



**SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS AND
MANAGEMENT**

Master's Thesis

Teams' Perception of Driving Forces and Challenges on Psychological Safety in
Relation to Different Work-Setting Arrangements (remote, hybrid, on-site)

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Abstract

The study has explored the teams' perceptions of driving forces and challenges of psychological safety (PS) in three different work-setting arrangements (WSAs), which are remote, hybrid, and on-site. These findings were discovered by interviewing three teams, each of which worked in different WSAs, and by asking them questions about what factors influence their PS. After that, thematic analysis was used to reveal all the commonalities and differences between the different replies and relate each to its WSA. We found 31 driving forces of PS, and some of them were shared between all three WSAs, which were team demography, constructive feedback, leadership style(s) (e.g. supportive leader), as well as having a good and supportive environment. Among those 31 driving forces of PS, there were some differences between the three teams, and 4 of them were closely associated with WSAs: flexibility, organizational policies, social activities, and motivational sense of the presence of others. We also found 28 challenges of PS, and only one of them was common for all three WSAs, which was lack of knowledge (from teams and the leader). Among those 28 challenges, there were some differences between the three teams, and 4 of them were closely associated with WSAs: working in silos, familiarity, lack of personal connection, and lack of monitoring. Therefore, it is discovered that WSA can influence PS but it is not the only factor that matters.

Keywords:

Psychological safety, work-setting arrangement, remote working, hybrid working, on-site working, perception, employee, team

Abbreviations

PS : Psychological Safety

WSA : Work Setting Arrangement

HR : Human Resources

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The discussion about the concept of teams has expanded. In the past, the discourse of teams was mainly about defining what it is. In the last decade, the discourse of teams began to involve ways to build high-performing teams, and a relevant concept that emerged is psychological safety (PS). Katzenbach and Smith (1993) defined a team as a group of individuals with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose while holding themselves mutually accountable. However, it is common in business organizations that there are groups with similar skills that work under the same business function, where individual contributions and accountability might have a more important role than collective work. These groups are defined as “working groups” according to Katzenbach and Smith (1993), despite still commonly being called and treated as a team in business organizations. Nonetheless, teams in this study will include both definitions.

Some research also contributed to guidance in building high-performing teams. Miles and Watkins (2007) argued that complementary strengths between individuals in the team are important. Similarly, Belbin (1981) expressed that different roles might be needed to foster different team stage development. However, there is a fundamental strategy that can enable the higher performance of a team despite its different circumstances, and that is the climate where the members of the team feel safe to speak up and safe to learn from their mistakes. This condition is described as psychological safety (PS).

PS is a recently-introduced concept in the late 90s that is believed to be a key to reaping performance, and team-learning benefits, (Edmondson, 2003), and also provides more satisfying developmental experiences for the members of the team (Edmondson, 2018). PS refers to a climate where people are comfortable being (and expressing) themselves (Edmondson, 2011).

Some of the most important aspects of PS are enabling interpersonal risks, which include practical behaviors such as giving or asking for help and feedback, speaking up regarding issues, and expressing personal and private feelings and experiences (Cauwelier, 2019). Allowing the team members to be able to do these things and have PS is highly important and needed in teams

as it allows for more collaboration and not fearing to experiment or take risks, which will all lead to having a culture of learning and developing (Edmondson, 2011). Similarly, Kessel, Kratzer, & Schultz (2012) and Jha (2019) agree that having PS will have a positive impact on teams by improving performance and creativity and having a culture of learning. Thus, PS is significant and should be present in teams, especially working teams, where constant learning is a necessity.

1.2 Problem Statement

Several studies investigated some factors that can influence the perception of psychological safety (PS). For instance, Fonagy & Allison (2014) suggests that different experiences of parenting practices in the past can influence the individuals' willingness to trust others, thus becoming a factor in building the individual perception of PS. A study of first-year engineering students revealed that demography influences the perception of PS, where it is found that teams with no international students had significantly higher psychological safety than teams with 50-67% international students. (Beigpourian, Ohland, & Ferguson, 2019). The requirements of effort to perform a certain job as well as the level of control the employee has over the job are also found as other factors that influence the perception of psychological safety (Shain, Arnold, & Germann, 2012).

The recent COVID pandemic that started in 2020 has impacted how people work, and only a few PS studies have covered this new circumstance. Earlier in the pandemic, WHO issued guidance on recommending large-scale movement restrictions, commonly referred to as 'lockdowns' (World Health Organization, 2020, April 16). This means that people are prohibited from gathering in public spaces, including offices. This circumstance forced companies and workplaces to shift their arrangement into work-from-home. However, recently, in March 2023, "(...) several significant developments have occurred (...)" (World Health Organization, 2023, March 30), and it encouraged corporates and organizations to implement their own policy regarding where they require their employees to work.

No matter what work-setting arrangement a company decided to implement after the pandemic, the collective experiences of the past two years created a significant shift in how individuals define work in their lives (Microsoft, 2022). As most of them have been exposed to the possibility and benefits of remote work and flexible schedules during the pandemic that includes supporting their well-being, the modern workforce is now prioritizing remote or hybrid

arrangements (Hatfield, S., Mahoutchian, T., Paynter, N., & Scoble-Williams, N., 2023). Richardson and Antonello (2022) even found that two-thirds (64%) of the workforce globally would consider looking for a new job if required to return to the office full-time.

However, despite the workers' current trend of preference, some companies still decide to re-implement an on-site arrangement. There might be various reasons, for example, the nature of the role and industry, lack of technological skills and availability, and the importance of connecting with peers physically (Marketplace, 2023). Some others argued that it is an important symbolic step post-pandemic to restore the sense of belonging (CNBC, 2023). Following the phenomenon, currently, there are various work-setting arrangements adopted by companies, and three of the main work-setting arrangements (WSAs) that we chose to focus on in this study are remote, hybrid, and on-site.

According to Indeed Tutorial Team (2023), on-site work is working in an office or business location. Furthermore, working hybrid is a mixture of working physically together in an office whilst working remotely on some other days (Hooijberg & Watkins, 2021), and finally, remote working is when employees work from home or any other place other than the main office building and is work that is done online (Gartner, n.d). Those different work-setting arrangements can be another emerging factor that has an influence on a team's perception of psychological safety, which can become a relevant discussion from both academic and practical perspectives.

Most researchers have studied PS before the pandemic without the consideration of recent disruption of employees' perception of work-setting arrangements. Several studies already focus on PS in different work-setting arrangements; such as the hybrid work arrangement in Sweden (Bless & Velazco, 2022), PS in virtual teams (Lilja & Milani, 2020), challenges of PS in remote work (Morrison-Smith & Ruiz, 2020), and challenge of receiving feedback in remote work (Fischer, Mosier, Orasanu, Morrow, Miller, & Veinott, 2013). Despite that, there is still limited research regarding PS that combines and compares the perception of PS in employees in different work-setting arrangements, and we are interested in studying if the different work-setting arrangement has an influence on the team's perception of PS.

1.3 Aim

This research aims to describe and analyze the teams' perceptions of the driving forces and challenges of PS in different work-setting arrangements (i.e. remote, hybrid, and on-site). Further, the research will reveal the commonalities and differences between the driving forces and challenges of PS in the three WSAs. The ambition of the study is to develop more knowledge on PS by investigating if there is an association between PS and WSA, as it is currently underdeveloped.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions will be as follows:

1. What are the driving forces that can increase the perception of psychological safety in teams in different work-setting arrangements (i.e. remote, hybrid, and on-site)?
2. What are the challenges that can hinder the perception of psychological safety in teams in different working setting arrangements (i.e. remote, hybrid, and on-site)?
3. What are the commonalities and differences between the driving forces and challenges of PS in the three working setting arrangements (i.e. remote, hybrid, and on-site)?

1.5 Outline

This paper will be organized by using three lenses to enable gathering information from different angles, which are team, leadership, and organization. These lenses were chosen because previous studies have highlighted each of them separately in different ways, and by combining the lenses in this study, a more nuanced understanding can be achieved. These lenses will be the basis of the theoretical background and analysis of the study.

Structurally, this paper started with an introduction that provides the necessary contextual background for readers to understand the problem discussed in the study. Further, the theoretical background is explained, to serve as preliminary knowledge that would be essential to be further discussed with the empirical study results. After, the methodology of the study is described, including the data collection, analysis methodology, limitations, and ethical considerations, which correspond to the research purpose. The following chapter gathers relevant data from the empirical study. The next chapter reveals the analysis of the empirical data and links it back to the theoretical background. Lastly, the conclusion of the study is drawn.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The Benefits of Psychological Safety for Teams

The concept of psychological safety (PS) has developed over the years. It started from a claim of the importance of making people feel secure and capable of changing on organizational change theory (Schein & Bennis, 1965). Subsequently, it was discovered that PS facilitates individuals' ability to work collaboratively towards shared goals without feeling defensive, by reducing excessive self-protection in the workplace (Schein, 1993). Edmondson (1999) defined PS as a shared belief held by members of the team that it is safe to take interpersonal risks, while also proving the positive relationship between team PS, team learning, and team performance.

Edmonson and Bransby (2023) also described PS as a work environment where people believe honesty to contribute knowledge is expected and possible. Previous literature has shown the influence of PS on performance.

For instance, PS helps people to:

- Frame challenges as positive opportunities (Espedido & Searle, 2021)
- Drives error tolerance that improves learning behavior which positively affects performance (Wang, Guchait & Pasamehmetoglu, 2020)
- Help mitigate the negative impact of functional dominance in cross-functional teams (Malhotra, Ahire & Shang 2017)
- Foster knowledge-sharing processes and enables team creative performance (Kessel, Kratzer, Schultz, 2012)

PS is likely to affect learning and improvement behaviors (Edmondson, 1999), which Edmondson (2003) discussed under five consequences; promoting help-seeking behaviors, facilitating feedback-seeking behaviors, encouraging speaking up about errors and concerns, cultivating innovation, and fostering boundary-spanning (i.e reaching out to external interaction).

PS is a concept that has been discussed in multiple disciplines and industries. Over the last decade, 185 empirical papers on PS have been conducted in multiple industries, including healthcare, manufacturing, technology, and higher education, among many others (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). Edmondson and Bransby (2023) observed themes of established literature on PS

from all over the world from the past decade and found that there are currently four major clusters of PS research, which were enabling performance, fostering learning behaviors, improving the work experiences, and leadership.

On enabling performance, it was consistently proven that PS enabled performance across the empirical papers on individual, team, and organizational levels. On the individual level, it unlocks individual potential by enabling a mindset to frame challenges as opportunities to explore new ideas and actions (Espedido & Searle, 2021). From the team level, PS has proven to help overcome barriers to effective teamwork, such as hierarchy, functional diversity, and professional boundaries (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). On the organizational level, the available evidence indicates that PS plays a key role in enabling organizations to overcome internal and external pressures that could otherwise hinder their performance (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023).

On fostering learning behavior, PS is found to have a positive relationship to it by enabling knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). Wilhelm, Richter, & Semrau (2019) argued that PS can be a moderator for knowledge transfer by conducting a study on 42 teams with 218 employees in a German company, and discovered that employees were more likely to learn from failure when they worked in teams with a medium to high levels of psychological safety. Mura, Lettieri, Radaelli, & Spiller (2016) demonstrated that PS particularly affects knowledge sharing that involves flaws, such as sharing mistakes or seeking feedback. However, knowledge sharing that does not involve interpersonal risk, such as sharing best practices, was not affected by PS (Mura et al. 2016).

On improving working experiences, Edmondson and Bransby (2023) claimed, based on evidence found across established literature, that PS can help to encourage being open and authentic (Grant, Berg, & Cable, 2014, Vogus, Cull, Hengelbrok, Modell, & Epstein, 2016), while creating a supportive and inclusive team climate (Gonzalez, Tillman, & Holmes, 2020, Singh, Winkel, & Selvarajan, 2013).

Leadership is also identified as one of the major streams in PS research. Most of these studies focused on the mediating role of PS, especially in associations between various leadership styles and desirable behavior at the individual level (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023).

The consistent result of various empirical studies shows that PS is an essential climate that would be relevant to all kinds of teams across industries. The need for PS is even higher

today, where the world has high interconnectedness, which drives work to also be highly interdependent to be able to achieve results (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). This means that when PS is not present, people may be reluctant to share their expertise due to fear of being judged incompetent, and it could affect the performance of the organization negatively.

PS has been described to be a very positive phenomenon with so many benefits, and it was very difficult to find any criticisms. However, PS has been viewed negatively by some leaders. LeaderFactor (2023) explains that there are two types of leaders that dislike and fear PS. As PS may neutralize hierarchy, the first type of leaders that would dislike PS are leaders who feed on status and titles and love sensing that they are higher than others. Secondly, as PS may threaten to expose leaders' incompetencies, leaders that fear showing their incompetencies would also dislike PS and fear its presence.

