

**THE IMPACTS OF REMOTE WORKING ON EMPLOYEE
ENGAGEMENT IN THE ORGANIZATION**

The image shows a large, faint watermark of the Mahidol University logo in the center of the page. The logo is circular with a blue background and a gold border. It features a central golden emblem of a traditional Thai stupa (chedi) with a flame-like base. The Thai text 'มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล' (Mahidol University) is written in a circular path around the emblem.

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**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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ENGAGEMENT IN THE ORGANIZATION**

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THE IMPACTS OF REMOTE WORKING ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN THE ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

Since the COVID-19 epidemic began in 2020, it has changed work life, workplace, and working behavior in every business. The new working paradigm known as "Remote Working" is gaining popularity, since technological advancement has accelerated this working culture. The dependent variable in this study is employee engagement drivers (based on the Aon Hewitt Engagement Model), and remote working is one of the factors that influences employee engagement following a pandemic.

To examine the relationship between remote work and employee engagement and to identify the essential characteristics of remote work that have the biggest impact on engagement drivers, this study utilized the quantitative approach. To explore the relationship between this study's independent and dependent variables, a multiple regression analysis and an assessment of the data's reliability were both conducted. As it demonstrates how the new approach of remote working influences employee engagement, there is a strong relationship between remote working and employee engagement.

KEY WORDS: Employee Engagement / Work from Home, COVID-19 / Human Resource Development / Remote Working / Aon Hewitt Engagement Model

43 pages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the study

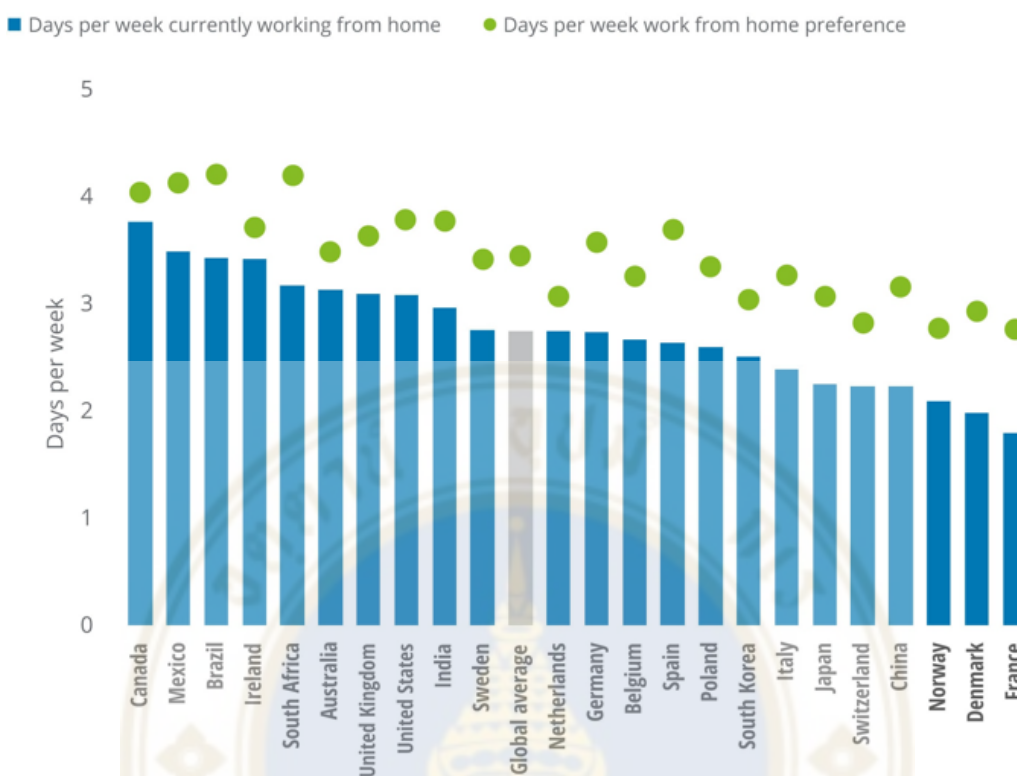
Employees are undeniably one of the most important resources in any business, possessing the ability to push for new creative solutions, generate large sales volumes, and contribute to the company's long-term profitability. As a result, in order to keep potential employees completely operating properly for the benefit of the business, each company must discover the right strategy to create a connection, relationship, and bond. As evidenced by many research findings, the power balance has moved from employer to employee in many circumstances, forcing company leaders to understand how to design an organization that engages people as sensitive, motivated, and innovative stakeholders (Deloitte US, 2015). As a result, a strong employee engagement strategy will surely assist the organization in becoming a champion in their industry.

Normally, during the pre-pandemic period, employees engage with their own organization through several activities to hold the single one of core value, vision as well as culture. Most engagement between employees and organization is created and designed through face-to-face circumstances, resulting in a strong bond of relationship. And then, COVID-19 has caused significant changes in how we work, most notably driving many people to work remotely. It is unavoidable that the pandemic has accelerated current trends in remote work, e-commerce, and automation. For almost three years, office workers have been accustomed to the new normal of remote working from anywhere other than the office, as well as hybrid working, which allows employees to visit the office on occasion.

According to Deloitte Insights data (figure 1), half of all working individuals (53 %) say they can conduct their job remotely. Working from home accounts for most of the usual work week—an average of 2.7 days. It can be seen that the global trend of remote work is on the rise, even while the epidemic is progressively getting better.

FIGURE 1

The shift to remote work will likely outlive the pandemic



Note: N=11,500 respondents able to do their job from home.

Source: Deloitte Global State of the Consumer Tracker.

Deloitte Insights | deloitte.com/insights

Figure 1.1 The shift to remote work will outlive the pandemic - Deloitte Insights

Meanwhile, according to PwC Thailand, Thai firms have already started to embrace a remote working style in which employees are not required to show up at work. The results of PwC's Future of Work and Skills Survey, which asked almost 4,000 business and HR leaders from 26 countries about current workforce problems and the future of work, are in line with this trend. This obviously demonstrates that remote working models are still commonly used even after the COVID-19 crisis.

However, since the pandemic has lasted for more than two years, remote working has evolved into the norm. The ability to work remotely brings several challenges and benefits to employees in the organization. Despite the huge rise in remote working, one-fifth of all HR leaders mentioned the general problem of shifting from onsite to remote work, while others mentioned significant issues, such as keeping

remote employees engaged (17%), productive (7%), and connected (5%) (Sull et al., 2020). Therefore, it is very challenging to see how this new approach of working will affect employee engagement during the post-pandemic circumstance.

The above information clearly demonstrates that the dynamics of the workforce are transforming; thus, it is undeniable that businesses must adapt to this new, fast-paced environment. It can be expected and predicted that the demand for employees will change, such that remote working or even working with no boundaries will play a significant role in the shift to a global workforce outlook. Understanding and obtaining the ability to gain insight from employees' data will slow the decline of their engagement level while increasing their motivation.

AON Hewitt contributes significantly to this thematic paper's research by studying the impact of remote working on employee engagement, since the model defines employee engagement as the psychological and behavioral effects that contribute to improved employee performance. According to the Aon Hewitt engagement model, engagement is made up of six components: brand leadership, performance, company practices, basics, and work, with three observable outcomes: say, stay, and strive. Employees are completely engaged if they exhibit all features of these three results, which constitute engagement outcomes (Hinzmann et al., 2019).



Figure 1.2 Aon Hewitt Engagement Model - Aon Hewitt

As seen in the figure below, it demonstrates that there are 21 areas which are referred as “Engagement Drivers,” that can potentially drive people’s engagement towards the organization.

