

## Working From Home Facilities Model During Pandemic Situation

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**Abstract:** Since WHO declare COVID-19 as a pandemic, it has changed the way of our life today. Mostly, all countries in the world implementing lockdown or movement control to stop the spreading. In Malaysia, the government announced a Movement Control Order (MCO) which requires the closure of all businesses except those providing essential services and items. This affects most business operations and companies have to switch to Working From Home (WFH). This paper aim to propose WFH Facilities Model during a pandemic (COVID-19). The scope of this study pertains to Malaysian citizens. The main methods used in this research were a deductive approach that suit to cross-sectional research. This research employs a simple random sampling technique to achieve the required minimum sample size. Therefore, to gather data, a questionnaire survey technique was selected. Meanwhile, using the SmartPLS3, structural equation modeling (SEM) technique was used to test the research hypotheses. A total of 500 questionnaires was circulated via a web-based self-administered questionnaire using the Google Forms survey. Out of 500 questionnaires distributed, only 363 sets were replied to and completed with a high response rate of up to 73%. The findings of the study show that from six research hypotheses, only two hypotheses are supported which are Work-Family Related (WF) and Modern Technology (MT). Hence, this study recommends that it is important for any organisation that wants to implement WFH to pay an attention to both attributes.

**Keywords:** Working From Home, Working Facilities, Movement Control Order, Model, Pandemic COVID-19

### 1. Introduction

The spreading of COVID-19 has caused shock to the world's economy and devastating human toll. The Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global health emergency based on increasing case-reported rates in China and globally. (Velavan & Meyer, 2020). Furthermore, the WHO announced COVID-19 as a global pandemic on 11 March 2020 (Shah et al., 2020). Until October 2020, COVID-19 has spread to numerous different countries and now in the third wave. Most countries have implemented extreme lockdown, movement control, or shelter orders on their residents in an attempt to reduce the outbreak of COVID-19. The spread of COVID-19 was greatly mitigated in China by the drastic prevention strategies enforced (Kraemer et al., 2020). Consequently, the success of these preventive measures is therefore highly dependent on the cooperation and compliance of all members of society as a whole (Azlan et al., 2020). The response of most countries involves contact tracking, self-isolation or quarantine, the promotion of public health initiatives, the improvement of health services, the strengthening of health facilities, and the postponement or cancellation of large-scale public events (Bedford et al., 2020). Hence, most businesses, therefore, introduce flexible working structures such as teleworking, distance learning, crowd limitation and avoidance, closure of non-critical facilities and services (WHO, 2020). These initiatives ensure a physical distance between individuals and minimize interaction with polluted surfaces, while at the same time fostering and preserving virtual social interactions within families and communities. This approach is also known as Working From Home (WFH). WFH could potentially become a norm for many businesses following the pandemic situation. WFH means an employee is working from their space (house, apartment, or place of residence), rather than working from the office either full-time or when it's most convenient for them.

It is observable during the COVID-19 pandemic that the workforce and the way of working are shifting dramatically and expected to expand (Ahmadi et al., 2000; Montenovio et al., 2020). Most working sector, including management, professional and related occupations were more likely to shift toward WFH (Brynjolfsson et al., 2020). This transition might serve as the catalyst for a new way of doing business for years to come (Deng et al., 2020). It is no doubt that WFH led to a 13% performance increase, improved employer satisfaction, and their attrition rate halved. This shows the advantages of learning and selection effects when new management approaches like WFH are introduced (Bloom et al., 2015). In WFH, the notion of work transformation, the convergence of people, space, and technology with a direct emphasis on business operations is crucial. WFH's ultimate aim is to help businesses break out of their conventional job description and shift to a more agile, inspiring, communicating, and satisfying environment. Work transformation offers the ability for groups of facilities to play a crucial strategic role in serving the rapidly evolving environment and providing the business with real strategic value-added. In terms of the real office and the rapidly growing virtual office, work

transition is focused on facilities management, human resources, and information technology, all working together to create more innovative ways of managing space (Hassanain, 2006; Robertson, 2000). Thus, in the case of WFH, the provision of services should ensure facility functionality like effective virtual connectivity and accessibility (Kojo & Nenonen, 2015).

