

# The factors affecting employee retention in construction-related small-medium enterprises situating in Krung Thep Maha Nakhon

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – This study aims to determine the factors influencing employee retention working in construction-related small-medium enterprises (SMEs) in Krung Thep Maha Nakhon. The study contributes to the construction site manager getting insight into employees' desired goals in the workplace. Furthermore, the study provided information about the diversity of generations (age groups), income levels and educational levels of employees working in the construction industry in the Krung Thep area.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The researcher decided to investigate a sample size of 386 respondents based on the target population. A purposive sampling method was selected by giving out questionnaires to the respondents employed in construction-related SMEs in Krung Thep. The questions comprised two major parts, which are demographic questions and measuring variables relevant to the independent variables.

**Findings** – The study's aim of findings is to investigate the factors that retain the employees who are pursuing their careers in construction-related SMEs. The findings of this research are to unveil that task interdependence significantly contributes to agile working. Lastly, employee retention is significantly affected by agile working among employees in an organisation.

**Research limitations/implications** – This research only studies factors influencing employee retention among those of all ranges of ages, incomes and educational levels working in construction-related SMEs. The researcher collected data on the income level, age group and educational level of employees to use for further study.

**Originality/value** – The study is about determining the factor that affects agile working and employee retention among those working in construction-related SMEs.

**Keywords** Entrepreneurial intention, Agile working, Task interdependence, Reward, Recognition, Employee retention, Generations

**Paper type** Research paper

## 1. Introduction

The following chapter illustrates the overview of the study of the factors affecting employee retention in small-medium enterprises (SMEs) in the construction field. The beginning part of the investigation presents the statistical data on employment in the construction field in Krung Thep. This is followed by a section that summarises the literature review used in

## JEL Classification — Unknown

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carrying out the investigation of employee retention among employees working in the construction field. This section will go through the factors that influence the employees' decisions to stay in construction SMEs instead of resigning. The objectives of the study will be identified in the following sections. Research questions relevant to the topic's hypotheses, and finally, the significance of the study will be explained.

Nowadays, social media has become more influential in the mindset and perspectives of Generation Z people, according to [Sidorcuka and Chesnovicka \(2017\)](#). According to [ecommerceDB \(n.d.\)](#), e-commerce sales are expected to increase by 15% in 2021. In addition, [Smart Digital \(2020\)](#) reported that selling products via social media platforms has increased by over 200% during the pandemic. Generation Z is considered to be those who face distinctive experiences compared to earlier generations, especially with the rapid growth in the popularity of social media ([Sidorcuka and Chesnovicka, 2017](#)). Moreover, the writers also mentioned that the current generation of employees prefers to switch jobs in different organisations rather than work in one place like earlier generations. The study will look at the reasons why people in the current generation continue to work in construction fields that require a lot of work and sometimes eliminate life balance.

### *1.1 Problem statement*

Nowadays, new employees are mostly Millennials and Generation Z, whereas Generation X and Baby Boomers are mostly sitting in senior positions. [Kirchmayer and Fratričová \(2018\)](#) pointed out that employees in Generation Z have a solid linkage with the digital platform and value their privacy in person more than any other previous generation. The generation of Baby Boomers is observed as self-indulgent and commonly having a high level of egoism ([Slagsvold and Hansen, 2022](#)). As a result, this can be a serious difficulty in the workplace since Generation Z employees, especially in the construction field, prefer to work in an agile way with task interdependence. In contrast, seniors who are baby boomers are more flavourful in the traditional way, with their mindset being conservative, according to [Ng and Indran \(2022\)](#).

The current generation employees are seeking transparency in the workplace. On the other hand, in Thailand, corruption, for example, bribery, at the senior level is very common, and this has been happening for a long time due to various factors, for example, organisational culture, opportunistic employees, conflicts of laws, etc. ([Opoku et al., 2022](#)). Interestingly, engineering is one of the fields that has the third highest unemployment rate ([Chulawongse, 2019](#)). However, the former statement objects to other statistical data, which states that up to 55% of engineers with a working life below 5 years are ready to resign for a different one with better opportunities ([Thos, 2018](#)).

### *1.2 Objectives of the study*

In the construction industry, the issues are dynamic and day-to-day, as hazards and dangers can happen at any time. As a result, in comparison to other careers, the job always involves stress and awareness at all times. Moreover, with the expectation of transparency in the workplace in a new era of employment, the construction working culture in Thailand is still in the pool of corruption, according to [Opoku et al. \(2022\)](#). As a result, this study aims to evaluate the existing independent variables from the literature review that have a significant impact on employee retention in SMEs in the construction industry in Bangkok. The investigation will go through the following specific areas:

- (1) To investigate the relationship between entrepreneurial intention and employee retention among employees working in construction-related SMEs.
- (2) To investigate the effect of reward and recognition on agile working among employees working in construction-related SMEs.

