

# THE REMOTE WORK AND JOB SATISFACTION ON EMPLOYEE'S PERFORMANCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**ABSTRACT-** Due to this COVID-19 pandemic, remote work became a new norm to employees. This study aims to explore the relationship between remote work and the employee's performance and to measure the relationship between the job satisfaction and employee's performance. In this research, there two independent variables such as remote work and job satisfaction of employees during pandemic. Then, the dependent variable is employee's performance during COVID-19 pandemic. The data was collected through a online survey. The samples of this study were remote workers from private and public sectors in Malaysia. A total of 200 questionnaires were gave it to the remote workers via the link of 'Google Form'. The, data collection was analyzed by SPSS software. The research result found a positive correlation between remote work and employee's performance. Next, the result also found a positive correlation between job satisfaction and employee's performance. Other than that, the analysis indicates that, job satisfaction gives that highest influence factor towards employee's performance.

**Keywords:** Remote Work, Job Satisfaction, Employees Performance, COVID-19

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the present circumstances, the world is facing the threatening COVID-19 pandemics. Due to this pandemic, almost all the countries around the world decided to held Movement Control Order (MCO). During this time, both public and private organizations recognized the critical need to digitize their everyday operations, requiring office workers to relocate to virtual workspaces, educational activities in universities, secondary and elementary schools to shift to online classrooms, and e-commerce to expand. According to a recent JobStreet poll, the top five businesses that need workers to work from home are insurance or pension funds (81%), information technology (77%), education (70%), property development (70%), and banking (70%)[1].

The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 has resulted in a significant shift of work to employees' homes, with many corporations implementing obligatory teleworking. Remote work offers flexible, convenient and easy to employees, nevertheless the

working style may not fit to all and become challenges which will affect their performance. Employees that work from home have challenges with communication, cooperation, and the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) [2]. For instance, while working remotely, communication between colleagues is limited, reducing workplace openness. Conducting online group meetings establishes limits, particularly in terms of managing expectations. Sharing information with peers is critical for workplace openness and trust building, and as such, the organisation should emphasise constructive communication as a key value in digital communication. The information exchange keeps each team member informed and contributes to the maintenance of a healthy workflow. Additionally, personnel face problems related to technology and facility readiness. Most employees were unprepared for the work-from-home routine, due to the lack of updated technology in the present system. The lack of specialists available to repair the system or individual computers has exacerbated the problem. Additionally, amid the ad-hoc pandemic crisis, the internet connection grew clogged, making online work impossible. Certain video conferencing systems are not always dependable and can cause employee frustration during meetings.

On the other hand, job satisfaction also effects employee's performance during this pandemic such as wages, organization culture, benefits, stress, training and development, promotion prospects and job security [3]. Wages and benefits are linked to management's evaluation of their contribution to the organization. On the other hand, coping with overwhelming workloads and unachievable deadlines during a pandemic crisis results in low job satisfaction even for the best employees. This is one of the primary reasons why employees experience job burnout, which can result in emotional despair. Employees, particularly those with high goals and potential, report greater job satisfaction in positions that offer advancement prospects. However, most businesses are struggling to survive owing to unpredictable economic conditions, which raises concern about job security. Employees who lack a sense of security in their organization will eventually see a reduction in work satisfaction. The organization that provides better working circumstances for its employees would obtain a greater level of satisfaction. Despite the enormous obstacles in terms of job performance, study on the influence of remote working and job satisfaction on employee performance is critical.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Remote Work**

Remote work is also known as telecommute, telework, working from home, and working from anywhere. Remote work is a working arrangement in which a worker fulfills the essential responsibilities of his/her job while remaining at home, using information and communication technology (ICT). Working from home is a new approach of battling the COVID-19 epidemic. Remote work demands both employers and employees to share responsibility and dedication to secure company sustainability and employment. The definition of remote work is when employees are not physically present at the typical central office but instead fulfil their professional duties using Internet services [4]. Additionally, remote work may be classified into two categories: remote work, which refers to those who work remotely full-time, and telecommuting, which refers to those who work remotely one to three days a week. [5].