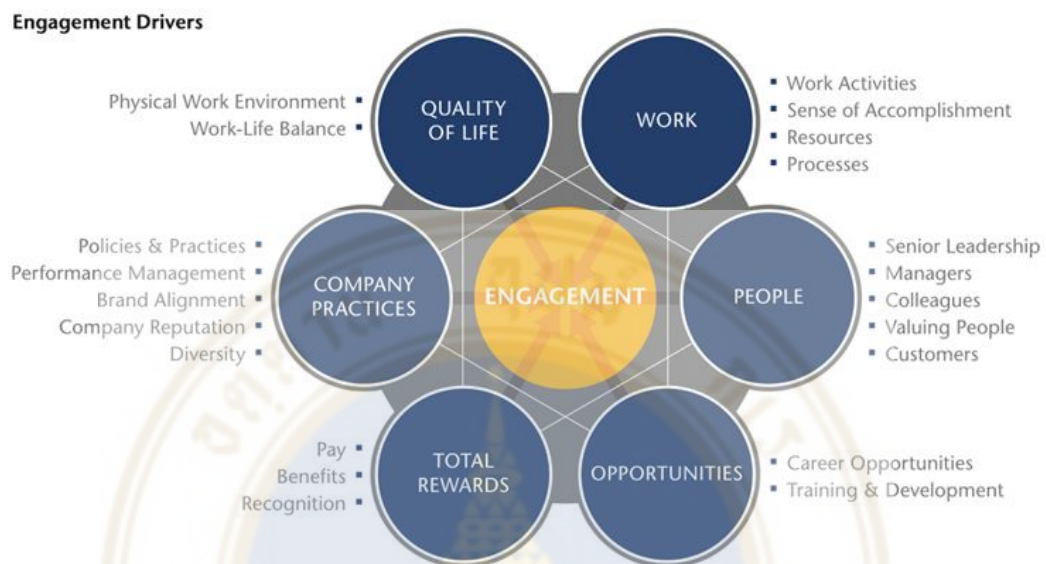


Figure 1.3 Aon Hewitt Engagement Model’s Engagement Drivers - Aon Hewitt

This model looks at the employees’ data, their areas of improvement, how they engage with their workforce, as well as the experience they have towards work. It clearly demonstrates that this engagement model does not only investigate the factors that lead to employee satisfaction but also focuses on how to understand the needs of employees to close the gap of dissatisfaction for them.

The second significant component of this model is defined as engagement outcomes, in which Aon Hewitt examines three crucial actions in employees: say, stay, and strive. All these things show how engaged an employee is. According to Aon Hewitt, the engagement surveys are crafted and utilized to gather results which indicate the magnitude of employees’ satisfaction, experience, and action towards organization from targeted employees. The results are expected to indicate which areas of engagement driver are considered key drivers that critically affect the overall engagement levels. Employers can increasingly engage employees in the specific area of improvement if there is a key driver that links to a significantly declining engagement level.

This model undeniably enables the company and employers to obtain the essential engagement data they need to implement and plan an effective strategy to keep their employees engaged.

1.4 Research Objectives

There are four research objectives in this paper as follows as below.

1. To identify factors based on remote working dimensions that influence employee engagement.
2. To examine the impact of remote working and its effects on employee engagement
3. To understand a correlation between remote working approach and employee engagement.
4. To explore literature reviews on remote working and its effects on employee engagement

1.3 Research Questions

There are two research questions in this paper as follows as below.

1. Is there a relationship between remote working and employee engagement?
2. What are the influential factors of remote working that affect engagement drivers based on the Aon Hewitt Engagement Model?

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Employee Engagement

According to Deloitte, employee engagement is defined as an employee's emotional connection to their organization, its employees, vision, and goals. It is not only about employee satisfaction, high wages, or rewarding an employee (Kewalramani, 2020). There are several management tools to measure the metrics of employee engagement. Most employee engagement indicators include the working atmosphere, job design, resource support, working conditions, business culture, and leadership style (Surma, Nunes, Rook, & Loder, 2021).

Several studies indicate that employee engagement is key for organizations to achieve profitability. According to *Employee Engagement: Creating High Positive Energy at Work*, everyone in the organization benefits from high levels of employee engagement (Peters, 2019). According to Gallup organization research, employee engagement is a critical success component, and in order to win the hearts and minds of customers, an organization must first win over and understand its employees. Then, employees will be able to offer customer-satisfying products and services, as they are the ones who determine the customer experience. The author, Peters, emphasizes further that a satisfied customer is the outcome of engaged employees along the value chain; hence, every group of employees at each step of the organization's process has direct and indirect effects on the customer experience.

As seen in multiple research and studies, the model to analyze, measure, and develop an organization's employee engagement does not only rely on the Aon Hewitt engagement model; consequently, other models have been addressed. Institute for Employment Studies (IES) defines its employee engagement as a positive attitude toward the company and its ideals. Engaged employees understand the business context and cooperate with colleagues to improve job performance for the organization. The

institute further states that engagement involves a two-way interaction between employer and employee.

Meanwhile, according to another academic publication, employee engagement is a psychological condition in which the employee has a good attitude toward the company and its goals to work at standards that meet the required job description (Gustomo, 2015). Another employee engagement model stated in the publication is the Mercer model, which defines employee engagement as a psychological state in which employees feel motivated to perform the task as required. The engagement drivers in each engagement model obviously vary, reflecting cultural and geographical differences, so that the engagement drivers considered by the Mercer model differ from those regarded by the Aon Hewitt engagement model. The Mercer divides drivers into four categories: the work itself, which includes opportunities for advancement, confidence and trust in leadership, recognition and rewards, and organizational communication (Gustomo, 2015). However, the primary focus of this study is employee engagement as assessed by the Aon Hewitt engagement model.

2.2 Remote Working

According to Cambridge Dictionary (Remote Working, 2022), the definition of remote working is the practice of an employee working at their home, or in some other place that is not an organization's usual place of business.

Looking back at the term, it is said that remote working is a concept that was defined in the twentieth century. In the early 1970s, the concept of remote work simply meant working remotely using IT equipment and office supplies or referred to as teleworking. The term "teleworking" has been replaced by the term "remote work" as technological progress has sped up (Wontorczyk & Roźnowski, 2022). Incoherency, another academic journal also defines remote working as the concept that was initiated by Jack Niles in 1970 with the word "Telecommuting" (Putra et al., 2020).

Remote working is defined as when employees perform tasks in different workplaces, such as at home, using information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as computers, the internet, and telephones (Garret & Danziger, 2007). Furthermore, Garret and Danziger state that remote working has four dimensions: flexible working

location, time distribution, a variety of employment relationships, and the importance of information and communication technology (Garret & Danziger, 2007).

Another research study demonstrates that there are multiple meanings behind the term "Remote Working", highlighting the similarity. According to the International Labor Organization, remote working is a type of work in which work is performed in a location remote from a central office or manufacturing plants, thus separating the worker from personal contact with work colleagues there; and new technology facilitates this separation by enabling interaction (Rañeses, Nisa, Bacason & Martir, 2022).

Remote working factors include three dimensions for reaping the full benefits of remote working: people; process; and infrastructure. People are considered to play the main role in the remote work process. Processes, such as policies and procedures, must support effective management or remote working processes. The final dimension is infrastructure, which includes the technological and physical aspects crucial in facilitating remote working such as internet, information, and communication platforms (Ghanbari and Bakhtjoo, 2017).

2.3 Remote Working and Traditional Working

According to a number of research studies, typical workplaces rely heavily on face-to-face interaction, whereas remote working is defined as an approach that does not require a physical connection. Furthermore, technological advancement is one important factor that distinguishes remote working from traditional working environments, as it is believed that the prospering use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) directly influences the increase of alternative means in the traditional workplace (Rañeses, Nisa, Bacason & Martir, 2022).

2.4 Remote Working and Employee Engagement

Even though the number of remote workers is increasing, the factors and characteristics of remote working allow employees to disengage with their work and

organization. With these two ideas in mind, it's no wonder that academics and companies are eager to learn how to keep remote employees motivated in their work (Baez, n.d.).

Reviewing Aeon Hewitt, remote working factors and their three dimensions influence and connect with some of the model's engagement drivers, but not all of them. This study selects seven engagement drivers within the model to investigate the influence and correlation between these two concepts. These selected engagement drivers are highlighted since they may heavily relate to factors in the context of remote work. The 7 are as follows.

2.4.1 Engagement

According to the published study on the correlation between remote working and employee engagement, respondents believe that their organization's engagement level is 3 on a scale of 5 (Anand & Acharya, 2021). Recipients are surveyed through questionnaire among human resources of various organizations.

2.4.2 Work task

According to the academic publication, there are significant changes in individual employees' work engagement levels when they work remotely. According to Anne Mäkikangas' study of higher education employees, the majority of them stated that the transition to remote work went well and that they were capable of maintaining their work engagement levels amid the extended remote work (Mäkikangas et al., 2022).

2.4.3 Collaboration

A recent post-COVID-19 research study elaborates that collaboration plays an important role in increasing engagement levels for remote employees. The author states the background of the study is that remote work was not created because of the pandemic; rather, the increasingly advanced and abilities of technology such as computers, the internet, and smartphones enable employees to be flexible enough to work from anywhere. Undeniably, collaboration between departments, such as IT and front-line workers, will also streamline customer experiences and achieve positive feedback (Tran, Carden, and Zhang, 2022). Additionally, the study also shows that a

shared leadership network that includes stakeholders in the processes of decision-making and operations also leads to a work culture.

