

An analytical study of Job Involvement and Employee Motivation among workers of public and private tea estates in Dibrugarh district of Assam

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Abstract

Purpose

The present study examines job involvement and employee motivation among public and private tea garden employees in the district of Dibrugarh, Assam. The study aims to identify significant differences in job involvement and motivational dimensions between public and private tea garden employees and among four employee groups comprising executives and non-executives. The study also attempts to understand the organizational and psychological factors influencing employee involvement and workplace motivation in plantation sector.

Design/Methodology/Approach

The study is exploratory in nature. Data were collected from 564 tea garden employees, including 284 public tea garden employees and 280 private tea garden employees, selected through random sampling technique. Standardized instruments namely Kanungo's (1982) Job Involvement Scale and Srivastava's (1988) Employee Motivation Scale were used for data collection. Inferential statistical techniques such as t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed through IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27 for analyzing the data.

Findings

The findings revealed that there were significant differences between public and private tea garden employees in job involvement, personal growth, achievement, self-control, social affiliation and autonomy and self-actualization. The findings of ANOVA also revealed that the public executives, public non-executives, private executives and private non-executives were significantly different in almost all motivational dimensions other than monetary gains. The organizational attachment and developmental orientation were comparatively higher among public tea garden employees while achievement orientation and social affiliation tendencies were comparatively higher among private tea garden employees. The findings show that the working environment, welfare facilities and work tasks have an impact on employee motivation and job involvement.

Practical Implications

The study provides important implications for human resource management and labour welfare policies in plantation sector. Improving employee involvement, organizational support, recognition programs, and development opportunities can have a substantial impact on employee engagement, organizational commitment, and productivity in tea plantation sectors.

Keywords

Job Involvement, Employee Motivation, Tea Garden Employees, Organizational Commitment, Work Engagement, Plantation Industry

Introduction

Today, Tea is still one of the most popular non-alcoholic beverages worldwide and has a key role in the socio-economic and cultural life of many countries. In addition to coffee and cocoa, tea is one of the other major crops that play a significant role in global agricultural trade, rural employment and export earnings (**Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO, 2022]**). Tea is a tree crop grown up to a great extent in Asia and Africa; China, India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, and the Indonesian islands are leading producers and exporters of tea (**International Tea Committee [ITC, 2022]**). India is also one of the largest tea producing country with being one of the largest tea consumers in the world. The **Tea Board of India (2023)** reports that roughly 80% of India's tea consumption takes place within the country, demonstrating the strong community and cultural connections to tea in India. Assam accounts for almost 50% of the total tea production in India and is the backbone of the tea industry of Assam. Assam tea plantations have a tremendous economic significance as it is directly and indirectly responsible for livelihood of millions of workers and their families. The tea plantation is the mainstay of the regional economy in the major tea producing belts of the districts, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Jorhat and Sivasagar (**Bhowmik, 2015**). Although tea plantation is an important sector, it suffers from a number of labour problems such as physically strenuous nature of work, low wage rates, lack of opportunities for development,

occupational stress and differential access to welfare measures (**Hazarika & Gogoi, 2022**). These difficulties impact on workers' mental connection to the job, their motivation, organization commitment, and their general well-being. The importance of job involvement as a key psychological attribute of employees in their attachment to their job roles is highlighted in literature of organizational behaviour. **Kanungo (1982)** defined job involvement as the extent to which a person relates to his/her job and considers his/her work performance to be significant to his or her self-esteem. High job involvement is generally evident in employees' commitment, enthusiasm, responsibility, and emotional attachment in their work (**Huang et al., 2019**). They tend to be more likely to actively engage in organizational activities, exhibit innovative behaviour and to make positive contributions to organizational goals (**Kahn, 1990**).

