

The Effect of Remote Working, Staff Performance and Job Satisfaction on Staff Engagement

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Abstract

This paper investigates the effect of remote working, staff performance, and job satisfaction on staff engagement in contemporary organizational settings, with a particular focus on the banking sector in Albania. The study aims to examine the direct and indirect relationships between remote working, job satisfaction, staff performance, and staff engagement, with particular emphasis on the mediating role of staff performance. The research addresses how job satisfaction influences staff engagement, the extent to which staff performance contributes to engagement, whether remote working has a significant impact on engagement, and whether staff performance mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and engagement. A quantitative research design is employed using survey data collected from employees working in the banking sector in Albania, specifically within BKT, Credins Bank, Raiffeisen Bank, and Intesa Sanpaolo Bank Albania. Validated Likert-scale instruments are used to measure staff engagement, job satisfaction, staff performance, and remote working. The data are analysed using correlation analysis, multiple regression, and mediation analysis conducted in SPSS. The findings indicate that job satisfaction and staff performance have a positive effect on staff engagement, while staff performance partially mediates this relationship. Remote working is anticipated to have a limited or non-significant direct effect on staff engagement.

Keywords: Remote working; Staff engagement; Job satisfaction; Staff performance.

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Introduction

Context and Problem Statement

Recent years have seen a major change in the nature of work because of new technologies, digitalization, and changes in how businesses work. One of the most important changes is that more and more people are working from home, which has become a permanent part of modern organizational structures instead of just a temporary fix. Because of this, businesses need to rethink how they manage their employees, keep them productive, and get them to work together in work environments that are becoming more flexible.

Remote work has many benefits, like flexibility and independence, but it also has problems with job satisfaction, staff engagement, performance monitoring, collaboration, and motivation. People who work from home may have more trouble staying focused, less time to talk to coworkers, and more trouble keeping work and personal life separate. These challenges pose significant enquiries about the impact of remote work on employee engagement and whether its effects are facilitated by job satisfaction and employee performance (Adisa et al., 2021).

Staff engagement is now a key factor in the success of an organization because employees who are engaged are more committed, motivated, and willing to go above and beyond what is required of them. There isn't a single definition of staff engagement that everyone agrees on, which makes it a complicated and multi-faceted idea. Some researchers say that staff engagement is a good attitude at work that makes employees want to do their best to help the company reach its goals and values (Chandani et al., 2016).

Previous research demonstrates a positive correlation between job satisfaction and employee performance (Tampubolon, 2016; Marie, 2018) as well as employee engagement (Delina & Samuel, 2020), indicating that satisfied employees are more inclined to enhance their performance and maintain their engagement with their work.

Staff performance is how well employees do their jobs and responsibilities in terms of quality, quantity, and efficiency (Naim et al., 2020; Sotome & Takahashi, 2014). For an organization to be successful, it is important to manage staff performance well. High-performing employees are a big part of productivity and competitive advantage. Studies have shown a strong link between staff performance and staff engagement, which means that better performance is often linked to more engagement (Smith & Bititci, 2017; Anitha, 2019).

Research Questions

As more and more companies start to use remote work as a long-term practice, it has created new problems and chances for managing, measuring, and engaging employees. As work arrangements become more flexible and reliant on technology, it is important to know how important organizational aspects work together to affect employee engagement in today's workplaces. Although there is increasing interest in remote work, empirical information about the combined effects of job satisfaction and staff performance on employee engagement in remote working environments is still scarce.

Consequently, additional research is required to investigate the correlations among remote work, job satisfaction, employee performance, and employee engagement. Taking these things into account, the following research question is made:

To what extent do remote working, staff performance, and job satisfaction influence staff engagement in contemporary organizational settings?

Objectives

This study advances our knowledge of employee engagement in contemporary organizational settings with flexible and remote work schedules by tackling the aforementioned research question. The results of this study offer insightful information about how employee performance and job satisfaction interact to affect employee engagement, as well as the degree to which remote work influences this relationship directly or indirectly.

Theoretical Framework

Staff engagement

In today's corporate settings, employee engagement is a crucial idea, especially with the rise in remote and flexible work schedules. Maintaining high levels of engagement is a major challenge for organizations when direct face-to-face connection among employees becomes less common. According to engagement theory, employees that are more engaged typically exhibit higher levels of commitment, motivation, and performance (Albrecht et al., 2018).

