

## Chapter II

### Literature Review

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the theoretical and empirical frameworks of teleworker support and psychological strain. The chapter's main objective is to explain the basic theories of these research variables in the human resources management context. Human resources management captures the process of acquiring, training, appraising, and compensating employees, and of attending to their labor relations, health and safety, and fairness concerns (Dessler, 2017). Psychological strain is one of the main concerns on mental health issues, especially in remote working conditions (Lynn & Sandi, 2003). Therefore, Human Resources Managers must consider the support needed by teleworkers to maintain their labor relation and health concerns. To make a better understanding of each variable, theories regarding psychological strain and teleworker support are necessary. This chapter begins with an understanding of psychological strain, organizational social support, and specific teleworker support. Next, it explains previous research related to each variable and hypothesis. Finally, the theoretical framework of dependent and independent variables is created accordingly.

## **2.2. The History and Concept of Telework**

### **2.2.1. The History of Telework**

According to Linden and Oljemark (2018), Jack M Nilles was the first to propose teleworking in 1973 during gasoline crisis in United States. The primary motivation at the time was to allow employees to save money on commuting to work (Linden & Oljemark, 2018). During the 1970s oil crisis, employees were able to remote working from home and from small branch office nearby particularly to evade paying high fuel rates. Although the gas crisis has passed, telework continues to be a popular work arrangement (ILO, 2016). The concept of telework expanded to various businesses, emphasizing the idea on personal and organizational benefits. Since then, teleworking has gotten a lot of attention in many literature studies, not just because of the cost savings for businesses and the reduced commute for employees, but also because of the impact it has on employees in the matters of productivity, satisfaction and flexibility (Bailey & Kurland, 2016).

### **2.2.2. Definition and Nature of Telework**

Telework is described as a flexible work arrangement where the employees work in locations, remote from their central offices or production facilities (Di Martino & Wirth, 1990). Therefore, the communication between coworkers is limited through

information technology tools. This unique work arrangement brings challenges to organizations, managers and down to the teleworker as the core unit of the company.

With the advancement of technology and the embracing of mobile working, teleworking is become more easier to apply. The use of cloud computing, broad band internet, mobile devices, networking tools social media, and technological devices has played a big role in enabling teleworking (Bentley et al., 2016). The idea and implementation that information technologies can modernize the work place could also a big push in the favor of teleworking (Troup & Rose, 2012).

There are two types of teleworkers, high and low-intensity of teleworking. Low-intensity teleworkers are those individuals who work remotely one or two days a week. Because of that, the effect of social isolation and lack of interaction of coworkers is not as great as those who telework on high-intensity (Bailey & Kurland, 2016). High intensity teleworkers are those who telework at least three days or more in a week (Bentley, Bousa et al., 2016). Those who work remotely longer seem to have more social strain. The effect is mostly happened for teleworkers who work three or more days away from the work place with lack of social interaction with their coworkers (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007).

Based on the work arrangement, telework can be classified into four basic work kinds, each of which can be used alone or in combination within an organization (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). Bailey and Kurland (2002) defined the four types based on their work arrangement as follows:

1. The Home Office
2. The Satellite Office
3. The Neighborhood Work Center
4. Mobile Working

The Home Office is the earliest type of Telework, and it allows employees to work from home in their own dedicated Home Office, sometimes known as "working from home." (Welz & Wolf, 2010). On the other hand, satellite office is remote work arrangement in a office which typically smaller than a branch office or headquarters, and it does not necessary have the same level of equipment and facility standard. In comparison to The Home Office, Satellite Office can accommodate a higher number of employees, and how spacious of each satellite office varies based on both organizational needs and the number of teleworkers expected to use the office (Bailey & Kurland, 2002).

The Neighborhood Work Center is comparable to a satellite office, but it has less structure because it can accommodate employees from more than one company (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). The last one, Mobile working, sometimes known as "working on the move" is when an employee could work from virtually anywhere, such as a coffee shop, an airport, a shared office, or at a client's location. Unlike Home Office teleworkers, mobile teleworkers are frequently away from home for extended periods of time. When comparing Telework to a worker who is working at a typical workplace like offices, the four categories of Telework include features that are comparable to

each other, but there are some distinctions in terms of benefits and obstacles in the organizational and individual viewpoints (Bailey & Kurland, 2002).

