

# The Influence of Work-Related Supports on Employee Engagement in the Pharmaceutical Industry in Thailand

Pimploi Tirastittam<sup>1</sup>, Patsara Sirikamonsin<sup>2</sup>, Hang Li<sup>3</sup>, Aongart Aun-a-nan<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand  
Email: [pimploi.ti@ssru.ac.th](mailto:pimploi.ti@ssru.ac.th)

<sup>2</sup>College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand  
Email: [patsara.si@ssru.ac.th](mailto:patsara.si@ssru.ac.th)

<sup>3</sup>College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand  
Email: [Lihang2000\\_cn@hotmail.com](mailto:Lihang2000_cn@hotmail.com)

<sup>4</sup>College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand  
Email: [aidedecampc31020@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:aidedecampc31020@hotmail.co.uk)

Article History:

Submitted: 27.12.2019

Revised: 26.01.2020

Accepted: 25.02.2020

## ABSTRACT

The employee at the workplace is not fully dedicated or engaged in their work due to two crucial reasons less commitment toward the organization and lack of motivation. Job satisfaction is simply a transactional or superficial situation for staff, employee engagement, on the other hand, demonstrate staff's intensive relation with the employer which inclined to achieve employer's objective. This study aims to investigate some of the influential factors that affect employee to engage at work. More specifically, the effects of work-related support and human resources practice on employee engagement in the Thailand pharmaceutical industry. A total of 370 questionnaires were distributed by the researchers themselves through the internal organizational distribution system. After data collection, 350 questionnaires were received and after screening 339

data used for the analysis of the study. The results showed that work-related support such as supervisor support, organisational support, co-worker support, and social support significant related to employee engagement. These findings corroborated those of previous studies.

**Keywords:** Work-related Support, Employee Engagement, Thailand

## Correspondence:

Pimploi Tirastittam  
College of Innovation and Management  
Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University  
Thailand  
E-mail: [pimploi.ti@ssru.ac.th](mailto:pimploi.ti@ssru.ac.th)  
DOI: [10.5530/srp.2020.2.85](https://doi.org/10.5530/srp.2020.2.85)

@Advanced Scientific Research. All rights reserved

## INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement refers to the interlinkage between an organization and its employee, which qualitatively and quantitatively affect the productivity of an organization. Engaging the employee is ever warranted, which seems to be crucial for the long-term sustainability of the company. However, recent studies depict the alarming news for global corporations and industries is that employee is less engaged in their work (Ghani, Kaliappen, & Jermisittiparsert, 2019; Jermisittiparsert, Sriyakul, & Siriattakul, 2019; Mekhum & Jermisittiparsert, 2019). For instance, a study conducted by S. Albrecht, Breidahl, and Marty (2018) shows that only 20% of the total employee is engaged to their work which yields a substantial productivity loss for the industries. Statistics show that the lost productivity due to disengaged employee account for U.S.\$300 billion yearly in the USA, U.S.\$232 billion in Japan and nearly U.S.\$100 billion in Australia. These statistics confirm the negative impact of

disengagement of the employee on firm productivity. Though Australia incurs the less monetary loss compared to USA and Japan, however, the share of employee to the engagement is quite high in Australia, and it is about 82% who are not engaged in their work (Aybas & Acar, 2017), which continuously putting tension for future organizations and their performance in Australia. While anticipation is too high employee engagement for outperforming of the company, researches have been advanced how to retain and engage the employee in their work to obtain maximum productivity. Hence, the company worldwide looking forward to adopting new strategies, tools and technique aiding the human resource management system for better performance. The proposed association and its findings from this study are the attempt to facilitate the existing human resource management practices with new guidelines to design the work line for the employees to be better engaged.



Figure 1: Employee Engagement Cycle  
Source: (Sivapragasam & Raya, 2018).

According to figure 1, employee engagement cycle provides five steps where each step together creates employee engagement. These steps start the work, low engagement scores, adrenaline shot, engagement scores go up, and adrenaline shot wears off. Employees always follow this cycle for their work.

Better engagement of the employee offshoots is the higher performance of an organization. A study of Conway, Fu, Monks, Alfes, and Bailey (2016) sheds light on the employee engagement and discuss how employee engagement impact of profitability and return on asset of a firm. Using employee engagement index, they come up with the conclusion that the top quantile employee of 65 companies assists their companies in achieving higher profitability and a higher return on asset compared to those group of employees who were in bottom quantile. Despite accentuating high importance of employee engagement, the trend of the employee to be engaged to work gradually decline over the world (Cooke, Cooper, Bartram, Wang, & Mei, 2019). For instance, studies show that disengagement to work among American workforce is quite high inducing a gap between employee and employer which often called "engagement gap" which underlie huge financial burden in the form of productivity loss to the U.S. economy as

estimated about the U.S. \$300 billion per annum (Memon, Salleh, & Baharom, 2016). Knowing the fact, academics and businesses nowadays have been emphasized to increase employee engagement and look for how employee engagement can be promoted. There have several factors that been identified as the catalyst of employee disengagement. However, the suggestion has been made for the managers to deepening the understanding of why employee have less commitment and demotivated to the organization and their work (Saks & Gruman, 2017). However, commitment to organization and motivation are not the only factors that can articulate employee engagement. More specifically, in business and management research, employee engagement is considered as a grandiose construct which simply plays a pivotal role in human resource management practices (HRMP) and strikes every aspect of HRMP. The latent feature of employee engagement is this; the construct is better performed when it fully synchronizes with HRMP and fail of which bring disengagement among employees. The underlying concept of employee engagement derives from the same cohort of HRMP and alike of job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviour and commitment to the organization.

