

COVID-19: FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE WHEN WORKING FROM HOME

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: In the time of Covid-19 pandemic period, working from home (WFH) has proven an effective countermeasure overcome the spread of disease, while enable the business continuation. The purpose of this study was to identify the motivation factors that impact the performance of employees while working at home during the pandemic.

Method/Approach: The in-depth interview was conducted with 10 respondents from three countries (Thailand, Japan and Vietnam) of different age, educational level, geography, and occupation, who have more than a year of experience switching between working from home and working in an office.

Findings: Environment, time management, and reward are the major factors that have a significant influence on working performance; additionally, labor intensity and job security are the variables that have the weakest relationship with employee performance when working from home respectively. The researchers also gave several implications to enhance employee performance for both organizations and workers based on the study results.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic, Work from Home, Motivation, Employee Performance, Reward, Job Security, Time Management, Environment, Labor Intensity

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 has become a massive worldwide issue since 2020. As a result, governments worldwide are forced to take action to slow the spread of the virus. One of the arrangements is social distancing. As a result of this approach, schools, workplaces, tourist attractions, and even some public transportations have been closed temporarily. As part of this reaction, businesses and policymakers have actively supported the idea of telecommuting and encouraging people to work from home. Most firms are resorting to flexible work schedules so that at least half the staff can keep telecommuting while the rest can return to the workplace.

While a massive shift to working from home has helped firms remain afloat and sparked a rethinking of how offices can be run, not everyone can pivot to a home-run office. According to (Madell, 2019), work from home has few disadvantages, such as lack of division, no physical separation between work and personal time. These cons can create vulnerability impacting job satisfaction and efficiency. Despite all that, workplace experts still agreed that working from home has proven a practical arrangement that helps companies overcome the storm when something extraordinary occurs in the business world like Coronavirus.

This crisis has given us an unprecedented opportunity to review paradigms of productivity and get a glimpse into unexpected and new ways of working. However, suppose organizations do not look to learn from this crisis by investing time and resources in applying the science of activity-based working and thinking to shape the new work culture deliberately. In that case, it will be an immense lost opportunity to reclassify new rules of engagement and a missed opportunity to identify their blended workstyle to support their business procedure going forward. Moreover, the influence of motivational factors on performance when working from home still has limited studies; given the above, the study's objective is to explore motivational components that influence employee performance when working from home in crisis circumstances such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work from Home during Covid-19 Pandemic

Since the end of 2019, the novel Corona Virus, or Covid-19, has spread throughout the world, and cause dramatic change to the business operations. Many businesses required to close down according to the government policy to control over the pandemic, or shift to remote workplace, some since Feb 2020, and more since May 2020 (Bick; Blandin; Martens, 2020). While many tasks require frontline operations such as medical service, technician, and messenger, many such as office workers could still perform their task at home as one of the countermeasures on the pandemic. The concept of working from home has been in the world for a very long time, but it was

never as popular as nowadays; Department of Transportation's National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) reported 11.9% of respondent reported working from home in 2017.

Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to how the employees act at workplace, or how well they perform the task given by the company. It can also refer to simply as work efficiency and quality. (Donohoe, 2019); Shahzadi, Javed, Pirzada, Nasreen, Khanam (2014), defined the characteristic of Employee Performance as involving *quality and quantity of completed task, presence as at work, the level of aid and being helpful, and punctuality to meet the deadline*. While it is hard to measure the level of productivity, providing "acknowledgement, recognition, and reward" could motivate and affect the Employee Performance (Yang, 2008). If the employees are motivated, they are willing to put more effort in producing output, which then reflect the better performance (Azar and Shafiqhi, 2013).

Motivation

Motivation refers to a force that move ones to take action with a particular objective. Motivation creates results such as productivity, performance, and persistence (Grant, 2008). Ryan and Deci (2000) stated that motivated employees have more self-control, flexibility, and self-driven more than the less motivated ones. According to previous researches (Arabi, 2013; Shahzadi & Javed, Pirzada & Nasreen & Khanam, 2014; Purwanto & Asbari & Fahlevi & Mufid & Agistiawati & Cahyono & Suryani, 2020), few motivational factors could be identified according to the Conceptual Framework in **Figure 1**.

