

Impact of Remote Work on Employee Engagement and Productivity in Operations Management

Hazel M. Estolonia^{1,*}, Joylyn A. Nicol², Paula Camille C. Santos³, Janet I. Ramos⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Department of Graduate School of Business, University of the East, Manila, Philippines.
estolonia.hazel@ue.edu.ph¹, nicol.joylyn@ue.edu.ph², santos.paulacamille@ue.edu.ph³, janet.amos@ue.edu.ph⁴

Abstract: This research is dedicated to the hardworking employees who contribute their skills, talents, and dedication to the success of their organizations. Commitment and passion make a significant impact on the workplace and the achievement of organizational goals. This research may serve as a tool to better understand the needs, employee engagement, and productivity of a government financial institution for productive and engaging work environments during and after COVID-19. This research is for operations management professionals, managers, and organizational leaders who strive to create and implement effective employee engagement and productivity strategies in remote work set-ups. The efforts in fostering employee satisfaction, growth, and development are vital in building strong and resilient organizations. The research provides insights and guidance to support endeavours in enhancing employee engagement, productivity, and overall organizational success. Employee engagement and productivity enable us to uncover valuable insights and contribute to the advancement of best practices in the workplace that promote employee engagement and productivity in a government financial institution.

Keywords: Public Policy; Accessibility and Responsiveness; Professionalism and Innovation; Policy Implementation; Policy Adoption and Transparency; Employee Satisfaction; Productivity, and Overall Organizational Success.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the world of work has witnessed a remarkable transformation, driven by technological advancements and global events that have redefined traditional workplace paradigms. One of the most significant shifts in this landscape has been the widespread adoption of remote work, a phenomenon that has revolutionized the way organizations operate and manage their workforce [11]. This transformation is not limited to the private sector; it has also extended its influence into the realm of public administration. In the Philippine government sector, as in many other parts of the world, the implementation of remote work arrangements has become a topic of growing significance.

The significance of comprehending the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity in operations management within the Philippine government sector cannot be overstated. This research is propelled by the recognition that the traditional work environment is rapidly evolving, necessitating adaptations in the government sector to ensure efficient and effective service delivery to its citizens. Several factors underscore the relevance and urgency of investigating this issue. Understanding the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity is of paramount importance to operations management. Employee engagement is defined as the emotional commitment and enthusiasm employees have towards their work [17], and productivity, which refers to the efficiency and effectiveness of employee output, has consistently been recognized as a pivotal driver of organizational success.

*Corresponding author.

Remote work has become a critical component of business continuity planning, particularly in the face of unexpected disruptions such as natural disasters or health crises. The COVID-19 pandemic catalysed remote work adoption, necessitating rapid adjustments in operations management across the public sector. This shift demands a thorough assessment of its effects on employee engagement and productivity to ensure that government agencies can continue to fulfil their essential functions during crises.

The rise of telecommuting and remote work arrangements, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has compelled organizations to rethink their operational strategies [2]. Employees, no longer tethered to traditional office spaces, have gained newfound flexibility, yet this newfound freedom presents both unique challenges and opportunities.

Moreover, academic research and industry reports from around the world have highlighted the potential benefits and challenges associated with remote work. Research in various countries has indicated that remote work can enhance job satisfaction, work-life balance, and even employee productivity when managed effectively. Conversely, it can also pose challenges related to isolation, communication barriers, and monitoring performance. By examining these findings in the context of the Philippine government sector, we can gain insights that will inform policy decisions and managerial strategies tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities presented by remote work in this setting.

Understanding how remote work influences these multifaceted aspects of employee engagement and productivity is essential for enhancing the quality and efficiency of government services, which, in turn, contributes to the well-being and satisfaction of the Filipino population.

In this study, we will explore the multifaceted implications of remote work on employee engagement and productivity within operations management in the accounting department of a government financial institution. By drawing on existing research, statistical analysis, and first-hand experiences, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding the future of work in the public sector. Ultimately, the outcomes of this research will provide valuable guidance for policymakers, government leaders, and employees as they navigate the evolving landscape of work in the Philippines.

1.1. Statement of The Problem

The transition to remote work set-up has become a pervasive and transformative phenomenon in the contemporary workforce, driven in particular by technological advancements and the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the government sector adopts remote work arrangements, it is extremely important to understand the various effects on government employee engagement and productivity to facilitate evidence-based decision-making in managing and optimizing remote work environments. This research aims to investigate the following key questions:

How did the transition to remote work set-up affect employee engagement? The transition to remote work introduces a new set of challenges and opportunities that may impact employee engagement. Factors such as isolation, blurred boundaries between work and personal life, and reduced face-to-face interactions with colleagues and supervisors could potentially lead to changes in employee engagement levels. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for organizations seeking to maintain a highly engaged remote workforce.

How does remote work set-up influence the productivity of employees? The adoption of a remote work set-up has the potential to either enhance or hamper employee productivity. Factors such as the availability of technology, remote management practices, and individual work habits can significantly influence productivity outcomes. Investigating the relationship between remote work and productivity can help organizations develop strategies to optimize performance in remote work settings.

