceptions of support. When an organization adopts fair procedures or rewards for everyone, it enhances the perception of organizational support (Cenkci et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2025). Moreover, Saks (2022) argues that POS results from several practices adopted by the organization, including financial, procedural, and human resource practices, which are most directly impacting employee perception. Fair treatment is evident in the procedures an organization uses with its employees, and a supportive manager's behavior highlights the interactive and social role directed toward the employee in improving their performance or addressing the problems they face. He adds, participation in decision-making is also an effective practice in human resource management, retention, and increasing employee appreciation. Further, he maintained that participation involves several practices,

including information sharing, employee input, and employee involvement in decision-making processes. This participation results from giving employees opportunities to express their opinions, beliefs, and concerns in a way that makes them inputs for decisions those affect them. Moreover, when an organization shares information with its employees and gives them the opportunity to participate in decisions, it expresses its appreciation for their contributions and opinions. Consequently, its employees usually view these factors as positive organizational support directed toward them, and thus become directly engaged in their jobs (Saks, 2022). Finally, providing suitable working conditions, both physical and interpersonal, is a key practice in effective human resource management. Conducive work conditions (exogenous conditions) encompass all the policies, procedures, and working conditions offered by the organization that play a significant role in fostering engagement (Boccoli et al., 2022). However, POS is measured through different research scales. Eisenberger et al. (1986) scale is one of the earliest measures used to assess POS. They developed a scale called the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS). Initially, the scale consisted of 36 items, later reduced to 17. It comprised three dimensions: fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and job conditions. The third dimension encompassed various conditions experienced by employees within the organization, such as recognition, salary, promotion, job security, autonomy, work stress, training, and organizational size. (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002)

3.4 Work Engagement

Khan's (1990) conceptual model of engagement categorizes the conditions under which engagement occurs into three conditions: (1) *Meaningfulness*, includes elements of work itself, such as job-specific tasks and activities, which lead to WE as long as the individual perceives them positively. (2) *Safety*, refers to the interactive social elements, management style, processes, and internal norms of the organization—a set of interactive factors that make the individual feel safe while performing their job duties. Finally, (3) *Availability*, includes the individual employee's dispersal. On the other hand, Buckingham and Coffman (1999) identified three important conditions for employee engagement: *suitable colleagues*, *suitable job roles*, and *suitable managers*. This perspective indicates that employee engagement is the result of the interaction of more than one variable. Thus, engagement is seen as multidimensional concept that does not result from a single variable. As long as an employee perceives that they are working

with a homogeneous and compatible team, they are more likely to exhibit engagement practices, and vice versa. Conversely, when an employee perceives the availability of meaningful and valuable jobs and roles, they are more likely to engage. Similarly, when an employee perceives that their managers care about, appreciate, and support their interaction and activities within the organization, they are also more likely to practice WE.

Schaufeli et al. (2002) present another model of engagement, defining it as "*a positive and promising work-related mental state characterized by vitality, dedication, and absorption*" (p. 74). This definition is based on describing engagement as a state experienced by the employee, characterized by behaviors that are productive for both the employee and the organization, and related to work activities in general, not just the job itself. This state is characterized by physical adherence to work instructions, dedication to performing tasks, interaction with others, and a lack of feeling burdened by the time spent at work. Work engagement model presented by Schaufeli et al. (2002) consists of three dimensions, namely; *vitality, dedication, and absorption*. They explain that their results showed high levels of correlation between these variables (greater than 0.90), as follows:

1. *Volatility*: This refers to a high level of energy, willpower, and intellectual flexibility at work. Volatility also indicates an employee's conscious investment of effort in their work and their determination to overcome all obstacles.
2. *Dedication*: This refers to an individual's strong participation in their work tasks through diligence, involvement, and engagement. It also indicates an employee's sense of appreciation, importance, and self-worth from all direct and indirect components of the organization. Furthermore, dedication reflects high levels of enthusiasm for working within the organization, inspiration, and pride in being part of it, where the organization's values are fully aligned with the individual's values.
3. *Absorption*: it refers to a state of intense focus that leads to a loss of sense of time. An individual is intensely focused on performing their work tasks and happily immersed in dealing with all situations they encounter while performing those tasks. Work time passes quickly, and the individual finds it difficult to stop working.