TABLE 1. Thailand leads the region in meeting healthcare standards

Country	Number of International-accredited hospitals
Malaysia	14
Singapore	19
South Korea	31
India	36
Thailand	58

Source: (Seiger & Wiese, 2009)

Table 1 shows, Thailand's hospitals have worked to meet healthcare accreditation standards. As of 2008, the independent Joint Commission International (JCI) as recognized 58 hospitals across Thailand. The derivation of these three constructs conceptually aligns to the employee engagement. However, the later has the most significant predictability capacity and has a broader scope. Unlike other constructs in HRMP, the employee engagement can portray bidirectional association, i.e., established relation between employee and employer is two-way. More precisely, if the employee is engaged to his/her work, there is a high possibility of obtaining success for both party; the employer would have a comparative advantage as the employee provides maximum effort having sufficient incentives and motivation. After considering the importance of greater engaged employees, this study will investigate some of the influential factors that affect employee to engage at work. More specifically, the effects of work-related support and human resources practice on employee engagement in the Thailand pharmaceutical industry.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Employee Engagement

Employee engagement, by definition, has not yet convincible to many to till date. However, many academics put their definition, relying on their school of thought. For

instance, Perrin (2003) uses the definition "employees' willingness and ability to help their company succeed, largely by providing discretionary effort on a sustainable basis." Their explanation of employee engagement tries to delve what factors affect the engagement process. Concisely, emotional factor is one of them which influence employee decision over full-fledge involvement in the workplace. Very often rational factors also affect the decision of an employee toward involving work with wholeheartedly. Another definition can be marked as popular given by the Gallup organization. According to Gallup, employee engagement is simply the enthusiasm of a worker for his/her particular job and the company they work for. In most cases, employee engagement is a process where the employee is not only attached physically but also stick physiologically to show positivism toward the work and the organization; he/she belongs to. According to their definition engagement of an employee in his/her work as "a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its value. An engaged employee is aware of the business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization.

The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee." The Institute of Employment Studies (IES) ascertains employee engagement as the relationship between two beneficiary

parties where both depend on the action of other; simply the anticipation is positive relationship exists between the action and the outcome emphasizing the bi-directional relationship between employee and employer and urging strategic action that brings benefits for both parties. Often in academics, the terminology “job satisfaction” and “employee engagement” are viewed from the reflective perspective. However, critically the construct “employee engagement” distinctively differs from “job satisfaction” on the ground of retaining best employee in the firm as simply as the satisfied employees may not engage their job might pay off negatively to the firm. While there is an explicit difference between employee engagement and job satisfaction, many researchers opine that job satisfaction is an integral part of employee engagement. Conclusively, whereas job satisfaction is simply a transactional or superficial situation for staff, employee engagement, on the other hand, demonstrate staff’s intensive relation with the employer which inclined to achieve employer succeed as well. In the engagement situation (Owor, 2016; Presbitero, 2017). Outwardly, contribution to the job and being satisfied with the job requires alignment to obtain full engagement of the employee.

Most of the literary works, employee engagement, take into account as a superstructure of HRMP; however, in reality, the concept of employee engagement often obscure (Sivapragasam & Raya, 2018). Epistemologically, the evolution of construct “employee engagement” is attributed to applied psychology (Ahmed, Phulpoto, Umrani, & Abbas, 2015). Interestingly, till date, the conceptualization of the employee engagement and its theoretical and empirical justification has not been studied rigorously; the factors that influence employee engagement and the elements of employee engagement are poorly understood (S. L. Albrecht & Dineen, 2016). Therefore, to be in a safe position, even among the HR auctioneers, skipping tendencies are observed in defining the construct “employee engagement” rather considered the postulated positive impact of employee engagement.

#### Work-related support

##### *Organizational support and Employee Engagement*

The employee engagement underpins organizational support theory to explain how support and care from an organization help employee to achieve organizational goals (Chandani, Mehta, Mall, & Khokhar, 2016). The social exchange theory, on the other hand, underpins how two parties can be gained maximally by exchanging their actions and treatments as a favourable exchange of compelling resources (Davies, Mete, & Whelan, 2018). The academics emphasize on the necessitate of organizational support which provides the employee with a juncture that how important the employee to the organization; appreciating employee contribution, caring employee well-being and maintaining good work-life balance for the employee by the employer (Javed, Nawaz, & Qurat-UI-Ain, 2015).