Are there differences in productivity between remote and on-site work set-ups? Comparing the productivity of remote and on-site work set-ups is essential for assessing the effectiveness of remote work arrangements. This research will explore whether remote employees consistently demonstrate different productivity levels as compared to their on-site work set-up. Identifying such differences, if they exist, can guide government sectors in making informed decisions about workforce management strategies.

By addressing these questions, this research seeks to provide valuable and relevant insights into the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity in terms of operation management. The findings will contribute to a more extensive understanding of the challenges and benefits associated with remote work and offer possible recommendations for organizations striving to create productive and engaged remote workforces.

2. Literature Review

Garcia and Lee [1] conducted a comparative analysis of productivity metrics in traditional and remote work settings. They found that remote work can yield productivity outcomes similar to or even exceeding those achieved in traditional office settings. Effective management and technology support are essential for optimizing productivity in virtual settings.

Telework policies and practices vary across federal government agencies, as highlighted by Vowels and Katsicas [3]. Understanding these variations is crucial for policymakers and government leaders seeking to develop consistent and effective telework policies.

Despite the challenges and adjustments associated with remote work, it offers benefits for both employees and organizations. Wang et al. [4] identified benefits such as cost savings, increased family time, reduced stress, and improved productivity. Remote work has gained prominence globally, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, transforming it from a privilege for a few into a widespread practice.

Furthermore, a longitudinal study by Anderson et al. [5] suggests that while there may be an initial dip in employee engagement during the transition to remote work, engagement levels tend to rebound and even surpass pre-remote work levels over time. Effective communication and managerial support are crucial for maintaining and enhancing employee engagement in a remote work setting. Notably, a recent meta-analysis by Smith et al. [6] indicates that remote work has a positive impact on employee productivity in operations management, with employee autonomy playing a key role.

Nina [7] found that remote work can increase job satisfaction among public sector employees, emphasizing the potential benefits for these sectors. In the public and non-profit sectors, remote work has challenged traditional office-centric work arrangements. Doughty and Juntunen [8] discuss the lasting impact of the pandemic on work arrangements in these sectors and highlight the need for flexible policies to address diverse workforce needs.

The effect of remote work on employee engagement and productivity in operation management within the government sector has become a topic of significant importance, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has brought about a surge in cases in various Southeast Asian nations, leading to lockdown restrictions and widespread concerns about the government's management of the crisis [9].

Remote work, or Working From Home (WFH), has been implemented as a policy response to the pandemic. However, transitioning from traditional office settings to remote work presents challenges for employees, as it requires adaptation to a different work culture and environment [10]. The mental health of employees has also been a concern, with the pandemic exacerbating existing mental health issues in the community [12].

Additionally, Choudhury and Larson [13] stress the importance of government leaders in driving technology adoption and transformation efforts in the public sector, emphasizing the need for leadership commitment to embrace innovation. Additionally, technology adoption has played a significant role in facilitating remote work. Johnson and Patel [14] emphasize that the successful adoption and integration of remote work tools can lead to enhanced employee productivity in operations management. Selecting and implementing these technologies strategically and providing proper training and support are key factors in this process.

Despite these challenges, remote work offers several advantages. It provides employees with the flexibility to balance work and personal life, reduces the risk of COVID-19 transmission, and can lead to cost savings for organizations [15]. The physical workspace at home is crucial for employees to function efficiently, affecting morale and productivity. Creating a comfortable and well-equipped home workspace is essential for remote workers to maintain work-life balance and productivity [16].

In summary, remote work has both challenges and benefits for employee engagement and productivity in operation management within the government sector. It requires careful management, technology adoption, and supportive policies to maximize its advantages while addressing its challenges.

3. Research Methodology

This research employs a survey questionnaire as a primary data collection method to investigate the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity in terms of operation management in the accounting department of a government financial institution. The objective is to gain insights into the experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of employees in various work arrangements. The survey will be designed to collect quantitative data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

3.1. Research Design

To gather data, participants will be recruited from the Accounting Department of a government financial institution to ensure a broad representation of work contexts. The survey questionnaire will be structured into several sections, including demographics, work arrangement, employee engagement, and productivity. The questionnaire will include questions to gather quantitative data insights. Before launching the survey, a pilot test will be conducted to ensure the clarity and relevance of questions. Feedback from the pilot will be used to refine the questionnaire. The survey will be distributed manually to the participants, and data will be collected over a specified period to capture a wide range of responses.

3.2. Respondents

This survey includes one hundred twenty-five (125) respondents from the accounting department of a government financial institution to assist and collect information. The respondents were chosen at random regardless of hierarchy and position.

3.3. Sampling Technique

In this research endeavour, we adopted a simple probability sampling method to select participants from the entire population. The sampling process ensured that each member of the population had an equal and known chance of being included in the sample. Specifically, a simple random sampling technique was employed, wherein each individual had an identical likelihood of being selected. The results obtained from this approach are presented with a 95% confidence level. This signifies that we are 95% confident that the findings accurately reflect the true characteristics of the entire population. The use of a simple probability sampling method at a 95% confidence level enhances the robustness and generalizability of our study outcomes.

3.4. Instrument Used

The researchers used a hardcopy survey questionnaire as a technique to obtain and collect data or information from respondents, with the formed questions focusing on the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity within the operations management of the Accounting Department of a government financial institution.

