

# Impact of Work from Home on Job Performance of Lecturers in Suburban Areas of Peninsular Malaysia

Nik Mohd Faris Nik Min, Ayu Kamareenna Abdullah Thani,  
Muhammad Ammar Haidar Ishak, Siti Rosnita Sakarji  
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kelantan,  
Malaysia

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## Abstract

In many different companies, the option of working from home has always been available, enabling employees to go on with their regular tasks from home. Employees working from home have significantly increased in light of the COVID-19 scenario, keeping the pandemic's safety standards and health criteria. To avoid any degradation in their individual job performance, many working cadres have taken to working from home seriously. Managers now have immediate access to information on the advantages and challenges of working from home. Numerous studies have been done on telecommuting and work performance separately; nevertheless, there is very little evidence to support a meaningful link between the two. The purpose of this study is to ascertain whether working from home affects public higher institution employees' ability to do their jobs. To ascertain their justification for working from home, 66 academicians from Peninsular Malaysia's suburbs were surveyed. The instrument used is a survey. The findings indicate that the relationship between job performance as the dependent variable and working from home as the independent variable cannot be explained by work motivation.

**Keyword:** Work from Home, Employees' Motivation, Job Performance

## Introduction

Work from home depicts work being done distantly, rather than at an office. The abbreviation "WFH" is utilized as a moniker for the idea. Numerous associations progressed their workplace representatives to work from the home model during the Coronavirus worldwide pandemic. Generally, work is done in an office. Representatives finish business capacities in an actual workspace and business-related undertakings at the workplace itself. With the progression of progressive change, this is changing. Organizations are discovering that a significant portion of their representatives are now not constrained by an actual working environment to function effectively as programming capabilities get more advanced and business measures depend more on them. Working from home has several advantages for businesses and people, including decreased absenteeism, greater assurance, cheaper overhead, the allure of a larger talent pool, more schedule flexibility, and less distractions.

Therefore, telecommuting or working from home might be equally helpful. The widespread use of work-from-home will enable researchers to solely get information from firms ready for it and, crucially, from those not yet ready and trying to transition (Susilo, 2020).

### **Job Performance**

Companies seldom let workers to begin working from home on a regular basis out of concern for employees' potential lack of commitment (Becker et al., 1996). Many companies (public and private) were obliged to operate remotely as a result of the spreading pandemic in order to uphold COVID safety standards and social seclusion without having their operations affected (Chi et al., 2021).

To determine the connection between employees' conduct at work and job performance, several studies have made various attempts. One example is the research done by Galanti et al (2021), who hypothesised that empowerment, "self-efficacy and organisational culture positive and substantial influence on the job performance and job satisfaction." According to Galanti et al (2021), job performance is the result of a person's character attributes, level of effort, and assistance given to the business.

Additionally, previous study by Irshad et al (2021) found that mastery objectives promote long-term learning whereas job performance goals encourage short-term learning. Job Performance is another term given out by (Popovici, 2021). It refers to the output produced over time by the job or mandate in general. As a result, this includes both the prescribed labour and the responsibility to do it (Pradoto et al., 2022). According to Chi et al (2021), there are three key categories of job performance: competency, adaptability, and proactivity. Proficiency is a Job Performance category that represents attitudes like putting others first, being supportive of others, and being helpful (Ray & Aranhall, 2021). On the other hand, adaptability showed a mindset that enables people to deal with changes that influence their responsibilities while still staying within its purview (Irshad et al., 2021). Last but not least, proactivity is a person's ability to "predict changes in working techniques or processes as circumstances dictate," enabling them to take preventative action (Galanti et al., 2021).

According to Ibrahim's (2015) hypotheses, job performance refers to an individual's overall performance in relation to predefined work standards and benchmarks. As a result, a person's job performance was also influenced by other variables, including job happiness, remuneration for performance, and personal competence (Imran et al., 2016). Additionally, aptitude, ambition, and environment all affect job performance (Hernaus & Mikulik, 2014). Job Performance, as proposed in the AMO framework, suggests that Job Performance is a result of three key focal areas: ability, motivation, and opportunity, according to (Obeidat et al., 2016). Therefore, this simply revealed that an important factor driving each employee's job performance and eventually the job performance was their inventiveness (Hassan et al., 2020).

The Heuristic framework of individual work job performance, which was described in four main dimensions—task job performance, contextual job performance, adaptive job performance, and counterproductive work behavior—was introduced by Koopmans et al (2013) as a more thorough model of job performance. It was proposed that task job performance, which comprises "work-specific task proficiency, technical proficiency, or in-role job performance," refers to the competence with which one executes core job duties (Koopman et al., 2013). The individual behaviours supporting the organisational, social, and psychological environments were examined to derive contextual work performance (Borman & Motowildo, 1993). Last but not least, the adaptive job performance saw an individual's

conduct as being more adaptable to changes in the following work processes, roles, scenarios, and settings, among others (Pandey, 2018).