## 2. Research Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

Primarily, based on the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), a research conceptual model was developed. The most prominent social psychological model for understanding and predicting human behaviour in particular contexts (Ajzen, 2001). The TPB is defined as an individual's intention to perform a given behaviour and is generally assumed to capture the motivational factors that determine individual behaviours, such as effort and willingness to perform a behaviour. This research conceptual model was established on the basis of six determining factors identified by the authors in the previous research. The six determinant factors for WFH Facilities consists of Work-Family Related (WF); Organisational Support (OS); Working Culture (WC); Job Autonomy (JA); Modern Technology; and Social Media (SM).

The first determinant factor is Work-Family Related (WF). It can be interpreted as the fulfillment of role-related expectations that are accepted and shared in the work and family environments between a person and his or her partners (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). The WF items included managing work obligations, doing jobs while relaxing at home, emotional support from family, isolate work and family priority, and resisting lifestyle with the current situation. In line with Noor (2003) study, these WF items were expected to be related to work-family conflict and well-being during the pandemic COVID-19.

Secondly, the determinant factors of Organisational Support (OS) can be described as the beliefs of employees about the degree to which the company values its commitment and cares about its well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2004; Satardien et al., 2019). The OS items included employer understanding, assisting with family-friendly, responsive, improves skills and on-job training, treated with trust and respect. Hence, support of the organisation is essential for employees' to perform according to the transforming work environment (Halcomb et al., 2020).

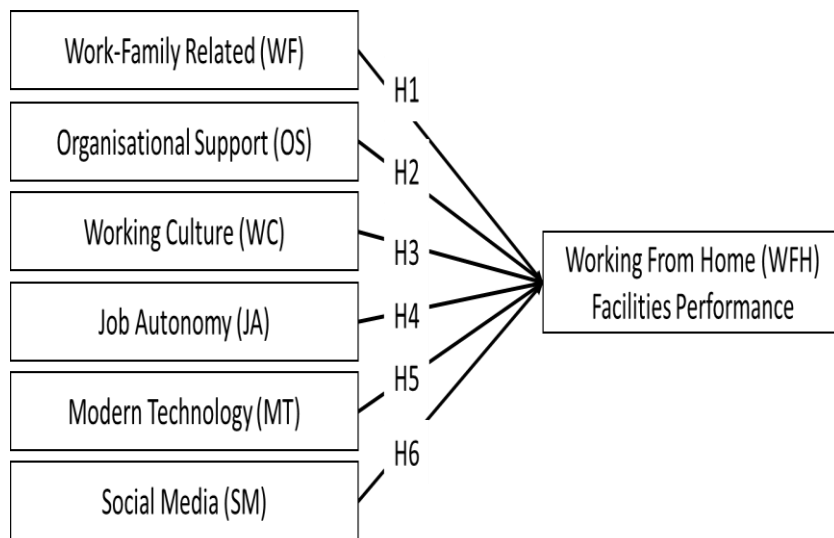
The third determinant factor is Working Culture (WC) that can be defined as a set of informal norm values and norms. The WC control the way people or groups in an organisation interact with each other inside and outside the organisation (Akbar et al., 2019). The WC items included working extra time, two-way communication, regular feedback, positive environment, flexible location to do jobs, and sufficient workload to do. Apart from that, WC is anticipated to generate values and beliefs in the organisation (Ali et al., 2019), definitely during pandemic COVID-19.

The fourth determinant factor is Job Autonomy (JA). JA can be identified as the degree to which the job offers the employee considerable freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling the work and in specifying the procedures to be used in carrying it out (De Spiegelaere et al., 2016). JA can be divided into two main dimensions: work schedule (with the autonomy to schedule the task) and work procedures (with the autonomy to choose strategy) (Khoshnaw & Alavi, 2020). The JA items included precise job criterion, detail work procedure, sufficient timeframe, input in decision-making, and personal initiative. In advanced, JA improved the effect of balanced emotion on employee voice, which, in turn, enhanced the mediated relationship between empowering leadership and employee voice via harmonious passion (Gao & Jiang, 2019).

The next determining factors are the needs of Modern Technology (MT), which is identified by the ability to automate business processes and present information sufficiently (Beliaeva & Chernyavskaya, 2019). The way people live has definitely been changed by technology. It has influenced numerous aspects of life and redefined life (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018). The MT items included surveillance camera, video and audio recordings, internet network, supporting computer devices, mobile gadgets, and work-related mobile applications. During pandemic COVID-19, the modern technology has contributed in improving people's lives (Kumar et al., 2020).

