

Teacher Self-Competencies and Job Engagement among Primary School Teachers in Qatar: A Quantitative Correlational Study

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Abstract

Teacher self-competencies and job engagement are central to understanding teachers' professional functioning, particularly in primary education where teachers play a foundational role in shaping students' early learning experiences. This study examined the level of self-competencies, the level of job engagement, and the relationship between these two variables among primary school teachers in Qatar. A quantitative correlational survey design was employed. Data were collected from 331 teachers working in government primary schools in Qatar using a structured questionnaire. The instrument measured two main constructs: teachers' self-competencies and job engagement. Descriptive statistics, one-sample t-tests, and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used to analyse the data. The findings showed that teachers reported a high level of self-competencies, with a mean score of 4.33. The findings also indicated a high level of job engagement, with a mean score of 4.44. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between self-competencies and job engagement, with $r = 0.670$ and $p = 0.000$. These results suggest that teachers who perceive themselves as more professionally, socially, and emotionally competent are more likely to demonstrate stronger engagement in their work. The study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence from Qatar's primary education context and highlights the importance of strengthening teachers' competencies as a pathway to enhancing their engagement. The findings offer practical implications for teacher professional development, school leadership, and educational policy in Qatar.

Keywords: Teacher Self-Competencies, Job Engagement, Primary School Teachers, Teacher Professional Development, Qatar

Introduction

Teachers remain central to the quality, stability, and effectiveness of any educational system. Although contemporary education reforms increasingly focus on curriculum renewal, digital transformation, accountability systems, and school leadership, the success of these reforms continues to depend largely on teachers' professional capacity and psychological readiness to engage meaningfully with their work. In primary education, this issue becomes even more significant because teachers are responsible not only for delivering content, but also for shaping students' early learning habits, classroom behaviours, motivation, and attitudes toward schooling. Therefore, understanding the factors that strengthen teachers' professional functioning is essential for improving school quality and sustaining educational reform. Within this context, teacher self-competencies represent an important professional and psychological construct. Self-competencies refer to teachers' perceived ability to organise, manage, and perform teaching-related tasks effectively. This includes planning lessons, managing classrooms, communicating with students, responding to learning difficulties, and maintaining confidence when facing professional challenges. The theoretical foundation of this construct is closely connected to Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, which explains how individuals' beliefs about their capabilities influence their motivation, effort, persistence, and performance (Bandura, 1997). In teaching, these beliefs are especially important because teachers who believe in their own professional abilities are more likely to invest effort, persist when challenges arise, and adopt effective classroom practices.

Previous research has consistently shown that teacher self-efficacy and professional competence are associated with important educational outcomes. Klassen and Tze (2014), in their meta-analysis, found that teacher self-efficacy was linked to indicators of teaching effectiveness. Similarly, Zee and Koomen (2016), through a synthesis of 40 years of research, showed that teacher self-efficacy influences classroom processes, student adjustment, and teacher well-being. These findings suggest that teachers' beliefs about their own professional capabilities are not merely personal attitudes; rather, they shape how teachers act, respond, and sustain their work within the school environment.

Alongside self-competencies, job engagement has become a major construct in educational and organisational research. Job engagement refers to a positive work-related state in which individuals demonstrate energy, dedication, and deep involvement in their professional tasks. Kahn (1990) conceptualised engagement as the extent to which individuals bring their physical, cognitive, and emotional selves into their work roles. Later, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) operationalised work engagement through three key dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. These dimensions reflect the teacher's energy at work, sense of professional meaning, and deep concentration in teaching-related responsibilities. Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006) further strengthened this construct by validating a short work engagement scale across different contexts, confirming the relevance of these dimensions in measuring engagement.

For teachers, job engagement is particularly important because teaching is an emotionally, cognitively, and socially demanding profession. An engaged teacher is more likely to show enthusiasm in the classroom, maintain commitment to students, participate in school improvement, and remain resilient when facing workload pressures. The Job Demands–Resources model provides a useful explanation here, as it argues that job resources such as

support, autonomy, feedback, and professional development can enhance motivation and engagement, especially when employees face demanding work conditions (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In schools, these resources may help teachers transform their competencies into active participation, stronger commitment, and more sustained involvement in their professional roles.

The relationship between teacher self-competencies and job engagement is therefore theoretically meaningful. Teachers who perceive themselves as competent are more likely to approach their work with confidence, manage classroom demands more effectively, and experience a stronger sense of professional control. This confidence may support higher levels of engagement because teachers are more willing to invest energy and commitment when they believe they can perform their duties successfully. In contrast, low perceived competence may contribute to stress, withdrawal, and reduced involvement in school activities. This interpretation is consistent with Bandura's (1997) argument that self-efficacy beliefs influence effort, persistence, and behavioural choices, and with research showing that teacher self-efficacy is closely linked to teacher motivation, well-being, and classroom functioning (Klassen & Tze, 2014; Zee & Koomen, 2016).

