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Abstract

This study explored the influence of Perceived Location Autonomy (PLA) and Hybrid Work Promise Fulfillment (HWPF) on employee outcomes in a Norwegian municipality organization. Utilizing a survey-based quantitative approach, 98 responses were collected from Bymiljøetaten employees involved in hybrid work arrangements. Despite revealing weak-to-moderate significant relationships between PLA and aspects such as Employee Well-Being, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, and Work Efficiency, PLA did not correlate significantly with Turnover Intentions or HWPF. Furthermore, HWPF showed no significant correlation with any employee outcomes, challenging its mediating role between PLA and these outcomes. These findings suggest that organizations need to adopt a comprehensive approach to managing hybrid work arrangements beyond merely allowing location autonomy. Future research could benefit from exploring these relationships longitudinally, across different contexts, and through qualitative methodologies. Additional moderating variables, such as personality traits and other organizational factors, and other employee and organizational outcomes could be investigated to provide a more comprehensive understanding of PLA and HWPF's role in hybrid work environments.

1.0 Introduction

The global COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted traditional work arrangements, forcing a substantial shift towards more flexible and remote work practices (Brynjolfsson et al., 2020). A survey conducted by the World Economic Forum in 2022 revealed that 68% of employees prefer the hybrid work model, indicating a strong trend toward such arrangements (IFEBP, 2022). As hybrid work becomes more prevalent, organizations are having to manage this transformation while ensuring optimal outcomes. The ongoing shift to these work models highlights the importance of understanding the factors inherent in the hybrid work models. Perceived Location Autonomy (PLA) and Hybrid Work Promise Fulfillment (HWPF) are of particular relevance in this context. Moreover, how these concepts relate to Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), Employee Well-Being (EWB), Turnover Intention (TOI), and Work Efficiency (WEF) remains a relatively unexplored area of investigation. Failure to understand the dynamics of these variables could have detrimental effects, potentially impacting organizational performance and the economy (Kniffin et al., 2021).

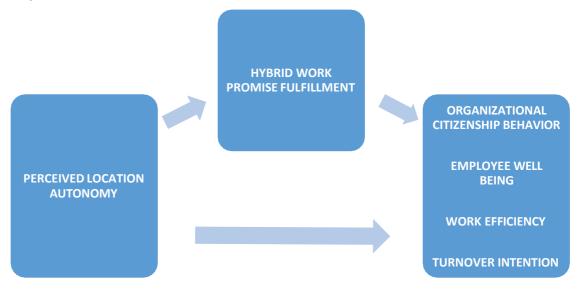
PLA, as conceptualized by Spivack and Milosevic (2018), refers to an employee's perceived autonomy of their work location. HWPF signifies the degree to which an organization fulfills its promises related to the implementation and management of hybrid work arrangements, a concept underpinned by the principles of Psychological Contract Theory (Rousseau, 1989). Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) encompasses voluntary behaviors that contribute positively to overall organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988). Employee Well-Being (EWB) is a multifaceted construct reflecting the physical and psychological health of employees in the workplace (Warr, 1987). Turnover Intention (TOI) reflects the potential inclination of employees to leave their current employment (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Work Efficiency (WEF) refers to an employee's ability to carry out tasks efficiently and productively (Drucker, 1963).

Guided by the Psychological Contract Theory (Rousseau, 1989) and the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), this research intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the mentioned concepts. The empirical foundation of this research is grounded in the Norwegian context. Specifically

within the municipal agency responsible for urban development and environmental services in Oslo, Bymiljøetaten.

Despite significant interest in hybrid work models, gaps remain in the existing research regarding the relationships between PLA, HWPF, and their impact on OCB, EWB, WEF, and TOI. This master's thesis seeks to bridge this gap in the literature by exploring these relationships. The insights derived from this research hold practical relevance for organizations aiming to implement effective hybrid work models and for policymakers seeking to encourage and regulate flexible work arrangements.

Figure 1: an overview of the research model which will be the subject of the thesis - How Perceived Location Autonomy and Hybrid Work promise Fulfillment impacts Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Employee Well Being, Turnover Intention, and Work Efficiency, and the mediating effect of Hybrid Work Promise Fulfillment



2.0 Literature review

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

Psychological Contract Theory

Psychological contract theory refers to the set of mutual expectations and perceptions that exist between an employee and their employer which shape their relationship (Rousseau, 1989). This contract is not static but rather dynamic and subjective influenced by factors such as organizational culture, individual personality, and past experiences (Conway & Briner, 2005). Moreover, it extends beyond the formal written contract of employment, encompassing unwritten agreements and expectations. These unwritten agreements can be categorized as either transactional, focusing on short-term economic exchanges, or relational which are centered on long-term socio-emotional commitments (Rousseau, 1995). In the context of this study, HWPF can be understood as a component of both the transactional and relational aspects of the psychological contract. Regarding the transactional aspects, HWPF corresponds to the concrete and tangible dimensions of the hybrid work model. This can be exemplified by specific flexibility and support promised by the organization. In terms of the relational aspects, HWPF relates to the quality of the employee-employer relationship and the level of trust and fairness perceived by the employee in concerning the organization's commitments to HWPF. The extent to which the organization fulfills the employees' expectations indicates the degree to which the psychological contract is fulfilled.

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) provides insights into social behavior by employing a cost-benefit analysis and examining the resulting reciprocity (Blau, 1964). Within an organizational context, SET offers a framework for understanding interactions between employees and their organizations. The theory revolves around the idea of mutual benefit, where employees' attitudes and behaviors are influenced by their perception of the balance between their inputs such as effort, time, skills, and outcomes such as rewards, and recognition. Trust plays a pivotal role in these exchanges as it develops when parties consistently demonstrate reliability and fulfill the expected terms of the exchange over time (Molm, Collett, & Schaefer, 2007). In the context of hybrid work models,

employees contribute their inputs with the expectation of experiencing a certain level of PLA and HWPF. The perceived outcomes compared to the perceived inputs shape employees' perceptions of fairness in the exchange (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

2.2 Perceived Location Autonomy

Perceived Location Autonomy (PLA) can be viewed as a subset of job autonomy. Work autonomy, as initially conceptualized, refers to the level of freedom and discretion individuals have in planning and executing their work tasks. It encompasses decision-making authority, goal-setting autonomy, and the organization of work activities (Hackman and Oldman, 1975). Perceived Location Autonomy is a concept that builds upon the notion of work autonomy, expanding it to encompass employees' ability to define and redefine their work environment (Spivack, 2012).

