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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REMOTE MEETING PLATFORM QUALITY DIMENSIONS AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Mohd Razak Noor Aini (a), Azrilaffizi Azman (b), Nurul Ain Fatizah Rahim (c), Salina Noranee (d), Shereen Noranee (e)*
*Corresponding author

(a) Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam Campus, Malaysia, 2022668888@student.uitm.edu.my
(b) Lembaga Hasil Dalam Negeri Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, azrilaffizi@hasil.gov.my
(c) Khazanah Research Institute, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, fatizahain@gmail.com
(d) Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Seri Iskandar Campus, Malaysia, salin665@uitm.edu.my
(e) Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam Campus, Malaysia, shereen@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

During Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Malaysian government imposed a new regulation on allowing 20% of employees to work physically at the office. Due to that, 80% of the employees were working remotely. The uncertainty of the outbreak has affected everyone’s daily work culture, for example, by transforming physical meetings into virtual meetings. The goal of this quantitative study is to discover the relationship between remote meeting platform quality dimensions (e.g., efficiency, system availability and fulfilment, and privacy) and employee engagement at a Malaysian government agency (which will be referred to as Organization XYZ) which is located in Putrajaya. The correlational study was carried out in a non-contrived setting via an online survey. Using the purposive sampling technique, the total number of respondents is 409. The results from the survey confirmed that efficiency has a relationship with employee engagement. However, there are no relationships between fulfilment and system availability, and privacy with employee engagement. The results from this study can be used to provide important implications for the management of Organization XYZ in developing the quality platforms used for remote meetings to increase the level of employee engagement and concentrate on the more significant elements to improve future technology growth.

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1. Introduction

Remote meetings are not a new phenomenon in the service and production sectors. It has only become a new normal for people during the pandemic. According to Phillips (2020), the pandemic has had major implications for the majority of work due to the adjustment to movement control orders and other restrictions adopted to deal with COVID-19. The office of National Statistics conducted a study in 2019 and found that at least 30% of employees were allowed to engage in remote work, but only 6% fully engaged in regular remote work. Phillips (2020) added that during the lockdown, the number of workers that had been allowed to work from home had increased to more than 48%. Similarly, the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development surveyed in 2020 found that 61% of employees surveyed did remote meetings. The impact of remote meetings on employee engagement was an important issue in studies that sought to understand how the easing of the pandemic-related restrictions will impact organizations’ adjustment of their respective workplaces’ strategies.

A study indicated that leadership and management effectiveness was required to improve the quality of remote meeting platforms in line with increasing employee engagement during and after the pandemic (Phillips, 2020). Effectively leading and efficiently managing remote meetings did not fundamentally differ from normal management. A prior study had also found that quality dimensions of platform used among the managerial implications previously uncovered, where the users’ satisfaction about 78% with the remote meeting platforms’ quality, which makes it clear that management should evaluate remote meeting platforms from the aspects of system availability, efficiency, fulfilment, and privacy (Demir et al., 2021). Moreover, the platforms’ quality might be characterized by focusing on employees’ needs and trust, and expectations with regard to the platforms (Top & Ali, 2021).

The issue arises when Organization XYZ invested in Microsoft Teams (licensed) to ensure department meetings run smoothly. However, employee engagement in Organization XYZ was considered low during meeting sessions (Staff, Personal Communication, June 11, 2021). Remote meetings and the way employees engaged in Organization XYZ had been highlighted in two main problems. The first challenge was passive participation among members of the remote meeting due to the poor quality of the remote meeting platform used. Here, the quality of connection, the technological devices that the participants used, and the quality and strength of the connectivity that they used were the key issues that determined employee engagement for Organization XYZ (Staff, Personal Communication, June 11, 2021).

Secondly, remote meetings tended to take longer durations compared to normal meetings due to the technical and communication challenges that involve listening, talking, and responding. Accordingly, the identified challenges and the existing needs for employee engagement on remote meeting platforms required the addressing of the quality issues, which were related to respective platforms’ efficiency, system availability, fulfilment, and privacy. Moreover, Cao et al. (2021) proposed that more research was needed in the future to address the remote meeting experience. This is because remote meeting has become wider, and a researcher gave a foundational and relevant understanding of such. The gap in this study also involves the quality of remote meetings and has its impacts on employee engagement in the service industry which future research should address (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Kniffin et al., 2021). Remote meetings and their quality are factors of the technological infrastructure that the company has invested in.
(on their employees) and the functioning of the platforms. Therefore, the quality dimensions of the platform used need to be investigated to ensure remote meeting engagement among employees at Organization XYZ.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the capacity of an organization to involve its employees in its activities, responsibilities, and objectives. According to Bakker et al. (2012), involvement in work exercises increased commitment, led to enhanced task performance, and hence increased outputs. Team members with a greater sense of psychological empowerment and commitment were more inclined to engage in activities that benefited their team and the business as a whole (Chen et al., 2011).