In Qatar, the relationship between teacher self-competencies and job engagement deserves closer academic attention. Qatar has invested heavily in educational development, teacher preparation, and school reform as part of its broader national development priorities. However, educational reform also places new expectations on teachers, including higher accountability, curriculum changes, professional standards, and adaptation to changing school environments. In this regard, Qadhi et al. (2020) found that teacher preparation programmes play an important role in shaping novice teachers' professional teaching competencies. Their findings are relevant to the present study because they show that teachers' professional readiness is closely connected to the quality of preparation, training, and support they receive.

Despite this growing body of literature, there remains a need for more focused empirical work on how teachers' self-competencies are connected to their level of job engagement in Qatar's primary school context. Much of the existing research has examined teacher preparation, self-efficacy, job satisfaction, burnout, or professional challenges separately. Less attention has been given to the direct relationship between teachers' perceived self-competencies and their engagement in work, particularly among primary school teachers in Qatari government schools. This gap is important because primary school teachers operate at a foundational stage of education, where their motivation, confidence, and engagement can have long-term implications for students' learning experiences.

The present study addresses this gap by examining the level of self-competencies and job engagement among primary school teachers in Qatar and by testing the relationship between these two variables. The study is derived from a larger thesis that investigated self-competencies, job engagement, and teaching performance among primary school teachers in Qatar. For this article, however, the focus is intentionally narrowed to the first two constructs: self-competencies and job engagement. This separation allows the article to provide a clearer and more focused contribution to the literature on teacher professional capacity and work engagement.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three research questions.

1. What is the level of self-competencies among primary school teachers in Qatar?
2. What is the level of job engagement among primary school teachers in Qatar?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between self-competencies and job engagement among primary school teachers in Qatar?

By answering these questions, the study aims to provide evidence that can support teacher development policies, professional learning programmes, and school-level initiatives designed to strengthen teachers' professional confidence and engagement.

Research Problem / Problem Statement

Although teachers are widely recognised as the core agents of educational quality and school improvement, their ability to contribute effectively depends not only on formal qualifications or institutional expectations, but also on their perceived professional competencies and psychological engagement with their work. In primary education, this issue is particularly important because teachers operate at a foundational stage where students' early learning experiences, classroom behaviours, motivation, and attitudes toward schooling are shaped. Therefore, when teachers lack confidence in their own professional abilities, or when they experience low engagement with their work, the quality of classroom interaction and the stability of the learning environment may be affected.

Teacher self-competencies are strongly connected to the way teachers perceive their ability to plan, manage classrooms, communicate with students, respond to challenges, and sustain effective teaching practices. Bandura's theory of self-efficacy explains that individuals' beliefs about their own capabilities influence their motivation, persistence, effort, and behavioural choices (Bandura, 1997). In the teaching profession, this means that teachers who perceive themselves as competent are more likely to invest effort in their work, remain persistent when facing classroom difficulties, and approach professional challenges with greater confidence. This view is supported by previous research showing that teacher self-efficacy is associated with teaching effectiveness, classroom processes, student adjustment, and teacher well-being (Klassen & Tze, 2014; Zee & Koomen, 2016).

At the same time, job engagement represents another critical dimension of teachers' professional functioning. Engagement reflects the extent to which individuals invest their physical, cognitive, and emotional selves in their work roles (Kahn, 1990). In educational settings, engaged teachers are more likely to demonstrate enthusiasm, dedication, resilience, and meaningful involvement in teaching and school-related responsibilities. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) conceptualised work engagement through three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. These dimensions are highly relevant to teachers because the teaching profession requires sustained energy, emotional commitment, and continuous concentration in classroom and school tasks. When teachers are disengaged, they may remain physically present in school but demonstrate reduced motivation, weaker involvement, and limited professional initiative.

The relationship between self-competencies and job engagement is therefore an important issue that deserves empirical attention. Teachers who believe they possess the competencies required for effective teaching may be more likely to experience confidence, professional meaning, and motivation in their work. In contrast, teachers with weaker perceived

competencies may feel less prepared to manage classroom demands, respond to students' needs, or cope with institutional pressures. The Job Demands–Resources model further supports this logic by explaining that professional resources, including competence, support, feedback, and autonomy, can enhance work engagement and help employees manage demanding work conditions (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In this sense, teacher self-competencies may function as an important professional resource that strengthens teachers' engagement with their work.

In the context of Qatar, this issue becomes more significant due to the continuing development of the national education system and the growing expectations placed on teachers. Educational reforms, professional standards, accountability demands, and school improvement initiatives require teachers to demonstrate strong professional competencies and sustained engagement. However, research related to teachers in Qatar has often focused on teacher preparation, professional development, or broader aspects of teaching quality, rather than directly examining the relationship between teachers' self-competencies and their job engagement. For example, Qadhi et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of teacher preparation programmes in shaping novice teachers' professional competencies, but further empirical work is still needed to understand how teachers' perceived competencies relate to their engagement in daily school practice.

The problem addressed in this study is that, despite the recognised importance of teacher self-competencies and job engagement, there remains limited empirical evidence explaining the relationship between these two variables among primary school teachers in Qatar. This gap is important because self-competencies and job engagement are not isolated constructs; rather, they may jointly influence teachers' professional commitment, classroom energy, and willingness to participate actively in school life. The attached thesis also identifies self-competencies and job engagement as central variables in understanding teachers' professional functioning among primary school teachers in Qatar.