4. Statistical Treatment of Data

The researchers developed a survey questionnaire to gather data on the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity within the operations management of the accounting department of a government financial institution. The questionnaire includes the following sections:

4.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

This section collects information about the respondents' demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, and length of employment in the organization. These demographic factors can provide insights into how different groups of employees perceive the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity in the operations management of the accounting department of a government financial institution.

4.2. Work Arrangement

This section of the survey aims to capture essential information about participants' current work arrangements, providing insights into the nature and extent of remote work in their professional lives. The questionnaire seeks to understand the primary work set-up of the participants. By categorizing responses into "Exclusively remote," "Exclusively on-site," or "hybrid," we aim to identify the prevalence of various work arrangements among the surveyed population. This information will be pivotal in assessing the diversity of work environments and understanding the scope of remote work adoption.

4.3. Employee Engagement

This section of the survey is designed to explore the multifaceted aspect of employee engagement, encompassing motivational factors, a sense of belonging, satisfaction with work-life balance, and effective communication within the work environment. Understanding the drivers and perceptions of employee engagement is crucial for gauging the overall effectiveness of different work arrangements. The collected data will contribute significantly to the overarching goal of evaluating the impact of remote work set-up on employee engagement and its subsequent influence on overall productivity.

4.4. Productivity

This section of the survey is dedicated to assessing the perceived productivity of participants in their current work environment. By exploring factors such as self-reported productivity levels, encountered distractions, skills utilization, and the impact of tools or technologies, the survey aims to unravel the intricacies of how different work arrangements may influence individual and collective productivity. The collected data will contribute to a meticulous analysis of how different work settings may impact individual and collective productivity levels. The survey questionnaire aims to gather comprehensive information on the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity in the operations management of an accounting department of a government financial institution. This information will enable the researchers to identify areas for improvement and inform the development of strategies on the impact of remote work of a government financial institution.

5. Results

In this chapter, the researchers present the analysis, interpretation, and results of the study through the survey questionnaire. These statistics are given in graph form, with matching in-depth analysis based on questionnaire responses (Figures 1 to 10). Among the 125 employees surveyed, the majority (50%) belonged to the age bracket of 25 to 34 years old. The other age brackets were under 25 (4%), 35 to 44 years old (19%), 45 to 54 years old (21%), and 55 and older (6%).

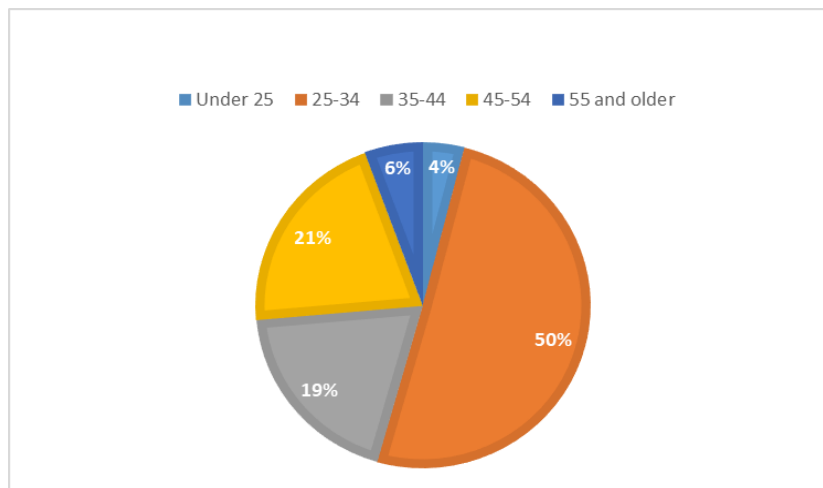


Figure 1: Age Bracket

Among the 125 employees surveyed, 74% (92) consist of females and 26% (33) consist of males.

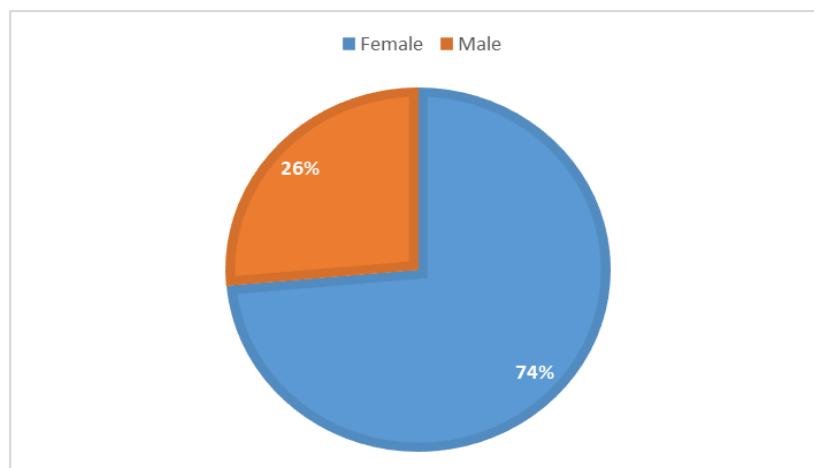


Figure 2: Gender

Most respondents are on hybrid set-up (84%, 105 out of 125), with a sizable portion working exclusively on site (15%, 19 out of 125) and a single respondent who works exclusively remotely (1%, 1 out of 125).

