

# Team Building and Employee Behaviour: The Role of Employees Sports Involvement, Work Environment, and Participated Leadership

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## Abstract

The cultivation of healthy Work Environments, coupled with the enhancement of Employee Behaviour through effective team building, holds significant importance. There is an increasing scholarly focus on examining the impact of employees' participation in sports on team dynamics and interpersonal relationships within the workplace. The behaviour of employees is significantly impacted by the Work Environment, encompassing both the physical setting and the organisational culture. Furthermore, the implementation of participatory leadership fosters a sense of unity within the team and enhances overall performance through the engagement of team members in the decision-making process. Hence, the objective of this research is to examine the correlation among engagement in sports, the Work Environment, and participative leadership, thereby illustrating their collective impact on team cohesion and Employee Behaviour within contemporary organisational settings. The study was conducted by the researcher using a deductive approach grounded in quantitative research methodology. Research findings indicate a positive correlation between employees' engagement in sports activities, enhanced teamwork, and overall workplace conduct. Moreover, empirical evidence suggests that the presence of a conducive Work Environment, coupled with the implementation of participative leadership practices, significantly contributes to the development of a positive organisational culture and the promotion of desirable employee conduct. Nevertheless, the research has predominantly utilised quantitative data, thereby excluding qualitative perspectives that could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying concepts driving the observed correlations.

**Keywords:** Sports Involvement; Sports Engagement; Work Environment; Participated Leadership; Employee Behaviour; Saudi Arabia

## 1. Introduction

Undoubtedly, participation and engagement in sports have a beneficial effect on the physical and mental well-being of individuals. Nevertheless, involvement in sports also exerts a noteworthy influence on the prosocial conduct of individuals, fostering a sense of social identity within team members engaged in the physical endeavour. Engagement in physical activities exerts a substantial influence on the reliability and credibility of team members (Di Bartolomeo & Papa, 2019). In the Saudi Arabian context, Alashab and Mohamad (2020) conducted a study that similarly found a positive association between healthy behaviour and employee performance. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that effective leadership significantly contributes to the achievement of academic institutions (Al-shahrani, 2022).

According to a recent study conducted by Alsubaie (2021) within the public sector of Saudi Arabia, it was found that the leadership approach employed by participants had a notable influence on the performance of employees. Participatory leadership emphasises the importance of incorporating the perspectives of all stakeholders in the

decision-making process, thereby fostering an environment where employees are encouraged to express their opinions and concerns (Hanaky, 2021). Thus, participative leadership fosters collaboration among team members in order to make strategic decisions. This approach involves leaders relinquishing some of their decision-making authority and empowering employees to work collectively to resolve diverse challenges (Chan, 2019).

Furthermore, it has been documented by scholars that participative leadership has a notable and favourable influence on employee helpfulness, resulting in enhanced teamwork (Usman et al., 2021). However, public sector entities in Saudi Arabia encounter a notable obstacle characterised by a substantial power distance existing between employees and leaders. This power disparity is evident in organisational power dynamics (Alsubaie, 2021). Saudi Arabia exhibits a power distance score of 72, indicating a cultural tendency among individuals to accept and acknowledge the hierarchical power structures within organisations. This score further suggests the prevalence of an autocratic leadership style within the country (The Culture Factor Group, 2023). In addition, the Work

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Environment has been widely recognised as a crucial factor influencing Employee Behaviour. According to a study conducted by Abdelwahed and Doghan (2023), the Work Environment was found to have a substantial impact on the performance of employees in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the influence of Sports Engagement, Work Environment, and participative leadership on Employee Behaviour within the framework of team building and leadership effectiveness. The specific context of the investigation is the university staff members in Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is currently experiencing a rapid and robust process of transformation aimed at enhancing growth and prosperity in multiple domains. Hence, the Saudi government is actively promoting physical activities across various sectors due to their advantageous impact on the economy, health, and culture. Furthermore, the inclusion of sports and physical activities in the Vision 2030 of the country is a component of the national Quality of Life Programme (Albujulaya et al., 2023). Prior research has documented a significant dearth in sports and physical activity engagement among the populace of Saudi Arabia. According to the findings of Alqahtani et al. (2021), the participation rate in physical activity among Saudi adults was found to be 17.40%. In a comparable manner, the 2019 national survey conducted by the Saudi General Authority for Statistics revealed that a significant majority, specifically 78% of the populace, abstained from engaging in any form of physical activity (GAS, 2019). According to the most recent survey conducted by the GAS (AN, 2022), there has been an increase in the proportion of individuals engaging in sports activities, with the percentage reaching 48.2%. Furthermore, contemporary policy guidelines pertaining to sports and physical activities prioritise the promotion of collaboration, teamwork, inclusivity, and adaptability (WHO, 2019).

In previous decades, the higher education sector in Saudi Arabia consisted of a total of 7–8 universities, which were primarily situated in major urban centres. However, the subsequent allocation of government funds led to the growth and development of the higher education industry (Alsulami, 2018). In accordance with Vision 2030, the Saudi authorities have implemented a range of reforms in the field of higher education with the aim of enhancing the calibre of universities and the educational experience offered to students (Al-shahrani, 2022). Research findings indicate that academic and administrative personnel within Saudi Arabia's universities exert considerable effort in utilising their expertise and skills to promote economic growth while simultaneously striving to deliver high-quality education and exceptional services to students and

the broader community.