Therefore, the present study seeks to address this research problem by examining the level of self-competencies, the level of job engagement, and the relationship between these two variables among primary school teachers in Qatar. By doing so, the study provides empirical evidence that may help educational leaders, policymakers, and school administrators design more effective professional development and support systems that strengthen teachers' perceived competencies and enhance their engagement in the teaching profession.

Literature Review

Teacher Self-Competencies

Teacher self-competencies represent a central construct in understanding how teachers perceive their ability to perform professional tasks effectively. In the teaching context, these competencies include the teacher's confidence in planning lessons, managing classroom interaction, communicating with students, responding to learning difficulties, and sustaining effective teaching practices under different school conditions. Although the term "self-competencies" may be used broadly in some educational studies, it is closely connected to the concept of teacher self-efficacy, which refers to teachers' beliefs about their capability to organise and execute teaching-related actions successfully (Bandura, 1997).

Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy provides a strong theoretical basis for understanding teacher self-competencies. According to this perspective, individuals' beliefs about their capabilities influence how much effort they invest, how long they persist when facing difficulties, and how they respond to professional challenges. Applied to teaching, this means that teachers who possess strong self-competencies are more likely to approach classroom demands with confidence, persistence, and professional initiative. They are also more likely to interpret challenges as manageable rather than threatening, which can influence both their teaching behaviour and their psychological connection to work.

The importance of teacher self-efficacy has been widely discussed in educational research. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) described teacher efficacy as a powerful but complex construct that is related to teachers' persistence, enthusiasm, commitment, instructional behaviour, and student outcomes. Their work is particularly important because it clarified the measurement of teacher efficacy and helped position the construct as a key factor in teacher professional functioning. Similarly, Klassen and Tze (2014) found that teacher self-efficacy was associated with teaching effectiveness, while Zee and Koomen (2016) showed that teacher self-efficacy affects classroom processes, student academic adjustment, and teacher well-being. These studies suggest that teacher self-competencies are not limited to internal beliefs; rather, they are reflected in the teacher's professional actions and classroom practices.

In addition, teacher self-competencies are important because they influence how teachers respond to the demands of school life. Teaching is not a simple technical activity; it requires continuous decision-making, emotional regulation, instructional flexibility, classroom management, and the ability to respond to students' diverse needs. Teachers who perceive themselves as professionally competent are more likely to engage in adaptive practices and remain resilient when they face workload pressures or classroom difficulties. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) found that teacher self-efficacy was related to teachers' perceptions of school context, job satisfaction, and burnout. This indicates that teachers' self-beliefs are connected not only to instructional performance, but also to their broader professional well-being.

In the context of Qatar, teacher self-competencies are especially important because the education system has undergone continuous reform, development, and professionalisation. Teachers are expected to respond to national educational priorities, curriculum expectations, school accountability systems, and changing classroom needs. Qadhi et al. (2020) showed that teacher preparation programmes play a significant role in developing novice teachers' professional teaching competencies. This finding is relevant to the present study because it highlights the importance of professional preparation and support in strengthening teachers' readiness for classroom practice. However, while teacher preparation is important, there remains a need to understand how teachers' perceived self-competencies are connected to their engagement in daily school work.

Job Engagement among Teachers

Job engagement is another key construct in teacher professional life. It refers to a positive work-related state in which individuals show energy, dedication, and deep involvement in their work. Kahn (1990) introduced engagement as the process through which individuals bring their physical, cognitive, and emotional selves into their work roles. In this view,

engagement is not simply about being present at work; it reflects a deeper psychological investment in one's professional responsibilities. For teachers, this means showing enthusiasm in teaching, emotional commitment to students, and active involvement in school duties.

Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) conceptualised work engagement through three main dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor refers to high levels of energy and mental resilience while working. Dedication refers to a strong sense of involvement, enthusiasm, pride, and meaning. Absorption refers to being fully concentrated and deeply immersed in work. These dimensions are highly applicable to teaching because teachers need energy to manage classroom demands, dedication to sustain meaningful relationships with students, and absorption to remain focused on instructional and school-related responsibilities. Schaufeli et al. (2006) further supported the measurement of work engagement through a short questionnaire, confirming the usefulness of these dimensions across different contexts.

Teacher job engagement is important because teaching is emotionally and cognitively demanding. Teachers are required to plan lessons, manage classroom behaviour, communicate with parents, assess student progress, collaborate with colleagues, and respond to institutional expectations. When teachers are engaged, they are more likely to demonstrate motivation, commitment, resilience, and willingness to contribute to school improvement. In contrast, disengaged teachers may experience reduced motivation, emotional exhaustion, weaker involvement, and limited professional initiative. Hakanen et al. (2006), in their study on burnout and work engagement among teachers, found that job resources were linked to work engagement and organisational commitment, while job demands were linked to burnout and health problems. This finding supports the view that teacher engagement is shaped by the interaction between individual, organisational, and contextual factors.

The Job Demands–Resources model provides an important theoretical explanation of teacher engagement. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), job resources such as support, autonomy, feedback, and opportunities for professional growth can enhance work engagement, particularly when employees face demanding work conditions. In school settings, these resources may include supportive leadership, collegial cooperation, meaningful professional development, access to teaching resources, and recognition of teachers' efforts. When such resources are present, teachers are more likely to feel professionally valued and psychologically engaged in their work.

