

# The Impact of Remote Working Environment on Academicians' Performance in Public Higher Education Institutions

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## ABSTRACT

Remote working or working from home (WFH) refers to employees performing their tasks from home or any location outside the traditional office. WFH is mostly related to work environment (WE) which encompasses the surrounding of how well someone performs in their job. It is enabled by modern technology such as the Internet, mobile networks, and video conferencing tools. This concept, also known as telecommuting or remote work, allows for flexibility in work hours and locations, which can lead to significant changes in how employees interact with their work and employers. Among the sectors significantly affected is higher education, where academic staff have been required to adapt to remote work and online teaching, leading to a range of emotions from apprehension to optimism. Alongside this transition, the need to acquire new competencies and upskills has emerged, presenting additional challenges that must be addressed. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 220 academicians from Politeknik Mukah and UiTM Mukah represented samples in this study. A Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 was employed to examine all collected data and test the hypotheses. The WFH and WE were analyzed for its impact on job performance using regression analysis. At the same time, Mean differences in working from home and work environment were analyzed using a t-test. Based on the result, it reveals there has positive impact of WFH on academicians' job performance in a moderate relationship. Meanwhile WE also have positive impact on academicians' job performance but a weak relationship. This finding will assist the Ministry of Education generally and higher academic institutions specifically in taking actions and restructure the mode of teaching among the academicians.

**Keywords:** Work from home, Work environment, Academicians, SPSS, Job performance

## INTRODUCTION

The work-from-home (WFH) arrangement introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges for employees, particularly in adapting to digital technologies, managing work-life boundaries, and sustaining productivity. Work from home can be defined as an arrangement where employees carry out their normal office tasks from home with information and communication technologies (Thani et al., 2022). Today, this issue has re-emerged because of political instability caused by war. In response to the current issue, the government introduced a Work-from-Home (WFH) policy for the public sector, which was officially enforced beginning 15 April 2026 as part of the national strategy to mitigate the energy crisis.

In the context of higher education institutions, such implementation may have significant implications for academicians' work performance, particularly in teaching delivery, research productivity, student supervision, and administrative responsibilities. Al-Naabi and Al-Shukaili (2024) mentioned that the rapid transition to WFH increased job demands such as workload and role ambiguity, while simultaneously exposing insufficient job

resources, including infrastructure, training, and institutional support. Besides, the shift to home-based work environment (WE) may influence academicians' efficiency depending on factors such as workspace conditions, digital accessibility, family distractions, and institutional support. These constraints may negatively impact on academicians' performance, particularly in areas requiring continuous student engagement, timely research output, and effective online teaching delivery.

## Research Gap

The implementation of the Work-from-Home (WFH) Policy in the public sector beginning 15 April 2026, as part of the national energy crisis mitigation strategy, has created a new working landscape for academicians in public higher education institutions (IPTA). While WFH offers flexibility and supports operational continuity during crises, it also raises concerns regarding the suitability of the homework environment in sustaining academicians' work performance. Unlike conventional office settings, the home environment may present challenges such as limited workspace, unstable internet connectivity, family interruptions, inadequate digital facilities, and reduced interaction with colleagues and students (Al-Naabi and Al-Shukaili, 2024). These factors may influence academicians' ability to effectively perform teaching, research, supervision, and administrative duties. Nik Min et al. (2024) found that work-from-home practices significantly affect academicians' job performance, especially when home conditions are not conducive to sustained concentration and motivation. Although previous studies have examined the general impact of WFH on employees, limited attention has been given to how the work environment in WFH settings specifically affects academicians' work performance in Malaysian IPTA. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the impact of work from home and work environment arrangements on academicians' work performance.

## Research Objectives

- (i) To identify the significant impact between work from home and job performance?
- (ii) To identify the significant impact between work environment and job performance?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Employee Job Performance

Employee job performance is crucial for every stakeholder within an organization. Job performance is the clarity of completing tasks according to established standard procedures designed to support employee effectiveness. Abun et al. (2021) defined job performance as the act of completing assigned tasks within a given time frame efficiently and effectively. Zhenjing et al., (2022) stated that employee performance is a valuable resource for any company, and this holds across all industries and countries in the business world. In this study, job performance refers to their effectiveness in completing teaching, research, supervision, and institutional tasks while working from home. It refers to the practice of academicians performing their academic and administrative responsibilities from home, while (Thani et al, 2022).

