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ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION, ENGAGEMENT, AND BURNOUT IN PAKISTANI UNIVERSITY FACULTY

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Abstract

Objectives: *This study examined the relationships among organizational identification, employee engagement, and burnout among university faculty members in Pakistan and tested employee engagement as a mediating mechanism. Methods: A quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design was used with 180 faculty members (90 men, 90 women) from public and private universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, recruited through purposive sampling. Organizational identification was assessed with the six-item Organizational Identification Scale; employee engagement with the 17-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale; and burnout with the 33-item work-related Burnout Assessment Tool, combining core and secondary symptoms. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha, Pearson correlations, simple linear regression, PROCESS Model 4 mediation with 5,000 bootstrap samples, independent-samples t tests, and one-way ANOVA.*

Results: *Organizational identification was positively associated with employee engagement, $r = .596$, $p < .001$, and negatively associated with burnout, $r = -.570$, $p < .001$. Employee engagement was negatively associated with burnout, $r = -.578$, $p < .001$. The indirect effect of organizational identification on burnout through employee engagement was significant, $B = -.228$, 95% bootstrap CI [-.328, -.135]. Gender differences were found for organizational identification and employee engagement but not burnout; age-group differences were not significant for the three central variables.*

Conclusions: *The findings support a model in which stronger organizational identification is associated with greater engagement and lower burnout among Pakistani university faculty. Given the cross-sectional design, results are interpreted as associations rather than causal effects.*

Theoretical Background

Burnout is a major occupational well-being concern and has been conceptualized as a work-related state involving substantial depletion of psychological and physical resources. Early descriptions emphasized exhaustion in helping professions, while later approaches differentiated emotional exhaustion,

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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Freudenberger, 1974; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Contemporary work has broadened the construct to include core symptoms such as exhaustion, mental distance, cognitive impairment, and emotional impairment, together with secondary symptoms that can accompany prolonged strain. The Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT) operationalizes burnout as a multidimensional work-related experience and permits both subscale and total-score interpretation (Schaufeli et al., 2020). In academic work, burnout is especially relevant because faculty members combine teaching, research, administrative responsibilities, and emotionally demanding interactions with students. The present study therefore treats burnout as an important occupational outcome rather than an isolated individual difficulty.

Work engagement provides a complementary perspective. Kahn (1990) described engagement as the harnessing of the self to work roles through physical, cognitive, and emotional investment. Schaufeli and colleagues subsequently conceptualized work engagement as a positive, fulfilling work-related state reflected in vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Vigor concerns energy and resilience, dedication concerns significance, enthusiasm, and pride, and absorption concerns deep concentration in work. Research using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) has supported the separability and reliability of these dimensions and has shown that engagement is related to important occupational outcomes (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Seppälä et al., 2009). Within the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework, work engagement is located within a motivational pathway in which job and personal resources help sustain energy and involvement, whereas excessive demands contribute to health impairment and burnout (Bakker et al., 2014; Lesener et al., 2019).

Organizational identification refers to a perceived sense of oneness and belonging with an organization. Social Identity Theory proposes that people derive part of their self-definition from meaningful group memberships, while organizational identification describes the extent to which organizational membership becomes integrated into the self-concept (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Mael and Ashforth (1992) demonstrated that organizational identification can be associated with organizational distinctiveness, prestige, satisfaction, and other contextual antecedents. Later research has linked identification with job attitudes, in-role and extra-role performance, and engagement-related processes (Lee et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2017). For faculty members, identifying strongly with a university may provide a sense of meaning, belonging, and shared purpose that supports motivational functioning in demanding work contexts.

Organizational Identification, Engagement, and Burnout

The current research integrates these constructs through the JD-R perspective. The framework assumes that personal resources can support the motivational process alongside job resources. Organizational identification is treated here as a psychological resource that may strengthen engagement by connecting the employee's sense of self to the organization and its goals. Higher engagement, in turn, may be associated with lower burnout because energized and meaning-oriented involvement can counter some of the depletion associated with prolonged job demands. Empirical work has repeatedly shown negative associations between burnout and engagement, while studies of organizational identification have linked identification to positive attitudes and work behaviors (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Rich et al., 2010; Zhang & Guo, 2020). The present study extends this literature by testing the combined pathway in a faculty population in Pakistan.