Despite the diligent execution of their responsibilities by both teaching and non-teaching personnel, universities continue to encounter challenges pertaining to productivity and performance. Consequently, it is imperative to cultivate a collaborative culture within academic institutions, wherein experienced faculty members provide guidance and assistance to their junior counterparts and other members of the team (Alshaikhmubarak et al., 2020). However, a notable deficiency exists in the existing literature regarding the effects of Sports Engagement, Work Environment, and participative leadership on the performance of university staff in Saudi Arabia. This research gap contributes to the novelty and importance of the current study. The primary objective of this study is to contribute to the current body of literature regarding the influence of participative leadership and employee involvement in sports activities on their work-related behaviours. Nevertheless, this research is distinctive due to its focus on the influence of Sports Engagement and active leadership on employee conduct within the context of team building and leadership efficacy.

### 2.1 Self-determination theory

The Self-Determination Theory is an educational programme that aims to cultivate motivation in individuals and examine its influence on an individual's behaviour and overall well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017). According to Self-Determination Theory, in order to achieve a greater level of motivation and desirable behavioural outcomes, it is essential to address three fundamental needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy is commonly perceived as an individual's inclination to exercise a state of preparedness in their endeavours. Competence pertains to an individual's imperative to exhibit efficacy in their communications and interactions with others, while relatedness encompasses a desire for interpersonal connection with important individuals, contentment with the social environment, and a sense of acceptance (Vasconcellos et al., 2020). The application of self-determination theory is crucial in the context of team building and Employee Behaviour, as it facilitates the development of various skills necessary for effective teamwork.

### 2.2 Employees sport involvement

It has been widely posited that the engagement of employees in sports activities may have an impact on their performance and behaviour within their respective organisations (Oh et al., 2023). Sports Involvement is commonly defined as the extent to which an individual engages in sports activities and the subsequent influence it has on their behaviour as an employee. The Participation

of Employees According to Beaton et al. [58], “Sports Involvement is extant when persons assess their involvement in a sports activity as a dominant factor of their life and deliver both hedonic and symbolic value”. Due to various physical and psychological benefits, Sports Involvement has been highly discussed in the research literature. Sports is a significant topic of concern within the field of organisational behaviour (Alahmed et al., 2016; Campos et al., 2017; Cómez-Mármol et al., 2017).

Previous research has predominantly focused on examining the behavioural and physical consequences of individuals' engagement in sports, yet there remains a dearth of knowledge regarding the impact of organisational factors on employees' participation in sports. With the aforementioned perspective in mind, a comprehensive examination of the various factors that may impact an employee's engagement in sports is warranted. In their study, STAFYLIDIS et al. (2023) investigated the correlation between teachers' engagement in sports and inhibitory factors, such as daily social and personal obligations, that limit their participation in sports. However, there remains a lack of clarity regarding the methods by which these inhibitory factors can be mitigated. Existing scholarly literature has not adequately explored leadership and team-building strategies for overcoming this inhibition.

Involvement in sports also holds significance in fostering team cohesion within an organisation. Engaging in sports activities enhances teamwork among employees, thereby promoting collaboration and communication as they work collectively towards a common objective (Kay, 2009). According to Cómez-Mármol et al. (2017), engaging in sports activities enables employees to acquire diverse concepts, methodologies, and proficiencies that contribute to the establishment of an efficient team. The research suggests that sports participation not only enhances physical well-being but also has a positive influence on the development of social and personal characteristics, which are crucial elements in the process of team building. There is a positive correlation between employee participation in group sports, enhanced communication skills, and positive team relationships (Salcinovic et al., 2022). Based on this finding, it is reasonable to propose the hypothesis that H1: Employee Sports Involvement increases team building in university Staff Members of Saudi Arabia.

### 2.3. Employees Sports Engagement

The employees' Sports Engagement refers to the extent to which an employee is connected to sports activities, resulting in a positive perception, behaviour, and passion, as well as a sense of involvement within the organisation (Stolarski et al., 2020). Based on the findings of Martínez-Alvarado et al. (2016) in the field of Sport Engagement and

within the framework of organisational research as discussed by (Schaufeli et al., 2006), it is posited that Sports Engagement can be conceptualised as comprising three key components, namely absorption, dedication, and vigour. In this instance, Absorption refers to the act of actively engaging with and maintaining focused attention on any task that pertains to sports. This phenomenon perpetuates a pervasive fixation on a specific athletic endeavour and may lead to difficulties in disengaging from Sports Involvement. Dedication encompasses a heightened level of commitment, resolve, enthusiasm, and support, along with the discovery of personal satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment in one's performance. In contrast, vigour is indicative of the degree of preparedness and determination to engage in both emotional and physical exertion within the realm of sports activities (Sari & Bizan, 2022).