Lastly, the determinant factor of Social Media (SM) can be defined as a series of technological innovations in both hardware and software that facilitate inexpensive content creation, interaction, and interoperability for creative online users (Berthon et al., 2012; Wang & Kim, 2017). The SM variables that contribute to job performance included Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate. During the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, individuals operating on the SM were able to obtain and share various types of data on a wide and extraordinary scale (Li et al., 2020).

In particular, all the six determinant factors are included in the research conceptual model. This research conceptual model consists of 34 items for independent variables and five items for dependent variables. Hence, six hypotheses were established based on the research conceptual model, as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Research Conceptual Model

H1: There is a significant relationship between the determinant factor of the Work-Related Family for WFH performance during a pandemic situation.

H2: There is a significant relationship between the determinant factor of the Organisational Support for WFH performance during a pandemic situation.

H3: There is a significant relationship between the determinant factor of the Working Culture for WFH performance during a pandemic situation.

H4: There is a significant relationship between the determinant factor of the Job Autonomy for WFH performance during a pandemic situation.

H5: There is a significant relationship between the determinant factor of the Modern Technology for WFH performance during a pandemic situation.

H6: There is a significant relationship between the determinant factor of the Social Media for WFH performance during a pandemic situation.

### 3. Methods

The primary methods used in this research were a deductive approach that suit to cross-sectional research. This research employs a simple random sampling technique to achieve the required minimum sample size for a questionnaire survey technique to collect data. Meanwhile, the structural equation modeling (SEM) approach was used to test the research hypotheses using the SmartPLS 3 software. The analysis was carried out in two stages: i) the measurement model assessment, and ii) the structural model assessment. The measurement model assessment involved examining the adequacy of the model by analysing the relationships between each determinant factor and items in independent and dependent variables. Meanwhile, the structural model assessment is the part that associates with independent and dependent variables. After satisfying the prerequisites of measurement model assessment have to proceed with the evaluation of the structural model for the collinearity issue. In addition, all the threshold values for every criterion were clearly represented under the conclusion to have a comprehensive understanding of the evaluation of measurement and structural model.

The sufficient sample size from the local population was properly identified using a simple random sampling technique. The simple random sampling technique is a popular type of random or prospect sampling (Al Ghayab et al., 2016; Gupta & Shabbir, 2008). In this technique, each sample of the population has the same chance of being selected as a subject. The sampling unit of analysis for this research was a Malaysian citizen. Therefore,

the minimum sample size for this research is between 271 for a 90% confidence level with a 5% confidence interval (error margin); and 385 for a 95% confidence level with a 5% confidence interval. A total of 500 questionnaires was circulated via a web-based self-administered questionnaire using the Google Forms survey. Out of 500 questionnaires distributed, only 363 sets were replied to and completed with a high response rate of up to 73%. The findings of the study show that from six research hypotheses, only two hypotheses are supported which are Work-Family Related (WF) and Modern Technology (MT). Hence, this study recommends that it is important for any organisation that wants to implement WFH to pay an attention to both attributes.

### Demographic Data

Throughout the simple random technique, potential respondents were randomly identified and invited to take part in this study. Then, the frequency descriptive analysis was carried out to attain the demographic profile of the respondents who answered the questionnaire. The demographic data consists of several categories such as age, gender, academic qualification, occupation, and time allocation for WFH of the respondent. The questionnaires were answered by respondents who are WFH during the COVID-19 MCO. A total of 500 questionnaires was distributed via a web-based self-administered questionnaire. Out of 500 questionnaires distributed, only 363 sets were replied to and completed. This clearly shows the response rate is 73%, which is considered high responses.