The Pakistani academic context is particularly relevant. Previous local research summarized in the thesis has focused largely on workload, supervisory and colleague support, emotional exhaustion, hardiness, or general occupational well-being rather than on an identity-based mechanism connecting organizational

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identification with burnout through engagement (Akhter et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2019; Siraj et al., 2024). International research has examined organizational identification and engagement, including mediation processes, in other occupational settings (Hui et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2017). A recent Pakistan-including study also linked organizational identification to engagement in the context of abusive supervision, while indicating that the relationship with burnout may depend on other mechanisms and contextual factors (Arshad et al., 2025). Together, this literature supports the relevance of examining an integrated identity-motivation-burnout pathway specifically among Pakistani university faculty.

Present Study and Hypotheses

The present study investigated whether organizational identification was associated with employee engagement and burnout among university faculty members in Pakistan, and whether employee engagement statistically mediated the association between identification and burnout. Eight hypotheses were examined. The primary hypotheses predicted a positive association between organizational identification and engagement (H1), a negative association between organizational identification and burnout (H2), a negative association between engagement and burnout (H3), and a negative indirect effect of organizational identification on burnout through engagement (H4). Additional hypotheses tested gender differences in burnout (H5), age-group differences in burnout (H6), gender differences in organizational identification and engagement (H7), and age-group differences in organizational identification and engagement (H8). The study also explored work-related and sociodemographic factors in relation to the three main constructs. The conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.

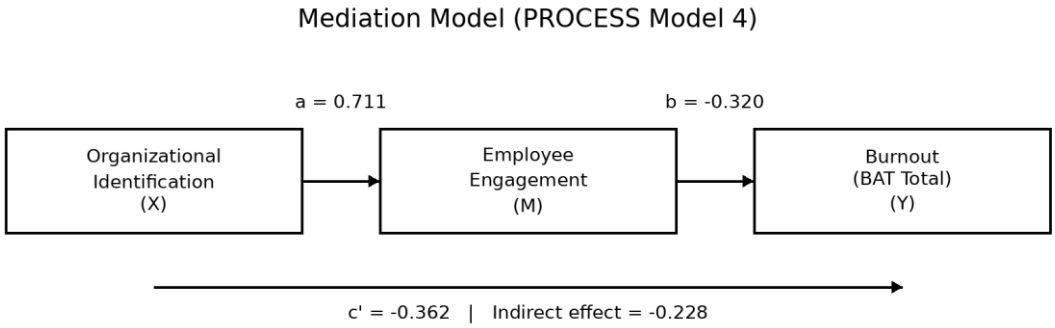


Figure 1. Conceptual and mediation pathway linking organizational identification, employee engagement, and burnout. The empirical mediation model shown here is the model tested in the study.

Method

Participants and Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design was used. The target population consisted of university faculty members working in public and private universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The final sample comprised 180 faculty members, with an equal gender distribution of 90 men and 90 women. Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants across institutional and departmental contexts. The thesis states that eligible faculty were full-time employees, had at least one year of service in their current institution, and were between 28 and 60 years of age. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained before completion of the survey.

JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDIES
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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

Table 1: *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants*

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Age	20-29	50	27.8
Age	30-39	71	39.4
Age	40-49	39	21.7
Age	50-60	20	11.1
Gender	Female	90	50.0
Gender	Male	90	50.0
Marital status	Married	103	57.2
Marital status	Single	72	40.0
Marital status	Other	5	2.8
Education	M.Phil./PhD	74	41.1
Education	Master's	73	40.6
Education	Bachelor's	33	18.3
Position	Lecturer	70	38.9
Position	Assistant Professor	50	27.8
Position	Associate Professor	27	15.0
Position	Administrative Role	17	9.4
Position	Professor	16	8.9
Work experience	1-5 years	71	39.4
Work experience	6-10 years	54	30.0
Work experience	>10 years	42	23.3
Work experience	1 year	13	7.2
Tenure	1 year	19	10.6
Tenure	1-3 years	53	29.4
Tenure	4-6 years	55	30.6
Tenure	>6 years	53	29.4
Monthly income	50 thousand-1 lac	64	35.6
Monthly income	1-2 lac	65	36.1
Monthly income	2-3 lac	38	21.1
Monthly income	3 lac+	13	7.2
Sector	Public	90	50.0
Sector	Private	90	50.0

Note. N = 180. Percentages are based on the full sample.

Measures

Organizational identification was measured with the six-item Organizational Identification Scale developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992). The methodology section of the thesis specifies a five-point response format from 1 = strongly

JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDIES
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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

agree to 5 = strongly disagree, with higher scores indicating stronger identification. The six items address perceived oneness with the organization, reactions to organizational criticism or praise, and identification with organizational successes and failures. This scoring convention was used for the manuscript results.