Perceived Location Autonomy and Empowerment

PLA can be viewed as an aspect of empowerment at the workplace as they share commonalities and reinforce each other within the organizational context. Empowerment, as defined by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) in the realm of organizational behavior, implies an increased sense of self-determination and control over one's work environment and tasks. PLA's essence aligns closely with the concept of empowerment as it provides employees with the discretion to select their work location based on their individual needs, circumstances, and preferences (Rubin & Spivack, 2012). Additionally, PLA aligns with the notion of self-determination, a fundamental aspect of empowerment. According to self-determination theory, individuals have an inherent psychological need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). By allowing individuals to choose their work location, PLA satisfies their need for autonomy, contributing to a greater sense of empowerment (Shen & Scott, 2007).

2.3 Perceived Location Autonomy and Employee Outcomes

Work Efficiency

Research has demonstrated that empowerment leads to employees making decisions that align with organizational objectives, ultimately enhancing WEF (Braverman, 1974). When employees have the opportunity to work in an environment of their choice, they are likely to feel more comfortable and less

distracted. This can result in improved focus and reduced time waste leading to enhanced WEF (Milosevic et al., 2018; Sekiguchi et al., 2017). Moreover, the freedom inherent in PLA has been found to promote the growth of individual work outputs and effectiveness (Rubin & Spivack, 2012).

Additionally, research has highlighted the ability of empowerment to enhance intrinsic motivation (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). This provides another pathway through which PLA can positively impact WEF. By offering PLA, organizations can cater to the psychological needs of their employees for autonomy, thereby creating an environment that is likely to boost intrinsic motivation. Intrinsically motivated employees tend to demonstrate heightened commitment and diligence in their tasks, contributing to greater WEF (Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

Employee Well-Being

Empirical studies have indicated that autonomy in the workplace positively influences EWB. Employees who perceive higher levels of autonomy demonstrate greater satisfaction with their work, resulting in increased EWB (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Moreover, when employees are empowered to make decisions about their work and have control over their work location, they experience improved work-life balance, reduced stress, and enhanced EWB (Berg et al., 2003; Golden & Fromen, 2011).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Spreitzer's (1995) study on employee empowerment found that empowered employees were more likely to engage in OCB. When employees feel empowered, they develop a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the organization which motivates them to engage in behaviors that support the organization's overall goals. Further research has also indicated that when employees are granted autonomy in how they perform their work, they are more likely to exhibit higher levels of OCB (Kehoe & Wright, 2010). Additionally, a meta-analysis conducted by Podsakoff et al. (2009) found a positive association between autonomy and OCB. Based on this line of research, it can be implied that empowerment in the form of location autonomy can instill confidence in employees regarding their ability to meet job demands and navigate work

challenges. This sense of worth can serve as a motivation for employees to take initiative and demonstrate OCB (Organ, 1988).

Turnover Intention

Research has consistently shown that when employees are granted autonomy in how they perform their work, they are less likely to have turnover intentions (Kehoe & Wright, 2010). This suggests that providing employees with the freedom to choose their work location can contribute to increased job satisfaction and reduced turnover.

Hom et al. (1984) found that employees who are more satisfied with their job, are less likely to exhibit behaviors associated with TOI. Building on this, research indicates that autonomy in the workplace has been linked to improved work-life balance (Berg et al., 2003; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). A meta-analysis conducted by Allen et al. (2013) on flexible work arrangements further supported these findings indicating that employees who perceive their work as less restrictive due to the control over their work location experienced fewer workfamily conflicts.

Hypothesis 1: Higher levels of PLA are positively related to OCB, EWB, and WEF, and negatively related to TOI.

2.4 Hybrid Work Promise Fulfillment and The Psychological Contract

Hybrid work promise fulfillment is closely intertwined with the psychological contract that exists between employees and their organizations. As mentioned earlier, HWPF refers to employees' beliefs in the organization's ability to fulfill its commitments related to hybrid work arrangements. In a hybrid work model, the dynamic nature of the psychological contract becomes more complex due to the blending of remote and in-office work. Employees' perceptions of the organization's fulfillment of its promises regarding hybrid work significantly influence their interpretation of the psychological contract. The obligations encompassed in the psychological contract of hybrid work may go beyond the formal employment agreement, encompassing unspoken agreements and expectations regarding the provision of resources, support, flexibility, and autonomy in the hybrid work environment (Rousseau, 2001).

2.5 Hybrid Work Promise Fulfillment and Employee Outcomes Work Efficiency

The research conducted by Bloom et al. (2015) indicated that the implementation of flexible work arrangements can yield a notable increase in WEF. The study was done by randomly assigning a percentage of the employees to work from home for a certain period. The successful implementation of this, and the subsequent enhancement serves as an indication to the significance of fulfilling commitments about hybrid work. Furthermore, additional research emphasizes the vital role of providing the promised resources for remote work, ensuring that employees possess the necessary tools to execute their tasks with utmost efficiency (Bal et al., 2013).

This observation aligns with the principles of the psychological contract. When organizations effectively deliver on their promises employees tend to perceive a high level of promise fulfillment. As suggested by the psychological contract theory this fosters a supportive environment where employees feel valued and trusted, thereby fueling their determination to accomplish tasks proficiently. Conversely, when organizations fall short in fulfilling their commitments regarding hybrid work arrangements it can give rise to low HWPF. Breaching these promises may result in a diminished sense of trust and support, potentially exerting adverse effects on WEF. The absence of the pledged resources or flexibility can create obstacles that impede employees' ability to execute tasks efficiently, leading to frustration, decreased motivation, and a decline in WEF (Conway & Briner, 2005).