In educational environments, job engagement is also connected to teachers' professional identity and commitment. Engaged teachers tend to experience teaching as meaningful and personally significant. They are more likely to show persistence, participate in school activities, and develop positive relationships with students and colleagues. Høigaard et al. (2012) found that newly qualified teachers' work engagement and teacher efficacy were related to job satisfaction, burnout, and intention to quit. This is important because it shows that engagement is not only a motivational state, but also a factor linked to teacher retention and professional sustainability.

Relationship between Teacher Self-Competencies and Job Engagement

The relationship between teacher self-competencies and job engagement is theoretically and empirically meaningful. Teachers who believe that they are capable of managing classroom tasks, responding to students' needs, and achieving instructional goals are more likely to experience confidence and motivation in their work. This professional confidence may increase their energy, dedication, and willingness to become deeply involved in school responsibilities. In contrast, teachers who doubt their professional abilities may experience uncertainty, stress, and reduced psychological investment in teaching.

Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory helps explain this relationship. When teachers believe they can perform their duties successfully, they are more likely to invest effort, persist in difficult situations, and remain motivated. These qualities are closely aligned with the dimensions of work engagement, particularly vigor and dedication. Therefore, teacher self-competencies may be understood as an individual professional resource that supports job engagement. This interpretation also aligns with the Job Demands–Resources model, which suggests that personal and job resources contribute to motivational processes and work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Empirical studies also support the link between teacher efficacy and engagement. Høigaard et al. (2012) found that teacher efficacy and work engagement were associated with job satisfaction, burnout, and intention to quit among newly qualified teachers. Minghui et al. (2018) examined teacher efficacy, work engagement, and social support among Chinese special education teachers and found associations between teacher efficacy, work engagement, and social support. Their study further showed that aspects of work engagement, especially vigor, were related to teacher efficacy. Although this study was conducted in a special education context, it provides useful evidence that teacher efficacy and engagement are closely connected in professional teaching environments.

The relationship between self-competencies and job engagement is also important from a practical perspective. If teachers' perceived competencies are positively associated with engagement, then improving teacher competencies through professional development, mentoring, feedback, and school-based support may also enhance teachers' engagement. This is particularly relevant in primary education, where teachers' energy, confidence, and involvement directly influence the classroom climate and students' early learning experiences. In this sense, studying the relationship between self-competencies and job engagement can provide useful evidence for school leaders and policymakers who aim to strengthen teacher quality and professional sustainability.

Literature Gap and Relevance to the Present Study

Although previous studies have examined teacher self-efficacy, teacher competencies, job engagement, burnout, job satisfaction, and teacher well-being, the direct relationship between teacher self-competencies and job engagement remains underexplored in the context of primary education in Qatar. Much of the existing literature has been conducted in Western, East Asian, or general international contexts. While these studies provide strong theoretical and empirical foundations, their findings may not fully capture the realities of teachers working within Qatar's educational system, where national reform priorities, school

expectations, professional standards, and local institutional conditions shape teachers' experiences.

The present study responds to this gap by examining the levels of teacher self-competencies and job engagement among primary school teachers in Qatar and by testing the relationship between these two variables. The attached thesis positions self-competencies and job engagement as two central constructs in understanding teachers' professional functioning in Qatar's primary schools. By focusing specifically on these two constructs, the current paper offers a focused contribution to the literature on teacher professional capacity and engagement. It also provides empirical evidence that may inform professional development programmes and school-based interventions designed to strengthen teachers' confidence, motivation, and involvement in their work.

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational survey design to examine the level of self-competencies, the level of job engagement, and the relationship between these two variables among primary school teachers in Qatar. This design was appropriate because the study did not seek to manipulate any variables, but rather to describe teachers' responses and determine the strength and direction of the relationship between their perceived self-competencies and job engagement. The original thesis adopted a correlational causal-comparative approach to examine relationships among self-competencies, job engagement, and teaching performance; however, the present paper focuses only on the relationship between self-competencies and job engagement to provide a more focused and publishable analysis.

The design was guided by three research questions. First, the study examined the level of self-competencies among primary school teachers in Qatar. Second, it examined the level of job engagement among the same group of teachers. Third, it tested whether there was a statistically significant relationship between self-competencies and job engagement. This methodological focus directly corresponds to the four results tables presented in the paper.

Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of all male and female teachers working in government primary schools in Qatar during the academic year 2025–2026. According to the thesis, the population included 2408 teachers distributed across 114 primary schools. The population was dominated by female teachers, which reflects the structure of the primary education workforce in Qatar.

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the study sample. This sampling method was adopted to ensure that teachers from different educational districts were represented fairly and proportionally. The final sample consisted of 331 teachers, representing approximately 14% of the total population. The thesis also reports that a pilot sample of 60 teachers was used before the main data collection to examine the validity and reliability of the research instruments.

For the present paper, the demographic profile of the respondents is reported in Table 1. This table includes gender and academic qualification because these variables help describe the structure of the sample. However, they are not treated as independent analytical variables in this paper because the main objective is to examine self-competencies, job engagement, and the relationship between them.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed and validated in the original thesis. For the purpose of this paper, only two sections of the instrument were used: the self-competencies scale and the job engagement scale. The teaching performance scale was excluded from this paper because it will be used in the second publication.