PS is a subject that has been largely studied from different aspects. However, there are still limited studies dedicated to evaluating PS from different work-setting arrangements. Therefore, this study is interested in analyzing the driving forces and challenges to building PS in teams in different work-setting arrangements (i.e. remote, hybrid, and on-site). To explore this underdeveloped area, it was important to choose a specific profession or industry that has roles that could be done in the three WSAs. Additionally, it was vital to conduct the study on teams that have activities where PS would have a significant value.

2.2 Different Work-Setting Arrangements that Could Influence PS

As previously mentioned, the post-COVID era encouraged the emergence of different work-setting arrangements as now it is seen as the company's strategic choice instead of an established norm to follow. This study intends to investigate if there is a relationship between different WSAs (i.e. remote, hybrid, and on-site) and PS. The further explanation of each work-setting arrangement is presented separately as follows.

2.2.1 Remote Working

Remote working is when employees work virtually from a place other than the main office that they choose (Gartner, n.d). According to Kirkman & Mathiew (2004), "the use of ICT (information, and communication technology) for communication between the virtual team members is the main criteria that distinguish virtual teams from the ordinary ones". Despite that

this work setting may seem comfortable to some employees, it is important to make sure that employees do not burn out, and Sundin (2010) suggests that some of the practices that would keep employees engaged are recruiting competent members for working remotely, staying connected, having an agreed way of performance review, and trust. Constantinides & Quercia (2022) also suggest that it is important to make a meeting useful, have balanced conversations between team members, take turns to speak, and have inclusive working environments where everyone is comfortable. Those behaviors can be related to what is known as PS.

2.2.2 Hybrid Working

According to Halford (2005), a hybrid working setting is when “a combination of both locations, the organization’s office, and an employee’s own chosen remote workplace, is offered”. During the pandemic, many organizations moved to work hybrid due to the situation, however, Barrero, Bloom, & Davis (2022) claim that several studies have indicated that organizations prefer to continue working hybrid post-pandemic, which Hooijberg & Watkins (2021) names the “new normal”. Also, McKinsey (2021) found that nine out of ten managers envision the post-pandemic working environment as being hybrid.

2.2.3 On-site Working

According to Indeed Tutorial Team (2023), working on-site is working in an office or business location to fulfill the duties and tasks, and not anywhere else. Pre-covid, all research that discussed the on-site work setting was before any disruptions of workers happened, and it was the normal work-setting for them to work in. However, due to the pandemic, new work settings have been familiarized to the workers like remote and hybrid. The infusion of these new work setting arrangements has allowed the workers to get exposed to different work-settings and have options and preferences. Thus, the on-site work-setting in this study will be looked at from the perspective of it being an option and not the norm.

2.3 Lenses to Analyze Psychological Safety in Different WSA

The study focuses on three main lenses: team, leadership, and organization. The lenses were chosen as they are assumed to be the main major categories that can affect the sense of psychological safety perceived by teams. This assumption was based on the observation of

general patterns in previous studies that have examined the PS phenomenon, where most of them were focusing on either team, leadership, or organization. Combining those lenses that can be seen as patterns in PS research enabled the study to achieve a more nuanced understanding, enabling researchers to explore the complexity of the phenomenon. In this way, it becomes possible to view psychological safety from a broader perspective, considering a wide range of factors that can influence its driving forces and challenges. It is possible that the lenses might interact with each other, however, the study will look at the influence of each lens independently and the interconnections will be beyond the scope of the study.

It is necessary to mention that these lenses might not be the only ones that could have been used in the study, however, they are ones that can help in gaining a very good overview of the most important dynamics, and have the ability to cover more details but still can be generalizable in most circumstances.

2.3.1 The Influence of Teams on Psychological Safety in Different WSA

A team is defined as a number of people with complementary skills where they hold themselves mutually accountable (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993), however, there are also teams in business organizations that have similar skills to perform within the same functions, which will also be within the scope of the study. Also, Glassop (2002) claims that “[t]eams perform better than individuals”. This means that when more than one person works together on a project or task, they will have a better performance than when an individual does it. However, Lembke & Wilson (1998) argued that teams can only be effective when the team members share a social identity. There is much research that studies team dynamics and factors that might affect the productivity and PS within the team in general and the challenges that they face.

Identified Driving Forces from Teams

Accepting Mistakes

Edmondson (2018) expressed in her book *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth* that when people sense that making mistakes is accepted and no form of judgment or embarrassment will occur, PS increases in teams. This driving force is very logical and straightforward, and it would make

sense that the more comfortable the person is when making mistakes and not being judged for it, the more they might have the will of taking risks and learning. This factor will also be presented again in the leadership and organization lens as a driving force.

Demography

Beigpourian, Ohland, & Ferguson (2019) found that a factor that affects PS in a team is demography, where they claim that teams with no international members have higher PS. This driving force is interesting as it might be subjective. As there are people that would agree with the previous studies of working with similar people, there might still be people that would favor working in diverse teams.

Familiarity

A study revealed that there is a positive relationship between team tenure and PS, where the PS measured is higher in teams that have a longer tenure (Koopman, Zhou, and Lanaj 2014). It is supported by O'donovan & Mcauliffe (2020) that found having familiarity with team members can increase PS. This driving force might not only be one for teams but can be for almost all relationships. The more time spent with people and the more familiar one becomes with them, the more they would understand each other's preferences, thus, it can be a relevant driving force to increase PS.

Interpersonal relationships

O'donovan & Mcauliffe (2020) also claim that getting support from peers is a driving force that increases PS. Remtulla, Hagana, Houbby, Ruparell, Aojula, Menon, Thavarajasingam & Meyer (2021) also state that some other factors that act as driving forces for PS are having interpersonal relationships. Having the support that is needed and having strong interpersonal relationships with the people around a person might play a role in making them happier and more psychologically safe.

Team Structure

Remtulla et al. (2021) claim that having a new chairperson for every meeting and working in small groups are driving forces that could increase PS. Getting the chance to be the chairperson could infuse the feeling of equality between the team members. Also, smaller groups may also increase PS in some team members that do not feel comfortable working in larger groups.

Feedback

According to Lilja & Milani (2020), feedback is an essential driving force that enhances PS in virtual teams. This means that when team members are able to give each other constructive feedback that is aimed to improve one's performance and learn from their mistakes, this acts as a factor that improves PS from the lens of the team. Of course, this driving force is a basic one that will highly likely be appreciated and required. Most people will always want to receive constructive feedback on their work to improve and know how to develop.

Expectation setting

Additionally, Lilja & Milani (2020) also claim that an important driving force for PS is when the virtual team members have a clear understanding of the intended goal and the expectations they have from one another, whether it was about the quality of the work, how ambitious they are towards completing a specific task, etc. This driving force is very important as assuring to have the expectations set could prevent any unexpected or unwanted situations.

Social Activities

Further, Lilja & Milani (2020) claim that social activities improve PS in remote teams, and this includes doing things outside of the working hours like going to events, drinking beer, having dinner, etc. Hanging out and emerging in social activities allows the team members to connect on a personal level, increasing their PS. This is surely a very important driving force that is very much needed in teams as it can get the team members together to spend some time out of the work context, which is where they will really get to know each other and create memories and some fun time that will likely affect their work and increase their PS.

Identified Challenges from Teams

Communication

After the pandemic, many policies were made on work setting arrangements where some teams continued working on-site, but others moved to work in a hybrid working environment or fully remote. Each work-setting arrangement resulted in challenges for the teams. For example, Coe, Cordina, Enomoto, & Stueland (2021) discussed that there are groups of people that view working on-site as a challenge after experiencing working remotely, especially for those who have children to take care of and have mental health needs. On the other hand, Fischer et. al (2013) argued that there are unhappy employees that are working remotely and are facing challenges regarding remote communication which could also be applied to hybrid teams. Team members are requiring more effort to understand each other due to the elimination of the “visual cues”. Also, gestures and facial expressions play a big role in communication and are commonly used to show if one agrees or disagrees, understands what is being said or needs more clarification, etc., and working online limits access to that.

In remote teams, it is also found by Morrison-Smith & Ruiz (2020), that trust becomes more difficult to build, and having lower levels of technical competence in collaboration tools can be challenging for them.

Despite that many studies have revealed the challenges that teams face in different working setting arrangements, they were referring to the team’s communication challenges but not explicitly the impact on PS. However, as communication can be a main part of climate-building in teams, communication challenges can be highly relevant to building PS, which makes it an interesting point to study.

Working in Silos

Business Dictionary (n.d. cited in Gleeson, 2013) defined working in silos as when certain individuals or departments do not wish to share information with others in the same company. Past research has identified that working in silos would be potentially harmful to the collaboration culture in a team. Edwards (2020) proposed a way to avoid silos and encourage collaboration, which can be done by having more relaxed social interactions, focusing on the customer, and sharing information across the organization. For instance, when working online,

the awareness of the team members about each other and the context they work in is less, leading to lower PS (Morrison-Smith & Ruiz (2020).

Working in silos might be more emphasized when working online, but it might also happen in working hybrid and on-site. This challenge can be relevant for building PS, as people might tend to withdraw from expressing vulnerability and mistakes when the climate for sharing regular information has not yet been built well.

Knowledge Hiding

Jiang, Hu, Wang, and Jiang (2019) found that a possible barrier to psychological safety is the practice of knowledge hiding within the team. They discovered that those who hid their knowledge made other team members have a decreased level of psychological safety, which negatively impacted the team's ability to thrive.

Motivational Sense of the Presence of Others

Morrison-Smith & Ruiz (2020) observed that people would work harder when they are surrounded by others, and remote settings would limit people from seeing the ones they work with physically. It can lead to a decrease in motivation as the employees are unsure if the others are aware of the effort they are giving.

2.3.2 The Influence of Leadership on Psychological Safety in Different WSA

According to Harvard Business Review (n.d), leadership is completing a goal with a person's assistance, and "[t]he man who successfully marshals his human collaborators to achieve particular ends is a leader". This study will refer to leaders as the ones that are considered formal leaders. Montano, Reeske, Franke, & Hüffmeier (2016) claim that leaders can significantly affect a team positively or negatively, meaning that they can improve and nurture a team but could also hinder the team members' well-being. This means that leadership can be interconnected to PS within a team.

Identified Driving Forces for Leadership

Accepting Mistakes

Edmondson (2018) states that accepting mistakes is a factor that allows PS to increase and it is very needed to come from the leader. Team members that feel that they are allowed to make mistakes and are not being judged or underestimated by their leaders tend to have higher PS. As mentioned previously, accepting mistakes can be greatly needed by team members, and it could be highly appreciated to come from the leader or the manager, as their actions usually have strong effects on their subordinates.

Various Leadership Styles that Enhance PS

Many studies have been conducted to see what leadership styles have been proven to have a positive relationship with PS, and researchers have found different styles that they think have been identified to be the most significant. Aranzamendez, James, & Toms (2015), Nembhard & Edmondson (2006), Hirak, Peng, Carmeli, & Schaubroeck (2012), and Remtulla et al. (2021), in their research, argue that leadership inclusiveness has been found to have a link to PS, which is when leaders appreciate their subordinates. Aranzamendez et. al (2015) also claim that trustworthiness and ethical leadership encourage PS, and they agree with Yukl, Gordon, & Taber (2002) that change-oriented leadership, which is a style that supports innovation and new strategies, is a style that fosters PS.

On the other hand, Kázmér-Mayer (2020) and Shih & Koch (2022) claim that the best leadership style that influences PS is transformational leadership, which is a style that supports others to all support each other. Alternatively, Byung-Jik Kim (2022) found a link between coaching leadership and PS, which is when leaders treat their teams as coaches to help the team members improve. Qian, Liu & Chen (2022) have also found that leader humility had a positive influence on PS, which is listening to the team member's opinions and having a generous attitude with good self-awareness. Finally, Shih & Koch (2020) have mentioned that when a leader has more awareness of how they behave and how they guide their subordinates, they will work better on their skills and this will result in a safer working environment with higher psychological safety. All the leadership styles that have been found to enhance PS may have positive effects on teams. Having more leadership qualities and using them accordingly in specific situations

depending on the context may be seen as a great way to lead, and thus might positively affect PS. Also, all the previous studies are ones that mention driving forces that enhance PS when it comes to leadership, but very few studies talk about the differences when the work setting arrangement changes.

Familiarity

A study by Bergum (2023) states that when working remotely, a driving force for having PS is when leaders have interacted with their employees and worked with them before going fully remote. Previous interactions with the employees result in having prebuilt trust that might not be affected when working remotely.

Identified Challenges

Hierarchy

According to Remtulla et al. (2021), some of the factors that act as barriers to psychological safety for leaders is the hierarchy. If the leaders treat their subordinates based on their level or status, this could decrease their PS.

Lack of knowledge

Leaders that lack knowledge will decrease the employees' PS as they will feel stressed and they will not find the source of safety that they need from a knowledgeable leader (Remtulla et al., 2021). A knowledgeable leader can give a sense of safety to the employees because they can trust the leader's judgment of their work, or even trust them to help fix any mistake that might be made.