**Table 1**

*Components of Sports Engagement*

Sports Engagement components	
Absorption	Obsession with the sports activity.
Dedication	High level of commitment in a sport.
Vigor	Eagerness to physically participate in sports

To date, extensive research has demonstrated significant associations between participation in sports and lower levels of burnout (DeFreese & Smith, 2013), enhanced self-evaluation (Martin & Malone, 2013), increased exposure to novel experiences, and heightened competitiveness (Jowett et al., 2016). However, there is a limited body of literature exploring the impact of employee Sports Engagement on team building. Active participation in sports fosters the cultivation of teamwork skills among employees, which are crucial for the process of team building. The participation of employees in sporting activities contributes to the fulfilment of competence and relatedness needs, fostering the development of skills and social connections that serve as foundational elements for effective teamwork (Bedard et al., 2020). Despite the extensive body of research on team building within organisations, there is a lack of exploration regarding the challenges and issues related to team building and Sports Engagement. Therefore, this paper aims to address these gaps by developing the following hypotheses.

H2: Employee Sports Engagement increases team building in university Staff Members of Saudi Arabia.

### 2.3 Work Environment

The significance of the Work Environment cannot be overlooked, as it is a crucial element within any organisation. The Work Environment refers to the physical and psychological context in which employees perform their



regular tasks to ensure the smooth functioning of operations (TaHERI et al., 2020). A Work Environment is shaped by three key factors, one of which is the physical environment. This encompasses various tangible elements, including tables, desks, machinery, lighting, and, in the context of online jobs, hardware, software, and devices. Working conditions encompass various aspects of employment, including but not limited to the hierarchical structure, payroll, compensation, and benefits associated with a particular job. Organisational culture refers to the comprehensive cultural framework within which an organisation functions, encompassing elements such as its mission, vision, leadership style, and communication style (Hall, 2020).

However, the extent to which these elements exert influence on team building has not been thoroughly investigated in the existing body of research. Furthermore, organisations establish various types of Work Environments. For instance, in a traditional Work Environment, there exists a structured hierarchy, centralised control, and a well-defined reporting culture (Mael & Jex, 2015). In the context of a remote work culture, employees are afforded the flexibility to perform their duties outside of traditional office spaces. A substantial body of research (Badrianto & Ekhsan, 2020; Hafeez et al., 2019; Pawirosumarto et al., 2017) has examined the significance of Work Environment implications on employee performance. However, the literature lacks precision regarding the impact of the Work Environment on team building. The Work Environment plays a crucial role in facilitating effective and transparent communication within an organisation, thereby enabling employees to engage in discussions pertaining to common objectives and core principles. This, in turn, enhances the spirit of collaboration and cooperation among team members.

H3: Employee work increases team building in university Staff Members of Saudi Arabia.

#### **2.4 Participated Leadership**

The dynamic nature of the external environment poses significant challenges for organisations in making informed decisions. Consequently, organisations must employ effective leadership strategies to navigate these challenges. In this context, participative leadership emerges as a viable approach for decision-making. The concept of participative leadership, which entails involving employees in the decision-making process, has gained significant attention in both research and practice (Chang et al., 2021). By involving employees in the decision-making process, organisations can benefit from the generation of more dynamic decisions and ideas that align

with market demands (Kim & Schachter, 2015). There is a growing consensus among researchers that organisational leaders are increasingly reliant on highly engaged employees to address the challenges of maintaining a competitive advantage.

As a result, participative leadership, which aims to promote actions that enhance employee involvement, is gaining attention in both theoretical and practical contexts (Huang et al., 2021). However, the relationship between participative leadership and team building has not been thoroughly investigated. Participative leadership fosters collaboration among employees in pursuit of a shared objective, thereby promoting a sense of camaraderie and facilitating the process of team formation. There is an opportunity to conduct research on the subject of participative leadership and team building.

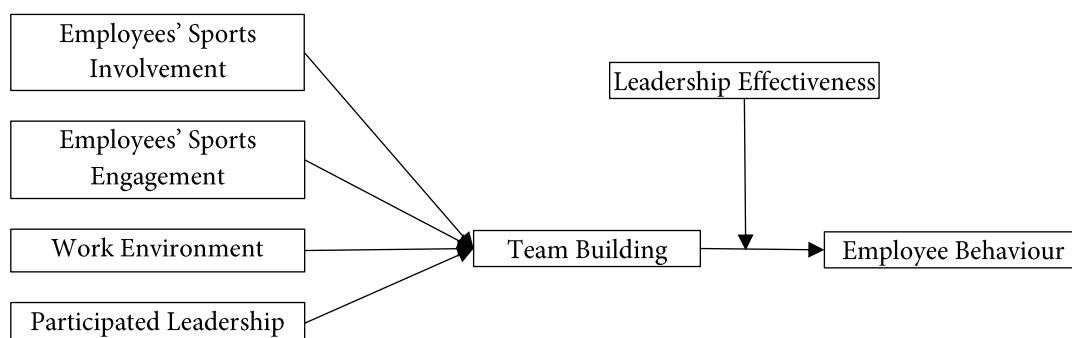
H3: Participative leadership increases team building in university Staff Members of Saudi Arabia.