Furthermore, Kurland & Bailey (2002) claim that teleworkers have both societal benefits and challenges. The societal benefits of the Home Office, Satellite Office, and Neighborhood Work Center are similar but to varying degrees, with less time spent stalled in traffic and reduced pollution as a result of a shorter commute. The nomadic worker, on the other hand, has no societal benefits. Only the Home Office and mobile workers face social limitation problems (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). With that aspect in mind, the Home Office teleworkers are the suitable object of the research since they face higher social challenge.

### **2.2.3. The Home Office Teleworkers**

Teleworkers can undertake tasks from home in their own created Home Office, which is widely known as "working from home" (Welz & Wolf, 2010). Less time spent travelling, financial savings, less stress, better flexibility, less distractions, increased job satisfaction, and work-family balance are all known as the benefits of the Home Office, according to Kurland & Bailey (2002). Furthermore, social isolation, less connected to organizational culture, work-life conflicts, less information taken from colleagues, less direct communication, work-family conflicts, limited access to resources, and need of technical expertise are all individual problems that should be addressed with the Home Office (Kurland & Bailey, 2002). While studies show that the majority of professionals who work from home are happier with their work-life

balance, they also show that an external distraction linked with being at home is a threat to homeworking (Akerley, 2011). When an employee working in The Home Office setup, it is critical that all relevant information and supports are provided. Allowing employees to work from home has been found to reduce managers' perceptions of control over teleworker's work. Managers rely on employee trust that work will be completed and that the teleworkers is self-sufficient enough to be productive. Fear and a sense of losing control are also major reasons for managers to object to teleworking (Dimitrova, 2003).

#### **2.2.4. Advantages of Telework**

Due to the popularity of telework, many researches have been done to explain the advantages and disadvantages of teleworking. One of the advantages including increased on job satisfaction. Fonner and Roloff (2010) investigated 89 teleworking employees who worked at least three days a week away from their usual workplace, as well as 103 office-based employees. Employees' total job satisfaction increases when they telework, according to the findings, due to reduced frequency of information sharing, general office politics, work-life conflict, and interruption stress (Fonner & Roloff, 2010).

Furthermore, research by Deloitte (2011) found that having the option to Telework has a significant beneficial impact on job satisfaction. Having the choice to Telework improved employee performance, whether they choose to Telework or not, when compared to employees who do not have the choice to Telework in the study (Deloitte,

2011). The fact that the teleworkers do work on their own willing and at their own pace regardless of having a routine scheduled work time, have impact on their motivation to work and to be better compared to what they do on a regular office routine. Due to the increased motivation, there is better performance of teleworkers which has a long run benefit to the organizations that they work for.

Telework also known for promoting the flexibility in term of time management and relocation. Employees with location flexibility could do their job in locations that more suitable for them, or at least place they feel better than their current location. Provide and managing flexibility in the workplace has been found to reduce employee absences, improve employee well-being, and boost productivity (Sebastian, Dubravka, & John, 2014). Furthermore, teleworking has been identified as a flexible working strategy that allows employees to plan their schedules properly, work at convenient locations, and enhance their time management, resulting in a healthy work-life balance (Bentley, et al., 2016).

Teleworking has managed to create a balance between work and daily activity, Teleworker does not overly push the teleworkers with work pressure since they are surrounded by their family and also family is a good support and motivation factor. Flexible time management also a big factor to the increase of work-life balance during telework. It allows the teleworkers to manage their schedule according to their will. Teleworkers may have various preferences on how to manage their work-life balance,

and some strategies may work for some teleworkers but not for others within the similar arrangement.

Another topic that has been commonly researched is the instance of telework and its effect on productivity. The claim that teleworks could boost productivity is based primarily on the fact that teleworkers face less distractions (Bentley, et al., 2016). Distractions are thought to cause stress, which lowers overall job satisfaction. Unnecessary meetings, which stress the employee over producing and delivering what is expected of them could be avoided during telework. Therefore, it can be concluded that increased job satisfaction, flexibility, work-life balance and productivity are the benefits of telework.