The employee engagement is viewed as the core concept of social exchange theory which delves deep into the employee-employer relationship on the basis of exchange. A previous pioneer study conducted by Akhtar, Nawaz, Mahmood, and Shahid (2016) summarized how the significance of employee engagement on an organization. Their study concludes that employee engagement had a

significant positive relationship with management / organizational performance. Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades (2002) found employee engagement, organizational character, citizenship behaviour of the organization and retention to be showed negative effects of the company’s deviant behaviour. The explanation of this may be as the organizational support deems crucial under the norm of social exchange theory; an employee shows strong engagement toward the company preventing negative impacts onward to the company. The deviant behaviour can simply obstruct by showing the negative attitudes; therefore, the relationship might show negatively directed. Recently, many studies have been progressed which found organizational support increase the organizational citizenship behaviour; buffering effect between variables positive spillover effect on firm performance moderating effect of job demand on employee engagement (Rai, Ghosh, Chauhan, & Mehta, 2017). Therefore, this study hypnotized that organizational support positively related to employee engagement.

#### Social Support and Work Engagement

The underlying concept of social support is the ideas of resource exchange in a mutual manner. In the case of an organization, social support urges the exchange of resources between the employees providing that the recipient will be benefited or increased the well-being (Shumaker & Brownell, 1984). Typically, social support refers to the helping relationship and the quality of the relationship. Further, social support is viewed as the positive or supportive social interactions endowed with supervisors, management and co-workers in the workplace. On the other hand, many researchers take social support into account as the cumulative process that targeted to “bring about a constructive change” of the beneficiary.

In the academic literature, researchers identified that social support could be work-related (i.e. supervisors, co-workers and management) or non-work related (i.e. family, spouses, and partners), and also could be in different forms (Mihail & Kloutsiniotis, 2016). According to Langford, Bowsher, Maloney, and Lillis (1997), an individual could find social support in four areas, firstly, emotional support; secondly, instrumental support; thirdly, informational support and; fourthly, appraisal support (Saks, 2019). Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, and Hammer (2011) demonstrated generic workplace support as supervisory or organizational support within the workplace, which may affect employee well-being. Recent studies suggested that employees who received social support may have stronger psychobiological systems which may help to enhance the work recovery process of employees. With this view, Garg and Lal (2015) posited that WRS could improve emotional labour by decreasing emotional exhaustion and could enhance job satisfaction and performance.

Impact of social support on various dimension has been studied extensively. For instance on measuring employee well-being burnout and life satisfaction, job burnout, leisure participation and well-being (Malinauskiene, Leisyte, Romualdas, & Kirtiklyte, 2011), psychological safety and service recovery performance, and work hours and psychological health and well-being (Memon, Salleh, & Baharom, 2015). However, all these studies come up with

inconclusive findings such that the relationship between social support and related constructs significantly differs among the studies. While some studies found that social support aids the employees with relaxation if they are prone to belong hour workloads, social support also has a direct impact on the work-to-leisure situation (Mu'taman Jarrar & Don, 2016).

Although research identified that there are multiple sources of social support exists, the present study places its focus on WRS, i.e. SS, CWS and OS. Sundin, Fear, Iversen, Rona, and Wessely (2010) noted that SS, CWS and OS are the important sources of WRS as that support could help to cope with work-related stress and employee well-being which ultimately has a positive impact on professional growth and career development. In this line, El Akremi, Vandenberghe, and Camerman (2010) stated that social relationships at the workplace had a positive influence on worker well-being by increasing the perception of the availability of social support. Another study of Othman and Nasurdin (2013) postulated that only SS could predict work engagement, whereas, colleague support had no effect on engagement. The development of these above literature survey regarding social support helps us to make hypothesis-2 that social support positively related to employee engagement.

#### Supervisor Support and Employee Engagement

From a supervisor, the employee always seeks support and keen to learn new knowledge challenged by the current business world. If an employee perceives that supervisor is supportive and well aware of the state of an employee relating to their work; acknowledging contribution, support in the difficult time, encouragement to achieve new heights. With this view, Kottke and Sharafinski (1988) defined supervisory support as the degree to which they are valued for their work and get attention to maintain the employee well-being by the supervisors; consequently, workers also share their views in the way that to which extent the entity is committed to them. Moreover, supervisor support often defined as the magnitude of supportive behaviour outstretched toward employee by an employer or supervisor which make an understanding to the employees that how much they are committed to their organization; ensuring employee well-being (Seiger & Wiese, 2009). The underlying concept of the supervisor support is consistent with the theory of social exchange, which posited that employees are more likely to develop the relationship between both the organization and the supervisors.

The fundamental understanding of practising supervisory support deemed essential for an organization. It is commonly believed that this role-play behaviour of the supervisor helps employees to be the best performer through providing necessary information, supportive and constructive feedback and overall impulse positive perceptions among employees that all these doings necessitates for their further development. Employees perceived that supervisors are acted as an agent of the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2002) who implemented **the organization's policies and practices to create a favourable workplace for them, which in turn, enhance their emotional and psychological resources by reducing the strain created from work demands** Peng et al. (2019).

