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Faculty Engagement as a Strategic Driver of Institutional Performance in Higher Education

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Abstract. Faculty engagement is increasingly recognized as a determinant of academic excellence in higher education institutions. This study investigates the impact of faculty engagement on perceived academic quality at Avinash Group of Institutions, Hyderabad, India, with a focus on factors such as job satisfaction, personal and career growth, and institutional support. A descriptive design using a mixed-methods approach was adopted. Primary data were collected from 47 faculty members (10% of the population) through a structured questionnaire using convenience sampling. Quantitative analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and two-way ANOVA in MS Excel, while qualitative analysis explored additional factors influencing academic excellence. The findings reveal that 81% of respondents agreed faculty engagement significantly impacts academic excellence. Regression analysis identified personal and career growth as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.651$), followed by job satisfaction ($\beta =$ 0.401) and innovative teaching, collaboration, and institutional support ($\beta = 0.397$). ANOVA confirmed job satisfaction as highly significant (F = 28.23, p < 0.001), whereas years of experience (F = 0.976, p = 0.5038) and its interaction with job satisfaction (F = 0.976, p = 0.5038) and its interaction with job satisfaction (F = 0.976, p = 0.5038) and its interaction with job satisfaction (F = 0.976, P = 0.5038) and its interaction with job satisfaction (P = 0.976). 0.7527, p = 0.8423) were not significant. Qualitative findings suggested leadership style, student discipline, infrastructure, and research opportunities as additional contributors to academic excellence. The results align with previous studies that emphasize the role of personal and professional growth, job satisfaction, and innovative teaching in enhancing academic performance. The study also underlines the importance of institutional support systems, work-life balance, and recognition mechanisms in sustaining engagement. However, limitations include reliance on self-reported data, a small and non-random sample, and the exclusion of student and management perspectives.

Keywords: Academic performance; academic success; employee participation; faculty engagement; faculty training; higher education institutions

1. Introduction

Employee engagement has long been recognized as a central topic in human resource management, with substantial evidence linking it to improved organizational productivity and performance (Kallio et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022; Rahi et al., 2023; Saha et al., 2023). Research shows that dedication and absorption among employees foster organizational

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growth and provide practical insights for strengthening engagement strategies (Gede & Huluka, 2024). In the context of higher education, employee engagement has a direct bearing on academic outcomes, making it an essential component for institutional development (Caldwell & Knuth, 2024). Specifically, faculty engagement emerges as a critical driver of academic success, influencing both student learning experiences and broader institutional performance (Fadeke Adeola Atobatele et al., 2024).

Engaged faculty members are considered valuable assets to any institution, while disengaged faculty may hinder progress. Levels of engagement directly affect teaching quality and commitment (Artates, 2023; Owojori & Gbenga-Akanmu, 2021; Sopiah & Sangadji, 2020; Xiao & Wilkins, 2015), and insufficient engagement can ultimately diminish an institution's return on investment (Vedhathiri, 2023). Faculty who demonstrate strong engagement often extend beyond traditional teaching responsibilities by contributing to research, curriculum innovation, and academic quality enhancement (de Borba et al., 2020). They also cultivate meaningful relationships with students, encouraging participation and active learning. Such interactions foster confidence among students and contribute to higher academic performance (Laranjeira & Teixeira, 2025; Mattanah et al., 2024).

Understanding faculty engagement is particularly relevant within the framework of emerging trends in management education. Institutional support, innovative pedagogy, and job satisfaction are increasingly recognized as key factors that shape academic outcomes, offering valuable insights for educators and policymakers (Raina & Khatri, 2015). Several dimensions influence faculty engagement, including inclusivity, organizational culture, and institutional support mechanisms (Jessani et al., 2020). Job satisfaction has also been identified as a major determinant of engagement (Sumardjo & Supriadi, 2023), alongside motivational factors such as opportunities for career advancement (Li et al., 2021). Interestingly, teaching experience does not appear to have a significant effect on engagement levels (Topchyan & Woehler, 2021).

Moreover, faculty contributions to research, innovation, interactive learning, and capacity building are strongly correlated with improved institutional performance (Paudel, 2021). Even workplace infrastructure and the availability of physical resources play an important role in shaping faculty engagement (de Borba et al., 2020). Collectively, these findings underscore the multifaceted nature of faculty engagement and its strategic importance in advancing both academic and organizational excellence.