Employee engagement was measured with the 17-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), covering vigor, dedication, and absorption. Items were rated on a seven-point frequency continuum from 0 = never to 6 = always. The scale captures energy and resilience, dedication and enthusiasm, and immersion in work. The UWES has extensive evidence of reliability and construct validity across occupational settings (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Seppälä et al., 2009).

Burnout was assessed with the work-related Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT). The dataset contained 23 core-symptom items and 10 secondary-symptom items. Responses were scored from 1 = never to 5 = always. Consistent with the operational definition in the thesis, burnout was calculated from all 33 work-related BAT items, while core and secondary symptoms were also examined as descriptive components. The BAT conceptualizes burnout through exhaustion, mental distance, cognitive impairment, and emotional impairment, together with secondary distress and psychosomatic symptoms (Schaufeli et al., 2020).

Procedure and Ethics

Data were collected using a structured self-report survey after institutional permissions and ethical procedures were addressed. Participants received information about the study, were informed that participation was voluntary, and provided consent before completing the questionnaire. No identifying participant information was reported in the dataset used for analysis. The study materials indicate that confidentiality, anonymity, the right to withdraw, and secure use of data were emphasized. The final analysis used the complete set of 180 participant records supplied for the study.

Analytic Strategy

Data were analyzed using the statistical plan specified in the thesis. Descriptive statistics summarized participant characteristics and the central study variables. Internal consistency was evaluated with Cronbach's alpha. Pearson product-moment correlations examined direct relationships among organizational identification, employee engagement, and burnout. Simple linear regressions quantified the predictive associations corresponding to H1-H3. Employee engagement was then tested as a mediator of the organizational identification-burnout association using PROCESS Model 4 with 5,000 bootstrap resamples, with the indirect effect judged by its bootstrap confidence interval. Independent-samples t tests were used for gender comparisons, and one-way ANOVAs were used for age-group comparisons. Exploratory tests considered rank, work experience, tenure, monthly income, education, marital status, and sector. Because the design was cross-sectional, all regression and mediation results were interpreted as statistical associations rather than evidence of causal effects.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Table 2: *Descriptive Statistics for the Main Study Variables*

Variable	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Organizational Identification	180	2.891	1.188	1.000	5.000
Employee Engagement	180	3.423	1.418	1.000	5.941
BAT Core Burnout	180	3.087	1.278	1.000	5.000
BAT Secondary Symptoms	180	3.081	1.200	1.000	5.000

JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDIES
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ISSN (Online): 3006-2071 | ISSN (Print): 3006-2063
Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

Variable	N	M	SD	Min	Max
BAT Total Burnout	180	3.086	1.230	1.061	5.000

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

Organizational identification had a mean of 2.891 (SD = 1.188), whereas employee engagement averaged 3.423 (SD = 1.418). Mean scores for BAT Core and BAT Secondary Symptoms were 3.087 and 3.081, respectively, and the complete BAT total mean was 3.086 (SD = 1.230). The observed score ranges indicate that participants used a substantial proportion of the available response scales. Skewness values for the principal variables were close to zero and excess kurtosis values were negative, suggesting broadly balanced and relatively flat distributions. These descriptive characteristics provided a reasonable basis for the subsequent correlational and regression analyses.