#### **2.5 Team building mediating impact.**

Team building is commonly defined as the process of fostering cohesive and collaborative relationships among members of a team through various activities and initiatives. The aforementioned elements encompass the cultivation of trust, facilitation of communication, establishment of mutual respect, and pursuit of shared objectives among members of a team. According to Klein et al. (2009) definition, team building refers to deliberate efforts made by groups, both formal and informal, to complete a specific task or solve a problem. The primary objective of team building is to enhance social connections within the group and foster a deeper understanding of the roles that influence effective teamwork. The scholarly literature (Loving, 2021) has placed significant emphasis on the four distinct approaches to team-building. However, it has not provided a comprehensive explanation regarding how these approaches specifically influence the behaviour of employees who are actively involved in sports activities. Based to a prior study conducted by (Shaukat et al., 2022), various strategies for team building can be identified. These include goal setting, wherein teams are assigned specific objectives, and role clarification, wherein team members acknowledge their respective tasks and responsibilities.

Another interpersonal process involves establishing and managing relationships as well as resolving conflicts. The significance of team building is contingent upon an employee's capacity to enhance personal relationships, communication networks, creativity, and problem-solving skills, thereby increasing employee engagement and ultimately improving overall team performance

(Potnuru et al., 2019). In addition, the practice of collaborative work necessitates employees' active participation in physical activities that promote competence and self-assurance, thereby enhancing their conduct within the organisational setting. In light of the existing scholarly discourse (Zhang & Losekoot, 2021) pertaining to team-building, there exists a pressing necessity for additional empirical investigations concerning inclusive team-building strategies within the context of a university workplace setting, with the aim of enhancing employee conduct. This research paper posits



### 2.6 Leadership effectiveness moderating Impact

Leadership effectiveness can be defined as the skillful utilisation of personal influence by multiple individuals, resulting in the attainment of shared objectives and the consequent fulfilment of personal gratification for all parties involved (Rickley & Stackhouse, 2022). However, this description elicits disagreement when examined from different perspectives based on behaviour in diverse situations. This definition can be applied to personal relationships and smaller groups, as well as within conventional work settings. The effectiveness of leadership is determined based on factors such as the scale of organisations, the characteristics of the Work Environment, and the specific context of the tasks at hand. Effective leadership exerts a positive influence on the process of team building (Wei et al., 2020).

Under the framework of participative leadership, the leader actively encourages employees to contribute their ideas and perspectives during the decision-making process. This approach cultivates positive behaviour among employees, as they feel valued and acknowledged for their input. This recognition plays a crucial role in fostering character development. However, this study has solely examined the influence of leadership style on team building while neglecting to address the role of leadership effectiveness in moderating team building and Employee Behaviours. When a leader provides employees with the opportunity to express their opinions and collaborate

that team building plays a significant mediating role in the association between participative leadership and employee performance.

H5: Team building positively mediates between Employees sport involvement and Employee Behaviour.

H6: Team building positively mediates between Employees sport engagement and Employee Behaviour.

H7: Team building positively mediates between Work Environment and employee behavior.

H8: Team building positively mediates between Participated Leadership and Employee Behaviour.

towards a shared objective, it fosters team cohesion and facilitates the development of enhanced behavioural skills, including collaboration, communication, and conflict resolution (Pellegrini et al., 2020). Numerous scholars (López-Cabarcos et al., 2022; Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020) have emphasised the significance of leadership within the corporate sector. However, there exists a dearth of literature pertaining to leadership within the context of education. So, to fill this gap it can be hypothesized that:

H9: Leadership effectiveness moderates between team building and employee behavior.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Strategy, Data and Sampling

The researcher employed a deductive approach rooted in quantitative research methodology to conduct this study. The primary focus was on collecting and analysing primary data to evaluate the selected variables. In order to achieve the intended research objective of the study, the researcher has selected the university staff as the target population. The non-probability purposive sampling technique has been employed, specifically focusing on the teaching staff of universities situated in various regions of Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the researcher employed two different methods to reach the participants within the desired population. One of these methods involved the use of a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, through which the researcher collected tangible data while adhering to all ethical guidelines set forth for the study.

Furthermore, in order to enhance the elements of diversity and generalizability, the researcher employed the online survey methodology to capture the perspectives of a large number of respondents from the intended population. The researcher employed a deductive approach rooted in quantitative research methodology to conduct this study. The primary focus was on collecting and analysing primary data to evaluate the selected variables. In order to achieve the intended research objective of the study, the researcher has selected the university staff as the target population. The non-probability purposive sampling technique has been employed, specifically focusing on the teaching staff of universities situated in various regions of Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the researcher employed two different methods to reach the participants within the desired population. One of these methods involved the use of a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, through which the researcher collected tangible data while adhering to all ethical guidelines set forth for the study. Furthermore, in order to enhance the elements of diversity and generalizability, the researcher employed the online survey methodology to capture the perspectives of a large number of respondents from the intended population.