Faculty engagement can be significantly affected by challenges such as heavy administrative responsibilities and limited opportunities for professional development. Studies suggest that granting faculty members a certain degree of autonomy in determining their work direction can positively influence their level of engagement (Sumardjo & Supriadi, 2023). Against this backdrop, the present study examines faculty members' perceptions of how their engagement contributes to academic quality within Avinash Group of Institutions, Hyderabad, India. Specifically, it investigates the relationship between faculty engagement and perceived institutional performance, explores the factors influencing engagement and their connection with institutional effectiveness, and identifies additional elements beyond engagement that contribute to academic outcomes.

This research is particularly relevant because the success of higher education institutions largely depends on the level of engagement demonstrated by their faculty. Faculty engagement has been shown to directly shape academic quality, teaching effectiveness, research productivity, student achievement, and even the overall brand



image of institutions (Raina & Khatri, 2015). As a centrally managed network of more than ten academic institutions, Avinash Group of Institutions requires consistently high levels of faculty engagement across its branches. While various initiatives have already been introduced to foster greater engagement, it remains important to identify the key drivers and address existing challenges that influence faculty motivation and performance.

By focusing on faculty members' perspectives, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of engagement on academic outcomes. It not only analyzes the factors contributing to engagement but also examines other variables that affect institutional performance. The findings aim to offer actionable recommendations to strengthen faculty engagement at Avinash Group of Institutions. Furthermore, the insights derived from this research are expected to serve as a benchmark for other higher education institutions seeking to improve academic quality through enhanced faculty participation.

2. Methods

This study adopted a descriptive design with a qualitative orientation, focusing on faculty engagement and its perceived impact on institutional academic quality (Pitman, 1998; Takona, 2024). Data were gathered from 47 faculty members, representing approximately 10% of the total population at the institution. A convenience sampling technique was employed, and primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The responses were analyzed using Microsoft Excel, with several statistical tools applied to interpret the data. Descriptive analysis was conducted to identify patterns within the raw data, while correlation and regression tests were applied to examine relationships among multiple variables. In addition, ANOVA was used to assess the effect of two independent factors and their interaction on the dependent variable.

2.1 Hypotheses of the Study

Drawing from the literature review, two key variables namely years of work experience and job satisfaction were identified to evaluate their influence on perceived academic quality within the institution. The following hypotheses were formulated:

 H_{01} : There is no significant difference in perceived academic quality based on years of work experience.

 H_{11} : There is a significant difference in perceived academic quality based on years of work experience.

 H_{02} : There is no significant difference in perceived academic quality based on job satisfaction.

 H_{12} : There is a significant difference in perceived academic quality based on job satisfaction.

 H_{03} : There is no interaction effect between years of work experience and job satisfaction on perceived academic quality.

 H_{13} : There is an interaction effect between years of work experience and job satisfaction on perceived academic quality.

2.2. Data Analysis and Interpretation

2.2.1. Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Factors

Factor Mean Median	Mode	Standard
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				Deviation
Age	2.15	2	1	0.98
Gender	1.26	1	1	0.44
Highest Qualification	2.74	3	3	0.71
Designation	1.51	1	1	0.62
Branch	1.09	1	1	0.35
Stream	1.64	2	2	0.49
Years of Teaching Experience	2.6	2	2	1.33

Table 1 analysis of the various demographic factors provides key insights. The demographic factors - age (Mean: 2.15, SD: 0.98), gender (Mean: 1.26, SD: 0.44), highest qualification (Mean: 2.74, SD: 0.71), designation (Mean: 1.51, SD: 0.62), branch (Mean: 1.09, SD: 0.35), stream (Mean: 1.64, SD: 0.49) and years of teaching experience (Mean: 2.60, SD: 1.33), states that the respondents come from diverse backgrounds. The analysis highlights that the faculty members who responded to the study have different years of experience, ages, designations, and qualifications.

Table 2 Descriptive Analysis of Factors Impacting Faculty Engagement

Factor	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Faculty Engagement & Career Success	4.17	4	5	0.89
Collaboration with Faculty	4.17	4	4	0.82
Use of Innovative Teaching Methods	3.79	4	3	0.88
Professional Engagement Impact	3.98	4	4	0.82
Role Alignment with Expertise	3.89	4	4	0.67
Job Satisfaction	4.02	4	4	0.74
Institutional Support for Research & Teaching	3.98	4	4	0.79
Participation in Faculty Development Programs	3.94	4	4	0.79
Challenges in Professional Development	2.98	3	3	1.15
Institutional Policies & Faculty Growth	4.06	4	4	0.99
Tracking & Analyzing Student Performance	3.98	4	4	0.94
Institutional Support for Student Performance	4.21	4	5	0.95
Additional Academic Support for Students	4.32	4	5	0.78