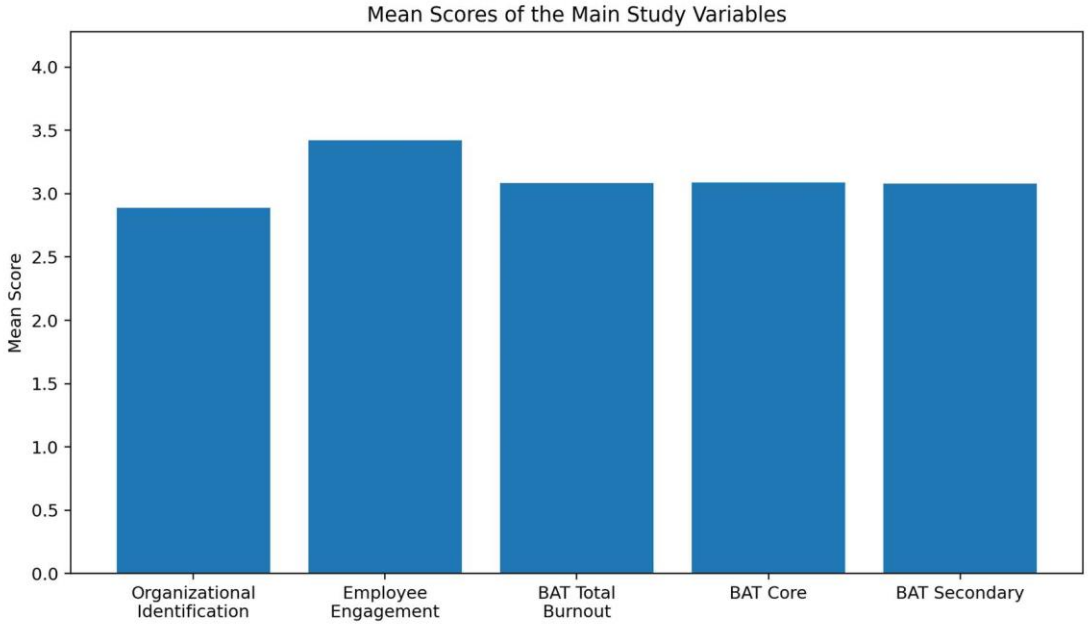


Figure 2. Mean scores of organizational identification, employee engagement, and burnout measures.

Table 3: ***Internal Consistency of Study Measures***

Scale	Items	Cronbach's alpha
Organizational Identification	6	.898
Employee Engagement (UWES)	17	.960
BAT Core Burnout	23	.977
BAT Secondary Symptoms	10	.928
BAT Total Burnout	33	.981

Note. Cronbach's alpha coefficients are based on the 180 participant records.

All measures demonstrated strong internal consistency in the present sample. The Organizational Identification Scale yielded alpha = .898, the UWES yielded alpha = .960, the BAT Core scale yielded alpha = .977, and the BAT Secondary scale yielded alpha = .928. The 33-item BAT total produced alpha = .981. These results support the use of composite scale

JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDIES
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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

scores in the primary analyses. As usual, reliability coefficients describe internal consistency and should not be interpreted as evidence of construct validity by themselves.

Correlations

Table 4: ***Pearson Correlations Among the Main Study Variables***

Variable	OID	Engagement	BAT Total
Organizational Identification	1.000	.596***	-.570***
Employee Engagement	.596***	1.000	-.578***
Burnout	-.570***	-.578***	1.000

Note. *** p < .001, two-tailed. OID = organizational identification.

The correlation matrix showed statistically significant relationships among all three central constructs. Organizational identification was positively associated with employee engagement, r = .596, p < .001, supporting H1 at the bivariate level. Organizational identification was negatively associated with total burnout, r = -.570, p < .001, supporting H2. Employee engagement was also negatively associated with total burnout, r = -.578, p < .001, supporting H3. The magnitudes of these coefficients indicate relationships that were more than trivial in the present sample and were consistent with the directional expectations of the proposed model.

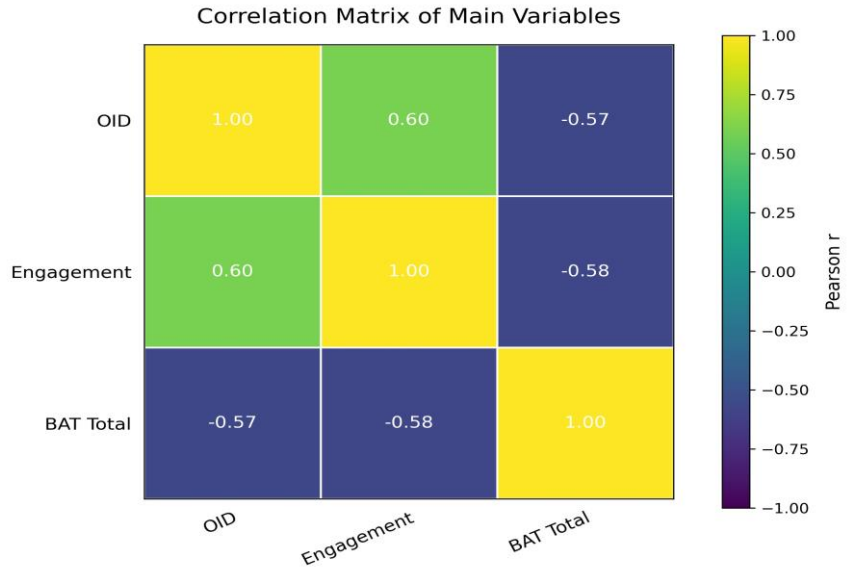


Figure 3. Correlation matrix illustrating the direction and magnitude of associations among organizational identification, employee engagement, and total burnout.