- (3) To explain how agile working affects employee retention in construction-related SMEs.

### *1.3 Significance of the study*

Studying the factors that retain the engineers working in the construction industry in Krung Thep can allow the human resources department (HR) in the construction company to find out if there is a hiatus in the workplace. As formerly stated in the earlier section, more than half of the junior engineers are willing to switch career paths immediately once they find a better opportunity. Each independent variable, which will be discussed later, will identify the willingness and reason of the engineers to stay and work in the same place. Moreover, the following research can allow the entrepreneurs of construction SMEs in Bangkok to reflect on their working culture and know the areas for improvement to develop and reinforce employee retention in their organisations. The following research will highlight the strengths of SMEs in the construction industry that persuade engineers to stay. As a result, improvements can be made in the right area. For example, if employees want to gain experiences and challenges at work, the manager may begin to share responsibility.

## **2. Literature review**

### *2.1 Theories of each variable*

*2.1.1 Entrepreneurial intention.* There are always those in any organisation who are eager to learn and gain as much experience as possible from their workplace in order to become future entrepreneurs in their businesses (Li *et al.*, 2022). Moreover, the writer found that the entrepreneurial dream significantly affects employee turnover. Not only does the entrepreneurial intention have a significant effect, but entrepreneurial self-efficacy also has a considerable effect on the employee's turnover intention, according to Li *et al.* (2022). The authors of the paper also found that the entrepreneurial dream has a significant effect on the employee's turnover intention. However, based on the idea of Contreras-Barraza *et al.* (2021), there are also external factors affecting entrepreneurial intention, for example, social or family culture etc.

*2.1.2 Task interdependence.* According to the study background in the last chapter, teamwork is one of the most important parts of the construction business. As a result, task interdependence is a crucial component of teamwork. Adu and Opawole (2019) mentioned in their research that task interdependencies are part of organisational teamwork. In the study of Fong and Lung (2007), task interdependence significantly affects team orientation. The authors also evaluated the results further that the employees in the construction field usually prefer to work with others in real-life situations, and the task interdependence is directly proportional to the project difficulty level. Furthermore, Talat and Riaz (2020) stated that task interdependence is another tool to enhance motivation within a team. In addition, the writer found that task interdependence is the essential moderator for team bricolage to have a positive impact on team resilience.

*2.1.3 Reward and recognition.* Generally, Birhanu (2022) stated that recognition and reward are the employee's main expectations for repaying their working effort. Another fundamental meaning of the term "reward and recognition", defined by Tirta and Enrika (2020), is an attempt by the managers to raise the employees' awareness of becoming outstanding in the organisation.

Based on the study of the following author, the majority of the participants agreed with themselves being recognised by their supervisor. However, Birhanu (2022) suggested that the employees may respond more positively to the modification in the organisational structure. According to Makai HR (2022), construction companies usually consist of an organisational

structure with a functional design since many departments work on different parts of the project. However, [Abu Hassan Asaari et al. \(2019\)](#) raised an eye-catching point stating:

The recognition is not solely for the achievement of a person's performance, it is more focused on employee contributions and efforts.

The longer the functional structure, the more difficult it is for the bottom-line employees to be recognised by the top-line managers. Likewise, according to [Tirta and Enrika \(2020\)](#), employee recognition is a common challenge to most enterprises since it is an individual's fundamental necessity.

*2.1.4 Agile working.* [Darino et al. \(2019\)](#) distinguished between traditional and agile organisations, demonstrating that traditional organisations rely heavily on structural hierarchy while agile organisations are more dynamic. Moreover, the writers claimed that agile working is people-centred, allowing fast learning and quick decision-making. The core of agile working is flexibility and linking team members' goals to business priorities ([Darino et al., 2019](#)).

Since construction work involves many day-to-day issues, the ability to handle ambiguity is essential for continuing the process. However, [Aghina et al. \(2019\)](#) stated that a successful agile team usually has the ability to deal with high ambiguity and agreeableness. In contrast, traditional organisations, e.g. some family businesses, are still on the path with a structural hierarchy where only those in the top line have a decision in all the problems. In an agile organisation, instead of frankly disagreeing with one of the team members' ideas, a team member can ask a question instead ([Aghina et al., 2019](#)). However, agile working can lead to low transparency, which is contrary to Generation Z and Millennials' expectations since there is a high level of flexibility as team members are allowed to make decisions in most cases ([Leicht et al., 2020](#)).

