Evaluation of Classroom Teachers' Social Capital and Work Engagement Levels

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ABSTRACT

Aim. The aim of the study is the exploration of relationship between various dimensions of social capital and level of work engagement among teachers.

Methods. This is a descriptive study based on the quantitative method and structured using a survey model. Data was collected with the Social Capital in Schools Scale, and the Engaged Teacher Scale developed. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS v.22.

Results. The findings revealed that the level of social capital perceived by classroom teachers in their schools is high and their work engagement is very high. A moderate, significant, and positive correlation was identified between the perceived level of social capital in schools and attitudes toward work engagement. Additionally, it was found that the social capital sub-dimensions together significantly predicted 18% of the variance in work engagement.

Conclusions. In conclusion, it was revealed that the level of social capital perceived by classroom teachers in primary schools is high and teachers are engaged with their work. Additionally, it was concluded that as the level of perceived social capital in schools increases, teachers' engagement with their work will also increase; therefore, research shows that social capital in schools will make teachers more committed to their work.
Keywords: social capital, work engagement, classroom teacher

Introduction

The concept of social capital (SC) was almost unknown until the 1990s; however, from that time onward, it began to attract rapid attention. It started to be used not only in educational institutions but also in social development, business, and politics, eventually becoming part of everyday language (Claridge, 2021). SC is often studied in relation to economic or cultural capital (Wojciechowska, 2022). It is an intangible resource, a set of shared values, and a network of individual relationships (Field, 2008). It is defined as the sum of potential resources consisting of interpersonal respect and institutional relationships (Bourdieu, 1986), and as a network that supports social development (Nieman, 2006). SC strengthens the accumulation of other forms of capital by enhancing the efficiency of economic interactions and ensuring fair access to resources (Forichon, 2020). Researchers emphasise that norms of trust and reciprocity make a significant contribution to long-term economic development (Roth, 2022). SC and education are directly related; an increase in SC within education is an important factor for success (Coleman, 2000; Plagens, 2011). In this context, educational institutions are regarded as key actors in the development of SC and the establishment of social networks (Alshammari et al., 2023). Therefore, schools that recognise the importance of SC are expected to produce more successful outcomes.

The SC levels of countries are directly related to the quality of their education systems. Therefore, educational institutions need to organise their processes by considering elements that enhance SC (Mikiewicz, 2021). SC plays an important role in addressing education-related issues effectively and improving the efficiency of school outcomes. Schools with strong SC can increase employees' commitment to the institution, thereby enhancing productivity. Research demonstrates a significant relationship between the SC of organisations and employees' work engagement (Chen et al., 2024; Clausen et al., 2019; Jutengren et al., 2020). Positive social relations in educational institutions strengthen employees' engagement with work, thus increasing SC within schools. At this point, the concept of work engagement (WE) comes to the forefront. WE is defined as a positive state towards work, characterised by energy, dedication, and involvement (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Accordingly,

employees' levels of SC may positively influence their commitment to the institution (Kida et al., 2023). Identifying the interaction between SC and WE, which could contribute to the improvement of educational quality, emerges as a significant need. Moreover, although the relationship between SC and WE has been extensively examined in sectors outside of education (Clausen et al., 2019; Jutengren et al., 2020; Wider et al., 2025), studies focusing specifically on teachers remain limited (Murray et al., 2025). Thus, addressing this gap in the literature is considered important. The main purpose of this study is to examine classroom teachers' perceived levels of SC and their attitudes toward WE in their schools. The research investigated the following sub-problems:

- What is the level of SC perceived by teachers in their schools?
- What are the attitude levels of teachers towards WE?
- Is there a significant relationship between teachers' perceived SC in their schools and their attitudes towards WE?
- Is the level of SC perceived by teachers in their schools a significant predictor of their attitudes towards WE?