Enthusiasm, commitment, and a strong desire to contribute to the organization's overall success are characteristics of an engaged employee (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Stronger emotional ties to work and more job dedication are linked to high levels

of engagement. According to earlier studies, engaged workers have less burnout and continue to have a more active and productive relationship with their jobs (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Additionally, in contemporary workplaces, the necessity for workers to feel engaged and connected to one another is becoming more widely acknowledged (Saks, 2006).

It is often acknowledged that a major precursor to employee engagement is job satisfaction. Employees' emotional and psychological attachment to their work is greatly influenced by job satisfaction in flexible and remote work environments (Riyanto et al., 2021). Higher levels of engagement are a result of satisfied workers' tendency to be more persistent, productive, and enthusiastic in their work (Yadav & Srivastava, 2020). According to Eldor and Vigoda-Gadot (2017), engagement can also be defined as a passionate, driven, and enthusiastic mood that results from favourable affective and psychological situations at work. According to Pong Bija (2020), high work satisfaction levels encourage employee motivation and support long-term commitment.

Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on staff engagement.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a key factor that affects how employees feel and act in today's businesses. Handoko (2019) says that it is usually defined as a good emotional state that comes from how employees feel about their job and work experiences. Job satisfaction is especially important in flexible and remote work settings because employees depend more on intrinsic motivation and perceived organizational support.

Prior research demonstrates that job satisfaction positively influences employee performance (Riyanto et al., 2021). Employees who are happy with their jobs are more likely to work harder, be more productive, and be more committed. A positive correlation has been established between job satisfaction and performance appraisal systems, indicating that equitable and transparent evaluation methods enhance performance outcomes (Ali & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2014).

Individual differences, including personality traits and cognitive abilities, significantly influence job satisfaction and performance (Arvey et al., 1989). Additional research indicates that job satisfaction and engagement correlate positively with significant business outcomes in various organisational settings (Harter & Schmidt, 2000). In general, happy employees do better work, especially in places where they don't have a lot of direct supervision or interaction (Deepa & Kuppusamy, 2011).

Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on staff performance.

Staff performance

Staff performance is a major factor in how well an organization does, and it shows how well employees do their jobs and meet their responsibilities. Studies show that there is a strong and positive link between staff performance and staff engagement. This means that higher levels of performance are linked to higher levels of engagement (Nazir & Islam, 2017).

Evaluations of performance are very important for changing how employees think and act. Research indicates that equitable and constructive performance evaluations enhance motivation and engagement (Girma & Tekalegn, 2016; Shaharyar, 2014). Performance is generally viewed as a dynamic process shaped by individual traits, the work environment, and team interactions (Andrade et al., 2020).

Given the close relationship between performance and engagement, improving staff performance through appropriate support, training, and reward systems is essential for fostering sustained engagement. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Staff performance has a positive effect on staff engagement.

Remote working

Working from home has become a more common part of modern business life. It is often defined as work done outside of a traditional office setting, often with the help of digital technologies (Mokhtarian, 1991). Remote work arrangements give employees more freedom and control over how they do their work and when they do it (Langfred, 2000), which could boost their motivation and engagement.

Some studies show that working from home can make people more engaged by giving them more freedom and flexibility (May, 2012; Mehta, 2021). However, other studies say that the effects of working from home may depend on things like the type of job, the level of support from the organization, and the person's own preferences. As companies keep adding remote work to their business models, it's still very important to look at how it affects employee engagement.

Based on these considerations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Remote working has a positive effect on staff engagement.

Mediating role of staff performance

Staff performance could act as a mediator in the connection between job satisfaction and staff engagement. MacKinnon (2000) asserts that mediation transpires when a predictor variable affects an outcome variable via an intervening mediator. In

this context, job satisfaction is anticipated to impact staff performance, which subsequently influences staff engagement.

The mediating role of staff performance is especially important for understanding how job satisfaction leads to staff engagement. Employees who are happy are more likely to do a good job, and employees who do a good job are more likely to be interested in their work. Looking at this mediating mechanism gives us a better understanding of how organizations that work in flexible environments work on the inside.

Based on the above arguments, the final hypothesis of this study is formulated as follows:

H5: Staff performance mediates the positive relationship between job satisfaction and staff engagement.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model of this study demonstrates the theoretical interrelations among the principal variables investigated: job satisfaction, staff performance, remote working, and staff engagement. The model is constructed from existing literature and illustrates both direct and indirect relationships among the variables.