While remote employees often work in remote regions without a fixed location, they are still required to communicate with and engage with the organization or agency and their managers. The remote worker is frequently misinterpreted by the other participants or feels distanced from them [6]. Self-efficacy theory, as well as social cognitive theory in general, discusses how an individual's behavior, environment, and cognitive aspects are all intricately connected [7]. Additionally, self-efficacy judgments influence how much effort individuals will devote to an activity and how long they will persevere with it [8]. This idea refers to remote work and employee performance; it demonstrates the influence of an employee's work environment on their performance. It demonstrates that remote work has a favorable effect on employee performance. Therefore, the researcher hypothesizes that:

H1: Remote work is significantly positive with the employee's performance

### **2.2. Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction can be defined as how much extent an individual is pleased, comfortable, or satisfied with his or her job. Job or work experience evaluation results in a pleasant or positive emotional state [9]. Job satisfaction is a term that refers to an employee's attitude about his or her employment. Cognitive dimensions of job satisfaction include an employee's confidence in his or her work, namely the perception that the job is appealing, unappealing, or a combination of the two. The cognitive dimension is not a self-contained affective

dimension significantly related with sentiments of positive impact. Component behavior is frequently used to refer to an employee's conduct or behavioral inclinations in relation to his employment. The level of employee's satisfaction also becomes apparent by fact that he/she tried to follow a regular job, working hard, and intends to remain a member of the organization for a long time [10].

According to the equity theory, people would feel satisfied or unhappy based on whether they sensed equity in a circumstance or not. Equity theory is composed of three components: input, results, and comparison individuals. To begin, input refers to anything deemed useful by employees as a contribution to their job. Second, job outcomes relate to the value felt by workers as a result of their labor; comparison individuals refer to others or to those with whom the employee is comparing the input-output ratio. The comparable person might be a coworker or a role model. The theory clarifies the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance. Therefore, the researcher hypothesizes that:

H2: Job satisfaction is significantly positive with the employee's performance.

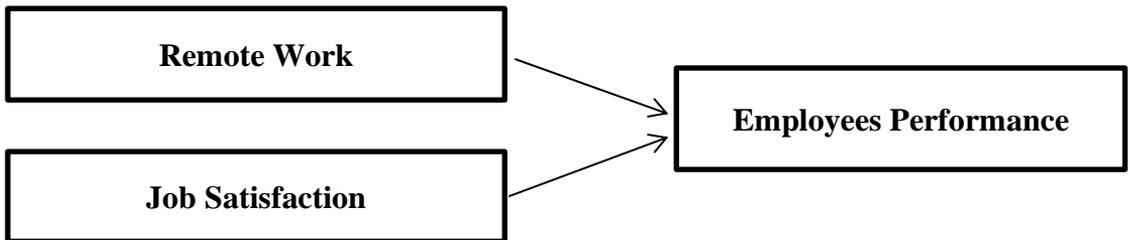
### **2.3. Employee's Performance**

Many studies conducted earlier indicate that human resource management practices are positively related to employee performance [11]. However, the new normal phenomena has changed the business operational approach; working at home or commuting as a new business practice has grown significantly due to increasing organizational pressure to reduce costs and increase employee performance [12]. A study conducted at a prominent Chinese travel agency to determine the effect of working from home on employee performance discovered that workers working from home have a greater overall performance than workers working in the office [13]. Employee productivity has been linked to a peaceful work environment in studies. When employees work from home in a less stressful atmosphere, their motivation to accomplish their task increases [18].

Additionally, employing staff must be performed efficiently and effectively during pandemic crisis [14]. Simultaneously, management should recognize that employees have specific requirements and personal preferences that must be respected, particularly while working from home. Their attitude to the business and their job, whether favourable or bad, is strongly dependent on rewards and job recognition. Indeed, employee performance serves as the criterion for promotions, layoffs, incentives, sanctions, comments, and compensation changes. When the benefits meet the individual's personal demands for recognition, job promotion,

and income increase, the employee will be classified as a high performer, as specified by the expectation theory. The hypothesis established that the interplay of three distinct beliefs generates the motivation that satisfies expectation, utility, and valence [15]. To encourage an individual to accomplish a task, the individual must feel that with enough effort, he or she can accomplish any level of performance necessary..

### **3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**



The conceptual framework shows about the relationship between remote work and employee’s performance and the relationship between job satisfaction and employee’s performance.

### **4. MATERIALS AND METHOD**

#### **4.1 Research Design**

In this research, the researcher measures the effect of remote work and job satisfaction on employee’s performance. The remote work and job satisfaction are independent variables and the employee’s performance is dependent variable. Essentially, this survey will be conducted with Malaysian individuals who currently work from home. Participants are drawn from the public and private sectors. In this study, the quantitative technique was utilized to collect data from the target participants using questionnaires that contained closed-ended questions. The questionnaire consisted of four sections with a total of 58 questions. The data will be utilized to derive statistical conclusions in this study using data analysis.