The first section measured teachers' self-competencies. The thesis reports that the self-competencies scale consisted of 30 items distributed across three dimensions: cognitive self-competencies, social self-competencies, and emotional self-competencies. These dimensions were designed to measure teachers' perceived professional ability to perform teaching-related tasks, interact with others, and manage emotional and professional demands. The scale was evaluated by expert reviewers, and the final version retained 30 items after the validation process.

The second section measured job engagement. The job engagement scale also consisted of 30 items distributed across three dimensions: absorption, dedication, and vigor. These dimensions reflect teachers' involvement, enthusiasm, energy, and psychological connection to their work. The thesis indicates that the scale was reviewed by experts and revised based on their feedback before being used in the main study.

The questionnaire items were measured using a Likert-type response format. In the results section, the interpretation of the mean scores was based on the comparison between the observed mean and the hypothetical mean of the scale, which was set at **3**. This allowed the study to determine whether the levels of self-competencies and job engagement were statistically higher than the midpoint of the scale.

Validity and Reliability

Several procedures were used to establish the validity and reliability of the instruments. First, face validity was assessed by presenting the scales to a panel of seven experts from Qatar University and related educational fields. The experts reviewed the clarity, relevance, and suitability of the items for measuring the intended constructs. The thesis reports that an 80% agreement level was used as the criterion for accepting items, and revisions were made based on the experts' comments.

Second, construct validity was examined using exploratory factor analysis on the pilot sample of 60 teachers. For the self-competencies scale, the factor-related values ranged from 0.800 to 0.961, indicating strong item alignment with the three dimensions of the scale. For the job engagement scale, the factor-related values ranged from 0.805 to 0.974, also indicating strong construct validity.

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The self-competencies scale showed strong internal consistency, with alpha values of 0.85 for the cognitive dimension, 0.80 for the social dimension, 0.82 for the emotional dimension, and 0.88 for the overall scale. The job engagement scale also showed strong reliability, with alpha values of 0.87 for dedication, 0.85 for absorption, 0.83 for vigor, and 0.88 for the overall scale. These values indicate that both scales were reliable and suitable for use in the main study.

Data Collection Procedures

The study followed a two-stage data collection process. In the first stage, the questionnaire was piloted with 60 teachers who were not included in the final sample. This step was conducted to test the clarity, validity, and reliability of the research instruments before applying them to the main sample. In the second stage, the final questionnaire was administered to the main sample of 331 primary school teachers. The use of a pilot study helped ensure that the instrument was suitable for the Qatari primary school context and that the data collected from the main sample could be analysed with confidence.

Before conducting the statistical analysis, the collected data were screened to ensure their suitability for analysis. The thesis indicates that the data were checked for missing values, incomplete responses, inconsistent responses, and logical response patterns. This screening process was important to ensure that the final dataset was clean, consistent, and appropriate for descriptive and correlational analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was conducted in a sequence that matched the research questions and the four selected results tables.

First, frequencies and percentages were calculated to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents. These results are presented in Table 1.

Second, descriptive statistics were used to examine the level of self-competencies. The mean, standard deviation, standard error, t-value, significance value, and 95% confidence interval were calculated. A one-sample t-test was used to compare the observed mean of self-competencies with the hypothetical mean of the scale, which was set at 3. These results are presented in Table 2.

Third, the same procedure was used to examine the level of job engagement. The mean, standard deviation, standard error, t-value, significance value, and 95% confidence interval were calculated, and a one-sample t-test was used to determine whether the level of job engagement was statistically higher than the hypothetical mean. These results are presented in Table 3.

Fourth, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between self-competencies and job engagement. This test was appropriate because both variables were measured quantitatively and the purpose was to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between them. These results are presented in Table 4. The thesis confirms that Pearson correlation was used to test the relationship between self-competencies and job engagement.

Results

This section presents the results of the first paper, which focuses specifically on teachers' self-competencies, job engagement, and the relationship between these two variables among primary school teachers in Qatar. The results are organised according to the three research questions of the paper. First, the demographic profile of the respondents is presented. Second, the level of teachers' self-competencies is reported. Third, the level of job engagement is presented. Finally, the relationship between self-competencies and job engagement is examined using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The tables below are based directly on the thesis results.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Before addressing the main research questions, the demographic profile of the respondents was examined to provide a clear description of the study sample. The demographic results include gender and academic qualification. These variables are useful for understanding the structure of the sample, although they are not treated as main analytical variables in this paper.

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	65	19.6	19.6	19.6
	Female	266	80.4	80.4	100.0
	Total	331	100.0	100.0	—
Academic qualification	Bachelor's degree	295	89.1	89.1	89.1
	Master's degree	36	10.9	10.9	100.0
	Total	331	100.0	100.0	—

The demographic results show that the sample consisted of 331 primary school teachers. In terms of gender, female teachers represented the majority of the sample, with 266 respondents, accounting for 80.4% of the total sample. Male teachers represented 65 respondents, accounting for 19.6%. This indicates that the sample was female-dominated, which is consistent with the nature of the primary teaching workforce in many educational contexts, including Qatar. The thesis also notes that this gender distribution should be considered when interpreting results, especially in analyses involving gender comparisons.