Salessi and Omar (2021) noted that job involvement indicates cognitive and emotional involvement in work, and is closely linked with employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. The concept of employee motivation, job involvement and organisational commitment has been further strengthened in labour intensive sectors, in recent studies. The supportive work conditions, organizational support and employee involvement are closely related to workplace motivation and organizational attachment (**Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2024; Hngoi et al., 2024**). Similarly, job resources are positively associated with work involvement and psychological work attachment (**Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004**). Research studies by **Schaufeli et al. (2019)** also confirmed that the engaged workers exhibit greater energy, commitment, and absorption in the job. High involvement work systems have also been identified as an important factor affecting employee involvement and organizational resiliency. **Nguyen et al. (2024)** noted that participative management practices and cooperative organizational cultures have a significant impact on enhancing employee commitment and adaptability. Likewise, **Alikaj et al. (2021)** found that proactive personality and supportive human resource practices positively affect employee creativity, thriving at work and job involvement. Furthermore, **Gürbüz et al. (2024)** showed that autonomy, innovative HR practices, and employee empowerment are also important determinants of high levels of work engagement and creative performance in organizations. Other factors such as leadership behaviour and organizational support are also linked to employees' work involvement. Constructive leadership practices have a positive impact on employees' commitment and organizational identification, as shown by **Li et al. (2023)**. Similar study was conducted by **Hngoi et al. (2024)** which showed that organizational support has a positive effect on the job involvement and confidence of employees in the service sector. In fact, when employees feel fairly treated, supported, and recognized by management, they're more likely to feel connected to, and satisfied with, their work. Employee motivation is another critical factor to organizational effectiveness. Motivation is considered as the internal and external factors which activate, guide and maintain an individual's behaviour to attain a goal (**Pinder, 2019**). Motivation affects employees' desire to try, to persevere when things get tough, to work productively for the organisation. Labour intensive sector like tea plantations are particularly sensitive to employee motivation as workers are engaged in repetitive and physically demanding work in stressful working environment. Motivation in organizational psychology has several theoretical frameworks that offer insights into the nature of employee motivation. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by **Deci and Ryan (2000)** describes that the phenomenon of intrinsic motivation by stating that employees exhibit intrinsic motivation when their psychological need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is met. Subsequently, **Ryan & Deci (2020)** confirmed the link of intrinsically motivated employees in engaging in their jobs, being more creative, and experiencing higher levels of job satisfaction. Likewise, **Hackman and Oldham (1976)** theorized that autonomy, task identity, task significance, and feedback are positive influences of intrinsic motivation and employee satisfaction. These theories are still relevant when considering organizational behaviour (**Callado et al., 2023**).

The relationship between motivation, engagement, and organizational commitment has received considerable scholarly attention in recent years. **Meyer et al. (2019)** argued that motivated employees are more likely to develop stronger organizational commitment and remain emotionally attached to their workplaces. **Klein et al. (2020)** similarly reconceptualized workplace commitment as a multidimensional psychological bond influencing employee behaviour and organizational participation. The study by **Chauhan et al. (2022)** also revealed that employee engagement has a significant impact on organizational commitment with the mediation of job involvement. **Hirschi et al. (2019)** found that workers who believe that their work is meaningful exhibit higher levels of engagement and psychological commitment. **Callado et al. (2023)** also found that psychological empowerment and meaningful work have a positive impact on job involvement and intrinsic motivation. Motivation and job involvement are also closely related to employee well-being and work-life balance. **Brough et al. (2020)** found that across cultures, balanced work environments have a positive impact on employees' psychological health and organizational commitment. Likewise, **Grandey (2000)** emphasized the role of emotional regulation in the workplace on the stress of