#### **4.2 Population and Sampling**

This study intended to explore the relationship between remote work and employee’s performance and the relationship between job satisfaction and

employee's performance. The remote workers from Malaysia were approached to participate in the study. In total of 200 remote workers were took part in the study. The questionnaire contains close-ended questions to collect data from the participants. In order to avoid the bias, this study only distributed questionnaires to remote workers who are working in private sectors and public sectors during COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaires were delivered via 'Google Form' link to remote workers.

Sampling is a method that allows researcher to infer information about the population based on the results of a subset of the population without having to survey everyone. The sampling method used in this research is simple random sampling. The method is suitable for this research because during COVID-19 pandemic most of the employees working from home. So that, this sampling method is easy to collect data among the remote workers.

### **4.3 Instrument and Instrumentation**

In this study, the questionnaire consisted of four parts (Section A: Demographic Profile, Section B: Remote Work, and Section C: Job Satisfaction and Section D: Employees Performance). Section A consist of demographic profile such as age, gender, marital status, education level, occupation, working experience and income. The section B (15 items), C (20 items) and D (items 16) consist closed-ended questions were based on a Likert 5-point scale.

### **4.4 Data Collection**

The collected data was analyzed by using quantitative method. Quantitative methods emphasize objective measurement and statistical, mathematical or numerical analysis of data collected through questionnaires using computational techniques. To analyze the data, this research used SPSS software. The descriptive statistics, reliability, correlation, and regression were analyzed in the SPSS.

## **5. PILOT STUDY**

The researcher conducted the pilot test among 50 remote workers to collect possible suggestions on the length, clarity and measures of the questionnaires. All the questions from the questionnaires were took from the previous study. Then, questions in the questionnaire were modified in the simplest brief to the employees.

The researcher chose the remote work questionnaire that developed by Zhang et al. (2020) to measure the acceptance of employees to new norm which is working from home. Next, the researcher chose the short form of Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss et al. (1967) [16]. Then, the researcher assessed employee's performance through Yu (1996) measure the task performance and context performance with 16 items [17]. The respondents were asked to estimate their levels of agreements in the questionnaires through a five-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree and 5=Strongly Agree).

The Table 1 shows the reliability of pilot test. From the result of the reliability test, it has been found that all the constructs have high-reliability values in the range of 0.865 to 0.935 using Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency or reliability between multiple items, metrics or levels. Basically, the Cronbach's Alpha value should be higher than 0.7 then only the internal consistency is acceptable (Bonett & Wright, 2014).

**Table 1: Reliability Analysis**

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Number of Items (N)</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha (<math>\alpha</math>)</b>
Remote Work	15	0.934
Job Satisfaction	20	0.935
Employees Performance	16	0.865

## **6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 2 shows the demographic profile of respondents. A descriptive analysis was conducted and the respondents have been categorized according to age, gender, marital status, educational level, occupational sector, working experience and monthly income. The total number of participants who took part in this study was 200. The demographic profile stated that most of the respondents were male (54%), followed by female (46%); in the age group of 31 to 40 years old (32.5%), 41 to 50 years old (31%), 20 to 30 years old (30.5%) and followed by 51 to 60 years old (6%). The respondents were single (38.5%) and followed by married (61.5%); had educational background of Degree (55%), Master (32.5%), Diploma (9%), PHD (3%) and followed by STPM (0.5%). Next, most of the respondents

working in private sector (76.5%) than public sector (23.5%). Other than that, the respondents had working experience 1 to 5 years (18%), 6 to 10 years (39%), 11 to 15 years (29.5%), 16 to 20 years (7.5%), 21 to 25 years (3.5%) and over 26 years (2.5%). Finally, the monthly income of the respondents was RM 1 000 to RM 3 000 (2.5%), RM 3 001 to RM 6 000 (34.5%), RM 6 001 to RM 9 000 (35.5%), RM 9 001 to RM 12 000 (25%) and RM 12 001 to RM 15 000 (2.5%).

