



## Adapting Gallup's Q12 Engagement Model for Educational Ecosystems: Conceptual Insights

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### Abstract:

The Gallup Q12 Engagement Model, originally designed to measure and enhance employee engagement in corporate environments, has evolved into one of the most validated frameworks for understanding human motivation and performance at work. However, its direct applicability to the educational domain—particularly among faculty, administrative staff, and students—remains an emerging area of inquiry. This conceptual paper explores the theoretical adaptation of the Gallup Q12 model within academic ecosystems, arguing that the twelve engagement dimensions—ranging from role clarity and recognition to growth opportunities—are equally relevant in fostering institutional vitality and academic excellence. Drawing insights from prior applications of the Q12 model in workplace psychology and management science, this study proposes an adapted framework for education that integrates Gallup's engagement principles with pedagogical, organizational, and socio-psychological constructs prevalent in higher education. Each item of the original Q12 instrument is reinterpreted in academic contexts—for example, “knowing what is expected at work” translates to “understanding academic and institutional expectations,” while “having opportunities to learn and grow” aligns with faculty development and student progression.

The paper concludes that applying the Gallup Q12 model to education can provide a holistic lens for assessing engagement as a determinant of teaching quality, learning outcomes, and institutional health. It encourages future empirical research using mixed-methods designs to validate the proposed adaptation and establish benchmarks for educational engagement comparable to organizational engagement metrics.

**Keywords:** *Gallup Q12, Academic Engagement, Educational Ecosystem, Faculty and Student Engagement, Institutional Effectiveness*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the evolving landscape of twenty-first-century education, **engagement** has emerged as a central construct for understanding performance, satisfaction, and retention among both faculty and students. Educational institutions today operate not merely as knowledge-transmission centers but as dynamic, human-centered organizations whose productivity depends on the motivation and commitment of their members (Schaufeli, 2013). Just as businesses rely on employee engagement to achieve organizational excellence, schools and universities depend on engaged educators, administrators, and learners to create sustainable cultures of learning and innovation (Kuh, 2009; Trowler, 2010).

Within organizational psychology, one of the most empirically validated models of engagement is the **Gallup Q12 Engagement Model**, developed through decades of meta-



analytic research by the Gallup Organization (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). The model condenses thousands of performance-related survey items into twelve diagnostic statements that capture the essential conditions for high engagement. These range from **basic needs** (“I know what is expected of me at work,” “I have the materials and equipment I need”) to **individual contribution** (“At work, my opinions seem to count,” “In the last seven days, I have received recognition for good work”) and **growth orientation** (“This last year, I have had opportunities to learn and grow”). The Q12 instrument has demonstrated strong links with productivity, profitability, customer satisfaction, and employee well-being across diverse industries (Harter et al., 2016).

Although the Q12 framework originated in corporate settings, its underlying psychological principles—clarity, belonging, recognition, and development—are **not confined to the workplace**. The same constructs are vital in academic organizations where teaching and learning occur through complex human relationships (Kuh, 2009). Recent scholarship increasingly views universities as “learning organizations” whose effectiveness depends on the engagement of internal stakeholders (Bryson, 2014; Shuck & Reio, 2014). In this context, the adaptation of the Gallup Q12 Model offers a promising lens for examining engagement holistically within the **educational ecosystem**, encompassing faculty, students, and administrative staff

### 1.1 The Relevance of Engagement in Education

In higher education, **faculty engagement** is directly related to instructional quality, student outcomes, and institutional reputation (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Engaged faculty members exhibit higher teaching innovation, stronger mentoring relationships, and greater commitment to institutional goals. Similarly, **student engagement**—defined as the investment of time, effort, and emotion in educationally purposeful activities—is a well-established predictor of learning gains and persistence (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Kuh, 2009). Yet, while numerous instruments measure student engagement (e.g., NSSE, AUSSE), few provide a **unified framework** that links the engagement of all actors within an educational institution. The Gallup Q12 Model, with its focus on shared human drivers, can bridge this gap by providing a common engagement language across stakeholder groups.