Literature Review

Social Capital

SC is an accumulation based on interpersonal relationships aimed at generating mutual benefit within society. It can be used to achieve specific goals, and various researchers have emphasised different aspects of it. Bourdieu (1986) highlighted institutionalised networks and group membership; Coleman (1988, p.5) focused on obligations, expectations, information channels, and social norms; Putnam (1996, p.66) emphasised networks, norms, and trust; while Fukuyama (2002) underlined shared norms and values that promote cooperation. Mutual trust within organisations facilitates individuals' collaboration around common goals (Veloso et al., 2024). Therefore, in the public sector, sustainable success relies not only on employees' personal and psychological capital but also on the effective management of SC (Kidron & Vinarski-Peretz, 2024). Unlike other forms of capital, SC tends to increase with use (Ostrom, 2000). The OECD (2020) identifies SC as one of the four types of capital supporting the future prosperity of organizations. However, in contexts of inequality and injustice, trust and cooperation significantly decrease, leading to the gradual weakening of SC (Fehr et al., 2020). Thus, SC is expected to strengthen social dynamics by supporting equal access to resources.

SC is a factor that contributes to teachers' professional development and enhances students' academic achievement (Jain et al., 2024). The networks that teachers establish with other segments of society also contribute to the formation of their

intellectual capital (Safdar, 2023). School bridging facilitates the development of SC (Peterson et al., 2023). Thanks to SC, schools can more easily access resources, information, and collaborative networks to improve quality (Taufik & Dwiningrum, 2020) and support students' academic success (Adeyeye & Dasoo, 2023). However, as Azahar (2024) emphasises, not all students have the same social networks, which leads to differences in academic outcomes. Azahar also notes that SC can lose value if unused, accumulate when frequently utilized, and that investing in SC can improve academic results. According to Bourdieu, individuals with access to resource-rich networks gain greater benefits, which may increase social stratification (Gamoran et al., 2021). Strong SC can enhance teachers' work engagement and motivation, thereby strengthening their organizational commitment. Thus, SC supports the effectiveness of schools in multiple ways.

Work Engagement

WE is related to employees' levels of energy, responsibility, and enthusiasm (Prieto-Díez et al., 2022) and is considered a type of work effort associated with organisational success. Employees' WE is a positive state of mind characterised by being energetic, dedicated, and fully focused on their work. These three characteristics — vitality, dedication, and focus — represent the physical, emotional, and cognitive dimensions of WE, respectively (Abdulrahman et al., 2022). Organisations with employees demonstrating strong job commitment can be more effective and efficient (Rodionova & Dominiak, 2020). WE plays an important role in enhancing employee performance (Hendrik et al., 2021). Moreover, corporate leaders can increase their own work commitment by supporting employees with care and encouraging their engagement (Sudibjo & Riantini, 2022). From the perspective of employee-leader interaction, WE not only improves individual performance but also supports workplace performance and the sustainability of organisational success.

Teacher quality is a critical determinant of educational quality in schools. Teachers who are dedicated to their roles, experience a sense of organisational belonging, and engage both physically and psychologically in their tasks play a key role in raising the standards of educational institutions. Ahsaan Siddique et al. (2022) state that there is a positive relationship between teachers' job involvement and their job performance. Sündüs Yerdelen et al. (2018) emphasise that teachers who are committed to their work actively participate in their schools and contribute positively to school life. The literature highlights that job commitment positively affects job performance (Pongton & Suntrayuth, 2019; Song et al., 2018). Organisational support perceived by teachers positively influences their job commitment (Sudibjo & Riantini, 2023); therefore, schools should act as supportive environments for teach-

ers. Some studies emphasise the importance of WE for educational institutions (Ljubetić et al., 2022; Özbilen, 2023; Siddique et al., 2022). In this context, WE is a significant factor affecting teachers' productivity, effectiveness, performance, organisational commitment, and belief in education.

Relationships Between Social Capital and Work Engagement

SC influences workplace dynamics by strengthening trust, cooperation, and professional relationships (Thang, 2025). In schools, SC is considered as important as physical and human capital in enhancing the quality of education (Özbilen, 2019). Successful schools rely on close and sincere relationships among teachers, and social relationships based on mutual trust are key outcomes of SC (Putnam, 2000; Plagens, 2011). Özbilen (2019) identifies the components of SC as social networks, participation, trust, cooperation, norms, commitment, and belonging. These components reflect teachers' levels of SC and their WE. Carrie R. Leana and Harry J. van Buren (1999) emphasise that SC in organisations allows employees to defer personal goals and prioritize collective goals, thereby supporting WE. Accordingly, teachers' motivation to collaborate, their organisational commitment, and organisational identification can be seen as reflections of SC that strengthen WE.