Regression Analyses

Table 5: ***Simple Linear Regression Models***

Outcome	Predictor	R^2	F(1,178)	β	p	95% CI for B
Employee Engagement	OID	.355	97.871	.596	< .001	[0.569, 0.853]

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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

Outcome	Predictor	R^2	F(1,178)	β	p	95% CI for B
BAT Total Burnout	OID	.325	85.627	-.570	< .001	[-0.716, -0.464]
BAT Total Burnout	Employee Engagement	.334	89.245	-.578	< .001	[-0.606, -0.396]

Note. β = standardized regression coefficient; CI = confidence interval. Unstandardized B values were 0.711, -0.590, and -0.501, respectively.

The regression models were statistically significant for all three primary relationships. Organizational identification explained 35.5% of the variance in employee engagement, F(1, 178) = 97.871, p < .001, with a positive standardized coefficient, β = .596. Organizational identification explained 32.5% of the variance in total burnout, F(1, 178) = 85.627, p < .001, with a negative coefficient, β = -.570. Employee engagement explained 33.4% of the variance in total burnout, F(1, 178) = 89.245, p < .001, with a negative coefficient, β = -.578. In each model, the confidence interval for the unstandardized coefficient excluded zero. These findings provide regression-level support for H1-H3 and are consistent with the correlation results.

Mediation Analysis

Table 6: ***Employee Engagement as a Mediator of the Organizational Identification-Burnout Association***

Path/Effect	B	SE	β	t	p	95% CI / Bootstrap CI
a: OID → Engagement	.711	.072	.711	9.893	< .001	[0.569, 0.853]
b: Engagement → Burnout | OID	-.320	.062	-.370	-5.154	< .001	[-0.443, -0.198]
c': OID → Burnout | Engagement	-.362	.074	-.350	-4.879	< .001	[-0.509, -0.216]
c: Total OID → Burnout	-.590	.064	-.570	-9.253	< .001	[-0.716, -0.464]
Indirect effect, a ×b	-.228	Bootstrap				[-0.328, -0.135]

Note. Indirect effect estimated using 5,000 bootstrap resamples. The bootstrap confidence interval excludes zero, indicating a statistically significant indirect effect.

The mediation model provided evidence for the hypothesized indirect pathway. The a path from organizational identification to employee engagement was positive and significant, B = .711, p < .001. The b path from engagement to burnout, controlling for organizational identification, was negative and significant, B = -.320, p < .001. The direct effect of organizational identification on burnout remained negative and significant after engagement was included, B = -.362, p < .001. The total effect was also significant, B = -.590, p < .001. Most importantly, the indirect effect was -.228, and its 95% bootstrap confidence interval [-.328, -.135] did not include zero. Thus, employee engagement statistically mediated part of the association between organizational identification and burnout, supporting H4. The mediation should be interpreted as an indirect statistical association rather than a causal mechanism because the data were cross-sectional.

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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

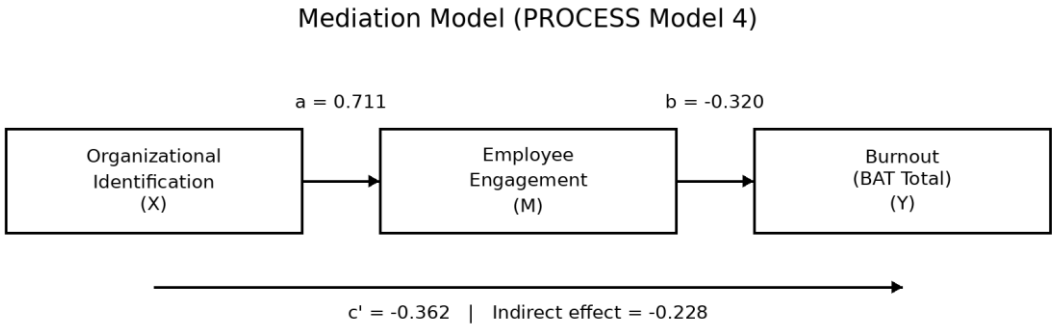


Figure 4. Mediation model showing the estimated paths from organizational identification to engagement and burnout, with engagement as the mediator.