employees, emotional exhaustion, and work engagement. The affective events theory of **Weiss and Cropanzano (1996)** also accounted for the fact that emotional events and experiences in the workplace have a significant impact on employees' attitudes, behaviors, and motivational patterns. The effect of organizational climate, HR practices and career development opportunities on job involvement has been explored in several studies. **Sungu et al. (2019)** concluded that the organizational career growth opportunities positively affect the turnover intentions and workplace attachment. Similarly, **Judge et al. (2020)** noted that positive job attitudes and satisfaction remain key factors in employee performance and organizational effectiveness. **Cohen (2006)** also found that those who have several types of organizational commitment are more likely to display positive workplace behaviour and organizational citizenship. Organizational support, labour welfare and management practices are important factors that affect the motivation and work involvement of employees in the context of tea plantation sector. In a study among plantation workers in Sri Lanka, **Fernando and Weerakkody (2018)** concluded that supportive supervision, welfare facilities and favourable work conditions have positive effects on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Likewise, **Begum (2020)** found that the employee welfare practices significantly influence the morale and organizational attachment of the employees in plantation sectors. The study by **Dutta (2021)** in the tea estates of Dibrugarh also revealed that recognition, support at work and supervisory behaviour have a significant impact on the motivation and performance of employees. Research on Assam tea gardens shows significant differences in the working environment of various types of workers. **Hazarika and Gogoi (2022)** found that there are significant differences between the welfare measures and employee satisfaction of public and private tea gardens in Assam. Likewise, **Kakati and Gogoi (2023)** noted that non-executive employees may face motivational issues because they are not involved in decision-making and have limited promotion prospects. Additionally, tea garden workers' subjective happiness and psychological well-being are strongly linked to social security measures, treatment at work, and organizational support systems, as noted by **Mozumdar (2023)**. Similarly, **Saikia and Shome (2023)** also highlighted the need for labour welfare and employee participation to enhance the organizational involvement in Assam tea gardens. Similarly, **Sharma and Das (2021)** stated that labour welfare and human development are still crucial to enhance the quality of life and productivity of tea plantation workers. Furthermore, the modern workplace demands that workers be flexible, psychologically resilient, emotionally stable, and engaged in their work. Research shows that employees who feel supported in their organizations are more likely to be motivated, creative, and committed to organizational goals (**Van der Voet & Steijn, 2021; Li et al., 2023; Eisenberger et al., 2020**). Likewise, companies with participative management systems and high-involvement work practices tend to have higher levels of employee engagement and organizational resilience (**Nguyen et al., 2024; Alikaj et al., 2021; Gürbüz et al., 2024**). Other studies also indicate that when employees feel fair, autonomous, and recognized in the workplace, they tend to feel more psychologically attached to their jobs and are more likely to go above and beyond their official duties (**Judge et al., 2020; Cohen, 2006; Hngoi et al., 2024**). Over the last few years, organizational scholars have increasingly focused on the fact that employee engagement and involvement are not only behavioural outcomes, but organizational resources that can be used to achieve long-term sustainability and institutional effectiveness (**Silva et al., 2023; Schaufeli et al., 2019; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017**). Likewise, **Dave et al. (2024)** found that job involvement, recognition, and organizational communication have positive effects on job involvement and satisfaction among employees. **Mehta et al. (2025)** found that psychological empowerment and welfare support enhance organizational commitment and productivity among industrial workers in the plantation sector context. Similarly, **Khalkho and Ghosh (2025)** emphasized that labour welfare, dignity at work and employee participation continue to be important factors in motivating and retaining employees in plantation sector. **Dey and Mishra (2026)** also found that employee welfare policies, labour-management relations, and participative organizational structures play significant roles in shaping the harmony and commitment of employees in the tea plantation industry in India. Similarly, **Usha et al. (2026)** reported that the job satisfaction and sustainability of livelihoods of tea plantation workers are significantly influenced by welfare facilities and supportive working environment. There has also been a great deal of academic research on the link between job involvement and employee well-being in various sectors and occupations. When employees feel their work has significance and is psychologically rewarding, they tend to be more emotionally stable, less prone to burnout, and more committed to the organization (**Hirschi et al., 2019; Sheikh, 2023; Callado et al., 2023**). Similarly, positive psychological health and work-life balance in the workplace are associated with increased workplace motivation and decreased turnover intentions (**Brough et al., 2020; Grandey, 2000; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996**). Recent research also shows that career development opportunities and developmental support in organizations positively influence employees' organizational attachment (**Sungu et al., 2019; Meyer et al., 2019; Klein et al., 2020**). These results support the idea that job

involvement is a multidimensional phenomenon and that it is related to employees' emotional, cognitive, and motivational experiences in organizational contexts (Salessi & Omar, 2021; Kahn, 1990; Kanungo, 1982).

