

MODERATORS AND MEDIATORS THAT EXPLAIN CONTRADICTIONARY RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HYBRID WORK AND WORK ENGAGEMENT

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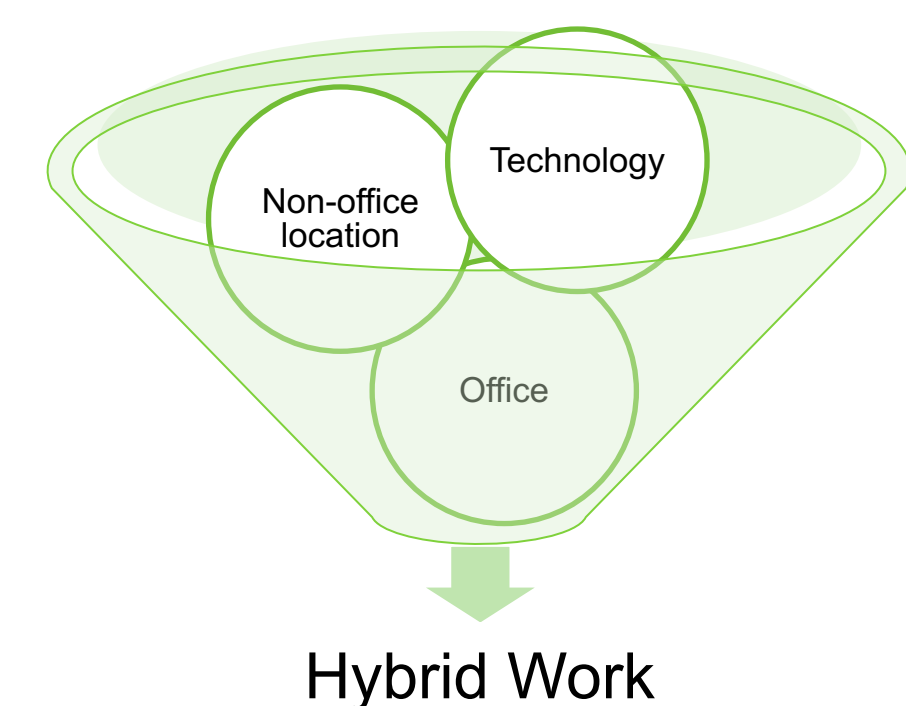
Abstract

Under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the way people work changed from an in-person focus to a hybrid-oriented style. The increase in working from home shapes how employees interact and deal with daily work. This thesis aims to explore mediators and moderators which explain the change in the relationship between hybrid work and work engagement. Through regression analyses and mediation testing, my results indicate that among selected variables (turnover intention, job crafting, and social support), the turnover intention has a moderation effect while interacting with work from home. Social support directly relates to work engagement, with no significance interact with work from home. Job crating does not impact the relationship between hybrid work and work engagement. Additionally, all three variables show no mediation effect between hybrid work and work engagement.

