

Improving Employee Performance on Work Efficiency: A Survey in Employee Productivity in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a significant impact on the workplace, particularly on employee productivity. Due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, businesses and employees have been restricted from travelling to prevent the spread of the virus. Working from home is growing increasingly prevalent in the current digital age and employees are urged to be accommodated. This study aims to investigate employee productivity in Malaysia during COVID-19. Our research objective for this research is to evaluate employee satisfaction, compensation and benefits, training and development and organizational culture factor contribution to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age. Our conceptual framework includes four independent variables, namely employee satisfaction, compensation and benefits, training and development and organizational culture and they have an impact on employee performance. Moreover, this study mainly uses quantitative research method, and it adopts a survey methodology to collect data from employees in various organizations in Malaysia. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses are used to analyze the data.

Keywords: COVID-19, employee performance, employee productivity, work efficiency

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges, leading to disruptions across various aspects of society, especially in the realm of workforce. In Malaysia, as in many countries worldwide, it is witnessed that the organizations have faced substantial transformations in the way they operate, with work from home (WFH) becoming the new norm for a considerable number of employees. There has been a significant shift in the way employees work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As organizations adapt to the new reality, it becomes crucial to assess and enhance employee performance on work efficiency to maintain business continuity and maximize productivity. This study aims to study employee productivity landscape in Malaysia during the COVID-19. By understanding the factors

affecting employee performance, organizations can formulate and implement strategies to maximize employee productivity in the setting of WFH during the pandemic outbreak, which will enable organizations to have a more favorable position over the competitors in the market and help contribute to the gross domestic product (GDP) of the nation.

Employers and their workers should be considered while establishing the most efficient way to achieve WFH objectives. Although working from home is now a possibility, the present situation provides a unique perspective on how the arrangement functions. This information may be helpful in future legislation that changes the existing structure of working hours. Examining the challenges faced by companies and people in Malaysia necessitates a SWOT analysis and an experimental methodology on whether this temporary or permanent employment agreement will also be considered (Shyamasundar & Bindurani, 2021).

Saludin, Karia, and Hassan (2020) say working from home is common in industrialized nations, although it is illegal in many nations. Since the 1970s, most industrialized nations have adopted the concept in its current form. Additionally, it is well known that WFH encourages a healthier work-life balance and can offer significant benefits for both employers and employees, including lower real estate costs, increased productivity, decreased absenteeism, flexible labour relations, improved customer satisfaction, and lower commuting costs. The main factors cited for the growth of telecommuting in many developed nations are flexibility, lower office overheads, less energy consumption, higher employee productivity, better recruitment opportunities, especially for female employees, reduction in travel fatigue, journey time, transport costs, parking fees, fuel savings, promotion of opportunities for dual-income households, and better control of childcare arrangements, with Malaysia being cited as one of these countries. This study's discovery of WFH implementation is significant since it reveals that Malaysian organizations implicitly handle the WFH concept.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia has been affected drastically over the past two years since Malaysia's government announced the movement control order (hereafter MCO) to slow down the transmission of the COVID-19 chain in the community. The MCO was first imposed in March 2020 and has been extended repeatedly. Moreover, since then, nearly one million office workers have been forced to WFH during the implementation of MCO (Anis, 2020). WFH is not a newly introduced concept. The phrase "work from home" has grabbed the attention of the public across the globe, particularly in the recent years of the pandemic.

Even though Malaysia has begun to transit to the endemic stage since April 2022, WFH culture in Malaysia is expected to remain, with the government considering making amendments to employment law to support it (Meikeng, 2021). In implementing WFH, the ministry mentioned that employees would be given more flexibility, particularly for those who need to take care of newborn babies and other family members. However, employers have noted that WFH may not suit everyone's personality or skill set. Employers found it difficult to monitor employee performance, making management standards inconsistent.

Moreover, several challenges have a significant effect on employee performance in Malaysia: physical, psychological, and technological challenges (Nathan, Omar, & Angsor, 2021). Firstly, physical challenges contribute to poor employee performance because of several factors, such as the working environment. Before the implementation of WFH, employees spent most of their time working in an office equipped with the proper furniture. However, during the WFH period, the employees' homes became their work environment. Not all employees have the proper ergonomic furniture at home; most of them carry out their work using their dining table, chair, or even couch and bed. This poor ergonomics practice is a significant health risk of WFH and can affect employee performance on work efficiency.