The concept of remote meetings applies to numerous business types. As organizational leaders continued to invest in strategic information systems, the manager's role shifted to capitalize on new technology prospects (Dodgson et al., 2013). According to Luftman et al. (2012), when information technology was well managed, it contributed value through revenue growth, cost reductions, and enhanced efficiency and productivity. In terms of employee engagement, the employer must be able to communicate with employees, and such interactions must be of high quality, as it influences employee motivation (Mone et al., 2011). Through a proper communication platform, employees can become more efficient through interactions such as receiving feedback on their work, and the work process, sharing information and collaborating on ideas and concepts (Mone et al., 2011).

2.2. Quality Dimensions of Platform Used

The remote meeting platform must be of quality so that it will enable superior communication and discussion among the participants. Those who were well-acquainted with the inferior temporal, superior parietal, and orbitofrontal corticestes, as well as many other brain areas, indicated that humans digest visual information far more quickly and efficiently than text or audio (Chawla, 2020). The largest effect was seen in the quality of remote meeting platforms, as assessed by the ratio of meeting minutes with a good (video/audio) connection to meeting minutes with a bad connection (Espín & Rojas, 2021). In capturing electronic service quality, the basic E-S-QUAL scale covered four dimensions; efficiency, system availability, fulfilment, and privacy. It broadly encompassed all phases of a user’s interactions with a platform; the extent to which a platform facilitates efficient and effective user experiences (Parasuraman et al., 2005). Successful businesses in the remote meeting sector realized that the key factors for avoiding such problems were not limited to the existence of a good platform and low prices but must also include high standards of platform service quality (Santouridis et al., 2012).

2.3. Efficiency

According to Parasuraman et al. (2005), efficiency means that the platform is simple to use, structured properly, and requires a minimum of information to be input by the customer. The ease and
speed of accessing and using the platform. Previous research had shown that online platform usage might improve work performance, organizational performance, consistent and inventive performance, and contextual performance (Liang et al., 2021). However, the majority of previous research had omitted consideration of how various incentives for online platform use may affect job productivity and the impact process. Such incentives; improved work performance, organizational performance, consistent and inventive performance, and contextual performance (Liang et al., 2021). Employee productivity was the primary determinant of an enterprise’s ability to generate profits and achieve long-term growth (Sutanto et al., 2018). According to Cheng (2012), when employees recognized that platform was easy to use, they felt that the platform was useful and efficient, and therefore wanted to use it. When employees perceived that using the platform was easy and when the employees considered the platform is useful, they are interested in using the platform. The employees that perceived ease in using the platform considered that the platform is efficient. Employees who felt at ease and useful in remote meetings would look at that remote meeting platform as efficient and beneficial, so they would be more interested in using it and be more engaged (Cheng, 2012). At this point, it should be proven beyond a reasonable doubt that the platform would perform all tasks for which it was intended in the company’s particular circumstances and environment and would therefore assist in the execution of the company’s business process (Angelova, 2020).

### 2.4. Fulfilment & System Availability

Fulfilment means the extent to which the platform’s promises about conformity and service availability are fulfilled (Parasuraman et al., 2005). Creating a platform systems architecture is about doing the right things, that is, creating a platform system that strives to fulfill its intended purpose, which is defined via functional and quality criteria and then translated into features and system behaviors iteratively (Bass et al., 2003). At its core, platform development is an engineering field concerned with the creation of usable artifacts (e.g., applications and systems) for a variety of purposes across sectors and settings. Thus, a good platform system architecture is purpose-built, meaning that it supports the system’s intended objectives and enables the implementation of necessary features and behavior (Bass et al., 2003). Fulfilment is achieved by meeting all functional criteria, the platform architecture should ultimately be able to be utilized for a particular purpose.

System availability means the correct technical functioning of the site. When customers used the service provided by the platform, function problems like non-working buttons or missing links would disappoint customers and could lead to exiting from using the service. As a result, the platform provider might lose the opportunity to enhance customer loyalty (Parasuraman et al., 2005). In general, system availability refers to the likelihood of a system effectively functioning and performing its necessary function sufficiently within 24 hours a day. Availability is a critical factor in the design and operation of platform systems. It allows the prediction of system behavior over time and the implementation of suitable maintenance methods, resulting in revenue losses being minimized (Sayed et al., 2020). The portion of time that a system is available to execute its necessary function is called system availability. It is critical to emphasize that availability is determined by more than simply dependability, and that an
availability study is essential for evaluating the system’s performance, much more so when the problem of accessibility is involved (Sayed et al., 2020).