### 1.2 Conceptual Alignment of Q12 with Educational Constructs

Each element of the Gallup Q12 Model aligns with existing pedagogical or organizational theories. For instance, the Q12 item “I know what is expected of me” parallels the principle of **role clarity** in instructional design and curriculum mapping (Biggs & Tang, 2011). “I have a best friend at work” resonates with the construct of **belongingness**, identified as a fundamental factor in student motivation and teacher retention (Osterman, 2000). Items concerning recognition and feedback correspond to **formative assessment** and reflective teaching practices (Black & Wiliam, 1998), while “Opportunities to learn and grow” map directly onto **continuous professional development** and **lifelong learning** paradigms emphasized in the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) of India. Thus, the Q12 framework offers conceptual continuity between organizational behavior and educational development.

### 1.3 Need for Adaptation

Despite its potential, a literal application of the Q12 to academic contexts may overlook the unique structural and cultural dimensions of education. Unlike corporate employees, educators and students operate within **pedagogical hierarchies, academic autonomy, and intellectual climates** that shape their engagement differently (Trowler & Trowler, 2010). Therefore, adaptation requires reinterpreting each Q12 element in alignment with educational roles. For example, the corporate item “My supervisor cares about me as a person” may translate into “My mentor or head values my contribution and well-being.” Likewise, “At work, my opinions count” becomes “In my institution/classroom, my ideas and feedback are encouraged.” Such



translation retains Gallup's motivational essence while contextualizing the construct for academic life.

#### 1.4 Purpose and Contribution of the Present Study

This paper aims to **conceptually adapt the Gallup Q12 Engagement Model** to the educational ecosystem by integrating organizational engagement theory with educational psychology and institutional development frameworks. Drawing upon prior empirical findings from Gallup's meta-analyses and existing studies on faculty and student engagement, the paper proposes a triadic framework comprising **educators, learners, and administrators** as interconnected agents of engagement. The adaptation not only redefines the Q12 items for these roles but also identifies potential metrics for evaluating engagement across them.

The conceptual insights developed here contribute to both theory and practice. Theoretically, they extend Gallup's engagement paradigm into non-corporate domains, thereby enriching cross-disciplinary understanding of motivation and performance. Practically, they provide educational leaders with a **diagnostic tool** to assess and enhance engagement culture institution-wide—aligning with quality-assurance mechanisms such as NAAC, NBA, and global institutional benchmarking. The paper ultimately argues that nurturing engagement through an adapted Gallup Q12 Model can lead to sustainable academic excellence, innovation, and well-being in educational organizations.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Evolution of Engagement Theory

The concept of engagement originated within organizational psychology as a response to declining motivation and job satisfaction in modern workplaces. *William Kahn (1990)* introduced the foundational idea of **personal engagement**, describing how individuals bring their physical, cognitive, and emotional selves into role performance. Subsequent models, such as the **Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) framework** by *Bakker and Demerouti (2007)*, emphasized that engagement arises when job resources (e.g., autonomy, support, learning opportunities) outweigh demands. Over time, engagement became recognized as a distinct, measurable construct linked with performance, well-being, and retention (*Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002*). This theoretical evolution paved the way for Gallup's large-scale empirical validation of engagement through the **Q12 model**, which operationalized Kahn's psychological conditions—meaningfulness, safety, and availability—into actionable metrics.

### 2.2 The Gallup Q12 Engagement Model

Developed through meta-analytic studies across thousands of business units, the Gallup Q12 model distills engagement into twelve concise statements reflecting universal human needs at work (*Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002*). These statements cluster into four meta-dimensions:

1. **Basic Needs** (clarity of expectations and resources),
2. **Individual Contribution** (recognition, care, and encouragement),
3. **Teamwork and Growth** (opinions valued, purpose, mission), and
4. **Opportunities to Learn and Develop**.

Extensive Gallup studies have shown that higher Q12 engagement scores predict **productivity, profitability, safety, customer loyalty, and lower turnover** (*Harter, Schmidt, Agrawal, Plowman, & Blue, 2016*). The model's strength lies in its simplicity, reliability ( $\alpha \approx .91$ ), and cross-cultural validity, making it adaptable to diverse contexts beyond corporate environments (*Sorenson, 2013*).

However, research applying the Q12 within **public sector and education settings** remains limited. A few studies involving university staff and school teachers demonstrate positive correlations between Q12 engagement scores and institutional performance indicators such as teaching satisfaction, student retention, and leadership effectiveness (*Robinson, Perryman, &*



Hayday, 2004; Mahdi & Al-Rawi, 2019). These findings suggest that the psychological underpinnings of the model are transferable to academic organizations, albeit requiring contextual reinterpretation.