Table 2 examined faculty engagement in academic activities. Most of the faculty members agreed that their engagement level significantly impacts their personal growth and career success (Mean: 4.17, SD: 0.89). Respondents also agreed they regularly collaborate with other faculty members for curriculum development (Mean: 4.17, SD: 0.82). The faculty members commonly implement flipped classrooms, project-based learning, and other innovative teaching methods (Mean: 3.79, SD: 0.88). There is also a strong relationship between the perceived impact of professional engagement on the institutional academic outcome (Mean: 3.98, SD: 0.82). Faculty members also find their roles adequately aligned with their areas of expertise and expectations (Mean: 3.89, SD:

0.67). Job satisfaction (Mean: 4.02, SD: 0.74) and institutional support for research and teaching initiatives (Mean: 3.98, SD: 0.79) also impact faculty engagement positively.

Faculty members said they actively participate in faculty development programs (Mean: 3.94, SD: 0.79), with limited opportunities for their professional growth (Mean: 2.98, SD: 1.15). Institutional policies did not seem to be impacting the engagement and growth of faculty members. (Mean: 4.06, SD: 0.99). The result highlighted that faculty members usually track and analyze student performance to improve teaching methods (Mean: 3.98, SD: 0.94). Faculty members emphasized the role of institutional support in enhancing the student's academic performance (Mean: 4.21, SD: 0.95). It was also found that faculty members regularly provide additional support, such as mentoring and feedback, to the students. (Mean: 4.32, SD: 0.78). The findings highlight the importance of faculty engagement in students' performance and institutions' academic excellence

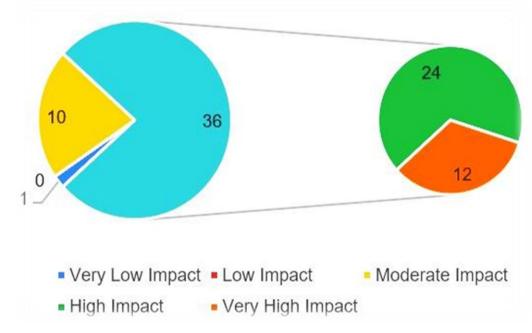


Figure 1 Impact of Faculty Engagement on Perceived Academic Excellence *Source: Author preparation based on the data*

Figure 1 illustrates the perceived impact of faculty engagement on academic excellence. The findings show that the majority of respondents (36 out of 47, or 77%) considered faculty engagement to have a very high impact, while 24 respondents (51%) rated it as high impact. Meanwhile, 10 respondents (21%) indicated a moderate impact, and only a very small fraction 1 respondent (2%) perceived a very low impact, with no respondents identifying a low impact. These results highlight that over four-fifths of faculty members strongly associate engagement with improved academic outcomes, underscoring the critical role of faculty motivation and involvement in enhancing institutional performance, particularly in higher education contexts where interactive and experiential learning are central to student success.

A majority (81%) of the respondents agreed that the overall faculty engagement in an institute significantly impacts academic excellence. This emphasizes the importance of faculty engagement, especially in higher education institutes where students learn more through experimental and interactive learning.

2.2.2. Correlation Analysis:



Factor 1	Factor 2	Correlation Coefficient
Job Satisfaction	Academic quality	0.3603
Personal and Career Growth	Participation in FDPs	0.1696
Role Alignment	Institutional policies	0.1426
Participation in FDPs	Innovative teaching methods	0.2601
Job Satisfaction	Additional academic support	0.4023

Table 3 Correlation Analysis of Factors Influencing Faculty Engagement

Table 3 identified that there is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and academic quality and between job satisfaction and additional academic support. Therefore, it is evident that job satisfaction significantly enhances the perceived academic quality and the additional academic support provided by the faculty to students. The literature review identified multiple factors influencing faculty engagement. Correlation analysis was performed to understand the relationship between the key factors.

The analysis also shows that there is less or no significant relationship between a few factors. The correlation coefficient of 0.2601 between participation in Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) and innovation of teaching methods suggests that the frequency of FDPs attended by faculty members will not innovate the teaching methods. Similarly, no significant relationship was found between personal and career growth, participation in FDPs (0.1696), role alignment, and institutional policies (0.1426).