### 3.2. Measurement of The Variables and Data Analysis

The researcher created the survey tool, which consists of various sections. The initial section focused on providing

an introduction to the researcher and outlining the purpose of the study. The subsequent section focused on the demographic characteristics of the participants, encompassing variables such as age, gender, educational background, and professional tenure. In the final section, the researcher attached all the scale items and the questions pertaining to the variables under investigation in the study. The researcher has provided a comprehensive explanation of the scales that were adopted from various literature sources, encompassing all the necessary information. To provide further clarification, the researcher expounded on the measurement of the independent variables, namely employee Sports Engagement, Work Environment, participation leadership, and employee Sports Involvement. These variables were assessed using 12, 14, 3, and 6 items, respectively. The mediating variable of team building was assessed using a set of six items, while the assumed moderator of the study, leadership effectiveness, was measured using a set of five items.

In the previous analysis, the dependent variable was assessed using a set of seven items. Furthermore, the researcher utilised the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to perform all necessary statistical analyses in order to determine the significance and outcomes of the synthesised relationships among the variables.

**Table 2**

#### Measurement details

No.	Variable name	Source	No of items	Example items
1	Employee Sports Engagement	(Guillén & Martínez-Alvarado, 2014)	12	I am proud of the work I do. I am absorbed in my sport activity. I am immersed by my sport activity
2	Work Environment	(Klein et al., 2001)	14	My work is motivating. My work here is boring. My work here is enjoyable.
3	Participated Leadership	(Park et al., 2016)	3	Employees have a feeling of personal empowerment and ownership of work processes. Managers provide an environment that supports employee involvement, contributions, and teamwork.
4	Employee Sports Involvement	(Trivedi, 2020)	6	Unimportant/Important Worthless/Valuable
5	Team building	(Potnuru et al., 2018)	6	Team members have the complementary skill sets to accomplish their roles within the team. Team members are familiar with each other's roles and job responsibilities
6	Leadership effectiveness	(Breevaart & Zacher, 2019) (Vecchio & Anderson, 2009)	5	I am satisfied with the quality of leadership that I provide. I am an example of an ideal leader.
7	Employee behavior	(Wallace & Coughlan, 2023)	7	Left work early without permission. Left your work for someone else to finish.

## 4. Results and Analysis

Based on the analysis of descriptive statistics, it can be concluded that the data exhibits a normal distribution.

Additionally, the KMO and Bartlett's test results indicate that the data set has a sampling adequacy of 83.5%. Furthermore, the Bartlett's test of sphericity is statistically significant, providing further confirmation of the overall accuracy and adequacy of the data.

**Table 3**

*Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
PL	150	1.67	5.00	3.6133	.77342	-.244	.198
WEN	200	1.00	5.00	3.5329	.77915	-.551	.172
EE	200	1.00	5.00	3.7677	.87267	-1.004	.172
TB	200	1.00	5.00	3.0050	.99775	.080	.172
LEDE	200	1.00	5.00	3.8813	.94939	-1.294	.172
EIS	200	1.00	5.00	3.0792	1.09717	-.251	.172
EB	200	1.00	5.00	3.1781	1.05393	-.008	.172
Valid N (listwise)	150						

**Table 4**

*KMO and Bartlett's Test*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.835
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5633.157
	Df	1326
	Sig.	.000

According to the findings presented in Table 5, there is a statistically significant negative correlation between PL and EB. This suggests the presence of an inverse

relationship between these two variables. On the other hand, there are notable positive correlations between EE, TB, LEDE, and EIS and EB. These findings indicate that there are positive linear associations between the mentioned variables and employee engagement. Furthermore, it is worth noting that there exist substantial positive intercorrelations among the independent variables. For example, there is a positive correlation between EE and TB, LEDE, and EIS. In general, the correlation analysis reveals that EE, TB, LEDE, and EIS exhibit a positive relationship with EB, whereas PL demonstrates a negative correlation. The predictor variables exhibit notable associations as well.

**Table 5**

*Correlations*

		PL	WEN	EE	TB	LEDE	EIS	EB
PL	Pearson Correlation	1	.063	-.144	-.036	-.145	-.121	-.218**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.441	.078	.666	.078	.141	.007
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
WEN	Pearson Correlation	.063	1	.295**	.142*	.348**	.198**	.228**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.441		.000	.045	.000	.005	.001
	N	150	200	200	200	200	200	200
EE	Pearson Correlation	-.144	.295**	1	.337**	.871**	.432**	.429**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.078	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	200	200	200	200	200	200
TB	Pearson Correlation	-.036	.142*	.337**	1	.433**	.413**	.388**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.666	.045	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	200	200	200	200	200	200
LEDE	Pearson Correlation	-.145	.348**	.871**	.433**	1	.519**	.559**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.078	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	150	200	200	200	200	200	200
EIS	Pearson Correlation	-.121	.198**	.432**	.413**	.519**	1	.463**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.141	.005	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	150	200	200	200	200	200	200
EB	Pearson Correlation	-.218**	.228**	.429**	.388**	.559**	.463**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	150	200	200	200	200	200	200

The R Square value of 0.331 presented in Table 6 signifies that approximately 33.1% of the variability observed in employee engagement can be accounted for by the model.

According to the data presented in Table 7, the regression model demonstrates a significance value of 0.000, indicating that the model possesses statistical significance.