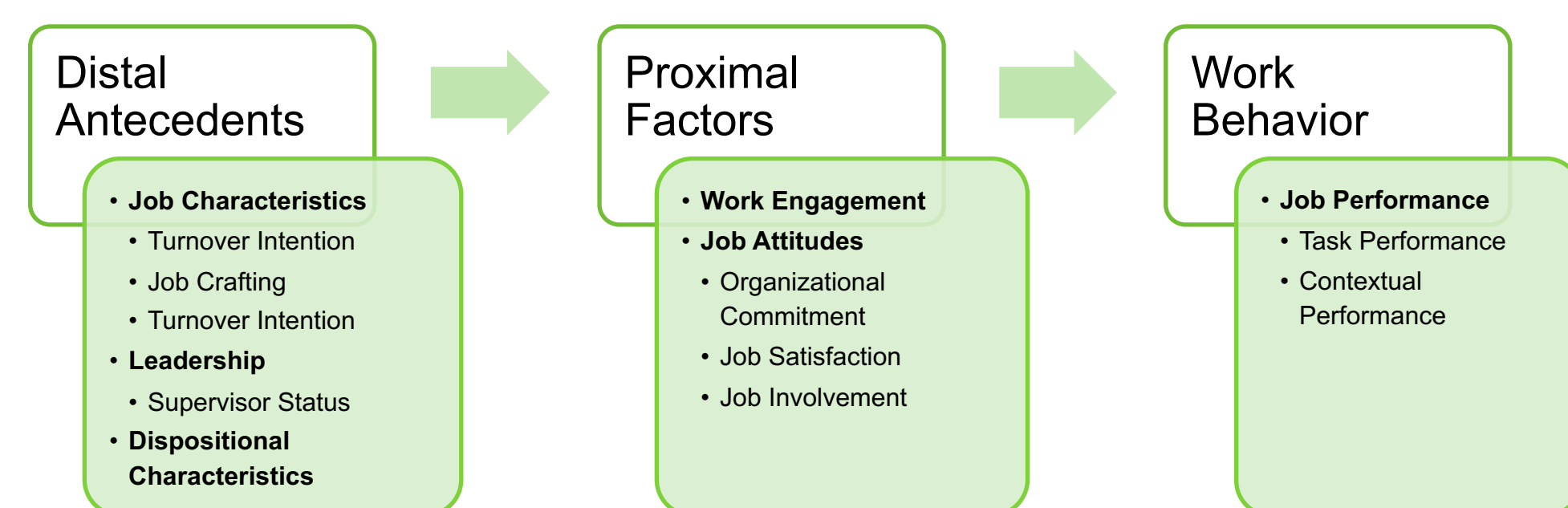
Introduction

My research topic has four major components: hybrid work, work engagement, potential mediators, and potential moderators.

Hybrid working has been defined as a combined working method between domestic and organizational workspaces while engaging in working through digital technology.



Work engagement refers to a positive motivational state of work-related well-being with three aspects: emotional, cognitive, and physical.



In academia, contradictory findings exist in the relationship between hybrid work and work engagement. Past research shows that when taking different work-related variables into consideration, the results change. However, my research aims to find out in what way the working-related variables shape the relationship between hybrid work and work engagement. To pursue this goal, I adopted secondary data from Richard Burgess and selected turnover intention, job crafting, and social support as potential mediators and moderators.

Turnover intention represents the willingness of an employee to leave the current job to pursue different personal/professional goals, which is highly negatively associated with work engagement.

Job crafting, as an extension concept of job design, serves as a top-down function for employees to design their work. Job crafting contains multiple aspects, including autonomy, skill variety, feedback, and task significance.

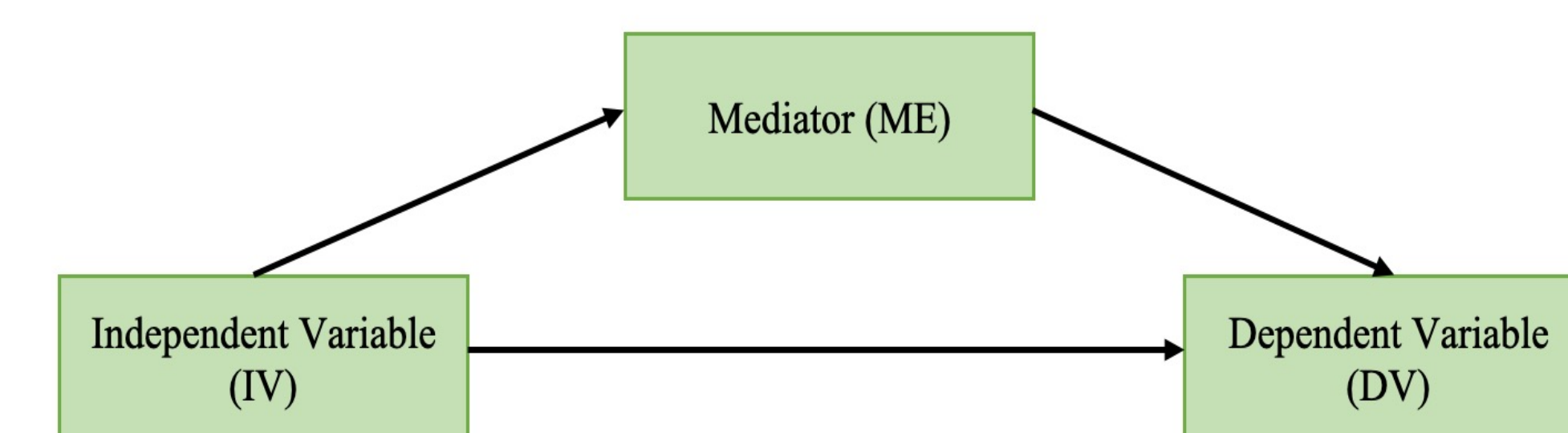
Social support has been defined as an emotional and instrumental attachment to care provided by a community or a group of people. Social support assists employees to reduce stress and provide help with work-related difficulties.

Methodology

My research adopted a survey conducted by Richard Burgess, with 164 participants of different gender, educational backgrounds, and roles in organizations.