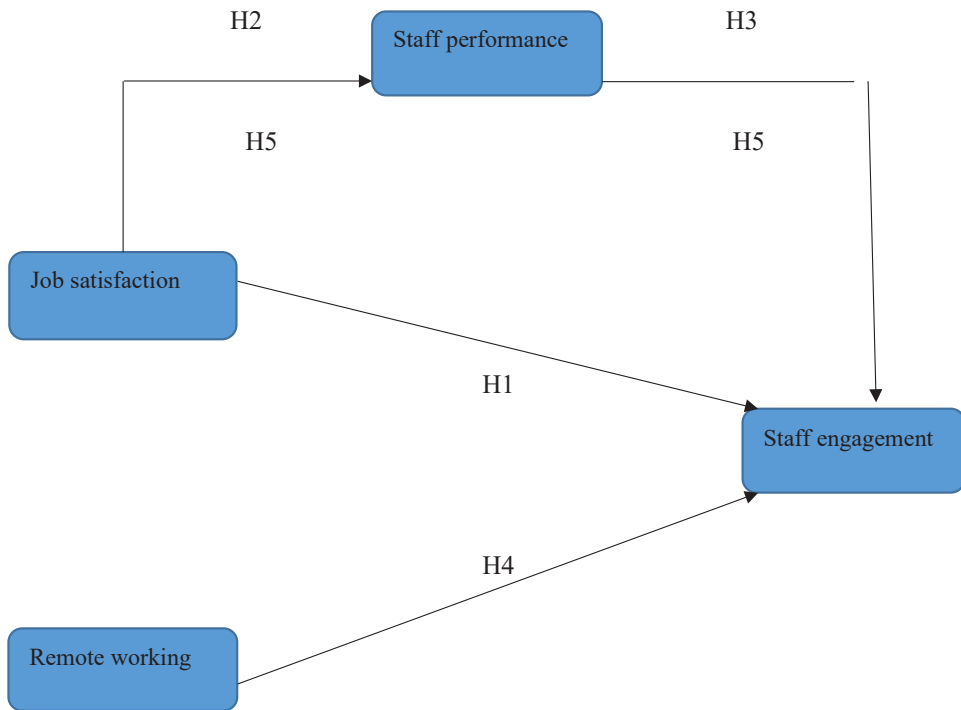
The proposed model posits that job satisfaction exerts a direct influence on staff engagement (H1) and a direct impact on staff performance (H2). In turn, it is expected that staff performance will directly affect staff engagement (H3). These connections show that happy employees are more likely to do a good job, and high-performing employees are more likely to be interested in their work.

Additionally, one independent variable that is anticipated to have a direct impact on employee engagement is remote working (H4). This link illustrates how employees' motivation, autonomy, and emotional connection to their work may be affected by flexible and remote work arrangements.

Additionally, the model includes employee performance as a mediating factor in the connection between employee engagement and work satisfaction (H5). This mediation mechanism offers a deeper understanding of how engagement is developed in modern organizational settings by implying that job satisfaction may indirectly impact employee engagement through its impact on employee performance.

All things considered, the conceptual model offers an organized framework for conducting empirical tests of the suggested hypotheses and investigating the ways in which job satisfaction, employee performance, and remote work collectively influence employee engagement.

FIGURE 1. Conceptual model



Methodology

Research method

Through statistical analysis, this study used a quantitative research approach to investigate the connections among remote working, job satisfaction, employee performance, and employee engagement. Working hours and employment contract status are used as control variables in the testing of five hypotheses (Amano et al., 2021). Employees in Albania's banking industry were surveyed to gather data, which was then subjected to correlation, multiple regression, and mediation analysis. The goal is to address the primary study question and offer insights into the variables affecting employee engagement in flexible work settings.

Data collection

This study adopts a quantitative approach to empirically test hypotheses using data from 270 employees in Albania's banking sector (BKT, Credins Bank, Raiffeisen Bank, and Intesa Sanpaolo Bank Albania). After data cleaning - removing

incomplete responses (29), checking duplicates (none), converting variables (9), and confirming no missing values - the final sample included 241 respondents. Data met normality assumptions and showed no outliers.