Gender and Age-Group Differences

Table 7 *Independent-Samples t Tests by Gender*

Measure	Male M (SD)	Female M (SD)	t(178)	p	Cohen's d
Organizational Identification	2.693 (1.194)	3.089 (1.155)	-2.263	.025	-.337
Employee Engagement	3.178 (1.372)	3.667 (1.430)	-2.341	.020	-.349
BAT Total Burnout	3.160 (1.105)	3.011 (1.345)	.815	.416	.121

Note. Two-tailed tests. Negative d indicates the male group had the lower mean in the corresponding comparison.

Gender differences were mixed across the outcomes. Total burnout did not differ significantly between male and female faculty, t(178) = .815, p = .416, so H5 was not supported. In contrast, organizational identification differed by gender, t(178) = -2.263, p = .025, with the female group showing the higher mean, and employee engagement also differed, t(178) = -2.341, p = .020, again with the female group showing the higher mean. These two findings provide support for H7. The effect sizes for these group differences were small-to-moderate in magnitude (|d| = .337 and .349).

JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDIES
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ISSN (Online): 3006-2071 | ISSN (Print): 3006-2063
Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

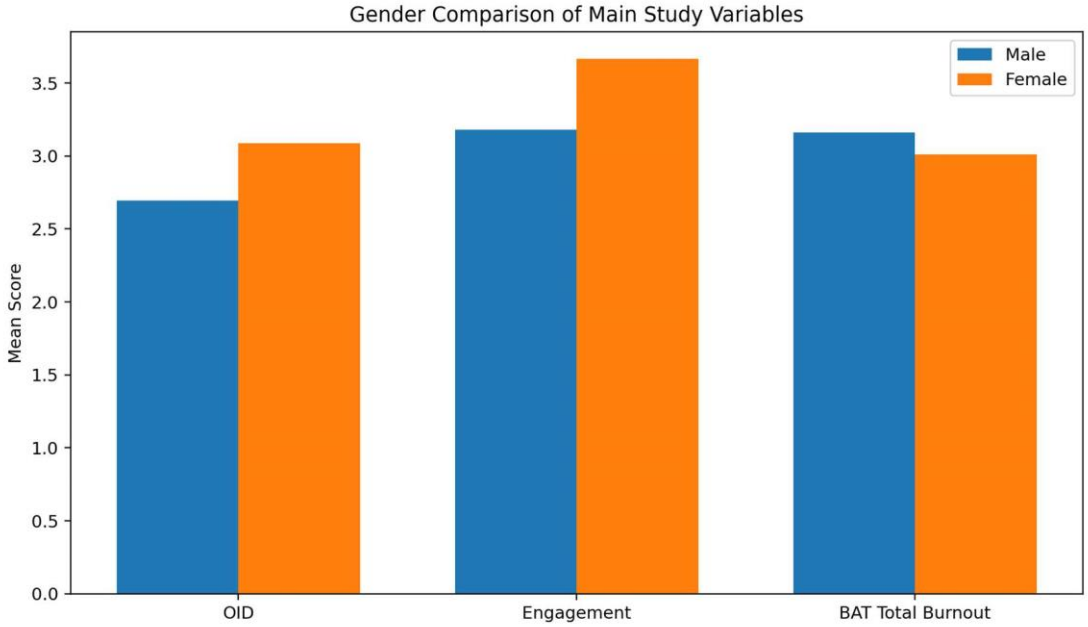


Figure 5. Gender comparison of organizational identification, employee engagement, and total burnout.

Table 8: *One-Way ANOVA by Age Group*

Measure	F(3,176)	p	η^2	Interpretation
Organizational Identification	.319	.812	.005	Not significant
Employee Engagement	.759	.519	.013	Not significant
BAT Total Burnout	.128	.943	.002	Not significant

Note. Age groups were 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, and 50-60 years in the supplied dataset.

The one-way ANOVAs showed no significant differences across age groups for organizational identification, F(3, 176) = .319, p = .812, employee engagement, F(3, 176) = .759, p = .519, or total burnout, F(3, 176) = .128, p = .943. Accordingly, H6 and H8 were not supported. The eta-squared values were small, suggesting that age-group membership accounted for little variation in the central outcomes in this sample.

Exploratory Sociodemographic and Work-Related Associations

Exploratory analyses examined academic rank, work experience, tenure, monthly income, education, marital status, and sector. Most factors were not significantly associated with the primary study variables. Marital status was associated with organizational identification, F = 3.515, p = .032, while its association with burnout was at the conventional .05 threshold (p = .050) and should therefore be interpreted cautiously. Rank, work experience, tenure, monthly income, education, and sector did not show statistically significant associations with the principal study variables. These analyses were exploratory and were not used to alter the primary hypothesis tests.

JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDIES
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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

Hypothesis Summary

Table 9 *Summary of Hypothesis Tests*

Hypothesis	Key test	Result	Decision
H1	OID → Engagement, r = .596	p < .001; positive	Supported
H2	OID → Burnout, r = -.570	p < .001; negative	Supported
H3	Engagement → Burnout, r = -.578	p < .001; negative	Supported
H4	Indirect OID → Engagement → Burnout	B = -.228; bootstrap CI [-.328, -.135]	Supported
H5	Gender difference in burnout	t(178) = .815, p = .416	Not supported
H6	Age difference in burnout	F(3,176) = .128, p = .943	Not supported
H7	Gender differences in OID and Engagement	p = .025 and .020	Supported
H8	Age differences in OID and Engagement	p = .812 and .519	Not supported

Note. Decisions reflect the prespecified .05 significance threshold and the directional hypotheses stated in the thesis.

Discussion

Main Findings

The present study examined whether organizational identification was associated with employee engagement and burnout among university faculty in Pakistan and whether engagement explained part of the organizational identification-burnout association. The results supported the four central pathway hypotheses. Organizational identification was positively related to engagement, negatively related to burnout, and predictive of both outcomes in the expected directions. Employee engagement was also negatively related to burnout. In the mediation analysis, the indirect effect through engagement was statistically significant, while the direct organizational identification-burnout association remained significant after accounting for engagement. The additional group analyses produced a more differentiated pattern: gender was associated with organizational identification and engagement but not burnout, whereas age-group differences were not statistically significant for the main variables.

Organizational Identification and Employee Engagement

H1 was supported because stronger organizational identification was associated with higher employee engagement, r = .596, p < .001. This finding is consistent with Social Identity Theory and the Group Engagement Model, which propose that feeling psychologically connected to a valued collective can strengthen motivation and investment in group-related roles (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tyler & Blader, 2003). It is also consistent with research linking organizational identification to engagement and positive work-related behavior (Zhang et al., 2017; Zhang & Guo, 2020). In the present faculty context, identification may represent a meaningful psychological resource because academic work is not limited to discrete tasks; it is also connected to the perceived mission and reputation of the university. The strength of the observed association suggests that identity-related processes are relevant to understanding engagement among university faculty, although the cross-sectional design prevents causal interpretation.

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Organizational Identification and Burnout

H2 was supported, with organizational identification showing a substantial negative association with burnout, r = -.570, p < .001. The regression model similarly showed that organizational identification accounted for 32.5% of the variance in burnout in this sample. The direction is consistent with the JD-R perspective, in which resources can reduce the vulnerability created by high demands (Bakker et al., 2014; Lesener et al., 2019). The finding also extends a literature base that has often focused on workload, social support, and personal moderators when explaining faculty burnout in Pakistan (Akhter et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2019). Rather than replacing those explanations, the present results indicate that identity-based organizational processes may also be relevant. Faculty who experience their institution as an important part of who they are may have greater access to meaning and belonging, which can coexist with lower reported burnout. Because identification can also create demands when organizational failures threaten the self, future research should examine both its resource and strain dimensions rather than assuming that stronger identification is uniformly protective (Albert et al., 2000).

Employee Engagement and Burnout

H3 was supported because employee engagement was negatively related to burnout, r = -.578, p < .001, and significantly predicted lower burnout in regression analysis. This pattern accords with research treating burnout and engagement as distinct but related states that occupy contrasting regions of the work well-being continuum (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). The finding is also compatible with the motivational pathway of the JD-R model, in which resources support engagement while persistent demands contribute to exhaustion and related strain (Galanakis & Tsitouri, 2022; Giauque et al., 2022). In the Pakistani academic context, engagement may be particularly relevant because faculty members face simultaneous teaching, research, and administrative demands. Nonetheless, the result should not be read as demonstrating that increasing engagement necessarily causes burnout to decline; the cross-sectional design does not establish temporal order, and common method influences may also affect associations among self-report measures.

Mediating Role of Employee Engagement

H4 was supported by the bootstrap mediation model. Organizational identification was positively related to engagement, engagement was negatively related to burnout when identification was controlled, and the indirect effect was significantly below zero because the bootstrap confidence interval did not include zero. This pattern is consistent with the theoretical model in which organizational identification operates as a resource that facilitates engagement, which in turn is associated with lower burnout. The finding also speaks directly to a gap identified in the thesis literature review. Prior studies have examined identification, engagement, or burnout in different combinations and occupational settings, but relatively little work has integrated these constructs in Pakistani university faculty. The present analysis therefore contributes a context-specific test of an identity-motivation pathway. At the same time, mediation in cross-sectional data should be viewed as evidence of a statistical pattern compatible with the proposed mechanism, not as definitive proof of a causal process. Longitudinal or time-lagged designs would be needed to establish temporal precedence more convincingly.