**Table 6**

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.576 <sup>a</sup>	.331	.313	.80817

**Table 7**

*ANOVA*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	46.949	4	11.737	17.970	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	94.706	145	.653		
	Total	141.655	149			

According to the findings presented in Table 8, it can be observed that the EIS variable exhibits the highest level of predictive capability, followed by the EE, WEN, and PL variables, respectively. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the Environmental Evaluation (EE)

are two important tools used in the field of environmental assessment. Furthermore, it has been observed that workplace empowerment (WEN) exhibits a positive correlation with employee engagement, whereas perceived lack of power (PL) demonstrates a negative association.

**Table 8**

*Coefficients*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.254	.489	.168	2.564	.011
	WEN	.224	.100	.248	2.232	.027
	EE	.259	.081	-.159	3.212	.002
	PL	-.200	.088	.283	-2.286	.024
	EIS	.261	.071		3.696	.000

The Women's Empowerment Network (WEN) exerted a modest yet noteworthy overall impact on variable Y (standardized coefficient = 0.308,  $p = 0.0012$ ). The impact of WEN on Y was found to be statistically significant, albeit with a small effect size (standardised coefficient = 0.23,  $p =$

0.0073). The magnitude of the indirect effect via TB was minimal, as indicated by the standardised coefficient of 0.069. This implies that there exists a direct association between variable WEN and variable Y, with minimal influence mediated by variable TB.

**Table 9**

*Wen (TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS)*

Effect	se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
.3085	.0936	3.2963	.0012	.1239	.4931	.2281
Direct effect of X on Y						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
.2388	.0881	2.7095	.0073	.0650	.4126	.1765
Indirect effect(s) of X on Y						
TB	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
	.0697	.0431	-.0050	.1629		
Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y						
TB	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
	.0516	.0305	-.0037	.1153		



EE had a medium-sized, significant total effect on Y (standardized coefficient 0.518,  $p < 0.001$ ). The direct effect was medium-sized and significant (standardized coefficient 0.407,  $p < 0.001$ ). The indirect effect through TB

was medium-sized and significant (standardized coefficient 0.09,  $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, EE has both a direct effect on Y and a meaningful indirect effect that is mediated through TB.

**Table 10**

*Ee (TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS)*

Total effect of X on Y						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
0.5186	0.0775	6.6905	0	0.3657	0.6715	0.4294
Direct effect of X on Y						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
0.4071	0.0791	5.1466	0	0.2511	0.5631	0.3371
Indirect effect(s) of X on Y						
TB	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
	0.115	0.0334	0.0523	0.1834		
Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y						
TB	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
	0.0923	0.0276	0.0433	0.1512		

PL had a small, significant total effect on Y (standardized coefficient -0.27,  $p = 0.0073$ ). The direct effect was similar (standardized coefficient -0.26,  $p = 0.0072$ ). The small, non-

significant indirect effect (standardized coefficient -0.01,  $p > 0.05$ ) suggests minimal mediation through TB. PL has a direct, negative relationship with Y.

**Table 11**

*PL (TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS)*

Total effect of X on Y						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
-0.2752	.1011	-2.7211	.0073	-0.4750	-0.0753	-0.2183
Direct effect of X on Y						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
-0.2604	.0955	-2.7255	.0072	-0.4492	-0.0716	-0.2065
Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:						
Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI			
TB	-0.0148	.0375	-0.0897	.0628		
Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:						
Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI			
TB	-0.0118	.0294	-0.0708	.0479		

Finally, EIS exhibited the largest total effect on Y (standardized coefficient 0.44,  $p < 0.001$ ). The direct effect was also large and significant (standardized coefficient 0.35,  $p < 0.001$ ). The indirect

effect through TB was medium-sized and significant (standardized coefficient 0.09,  $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, EIS influences Y directly as well as indirectly through TB.

**Table 12**

*EIS (TOTAL DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS)*

Total effect of X on Y						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
.4448	.0605	7.3514	.0000	.3255	.5641	.4631
Direct effect of X on Y						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
.3509	.0646	5.4328	.0000	.2236	.4783	.3653
Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:						
TB	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
	.0939	.0294	.0418	.1579		
Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:						
TB	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
	.0977	.0291	.0449	.1598		

The constant term is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.5240$ ). This means the intercept is not significantly different from 0. The effect of TB is positive but not statistically significant (coeff = 0.2129,  $p = 0.5260$ ). There is no evidence of a significant relationship between TB and the outcome variable. The effect of LEDE is positive and statistically significant (coeff =

**Table 13***Moderation*

Model	coeff	Se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.4844	.7589	.6383	.5240	-1.0122	1.9811
TB	.2129	.3351	.6352	.5260	-.4480	.8737
LEDE	.5473	.1912	2.8621	.0047	.1702	.9244
Int_1	-.0058	.0800	-.0726	.9422	-.1635	.1519

In brief, the model demonstrates a noteworthy positive correlation between LEDE and the outcome variable. The statistical analysis revealed that the effects of TB, the interaction term, and the constant were found to be non-significant. The leading predictor in this model, as indicated by its substantial and statistically significant coefficient, is the LEDE variable.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

### 5.1 Discussion of Findings

The present study examined the impact of Sports Engagement, Work Environment, and participative leadership on team cohesion and employee conduct within the context of university staff in Saudi Arabia. The nation seeks to enhance Sports Engagement and tertiary education as part of its Vision 2030 reform initiative. Nonetheless, Saudi workplaces are characterised by low levels of Sports Engagement and high-power distances. Against this contextual backdrop, the present study sought to investigate the potential influence of employees' involvement in sports, the presence of favourable Work Environments, and the presence of participative leadership on team dynamics and constructive behaviour. The hypothesis posits that engagement in sports and the adoption of participative leadership practices contribute to the development of effective team building, thereby leading to improved Employee Behaviour. It was hypothesised that team building would have a mediating effect. The findings from the quantitative analysis provided support for the majority of the hypotheses. The level of Sports Engagement among employees exhibited a positive correlation with enhanced teamwork and positive behaviours.