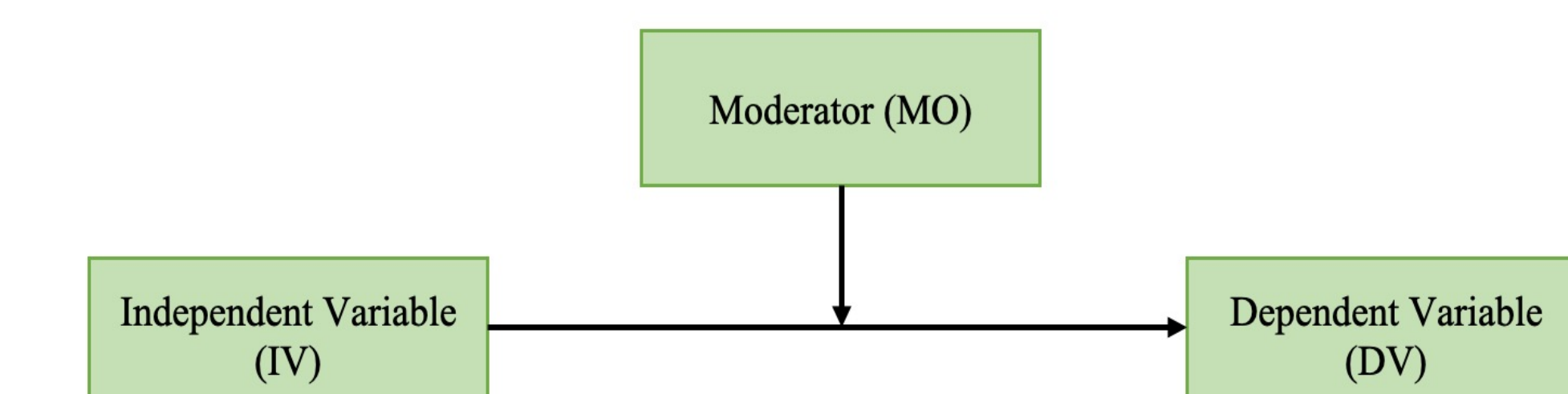
Survey Questions are asked based on Utrecht Work Engagement Scales (UWES-9), with a scale 1-7. With the scale, I codify the answers into numbers then conduct mediation tests and regression analysis.

For **mediation tests**, I used the R package "lavaan" with the null hypothesis (H0): turnover intention/job crafting/social support mediates the relationship between hybrid work and work engagement



For **moderation tests**, I build four regression models and take control variables into consideration (note: Work Engagement(WE); Work From Home(WFH); Turnover Intention(TI); Job Crafting(JC); Social Support(SS); Gender(Gen); Supervisor Status(Sup))

- $WE = a * WFH + b$
- $WE = a * WFH + b * TI + c * (WFH:TI) + d * Gen + e$
- $WE = a * WFH + b * JC + c * (WFH:JC) + d * Sup + e$
- $WE = a * WFH + b * SS + c * (WFH:SS) + d * Sup + e$