SC is an important factor that positively influences employees' work engagement (WE) both holistically and through its sub-dimensions, and it has the potential to create a contextual effect on WE in organisations (Clausen et al., 2019; Fujikawa et al., 2024). In other words, SC is a significant predictor of WE (Jutengren et al., 2020). This relationship also holds true for the sub-dimensions of SC. Putnam (1996) defines SC's components as networks, norms, and trust, while Özbilen (2019) describes its sub-dimensions as social networks, participation, trust, cooperation, norms, commitment, and belonging. The positive effect of SC's sub-components on WE is grounded in a theoretical framework. For example, employees with strong social relationships exhibit higher WE (Biswal et al., 2025). Similarly, shared norms and collective responsibility positively influence WE through cooperation and reflective dialogue (Cai et al., 2002). In this context, the professional community, which is linked to SC's sub-components, provides teachers with social resources that support their WE. WE is also directly related to organizational trust (Gülbahar, 2017), trust in the leadership process (Uslukaya et al., 2024), and teachers' work commitment (Shibiti, 2020). Empirical studies indicate that SC enhances WE in educational institutions and fosters a school culture open to development. In schools, social capital (SC) requires teachers who have high organisational commitment, feel a sense of belonging to the school, and have embraced their work. The literature supports this assertion. For example, Walton Wider et al. (2024) indicate that network ties and trust, which are components

of SC, increase work participation and enhance innovative work performance. Alexander E. Ellinger et al. (2013) demonstrated that investments in SC improve employees' commitment and job performance. Yasuyuki Sawada (2000) found that in schools where social participation was encouraged, teachers' effort levels increased, and indirectly, students' academic performance also improved. Ebrahim Sayadi and Ali Hayati (2014) identified a direct relationship between SC and organisational commitment. This relationship raises the question of whether work engagement (WE) could be a sub-component of SC or whether there is a relationship between these two concepts in educational institutions. Woocheol Kim et al. (2017) suggest that organisational commitment, a sub-dimension of WE, and SC are mutually influencing concepts. Additionally, a positive relationship between SC and WE has been observed in higher education institutions (Palabıyık & Akay, 2024). Research indicates that the relationship between SC and WE in educational institutions requires further examination. Since schools contribute to social welfare through the quality of education they provide, uncovering the relationship between WE and SC is important for testing the proposition that WE may be one of the determinants of SC.

Method

Research Model

The correlational survey model guides the design of this quantitative and descriptive research. In quantitative research methods, various measurements are made by obtaining statistical analysis or numerical data; the data is collected with various methods, such as surveys and questionnaires (Creswell, 2009).

Research Sample

The sample of the research consisted of a total of 313 teachers working in public primary schools in the city center of Çanakkale in the 2023-2024 academic year and was determined by the simple random sampling method. During simple random sampling method, all individuals in the population have an equal chance to participate in the research, and the selection process is based entirely on chance (Mulisa, 2022). In determining the sample, the sampling error was accepted as .05, and the minimum number of people to be included in the sample was calculated using Osman Saka's (2004) formula. Table 1 below provides the distribution of demographic information of the classroom teachers participating in the study.

Table 1

Demographic Information about the Sample Group

Independent Variable	Groups	f	%
Gender	Female	226	72.2
	Male	87	27.8
Professional seniority	0-3 years	192	61.3
	4-6 years	77	24.6
	7-10 years	44	14.1
Number of students taught	Fewer than 40 students	153	48.9
	41-50 students	118	37.7
	51 or more students	42	10.5

Source. Own research.

Data Collection Tools

Data to determine teachers' SC levels were obtained with the Social Capital Scale in Schools developed by Mahmut Polatcan (2017), and data to determine teachers' WE levels were obtained with the Work Engagement Scale for Teachers developed by Klassen et al. (2013) and adapted into Turkish by Yerdelen et al. (2018).