### The Impact of Work from Home on Job Performance

Researchers have studied the most frequently examined work-related outcomes of working from home: job satisfaction and performance. Study by Vaibhav (2026) indicates that higher WFH frequency significantly enhances job satisfaction through improved work-life balance and autonomy. This shows that workers are satisfied with doing a task from home or remote area as it will increase their work-life balance such as spending more time with family. Besides, productivity shows positive associations overall, particularly for individual-focused tasks, though moderated by factors like organizational support and task collaboration needs

WFH may affect academicians' teaching effectiveness, research productivity, and student supervision, making it crucial factor in determining their overall work performance. Furthermore, Malaysian studies on lecturers reported that WFH practices significantly influence academicians' job performance, particularly when, motivation and home working conditions are considered (Nik Min et al., 2024). In contrast, Moe (2025) found

that WFH gives negative impact to the employees' job performance. In this study, participants highlighted that stress, isolation, and burnout often reduced productivity. The results show 75% of participants were dissatisfied with how remote work affected job satisfaction, while 25% expressed satisfaction with remote work's influence on job satisfaction.

**H1:** Work from Home has a positive and significant impact on Job Performance

### The Impact of Work Environment on Job Performance

The term Work Environment (WE) encompasses all environmental factors in the surroundings of how well someone performs in their job. Studies pointed out that positive WFH experiences are correlated with the quality of the workspace. Employees with good control of the workspace environment, such as light and being sufficiently separated from living space, have recorded higher job performance and productivity. When this control and separation is unavailable, employees may face additional job demands. Thus, we believe that environmental distractions influence employees' productivity in a WFH setting.

In the context of academicians, the work environment becomes even more crucial as their roles require sustained concentration for teaching preparation, online delivery, research writing, and student supervision. Kamaruddin and Mohd Zin (2024) found that a supportive work environment has a significant positive relationship with academicians' job performance, as it enhances focus, task completion and work effectiveness.

On the other hand, Moe (2025) studied the impact of remote work on employee performance in the digital age. As technology is widely used in teaching and learning today, academics must equip themselves with the skills needed to operate remote working technology. Therefore, those who lack knowledge about technology will lag and affect work performance.

In addition, the home environment is not conducive to working from home with the presence of the children (especially at school or preschool aged) and the disruption of caregiving and educating services. Consequently, higher education organizations have highly stressful work environment, academic staff need to ensure the quality of the teaching process, have high quality publications as well as the need to attract funds for their research (Lojaina et al, 2023)

**H2:** Work Environment has a positive and significant effect on Job Performance

### Conceptual Framework

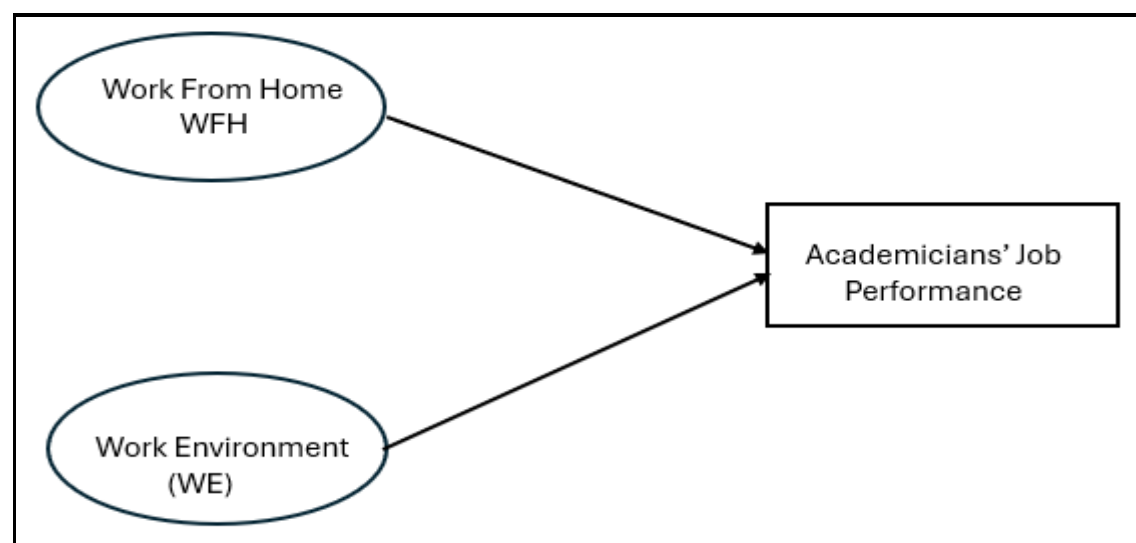


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Several variables relevant to the current study were already included in Susilo (2020) conceptual framework. This framework systematically describes the relationships between these variables. Figure 1 illustrates the

relationships between the independent variables: work from home and work environment, with job performance as the dependent variables.