2.5. Privacy

Some believed that the Internet was built with security and privacy in mind, rather than as a means of enabling innumerable data packets and as many nodes as possible to flow across the network without being intercepted (Westerlund & Enkvist, 2016). According to Parasuraman et al. (2005), privacy means the degree to which the platform is safe and protects customer information. Many people were still not willing to use online platforms because of the risk that was related to maltreat of personal information. Users were becoming more acquainted with the importance of providing their privacy. Because privacy concerns had a major impact on employees’ trust, managers must strengthen the platform significantly to prevent sharing data with other parties and safeguard their employees (Top & Ali, 2021). Privacy is the protection of personal information and security is the protection of users from the danger of fraud and financial loss which have been proven to have a significant effect on attitudes about the usage of online platform services empirically (Parasuraman et al., 2005). There was a potential that online platforms might create greater privacy and security issues among platform users than e-commerce, not only that information about meeting content could be gathered, but data transmitted wirelessly made intercepting such data much simpler (Tseng & Wei, 2020).

2.6. The Relationship Between Remote Meeting Platform Quality Dimensions and Employee Engagement

Previous studies found that remote meeting platform quality, which consists of efficiency, fulfilment and system availability, and privacy dimensions, influences employee engagement. Chang et al. (2009) stated that the quality of a remote meeting platform has a beneficial impact on employee engagement and, as a result, increases employee loyalty to the organization. Meanwhile, Sanayei and Jokar (2013) identified the quality of a remote meeting platform as a competitive advantage and discovered a substantial correlation between platform quality and employee engagement. In addition, Amin (2016) found a substantial correlation between the quality of the remote meeting platform and employee engagement. Ataburo et al. (2017) discovered that organizations that provide high-quality platform services are more likely to please their employees, which in turn influences their decision-making and loyalty intentions. Dhingra et al. (2020) also observed a positive association between platform service quality and employee engagement for Indian remote employees. Al-Shamayleh et al. (2015) examined various aspects of platform service quality and discovered that all variables had a substantial impact on employee engagement among Jordanian remote workers. Except for ease of use, Ali (2019) discovered that all other platform service quality parameters had a positive effect on the engagement of remote workers in Bahrain. Therefore, based on the literature reviewed, the following are the feasible hypotheses for this study:

H1: There is a relationship between efficiency and employee engagement.
H2: There is a relationship between fulfilment & system availability and employee engagement.
H3: There is a relationship between privacy and employee engagement.
2.7. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study. The dependent variable is employee engagement, whereas the independent variable is the quality dimensions of the platform used (i.e., efficiency, fulfillment & system availability, and privacy). The analytical framework assisted the researchers in establishing the research’s basis.

![Conceptual Framework](image)

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework on the Relationship between Quality Dimensions of Platform Used and Employee Engagement in Remote Meeting

3. Research Methods

Sekaran and Bougie (2020) define applied research as a scientific study that aims to answer practical problems, whereas descriptive research methods are used to characterize various aspects of the sample population. The study used descriptive-correlational research to determine the association between remote meeting platform quality characteristics and Organization XYZ employee engagement. Individual employees from Organization XYZ’s headquarters (HQ) department participated in this survey. The researchers used a cross-sectional design, which collected data at a specific moment in time when a sample of respondents was invited to fill out research survey questionnaires. The study's target demographic was 800 employees from Organization XYZ’s HQ department. According to the statistics provided, the total number of employees at Organization XYZ’s HQ department was 1,000, and the participants were chosen based on their competence, with 80% of employees working remotely via the remote meeting platform, hence purposive sampling was used. Respondents have had weeks to complete the survey questionnaires. The total number of employees targeted was 800. According to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) standards, a minimum of 260 respondents are required from the target, and 452 respondents were obtained, exceeding 74%. 452 sets of questionnaires were received in total. However, 43 of the 452 respondents had no prior experience with the Microsoft Teams application. As a result, the study's total legitimate respondents were 409. The items for employee engagement were taken from
Ababneh et al. (2019), and the items for remote meeting platform quality dimensions were taken from Demir et al. (2021).

4. Findings

4.1. Relationship between Remote Meeting Platform Quality Dimensions and Employee Engagement

Referring to Table 1 below, the R-square shows how much the total variation in the independent variable, which is employee engagement can be explained by the independent variables, which results in less than 2 means the value of variables was a positive correlation (Watson & Durbin, 1951). In this study, the R-square value is 0.266 which indicates that the independent variable could explain 26 percent of the total variance of employee engagement. Another 74 percent of the variance is thus explained by other factors which are not included in this study. As for the Durbin-Watson statistic, it shows that the value of these data is 1.613 which is less than 2 which means the value of variables was a positive correlation.