Social Capital Scale in Schools: The scale developed by Polatcan (2017) consists of 31 items and five dimensions. It is graded as a five-point Likert type and the degrees range from "I completely disagree" to "I completely agree". The dimensions in the scale are *commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust, participation* and *cultural memory*. While developing the scale, after the preliminary application on teachers, the construct validity of the scale was examined by performing Exploratory Factor Analysis. During the factor analysis process, KMO (Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin) and reliability coefficient were calculated. The limit for the loading value of the items in the factors was selected as .30. Afterwards, CFA was performed on the scale. The reliability of the measurement tool was examined with Cronbach-Alpha Coefficient and corrected item total correlations. For the discrimination of the items, the item total correlation value was preferred as .30. As a result of EFA, the KMO value was found as .93 and the Bartlett Sphericity Test was found as $p<.05$. The internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient) for the dimensions of the scale are given in Table 2.

Work Engagement Scale for Teachers: The scale, developed by Klassen et al. (2013) and adapted to Turkish by Yerdelen et al. (2018), consists of 16 items and four dimensions. The scale is graded as a six-point Likert type, and the de-

grees range from "never" to "always". The dimensions in the scale are emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, social engagement: students and social engagement: colleagues. The internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient) for the dimensions of the scale are given in Table 2. According to Table 2, Cronbach's alpha values show that there is high internal consistency in all subscales.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Values of SC Scale in Schools and WE Scale for Teachers

Dimensions	Cronbach's Alphas of Scales	Cronbach's Alphas for the study
Commitment	.90	.916
Social interaction networks/ties	.91	.888
Trust	.92	.903
Participation	.74	.827
Cultural memory	.89	.868
Emotional engagement	.82	.817
Cognitive engagement	.83	.830
Social engagement: students	.70	.703
Social engagement: colleagues	.70	.699
For the entire SC scale α= .955		
For the entire WE scale α= .863		

Source. Own research.

Data Analysis

While analysing the research data, the normality distributions of the data were first examined in order to decide which statistical analyses to apply. At this stage, as stated in Table 3, descriptive statistics such as arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the data were determined; skewness and kurtosis coefficient values for the distribution of the data both in the entire scales and in their sub-dimensions were calculated. It was seen that the descriptive statistics obtained from the data both in the scales in general and in their sub-dimensions had close values, and the skewness/kurtosis coefficient values were within acceptable ranges. Therefore, assuming that the data were normally distributed, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was calculated to examine the relationship between SC and WE. Then, Multiple Linear Regression analysis was performed to determine the predictive value of sub-dimensions of SC on WE. SPSS 22.0 package program was used in the analysis of data.

RESULTS

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and Skewness/Kurtosis Coefficient Values for the Normality Distribution of the Scales and Dimensions

Scales	N	M	SD	SKW	SE	KRT	SE
SC Scale in Schools	313	3.57	.64	-.053	.138	-.270	.275
Commitment	313	3.71	.82	-.303	-.423	313	3.71
Social interaction networks/ties	313	3.66	.63	-.065	-.286	313	3.66
Trust	313	3.60	.83	-.423	-.077	313	3.60
Participation	313	3.45	.81	-.179	-.343	313	3.45
Cultural memory	313	3.31	.88	-.155	-.399	313	3.31
WE Scale for Teachers	313	5.40	.41	-.340	.138	-.847	.275
Emotional engagement	313	5.45	.57	-.944	.296	313	5.45
Cognitive engagement	313	5.57	.48	-.775	-.523	313	5.57
Social engagement: students	313	5.47	.46	-.575	-.382	313	5.47
Social engagement: colleagues	313	5.13	.66	-.870	.811	313	5.13

Source. Own research.

According to Table 3, the mean score of classroom teachers from the SC Scale in Schools is high (M=3.57, SD=.64). Therefore, it can be said that the level of social capital perceived by teachers in schools is high (Ekinci, 2017). In addition, the mean score of classroom teachers from the WE Scale for Teachers is very high (M=5.40, SD=.41). Therefore, it can be said that teachers' level of work engagement is high (Yerdelen et al., 2018).