*2.1.5 Employee retention.* Employee retention plays a critical role in the construction industry since the project involves a lot of complexity and issues from various factors ([Park et al., 2021](#)). [Msengei and Obwogi \(2015\)](#) discovered that financial pay and compensation have a significant impact on employee retention. Moreover, personal characteristics are one of the determinants of employee retention. [Pan et al. \(2021\)](#) stated that more training and employee development could increase loyalty, leading to employee retention. However, the following supports may reduce employee retention because the employee will have more skills and will be more confident in looking for a new job ([Haines et al., 2010](#)). [Mukuna \(2019\)](#) found in the research that staff development can improve employee retention. [Pan et al. \(2021\)](#) found that job performance significantly affects employee retention. [Cyriac and Baskaran \(2020\)](#) claimed that one of the main causes of employee turnover is poor non-monetary retention. The authors defined employee retention as the attempt of the employer to create an environment that convinces the current employee to remain in the organisation.

### 3. Research frameworks

#### 3.1 Theoretical frameworks

[Fong and Lung \(2007\)](#) have done a study on the team orientation in the construction industry. According to [Figure 1](#), the authors mentioned that there is a significant relationship between task interdependence and team orientation. In addition, the authors claimed that task interdependence is critical in the construction field. Similarly, the authors discovered that as the task's complexity increases, so does the team orientation.

The following paper studies how agile working systems within SMEs in African countries affect the performance of the business. [Govuzela and Mafini \(2019\)](#) suggest that new start-up businesses have to be responsive to the situation to survive and become successful nowadays. With respect to [Figure 2](#), the authors studied the relationship between collaborative innovation

and organisational agility, which is relevant to the construction industry, where group work is required in most projects. Another interesting relationship to be aware of is the link between organisational agility and SMEs' business performance, as the report is doing a study among SMEs in the construction industry.

The fourth framework introduced in Figure 3 was taken from the study of Lai *et al.* (2021), which illustrates the relationship between task interdependence and employee agility. The authors carried out the following study to get insight into employees' capability in information technology (IT) in China. In addition, the writers were willing to explore how the relationship between task interdependence on IT projects affects agile working among employees with good IT skills.

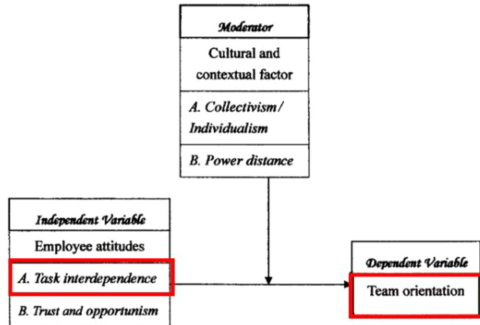
### 3.2 Conceptual frameworks

The following conceptual framework is developed from the theoretical frameworks in the previous section and the literature review in Chapter 2. The following independent variables, namely, entrepreneurial intention, task interdependence, and reward and recognition, and a dependent variable, which is employee retention, are developed from the theoretical framework in the previous studies, whereas agile working is developed from the previous research as a literature review.

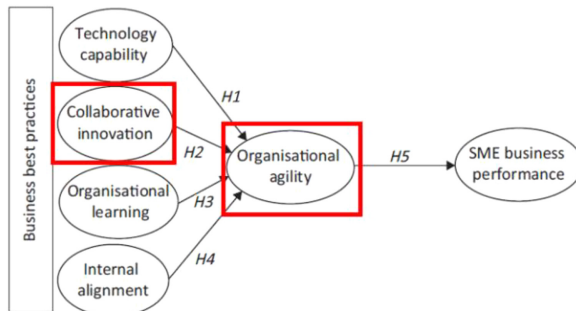
### 3.3 Research hypotheses

The following hypothesis was established based on the conceptual framework in Figure 4 to investigate the factors that impact employee retention among those working in construction-related SMEs in Krung Thep Maha Nakhon.

**Figure 1.**  
Effect of task interdependence on team orientation in the construction industry plotted by Fong and Lung (2007)



**Figure 2.**  
The relationship between collaborative innovation and organisational agility and the effect of organisational agility on SMEs' performance framed by Govuzela and Mafini (2019)



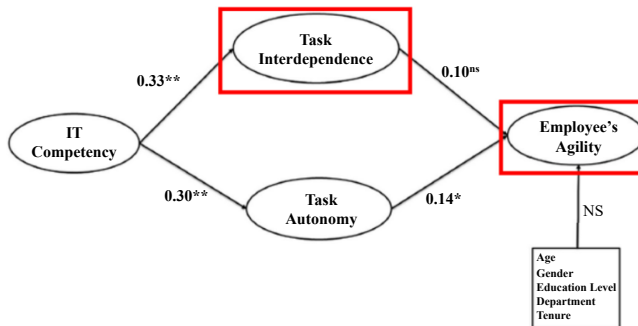
- H1. There is a significant effect between entrepreneurial intention and employee retention within the organisation.
- H2. There is a significant effect between task interdependence and agile working within an organisation.
- H3. There is a significant effect between reward and recognition and agile working within the organisation.
- H4. There is a significant effect between agile working and employee retention within an organisation.