Employee Well-Being

Drawing from the principles of the psychological contract it is evident that a high level of HWPF has a pivotal role in fostering a sense of psychological safety and security for employees (Kossek et al., 2014). Notably, the fulfillment of promises pertaining to work flexibility allows individuals to effectively balance their professional obligations with personal needs, thereby alleviating work-life conflict and reducing stress levels (Kelly et al., 2014). Moreover, the provision of

essential resources for remote work diminishes the likelihood of work-related strain, thereby contributing to the overall EWB (Allvin et al., 2013).

Conversely, in the event of a breach in the hybrid work contract, detrimental effects on employee well-being can arise. Such breaches can instill feelings of insecurity and mistrust, thus leading to increased stress and dissatisfaction which can undermine the EWB (Zhao et al., 2007).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

When employees perceive a high level of HWPF they often experience a sense of appreciation and value, which in turn stimulates a willingness to contribute beyond their standard job responsibilities, thus demonstrating heightened OCB. This occurrence is supported by a study conducted by Eisenberger et al. (2001). The study found that employees who perceive their organization as supportive and caring are more likely to engage in behaviors that go above and beyond their job requirements. Similarly, Bal et al. (2008) discovered that employees who perceive their organization to be fulfilling its promises are more inclined to reciprocate by actively participating in OCB.

Conversely, a low level of HWPF may result in a reduction of OCB. Employees who experience breached promises may feel undervalued and exhibit diminished enthusiasm to engage in behaviors that surpass their formal job obligations (Robinson & Morrison, 2000).

Turnover Intention

Research indicates that employees' perceptions of an organization fulfilling its promises can significantly impact their attachment and commitment to the organization (Conway & Briner, 2005; Rousseau, 1989). As a result, the fulfillment of promises related to hybrid work may result in a decrease in TOI. Additionally, research by Bal et al. (2010) indicates that perceived breaches in the psychological contract can lead to feelings of disappointment and distrust, increasing employees' turnover intentions. Therefore breach of promises related to hybrid work can lead to an increase in TOI.

Hypothesis 2: Higher levels of HWPF are positively related to OCB, EWB, and WEF, and negatively related to TOI.

2.6 The Relationship between PLA and HWPF

Per the principles of SET, offering a high degree of PLA to employees can be regarded as a valuable output from the organization. This output can come in the form of autonomy in their work location (PLA). The output may positively tip the balance in the social exchange relationship. Consequently, this can be interpreted as an indication of the organization fulfilling its promises, which can elevate employees' perception of HWPF (Blau et al., 1964).

Psychological Contract Theory enhances the idea of the SET, suggesting that PLA holds significance as a vital element within the psychological contract between employees and employers. Based on the principles of psychological contract fulfillment, it can be argued that when employees perceive a higher level of autonomy in their work location (PLA), they may interpret it as the organization fulfilling its obligations (HWPF), leading to enhanced trust and reliability (Rousseau, 1995).

A study conducted by Conway and Briner (2005) indicated that employees' perception of psychological contract fulfillment significantly increases their trust in the organization. Similarly, Morrison and Robinson (1997) conducted a study revealing that employees who perceive a high level of control over their work environment are more inclined to perceive the organization as reliable and trustworthy in upholding its commitments. These findings indicate a potential positive relationship between PLA and HWPF.

Hypothesis 3: Higher levels of PLA are positively related to HWPF

Hypothesis 4: HWPF mediates the relationship between PLA and OCB, EWB,

WEF, and TOI

3.0 Method

3.1 Procedure and Sample

The research method employed in this study was a quantitative survey-based approach. The questionnaire consisted of multiple items that measure the study concepts of perceived location autonomy, hybrid work promise fulfillment, organizational citizenship behavior, employee well-being, turnover intention, and work efficiency. Bymiljøetaten, a single organization, served as the research setting, and participants were selected based on their involvement in a hybrid work arrangement, as confirmed by the organization. The suitability of Bymiljøetaten as a setting for studying hybrid work models was established through conversations with a team leader, who further consulted with the head of HR to ensure alignment with the research objectives. To ensure the relevance and accuracy of responses, a control question was included in the survey to filter out individuals who had not previously experienced a hybrid work model.

To cater to the local circumstances the questionnaire was translated into Norwegian, before being distributed to 500 employees in the spring of 2023. The distribution process was streamlined using the web-based questionnaire tool Qualtrics, enabling efficient data collection and seamless exportation of data for analysis. The employee email addresses were provided by an HR representative at Bymiljøetaten, ensuring that the survey reached the intended participants within the organization.

To prioritize participant anonymity and confidentiality, the questionnaire was carefully designed to offer complete anonymity. Participants were provided with the option to skip any questions that might potentially reveal their identity. Additionally, the Qualtrics platform was utilized to further anonymize the survey and ensure the confidentiality of participant information. These measures were put in place to protect the privacy of the participants throughout the research process.

Out of the 500 distributed questionnaires, a total of 98 completed responses were obtained, representing a response rate of approximately 19%. The participants included 39 men, 53 women, and 6 who chose not to specify their gender. In terms of age, there were 8 participants in the 20-29 age range, 26 in the 30-39 age range, 32 in the 40-49 age range, 20 in the 50-59 age range, 6 in the 60-69

age range, and 6 who chose not to specify their age. Considering the educational background, 4 participants held a high school education, 25 had a bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification, 63 possessed a master's degree or similar qualification, and 6 did not specify their educational level.

3.2 Measures

Independent Variable

Perceived Location Autonomy was measured using a scale adapted from Schieman et al. (2009). The scale was modified by Spivack et al., (2019) to specifically measure the perceived autonomy an employee has over their work location in the context of hybrid work models. The adaptation involved tailoring the wording of items to specifically address autonomy about choosing the work location, rather than general job autonomy. The scale consisted of seven items, three of which were reverse-scored. The items in the scale assessed the extent of autonomy that employees perceive they have regarding their work location, as granted by their direct manager or superior. These items involve rating statements such as "I have the freedom to decide where I will work," and "I feel pressure to work in the office." The responses were captured on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree".