Reward

One of the most important factors of motivation factors that could affect employee performance is incentive, or reward. Akerlof and Kranton (2010) reported company would succeed gaining expected performance when they understand how economy works. All companies rewarded their employees using salary, promotion, bonus, as well as other non-financial reward to keep their employee financially sustainable, motivated, and able to keep up their high-level performance. Lemieux et al., (2009) provided evidence that by *using performance evaluation, performance reward can improve the employee's performance and work quality*. However, under the context of working from home, it would make the employee feel invisible toward their supervisors, which many decrease chances for any promotion, reward, and positive performance review (Golden, 2006). In addition, the reduced in profit due to the pandemic may cause the company to reduce the wages and bonus of the employees, which lead to demotivation and negative employee performance.

Job Security

Covid-19 pandemic has led to the challenge of job security (Carter & May, 2020; Sanchez et al., 2020). Job security refers to “employee’s expectations about the stability and longevity of their job in an organization” (Lu et al., 2017, p.30). Researches indicated that *employee’s behavior declined as soon as job security has come into question* (Domenighett, 2000; Ozyama, 2007), and *job insecurity could lead to high turnover rate*. Not only the increasing chances of wage reduction due to company’s declining financial position, working from home means employees need to bare the increase cost of electricity and internet (Arabi, 2013; Shahzadi & Javed, Pirzada & Nasreen & Khanam, 2014; Purwanto & Asbari & Fahlevi

& Mufid & Agistiawati & Cahyono & Suryani, 2020). Even though they may be able to save the transportation cost, working from home may be less sustainable for lower income employees. When the current wage could not sustain their living conditions, job insecurity may come into their mind.

Time Management

It was said that one of the most influential factors over the preference of working from home is to have *authority to manage their own time schedule*. Lupu (2017) stated that flexible time management enable the employees to manage their own time on their daily routine, and made adjustment both in personal and professional lives, whether to take care of their children, or making medical appointments. Wienclaw (2019) mentioned benefits of time management on employee performance, as to be able to make personal appointment during the working hours, and finishing the company’s work later in the evening without taking leaves from the company. In addition, working from home enables employees to spend times they usually spent on the road on other valuable activities, as well as reducing stress from the long traffic, which is considered major benefits to the employee performance (Ford & Butts, 1991). As per Thorsenssion (2020), the research result show that having flexible time management leads to positive influence on employee’s performance.

Environment

In relation to the time management, working environment at home was shown as positive environment since the employees could customize their own working environment to match their taste (Baltes et al., 1999; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). However, Ahmed & Farooqi (2020)’s research of environment under work from home during Covid-19 reflected negative result on the employees with less self-discipline, as the

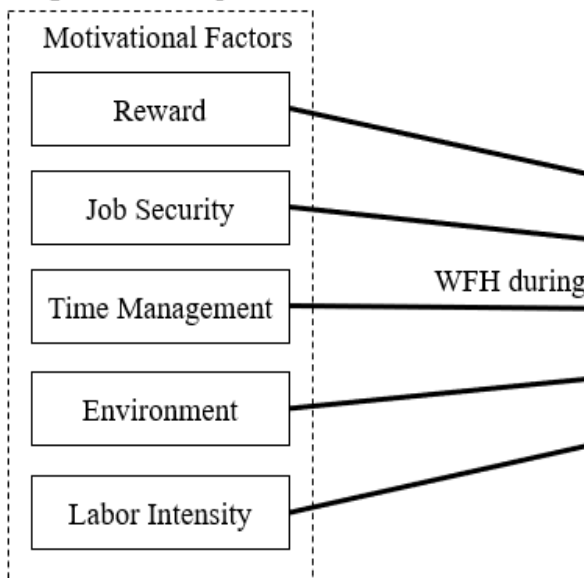
studies showed some may tend to be lazy at home environment, especially if working in the bedroom. It further showed the result from the interview that by working from home, *employees tend to lack of socializing with their co-workers*, and that working with people would lead to better job performance compare to work in isolation. Collins and Moschler (2009) found that the employees, who is isolated from their colleagues, have concern over *lower productivity* while working at home. Employees might be unable to focus on work with children around (Baruch, 2000; Kazekami, 2020), as well as unable to manage the work-life balance, which may lead to overwork (Grant et al., 2019).

