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## **Striking the Balance: How Workplace Flexibility Enhances Engagement and Performance of Employees working in Public and Private settings**

### **1. Introduction**

Workplace flexibility has grown into an increasingly vivacious component of contemporary workplace culture, reflecting a shift in how we perceive and approach work. It encompasses a spectrum of practices aimed at providing employees with greater control over when, where, and how they work (Giovanis, 2018). Technology breakthroughs have made it possible for people to work remotely, from places other than typical office settings. This might include working while on vacation, at a collaborative workspace, or from home. According to Choudhury et al. (2021), working remotely has many advantages, such as shorter commutes, more independence, and improved work-life balance. Flexible scheduling is another key component of workplace flexibility. Instead of adhering strictly to a traditional 9-to-5 schedule, employees may have the option to adjust their hours to better suit their individual needs and preferences (Kosseck & Lautsch, 2018). This

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could involve starting and ending work earlier or later in the day, compressing the workweek into fewer days, or even working non-consecutive hours. Flexible scheduling allows employees to better juggle personal commitments, such as childcare or caregiving responsibilities, while still meeting their work obligations (Lehdonvirta, 2018). Workplace flexibility might include different work arrangements including job sharing, part-time employment, or freelancing contracts in addition to remote work and flexible scheduling. These agreements provide workers more freedom and discretion to organize their work life around their own interests and circumstances (Zhang & Chun, 2018). For example, job sharing allows two employees to split the responsibilities of a full-time position, providing both with reduced hours while maintaining full-time coverage for the role. Implementing workplace flexibility requires a shift in organizational mind-set and practices. It involves creating policies and procedures that support remote work, flexible scheduling, and alternative work arrangements while ensuring that productivity and collaboration are not compromised (Winarno et al., 2021). It also requires investing in technology and infrastructure to enable remote work and provide seamless communication and collaboration tools. Understanding how workplace flexibility influences employee engagement and performance is crucial for businesses to the evolving needs of their workforce (Wood et al., 2020).

The relationship between workplace flexibility, employee engagement, and performance was well studied in the past, yet there remains a gap in understanding the nuances of this relationship and the need for further research to address it. Studies on the effects of flexible work arrangements on worker performance and engagement have been conducted. For example, a meta-analysis carried out by Allen et al. (2013) showed that many outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, were positively correlated with flexible work arrangements. Similarly, Kossek and Lautsch (2012) found that flexible work practices were associated with higher levels of engagement and performance among employees. However, while these studies provide valuable insights, there is still a lack of comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying the relationship between workplace flexibility, engagement, and performance. Recent research highlights the increasing recognition of the importance of workplace flexibility in meeting the evolving needs of organizations and employees. For example, a study by Grant & Parker (2009) emphasized the role of flexibility in adapting to changing work environments, especially in the context of remote and hybrid work arrangements. The need of further study is highlighted by

these current viewpoints in order to comprehend how workplace flexibility might improve employee's performance and engagement in the modern workplace. While qualitative studies have explored the experiences and perceptions of employees regarding workplace flexibility, very few empirical research have looked at the specific relationship between performance, engagement, and flexibility. Most existing research has been qualitative or based on secondary data analysis. For example, a qualitative study by Lee & Joseph Sirgy (2019) examined employees' perceptions of workplace flexibility and its impact on job satisfaction and work-life balance. Wang and Chen (2018) conducted a secondary data study on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and organizational performance. However, there is a scarcity of quantitative research that experimentally assesses the association between workplace flexibility, employee engagement, and performance using primary data.

Our study aims to close this research vacuum by empirically evaluating the association between workplace flexibility, employee engagement, and performance. By collecting primary data and employing statistical analysis techniques, we aim to provide empirical evidence on how workplace flexibility influences employee engagement and performance. This research is crucial for guiding corporate strategies and policies that attempt to improve employee well-being and productivity in today's dynamic work environment. Drawing on the aforementioned, the subsequent research objectives were formulated (a). To investigate how employee performance is impacted by workplace flexibility, (b). To investigate the relationship between employee engagement in public and private contexts and workplace flexibility. (c). To examine at the relationship between employee engagement and performance in both public and private contexts, (d). To investigate the association between employee engagement, workplace flexibility, and performance in both public and private contexts.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

Hackman and Oldham pioneered the Job Characteristics Theory, which offers valuable insights into how specific attributes of a job influence employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance. This theory holds that job attributes including autonomy, skill diversity, task relevance, task identity, and feedback are important in determining how individuals' experiences in the workplace (Fisher et al., 2019). Workplace flexibility, which encompasses practices like

remote work options, flexible scheduling, and alternative work arrangements, intersects with several key aspects of this theory (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). Workplace flexibility increases employee autonomy by giving them more choice over their work schedule, location, and methods. This autonomy aligns directly with one of the fundamental components of the Job Characteristics Theory (Kiyani et al., 2018). Employees who have the opportunity to plan their work schedules and procedures based on their preferences and requirements are more likely to feel a feeling of ownership and empowerment over their responsibilities. This intensified autonomy contributes to increased job satisfaction and fosters greater engagement and intrinsic motivation among employees (Noh et al., 2019).

According to social exchange theory, interpersonal relationships are governed by the reciprocity principle; individuals exchange resources such as time, energy, support, and tangible rewards. According to Social exchange theory, people weigh the costs and benefits of interacting with others and strive to maximize benefits while minimizing costs. Social exchange theory is the concept of justice, whereby individuals strive for fairness and balance in their relationships and expect the rewards they receive to be proportional to the effort they put into it. Additionally, the theory emphasizes the role of trust, commitment, and interdependence in maintaining long-term relationships as individuals continually evaluate their partner's fairness and trustworthiness.