Table 1 also shows that there is a relationship between efficiency and employee engagement (p < 0.000, β = 0.344). Hence, H1 is supported because it has a moderate positive correlation. Meanwhile, fulfilment and system availability (p > 0.112, β = 0.120), and privacy (p > 0.076 β = 0.104) are not predictors to employee engagement. Hence, H2 and H3 are not supported because the significance values for both relationships are more than 0.05.

Table 1. Multiple Regression Analysis Result for Employee Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>2.726</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfilment and System Availability</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>0.104</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Individual Level of Employee Engagement

5. Discussion

5.1. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

This study found that there was a positive relationship between the efficiency of remote meeting platform quality on employee engagement. These results may be explained by the fact that a well-design and efficient online meeting platform (Microsoft Teams) that they had been using had a great influence
on the employees in the sense that they felt proud of the work that they do, and they would show a great deal of passion while performing tasks (Lansmann et al., 2019).

Based on the finding of this study, respondents were proud of the work they did, and they showed a great deal of passion while performing their tasks, and clearly showed that they were always positive with their job. This is supported by Serin (2019), which stated that as a profession or a job, workers are proud of their attitudes toward it and their work. They regarded the values of their job profession as superior to other professional values, they wanted to be recognized in it, and they saw their career as the ideal one for working life, even when it is not economically necessary. In addition, Pratt and Cakula (2021) stated that it is possible to communicate through technology and motivate employees with the same efficiency as face-to-face as they are proud to work since they are passionate and has a strong sense of belonging and commitment to the organization. By having a strong sense of belonging to the organization, employees who are engaged will be more likely to help improve the company’s long-term prospects. Even if they work from home, they are more likely to put in the effort and accomplish their jobs more efficiently if they fully commit themselves to them (Turner, 2020). Employees who work at home were required to attend their office meetings or when there is a team discussion via online platform. According to Cheng (2012), employees are more likely to use a remote meeting platform if they find it straightforward to use. They enjoyed using the platform because they think it was user-friendly, simple to get started with, and there was visual graphic facilitation that help the presentation to be more meaningful. Employees were more likely to use a platform if they believe it was simple to use and if they believe it is beneficial and enhanced their understanding. Employees who found the platform to be user-friendly believe it to be effective. Employees will be more interested in and more involved in using a remote meeting platform if they perceive it to be efficient and useful (Cheng, 2012). Effective remote meetings brought together a carefully chosen group of people for a specific reason, gave a venue for open conversation, and provide a tangible result: a decision, a plan, a list of outstanding ideas to explore, and a shared understanding of the work ahead. According to Smith (2014), by using virtual graphic facilitation in the remote meeting platform, everything can be made more interesting and productive, as well as increasing creativity and retention and reducing multitasking.

In addition, it is believed that an effective and efficient remote meeting platform will result in the absolute best plan of action for the organization. This is supported by Teece (2018), who claimed that organizations must consider all the aspects of cost to have an effective and efficient remote meeting platform. The costs of subscribing a good platform facilities or software, appropriate management structure, and training may need to be handled wisely.

However, there was no relationship between fulfilment and system availability with employee engagement in the current study. These findings are supported by a study done by Hidayah et al. (2021) on the relationship between fulfilment and system availability with e-wallet electronic service. In addition, there was also no relationship between privacy and employee engagement in the current study. Privacy has received considerable academic attention in remote meetings (i.e. Keshlaf et al., 2021; Park et al., 2022; Thomas et al., 2022). However, the current findings supported Jones et al., (2022) who found that there is a lack of privacy when conducting meetings for remote working in people involvement and engagement using online and digital technologies. The current findings suggest that the management of
Organization XYX is doing a reasonable job in providing information about privacy and security policies, but tend to miss the opportunity to promote a sense of credibility in their employees’ minds by posting security certification or sharing their business ethics with employees on their web sites.

6. Recommendations and Conclusion

In investigating the relationship between remote meeting platform quality dimensions (efficiency, fulfilment and system availability, and privacy) and employee engagement, a few recommendations are discussed. It is highly recommended that this study can also be done at other Organization XYZ’s branches or states in Malaysia, or as a whole. For example, to focus on branches that are in big cities or states like Penang, Johor Bahru, Kuching, or Kota Kinabalu. This is to get the big picture of how the employees in big cities or states perceive the factors that influence remote meeting platform quality and employee engagement. As the Internet, remote meeting platform, and mobile technology enhance day to day, there may be some factors or impacts that would affect the experience and perception of the users towards factors that influence remote meeting platform quality and employee engagement. Moreover, increasing remote meeting platforms and features will surely influence the behavior of the users/customers towards factors that influence remote meeting platform quality and employee engagement. As such, it is recommended that future research investigate the evolutionary process of changes in customers’ experience and perception of factors that influence remote meeting platform quality and employee engagement by employing a longitudinal research method.

References