**4. Research methodology**

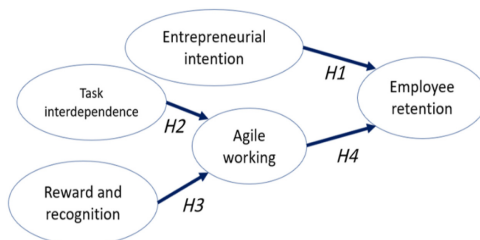
*4.1 Research design*

Cronbach’s alpha was used to carry out the reliability test via the software PSPP. Moreover, multiple linear regression (MLR) and descriptive statistics were used as tools to carry out quantitative research for this study. First of all, a small group of 35 samples was conducted as a pilot test. Descriptive data research was used to analyse demographic information and operationalised variables. Secondly, MLR was used to analyse the factors influencing agile working, which are task interdependence and reward and recognition. Likewise, another MLR to study is the factors affecting employee retention, which comprises agile working and entrepreneurial intention.

There are two parts of questionnaires used to carry out the survey with a total number of 22 questions, where 3 of them are demographic questions and 19 of them are the measuring variables. The measuring variables were taken from a similar study, and the majority of information used in the study was from secondary sources, e.g. articles, government statistics and journals taken from a reliable source that carried out similar areas of study.



**Figure 3.** The framework of how task interdependence has a positive effect on employee’s agility created by [Lai et al. \(2021\)](#)



**Figure 4.** The conceptual framework of the factors affecting employee retention in construction-related SMEs situating in Krung Thep Maha Nakhon drawn

4.2 Sampling plan

4.2.1 Target population and sample size. According to the data obtained from the National Statistical Office in Thailand (2021), the target population is 320,300 people who are working in the construction-related industries in Krung Thep. The study uses the formula of Cochran (1977) to calculate the sample size to be 384 respondents using the equation below 1 taken from Nuangjamnong (2021). The definitions of each variable used for the calculation of sample size in Equation (1) are presented in Table 1

$$n = \frac{N Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2 p(1 - p)}{e^2(N - 1) + Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2 p(1 - p)} \tag{1}$$

However, the researcher decided to use 386 respondents since there are a few eligible respondents who would like to participate in answering the questionnaire.

4.2.2 Sampling procedures. The researcher decided to carry out the investigation via the non-probability sampling methods. The method used was judgement sampling since the researcher selected a specific population of those working in the construction-related-industry SMEs to participate in filling in the questionnaire.

4.3 Research instrument/questionnaire design and reliability (pilot) test

In this study, questionnaires were used as a research instrument to analyse the factors and the relationship between variables. The researcher distributed the questionnaire via an online platform for the simple access of the selected participants, as they can choose to fill in the question anywhere and anytime. In addition, as the set of questionnaires was distributed to specific groups of employees enrolling in construction-related-industry SMEs, therefore the screening questions were unnecessary for the study.

The first part is the demographic questions in the form of multiple choices that allowed the researcher to know the preliminary background of the selected respondents, e.g. age, educational level, income, etc. Moving to the second part of the questionnaire, the focus is on the relationship between the measuring variables, categorised by the independent variable. In this section, the questionnaire is in the form of a Likert scale.

The pilot test, Cronbach’s alpha values, was carried out on 35 respondents as a first stage of the reliability test before continuing distributing a set of questionnaires to the rest of the respondents. The preliminarily reliability test was valid with the overall values above 0.6. Similarly, the result of the pilot test of the 386 respondents illustrated in Table 2 presents that overall values were above 0.6, which were considered acceptable to carry out the questionnaire.