Personality

Personality of the leader would highly likely reduce the PS in the employees (Remtulla et al, 2021), if the leader has characteristics like being judgemental, not supportive, blaming others for mistakes, having anger issues, no patience, etc. Adding to that, Sumathipala (2020) specified that in a remote work setting arrangement, the most important thing is that the leader should not be authoritarian. However, a leader's authoritarian style might become a challenge for PS , regardless of the WSAs and not only applicable for the remote teams.

Recognizing that there are different approaches to leadership in previous studies that are proven to enhance PS, our study will focus to explore the relevancy of past research as well as capturing potentially new leadership qualities. As there are very few studies that discuss the leadership qualities that promote PS in different work setting arrangements, one of our perspectives in this study is to explore this gap.

2.3.3 The Influence of the Organization on Psychological Safety

According to the Sociology Dictionary (n.d), an organization is “[a] formal, goal-orientated group with members and a defined structure, governed by rules and procedures that guide operation.” The organization lens that would be explored in this study would include diverse perspectives. The study would not only cover vertical authority in accordance with the defined structure and its policies but also horizontal dynamics, where interaction between different teams within the goal-oriented group might also affect a team’s perception of psychological safety and is included when looking through the lens of organization.

Identified Driving Forces from Organization

Accepting Mistakes

As mentioned previously, Edmondson (2018) claims that accepting mistakes is a driving force that increases PS, and it applies to the lens of organization. Having a common culture in all the different departments of the organization and around all the stakeholders where making mistakes are accepted encourages PS. As mentioned previously, accepting mistakes not only from within the team and leader, but also from the stakeholders might be important and needed and could have a great influence on the employees.

Organizational Policies

Despite PS being defined as shared individual belief and generating impact on team performance, a number of studies also found that some organizational policies might help in fostering PS. Shain, Arnold, and GermAnn (2012) found that job demands and effort requirements, job control, reward, fairness, and support that are managed at the corporate level may influence PS. Similarly, Volevakha, Kolomiiets, and Kukhar (2021) conducted research that involved 322 participants and concluded that organizational policies can help improve PS, such

as by providing autonomy, establishing a clear job description, correcting management style for those who demonstrate a lack of concerns for personnel, and developing corporate culture components such as internal communications, positive incentives, and morality.

Identified Challenges

Status and Power Difference

Status and the power difference were identified as one of the challenges in building psychological safety. O'donovan & Mcauliffe (2020) found that those having a higher status in the team or the company they work for have reported having more PS than ones with a lower status. Another study in a virtual healthcare team discovered that the culture of learning is harder to be implemented if the communication must cross traditional lines of status, which then contribute to many medical errors (Sumathipala, 2020). Edmondson (2008) claims that different levels of knowledge, credentials, length of tenure, and rank within the organization can contribute to status and power differences, which may threaten PS. Edmondson (2008) also argues that power differences can and must be managed to enhance team learning and performance, as suppressing the input of team members in a lower status reduces opportunities for gathering more internal knowledge. Sometimes team members can also be reluctant to speak, so direct encouragement might also be needed from the leaders (Edmondson, 2008).

Despite being mentioned as a challenge in the team's lens for hierarchy, status and power differences across teams in an organization can also be an important challenge for individuals. Individuals collaborate with people from various teams within the organization, and the culture of PS can be harder to achieve if the interaction between each other tends to be more of a blaming culture.

Perception of Organization Politics

Past research showed that the organizational environment is crucial for employees to decide if it is safe for them to articulate their voices (Tangirala & Ramajunam, 2008). Perception of a highly political organization is argued as an important constraint that discourages employees to express concerns and ideas. There is a risk of spiraling into low PS, as employees who lack PS from a political work environment would be less likely to challenge the organization as they do not feel safe, and it will result in the maintenance of the status quo (Li, Liu, & Kwan, 2013).

Organizational Innovation and Change

Ming, Xioying, Huizhen, & Bin (2015) argued that a challenge of building psychological safety from an organizational perspective is the situation of innovation and change; because in these situations, employees need to adapt to new situations so they might perceive higher risk and uncertainty, which might reduce psychological safety.

Economic Uncertainty

Post-COVID, the global economic situation has been more unpredictable. Although economic uncertainty is not something that comes from an organization, it can be a determinant factor in an organization's policies and decisions. Godinic, Obrenovic, and Khudaykulov (2020) observed that economic uncertainty has a negative effect on psychological well-being as well as a factor of social identity disturbance. Some of the characteristics of psychological safety can be a sense of belonging to the organization's identity, and the detrimental effect of economic uncertainty might also be a challenge for psychological safety from an organizational lens.

2.4 Summary of Theoretical Background

This section summarizes the identified driving forces and challenges from the literature. Table 1 explains the identified driving forces, while Table 2 explains the identified challenges. Both tables would also expose the identified commonalities and differences from established literature in regard to different WSAs.

Identified Driving Forces

Lenses	Identified Driving Forces	Work-setting Arrangements			
		Unspecified	Remote	Hybrid	On-site
Team	Accepting Mistakes	✓	-	-	-
	Demography	✓	-	-	-
	Familiarity	✓	-	-	-

	Interpersonal relationship	✓	-	-	-
	Team structure	✓	-	-	-
	Constructive Feedback	-	✓	-	-
	Expectation-setting	-	✓	-	-
	Social activities	-	✓	-	-
Leadership	Accepting mistakes	✓	-	-	-
	Leadership style(s)	✓	✓	✓	-
	Familiarity	-	✓	-	-
Organization	Accepting mistakes	✓	-	-	-
	Organization policies	✓	-	-	-

Table 1. Identified Driving Forces Summary

Identified Challenges

Lenses	Identified Challenges	Work-setting Arrangements			
		Unspecified	Remote	Hybrid	On-site
Team	Communication	-	✓	✓	-

	Working in Silos	✓	✓	-	-
	Knowledge hiding	✓	-	-	-
	Motivational sense of the presence of others	-	✓	-	-
Leadership	Hierarchy	✓	-	-	-
	Lack of Knowledge	✓	-	-	-
	Personality	✓	✓	-	-
Organization	Status and Power Difference	✓	✓	-	-
	Perception of Organization Politics	✓	-	-	-
	Organizational Innovation and Change	✓	-	-	-
	Economic Uncertainty	✓	-	-	-

Table 2. Identified Challenges Summary

After collecting studies from previous research about the driving forces and challenges of PS for the three lenses, team, leadership, and organization, a clear understanding of the driving forces and challenges for the different WSAs was found and will be referred back to in the discussion. It will allow this study to reveal recurring patterns from previous study as well as new findings that emerge from the empirical study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology used in this research. It will be started with the main approach of the study, followed by the design of the study, and how the empirical data would be analyzed. Finally, it will also provide the limitation of the study as well as the ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Approach

This study used a qualitative approach to describe the employees' perceptions of driving forces and challenges of psychological safety (PS) in different work-setting arrangements (i.e. remote, hybrid, and on-site). The driving forces and challenges of PS are illusive phenomena that could be viewed in different ways, so we need the study to involve elaboration from the individuals engaged within the team. On the other hand, we did not limit our exploration to certain causal research questions. Therefore, a qualitative study is a relevant approach to be used in the paper.

This study also adopted an abductive approach, which allows the authors to collect data in exploring phenomena, explain patterns, and generate or modify existing theories (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). We did not limit our findings only to verifying or falsifying the existing theories, as we included new insights that might be generated during our data collection, hence using an abductive approach.

It was important for us to acknowledge that individuals have different experiences within the team, thus forming different perceptions of PS. The research questions in this study explored the team's perception, rather than measuring PS as one true reality. This means that the result of the study will represent driving forces and challenges that can influence PS.

However, we also assumed that the perception of PS itself might be influenced by various driving forces and challenges of building PS, and to analyze, we chose to look at PS through three lenses that would be explained further in the later section, which consist of team, leadership, and organization.

We were aware of the variety of previous studies on PS, and we would like to see if the driving forces and challenges patterns that happened in a team that work in-office pre-COVID

pandemic would also be applicable in teams with different work-setting arrangements after the COVID pandemic.

3.2 Collection of Previous Studies

In order for us to collect the identified theoretical knowledge, we have used keywords and terms to search for articles, academic journals, dissertations/thesis, and books in various academic search engines, such as Google Scholar, Elicit, LUBcat, LUP Student Papers, and DiVA portal. The papers we found allowed us to generate previous knowledge about similar phenomena that were used for the theoretical background chapter, and to identify novelty in our research.

After reading many studies and collecting as much information as possible, patterns about driving forces and challenges of PS emerged, and we decided to categorize them into three main themes: team, leadership, and organization. This resulted in having these themes as the lenses that will be used to conduct the study and they covered most of the important aspects of the driving forces and challenges of PS.

3.3 Empirical Study

We chose to conduct the study on different teams with the same function in different organizations. The teams we planned to engage with as the participants of this study were Human Resources teams in three different companies in Indonesia because we wanted to have controlled variables. We chose three teams because we studied three work-setting arrangements, virtual (i.e less than once a week in the office), on-site (i.e more than three days a week in the office), and hybrid work-setting arrangements (i.e 2-3 days a week in the office), at one time period. Also, we decided to study PS through the same three lenses in all the participating teams to find to what extent the working setting arrangement plays a role in influencing the teams' perceptions of PS.

However, we acknowledged different companies might have different cultures and we chose to study companies that are in the same country, operating in the same city, and playing in a similar industry, to ensure reliability. This study aimed to be able to represent a generalized framework, despite knowing that teams might have different contexts; for example, how long the manager has led the team, the team's size, the team's demographics, and the country's culture.

The research could be designed by some other alternatives, such as by studying different teams within the same organization in different work setting arrangements or studying one team in the same organization in different time periods, which could be suggestions for future research.

Data Collection

To analyze the driving forces and challenges of building PS in teams in different work-setting arrangements, we chose to collect the data through a combination of a pre-interview questionnaire and structured individual interviews. We chose to conduct a pre-interview questionnaire to get initial numerical data that can be explored further during the interview, and the pre-interview questionnaire was taken from the main researcher on PS, Edmondson (1999) as presented in Appendix A. There were several reasons for choosing a pre-interview questionnaire. First, it was helpful for us to conduct the research in different ways. From the pre-interview questionnaire, we gained a general overview of how the team feels about their PS climate. Also, asking for a multi-item scale and not open-ended questions helped us avoid falling into the trap of misinterpreting what was meant to be said or taking things subjectively or with the influence of bias. Not only that, but the pre-interview questionnaire was also helpful to the ones taking it because it was a way that introduced the concept of PS if they never heard of it, and the questions asked showed examples of how the climate should be. Holder (2017), a doctor in psychology, also claims that a common method that researchers use to measure topics like happiness or satisfaction is by conducting multi-item scale surveys, and we agree that it can be easier for the human brain to use numbers when asked to rate their feelings. Finally, we chose to do a pre-interview questionnaire because it was a way that pulled the ones taking it into the topic and engaged them to be willing to participate in the interview as well.

After conducting the pre-interview questionnaire, we chose to conduct interviews with subjects that filled in the pre-interview questionnaire. The interview questions were generated from the lenses that were drawn from previous research and were formed as open-ended questions to allow the study to explore as many relevant driving forces and challenges of PS as possible. Also, some of the interview questions were taken from Edmondson's 7 Statements of PS, where a specific statement that the participant has evaluated as significantly high or low in the pre-interview questionnaire would be addressed and a question of an elaboration would be

asked to reveal new insights. PS is a topic that requires human connection, and the best way to do that is to approach people and ask for their verbal responses to open-ended questions as it will allow them to express themselves more and allow us to gain a deeper understanding of how they feel for our analysis. It also allowed us to infuse questions that were directly related to the work setting arrangements, which was a variable we were interested in studying. The questions also represented the lenses we were interested in analyzing, which are team, leadership, and organization. Thus, the interview allowed us to explore the connections between PS, the lenses, and the work-setting arrangements. It also helped us find patterns and explore new insights from the different responses and analyze the common driving forces and challenges of PS.

In terms of time frame, this study was a cross-sectional study, where the data were gathered once (Bougie & Sekaran, 2016), over a period between April to May 2023. This was because we compared three different teams and their perception of driving forces and challenges to PS at the same time when the participants had similar contexts.

Participant Selection Criteria

The teams selected represented the main variables of the study, which are the different work-setting arrangements. The participants of the study are the individuals within each participating team working under the same manager, excluding the manager. This approach was taken because the study focused on examining the team’s perception rather than the leader’s perception of PS. The selection of the participating individuals for the interview was based on availability, with a minimum percentage of 50% from each participating team. We aimed to interview as many participants as possible, and we were able to talk to 8 of them in total, 2 participants were from the remote team, and 3 participants were from both the hybrid and on-site teams, as shown in Table 3.