The mean scores of teachers for the dimensions of the SC Scale in Schools, commitment (M=3.71, SD=.82), social interaction networks/ties (M=3.66, SD=.63), trust (M=3.60, SD=.83), and participation (M=3.45, SD=.81), are high, and for the cultural memory (M=3.31, SD=.88) dimension, they are at a moderate level. These findings show that teachers' perceptions of commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust and participation in the schools they work in are high, and their perceptions of cultural memory are at a moderate level. The mean scores of teachers for the dimensions of the WE Scale for Teachers, emotional engagement (M=5.45, SD=.57), cognitive engagement (M=5.57, SD=.48), and social engagement: students (M=5.47, SD=.46), are very high; and for the social engagement: colleagues (M=5.13, SD=.66) dimension, they are at a high level. These findings show that the levels of emotional engagement, cognitive engagement and social engagement with students, which constitute teachers' work engagement, are very high, and their engagement with colleagues is high.

Table 4

Findings Regarding the Relationship between the Level of SC Perceived by Classroom Teachers in their Schools and their Attitudes towards WE

	Emotional engagement	Cognitive engagement	Social engagement: students	Social engagement: colleagues	Attitude Towards WE
Commitment	.301**	.295**	.251**	.342**	.397**
Social interaction networks/ties	.232**	.177**	.149**	.384**	.327**
Trust	.132*	.104	.122*	.309**	.234**
Participation	.178**	.108	.133*	.289**	.246**
Cultural memory	.211**	.183**	.171**	.244**	.272**
Perception of SC in Schools	.258**	.215**	.201**	.387**	.363**

Note. ** p<.01, * p<.05.
Source. Own research.

Based on the scores reported in the Table 4, it is seen that there is a moderate, positive and significant relationship at the level of .36 between the average scores of SC perceived by classroom teachers in their schools and the average scores of their attitudes towards WE (p<.01). The highest relationship between the average score of perceived SC level in schools and the average scores of attitudes towards WE is in the dimension of social engagement: colleagues. The relationship between the variables is .39 and significant (p<.01). This shows that the perception of SC increases or decreases moderately and positively in line with social engagement with colleagues. The lowest relationship between the average score of perceived SC in schools and the attitudes towards WE is in the dimension of social engagement: students with a level of .201 (p<.01).

When Table 5 is examined, the t-test results for the significance of the regression coefficients in Model 1 show that only commitment and trust are significant predictors of emotional engagement. Commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust, participation, and cultural memory variables together have a low-level but significant relationship with teachers' emotional engagement (R=.334, R2=.111, p<.01). These five variables together explain 11% of the total variance in emotional engagement. According to the standardised regression coefficient (β), the relative importance of the predictor variables on emotional engagement is commitment, trust, social interaction networks/ties, cultural memory, and participation.

According to the t-test results for the significance of the regression coefficients in Model 2, only commitment is a significant predictor of cognitive engagement. Commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust, participation, and cultural memory variables together have a low but significant relationship with teachers' cognitive engagement (R=.324, R2=.105, p<.01). These five variables together explain approximately 11% of the total variance in cognitive engagement. According to the standardised regression coefficient (β), the relative

importance of the predictor variables on emotional integration is commitment, trust, cultural memory, participation and social interaction networks/ties.

According to the t-test results for the significance of the regression coefficients in Model 3, only commitment is a significant predictor of social engagement: students. Commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust, participation, and cultural memory variables together have a low but significant relationship with social engagement: students (R=0.260, R2=0.068, p<0.01). These five variables together explain approximately 7% of the total variance in the dimension of social engagement: students. According to the standardised regression coefficient (β), the relative importance of the predictor variables on social engagement: students is as follows: commitment, cultural memory, trust, social interaction networks/ties, and participation.