2.4.4 Autonomy

According to prior studies, there are multiple definitions of autonomy in terms of workforce aspects. The first is "the freedom an individual has in carrying out work" (Humphrey, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007). Meanwhile, as per self-determination concept, one of the three fundamental needs for the development of engagement is the need for autonomy; the other two are the needs for competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The 2021 paper investigated the mutual linkages between autonomy, work, employee engagement, and remote working. The study conducted in this paper aims to demonstrate how autonomy helps in the development of employee engagement in the digital age, particularly under remote working situations. The author stated that autonomy is the real amount of freedom an employee must decide how their work is set up in four areas: planning work orders, choosing methods, choosing where to do work, and making decisions about the job. (Boskovic, 2021).

2.4.5 Rewards and Recognition

According to a Forbes article, employee recognition is an important tool not only for increasing productivity, turnover, and satisfaction for all, but the improved feelings of value, motivation, engagement, and trustworthiness are especially beneficial for those working under nontraditional circumstances as remote workers (Sonnenberg, 2022).

2.4.6 Communication with leaders and colleagues

The prior study investigated the impacts and influences of remote working on employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of communication, and found that remote working significantly impacted communication (Baakeel, 2021).

Meanwhile, another academic journal is researching employee engagement after the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the workforce. Its findings indicate that by engaging stakeholders and employees through strong communication, such as

information sharing, tools, and techniques, businesses can reap the benefits of remote employees while also achieving business success (Tran, Carden and Zhang, 2022). Therefore, it is clearly evidenced that communication is essential to keep employees engaged remotely.

2.4.7 Work/Life balance

Employees who have a strong work-life balance are more productive and engaged, whereas conflict leads to disengagement and burnout (Kossek et al., 2006). According to the journal's article on employee engagement and work from home circumstances, findings reveal that issues about work-life balance influence employee engagement when people work from home. The research further points out that employees may experience weariness and burnout because of their office workload and increasing duties at home (Krishnamoorthy, 2022).

2.4.8 Learning and Development

The previous research adds to an important study on remote and hybrid working that looks at its links with HRD topics like learning and development, organizational efficiency, learning effectiveness, sustainability, and career development (Gifford, 2022). Gifford also references an academic paper on learning and development. The first research looks at the problems and possibilities that remote employees have in pursuing their careers in a sustainable way.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

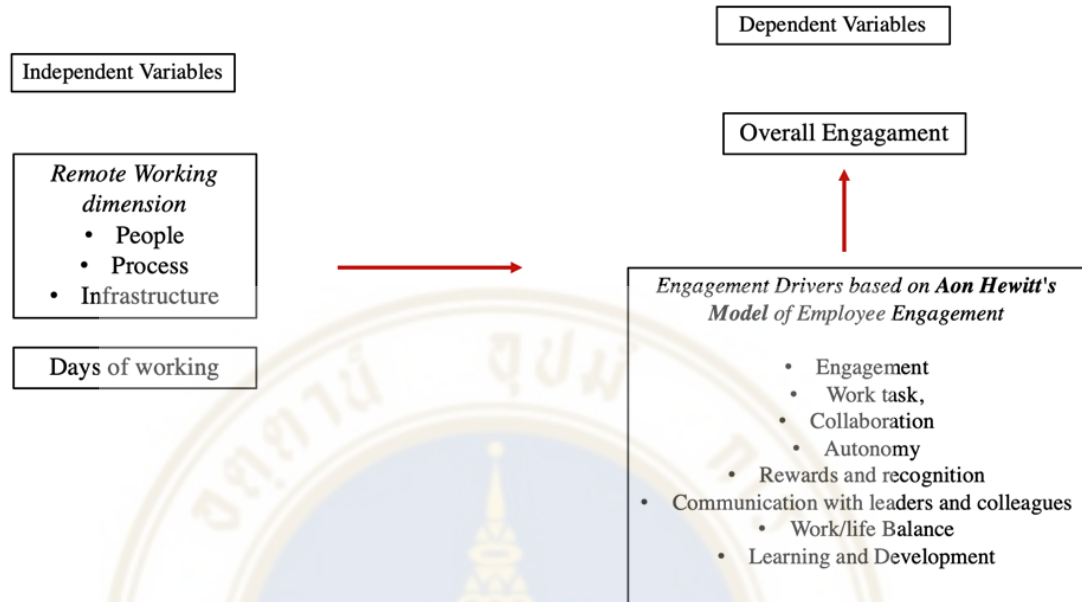


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants and procedure

In this study, survey sample is made up of both females and males who live in Bangkok and must be working for organization, age ranging from all group, from under 20 years old to over 54 years old. The purpose of this study is to investigate employee engagement as a result of remote working conditions, to examine the relationship between remote working and employee engagement, and to determine the most relevant remote working factors that influence engagement drivers. This study also focuses on gaining answers from employees whose job industries, ages, and frequency of remote working are related to remote working and from employees who have remote working experience, asking if they think each element of remote working affects employee engagement drivers and how.

The questionnaire contains short, key information underscoring the study's objective. Consequently, the questionnaire was reviewed by Mahidol University College of Management professors (CMMU) before its release. The research survey is conducted online through the Google Form platform and is divided into many sets.

3.2 Quantitative Method

The first section of questions is used to screen a sample population. It has two questions: the first is designed to determine whether respondents are familiar with remote working, and the second question is designed to identify whether respondents have previously worked remotely. If they do not, their replies will be omitted from the data collection.

The second section consists of questions about remote work, each of which is based on three dimensions of remote work to consider as independent variables. The three dimensions for achieving the full benefits of remote working includes people,

process, as well as infrastructure as it is crafted based on the actions or implementation that organization provide to their employees. Each of the independent variables contains a single four-choice question about organizational policies and procedures that facilitate remote work. The three questions include Does your organization have communication channels or activities that are set up to support remote working effectively?, When you work remotely, does your organization have a proper remote working process or procedure to support your work effectively? And do you have access to all the available infrastructure, hardware, data, and platforms you need—such as application or VPN access—to be productive while remote working? In addition to the three dimensions of remote working area of study, a question on remote working policy is added to analyze the frequency of remote working policies inside organizations as the question is How many days does your company have a policy on working remotely?

The third section covers the research questions for the dependent variables, which are employee engagement drivers in this thematic paper. The 25 questions are designed in accordance with the Aon Hewitt Engagement Model. There are seven sections of questions within of 25 questions relating to employee engagement drivers, which are engagement, work task, collaboration, autonomy, rewards and recognition, communication with leaders and colleagues, work/life balance, and learning and development.

Each dependent variable contains multiple questions with the following four-point scale: 1 is the scale for strongly disagreeing, 2 is the scale for disagreeing, 3 is the scale for agreeing, and 4 is the scale for strongly agreeing.

The first dependent variable in the third section is **engagement**, which intends to examine the effect of remote working on the engagement dimension. The question is: Do you agree that a company's establishment of a remote-work policy increases employee engagement?

The questions regarding second dependent variable, aim to assess the impacts of remote working on **work task** dimension, which considers employee productivity, work challenges, understanding of organizational work processes, the employee's work goal, and quality delivery of product within the employee's scope of work. The questions are asked to collect the respondents' degree of agreement as follows: Is the quality of the products or services not affected or degraded when I work

remotely? My work challenges me to use my knowledge and skills fully, I have clear work targets when working remotely, I have sufficient technical knowledge to complete work while working remotely, and I have a good understanding of organization's work structures and processes.

Furthermore, questions regarding third dependent variables, focusing on **collaboration**, intend to explore the influences of remote working on best practice and job knowledge sharing, as well as cooperation among coworkers. The questions are asked to gather the respondents' degree of agreement as follows: My coworkers respect my thoughts and feelings when I work remotely, I and my coworkers work together effectively when remote working, I and coworkers share best practices and job knowledge with each other when we work remotely, and I'm willing to participate in more informal company activities and foster good collaboration during remote working.

Questions about the fourth dependent variables are crafted based on autonomy dimension, attempting to assess the impact of remote working on the decision-making and authority of employees. The questions are asked based on the respondents' degree of agreement as follows: I have sufficient authority to produce tasks when working remotely, and I believe I have the appropriate amount of information to make correct decisions about my work.

The fifth dependent variable in the third section is **rewards and recognition**, which intends to examine the effect of remote working on the recognition of an employee's contributions as well as satisfaction with benefits and welfare. The questions are asked based on the respondents' degree of agreement as follows: I receive appropriate recognition for my contributions and accomplishments (in addition to my salary and benefits), My salary is strongly influenced by my performance, I think that rewards and recognition are fair and transparent even I work remotely, and Even though I work remotely, I think this organization's benefit package fits my (and my family's) needs properly.