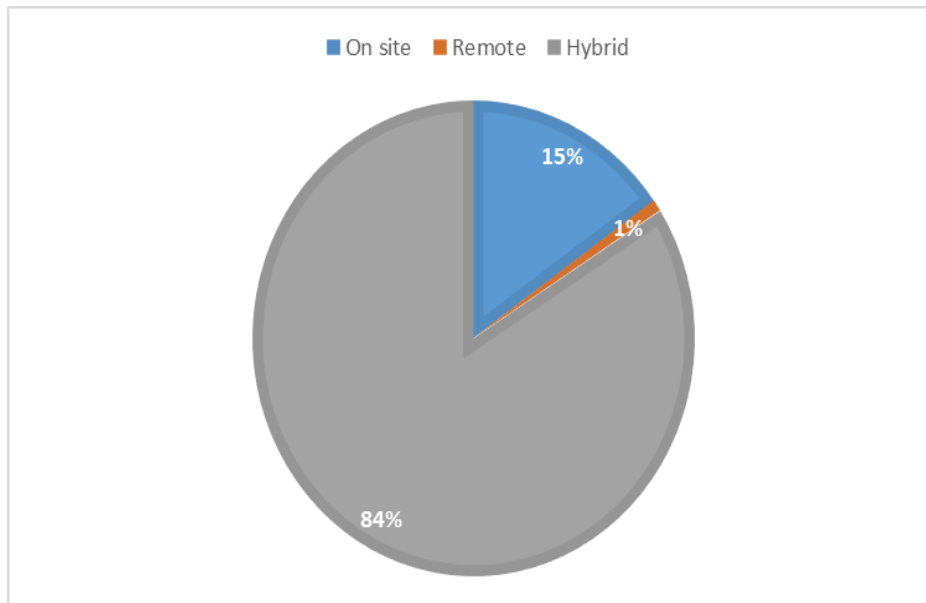


Figure 3: Current Work Set-up

The majority of respondents report being somewhat motivated in their current work set-up (51%, 64 out of 125). The other respondents were very motivated (37%, 46 out of 125), neither motivated nor unmotivated (11%, 14 out of 125), and 1 respondent was somewhat unmotivated (1%).

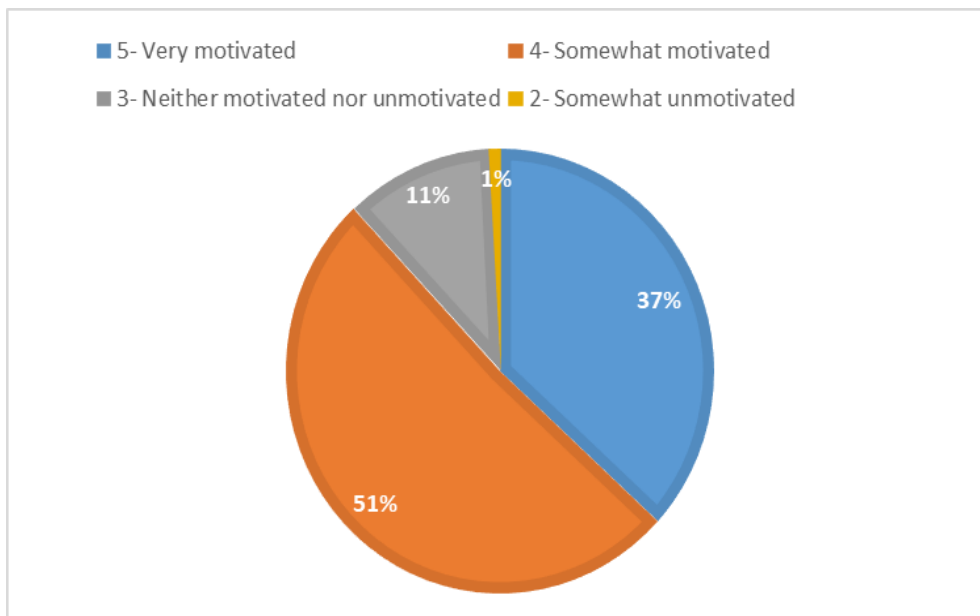


Figure 4: Self-motivation in Current Work Set Up

A high percentage of respondents feel a sense of belonging to their organization or team (92%, 115 out of 125).