Numerous studies have been progressing to investigate the role of supervisor support on the various perspective of an organization, e.g., organization turnover cognition, turnover intention. However, the findings of the studies are mixed. Maertz Jr, Griffeth, Campbell, and Allen (2007) found supervisory support had a positive relationship with turnover cognition. In contrary, Eisenberger et al. (2002) reported that supervisory support was significant with the turnover intention only when personal and situational features were added. Moreover, few studies have been stressed on incorporating other human resources management practices such as career development training, and empowerment activities. However, supervisory support best be explained if the supervisor provides sufficient motivation, constructive feedback, build higher trust and confidence. The above literature survey underpins an important hypothesis is that supervisory support positively related to employee engagement.

Hypothesis 3: Supervisory support has significant effects on employee engagement.

#### Co-worker Support and Employee Engagement

According to Babin and Boles (1996), CWS is the degree to which an individual feel that co-workers are helpful, are available when needed and are concerned to solve work-related problems. CWS termed as the assistance form co-worker at their workplace when needed by giving encouragement and support as well as sharing knowledge and expertise. Saelid, Czajkowski, Holte, Tambs, and Aarø (2016) defined CWS as **"the extent to which employees believe their co-workers are willing to provide them with work-related assistance to aid in the execution of their service-based duties"**. Moreover, CWS helps employees to do the things possible by providing emotional support, consideration, useful customer information, and directive guidelines and supportive colleagues also may help to create an encouraging environment where individuals can share their new ideas or discuss about their mistakes freely (Patwary, Roy, Hoque, & Khandakar, 2019). Co-workers had a positive influence on the individual employee, which may help them to cope with the organizational practices such as, work-team arrangement and the shift of job content to more complex and collective tasks. Scholars also suggested that the role of CWS not only limited to task-related information and helping but extended to employees' socio-emotional support, for example, providing care, empathy and love.

In addition, CWS is a critical construct for employees to accomplish a work-related task as it had a positive association with employees' overall morale. Various studies have shown that employees with high CWS are more likely to have the ability to deal with work-related stress, to solve customer problems, to improve service performance and finally have less intention to quit the job which may encourage employees to handle customer requests and complaints effectively and efficiently. In fact, supportive peers' environment at the workplace creates such a context where employees feel that they get help from others, and they share all the information which will enhance the learning opportunity at their job.

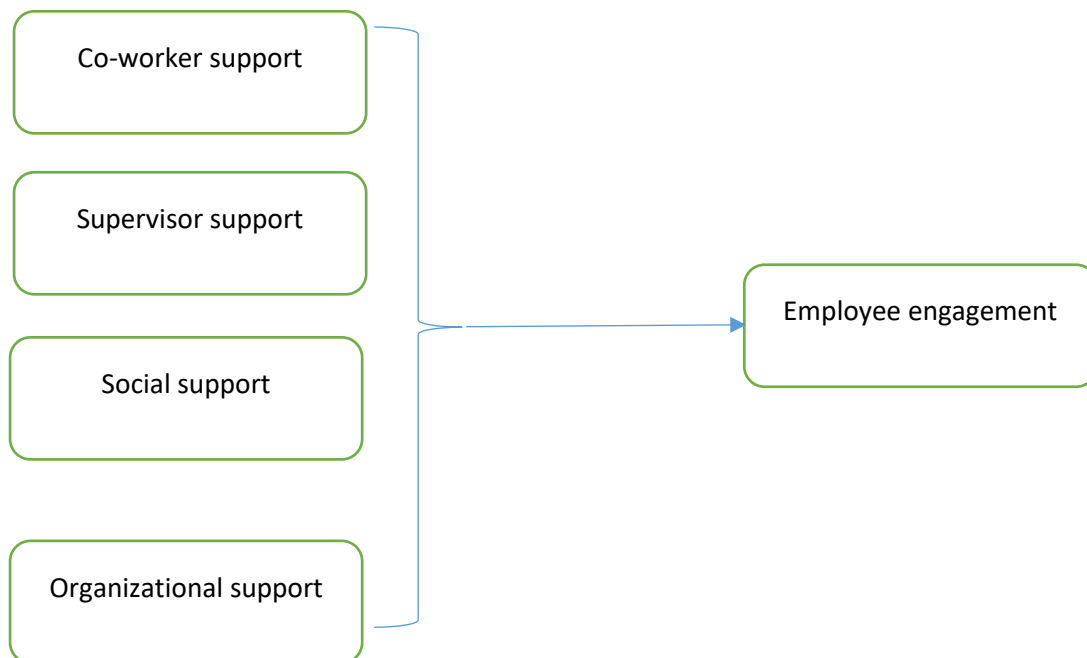
Prior studies showed that emotional support from co-workers had a direct association with employees' happiness and could reduce the level of negative emotion and exhaustion. CWS may help to show the internalization of

the behaviours of employees, through which they feel psychological identification with their jobs at the workplace. Furthermore, research suggested that co-workers can provide support for each other to deal with the work-related emotional experiences such as emotional labour or feelings of anger created by workers for others at the workplace. The study also supported that congenial relationship between co-workers might increase the positive and reduce the negative emotions in the workplace (Patwary & Omar, 2016). According to Menguc and Boichuk (2012), CWS had a positive and significant relation with unit identification. In their study, they revealed that CWS acted as a moderator between customer orientation dissimilarity and sales unit identification. Empirical studies suggested that the employees' social exchange relationships with co-workers had a positive influence on employees' attitudes and performance (Memon et al., 2015). In this regard, various studies found that CWS had a positive association with job satisfaction, job involvement, work engagement, and OC.