Meanwhile, questions regarding the sixth dependent variable, focusing on **communication with leaders and colleagues**, intend to explore the influences of remote working on employees' connectivity with their supervisors and coworkers. The questions are asked to gain the respondents' degree of agreement as follows: My manager provides the support I need to succeed when I work remotely, The leadership

of your division or business is visible and accessible to employees when I work remotely, I am kept informed on matters that directly affect me when I work remotely, and when I work remotely, I can connect with my manager as well as if I were in the office.

The questions regarding seventh dependent variable, aim to assess the impacts of remote working on **work/life balance** dimension, The question is asked to gather the respondents' degree of agreement as follows: The balance between my work and personal commitments is right for me when I work remotely.

Finally, questions about the final dependent variables are designed based on **the learning and development** dimension, with an emphasis on career opportunities as well as feedback and training employees received. The questions are to collect the respondents' degree of agreement as follows: I know what career opportunities are available to me at the company when I work remotely, I have sufficient opportunity to learn to enhance my career when I work remotely, When something unexpected comes up in my work during remote working, I usually know whom to ask for help, and I receive fair and practical feedback to help me improve my work.

In the last section, questions are designed to collect demographic responses from participants, including sex, age, the type of organization with which respondents have experience working remotely, such as private sector, public sector, state-owned enterprise, or NGOs, and years of work experience. The questions in the first section can be analyzed along with the respondents' demographics as well as organization type to clarify the relationships between years of experience and respondents.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Number of responses

According to the survey throughout October 18, 2022 – November 11, 2022, consequently, there are 113 responses from individuals. According to the data, 109 respondents, or 96.5%, said they were familiar with the "remote working" approach, while 4 respondents, or 3.5%, said they had never heard of it. Furthermore, among the 113 responses, 102 respondents, or 89.3%, have worked remotely, while 11 respondents, or 10.7%, have never worked remotely before. The overall response results are illustrated in the tables and figures below (refer to table 4.1, 4.2 and figure 4.1, 4.2).

Table 4.1 Number of responses 1

| Have you ever known "remote working" approach before? | | | |
|---|-------|-----------|---------|
| | | Frequency | Percent |
| Valid | Yes | 109 | 96.5 |
| | No | 4 | 3.5 |
| | Total | 113 | 100.0 |

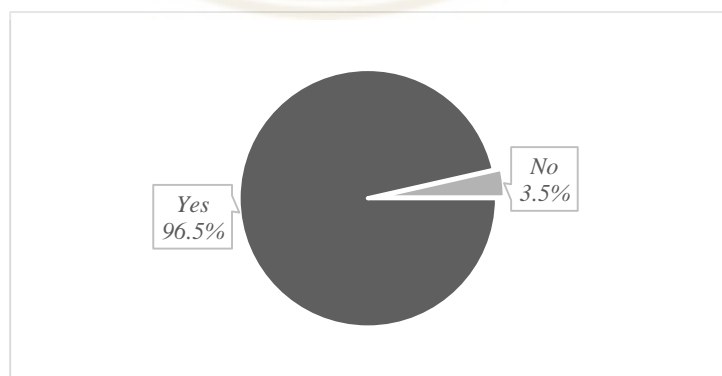
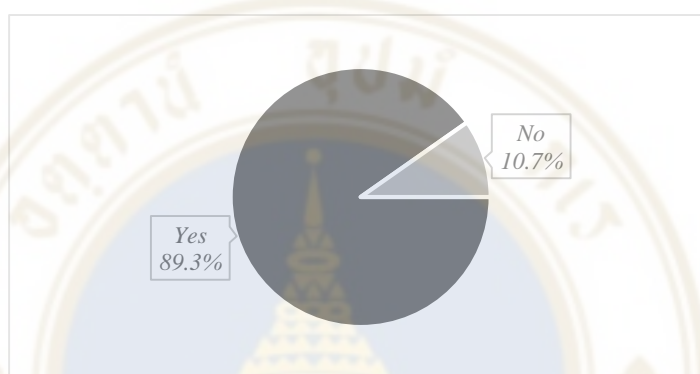


Figure 4.1 Number of responses 1

Table 4.2 Number of responses 2

| Have you ever worked remotely? | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|
| | | Frequency | Percent |
| Valid | Yes | 102 | 89.3 |
| | No | 11 | 10.7 |
| | Total | 113 | 100.0 |

**Figure 4.2 Number of responses 2**

The 11 respondents who have never experienced remote working will be excluded from the analysis. As a result, the surveys gathered for future analysis a total of 103 responses, with the following illustrated data:

4.1.1 Physical Gender

Most respondents are female, with 68 responses, or 66.7%, followed by males, with 30 responses, or 33.3%.

Table 4.3 Physical Gender

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|--------|-----------|---------|
| Valid | Female | 68 | 66.7 |
| | Male | 34 | 33.3 |
| | Total | 102 | 100.0 |

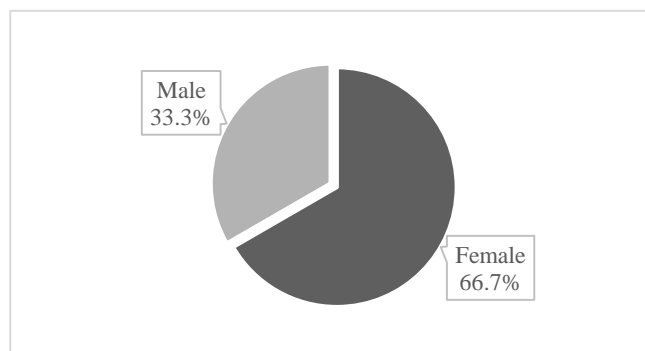


Figure 4.3 Physical Gender

4.1.2 Age

Most respondents are in the age range of 21–37 years old with 51%, followed by respondents in the age range of 38–53 years old with 47 %, respectively; moreover, there are only 2 responses, or 2% from people older than 54 years old.

Table 4.4 Age

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| Valid | Between 21-37 | 52 | 51.0 |
| | Between 38-53 | 48 | 47.0 |
| | More than 54 | 2 | 2.0 |
| | Total | 102 | 100.0 |

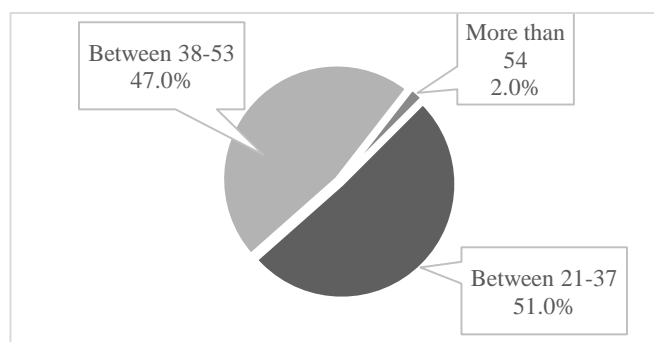


Figure 4.4 Age

4.1.3 Marital Status

Most respondents are single, with 64.7%, followed by married status with 35.3%.

Table 4.5 Marital Status

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Valid | Single | 66 | 64.7 |
| | Married | 36 | 35.3 |
| | Total | 102 | 100.0 |

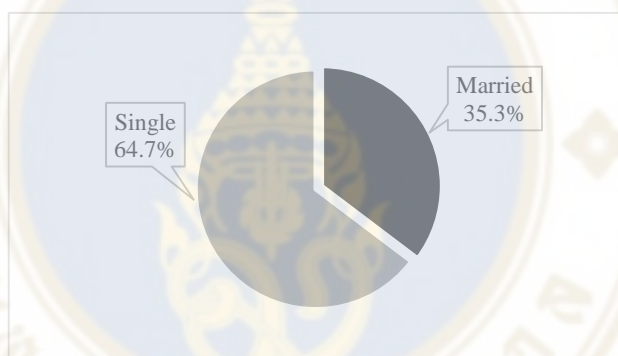


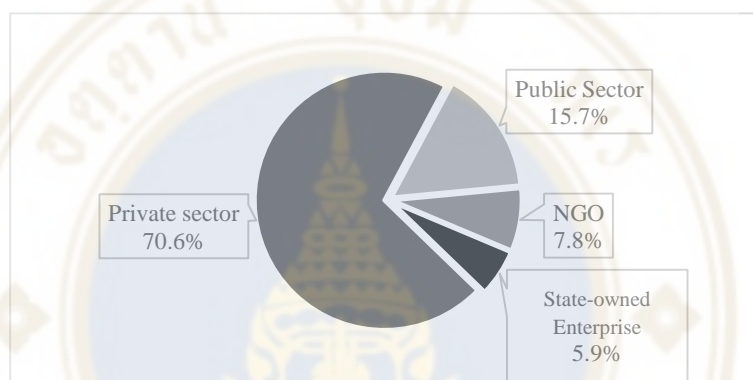
Figure 4.5 Marital Status

4.1.4 Type of organization

Most survey respondents work in organizations with private ownership, or 70.6%, followed by the public sector, NGOs, and state-owned enterprises with 15.7%, 7.8%, and 5.9%, respectively.