### **3. Workplace Flexibility**

The concept of workplace flexibility has undergone a transformative evolution in recent years, reflecting the dynamic shifts in technology, work culture, and societal expectations. Workplace flexibility refers to a flexible and adaptable work environment that goes beyond typical office limits, allowing employees to operate from a variety of places outside of the traditional office setting (Neis and Lippel, 2019). This paradigm shift is made possible by the proliferation of mobile devices, cloud computing, and high-speed internet connectivity. With laptops, smartphones, and tablets becoming ubiquitous, employees can seamlessly connect to their work-related tasks from virtually anywhere, fostering a more agile and responsive work style (Buckingham et al., 2019). This evolution was further accelerated by the global trends towards remote work and the growing recognition of the importance of work-life balance. Workplace flexibility empowers individuals to choose their optimal

working conditions, whether it be from the comfort of their homes, co-working spaces, or even while on the move (Viète & Erdsiek, 2020). This flexibility not only amplifies employee contentment and well-being but also has the potential to boost productivity as individuals can tailor their work environment to suit their preferences and peak performance times (Wheatley, 2021). Collaborative tools and project management platforms further facilitate communication and coordination among team members who may be geographically dispersed (Davidescu et al., 2020). However, this shift towards workplace flexibility also raises important considerations regarding data security, privacy, and the need for effective communication strategies to maintain a cohesive team dynamic (Wang & Chun, 2021). As firms adopt mobile work, it's important to find a balance between flexibility and managing a distributed staff. (Irawanto Novianti, 2021).

Workplace flexibility stands as a cornerstone in contemporary organizational culture, enhancing both employee performance and engagement. Its importance lies in its capability to tailor to the diverse needs and preferences of today's workforce while fostering an environment conducive to productivity, satisfaction, and loyalty (Spurk & Straub, 2020). Employee performance is linked to workplace flexibility through various mechanisms. When employees have the autonomy to manage their schedules and work environments, they are better positioned to optimize their productivity levels (Saks, 2019). For instance, remote work options allow individuals to tailor their workspaces to suit their preferences, minimizing distractions and enhancing focus (Sun & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019). According to Lemon (2019), flexible scheduling allows employees to coordinate their work hours with their peak production times, resulting in increased output. Workplace flexibility leads to heightened efficiency and effectiveness, ultimately driving improved performance outcomes for both individuals and organizations. Similarly, workplace flexibility plays a role in fostering employee engagement. Employees that are engaged are highly involved in their job and are deeply committed to their organization's mission and core beliefs (Sendawula et al., 2018).

Workplace flexibility boosts participation by encouraging trust, autonomy, and mutual respect. Employees who feel empowered to manage their work in ways that meet their requirements are more likely to feel a feeling of ownership and dedication to their positions. This intensified engagement translates into greater discretionary effort, job satisfaction, and loyalty (Wiswall & Zafar, 2018). Workplace flexibility is an effective tool for recruiting and keeping top

personnel, a key priority for organizations seeking to thrive. Prioritizing workplace flexibility demonstrates an organization's dedication to employee well-being and holistic development, strengthening the employee brand (Ngwenya & Pelsler, 2020).

Workplace flexibility encompasses a variety of arrangements and practices designed to accommodate the diverse needs and preferences of employees (Chen et al., 2019). One of the most common types of workplace flexibility is remote work, which enables workers to execute their job obligations from places other than the usual office environment. This may involve working from home, co-working places, or other distant locations (Sungmala & Verawat, 2021). Remote work offers numerous benefits, including reduced commuting time, increased autonomy, and greater work-life balance. With advancements in technology facilitating seamless communication and collaboration, remote work has become increasingly popular (Lee et al., 2020). Organizations may access a worldwide talent pool by virtue of workplace flexibility and provide employees with greater flexibility in managing their schedules and work environments (Rotter, 2021). Employees with flexible schedules are able to modify their working hours to better suit their own requirements. This may involve options such as flexible start and end times, compressed workweeks, or part-time arrangements (Motyka, 2018). Employees with flexible scheduling have more control over their time and may better manage their obligations at work with personal responsibilities such as childcare, caregiving, or pursuing further education (Albrecht et al., 2018).

Another kind of workplace flexibility is job sharing, when two or more employees split the duties of a single full-time role. Each employee typically works a reduced schedule, allowing for coverage of the role on a part-time basis (Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019). Job sharing can be beneficial for employees seeking greater work-life balance or looking to transition gradually into retirement. According to Uddin et al. (2019), job sharing may promote teamwork and knowledge exchange, which can improve innovative thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Flexible location arrangements involve allowing employees to work from different physical locations, such as satellite offices, client sites, or temporary workspaces (Joplin et al., 2021). This flexibility enables employees to choose the most suitable environment for their work tasks, whether they require focus and concentration or collaboration and interaction with colleagues. By providing employees with options for where they work, organizations can accommodate diverse preferences and work styles (Riyanto et al., 2021).

## 4. Employee Performance

Employee performance encompasses the behaviours, actions, and outcomes of individuals within an organization, directly influencing its overall effectiveness and success. Employee performance is shaped by a combination of individual characteristics, organizational factors, and environmental influences (Mulyani et al., 2019). Individual factors such as skills, knowledge, abilities, and motivation play roles in determining how effectively employees carry out their job responsibilities. Employers may improve worker performance by seeking out and hiring candidates who possess the necessary abilities and by giving them continual training and development chances to broaden their skill set (Teo et al., 2020). Factors like company culture, leadership style, communication techniques, and performance management systems can impact the work environment and their ability to perform at their best (Mohapatra & Sundaray, 2018). A high-performing workplace is fostered by a business with a good culture that values transparency, trust, and employee well-being (Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023). Effective leadership that provides clear direction, sets high expectations, and offers meaningful feedback can inspire and inspire employees to perform well in their positions (Arif et al., 2019). Environmental influences such as workplace conditions, resources, and technology can either facilitate or hinder employee performance. When employees have access to the tools, equipment, and technology they need, they can do their jobs effectively and productively (Kawiana et al., 2018). Creating a physical workspace that encourages cosiness, security, and cooperation may boost staff morale and output. Employees who are engaged are devoted to their jobs and the organization's objectives, and they are prepared to put in greater effort to accomplish their goals (Kenedi et al., 2022). Organizations foster employee engagement by providing opportunities for meaningful work, recognition, rewards for contributions, and prospects for growth and advancement. Emotional attachment to the company and drive for excellence are also improved when employees have a feeling of community and belonging (Saman, 2020).

