The Effect of Teleworking on Working Adult's Job Satisfaction During COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract. Many companies have adapted digital technology to continue their businesses during the enforcement of movement control order due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective of this research was to examine the effect of teleworking on working adult's job satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic. There were four independent variables which were communication satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, organisational social support and psychological strain were being tested on the job satisfaction which act as the dependent variable of this study. This research is mainly concern on working adults whose range between 18 to 60 years old. Convenience sampling method has been employed in this study. The response rate of this study is 92.54% where 186 respondents who have experienced of teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic have answered the questionnaire of this study. The collected data were entered into SPSS version 26 and then tested using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM 3.3.3). The analysis result concluded that only communication satisfaction and intrinsic motivation showed significant effect towards job satisfaction among working adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. Government bodies and employer will benefit from the findings of this research to know the needs and wants of their employees.

Keywords: Teleworking · Job satisfaction · Communication satisfaction · Intrinsic motivation

1 Introduction

Many governments have strongly encouraged or enforced limited physical presence to work when the COVID-19 pandemic spread over the world. Hence, many companies have adopted the digital technology tools including videoconferencing, virtual private network and etc. to continue their businesses. Businesses that were able to take advantage of pre-existing telework capabilities or quickly adapt were best suited to make a relatively seamless transition to working from home while maintaining output levels [1]. However, not all jobs are suitable for teleworking. Indeed, only a small percentage of jobs can be done from home [2].

Once the COVID-19 reached Malaysia, the government placed a Movement Control Order (MCO) on the citizens of Malaysia. People must remain at home under the Movement Control Order (MCO) Regulations. Most Malaysians do not have a backyard to do business. So, most Malaysians remained indoors most of the time during the lockdown. Some of the Malaysians have to be separated from their families because of workouts and cannot go home to their wives and children because of the sudden lockdown that the government has put in place. The effect of COVID-19 on the economy of Malaysia can be seen via high Unemployment level and depreciation in the Ringgit of Malaysia against USD.

Malaysia's unemployment rate is 3.3% in 2019, which means that there are 508,200 unemployed people. The pandemic of COVID-19 has had a major effect on the Malaysian economy. This can be illustrated by examining the unemployment rate in Malaysia. The unemployment rate in January 2020 is 3.2% but there is a steady rise in the rate of unemployment until May 2020 and it is 5.3%. This is not a positive phenomenon since there is a negative trend in the market for labour because most of the employees cannot adapt with teleworking. So, they are not satisfied and leave their job [3]. Some of the workplace or organisation approach their employees to continue their work from home Another issue is about there is gender gap while working at home. Women are paid less while working at home and they gain fewer promotions than men and they are still significantly under - represented in roles in corporate management [4–6].

For household chores, such as housework and childcare, women spend even more time [7]. Even though these are mainly about gender discrepancies can indicate lower work efficiency. Research projects which are mentioned that job satisfaction for women compared to men, while in these work-related results, research reports few or no gender differences [8–10]. While teleworking activities usually provide further versatility [11]. They can lead to more housework especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The house is likely to get more unkempt with everyone dining and playing at home, provided that all family members are now sitting at home the entire day.

Hence, the main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of teleworking towards job satisfaction among working adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2   Literature review

2.1   Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a worker's feeling of accomplishment and progress on the job. It is commonly considered to be specifically related to success as well as to personal well-being. Satisfaction with work means a task you want, do it well and be awarded for your efforts. Furthermore, career fulfilment means passion and enjoyment at work. Job satisfaction is the most significant component that contributes to the appreciation, revenue, advancement and fulfilment of other goals [12]. The word satisfaction in the job refers to people's approach to their work and emotions. Positive and positive attitudes towards jobs reflect workplace satisfaction. Negative and unfavourable attitudes towards employment suggest workplace discontent [13]. Employment happiness is a set of thoughts and opinions that people have about their new job. People's levels of work satisfaction will vary from intense satisfaction to extreme dissatisfaction. Besides

getting attitudes towards their work as a whole. People may also have attitudes towards different facets of their jobs, such as the sort of work they perform, their co-workers, supervisors or subordinates, and their payroll [14]. Job satisfaction linked to seniority, age, sex, education, occupation and profits, to name a couple.