The longitudinal study by Attiq, Wahid, Javaid, Kanwal, and Shah (2017) documented that positive association exists between co-worker support and employees' promotive voice and negatively related to psychological stress. Furthermore, Xanthopoulou, Baker, Heuven, Demerouti, and Schaufeli (2008) suggested that peer support had an indirect relation with job performance which was mediated by work engagement among European flight attendants. Similarly, Chen and Kao (2012) found that colleague support had positively affected the flight attendant performance. In a more recent study, by Chen and Kao (2014), revealed that social support (namely, CWS) had a direct influence on flight attendants service performance and also influence on proactive personality and service performance. The hypothesis is derived from this literature survey is as follows:

*Hypothesis 4: Co-worker support positively related to employee engagement*

#### WORK-RELATED SUPPORT



#### Measurement

To measure the work-related supports such as co-worker support (4 items) from Eisenberger et al. (2002); Supervisor support (4 items) taken from Karasek (1985); Organization support (8 items) from Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli (2001); and Social support (4 items) from House and Wells (1978).

#### Data Collection Method

Participant for this study is the employees working in the pharmaceutical industry in Thailand. The sample consists of lower mid-level employees were invited to participate in the research. The sample was randomly selected from the company's employees those were recorded in human

resource management. Three hundred seventy questionnaires were distributed by the researchers themselves through the internal organizational distribution system. The completed questionnaire collected by the post is 350. The participation was voluntary, and all the information of the participant are confidential. A total of 339 data proceeded for further analysis of the study.

#### ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Table 2 shows the demographic distribution of the respondents for gender, marital status, age, income, education level and working experience in the industry.

TABLE 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (n= 339)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	175	51.6
Female	164	48.4
Marital Status		
Single	128	37.8
Married	211	62.2
Age (Years)		
25 years and below	105	31.0
26-35 years	115	33.9
36-45 years	48	14.2
46-55 years	44	13.0
56 years old and above	27	8.0
Income		
Below 10000 Bhat	26	7.7
10000 - 30000 Bhat	75	22.1
30001- 50000 Bhat	149	44.0
Above 50000 Bhat	89	26.3
Education		
Diploma	12	3.5
Degree/Bachelor	144	42.5
Masters	139	41.0
PhD/Doctoral	44	13.0
Experience		
1-3 years	196	57.8
4-6 years	119	35.1
7-9 years	17	5.0
More than 9 years	7	2.1

For gender, 51.6% of the respondents are male, and 48.4% are female. Majority of the respondents are married, which is 62.2% and single are 37.8%. In terms of age group, highest age group consists of “26 to 35 years” 33.9% followed by “25 years and below” which is 31.0%, “36 to 45 years” 14.2% “46 to 55 years” is 13.0%, and 56 years and above is 8.0%. Majority of the respondents have the income of 30001 to 50000 Bhat which is 44.0% followed by above 50000 Bhat (26.3%), 10000 to 30000 Bhat (22.1%) and below 10000 Bhat (7.7%). For education level, majority of the bachelor and master's degree holder, which are 42.5% and 41.0% respectively, and PhD/ Doctoral degree holder (13.0%) and diploma holder is 3.5%. While looking into the job experience of the respondents, most of them have

experiences of 1 to 3 years (57.8%), followed by 4 to 6 years is 35.1%, 7-9 years is 5.0% and more than 9 years is 2.1%.

#### Measurement Model of the Study

In measuring the model, the convergent validity, discriminant validity, R square, effect size, and average variance extracted (AVE) were evaluated. The four independent variables, such as co-worker support, organizational support, supervisor support, and social support, have explained 48 per cent variance on employee engagement. This variance is considered as moderate level. The minimum Cronbach alpha for social support is 0.72. In addition to that average variance extracted is 0.51, which is just above the recommended value of 0.50 (see Table 3).

TABLE 3. Construct Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Co-Worker support	0.851	0.900	0.692
Employee engagement	0.880	0.904	0.511
Organizational support	0.911	0.928	0.616
Social Support	0.722	0.819	0.532
Supervisor Support	0.876	0.915	0.731

Furthermore, for discriminant validity two most widely used method performed such as Fornell-Larcker criterion

(see table-4) and Heterotrait and Monotrait Ratio (see table-5)

TABLE 4. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Co-Worker support	Employee engagement	Organizational support	Social Support	Supervisor Support
Co-Worker support	0.832				
Employee engagement	0.611	0.715			
Organizational support	0.472	0.543	0.785		
Social Support	0.022	0.130	-0.010	0.729	
Supervisor Support	0.135	0.260	0.282	0.018	0.855

The table 3 represent that the square root of AVE is higher than the correlation between the constructs in diagonal.