Mediating Variable

The measurement scale for Hybrid Work Promise Fulfillment was adapted from a scale developed by Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler (2002). The scale was adapted to specifically address hybrid work promise fulfillment. The adapted scale employed three items indicating: (i): the extent to which their organization had promised a flexible working arrangement, (ii): the extent to which they felt the organization was obligated to provide flexible work arrangements, and (iii): the degree to which the organization had fulfilled the flexible work arrangements. The second item (ii) was included in the survey to offer additional context and as a potential point of investigation for future research, but did not impact the present study's operationalization of hybrid work promise fulfillment. Hybrid work promise fulfillment was indicated by computing the difference between the perceived level of promise (i) and the perceived level of fulfillment (iii) (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000). The responses were captured on a five-point Likert-type scale from 1 = "to a very small extent" to 5 = "to a very large extent".

Dependent Variables

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) was assessed using a scale created by Van Dyne and LePine (1998). The scale that was used was adapted for the Norwegian language and context by Kuvaas and Dysvik (2009). Participants rated their agreement with items related to extra-role behaviors aimed at improving the organization. The scale consisted of seven items, capturing behaviors such as voluntarily taking on additional tasks, assisting new employees with their adaptation, and supporting and helping others in their work responsibilities. Participants were asked to rate their frequency of behaviors like "taking on tasks without being asked," or "assisting my group/unit even if it's not part of my job." Responses were captured on a five-point Likert-type scale from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree".

Employee Well-Being was measured using a scale adapted from Zheng (2015). The original scale comprised 18 items that covered the three facets of well-being: Life Well-Being (LWB), Work Well-Being (WWB), and Psychological Well-Being (PWB). For this study, seven items - two from LWB, three from WWB, and two from PWB - were selected. This adaptation, designed to increase response rates, retained items considered most relevant to the context of this study. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements related to life satisfaction, experiencing genuine happiness, satisfaction with work responsibilities, finding enjoyment in their work, perceiving work as a meaningful experience, personal growth, and general self-confidence. The response format was adapted from a seven-point, to a five-point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree", 5 = "strongly agree"). This was employed to maintain consistency across measures and simplify the participant response process. It should be noted that this adapted scale has not been independently validated.

Turnover Intention was assessed using a scale developed by Kuvaas (2006, 2010). Participants rated their agreement with five items indicating the likelihood of seeking new employment. The scale consisted of five items. The items explored the extent to which participants often thought about quitting their current job, the possibility of leaving their current job within the year, actively searching for a new job in the next year, perceiving their future prospects in the organization as

poor, and the likelihood of actively searching for a new job within the next three years. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with statements such as "I am likely to actively look for a new job in the next year," and "I often think about quitting my current job," on a five-point Likert-type scale from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree".

Work Efficiency was measured using a scale developed by Kuvaas (2005, 2007). The scale included six items assessing participants' personal effort and performance in their job. The items covered aspects such as striving to work as hard as possible, delivering work of the highest quality, being highly committed to performing well, frequently putting in extra effort, consistently exceeding expected performance levels, and achieving higher performance levels than what is typically expected. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with statements like "I try to work as hard as possible," or "My work is of the highest quality," on a five-point Likert-type scale from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree".

Control Variables

To account for potential confounding factors and ensure the robustness of the findings, several control variables were included in this study. These variables aimed to capture important demographic and work-related characteristics of the participants. Age, gender, and level of education have been demonstrated to significantly influence work attitudes and behaviors (Ng and Feldman, 2010). Furthermore, factors such as age and education level are known to predict turnover intention (Griffeth et al., 2000), highlighting the necessity of their inclusion as control variables. By controlling for these variables, the study can ensure a more robust understanding of the relationships under examination, eliminating potential confounding influences. Similarly, tenure within the organization and with a specific manager can impact perceptions and experiences related to the work environment, such as perceived organizational support, autonomy, well-being, and turnover intention (Dysvik and Kuvaas, 2010) Thus, including these measures strengthen the study's reliability by accounting for these additional potential sources of variation.

Tenure with the organization (Ten1): Participants were asked to indicate the number of years they had been employed by Bymiljøetaten. Response options ranged from less than a year to more than 15 years.

Years working with the current supervisor (Ten2): Participants provided information on the length of time they had worked with their current supervisor. Response options ranged from less than a year to more than 15 years.

Years that their current supervisor has been their supervisor (Ten3): Participants were asked to report the number of years their current supervisor had held their current position.

Gender (Gen): Participants were asked to indicate their gender identity, choosing from the response options of male, female, or prefer not to say.

Age (Age): Participants were requested to disclose their age by selecting the appropriate age range from the given options. The response categories ranged from under 20 to over 75. The participants also had the choice of not answering. Highest completed education (Edu): Participants were asked to indicate their highest level of education achieved. The response options included grade school, high school, vocational school, bachelor's degree or equivalent, master's degree or equivalent, other, or prefer not to say.

3.3 Analysis

This study's analysis progresses systematically to examine relationships among the research model's variables through by the statistical software SPSS 29.0. Initially, the approach includes an exploratory principal component analysis and Cronbach's alpha coefficient calculation. This is followed by evaluating descriptive statistics and running a bivariate correlation analysis. The subsequent stages involve testing hypotheses through regression modeling and correlation analysis. A mediation test using the PROCESS macro is then performed. Further sections will provide a detailed look at each step, explaining the methods and reasons behind them.

An exploratory principal component analysis with Promax rotation was conducted on the multiple scale items to determine the discriminant validity of the study measures (Farrel, 2010). Items with a loading of 0.50 or higher on the target construct and a cross-loading of less than 0.35 on other factors were retained to form the computed measures (Nunnally and Bernstein, 2007).

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for each concept measure to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the scales. A reliability coefficient above 0.70 was considered acceptable (Nunnally and Bernstein, 2007). The variables that were used in the analysis were computed by taking the mean score of the items within each concept measure. Additionally, special consideration was given to the hybrid work promise fulfillment variable, as mentioned in the measures section.