A detailed overview of the demographic profiles of the respondents is presented in Table 1. Based on the response, most of the respondents are from the age group of 21 to 30 years old (43.3%) and 31 to 40 years old (37.5%), and minimal respondents within the range of 41 to 50 years old group (16%). Male respondents slightly outnumber female respondents, total numbers of 54.6 percent as against 45.5 percent, respectively. The majority of the respondents have a Master's Degree with 106 respondents (29.5%), followed by Bachelor's Degree with 96 respondents (26.4%), SPM/STPM/Certificate with 56 respondents (15.4%), and Ph.D. with 53 respondents (14.6) as their highest educational qualification. In terms of occupation, the questionnaire was mostly answered by the government servants with a total of 130 respondents (35.8%). Then followed by internship students (including the SLIM program) and from the private sector with 111 respondents (30.6%) and 106 respondents (29.2%), respectively. In general, the allocation time for WFH shows most of the respondents spent time within 4 to 12 hours daily. Specifically, 4 to 8 hours and 8 to 12 hours are highly rated with 185 respondents (51%) and 131 respondents (36.1%), respectively.

**Table 1.** Respondent profile

Category	Indicator	Frequen cy	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
AGE	21 - 30 years old	157	43.3	43.3
	31 - 40 years old	136	37.5	80.7
	41 - 50 years old	58	16.0	96.7
	51 – 60 years old	10	2.8	99.4
	Over 61 years old	2	0.6	100.0
	Total	363	100.0	
GENDER	Male	165	45.5	45.5
	Female	198	54.5	100.0
	Total	363	100.0	
ACADEMIC	SPM/STPM/Certificate	56	15.4	15.4
	Diploma	51	14.0	29.5
	Bachelor Degree	96	26.4	55.9
	Master	107	29.5	85.4
	PhD	53	14.6	100.0
	Total	363	100.0	
OCCUPATION	Student	111	30.6	30.6
	Government Sector	130	35.8	66.4
	Private Sector	106	29.2	95.6
	Business	16	4.4	100.0

	Total	363	100.0	
TIME WFH	1 - 4 hours	1	0.3	0.3
	4 - 8 hours	185	51.0	51.2
	8 - 12 hours	131	36.1	87.3
	12 - 16 hours	36	9.9	97.2
	More than 16 hours	10	2.8	100.0
	Total	363	100.0	

#### 4. Results and Findings

##### Structural Equation Modelling

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is the analysis technique used in this research, which is a multivariate analysis technique based on the ideas used in regression analysis that overcomes important and statistical problems with more traditional approaches. In this analysis, there are two assessments conducted: measurement model assessments and structural model assessment.

##### Measurement Model Assessment

To provide rigorous testing of the reliability and validity of the research model, the evaluation of the measurement model is important. It is also used for latent constructs and their manifest variables to be evaluated (Loehlin, 1998). For the evaluation of the measurement model, several steps were used in this analysis, including the evaluation of convergent validity and discriminant validity for independent and dependent variables. The summary of the indicator loadings shown in Table 2. The first attempt to establish a measurement model indicates that indicator loading for WC1 and MT1 are lower than the 0.6 cut-off threshold value. Therefore, these two items were removed and reassess all retained indicator loadings. The second attempt indicates that all indicator loadings were greater than 0.60 and indicator loadings ranged from 0.67 to 0.92. Items with indicator loadings exceed 0.60 were considered high significant (Hair et al., 2010). High indicator loadings indicate that measurements had convergent validity.

**Table 2.** Indicator loading

Items	1	2
WF1	0.778372	0.778382
WF2	0.846690	0.846688
WF3	0.850404	0.850396
WF4	0.775217	0.775219
WF5	0.836070	0.836065
WF6	0.806724	0.806731
OS1	0.906462	0.906449
OS2	0.920936	0.920929
OS3	0.920624	0.920617
OS4	0.719226	0.719258
OS5	0.865296	0.865298
<del>WC1</del>	<del>0.025009</del>	Item Removed
WC2	0.802643	0.800475
WC3	0.825490	0.826398
WC4	0.865200	0.869502
WC5	0.746088	0.748868
WC6	0.769516	0.771781
JA1	0.802785	0.802785
JA2	0.794830	0.794830
JA3	0.817941	0.817927

JA4	0.802557	0.802559
JA5	0.797488	0.797500
<del>MT1</del>	<del>0.463370</del>	Item Removed
MT2	0.679930	0.676956
MT3	0.862951	0.864865
MT4	0.916256	0.921003
MT5	0.892374	0.900202
MT6	0.811424	0.819370
SM1	0.739817	0.739885
SM2	0.719295	0.719376
SM3	0.748805	0.748729
SM4	0.744402	0.744398
SM5	0.740080	0.740051
SM6	0.711402	0.711403
BF1	0.716842	0.717067
BF2	0.791390	0.791457
BF3	0.850294	0.849952
BF4	0.843673	0.843460
BF5	0.679558	0.679995