TABLE 5. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	Co-Worker support	Employee engagement	Organizational support	Social Support	Supervisor Support
Co-Worker support					
Employee engagement	0.689				
Organizational support	0.528	0.582			
Social Support	0.114	0.174	0.086		
Supervisor Support	0.153	0.295	0.311	0.042	

In addition to that HTMT also shown for the confirmation of discriminant validity. There is no correlation is more than 0.85. So, this study confirms all the criterion for the measurement model.

#### 4.2 Structural Model:

To find the effect of work-related supports on employee engagement, the bootstrapping method performed using the Smart-PLS version 3.0.

TABLE 6. The direct effects of work-related supports on employee engagement

	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Co-Worker support -> Employee engagement	0.452	0.054	8.440	0.000
Organizational Support -> Employee engagement	0.299	0.055	5.416	0.000
Social Support -> Employee engagement	0.121	0.039	3.082	0.002
Super Support -> Employee engagement	0.113	0.041	2.753	0.006

The table-6 represents the direct effect of social support, co-worker support, supervisor support, and organizational

support on employee engagement. For better representation, the figure-3

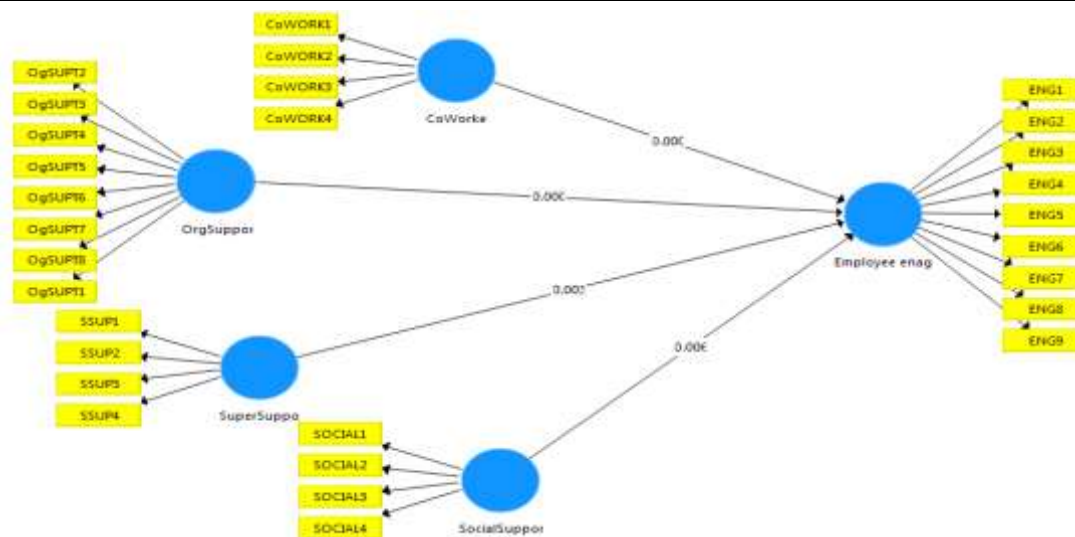


Figure 3: Structural model

The main aim of this study was to investigate the effects of work-related support on employee engagement in the pharmaceutical industry in Thailand. The bootstrapping results confirms work-related support such as organisational support, supervisor support, co-worker support, and social support significantly related to employee engagement. The finding of the study supported the hypothesis that social support, co-worker support, organizational support, and supervisor support are important antecedents of employee engagement. Among the four factors, co-worker support found to be the most significant in increasing the employee engagement with t-value of 8.44, followed by organisational support with t-value 5.41.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study assesses the antecedent of employee engagement regarding the work-related support in the context of pharmaceutical companies in Thailand. The empirical data found that supervisor support was the lowest effect on employee engagement though the significant effects. This is the implication of social exchange theory that when employees perceive work related support from the organization and colleagues, and in return, they are more likely to engagement at work. It is found that work-related support are the important factor in enhancing employee engagement. In other words, co-worker support, organizational support are the most significant factors followed by supervisor support and organisational, respectively, which produce better engagement. This is a further implication of social exchange theory in the context of the pharmaceutical industry in Thailand.

#### Policy Implications

This empirical study contributes to the literature in engagement theory in Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand. It indicates that the combination of organizational support and co-worker support is more relevant in Southeast Asian countries. Human resources managers should develop the positive and caring work climate providing the support from both organization and co-workers, and their supervisor. Organisations in Thailand pharmaceutical industry and other related

industries continue to support employees by developing the policies and strategies.