Secondly, the challenges of psychological needs. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, humans are motivated by five essential needs: physiological, safety, social, self-esteem, and self-actualization. In our case, the third level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs---social need can be related to the psychological challenge of WFH. Social need is essential for avoiding psychological issues such as loneliness, sadness, and anxiety (Cherry, 2022). However, as employees are isolated at home, they lose access to acquiring social needs, and it has caused psychological issues such as the sense of isolation and loneliness. According to Malaysiakini news, considering the pandemic and the resulting new norms, WFH has prompted an ongoing discussion on employees' mental health (Tan, 2021). Not to mention, many published newspaper articles in Malaysia have emphasized the difficulties faced by working parents during the pandemic. WFH has led to the blurring of work and family boundaries. Due to the closure of daycare facilities, public and private schools, and institutions of higher learning in both the public and private sectors, working parents must balance their work and taking care of their children. (Manja et al., 2020). A mother shared that she finds it nearly impossible to separate her work and home responsibilities, especially when her kids need her help with online classes (Zainuddin, 2021). All these stresses to juggling work and family can cause stress to the employees, and eventually, it will negatively affect employee's performance on work efficiency.

Thirdly, technological challenges. The switch to WFH almost happened overnight, and employees were left unprepared. For instance, some employees who live in the less developed area struggle with network connectivity (Network Connectivity Still a Problem for Some, 2021). During the MCO time, internet usage was high due to individuals working and studying from home, which caused internet traffic to be congested and slow even in urban areas. (Internet Connectivity, a Major Challenge to Communications Ministry Due to COVID-19, Says Minister, 2021). Inadequate internet access has become a concern for employees who attend virtual meetings, as they experience audio and video interruptions. Consequently, this technological interruption has caused employee performance to decline.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate employee satisfaction factor contribution to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age.
2. To evaluate compensation and benefits factor contribution to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age.
3. To evaluate training and development factor contribution to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age.
4. To evaluate organizational culture factor contribution to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Does employee satisfaction contribute to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age?
2. Does compensation and benefits contribute to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age?
3. Does training and development contribute to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age?
4. Does organizational culture contribute to the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last quarter of 2019, a newly discovered infectious disease surfaced in Wuhan, China. The disease has spread to various continents only. A few months from the time it was discovered, and a few months

later, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared it a global epidemic, an epidemic that spreads to more than one continent; it is now known as the 'Coronavirus Disease 2019' or 'COVID-19' (Tang, 2020). The first COVID-19 case in Malaysia was discovered on 25 January 2020 and originated in Wuhan, China. This has led to a snowball effect resulting in the first Malaysia Movement Control Order on 18 March 2020. The order prohibits mass gathering and travel bans, and the most prominent restriction being the focus of the research paper is the closure of all public and private premises except for essential services, which has resulted in a halt of economic activities (Tang, 2020). The recent fast global dissemination of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19 virus) has precipitated a devastating global economic recession (AL-MANSOUR & AL-AJMI, 2020).

The tight government control procedures caused numerous uncomfortable working circumstances. There are significant difficulties with traditional working methods. COVID-19 has had a comparable effect on the world economy as the 2008 financial crisis, albeit its long-term effects are more severe. The impact on business performance is apparent in badly impacted areas and industries, such as education and healthcare. With swift responses from businesses, a provisional COVID-19 plan is implemented (Ahlstrom & Wang, 2020). Subsequently, private companies and organizations have resorted to working from home, now commonly known as WFH, to sustain the structure and livelihood of the company. The new concept of WFH is foreign to Malaysia's workforce due to the work culture in Malaysia that employees must be present in the office to perform their duties. During the COVID-19 epidemic, most individuals already use internet commerce, work from home (WFH), and digital companies. In reaction to the onset of the crisis, labour patterns have altered, and the work from home (WFH) model has expanded significantly. With the announcement and execution of MCO 2020, the companies are forced to adopt WFH, and it has presented a unique chance to assess employees' performance on work efficiency during the pandemic.