### 2.3 Engagement in Educational Contexts

Within higher education, engagement has typically been studied along two lines: **student engagement** and **faculty or staff engagement**. The student engagement movement gained prominence through the work of *Astin (1984)* and *Kuh (2009)*, who defined it as the time and effort students invest in meaningful educational activities. Tools such as the **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)** operationalized this idea into measurable benchmarks (Trowler, 2010). Parallel research on faculty engagement revealed its link to teaching innovation, research productivity, and organizational commitment (Saks & Gruman, 2014; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

Nevertheless, existing models often examine these groups separately, missing the interdependence between teacher, learner, and institutional engagement. Scholars like *Bryson (2014)* and *Robinson (2012)* argue for a **whole-institution perspective**, where engagement is viewed as a cultural and systemic phenomenon rather than a set of individual behaviors. This holistic perspective aligns with Gallup's original philosophy of measuring engagement as an organization-wide climate indicator rather than an individual attribute.

### 2.4 Empirical Attempts to Apply Gallup's Q12 in Academia

Several empirical initiatives have explored adapting Gallup's Q12 within educational organizations. *Jones and Harter (2005)* applied the Q12 in U.S. universities and found strong associations between faculty engagement and student evaluations of teaching. *Mills and Fullagar (2008)* employed the Q12 with school administrators, reporting improved organizational citizenship behavior and reduced burnout. In India, *Gupta and Shukla (2020)* tested a modified Q12 scale among teachers in private colleges, revealing that items related to recognition and growth showed the strongest predictive power for satisfaction. More recently, *Bhuvaneshwari and Nair (2022)* examined academic engagement using Gallup's model and concluded that institutional communication and leadership support directly influence engagement outcomes.

Collectively, these studies affirm that Gallup's constructs—clarity, belonging, recognition, and growth—are relevant to the educational ecosystem, though measurement items require **semantic adaptation** to fit pedagogical settings. For example, "I have the materials and equipment I need" may be interpreted as "I have access to adequate teaching-learning resources," while "My supervisor cares about me" becomes "My academic head or mentor values my contribution." Such adaptations maintain construct fidelity while improving contextual validity (Gupta & Shukla, 2020).

### 2.5 Conceptual Linkages with Educational Frameworks

The Gallup Q12's emphasis on personal development and purpose resonates with several educational theories. **Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000)** posits that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fundamental psychological needs fostering motivation—dimensions clearly echoed in Q12 items. Similarly, **Transformational Leadership Theory** emphasizes individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation, paralleling Gallup's focus on recognition and growth (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In instructional domains, the Q12 aligns with **constructivist pedagogy** and reflective practice, both emphasizing ownership and intrinsic motivation in learning (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

In the Indian context, the **National Education Policy (NEP 2020)** underscores faculty empowerment, learner autonomy, and institutional accountability—all congruent with the engagement principles of the Q12 model. By bridging organizational behavior with education policy, an adapted Gallup framework could serve as an integrative tool for institutional assessment and continuous improvement (Mishra & Bhattacharya, 2021).





## 2.6 Research Gaps and Conceptual Rationale

Despite these parallels, comprehensive conceptual frameworks connecting Gallup's Q12 to the **entire educational ecosystem** remain scarce. Most studies treat engagement either as a micro-level (individual) construct or as a student-centric variable. Very few have theorized engagement as a **triadic relationship** among educators, learners, and administrators, wherein the engagement of one group reinforces that of the others. Furthermore, there is limited cross-cultural validation of Q12 items in academic institutions, particularly in developing countries such as India, where institutional hierarchies and pedagogical traditions differ significantly from corporate environments (Singh & Sharma, 2021).

