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Effects of Motivation, Self-Efficacy, Efficiency, and Qualities on Academician's Job Performance During Work from Home (WFH)

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Abstract
WFH has become the "new norm," prompting organizations to consider its long-term implementation. This study investigates the relationship between telework motivation, self-efficacy, efficiency, and quality, and their impact on job performance among academicians. Through an online survey of 369 lecturers from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), employing statistical analyses including Pearson correlation and multiple regression, the study finds significant positive correlations between telework motivation, self-efficacy, efficiency, quality, and job performance. Particularly, telework self-efficacy and quality significantly influence job performance. The findings underscore the importance of fostering self-efficacy and providing supportive telework environments to enhance productivity and well-being among remote academic staff.

Keywords: Job Performance; Work from Home; Academician

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1.0 Introduction
Between 2019 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly changed our lifestyles and work patterns. The crisis led to the closure of academic institutions and a widespread shift to remote learning, directly impacting both academicians and students. For academicians, the pandemic posed numerous challenges by disrupting traditional teaching, research, and administrative practices. They had to navigate new responsibilities and adapt to e-learning platforms to achieve their goals. Common difficulties included inadequate internet access, reduced interaction with students, limited technological resources, and varying student attitudes.

The concept of working outside traditional office settings, known as telecommuting or teleworking, first appeared in the 1950s with technological advancements (Baruch & Yuen, 2000). By the 1970s, working from home (WFH) became popular in advanced nations and was known for enhancing work-life balance. WFH offers benefits like cost savings, increased productivity, flexible work arrangements, and better customer service (Saludin et al., 2020). Although terms like telecommuting exist, WFH is now the most used term (Hassan & Nuruddin, 2011).

Ndubisi and Kahraman (2005) highlight that while WFH is increasingly common, especially during global emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic also presents challenges such as technology use, communication, and collaboration. As WFH becomes the "new norm," organizations are considering making it permanent.

Telework or WFH involves working outside the main office according to a set schedule and is common in knowledge-based fields like IT and academia (De Abreu E Silva & Melo, 2017). Academics have been greatly affected by telework during the pandemic. However, not all jobs are suited for remote work due to environmental and facility limitations, leading to varied employee experiences. This can impact motivation, effectiveness, and efficiency while working remotely (Widar et al., 2021). Research shows that telework can also cause stress, sleep issues, work-life imbalance, and reduced physical activity, underscoring the need to assess its effects on job performance (Widar et al., 2021). This study aims to explore the relationship between telework motivation, self-efficacy, efficiency, and quality, identifying the most influential factors on job performance among academicians in UiTM.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Employees' Job Performance
Work performance is a key focus in industrial and organizational psychology (Kahya, 2009). Despite advances in products, processes, and technology, improving work performance remains crucial for managers. The shift to WFH during the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected employee performance. Susilo (2020) shows that teleworkers often outperform those in physical offices, especially when working in quiet environments with flexible schedules, with the excessive use of ICT devices at home can disrupt performance. Effective performance measurement is essential, especially for remote-working academicians (Azmy, 2022). Teleworking is linked to higher productivity, greater job satisfaction, and reduced stress compared to office work (Catana et al., 2021). Studies suggest autonomy and flexibility during WFH positively impact job performance, particularly during the pandemic (Liu et al., 2021).

2.2 Motivation
In the present era, numerous organizations permit their staff to engage in remote work, despite the ongoing pandemic. WFH is frequently perceived by workers to enhance motivation and enhance their work-life balance (Felstead et al., 2017). The way a firm organizes WFH can have an impact on employee motivation. Telecommunication enables employees to exercise greater autonomy in the management of their schedules, potentially enhancing their motivation. According to the findings of Balasundran et al. (2021), the motivation of educators can be enhanced by the acknowledgment of their contributions to online learning and the facilitation of supportive conversations by school officials. Academics, who bear several obligations, require a strong drive to handle their assignment efficiently. Motivation, work performance, and commitment are influenced by individual behaviors (Sultana et al., 2021). The most significant issue in work-from-home (WFH) is the limited accessibility of remote work technology, resulting in higher motivation levels among telecommuters.

2.3 Self-Efficacy
The theory of self-efficacy, proposed by Bandura (1986), is a social cognitive theory that delves into how an individual's behavior, environment, and cognitive factors interplay with their expectations. Changes in the work environment, such as transitioning to teleworking, can significantly impact an employee's self-efficacy, particularly when the teleworking setup influences their self-esteem (Brown, 2014). However, teleworking does not necessarily negatively impact self-efficacy if employees maintain social connections and use social media platforms to enhance their job performance (Prihadi et al., 2021). Individuals with high self-efficacy are likely to achieve desired outcomes and derive satisfaction from their work, leading to increased motivation and adaptability to telecommuting (Judge & Bono, 2001). Given that WFH often entails balancing household chores and family obligations, employees with high self-efficacy are better equipped to cope with these demands (Cattelino et al., 2019). Ultimately, self-efficacy serves as a valuable resource that enhances employees' functioning and well-being (Yap & Baharudin, 2016). In the context of WFH, fostering high levels of self-efficacy can empower employees to effectively navigate the challenges associated with remote work, leading to improved overall performance and satisfaction.