Although extensive research has been conducted on job involvement, work engagement, employee motivation, and organizational commitment in sectors such as healthcare, education, manufacturing, hospitality, and information technology, comparatively limited empirical studies have examined these psychological constructs within the tea plantation industry of Assam from a comparative perspective. Existing plantation-related literature has largely concentrated on labour welfare, socio-economic conditions, industrial relations, and workforce exploitation, while comparatively less attention has been paid to psychological constructs such as employee involvement, intrinsic motivation, emotional engagement, and organizational commitment (Bhowmik, 2015; Hazarika & Gogoi, 2022; Dutta, 2021). Furthermore, differences in motivational orientation and job involvement between executive and non-executive employees remain insufficiently explored despite the hierarchical and labour-intensive nature of plantation organizations (Kakati & Gogoi, 2023; Begum, 2020; Saikia & Shome, 2023). Therefore, there exists a significant research gap in understanding how organizational role, authority structure, workplace environment, and managerial support influence the psychological involvement and motivation of tea plantation employees in Assam.

Against this background, the present study aims to examine and compare job involvement and employee motivation between executive and non-executive employees working in private tea gardens of Dibrugarh district, Assam. The study seeks to contribute to the fields of organizational behaviour, industrial psychology, and human resource management by providing empirical insights into employee motivation and workplace involvement in labour-intensive plantation sectors.

Objectives of the Study

The present study is undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To examine whether significant differences exist between public and private tea garden employees with respect to job involvement and employee motivation in Dibrugarh district, Assam.
2. To find out the significant differences among four groups of employees, namely public tea garden executives, public tea garden non-executives, private tea garden executives, and private tea garden non-executives, on the variables of job involvement and employee motivation in Dibrugarh district, Assam.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present study:

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between public and private tea garden employees with respect to job involvement and employee motivation in Dibrugarh district, Assam.

H₁₁: There is a significant difference between public and private tea garden employees with respect to job involvement and employee motivation in Dibrugarh district, Assam.

Hypothesis 2

H₀₂: There is no significant difference among public tea garden executives, public tea garden non-executives, private tea garden executives, and private tea garden non-executives on the variables of job involvement and employee motivation in Dibrugarh district, Assam.

H₁₂: There is a significant difference among public tea garden executives, public tea garden non-executives, private tea garden executives, and private tea garden non-executives on the variables of job involvement and employee motivation in Dibrugarh district, Assam.

Methods of the Study

The present study is based on an exploratory research design in nature to examine job involvement and employee motivation among public and private tea garden employees in Dibrugarh district, Assam. The study aimed to identify significant differences between public and private tea garden employees as well as among executives and non-executives with respect to job involvement and employee motivation. Quantitative approach was employed to obtain systematic and reliable findings.

Study Area

The study was conducted in selected public and private tea gardens of Dibrugarh district, Assam. Dibrugarh is one of the major tea-producing districts of Assam and tea plantation activities play an important role in the socio-economic development of the region.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study was conducted on a total sample of 564 permanent tea garden employees comprising 284 public tea garden employees and 280 private tea garden employees. Among the public tea garden employees, 62 were

executives and 222 were non-executives. Similarly, among the private tea garden employees, 65 were executives and 215 were non-executives. Respondents selected through a random sampling technique within the tea plantation sector. Employees having less than five years of work experience were excluded from the study in order to obtain more stable and reliable responses regarding job involvement and employee motivation.

Tools used for data collection

1. Job Involvement Scale

Job involvement was measured using the Job Involvement Scale developed by Kanungo (1982). The scale consists of 10 items measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” The scale measures the degree of psychological identification an employee has with his or her job.

2. Employee motivation scale

Employee motivation was measured using the Employee Motivation Scale developed by Srivastava (1988). The scale consists of 70 items covering dimensions such as personal growth, achievement, self-control, monetary gains, non-financial gains, social affiliation, and autonomy and self-actualization. Responses are measured on a 4-point Likert scale.

Data Analysis

Data analysis were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 27). Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were applied in the present study. Inferential statistical techniques including t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed to examine significant differences between public and private tea garden employees as well as among four groups of employees, namely public tea garden executives, public tea garden non-executives, private tea garden executives, and private tea garden non-executives. The statistical findings are presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table-1 represents significance of difference of the mean values between public tea garden employees and private tea garden employees on all the variables