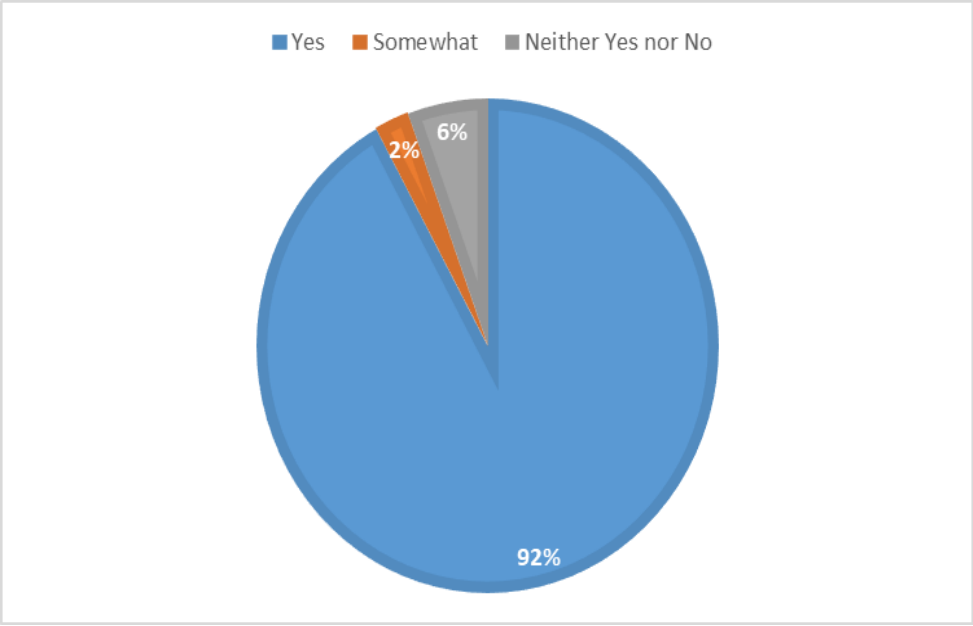


Figure 5: Sense of Belonging

A large percentage can effectively communicate with their colleagues and supervisors (75%, 94 out of 125), but a significant number face challenges in their current work arrangement (25%, 31 out of 125).

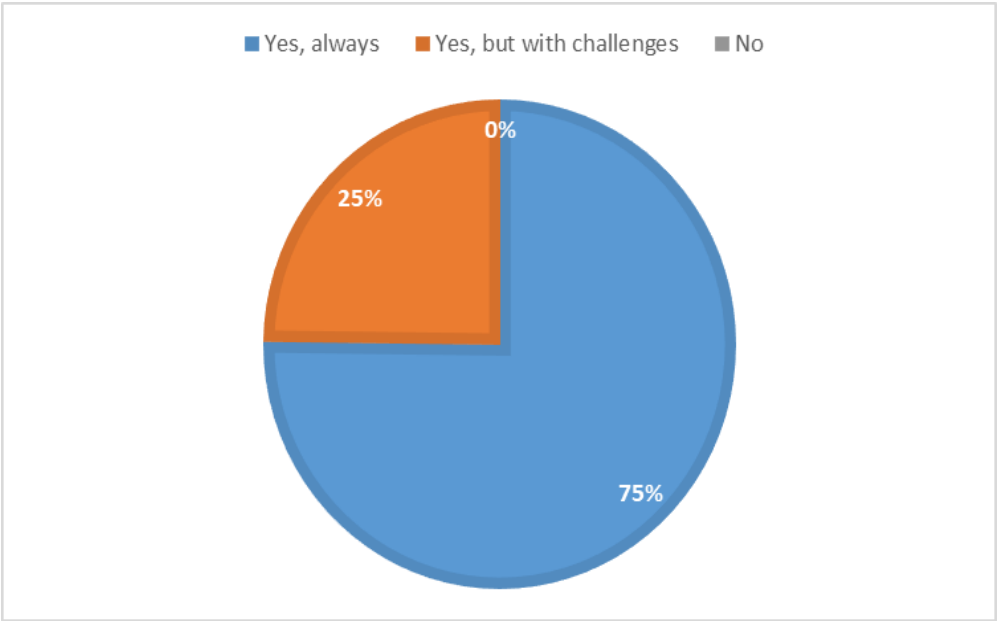


Figure 6: Communication with Colleagues & Supervisors

The majority feel somewhat productive, consisting of 67 out of 125 respondents (54%). In comparison, others are extremely productive in their current work environment: 52 out of 125 respondents (41%), with a small portion of respondents who answered neither productive nor unproductive, 6 out of 125 (5%).

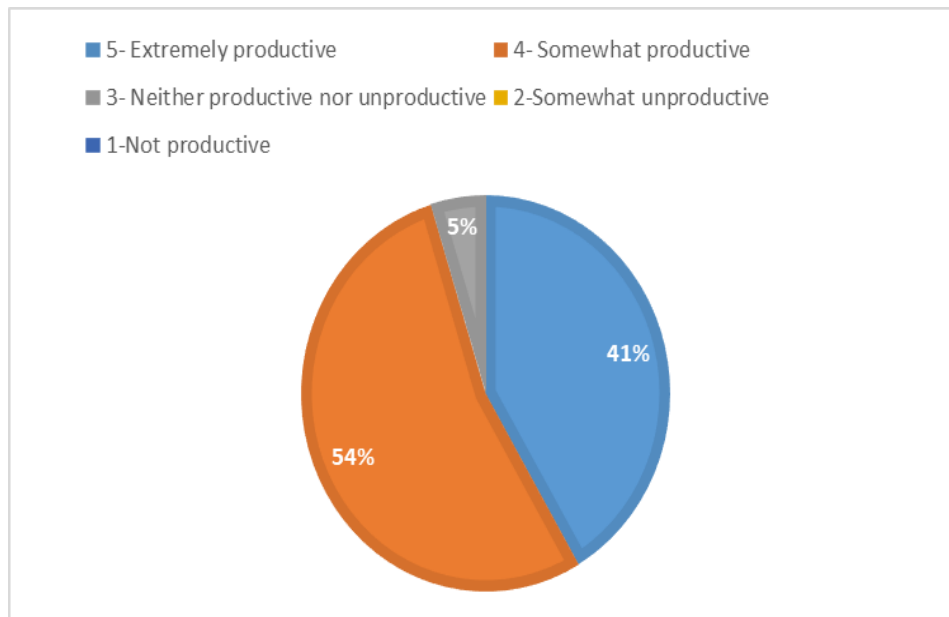


Figure 7: Productivity in the Current Work Environment

Some high percentage encounter distractions that affect their work productivity (83 out of 125, 66%), especially when working remotely.