2.4 Efficiency
In recent years, WFH, or telework, has been a common subject of debate, particularly in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. Extensive research has been undertaken to ascertain the correlation between telework and employee performance. As stated by Blahopoulou et al. (2022), the implementation of WFH arrangements has the potential to enhance both productivity and the perception of greater job autonomy. Particularly among working mothers, home-based teleworking was associated with greater levels of satisfaction, according to (Wheatley, 2012). Ilies et al. (2009) state that the impact of remote work on employees' families and, by extension, their overall job satisfaction will be important provided telecommuters with the flexibility to work from home to accommodate family or personal obligations (Hill & Fellows, 2014). Several studies have examined the correlation between WFH and job performance and concluded that WFH enhances productivity by allowing employees to work remotely from the office, thereby eliminating the disruptions caused by colleagues (Thulin et al., 2019).

2.5 Qualities

WFH's impact on the job performance of academics in public higher education institutions is multifaceted. Campo et al. (2021) suggest that WFH can enhance productivity and work-life balance by offering greater autonomy and reducing stress. However, its effects on health, stress levels, recovery capacity, and overall well-being may vary among staff members (Heiden et al., 2020). Neo-institutional theory, which investigates how organizations respond to internal and external influences, can be applied to business contexts to analyze WFH. These influences shape perspectives regarding WFH (Daniel et al. 2001). The nature of job responsibilities significantly impacts the feasibility of WFH within an organization. The implementation of WFH policies may be justified when tasks can be reliably executed from a distance, personnel performance can be easily monitored, and work can be completed remotely. Significantly affecting these assessments is the organizational culture. In contrast, beliefs that prioritize bureaucratic control and stability may hinder the adoption of WFH, according to Daniels et. al (2001). On the other hand, attitudes that value personal flexibility in work performance are more likely to promote its acceptability.

3.0 Methodology

A total of 369 samples out of 8788 were included in this study. As to the suggestion by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample size of 368 is sufficient for a population of 8000. The questionnaire used was adapted and modified from several studies conducted by other researchers. The questionnaire consists of five sections, including demographic items. The reliability analysis confirmed that the variables used in this study have high internal consistency and reliability which ranges from .782 to .962. An online survey including 55 items with a 7-point Likert scale was distributed via email to all lecturers at 13 Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) campuses. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, and no personal information was collected to guarantee respondent anonymity. The study employed a simple random selection procedure to ensure that every member of the population had an equal and independent probability of being picked for inclusion in the sample. Before distributing the questionnaire, the researcher sought approval from the Research Ethics Committee under the reference REC/02/2022 (ST/MR/16). In fulfilling the research objectives, several analyses were performed such as correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis to verify the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

4.0 Findings

The demographic profile of the respondents of this study, which are divided into four categories, namely gender, age, marital status, and faculty. Based on the total of 369 responses received, the majority of the respondents are female with n = 285, 77.2%, followed by male respondents with n = 84, 22.8%. Most of the respondents are also in the age group of 36 years old to 45 years old with n = 192, 52%, followed by 46 years old to 55 years old with n =85, 23%, and the age group of 26 years old to 35 years old with n = 30, 8.1%, meanwhile, the remaining respondents are from the age group of 56 years old and above. Based on the responses, most respondents are married with n = 285, 77.2%, followed by n = 73, 19.8% who are single and 3.0% or 11 respondents are divorcee.

Table 1. Demographic Profile

Variable	Label		
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	84	22.8
	Female	285	77.2
Age	26 – 35 years old	30	8.1
	36 – 45 years old	192	52
	46 – 55 years old	85	23
	56 years old and above	62	16.9
Marital Status	Married	285	77.2
	Single	73	19.8
	Divorcee	11	3.0

In addition, the number of respondents from various faculty, involved in this study. The highest of the respondents are from faculty of Business Management (22.2%), followed by the faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences (11.4%), College of Engineering Studies (8.9%), faculty Accountancy (7.3%), faculty of Applied Sciences (7%), faculty of Academy of Language Studies (7%), faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying (4.6%), College of Creative Arts (4.6%), faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management (3%), faculty of Medicine (2.7%), faculty of Pharmacy (2.7%), faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies (2.7%), faculty of Information Management (2.7%), faculty of Sport Science & Recreation (2.4%), faculty of Health Science (2.2%), faculty of Plantation & Agrotechnology (1.9%), faculty of Education (1.9%), faculty of Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (1.9%), faculty of Communication & Media Studies (1.4%) and faculty of Law (1.4%).