Labor Intensity

Labor intensity in this case, refers to *time and effort spent on the job, as expected by the company*. While working from home provide the opportunity for employee to manage their own schedule, on the other hand, research reported it is harder to disconnected from the corporate communication circle; the employees are now working a longer hour, longer meeting sessions, and spending more time on the communication channels, with 70 percent stated they are now working on the weekend, and 45 percent working a longer hour during weekday (Maurer, 2020).

According to the previous studies, labor intensity led to the negative outcome on the employees – including health issue, stress, work-life balance (Boxal and Macky, 2014; Aleksic et al., in press), burnout, and turnover, (Burke et al., 2010), which may result in lower job satisfaction (Burke et al., 2009), especially if there is within the non-rewarding circumstance (Burke et al., 2010).

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



METHODOLOGY

The research used a qualitative interview approach to measure the effect and significance of independent variables (motivational factors) on the dependent variable (employee performance) under the environment of working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, from the perspective of employees who are currently having more than one year experience switching between working from home and in office, in different ages, educational level, geographical resident, and field of work. This research aims to answer questions by collecting and analyzing a sample and generalizing the results to explain a population. Data collection was conducted by having telephone interviews with the workers in Thailand, Japan, and Vietnam. This method is preferable considering social distancing policy amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. Interviewees were selected from private and public sectors. Interview data sources were put into **Table 1** and **Table 2**. The data was collected through in-depth interviews using semi-structured questions.

The researchers listed the names of persons whom the researchers acknowledged as working from home, then the request was sent to twelve of the recipients, explaining the study's objective, and only ten confirmed. Interview guidelines were then sent to all of the interviewees and appointments were made for the interviews. Each interview session took about 30 to 60 minutes. The audio recording was used only upon the consent of the interviewees, but all were short noted and put into a transcript format after the interview. All of the interview questions would be translated to native languages and the researchers would translate answers to English. Before the interviews, the researchers explained the study's objectives and confirmed to all participants that their personal data would remain confidential. The data were gathered by three dimensions: 1) General information of interviewees; 2) Motivational factors affect employee performance; 3) Other actions to improve performance when working from home. Some open-ended questions were also included to obtain more information from the interviewees. The list of interview questions is shown in **Appendix**.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Interviewees

No.	Interviewee Code	Gender	Age (Years old)	Education Level	Sector	Have Children	Country of Work	WFH Experience (Month)
1	ITVW1	Female	21 – 30	BA	Private	N	Thailand	3
2	ITVW2	Male	21 – 30	MA	Private	N	Japan	12
3	ITVW3	Female	21 – 30	MA	Private	N	Thailand	3
4	ITVW4	Female	21 – 30	BA	Private	N	Vietnam	4
5	ITVW5	Female	31 – 40	BA	Public	Y (2)	Vietnam	5
6	ITVW6	Male	41 – 50	BA	Public	Y (2)	Vietnam	5
7	ITVW7	Female	51 – 60	PhD	Private	N	Thailand	4
8	ITVW8	Female	51 – 60	PhD	Private	Y (2)	Thailand	18
9	ITVW9	Female	21 – 30	BA	Public	N	Vietnam	3
10	ITVW10	Female	21 – 30	BA	Private	N	Vietnam	4

RESULT

The interview data was analyzed using the motivational factors including: reward, job security, time management, environment, and labor intensity. The results are summarized in **Table 2**.