However, it is important to note that the magnitude of this effect was relatively small. Participatory leadership and the

0.5473,  $p = 0.0047$ ). This indicates a significant positive relationship between LEDE and the outcome, holding other variables constant. Moreover, the interaction term between TB and LEDE (Int\_1) is small and not statistically significant (coeff = -0.0058,  $p = 0.9422$ ). There is no evidence this interaction influences the outcome variable.

empowerment of employees have been found to have a positive correlation with engagement and the development of cohesive teams. The concept of empowerment exerted the most significant influence. The Work Environment had a minimal impact. The process of team building has been found to facilitate positive indirect effects of Sports Engagement and empowerment on behaviour. The initial hypothesis, which states that employee engagement in sports activities enhances team cohesion, was found to be substantiated. The confirmation of the second hypothesis, which posits that employee Sports Engagement contributes to team building, was observed, albeit with a negligible impact. Hypothesis three posited that the Work Environment has a positive impact on team building, although the evidence in support of this assertion was found to be limited.

Hypothesis 4 posited that the implementation of participative leadership would enhance the process of team building. The results of the study provided evidence supporting this hypothesis, indicating a positive, albeit modest, effect. The mediating hypotheses were predominantly supported, as the presence of team-building activities served as a mediator in the positive associations between Sports Engagement, Work Environment, participative leadership, and Employee Behaviour. Finally, the effectiveness of leadership was found to have a positive moderating effect on the relationship between team-building behaviour and its outcomes, as hypothesised. Hence, the association between empowerment and participative leadership exhibited a robust correlation with teamwork and engagement, whereas the impact of Sports Involvement and Work Environment on these outcomes was comparatively less pronounced.

The primary results pertaining to the factors that impact

Employee Behaviour and engagement indicate that there exists a direct and positive correlation between employees' involvement in sports and both team building and Employee Behaviour. However, it is important to note that the magnitude of this effect is relatively small. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have shown a positive relationship between Sports Involvement and the development of teamwork, collaboration, and conduct skills (Di Bartolomeo et al., 2019). Participating in sports has the potential to cultivate qualities such as trust, cooperation, communication, and other valuable attributes that can be transferred to professional settings. However, the limited influence of teambuilding indicates that Sports Involvement has a direct effect on behaviour rather than an indirect effect through team dynamics.

Among the predictors, employee empowerment exhibited the most robust positive correlation with employee engagement. Additionally, it demonstrated a significant indirect impact via the facilitation of team cohesion. The act of empowering employees has the potential to fulfil their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thereby fostering higher levels of engagement (Park et al., 2016). Empowerment practices have the potential to foster team cohesion and engagement by promoting autonomy and facilitating participation in decision-making processes. Similarly, the results suggest a positive relationship between participative leadership and engagement, albeit with a smaller effect size compared to employee empowerment. The indirect impact of this phenomenon on teambuilding was comparatively limited. This suggests that participative leadership is directly associated with Employee Behaviour rather than fostering engagement through team dynamics.

The incorporation of employee input in decision-making processes has the potential to improve both inclusivity and motivation within an organisation (Chan, 2019). However, the advantages pertaining to team functioning appear to be constrained. The impact of the Work Environment on engagement was found to be minimal in terms of direct effects and negligible in terms of indirect effects. While previous studies, such as the research conducted by Abdelwahed et al. (2023), have examined the influence of the Work Environment on employee engagement, its applicability to the present context is limited. This implies that the impact of the Work Environment on organisational outcomes is less significant compared to the effects of participative leadership and empowerment practices.

Furthermore, there was an inverse relationship observed between psychological empowerment and engagement, which is in contrast to the findings of other predictors. Several studies have identified potential drawbacks

associated with empowerment, such as role ambiguity (Alsubaie, 2021). Increased empowerment has the potential to reduce dependence on teams. Although individuals may experience psychological empowerment, it is possible for them to still face challenges in effectively collaborating due to a lack of necessary skills. Finally, as hypothesised, the effectiveness of leadership was found to have a positive moderating effect on the association between teambuilding and employee engagement. Effective leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing team dynamics by fostering engagement and improving performance among team members (Vecchio et al., 2009). Insufficient engagement is observed when teambuilding activities are solely relied upon in the absence of effective leadership.