### 4.1. Link between Workplace Flexibility and Employee Performance

Workplace flexibility has a major direct and indirect impact on employee performance. It is shaping how individuals engage with their work and contribute to organizational goals. Directly, workplace flexibility empowers



employees by permitting them greater control over their work schedules, methods, and environments (Saidi et al., 2019). When individuals have the flexibility to determine when and where they work, they can optimize their productivity by aligning their tasks with their rhythms and preferences (Chanana & Sangeeta, 2021). For example, remote work options enable employees to create a conducive work environment tailored to their needs, fostering focus, and minimizing distractions (Rumjaun & Narod, 2020). In a similar vein, flexible scheduling enables people to manage their personal and professional obligations, including child care or elder care, without sacrificing their effectiveness at work. By accommodating the diverse needs of employees, workplace flexibility enhances job satisfaction, reduces stress, and fosters a sense of empowerment (Cooper-Thomas & Saks, 2018). Indirectly, workplace flexibility influences employee performance by shaping organizational culture and employee engagement (Mao et al., 2022). Prioritizing flexibility demonstrates an organization's dedication to promoting work-life balance and employee well-being, which in turn creates an appealing and positive work environment. Employee morale and motivation are raised by this climate of trust and respect, which increases involvement and dedication to company objectives (Akingbola & Van Den Berg, 2019). Moreover, workplace flexibility promotes a results-oriented approach to performance evaluation, focusing on outcomes rather than mere presence in the office (Sendawula et al., 2018). Working from home or at a different location gives employees the freedom to own their work and produce results since they know that their efforts are appreciated and acknowledged. As a result, workplace flexibility cultivates a culture of accountability and excellence. Workplace flexibility indirectly impacts employee performance by influencing talent attraction and retention. Flexibility is now seen as essential to attracting and keeping top talent in today's cutthroat employment market (Aljohani, 2019). Organizations that offer flexible work arrangements are more appealing to skilled professionals seeking autonomy and work-life balance. Organizations may maintain institutional knowledge and promote continuity in performance while increasing employee loyalty and decreasing turnover by catering to the varied requirements and preferences of their staff (Kwon & Kim, 2020).

**Hypothesis 1:** Workplace flexibility has significant influences on employee performance directly/ indirectly.



## 5. Employee Engagement

A vital aspect of organizational dynamics is employee engagement, which reflects the emotional attachment and dedication that employees have to their jobs, their co-workers, and the company's overarching goal. It goes beyond mere job satisfaction and delves into the realm of deep-seated enthusiasm and dedication that employees bring to their roles (Kwon & Kim, 2020). Employee engagement is an effective collaboration tool because it fosters a transparent and inclusive atmosphere in which employees feel heard, respected, and educated about the company's aims and initiatives (Chanana & Sangeeta, 2021). Clear communication fosters a sense of trust, which is fundamental for building strong relationships between management and staff. According to Heslina and Syahrani (2021), engaged employees are more likely to integrate their own goals with the organization's overall aims and feel valued for their efforts. Recognition and appreciation play a vital role of sustaining high levels of engagement among employees. Rewarding and acknowledging employees for their diligent work and achievement not only raise morale, but also perpetuates a positive feedback loop, supporting a culture of continual development and devotion (Ababneh, 2021). Recognition can take various forms, including public praise, awards, or even simple expressions of gratitude. Effective leadership involves providing clear guidance, support, and feedback to inspire and motivate individuals to excel in their professions. Moreover, alignment with the company's mission, goals, and values creates a sense of meaning and purpose, driving intrinsic motivation and engagement among employees (Gordon, S., & Adler, H. (2022).

### 5.1. Link between Workplace Flexibility and Employee Engagement

The advent of mobile technologies has ushered in an era of flexibility, enabling employees to transcend the confines of a traditional office setting and work from diverse locations. This enhanced flexibility in the workplace promotes employee autonomy and correlates to heightened job satisfaction and engagement (Men et al., 2020). Buckingham et al. (2019) found that having the freedom to select when and where to work promotes a feeling of empowerment and optimizes productivity. The workplace flexibility facilitates improved work-life balance, a crucial factor in sustaining high levels of employee involvement. With the flexibility to integrate work seamlessly into their lives, employees can better manage personal commitments, reducing stress and enhancing overall well-

being (Adisa et al., 2023). This flexibility is especially important in recruiting and maintaining top talent because it coincides with the changing expectations of a workforce that values a work-life balance (Burnett & Lisk, 2021). Cloud-based applications, video conferencing, and instant messaging create a virtual space where employees can connect and collaborate in real-time, transcending geographical barriers (Aruldoss et al. 2021). Interconnectedness creates effective cooperation as well as a sense of belonging and community, both of which are essential components of long-term employee engagement.

**Hypothesis 2:** Workplace flexibility has direct and positive impact on employee engagement.

## 5.2. Influence of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance

Different facets of an individual's and an organization's effectiveness are influenced by their involvement in their work. Highly engaged workers exhibit superior levels of dedication, productivity, and originality in their work, in addition to being highly driven to do their best work (Ghislieri et al., 2021). One significant way in which employee engagement influences performance is through increased discretionary effort (Akers & Jennings, 2019). Engaged employees go above and beyond their job descriptions, willingly investing extra time, energy, and creativity to achieve organizational goals. They are more prone to look for ways to do better and accept greater responsibility, and proactively contribute ideas and solutions to challenges (Kaliisa et al., 2022). This discretionary effort translates into tangible performance outcomes, such as higher productivity, quality of work, and innovation, driving organizational success. Job satisfaction and morale are strongly correlated with employee engagement. Greater job satisfaction and general well-being are experienced by engaged workers, who get a feeling of purpose and fulfilment from their work (Mone, 2018). Higher levels of drive, resilience, and tenacity in the face of difficulties are correlated with this positive emotional state. Engaged employees maintain a positive attitude, even in difficult circumstances, and are better equipped to overcome obstacles and setbacks (Antony, 2018).