Teleworking during the Coronavirus Pandemic provides a number of advantages, including greater productivity and a better work satisfaction of employees. Teleworking boosts overall job satisfaction for 65.7 percent of 14,005 respondents [15]. Teleworking can boost business performance by enhancing worker satisfaction and hence efficiency, according to the results of an OECD research [1].

2.2 Communication Satisfaction

The Big Five provides a specific way of understanding the employee satisfaction of working adults. However, measuring the happiness of the communication channel or in another phrase is communication satisfaction in tandem and with the Big Five encourages a more in-depth analysis of how teleworking can influence the satisfaction of employees. The first research which investigated the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction was conducted by [16]. Communication satisfaction has become a reliable building block in organizational behaviour studies since then [17].

Conversely, research highlighted the poor condition of research into the relationship between contact satisfaction, work satisfaction and communication networks. Shockingly, despite the growing evolving capabilities of communications technologies, there is still a lack of research in this field [18]. Even within organizational framework, communication satisfaction is described as "an individual's satisfaction with the various aspects of communication within his organization" [17]. On any and all factors compared to traditional office employees, they find that teleworkers experience a great deal of contact satisfaction. A research noted that the most significant contributors to the communication-job success relationship between workers are regulatory interaction, personal feedback and communication environments [19].

Although past studies discussed broader corporate communication structures, the role of communication satisfaction and job satisfaction in the study of teleworkers was not considered in previous analysis. Consequently, the next important move is to explore not just how the form of identity of teleworkers affects job satisfaction, but also how teleworkers' common contact networks contribute to attitude and affect job satisfaction.

H1: Communication satisfaction has significant effect towards working adult's job satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic.

2.3 Intrinsic Motivation

Individual behaviour is heavily influenced by motivation. There is a link between motivation and beginning and maintaining a behaviour. Understanding what motivates people to accomplish what they do and how they go about doing it is crucial. Working adults who are driven to assist the firm achieve its objectives are great assets to the workplace. The motivation of working adults is one of the most essential components of preventive efforts [20]. Employees' self-determination has an impact on their job-related motivation. It enhances the attractiveness of the event and makes it more enjoyable for consumers.

Personal challenge may be defined as an inherent motivation that aids in the discovery and development of new skills and information [21]. Both employee and task attributes are key in determining employee motivation. If a person finds their profession intriguing and has strong values, for example, they will have enough intrinsic drive to improve their performance. Internal motivation is necessary to have a significant influence on a person. The higher the drive to attain a goal, the stronger one's emotions of fulfilment [22, 23].

Compensation policies have an essential influence on the intention employees to provide their all-in terms of performance, motivation, and innovation [24]. Then a goal is set to be achieved, and that is how the need is met. Intrinsic motivation may be developed to help teleworkers achieve their goals. This setting encompasses not just corporate principles and culture, but also management and organizational, and even the group or team in which a person works.

Intrinsic motivation is defined as the process of being motivated by job in the sense that it meets the employee's own needs. Intrinsic motivation is personality, and it is believed that people choose jobs that would best meet their requirements [24]. Responsibility, freedom to act, bravery to utilise and develop one's own abilities, fascinating work, and possibilities for growth are all variables that influence intrinsic motivation [24]. Intrinsic motivators have a longer lasting effect since they are natural and not imposed from the outside [25].

H2: Intrinsic motivation has significant effect towards working adult's job satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic.

2.4   Organisational Social Support

Social support of organisations has been described as "the degree to which the ecosystem makes resources available". In social work, support structures can be separated into two categories which are formally or informally support. Formal support includes systems of line management, monitoring and assessment. Informal support referred to the assistance within and outside the environment of social work which also including family members and friends.