Team	Number of Participant	Sample size	Name of Participant
Remote	2	50% of the team	A
			B

Hybrid	3	100% of the team	C
			D
			E
On-site	3	50% of the team	F
			G
			H

Table 3. List of Study Participants

3.4 Data Analysis

The research explored the topic from three main lenses, which were team, leadership, and organization. We then compared the difference and similarities of driving forces and challenges of PS in teams with different work-setting arrangements through those lenses. Although it is possible for the lenses to have crossovers, the study aimed to look at the lenses independently.

We used the team as one of our lenses because we assumed that interaction between individuals within the team can be an important factor in PS. There is also a lack of research studies on the role other team members play in creating PS in the past decade (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023), therefore exploring team members’ influence on PS could be a part of the novelty of this research.

In regards to leadership and organization, as mentioned previously in the Theoretical Background chapter, there is a pattern of previous studies that have proven the influence of those lenses. However, there is still a gap where no study takes into consideration different work-setting arrangements.

The study used thematic analysis, which is believed as an accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analyzing qualitative data. This was done by identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, we analyzed the sentences that were said during the interviews to construct ‘themes’ related to driving forces and challenges in building PS in teams.

3.5 Discussion of Methods

The people we have chosen to participate in the study were chosen very carefully. We have made sure that each of them had the required controlled variables. Also, we have chosen to conduct the study through the three lenses, team, leadership, and organization. It is important to acknowledge that choosing these lenses has influenced the results and the factors that we have identified from the empirical study. If other lenses were chosen like the country's culture, for example, this would have had an influence on the results and would have shown different insights. However, we believe that the lenses we chose covered most of the important dynamics, and thus were a way to help us structure the interview questions and get the most out of the participants.

The questions we used were open-ended questions framed from the lenses and an additional question to capture factors that might not be covered in the lenses was asked. These questions allowed us to gain detailed insights from the participant during the interview. The research questions might also be answered by using different methods than interviews, but, it would have limited the study from having the opportunity of gaining new insights, and just choosing to conduct surveys without interviews would have altered the results and limited the research.

3.6 Limitations

There are some limitations to the study that might have an effect on the result. Some examples of that might be that the answers during interviews might be altered by some of the participants as one of the interviewers had mutual connections with the participants' team members and some of the managers.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Tracy (2010) argued that in conducting a qualitative study, ethics is one of the most important criteria for excellent research. From a procedural perspective, researchers have to provide participants with information on the nature and potential consequences of the research (Tracy, 2010), and we always provided information prior to our data collection, both the pre-interview questionnaire and the interviews.

Further, confidentiality was agreed upon with the participants. We always asked for the participant's consent to get their interview recorded for our analysis purposes. However, after the research is submitted, the recordings will be deleted and will not be used for any other purposes. The data analyzed was also anonymized, and only some contexts, such as the size of the team, and the work-setting arrangements are used in this paper. Doing so allowed us to keep the confidentiality of the participants.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

After collecting all the data from the pre-interview questionnaire and the interviews, the responses of the interviewees from each work-setting arrangement (WSA) in relation to each lens were analyzed using thematic analysis, where the commonalities of the driving forces and challenges as well as additional findings (that were not closely related to the three lenses) were grouped into similar themes and the differences between them were shown in the tables. All items of driving forces and challenges under the lenses explained in this chapter were generated from individual interviews, without considering the frequency of their occurrences. This approach is taken because as long as an item was mentioned by a participant, it might also be relevant to other people as well.

Each section will have a table representing items that were found in the empirical study (ES), as well as the commonalities shared between different WSAs.

4.1 Driving Forces of Psychological Safety

The interviews we conducted intended to explore factors that acted as driving forces of PS in different WSA and through three different lenses: team, leadership, and organization.

4.1.1 Team

Table 4 represents a table for the driving forces of PS in relation to the lens of the team for each WSA.

Category	Driving Forces Items	Work-Setting Arrangement		
		Remote (ES)	Hybrid (ES)	On-site (ES)
	Accepting mistakes	-	-	✓
	Demography	✓	✓	✓

Findings from Empirical Study (ES)	Familiarity	-	✓	✓
	Interpersonal relationship	-	✓	✓
	Constructive Feedback	✓	✓	✓
	Social activities	-	✓	-
	Transfer knowledge	-	-	✓
	Empathy & being understanding	-	✓	✓
	Similar personalities	✓	✓	✓
	Open communication	✓	-	✓
	Not being judged	✓	-	✓
	Safe Space to share opinion	✓	-	✓

Table 4. PS Driving Forces for the Three WSAs through the Lens of Team

By looking at Table 4, it is shown that there are similarities and differences between the driving forces of PS in relation to the lens of team.

For the remote WSA, there weren't any driving forces that were mentioned for it, and that were not common with the other WSAs.

Regarding the hybrid WSA, some of the driving forces that were viewed to be specifically discovered was social activities. Participant E from the hybrid team admitted that *“Team dynamics is very influential to my perception of psychological safety. One practice that really contributes to the sense of safety is if I can hang out outside work with them, and we can have fun with each other.”* Social activities, or “spending time together” could allow the teammates to get to know each other more personally and build a stronger relationship with each other, which was said to be easier done in the days worked on-site, resulting in an increase in their PS. This was aligned with how Participant D from the hybrid team said, *“It’s nice to be able to do hybrid work, as I can spend more time together with the team during office days.”*

For the on-site team, some of the driving forces that were not common with the other WSAs, and were specifically found in teams working on-site are accepting mistakes and transferring knowledge. Accepting mistakes means that the person has the ability to make a mistake and not feel judged or underestimated, and the mistake that he/she did will not be held against them and they can take it as an opportunity to learn instead of being blamed for it. Participant F from the on-site team highlighted this as, *“How the team never judged and blamed me whenever I make a mistake, and just being supportive and understanding because nobody is perfect, really influences how I feel safe being around them.”* Also, transferring knowledge deals with the willingness to share the knowledge and competence one has with team members and allow each other to learn from each other’s experiences.

Moreover, there were commonalities between two or more WSAs with driving forces that could be implemented to each in relation to the lens of the team. For example, one of the common driving forces between working on-site and hybrid is having a supportive circle. This means that the team is viewed as a place where help and support will be provided for the team member when needed, and a sense of reliance and not being left alone exists. This also includes feeling protected within the team from anything external that could happen. Another thing is having empathy and understanding. These traits are ones that create a stronger bond between the teammates as one would feel like his feelings matter and are taken into consideration, and teammates are willing and caring to want to understand what one is experiencing. Participant G from the on-site team illustrated, *“My teammates are my safe space because they are the only ones who understand fully what I am going through at work. I feel comfortable telling them things about work that I can’t share with anybody else because they always show empathy and understanding.”* This was also connected to the fact that some interviewees said that they felt sharing stories with their teammates was easier and that they felt that they would be more understanding of the situation due to the similar context and work problems that they know in common.

Adding to that, there were commonalities between the driving forces of working on-site and remotely for the lens of the team. The first driving force is having open communication in the team where team members feel comfortable sharing ideas and thoughts and do not fear being judged, which can lead to having a safe space for them.

Moreover, there were commonalities of driving forces for the lens of teams between working hybrid and remote. Some of the similarities between them were the team members favoring to deal with team members that share a similar personality with them, which could include having common personal traits like not being moody or easily frustrated or being calm, etc. It can also be beneficial for individuals to share a common understanding of what is considered right or wrong, as well as agree on the importance of certain values such as punctuality, speed, excellence, meticulousness, and so on. The hybrid team also shared some factors with the on-site team in relation to the personality of others, such as feeling safer working with people with a growth mindset and high level of adaptability, for example. However, diversity of the demographic status within the team is favored by these two teams, which was also said as a driving force for PS. Another driving force for those two WSAs is having frequent communication with their team members. More time spent with the team members leads to a clearer understanding of how one is, thus resulting in familiarity with the person, making it more comfortable to be around them and feel more psychologically safe. This is highly related to another shared driving force between hybrid and on-site, which is the personal connection. Frequent communication can allow teammates to know each other more, and it can develop into a personal level, which can make it easier for them to be vulnerable.

Finally, there was one driving force that was common between the three WSAs, and that is constructive feedback. This is one thing that appears to be important in all WSAs. Giving constructive feedback was expressed by Participant B from the remote team by saying, *“It feels safe working with a team that gives great feedback, both for recognition as well as improvement suggestions”*. Constructive feedback can also cover giving suggestions on how to develop or supplying them with advice for the future, creating a feeling that the team members care about him/her and want them to become better at what they do, and this creates a learning space that allows the person to take the job as an opportunity to learn from the mistakes.

4.1.2 Leadership

Another lens that was studied in this research paper is leadership. Interviewees were asked about leadership and its influence on their PS, and the driving forces that they believe would increase their PS if it comes from the leader. Again, the questions were asked of

interviewees that worked in different WSAs, hence, revealing commonalities and differences between them. Table 5 below represents the result from the leadership lens.

Category	Driving Forces Items	Work-Setting Arrangement		
		Remote (ES)	Hybrid (ES)	On-site (ES)
Findings from empirical study	Accepting mistakes	-	✓	✓
	Leadership style(s) (e.g. supportive leader)	✓	✓	✓
	Familiarity	-	-	✓
	Good communication	-	✓	-
	Resourcefulness	-	-	✓
	Personal connection	-	-	✓
	Flexibility	-	-	✓
	Knowledgeable	-	✓	✓
	Constructive feedback	-	✓	✓
	A balance between task and relationship orientation	-	✓	✓
	Providing learning spaces	-	✓	✓
	Standing up for the team members	-	✓	✓
	Clear career path and options	✓	-	-
Mental and emotional stability	✓	-	-	

	Patience	✓	-	-
	Not being judgmental	✓	-	-
	Encourage the team to take risks	✓	-	-

Table 5. PS Driving Forces for the Three WSAs through the Lens of Leadership

By looking at Table 5, it is shown that there are some driving forces that were specifically related to the remote WSA when it comes to the lens of leadership. Factors that enabled PS in the remote team from the leader are things like leaders giving their subordinates clear paths and options that could be explored in the future, which would help the subordinates know how to move forward in their working life. Adding to that is mental and emotional stability. As Participant A illustrated, *“I really feel safe with my leader because I believe he is capable of handling his emotions. He does not panic when something happens, and it makes me feel calm as well. It feels that we always know what to do if a crisis happens.”* Another important trait that is a driving force for some subordinates in the remote WSA is the leader’s patience. Also, it is important for the leader not to be judgemental of the subordinates' decisions or competence, and finally, encourage them to take risks and allow them to feel that they are good enough to make such decisions.

Regarding the hybrid team, participants said that having good communication with the leader increases their PS. This includes but is not limited to, how the leader is expected to show respect, politeness, being a good listener, talking or assigning directions clearly, and being available for the team when needed.

Finally, for specific driving forces for each WSA individually, there are some driving forces that are specifically related to the on-site WSA when it comes to the lens of leadership. For example, resourcefulness was revealed to be a strong driving force that team members need from their leader to increase their PS. This means knowing that the leader that guides and directs them is someone that has the needed knowledge to make the correct decisions. Another driving force is the duration spent with the leader, which can be related to familiarity. Participant H recently joined the on-site team and expressed that *“If comparing with my previous leader who I have worked for the past five years, of course, I feel safer with them. I just joined the team for*

some months, so I need to gradually build trust first with this new leader.” Also, personal connection turned out to be an important factor in enhancing PS in a team from the leader. Interviewees expressed that having personal connections with the leader like talking to them on a personal level or meeting in hours out of work are things that increase their PS. Finally, an interesting driving force for the on-site team was the leader’s flexibility with the working hours and WSA. Some of the participants felt that having the option to be able to choose to work remotely for a couple of hours whenever they need actually played a role in improving their PS.

There were commonalities between some WSAs in relation to leadership that act as driving forces of PS. For instance, having a knowledgeable leader is one of the similarities between the on-site and hybrid teams, which gives both teams a sense of security because they know the leader won't let them take uncalculated risks that will significantly harm the organization. A knowledgeable leader also possesses a thorough understanding of the organizational dynamics and context and is appreciated by the team for their ability to guide the team in effectively collaborating with other stakeholders. Another important factor is when leaders give timely and constructive feedback, which is beneficial to allow the subordinates to know what they lack and how to improve. Also, an important trait in a leader’s style is to find a balance between both tasks but also relationship orientation. This means that a leader would care about getting the work done and is goal-oriented, but is at the same time caring about the team members and their needs and emotions. Providing a learning space was always said to be an important driving factor that should come from a leader in on-site and hybrid teams. An example is when Participant D elaborated, *“I am new in this role, and I really appreciate how my manager allows me to learn these new responsibilities. He let me take my time to ask questions and guidance. I feel safe being treated this way.”* This includes having the space to make mistakes and learn through the process and not being blamed for anything that goes wrong, which could be connected to the factor of accepting and encouraging mistakes. The last common factor between both WSAs is standing up for the team members when there is any interference from stakeholders or other external forces.