**Table 3.**Internal consistency reliability & convergent validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Working From Home Facilities	0.836407	0.884740	0.607365
Work-Family Related	0.899763	0.922800	0.666119
Organisation Support	0.917542	0.939131	0.756674
Social Media	0.835961	0.875157	0.538904
Working Culture	0.862967	0.901464	0.647236
Job Autonomy	0.862608	0.900855	0.645066
Modern Technology	0.893639	0.922782	0.707248

In order to established internal consistency reliability and convergent validity, all construct factor loadings and AVE must exceed the acceptable 0.5 cut-off threshold value(Hair et al., 2010). In this research, the AVE was exceeding the0.5 cut-off threshold value and considered satisfactory(refer to Table 3).Every variable/item was found to have great convergent validity based on good composite reliability (>0.8); thus, based on results in Table 3, the study's measurement model demonstrated high satisfactory convergent validity.

The evaluation of discriminant validity is the next step in the validation process of the construct. Discriminate validity was assessed here by analyzing the cross-loads of each construct item and the measured square root of AVE for each construct. On their corresponding construct, all objects should have higher loading than cross-loading on other constructs in the model. For all factors, the square root of AVE should be larger than all the correlations between that construct and other constructs. Table 4 indicates that the AVE (in bold in Table 4) diagonal values is greater than the AVE off-diagonal values. Hence, discriminant validity was established by the test.

**Table 4.**Discriminate Validity

	AVE	
Working From Home Facilities	0.60737	<b>0.77639</b>
Work-Family Related	0.66612	<b>0.81558</b>
Organisation Support	0.75667	<b>0.86651</b>
Social Media	0.53890	<b>0.73397</b>
Working Culture	0.64724	<b>0.80340</b>
Job Autonomy	0.64507	<b>0.80312</b>
Modern Technology	0.70725	<b>0.83648</b>