Table 5

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Table

Variable	Model 1 Emotional engagement			Model 2 Cognitive engagement		
	β	SE	p	β	SE	p
Constant	-	.186	.000	-	.157	.000
Commitment	.279	.050	.000	.323	.042	.000
Social interaction networks/ties	.151	.072	.061	.096	.061	.235
Trust	-.178	.057	.032	-.146	.048	.078
Participation	-.006	.059	.943	-.102	.050	.223
Cultural memory	.079	.051	.317	.105	.043	.185
	R=.334, R^2= .111, $F_{(5, 307)}$=7.690, p=.000	R=.324, R^2=.105, $F_{(5, 307)}$=7.206, p=.000	R=.260, R^2=.068, $F_{(5, 307)}$=4.446, p=.001	R=.414, R^2=.171, $F_{(5, 307)}$=12.698, p=.000	R=0.423, R^2=0.179, $F_{(5, 307)}$=13.415, p=.000	

Variable	Model 3 Social engagement: students			Model 4 Social engagement: colleagues			Model 5 Work engagement		
	β	SE	p	β	SE	p	β	SE	p
Constant	-	.154	.000	-	.207	.000	-	.129	.000
Commitment	.248	.042	.001	.181	.056	.010	.333	.035	.000

	Model 3 Social engagement: students			Model 4 Social engagement: colleagues			Model 5 Work engagement		
Variable	**β**	**SE**	**p**	**β**	**SE**	**p**	**β**	**SE**	**p**
Social interaction networks/ties	.026	.060	.750	.266	.080	.001	.194	.050	.013
Trust	-.074	.047	.383	.029	.063	.716	-.113	.039	.154
Participation	-.020	.049	.812	.038	.065	.639	-.022	.041	.781
Cultural memory	.076	.042	.346	-.051	.057	.498	.058	.035	.439

Source. Own research.

According to the t-test results for the significance of the regression coefficients in Model 4, commitment and social interaction networks/ties are significant predictors of social engagement: colleagues. Commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust, participation, and cultural memory variables together have a low but significant relationship with social engagement: colleagues (R=.414, R2=.171, p<.01). These five variables together explain 17% of the total variance in the social engagement: colleagues dimension. According to the standardised regression coefficient (β), the relative importance of the predictor variables on social engagement: colleagues is social interaction networks/ties, commitment, cultural memory, participation, and trust.

According to the t-test results for the significance of the regression coefficients in Model 5, commitment and social interaction networks/ties are significant predictors of work engagement. Commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust, participation, and cultural memory variables together have a low but significant relationship with work engagement (R=.423, R2=.179, p<.01). Together, these five variables explain approximately 18% of the total variance in work engagement. According to the standardised regression coefficient (β), the relative importance of the predictor variables on work engagement is commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust, cultural memory, and participation.

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

The research found that classroom teachers' levels of social capital (SC) in their schools were high. Similarly, studies with primary, secondary, and high school teachers have shown SC levels to be average or above (Bridwell-Mitchell & Fried, 2020; Giavrimis & Nikolaou, 2021; Mason & Poyatos-Matas, 2016). Ömer Doğan and Aynur Bozkurt-Bostanci (2017) reported that primary school teachers demonstrate higher levels of SC than others. This may be related to their more intensive communication with parents and longer time spent at school. Furthermore, the study revealed that teach-

ers scored high in the dimensions of commitment, social interaction networks, trust, and participation, while their scores in cultural memory were at an average level. Neil Flint (2011) emphasises that trust, reciprocity, participation, and harmony create strong SC in schools. In this context, the expansion of acquaintance networks, collectivism (Bourdieu, 1986), and strengthened trust may increase SC levels.

The research determined that classroom teachers' attitudes towards WE were at a very high level. Özbilen's (2023) research also found that teachers' WE level was high. Maja Ljubetić et al. (2022) found that preschool and primary school teachers had higher WE than secondary school teachers. In the present study, classroom teachers also scored high in the dimensions of emotional, cognitive, and social engagement (students and colleagues). Tarik Alwerthan (2024) noted that the school environment and support positively affect teachers' WE, explained by the intensive social interactions in educational institutions. William A. Kahn (1990) defined WE as investing one's body, emotions, and mind in work and expressing oneself more freely while performing tasks. Thus, due to the nature of teaching, high WE perceptions are expected. Moreover, social engagement is linked to academic performance, as it increases student participation and motivation (Li et al., 2021), while also strengthening student–student and teacher–student relationships and reducing behavioural problems (Lätsch et al., 2016).