Employee engagement influences the quality of relationships within the workplace. Engaged employees tend to have stronger connections with their colleagues and managers, fostering a supportive and collaborative work environment (Riyanto et al., 2021). These positive relationships facilitate communication, information sharing, and teamwork, enhancing coordination

and efficiency in achieving shared objectives. Engaged employees are also more receptive to feedback and coaching, actively seeking opportunities for growth and development to further enhance their performance. Additionally, employee engagement contributes to higher levels of employee retention and loyalty. Employees who are engaged are more dedicated to the purpose, values, and objectives of the company, which reduces their likelihood of looking for chances elsewhere (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). Additionally, they are more likely to serve as brand ambassadors, enhancing the company's image and drawing in top personnel via word-of-mouth advertising (Purnamasari et al., 2023). By reducing turnover and preserving institutional knowledge and expertise, employee engagement fosters continuity and stability within the organization, which is essential for long-term performance and success (Atatsi et al., 2019).

**Hypothesis 3:** Employee engagement has positive and significant influence on employee performance.

### **5.3. Mediating and Moderating impact of Employee Engagement on the relationships between Workplace Flexibility and Employee Performance**

Employee engagement serves as a critical mediator, shaping how employees interact with workplace flexibility initiatives and ultimately impacting their performance outcomes. Employee engagement plays a role in how individuals respond to and utilize workplace flexibility (Ugargol & Patrick, 2018). Flexibility is seen by engaged workers as a useful tool that enables them to organize their workload in a way that best suits their own requirements and preferences (Teo et al., 2020). They are motivated to make the most of flexible work arrangements, leveraging them to optimize their productivity, work-life balance, and overall well-being. Engaged employees seek out opportunities to work remotely, adjust their schedules, or explore alternative work structures in ways that enhance their job satisfaction and performance (Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020). Moreover, employee engagement influences the quality of relationships within the workplace, including those between employees and their managers or colleagues. Engaged employees tend to have stronger connections and open lines of communication with their supervisors (Setiyani et al., 2019). Employees are more likely to have productive discussions about what they want and prefer at work when they perceive their supervisors to be trustworthy, supportive, and respected. This collaborative approach fosters mutual understanding and

agreement on how flexibility can be best leveraged to support individual and organizational goals. This will enhance performance outcomes overall (Cooke et al., 2019). A healthy company culture that prioritizes responsibility, trust, and autonomy at work is facilitated by engaged employees. Employees that are engaged are more likely to adopt a results-oriented mind-set, focused on outcomes rather than just being there at work (Galanti et al., 2021). This culture transformation fosters employee ownership and accountability, enabling individuals to take initiative and achieve outcomes independent of their actual location or hours of work (Davidescu et al., 2020). Workplace flexibility includes factors such as flexible work hours, telecommuting options, and autonomy in task management, giving employees the freedom to meet personal and professional life demands, thereby helping to upsurge job contentment and engagement (Sendawula et al., 2018; Chanana & Sangeeta, 2021). Employees that are engaged are emotionally immersed in their work, driven to achieve their highest potential and are more inclined to exceed job standards. As a result, highly engaged employees can take advantage of workplace flexibility to increase their productivity, creativity, and job performance (Ugargol & Patrick, 2018). Engaged employees are more resilient, adaptable, and resourceful, allowing them to more effectively navigate the complexities of flexible work arrangements and uphold higher degree of employee performance (Setiyani et al., 2019). In addition, employees are more likely to respond with higher degrees of engagement and performance when they perceive that their employer values, supports, and trusts them (Burnett & Lisk, 2021).

**Hypothesis 4:** Employee engagement acting as mediating and moderating between the relationship of workplace flexibility and employee performance.

## 6. Methods

### 6.1. Sample

This study uses a quantitative research approach to examine the correlations between workplace flexibility, employee engagement, and employee productivity in Saudi Arabia's governmental and private sectors. The study utilizes a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection method. The participants in this study will be employees working in various public and private sector organizations across different industries in Saudi Arabia. A stratified random sample approach will be used to assure representation from a variety of

industries, including finance, technology, healthcare, and manufacturing. The survey was delivered to a randomly chosen sample of 400 employees from both public and private-sector organizations. Potential respondents were informed of the anonymous nature of their participation in the research prior to participation.

## 6.2. Measures

The primary instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire designed to assess the important factors of workplace flexibility, employee engagement, and employee performance. Each item was assessed on a five-point Likert scale, from (5) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree. In this study, we will utilize well-established and validated measurement scales to assess the key constructs under investigation. These scales have been sourced from previous research studies, and their reliability and validity have been demonstrated. Workplace flexibility, this construct was measured utilizing a 6-item scale adapted from a study by Brown & Catsouphes (2016) and Butler et al. (2009); and Employee Engagement, this construct will be measured using a 6-item scale adapted from a study by Joplin et al. (2021); and Employee Performance, this construct will be assessed by utilizing a 5-item scale adapted from a research by Joplin et al. (2021). The Cronbach's Alpha values of all the variables are above 0.7. Therefore, the data may be regarded as being of an acceptable, adequate, and satisfactory level (Taber, 2018).

## 6.3. Data analysis

**Table 1. Socio demographic details**

		N	%
Sector	Public	162	40.50%
	Private	238	59.50%
Gender	Male	264	66.00%
	Female	136	34.00%
Age	Less than 30Years	90	22.50%
	31-40 Years	136	34.00%
	41-50 Years	108	27.00%
	Above 50 Years	66	16.50%

Work Experience	Less than one year	36	9.00%
	1 - 5 Years	110	27.50%
	6 - 10 Years	96	24.00%
	11 - 15 Years	88	22.00%
	Above 15 Years	70	17.50%
Qualification	Diploma	68	17.00%
	Bachelor	203	50.70%
	Master	84	21.00%
	Ph.D	45	11.30%
Marital Status	Single	129	32.0%
	Married	192	48.0%
	Divorced	79	19.8%
Finance	Public -24 Private - 42	Public sector VS Private Sector 162 238	
Technology	Public- 20 Private- 47		
Healthcare	Public- 89 Private- 97		
Manufacturing	Public- 29 Private-52		

Source: Survey data 400

**Table 2. Correlations between variables**

	Workplace Flexibility	Employee Engagement	Employee Performance
Workplace Flexibility	1		
Employee Engagement	0.497**	1	
Employee Performance	0.455**	0.561**	1

Source: own study

## 7. Results

### 7.1. Common method bias (CMB)

In order to reduce common method variation, the researchers applied statistical and procedural techniques. These included ensuring participant anonymity, randomized variables measurements, and using Harman's single-factor test to identify anyone-dimensionality. The lack of common method variance was shown by the results of Harman's single-factor test, which revealed that the variation explained by a single component was less than 50%. Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) recommended a significance threshold of  $p < 0.001$  for the identification and removal of outliers from the dataset.