### **WFH**

Working from home is defined as a work practise where employees of a company substitute some of their usual work hours for time spent working away from a primary workplace, often from home and employing technology to engage with others on work projects. Working from home may also reduce travel costs and time for the employee, as well as allow reps to better balance their personal and professional duties. Additionally, as it would lessen pollution and traffic jams, it might benefit society as a whole. Despite these favourable circumstances, there is still debate over the effects of representatives working from home. The majority of prior studies have ignored the potential impact on representative wellbeing in favour of examining how working from home interacts with mentalities and behaviours oriented toward the job or the organisation. According to Galanti, et al (2021), the job qualities WFC (work-to-family struggle), work autonomy, and social support from coworkers, but not the extent of working from home, were shown to be proximal markers of business-related success.

Working from home to a certain extent was a distant signal of business-related wellbeing, but only when assisted socially by partners. Their findings suggested that employee wellbeing is predicted by how the work—including working from home—being depicted (for example, the degree of self-governance, communication with coworkers).

### **Work Motivation**

One dimension that consistently piques researchers' curiosity is motivation, which is seen as having significance for human capital generally (Riyanto et al., 2021). Schade et al (2021) define motivation as the urge to start and complete a goal-oriented action. This just implied that different requirements within the workforce acted as motivators or driving forces (Kohonti & Ignjatovic, 2022). As a result, it is important to analyse the elements that affect employee motivation because it is what drives work performance and advancement (Kalliath et al., 2022). Kurniawan et al (2022) state that although "extrinsic incentives might occasionally hinder intrinsic motivation," rewards have a favourable impact on people's motivation.

There are several frameworks and models that have been discovered in the subject of motivation. The first is McGregor's theory X and theory Y, which is defined as the effect that management techniques have on influencing "attitudes, work behaviour, and job performance of subordinates" (Prottas & Nummelin, 2018). Therefore, Theory X represents the traditional perspective of the workforce, portraying people as essentially sluggish, self-centered, and lacking in ambition, whereas Theory Y suggests that employees are naturally driven and willing to take on challenges (Daneshfard & Rad., 2020).

The Vroom's theory of expectation is another theory of motivation that fundamentally holds that workers can be driven and productive if only their efforts will result in positive outcomes and that they will be rewarded for their performance (Wangdi & Tobgay, 2022). A comprehensive explanation of human motivation, the Self-determination theory (SDT) examines how people interact with one another and with their social environments (Sansone & Tang, 2021). Contrarily, is divided into two key concepts: extrinsic and intrinsic. The term "intrinsic motivation" simply refers to internal employee motivation, such as enthusiasm, a sense of success, joy, and pleasure following work-related activities (Prottas & Nummelin, 2018). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, explains how an individual's desire to work is

impacted by outside influences or elements provided by an organisation, such as the job, atmosphere, ideals, and objectives (Kalliath et al., 2022).

The McClelland's theory of needs is an additional idea that basically evaluates the three driving factors, one of which will determine an individual's dominant behaviour and is highly influenced by their life experiences (Acquah et al., 2021). These three motivations are: 1) Achievement, which refers to the need to complete tasks and demonstrate one's competence; 2) Affiliation, which essentially postulates one's need for love, belongingness, and social acceptance; and finally, 3) Power, which denotes the need for control over one's own work or autonomy as well as that of others.

Susilo (2020) said that employees who telecommute considerably increased their motivation for one primary reason—convenience. This allows people the convenience of working from anywhere as long as telecommuting is logistically feasible. This was the only thing that was implied and supported by the idea that telecommuting helped to establish a link between home and work in terms of the working environment and created a more balanced setting that motivated people more (Rybnicek et al., 20119). A study conducted by Hussainy (2021) hypothesis that telecommuting facilitated a causal relationship between motivation and productivity lends weight to this.

Based on the literature review above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1. Work from home has a positive and significant effect on Work Motivation

H2. Work from home has a positive and significant effect on Job Performance

H3. Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Job Performance

H4. Work motivation mediates the effect of Work from home on Job Performance

### **Methodology**

Correlational research was used for this study's research design. The link between variables is examined via correlational research (Salkind, 2006). Correlational research is being used to investigate the connection between working from home and job performance among instructors in suburban locations.

The entire number of lecturers employed in Kelantan's suburban areas is referred to as the population in this study since they also participate in online remote teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak during movement order control. There are eighty-one (81) lecturers in total. To gather the necessary data for the study from the personnel, a survey was run.

In a suburban region of Kelantan, there were 66 responders, and everyone received a questionnaire individually. They have seven days to reply. Numerous follow-up calls were sent throughout that time to make sure they completed the provided questionnaire. During the time before the data were taken, they can also ask any questions about anything they didn't understand in the questionnaire. Because this study only includes professors who work in suburbia, ordinary random sampling was chosen as the sample strategy. Because this particular set of individuals fit the stated criteria, the responders to the research had already been selected. The number of participants actually selected as a sample to reflect the characteristics of the population is known as the sample size (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019).

An efficient technique of estimating sample size is required because empirical research increasingly requires a representative statistical sample. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) created a table for calculating sample size for a certain population as a means of filling in the existing

gap. It was planned to give the survey questionnaire to 66 participants from 81 suburban regions for this study.