Table 4.6 Type of organization

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Valid | Private sector | 72 | 70.6 |
| | Public Sector | 16 | 15.7 |
| | NGO | 8 | 7.8 |
| | State-owned Enterprise | 6 | 5.9 |
| | Total | 102 | 100.0 |

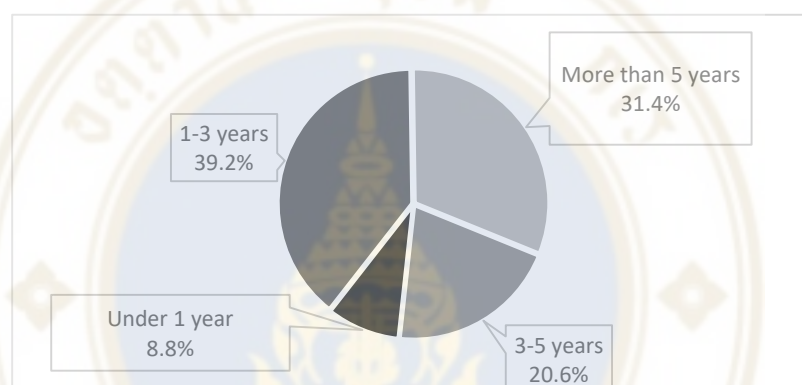
**Figure 4.6 Type of organization**

4.1.5 Years of work experience

Most survey respondents work in organizations with 1-3 years of experience, or 39.2%, followed by respondents with more than 5 years of experience at 31.4%. Consequently, respondents working in organizations with 3-5 years of experience, or 20.6%, and respondents with less than a year of experience rank last with 8.8%.

Table 4.7 Years of work experience

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| Valid | 1-3 years | 40 | 39.2 |
| | More than 5 years | 32 | 31.4 |
| | 3-5 years | 21 | 20.6 |
| | Under 1 year | 9 | 8.8 |
| | Total | 102 | 100.0 |

**Figure 4.7 Years of work experience**

4.2 Reliability Test

Cronbach's alpha measure is used in this thematic paper as it is a measure of scale reliability. To assess the reliability of the data collected from the survey, IBM SPSS Statistics version 29 has been utilized. As seen in the table below, Cronbach's alpha values for each variable question about engagement drivers are all higher than 0.6. This indicates that the survey data has passed the reliability test and can be used for further study.

As it is stated generally that Alpha Cronbach's value above 0.6 is considered a high reliability and acceptable index, all the data from the survey demonstrate that the value of all is considered "acceptable." Among 7 different engagement drivers, the highest value of Cronbach's Alpha for the survey was $\alpha = .84$, which is Communication

with leaders and colleagues' engagement driver, meanwhile, the lowest value of Cronbach's Alpha for the survey was $\alpha = .74$ which is Learning and Development engagement driver. Additionally, the work/life balance engagement driver is not measured by Cronbach's alpha approach as it contains only one question under its dimension.

Table 4.8 Reliability Statistics

| | Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|---|------------------|------------|
| Specific Questions: Work task | .795 | 5 |
| Specific Questions: Collaboration | .750 | 4 |
| Specific Questions: Autonomy | .812 | 2 |
| Specific Questions: Rewards and Recognition | .839 | 4 |
| Specific Questions: Communication with leaders and colleagues | .843 | 4 |
| Specific Questions: Learning and Development | .741 | 4 |

4.3 Descriptive Analytic

After a thorough analysis of all the responses, there is data and information that help classify, show, or summarize data points in a useful way. This produces patterns that can be used to answer research questions and objectives about how remote working affects employee engagement. The following 4.3.1. column chart illustrates all the data regarding the general question of remote working, the results suggest that most respondents work for organizations that have a remote working policy of 3-4 days per week.

4.3.1 General question on remote working policy

Most survey respondents stated that their organizations have policies and procedures that allow them to work remotely 3-4 days per week; nevertheless, the number of working days has a similar proportion ranging from 2 days per week to once per week. However, respondents' organizations range across many different types.

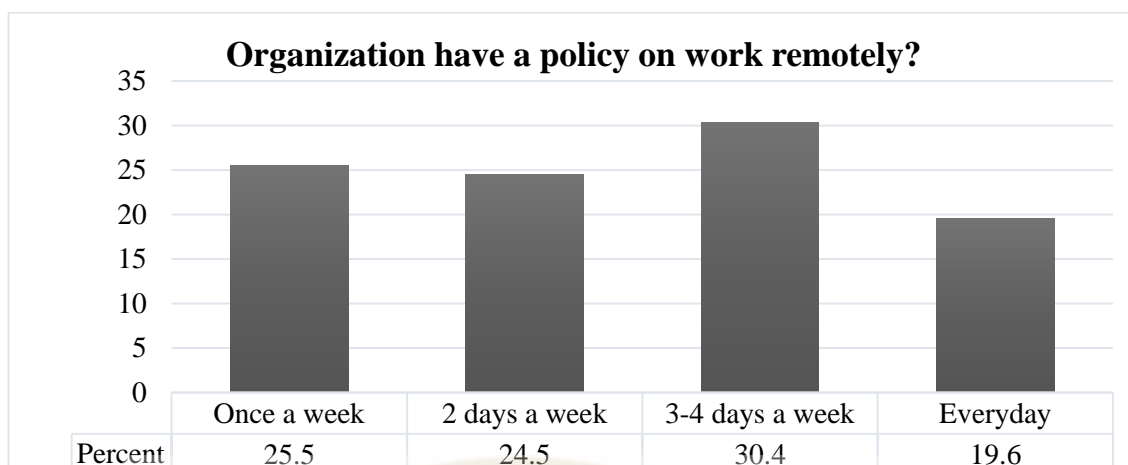


Figure 4.8 Remote working policy

4.3.2 General question on communication channels

For the general question of remote working, the results showed that most respondents' organizations have implemented communication channels that every employee uses at 61.8%.

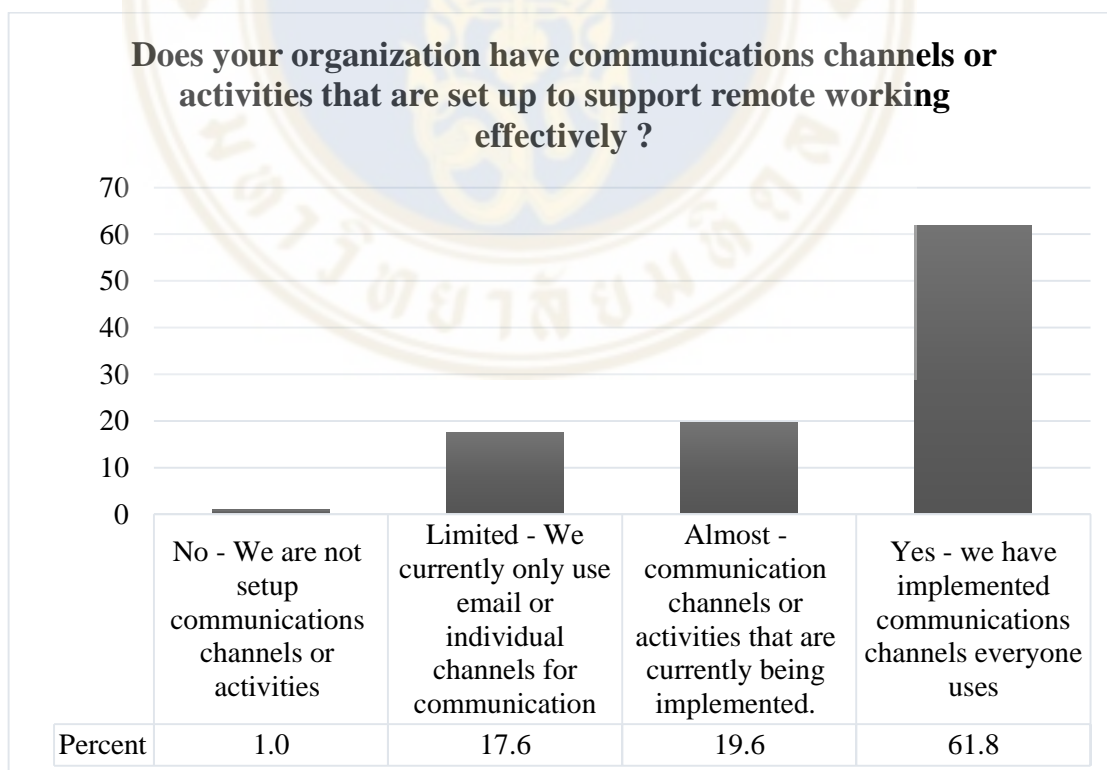


Figure 4.9 Communication channels

4.3.3 General question on remote working process or procedure

For the third general question of remote working, the results shows that most respondents' organizations develop a proper remote working process or procedure to support your work effectively; the number is 43.1%.