4.4 Methods of data gathering and procedures

In this study, the researcher collected both primary and secondary data. For the primary data, the researcher obtained the results directly through questionnaires and surveys from a specific number of respondents working in construction industry-related SMEs. The

**Table 1.**  
Definition of the  
variables in  
Equation (1)

Variables	Definition
Z	A critical value of desired confidence level based on the desired confidence level
N	Target population
N	Sample size
P	Estimated proportion of an attribute that is presented in the population
E	The desired level of errors based on the desired confidence level

Item No.	Variables/Measurement items	Cronbach's alpha	Strength of association
<i>Entrepreneurial intention (EI)</i>			
EI 1	My goal is to become an entrepreneur <a href="#">Iwu et al. (2021)</a>	0.88	Good
EI 2	I will try my best to create my own business <a href="#">Iwu et al. (2021)</a>	0.84	Good
EI 3	I have acquired the expertise, experience, and skills necessary to build, grow and manage a new company <a href="#">Kisubi et al. (2021)</a>	0.85	Good
EI 4	From a wider environment, I can recognise a business opportunity <a href="#">Kisubi et al. (2021)</a>	0.86	Good
<i>Task interdependence (TI)</i>			
TI 1	Do you think that it is important for you to work with people who do not cooperate well with one another <a href="#">Fong and Lung (2007)</a> ?	0.84	Good
TI 2	Do you think that it is important for you to save time by paying attention to your friends <a href="#">Fong and Lung (2007)</a> ?	0.73	Acceptable
TI 3	Do you think that it is important for you to enjoy things alone <a href="#">Fong and Lung (2007)</a> ?	0.78	Acceptable
<i>Agile working (AW)</i>			
AW 1	I am satisfied with the quality/quantity of the rewards <a href="#">Hussain et al. (2019)</a>	0.86	Good
AW 2	Employees work more as a team in order to gain rewards <a href="#">Hussain et al. (2019)</a>	0.85	Good
AW 3	I am regularly praised for my work <a href="#">Hussain et al. (2019)</a>	0.79	Acceptable
AW 4	I received constructive criticism about my work <a href="#">Hussain et al. (2019)</a>	0.81	Good
<i>Reward and recognition (RR)</i>			
RR 1	Good motivation among team members <a href="#">Esangbedo and Ealefoh (2021)</a>	0.83	Good
RR 2	Excellent and collaborative working relationships among project stakeholders <a href="#">Esangbedo and Ealefoh (2021)</a>	0.77	Acceptable
RR 3	It involves creative brainstorming <a href="#">Esangbedo and Ealefoh (2021)</a>	0.76	Acceptable
RR 4	Continued channel of communication between team members, which increases job satisfaction <a href="#">Esangbedo and Ealefoh (2021)</a>	0.78	Acceptable
<i>Employee retention (ER)</i>			
ER 1	The salaries and benefits at the company are fair for everyone <a href="#">Kaewnaknaew et al. (2022)</a>	0.86	Good
ER 2	The work at the company matches the skills of everyone <a href="#">Kaewnaknaew et al. (2022)</a>	0.85	Good
ER 3	The employment conditions at the company satisfy employees' work-life balance <a href="#">Kaewnaknaew et al. (2022)</a>	0.79	Acceptable
ER 4	The company avoids employees who work harder than they can, which may cause stress <a href="#">Kaewnaknaew et al. (2022)</a>	0.81	Good
<b>Note(s):</b> Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70 represents that measuring variables are acceptable in the study			

**Table 2.** Results from the pilot test – Cronbach's alpha – strength of association ( $n = 386$ )

information from the secondary resource was studied as a literature review to develop the theoretical into a conceptual framework.

#### 4.5 Statistical treatment of data

MLRs were used as the statistical approach to work out the significance level, known as the  $p$ -value, to decide whether the null hypothesis for each measuring variable should be rejected



or maintained. Cloud, Jamovi and PSPP programmes were used to analyse the results obtained from the survey.

*4.5.1 Descriptive statistics.* The descriptive analysis enabled the researcher to know the frequency, mean and standard deviation of the respondents, then further interpret the mean score.

*4.5.2 Inferential analysis.* Regression analysis is used as a part of the inferential statistics family since the research topic is about determining the relationship between independent and dependent variables. MLR is required since more than one independent variable affected the dependent variable, where the interval /ratio (I/R) was carried out on each variable.

## 5. Results and discussion

### 5.1 Reliability testing

A pilot test was carried out on 386 respondents to re-check the reliability along with investigating any incoherence of variables in the questionnaire. The software PSPP was used to carry out Cronbach's alpha test of reliability, where the values obtained were used to evaluate and analyse the reliability of the measuring variables used in the questionnaire. The strength of the association standard relied on [Table 2](#).

### 5.2 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

The screening questions were not necessary as the questionnaire was handed to a specific group of respondents who were employed in construction-related industry businesses. The frequency distribution extracted and analysed from the data collected from 386 respondents by Cloud Jamovi software was allocated as shown in [Table 3](#).