### 7.2. Measurement Model

We evaluated the reliability of the measurement model by using the partial least square (PLS) structural equation modeling (SEM) approach (see table 3), based on the values of Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and composite reliability (CR). The measuring scales' dependability is shown by the obtained  $\alpha$  and CR values, which are greater than the prescribed 0.7. Furthermore, (Ojo & Fauzi, 2020; Peng & Lai, 2012) used the variables correlation matrix and the average variance extracted (AVE) values to analyze the convergent and discriminant validities. With the exception of the group of factors related to employee performance (EP5), employee engagement (EENG1, EENG2), and workplace flexibility (WPFX1), all factor loadings were greater than 0.50. Upon eliminating these items, as seen in table 3, the average variance exponents (AVEs) for every variable exceeded the 0.5 criterion. Therefore, according to Fornell & Larcker (1981) and Peng & Lai (2012), the model satisfies the requirements for convergent validity.



**Table 3. Results of Data Statistics**

Con-structs	Various Items	Type	Factor Loadings	Cronbach alpha $\alpha$	rho-A	Compos-ite reliability CR	Average variance extracted AVE	Variance inflation factor VIF
Work- place Flexibility	WPFX2	Reflec- tive	0.680	0.836	0.848	0.884	0.604	1.484
	WPFX3		0.813					1.929
	WPFX4		0.815					1.993
	WPFX5		0.809					1.841
	WPFX6		0.761					1.622
Employee Engage- ment	EENG3	Reflec- tive	0.784	0.783	0.786	0.860	0.605	1.713
	EENG4		0.813					1.756
	EENG5		0.745					1.457
	EENG6		0.768					1.419
Employee Perfor- mance	EP1	Reflec- tive	0.835	0.779	0.805	0.855	0.598	1.759
	EP2		0.838					1.886
	EP3		0.648					1.396
	EP4		0.758					1.379

Moderating effect =WPFX\*EE=1

**Source:** developed by the authors

**Table 4. Discriminant Validity by Fornell-Larcker Criterion & Heterotrait - Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)**

Fornell-Larcker Criterion					Heterotrait - Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)			
	WPFX	EENG	EPC	Moderating Effect 1	WPFX	EENG	EP	Moderating Effect 1
WPFX	0.745							
EENG	0.539	0.701			0.739			
EP	0.532	0.583	0.774		0.783	0.730		
Moderating Effect 1	0.023	-0.205	-0.163	1	0.042	0.254	0.211	

**Note:** The Fornell-Larcker section's diagonal's bold numbers represent the square root of the AVE for each construct, while the other numbers represent the correlation between the constructs; Note: Workplace flexibility is represented by WPFX; EENG stands for Employee Engagement, whereas EP stands for Employee Performance.

**Source:** own study

The discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the square root of the AVEs to the pair correlation values of the concept (refer to table 4). According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the requirements for discriminant validity are met by the AVEs values shown in the main diagonal, which are greater than the pair correlations between the respective constructs.

### 7. 3. Assessment of Predictive Model

All of the variables in table 5 have SRMR values of 0.082 and NFI values of 0.914, demonstrating that the model appropriately fits the actual data. The Employee Performance (EP)  $Q^2_{\text{predicts}}$  value of 0.352 indicates a strong predictive relevance with a large impact size. Employee Engagement (EENG), on the other hand, has a  $Q^2_{\text{predict}}$  predictive value of 0.185, which indicates medium predictive relevance with a medium size impact. These  $Q^2_{\text{Predict}}$  scores show how well the model predicts each variable, surpassing the suggested minimum threshold of 0.00. Furthermore, it can be shown from the  $Q^2$  effect sizes for EENG and EPC that these factors have a significant impact on the endogenously generated variable (WPFX).

**Table 5. Assessment of Predictive Model**

Variables	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	R2	Normed Fit Index (NFI)	Q <sup>2</sup> predict (For Predictive Relevance)	Q2 Effect SIZE
WPFX	0.082		0.914		
EENG		0.292		0.185	Medium
EP		0.420		0.352	Large

Source: own study

#### 7.4. Dual Effect of Mediation and Moderation

In SmartPLS 3.3.9, the bootstrapping approach in conjunction with the PLS algorithm was used to test the hypothesis. The beta values, which show the degree and importance of the positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables—in which employee engagement serves as both a moderator and a mediator—are shown in table 6. Including both mediation and moderation in the same model allows you to acquire a more thorough knowledge of how workplace flexibility affects employee performance, taking into account the mediating function of employee engagement and the moderating influence of its degree. Five hypotheses were framed, which reflects that workplace flexibility have a significant and positive impact on employee performance (Beta value ( $\beta$ ) = 0.335,  $p$  = 0.000,  $t$  = 7.793); H1 is supported, in addition, workplace flexibility have a positive impact on employee engagement (Beta value ( $\beta$ ) = 0.540,  $p$  = 0.000,  $t$  = 16.184). Hence, H2 supported. Employee engagement have a positive and significant impact on employee performance (Beta value ( $\beta$ ) = 0.389,  $p$  = 0.000,  $t$  = 8.972). H3 supported. Employee Engagement acting as “Moderator” which shows the moderating effect 1[(Workplace flexibility (WPFX\*Employee performance EP)] shows (Beta value ( $\beta$ ) = -0.081,  $p$  = 0.004,  $t$ -value = 2.152); H4 is confirmed. The precise indirect impact that employee engagement has in mediating the relationship between workplace flexibility and employee performance is shown in table 7. The influence of workplace flexibility on employee

performance is largely mediated by employee engagement, as shown by the significant values of indirect effects (Beta value ( $\beta$ ) = 0.210, P = 0.000, t = 7.217). Thus, H5 is supported by the results.