When MCO 2020 started, 44% of employees surveyed by Malaysia's Department of Statistics (DOS) disclosed that they are retained and are working from home. This working adjustment was familiar only to standard employees who work for private or public employers and receive a standard salary. These are Malaysia's most common employment categories, making up 74% of the workforce, accurate to 2019. In comparison, only 25% of the self-employed workers could opt for WFH, with the majority being on unpaid leave. Approximately 10% of the total workforce was laid off due to the pandemic (Department of Statistics Malaysia Official Portal, n.d.).

Technology advancements have made it possible for people to WFH, and this has had an influence on how people, especially workers, think and behave. Additionally, it helped several businesses get through the difficult times caused by the outbreak. Businesses have adopted the WFH approach, relying on modern technology to reduce the associated regulatory costs (White, 2018). Due to its flexibility, working from home might improve performance. Choosing when and where to work is up to the employee. Many employees are thrilled with the flexibility the WFH idea gives them. Since there are no interruptions, employees take fewer breaks, and there is minimal contact with co-workers, working from home may also increase performance (Garg & van der Rijst, 2015).

WFH requires the development of online office and virtual work communication skills, in contrast to traditional office models. Unexpected virtual work sessions may also happen. In order to prevent data breaches, it is also crucial to keep workplace information safe while working from home. This emphasizes the need for employees to improve and increase their WFH skills in order to adapt to the evolving workplace. This need for WFH is pushing the digitalization of human employment at an alarming pace due to the growth of COVID-19 (Savic, 2020). Since there is no face-to-face interaction while working from home, it might be challenging to resolve issues at work swiftly via online virtual contact. This paradigm cannot be used in specialized sectors, such as low-skilled services. The concept's viability may also be impacted by network connectivity and online task appropriateness—using online networks for problem-solving increases psychological stress and anxiety. According to research, working alone and lacking social support might make one feel lonely (Savic, 2020). The effects on people's mental health are likewise quite detrimental. Since they are unable to share their concerns with others, some individuals find that pandemics make them more anxious. When there is uncertainty about

the future, such as when redundancies, salary cutbacks, or bankruptcies take place, employees' internal stress levels also considerably increase. Additional studies have shown that psychological stress at work directly lowers hiring commitment. Furthermore, WFH causes family members to occupy one another's space. Due to the recent prevalence of crown pneumonia, individuals often use family space for their professional requirements. Some household chores, such as childcare or housekeeping, must be divided amongst family members who work from home. As a result, job and family are at odds. During an epidemic, workers with WFH often struggle to balance caring for their families and careers. One of the leading causes of the imbalance between work and family is that telecommuters put in longer hours than those who work in traditional workplaces. They have unrestricted internet access due to their flexible working style (Mehta, 2021). Additionally, the distinction between work and non-work is blurred by this concept. Since more rooms are needed for WFH, it decreases the company's requirement for office space while increasing the need for living space among the workers.

Moreover, people often ignore how corporate culture affects business operations, even when the office work style has been abandoned. People often overlook the importance of culture since those who work from home may only interact and do business online. In addition, culture's influence has diminished. The roles reflected in corporate cultures, such as leadership and cooperative cultures, are diminished in WFH scenarios. The manager's ability to supervise and oversee employees is likewise impacted. Managers could also worry about how remote work affects contracts and workers' reputations. This strategy lessens possibilities for intimate psychological relationships while decreasing face-to-face contact, in contrast to regular office employment. Information and communication technology (ICT) may let people engage and collaborate online. However, it lacks the passion for face-to-face contact, which is thought to be essential for forging tighter social bonds (AL-MANSOUR & AL-AJMI, 2020). Employees may eventually feel alienated from the workplace environment and business culture if the absence of interpersonal connection is not addressed.