The study identified a moderate, positive, and statistically significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of social capital (SC) in their schools and their work engagement (WE) attitudes. SC, which includes networks that provide support to employees, increases participation among staff and creates a positive effect among colleagues (van den Berg et al., 2017). Similarly, Hirohisa Fujikawa et al. (2024) revealed that teachers' workplace SC is associated with greater well-being and work commitment. Hsin-Yi Lien and Hsieh-Chih Lai (2024) also found a meaningful and positive relationship between organisational commitment and job involvement, noting that this relationship was at a moderate level ($r = .399$), similar to the result of the present study ($r = .397$). Likewise, Mehmet Tufan Yalçın et al. (2023) reported that teachers' SC is positively related to organisational commitment and teacher collaboration. Shannon Mason and Cristina Poyatos Matas (2016) emphasised that teachers with strong social networks feel valued and supported, which enhances their engagement. It is therefore considered that a supportive school culture can strengthen both SC and WE. The study further revealed that the strongest relationship between SC and WE emerged in teachers' interactions with colleagues, while social engagement with students was the least affected dimension of WE. Thomas Clausen et al. (2019) also found a significant relationship between SC and WE. Moreover, social networks and perceived organisational support strengthen work engagement by fostering SC. Teacher collaboration likewise contributes to the growth of SC and the development of supportive networks within professional learning communities (Han & Park, 2023). Azmat Islam and Muhammad Ajmal (2024) highlighted that social networks and sup-

port increase WE. The effect of SC on WE may vary depending on organisational culture, job characteristics, and individual traits. Indeed, one of the most important factors in teacher retention is a positive school culture, which guides teachers' attitudes and practices, while teachers' efforts play a key role in its development (Flores & Shuls, 2024). Hanna Reinius et al. (2023) found that teachers focused on the time allocated to cooperation behaviour in order to strengthen school culture. Therefore, school administrations should encourage collaboration based on teacher–teacher relationships to promote a positive school culture (Thien & Lee, 2023). This is crucial since teachers' perceived organisational support strongly influences their engagement (Fridayanti et al., 2022). In conclusion, teachers' SC enables them to work in a climate of trust and to access various resources through professional interactions with colleagues (Son, 2020).

In Model 1, it was found that the sub-dimensions of social capital, namely commitment and trust, significantly predict emotional engagement, a sub-dimension of work engagement, among classroom teachers. Nahid Royaei and Afsaneh Ghanizadeh (2016) reported a positive relationship between teachers' organisational commitment and their emotional engagement. Mohamed Mostafa Saad et al. (2022) found that the strongest positive relationship with commitment was in the emotional engagement dimension. Fabrizio Scrima et al. (2013) showed that job commitment fully mediates the relationship between emotional engagement and job involvement. Therefore, emotional factors in teachers may positively influence their commitment to their institutions. Indeed, BA Vasu et al. (2023) state that teachers' commitment increases when they feel valued, understood, and supported. Additionally, there is strong relationship between organisational trust and emotional engagement (Taşkin & Dilek, 2020). In this context, teachers' attachment to their schools and trust in their institutions can enhance their emotional engagement. Educational institutions that strengthen social capital environments, making teachers feel valued and secure, may thus increase teachers' emotional engagement and contribute to improving the quality of education.

In Model 2, it was found that commitment, one of the sub-dimensions of social capital among primary school teachers, significantly predicts cognitive engagement, a sub-dimension of work engagement. Annie Riya Michael et al. (2025) reported a triadic interaction between employee commitment, cognitive engagement, and quality of work life. Mohamed Mostafa Saad et al. (2022) also found a moderate to high significant relationship between employee commitment and cognitive engagement. Therefore, teachers' cognitive engagement with their work plays a critical role in both individual and organisational outcomes. Furthermore, teachers' commitment is strongly associated not only with emotional dimensions but also with cognitive components, and cognitive engagement may serve as an important mediating variable in enhancing the effectiveness of organisational processes.