**Table 6. Mediating and Moderating hypothesis Results**

Hypothesis	Direct	Path Coefficient	T- Value	P- values	Hypothesis Supported
H1	Workplace Flexibility -> Employee Performance	0.335	7.793	0.000	Supported
H2	Workplace Flexibility -> Employee Engagement	0.540	16.184	0.000	Supported
H3	Employee Engagement -> Employee Performance	0.389	8.972	0.000	Supported
H4	Moderating Effect 1 -> Employee Performance	-0.081	2.152	0.003	Supported

**Note:** WPFX denotes Workplace Flexibility; EENG denotes Employee Engagement; EP denotes Employee Performance

**Source:** own study

**Table 7. Specific Indirect Effect**

H5	Workplace Flexibility -> Employee Engagement-> Employee Performance	0.210	7.217	0.000	Supported
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**Source:** own study

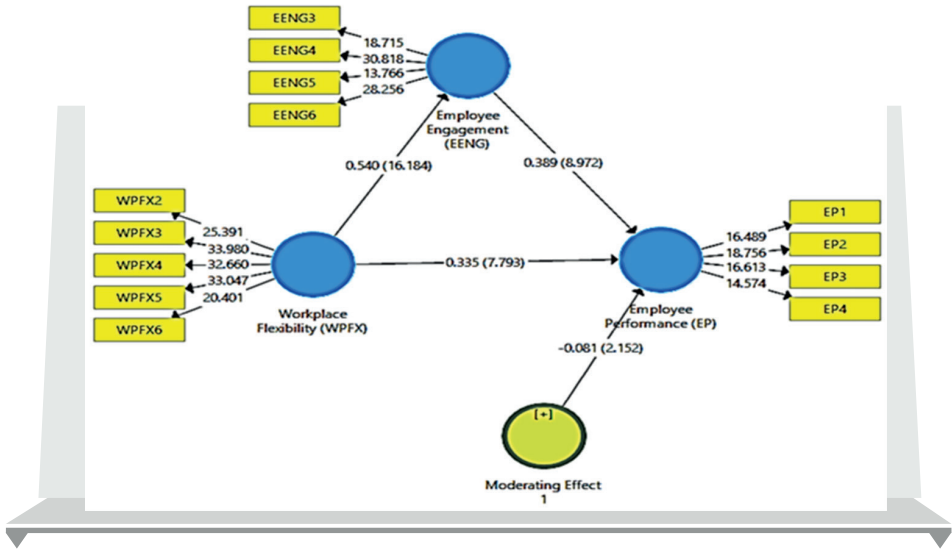


Figure 1 Mediation and Moderation Effect

Source: own study

## 8. Discussion

Based on figure 1, the study reveals employee engagement acting as a “Mediator” has a direct and indirectly significant and positive impact on the association between workplace flexibility and employee performance in public and private organizations. This is aligned with prior and recent research (Anderson & Kelliher, 2009; Gasic & Berber, 2023; Jayasena, Jusoh, & Khatibi, 2023; Lee, Chong, & Ojo, 2024). The (Social exchange theory, 1958; Kahn’s theory of engagement, 1990 & Aon Hewitt’s model of engagement, 2015) are some of the ideas that support this concept and align with the hypothesis set. Hence, H1 is supported. The findings suggest that workplace flexibility positively impacts employee performance in private and public organizations by enhancing, job satisfaction, fostering employee engagement, work-life balance and supporting in talent retention and recruitment. This supports the hypothesis having positive, significant and direct impact on employee performance across various organizational settings. Conversely, Çemberci et al.

(2022) recent research revealed that preserving work-life balance has become far more challenging as a result of flexible work rules. Working remotely, while beneficial in some ways, tends to disrupt this balance, leading to increased conflicts between work and family responsibilities (Waples & Brock-Baskin, 2021). Additionally, this is supported by (Zhang et al., 2023) that claims flexible work schedules mark the start of an unrestricted expansion of working hours and disturbance of daily life.

Secondly, the study Hypothesis (H2) shows that workplace flexibility have a positive and significant impact on employee engagement suggests that when employees perceive flexibility in their work arrangements, such as flexible hours, telecommuting options, or the ability to adjust their schedules to accommodate personal needs, they are probably more focused on their task. which is consistent with various researches (Richman et al., 2008 ; Setiyani et al., 2019; Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020; Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020). According to hypothesis (H3), employee engagement and performance in both public and private organizations are positively and significantly correlated. This is aligned with many empirical and latest findings (Otchere-Ankrah, 2021; Nkansah, Gyimah, Sarpong, & Annan, 2023; Gede & Huluka, 2024; Lee, Chong, & Ojo, 2024) which is shedding light on the ways in which performance results in organizational contexts are impacted by engagement.

However, in public and private organizations, employee engagement can act as a “moderator,” negatively impacting the relationship between workplace flexibility and performance. When employees are highly engaged but perceive limited or poorly implemented flexibility, frustration may arise, leading to disengagement and decreased performance. Additionally, insufficient support, role ambiguity, communication challenges, and organizational culture play significant roles. Understanding how engagement moderates this relationship is crucial for optimizing the benefits of workplace flexibility while mitigating potential performance drawbacks across diverse organizational contexts. Our findings H4 are consistent with a study by (Ugargol & Patrick, 2018), which found a significant relationship between workplace flexibility and employee engagement among Indian IT employees. The study also found that employee engagement acted as a moderator, negatively influencing this relationship. Several recent studies explore the negative effect of employee engagement on workplace flexibility and employee performance in public and private settings (Mansor, Jusoh, Hashim, Muhammad, & Omar, 2023; Johnson 2020). And finally, hypothesis (H5) explores significant and positive specific indirect impact of employee engagement on workplace flexibility and

employee performance. Also, it addresses how social exchange theory may be used to examine how workplace flexibility and employee engagement are integrated. It explores how employees perceive work flexibility as a positive exchange, leading to increased engagement and potentially influencing employee performance indirectly which is consistent with the studies by (Asif, 2021; Armitage & Amar; 2021).