Most of the results supported the idea that motivational factors affect the employee's performance, except for job security and labor intensity. Most significant motivational the researchers found was environment, which appeared to have negative effect to work performance. Most of the interviewees stated they are having communication problem, where WFH led to slower communication and working process, internet problem, lazing around as no supervisor was watching, and even got distracted from family members. The next most influential factors would be time management and reward. The least important factors are job security and labor intensity, which most interviewees agreed it might not have been the motivational factors that affect work performance.

Interestingly, while we interviewed people across three countries of Thailand, Vietnam, and Japan (while their nationalities are either Thai or Vietnamese), no significant cultural difference appeared from the interview. Even the sector categorization may seem different based on amount of work load, with government sector having lower amount of work load than private sector, but it is not significantly having effect on work motivation or work performance. On the contrary, the interviewee, who have small children, stated in favorable to WFH that it would enable them to supervise their children while working at the same time. In addition, the senior interviewees (51 – 60 years old), whom both obtain degree of PHD, stated in favorable and understanding for being given extra work/ working after working hours. For other interviewees, who are much younger and gain either BA or MA in educational level, they showed neutral attitude (those whom work intensity remain unchanged) or negative response (those whom work after working hours).

Table 2: Motivational factors provided by Employees who experience working from home during Covid-19 pandemic

No.	Interviewee code	Education Level	Sector	With Children	Country	Reward	Job Security	Time Management	Environment	Labor Intensity
1	ITVW1	BA	P	N	TH	+		-	-	
2	ITVW2	MA	P	N	JP			-	-	
3	ITVW3	MA	P	N	TH		-	-	-	-
4	ITVW4	BA	P	N	VN	+		-	-	
5	ITVW5	BA	G	Y (2)	VN	+		+	-	
6	ITVW6	BA	G	Y (2)	VN	+			+	
7	ITVW7	PhD	P	N	TH			+	+	+
8	ITVW8	PhD	P	Y (2)	TH			+	-	
9	ITVW9	BA	G	N	VN	-		-	-	
10	ITVW10	BA	P	N	VN	+		-	-	
+						5	0	3	2	1
-						1	1	6	8	1
Total						6	1	9	10	2

ITVW = Interviewee (Applied as Interviewee Code)

BA = Bachelor's Degree

MA = Master's Degree

PhD = Doctoral Degree

P = Private Sector

G = Government Sector/ Public Sector

Y = Yes (follow by No. of children)

No = No children

Country Code: TH = Thailand, JP = Japan, VN = Vietnam

Note: Person working in Japan has Thai nationality

+ = factor has positive affect to work performance

- = factor has negative affect to work performance

Blank = No difference between Work in Office & Work from Home

The following findings are what researchers found from the interviews:

Reward

Out of 10 interviewees, five interviewees, both in private and government sector have confirmed reward have positive affect to their work performance, and 1 reported negative, such as the following examples:

“We have a cooking competition. We take pictures of our home cooking and compete to win the voucher or money or snack. It should help motivated the staffs since the work is pretty stressful, so having this kind of activity make us more relax.” - ITVW1

“Because my children are small and easy to become sick, my supervisor gives me the freedom to arrange my work as long as I finish my work on time. If I don't have task on a working day, I can stay at home (only when social distancing - 50% official WFH). That is touching for me and motivated me a lot” - ITVW5

“My supervisor sometimes contacts me out of office hour when he/she is having any urgent work. I am proud to be given extra work as it means the Chancellor have trust in me” - ITVW7

“Sometimes my boss gives compliments and small bonus for good performance of mine and co-workers. I feel my effort is worth and that I should dedicate more [to the company]” - ITVW 10

“They give us some physical things like rice. In term of motivation, it did not affect much, but at least I know they take care of their employees.” - ITVW9

Job Security

Only one Interviewee (ITVW3) stated she has concern over the job security:

“[I have concern over job security] because many people in the office were forced to work in position that does not suit them, and indirectly cause them to leave the job. We have higher turnover rate, partly, it is due to higher difficulty to do the job such as doing the copy ad in brochure. Normally, I need to printed the broacher out to check color proof, and hand over to AE team, but we cannot do that right now. It is also harder to communicate since we can normally speak right away in the office.” - ITVW3

The other interviewees, with their work security remain the same whether in the office or working from home, shows no concern over job security, and does not have any motivational affect toward work performance, whether it is in the office or working from home.