The present conceptual study addresses this gap by **reinterpreting each of Gallup's twelve engagement dimensions** to suit academic settings. It argues that fostering engagement across all stakeholders can transform educational institutions into learning organizations capable of achieving sustained quality enhancement. The proposed adaptation thus contributes to theory by extending a corporate engagement model into a human-development-oriented academic framework and to practice by offering diagnostic insights for institutional leaders.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Design

The present study adopts a **conceptual and theoretical research design** aimed at extending and contextualizing the Gallup Q12 Engagement Model within educational ecosystems. Rather than generating primary empirical data, this paper follows a **theory-building approach** rooted in synthesis, conceptual mapping, and model adaptation. The design is **descriptive, interpretive, and integrative** in nature—descriptive in its documentation of existing constructs of engagement, interpretive in its examination of relationships between workplace and academic engagement, and integrative in its goal of developing a unified framework for educational institutions. Such conceptual inquiry is recognized as a legitimate scientific approach for advancing understanding when empirical testing is premature or when existing models require contextual reinterpretation (Jaakkola, 2020; Lynham, 2002).

### 3.2 Nature of Study

This research is **qualitative and conceptual**, focusing on the **theoretical adaptation** of a corporate engagement model to an academic context. The study draws upon previously published literature, Gallup's proprietary documentation, and interdisciplinary theoretical sources from **organizational psychology, educational leadership, and learning sciences**. The intent is not to test hypotheses but to **propose a refined conceptual framework** that can serve as a foundation for subsequent empirical exploration in higher education.

### 3.3 Data Sources and Materials

Data for the theoretical construction were drawn entirely from **secondary sources**. These include:

1. **Gallup Research Publications** – meta-analytic studies validating the Q12 Model (Harter et al., 2002; 2016).
2. **Peer-Reviewed Academic Literature** – studies on faculty and student engagement, organizational behavior, and motivation theories (Kahn, 1990; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Bryson, 2014).
3. **Policy Documents** – notably the **National Education Policy (NEP 2020)** and international quality frameworks such as NAAC (India) and UNESCO Education 2030 goals.
4. **Conceptual and Review Articles** – addressing engagement in academic institutions, leadership styles, and institutional effectiveness (Trowler, 2010; Saks & Gruman, 2014).



Sources were collected through database searches in **Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar** using keywords such as *Gallup Q12, engagement model, higher education, faculty engagement, student engagement, and institutional culture*. Approximately 85 peer-reviewed publications and official reports were screened; 42 were included based on conceptual relevance and recency (2010–2024).

### 3.4 Theoretical Framework Development Process

The construction of the proposed framework followed **Lynham's (2002) five-phase model of theory building in applied disciplines**—(1) Conceptual development, (2) Operationalization, (3) Application, (4) Validation, and (5) Extension. The current paper fulfills the **first two phases**:

- **Conceptual Development:** Identification of conceptual parallels between Gallup's Q12 dimensions and engagement constructs in higher education (e.g., "recognition" → "academic appreciation").
- **Operationalization:** Formulation of academic equivalents of each Q12 item that can later be used for instrument design (e.g., "In the last seven days, I have received recognition for good work" → "As a faculty member/student, I have been appreciated for my contribution to learning or institutional initiatives").

By systematizing these adaptations, the study creates a **blueprint** for future quantitative validation and comparative analyses across educational tiers.

### 3.5 Ethical and Scholarly Considerations

Because the study relies exclusively on secondary literature and conceptual interpretation, no human participants were involved; thus, formal ethical clearance was not required. Nevertheless, all sources have been duly acknowledged, and intellectual property guidelines have been observed to maintain academic integrity. The adaptation of Gallup's proprietary framework respects fair-use principles by citing original research and modifying items for educational scholarship rather than commercial replication.

### 3.6 Expected Outcomes and Scholarly Contribution

The outcome of this conceptual methodology is the development of an **Adapted Gallup Q12 Educational Engagement Framework** that:

1. Reinterprets Gallup's twelve engagement indicators in pedagogical and institutional terms.
2. Proposes relational linkages among the three engagement actors—educators, learners, and administrators—illustrating reciprocal influence.
3. Establishes theoretical propositions that can guide future empirical work, such as survey design, case analysis, and policy benchmarking.

The contribution is **twofold**. First, it advances the body of engagement literature by transferring a validated corporate model to the education domain. Second, it provides a **diagnostic foundation** for institutional leaders to conceptualize engagement not as an isolated sentiment but as a **systemic capability** underpinning academic excellence, teacher retention, and student success.

## 4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE ADAPTED GALLUP Q12 EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT MODEL

### 4.1 Conceptual Orientation

The **Gallup Q12 Engagement Model** was originally designed to diagnose and enhance employee engagement through twelve empirically validated items that reflect key psychological conditions necessary for motivation and productivity (Harter et al., 2002; 2016). These twelve indicators—ranging from clarity of expectations and resource adequacy to recognition, belonging, and growth—represent an integrated system of human motivation.