**Table 2: Demographic Profile**

<b>Demographic Profile</b>	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Age</b>		
20-30 years	61	30.5
31-40 years	65	32.5
41-50 years	62	31.0
51-60 years	12	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	108	54
Female	92	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	77	38.5
Married	123	61.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational Level</b>		
STPM	1	0.5
Diploma	18	9.0
Degree	110	55.0
Master	65	32.5
PHD	6	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupational Sector</b>		
Public Sector	47	23.5
Private Sector	153	76.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Working Experience</b>		
1-5 years	36	18.0
6-10 years	78	39.0
11-15 years	59	29.5
16-20 years	15	7.5
21-25 years	7	3.5
Over 26 years	5	2.5

<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
RM 1000 - RM 3 000	5	2.5
RM 3 001 - RM 6 000	69	34.5
RM 6 001 - RM 9 000	71	35.5
RM 9 001 - RM 12 000	50	25.0
RM 12 001 - RM 15 000	5	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

The mean value for remote work is 3.88 (agree), job satisfaction is 3.63 (agree) and employee’s performance is 4.21 (agree). Next, the standard deviation for remote work is 0.55, job satisfaction 0.38 and employee’s performance is 0.26. To sum up, most of the respondents agreed that remote work make employees life easy, satisfied with their jobs and have a positive effect on employee’s performance with a mean score higher that 3 as shows in Table 3.

**Table 3: The Descriptive Statistics**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Remote Work	200	1.93	4.80	3.8847	.55431
Job Satisfaction	200	2.00	4.55	3.6318	.37678
Employees Performance	200	3.00	4.81	4.2107	.26067
Valid N (listwise)	200				

A correlation analysis between the study variable was performed. The first objective is to measure the relationship between remote work and the employee’s performance. There is positive moderate correlation between remote work and employee’s performance ( $p < 0.05$ ) as shown in Table 4. The result indicates that, if the positive effects of remote work increase than the employee’s performance level should be increase which supported the first hypothesis (Remote work is significantly positive with the employees performance).

**Table 4: Correlations between Remote Work and Employees Performance**

		Remote_Work	Employees_Performance
Remote_Work	Pearson Correlation	1	.402**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200

Employees_Performance	Pearson Correlation	.402**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The second objective is to measure the relationship between job satisfaction and employee’s performance. There is positive moderate correlation between job satisfaction and employee’s performance ( $p < 0.05$ ) as shown in Table 5. This means, if the positive effects of job satisfaction increase than the employee’s performance also increase which supported the second hypothesis (Job satisfaction is significantly positive with the employees performance).

**Table 5: Correlations between Job Satisfaction and Employees Performance**

		Job_Satisfaction	Employees_Performance
Job_Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.412**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Employees_Performance	Pearson Correlation	.412**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The multiple regression analysis indicated that, Remote Work ( $B = 0.113$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Job Satisfaction ( $B = 0.185$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) give a significant positive influence towards employee’s performance since the probability value was less than 5% level of significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) as shown in Table 6. Therefore, it can be concluded that, if the average rating job satisfaction increase than the average rating of employee’s performance should be increase too by remaining another independent variable constant. In addition, the analysis indicated that, if the average rating of remote work increases than the average rating of employee’s performance should be increase, by remaining other independent variables remain constant. Other than that, the analysis indicates that, job satisfaction (Beta= 0.267) gives that highest influence factor towards employee’s performance, since it produces the highest value of standardized beta coefficient, followed by remote work (Beta= 0.240).

**Table 6: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.102	.162		19.125	.000		
	Remote_Work	.113	.037	.240	3.012	.003	.634	1.578
	Job_Satisfaction	.185	.055	.267	3.346	.001	.634	1.578

a. Dependent Variable: Employees\_Performance

## 7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the job satisfaction gives highest influence towards employee's performance. There are two research questions were built in this research. The first research question is "What is the significant effect of remote work and the employee's performance? There is evidence that remote work has a favorable influence on employee performance. During this pandemic, technology enables people to work from home. Additionally, it protects personnel against the COVID-19 virus. Employees benefit from remote work since they may work at their own speed. Additionally, it is more appropriate, adaptable, and handy during this epidemic. The first hypothesis is supported (remote work has a significant positive effect on an employee's performance). The second study question is, "Is there a statistically significant relationship between work happiness and employee performance?" Job satisfaction has a substantial positive correlation with employee performance, according to the data. This is because if an employee is content with his or her job, he or she will inevitably perform well. The second hypothesis is supported by the evidence. However, this study has limitations of its own. To obtain reliable results in the future, the sample size must be increased, and the study narrowed in on a certain area.

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