“[I don't feel insecure much] because my performance is not bad, and auditor is lacking in personnel, so the company try its best to keep us with them. If we were to quit, it would be because we do not want to stay.” - ITVW1

“[I don't feel insecure] Although my salary is decreased 30% when WFH, it's because of some cost that I no need to pay, not related to my performance.” - ITVW4

“No. [I don't feel insecure] In term of lost, I may lose a chance to travel to foreign countries to attend meetings with my higher up face-to-face, but for other things, they are according to the nature of the business. (Finance field)” - ITVW8

Time Management

Six interviewees reported negative affect toward their work performance, three reported positive effect:

“No, [given time flexibility does not improve my work performance] because at office, I have supervisor to monitor me. ... I tend to get lazy when I am at home. Everyone said we are not productive when at home because no one is monitoring us. For example, if the work schedule for 2 weeks, I can get the work done within 1 ½ week in office, but within 2 weeks if work at home.” - ITVW1

“Yes, totally [have more flexibility to manage one’s life]. I can have a small leave to do my laundry during the day. But for me, I prefer WFH 50% would be best. WFH 100% does not work, and productivity [concentration] will fall.” - ITVW2

“Yes, in the morning because no transportation time. But we also do not have clear working time off. Since we have notebook with ourselves all the time, the company will have expectation that we can answer the request all the time.” - ITVW3

“I don’t think so [that flexibility in time management will improve work performance.] I don’t have much motivation when WFH, at least in the office, my boss and colleagues can push me by somehow” - ITVW4

“I don’t think so, when WFH, after finishing my work I tend to do other stuffs; otherwise, when Working in office, at least I can work harder like reading materials or discussing with my co-workers.” - ITVW9

“Yes, I can do more work than in the office. This is not limit to just teaching or attending seminars [as a university teacher]. Many people came to talk to me in the office a lot, and I am unable to finish my work. On the contrary, no one disturbed me at home.” - ITVW7

“We don’t have limitation on working hours since pre-Covid-19 as we work together with many countries. Given current flexibility, we can arrange meeting late at night, and it is easier to manage time to have a meeting with someone in USA. When I was in the office, I feel a bit burden to stay late in the office, but understand it is the work nature.” - ITVW8

Environment

Eight interviewees reported negative affect to their work performance, and only two (ITVW6 & ITVW7) said otherwise:

“I personally don’t think it is that positive. It can be relaxed since no one is monitoring me, but I can be too relaxed.” - ITVW2

“It slows down the work, and I could not concentrate since there is a lot of distraction [from parents].” - ITVW3

“Not all the time, I only concentrate on my work when my children are sleeping. Even though I often complete my task on time but I need to work after dinner occasionally (8-9pm)” - ITVW5

“If I am the owner, I would prefer office since we can see each other and can have more intimacy between colleagues, which would make work more productive (such as instant communication) ... The communication during WFH is mostly work related. We did not chit-chat. We will feel a bit distance as we don’t know much about colleagues’ personal story, but it does not affect the work.” - ITVW8

“WFH gives me more relaxes but I prefer WIO because of higher productive and it’s also more convenient for me in solving problems” - ITVW10

“Yes, doing my favorited things [having a teapot or watching TV when I have no task] could give me more motivation.” - ITVW6

“Yes, it’s a good thing my house is nice. I have my personal room, which is quiet for me. I am happy with it... I feel more productive at home. As stated before, many people came to disturb me in the office, so I prefer working from home.” - ITVW7

Labor Intensity

Only one Interviewee stated labor intensity have negative effect, and one have positive effect during WFH period, while the others stated they have the same workload:

“I worked longer hours around 1-2 hours later than usual. I think I am more productive because I work for 2 positions right now, and working longer hour means I can work more jobs... [But] This is very hard [to balance personal & work life]. I don’t have Work-life balance for a long time. Sometimes at 7 am, I already have work sent to me.” - ITVW3

“[The current work intensity is] positive, because we have work result from working. I need to review the students’ papers, and by reading many papers, I gain more knowledge that could be contributed for my own research.” - ITVW7

“I have the same workload as when I was in the office. I think this amount of workload has positive affect to my performance, since workload is not as much that I need to stay late until 12:00 am. I can manage to get off work at 5 or 6 pm.” - ITVW1

“One supervisor of mine worked until 2 am continuously [not WFH], and affect her health in the long term. That’s why they quite to get a better work-life balance.” - ITVW1

“My workload is the same for me. Since there is not much workload, I think it’s positive [affect to my performance.]” - ITVW6

DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this study is to find the motivational factors that affect the employee performance when working from home during Covid-19. The findings imply that the most interviewees perceived working from home as overall negative effect toward their working performance.

Environment

The findings of this study showed that environment is a major negative impact toward employees' performance. It is showed that the interviewees tended to be relax and lazy when out of the sight of their supervisors' monitoring, which they feel would make their productivity dropped. This corresponded to the finding from Ahmed & Farooqi (2020), which stated employees may be less-discipline in a homy environment, although no significant finding stated lack of socializing with co-workers would lead to lower performance except for unable to have instant communication during work. They would also be distracted, not only by children as stated by Baruch (2000) and Kazekami (2020), but also the parents and other external environment. In contrast, those who have personal working space and could maintain quiet environment similar to the office expressed preference to work at home. Some interviewees also expressed they were working late at night, and having a hard time to differentiate personal and professional life.

Time Management

As the second most affecting factors to employee performance, majority of interviewees viewed time management as negative effect to their work performance. While they agreed that time management and flexibility to manage their own schedule is considered good point for WFH (with few interviewees gave positive response on this point), corresponded to Lupu (2017), as well as how no transportation time would be good

for them as stated by Ford & Butts (1991), the actual results of the research were opposite: they have more time in the morning, but need to work late and work more hours than in the office. In addition, given the time flexibility without supervising has proved by majority of the interviewees that it made them too lazy that, while the productivity level is still acceptable by the organization's standard, it is dropped compare to when working in the office.

Reward

Reward is considered having moderate effect to work performance. The selected interviewees did not receive much financial impact from the pandemic situation. While the additional funds such as OT or off-site incentive were not provided during WFH, they understand it is unrelated to their performance. In addition, receiving reward such as cash or voucher from extra-curriculum activities (cooking competition) or given permission to work from home to oversee young children were perceived as positive motivation on work performance by the interviewees. Moreover, some interviewees reported being complimented or given bonus as reward could be perceived as positive motivation to work performance and being assigned any urgent task by supervisor could be viewed as being trusted by supervisor, which make Interviewee proud of oneself. This is in line with Lemieux et al (2009) statement that performance reward could motivate employee's willingness to work as well as the performance. However, while evaluation is harder during WFH period, the interviewees did not feel invisible to their supervisors, and viewed that they received sufficient evaluation score based on the final work produced. Therefore, this aspect is contrasted to Golden (2006)'s statement on employee feels invisible toward their supervisors, and shall decrease chances of any promotion and reward.

Job Security & Labor Intensity

Job security and Labor intensity were rated almost equally (1:2), and could be considered unrelated to work performance under the pretext of working from home; only one interviewee (ITVW3) expressed relationship toward job security and 2 for work intensity, which the researchers considered them as the insignificant variables. As previously stated, the interviewees' salary was not lower to the point of financially unsustainable, and their employment status were quite stable in the organization, especially in government sector. The outcome of job security is in accordance with (Parker et al., 2020), among workers who are in a similar occupation as they were before the Covid started, they are as happy with their work now that there has been no adjustment of their efficiency or job security. Therefore, while they implied that Domenighett (2000) & Ozyama (2007)'s statement on employee's behavior declines as soon as job security has come into question is true, it did not take place for the interviewees' situation except for ITVW3, where the company forced employees to work in an unsuitable job position and therefore were indirectly forced to quit the company. This is also applied for labor intensity where majority of interviewees reported their workload were the same as in the office, and they saw that the current workload was good for them and have positive impact to work performance. ITVW7, whom has strong passion for her career, also respond positively as she enjoys reading students' paper or searching for new knowledge that could contribute to her research, as the Dean of faculty of Science in a university, outside her working hours. Only ITVW3 reported she was working longer hours with no clear time off, and even required to work on holiday for urgent cases. While she stated more working hours have positive affect to work performance since she could take on more work, the long duration would definitely be