The sample was 64.52% female, with most holding master's or bachelor's degrees. Nearly half had 0–5 years of experience, and most worked 40+ hours weekly with permanent contracts. All respondents worked in remote or hybrid settings, supporting analysis of remote work's impact on staff engagement.

Results

Factor analysis

In order to determine whether the measuring scales for job satisfaction, employee engagement, employee performance, and remote working represent consistent and trustworthy conceptions, factor analysis was used in this study. All analyses were carried out using SPSS Statistics, utilizing widely used diagnostic tests such as Cronbach's alpha, Bartlett's test of sphericity, and the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure. The KMO statistic, which must be greater than the minimal threshold of 0.50 to support factor analysis, was used to evaluate sample adequacy in the first stage (Field, 2013). Adequate sampling was indicated by the KMO value for job satisfaction, which was 0.775. The KMO values for employee performance and distant work were 0.806 and 0.845, respectively. Values that are higher than the suggested minimum show that factor analysis is appropriate for the data.

Every reliability coefficient is higher than the widely recognized cutoff point of 0.70, signifying adequate internal consistency. No items were eliminated or changed because the measures utilized in this study have been previously validated and show sufficient psychometric qualities. As a result, hypothesis testing might continue.

Correlation analysis

After factor analysis, correlations between variables were investigated using Pearson's coefficients in SPSS. Means, standard deviations, and relationships are shown in Table 1. Working hours per week, the control variable, has modest associations with most other variables. It has small positive correlations with staff engagement ($r = 0.01$, $p < .05$) and performance ($r = 0.09$, $p < .05$), indicating slightly higher engagement and performance with more hours. However, it has a negative correlation with both remote work ($r = -0.01$, $p < .05$) and job satisfaction ($r = -0.07$, $p < .05$), suggesting that longer hours may lower perceptions of remote work and job satisfaction.

Strong and positive correlations have been found between job satisfaction and staff engagement ($r = 0.62$, $p < .01$), performance ($r = 0.46$, $p < .01$), and remote work ($r = 0.17$, $p < .01$). Similarly, there is a favorable correlation between staff engagement and both remote working ($r = 0.12$, $p < .05$) and performance ($r = 0.46$, $p < .01$). Additionally, remote work has a positive correlation with staff performance ($r = 0.24$, $p < .01$).

Overall, these results validate additional testing using regression and mediation analysis and support the suggested associations.

TABLE 1. Correlation matrix

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	Working hours per week	2.67	.79					
2	Job satisfaction	4.13	.47	-.07				
3	Staff engagement	3.81	.62	.01	.62**			
4	Staff performance	4.31	.43	.09	.46**	.46**		
5	Remote working	3.69	.64	-.01	.17**	.12*	.24**	

Note: N=241, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Regression analysis

The associations between job satisfaction, employee performance, remote work, and employee engagement were investigated using a multiple regression analysis (H1–H4). Strong explanatory power was demonstrated by the model's statistical significance ($F(3, 237) = 81.079$, $p < .001$), which explained 41.9% of the variance in staff involvement ($R^2 = .419$).

Both H1 and H2 were supported by the significant positive effects of job satisfaction on employee engagement ($\beta = .675$, $p < .001$) and performance ($\beta = .415$, $p < .001$). H3 was supported by the large increase in staff involvement that resulted from staff performance ($\beta = .334$, $p < .001$).

However, H4 was rejected since distant work did not significantly affect employee engagement ($\beta = -.024$, $p = .569$). This implies that job happiness and performance have a greater impact on engagement than remote work alone.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	Job satisfaction → Staff engagement	.675	10,974	.000	Accepted
H2	Job satisfaction → Staff performance	.415	9,552	.000	Accepted
H3	Staff performance → Staff engagement	.334	4,812	.000	Accepted
H4	Remote working → Staff engagement	-.024	-0.570	.569	Rejected

Note: N=241, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Mediation analysis

A mediation analysis utilising SPSS Statistics 25’s PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes, 2018) investigated whether employee performance mediates the connection between employee engagement and job satisfaction. Staff performance is significantly predicted by job satisfaction, accounting for 21.21% of its variation ($R^2 = .2121$, $p < .001$). Employee engagement is positively and significantly impacted by work satisfaction overall (effect = 0.8085, $p < .001$). The direct effect is still substantial (effect = 0.6731, $p < .001$) when staff performance is taken into account. Since bootstrapped confidence intervals (0.072 to 0.203) exclude zero, the indirect effect through staff performance is likewise positive (effect = 0.1354) and statistically significant. This outcome is further supported by the standardized indirect impact (0.1031). Overall, the link is partially mediated by staff performance, indicating that job happiness increases engagement both directly and indirectly through better performance.