Descriptive statistics, including measures of skewness and kurtosis, were calculated for the computed variables to provide an overview of the data distribution and evaluate any potential issues. To examine relations between the computed variables and any control variables involved in the study, a bivariate correlation analysis was conducted. Statistical significance was determined using a p-value threshold of less than 0.05.

Direct effect hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) were investigated using linear regression modeling and correlation analysis. A correlation matrix was first computed for the variables: PLA, HWPF, OCB, EWB, TOI, and WEF to test these hypotheses. Further exploration of these relationships was conducted through linear regression, where dependent variables were regressed onto each independent variable separately, and with the control variables. To test the mediation hypothesis (H4), the PROCESS macro by Hayes (2013) in SPSS was used. This tool is designed to examine models involving both mediation and moderation effects. This approach aligns with contempered research, recognizing that significant mediation can occur even when direct effects are not evident (Hayes, 2018). If the confidence interval does not contain zero, it provides evidence of a significant mediation effect (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

3.4 Results

Principal component analysis and reliability scale analysis

Upon reviewing the results of the initial PCA with all measurement items, it was observed that some items exhibited cross-loadings on multiple factors. To address this issue, the reverse scored PLA items (items 5, 6, 7), related to the perceived pressure employees felt in regards to working at the office, were

removed. Additionally, WEF items 5 and 6 were removed. These items regarded going above and beyond in efforts and performance, exceeding both acceptable levels and expectations. Additionally, OCB item 1, and TOI item 3 were removed from the analysis to enhance discriminant validity. Following the removal of the aforementioned items, a second PCA was performed. The pattern matrix obtained from this analysis exhibited cross-loadings on EWB item 7 and WEF item 2, resulting in the removal of these items. Further analysis revealed that the removal of EWB items 5 and 6 resulted in the principal component analysis showing each measure loading primarily on its intended factor. EWB items 5 and 6 were both related to the psychological well-being aspect of employee well-being. Following the removal of the mentioned items, the final PCA thus resulted in the following: HWPF (1 item), PLA (4 items), EWB (4 items), WEF (3 items), OCB (6 items), and TOI (4 items). The full measures without the removed items are presented in Appendix A. The factor loadings are presented in Appendix B. A reliability scale analysis was performed to assess the internal consistency of each measure. The results received were: PLA (α =0.783), OCB (α =0.848), EWB (α =0.857), WEF (α =0.749), and TOI (α =0.872). Table 1 provides an overview of descriptive statistics, correlations, and reliability coefficients.

	MEA	N SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.HWFP	0.40	0.98	-										-	
2.PLA	3.61	0.75	-0.11	(0.78)										
3.EWB	3.85	0.75	-0.00	0.30**	(0.86)									
4.WEF	4.11	0.56	-0.09	0.28**	0.42**	(0.75)								
5.OCB	4.04	0.48	0.02	0.28**	0.34**	0.41**	(0.85)							
6.TOI	2.31	0.97	0.08	-0.17	-0.45**	-0.32**	-0.34**	(0.87)						
7.TEN1	3.31	1.57	0.08	-0.05	0.09	0.05	0.08	-0.22*	-					
8.TEN2	2.36	1.03	0.13	0.04	-0.08	-0.04	-0.09	0.03	0.53**	-				
9.TEN3	2.26	0.96	0.11	0.11	-0.04	-0.06	-0.14	-0.06	0.38**	0.75**	-			
10.Gen	1.70	0.72	0.13	-0.06	0.02	0.14	-0.13	.021*	0.09	0.01	0.01	-		
11.Age	4.22	1.60	0.08	-0.04	0.02	0.02	-0.04	-0.01	0.48**	0.22*	0.27**	0.48**	-	
12.Edu	4.70	0.93	0.03	0.08	0.03	-0.04	-0.08	0.19	-0.09	0.20*	0.16	0.44**	0.290**	-

N = 97; ** indicates significance level p-value < 0.01, * indicates significance level p-value < 0.05; Parentheses are used to indicate the scale reliability coefficient alphas.

4.0 Analysis

Correlation, regression, and mediation analysis

Hypothesis 1 predicted a positive relationship between PLA and OCB, EWB, WEF, and a negative relationship with TOI. The correlation matrix revealed that the correlation coefficients disclosed a weak to moderate positive correlation between PLA and EWB (r = .301, p < .01), PLA and OCB (r = .276, p < .01), and PLA and WEF(r = .277, p < .01). These findings support the aspect of hypothesis 1 which hypothesized a positive relationship between PLA and EWB, OCB, and WEF, respectively.

Conversely, a lack of statistical significance was observed in the relationship between PLA and TOI (r = -.168, p > .05). The correlation matrix indicated that tenure in the organization (Ten1) showed a significant negative correlation with TOI (r = -.22, p < .05). However, controlling for Ten1 in the regression model did not make the relationship between PLA and TOI significant. The change in the p-value went from 0.101 to 0.075, indicating only a slight increase in the predictability of PLA. Therefore, the findings only partially support Hypothesis 1, even after controlling for tenure.

Hypothesis 2 predicted a positive relationship between HWPF and OCB, EWB and WEF, and a negative relationship between HWPF and TOI. The correlation between HWPF and all employee outcomes was statistically insignificant (OCB: $\beta = 0.022$, p > 0.05, EWB: $\beta = -0.003$, p > 0.05, WEF $\beta = -0.090$, p > 0.05, TOI: $\beta = 0.077$, p > 0.05), thereby Hypothesis 2 was not supported by these results.

As mentioned earlier, organizational tenure (Ten1) displayed a significant negative relationship with TOI in the correlation matrix. To further examine the potential relationship between HWPF and TOI, a regression analysis was conducted, controlling for organizational tenure (Ten1). However, the change in the p-value went from 0.454 to 0.345, indicating that HWPF is not a predictor for TOI even when controlling for Ten1. Taken together, these findings indicate that Hypothesis 2 is not supported.