We also performed a multivariate analysis of variance (Manova) in addition to the aforementioned study to assess the relationship between independent and dependent variables along with sociodemographic characteristics.

**Table 8. Multivariate Analysis of Variance**

Variables	Gender	Age	Experience	Qualification	Sector	Marital Status
Workplace Flexibility	4.253 (0.01)	4.983(0.02)	ns	2.669(0.04)	4.126(0.01)	ns
Employee Engagement	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	5.494 (0.04)
Employee Performance	ns	3.549(0.01)	3.162(0.01)	ns	ns	ns

**Note:** Significant level at  $p < 0.005$  at one-tailed,  $p < 0.001$  at two-tailed;  $f_{\text{values}}$  are marked in bold

**Source:** own study

## 8.1. Workplace Flexibility

The analysis reveals a significant impact of Workplace flexibility on gender, age, qualification, and sector among public and private organization settings, with an F value of Gender (4.485 and  $p=0.001$ ); Age (4.983 and  $p=0.02$ ); Qualification (2.669 and  $p=0.04$ ); Sector (4.126 and  $p=0.01$ ) respectively. It clearly shows that female participants working in public and private sector requires more workplace flexibility with a mean value (3.621) in comparison to male (3.543). This suggested that females may have a greater need or desire for flexibility in their work arrangements, potentially due to caregiving responsibilities, work-life balance considerations, or other personal factors.

Secondly, the data on workplace flexibility reveals interesting trends across different age groups. Participants aged 31-40 years exhibit the highest mean value of (3.672), indicating a stronger preference for flexibility. Interestingly, those aged



41-50 years and above 50 years also show relatively high mean values of (3.682) and (3.639), respectively. However, individuals below 30 years display the lowest mean value at (3.230). These findings suggest that as employee's progress in their careers and gain more experience, they may increasingly value and seek out workplace flexibility to accommodate their evolving personal and professional responsibilities, while younger individuals may prioritize other factors in their work environment.

Thirdly, the data on workplace flexibility across different educational levels in both public and private organizational settings offer insights into how individuals perceive and prioritize flexibility based on their educational attainment. Interestingly, employees with a master's degree exhibit the highest mean value of (3.827), indicating a strong preference for flexibility. This could be attributed to their higher level of education, which may lead to greater autonomy and responsibility in their roles, thus necessitating more flexible work arrangements. Employees with a bachelor's degree also show a relatively high mean value of (3.479), suggesting a moderate preference for flexibility. Conversely, those with a Diploma or PhD display slightly lower mean values, indicating differing levels of importance placed on flexibility. These findings suggest that educational background influences perceptions of workplace flexibility, with individuals with higher levels of education valuing flexibility more, potentially due to the nature of their roles or career aspirations.

Fourthly, the findings suggest that employees working in public and private sectors express a remarkable desire for workplace flexibility, with slightly higher mean values (MV) reported in private organizations (MV 3.581) compared to public ones (MV 3.552). This indicates that, overall, employees in both sectors value flexibility in their work arrangements. Several factors could contribute to this trend. In the private sector, where competition may be more intense and performance-driven, employees might prioritize flexibility as a means to maintain work-life balance, reduce stress, or accommodate personal commitments while meeting job demands. Similarly, in the public sector, where organizational structures and processes may be more rigid, flexibility could be perceived as a means to enhance job satisfaction, productivity, and employee well-being. These results emphasize how crucial it is for businesses of all sizes to think about introducing flexible work arrangements that accommodate the various needs and preferences of their employees. These arrangements will eventually raise employee satisfaction and engagement levels while also improving output and performance.

## 8.2. Employee Engagement

The outcomes of clearly states impact of employee engagement on marital status, with an F-value (5.494,  $p=0.04$ ) while it doesn't have any impact on gender, age, experience, qualification, and sector. The findings reveal that employee engagement varies across different marital statuses, with married individuals exhibiting the highest mean value of (4.080), followed by single individuals having a mean value of (3.925), and divorced individuals with a slightly lower mean value of (3.753). Marital status can influence employee engagement due to various factors. Married individuals may experience greater social support and stability from their spouses, contributing to higher levels of engagement. Conversely, divorced individuals may face additional stressors and challenges, which could impact their engagement levels. Single individuals may fall somewhere in between, with engagement influenced by factors such as personal interests, social networks, and career aspirations. Furthermore, the impact of marital status on employee engagement may vary between public and private sectors due to differences in organizational culture, work-life balance policies, and job demands.

## 8.3. Employee Performance

The results reveal that impact of employee performance on Age, with an F-value (3.549,  $p=0.01$ ) and Experience with F value as (3.162,  $p=0.01$ ). The data suggests variations in employee performance across different age groups in both public and private settings. Employees in the age range of 31 to 40 had the top mean score (4.081), which indicates the greatest performance levels. This could be attributed to their experience and expertise, coupled with a strong work ethic. Interestingly, employees aged 41-50 years also display a relatively high mean value of (3.881), suggesting continued effectiveness in their roles. However, performance declines slightly among those above 50 years, with a mean value of (3.755). These differences may be influenced by factors such as experience, adaptability to technological changes, and career aspirations.

The outcomes suggest that employee performance is influenced by years of experience, with notable variations across different experience levels in both public and private settings. Employees with 1-5 years of experience exhibit the top mean score (4.036), signifying the highest performance levels among this group. This could be attributed to a combination of enthusiasm, skill development, and familiarity with job responsibilities. Interestingly, performance remains

relatively high for employees who had worked for 6-10 years (3.940) and worked for 11-15 years (3.995), suggesting continued effectiveness and competency in their roles. However, performance tends to decrease slightly among employees with over 15 years of experience (3.880), possibly due to factors such as complacency or reduced adaptability to change.