There were no commonalities between only on-site and remote, or only hybrid and remote, but there was a factor that was agreed upon by the three teams in the different WSAs to be a driving force that enhances PS when it comes to leadership, and that is being supportive. A

supportive leader can mean that the leader knows the individual needs of their team members, and give appropriate support to help the team members achieve their goal.

4.1.3 Organization

Finally, the participants were asked about driving forces that they believe would enhance their PS in the different WSAs in relation to the lens of the organization. Table 6 will represent the similarities and differences between the driving forces for each WSA.

Category	Driving Forces Items	Work-Setting Arrangement		
		Remote (ES)	Hybrid (ES)	On-site (ES)
Findings from empirical study	Organizational policies	-	✓	✓
	Job security	-	-	✓
	Organizational values	-	-	✓
	Constructive feedback	✓	-	-
	Transparency	✓	-	-
	Good and supportive environment	✓	✓	✓

Table 6. PS Driving Forces for the Three WSAs through the Lens of Organization

By looking at Table 6, it is shown that the driving force discovered in the remote team specifically in regard to the organization lens is getting constructive feedback from the other departments and being transparent and honest with one another.

Hybrid and on-site teams shared a common driving force which is organizational policies. Regarding the hybrid team, a main PS enhancer is the organization’s policy of providing a hybrid WSA. Participant D described, *“This is a perfect arrangement for me, and I feel safe by having both arrangements. On on-site days, I can connect and communicate on a personal level with the*

team, while I can get more focused work done during the remote days.” Meanwhile, participant G from on-site addressed, “I feel safer to be in the office, as people will understand how much work I need to do, and I am not just being lazy laying around like what they might have been expecting of me when we work remotely.”

For the on-site team, some of the driving forces that enhance PS is related to the organization is job security. This includes securing the job and knowing that it will not be lost or taken from the person, which is a huge PS enhancer. Also, another important thing is knowing about the company’s historical record when it comes to dealing with tough issues. Having the ability to see how the company has dealt with issues has made some of the on-site team members understand that the company is one that puts ethics in its decision-making, thus, increasing their PS. Also, working at a company that has good values like having a growth mindset of having a customer orientation of putting them first was revealed to be a driving force for PS in the on-site team.

4.2 Challenges of Psychological Safety

The interviews we conducted intended to explore the challenges of PS in different WSAs, also through the same three different lenses with the driving forces: team, leadership, and organization.

4.2.1 Team

This study explored not only the driving forces but also the challenges of building the perception of PS. To achieve that, participants were asked about the team and what are the dynamics that can be a barrier to PS. The questions were asked to participants that worked in different WSAs, hence, revealing commonalities and differences between them. Table 7 below represents the challenges through the lens of team.

Category	Challenges	Work-Setting Arrangement		
		Remote (ES)	Hybrid (ES)	On-site (ES)
	Different Personalities (Values or	✓	✓	-

Findings from empirical study	traits)			
	Lack of Knowledge	✓	✓	-
	Lack of Confidence	✓	-	-
	Diversity	✓	-	✓

Table 7. PS Challenges for the Three WSA through the Lens of Team

By looking at Table 7, through the lens of team, there were no common challenges for the three WSAs in the teams we studied. However, there were similarities in challenges between hybrid and remote teams, which tend to struggle in feeling PS when the team consists of people with different personalities; such as contrasting values or traits. For example, participant C from the hybrid team said, *“I find it hard to work with people with different personalities”*. They also added, *“I would also prefer working with people with a similar age as me”*. Participant B from the remote team also said, *“I prefer to work with people that share a similar educational background as me”*, meaning that they find it more challenging to work with people that have different educational backgrounds. They also said, *“If my teammates have toxic traits, it will affect me”*. Another challenge the study came across that was shared between hybrid and remote teams is the lack of knowledge in individuals about the job in the team, which can lead to feeling less safe when the leader is not around because the team can not ensure each other if what someone is doing is on the right track. For example, participant D said, *“When the leader is not there, and it is only us working in the team, I feel scared to be stuck at doing something if I feel that my team also doesn't know”*.

In the remote team, another challenge of building PS was also the lack of confidence in individuals, which led to asking for constant validation and feedback from other team members, which can risk the feeling of disturbance for the receiving end. Participant A expressed that by saying, *“I find it annoying when they ask me for feedback all the time”*. So, participant A found it difficult to make boundaries to avoid interruption in their own work.

There was also a challenge shared between remote and on-site teams. Both of the teams felt working with people from different demographic statuses in the team such as different education levels, gender, or age would make them feel less psychologically safe. For example,

participant G said, “*It is easier for me to relate to people who are similar*”. The other challenges of the on-site team were more focused on how in the office, there is a tendency to work in silos when they do not know what the other team members are doing because they have different stakeholders and have mobility.

4.2.2 Leadership

After looking through the lens of the team, interviewees were asked about leadership and what are the practices and qualities of the leaders that can be a challenge to PS. The questions were asked for participants that worked in different WSAs, hence, revealing commonalities and differences between them. Table 8 below will represent the challenges of PS through the lens of leadership.

Category	Challenges	Work-Setting Arrangement		
		Remote (ES)	Hybrid (ES)	On-site (ES)
Findings from empirical study	Piling Up Tasks	-	✓	-
	High Expectations for Output and Process	-	✓	-
	Exaggerating mistakes	-	✓	-
	Emotional Instability	✓	✓	-
	Restructure and Task Reallocation	-	✓	✓
	Destructive Feedback	-	✓	✓
	Familiarity	-	-	✓
	Lack of personal connection	-	-	✓
	Disallowing Mistakes	-	-	✓

	Lack of Monitoring	-	-	✓
	Imbalance in task and relationship orientation	-	-	✓
	Judgmental Leader	✓	-	-

Table 8. PS Challenges for the Three WSAs through the Lens of Leadership

In Table 8, it can be seen that the leadership of the team leader has a strong influence on the team’s perception of PS, due to different contributing aspects based on it. In a hybrid team, having an overly ambitious leader who wants to accomplish many tasks simultaneously can be a challenge. The leader may delegate numerous tasks to the team at once, which leads to a pile-up of tasks, and may make the team feel overwhelmed. For example, participant E said, *“If the leader is ambitious, the tasks might be piled up and it stresses me”*. Additionally, the team may feel less safe in making mistakes, as there may not be enough time to complete and correct the assigned tasks. The other challenge mentioned is when the leader exaggerates mistakes and problems when addressing the team’s errors. A leader that has overly high expectations of the team could also be a challenge for PS. The expectation can include the process, which covers things like speed and collaboration, as well as the output which is the quality and time of the delivery.

There is a challenge mentioned in the hybrid team that we also heard from the remote team, which was the emotional instability of the leader. The leader was expected to not easily panic and to be calm when facing tough issues, also when giving feedback. If the leader does not do that, it makes the team feel psychologically less safe. An example of that is when participant D said, *“I do not like leaders that get mad easily or panic”*.

The hybrid team also shared some challenges with the on-site team, which were organization restructure and task reallocation within the team. They feel that it felt less safe for them if the leaders reallocate the tasks that have been assigned to them for quite some time because it meant that the team needed to readjust and learn everything from the beginning again. This, according to participant C who agrees, influences their perception of Edmondson’s 7 Statements of PS which was when they said, *“In this team, I feel that my talents and skills are*

valued". They said that it would make them more psychologically safe if they maintain the scope of their job for a longer time period, which means they can be an expert and build stronger skills in the area assigned to them.

Another pitfall for building PS that comes from the leader, which was mentioned both in hybrid and in on-site teams is the destructive feedback. Leaders that give feedback in a way where they just point out the mistake, also not in a calm tone, might be perceived as destructive to the receiving end. The team tends to feel less safe when the leaders give feedback that ignites fear in them. For example, participant D said, *"I sometimes feel like mistakes are being held against me by my manager when they give me feedback, and I did not feel it was helpful, but, it is getting better"*.

As one of the study's participants that represented the on-site team has just recently moved to the team, this participant talked about how the duration spent with the leader might also influence their perception of PS. This participant has worked in the company for five years and had spent five years with another manager, and they admitted they felt completely safe with the previous manager. They have not felt exactly the same way with the new manager in the new team, as they have not intensely interacted with the new manager in the past. For example, participant H said, *"My previous manager asked and cared about me on a personal level"*.

The challenges of PS faced by the on-site team were a lack of personal connection from the leader to the team if the leader does not accept mistakes, and also if the leader seemed not to care about the team's work, which can result in a lack of monitoring. The participants also admitted that they might have different needs, and if the leader is not keen to learn about it, it would also make them feel less psychologically safe in the team. Lastly, the imbalance in task and relationship orientation can also make the team feel less PS in this team.

4.2.3 Organization

The interviews we conducted explored factors that acted as challenges of PS in different WSAs and through the lens of Organization. Table 9 below represents the challenges through the lens of organization.

Category	Challenges	Work-Setting Arrangement		
		Remote (ES)	Hybrid (ES)	On-site (ES)
Findings from empirical study	Personality of Stakeholders	-	✓	-
	Piled Up Tasks	✓	-	-
	High Expectation from Stakeholders	✓	-	-

Table 9. PS Challenges for the Three WSA through the Lens of Organization

Table 9 represents the challenges of PS mentioned through the lens of organization. As the study clarified in the previous chapter, the organization that is the scope of the study also includes organizational dynamics. The hybrid team mentioned that the personality of the stakeholders they work with strongly influenced their perception of PS. They tend to feel less of PS if the stakeholders they work with showed aggressive behaviors. An example of that is when Participant C said, *“Some of the stakeholders tend to complain about me to the manager before talking to me first...I find it really annoying”*. The organization's culture also played a role as a challenge for PS when the culture is inconsistent. Another challenge mentioned is business instability, which was also influenced by macroeconomic situations. The team feels less safe about making mistakes if that can mean insecurity of their roles or position.

The hybrid team shared one aspect that can be a challenge in building PS with the on-site team, which was the seniority attitude of the stakeholders. As we study the same role where they interacted with stakeholders a lot, sometimes interacting with more-senior stakeholders can be tough, especially with those that think and feel they know better than the team. It impacted a decreased PS in expressing ideas or concerns from the team’s perspective.

However, the on-site team also had specific challenges that were not mentioned by other teams. The first challenge was the lack of transparency in the hierarchy. This means that sometimes, information is only shared to a certain level, but the lower level employees also

already know something was going on, but no one told them yet. This situation can be a challenge to their sense of psychological safety.

The remote team has different challenges from the other two teams. The challenge for them is more into the dynamics and interaction with their stakeholders, but from an angle of overly high expectations from the stakeholders. While this was a challenge for the hybrid team of the overly ambitious leader, the remote team thought that it was more from the stakeholders. The high expectation, again, can lead to piled-up tasks that make them feel less safe.

4.3 Additional findings

The interviews we conducted intended to explore factors that acted as driving forces or challenges of PS in different WSAs and through three different lenses: team, leadership, and organization. However, the study discovered that the participants expressed some factors that were not related to the lenses which will be discussed below.

Category	Additional Influencing Items	Work-Setting Arrangement		
		Remote (ES)	Hybrid (ES)	On-site (ES)
Findings from empirical study	Nature of the job	-	✓	✓
	Individual personality	✓	✓	-
	Self-perception towards age	✓	-	-
	Individual preparedness before talking to others	✓	-	-

Table 10. PS Additional Influencing Factors for the Three WSAs

Table 10 represented the other findings that were found in this study outside of the lenses the study intended to use. These additional findings are influencing factors in the perception of PS but can give different effects on different people.

The nature of the job is a common factor between hybrid and on-site. However, for the hybrid team, they feel less safe making mistakes because their mistake can impact the whole company as they work in Human Resources (HR), and some of them work as Human Resource Business Partner (HRBP). However, the nature of the HR job makes the on-site participants feel safer because they have access to all sensitive information in the company. For instance, participant E said, *“I feel unsafe to take risks as I work in HRBP and my decisions could impact the employee’s life”*.

The hybrid team also shared one factor with the remote team, that their individual personality can also influence their perception of PS. For example, they feel safer in remote arrangements as introverts, because they would be able to take time to prepare prior to interacting with other people in the organization, instead of spontaneous coordination when they come across each other in the office.

For the remote team specifically, the study found that self-perception regarding challenges and opportunities in relation to their age can also be a factor in PS. For example, participant B perceives themselves to be young, and it is still their time to make mistakes and explore opportunities as well as challenges as they say, *“I am still very young, and this my first job, and of course, I am still lacking experience”*. The other factor that was found in the remote team was that participants expressed their preferences of having the opportunity to prepare themselves before talking to others, whether it was related to work or being mentally prepared to open a conversation.

After collecting all the information from the participants, the results were used to be able to answer the research questions and connect the responses to the previous literature. Also, it was a way that allowed the study to discover the commonalities and differences between them, as well as revealing new findings that have not been mentioned in the Theoretical Background chapter previously.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

After conducting the study on the teams from the different work setting arrangements (WSAs), we addressed interview questions that were generated by the three lenses chosen in this study. Thematic analysis was further used to collect all the themes that emerged in the responses and they were categorized into factors. The study then identified which of the factors were identified in the theoretical background chapter to have an influence on psychological safety (PS), and which are new findings that were discovered in the empirical study of this research paper to benefit or hinder the presence of PS.