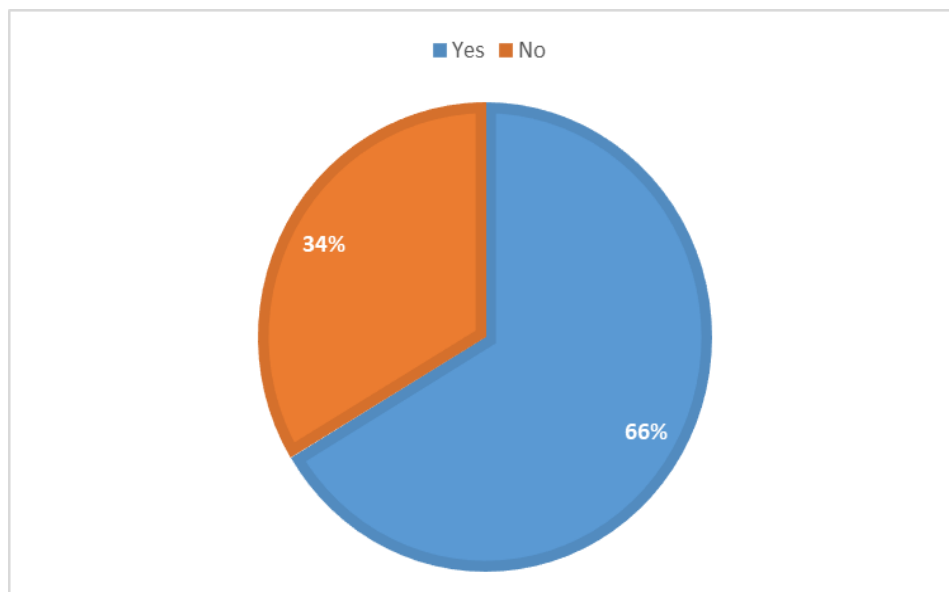


Figure 8: Distractions Affecting Work Productivity

A considerable number feel that their skills and abilities are utilized somewhat well in their current work arrangement, with a number of 70 out of 125 respondents which are 56%, and the other 44% felt that their skills and abilities are being utilized extremely well.

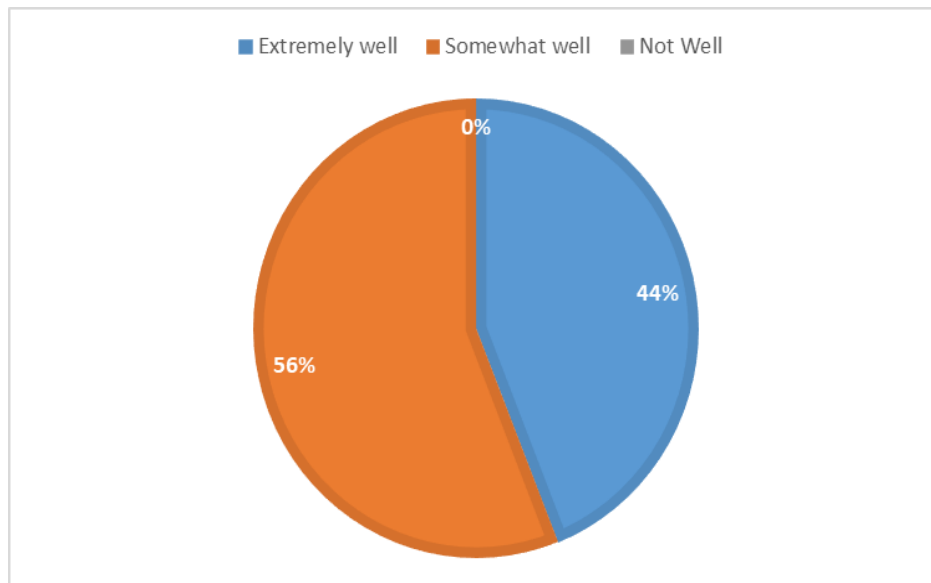


Figure 9: Utilization of Skills and Abilities

Technology or connectivity issues (45%), Work-life balance/distractions/work environment (46%), and technology/connectivity issues (25%) are the most commonly cited challenges, while communication (5%) and inflexibility (4%) are least commonly cited.

