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**EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT OF PRIVATE SECTOR
EMPLOYEES IN SOUTHERN THAILAND:
PERSONALITY, TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP
AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY**



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**DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
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**EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT OF PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES
IN SOUTHERN THAILAND: PERSONALITY, TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY**



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**Thesis Submitted to
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business,
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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Doctor of Business Administration**



OTHMAN YEOP ABDULLAH GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
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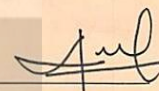
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ABSTRACT

The motivation for this study is driven by the inconsistent findings in the literature concerning the relationship between the variables related to employee engagement. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of a five-factor model of personality consists of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and neuroticism factors on employee engagement. Further, it examines the mediation role of psychological safety on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement. Accordingly, this study is underpinned by self-determination theory to explain the network of the relationship between the variables in the conceptual framework. The study utilized a survey questionnaire which was distributed to 608 employees of private companies in Southern Thailand. Out of the 422 returned questionnaires, 402 were usable for further analysis. PLS-SEM was used to analyze the direct and indirect relationship between the related variables in the study. Of the five personality factors, three which are extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience factors influence the employee engagement. However agreeableness and neuroticism factors do not influence employee engagement. Transformational leadership is discovered to have both direct and indirect influence on the employee engagement. The psychological safety also shows to have an influence on the employee engagement. In addition, the psychological safety constructs is discovered to be a partial mediator in the relationship between the transformational leadership and the employee engagement. The results of the predictive power of the structural model is 0.337 indicating that 33.7% of the variance in the employee engagement construct is explained by the five-factor model of personality, transformational leadership and psychological safety. Theoretical, practical and methodological implications of the study are highlighted. Finally, limitations and further research are also discussed in this paper.

Keywords: employee engagement, five-factor model of personality, transformational leadership, psychological safety, self-determination theory

ABSTRAK

Motivasi untuk melaksanakan kajian ini didorong oleh penemuan yang tidak konsisten dalam literatur tentang hubungan antara pemboleh ubah yang berkaitan dengan penglibatan pekerja. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pengaruh model lima faktor personaliti iaitu *extraversion*, *agreeableness*, *conscientiousness*, *openness to experience*, dan *neuroticism* keatas penglibatan pekerja. Selanjutnya, kajian ini menguji peranan keselamatan psikologi sebagai pengantara ke atas hubungan antara kepimpinan transformasi dan penglibatan pekerja. Kajian disokong oleh teori penen tuan sendiri untuk menjelaskan rangkaian hubungan antara pemboleh ubah dalam kerangka konseptual. Kajian ini menggunakan soal selidik yang diedarkan kepada 608 orang kakitangan syarikat swasta di Selatan Thailand. Daripada 422 soal selidik yang dikembalikan, 402 didapati lengkap untuk digunakan dalam analisis. PLS-SEM digunakan untuk menganalisis hubungan langsung dan tidak langsung antara pemboleh ubah yang berkaitan dalam kajian ini. Daripada lima faktor personaliti, tiga daripadanya iaitu *extraversion*, *conscientiousness*, dan *openness to experience* mempengaruhi penglibatan pekerja. Walau bagaimanapun sikap *agreeableness* dan *neuroticism* tidak mempengaruhi hubungan tersebut. Kepimpinan transformasi didapati mempengaruhi penglibatan pekerja secara langsung dan tidak langsung. Keselamatan psikologi juga menunjukkan pengaruh ke atas pengambilan pekerja. Di samping itu, konstruk keselamatan psikologi ditemui sebagai pengantara separa ke atas hubungan antara kepimpinan transformasi dan penglibatan pekerja. Keputusan bagi model kuasa ramalan berstruktur adalah 0.337. Ini menunjukan bahawa 33.7% daripada varians dalam konstruk pengambilan pekerja dijelaskan oleh model lima faktor personaliti, kepimpinan transformasi dan keselamatan psikologi. Akhirnya, implikasi pengurusan dan theoretikal serta kajian lanjutan turut dibincangkan. Implikasi teori, praktikal dan metodologi kajian ini diketengahkan. Akhirnya, batasan dan kajian lanjutan turut dibincangkan dalam kajian.

Kata kunci: penglibatan pekerja, model lima-faktor personaliti, kepimpinan transformasi, keselamatan psikologi, teori penentuan sendiri

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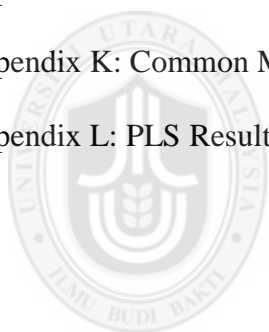
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Agree	Agreeableness
AVE	Average Variance Extraxted
Cons	Conscientiousness
CR	Composite Reliability (CR)
STD	Self-Determination Theory
EE	Employee Engagement
Ext	Extraversion
FFM	Five Factor Model
GOF	Goodness of Fit
MLQ	The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
Neuro	Neuroticism
NESDB	The National Economic and Social Development board
Open	Openness
PLS	Partial Least Squares
Psy	Psychological Safety
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TL	Transformational Leadership
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the background of the study and discusses the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, and scope of this research. The significance of the study and the definitions of the key terms as well as the organization of research are also provided at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

In order to oversee the development of the national economy, the government of Thailand has set up an office at the prime minister department, which is called the national economic and social development board (NESDB). The NESDB is tasked with the Thailand National Development Plans. They have been responsible for the first national plan until the most current one, i.e. the 11th national plans. From the 1st plan to the 7th Plan, the national development was growth-oriented. However, due to the economic mismanagement, which led to the 1997 Asian Crisis, the 8th Plan until the current 11th Plan have concentrated on people-centered development. During the 11th Plan (2012-2016), Thailand encounters more complicated domestic and external changes that present both opportunities for and threats to the national development. In order to cope with these changes, it is necessary for Thailand to prepare its people (National Economic and Social Development Board, 2011). Within the people-centered development, human resource is the most important resource in the development of a country (Rodgers & Peter, 2001). It is the most important resource if organizations

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