Name of the variables	Public tea garden employees N=284		Private tea garden employees N=280		t' value	Level of significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
(V1) Job involvement	33.03	2.77	32.27	3.03	3.11	S
(V2) Need for personal growth.	33.38	1.85	32.70	2.62	3.58	S
(V3) Need for achievement	32.02	2.71	32.70	2.50	3.07	S
(V4) Need for self- control	27.45	3.76	29.73	3.59	7.37	S
(V5) Need for monetary gains.	33.99	1.68	34.11	2.36	.68	NS
(V6) Need for non-financial gains.	34.33	2.34	33.91	2.16	2.19	NS
(V7) Need for social affiliation	32.17	3.65	33.26	2.71	4.03	S
(V8) Need for autonomy and self-actualization.	33.35	3.47	31.84	3.09	5.43	S

*P<.05, **P<.01, ***P<.001, NS= Not significant

Table-1 shows that out of eight variables, six variables namely job involvement, need for personal growth, need for achievement, need for self-control, need for social affiliation, and need for autonomy and self-actualization were found to be statistically significant between public and private tea garden employees based on the independent sample t-test analysis. However, no significant differences were observed regarding need for monetary gains and need for non-financial gains.

Table-2 presents the ANOVA results for eight variables among four groups of tea garden employees, namely public tea garden executives, public tea garden non-executives, private tea garden executives, and private tea garden non-executives in Dibrugarh district, Assam.

Name of the Variables	Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of significance
(V1) Job involvement	Between Groups	884.88	3	294.96	41.97***	S
	Within Groups	3935.31	560	7.03		
	Total	4820.19	563			
	Between Groups	284.85	3	94.95	19.92***	S

(V2) Need for personal growth	Within Groups	2669.04	560	4.77		
	Total	2953.89	563			
(V3) Need for achievement	Between Groups	227.70	3	75.90	11.61***	S
	Within Groups	3661.67	560	6.54		
	Total	3889.37	563			
(V4) Need for self-control	Between Groups	2314.69	3	771.56	71.89***	S
	Within Groups	6010.39	560	10.73		
	Total	8325.08	563			
(V5) Need for monetary gains	Between Groups	33.69	3	11.23	2.70	NS
	Within Groups	2326.01	560	4.15		
	Total	2359.71	563			
(V6) Need for non-financial gains.	Between Groups	61.50	3	20.50	4.07**	S
	Within Groups	2822.30	560	5.04		
	Total	2883.80	563			
(V7) Need for social affiliation	Between Groups	270.49	3	90.16	8.83***	S
	Within Groups	5720.24	560	10.21		
	Total	5990.73	563			
(V8) Need for autonomy and self-actualization.	Between Groups	477.25	3	159.08	15.06***	S
	Within Groups	5914.19	560	10.56		
	Total	6391.44	563			

*P<.05 **P<.01 ***P<.001 NS= Not significant

Table -2 shows that there were significance differences among the four groups (public tea garden executives, public tea garden non-executives, private tea garden executives and private non- executives) on all the variables except for need for monetary gains.

Discussion:

The results of the present study revealed that there is a significant difference between the public and private tea garden employees in terms of job involvement ($t = 3.11$, $p < .05$) as shown in Table–1. The mean score ($M = 33.03$, $SD = 2.77$) of the public tea garden employees was higher than that of the private tea garden employees ($M = 32.27$, $SD = 3.03$). The results indicate that public sector workers might feel more attached to the organization, more stable in their positions, and more involved in organizational activities. **Gupta et al. (2024) and Mehta et al. (2025)** found that supportive organizational systems and employee empowerment have positive effects on workplace involvement and commitment. Likewise, **Saks (2022)** and **Bakker and Demerouti (2023)** highlighted the importance of supportive organizational environments in enhancing employee engagement and job involvement. The difference between the public and private tea garden employees in terms of the need for personal growth is significant ($t = 3.58$, $p < .05$) as shown in table–1. The public tea garden employees had higher aspirations for career development and professional advancement ($M = 33.38$, $SD = 1.85$) than the private tea garden employees ($M = 32.70$, $SD = 2.62$). Public sector organizations might offer more favorable learning, promotion and professional development opportunities. **Tangri and Sharma (2024) and Nanda (2025)** found that developmental opportunities and organizational empowerment have a positive effect on employee growth orientation and motivation. Similarly, **Deci et al. (2020) and Van den Broeck et al. (2021)** highlighted that competence development and supportive organizational climates positively strengthen personal growth needs and workplace motivation. Table–1 shows that there is significant difference between the public and private tea garden employees in the need for achievement ($t = 3.07$, $p < .05$). The mean score of the private tea garden employees ($M = 32.70$, $SD = 2.50$) was higher than that of the public tea garden employees ($M = 32.02$, $SD = 2.71$), indicating comparatively higher achievement orientation among the private sector employees. Private companies and institutions may foster higher levels of ambition and competitiveness in the workplace. **Choudhary and Sinha (2025) and Mehta et al. (2025)** found that performance-based work systems have a positive effect on employee achievement motivation. Similarly, **Locke and Latham (2020) and Gagné et al. (2022)** highlighted that the role of the organization, its goals, and its responsibility and performance expectations are important factors that reinforce achievement orientation and workplace motivation. Table–1 shows that there is a significant difference between public and private tea garden employees in terms of the need for self-control ($t = 7.37$, $p < .05$). The private tea garden employees had significantly higher scores ($M = 29.73$, $SD = 3.59$) than the public tea garden employees ($M = 27.45$, $SD = 3.76$). This means that the private sector workers might need to be more emotionally regulated, disciplined and adjusted in their behaviour because of the relatively higher work stress and performance expectations. **Usha et al. (2026) and Singh and Bajaj (2025)** found that stress in the workplace and organizational pressure have