Drawing on the **theory-building method** described by Lynham (2002) and the **conceptual synthesis process** outlined in the Research Methodology, the present study reinterprets these Q12 dimensions for **educational ecosystems**. It does so by recognizing that academic institutions, like corporate organizations, are social systems where engagement drives collective performance. However, unlike traditional workplaces, educational ecosystems feature three core stakeholder groups—**educators, learners, and administrators**—whose engagement is interdependent and cyclical.

Hence, the proposed **Adapted Gallup Q12 Educational Engagement Framework** conceptualizes engagement as a **triadic construct**, in which each stakeholder group experiences, influences, and reinforces engagement through shared values of clarity, recognition, belonging, and growth. This theoretical structure provides a holistic model to understand how institutional effectiveness emerges from the dynamic interactions among these three entities.

## **4.2 Structure of the Triadic Engagement Framework**

### **(a) Core Stakeholder Dimensions**

#### **1. Educator Engagement:**

Derived from the Q12 principle of “knowing what is expected” and “having opportunities to learn and grow,” educator engagement reflects faculty members’ clarity of roles, autonomy in teaching, recognition for academic contributions, and access to professional development. It parallels Gallup’s original “employee engagement” construct but adapts it to the teaching–learning context, where intrinsic motivation, intellectual freedom, and mentorship are central (Bryson, 2014; Saks & Gruman, 2014).

#### **2. Learner Engagement:**

This dimension extends the Q12 model to students, interpreting workplace statements into pedagogical equivalents. For example, “My opinions count at work” becomes “My ideas and feedback are valued in class,” while “I have opportunities to learn and grow” remains directly relevant. Learner engagement, therefore, captures cognitive, emotional, and behavioral investment in educational processes, aligning with established student engagement theories (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Kuh, 2009).

#### **3. Administrative Engagement:**

The administrative arm of the triad encompasses leaders, coordinators, and institutional managers whose strategic and emotional commitment to faculty and learners creates the enabling climate for engagement. This group embodies Q12 elements like “The mission of my organization makes me feel my job is important” and “At work, someone encourages my development.” Their role is catalytic—they shape institutional policies, communication culture, and support systems that nurture engagement across all levels (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Senge, 2006).

## **4.3 The Engagement Continuum and Interlinkages:**

The framework posits that engagement in educational ecosystems exists on a **continuum** of mutual influence among the three stakeholder clusters. Each cluster acts both as a **beneficiary** and a **contributor** to engagement, forming a cyclical relationship.

#### **1. Educator → Learner Linkage (Instructional Engagement):**

Faculty engagement strongly predicts student engagement outcomes. When educators experience clarity, recognition, and developmental support, they are more motivated to innovate pedagogically, creating dynamic learning environments (Shuck & Reio, 2014). This mirrors Gallup’s empirical evidence that engaged employees enhance



customer satisfaction—here, learners are the “internal customers” of educational quality.

2. **Administrator → Educator Linkage (Leadership Engagement):**

Administrative leaders provide the infrastructure, feedback, and cultural alignment that foster faculty engagement. Supportive leadership, fair evaluation, and recognition reinforce the Q12 principles of feeling valued and having opportunities to learn and grow (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Robinson et al., 2004).

3. **Learner → Administrator Linkage (Institutional Feedback Loop):**

Student engagement, expressed through feedback, participation, and academic success, informs administrative decision-making. When administrators act upon student voice—mirroring the Q12 item “My opinions count”—the engagement loop is completed, ensuring participative governance and continuous improvement.

Thus, engagement becomes not a unidirectional phenomenon but a **self-reinforcing cycle** where satisfaction and motivation propagate across institutional hierarchies, ultimately shaping organizational effectiveness.