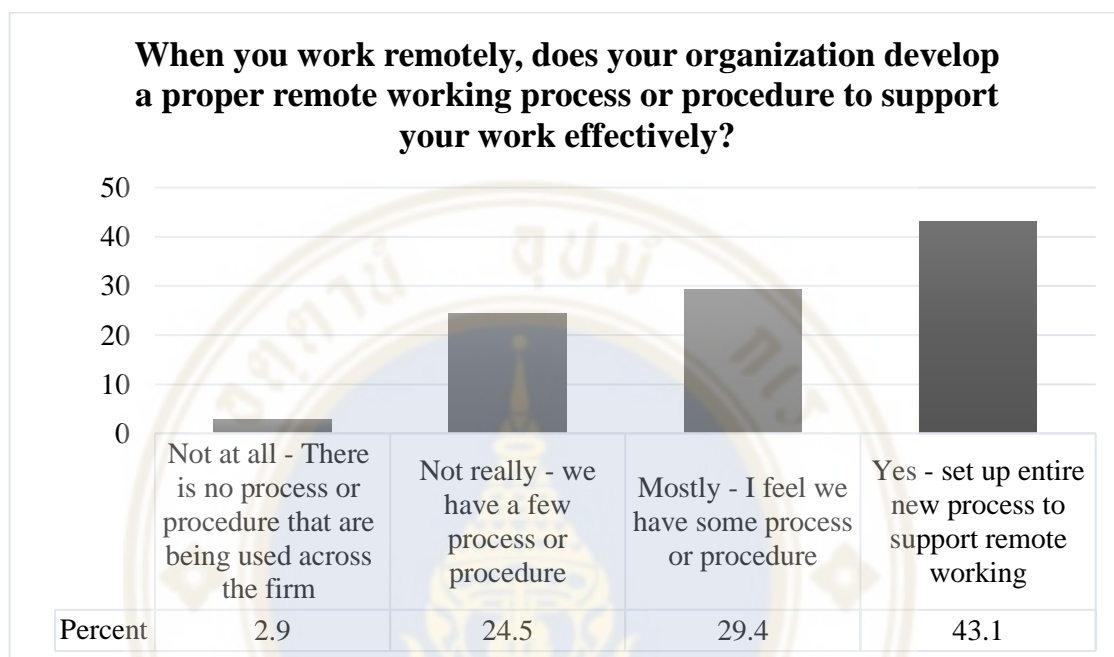


Figure 4.10 Remote working process or procedure

4.3.4 General question on the available infrastructure, hardware, data, and platforms

For the last general question of remote working, the result shows that most respondents' organizations can access all the available infrastructure, hardware, data, and platforms they need—such as application or VPN access—to be productive while remote working; the number is 55.9%.

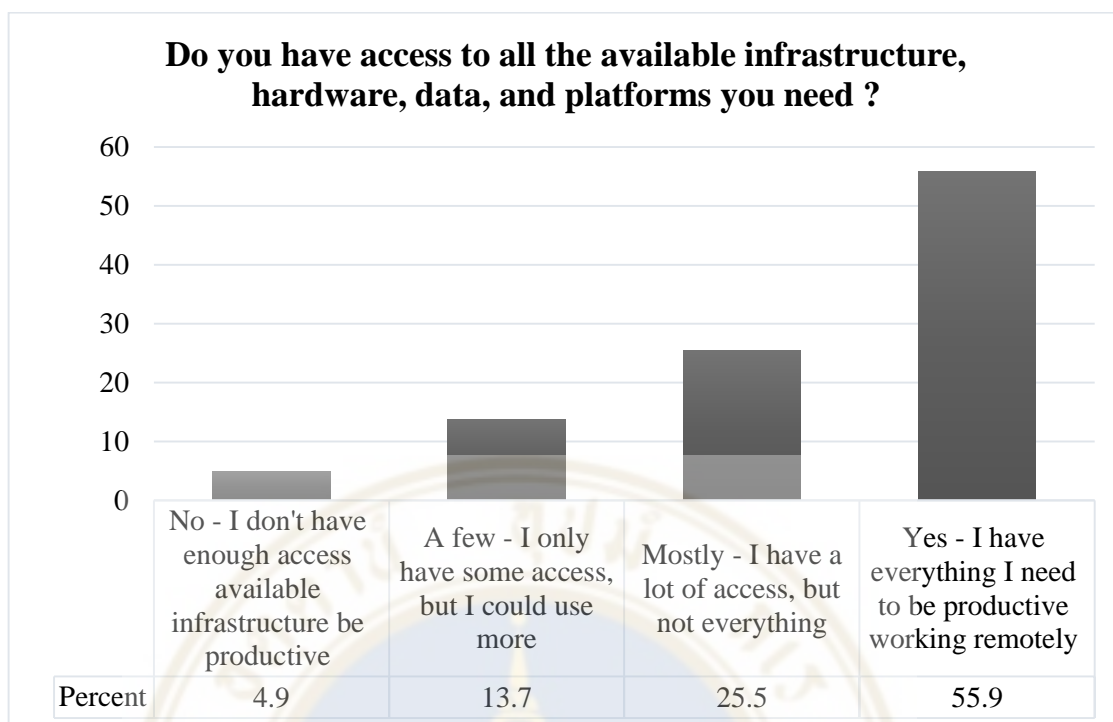


Figure 4.11 the available infrastructure, hardware, data, and platforms

It is evident from the data that the majority of respondent organizations have already prepared for remote work, particularly in terms of communication channels and activities to assist their employees, as well as infrastructure to make it convenient for employees to work.

4.3.5 Descriptive Analytics for engagement driver questions

After illustration of data based on the aforementioned general questions, the table below describes the data that identify the most significant remote working factors that impact engagement drivers. If the mean value is between 1.00 and 1.75, the engagement driver is associated with the scale of strongly disagree. Consequently, if the mean value is between 1.75 and 2.50, it is indicated that the engagement driver is linked to the scale of disagreement. Additionally, if the mean value is between 2.51 and 3.25, it is indicated that the engagement driver is linked to the scale of agree; meanwhile, if the mean value is between 3.26 and 4.00, it is indicated that the engagement driver is linked to the scale of strongly agree.

Table 4.9 Significant remote working factors that impact engagement drivers.

| Engagement Driver | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpret |
|---|-----|------|----------------|----------------|
| Overall Engagement | 102 | 2.79 | 0.87 | Agree |
| Work-Life Balance | 102 | 3.06 | 1.04 | Agree |
| Learning and Development | 102 | 3.09 | 0.64 | Agree |
| Collaboration | 102 | 3.16 | 0.60 | Agree |
| Autonomy | 102 | 3.20 | 0.79 | Agree |
| Rewards and Recognition | 102 | 3.21 | 0.64 | Agree |
| Communication with leaders and colleagues | 102 | 3.23 | 0.68 | Agree |
| Work Task | 102 | 3.39 | 0.54 | Strongly Agree |

The survey's findings show that the remote work factors offered by organizations have a positive impact on all engagement factors. For one engagement driver, work tasks, respondents strongly agree that even though they work remotely, this can improve engagement in this dimension. However, the mean of overall engagement seems significantly low, as seen in the column chart below.