#### Limitations and Future Study Suggestions

Some of the limitations for the study discussed below. This study only considered work-related support and the direct effect on employee engagement. Future study should consider how the relationship occurs through the introducing mediating variable, which could further increase the relationship. Self-reports-based data collection and cross-sectional survey may produce another barrier to generalise the findings. Future research may concentrate on overtime data collection survey for further findings. The empirical finding shows the co-worker support and organizational support are the most significant predictors.

### REFERENCES

1. Ahmed, U., Phulpoto, W., Umrani, W., & Abbas, S. (2015). Diving deep in employee training to understand employee engagement.
2. Akhtar, A., Nawaz, M. K., Mahmood, Z., & Shahid, M. S. (2016). Impact of high performance work practices on employees' performance in Pakistan: Mediating role of employee engagement. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences (PJCSS)*, 10(3), 708-724.
3. Albrecht, S., Bredahl, E., & Marty, A. (2018). Organizational resources, organizational engagement climate, and employee engagement. *Career Development International*, 23(1), 67-85.
4. Albrecht, S. L., & Dineen, O. J. (2016). 6. Organizational commitment and employee engagement: ten key questions. *Handbook of Employee Commitment*, 70.
5. Attiq, S., Wahid, S., Javaid, N., Kanwal, M., & Shah, H. J. (2017). The Impact of Employees' Core Self-Evaluation Personality Trait, Management Support, Co-worker Support on Job Satisfaction, and Innovative Work Behaviour. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, 32(1).
6. Aybas, M., & Acar, A. C. (2017). The effect of human resource management practices on employees' work



- engagement and the mediating and moderating role of positive psychological capital. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 7(1), 363-372.
7. Babin, B. J., & Boles, J. S. (1996). The effects of perceived co-worker involvement and supervisor support on service provider role stress, performance and job satisfaction. *Journal of Retailing*, 72(1), 57-75.
  8. Chandani, A., Mehta, M., Mall, A., & Khokhar, V. (2016). Employee engagement: A review paper on factors affecting employee engagement. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 9(15), 1-7.
  9. Chen, C.-F., & Kao, Y.-L. (2012). Investigating the antecedents and consequences of burnout and isolation among flight attendants. *Tourism Management*, 33(4), 868-874.
  10. Chen, C.-F., & Kao, Y.-L. (2014). Investigating the moderating effects of service climate on personality, motivation, social support, and performance among flight attendants. *Tourism Management*, 44, 58-66.
  11. Conway, E., Fu, N., Monks, K., Alfes, K., & Bailey, C. (2016). Demands or resources? The relationship between HR practices, employee engagement, and emotional exhaustion within a hybrid model of employment relations. *Human Resource Management*, 55(5), 901-917.
  12. Cooke, F. L., Cooper, B., Bartram, T., Wang, J., & Mei, H. (2019). Mapping the relationships between high-performance work systems, employee resilience and engagement: A study of the banking industry in China. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 30(8), 1239-1260.
  13. Davies, G., Mete, M., & Whelan, S. (2018). When employer brand image aids employee satisfaction and engagement. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 5(1), 64-80.
  14. Eisenberger, R., Stinglhamber, F., Vandenberghe, C., Sucharski, I. L., & Rhoades, L. (2002). Perceived supervisor support: Contributions to perceived organizational support and employee retention. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(3), 565.
  15. El Akremi, A., Vandenberghe, C., & Camerman, J. (2010). The role of justice and social exchange relationships in workplace deviance: Test of a mediated model. *Human Relations*, 63(11), 1687-1717.
  16. Garg, N., & Lal, B. (2015). Exploring the linkage between awareness and perception of high-performance work practices with employee well-being at workplace: A new dimension for HRM. *Jindal Journal of Business Research*, 4(1-2), 81-100.
  17. Ghani, A., Kaliappen, N. & Jermisittiparsert, K. (2019). Enhancing Malaysian SME Employee Work Engagement: The Mediating Role of Job Crafting in the Presence of Task Complexity, Self-Efficacy and Autonomy. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 6(11), 1-18.
  18. House, J. S., & Wells, J. A. (1978). *Occupational stress, social support, and health*. Paper presented at the Reducing occupational stress: Proceedings of a conference.
  19. Jarrar, M., & Abdul Rahman, H. (2016). Optimizing Quality of Care and Patient Safety in Malaysia: The Current Global Initiatives, Gaps and Suggested Solutions. *Global Journal of Health Science*, 8(6), 75–85.
  20. Javed, M., Nawaz, M. A., & Qurat-UI-Ain, A. (2015). Assessing Postgraduate Students' Critical Thinking Ability. *Journal on Educational Psychology*, 9(2), 19-26.
  21. Jermisittiparsert, K., Sriyakul, T., & Siriattakul, P. (2019). An Empirical Framework to Understand the Antecedents of Work Engagement and Employability in the Thai Universities. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 23(4), 837-852.
  22. Karasek, R. (1985). Job content questionnaire. *Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering*.
  23. Kossek, E. E., Pichler, S., Bodner, T., & Hammer, L. B. (2011). Workplace social support and work-family conflict: A meta-analysis clarifying the influence of general and work-family-specific supervisor and organizational support. *Personnel psychology*, 64(2), 289-313.
  24. Kottke, J. L., & Sharafinski, C. E. (1988). Measuring perceived supervisory and organizational support. *Educational and psychological Measurement*, 48(4), 1075-1079.
  25. Langford, C. P. H., Bowsher, J., Maloney, J. P., & Lillis, P. P. (1997). Social support: a conceptual analysis. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 25(1), 95-100.
  26. Maertz Jr, C. P., Griffeth, R. W., Campbell, N. S., & Allen, D. G. (2007). The effects of perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support on employee turnover. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 28(8), 1059-1075.
  27. Malinauskiene, V., Leisyte, P., Romualdas, M., & Kirtiklyte, K. (2011). Associations between self-rated health and psychosocial conditions, lifestyle factors and health resources among hospital nurses in Lithuania. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 67(11), 2383-2393.
  28. Mekhum, W. & Jermisittiparsert, K. (2019). Effect of Supervisor Support, Co-Worker Support and Meaningful Work on Work Engagement of Pharmaceutical Firms' Employees in Thailand. *Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy*, 10(2), 176-187.
  29. Memon, M. A., Salleh, R., & Baharom, M. N. R. (2015). Linking Person-Job Fit, Person-organization fit, employee engagement and turnover intention: A three-step conceptual model. *Asian Social Science*, 11(2), 313.
  30. Memon, M. A., Salleh, R., & Baharom, M. N. R. (2016). The link between training satisfaction, work engagement and turnover intention. *European Journal of Training and Development*, 40(6), 407-429.
  31. Menguc, B., & Boichuk, J. P. (2012). Customer orientation dissimilarity, sales unit identification, and customer-directed extra-role behaviors: Understanding the contingency role of coworker support. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(9), 1357-1363.
  32. Mihail, D. M., & Kloutsiniotis, P. V. (2016). The effects of high-performance work systems on