*5.2.1 Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation.* For the entrepreneurial intention, the highest average value of the variable was "From a wider environment, I can recognise a business opportunity", which was 4.20. On the other hand, the lowest mean was "I will try my best to create my own business", which was 4.08. For the review of the standard deviation, the highest value of 0.980 went to "I will try my best to create my own business.", while the lowest value was "I have acquired the expertise, experience, and skills necessary to build, grow and manage a new company", which equals 0.922.

Demographic factors	Frequency	Percent
<i>Age (Years)</i>		
18–28	181	46.9
29–43	145	37.6
Over 44	60	15.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>386</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Education levels</i>		
Below Bachelor's	41	10.6
Bachelor's	290	75.1
Master's	47	12.2
PhD or above	8	2.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>386</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Income per month (Baht)</i>		
Below 20,000	27	7.0
20,001–40,000	190	49.2
40,001–80,000	127	32.9
80,001–100,000	32	8.3
Over 100,000	10	2.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>386</i>	<i>100</i>

**Table 3.**  
Analysis of  
demographic factors  
using the frequency  
distribution and  
percentage

The highest mean and standard deviation of task interdependence was “*Do you think that it is important for you to work with people who do not cooperate well with one another?*”, which equals 2.26 and 1.37, respectively. Nevertheless, the lowest mean value and standard deviation, 1.85 and 1.20, respectively, were “*Do you think that it is important for you to save time on paying attention to your friends?*”.

The highest mean but the highest standard deviation of the agile working was “*I received constructive criticism about my work.*”, which equals 4.57 and 0.811. On the other hand, the lowest mean was “*I am satisfied with the quality/quantity of the rewards*”, which equals 4.36, but has the lowest standard deviation value of 0.750.

The highest mean of reward and recognition was “*It involves creative brainstorming*”, which equals 4.37. On the other hand, the lowest mean was “*Good motivation among team members*”, which equals 4.02, but it obtained the highest standard deviation value of 1.059. In addition, the measuring variable, “*Continued channel of communication between team members, which increases job satisfaction.*” got the lowest standard deviation value of 0.844.

The highest mean but with the lowest standard deviation of employee retention was “*The work at the company matches the skills of everyone.*” which equals 4.42 and 0.835, respectively. On the other hand, the lowest mean was “*The employment conditions at the company satisfy employees’ work-life balance*”, which equals 4.11. Lastly, the measuring variable, “*The company avoids employees who work harder than they can, which may cause stress*” got the highest standard deviation value of 1.049.

### 5.3 Hypothesis testing results of multiple linear regression

According to the statistical theory by Nuangjamnong (2021), the variance inflation factor (VIF) with a value higher than or equal to 5 represents overlapping variables. Another critical variable is the R-square value. The following variable indicates the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that is based on the independent variable. According to Frost (2018), the writer claimed that the study of human behaviour could generate the output of an R-square value of less than 50%. Moving to the unstandardised beta B, this value represents the gradient of the line between the independent (IV) and dependent variable (DV) (Nuangjamnong, 2021). The standard error for the unstandardised beta, SE B, illustrates how much the data is being spread away from the regression line (Nuangjamnong, 2021). The standardised error ranges from 0 to 1 or -1 to 0 for the opposite direction. As the value approaches the positive or negative value of 1, this indicates a stronger relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

5.3.1 Results of multiple linear regression of H2 and H3. The VIF values of both variables, reward and recognition, and task interdependence, are lower than 5, indicating that the variables had no issues of multicollinearity between the independent variables. Similarly, the values of unadjusted and adjusted R-square appeared to be 0.369 and 0.366, respectively, at a 95% confidence level. As a result, the values inferred that the independent variables, reward and recognition, and task interdependence, have a significant relationship with the agile working by approximately 36.9%.

#### 5.3.1.1 Hypothesis 2

$H_{2a}$  There was no significant effect between task interdependence and agile working among employees within the organisation.

$H_{2a}$  There is a significant effect between task interdependence and agile working among employees within the organisation.

The significant level of  $H_2$ , task interdependence, was at 0.000, which was prominently less than 0.05. As a result, the null hypothesis,  $H_{2a}$ , was insistently rejected, which can be

concluded that task interdependence has a significant impact on agile working among construction site employees. Likewise, the standardised coefficient  $\beta$  of the variable dominates the highest value, 0.385, which implies that task interdependence is the strongest variable that influences agile working.

Moreover, the under-standardised coefficient B is  $-0.228$ , which implies that if the independent variable, task interdependence, rises by 1%, the dependent variable, agile working will be raised by  $-22.8\%$ . In addition, the negative value (a minus sign) shown in the result of the under-standardised coefficient value B infers that the result tends to move in the opposite direction.