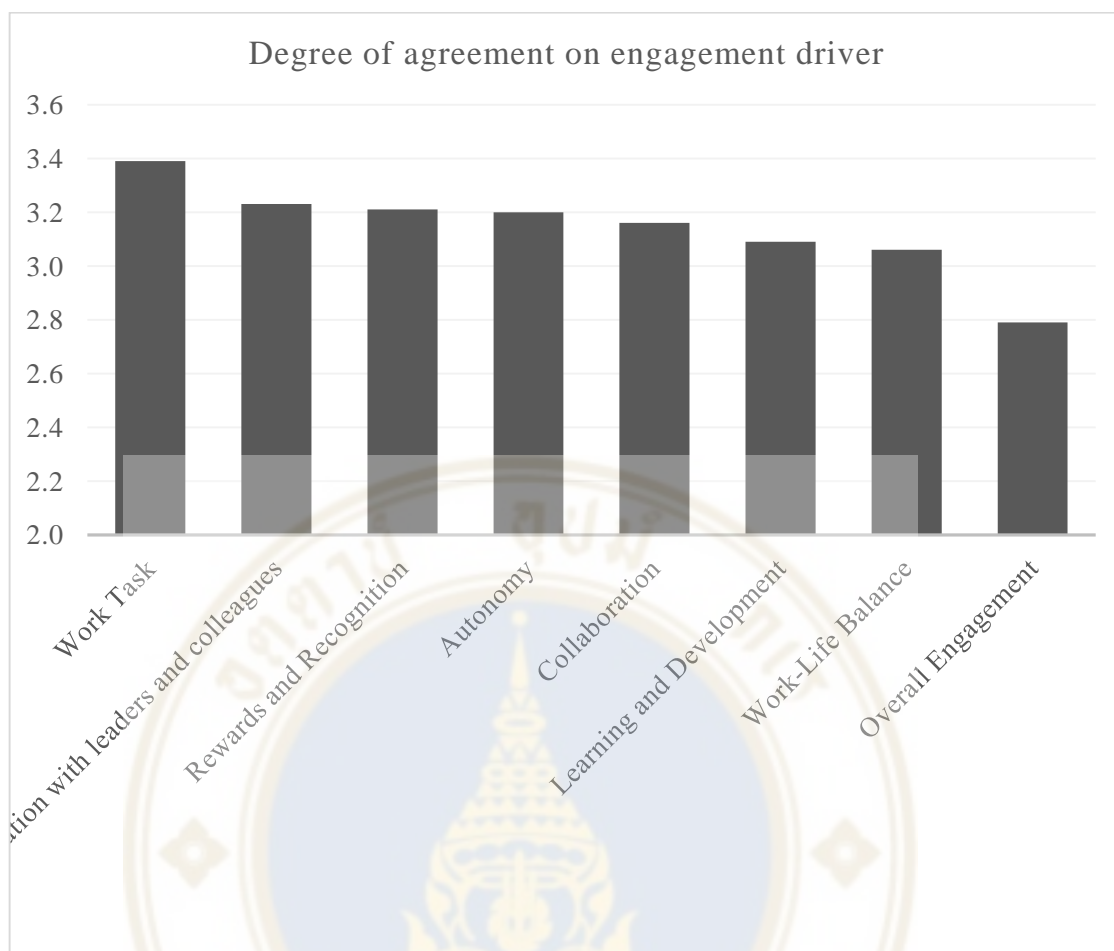


Figure 4.12 Degree of agreement on engagement driver

4.4 Exploratory Factor Analysis: EFA

In this thematic paper, the author analyzed factors that have an impact on overall engagement and engagement drivers. To analyze the correlation between independent variables and dependent variables of this study, multiple regression is used in the analysis to determine its correlation.

4.4.1 Overall engagement

To answer the hypothesis of which engagement drivers has a positive effect overall engagement; it has 7 variables to analyze. The below table illustrates the engagement drivers that significantly influences overall engagement.

Table 4.10 Regression results for overall engagement

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|---|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| (Constant) | -0.268 | 0.485 | | -0.553 | 0.582 |
| Work Task | -0.088 | 0.214 | -0.054 | -0.413 | 0.681 |
| Collaboration | 0.589 | 0.211 | 0.403 | 2.792 | 0.006* |
| Autonomy | -0.11 | 0.138 | -0.099 | -0.794 | 0.429 |
| Rewards and Recognition | 0.187 | 0.163 | 0.138 | 1.148 | 0.254 |
| Communication with leaders and colleagues | 0.183 | 0.182 | 0.142 | 1.001 | 0.319 |
| Work-Life Balance | 0.077 | 0.085 | 0.092 | 0.906 | 0.367 |
| Learning and Development | 0.138 | 0.204 | 0.101 | 0.675 | 0.501 |
| R ² = 0.376, Adjusted R ² = 0.330, F = 8.096, Sig. = 0.000*, SE est = 0.713 | | | | | |
| *Significant level at 0.05 | | | | | |

Overall, the six variables accounted for 37.6% of the variance in overall engagement. Since the F-value was 8.096 ($p < 0.05$), this shows that at least one engagement driver had statistically significant impact on overall engagement. The results suggest that the collaboration driver, which refers to best practices and job knowledge sharing, as well as coworker cooperation, is significantly associated to overall engagement. (Beta = 0.403, $p < 0.05$ and 0.314). In other words, collaboration among employees during remote working had significantly positive effects on overall engagement.

4.4.2 Engagement drivers

To examine how multiple independent variables of remote working are related to each dependent variable, which are engagement drivers, the multiple linear regression is used, and the information of all statistical testing is shown in the tables below.

Table 4.11 Regression results for work task

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|--|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| (Constant) | 2.804 | 0.242 | | 11.565 | <.001 |
| Policy – remote working days | 0.068 | 0.051 | 0.137 | 1.348 | 0.181 |
| People – communication and activity | 0.053 | 0.106 | 0.081 | 0.504 | 0.615 |
| Process – work procedure | -0.045 | 0.095 | -0.074 | -0.474 | 0.636 |
| Infrastructure – hardware, data, and platform | 0.114 | 0.093 | 0.19 | 1.236 | 0.219 |
| R ² = 0.070, Adjusted R ² = 0.032, F = 1.836, Sig. = 0.128, SE est = 0.528 | | | | | |
| *Significant level at 0.05 | | | | | |

Since the F-value was 1.836 and significant value equal to 0.128 ($p > 0.05$), this demonstrates that none of the remote working factors are significantly related to the work task.

Table 4.12 Regression results for collaboration

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|---|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| (Constant) | 2.348 | 0.264 | | 8.889 | <.001 |
| Policy – remote working days | 0.061 | 0.055 | 0.110 | 1.109 | 0.270 |
| People – communication and activity | 0.029 | 0.115 | 0.039 | 0.25 | 0.803 |
| Process – work procedure | -0.007 | 0.103 | -0.01 | -0.068 | 0.946 |
| Infrastructure – hardware, data, and platform | 0.177 | 0.101 | 0.264 | 1.754 | 0.083 |
| R ² = 0.106, Adjusted R ² = 0.070, F = 2.888, Sig. = 0.026*, SE est = 0.576 | | | | | |
| *Significant level at 0.05 | | | | | |

From the statistical test, the significant level below 0.05 means there are some factors related to collaboration. As seen in the table, the significant value of infrastructure is only 0.083 which can determine that infrastructure could affect collaboration in positive way (Beta = 0.264).

Table 4.13 Regression results for autonomy

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|---|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| (Constant) | 1.662 | 0.319 | | 5.215 | <.001 |
| Policy – remote working days | 0.241 | 0.066 | 0.329 | 3.624 | <.001* |
| People – communication and activity | -0.029 | 0.139 | -0.03 | -0.212 | 0.833 |
| Process – work procedure | 0.063 | 0.125 | 0.071 | 0.505 | 0.615 |
| Infrastructure – hardware, data, and platform | 0.257 | 0.122 | 0.291 | 2.112 | 0.037 |
| R ² = 0.253, Adjusted R ² = 0.222, F = 8.210, Sig. = 0.001*, SE est = 0.695 | | | | | |
| *Significant level at 0.05 | | | | | |

The results showed that F-value was 8.210 and statistic test value was 0.002, it can be concluded that some remote working factors significantly impact autonomy. To emphasize this issue, the significant value of every factor in the table showed that only policy had a significantly positive impact on autonomy (Beta = 0.329, p<0.05).

Table 4.14 Regression results for Rewards and Recognition

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|-------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| (Constant) | 0.009 | 0.060 | 0.014 | 0.144 | 0.885 |
| Policy – remote working days | -0.148 | 0.125 | -0.187 | -1.178 | 0.242 |
| People – communication and activity | 0.190 | 0.112 | 0.262 | 1.692 | 0.094 |
| Process – work procedure | 0.138 | 0.110 | 0.192 | 1.261 | 0.210 |

Table 4.14 Regression results for Rewards and Recognition (cont.)

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Infrastructure – hardware, data, and platform | 0.009 | 0.060 | 0.014 | 0.144 | 0.885 |
| R2 = 0.090, Adjusted R2 = 0.052, F = 2.392, Sig. = 0.056, SE est = 0.625 | | | | | |
| *Significant level at 0.05 | | | | | |

Since the F-value was 2.392 and the significant value equal to 0.056 ($p > 0.05$), this shows that none of the remote working factors are significantly related to rewards and recognition.