2.2.3. Regression Analysis

Table 4 Regression Analysis

Factor 1	Factor 2	Regression Coefficient
Job Satisfaction	Academic quality	0.401
Personal and Career Growth	Academic quality	0.651
Innovative Teaching,		
Collaboration, Institutional	Academic quality	0.397
Support		

Table 4 presents the results of the regression analysis examining the effect of different factors on perceived academic quality. The findings indicate that *personal and career growth* has the strongest influence, with a regression coefficient of 0.651, suggesting that opportunities for advancement and development significantly enhance faculty perceptions of academic quality. *Job satisfaction* also demonstrates a substantial positive effect (0.401), highlighting the importance of faculty well-being and fulfillment in driving institutional outcomes. Similarly, *innovative teaching, collaboration, and institutional support* show a meaningful contribution (0.397), underscoring the role of supportive environments and pedagogical innovation in strengthening academic excellence. Collectively, the results affirm that both individual motivation and institutional support are critical determinants of academic quality.

2.2.4. Two-way ANOVA

Table 5 Two-way ANOVA for Hypothesis Testing

Factor	F-Value	P-Value	Significance
Experience	0.976	0.5038	Not Significant



Job satisfaction	28.23	0.0000000011	Significant
Interaction between experience and job satisfaction on academic quality	0.7527	0.8423	Not Significant

Table 5 summarizes the results of the two-way ANOVA used for hypothesis testing. The analysis shows that *years of experience* (F = 0.976, p = 0.5038) does not have a significant effect on perceived academic quality, indicating that teaching tenure alone is not a decisive factor in shaping faculty engagement outcomes. In contrast, *job satisfaction* demonstrates a highly significant effect (F = 28.23, p < 0.001), suggesting that satisfied faculty members strongly contribute to improving academic quality within the institution. Meanwhile, the interaction effect between *experience* and *job satisfaction* is also not significant (F = 0.7527, p = 0.8423), which implies that the influence of job satisfaction on academic quality remains consistent regardless of faculty members' years of experience. These findings underscore that enhancing job satisfaction is a far more critical driver of institutional performance than tenure or its interaction with other factors.

Two-way ANOVA was performed to study the impact of two key factors, years of experience and job satisfaction, on academic excellence. The result shows that years of experience have no significant impact on the perceived academic quality (F: 0.976, p: 0.5038). This means that experience alone will not ensure better academic quality. Therefore, the first null hypothesis (H_{01}) is accepted.

The second factor, job satisfaction, is significant in improving academic quality (F = 28.23, p = 1.10E-09). Faculty members satisfied with their jobs, environment, growth, and support will engage more, directly benefitting the students and improving institutional quality. Therefore, the second null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected.

The result of the interaction between experience and job satisfaction displayed no significant impact on academic quality (F = 0.7527, p = 0.8423). This states that satisfaction, regardless of experience, will impact academic quality. Therefore, the third null hypothesis (H_{03}) is accepted.

3.5. Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis in this study highlights that academic excellence is shaped not only by faculty engagement but also by several complementary factors. One of the most prominent themes that emerged was the role of leadership style within the institution. Faculty members emphasized that supportive, visionary, and participative leadership fosters a culture of trust and collaboration, which in turn enhances teaching effectiveness and institutional performance. Leaders who encourage innovation, provide recognition, and create an inclusive environment were viewed as essential in sustaining academic excellence.

Another critical factor identified was the quality of institutional infrastructure. Adequate physical resources such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and digital facilities were seen as fundamental to maintaining high academic standards. Faculty pointed out that infrastructure directly affects both teaching and learning processes, enabling interactive pedagogy and research productivity. Institutions with well-developed infrastructure are also better positioned to attract and retain talented faculty and students, further strengthening their academic profile.

Research opportunities emerged as another central determinant of academic quality. Faculty members underscored the importance of institutional support for research in the form of funding, mentorship, and access to resources. When faculty have opportunities to engage in research, they not only contribute to knowledge creation but also enrich their



teaching through updated insights and innovations. Moreover, a strong research culture enhances the reputation of the institution and creates an environment that motivates both faculty and students to strive for excellence.

In addition to institutional factors, student-related elements were also highlighted. Discipline, ethics, and motivation among students were viewed as crucial contributors to academic outcomes. Faculty members observed that when students demonstrate strong commitment, responsibility, and academic integrity, the overall learning environment improves significantly. Effective student support services such as counseling, mentoring, and career guidance were also mentioned as vital components that help students achieve their potential and maintain academic success.