In a related context, Opoku and Boateng (2024) describe WE as a state in which individuals feel committed, engaged, empowered, and enthusiastic about performing their job duties. Therefore, they refer to WE as a positive work-related mindset that activates employee perceptions and beliefs through three types of engagement, namely: (1) *Intellectual engagement*; expresses an understanding of work tasks and objectives, practiced through behaviors of intellectual and contextual awareness of the organization's tasks and overarching goals, and manifested in behaviors such as dedication to work, awareness, and a high level of focus on the organization's objectives. (2) *Social engagement*; this concept refers to the degree to which individuals feel socially connected in the work environment and share a number of the organization's values with others. It allows building and strengthening of relationships and the development of trust among individuals. This type of engagement manifests in a number of behaviors such as adaptability, initiative, and responsiveness to change. (3) *Emotional engagement*; expresses a positive psychological attitude towards the organization and its adopted goals, towards superiors and colleagues, and towards working conditions. It manifests through the adoption of behaviors of trust in the organization and its components, and is therefore linked to other positive behaviors such as satisfaction and commitment.

On the other hand, a review of previous literature (Opoku and Boateng, 2024; Ghaniyyaturrahmah and Djamhoer, 2023) reveals three levels of employee engagement: (1) *Active Engagement*; individuals with active engagement typically perform their tasks with enthusiasm, passion, and energy. They pay attention to every detail of the organization. They also work in innovative and highly productive ways to achieve goals. They are able to solve problems and contribute necessary ideas in collaboration with their colleagues. (2) *Non-Engagement*; this segment represents employees who work to complete the tasks assigned to them by their managers. They usually adhere to the tasks assigned to them through job descriptions and follow work systems and policies precisely. (3) *Disengagement*; this category represents those employees who do not exert significant effort at work and therefore have little impact on work output. They do not feel a sense of belonging to the organization and only appreciate it when it comes to receiving rewards. They don't recognize building relationships as productive work, nor do they believe that development opportunities will help them in their future career

paths. The dangerous aspect of this is that they could have a strong influence on their colleagues who are integrated into the organization.

Engagement refers to a positive, active psychological state related to work, practically expressed by the intensity and direction of a coherent set of intellectual, emotional, and behavioral energies (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Schaufeli et al., 2006; Shuck et al., 2017). Engaged employees possess a strong sense of vital and emotional connection to their work activities and consider themselves capable of handling the demands of their jobs. Thus, engagement at work represents a comprehensive mental state that encompasses a spectrum of behaviors and feelings, not specific to a particular subject, person, or job, but rather encompassing all components of the organization. Furthermore, it is a continuous state of unwavering commitment to performing work tasks. Engagement is a cumulative and chronic state, not a temporary or transitional one. Therefore, employees who are engaged in their work also feel functionally effective by balancing job demands and resources, appreciating the work they do in return for the support they receive (Eljaaidi, 2016; Ghaniyyaturrahmah and Djamhoer, 2023).

Given that engagement is a dynamic, relational process linked to several different factors depending on the type of interaction, connection, and situation, it is relevant for engagement, within the same organization, to vary from one individual to another. It can even differ within the same individual in certain situations, as positive emotions play a significant role in promoting engagement behaviors (Khan, 1990). Furthermore, Boccoli et al. (2022) classified the causes of engagement into two categories: (1) *Endogenous factors*; which are cognitive factors related to individuals that motivate them towards engagement. This category includes four subcategories: personal resources, positive emotions, and activities related to rest, recovery, and engagement. (2) *Exogenous factors*; which are factors surrounding the individual that influence their engagement in engagement. This category includes three subcategories: job characteristics, social relationships, and organizational resources. Nevertheless, Joshi and Sodhi (2011) identify several causes of engagement in organizations, including: (1) *Job content*; reflecting the degree of autonomy and learning opportunities available during task performance. (2) *Financial benefits*; including salaries and their associated requirements such as qualifications, responsibilities, adequate compensation, and equal opportunities for compensation. (3) *Work-life balance*; encompassing consideration of individual needs and the ability to work flexible hours. (4) *Employee relations with senior*

management; including easy access to senior leadership, senior management values and conduct, fair treatment, respect for employee opinions, and fostering a collaborative work environment. (5) *Scope of promotion and career growth*; including clear and effective employment policies, suitable job opportunities, clear career paths, transparency, fairness in growth opportunities, and support for individual development. (6) *Teamwork*; comprising the appreciation of teamwork and cooperation within and between departments within the organization.