bad for work-life balance, and this corresponded to Boxal and Macky (2014); Aleksic et al. (in press) that work intensity could lead to health issue, stress, and work-life balance.

IMPLICATION

For most employees, the switch to working from home the pandemic started was their first experience with remote working. With the upward trend of the Covid pandemic, increasing productivity has the most significant concern for both employees and employers. To raise employee performance when working from home, management and workers should consider these following several approaches or actions.

Firstly, the environment when working from home plays a critical part that influences employee working outcomes directly. It is easy to be distracted because of external impact or lack of professional and family obligations boundary. Employees should consider having a working space with comfortable and suitable office furniture in their house, not working on a sofa or in the bedroom, and ensuring that the workspace is quiet to focus on tasks. When they do this, their brain will alert that it is time for work, not relaxation. Moreover, quality technology equipment like a new laptop, tablet or a high-performance router will save workers from many technological issues. Working from home relies more on technology to keep communicating with supervisors and co-workers; a piece of out-of-date technical equipment might be prone to common network issues. The company many considered supporting their employees on the necessary equipment for the employees to work from home effectively.

Secondly, one of the most important things when working from home is to separate work life and personal life. Without supervision,

the conscientious can slack off. Start a day like normal when working in the office, such as getting up early, getting dressed, and avoiding online distractions once sitting down to work. Then setting a schedule could provide a day structure and help them stay motivated and manage their workload. Taking regular breaks also is a great way to keep productive. It can be simple like staring out the window, reading a newspaper or having some small exercises. Don't be consumed by social media or online shopping when working because it can become addictive without boundaries. Logging out of social media account or turn off notifications during working time can help to reduce temptation. Furthermore, to work from home more efficiently, before starting working, employees should make sure what are priorities for the day, how long to get everything done and at the end of the day, they should review and update their to-do list. It also might more helpful to take a few minutes before going to bed to plan for the next day. The company may also aid employees by issue policy so no work communication would be done outside of office hours to maintain employee's work-life balance and prevent burnout or turnover.

Finally, recognizing the effort of employees can make them feel more motivated and inspired. An appreciation, even small, will generate a sense of trust in them. A small set with different things like mugs, pens, or something related to them might be a thoughtful gift. Special treats when employees work well can be considered adequate, such as vouchers to restaurants or online stores. They might come there with family or friends after social distancing. Most people want to keep updating and developing their knowledge and skills, and online training courses is another way that management level can reward their employees. In more advanced, few new tools which might make an immense job

satisfaction and performance can be taken to consideration, including a laptop, a tablet, or just a small allowance for their monthly invoices when working from home, it would be nice.

CONCLUSIONS

Primary objective of this study was to use interview approach to find related motivational factors that could affect employee performance during working from home amidst Covid-19 situation.

The findings of this research contributed to the idea that few motivational factors could contribute to employee performance during work from home. The main factors that should be raised to attention is related to the change of nature of work, such as environment, time management, and reward. Homey environment could have negative effect toward employee performance, making them lazy and distracted by external factors, thus ensuring quiet and peaceful environment for employee could most their performance. Being flexible in time management sometimes blur the line between personal and professional life, causing people to risk overwork and have lower quality of work-life balance. The company could improve by setting clear work-life schedule for employees. In addition, showing appreciation or given some reward could motivate employees to continue the work during the pandemic period.