#### **2.2.5. Disadvantages of Telework**

While in disadvantages side of telework, some researches have identified concerns and challenges faced by teleworkers. Employees may become socially and professionally isolated due to limited social interaction with coworkers and employers. The impression of isolation, according to Fonner & Roloff (2010), can be reduced by establishing frequent and quality information sharing systems (Fonner & Roloff, 2010). Feeling isolated from coworkers, insufficient social support, and delayed feedback could impact on teleworker's well-being. Psychological strain is one among well-being aspects which alert a main concern of telework research (Bentley, et al., 2016).



Despite the findings for the benefits of Telework in terms of work-life balance, research shows that there are several characteristics that have a negative impact on the teleworkers. Teleworking employees work longer days, according to researchers Glass & Noonan (2016). Observed teleworking workers worked three hours longer per week on average than office-based employees within the same firm, according to their research. In addition, employees frequently employed Telework, which consisted of additional work taking at home after their usual 40-hour workweek. Additionally, it was discovered that teleworkers who worked overtime were rarely paid for their extra hours worked, resulting in employees completing more work but receiving no long-term significant additional compensation (Glass & Noonan, 2016).

Some researches argue that telework could eliminates distractions associated with working in an office workplace, such as when a colleague coming by for a chat or some discussions with other department. However, this argument is only valid if the new work environment like home, provides fewer distractions (Van der Meulen, et al., 2012).. When working from home, a distraction could include getting caught up in household issues or being stopped by children or a family member who does not understand that the person is working even though they are at home (Kurland & Bailey, 2002). These distractions will reduce the teleworker's productivity and have a general negative impact. To summarize, threat on well-being, unwanted distractions, over work, and social isolation are found as the main concerns of telework.

### 2.3. Psychological Strain

According to Beehr, Strain is a harmful state because it has bad consequences to the person who experience it (Beehr, 1995). Lee and Ashforth (1990) also defined psychological strain as an affective state that leads to feelings of emotional deprivation and energy drain. Many pieces of research have examined that psychological strain arises because of specific stressors. Based on the research conducted by Lazarus and Folkman, Psychological Strain in the work environment happens when employees cannot meet their job demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Other research conducted by National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health found that psychological strain in workplace likely happen when the job requirements do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker (NIOSH, 1999). Low salaries combined with high demands and a low level of control over tasks are common stressors in a workplace.

Previous research has proved that psychological strain is connected to psychological health and could eventually impact on employee's physical health. When psychological strain happens in the form of distress, workers typically experience short tempers, headaches, stomach aches, and difficulty in concentrating (NIOSH, 1999). In more persistent conditions, insomnia, anxiety, high blood pressure, weakened immune system, and heart disease may occur (Lee and Ashforth, 1990). The level of demand on an employee and the level of control given to the employee are primarily related to

work strain. Stressful work demand creates high levels of psychological strain, but higher work control can result in lower strain levels (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

### **2.3.1. Psychological Strain in Remote Work Arrangement**

In remote conditions, the stressors are increased due to external factors. Teleworkers who are home working are likely to face distractions caused by the unideal environment around them. Work-family conflicts often occur during remote working in a home-based environment (Bentley et al., 2016). Lack of technical support and resources could lead to low teleworkers' control over their tasks (Kossek, 2006). According to Eurofound research, at least fourteen percent of those who occasionally worked from home reported stress at work compared to those who work directly in office. (Charalampous et al., 2019; Ipsen et al., 2021).

In work from home environment, psychological strain may also be caused by delayed feedback, inadequate social support and feeling isolated from their supervisor and co-workers compared to office-based employees (Bentley, et al., 2016). If an organization does not have reliable technology that allows the teleworkers to easily access information and give essential communication support, they will feel the impact of isolation causing psychological strain. In one study, teleworking has managed to create some sort of balance, teleworker does not content with work since the person are surrounded by their family because family could bring a good social support and motivation factor for the employees (Bailey & Kurland, 2016). These factors may affect toward teleworker's psychological strain in a positive way.

## 2.4. Organizational Social Support

Organizational Social Support consists of Perceived Organizational Support and Perceived Social Support, and they all develop from the extent that the employees believe that the organization cares for their wellbeing (Eisenberger et al., 1997). At the same time, Krishnan and Mary defined Perceived Organizational Support as employees' sensitivity to the degree of involvement and consideration as crucial organizational resources (Krishnan & Mary, 2012). According to research by Robbin & Judge (2008), individuals feel their organization is supportive when rewards are considered fairly, employees have a voice in decision-making, and their supervision is considered supportive.