Based on the above discussion, the intense research interest in this variable has led to development of several scales. Previous studies have identified four main scales for measuring WE: (1) *The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)*, developed by Schaufeli et al. in 2002. This is the most widely used scale in WE research, having been used 87 times out of 119 papers reviewed by Boccoli et al. (2002). This scale aims to measure three dimensions: Vigor, Dedication, and Absorption. It initially comprised 17 items in 2002, and was later revised to include only Vigor and Dedication, with 11 items (Schaufeli et al., 2019). The UWES scale is typically used to explore the relationships between engagement and its causes, such as perceived organizational support, and its outputs, such as primary and secondary job behavior. This scale is a general measure that incorporates other concepts such as commitment, engagement, and burnout. (2) *The Job Engagement Scale (JES)* is the most widely used scale for measuring engagement after the UWES scale. Developed in 2010 by Rich et al., it measures three dimensions: intellectual engagement, physical engagement, and emotional engagement. This scale is based on the conceptual framework presented by Khan (1990). (3) *The Job and Organization Engagement Scale (JOES)* is built on the theoretical framework presented by Sacks (2006), which classifies engagement into two levels: the individual level and the organizational level. (4) *The Gallup Workplace Audit Scale (Q12)*, developed by Gallup Consulting, is designed as a performance management scale. It is versatile enough to measure various concepts such as participation, satisfaction, enthusiasm, and other drivers of engagement, based on the theoretical framework centered on job resources (Boccoli et al., 2022). Based on the above measures, it can be concluded that the UWES scale is the most widely used in engagement research due to its inclusion of dimensions that accurately reflect the content of engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2019), while noting the limitations of other scales in independently measuring the concept of

engagement. Therefore, this scale was adopted to study the phenomenon of engagement in this research.

4 Research Methodology and Procedures

The study adopted a quantitative approach using a descriptive correlational research design to test the effects of PPOS on WE. The study population consisted of the faculty members of Misrata University, totaling (1487) members. Misrata University was chosen as a representative model of the organizational and legal environment of Libyan universities, reflecting higher education institutions. It also encompasses a diversity of faculties, including applied, humanities, and other disciplines (Misurata University, 2025). Stratified random sampling was employed to select the sample. The university was stratified according to faculties, and then faculties were selected based on relative size to ensure fair representation proportional to their size within the university. Therefore, the following faculties were chosen: Economics and Political Science, Science, Arts, Education, Islamic Studies, Engineering, Medicine, Information Technology, and Law, as they constitute the largest proportion of the university's faculty members. The target sample size was 306, and the collected and valid questionnaires were (261) questionnaires, representing 85% of the total targeted sample.

Based on the theoretical frameworks discussed above, the following measures were used: (1) The Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002) Perceived Organizational Support Scale. This scale measures the following dimensions: (a) Organizational fairness (9 items), (b) Supportive leader behavior (6 items), (c) Participation in decision-making (6 items), and (d) Work environment conditions (5 items). The scale includes objectively formulated items. For example, the organizational fairness dimension included items such as, "Results obtained by faculty members reflect their efforts" and "All procedures are applied fairly to all faculty members at the university." The supportive leader behavior dimension included items such as, "The department head informs faculty members of any changes that may affect their jobs," and "The department head considers faculty members' goals when assigning tasks." Additionally, the participation dimension included items such as "The university administration consults with faculty members before making decisions" and "The university administration considers faculty input when making decisions". Finally, the section on work environment conditions includes provisions such as: "The university administration provides growth opportunities (training, workshops, conferences) for faculty members" and "The university

administration assists faculty members when they encounter difficulties that hinder their performance of their duties". (2) For its part, the Schaufeli et al. (2002) Work Engagement Scale included three dimensions: (a) Vitality, with 6 items, including statements such as "I have a strong desire to be at the college every day" and "I have maximum energy when performing my duties at the college." (b) Dedication, with 6 items, including statements such as; "My job motivates me to perform my duties to the best of my ability" and "I feel proud of performing my duties as a faculty member at the college." (c) Absorption, with 5 items, including statements such as "I often lose track of time when performing my duties at the college" and "It is difficult for me to separate my personal interests from my work interests at the college".

The quantitative measurement process involved the use of a five-point Likert scale ranging from the lowest score (1), which represents (strongly disagree), to the highest score (5), which represents (strongly agree), according to the following table:

Table1: Likert scale ranges

Level of Agreement	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very low
Mean Score Range	4.2–5.0	3.4–4.2	2.6–3.4	1.8–2.6	1.0-1.8

The questionnaires were distributed to the colleges according to the following schedule

Table 2: Survey Distribution at Misurata University Colleges

College	Number
Economics and Political Science	39
Islamic Studies	18
Medicine	17
Information Technology	21
Arts	41
Education	46
Science	41
Law	16
Engineering	21
Total	261

The table shows that the Faculties of Education, Arts, Economics, and Science received the largest number of questionnaires due to their large number of faculty members, as they are the oldest faculties at the university.