Gender and Age Differences

The demographic results show that the central relationships were not simply a product of total burnout differences by gender or age. H5 was not supported because male and female faculty did not differ significantly in total burnout. H7, however, was supported because gender differences were observed for organizational identification and engagement, with higher mean scores among women in this sample. This suggests that demographic differences may be more visible in motivational and identity-related experiences than in the overall level of burnout. H6 and H8 were not supported

ISSN (Online): 3006-2071 | ISSN (Print): 3006-2063
Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

because age groups did not differ significantly in burnout, identification, or engagement. These null findings are consistent with the possibility that immediate organizational and job conditions may be more proximal to faculty well-being than chronological age alone. They also emphasize the need to avoid treating age or gender as simple proxies for organizational experience without considering the actual work context.

Exploratory Findings and the Pakistani Context

The exploratory analyses found little evidence that rank, work experience, tenure, income, education, or sector were strongly associated with the three primary variables. Marital status showed a significant association with organizational identification and a borderline association with burnout. Because these comparisons were exploratory and involve multiple variables, they should be interpreted as signals for future investigation rather than definitive subgroup effects. The findings also reinforce the value of an integrated psychosocial perspective in Pakistani higher education. Existing local literature has identified workload, social support, hardiness, and occupational well-being as relevant, while the current study adds organizational identity and engagement to that evidence base (Akhter et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2019; Siraj et al., 2024). The combination is conceptually consistent with the JD-R model, which accommodates multiple resource and demand pathways instead of reducing burnout to a single cause.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings have two main theoretical implications. First, they support the use of organizational identification as a psychologically meaningful resource within a JD-R-informed account of faculty well-being. Second, the mediation result indicates that engagement may be one mechanism through which identification relates to burnout, while the remaining direct effect suggests that additional mechanisms are also likely to matter. This aligns with broader models in which identity processes and motivational resources interact rather than operate independently (Hui et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2015). Practically, the findings suggest that universities may benefit from environments in which faculty members experience respect, belonging, meaningful participation, and clarity of institutional purpose. Such practices should not be framed as guaranteed treatments for burnout; rather, they are organizational conditions that may be relevant to engagement and occupational well-being and can be evaluated alongside workload, supervisory support, and other established determinants.

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference and temporal interpretation. The study also relies on self-report measures, which may introduce common method effects. Purposive sampling across universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi limits generalizability to other regions, institution types, and faculty populations. There is also a reporting discrepancy between the stated inclusion criterion of age 28-60 and the age categories present in the supplied dataset. In addition, workload is named in the broader objectives but was not directly measured as a participant-level variable in the supplied questionnaire, which limits conclusions about workload intensity. Finally, the source thesis includes broader economic context such as salary disparities and inflation, but these contextual indicators were not modeled as participant-level variables. Future research should therefore use longitudinal or time-lagged designs, broader probability-based samples, direct measures of workload and organizational resources, and multi-source or objective indicators where feasible. Replication across regions and institutional types would also clarify the extent to which the present pattern generalizes.

Conclusion

This study provides evidence that organizational identification, employee engagement, and burnout are interconnected among university faculty in Pakistan. Stronger

ISSN (Online): 3006-2071 | ISSN (Print): 3006-2063
Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

organizational identification was associated with greater employee engagement and lower burnout, while engagement was itself associated with lower burnout. Employee engagement statistically mediated the organizational identification-burnout association, providing support for the proposed motivational pathway within a JD-R-informed framework. Gender differences were observed for identification and engagement but not total burnout, while age-group differences were not significant for the central constructs. Overall, the findings add a faculty-specific Pakistani perspective to international research on organizational identity, engagement, and occupational well-being. The results are associative rather than causal and should be interpreted alongside the study's methodological limitations and the wider literature on academic workload and organizational resources.

Author Contributions

Mehwish Altaf: Conducted the main research work and made the major contributions to this article.

Dr. Muhammad Umar Fayyaz: Supervised the student throughout the research.

Waqar Hassan Shahab: Assisted with compiling and formatting the article.

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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

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Volume 4 • Issue 6 • October 2026

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