Organizational support is the measure to which staff view their contributions and concern about their well-being through their company [26]. Whereas social support applies to how they've been involved in assessing their co-workers and executives as supporting them [27]. The constructions factors are known to be as results at the workplace and therefore are assumed to have been essential for the findings of telework. Pertinently, specific organizational support for teleworkers is known to also have a major effect on telework performance because telework varies substantially from jobs completed in the cross national and thus needs a particular management plan to evaluating effective results [28].

In other research stated that employees working from home will be monitored with an approach to knowledge sharing were appreciate to reduced tensions between the work-family and improved job efficiency [29]. In empirical telework research, other organizational support variables investigated include teleworker interaction with colleagues and supervisors [30]. Both of these studies showed a link between teleworker assistance and possible telework advantages, including engagement or lack of negative

effects of telework [31]. In addition, research observed that perhaps the assistance of subordinate's decreased stress and improved job satisfaction [32].

H3: Organisational social support has significant effect towards working adult's job satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic.

2.5 Psychological Strain

Psychological strain can be defined as the working climate has a significant effect on the health of workers [33]. Psychological threats include major emerging risks found in the workplace [34]. Psychological hazards refer to the relationship between organizational aspects, including work material, organizational management and environmental conditions, and the needs of employees that affect the physical and psychological health of employees [35]. Work-related stress is a concern connected to occupational psychological risks [36]. From two viewpoints, the relevance of this subject can be clarified.

Second, for both organizational effectiveness and individuals, possible negative effects of psychological stress may occur and also effect workers job performance. For example, greater organizational efficiency, innovation and ultimate occupational results are created by better health and well-being in the workplace [36]. From an individual viewpoint, lower occupational stress has been correlated with better outcomes for personal wellbeing [37]. The level of job satisfaction due to psychological stress can act as a determinant of the health and well-being of a person.

Alternatively, decreased work satisfaction can also affect the productivity of an employee and can influence the financial wellbeing of society and also bring the organization to pressure existing employees [38]. Previous studies conducted by [39] found that psychological challenges such as mental wellbeing, depression and social action are linked to work satisfaction. In addition, a research revealed that among workers with significant psychological distress, work satisfaction was lower [40].

H4: Psychological strain has significant effect towards working adult's job satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic.

3   Research Methodology

Convenience sampling method has been employed in this study. Based on the G* power calculation, the minimum required sample size is 129 respondents. A total of 202 targeted respondents from Selangor, Johor, and Melaka of Malaysia have participated in this study by answering the questionnaire via Google form. Then, the successful response rate of 92.08% with 186 sets of completed questionnaires are used for data analysis purposes in this study. The set of self-administered questionnaires is divided three main sections including demographic variables, the measurement items for independent and dependent variables. The measurement items of communication satisfaction are adopted from [41], the items of organisational social support are adopted from [42], the items of psychological strain are adopted from [43], the items of intrinsic motivation are adopted from [44] and the items of the dependent variable are adopted from [45]. This study has employed the five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to

measure the questionnaire items. SPSS version 26 and Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM 3.3.3) are used for data analysis purposes in this study. PLS is a composite-based method to SEM that tries to maximise the explanation on the variance of dependent constructs in the path model [46].

4   Results and Discussion

There is a total of 186 respondents involved in this questionnaire, and 71 (38.17%) are male, while 115 (61.83%) are female. The majority of the respondents' ages range from 40 to 49 years old. 70.43% or 131 respondents of this study are currently working in the government sector.

The analysis is started with the convergent validity test before the application of Structural Equation Modelling. The result of the convergent validity analysis is summarised in Table 1. As shown in Table 1, all the item loadings are range from 0.796 to 0.980 and they are meeting the minimum requirement [47]. Furthermore, our result also revealed that the composite reliability (CR), Rho_A, and average variance extracted (AVE) values for all the five variables have met the requirement too. [48] mentioned that a strong valid model should reached the AVE values above 0.5, CR, and Rho_A values above 0.7. In conclusion, the model constructs have met the convergent validity and internal consistency. Table 2 summarised the discriminant validity result. All the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criteria were lower than the required threshold value of HTMT 0.90 by [49]. Hence, this indicates that the proposed hypotheses are supported.