Regarding the validity and reliability of the measurements, Pearson's correlation analysis revealed statistically significant positive correlations between all variables, with significance values of (Sig = 0.000), indicating significant correlation coefficients. These values fall between 0.64 and 0.84, which are strong positive values. Furthermore, the Item-Total Correlation analysis showed that all coefficients were positive and statistically significant at (p-value= 0.000), exceeding the statistically acceptable minimum of (0.3). This indicates a high degree of consistency between the items and their respective dimensions. Therefore, these results reflect homogeneity of the scale's structure and its ability to measure its constituent dimensions. Thus, it can be concluded that the measurement has a high validity in testing the study's hypotheses. For its part, the Cronbach's alpha analysis, which measures the reliability of the study's measures, showed the following results:

Table 3: Results of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Variables	Dimensions	No of Items	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
Independent Variable-POS) (Organizational Justice	9	0.905
	Supportive Leader Behaviour	6	0.887
	Participation in decision making	6	0.903
	Work Environment Conditions	5	0.861
Dependent Variable-(WE)	Vitality	6	0.820
	Dedication	6	0.886
	Absorption	5	0.795
Total		43	0.952

Results indicate that all Cronbach's alpha coefficient values are suitable for demonstrating the validity, reliability, and suitability of the scales for the study. The results showed that the dimensions of the independent variable recorded high values ranging from 0.86 to 0.90, indicating a high level of reliability. Similarly, the dimensions of the dependent variable recorded values ranging from 0.79 to 0.88, also falling within the high reliability range. Overall, the total reliability of the measurement instrument was 0.95, reflecting a high degree of internal consistency among the items and confirming the scale's validity in hypothesis testing.

Results and Hypothesis Testing

This section presents the results of the statistical analyses as follows:

4.1 Descriptive Analysis for Dimensions of POS

The descriptive analysis included results of Mean, Standard Deviation and the Coefficient of Variation was used to determine levels of dimensions of POS. The following table shows the results:

Table 4: Results of Descriptive Analysis for POS Dimensions

Dimensions	Mean	Std. Deviation	CV%	Level of Perception
Organizational Justice	2.69	.74	27.5%	Moderate
Supportive Leader Behaviour	3.59	.79	22.0%	Moderate
Participation in decision making	2.62	.78	29.8%	Moderate
Work Environment Conditions	2.91	.83	28.5%	Moderate
Total (POS)	2.95	.66	22.4%	Moderate

The table shows the results of the descriptive analysis of the dimensions of perceived organizational support. The results indicate that all dimensions fell within the average level, with means ranging from (2.62) to (3.59), reflecting a moderate POS among the sample.

However, supportive leader behavior dimension reached the highest mean (3.59), indicating that leadership support is one of the most prominent aspects of POS within Misurata University. Conversely, participation in decision-making ranked last with a mean of 2.62, suggesting limited employee involvement in decision-making processes.

Regarding the degree of homogeneity, the coefficient of variation (CV) was used to measure the relative dispersion among the dimensions. The results showed that the dimensions of supportive leader behavior (22.0%) and overall POS (22.4%) exhibited the highest degree of homogeneity, reflecting the convergence of the sample's opinions on these two dimensions. While the dimension of participation in decision-making recorded the highest coefficient of variation (29.8%), this indicates a significant disparity in employees' perceptions of this dimension. Overall, the results suggest that the perceived level of organizational support is moderate, with variations in the application of some of its dimensions, particularly regarding employee participation in

decision-making. This may affect the fostering of positive employee attitudes in the future.

3.1 Descriptive Analysis for Dimensions of POS WE.

Results of the descriptive analysis of dimensions of WE are as follows:

Table 5: Results of Descriptive Analysis for WE Dimensions

Dimensions	Mean	Std. Deviation	CV%	Level of Perception
Vitality	3.70	.66	17.8%	High
Dedication	3.73	.70	18.8%	High
Absorption	3.74	.66	17.6%	High
Total (WE)	3.72	.60	16.1%	High

The results indicate that all dimensions of WE were ranked high, as all mean values ranged from (3.70) to (3.74). This refers to high levels of vitality, dedication and absorption of academic staff of Misurata University. However, coefficient variance results show low variance for all dimensions ranged from (16.1%) to (18.8%). These results indicate high level of consistency in staff perception. Additionally, the overall variance coefficients of WE reached (16.1%) reflecting strong agreement among academic staff at Misurata University.