5.1 Driving Forces

This section provides an analysis and discussion to compare and combine the findings in previous studies with the result of the empirical study in regard to the driving forces of PS. The overview of information will be presented in tables under each lens, where L means Literature, i.e., items that have been identified in the previous research, while ES means Empirical Study. The information presented in the table will be further analyzed and discussed in the subsequent sections of the paper and will help to provide insights into the driving forces of PS in three different WSAs (remote, hybrid, and on-site).

5.1.1 Team

Category	Driving Forces Items	Work-Setting Arrangement							
		Unspecified (L)	Remote		Hybrid		On-site		
			L	ES	L	ES	L	ES	
Identified driving forces from	Accepting mistakes	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Demography	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
	Familiarity	✓	-		-	✓	-	-	✓

previous study	Interpersonal relationship	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Team structure	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Constructive Feedback	-	✓	✓	-	✓	-	✓
	Expectation-setting	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	Social activities	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-
	Transfer knowledge	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Findings from empirical study	Empathy & being understanding	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Similar personalities	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
	Open communication	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓
	Not being judged	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓
	Safe space to share opinion	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓

Table 11. Comparison between Literature and Empirical Study Findings from the Team Lens

By studying the lens of the team and asking the participants to supply us with information regarding team dynamics, a discovery of driving forces that influenced PS in the team in the three different WSAs emerged, as shown in Table 11. Some of them were already mentioned in previous literature and some of them were not.

The first driving force that influenced PS in the working on-site team was accepting mistakes. Being able to make mistakes and not feel like one will be underestimated or embarrassed was identified to be an enhancer of PS as the individual feels comfortable and encouraged to try without the fear of failure. This factor was previously presented in a book written by Edmonson (2018), where she expressed that this factor has been also found to be a PS enhancer. However, she did not specify to which WSA this factor influenced PS positively,

which might mean that it is necessary for any WSA. Regarding this empirical study, it was only mentioned from the working on-site team and from the perspective of the team members only. It was interesting to see that the hybrid team and remote team did not mention it to be a driving force of PS between the team members, but it could be because when working on-site, team members would physically see each other, and make a mistakes and being judged for it while being physically present may be harder to encounter and more stressful and embarrassing to the individual that has made the mistake, influencing their level of PS and needing it as a driving force in such a WSA.

Secondly, demography has been seen to be a PS enhancer in the empirical study. The three teams from the three WSAs have all agreed that they prefer people in their team to share with them common demographics such as having similar races, ethnicities, educational backgrounds, etc, and that this factor enables them to have a higher perception of PS. Beigpourian, Ohland, & Ferguson (2019) have all agreed with this finding as they have previously also classed that teams with less diverse members or no international ones have had stronger and higher PS than teams that were more diverse. The research did not specify to what WSA this was a driving force, however, with the empirical study results, it was mentioned as a driving force for the three WSAs. This might mean that it is a factor that is relevant to any team regardless of the WSA.

The third driving force of PS in the empirical study is familiarity. This involves team members knowing each other or having frequent communication with each other, and it was viewed as a driving force in both the hybrid and on-site teams. Again, in previous research, Koopman, Zhou, & Lanaj (2014) have revealed in their study that team tenure increases PS, but they did not specify to what WSA this was the case. The empirical study has found it to be a driving force that enhances PS in the hybrid and on-site teams. This might have been the case as both of these WSA are ones that involve physical interaction to different degrees, and working with members that one is unfamiliar with physically might be more stressful to some team members, thus, referring to it as a driving force that they favor to have within their team.

Additionally, interpersonal relationships was a driving force of PS that was mentioned by the hybrid and on-site teams. Both of these teams mentioned that having a supportive circle, where team members support and understand their other team members in the team, is very much needed when it comes to having high PS. O'donovan & Mcauliffe (2020) in their study have also

claimed that getting support from peers (team members) is a driving force that increases PS. Looking again at the WSA, the researchers have not specified to which WSA this implies, however, in this empirical study, it was mentioned by teams that worked hybrid and on-site, which could also have been due to the physical interactions that the WSAs require. Having strong interpersonal relationships with your team members might be needed more to enhance PS when team members are asked to meet physically, but it might not be such an essential factor for the team working remotely due to the limited interaction between each other.

Also, team structure was a PS driving force that was mentioned by Remtulla et al. (2021), claiming that working in smaller groups of having new chairpersons for meetings would enhance performance without specifying to which WSA this implies. However, in the empirical study conducted in this research, this factor was not mentioned by any of the teams as a driving force for PS from the team lens.

Further, constructive feedback has been viewed to be an agreed-upon driving force of PS that all the three teams in the three WSAs have mentioned in relation to the lens of team. Giving and receiving feedback that is helpful and beneficial might always be appreciated from the team members and can be very much needed for one to improve. Lilja & Milani (2020), have also mentioned how essential this factor is in teams, however, the study specifically mentioned it to be important in remote teams without referring explicitly to the other WSAs. The empirical study has covered all the WSAs where all the teams agreed that it was a driving force of PS.

Expectation setting was also a factor that was mentioned by Lilja & Milani (2020) to be a driving force for remote teams where the team members would all have a common understanding of what they expect from each other, however, none of the teams in any of the WSAs have mentioned it to be a driving force for PS from their perspectives in relation to the team members.

Additionally, social activities were also a factor that the hybrid team has mentioned to be a driving force for PS. Hanging out and having time spent together with team members outside of working hours enhance PS within the team. This is agreed upon by Lilja & Milani (2020) that also mentioned it to be a PS enhancer but it was in regards to remote teams. As hybrid teams and remote teams are both WSAs that have the factor of working online with different degrees, physical interaction is limited, and as the job does not require them to spend time together to

work, they might have found social activities to be an alternative to compensate for that and build stronger bonds with their team members.

Further, the remote team has expressed that when the team members are willing to share what they know and allow the other members to learn from them, this increases PS and creates a sense of care and love. This could be related to Edmondson & Bransby (2023) who found that knowledge transfer fosters learning and leads to having positive relationships without referring to any WSA specifically or to it coming from within the team.

All the previous driving forces that have been discussed through the lens of team were related to identified items in previous research. However, a number of items were also found in the empirical study that was not mentioned in previous literature.

The first driving force that was not mentioned in the Theoretical Background chapter but was expressed in the empirical study is when the team members have empathy and understanding. Team members that worked in a hybrid and on-site WSA have both mentioned that caring about what the other members were saying and having a common understanding of what is being spoken about, especially if it was related to anything with work as no one better would know about the work secrets and problems, is a PS enhancer. As previously mentioned, these two WSAs are ones that include the factor of working on-site, and it might be that team members feel that it is easier to share their stories and problems with the team members during office hours when meeting physically, thus, making it a PS enhancer for these two teams in the hybrid and on-site WSAs.

Having similar personalities was a factor that was mentioned to be a PS driving force from the remote, hybrid, and the on-site team. This factor was not mentioned in the previous research, however, it came across as an important factor that influenced the participating individuals on their perception of PS. Different highlights were made, for example, a participant expressed they feel safer working with people that have similar personalities or a growth mindset, and the other ones highlighted similar coping mechanisms or emotional management in others within the team made them feel safe.

Finally, open communication, not being judged, and having a safe space to share one's opinions have been viewed to be important driving forces for PS in the remote and on-site teams. These three items can be heavily related to each other, and the presence of one thing can contribute to the presence of others.

Overall, all the factors mentioned previously were ones that have been expressed to be playing a role in PS when it comes to the team dynamics. Some of the factors agree with the literature, and some findings were new to the previous research provided. Also, some of the previous findings were related to some WSAs and some were more general or unspecified, whilst this empirical study was keen to see what factors are considered driving forces of PS and whether the WSAs had any interference, and the answer was that there were some differences in relation to the WSA, which might mean that WSA might have an effect on some of the driving forces of PS in teams.

5.1.2 Leadership

Category	Driving Forces Items	Work-Setting Arrangement						
		Unspecified (L)	Remote		Hybrid		On-site	
			L	ES	L	ES	L	ES
Identified driving forces from previous study	Accepting mistakes	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Leadership style(s) (e.g. supportive leader)(e.g. supportive leader)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
	Familiarity	-	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
Findings from empirical study	Good communication	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	Resourcefulness	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Personal connection	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Flexibility	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Knowledgeable	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓

	Constructive feedback	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	A balance between task and relationship orientation	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Providing learning spaces	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Standing up for the team members	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Clear career path and options	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Mental and emotional stability	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Patience	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Not being judgmental	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Encourage the team to take risks	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-

Table 12. Comparison between Literature and Empirical Study Findings from the Leadership Lens

By studying the lens of leadership and asking the participants to supply us with information regarding it, a discovery of driving forces that influenced PS in the team in the three different WSAs emerged, as shown in Table 12. Some of them were already mentioned in previous literature and some of them were not.

The first driving force that was viewed by the previous literature to be a PS enhancer from the leader was accepting mistakes. However, Edmondson (2018) claimed this without specifically mentioning that this needs to come from the team, leaders, or organization, so this

study includes it for all three lenses. In the empirical study for teams with different WSAs, leaders that accept mistakes are found to be essentially desirable to build PS from the hybrid and on-site teams. However, accepting mistakes might also be highly interconnected with the encouragement to take risks, which was present as an important driving force from leadership in the remote team.

Further, various leadership styles were tested to be positively associated with PS. This study found a consistent association across the three teams in relation to leadership styles and behaviors. However, the participants of the study described it in a slightly different term, which was ‘supportive leadership’. Supportive leadership is meant to address the expectation for leaders to understand the team's individual needs to achieve both personal and organizational goals, as well as help, guide, and provide the team with relevant tools for doing that. This resonates very similarly with how Byung-Jik Kim (2022) found a link between coaching leadership and PS, which is when leaders treat their teams as coaches to help the team members improve. It might also make the leader to be a role model for others to support each other in the team, which Kázmér-Mayer (2020) and Shih & Koch (2022) called as transformational leadership, which one of the characteristics is supporting the team members to all support each other.

Familiarity was another PS driving force that was found in a study by Bergum (2023) specifically when working remotely. However, the participating remote team in this study did not bring up the importance of leaders and team members knowing each other prior to working remotely, as the participating teams were built as remote teams from the beginning. It is interesting to see that familiarity was mentioned as a driving force from the leadership view of the on-site team, which also had experience working remotely during the pandemic.

The study also came across specific leadership behaviors that were not explicitly expected from the previous studies, but highlighted during the interview. However, the terms used during the interview might have positive associations with what previous studies have done. For instance, Qian, Liu & Chen (2022) found that leader humility had a positive influence on PS, which is listening to the team member’s opinions and having a generous attitude with good self-awareness. Humility can be a root of leadership behaviors that were mentioned by the study participant, which were patience, flexibility, and providing learning space. It was important for

the team to feel PS when the leader listened to their needs and guided them with patience, as well as understanding that the learning process might take a while.

Additionally, Aranzamendez et. al (2015) claims that ethical leadership encourages PS, and it might be manifested into a desirable behavior from the leader in the remote team, which is not being judgemental, as it can relate to the leader’s moral compass in interacting with their team. The other thing the study found as a driving force of PS from a leadership perspective is emotional and mental stability. This can be related to Shih & Koch (2020) that have mentioned that leaders with a higher awareness of how they behave and guide their subordinates will result in a higher PS.

The other newly revealed insights that were collected as PS driving forces were good communication, resourcefulness, personal connection, knowledgeability, constructive feedback, the balance between task and relationship orientation, standing up for the team members, and providing clear career path options.

5.1.3 Organization

Category	Driving Forces Items	Work-Setting Arrangement						
		Unspecified (L)	Remote		Hybrid		On-site	
			L	ES	L	ES	L	ES
Identified driving forces from previous study	Accepting mistakes	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Organizational policies	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
Findings from empirical study	Job security	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Organizational values	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Constructive feedback	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Transparency	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-

	Good and supportive environment	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
	Motivational Sense of the Presence of Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓

Table 13. Comparison between Literature and Empirical Study Findings from the Organization

Lens

After studying the lens of organization and asking the participants to supply us with information regarding driving forces that they seem to find positively enhancing their PS, a discovery of driving forces that influenced PS in the team in the three different WSAs emerged, as represented in Table 13. Some of them were already mentioned in previous literature and some of them were not.

The first driving force that was viewed by the previous literature to be a PS driving force from the organization was accepting mistakes. This would involve being able to make mistakes between teams from different departments and having a culture that infuses it to be encouraged. Although Edmondson (2018) claimed it to be a driving force without specifying what to what WSA it was related to, it was not mentioned that accepting mistakes that would come for the organization and its stakeholders was a driving force for PS.