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, humans are motivated by five essential needs: physiological, safety, social, self-esteem, and self-actualization. This theory can provide insights into understanding and enhancing employee performance and productivity. In our case, the third level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs—social need can be related to the psychological challenge of WFH. Social need is essential for avoiding psychological issues such as loneliness, sadness, and anxiety (Cherry, 2022). However, as employees are isolated at home, they lose access to acquiring social needs, and it has caused psychological issues such as the sense of isolation and loneliness. According to Malaysiakini news, in light of the pandemic and the resulting new norms, WFH has prompted an ongoing discussion on employees' mental health (Tan, 2021). Not to mention, many published newspaper articles in Malaysia have emphasized the difficulties faced by working parents during the pandemic. WFH has led to the blurring of work and family boundaries. Due to the closure of daycare facilities, public and private schools, and institutions of higher learning in both the public and private sectors, working parents must balance their work and taking care of their children. (Manja et al., 2020). A mother shared that she finds it is nearly impossible to separate her work and home responsibilities, especially when her kids need her help with online classes (Zainuddin, 2021). All these stresses to juggling work and family can cause stress to the employees, and eventually, it will negatively affect employee's performance on work efficiency.

Upon further analysis of the survey, the data obtained effectively identified the WFH trend in Malaysia. As mentioned above, 44% of employees working from home were hired in highly compensated jobs such as education, real estate, finance, and other professional industries. This has shown the injustice of the lockdown, as high-income employees were the immediate economic survivors. At the same time, low-income workers would almost certainly be the immediate economic losers as they would be laid off owing to the temporary shutdown of these enterprises. Most of these workers are from the transport, storage, accommodation, F&B and retail industry (Tumin, 2020).

Further, a report by JobStreet's Malaysia Survey on September 2020, employees and employers following the experience of WFH has reported a greater willingness to more hours of working from home in organizations with 501+ employees (37%), those operating for three to four years (38%), high-

income workers (37%) and IT sectors (38%). In contrast, local businesses (33%), organizations with 50 or fewer employees (35%) and business owners (39%) reported that fewer hours of WFH are preferred (Jobstreet, 2020).

Employees Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction indicates whether employees can fulfil their wants and requirements through their jobs. In other words, employee satisfaction is used to evaluate an employee who is either satisfied or dissatisfied with the compensation or rewards. This work is related to his own, with his superiors, co-workers, and the working environment. (Saman, 2020). Employee satisfaction generates the drive and high morale necessary to achieve the company's goals and objectives. When individuals' aspirations and company goals are linked, they will be happier and more satisfied with their jobs and organizations. Thus, firms need to connect their organizational goals with the personal aspirations of their employees, as employee satisfaction increases their contribution to organizational goal achievement. In addition to treating employees with respect, acknowledging their achievements inside the organization, providing benefits that exceed industry standards, offering employee incentives, and empowering them, it can boost employee satisfaction. These aspects will significantly add to employee satisfaction, improving their dedication to their work and, ultimately, their contribution to goal attainment.

Compensation and Benefits

Compensation is a monetary compensation or incentive provided to an employee in exchange for his or her services, and salaries, wages, bonuses, and incentives are commonly used. Compensations are granted due to exchange for employees' services within the organizations. Compensation is believed to influence employee performance on work efficiency. The relationship between employee compensation and performance has been investigated (Adnan, Zarrar, & Zaffar, 2021). According to the author, compensation thus has a substantial impact on work efficiency.

Training and Development

Training and development are one of the main variables influencing employee performance. Organizations often define training and development as a strategic method that can be implemented to improve the organization's overall business outcomes using internal educational programs, also known as training and development, that are beneficial in increasing employee growth and retention. However, organizations that implement such aspects need to be designed, implemented, and maintained by skilled individuals (Rodriguez & Walters, 2020). The training and development factors allow the employees to enhance their skills and knowledge by providing sufficient information to adapt the working method throughout the pandemic era. In addition, increasing their ability to use new technologies such as Microsoft Teams and other platforms would assist the employees during working hours.