TABLE 3. Mediation analysis

Total effect of X on Y							
	Effect	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
	.8085	.0562	143,874	.0000	0.6979	0.919	0.6157
Direct effect of X on Y							
	Effect	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
	0.6731	0.0613	109,711	.0000	0.5524	0.7937	0.5126
Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:							
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI			
Staff performance	0.1354	0.0335	0.072	0.203			
Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:							
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI			
Staff performance	0.1031	0.0252	0.0548	0.154			

Note: N=241, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Conclusion and Discussion

Conclusion

In the Albanian banking industry, this study looked at the connections between employee performance, job satisfaction, engagement, and remote work. Additionally, it examined how employee performance functions as a mediator in the relationship between engagement and job happiness.

In line with other research, the findings demonstrate that job satisfaction significantly increases employee engagement, suggesting that happier workers are typically more involved (Riyanto et al., 2021). Employee engagement is positively impacted by staff performance, and job happiness has been shown to enhance performance (Nazir & Islam, 2017).

On the other hand, there is no discernible direct impact of remote work on employee engagement, indicating that it neither raises nor lowers engagement by itself. Lastly, the relationship between job satisfaction and engagement is partially mediated by staff performance, which means that job satisfaction influences engagement both directly and indirectly through enhanced performance.

Discussion

In contemporary, flexible, and remote work situations, employee engagement continues to be a critical component of organizational success. Four of the five hypotheses were supported by this study, which looked at how job satisfaction, employee performance, and remote work affected employee engagement. However, the direct impact of remote work on engagement was not verified.

The absence of a noteworthy correlation implies that employee engagement is not only influenced by the location or methods of employment. Despite the flexibility and independence that come with working remotely, social connection and casual communication - both crucial for engagement - may be diminished. This is consistent with studies that demonstrate that, in the absence of adequate support, remote work can also pose challenges to motivation, focus, and overall wellbeing. The results emphasize how crucial employee performance and job happiness are to fostering engagement. High-performing workers are more engaged, and satisfied workers typically perform better. Performance's mediating function suggests that it is a crucial relationship between engagement and job happiness.

The organizational backdrop of Albania's banking industry, where institutional support and structured surroundings may restrict its direct impact, may be reflected in the neutral effect of remote working. Overall, the findings demonstrate that job happiness and performance are crucial in maintaining engagement, even when remote work by itself cannot increase it.

Recommendations

The study's conclusions have a number of useful ramifications for companies looking to improve employee engagement in flexible and remote work settings, particularly in Albania's banking industry.

- First, as these elements both directly and indirectly increase engagement and performance, organizations should prioritize job happiness by providing training and development, clear career routes, supportive leadership, and great workplace relationships.
- Second, organizations can invest in performance support through clear expectations, feedback, recognition, and sufficient resources, which can indirectly enhance engagement, given the strong correlation between employee performance and engagement.
- Third, remote work is still crucial even when it doesn't directly boost engagement. By offering appropriate technology, ergonomic support, advice on work-life balance, and chances for virtual collaboration, organizations can enhance remote work circumstances.
- Lastly, regular staff surveys should be carried out to track engagement, performance, and work satisfaction. This will allow organizations to take proactive measures and maintain engagement over time.

Recommendations for further research

The results of this study may not be as applicable to other businesses or nations because it was limited to the banking sector in Albania. The study could be repeated in other industries and settings in the future to see if the associations found are more widespread.

Additional research should look at moderating factors including leadership style, organizational support, job qualities, or personal preferences that influence the relationship between remote working and employee engagement. Additionally, longitudinal studies may shed more light on how engagement, performance, and job satisfaction change in remote and hybrid work environments. In order to assist organizations in creating work arrangements that promote both performance and long-term well-being, future research might examine the relationship between staff engagement and employee well-being, including physical and mental health outcomes.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES

During the preparation of this work, the author used ChatGPT for reference collection and table of contents mapping. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the references and table of contents as needed and takes full responsibility for the final content of the publication.

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