Another driving force of PS that comes from the organization is the organization's policies. Shain, Arnold, and GermAnn (2012) have previously mentioned that things like job control and effort requirements that come from the organization enhance PS. Similarly, Volevakha, Kolomiets, and Kukhar (2021) have also claimed that having clear job descriptions and providing autonomy are things that improve PS. In the empirical study, organization policies have also been mentioned as PS driving forces, where the hybrid team expressed that the organizational policy of having the hybrid work setting arrangement by itself affected their PS positively. This was justified by the nature of the setting, whereby working hybrid, the team has the ability to work on-site and meet together to build strong connections but is also having the ability to work remotely and focus more on the work, which they have expressed to be more productive. Also, the on-site team has expressed that their knowledge about how the company

has dealt with issues previously and the policies that the organization has taken as historical records have also played a role and influenced their PS positively.

Adding to that, there were new driving forces the teams have mentioned to be PS enhancers from the organizational lens but were not mentioned in the Theoretical Background chapter. Job security and organizational values are two of the driving forces that the on-site team has expressed to enhance PS and would come from the organization. Job security refers to making sure that the person will not lose his job suddenly with spontaneous layoff decisions for example. Also, having good organizational values that included having a growth mindset for example was also claimed to be influencing PS positively.

Also, constructive feedback and transparency were two other driving forces from the organizational lens that were said to be PS improvers for the remote team. Having a culture of giving and receiving feedback and knowing that it is meant to be a way for the person to improve and not to be judged by different stakeholders in the organization was said to be a comforting feeling that influenced the remote team's PS. Also, having transparency and honesty between all the departments for the remote team was expressed to be a PS driving force. This could have been only expressed by the remote team due to the fact that they work only virtually, and their access to the information between the other stakeholders is limited, thus, appreciating clarity.

Finally, a driving force that all teams from the three different WSAs agreed on being a PS driving force from the organization is having a good and supportive environment. All of the teams have mentioned that working in an organization with stakeholders that are supportive and willing to guide and help and as well as care about the others working in them has been a PS influencer and driving force regardless of the WSA.

Overall, the organization has been seen to be an influencer of PS for the teams in all three different WSAs with different factors that each thought was having an impact on their perception of PS, some of which have been already mentioned in previous literature, and some of which have been identified in this empirical study and could be seen as new findings that could be taken into consideration.

Finally, Morrison-Smith & Ruiz (2020) mentioned that working remotely limits team members from seeing how hard each of them is working, acting as a PS barrier. Despite that, in the empirical study, it was interesting to see that none of the teams expressed it to be a challenge from within the team, but the on-site team said they were happy that working on-site enabled

their hard work to be seen by the stakeholders that work in other departments. Therefore, this became a driving force for the lens of the organization.

5.1.4 Summary of Driving Forces Analysis

To answer research questions 1 and 3 (focusing on the driving forces part of the questions), Table 14 will provide a summary of all the driving forces that were found in the empirical study to have an influence on PS disregarding the lenses, and combining them all together as the main findings in relation to the WSAs.

Driving Force	Remote	Hybrid	On-site
Team Demography	✓	✓	✓
Constructive feedback	✓	✓	✓
Good and supportive environment	✓	✓	✓
Leadership style (e.g. supportive leader)	✓	✓	✓
Similar personalities with teammates	✓	✓	-
Open communication	✓	-	✓
Not being judged	✓	-	✓
Having a safe space to share opinions	✓	-	✓
Familiarity	-	✓	✓
Interpersonal relationship	-	✓	✓
Knowledgeable leader	-	✓	✓

Balance between task and relationship orientation from the leader	-	✓	✓
Empathy and understanding	-	✓	✓
Accepting mistakes	-	✓	✓
Standing up for the team members	-	✓	✓
Organizational policies	-	✓	✓
Providing a learning space	-	✓	✓
Resourceful leader	-	-	✓
Personal connections	-	-	✓
Flexibility	-	-	✓
Transferring knowledge	-	-	✓
Job security	-	-	✓
Organizational values	-	-	✓
Giving clear career paths and options	✓	-	-
Mental and emotional stability	✓	-	-
Patience	✓	-	-
Transparency	✓	-	-

Encouraging the team to take risks	✓	-	-
Good Communication	-	✓	-
Social activities	-	✓	-
Motivational Sense of the Presence of Others	-	-	✓

Table 14. List of Driving Forces of PS Found in the Study

In summary, the driving forces for PS for the different WSA have been presented. The commonalities and differences between them have been also shown in comparison to the Theoretical Background chapter and in comparison to the different WSAs. However, this does not imply that if one of the teams from a specific WSA did not mention a factor to be a driving force, that it could not be considered one for them as well. It might only be that the team from the specific WSA was prioritizing what they think is more important from their perspective and from their setting. Hence, the driving forces that have been discovered to be related to a specific WSA might not be limited to it only, but may also be applicable to the other WSAs.

5.2 Challenges

This section provides an analysis and discussion to compare and combine the findings in previous studies with the result of the empirical study in regard to the challenges of PS. In each lens, the overview of the information will be presented in the form of a table. Again, In the tables, L means Literature and ES means Empirical Study. The information presented in the table will be further analyzed and discussed in the subsequent sections of the paper and will help to provide insights into the challenges of PS in three different WSAs (remote, hybrid, and on-site).

5.2.1 Team

Category	Challenges	Work-Setting Arrangement						
		Unspecified (L)	Remote		Hybrid		On-site	
			L	ES	L	ES	L	ES
Identified challenges from previous study	Communication	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	-
	Working in Silos	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
	Knowledge hiding	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Findings from empirical study	Different Personalities (Values or traits)	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-
	Lack of Knowledge	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-
	Lack of Confidence	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Diversity	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓

Table 15. Comparison between Literature and Empirical Study Findings from the Team Lens

Table 15 presents the commonalities and differences of the challenges between the different WSA for the lens of the team. Some of the challenges were identified challenges in the literature, but others were new factors that were not referred back to from previous literature in this empirical study.

One of the most common challenges that influence PS in teams is communication. This factor has become even more challenging today due to the pandemic and the new work setting arrangements that the team members were asked to work in like remote or hybrid. In previous literature, Coe, Cordina, Enomoto, & Stueland (2021) have discussed how remote working has been viewed to be favored over working on-site due to some mental health needs and having the responsibility of taking care of children for example. Contrastingly, Fischer et. al (2013) have

claimed that employees were unhappy with the remote WSA as it made communicating more difficult and limited some factors of facial expressions and other “visual cues”. Other studies have also agreed on how challenging working remotely is, as Morrison-Smith & Ruiz (2020) mentioned that the technical competence that is required to work remotely was seen to be a communication barrier that is hindering PS. Despite all these findings, none of these communicating factors were seen to be affecting the participants that were interviewed in this empirical study, and none of them have felt that working on-site, hybrid, or remotely was affecting their communication and PS. This might be influenced by how the study is conducted in 2023 when people might already be better adapted to digital communication tools since the pandemic outbreak in 2020.

Working in silos was viewed by Morrison-Smith & Ruiz (2020) to have a negative effect on PS, especially in remote teams, which is due to the limited interaction between the team members. Edwards (2020) also agreed with that and proposed that avoiding silos and sharing information among the team members in any work setting arrangement should be done. In the empirical study, it was discovered that the team working on-site was the only team that expressed how it is a factor that hinders their PS due to having to deal with different stakeholders and having a high mobility in the office. Despite being mentioned to be more prone to silos by Morrison-Smith & Ruiz (2020), the remote team did not raise this issue, and it might be because they have a regular alignment meeting every day with the whole organization, thus avoiding them to be working in silos.

Knowledge hiding was found to be a challenge for PS in teams by Jiang, Hu, Wang, and Jiang (2019), who discovered that team members that tend to hide information and lack transparency with the other team members have negatively impacted their PS without specifying the WSA. This finding was also discovered in the on-site team, when a participant expressed that when one of the team's members was informed about a new project or decision, the others tended to feel less psychologically safe as they knew that the member was informed about something before them, where the information might also affect them, thus they expressed disliking the hiding factor.

There were also some new findings that were discovered in the study and not in the theoretical background chapter. The participants in the remote and hybrid teams have expressed that working with team members that have different personalities like differing in how they value

the importance of things or having unfavored traits impact their PS. Of course, this is not the case for all the hybrid and remote teams, but it could be a challenge for some people. This finding could also be implied to teams working on-site, but it was interesting to notice that it was not brought up by them despite that they physically interact much more together than the hybrid and remote teams, meaning that the personality of the individual will be a more dominant aspect. However, it might be that working hybrid and remote limits the team members from achieving a full understanding about each other’s personalities due to their limited physical interaction.

Lacking knowledge is also a factor that was mentioned by both hybrid and remote teams to be a PS challenge. They have expressed that they would feel less psychologically safe if their team members are ones that know as much as them or less, as they would feel that without the presence of the leader, it would be difficult to ask for help from their team members if they have the same level of knowledge or even less. The remote team has also mentioned that team members that lack confidence are ones that also decrease their PS. By lack of confidence, the participants referred to team members that consistently asked for validation of their work or asked for feedback, which to the ones asked to give it was turning into a burden and was distracting them from completing their work.

Lastly, remote and on-site teams have both expressed how working with a diverse team can be a PS challenge for them. They have said that they prefer to work with people that have the same educational background, or with ones that are more similar to them as they find it easier to relate to them. This is linked to Beigpourian, Ohland, & Ferguson (2019) who all agreed that having similar demographics increases PS, and having a diverse team might be a challenge.

5.2.2 Leadership

Category	Challenges	Work-Setting Arrangement							
		Unspecified (L)	Remote		Hybrid		On-site		
			L	ES	L	ES	L	ES	
Identified challenges	Hierarchy	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Lack of Knowledge	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓

from previous study	Personality	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-
Findings from empirical study	Piling Up Tasks	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	High Expectations for Output and Process	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	Exaggerating mistakes	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	Emotional Instability	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-
	Restructure and Task Reallocation	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Destructive Feedback	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Familiarity	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Lack of personal connection	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Disallowing Mistakes	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Lack of Monitoring	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Imbalance in task and relationship orientation	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Judgmental Leader	-	-	✓	-	-	-		

Table 16. Comparison between Literature and Empirical Study Findings from the Leadership Lens

By looking at Table 16, the commonalities and differences of the challenges between the different WSAs for the leadership lens were presented. Some of them were identified challenges in literature, but others were seen to be new discoveries that were found in the empirical study.

Remtulla et al. (2021) have previously mentioned that hierarchy is considered to be a factor that acts as a challenge and hinders PS when referring to the lens of leadership without specifying to what WSA this was applied to. This included leaders treating their subordinates based on their status or level in the company and not on who they really are. It was interesting to see that this challenge has not been found in this empirical study, but it could still be a challenge that leaders may need to try and avoid in all the different WSAs.

Lack of knowledge was another challenge of PS that Remtulla et al. (2021) mentioned when it comes to leadership without specifying to which WSA. Leaders that lack knowledge and are unsure about how to handle an issue or are unaware of how to guide their team tend to make their subordinates feel less safe, and it was also discovered in the empirical study that the on-site team has mentioned it to be a challenge for them that may hinder their PS in relation to the leader.

The personality of the leader has been viewed by several researchers to play a role in reducing PS within teams. Remtulla et al. (2021) have claimed that without specifying the WSA, but Sumathipala (2020) clearly stated that for leaders of remote teams specifically, it is important that they need to make sure they are not authoritarian. In the empirical study, it was discovered that the on-site team has emphasized on how the personality of their leader plays a vital role in limiting their perception of PS and reducing it. They have mentioned that leaders with personalities that involve things like being overly ambitious or having other characteristics like being judgmental, easily angry or with bad temper, and no patience, are all things that they would not like to have in their leaders and will be a barrier to their PS.

On the other hand, there were many factors that have been discovered to be challenges for PS from the lens of the leader but were not found in previous research. Participants in the hybrid team have expressed that they disliked leaders that piled up tasks as they felt that it decreased their PS and stressed them. Also, they have expressed that leaders that have high expectations and were ones that were wanting very good quality and speed together in the process of the task and in delivering it were also ones that the hybrid team described as a burden to their PS. They have also said that leaders that exaggerated mistakes and looked at them as

bigger problems than what they really are and how much they would actually have an impact on the required task have made them feel discouraged to take risks and instead made them fear making mistakes, hindering their PS.

Other than that, both the remote and hybrid teams have said that leaders with emotional instability and ones that had difficulties with controlling their emotions and were easily triggered or panicked from discomfoting situations have been viewed to decrease PS.

Hybrid and on-site teams have further expressed that restructuring and task reallocation were factors that have been seen as a challenge to PS from the lens of the leader. Being reallocated in the team with a new role or task is something that has been seen to bother many of the participants as they justified that it would require them to start all over again every time this change occurs, and they will never master what they are doing. They would be asked to adapt again to the new situation and learn everything from the beginning. So, fast restructuring and reallocations have been seen to be challenging PS.