Hypothesis 3 predicted a positive relationship between PLA and HWPF. However, the correlation analysis did not corroborate this hypothesis, revealing a non-significant correlation between HWPF and PLA (r = -0.110, p = 0.284). The negative correlation, although non-significant suggests a potential negative relationship if any exists between these two variables, contradicting the proposed direction hypothesized. As a result, the current evidence does not lend support to Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 suggested that HWPF would mediate the relationship between PLA and the outcome variables. Despite the results of Hypothesis 2 rejecting a significant relationship between HWPF and the outcome variables, a mediation analysis was carried out using the PROCESS macro in SPSS 29.0 for completeness of the study and to account for potential unique circumstances in the data. The results for HWPF as a mediator in the relationship between PLA and the dependent variables resulted as follows: specifically, for EWB, WEF, OCB, and TOI, the confidence intervals were (-0.0515, 0.0211), (-0.0176, 0.0347), (-0.0311, 0.0105), and (-0.0486, 0.0575), respectively. Consequently, Hypothesis 4 was not supported by the findings.

5.0 Discussion

The present study used a quantitative survey approach, to investigate PLA and HWPF, and their relationship with the employee outcomes: Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Employee Well-Being, Work Efficiency, and Turnover Intention.

The Relationship between PLA and Employee Outcomes

The data indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between PLA and EWB, OCB, and WEF, respectively. Specifically, for every unit increase in PLA, there was a 4.425% increase in OCB, a 5.175% increase in WEF, and a 7.5% increase in EWB.

Despite this data being indicative of a favorable effect of PLA, it should be interpreted cautiously in light of the weak to moderate correlation coefficients. For instance, the correlation coefficients for EWB (r = .301), OCB (r = .276), and WEF (r = .277) all suggest that the relationship between PLA and these outcomes is not strongly predictive (Cohen, 1992). This can indicate that other unexplored factors, such as, for instance: leadership style and job characteristics may play

more significant roles than PLA in these employee outcomes (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006).

The study's findings thereby validate that there's a correlation between PLA and work efficiency (WEF), employee well-being (EWB), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). This is aligned with existing literature that suggests a positive relationship between autonomy and these outcomes (Milosevic et al., 2018; Sekiguchi et al., 2017; Zhang & Bartol, 2010; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Spreitzer, 1995; Podsakoff et al., 2009). The results also corroborate the broader consensus in the literature that underscores the empowering potential of PLA and its favorable impact on employee outcomes (Rubin & Spivack, 2012; Hackman and Oldman, 1975; Braverman, 1974; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

However, a divergence from the hypothesis and the literature was observed in the case of turnover intentions. There was no significant correlation between PLA and TOI, contradicting established research that links increased autonomy with reduced turnover intentions (Kehoe & Wright, 2010; Berg et al., 2003; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Allen et al., 2013; Haar et al., 2014; Hom et al., 1984). The discrepancy between this study's results and prior literature might be due to contextual factors specific to the sample in Bymiljøetaten. In this regard, elements such as strong job security or benefits within the organization could overshadow the impact of PLA on turnover intentions (Shaw et al., 1998; Lambert et al., 2001).

The Relationship between HWPF and Employee Outcomes

The observed lack of significant correlations between HWPF and the discussed employee outcomes is unexpected given the theoretical underpinnings of the psychological contract. One possible explanation for this outcome is that employees may perceive HWPF as a standard offering, rather than an extra benefit. The increase in remote work and flexible work policies in the aftermath of COVID-19 has potentially shifted the way these policies are perceived by employees (Bloom et al., 2020). This shift in perception may suggest that employees view these policies as the norm, thereby diminishing the potential positive impact of HWPF on outcomes.

Furthermore, the results indicate that HWPF might not be the primary influencing factor for these employee outcomes. In the case of work efficiency, employees might experience high promise fulfillment, but other limitations - such as inadequate technology or complex tasks - might hinder their productivity (Bal et al., 2013). Similarly, while high promise fulfillment could theoretically boost well-being by facilitating work-life balance, other stressors like workload, job demands, or personal circumstances could counteract this positive effect (Allvin et al., 2013).

The sense of reciprocity embedded in the psychological contract would suggest that fulfillment of promises would be reciprocated with increased OCB and reduced TOI (Conway & Briner, 2005). A possible explanation for the deviation from theory in the results can be the interplay of other influential factors. OCB might not just be driven by perceived promise fulfillment, but also by other motivational drivers such as intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and perceived fairness (Bal et al., 2008; Eisenberger et al., 2001). Furthermore, turnover intentions could be more significantly influenced by other factors such as compensation, prospects for career advancement, and job security. These factors could potentially have a more substantial influence, thereby minimizing the role of HWPF in determining turnover intentions (Bal et al., 2010).

The relationship between PLA and HWPF

The thesis also hypothesized that perceived location autonomy would be a significant component of the psychological contract and have a substantial impact on the hybrid work promise fulfillment. Contrary to expectations, the results from the analysis indicated a non-significant relationship, with PLA only explaining 1.2% of the variance in HWPF. The empirical outcome suggests a more nuanced relationship between PLA and HWPF, indicating that PLA does not positively influence HWPF.

The outcome might be explained as the result of the discrepancy between theoretical underpinnings and practical interpretations of PLA. In accordance with The Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and the psychological contract (Conway & Briner, 2005; Morrison & Robinson, 1997), PLA, as an organizational output, should theoretically enhance employees' perception of

HWPF. However, the practical perceptions of PLA could vary significantly among employees due to individual preferences, work styles, or home environments (Bailyn, 1985). A possible perception could be that employees view the benefits of PLA as a result of their own actions, rather than as an intentional action by the organization to meet its commitments. Therefore employees might feel that the freedom to work from different locations is a choice they make, not necessarily a promise the organization delivers. This perspective highlights the dynamic nature of the psychological contract, emphasizing the importance of examining several factors when assessing it (Rousseau, 1989).