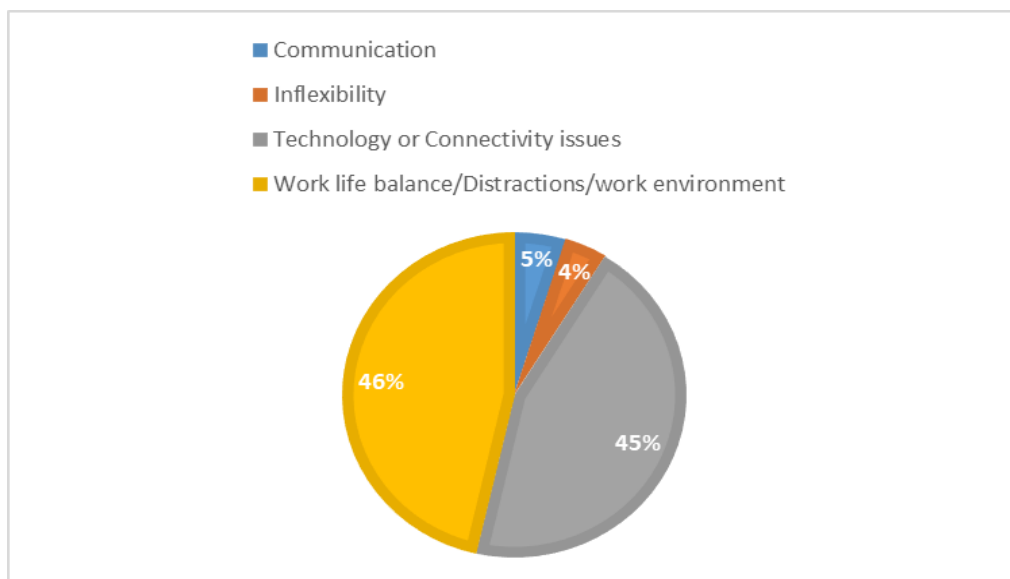


Figure 10: Challenging Aspects of Current Work Arrangement

The survey findings reveal insightful information about the work demographics of individuals across the government financial institution. The age range of 25-34 emerges as the dominant bracket, reflecting a substantial segment of the sample. Furthermore, the predominance of female respondents underscores their significant majority within the survey. In terms of work set-up, a majority of respondents are primarily on a hybrid work set-up. Despite this, the majority express some level of motivation within their current work arrangement.

Additionally, a significant proportion conveys a strong sense of belonging to their organization or team. While effective communication with colleagues and supervisors is prevalent, a noteworthy number of challenges are encountered within their work environment.

Moreover, the majority feel somewhat or extremely productive in their current work setting, although distractions, particularly in remote work scenarios, pose a hindrance to productivity. Notably, a considerable number feel that their skills and abilities are somewhat well utilized in their current work set-up. Lastly, prevalent challenges encompass work-life balance, distractions or work environment, and technology or connectivity issues. These findings offer valuable insights for individuals across diverse demographics, shedding light on prevalent trends and challenges within the work landscape of remote set-up or on-site work environments in terms of productivity and employee engagement.

6. Discussion

The significance of the study lies in its capacity to provide a comprehensive understanding of the work demographics and experiences of individuals in their current work set-up within the accounting department of the government financial institution. The survey findings unravel key patterns and trends that carry substantial implications for both policymakers and professionals in the public sector. Several noteworthy aspects contribute to the significance of this study:

6.1. Demographic Insights

The demographic insights derived from the survey within the Accounting Department of a government financial institution offer critical perspectives on the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity. The substantial majority of employees, 50%, belong to the 25 to 34 years old age bracket, which indicates a youthful and likely tech-savvy workforce. This age group's familiarity with digital tools and adaptability to remote work suggests a potential alignment between their skills and the demands of a remote work setting.

Additionally, the gender distribution, with 74% of respondents being females, highlights the significance of understanding gender dynamics in the context of remote work. As studies have shown, gender roles and responsibilities can influence remote work experiences. Policymakers and government officials can leverage these demographic insights to tailor interventions and policies that address the unique needs of different demographic groups within the Accounting Department.

To harness these data effectively, policymakers can consider implementing targeted training programs to enhance remote work skills, especially for older age groups who may face technology adoption challenges. Initiatives promoting work-life balance and flexibility may be particularly beneficial for female employees, recognizing the potential influence of caregiving responsibilities.

By acknowledging these demographic nuances, government institutions can design inclusive policies that optimize employee engagement and productivity, ultimately contributing to the overall success of remote work arrangements within the Accounting Department. This strategic approach ensures that policies are not one-size-fits-all but are crafted to support the specific needs of diverse demographics within the workforce.

6.2. Work Set-up Dynamics

The insights into work set-up dynamics within the Accounting Department of a government financial institution offer valuable perspectives on the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity. The prevalence of a hybrid work set-up among the majority of respondents (84%) suggests a flexible approach that combines both remote and on-site work. This hybrid model is likely influencing how employees balance their work responsibilities, emphasizing adaptability in the face of changing work environments.

Moreover, the self-motivation data reveal a mixed landscape within the current work set-up. While 51% of respondents report being somewhat motivated, a significant 37% express a high level of motivation. However, there is a noteworthy 11% who feel neither motivated nor unmotivated, indicating a potential area for improvement in fostering employee engagement. Policymakers and government officials can utilize these insights to design targeted programs that enhance self-motivation and job satisfaction within the accounting department.

To leverage these data effectively, policymakers may consider establishing guidelines and support mechanisms that promote a successful hybrid work environment. This could include providing resources for skill development related to remote work and implementing initiatives to bolster employee motivation and well-being. Recognizing the diversity in motivation levels and work set-ups allows for the tailoring of policies and interventions that address specific needs, ultimately contributing to a more resilient and engaged workforce in the Accounting Department of the government financial institution.