While research focus on people working in various countries, not much cultural difference is spotted. Those with small children share appreciation that WFH enable them to take care of children at the same time even if they were a little distracted from work. Those with high in seniority and educational level showed more understanding in the shift of business nature that led to work even after working hour.

FUTURE STUDIES

There are few limitations to this research that could be improved by future studies by Employer of the company that has WFH policy. Firstly, the sample were drawn from those of Thai and Vietnamese nationalities. While the researchers could not find distinctive cultural difference, future research in other regions such as America or Europe might result differently. Secondly, finding on seniorities' positive acceptance of working after working hour could be looked into further whether it is based on the age, educational level, or any other demographic factors. Thirdly, on the factors such as job security or work intensity could be research further by interview those who are financially affected by Covid-19 situation, or have work intensity change due to the shift of working location to confirm its insignificance toward employee performance during work from home.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Part 1: General Information		
	1. What is your age?	The researchers
	2. What is your gender? [Not asking as researcher already know]	
	3. Are you working in the private or public sector?	
	4. How long have you worked for the company?	
	5. What types of roles do you do that enable you to work from home?	
	6. Why do you work from home?	
	7. How long have you been working from home?	
	8. Within the time space of a week (or month), how frequent do you work from home?	
	9. How do you communicate with your co-workers?	
	10. Do you have any children? Are they study from home currently?	
Part 2: Motivational Factors That Affect Employee Performance		
	[Reward]	
	11. Are you affect financially from working at home, comparing to pre-Covid-19?	The researchers
	12. When working from home, it should be harder for your supervisor to evaluate your performance. Do you think you had (or will be) receiving sufficient evaluative score on your work performance? Why?	Lemieux et al. (2009); Golden (2006)
	13. Could you give the examples of reward the company/ government sector provides you that would motivate you in this current situation? [promotion, compliment, free meal, etc.] Do you think it is sufficient to motivate you to continue performing the role you are given?	
	14. Does the reward(s) given during this situation differ (or might differ) from when you are in the office?	The researchers
	[Job Security]	
	15. Do you think your supervisor trust you without his/her critical supervision?	Domenighett (2000); Ozyama (2007)
	16. Since the start of Covid-19 pandemic, many people have lost their job or got cut in their wage, and feel insecure about their job. Do you feel the same them right now? Why?	
	17. Are there higher or lower turnover rate within your company compared to before?	
	18. There are researches over the employees having to bear higher burden on electricity and internet bills when working from home, that they would prefer working in the office. Do you agree with this? How is your situation?	

[Time management]		
19. Do you think working from home gives you more flexibility in the time management between your personal and work lives? How?		Lupu (2017)
20. How can you balance your personal life and your work when working from home?		
21. Do you think giving you flexibility to manage your time when working from home will improve your work performance compare to working in office? Why?		Thorsenssion (2020)
[Environment]		
22. Do you think working from home gives you more freedom? How?		Baltes et al. (1999); Gajendran & Harrison (2007).
23. Does the environment at home have positive influence on your work performance? Why?		Ahmed & Farooqi (2020)
24. Where do you feel more productive between home and office? Why? And where would you prefer to work?		Collins and Moschler (2009)
25. What is your experience in communicating with your colleagues while working from home?		The researchers
26. Do you think a dedicated workspace at home can improve your performance? Do you decorate your home as a home-run office?		
27. Do you think you can reduce distractions when working from home like silence your phone and turn off notifications or listen to music for relaxing?		
[Labor intensity]		
28. How do you manage your workload? [create a routine...]		The researchers
29. Do you working longer hours compare to working in the office? If yes, how do you think it could be improved?		Maurer (2020).
30. Do you think the current workload have positive or negative influence on your overall work performance? Why?		(Boxal and Macky, 2014; Aleksic el al., in press)
Part 3: Other Actions to Improve Performance When Working from Home		
31. What are the main challenges that you face on a regular basis while working from home?		The researchers
32. Do you have any recommendations on how the business can improve employee performance more effectively when working at home?		