## METHODOLOGY

This study applies to the quantitative approach to determine the impact of work from home and work environment on job performance among academicians in public higher learning institutions. A population is a group of potential participants who want to generalize the findings of a study (Salkind, 2014). Therefore, academicians in public higher learning institutions are the population in this study. Referring to the Department's data inventory system, there are 198 academicians in Politeknik Mukah, Sarawak and 57 academicians in UiTM Campus Mukah, Sarawak. Thus 255 academicians were selected using stratified sampling, randomly choose from each department as the table below:

Table 1. Unit of Analysis

Higher Education Institutions	Department	Total Respondents
Politeknik Mukah, Sarawak	Department of Commerce	36
	Department of Information and Communication Technology,	34
	Department of Civil Engineering	27
	Department of Electrical Engineering	22
	Department of Mechanical Engineering	30
	Departments of Mathematics and Science Computer	39
UiTM Mukah, Sarawak	Department of General Studies	10
	Faculty of Business and Management	35
	Faculty of Plantation & Agrotechnology	22
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>255</b>

The Statistical Package for the Social Science Version 27 (SPSS 27) software was used to analyze the data due to its comprehensive functions in tabulating academic research specifically in quantitative research (Rowley, 2014).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the actual study, out of the 255 questionnaires distributed, 220 were returned and deemed usable, representing 86% of response.

### Means and Standard Deviations

Table 2. The Means and Standard Deviations

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Independent Variables			
Work from home	220	4.14	.517
Work Environment	220	3.93	.565
Dependent Variable			
Job Performance	220	3.44	.596

As seen in Table 2, work from home yielded the highest mean score which is 4.14. This means that respondents are satisfied with the questions asked regarding the impact of WFH on job performance. Similar with WE which respondents agreed with the questions asked in this section, contributed to mean value 3.93.

### Reliability Analysis

Hair et al. (2010) state that Reliability indicates the degree of measurements of a set of indicators that a latent construct is internally consistent. For Cronbach’s alpha value, the acceptable alpha value is 0.6 until 0.7; in the range of 0.8 or greater, this alpha value is considered good (Ursachi et al., 2013).

Table 3. Summary of Reliability Analysis

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha (Pilot Test)	Cronbach’s Alpha (Actual Survey)
<b>Independent Variables</b>			
Work From Home	10	.854	.823
Work Environment	6	.777	.692
<b>Dependent Variable</b>			
Job performance	8	.819	.793

The results in Table 3 show the summary of reliability analysis of the study variables that were conducted using Cronbach’s Alpha to assess internal consistency. For the independent variables, Work from Home comprised 10 items and scored 0.823 indicating very strong reliability. The Work Environment variable, consisting of 6 items, had a score of 0.692 representing strong reliability. The dependent variable, Job Performance, which included 8 items scored 0.793, indicates strong reliability. According to Ursachi et al. (2013), all the independent variables and dependent variables tested have Cronbach's Alpha values more than 0.6 can be considered valid.

### Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4 shows the relationship between the dependent variable: job performance, and all the independent variables: work-from-home and work environment. The relationship between the dependent variable and all independent factors is significant, as seen in the table below:

Table 4. Correlation Analysis

Variables	Work from Home	Work Environment	Job Performance
Work From Home	1		
Work Environment	.418**	1	
Job Performance	.471**	.241**	1

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Firstly, the result indicates a moderate correlation degree ( $r=.471^{**}$ ,  $n=220$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) with a significant relationship between work-from-home and job performance. This means that academics from public higher learning institutions moderately support working from home. WFH offered greater flexibility and autonomy, allowing them to arrange their work schedules and work independently, which has enhanced job satisfaction and improved work-life balance. Besides, the result indicates a weak significant relationship between work environment and job performance ( $r=.241^{**}$ ,  $n=220$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It means that the work environment has weak impact on job performance. Work environment during work at home often means sharing a workspace with family members, leading to frequent interruptions and distractions. This can make it challenging to focus and maintain a high level of performance.

Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis

No	Independent variables	Standard Coefficient Beta	T-Statistic	Sig.
1	Work from Home	.359	5.176	.000

2	Work Environment	.003	.048	.962
	R-Squared	.263		
	F-Statistic Sig. of F Value	25.756 .000		

Based on Table 5, the R value is 0.263 indicating that 26.3% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the variability of the independent variables, The remaining 73.7% of the variation cannot be explained by these independent variables and may be attributed to other factors. The model is significant, at 0.000 (F=25.756,  $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a strong overall relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

Regression analysis shows each independent variable's significant impact on Job Performance. Work from home (WFH) has a significant impact with p-values of less than 0.001. This indicates they are critical factors in enhancing job performance since their p-values are less than 0.05. On the other hand, the Work Environment (WE) does not have a significantly positive impact on job performance, as its p-value is 0.962. This weak significance is due to its p-value being more significant than 0.05.

The study findings indicate a significant relationship between working from home and job performance. The independent variable, work from home, demonstrated a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the alpha value of 0.05. It has been proven that working from home significantly correlates with positive job performance. The correlation results of .471\*\* indicate a moderate yet significant relationship. This stated that working from home has positively impacted job performance, serving as the primary basis for the study's hypothesis. Thus, the first hypothesis H1 is supported. The moderate correlation suggests that academicians are adapting to the new concept of remote work. Working from home (WFH) can encourage independence in approaching work. However, it is contrasting with the findings of Denzer & Grunau (2023), individuals working longer hours than usual, which could eventually lead to negative consequences. WFH sometimes burdening academics with new tasks alongside their existing house chores. These make most of them fatigues thus impact on job performance.

Next, the findings indicate a weak correlation between work environment and job performance, with a correlation coefficient of 0.241\*\*, showing that while the work environment is essential, the result does not have positive relationship on job performance. Hence, the second hypothesis H2 is not supported; in other words, there is a significant but weak correlation between work environment and job performance. The regression analysis (p-value of 0.962) shows that the work environment did not have a positive impact on job performance. Challenges such as distractions and lack of a conducive workspace at home were highlighted as potential issues. It is in line with a study by Lojaina et al. (2023) in which the presence of children (those who have a family) and disruptions of caregiving create stressful work environment and the quality of the teaching process, thus giving negative impact to academicians' job performance. Lack of a dedicated workspace at home can blur the boundaries between professional and personal life, further complicating efforts to stay productive. These factors underscore the importance of a conducive work environment for maintaining job performance and overall well-being

### Summary of Hypotheses

The hypothesis test results demonstrate in Table 6 shows that some of the hypothesis is supported and rejected. To address issues concerning the reliability of the proposed measure the impact of work from home, it is hypothesis that the measure.

Table 6. Summary of Hypotheses

No	Hypotheses	Result
H1	Work from home has a significant impact on Job Performance toward academicians in Public Higher Education Institutions	Supported
H2	Work Environment has a significant impact on Job Performance toward academics in Public Higher Education Institutions	Not Supported

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In conclusion, throughout this study, we have explored the multifaceted impacts of working from home and work environment on job performance specifically focusing on academicians in public higher education institutions. The findings reveal the work from home has a moderate positive significant impact on academicians' job performance in Public Higher Learning Institutions. For academics, remote work has offered greater flexibility and autonomy, allowing them to arrange their work schedules and work independently, which has enhanced job satisfaction and improved work-life balance. Additionally, access to online training and opportunities for professional growth during the pandemic have been crucial in ensuring continuous professional development. Moreover, the work environment has a weak positive significant impact on job performance toward academics in Public Higher Education Institutions. It may result in isolation, distractions especially for those sharing their workspace with family members, reduced collaboration, and difficulty in managing work-life boundaries. Moreover, dependence on a stable internet connection can be a significant drawback, particularly in regions with poor service, hindering job performance and increasing stress levels.

For future research, it is suggested to study the impact of WFH on work-life balance, mental health, and overall well-being among academicians. Moreover, examining how remote teaching affects student learning results and academic achievement will offer valuable insights into how educators' work-from-home setups impact educational quality. Assessing the efficiency of institutional policies and support systems for remote work can show successful methods and areas needing enhancement, assisting institutions in better aiding their employees in remote work environments.

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