- hospital employees' work-related well-being: Evidence from Greece. *European Management Journal*, 34(4), 424-438.
33. Othman, N., & Nasurdin, A. M. (2013). Social support and work engagement: a study of Malaysian nurses. *Journal of nursing management*, 21(8), 1083-1090.
  34. Owor, J. J. (2016). Human resource management practices, employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviours in selected firms in Uganda.
  35. Patwary, A. K., & Omar, H. (2016). An Overview of Consumer Complaining Behavior and the Choice of Complaint Channels in Service Industry. *International Journal of Business and Technopreneurship*, 6(2), 309-318.
  36. Patwary, A. K., Roy, B., Hoque, R., & Khandakar, M. S. A. (2019). Process of Developing a Community Based Tourism and Identifying its Economic and Social Impacts: An Empirical Study on Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 7(1), 1-13.
  37. Peng, J., He, Y., Deng, J., Zheng, L., Chang, Y., & Liu, X. (2019). Emotional labor strategies and job burnout in preschool teachers: psychological capital as a mediator and moderator. *Work*(Preprint), 1-11.
  38. Perrin, T. (2003). Towers Perrin global engagement workforce study. *Stamford, CT*.
  39. Presbitero, A. (2017). How do changes in human resource management practices influence employee engagement? A longitudinal study in a hotel chain in the Philippines. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, 16(1), 56-70.
  40. Rai, A., Ghosh, P., Chauhan, R., & Mehta, N. K. (2017). Influence of job characteristics on engagement: does support at work act as moderator? *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 37(1/2), 86-105.
  41. Rhoades, L., Eisenberger, R., & Armeli, S. (2001). Affective commitment to the organization: The contribution of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(5), 825.
  42. Saelid, G. A., Czajkowski, N. O., Holte, A., Tambs, K., & Aarø, L. E. (2016). Coping With Strain (CWS) course—its effects on depressive symptoms: A four-year longitudinal randomized controlled trial. *Scandinavian journal of psychology*, 57(4), 321-327.
  43. Saks, A. M. (2019). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement revisited. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 6(1), 19-38.
  44. Saks, A. M., & Gruman, J. A. (2017). Human resource management and employee engagement. In *A Research Agenda for Human Resource Management*: Edward Elgar Publishing.
  45. Seiger, C. P., & Wiese, B. S. (2009). Social support from work and family domains as an antecedent or moderator of work–family conflicts? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 75(1), 26-37.
  46. Shumaker, S. A., & Brownell, A. (1984). Toward a theory of social support: Closing conceptual gaps. *Journal of social issues*, 40(4), 11-36.
  47. Sivapragasam, P., & Raya, R. (2018). HRM and employee engagement link: Mediating role of employee well-being. *Global Business Review*, 19(1), 147-161.
  48. Sundin, J., Fear, N. T., Iversen, A., Rona, R. J., & Wessely, S. (2010). PTSD after deployment to Iraq: conflicting rates, conflicting claims. *Psychological medicine*, 40(3), 367-382.
  49. Xanthopoulou, D., Baker, A. B., Heuven, E., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2008). Working in the sky: A diary study on work engagement among flight attendants. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 13(4), 345.