In terms of academic qualification, most respondents held a bachelor's degree. Specifically, 295 teachers, representing 89.1% of the sample, had a bachelor's degree, while 36 teachers, representing 10.9%, held a master's degree. This indicates that the sample was relatively homogeneous in terms of academic qualification, with the majority holding an undergraduate qualification.

Level of Self-Competencies among Primary School Teachers

The first research question examined the level of self-competencies among primary school teachers in Qatar. To answer this question, a one-sample t-test was used to compare the observed mean score of self-competencies with the hypothetical mean of the five-point Likert

scale, which was set at 3. This analysis was conducted to determine whether the level of self-competencies among teachers was statistically higher than the midpoint of the scale.

Table 2

Results of the One-Sample t-Test for the Level of Self-Competencies

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	t-value	Sig.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Self-competencies	331	4.33	0.33	0.03	126.53	0.000	4.26	4.40

The results in Table 2 show that the mean score for teachers' self-competencies was 4.33, with a standard deviation of 0.33. This mean is clearly above the hypothetical mean of 3, indicating that primary school teachers in Qatar reported a high level of self-competencies. The t-value was 126.53, with a significance value of 0.000, which indicates that the level of self-competencies was statistically significant.

The confidence interval ranged from 4.26 to 4.40, confirming the stability of the mean estimate. This result suggests that the teachers in the sample perceived themselves as having strong professional, social, and emotional competencies. In practical terms, this means that the respondents generally viewed themselves as capable of managing teaching-related tasks, interacting positively within the school environment, and dealing with professional responsibilities with confidence. The thesis similarly concludes that the level of self-competencies among primary school teachers in Qatar was high and statistically significant.

Level of Job Engagement among Primary School Teachers

The second research question examined the level of job engagement among primary school teachers in Qatar. Similar to the previous analysis, a one-sample t-test was used to compare the observed mean score of job engagement with the hypothetical mean of the scale. The purpose of this analysis was to determine whether teachers' job engagement was significantly higher than the midpoint of the Likert scale.

Table 3

Results of the One-Sample t-Test for the Level of Job Engagement

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	t-value	Sig.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Job engagement	331	4.44	0.41	0.04	104.33	0.000	4.36	4.53

The results in Table 3 show that the mean score for job engagement was 4.44, with a standard deviation of 0.41. This indicates that teachers reported a high level of job engagement. The mean score was substantially higher than the hypothetical mean of 3, suggesting that the respondents generally demonstrated strong engagement in their teaching work.

The t-value was 104.33, with a significance value of 0.000, confirming that the level of job engagement was statistically significant. The 95% confidence interval ranged from 4.36 to 4.53, which further supports the consistency and stability of the result. These findings indicate that teachers in the sample showed high levels of involvement, energy, dedication, and absorption in their work. The thesis reports the same result and interprets it as evidence that job engagement among primary school teachers in Qatar was high and statistically significant.

Relationship between Self-Competencies and Job Engagement

The third research question examined whether there was a statistically significant relationship between self-competencies and job engagement among primary school teachers in Qatar. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used because both variables were measured quantitatively, and the purpose was to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between them.

Table 4

Pearson Correlation between Self-Competencies and Job Engagement

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.	Significance Level
Self-competencies ↔ Job engagement	4.33	0.33	331	0.670	0.000	0.01

The results in Table 4 show a positive and statistically significant relationship between self-competencies and job engagement among primary school teachers in Qatar. The Pearson correlation coefficient was $r = 0.670$, which indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The significance value was 0.000, which is below the adopted significance level of 0.01. This confirms that the relationship was statistically significant and not due to chance.

This result means that teachers with higher levels of self-competencies tended to report higher levels of job engagement. In other words, teachers who perceived themselves as more professionally, socially, and emotionally competent were also more likely to demonstrate stronger engagement in their work. This includes higher levels of energy, dedication, and absorption in teaching-related responsibilities. The thesis interprets this result as evidence of a strong positive association between teachers' self-competencies and their job engagement. Overall, the results show that primary school teachers in Qatar reported high levels of both self-competencies and job engagement. The self-competencies mean score was 4.33, while the job engagement mean score was 4.44. Both results were statistically significant when compared with the hypothetical mean of the scale. In addition, the correlation analysis showed a strong positive significant relationship between self-competencies and job engagement, with $r = 0.670$ and $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$. These findings suggest that teachers' perceived professional competencies are closely associated with their level of engagement in school work.

Discussion

The present study examined the level of self-competencies, the level of job engagement, and the relationship between these two variables among primary school teachers in Qatar. The findings showed that teachers reported a high level of self-competencies, with a mean score of 4.33. The findings also showed a high level of job engagement, with a mean score of 4.44. More importantly, the correlation analysis revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between self-competencies and job engagement, with $r = 0.670$ and $p = 0.000$. These results suggest that teachers who perceived themselves as more competent professionally, socially, and emotionally were also more likely to demonstrate stronger engagement in their work. This finding directly supports the central argument of the study: teachers' professional confidence and perceived competencies are closely connected to their psychological and motivational involvement in school work.