a significant impact on psychological adjustment and emotional regulation of employees. Likewise, **Hülshager and Schewe (2021)** and **Deci et al. (2020)** highlighted that the demands of the workplace and the expectations of the organization have a significant impact on self-control and behavioural discipline of employees. There was no significant difference between public and private tea garden employees with respect to the need for monetary gains ($t = .68$, NS) (Table–1). The mean score for private tea garden employees ($M = 34.11$, $SD = 2.36$) was slightly higher than that of public tea garden employees ($M = 33.99$, $SD = 1.68$). The results indicate that both sectors place a high priority on salary, incentives, and economic security. **Dey and Mishra (2026)** and **Chopra et al. (2024)** noted that financial security and welfare are important factors that affect employee motivation and stability in the workplace. Similarly, **Herzberg (1966)**, and **Locke and Latham (2020)** highlighted that financial incentives and organizational advantages have a positive impact on employee motivation and attitudes toward work. The results of the present study show that there is no significant difference between the public and private tea garden employees with respect to non-financial gains ($t = 2.19$, NS) as shown in Table–1. The mean score for public tea garden employees ($M = 34.33$, $SD = 2.34$) was slightly higher than that of private tea garden employees ($M = 33.91$, $SD = 2.16$), suggesting that recognition, prestige, and organizational respect are valued similarly by both groups. **Dave et al. (2024)** and **Singh and Bajaj (2025)** found that organizational support and employee-focused workplace practices have a positive impact on morale and psychological satisfaction. Likewise, **Saks (2022)** and **Lee and Kim (2020)** highlighted that positive recognition and leadership positively influence employee belongingness and motivational behaviour. Table–1 shows that there is a significant difference between the social affiliation of public and private tea garden employees ($t = 4.03$, $p < .05$). The mean score of the private tea garden employees ($M = 33.26$, $SD = 2.71$) was higher than that of public tea garden employees ($M = 32.17$, $SD = 3.65$), suggesting that private sector employees were more interpersonal and group oriented. The social relationships and teamwork in private tea garden settings may be enhanced due to collective work culture and constant interaction. According to **Khalkho and Ghosh (2025)**, **Dey and Mishra (2026)**, the organizational culture of plantation has positive impact on employee interaction and group belongingness. Similarly, **Van den Broeck et al. (2021)** and **Perry et al. (2021)** highlighted that positive relationships at work positively foster social affiliation and organizational commitment. The difference between public and private tea garden employees in terms of autonomy and self-actualization is significant ($t = 5.43$, $p < .05$) as shown in Table–1. The public tea garden employees had higher scores ($M = 33.35$, $SD = 3.47$) than the private tea garden employees ($M = 31.84$, $SD = 3.09$), indicating higher aspirations for autonomy, creativity, leadership and personal fulfillment among public sector employees. Participation and professional independence may be relatively better in public organizations. **Gupta et al. (2024)** and **Nanda (2025)** noted that empowerment-based work systems have a positive impact on employee confidence and self-development. Likewise, **Gagné et al. (2022)** and **Bakker and Demerouti (2023)** highlighted the positive relationship between self-actualization and workplace motivation, with autonomy, supportive work environments, and psychological empowerment being the key factors. Table–2 shows the ANOVA results for eight variables across four groups of tea garden employees: public male executives, public female executives, private male executives and private female executives in the district of Dibrugarh, Assam. The results of V1 (Job Involvement) showed that there were statistically significant differences among the four groups of tea garden employees ($F = 41.973^{***}$, $p < .001$). The high F-value shows that there is a significant difference between the employees in terms of their psychological attachment and involvement with work. Executives tend to have higher work participation and organizational commitment due to increased decision-making power, administrative responsibility, and professional recognition. Organizations with a plantation structure tend to have differential levels of engagement by occupational category. **Bakker and Demerouti (2017)**, **Saks (2019)**, **Gupta et al. (2024)**, and **Jimoh (2025)** reported similar findings, highlighting the positive impact of organizational involvement and supportive work environments on job involvement and commitment. The results of V2 (Need for Personal Growth) showed that there were statistically significant differences between the four groups of tea garden employees ($F = 19.922^{***}$, $p < .001$). The findings indicate that there are significant differences in aspirations for self-development, professional growth and educational enhancement among employees. Executive staff are typically exposed to more training, leadership involvement, and organizational communication, which enhances growth orientation. Staff who have less organizational exposure may exhibit relatively low developmental motivation. The same was found by **Ryan and Deci (2020)**, **Khedkar (2024)**, **Marimon et al. (2025)**, and **Wen and Tahir (2024)** who highlighted that autonomy, competence, and organizational learning opportunities have a significant impact on employees' personal growth orientation. The results of V4 (Need for Achievement) showed that there were statistically significant differences between the four groups of tea garden workers ($F = 11.608^{***}$, $p < .001$). The findings suggest that there are significant differences in achievement motivation between occupational categories. Staff who are encouraged, led and recognised in the organisation can have higher aspirations for