In Model 3, commitment, as a sub-dimension of social capital, was found to be a significant predictor of social engagement with students, one of the sub-dimensions of work engagement. Consistent with this finding, Maluenda-Albornoz et al. (2022) em-

phasised that commitment and a sense of belonging mediate the relationship between perceived social support and participation, thereby fostering social engagement among first-year students. Similarly, Julia Rivas et al. (2019) reported that international students often experience challenges in forming connections with local peers, and highlighted that both commitment and belonging play a critical role in strengthening social engagement within the university context. More broadly, social capital, by providing access to networks, information, and support systems, facilitates social integration. Accordingly, a sense of belonging or attachment can be considered a key factor influencing students' social engagement.

In Model 4, commitment, as a sub-dimension of social capital, was found to significantly predict social engagement with colleagues. Laura Weiss Roberts (2020) and Kelly-Ann Allen et al. (2021) emphasised that belonging or commitment is important in social integration, as it involves being accepted and valued by others, and constitutes a fundamental source of motivation that positively influences health, abilities, and relationships. They further noted that individuals with a sense of belonging are more likely to establish effective relationships with colleagues and contribute positively to the workplace environment. Therefore, belonging or attachment can be considered a fundamental human need that shapes psychological functioning and social interactions in the workplace, as well as an important determinant of social engagement. Additionally, Model 4 revealed that social networks significantly predict individuals' social engagement. Peng Xie et al. (2022) found that social participation and ties are positively associated with social engagement; Jieyi Hu and Chau Kiu Jacky Cheung (2024) highlighted that the formation of social relationships is also a process of social integration; and Justin Richardson et al. (2022) emphasised that social ties conceptualised as social support, group identification, and social capital enhance social engagement by fostering a sense of belonging and community. In this regard, social networks/ties play a critical role in individuals' integration into society by strengthening social cohesion, providing access to resources, and supporting well-being. Formed and reinforced through shared experiences, social networks, and civic participation, these ties enhance individuals' interactions with society and their sense of belonging, thereby making a significant contribution to social integration.

In Model 5, commitment, social interaction networks/ties, trust, participation, and cultural memory were found to have a low but significant combined relationship with classroom teachers' work engagement (WE), explaining approximately 18% of the total variance. Among these variables, only commitment and social interaction networks/ties were significant predictors of WE, while trust, participation, and cultural memory showed no significant effect. These findings are consistent with Xing Li et al. (2025), who reported that social networks and organizational commitment are significantly related to teachers' WE. Similarly, Lien and Lai (2024) found that organisational commitment was a strong predictor of WE among teachers in Taiwan ($\beta = .70$), and Yan Dong and Jieping Xu (2022) demonstrated that teacher

commitment significantly affects the quality and level of WE. Kunyao Shu (2022) emphasised that increases in teachers' commitment enhance professional effectiveness and contribute positively to student achievement. In this context, WE is considered critical not only for attracting and retaining talented employees but also for maintaining their commitment to the organisation. The view that employees' sense of meaningful work and organisational support increases commitment and engagement is also supported by the present study. Regarding social networks, Shengwen Wu et al. (2025) reported that social support has a significant positive effect on work participation ($\beta =$ 0.17), which aligns with the current study's finding ($\beta = .194$). Ljubetić et al. (2022) also indicated that parents are a significant social factor supporting teachers' work participation. Accordingly, the social networks teachers establish with colleagues, families, and others can be considered important determinants of their work engagement. However, unlike the present study, Wider et al. (2025), and Mustafa Filiz et al. (2024) found a positive relationship between organisational trust and WE. The lack of a significant relationship between trust and engagement in this study may be due to a potential mediating effect. While engagement develops primarily through commitment and social networks, the absence of effects from participation and cultural memory is consistent with expectations.

Based on the study's results, to enhance teachers' commitment to their profession and strengthen their social capital, it is important to increase social and cultural activities in schools and to promote collaborative work environments and motivation-boosting projects. Since social engagement with colleagues showed the strongest relationship with WE, it is recommended to develop a school culture that encourages collegial support; this can be achieved by establishing professional learning centres for teachers and organising orientation programmes for newly appointed teachers. Furthermore, considering that teachers scored lowest in the cultural memory sub-dimension, programs introducing the school's history, alumni reunions, and the establishment of school museums can be implemented to strengthen cultural memory.

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