On the other hand, employee development allows employees to become more responsible, allowing them to handle more challenging tasks, allowing to develop and build leadership skills, enable employees to set their very own goals and objectives and allows them to make decisions based on their personnel thinking skills (Nyoike, 2020). This focuses on how well the employee's character develops based on influencing its performance within the organization.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture plays a vital role in influencing employee performance. (Fidyah & Setiawati, 2020) briefly mentioned that a firmly embedded culture could be an organization's key to

success. Organizational culture is a habit the firm applies and implements among employees. Thus, different organizations would have a different culture based on how the firm applies it. A common definition of organizational culture is a collection of guiding ideas and values that an organization applies to its workers, then develops and disseminates through time to address issues with external adaptability and internal integration (Limaj & Bernroider, 2019). As a result, how the employee feels toward the organization as a whole will affect how they feel about doing their work and indeed impact their performance. Based on this research study, there are correlations between organizational culture and employee performance (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

We are approaching towards a quantitative research design that we will utilize, as the researchers of this study, in order to obtain data and gather findings from the employees that experience the mean of working from home throughout this pandemic, as our target respondents of this study. As for the population of our research study, we picked Baby-Boomers, Gen-X, Gen-Y and Gen-Z, based in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur. It is mainly because the representatives of this research are in within the working age gap as well. It is mostly due to the reason where all the different generation age groups mentioned above would face the mean of working from home. Therefore, the respondents that are selected and are willing to take part in our research study participating in our survey would mainly be the Baby-Boomers, Gen-X, Gen-Y and Gen-Z that experienced the mean of working from home throughout this pandemic. Along with fulfilling the requirements of taking part in our survey, the group of participants must be born between 1946 and 2012 as the criterion. We will select 250 samples of employees that had experience working from home as our target respondents. Simple random sampling, as a type of probability sampling methods, will be utilized in this research study. Thus, we will distribute the designated questionnaire/survey to the stated 250 samples through Google Form, analysing the findings of Baby-Boomers, Gen-X, Gen-Y and Gen-Z opinions about their job performance and work efficiency during the pandemic era.

As our research questionnaire proceeds, we will use the Likert Scale to collect data from our target respondents. Our designed Likert Scale scales are in between 5 statements for our target audience to pick from. In addition, the designed Likert Scale involves five statement scales, starting from Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Thus, we analyze the Likert scale data and summarize the collected data using descriptive statistics. As seen in a research paper produced by Weijters, Millet, and Cabooter (2021), a Likert Scale with five items, starting from Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree, was used in the research paper as it is a reliable method in scaling opinions, behaviors and attitudes from the target respondents of our

research study.

In addition, we use alpha to determine the internal consistency of our questionnaires' questions that we use to survey based on our research studies. In terms of the measurement, alpha ranges between 0 and 1; when it shows a higher value under the measurement of the questionnaire, it means that the questionnaire is reliable. The researchers have used Smart PLS to perform various tests, including reliability tests, Pearson correlation coefficient tests, multiple regression tests, and hypothesis testing between the IV and DV.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The composite reliability of all items should be higher than 0.70 in order to be considered reliable (Hair et al., 2014). In Table 1, the composite reliability of the independent variables is greater than 0.8, indicating their reliability. Additionally, as for the Cronbach's Alpha, which evaluates the intercorrelations of indicators, is greater than 0.8 for all the independent variables that we used, indicating their reliability as well. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted value of all of the independent variables is more than 0.5, indicating sufficient convergent validity. If the external load value is higher than 0.7, an indicator is deemed reliable. A component load value of 0.5 is considered acceptable if the Average Variance Extracted value is more than 0.5. Table 4.8 shows that all of the independent variables have AVE values higher than 0.5, implying that they are reliable.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Apha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Compensation and Benefits	0.945	0.946	0.958	0.821
Employee Performance	0.848	0.904	0.888	0.615
Employee Satisfaction	0.937	0.938	0.955	0.841
Organization Culture	0.937	0.937	0.955	0.840
Training and Development	0.954	0.954	0.965	0.845

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient is a numerical value that ranges from -1 to +1, with -1 indicating a perfect negative correlation, +1 indicating a perfect positive correlation, and 0 indicating no correlation at all. In Table 2, it is apparent that organizational culture and employee satisfaction have the highest correlation, while the correlation between compensation and benefits, and employee performance is the lowest.