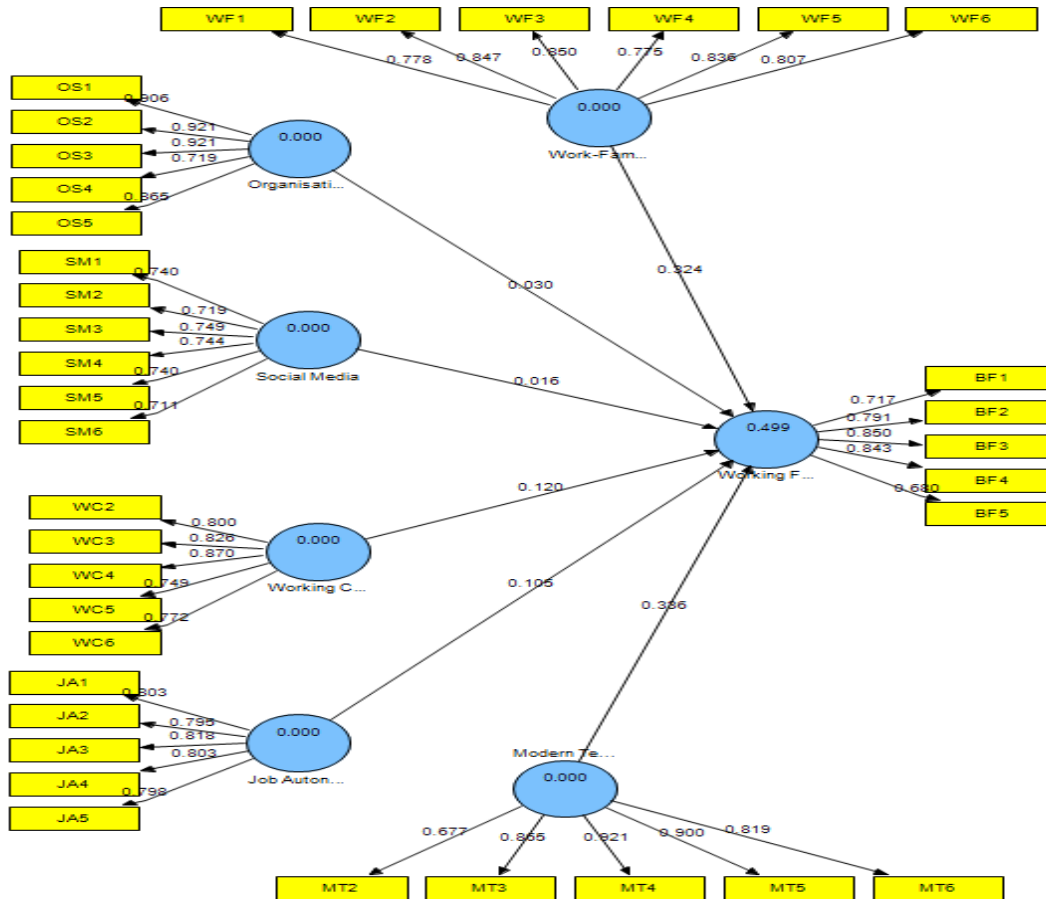
**Structural Model Assessment**

The next step in the process is to assess the path coefficient of all items by comparing beta ( $\beta$ ) values among all paths. The path coefficient represents hypothesized relationships between WFH facilities determinants on WFH performance. The highest  $\beta$  value indicates the strongest impact of WFH facilities determinants (independent variables) on WFH performance (dependent variables). According to Hair et al. (2014), path coefficients should exceed 0.10 to account for a certain impact within a model. However, the  $\beta$  value must be tested for its significance level through the t-value test, carried out by performing a non-parametric bootstrapping technique (Chin, 1998). Therefore, to test the statistical significance of each path coefficient, a bootstrap resampling procedure has been used. The number of resample iterations for this research was 5,000 to generate a stable estimation, as suggested by Henseler et al. (2016).

**Table 5.** Hypotheses Result

	Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	t-value	Remarks
Work-Family Related > Working From Home Facilities	0.32404	<b>3.18176***</b>	<b>Supported</b>
Organisation Support > Working From Home Facilities	0.02964	0.25753	Not Supported
Social Media > Working From Home Facilities	0.01565	0.17828	Not Supported
Working Culture > Working From Home Facilities	0.12050	0.89986	Not Supported
Job Autonomy > Working From Home Facilities	0.10481	0.96079	Not Supported
Modern Technology > Working From Home Facilities	0.33630	<b>2.97559***</b>	<b>Supported</b>

Results from Table 5 show that most of the  $\beta$  values are exceeding the cut-off point value of 0.01 for all items, as suggested by Hair et al. (2014). The highest  $\beta$  value of WFH facilities determinants which indicates the most significant impacts on WFH performance. The highest  $\beta$  results were 0.336 for modern technology. Meanwhile, the lowest  $\beta$  results were 0.016 for social media. According to Hair et al. (2014), it is suggested that acceptable t-values for a two-tailed test is 1.64 (significance level = 0.10 or 10%), 1.96 (significance level = 0.05 or 5%) and 2.58 (significance level = 0.01 or 1%). Hence, the t-values of modern technology and work-family related were 2.976 and 3.182, respectively. It shows higher than minimum cut-off significance values, which were at least 0.01 or 1%. This indicates that both factors of Work-Family Related and Modern Technology have a significant relationship to the WFH performance of this research. The other determinants which are Social Media, Organisation Support, Working Culture, and Job Autonomy had a smaller amount of significant relationships on WFH performance, respectively.



## 5. Conclusion

The global spread of COVID-19 is keeping people at home. Most employers are encouraging or requiring their employees to WFH for an indeterminate amount of time. This situation gives big impacts on business operations for most organisations. Therefore, organisation members that remote to the WFH lifestyle need to change their habits, routines and surely supporting facilities to make WFH a success. In this study, the significant relationship of WFH Facilities determinants on improving WFH performance was identified. Two hypotheses, i) Work-Related Family, and ii) Modern Technology had a significant relationship with WFH performance. Besides, four hypotheses were not supported and had no significant relationship with WFH performance (based on the current situation). Therefore, it is recommended for any organisations that preferring to implement WFH as an effective solution during the pandemic situation to use this WFH Facilities model that focuses on both factors Work-Family Related and Modern Technology. As this research was exploratory, it is proposed that for future research, a longitudinal research methodology should be used.

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