Finally, despite the moderate level of POS, academic staff at Misurata University reported high levels of WE, which may indicate presence of other motivational variables effecting engagement beyond POS. However, it can be said that faculty members have moderate levels of POS and high levels of WE. This answers the question of what is the level of faculty members' awareness of the organizational support they receive from the university and their WE at the university.

3.2 Results of Hypothesis Testing

The main hypothesis is based on the assumption that POS has an effect on the WE of faculty members at Misurata University. To verify this hypothesis, the effect of the sub-hypotheses must first be tested, and then a general conclusion regarding the main hypothesis must be reached, as follows:

3.2.1 Testing Normal Distribution of Data

Prior to conducting the regression analysis, the assumptions of Normality and Linearity were examined. The assumption of normality of the data was tested by examining the

Skewness and Kurtosis values. The Skewness and Kurtosis values were used as practical and reliable indicators for judging the normality of the distribution. The Skewness values ranged between (0.213) and (-0.615), and the Kurtosis values ranged between (0.613) and (-0.413), all of which fall within acceptable range (± 1). However, Test results are shown as follows:

Table 6: Results of Normal Distribution Tests

Construct	Skewness	Kurtosis	Normality
Organizational Justice	0.213	-0.413	Satisfied
Supportive Leader Behaviour	-0.512	0.116	Satisfied
Participation	0.142	-0.209	Satisfied
Work environment conditions	0.127	-0.317	Satisfied
Vigor	-0.576	0.613	Satisfied
Dedication	-0.615	0.582	Satisfied
Absorption	-0.302	0.002	Satisfied

Results indicate that all values of Skewness range between (-1 and +1) and Kurtosis values are satisfied. This confirms that the data do not suffer from any substantial deviation from the normality distribution, justifying the use of parametric tests in subsequent analyses.

3.2.2 Results of Sub-Hypothesis Testing

A- Testing the Sub-Hypotheses

To test the validity of the study hypotheses at a confidence level of 95% and a significance level of 0.05, which determines whether the hypotheses are accepted or rejected, the following mechanism was used:

- The hypothesis is accepted if the calculated significance level for any test is less than the statistical significance level of 0.05.
- The hypothesis is rejected if the calculated significance level for any test is greater than the statistical significance level of 0.05.

The main hypothesis of the study is based on the premise that POS has a positive and statistically significant impact on the WE of faculty members at Misurata University. To decide whether to accept or reject the hypothesis, the sub-hypotheses must first be verified. Accordingly, the following sub-hypotheses are tested:

1- Effect of Organizational Justice on WE of academic staff

The first sub-hypothesis stats that (*Organizational Justice has positive and significant effect (0.05) on Work Engagement of academic staff*). To test this hypothesis regression analysis involves testing relationship between the justice and WE. Values of R, R², and adjusted R² are calculated to determine if there is an effect of justice on WE. Results are shown in the following table:

Table 7: Model Summary of Results of Simple Linear Regression

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	P-value
.341a	.117	.113	.57217	0.05

The results in the table show that the correlation coefficient (R) was significant and positive, indicating a relationship between organizational justice and the WE of university faculty members. Furthermore, the adjusted R² coefficient of determination shows that 12% of the variation in WE among university faculty members is attributable to organizational justice as a dimension of POS. Furthermore, for more meaningful results, a t-test displays the significance of individual regression coefficients. If the values are (>0.05) this indicates:

- The independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable.
- The hypothesis regarding the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is accepted.

However, results of t-test were as follows:

Table 8: Results of Regression Coefficients for the effect of org-Justice on WE

Description	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	T-value	Sig.
(Constant)	2.968	.134	22.168	.000
Organizational Justice	.280	.048	5.847	.000

From the results displayed at the table, it is found that the significance level of (p-value) is less than (0.05), which specifies the significance of the regression model parameters. Thus, it can be said that organizational justice affects WE of Misurata university faculty members.

2- Effects of Supportive Leader Behaviour on WE of academic staff

The second sub-hypothesis stats that (*Supportive Leader Behaviour has positive and significant effect on Work Engagement of academic staff*). To test this hypothesis

regression analysis involves testing relationship between the supportive leader behaviour and WE. Values of R, R², and adjusted R² are calculated to determine if there is an effect of justice on WE. Results are shown in the following table:

Table 9: Model Summary of Results of Simple Linear Regression

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	P-value
.488 ^a	.238	.235	.53125	0.05