## 9. Conclusion

The interplay between workplace flexibility, employee engagement and employee performance are critical for organizations to succeed in today's dynamic work environment. This study emphasizes how crucial workplace flexibility is for raising employee engagement and enhancing productivity (Irawanto et al., 2021). By providing employees with opportunities for autonomy, work-life balance, and adaptability, workplace flexibility can promote a sense of ownership and ownership, thereby increasing engagement and motivation. In turn, engaged employees demonstrate higher levels of commitment, productivity, and creativity, improving organizational performance. The findings also show that the positive association between performance and workplace flexibility is reinforced by employee involvement, which modifies the relationship between them. Strong employee engagement increases the likelihood that employees will take advantage of flexibility and be able to manage responsibilities well while delivering outstanding workmanship (Lemon, 2019). However, companies must take full advantage of these factors by cultivating a supportive culture that values flexibility and encourages employee engagement.

## 10. Contribution to the Knowledge

This study adds to the corpus of existing knowledge. Firstly, it sheds light on the connections among workplace flexibility, employee engagement, and employee performance and offers a thorough grasp of how these elements affect one another within the framework of the business. This study expands on earlier research by analyzing the moderating effect of employee engagement and elucidating how motivated workers use workplace flexibility to enhance performance results. Second, this research contributes to the body of literature by examining the link between workplace flexibility and employee engagement in many organizational situations, including different sectors, organizational sizes, and cultural contexts. The study offers insights that are pertinent and applicable to a wide range of companies worldwide by taking these changes

into account. The present study broadens the comprehension of the correlation between workplace flexibility, employee engagement, and performance. It offers significant implications for researchers, HR professionals, and organizational leaders who seek to maximize employee outcomes and organizational effectiveness.

## **11. Practical Implications for Employees and Managers**

The results of the investigation have multiple practical implications for firms seeking to increase employee performance and organizational success. By recognizing the importance of workplace flexibility, companies can implement policies and practices that give employees more control over when, where and how they work. This might include providing flexible working hours, working remotely alternatives, and work-sharing agreements. Granting such flexibility not only enhances the work-life equilibrium of employees, but also enables them to modify work schedules in accordance with their individual preferences and requirements, ultimately strengthening the relationship between job satisfaction and engagement. Organizations should focus on improving employee engagement through initiatives that promote communication, collaboration, and recognition. The purpose is to give employees the opportunity to express their opinions, participate in the decision-making process and receive feedback on their performance. Employees are engaged, motivated, productive, and committed to achieving company goals.

Managers can foster a supportive work environment by implementing flexible work policies that accommodate employees' diverse needs. Several practical tools can be implemented by managers for providing supportive work environment in both public and private settings as they can prepare flexible work schedules which allow employees to choose their work hours within reason. Encouraging open communication and providing resources for remote or hybrid work can enhance employee engagement. This can be done by providing remote work technology which includes necessary software and hardware for effective remote work. Communication platforms, utilizing tools like Microsoft teams for seamless communication. Offering opportunities for professional development and recognizing achievements can further motivate employees, leading to improved performance. Regularly soliciting computerised feedback systems and being responsive to employees' concerns demonstrates a commitment to their well-being. By valuing flexibility and

engagement, managers can create more productive, satisfied, and loyal workforce, ultimately driving the organization's success.

## 12. Limitations

Although this research provided insightful information, there are a few important caveats to take into consideration. The research used employee self-reported data, which might incorporate social desirability bias and conventional procedures. Furthermore, the sample used for the research was selected based on a particular industry or organizational environment, which may have limited the applicability of the results to other contexts or industries.

## 13. Future directions

Future research in this area may take many exciting directions to deepen our understanding of workplace flexibility connections with employee engagement and performance. Firstly, comparative research, for example, comparing workplace flexibility in various industries (Finance, technology, healthcare, Manufacturing) and different organizational sizes, or culture settings, would help to gain elaborative insights in understanding the relationships in various sectors separately. In addition, qualitative research approaches, such as focus groups or interviews, could provide invaluable insight into how employees experience workplace flexibility and what are the underlying processes and factors that affect their dynamics. Lastly, further research might be done to examine leadership behaviour and organizational culture in particular as variables that influence the link between workplace flexibility and employee productivity and engagement.

## Abstract

This study investigates the relationships between workplace flexibility, employee engagement, and performance of employees working in public and private settings. The purpose is to understand how flexible work arrangements influence employee engagement and overall performance across various industries. This research was conducted using a descriptive quantitative method. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 400 employees across finance, technology, healthcare, and manufacturing industries. The measurement model's reliability was evaluated using the partial least square (PLS) structural

equation modeling (SEM) approach (see table 3). Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and composite reliability (CR) values were used. A prognosis model evaluation shows that all of the variables have SRMR values of 0.082 and NFI values of 0.914, suggesting that the model accurately matches with the experimental data. The  $Q^2$  predict value for employee performance (EP) of 0.352 shows excellent predictive relevance with a significant impact size. In comparison, the  $Q^2$  predict predictive value for Employee Engagement (EENG) is 0.185, indicating good predictive relevance with a modest impact size. These  $Q^2$  Predict values are higher than the required minimum threshold of 0.00, indicating that the model is highly predictive for each variable. Furthermore, the  $Q^2$  effect sizes for EENG and EPC show that they have a significant impact on the endogenous variable (WPFX). SmartPLS 3.3.9 used the PLS algorithm as well as the bootstrapping approach to evaluate the presented hypothesis. Table 6 shows the beta values that demonstrate the intensity and significance of the positive link between the dependent and independent variables, where employee engagement acts as both a moderator and mediator. By including both mediation and moderation in the same model, you can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how workplace flexibility impacts employee performance, considering the mediating role of employee engagement and the moderating effect of its level. In addition to the above analysis, In addition, demographic factors are tested by Manova.

**Keywords:** *workplace flexibility, employee engagement, employee performance, private organizations, PLS (SEM).*

**JEL**

**Classification:** M12; M14; M54; J24; C38.

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