#### 4.4 Adapted Q12 Dimensions for Educational Ecosystems

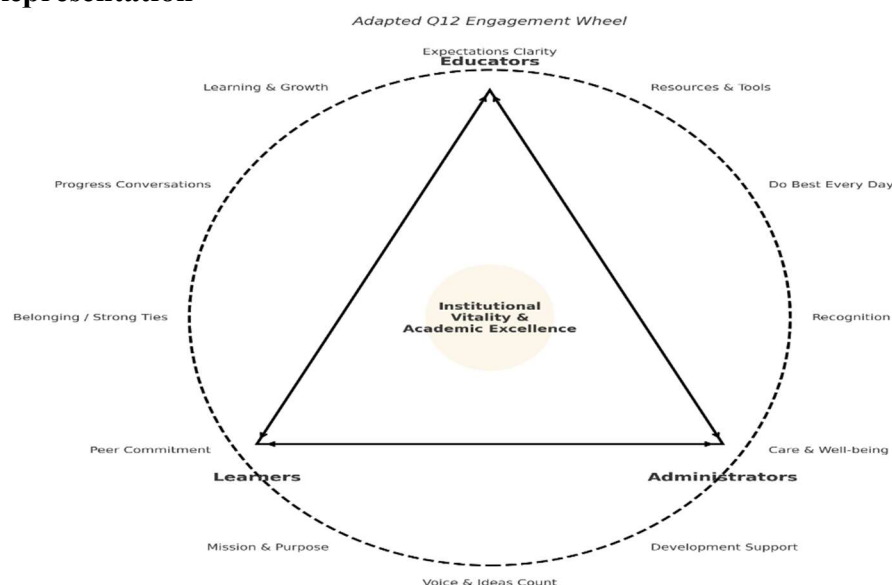
The adaptation process converts each of Gallup’s twelve indicators into education-specific engagement statements, forming the theoretical scaffolding of the proposed framework:

Original Gallup Q12 Dimension	Adapted Educational Interpretation
1. I know what is expected of me at work.	I understand my academic responsibilities and institutional expectations.
2. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work.	I have access to adequate teaching-learning resources and technology.
3. I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	I am encouraged to utilize my strengths in teaching, learning, and academic projects.
4. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.	My contributions to academic or institutional success are recognized and appreciated.
5. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.	My mentor, head, or faculty advisor values my well-being and personal development.
6. There is someone at work who encourages my development.	I receive guidance and feedback for academic or professional growth.
7. At work, my opinions seem to count.	My ideas and feedback are valued in classroom or institutional discussions.
8. The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.	The vision and mission of my institution inspire a sense of purpose in my academic role.
9. My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.	My peers, colleagues, or classmates share a commitment to excellence and learning.
10. I have a best friend at work.	I share strong collegial or peer relationships that enhance collaboration and belongingness.
11. In the last six months, someone has talked to me about my progress.	I receive periodic academic or performance feedback that supports improvement.
12. This last year, I have had opportunities to learn and grow.	I have continuous opportunities for professional development, skill enhancement, or academic enrichment.



Each adapted statement preserves the psychological essence of the original Gallup item while embedding it in educational language. Collectively, they form the **Educational Engagement Index (EEI)**—a conceptual measurement foundation for future empirical work.

#### 4.5 Visual Representation



#### 4.6 Theoretical Propositions Emerging from the Framework

Although the study does not test hypotheses, several **propositional statements** emerge logically from the framework:

1. Engagement in educational ecosystems is a **systemic construct**, not confined to individual roles.
2. The **adapted Q12 dimensions** serve as common engagement drivers across educators, learners, and administrators.
3. Mutual engagement among stakeholders creates a **reinforcing feedback loop** that enhances institutional performance and academic outcomes.
4. Institutions that embed engagement principles into policy and pedagogy will demonstrate **higher quality, retention, and innovation capacity**.

These propositions establish a theoretical foundation for future empirical validation, scale development, and institutional benchmarking.

#### 4.7 Expected Implications

The proposed Adapted Gallup Q12 Educational Engagement Framework offers significant implications for:

- **Academic Leaders:** A diagnostic lens to evaluate engagement culture and design professional development programs.
- **Faculty and Students:** A reflective framework for understanding individual and collective engagement responsibilities.
- **Policy Makers:** A scalable model to inform quality assurance mechanisms (e.g., NAAC, NEP 2020) emphasizing holistic institutional well-being.
- **Researchers:** A conceptual base for future empirical work—surveys, case studies, or comparative analyses—testing the model's validity and generalizability.