The high level of self-competencies among primary school teachers in Qatar can be understood in light of Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory. Bandura argued that individuals' beliefs about their capabilities influence their effort, persistence, motivation, and responses to challenges. In the present study, the high mean score for self-competencies indicates that teachers generally perceived themselves as capable of performing their teaching-related responsibilities effectively. This includes their perceived ability to plan, organise, communicate, manage classroom demands, and respond to professional challenges. Such a result is theoretically meaningful because teachers who believe in their own competencies are more likely to approach their work with confidence and persistence. This finding is also consistent with Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001), who described teacher efficacy as an important but complex construct that influences teachers' professional behaviour, motivation, and classroom functioning.

The result also aligns with previous evidence showing that teacher self-efficacy and professional competence are strongly related to teaching effectiveness and classroom processes. Klassen and Tze (2014), in their meta-analysis, found that teacher self-efficacy was associated with teaching effectiveness, while Zee and Koomen (2016) showed that teacher self-efficacy affects classroom processes, student adjustment, and teacher well-being. Although the present paper does not directly examine teaching performance, the high level of self-competencies reported by teachers suggests that they possess a strong sense of professional readiness. This is important in the primary school context because teachers at this level are responsible for foundational learning experiences, classroom routines, student motivation, and early academic development. Therefore, strong self-competencies may provide teachers with the confidence needed to manage the complex demands of primary education.

In the Qatari context, this finding is particularly relevant because teachers are working within an education system that has experienced continuous reform, development, and increasing expectations for professional quality. Qadhi et al. (2020) found that teacher preparation programmes play an important role in shaping novice teachers' professional teaching competencies. The current result extends this line of thinking by showing that primary school teachers in Qatar reported high perceived competencies in their current school practice. This may reflect the influence of professional preparation, school-based experience, and the broader emphasis placed on teacher quality in Qatar's educational development. However, the high level of self-competencies should not be interpreted as an indication that professional development is no longer needed. Rather, it suggests that future professional development programmes should build on teachers' existing strengths while continuing to support areas such as adaptive teaching, classroom management, emotional resilience, and professional collaboration.

The second major finding showed that teachers reported a high level of job engagement. This result indicates that the teachers in the sample generally experienced strong involvement, energy, dedication, and absorption in their work. This finding is consistent with Kahn's (1990) conceptualisation of engagement as the extent to which individuals bring their physical, cognitive, and emotional selves into their work roles. In the context of this study, the high level of engagement suggests that teachers were not merely performing their duties formally, but were psychologically and emotionally connected to their teaching responsibilities. This is

an important finding because teaching requires more than technical competence; it requires sustained emotional investment, active participation, and a meaningful connection to the profession.

The finding also aligns with the work engagement framework developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), who conceptualised work engagement through the dimensions of vigor, dedication, and absorption. These dimensions are highly applicable to teaching because teachers need energy to manage classroom demands, dedication to sustain commitment to students and school responsibilities, and absorption to remain focused on instructional tasks. Schaufeli et al. (2006) further confirmed the relevance of these dimensions through their cross-national measurement work on work engagement. The high mean score for job engagement in this study suggests that primary school teachers in Qatar generally experience their work as meaningful and involving, which may contribute to stronger professional commitment and classroom presence.

This result is also consistent with Hakanen et al. (2006), who examined burnout and work engagement among teachers and found that job resources were linked to engagement and organisational commitment. From this perspective, teachers' high engagement in the current study may reflect the presence of personal and contextual resources that help them remain motivated in their work. Similarly, Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) Job Demands–Resources model provides a useful explanation for this result. The model suggests that job resources, such as support, autonomy, feedback, and opportunities for development, can enhance engagement, especially when employees face demanding work conditions. In school settings, teachers may become more engaged when they feel supported, competent, professionally valued, and able to manage their responsibilities effectively.

The most important finding of the study is the strong positive relationship between self-competencies and job engagement. The correlation coefficient of $r = 0.670$ indicates that the relationship between the two variables is not weak or marginal, but strong and meaningful. This result suggests that teachers who reported higher self-competencies also reported higher job engagement. In practical terms, teachers who perceive themselves as competent in managing professional, social, and emotional aspects of teaching are more likely to invest energy, dedication, and attention in their work. This finding supports the theoretical assumption that self-competencies operate as a personal professional resource that strengthens teachers' engagement.

This relationship can be explained through Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy. Teachers who believe that they can perform their duties successfully are more likely to invest effort, persist in difficult situations, and approach professional challenges with confidence. These qualities are closely related to the dimensions of engagement, particularly vigor and dedication. When teachers feel competent, they are more likely to experience teaching as manageable and meaningful rather than overwhelming. As a result, they may show greater psychological availability and deeper involvement in their work. This interpretation is also consistent with Kahn's (1990) engagement theory, which emphasises the importance of psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability in shaping engagement. Teachers with strong self-competencies may feel more psychologically available

because they have greater confidence in their ability to handle school and classroom demands.