From the results in the table, we find that the value of the correlation coefficient (R) was significant and positive, and that supportive behavior of leaders is related to WE of Misurata university faculty members. From the value of the adjusted R² coefficient of determination, it is found that 23.5% of the change in WE of Misurata university faculty members depends on the supportive behavior of leaders. Furthermore, with the same conditions of using, explained above, the t-test, results display the significance of individual regression coefficients as follows:

Table 10: Results of Regression Coefficients for the effect of Leader Behaviour on WE

Description	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	T-value	Sig.
(Constant)	2.375	.153	15.503	.000
Supportive Leader Behaviour	.375	.042	9.005	.000

T-test was used to determine the significance of the regression model parameters. From the results, it is found that the significance level p-value is less than (0.05), which indicates the significance of the regression model parameters. Thus, it can be said that supportive behavior of leaders affects WE of Misurata university faculty members.

3- Effects of Participation in Decision Making on WE of academic staff

The third sub-hypothesis stats that (*Participation in Decision Making has positive and significant effect on Work Engagement of academic staff*). To test this hypothesis regression analysis involves testing relationship between the Participation in Decision Making and WE. Values of R, R², and adjusted R² are calculated to determine if there is an effect of justice on WE. Results are shown in the following table:

Table 11: Model Summary of Results of Simple Linear Regression

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	P-value
.331 ^a	.109	.106	.57446	0.05

The results indicate that the value of the correlation coefficient (R) was significant and positive, and that participation in decision making is related to WE of Misurata university staff. However, the value of the adjusted R² coefficient of determination, explains that (11%) of the change in WE of Misurata university staff depends on participation in decision making. Furthermore, with the same conditions of using, explained above, the t-test, results display the significance of individual regression coefficients as follows:

Table 12: Results of Regression Coefficients for the effect of Participation on WE

Description	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	T-value	Sig.
(Constant)	3.049	.125	24.477	.000
Participation in Decision Making	.257	.046	5.643	.000

The t-test to results show significance of the regression model parameters. The results illustrate that the significance level p-value is less than (0.05), which indicates the significance of the regression model parameters. Thus, it can be said that participation in decision making affects WE of Misurata university academic staff.

4- Effects of Work Environment Conditions on WE of academic staff

The fourth sub-hypothesis stats that (*Work Environment Conditions have positive and significant effect on Work Engagement of academic staff*). To test the regression analysis involves testing relationship between the work environment conditions and WE. The same criterion was applied and results are shown as follows:

Table 13: Model Summary of Results of Simple Linear Regression

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	P-value
.331 ^a	.109	.106	.57453	0.05

The results show that the value of the correlation coefficient (R) was significant and positive, and that favorable working conditions are related to WE of Misurata university faculty members. From the value of the adjusted R² coefficient of determination, it is found that (11%) of the change in WE of university faculty members depends on favorable working conditions. Moreover, applying the same conditions of using the t-test, results display the significance of individual regression coefficients as follows:

Table 14: Results of Regression Coefficients for the effect of Work Conditions on WE

Description	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	T-value	Sig.
(Constant)	3.022	.129	23.346	.000
Work Environment Conditions	.240	.043	5.637	.000

Results of the t-test illustrate a significance of the regression model parameters. The results reaffirm that the significance level p-value is less than (0.05) indicating the significance of the regression model parameters. Thus, it can be said that favorable work environment conditions affect WE of Misurata university faculty members.

B- Testing the effects of POS on WE of academic staff

Returning to the main hypothesis, which states that (Perceived Organizational Support has a positive and significant effect on Work Engagement of academic staff), the following table shows the results of the simple regression analysis as follows:

Table 15: Model Summary of Results of Simple Linear Regression

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	P-value
.443 ^a	.196	.193	.54575	0.05

Results display that the correlation coefficient (R) was significant and positive. The adjusted R² coefficient indicates that (.196) of the variances in staff's WE depend on POS. Therefore, POS influences faculty WE by 19%. However, the results of the t-test for the significance of the regression model are shown in the following table:

Table 16: Results of Regression Coefficients for the effect of POS on WE

Description	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
Constant	2.522	.155	16.293	.000
POS	.406	.051	7.953	.000

Results highlight that the significance level (p-value) is less than 0.05, indicating the significance of the regression model parameters. Therefore, it can be concluded that POS influences the WE of faculty members.

In conclusion, based on the above statistical analyses, a statistically significant effect (p-value) of POS on the WE of faculty members at Misurata University can be established with strong quantitative evidence. Consequently, the main hypothesis of the study is accepted.