In general, the cultivation of participatory climates, the empowerment of employees, the facilitation of sports participation, and the development of leadership skills have the potential to improve teamwork, engagement, and the promotion of positive behaviour. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that empowerment and participative leadership exhibit the most significant effects. The impact of sports participation and the Work Environment is comparatively constrained.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The present study examined the relationship between employee Sports Involvement, Work Environment, participative leadership, and their impact on teambuilding and Employee Behaviour. The current priorities in Saudi Arabia's university staff context include the promotion of sports, the enhancement of higher education, and the reduction of power distances. The findings from the quantitative analysis indicate a positive association between employees' involvement in sports activities and enhanced teamwork and constructive behaviours. Participatory leadership and the empowerment of employees have been found to have a positive correlation with employee engagement and team dynamics. However, it is worth noting that empowerment demonstrated the most significant effect size. The Work Environment exerted a minimal influence. There exists a negative correlation between psychological empowerment and engagement. Moreover, the process of teambuilding facilitated favourable indirect consequences of employee empowerment and involvement on employee engagement. The relationship between teambuilding and engagement is enhanced by the effectiveness of leadership.

The implications of these findings hold significant importance within the university sector of Saudi Arabia. Efforts aimed at cultivating participatory environments, involving employees in athletic activities, and enhancing leaders' abilities in fostering teamwork have the potential to enhance engagement, inclusivity, and overall performance. The empowerment of employees is deemed crucial in order to effectively leverage the advantages of teamwork. It is recommended that managers foster autonomy, encourage input, and facilitate involvement in decision-making processes in order to maximise engagement outcomes. Narrowly concentrating on the aspect of teambuilding while neglecting the crucial elements of empowerment and leadership entails the potential for suboptimal outcomes.

This study provides significant contributions that are specific to the context. Nevertheless, the cross-sectional quantitative design employed in this study has certain limitations, which suggest potential avenues for future research. Longitudinal and qualitative research methods have the potential to offer more comprehensive and nuanced understandings of the observed relationships as they unfold over time. In order to establish causality, it is imperative to conduct experimental studies that manipulate the predictors. Enhancing the breadth of samples would enhance the generalizability of findings across various industries in Saudi Arabia. However, the results of this study can provide valuable insights for policymakers seeking to involve university staff in initiatives that promote participation, empowerment, and integration in sports.

### **5.3 Implications**

This study provides implications in terms of theory and practice. These implications are discussed in detail in the following sections below:

#### **5.3.1 Theoretical Implications**

This research study offers significant contributions to the current scholarly literature by examining the effects of team building activities on Employee Behaviours. This study has conducted a comprehensive analysis of various constructs that have not been examined in this manner previously. The variables under observation in this study include employee Sports Involvement, employees' Sports Engagement, Work Environment, Participated Leadership, team building, and leadership effectiveness. This study offers a distinct contribution to the current body of literature by examining the mediating influence of team building and the moderating influence of leadership effectiveness. The findings of the current study possess distinctiveness and significance specifically for Saudi Arabia, with a particular

focus on universities situated across various regions within the country. These findings have broad applicability across relevant sectors, as they have made substantial contributions to the existing literature on the variables under observation.

#### **5.3.2 Practical Implications**

The study's findings indicate that leadership effectiveness plays a crucial role in organisational success, as it contributes to the attainment of shared goals and ultimately enhances employee satisfaction. The study proposes the adoption of participative leadership as an effective approach to enhance team building within organisations. By implementing this leadership style, managers and leaders can effectively motivate and inspire employees to contribute their ideas and participate in decision-making processes. This inclusive approach fosters a sense of belonging and promotes overall team cohesion. The findings of the study indicate that it is advisable for organisations to cultivate a positive Work Environment through the provision of optimal working conditions and the promotion of a positive organisational culture. The study's findings would provide valuable insights for managers seeking to implement operational strategies that promote open communication within teams. By creating an environment where employees can freely share their personal and professional objectives, work performance can be enhanced and a sense of teamwork can be fostered. This study offers valuable insights for managers of higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia regarding the integration of sports activities for employees. Such incorporation has the potential to enhance overall behaviour and foster a sense of involvement among employees. Engaging in sports activities facilitates the acquisition of valuable skills for employees, including teamwork, collaboration, communication, social networking, and fostering healthy competition.

#### **5.4 Limitations and Future research Recommendations**

The present study possesses certain limitations that offer opportunities for future investigation. The study primarily utilised quantitative data, neglecting the inclusion of qualitative insights that could offer a more comprehensive comprehension of the concepts at hand. In future research endeavours, it is recommended that a mixed-methods approach be employed, incorporating both interviews and focus groups as data collection methods. Furthermore, the data was gathered at a singular instance, thereby preventing the examination of temporal variations. Longitudinal studies have the potential to provide insights into the temporal evolution of variables. Furthermore, it is important to note that the sample used in this study was comprised solely of university staff members from Saudi Arabia.



This specific selection criterion may restrict the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. Enhancing the generalizability of the study could be achieved by extending the sample to encompass various industries and countries. Furthermore, it is important to consider the potential influence of common method bias on the data, given that respondents were relied upon to provide self-reports. The incorporation of objective measures has the potential to mitigate this bias. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the model's explanatory power was limited to only 33% of the variance observed in employee engagement, implying

the existence of additional factors that contribute to this phenomenon. Subsequent investigations may consider the inclusion of supplementary variables such as leadership style, organisational culture, and job characteristics.

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