achievement and success in the workplace. Executives often perform supervisory and administrative responsibilities that enhance achievement orientation. **Mehta et al. (2025), Dave et al. (2024), Locke and Latham (2020), and Herzberg (1966)** found that organizational encouragement, role clarity, and recognition positively reinforce achievement motivation and work performance. The results of V4 (Need for Self-Control) showed that there were statistically significant differences between the four groups of tea garden employees ($F = 71.888^{***}$, $p < .001$). The high F-value suggests that there is a significant difference in emotional regulation, coping and behavioural adjustment among employees. Occupational stress, physical hardship and economic insecurity are common in plantation work environments and can affect employees' emotional stamina and adaptive responses. The coping patterns of non-executive workers who work under strict supervision and are physically taxed may be different from those of executives. **Lakshmi and John (2023), Khalkho and Ghosh (2023), Hülshager and Schewe (2021), and Suifan et al. (2020)** also noted that stressful work conditions have a significant impact on self-control and emotional resilience. The results of V5 (Need for monetary gains) did not show any statistically significant difference between the four groups of tea garden employees ($F = 2.704$, NS). The non-significant result suggests that the financial expectations and monetary motivational needs are not significantly different between all occupational groups. Regardless of organizational type, employees in the tea plantation sectors are primarily reliant on wages and financial security for their livelihood. Economic uncertainty and inflation can also impact employees' financial concerns. The same results were obtained by **Sarkar (2023), Riyanto et al. (2021), Smith et al. (2023), and Dey and Mishra (2026)** who reported that monetary rewards are still a prevalent motivational issue among all occupational groups. The results of V6 (Need for non-financial gains) showed that there were statistically significant differences between the four groups of tea garden employees ($F = 4.067^{**}$, $p < .01$). The findings show that there are differences in expectations across occupational groups in terms of recognition, emotional support, appreciation, and organizational respect. Staff who are treated well and are supported in their leadership may exhibit higher orientation toward non-financial rewards. Executives are typically more appreciated and respected in their organizations. **Lakshmi and John (2023), Hilton et al. (2023), Saks (2019), and Khalkho and Ghosh (2025)** reported similar findings, highlighting the positive impact of emotional recognition and supportive work environments on employee morale and organizational attachment. The results of V7 (Need for social affiliation) showed that there were statistically significant differences between the four groups of tea garden workers ($F = 8.827^{***}$, $p < .001$). The findings suggest that there are significant differences between occupational categories in terms of interpersonal relationships, group belongingness, and workplace interaction. The traditional way of functioning of the tea garden communities is based on collective interaction and social dependency, but the organizational hierarchy can have different effects on the affiliation needs of employees. Positive social bonding is reinforced through supportive peer interaction and cooperative work culture. The results were also found by **Vinod and Meera (2022), Nurfalalah et al. (2021), Han and Yin (2016), and Dey and Mishra (2026)** who stated that cooperation and social interaction in the workplace positively affect organizational belongingness and employee motivation. The results of V8 (Need for autonomy and self-Actualization) showed that there were statistically significant differences between the four groups of tea garden workers ($F = 15.063^{***}$, $p < .001$). The findings suggest that there are significant differences in aspirations for independence, authority, dignity and psychological satisfaction between occupational groups. Executives tend to have more autonomy and leadership exposure within the organization, which enhances their self-actualization needs. Those who have less decision-making power may have lower psychological empowerment. **Ryan and Deci (2020), Gupta et al. (2024), Marimon et al. (2025), and Ceccarelli (2018)** all reported similar findings, highlighting the positive relationship between autonomy, competence, and participatory workplace systems and self-development and intrinsic motivation. Hypothesis -1 was partially rejected as significant differences were found between executives and non-executives on several dimensions of job involvement and employee motivation. Hypothesis was rejected as significant differences were observed among the four groups of tea garden employees on most dimensions of job involvement and employee motivation.