In answering the research objectives, a series of tests needed to be done. A correlation test was performed to determine the relationship between motivation, self-efficacy, efficiency, and qualities toward employee job performance during WFH. Based on Table

2 below, this research found that there are significant positive relationship between motivation, self-efficacy, efficiency, and qualities toward employee's job performance during WFH (p<0.05). The *R-value*s for motivation and self-efficacy are 0.477 and 0.501, respectively. This shows that each variable has a moderate positive relationship with employee's job performance. Meanwhile, *the r-value* for efficiency is 0.331 which indicates that the variable has a weak positive relationship with employee job performance. In addition, the *r-value* for qualities is 0.809 which indicates that the variable has a very strong positive relationship with employee's job performance.
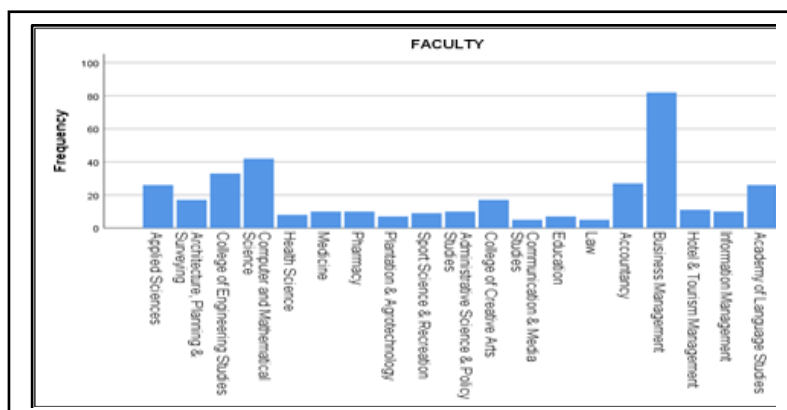

Figure 1. Faculty of Respondent

Table 2. Relationship between Variables

Variable	Employee's Job Performance		Level
	Pearson Correlation	Significant	
Motivation	0.477	0.000	Moderate
Self-Efficacy	0.501	0.000	Moderate
Efficiency	0.331	0.000	Weak
Qualities	0.809	0.000	Very strong

Table 3 shows the model summary for the regression model. The value of R Square is 0.658 shows that 65.8% of the total variation in employee's job performance is explained by the independent variable.

Table 3. Model Summary of Regression Model

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.811[b]	0.658	0.657	0.44785

F-statistics were carried out to find the overall strength of the model. Table 4 shows that the value of the F-Statistic is 141.521 and the p-value is 0.000 (<0.05) which indicates that the data used in the research fit the model.

Table 4. Anova result

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
2	Regression	141.521	2	70.761	352.8	0.000[c]
	Residual	73.408	366	0.201		
	Total	214.930	368			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee's job performance
c. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Efficacy, Qualities

Table 5 demonstrates the regression model result that shows only two independent variables that significantly influence the Employee's job performance: Telework Self-Efficacy and Telework Qualities (p<0.05).

Two variables which are motivation and efficiency had been removed from the model using the stepwise selection method since the p-value is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the final regression model is shown below:

$$y = \beta_0 + 0.046 \, X_2 + 0.747 \, X_4$$

Employees' job performance = 1.339 + 0.046 (Self-Efficacy) + 0.747 (Qualities)

Table 5. Regression model result

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
2	(Constant)	1.339	0.182		7.360	0.000
	Self-Efficacy	0.046	0.022	0.077	2.095	0.037
	Qualities	0.747	0.036	0.766	20.890	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee's job performance

5.0 Conclusion

Working from home requires high self-motivation as employees operate in isolation. Higher education institutions should support remote staff by ensuring they remain motivated. Superiors and peers play a crucial role in maintaining motivation among remote workers. Management should implement strategies to remind employees of their contributions and acknowledge their efforts. Recognizing and acknowledging employees' efforts fosters pride and engagement. Research shows that heightened motivation correlates with increased productivity. Therefore, organizations should cultivate a motivational environment that empowers employees to perform at their best, inspiring loyalty and dedication, ultimately driving organizational success.