The finding is also supported by the Job Demands–Resources model. Bakker and Demerouti (2007) argued that resources can activate motivational processes and increase work engagement. In the present study, self-competencies can be understood as a personal resource that supports teachers' motivation and engagement. Teachers who possess stronger perceived competencies may be better able to manage job demands, reduce feelings of helplessness, and maintain a positive connection to their work. This is especially important in teaching, where professional demands are continuous and often emotionally intensive. Therefore, the relationship found in this study suggests that strengthening teachers' competencies may be an effective pathway for enhancing their engagement.

The result also corresponds with prior empirical studies. Høigaard et al. (2012) found that newly qualified teachers' work engagement and teacher efficacy were related to job satisfaction, burnout, and intention to quit. Their study indicates that teacher efficacy and engagement are closely connected to teachers' professional sustainability. Similarly, Minghui et al. (2018) found relationships between teacher efficacy, work engagement, and social support among special education teachers. Although their study was conducted in a different educational context, the findings support the idea that teachers' beliefs about their professional capabilities are associated with their engagement in work. The present study adds to this body of literature by providing evidence from primary school teachers in Qatar, a context that remains underrepresented in the international literature on teacher competencies and engagement.

The findings are also consistent with Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010), who showed that teacher self-efficacy is related to school context, job satisfaction, and burnout. Their study is important for interpreting the current findings because it suggests that teachers' self-beliefs are connected not only to instructional confidence, but also to broader professional well-being. In the present study, the strong association between self-competencies and job engagement may indicate that teachers who feel professionally capable are more likely to experience positive work-related states. This has practical importance because job engagement is often linked to teacher retention, lower burnout, and stronger commitment to the profession. Although this paper does not directly examine burnout or retention, the relationship between self-competencies and engagement suggests that supporting teachers' competencies may indirectly contribute to healthier and more sustainable teaching environments.

The findings also have important implications for teacher development in Qatar. Since the study found high levels of both self-competencies and job engagement, schools and educational authorities should treat these as professional assets that can be further strengthened. Professional development programmes should not focus only on correcting weaknesses. They should also build on teachers' existing confidence and engagement by providing advanced training, mentoring, collaborative learning opportunities, and reflective practice. Qadhi et al. (2020) emphasised the importance of teacher preparation programmes in developing professional competencies. The present findings suggest that continuous

professional development after initial preparation remains equally important, especially if the goal is to sustain teachers' engagement throughout their careers.

At the school level, the findings suggest that principals and educational leaders should create conditions that allow teachers' competencies to translate into stronger engagement. This includes providing meaningful feedback, recognising teachers' efforts, supporting autonomy, reducing unnecessary administrative burdens, and encouraging professional collaboration. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), engagement is strengthened when employees have access to resources that help them meet job demands. Therefore, even when teachers possess strong self-competencies, their engagement may be further enhanced when the school environment provides support, trust, recognition, and opportunities for growth.

The findings also contribute to the literature by addressing a contextual gap. Much of the literature on teacher self-efficacy and work engagement has been developed in Western or East Asian settings. The present study provides empirical evidence from Qatar's primary education context, where teachers operate within specific national priorities, school structures, and reform expectations. By showing that self-competencies and job engagement are strongly related among primary school teachers in Qatar, the study supports the broader international literature while also extending it to an underrepresented context. This contextual contribution is important because teacher engagement cannot be fully understood without considering the educational setting in which teachers work.

Overall, the findings indicate that teacher self-competencies and job engagement are closely connected dimensions of teachers' professional functioning. The high levels reported for both variables suggest that primary school teachers in Qatar generally perceive themselves as professionally capable and meaningfully engaged in their work. The strong positive correlation between the two variables further indicates that teachers' perceived competencies may play an important role in strengthening their engagement. These findings reinforce the need for teacher development policies that integrate professional competence with psychological and motivational support. Rather than treating teacher competencies and engagement as separate issues, educational leaders should view them as interconnected elements of teacher quality and school improvement.

Conclusion

This study examined the level of self-competencies, the level of job engagement, and the relationship between these two variables among primary school teachers in Qatar. The findings showed that teachers reported high levels of self-competencies and job engagement, indicating that the respondents generally perceived themselves as professionally capable and meaningfully involved in their work. More importantly, the study found a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between self-competencies and job engagement. This means that teachers who perceived themselves as more competent professionally, socially, and emotionally were also more likely to demonstrate higher levels of energy, dedication, and absorption in their teaching work.

The findings contribute to the literature by providing empirical evidence from the Qatari primary school context, where teacher professional development and engagement remain central to educational improvement. The study confirms that teacher self-competencies

should not be viewed only as individual professional qualities, but also as important resources that can strengthen teachers' psychological connection to their work. Therefore, educational leaders and policymakers should design professional development programmes that enhance teachers' confidence, classroom management, communication skills, emotional resilience, and reflective practice. At the school level, principals should provide supportive environments that encourage teachers to apply their competencies through autonomy, recognition, feedback, collaboration, and meaningful participation in school improvement.

Although the study provides useful evidence, it is limited by its quantitative correlational design, which does not allow causal conclusions. Future studies may use longitudinal or mixed-methods designs to examine how teacher self-competencies develop over time and how they influence engagement across different school contexts. Further research may also examine other variables such as school leadership, workload, professional development quality, and teacher retention.

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