In the next step of the analysis, SMART-PLS bootstrapping was used to measure the structural model. The R2 value of the model is 0.428and this indicates that 42.8% of the total variation in job satisfaction can be explained by the four independent variables. Figure 1 illustrates the overview of the model in this study. Table 3 summarises the hypothesis testing result of this study. Only two independent variables which are communication satisfaction and intrinsic motivation showed significant effect towards job satisfaction among working adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our analysis result revealed that communication satisfaction has significant effect towards working adult's job satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic. This finding revealed some of the respondent's situation in neutral when emailing with their colleagues during teleworking, they can able to show their self as they want it. It conclude that they feel uncomfortable when they communicate with social platforms regarding about work assessments during teleworking or communicating through video call is not a proper way to expose and give their opinion about work discussion to co-workers. In this previous study communication satisfaction played a major role in improvement of working adults job satisfaction [41]. Despite the fact that e-mail lacks customization and is limited in its ability to send various cues and compensate for language variability, it does provide teleworkers with the benefit of continuity across discussions [50]. Among the various communication methods accessible to teleworkers, teleconferencing and instant messaging consistently ranked high in terms of job satisfaction [51].

Intrinsic motivation is an important tool to boost the employees in continue teleworking and it always make high improvement of working adults' job performance and maintain good flow of business in organisation. Without intrinsic motivation employees

Table 1. Convergent validity assessment

Model construct	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR	CA	Rho_A
Communication Satisfaction	CS1	0.832	0.742	0.896	0.827	0.843
	CS2	0.905				
	CS3	0.846				
Intrinsic Motivation	IM1	0.885	0.807	0.893	0.762	0.770
	IM2	0.912				
Job Satisfaction	JS2	0.817	0.774	0.932	0.902	0.904
	JS3	0.909				
	JS4	0.891				
	JS5	0.901				
Organization Social Support	OSS1	0.905	0.793	0.884	0.740	0.748
	OSS2	0.875				
Psychological Strain	PS1	0.980	0.797	0.886	0.795	1.606
	PS2	0.796				

Table 2. Discriminant validity of constructs

	Communication Satisfaction	Intrinsic Motivation	Job Satisfaction	Organisational Social Support	Psychological Strain
Communication Satisfaction					
Intrinsic Motivation	0.772				
Job Satisfaction	0.628	0.705			
Organisational Social Support	0.708	0.582	0.534		
Psychological Strain	0.114	0.099	0.125	0.029	

can't able to satisfy with their current work or task which is continue from home. Working adults' intrinsic motivation is one of the most important components of preventive measures [20]. Employee self-determination influences their job-related motivation. It increases the event's appeal and makes it more pleasurable for attendees. Internal motivation is required to make a substantial impact on someone. The stronger one's sentiments of fulfilment, the stronger one's motivation to achieve a goal. An earlier study found that intrinsic motivation was substantially related to teleworking and work satisfaction efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic [52].
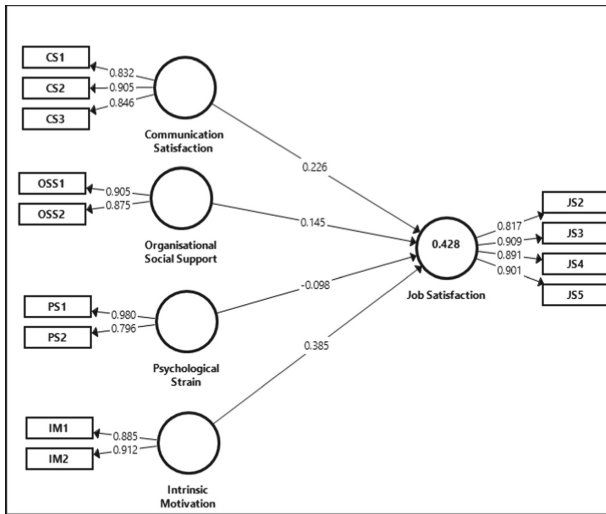
Fig. 1. Overview of the model