To effectively implement work-from-home (WFH) arrangements for academic staff, higher education institutions must adopt a multi-faceted approach that addresses technological, organizational, and personal aspects of remote work. Ensuring access to essential resources is fundamental. Institutions should provide academic staff with licensed software such as Microsoft Office 365 and robust collaboration platforms like Microsoft Teams or Zoom. These tools enable seamless virtual communication, document sharing, and team collaboration. Additionally, institutions must ensure that staff have stable internet connections, reliable hardware like laptops or desktops, and secure data storage systems to support their professional needs. Training and ongoing support are critical elements of a successful transition to remote work. Providing necessary training programs can help employees become proficient in using digital tools and platforms, ensuring they can effectively manage their workload and collaborate with colleagues. Technical assistance, such as help desks or dedicated IT support teams, can address issues promptly, reducing frustration and downtime. Promoting work-life balance is another essential aspect of supporting remote academic staff. The flexibility of WFH allows employees to manage their personal and professional responsibilities, which leads to improved well-being and productivity. Institutions can encourage this balance by setting clear boundaries for work hours, discouraging after-hours communications, and offering mental health resources to address the challenges of remote work. Recognizing and addressing obstacles associated with remote work is crucial to ensure a seamless transition. Privacy concerns, such as maintaining the confidentiality of sensitive data, must be addressed through secure communication protocols, encrypted file-sharing systems, and regular cybersecurity training. Monitoring performance in a remote setting can be challenging but should prioritize trust and transparency. Adopting performance evaluation criteria that focus on outcomes and deliverables rather than hours worked can foster a results-oriented culture that values productivity over presenteeism.

To further enhance communication and collaboration among remote academic staff, institutions should promote virtual meeting technologies, instant messaging platforms, and asynchronous communication tools. Virtual team-building activities and regular check-ins can help maintain a sense of community and connection among remote workers. Flexibility in work schedules is another critical factor in meeting the diverse needs of academic staff. Allowing employees the option to work remotely for three or more days a week can accommodate varying personal circumstances, such as caregiving responsibilities or health concerns, while also supporting individual work preferences. Institutions can also consider hybrid work models, where employees divide their time between on-campus and remote work, providing the best of both worlds. Fostering a culture of innovation and inclusivity in remote work policies can further empower academic staff. Institutions can encourage cross-departmental collaboration by hosting virtual conferences, workshops, and knowledge-sharing sessions. By creating an environment that values adaptability and continuous learning, higher education institutions can ensure their academic staff thrive in a remote or hybrid work setting while continuing to deliver high-quality education and research.

In addition, the implementation of WFH regulations that adhere to employment laws and foster fairness among employees effectively tackles both legal and equity concerns. Work From Home (WFH) (Service Circular No. 5 of the Year 2020) states employees are allowed to work from home with the permission of the Head of the Department, and this circular was enforced in January 2021. Employees received this consideration based on the appropriateness of their roles, by ensuring compliance with established conditions and regulations. These evolving work approaches strive to disturb a harmony between maintaining work consistency and addressing personal responsibilities, without permitting employees to take time off. In general, with these tactics, higher education institutions can proficiently help remote academic personnel, increase efficiency, and uphold a favorable work atmosphere, regardless of the remote settings. Flexible working policies should be revamped to ensure gender neutrality, particularly concerning childcare provisions, which often serve as the main reason for female employees opting to work from home. Staff welfare should be a top priority for university

administration, emphasizing the need to support remote work options, especially for employees with young children. (Hashim et al., 2020). The unprecedented challenges of the global pandemic, characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA), present significant management hurdles (Ochoa et al., 2019). Nevertheless, prioritizing employee well-being is paramount. Conversely, employees must also adhere to university policies and diligently meet their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

6.0 Acknowledgements

7.0 Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

The study contributes significantly to the understanding of factors influencing job performance among academicians during work-from-home (WFH) scenarios, a mode of working that has become increasingly common in recent years. By exploring the relationships between telework motivation, self-efficacy, efficiency, and quality, the research provides insights into which elements most strongly impact academic performance in a remote work setting. Notably, the study highlights that self-efficacy and the quality of telework environments are pivotal in enhancing job performance, the belief in one's ability to successfully perform tasks—and the quality of the telework environment in driving job performance. These findings suggest that fostering a supportive telework environment by ensuring access to essential tools and resources, such as high-speed internet, reliable hardware, and collaborative software, coupled with initiatives to boost self-efficacy, can improve productivity and job satisfaction among remote academic staff. The study's recommendations for higher education institutions, including providing necessary resources, training, and equitable performance assessments, offer practical guidance for optimizing remote work practices. Moreover, the emphasis on gender-neutral childcare provisions and employee welfare addresses broader concerns about work-life balance, making the study's contributions relevant to the evolving landscape of remote work. The findings and recommendations of the study have implications for the evolving landscape of remote work in academia. Higher education institutions can create conditions that not only improve academic performance but also contribute to the overall well-being of their workforce by fostering a supportive environment, enhancing self-efficacy, and addressing work-life balance. This holistic approach ensures that remote work becomes a sustainable and effective practice in the future.

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