By offering a table that guarantees a solid choice model in sample size, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) significantly streamlined the sample size decision process. For making judgments on sample size, this table offers broad scientific guidelines. based on the table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). 66 is the suggested sample size for a population of 81.

## Analysis

### Survey Return Rate

The researcher managed to collect 66 sets of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents, yielding a response rate of 94% as shown in Table 1.0. The raw data were keyed in and examined using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 27.0 where analysis on reliability, correlation and regression were conducted for the purpose of this study.

Table 1.0

*Number of Respondents Involved (n=66)*

Number of questionnaire distributed	Number of questionnaire returned	Percentage returned (%)	Number of valid questionnaire	Percentage valid (%)
66	62	94	62	100.0

Table 2.0

*Reliability Analysis for Work from Home and Job Performance*

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
• Work from home	7	0.701
• Work Motivation	8	0.610
• Job Performance	7	0.883

Table 3.0

*Results of Regression Analysis with Job Performance as the Dependent Variable*

	Without mediator		With mediator		Remarks
	Standardized Values	Beta	Standardized Values	Beta	
WFH	.182		.158		
Mediator (work motivation)			.075		Not a mediator
R	.352		.358		
R squared	.124		.128		
R squared change	.124		.004		
F change	5.099		.350		
Significant F change	.008		.556		
Durbin Watson			1.963		

Table 3 shows the finding for Regression Analysis with job performance as the dependent variable. The  $R^2 = .124$  12.4% indicates that 12.4% of the variance of the regression

model has been explained or by the independent variables without mediator with job performance as the dependent variable. The significance F change value ( $F= 5.099$ ,  $p = 0.08$ ).

The  $R^2 = .128$  or 12.8 % indicates that 12.8% of the variance of the regression model has been explained by the independent variables with mediator with job performance as the dependent variable. The significance F change value ( $F= .350$ ,  $p = .556$ ). The Durbin Watson value 1.963 and still within the acceptance range.

Looking at the individual contribution of independent variables in explaining job performance as the dependent variable with work motivation as mediator, work from home ( $\beta = .158$ ,  $p < .05$ ) are found to be the predictors.

It can be concluded that, work motivation cannot be accepted as mediator for the link between work from home as the independent variable and job performance as the dependent variable and the related hypotheses are not supported.

### **Discussion**

From the results, individual contribution of independent variables in explaining the job performance as the dependent variable with work motivation as mediator, work from home ( $\beta = .158$ ,  $p < .05$ ) are found to be the predictors. Work motivation cannot be accepted as mediator for job performance as the dependent variable. In the other words, work motivation is not the influence of work from home on employees' job performance. The lack of significance in the association suggests that improving work motivation does not always translate into higher or worse job performance. As a result, the company's initiatives to boost work motivation are not the best ways to improve job performance. This result contradicts earlier research conducted by Susilo (2020) that supported a substantial link between the two factors. However, this study thinks that in the middle of the coronavirus epidemic, employees have set aside their initial motive and feel glad that they can still do their job safely. More research is needed to fully understand this outcome.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

Since the link was not significant, it is possible that increasing work motivation does not necessarily result in better or worse job performance. The company's endeavours to increase work motivation as a consequence are not the most effective strategies to enhance job performance. This study hypothesises that, in the midst of the coronavirus outbreak, employees have put aside their original motivation and are content that they can still do their duties in a safe manner. To completely comprehend this result, more study is required.

Increasing personnel' levels of job performance is crucial for every organization. It can be done in a variety of ways. Considerations such as giving employees autonomy inside the organisation, giving them a sense of authority, and enabling them to control their own schedules are crucial. Recently, workers have demanded a balance between their home and professional life. As a result, employers must provide employees with flexible work schedules and options for telecommuting based on their individual preferences. To reduce the stress associated with daily travels, employers should provide their staff some flexibility with regard to departure and arrival hours. The best job performance is seen among those workers who are allowed to design their positions and work in line with their skills.

### **Limitation and Future Study**

The present findings are concentrated on a small sample size. Like with any investigation, further research is required to confirm these findings. In this sense, it would be beneficial to

evaluate the present idea using a wider range of samples, such as those from different job settings, professions, ethnic, religious, or cultural backgrounds, etc.

In either case, a cautious test of the current hypothesis was required given the homogenous sample at hand. The degree to which the two variables can correlate is thought to be constrained by the scope of the predictor and criterion variables, for instance. It is also important to note that the small sample size constrains the prediction power of the novel interaction hypothesis. Future research on work-life balance should examine efficiency as a potential side effect of remote employment as well as other potential workplace mediating elements like employee participation in the link between WFH and job satisfaction. Future WFH research should also examine employee involvement as a potential mediator in the association between WFH and work performance because there is a dearth of studies in this area.

Workers who are inspired by WFH exhibit greater levels of dedication and, as a result, do their jobs more effectively. Finally, future research should examine the relationship between extraversion, neuroticism, and transparency in connection to job performance and distant employment. While some people may enjoy working remotely and appreciate the flexibility it offers, others could find it difficult to balance work and family obligations, which could have an impact on their job performance. Even yet, further research on remote work is required.

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