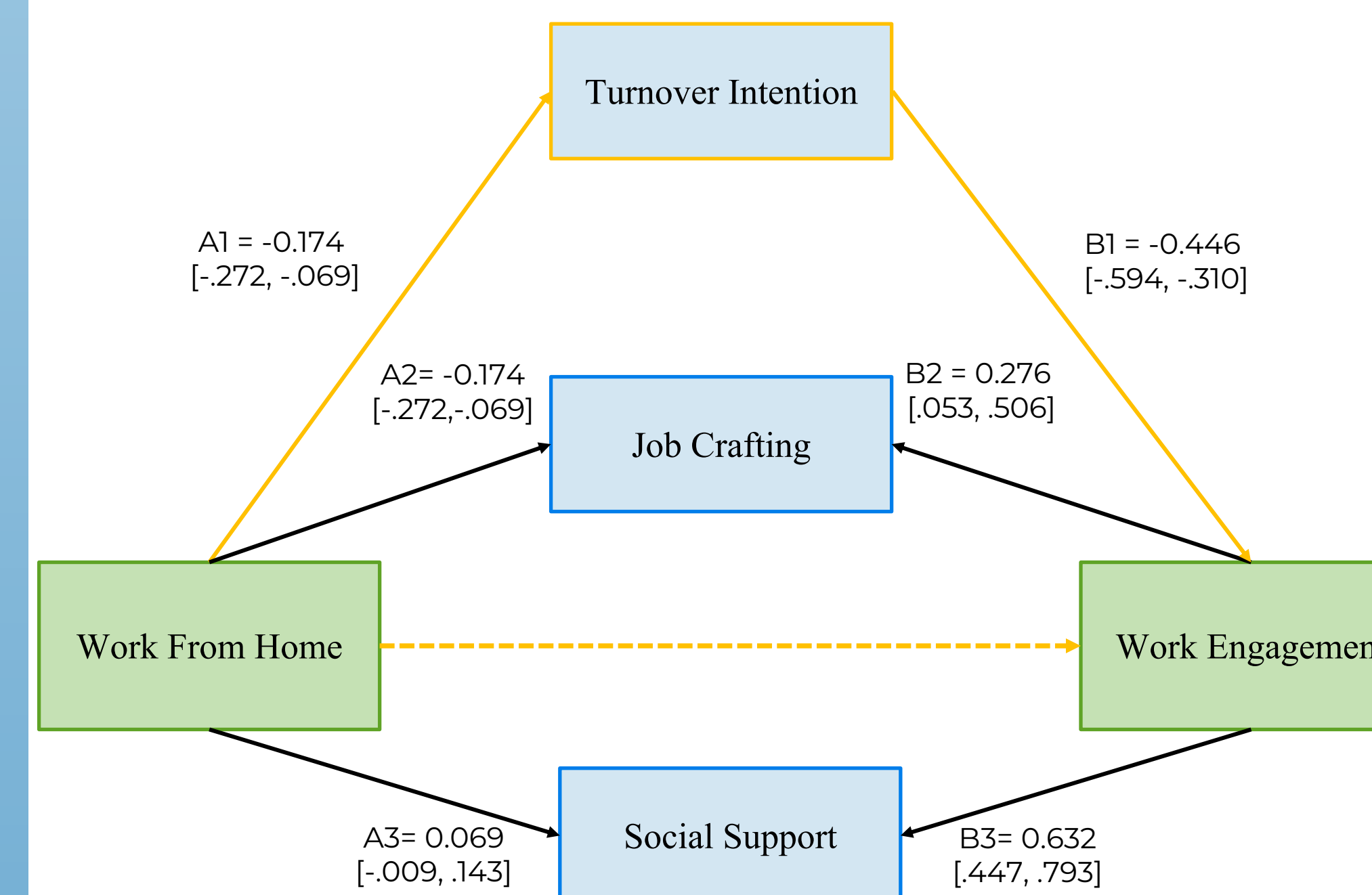


Results

From the correlation table, we can make preliminary assumptions. For example, turnover shows a negative relationship between work-from-home and work engagement, while work-from-home and work engagement shows a neutral relationship. We can assume that turnover intention is a potential mediator and moderator.



With the mediation analysis, the turnover intention is the only variable that has significance with both work-from-home and work engagement directly. Meanwhile, with the significance of the indirect effect between work-from-home and work engagement, turnover intention can be defined as a mediator. Besides, job crafting, and social support don't finish the whole cycle, which means they are not mediators



Through the moderation tests, the interaction term between turnover intention and work from home shows significance in impacting work engagement. Besides, social support shows a direct impact on work engagement without interacting with work from home. Moreover, supervisor status shows significance in all models, showing importance as a control variable.

- $WE = a * WFH (p: 0.402) + b$
- $WE = a * WFH + b * TI + c * (WFH:TI)(p: 0.07) + d * Gen + e$
- $WE = a * WFH + b * JC + c * (WFH:JC) + d * Sup (p: 0.001) + e$
- $WE = a * WFH + b * SS(p: 0.034) + c * (WFH:SS) + d * Sup(p: 0.001) + e$

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research has revealed important insights into the relationship between hybrid work, turnover intention, job crafting, social support, and supervisor status, and their impact on work engagement. Our study underscores the critical role of turnover intention as a mediator and moderator of the relationship between hybrid work and work engagement, emphasizing the need for organizations to implement strategies that address employees' intention to leave. We also found that job crafting does not significantly affect work engagement in a hybrid work environment, indicating that other factors, such as social support, are more influential.

Additionally, our research highlights the positive impact of social support on work engagement, suggesting that organizations should prioritize creating a supportive work environment that fosters employee well-being and engagement. Finally, our findings demonstrate that supervisor status matters, with high-status supervisors contributing to greater work engagement among their employees.

Taken together, our findings offer important guidance for organizations seeking to design and implement effective hybrid work environments that enhance employee engagement and productivity.

Future Research Opportunities

I believe that there are still unexplored dimensions when it comes to interpreting hybrid work, and I anticipate future research will uncover these. With the post-pandemic perspective, I expect there to be industry-specific data that will provide valuable insights into how different sectors are adapting to hybrid work and impacting employee engagement. Besides, work well-being might be impacted by various factors. Ranking and sorting those factors might help the organization to design its workplace.

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