Personal and professional well-being of faculty members was emphasized as a vital area influencing academic excellence. Faculty noted that work-life balance, access to financial support for research, and continuous opportunities for skill development are key to sustaining their motivation and engagement. When faculty members are supported in these areas, they are more likely to be productive, innovative, and committed to institutional goals. Collectively, these qualitative findings underscore that academic excellence is multidimensional, requiring alignment between institutional resources, leadership practices, student commitment, and faculty well-being.

3. Results and Discussion

The results indicate that a large majority of respondents (81%) perceived faculty engagement as a crucial determinant of academic excellence. This finding aligns with Deepalakshmi et al. (2024), who argued that employee engagement in higher education institutions significantly shapes organizational outcomes by influencing productivity, innovation, and the quality of teaching. In this study, faculty engagement not only enhanced academic quality but also contributed to a positive institutional culture, demonstrating that engaged faculty members are essential assets for institutional performance.

Among the factors examined, personal and career growth emerged as the most influential in shaping perceptions of academic quality. This outcome resonates with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which emphasizes growth and advancement opportunities as key motivators in enhancing employee satisfaction and engagement (Lee et al., 2022). Institutions that prioritize career development through training, workshops, and research opportunities are more likely to retain highly motivated faculty members. This suggests that long-term investment in faculty growth is a strategic driver of academic excellence.

The study also found that innovative teaching, collaboration, and institutional support have a positive effect on perceived academic quality. This aligns with Paudel (2021), who highlighted that innovative pedagogical practices and collaborative academic environments contribute significantly to institutional effectiveness. Encouraging faculty to integrate research into teaching, as recommended by Vedhathiri (2023), not only enriches classroom experiences but also strengthens the academic reputation of the institution. These findings underline the importance of fostering a culture that values creativity and teamwork in higher education.

Another key finding was the significant role of job satisfaction in determining academic outcomes. Job satisfaction was shown to be more influential than teaching experience, suggesting that supportive policies, recognition, and workplace well-being are central to sustaining engagement. This supports the observations of Jessani et al. (2020),



who emphasized that incentives and recognition programs play a critical role in improving faculty morale and performance. The non-significant impact of teaching experience on academic quality also aligns with Topchyan and Woehler (2021), who found that tenure alone does not predict engagement or effectiveness.

The results further reveal that additional factors such as work-life balance, library resources, practical learning opportunities, curriculum quality, and student-led initiatives substantially contribute to academic performance. These findings echo the work of De Borba et al. (2020), who argued that physical infrastructure and supportive learning environments are critical determinants of engagement and performance. Ensuring access to modern facilities and maintaining a student-centered approach to education are therefore essential for institutions seeking sustained excellence.

The study demonstrates that faculty engagement is a multidimensional construct shaped by personal growth, institutional support, job satisfaction, and environmental factors. By integrating these elements, higher education institutions can enhance both teaching effectiveness and organizational outcomes. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on higher education management by reinforcing the notion that academic excellence is best achieved through holistic faculty development and institutional strategies that prioritize engagement.

4. Conclusions

The study confirms that faculty engagement is a critical factor in enhancing academic excellence at Avinash Group of Institutions. A large majority (81%) of respondents agreed that engagement significantly impacts academic quality. Among the influencing variables, personal and career growth showed the strongest effect (β = 0.651), followed by job satisfaction (β = 0.401) and innovative teaching, collaboration, and institutional support (β = 0.397). Interestingly, years of teaching experience were found to be statistically insignificant (F = 0.976, p = 0.5038), suggesting that institutional support and intrinsic motivation matter more than tenure. These findings indicate that improving faculty engagement can directly enhance student outcomes and institutional reputation.

The discussion highlights that job satisfaction plays a highly significant role (F = 28.23, p < 0.001), while the interaction between experience and job satisfaction had no notable effect (F = 0.7527, p = 0.8423). This underscores the importance of institutional policies that reduce administrative burdens, encourage research, and provide recognition for faculty achievements. However, the study has limitations. Data collection was limited to 47 faculty members (10% of the population) from a single group of institutions, which may affect generalizability. Furthermore, reliance on self-reported data raises the possibility of bias, and student or management perspectives were not included.

Future research should broaden the scope by incorporating responses from multiple stakeholders across different institutions and cultural contexts. Expanding the sample size and employing longitudinal methods could provide deeper insights into how engagement influences academic outcomes over time. Additionally, integrating qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups alongside quantitative measures would strengthen the reliability of findings. Such efforts will help create more comprehensive strategies to improve faculty engagement and sustain academic excellence in higher education.

Declaration of conflicting interests

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.



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