#### 5.3.1.2 Hypothesis 3

$H_{3o}$ . There is no significant effect between agile working and employee retention among construction site employees within the organisation.

$H_{3a}$ . There is a significant effect between agile working and employee retention among construction site employees within the organisation.

Moving to another hypothesis,  $H_3$ , the significant level of the independent variable, reward and recognition, was 0.000. The results below 0.05 imply that the null hypothesis,  $H_{3o}$ , can be rejected. Therefore, reward and recognition have a significant impact on the agile working among construction site employees.

On the other hand, the standardised coefficient  $\beta$  of the variable was slightly lower than that of task interdependence, 0.329, which means that task interdependence is still considered a stronger variable that influences the agile working. In addition, the under-standardised coefficient B is 0.279. As a result, if the independent variable, reward and recognition, increases by 1%, the dependent variable, the agile working, will be raised by 27.9%.

5.3.2 Results of multiple linear regression of  $H1$  and  $H4$ . The result of the R-square was 0.264 at a 95% confidence level. Accordingly, the level of goodness of data fitting of the relationship between the following independent variables, entrepreneurial intention, agile working, and the dependent variable, employee retention, is approximately 26.4%. The VIF values (1.32) of both independent variables, which are entrepreneurial intention, and agile working, are below 5, which can sum up that there is multicollinearity between the variables.

#### 5.3.2.1 Hypothesis 1

$H_{1o}$ . There is no significant effect between entrepreneurial intention and employee retention among construction site employees within the organisation.

$H_{1a}$ . There is a significant effect between entrepreneurial intention and employee retention among construction site employees within the organisation.

The significant level of  $H_1$ , entrepreneurial intention was at 0.000, which was explicitly lower than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis,  $H_{1o}$ , had to be rejected, which can be summarised as entrepreneurial intention has a significant impact on employee retention among construction site employees pursuing careers in the construction industry. Similarly, the standardised coefficient  $\beta$  of the variable was 0.279, which implies that entrepreneurial intention is a weaker variable compared to agile working. Moreover, the under-standardised coefficient B is 0.328, which means that if the independent variable, entrepreneurial intention, rises by 1%, the dependent variable, employee retention, will climb up by 32.8%.

#### 5.3.2.2 Hypothesis 4

$H_{4o}$ . There is no significant effect between agile working and employee retention among construction site employees within the organisation.

$H_{4a}$ . There is a significant effect between agile working and employee retention among construction site employees within the organisation.

The significant level of  $H_4$  was 0.000, which was lower than 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis,  $H_{4a}$ , should be rejected. As a result, it can be concluded that agile working has a significant influence on employee retention. The independent variable obtained a standardised coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.316, which can be concluded that the independent variable has a stronger relationship with the dependent variable, employee retention, than entrepreneurial intention. Moving to the under-standardised coefficient B, the value of 0.357 implies that if the variable agile working increases by 1%, the dependent variable, employee retention, will effectively heighten by 35.7%.

## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

The study aims to investigate the factors affecting employee retention among those working in construction-related SMEs situated in the Krung Thep area.

### 6.1 Discussion and conclusion

According to the testing hypotheses, two variables, task interdependence and reward and recognition, affect agile working. Lastly, there are also two variables, namely, agile working and entrepreneurial intention, that significantly impact employee retention in employees working in construction-related SMEs.

*6.1.1 Task interdependence, reward and recognition, and agile working.* Referring to Table 4, two independent variables significantly impact agile working, where task interdependence was considered a dominant factor over reward and recognition. However, this cannot infer that reward and recognition do not have any impact since the hypothesis appeared that the significance level is below 0.05. [Ranasinghe and Sangaradeniya \(2021\)](#) stated that reward is a main factor that boosts employee motivation, and recognition creates accomplishments among colleagues in the workplace. As a result, the author claimed that this could result in better agile working within a team in the organisation. Interestingly, the author compared traditional rewards with agile reward management, where an agile reward is considered hygiene, whereas a traditional reward only focuses on motivation. According to the author, agile reward management primarily focuses on the recognition of employees, transparency and awareness of the rewards in the workplace. Furthermore, agile working should put more focus on the team-based reward rather than financial focus ([Bendt-Andersen, 2020](#)). To sum up, the relationship between reward and recognition and agile working is considered solid at a certain level.