Table 4.15 Regression results for Communication with leaders and colleagues

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|--|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| (Constant) | 1.948 | 0.280 | | 6.953 | <.001 |
| Policy – remote working days | 0.095 | 0.058 | 0.151 | 1.628 | 0.107 |
| People – communication and activity | -0.002 | 0.122 | -0.002 | -0.014 | 0.989 |
| Process – work procedure | -0.003 | 0.110 | -0.004 | -0.025 | 0.980 |
| Infrastructure – hardware, data, and platform | 0.320 | 0.107 | 0.422 | 2.994 | 0.003* |
| R2 = 0.220, Adjusted R2 = 0.188, F = 6.839, Sig. <0.001*, SE est = 0.610 | | | | | |
| *Significant level at 0.05 | | | | | |

Based on the findings that the F-value was 6.839 and the statistic test value was less than 0.001, it can be inferred that some remote working factors have a significant impact on communication with leaders and colleague's driver. To highlight this point, the significance of each factor in the table demonstrates that infrastructure had a significantly positive effect on communication (Beta = 0.422, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.16 Regression results for Work-Life Balance

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|---|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| (Constant) | 3.537 | 0.483 | | 7.323 | <.001 |
| Policy – remote working days | 0.018 | 0.101 | 0.019 | 0.181 | 0.857 |
| People – communication and activity | 0.046 | 0.211 | 0.036 | 0.217 | 0.829 |
| Process – work procedure | -0.039 | 0.189 | -0.033 | -0.206 | 0.837 |
| Infrastructure – hardware, data, and platform | -0.168 | 0.185 | -0.144 | -0.909 | 0.365 |
| R ² = 0.020, Adjusted R ² = -0.020, F = 0.495, Sig.=0.739, SE est = 1.052 | | | | | |
| *Significant level at 0.05 | | | | | |

The F-value of 0.495 and the significance value of 0.739 ($p > 0.05$) indicate that none of the factors associated with remote work had a significant relationship with work-life balance.

Table 4.17 Regression results for Learning and Development

| Variables | B | SE | Beta | t | Sig. |
|--|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| (Constant) | 2.389 | 0.288 | | 8.303 | <.001 |
| Policy – remote working days | 0.080 | 0.060 | 0.135 | 1.332 | 0.186 |
| People – communication and activity | -0.006 | 0.126 | -0.008 | -0.048 | 0.962 |
| Process – work procedure | 0.029 | 0.113 | 0.040 | 0.255 | 0.799 |
| Infrastructure – hardware, data, and platform | 0.130 | 0.110 | 0.182 | 1.185 | 0.239 |
| R ² = 0.072, Adjusted R ² = 0.033, F = 1.875, Sig.=0.121, SE est = 0.627 | | | | | |
| *Significant level at 0.05 | | | | | |

The F-value of 1.87 and the significance level of 0.121 ($p > 0.05$) indicate that none of the factors of remote working are significantly related to rewards and recognition.

However, the discussion, recommendations, limitations, and conclusions drawn from the research findings will be presented in the following chapter.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter offers the study's conclusion and discussion, followed by recommendations and limitations, which indicate the direction of future research.

5.1 Discussion

According to the findings in the prior chapter, the information can be analyzed and interpreted as follows.

Based on prior descriptive analytic data, most organizations emphasize implementing communication channels and establishing activities to communicate with their employees during remote working (61.8%), then employers focus on infrastructure establishment for their employees (55.9%) and procedure setting (43.1%). Considering employee engagement drivers, seen from the column chart, it is stated that the work task dimension has related to employee engagement improvement, as respondents strongly agree that this dimension is essential during remote working. Meanwhile, most respondents have the least agreement that work-life balance is related to employee engagement, which shows that people have an issue with this dimension considering remote working. Moreover, work-life balance drivers have the lowest standard deviation value, which can be interpreted as a wide range of responses with a lot of different answers from respondents. Work-life balance is considered an issue during remote working; as stated in the literature review, employees could have trouble with boundaries separating work and personal lives, resulting in stress and burnout.

However, considering the column chart, the interesting point is that the impact remote working has on overall engagement is seen as the lowest; the initial analysis leads to the conclusion that respondents do not think that remote working influences all engagement in the big picture. In author analysis, it can be interpreted that respondents cannot visualize what's inside the word "overall engagement," as it seems

too abstract to comprehend in one word. Therefore, it was necessary to describe all dimensions to consider under the employee engagement scheme, such as the surveys the author conducted based on the Aon Hewitt Engagement Model. Further looking into the in-sight data on exploratory factor analysis, the data can be interpreted to show that the driver that has the biggest impact on overall engagement is collaboration, as seen by the significant value of 0.006 compared with other drivers. It can be analyzed that collaboration would effectively drive employees to stay engaged with their organization.

According to the regression model data, remote working factors foster a positive impact on several engagement drivers, including autonomy. As seen in the data, the number of remote working days or the frequency employees work remotely relates to the autonomy driver. The more days employees work remotely, the more engaged they are in the autonomy dimension. Furthermore, one of the three dimensions, infrastructure, has been identified as one of the most influential remote working factors that impacts engagement drivers; infrastructure has a positive impact on the collaboration engagement driver. Infrastructure refers to the organization's implementation of VPN, applications, cloud-based platforms, or an intranet. The infrastructure factor also fosters a positive relationship with another engagement driver—communication. It can be analyzed that to build solid employee engagement, employers must consider an effective infrastructure as an essential factor to provide to their employees. With the rapid changes after the pandemic, infrastructure plays an important part in connecting people together. In the work environment, utilizing the platforms or applications with fast and convenient functions will be able to nurture effective communication, such as understanding the same goal, working on the same page, as well as enhancing in-sight comprehensive conversion.

5.2 Recommendations

The remote working approach is one element relating to a positive impact on an organization's employee engagement; inclusively, remote working factors—people, process, and infrastructure—also facilitate a more effective remote working process. It is undeniable, with the information and analysis found in this research study, that remote working is going to be considered the new normal. There are key

recommendations based on the discussion and analysis to answer the research objectives and questions. Even though all three dimensions, when considered as factors of remote working that employers establish for employees, have an impact on employee engagement, it is clearly seen that infrastructure is the most essential factor among the three dimensions. First, the organization and the employers must establish solid infrastructures internally and strongly to enhance the effectiveness of remote working. For example, an actionable recommendation is implementing an on-cloud platform that enables employees to thoroughly connect with each other. In addition, since infrastructure plays an essential role, another recommendation is that employers should construct effective infrastructure to facilitate the authorization approval process from anywhere, as this would also increase the positive engagement in the autonomy dimension.

Secondly, based on the findings and discussion, establishing a good communication plan and strategy for both the short and long term will help keep employees engaged with tasks and the organization. An actionable recommendation is setting up an application or platform that connects colleagues and leaders together. Additionally, an organization's corporate culture must be strong, as represented by shared common values or beliefs across the organization. This will help facilitate effective communication internally, resulting in an increase in employee engagement.

Thirdly, work-life balance is essential for employees in every type of organization, from the private sector to NGOs. Therefore, to reduce stress and burnout resulting from poor work-life balance during remote working, employers and organizations must promote soft skills aspects towards their employees; introducing mindfulness to employees through an online class or integrating mindfulness through a one-on-one performance review might reduce stress and enhance work-life balance for employees. Furthermore, for any organization that wants to improve their remote working effectiveness while also keeping employees engaged, the initial data and information and the fundamental suggestion approaches in this study can be used with the targeted respondents, with the result being more insightful and useful for organizational development.

5.3 Limitations and future research of the study

The lack of specification in demographics is among the study's limitations. 113 respondents work in a variety of sectors and organizations, including the private sector, the public sector, non-governmental organizations, and state-owned enterprises. As a result, rather than offering in-depth analysis and actionable recommendations, the facts and insights in this thematic paper might be used as a starting point for employer development strategies. Additionally, as organizations in each different industry have several different factors to consider in terms of employee engagement, the large-scale sampling could not lead to an absolute finding and the expected outcomes.

Acknowledging the limited issue of this study, future work could directly analyze the employee engagement outcomes using specific targeted respondents, for example, focusing on a specific industry such as pharmaceuticals, automotive, or education. Therefore, future research direction should be established by considering the sectors and industries respondents work for in order to provide specific and practical analysis for the organization.

5.4 Conclusion

To answer the previous research questions, this study shows how the new way of working affects employee engagement and explains the strong link between remote work and employee engagement. It also identifies important factors of remote work that have an undeniable effect on employee engagement. The qualitative methodology was utilized to collect data from targeted respondents, resulting in significant findings to summarize as recommendations.

Findings revealed that the influential factors of remote working that affect the engagement driver based on the Aon Hewitt Engagement Model are infrastructure; this dimension positively affects the collaboration engagement driver as well as communication. Therefore, initial recommendations for employers mainly focus on enhancing this dimension, which proves that it nurtures effective employee engagement.

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