The correlation coefficient value between training and development and employee satisfaction is 0.916. This finding indicates that there is a significant correlation between these two independent variables, which means that when a company uses these variables to influence employee performance on work efficiency, they are likely to observe a positive impact. It is worth mentioning that most of the independent variables have a positive correlation value greater than 0.7, indicating a strong positive relationship between them.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Analysis

	EP	CB	TD	ES	OC
EP	1	0.679	0.731	0.738	0.743
CB	0.679	1	0.913	0.880	0.904
TD	0.731	0.913	1	0.916	0.918
ES	0.738	0.880	0.916	1	0.932
OC	0.743	0.904	0.918	0.932	1

Furthermore, the Pearson Correlation Analysis reveals a positive and significant correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable. For example, the correlation value between organizational culture and employee performance is 0.743, while that between employee satisfaction and employee performance is 0.738. The high correlation values between the independent variables and the dependent variable suggest that they are closely related and that changes in one variable are likely to impact the other.

The p-value obtained from the regression analysis was 0.000 (Table 3), which is less than the significance level of 0.001. This indicates that at least one of the four variables: employee satisfaction, compensation and benefits, training and development, and organizational culture can be used to model employee performance on work efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic. In conclusion, the results of this analysis provide valuable insights into the factors that affect employee performance during challenging times and can be useful for organizations in developing strategies to improve their workforce's performance.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis

	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p Value
Total	240.484	249	0.000	0.000	0.000
Error	101.772	245	0.415	0.000	0.000
Regression	138.712	4	34.678	83.482	0.000

The study found that compensation and benefits had a non-significant positive impact on employee performance in terms of work efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is evidenced by the p-value being greater than 0.05, indicating that the null hypothesis is true and that these factors are not statistically significant (Table 4). On the other hand, the study found that employee's satisfaction, organization culture and training and development had a statistically significant positive indirect impact on employee performance in terms of work efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a p-value of less than 0.05. Thus, the mediating effect of intention was also verified in these cases, and the hypothesis can be accepted.

The significance of employee satisfaction in affecting employee performance on work efficiency is one of the study's primary findings. According to our study, employees are more likely to be motivated to work hard and produce high-quality work if they are happy with their organization and their employment. Engaged employees are more likely to go above and beyond their job responsibilities and are more likely to achieve better results. Furthermore, satisfied employees tend to be more productive, leading to higher work efficiency. Satisfied employees are also more likely to stay with the company, which can lead to reduced turnover costs for the business. Therefore, businesses need to prioritize employee satisfaction by creating a positive work environment that fosters job satisfaction.

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	p-value	Result
H1: Employee satisfaction factor has positive relationship with the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age.	p= 0.050 p ≤ 0.05	H1 Accepted
H2: Compensation and benefits factor has positive relationship with the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age.	p= 0.178 p >0.10	H2 Rejected
H3: Training and development factor has positive relationship with the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age.	p= 0.017 p ≤ 0.05	H3 Accepted
H4: Organizational culture factor has positive relationship with the employee performance on work efficiency in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic Age.	p= 0.036 p ≤ 0.05	H4 Accepted

Also, it was discovered that compensation and benefits does not play a significant role in determining employee performance in the pandemic era. However, it is important to note that this finding is specific to the context of the pandemic era and may not hold true in other contexts. In the pandemic era, employees may prioritize factors such as job security, safety, and health over compensation and benefits. The uncertainty and unpredictability of the pandemic may have led employees to focus on these immediate concerns, rather than long-term financial incentives. In addition, many employees may have had to take pay cuts or reduced working hours due to the pandemic, which could have affected their perception of the importance of compensation and benefits in determining their performance. Despite this finding, it is still important for employers to provide fair and competitive compensation and benefits packages to their employees. While these may not be the most important factors in determining performance during the pandemic, they remain important considerations for overall employee satisfaction and well-being. Moreover, in the long-term, compensation and benefits are likely to regain their importance as the pandemic recedes and the job market becomes more stable.

Moreover, it was shown that training and development were significant determinants of employee performance. Giving employees the chance to advance their knowledge and skills increases their likelihood of being motivated and effective. Training and development programs can help employees increase their productivity and work efficiency, leading to better job performance. Furthermore, training and development programs can help improve employee engagement, motivation, and retention, leading to a more committed and productive workforce. Therefore, it is important for employers to invest in training and development programs that can help employees improve their skills and knowledge.