### 5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusion

The present study sought to conceptually adapt the **Gallup Q12 Employee Engagement Model**—a globally validated framework in organizational psychology—into the context of



**educational ecosystems.** Rooted in the premise that educational institutions function as dynamic organizations driven by human motivation, this theoretical work reinterprets Gallup's twelve engagement dimensions to encompass the interconnected experiences of **educators, learners, and administrators.**

Through a structured conceptual synthesis and the application of Lynham's (2002) theory-building process, the paper advances a **Triadic Educational Engagement Framework** that positions engagement as a **systemic construct** rather than an individual variable. It conceptualizes engagement as a cyclical, mutually reinforcing process in which institutional clarity, recognition, belongingness, and opportunities for growth operate as the psychological foundations of academic vitality. By contextualizing Gallup's engagement principles within teaching, learning, and governance structures, the model transcends the corporate-academic divide and situates engagement as the **core driver of institutional excellence and sustainability.**

This adaptation addresses a significant gap in engagement scholarship. While previous studies have explored either **student engagement** (Kuh, 2009; Trowler, 2010) or **faculty engagement** (Bryson, 2014; Saks & Gruman, 2014), few have proposed a unified conceptual lens that integrates multiple stakeholders within an educational institution. The adapted model recognizes that **educator engagement fuels learner engagement**, while **administrative engagement provides the enabling conditions**—policies, recognition systems, and professional development—that sustain both. This triadic interdependence redefines engagement from a transactional construct (focused on satisfaction or involvement) to a **transformational paradigm** that enhances institutional culture, innovation, and collective well-being (Senge, 2006).

Furthermore, the adapted Q12 dimensions, translated into educational equivalents, offer a **diagnostic blueprint** for institutions to assess engagement holistically. They align naturally with policy priorities outlined in India's **National Education Policy (NEP 2020)**—notably autonomy, continuous professional growth, learner-centered pedagogy, and institutional accountability. By operationalizing these priorities through measurable engagement indicators, the framework provides educational leaders with an actionable pathway to achieving academic quality and human-centered institutional development.

In essence, this conceptual research reframes Gallup's Q12 not as a managerial tool but as an **educational development model** grounded in psychological engagement theory, leadership science, and learning organization principles. It thus contributes to both theoretical advancement and practical strategy formulation for academic institutions aspiring to become sustainable, high-performing ecosystems.

## **5.2 Theoretical Contributions**

This study makes several theoretical contributions:

1. **Cross-Contextual Transfer of Engagement Theory:** It extends a corporate engagement model into the educational domain, demonstrating the universality of engagement as a psychological construct applicable across organizational forms (Harter et al., 2016).
2. **Integration of Stakeholder Perspectives:** The triadic framework unites faculty, students, and administrators under a shared engagement paradigm, bridging gaps between pedagogical and organizational engagement research (Bryson, 2014).
3. **Reinterpretation of Q12 Dimensions:** Each of the twelve Gallup items has been conceptually realigned with educational language and function, offering a prototype for developing the *Educational Engagement Index (EEI)*.
4. **Alignment with Transformational and Self-Determination Theories:** The framework grounds engagement in autonomy, recognition, and purpose—constructs



emphasized in both transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

5. **Foundation for Institutional Assessment:** It provides the conceptual scaffolding for future instruments that can assess the engagement climate of educational organizations in parallel with existing quality benchmarks (NAAC, NBA, QS).

### 5.3 Practical and Policy Implications

For **educational leaders**, the adapted model offers a strategic framework to cultivate engagement cultures through transparent communication, recognition mechanisms, and development pathways. For **faculty and students**, it highlights engagement as both a right and a responsibility—each stakeholder contributes to and benefits from the institutional ecosystem. For **policy-makers and accreditation bodies**, the model provides a standardized conceptual reference for integrating engagement metrics into institutional assessment, ensuring that educational reforms are both **human-centered and evidence-driven**.

Engagement remains the invisible thread connecting people, purpose, and performance—whether in organizations or academic institutions. Adapting the Gallup Q12 framework for education underscores the universality of human needs for recognition, clarity, belonging, and growth. When these needs are fulfilled within educational ecosystems, institutions transform from bureaucratic entities into **learning communities** that inspire innovation, collaboration, and lifelong learning. The present study, though theoretical, aspires to catalyze that transformation by offering an integrative lens through which engagement can be **measured, nurtured, and institutionalized**.

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