Other facets of hybrid work, such as time flexibility, task autonomy, and supportive work culture, might also have a strong influence on determining the perception of HWPF (Kossek, Lautsch, & Eaton, 2006). Previous research corroborates this perspective, suggesting that trust and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) might influence promise fulfillment (Mayer et al., 1995) (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Despite a high PLA, if employees perceive other facets of the hybrid work model as lacking or unfulfilled, it might overshadow the positive impact of PLA on HWPF. This indicates that even though an employee may have the freedom to choose their work location, it doesn't necessarily translate into them believing that the promises made about hybrid work are being fulfilled.

Additionally, the slightly negative trend observed in the correlation (r = -0.110), despite not being statistically significant, invites speculation on the potential downsides of PLA. Existing literature suggests that high autonomy can blur worklife boundaries and foster an "always-on" culture, leading to increased workrelated stress and feelings of isolation (Mazmanian et al., 2013). If employees experience these downsides, their perception of HWPF may be negatively influenced, despite high location autonomy.

HWPF as a mediator between PLA and Employee Outcomes

It was also proposed that HWPF would mediate the relationship between PLA and employee outcomes. However, the analysis revealed no significant mediation effects of HWPF on the relationships between PLA and the different employee outcomes. While mediation effects of psychological contract fulfillment have

been observed in other work contexts, the lack of such effects in this hybrid work context could suggest that the nature of these mediating mechanisms might differ depending on work arrangements (Zhao et al., 2007). The independent nature of PLA and HWPF, as indicated by the results, might be attributed to the unique factors associated with hybrid work models. For instance, leadership styles characterized by excessive control might inhibit the perceived mediation of HWPF between PLA and employee outcomes (Braun et al., 2013). Other similar factors which often lead to diminished employee autonomy can negatively impact the psychological contract, thereby reducing the mediating effect of HWPF (Eisenbeiss et al., 2008)

5.1 Limitations

Firstly, the study is conducted within Bymiljøetaten, a single organization with a unique culture and policy framework. These unique characteristics may influence employees' attitudes and perceptions towards PLA and HWPF, which may not necessarily be generalizable to other organizations or different industry sectors. Such contextual specificity presents potential constraints related to external validity (Saunders et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the study's cross-sectional design only captures a snapshot of the constructs under study. Perceptions of the work environment and their impact on behavior might change over time. This can be attributed to factors such as the job lifecycle, personal life changes, or organizational policy changes. This design limitation could therefore potentially lead to over or underestimation of the relationships between constructs (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010).

The methodological approach employed in this study, a quantitative, survey-based approach, might have exposed the study to social desirability bias where respondents provide socially acceptable answers rather than accurate reflections of their perceptions or behaviors (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Also, the self-reporting nature of the survey can lead to the common method variance issue, which could inflate the relationships between variables (Podsakoff et al., 2012). A response rate of 19% could also raise concerns about non-response bias (Rogelberg and Stanton, 2007).

Additionally, the Norwegian language used in the survey might have introduced translation bias, particularly in nuanced concepts like perceived location autonomy and hybrid work promise fulfillment.

The utilization of existing scales to measure turnover intentions (TOI), employee well-being (EWB), work efficiency (WEF), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) could also present challenges. Given the dynamics introduced by hybrid work arrangements, existing scales might not fully capture these constructs, indicating the need for context-specific measures. Particularly, the use of a shortened scale for measuring employee well-being, while advantageous for enhancing response rates, was not independently validated, suggesting a cautious interpretation of the findings related to this variable.

Additionally, while the study controls for variables such as age, gender, education, and tenure, it overlooks certain individual characteristics like intrinsic motivation, perceived job security, career aspirations, or work values, indicating a potential limitation as these variables may have a significant effect (Lepine et al., 2005).

In terms of data analysis, several items had to be removed due to cross-loadings on multiple factors in the principal component analysis. This adjustment, while necessary, could have affected the comprehensiveness of the measures and might have limited the interpretation of the results.

5.2 Suggestions for Future Research

There is a need for future research to account for the dynamic nature of the constructs under investigation. Longitudinal designs could provide insights into how employees' perceptions of their work environment and the impact of hybrid work arrangements on their behavior might evolve over time (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010). The issue of common method variance that arises from the self-reporting nature of the survey used in the present study could be addressed in future studies by using multi-source or multi-method research designs (Podsakoff et al., 2012). This can be done through utilizing qualitative research methods, such as interviews or case studies which can reveal deeper insights into individual experiences within hybrid work environments (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). For

instance, employee interviews could provide additional insights into why PLA and HWPF might have limited influence on employee outcomes, and how these factors interact in the real-world setting. Diversifying the research context could also be beneficial. Including different industries, job roles, age groups, and cultural contexts can validate and enrich the findings of this study, making them more generalizable (Spector et al., 2000).

Expanding the scope of variables to include aspects such as personality traits, leadership styles, organizational culture, and technology as moderator or mediator variables could offer a more comprehensive perspective of hybrid work settings (Johns, 2006). Additionally, exploring constructs like perceived organizational support and job satisfaction as potential mediators or moderators in the PLA, HWPF, and employee outcomes relationship can further the understanding of these dynamics (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Further research could also aim to explore the potential relationship between trust, HWPF, and PLA to influence employee outcomes (Mayer, 1995).

Research into a broader range of employee outcomes influenced by PLA and HWPF can also provide more insights. Focusing on specific aspects like job satisfaction and work-life balance may highlight the diverse implications of hybrid work settings. Furthermore, the influence of PLA and HWPF on organizational-level outcomes, such as performance, competitiveness, and innovation, merits investigation.

5.3 Practical Implications

The absence of HWPF as a mediating factor indicates that organizations should refer to PLA and HWPF as separate elements when formulating strategies related to improving employee outcomes. The data points towards the advantage of increased PLA leading to enhanced organizational citizenship behavior, improved well-being, and elevated work efficiency. The positive correlation may be an indicator for businesses to consider increasing their efforts to promote PLA by offering employees the flexibility to choose their preferred work locations. Practically, this can be done through conducting regular meetings to understand employees' work preferences and providing them with choices regarding work location. However, the weak to moderate strength of the relationships between

PLA and the mentioned outcomes suggest that other factors may also significantly influence these results, implying that organizations may also need to concentrate on elements like leadership style and job characteristics when seeking to optimize these employee outcomes (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006).