Giao, Vuong, and Tushar (2020) evaluate the effects of social support on the level of on-job stress through the lens of the locus of control. In the Vietnamese banking industry, job stress is considered significant due to the high competitiveness of different players in the industry. Social support in this study by Giao, Vuong, and Tusha is defined as a segment of individuals within an employee's social network that offers the employee social-emotional aid. The locus of control is how the employees perceive the likelihood of getting a reward from a relationship. In that light, there is an internal and external locus of control. An internal locus of control presents higher reward chances, while an external locus limits the chances of realizing a reward. The acquisition of social support is thus perceived as receiving support from subordinates, coworkers, and supervisors. Social support in the banking sector is further conceptualized in the form

of information support, emotional support, and material support. These forms of support then manifest as empathy, receiving feedback, and acquiring material support required on the job.

#### **2.4.1. Organizational Social Support in Telework Arrangement**

According to Dawson-Howard, Standen, and Omari (2013), social support includes regular face-to-face interactions with supervisors and colleagues. Informal conversations such as lunch breaks and hallway conversations would normally lack in a teleworking work environment. Dawson-Howard, Standen, and Omari (2013) highlight that with the exception of formal and informal interactions that employees would enjoy in a conventional work environment, tele-mediated communication can serve the purpose of promoting the acquisition of social support. Social support, in this case, culminates as material, information, and emotional support. However, Dawson-Howard, Standen, and Omari (2013) indicate that the tolerance for social support is relative to individual characteristics that include introverts and extroverts.

On some occasions, telework manifests as a time-sensitive work where telework that exceeds three days leads to overall employee dissatisfaction. Telework can be divided into low-intensity and high-intensity telework. Low-intensity telework includes one to two days of teleworking, while high-intensity work includes several days that may consist of more than three days of teleworking. Social interaction at the workplace have been found as a great source of employee satisfaction, but it is lacking in the case of teleworking arrangements. Therefore, organizational social support

should be implemented in the form of an information sharing approach through managers and coworkers in order to minimize the possibility of threat on well-being aspect (Dawson-Howard, Standen, & Omari 2013).

Lobburi (2012) emphasizes the development of social support from both workplace and non-workplace social support. An organization can focus on developing the tools and aspects of teleworkers social support. Ensuring the establishment of work-life balance in teleworking arrangements promotes the perception of social support. According to Chou (2015), the different forms of social support include supervisor support and perceived coworkers' support could leads to change on employees' wellbeing. The supervisor support manifests in developing trust and friendship that facilitates relative levels of mentorship in the supervisor-employee relationship. Trust and respect from the supervisor then lead to the development of worthiness to the organization. On the other hand, the perceived coworker's social support leads to readiness to offer aid and additional expertise in completing a task. Besides providing expert help, the coworkers also provide social support when an employee is facing difficulties in completing a task, including provisions of workgroup cohesion and serving as a perfect buffer in cautioning against job-related stress.

## **2.5. Teleworker Support**

Teleworker Support consists of Manager Support, Manager Trust, and Technical Support for Telework. According to Bentley, Teo, McLeod, Tan, Bosua, and Gloet (2016), social and technical support in teleworking arrangements are essentials in

promoting teleworkers' well-being. Teleworker well-being is one of affected aspect when the person face social isolation, which could leads to psychological strain and low job satisfaction. Telework takes place in various contexts at home, on the road, and a co-working center, among other remote working contexts. The physical isolation between the organization and the employees raises concerns on how to support employees to support their safety and overall well-being in the remote context.

Further telework support can be extended in support and feedback for the employees, interaction with colleagues and managers, and the provision of job resources. Technical support is also essential in teleworking arrangements owing to the technology-intensive nature of the teleworking arrangements. Bentley, Teo, McLeod, Tan, Bosua, and Gloet (2016) highlight that technological and technical support requests increase with employees' utilizing remote working arrangements. Hence training and technical support promote the acquisition of lower psychological strain.