Destructive feedback was also a factor that was a challenge for PS for the hybrid and on-site teams. Giving feedback in a manner that intends to show that someone is wrong without showing support or giving any advice on how to improve was also something that was mentioned to be a challenge to PS from the leader. Despite it not being mentioned as a challenge for the remote team, constructive feedback was mentioned as a driving force for all the teams in the different WSAs, meaning that destructive feedback could be seen as a challenge for the three teams.

Further, there were many challenges that were expressed to hinder PS from the leader in the on-site team. First, many of them mentioned that not having familiarity with their leader challenges their PS. So, if the team members have not spent a while working with the leader, this would impact their PS. This is also connected to the factor that said that not having personal connections with the leader is also a challenge. Personal connections are a way that leaders could use to build this familiarity with their subordinates and create a bond between them that will have a positive influence on the team's PS. Also, the on-site team expressed that leaders that disallowed mistakes or did not really have a good balance between caring about the goal that needs to be met while making sure that team is doing fine decrease their PS.

Finally, the remote team has put emphasis on leaders that are judgmental, and they have expressed that it is something that decreases their PS and acts as a challenge from the lens of the leader. They disliked leaders that formed harsh opinions without good reasoning.

5.2.3 Organization

Category	Challenges	Work-Setting Arrangement						
		Unspecified (L)	Remote		Hybrid		On-site	
			L	ES	L	ES	L	ES
Identified challenges from previous study	Status and Power Difference	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Perception of Organization Politics	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓
	Organizational Innovation and Change	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	Economic Uncertainty	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Findings from empirical study	Personality of Stakeholders	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	Piled Up Tasks	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	High Expectation from Stakeholders	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-

Table 17. Comparison between Literature and Empirical Study Findings from the Organization Lens

The last lens that was examined in the empirical study was organization, and the result is shown in Table 17. This lens does not only cover the vertical authority or the organizational policies but also the interaction between the different teams in the organization itself. Some

findings from the empirical study were connected to the Theoretical Background chapter, but others were new findings that were not previously identified.

The first challenge that may influence PS from the organizational angle is status and power differences. Edmondson (2008) with some other researchers like O'donovan & Mcauliffe (2020) have previously mentioned that treating the team members based on their status in the organization hinders PS. This involves teams that have different levels of knowledge, higher roles, and longer years of working in the organization, all of which could result in a reduction in PS. Sumathipala (2020) also specified that in virtual teams, learning becomes more difficult when power differences emerge and would affect the team's performance, PS, and ability to gather knowledge. In the empirical study, the hybrid and on-site teams have both agreed on how the seniority attitude from the stakeholders was a factor that was hindering their perception of PS, and that power difference is one of the challenges that they believe would have a negative impact on their PS.

As the organization's culture is one that has a huge impact on the extent to which employees speak their mind, organizations that are highly political are viewed as ones that had employees with lower PS (Li, Liu, & Kwan, 2013). This was referred to in research without specifying to what WSA this is related to. In the empirical study, the on-site team has expressed that having a culture that did not include transparency between the hierarchy, meaning that employees in higher positions knew more about the decisions or events taking place, had a stronger word, or were seen to be more important, has resulted in an organization where employees felt discouraged from expressing their concerns or thoughts. They have said that this made them prefer to remain silent and follow what was being told, reducing their PS.

Another factor that is seen to be a challenge for PS from the lens of the organization is organizational innovation and change (Ming, Xioying, Huizhen, & Bin, 2015). This involves changes in assigned roles or tasks that may lead to a feeling of uncertainty and instability from the employees and would lead to lower levels of PS. The need of having to adapt to new situations was mentioned by the hybrid team, saying that having a culture that is inconsistent and not yet settled is a PS challenge.

As mentioned previously by Godinic, Obrenovic, and Khudaykulov (2020), economic uncertainty was observed to have a negative effect on the well-being of the employees in an organization despite it not being directly connected to the organization of the company. However,

it is still related to the lens of the organization if it could affect the organization's policies. The hybrid team that participated in the study mentioned that working in a business environment that is unstable with unpredictable changes disturbs their social identity and sense of belonging, and thus reduces their PS.

There were other challenges that were mentioned to be under the lens of the organization but were not mentioned in the Theoretical Background chapter provided. For example, the hybrid team has expressed that the personality of stakeholders was a factor that affected their PS. Participants have said that it is challenging to work with stakeholders and teams that have personality traits that they do not prefer, like having mood swings, being very emotional, taking things personally, and deciding to raise an issue about a team member in a specific team to the leader directly instead of talking to them personally about the problem before that.

Finally, having piled up tasks and having stakeholders with high expectations was described to be a team burnout from the remote team. They have expressed how stakeholders that are expecting too much of them and being very ambitious and demanding become tiring and stressful with time, reducing their sense of PS.

5.2.4 Summary of the Challenges

To answer research questions 1 and 3 (focusing on the challenges part of the questions), Table 18 will provide a summary of all the challenges that were found in the empirical study to have an influence on PS disregarding the lenses, and combining them all together as the main findings in relation to the WSAs.

Challenges	Remote	Hybrid	on-site
Lack of Knowledge (from teams and the leader)	✓	✓	✓
Different Personalities with Teammates (Values or traits)	✓	✓	-
Working in Silos	-	-	✓

Knowledge hiding	-	-	✓
Lack of Confidence of the Teammates	✓	-	-
Diversity	✓	-	✓
Hierarchy	-	-	-
Personality	-	✓	-
Piling Up Tasks	✓	✓	-
High Expectations for Output and Process	-	✓	-
Exaggerating mistakes	-	✓	-
Leader's Emotional Instability	✓	✓	-
Restructure and Task Reallocation	-	✓	✓
Destructive Feedback	-	✓	✓
Familiarity	-	-	✓
Lack of personal connection from leader	-	-	✓
Disallowing Mistakes	-	-	✓
Lack of Monitoring from leader	-	-	✓
Imbalance in task and relationship orientation from leader	-	-	✓
Judgmental Leader	✓	-	-

Status and Power Difference	-	✓	✓
Perception of Organization Politics	-	-	✓
Organizational Innovation and Change	-	✓	-
Economic Uncertainty	-	✓	-
Personality of Stakeholders	-	✓	-
High Expectation from Stakeholders	✓	-	-

Table 18. List of Challenges of PS Found in the Study,

In summary, the challenges for PS for the different WSA have been shown. The commonalities and differences between them have been also discovered in comparison to the theoretical background chapter and in comparison to the different WSAs. Again, the challenges mentioned to be PS influencers from the participants for each WSA do not mean that they are not relevant to the other WSAs or that they are not applicable to them. Prioritizations may have taken place in the responses and may have resulted in the differences encountered.

5.3 Additional Findings

Category	Additional Findings	Work-Setting Arrangement						
		Unspecified (L)	Remote		Hybrid		On-site	
			L	ES	L	ES	L	ES
Findings Empirical Study	Nature of the job	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	Individual personality	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-
	Self-perception towards	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-

	age							
	Individual preparedness before talking to others	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-

Table 19. List of Additional Factors of PS Found in the Study

The items listed in Table 19 represent the additional findings that could be either driving forces or challenges depending on individuals. Those items were not found in the previous literature. Reflecting on the items, it can be seen that there were some factors that were not captured in the lenses but turned out to influence the perception of PS in different WSAs. These personal preferences/needs can be an interesting area to be further explored.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Summary of Study

In conclusion, the study has explored the driving forces and challenges of PS in three different WSAs (Remote, hybrid, and on-site). The study has discovered similar driving forces and challenges that have been previously mentioned in the theoretical background chapter. It has also revealed new items of driving forces or challenges in different WSAs that previous studies did not explicitly mention. These findings were discovered by interviewing three teams, each of which worked in a different WSA, and by asking them questions about what they believe are factors that implement their PS. After that, thematic analysis was the methodology used to collect all the answers and pile them into codes and categories, which was a method that helped reveal all the commonalities and differences between the different replies and relate each to its WSA.

Discussion of Results

The study revealed the driving forces and challenges for the team's perception of PS in different WSAs. We found 31 driving forces of PS, and some of them were shared between all three WSAs, which were team demography, constructive feedback, leadership style(s) (e.g. supportive leader), as well as having a good and supportive environment. Among those 31 driving forces of PS, there were some differences between the three teams, and 4 of them were closely associated with WSAs: flexibility, organizational policies, social activities, and motivational sense of the presence of others. We also found 28 challenges of PS, and only one of them was common for all three WSAs, which was lack of knowledge (from teams and the leader). Among those 28 challenges, there were some differences between the three teams, and 4 of them were closely associated with WSAs: working in silos, familiarity, lack of personal connection, and lack of monitoring. Therefore, it is discovered that WSA can influence PS but it is not the only factor that matters.

For the rest of the items we have found, although they have been mentioned in specific WSAs, this does not imply that they are restricted to them only. Participants might have prioritized what they believe and perceive to be the significant driving forces and challenges.

Therefore, it might be helpful to take those items in the findings of the study as an initial reference in defining driving forces and challenges to build PS, regardless of the WSA with a proper contextual adjustment.

Contribution

The first important contribution of this study was that we have found new knowledge, and that is that WSA can influence PS but it is not the only factor that matters. We have also found that team, leadership, organization, and personal preference/needs can play significant roles in affecting the perception of PS. Our last realization is that across WSAs, we noticed a pattern where PS might not only be about social interaction but can also be about confidence in one's competence in their work. It has been largely proven in previous studies that PS enabled performance, but it was revealed in this study that the confidence to deliver good performance can also influence the perception of PS. For instance, it's hard to feel safe in making mistakes if they don't feel they can finish their piled-up tasks on time.

Suggestion for Future Research

It is also important to mention that responses from the teams may have been different if the study was focused on studying different teams or different lenses, like culture for example. This may be a future interesting study that may be conducted. Also, the interconnectedness between the different lenses was not covered under the scope of this study, but may also be an interesting study to be conducted in the future to reveal more insights and findings that may help managers of the future to take into consideration and use act as a guide for them. Finally, as the pattern of relationship between competence and psychological safety has emerged in this study, that can be an interesting area to be further explored.

Concluding Remarks

First, it is important to acknowledge that this study does not cover all the driving forces and challenges that impact PS, but it has pointed out some of the many more items that affect the perception of PS in teams. The second important remark is that, although WSAs might have an effect on the perceptions of the driving forces and challenges of PS to some extent, it is a factor that might sometimes be outside of the control of individual leaders and teams. Therefore, it

might be helpful for individuals to focus on the factors that have a higher significance and could be controlled and worked on to develop and maintain a high level of PS.

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APPENDIX

Pre-interview Questionnaire & Questions for Interview

For researchers: Preliminary identification

- Function
- Organization size
- Team size
- How long the teams have been working together
- How long the leader has led the team
- Individual demographic mapping (age, religion, nationality, gender)

Multi-items scale questions for pre-interview questionnaire (1-5)

Psychological safety statements:

- a. If you make a mistake on this team, it is not really held against you.
- b. Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.
- c. People on this team never reject others for being different.
- d. It is safe to take a risk on this team.
- e. It is easy to ask other members of this team for help.
- f. No one on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts.
- g. Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized

Interview Questions:

1. Joining date of the team:
2. How long have you been in HR?
3. Please describe the current working coordination in this team. Do you work closely together with other members, or do you have a specific responsibility that would only require limited collaboration with others? If it is put into percentage on a regular day, what is the proportion of working individually and working in a team?
4. We will describe the concept of psychological safety briefly, then ask: from 1-5, how much do you feel the presence of psychological safety in your team?

- a. Please explain the story behind the number you mentioned.
 - b. From 1-5, how much do you think your team affects your perception of psychological safety, and why?
 - i. What could have been done better in order to have a higher psychological safety in your perception?
 - ii. (If high), what are the practices that contribute to your perception?
 - c. From 1-5, how much do you think your leader affects your perception of psychological safety, and why?
 - i. What could have been done better in order to have a higher psychological safety in your perception?
 - ii. (If high), what are the practices that contribute to your perception?
 - d. From 1-5, how much do you think your organization/company affects your perception of psychological safety, and why?
 - i. What could have been done better in order to have a higher psychological safety in your perception?
 - ii. (If high), what are the practices that contribute to your perception?
 - e. What are the uncontrollable factors that might challenge the presence of psychological safety?
 - f. Do you think demography in the team influences your perception of psychological safety? Do you think having similar/more different teammates in terms of age, gender, etc will influence your perception of psychological safety in any way?
5. We will look deeper into all specific questions from the previous survey.
- a. We found that the team's average regarding question A is X, while your answer to this question was higher/lower/same. Can you please elaborate on why you think it's a Y for you?
 - b. Repeating for questions B, C, D, etc.
6. Now we will shift the focus towards your current work setting arrangement (remote/hybrid/on-site).
- a. From 1-5, how much do you think your work setting arrangement is affecting your perception of psychological safety?

- b. Why?
- c. What are the advantages and challenges of your current work-setting arrangement? How do you think those advantages could be embraced and how could the challenges be overcome?