9. Conclusion and Discussion:

This study directly contributes to bridging the knowledge gap regarding effects of POS on WE. The results indicate that level of POS among faculty members at Misrata University falls within the average range (2.95), while their WE is high and statistically significant (3.72). This suggests that WE is respectable even with moderate POS. In more depth, the results show a low level of perceived fairness (2.69) and participation (2.62) among faculty members at Misrata University. These results explain the existence of unfair procedural, transactional, or financial practices, such as an unbalanced or impervious distribution of teaching or administrative workloads, where equal opportunities are not available to everyone within the university. Furthermore, material and moral incentives offered may not be equitable for equal effort. Low perception of participation may reflect limited opportunities to contribute to university decision-making, or a lack of clear and transparent engagement with faculty proposals by university administration. Furthermore, a low perception of participation may also stem from weak role of departmental councils, where their proposals and academic opinions are often disregarded.

Low perception of participation in higher education reflects a situation incompatible with the nature of this context (Eljaaidi and Alshalbah, 2025). Such context is based on a culture of participation and decentralized decision-making within academic councils. However, decline in participation leads to outcomes related to weak commitment and loyalty, increased resistance to change, and reluctance to engage in university activities (Djerasimovic and Villani, 2020). Nevertheless, previous studies (Joshi and Sodhi, 2011) indicate that low perception of fairness is one of the main reasons for employee disengagement. Consequently, low levels of perceived fairness among faculty members limit their efforts, as they perceive that the rewards will not be equal among them, or that valuable assignments and tasks are granted without clear and transparent criteria. On the other hand, average perception of environment work conditions was (2.9). Although faculty members perceive these conditions at a higher level than fairness and participation, their perception of suitable workplace conditions remains low, reflecting exogenous factors affecting engagement (Boccoli et al., 2022; Balkar, 2015). This result indicates low perceptions of infrastructure, educational resources, and opportunities for training and professional development. Thus, availability of favorable workplace conditions contributes to increased WE among faculty members. Finally, faculty

members' perception of supportive leadership behavior reached its highest average (3.59), indicating real exist of supportive behaviors within the university. This type of perceived support is more likely to foster supportive leadership than authoritarian leadership. This means that faculty members are supported, provided with necessary information, and their goals and needs within the university are acknowledged (Black, 2015). Comparing the results across all dimensions raises an important question: how can supportive leadership behavior be high when levels of equity and participation are low? This might be explained by the fact that supervisor supportive behavior is a product of personal influence or interactional social culture, rather than a systemic, structural behavior reflecting a quality management and strategy. Therefore, the support shown by direct supervisors is a result of the interaction and social exchange that occurs between faculty members and their supervisors. Consequently, the concept of endogenous factors, discussed by Boccoli et al. (2022), provides a clear explanation for the study's findings. Therefore, the study provides evidence on the role of contextual relational factors in explaining the relationship between these two variables. The results show that these factors are more effective than structural organizational factors in explaining the phenomenon of WE in the context of higher education in Libya.

The results show that dimensions of WE fall within the high range of mean test, with absorption reaching the highest average (3.74), followed by dedication (3.73), and finally vitality (3.70). Opoku and Boateng (2024) describe this as active engagement, characterized by high levels of vitality, absorption, and dedication in performing job tasks. These results can be explained by the nature of academic work itself, which fosters self-motivation and professional commitment, both of which are associated with high levels of engagement. Therefore, it is expected that WE level will be high in the context of education (Eljaaidi and Alshalbah, 2025). Khan (1990) also refers to the concept of meaning-based engagement, arguing that individuals engage with their job tasks because work is linked to self-actualization, academic achievements, and long-term investment in career paths. This explains the high levels of WE among faculty members (Clack, 2021). In contrast, academic work is characterized by direct interaction with multiple stakeholders, not just administration. Interaction with students, academic supervision, scientific output, and academic reputation are all drivers of WE (Mather and Bam, 2025), which explains the high levels of engagement among faculty members. In the context of higher education in Libya, this profession is associated with

a positive social standing, fostering a sense of professional pride and commitment (Tamtam et al., 2011), which may also contribute to high levels of engagement. Finally, the study's findings indicate that faculty WE appears to be driven more by internal relational and functional factors than by their perceptions of organizational support from university management systems. This explains the continued high levels of vitality, dedication, and absorption despite their low perceptions of organizational support (Cotič et al., 2025).