Tarallo (2018) recommends the best practices in teleworking. These practices include co-creating the teleworking policies. In this case, the managers should engage the workers in the creation of teleworking policies and arrangements. The discussion should focus on arrangements to facilitate employee connections, coordinate team projects, and utilize technology. In tasks that require a team effort, the organization should develop a team schedule to facilitate meeting the organizational and the employees' collaboration needs. Technical facilities failure in teleworking arrangements is also a major source of teleworking dissatisfaction among teleworkers.

Teleworkers may get less feedback and social support than office employees since they operate from home or another remote location without the normal structure and guidance offered by supervisors and other people in the workplace. It can be claimed that organizational sources of support will likely affect the capability between teleworkers, their job tasks, and their surroundings, and teleworker views of their capacity to manage the demands of telework. Needed support can affect teleworker psychological strain by providing stable technology and support for teleworking communication (Bentley, et al., 2016)

## **2.6. Hypotheses Development**

### **2.6.1. Organizational Social Support and Psychological Strain**

Previous research underlined that teleworkers experience higher mental health symptoms of stress than office-based because of social isolation, work-family conflict and lack of support (Lynn & Sandi, 2003). Job stress or psychological strain, described as harmful physical and emotional responses that happen where the job requirements do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker (NIOSH, 1999). The perception of employees regarding assessment of their contribution and care of wellbeing by their organization (Perceived Organizational Support) as well as how much support they get from their co-workers and supervisor (Perceived Social Support) are understood as the factors that affect employee wellbeing in the workplace (Florence et al., 2016; Gülaçtı, 2016). These variables help to minimize the interruption and



problem that might occur during teleworking (Aboelmaged & Subbaugh, 2012). Knowing the important role of organizational support on teleworker wellbeing and psychological strain specifically, it can be assumed that teleworker psychological strain will decrease as organizational social support and teleworker support increases. Therefore, the first hypotheses for this study:

H1: Organizational social support will be inversely related to psychological strain.

### **2.6.2. Telework Support and Psychological Strain**

Because teleworkers have a different nature of work compared to office-based workers, some specific teleworker supports are considered to have an impact on teleworkers' well-being. Manager Support, Trust, and Technical Support were proven to significantly affect teleworkers' well-being (Bentley, et al., 2016). Trust appears to be a key determinant of telework effectiveness, impacting on teleworker attitudes and performance in the teleworking environment (Bentley, et al., 2016). Researches have been conducted looking at technical support for teleworkers suggests this form of support is essential for positive telework outcomes. Technical support is necessary to make sure effective coordination with the central office and co-workers (Bosua et al., 2013). Moreover, research has shown that the more an employee teleworks the more support is needed and the greater level of support is required with technology (Bayrak, 2012). Therefore, the second hypotheses for this study:

H2: Teleworker support will be inversely related to psychological strain.

## 2.7. Theoretical Framework

Based on the hypothesis that has been developed by the researcher in this research, this Theoretical Framework will represent the relation between each variables.

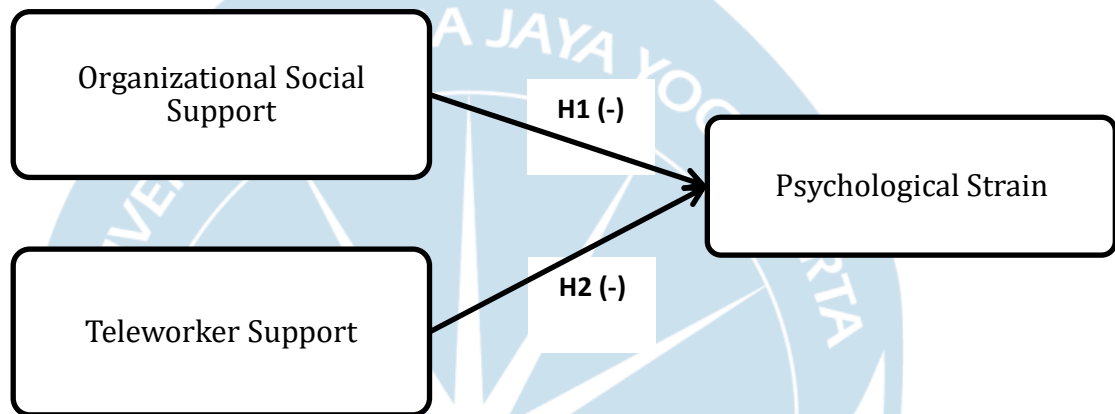


Figure 2.1