Table 3. Hypothesis testing results

Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	LL	UL	Decision
H1: Communication Satisfaction - > Job Satisfaction	0.226	0.098	2.313*	0.027	0.401	Supported
H2: Intrinsic Motivation - > Job Satisfaction	0.385	0.091	4.236**	0.177	0.539	Supported
H3: Organisational Social Support - > Job Satisfaction	0.145	0.079	1.847	0.018	0.318	Not supported
H4: Psychological Strain - > Job Satisfaction	-0.098	0.080	1.222	-0.214	0.119	Not supported

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, Bootstrapping (n = 5000)

Organisation social support showed no significant influence towards working adult's job satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic. Past studies concluded that organisation social support is an important tool to assist employees to involve teleworking and manage the business in an organization. Indeed, technological assistance is essential to ensure good collaboration between the central office and co-workers [28]. Furthermore, past research indicated that the more help is requested and the greater the degree of structured support required in terms of technology and training, the more a person teleworks [52, 53]. Management provide training to those who are not well performed in teleworking via online. The training considers of many interesting activities that based on teleworking. So, the employees job satisfaction based on teleworking become increase and the employees willing to give their high-performance during teleworking in the COVID-19

pandemic. As a result, teleworker job satisfaction is predicted to rise as organisational social aid and teleworker support expand.

Our findings revealed that respondents of this study are not having much stress during continue their work or complete tasks given by supervisors at home. However, previous studies showed the association between stress/strain and job satisfaction is well recognised, while there is considerable disagreement over the direction of causality, with job satisfaction claimed in various studies to be either an antecedent, mediator, or result of job stress [54, 55]. There was no research that investigated this association in the telework literature. Because of this, it is hypothesised that social hardship will have a detrimental influence on the mental state of teleworkers and their subjective assessment of their employment in the current study. The abrupt switches to telework during the COVID-19 epidemic present a unique context for studying the influence of teleworking on psychological strain. The longer stay-at-home mandates during the pandemic, in particular, may contribute to overall depression and anxiety.

5   Conclusion

With this study, the government will be able to analyse and execute human resource management practices to address work-life balance concerns or set up employers for work-life balance based on the COVID-19 epidemic. Based on this, employers agreed to collaborate with the government to promote best practises in work-life balance concerns. During this pandemic, most of the organizations force to change their working pattern to remote working thus, it is important that the government and employers come out with good package work life balance to the employees who work from home such as give flexibility in working hour and give permission to employees to take leave if they are not feeling well or they having any other avoidable situation.

Organizational support is actually which staff view their contributions and concern about their well-being through their company. Whereas social support applies to how they've been involved in assessing their co-workers and executives as supporting them. Based on this research the employers can plan to support their employees who continue their work from home. Employers let the supervisors provide some important resources such as giving or suggest software to decrease the burden of employees work from home. Employers should ensure employees have the right technologies and tools for their job. Supervisors should keep remote workers in the loop and prevent them from feeling less essential than onsite staff. Supervisor always need to encourage employees who doing difficult tasks during teleworking. Employers should establish clear benchmarks for productivity. Supervisors can gather feedback to learn what works and what doesn't. Supervisors should provide training through virtual meeting to employees who are not really adapt with teleworking. Supervisor always be accessible and responsive to employees who working from home.

Employees may clearly realise that motivation of working adults is one of the most crucial characteristics of preventive measures. Important to note that self-influences their job-related motivation. It increases the event's appeal and makes it more pleasurable for attendees. Employee intrinsic motivation is influenced by both employee and task characteristics. If a person is interested in their profession and has strong values, for

example, they will have adequate intrinsic motivation to enhance their performance. Internal motivation is required to make a substantial impact on someone. Workplace policies have a significant impact on individuals' willingness to give their all-in terms of performance, motivation, and innovation. Intrinsic motivation can be established to assist people in reaching their goals. This environment includes not only company ideas and culture, but also management and organisational structures, as well as the team or organization in which an employee stands.

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