However, the results illustrate moderate correlations between the dimensions of POS and WE. The strongest correlation was with the supportive leader behavior dimension (0.48), while the other dimensions were around (0.3). Moreover, the results indicate that supportive leader behavior has the highest impact at 23%, followed by organizational justice at 11.7%, and then participation and work environment conditions at 10.9% each. These findings are consistent with previous studies that support this relationship (Sulistiyani et al., 2022; Yeap, 2024; Rasool et al., 2021; Sacks, 2006). It can be affirmed that supportive leadership behaviors partially enhance faculty engagement by increasing vitality, loyalty, and work ethic. Therefore, supervisor's behaviors are influential and important, representing a key tool that university management can utilize to enhance WE. This conclusion reflects direct relationships between faculty members and their department heads, playing a role that extends beyond mere work systems or human resource management policies. In contrast, organizational justice is an influential factor on engagement, but it represents an organizational and administrative factor, not a relational one like leadership behavior. Faculty members may also perceive participation in decision-making and work environment as having an impact on their engagement, but these effects are limited. This can also be explained by the fact that these are more organizational factors than relational ones (Anitha, 2014). Relational factors are more prominent in the academic context due to the direct interaction between faculty members and department heads. This interaction relies more on moral support than on administrative authority, requiring flexibility, high professional standards, and a personal approach (Chen and Chen, 2024; Ashfaq et al., 2023). A supportive leadership style facilitates procedures, problem-solving, course load management, and research, thereby enhancing the leader's direct and personal influence. Furthermore, in cultures characterized by high levels of social interaction and strong interpersonal relationships, these relationships play a more significant role than formal systems (Zagencyzyk et al.,

2021; Eljaaidi and Alshalbah, 2025). In such cultures, the department head is the central figure, not the formal system, consequently, support is attributed more to the individual than to the system and trust is tied to the person rather than the structure. Therefore, a conclusion can be drawn that supportive perspectives and leadership represent the primary channel through which policies are translated into lived experience, underscoring the pivotal role of department heads in universities operating within a socially-oriented cultural context.

Results reaffirm that POS influences faculty WE at Misurata University by approximately 19%, consistent with several previous studies (Suarez-Albanchez et al., 2022). High engagement reflects the nature of academic work, which inherently involves intellectual independence and a strong connection to academic identity. It may also stem from intrinsic motivations within the faculty (Djerasimovic and Villani, 2020). Therefore, engagement may result from a commitment to the profession itself, rather than from university administrative policies. In other words, the nature of academic work necessitates engagement in teaching, learning, research, and community service activities, and engagement is not necessarily a response to university administrative policies .

In practice, given that supportive leadership behavior is the most influential factor in fostering engagement—and is relational rather than organizational—developing the concept of supportive leadership among deans and department heads, specifically focusing on skills such as support, effective communication, relationship building, trust-building, and professional mentoring, is crucial for enhancing faculty engagement. Further, strengthening university's policies that promote the academic identity based on engagement and interaction with students, colleagues, research and practical teams, and community activities is a key element in promoting professional engagement. Additionally, enhancing organizational fairness within the university by establishing equitable and transparent mechanisms and controls for distributing teaching loads and setting clear standards for work, assignments, and university committees is essential. This includes discussing and reviewing the information and rationale behind management decisions made at the university and clarifying them for stakeholders. Additionally, strengthening departmental decision-making processes and ensuring that departmental members bear responsibility for these decisions is vital, as neglecting departmental councils weakens faculty members' understanding of participation as a

dimension of organizational support. However, strengthening relational factors provides a strategic approach to enhancing faculty WE in short term, while organizational and administrative factors promote long-term engagement. This necessitates the development and structural reform of policies and mechanisms that foster supportive leadership. In research, the study reinforces re-testing the research model at several other Libyan universities to strengthen the findings and test their generalizability. It also proposes conducting more in-depth research models by incorporating mediating or moderating variables into the relationship between POS and WE, such as trust, empowerment, commitment, and quality of work life. Such variables would allow for testing a wider range of factors and thus broaden the understanding of the causes and effects of WE. Further investigation into the causal relationship between low perception of justice and participation is necessary, as engagement within the context of higher education may be driven more by subjective professional factors, such as academic motivation or the professional or ethical obligations incumbent upon faculty members, than by organizational policies. By contrast, the study has several limitations, including: (1) This study was conducted at Misrata University; therefore, generalizations should be made within this context. (2) The study focused specifically on faculty members; therefore, generalizing the results to other population groups may not be appropriate. (3) Methodologically, the study relied on a questionnaire for data collection, reflecting the respondents' subjective perceptions, which may be influenced by answer biases. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design may not allow for the deduction of empirical causal relationships between POS and WE. (4) Data were collected during the year 2025, a specific time period influenced by the organizational and environmental conditions surrounding faculty members, thus reflecting their perceptions within that specific time and place.

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