The lack of significant correlations between HWPF and employee outcomes suggests that hybrid work policies may have become a standard expectation rather than a perceived benefit. This could indicate a shift in the psychological contract, with employees expecting more than just flexible work policies. Therefore, organizations may need to redefine their understanding of what constitutes 'benefits' in the hybrid work era. This implies that organizations may need to focus on support mechanisms, technology, or upskilling opportunities (Kossek et al., 2006). Regular feedback sessions could present an opportunity for organizations to articulate their commitments towards hybrid work clearly, enabling employees to express their understanding and expectations.

6.0 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between Perceived Location Autonomy and Hybrid Work Promise Fulfillment, and their impact on Employee Well-being, Work Efficiency, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, and Turnover Intentions. Additionally, the role of HWPF as a potential mediator between PLA and OCB, EWB, WEF and TOI was investigated as a part of the study.

The findings validated the importance of PLA, confirming the positive relationship with employee well-being, work efficiency, and organizational citizenship behavior. These findings are aligned with previous research that underscores the empowering potential of autonomy in hybrid work environments. The study also reveals divergences from established hypotheses, particularly with respect to turnover intentions and the non-significant relationship of PLA with HWPF. Furthermore, contrary to theoretical assumptions grounded in psychological contract theory, HWPF did not demonstrate significant relationships with the analyzed employee outcomes, nor did it act as a mediator between PLA and these outcomes. These findings suggest that the fulfillment of hybrid work promises may not directly impact employee outcomes, indicating a more complex dynamics of psychological contracts in hybrid work contexts.

To bolster the generalizability and comprehensiveness of findings, future research should consider adopting longitudinal study designs, qualitative methodologies, or focusing on a broader organizational context. Additionally, examining the potential moderating effects of factors like job characteristics, perceived organizational support or leadership style could offer unique insights into the dynamics of hybrid work arrangements.

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APPENDIX A: Measure scales

Hybrid Work Promise Fulfillment - HWPF

- 1. To what extent has your organization promised to provide you with a flexible work arrangement?
- 2. To what extent do you believe your organization is obligated to provide you with a flexible work arrangement?
- 3. To what extent do you believe your organization has provided you with a flexible work arrangement?

Perceived Location Autonomy - PLA

- 1. I have the freedom to decide where to complete my work.
- 2. It is my own responsibility to find or create an environment that allows me to get my work done.
- 3. I feel free to find an optimal working environment in which to do my work.
- 4. I feel free to work off-site.
- 5. I feel pressure to work on-site. (R)
- 6. I feel pressure to work where others can find me. (R)
- 7. I feel others will evaluate where I choose to work. (R)

(R) symbolizes prompts that have been reverse-scored.

Employee wellbeing – EWB

- 1. I feel satisfied with my life.
- 2. Most of the time, I do feel real happiness.
- 3. I am satisfied with my work responsibilities.
- 4. I find real enjoyment in my work.
- 5. Work is a meaningful experience for me.
- 6. I feel I have grown as a person.
- 7. I generally feel good about myself, and I'm confident.

Work Efficiency – WEF

- 1. I aim to work as hard as possible.
- 2. My work is of the highest quality.
- 3. I am highly dedicated to doing a good job.
- 4. I often apply additional effort in my work.
- 5. I almost always exert more effort than is deemed to be necessary.

6. I perform better than what can be expected.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior – OCB

- 1. I often undertake tasks without being asked.
- 2. I aid new hires in adjusting to their role.
- 3. Despite it not being a part of my duties, I frequently assist my team and, or department.
- 4. I support and help colleagues for the benefit of the team and, or department.
- 5. I actively participate to ensure the well-being of the team.
- 6. I support colleagues by gaining more knowledge regarding the tasks.
- 7. I often support colleagues in my team.

Turnover Intention – TOI

- 1. I am likely to search for a new job in the next year.
- 2. I am likely to search for a new job in the next three years.
- 3. I often contemplate leaving my job.
- 4. I may possibly resign from my job this year.
- 5. I perceive my future prospects in this organization as poor.

APPENDIX B: Principal component analysis with promax rotation

	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6
HWPF	Opportunities for remote work from						0.881
	locations other than the employer's premises are often provided as part of flexible work						
	arrangements.						
PLA1	I have the freedom to decide where to				0.860		
	complete my work.						
PLA2	It is my own responsibility to find or create				0.592		
	an environment that allows me to get my work done.						
PLA3	I feel free to find an optimal working environment in which to do my work.				0.783		
PLA4	I feel free to work off-site.				0.901		
EWB1	I feel satisfied with my life.		1	0.980	0.701		
EWB2	Most of the time, I do feel real happiness.			0.884			
EWB3	I am satisfied with my work responsibilities.			0.659			
EWB4	I find real enjoyment in my work.			0.694			
WEF1	I aim to work as hard as possible.			0.051		0.935	
WEF3	I am highly dedicated to doing a good job.					0.784	
WEF4	I often apply additional effort in my work.					0.615	
OCB2	I aid new hires in adjusting to their role.	0.704				0.000	
OCB3	Despite it not being a part of my duties, I	0.689					
	frequently assist my team and, or						
	department.						
OCB4	I support and help colleagues for the benefit of the team and, or department.	0.766					
OCB5	I actively participate to ensure the well-	0.651					
	being of the team.						
OCB6	I support colleagues by gaining more	0.886					
OCB7	knowledge regarding the tasks. I often support colleagues in my team.	0.823					
TOI1	I am likely to search for a new job in the	0.823	0.941				
1011	next year.		0.941				
TOI2	I am likely to search for a new job in the		0.889				
- J	next three years.		2.307				
TOI4	I may possibly resign from my job this year.		0.884				
TOI5	I perceive my future prospects in this		0.701				
	organization as poor.						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.