Employee performance on work efficiency during the pandemic era was found to be significantly influenced by organizational culture, which is another important element. Employees who feel more connected to their coworkers and their business may be more motivated and productive. This can happen when there is a supportive organizational culture that encourages teamwork, communication, and collaboration. A positive organizational culture that promotes teamwork, communication, and collaboration can help employees feel more connected to their colleagues and their organization, leading to higher levels of motivation and productivity. Conversely, a negative organizational culture can lead

to high levels of stress, low job satisfaction, and low work efficiency. Therefore, businesses need to create a positive organizational culture that promotes a healthy work environment.

CONCLUSION

This study has successfully answered the research questions by identifying the factors that influence employee performance and work efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic age in Malaysia. Independent variables, including employee satisfaction, training, and development, as well as organization culture, are playing an important role in influencing employee performance during the pandemic. The findings of this study are highly relevant and important and can provide valuable insights for employers and employees who are looking to improve their performance and well-being in this challenging time. The findings suggest that organizations need to invest in employee training and development programs to help employees adapt to the new work environment during the pandemic. Such programs can help employees develop new skills and competencies that are essential for their job roles and improve their overall work efficiency. Similarly, organizations need to adopt a supportive and positive organizational culture that emphasizes employee well-being and job satisfaction. This can be achieved through policies such as employee recognition programs, mentoring, and coaching programs, and regular feedback mechanisms. By addressing these factors, organizations can improve employee performance and work efficiency, leading to better organizational outcomes and overall success.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to our understanding of the factors that influence employee performance and work efficiency in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study has identified key factors such as employee satisfaction, compensation and benefits, training and development, and organizational culture that can impact employee performance during the pandemic. These findings can be used to inform theoretical frameworks that explain the relationship between these factors and employee performance, thereby contributing to the development of new theories and models that can be used to guide future research in this area.

From a practice perspective, the findings suggest that organizations need to invest in employee training and development programs to help employees adapt to the new work environment during the pandemic. Such programs can help employees develop new skills and competencies that are essential for their job roles and improve their overall work efficiency. Similarly, organizations need to adopt a supportive and positive organizational culture that emphasizes employee well-being and job satisfaction. This can be achieved through policies such as employee recognition programs, mentoring, and coaching programs, and regular feedback mechanisms.

While this study provides valuable insights into the factors that influence employee performance and work efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic, further research is needed to validate these findings and explore other factors that may impact employee performance. For example, future research could investigate the impact of leadership styles, communication strategies, and job design on employee performance and work efficiency during the pandemic. Additionally, future research could examine the long-term impact of the pandemic on employee performance and work efficiency, as well as the effectiveness of different interventions and policies aimed at improving employee performance and work efficiency during the pandemic.

Additionally, future studies should explore the role of social support in remote work environments. As noted in the current study, social support can play a critical role in remote employee satisfaction and well-being. However, the study did not specifically investigate the types of social support that are most effective in remote work environments. Further research could examine the role of different types of social support, such as emotional support, instrumental support, and informational support, and how they impact remote employee productivity and performance.

Besides that, future studies should consider investigating the impact of remote work on team dynamics and collaboration. The current study focused primarily on individual employee performance on work

efficiency, but it did not examine the effects of remote work on team performance and collaboration. Given the importance of teamwork in many industries, exploring the impact of remote work on team dynamics can provide valuable insights into how to effectively manage remote teams and promote collaboration in remote work environments. By addressing these unanswered aspects of the research problem, organizations can develop more effective remote work policies and practices that support employee performance on work efficiency and well-being.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Lee Yu Nan and Haw Yen Nee conceived and planned the study and performed the data collection and analysis. Remie provided the guidelines throughout the writing process, as well as helping with post-article refinements. Ho Hong Ren provided final comments and revision guidelines. All authors provided critical feedback and helped shape the research, analysis, and manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

We certify that the article is the Authors' and Co-Authors' original work. The article has not received prior publication and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. This research/manuscript has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published in whole or in part elsewhere. We testify to the fact that all Authors have contributed significantly to the work, validity and legitimacy of the data and its interpretation for submission to Jurnal Intelek.

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