Summary and conclusion:

The present study examined job involvement and employee motivation among public and private tea garden employees in Dibrugarh district, Assam. The findings revealed significant differences between public and private tea garden employees on several dimensions of job involvement and employee motivation. Public tea garden employees demonstrated comparatively higher levels of job involvement, personal growth orientation, and autonomy and self-actualization, whereas private tea garden employees exhibited comparatively stronger need for achievement, self-control, and social affiliation. These differences may be associated with variations in work environment, job security, welfare facilities, administrative practices, and occupational responsibilities within tea plantation organizations.

The t-test analysis revealed significant differences between public and private tea garden employees on six important variables, namely job involvement, need for personal growth, need for achievement, need for self-control, need for social affiliation, and need for autonomy and self-actualization. However, no significant differences were observed regarding monetary gains and non-financial gains, indicating that employees in both tea gardens similarly value financial security, recognition, and workplace benefits.

The ANOVA findings further revealed statistically significant differences among public tea garden executives, public tea garden non-executives, private tea garden executives, and private tea garden non-executives on almost all motivational dimensions except monetary gains. Executive employees generally demonstrated comparatively higher organizational involvement and developmental orientation because of greater administrative responsibility and occupational exposure. On the other hand, non-executive employees exhibited comparatively stronger adjustment orientation and social dependency because of physically demanding work conditions and collective work structure within tea plantations.

The findings of the study are consistent with earlier organizational behaviour studies emphasizing that supportive work conditions, welfare facilities, organizational support, and opportunities for growth positively influence employee involvement and workplace motivation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Eisenberger et al., 2020; Hngoi et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024). The findings also support the theoretical perspectives of Kanungo (1982) and Ryan and Deci (2020), who emphasized that psychological attachment toward work, autonomy, competence, and workplace support significantly influence employee motivation and job involvement.

The study concludes that welfare measures, working conditions, organizational support, job security, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth play an important role in influencing job involvement and employee motivation among tea garden employees. Therefore, tea plantation management authorities should give greater importance to employee welfare, fair treatment, supportive work environment, and developmental opportunities in order to improve employee well-being, organizational attachment, and workplace productivity within plantation sector. Further, The study may assist policymakers, plantation management authorities, and human resource practitioners in developing effective strategies for improving employee well-being, organizational commitment, workforce engagement, and overall organizational productivity.

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