Similarly, task interdependence and agile working are considered the strongest relationships compared to reward and recognition, with the statistical hypothesis obviously staying below 0.05. There has been a study on team collaboration among hybrid, traditional and agile teams during the pandemic of the coronavirus by [Krzywdzinski \(2022\)](#). The writer found that task interdependence is a critical tool to bond members in an agile team, where team members informally share information when experiencing a difficult

Dependent variable	Rank	Independent variable	$\beta$
Agile working	1st	Task interdependence (TI)	0.385
	2nd	Reward and recognition (RR)	0.329
Employee retention	1st	Agile working (AW)	0.316
	2nd	Entrepreneurial intention (EI)	0.279

**Table 4.** Hypothesis testing results of all independent variables affecting the dependent variables, agile working and employee retention summarised

situation. The writer stated that this could also reinforce the social relationship among team members. A key to agile working in most organisations is task interdependence, where cooperation among team members is vital (Ruyck *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, there has been a study that task interdependence is also a useful tool for forming good behaviour among members working in an agile team (Klunder *et al.*, 2018). Finally, according to the study by Audet *et al.* (2002), the author mentioned that task interdependence agile is a key to successful project management as this requires a planning process activity among team members.

*6.1.2 Entrepreneurial intention, agile working and employee retention.* The result in Table 4 demonstrates that the independent variable, agile working, dominated the highest standardised coefficient value compared with entrepreneurial intention. Likewise, the variable also earned the highest value of standardised coefficients, which implies a stronger relationship between the dependent variable, employee retention and entrepreneurial intention. A significant level below 0.05 indicates a positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables. Issa *et al.* (2019) mentioned that employee retention is primarily supported by agile working. The authors claimed that agile working provides flexibility and freedom in working procedures which raises satisfaction among employees. As a result, the authors further evaluate that agile working can maximise the ability of employees and become one of the elements of handling employee retention. Moreover, the agile practice in the workplace among employees directly affect their job satisfaction Tripp *et al.* (2016). As a result, job satisfaction has a positive relationship with enhancing employee retention, according to the study of Bharadwaj *et al.* (2021).

On the other hand, the statistical hypothesis of entrepreneurial intention obtained a significant level below 0.05, implying that the null hypothesis could be straightforwardly rejected. Even though the independent variable did not gain the highest standardised coefficient, there is still a positive relationship with the dependent variable regarding the significant level result. Zayed *et al.* (2022) believed that entrepreneurial intention is one of the factors that cause employee retention issues among small- to multinational scale corporations. There has been a study of the relationship between employee retention and entrepreneurial intention to develop a few measuring variables to investigate entrepreneurial intention in the healthcare sector by Marques and Lages (2018). The author conducted the reliability test via Cronbach's alpha on the following measuring variables, and all the values were above 0.75, indicating an acceptable level. Furthermore, Badoiu *et al.* (2020) concluded that their study obtained a positive test result that employee retention is one of the primary determinants contributing to positive corporate entrepreneurship. According to Douglas and Fitzsimmons (2005), the authors summarised that there is a positive relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention.

## 6.2 Recommendations

According to the summary and conclusion stated in the previous sections, the research's overall outcome shows a prominent relationship between the independent variables (reward and recognition, and task interdependence) and the dependent variable (agile working). Also, the independent variables (entrepreneurial intention and agile working) and the dependent variable (employee retention) have a significant correlation.

As a result, human resources departments in most construction-related SMEs situated in the Krung Thep area may consider maintaining the level of teamwork and agile working in the workplace to maintain employee satisfaction, which further results in good employee retention within the business. Moreover, the HR team is suggested to find an approach that maintains good communication among team members. Managers are suggested to carry on giving suitable tasks to the right employee with the right skills and maintaining excellent collaboration, e.g. brainstorming, when experiencing a difficult situation among employees.

Nevertheless, with the positive relationship between entrepreneurial intention and employee retention according to the statistical outcome, the HR department may develop a strategy that encourages corporate entrepreneurship among employees. Lastly, the manager shall provide suggestions that encourage creative ideas and agreeableness on employees' ideas for better brainstorming for a constructive solution when experiencing a difficult situation.

### 6.3 Further study

There are several limitations to the study due to time constraints, so the researcher only focused on employee retention among all Generation X, Y and Z employees working in construction-related SMEs. The respondents' statistical data for the income level were collected to further study the relationship between the income of the employees working in construction-related SMEs and entrepreneurial intention. Similarly, the educational level summarised in the descriptive analysis is for the researcher to assess the information on the diversity of employees in each organisation and carry out further studies on the relationship between educational level and entrepreneurial intention. In addition, the age group data were used for the researcher to assess the age diversity in construction-related SMEs. The information is used to further develop another study to investigate the trend of Generation Z employees' (18–28 years old) willingness to start up their own business (entrepreneurial intention) and retain themselves in the firm.

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