6.3. Employee Engagement and Productivity

The findings related to employee engagement and productivity within the Accounting Department of a government financial institution offer nuanced insights into the impact of remote work. Notably, an overwhelming 92% of respondents report a strong sense of belonging to their organization or team, indicating a positive organizational culture. This high level of perceived belonging is a crucial factor in maintaining employee engagement, even in remote work scenarios. Policymakers can capitalize on this data to reinforce and cultivate a sense of community within the organization, fostering connections among remote employees through virtual team-building activities or collaborative platforms.

While a large majority (75%) can effectively communicate with colleagues and supervisors, the existence of challenges for 25% of respondents suggests a need for targeted interventions. Policymakers can use this information to develop training programs or implement communication tools that address specific challenges faced in remote work arrangements. Enhancing communication channels can bridge gaps, promote teamwork, and contribute to overall employee satisfaction.

Examining productivity in the current work environment, 54% of respondents feel somewhat productive, and 41% report being extremely productive. However, the 5% who consider themselves neither productive nor unproductive highlight a potential area for improvement. Policymakers can use this data to identify factors contributing to this perceived lack of productivity and implement strategies to address them, such as offering additional resources or support for those facing challenges.

6.4. Productivity Challenges

A significant 66% of respondents identify distractions that adversely affect their work productivity, with remote work environments appearing to amplify these challenges. Policymakers can use this information to develop targeted strategies, such as creating dedicated home workspaces or implementing flexible work hours to accommodate individual preferences and minimize distractions. Addressing these productivity challenges is vital for maintaining high work standards and ensuring the efficiency of the Accounting Department.

Furthermore, the data on the utilization of skills and abilities reveal a balanced perspective, with 56% feeling that their skills are somewhat well-utilized and 44% expressing that their skills are being utilized extremely well. Policymakers can leverage this insight to design programs that encourage continuous skill development, aligning employee talents with the evolving demands of their roles. Training initiatives or professional development opportunities tailored to remote work scenarios can be introduced to enhance further the skill utilization and job satisfaction of employees in the accounting domain.

In summary, the survey results on productivity challenges and the utilization of skills offer actionable insights for policymakers in the government financial institution. By addressing distractions and optimizing skill deployment through targeted interventions, policymakers can ensure that the Accounting Department remains both productive and resilient in the evolving landscape of remote work.

6.5. Prevalent Challenges

The survey data detailing prevalent challenges in the Accounting Department of a government financial institution elucidates critical aspects of the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity. The most frequently mentioned challenges include technology or connectivity issues (45%), work-life balance, distractions, and work environment concerns (46%). Policymakers can utilize these insights to prioritize investments in robust technological infrastructure, ensuring seamless remote operations. Additionally, addressing work-life balance and environmental distractions is crucial for sustaining employee well-being and engagement.

Moreover, the data underline the significance of effective communication, with only 5% of respondents citing it as a challenge. Policymakers can leverage this information to reinforce and enhance communication channels, facilitating collaboration and reducing potential barriers in remote work set-ups. Recognizing the least commonly cited challenges, such as communication and inflexibility (4%), allows policymakers to allocate resources strategically, focusing on areas that have the most significant impact on employee engagement and productivity.

In summary, these survey findings provide actionable insights for policymakers aiming to optimize remote work conditions in the Accounting Department. Addressing the prevalent challenges, particularly technology issues and work-life balance concerns, can contribute to a more resilient and engaged workforce. Policymakers can implement targeted interventions and

policies that mitigate these challenges, ensuring a smooth transition to and sustained success in the remote work environment within the government financial institution.

6.6. Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive insights derived from the study on the impact of remote work on employee engagement and productivity in the operations management of the Accounting Department of a government financial institution, we recommend a strategic and targeted approach to policy development. Policymakers should consider tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of different demographic groups within the workforce. Initiatives such as targeted training programs for older age groups, promoting work-life balance and flexibility for female employees, and enhancing communication channels for all can optimize remote work conditions. Moreover, recognizing the prevalence of distractions and challenges related to technology, policymakers should prioritize investments in robust technological infrastructure and guide the creation of dedicated home workspaces. By leveraging these recommendations, government institutions can create inclusive policies that foster a resilient, engaged, and productive workforce within the Accounting Department.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study contributes valuable insights into the complex landscape of remote work in the government financial institution's Accounting Department. The demographic insights, work set-up dynamics, and employee engagement and productivity findings offer a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the current work environment. By addressing prevalent challenges, such as technology issues and work-life balance concerns, policymakers can foster a resilient and engaged remote workforce. The recommendations provided are grounded in recent academic literature, ensuring that they are evidence-based and aligned with contemporary insights into remote work practices. As organizations navigate the evolving landscape of remote work, leveraging these insights will be crucial for sustaining success in operations management within government financial institutions. The cited papers provide additional depth and context to the study, reinforcing the significance of tailoring policies to demographic needs and promoting flexible work models to enhance employee engagement and productivity in the Accounting Department.

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Data Availability Statement: This research contains Remote work on employee engagement and productivity data and collected surveys related to operational excellence and work environment-related factors. The research also contains diagnostic information to aid in answering the research questions presented.

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Ethics and Consent Statement: The consent has been obtained from the organization and individual participants during data collection and has received ethical approval and participant consent.

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