

Modelling Managerial Coaching During Pandemic: Strengthening Delivery System and Employee's Well-Being

Nursaadatun Nisak Ahmad¹, Shereen Norance², Idaya Husna Mohd³, Izmayani Sa'adin⁴, Veera Pandiyan A/L Kaliani Sundam⁵, Tuan Noorkorina Tuan Kub⁶, Zarina Abdul Munir⁷ and Siti Nusryuhada Sheikh Ghadzi⁸

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of managerial coaching on employee well-being and training transfer during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The study examines management using a managerial coaching approach within the public service sector using a qualitative approach that includes semi-structured interviews with 50 immediate supervisors (grades 36 to 54) with at least six months of divisional experience. The research aimed to achieve three primary objectives: firstly, to comprehend the impact of managerial coaching on employee well-being during the pandemic; secondly, to determine the connections between management coaching and employee self-efficacy; and third, to look at the function of employee self-efficacy as a mediator between managerial coaching and training transfer. The study's findings show a positive relationship between managerial coaching and employee well-being, emphasising the need for good coaching methods in promoting mental and emotional health, particularly in remote work during the pandemic. The study additionally identifies a correlation between managerial coaching and employee self-efficacy, highlighting the role of coaching techniques in increasing workers' confidence in job performance and overcoming obstacles. Furthermore, the study reveals employee self-efficacy as a mediating factor in the relationship between management coaching and training transfer, emphasising the value of coaching for enhancing employees' confidence in implementing newly learned skills and information from training programs. In conclusion, this study emphasises the importance of managerial coaching in enhancing employee well-being, self-efficacy, and training transfer, providing useful insights for firms navigating the intricacies of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Managerial Coaching, Pandemic, Work from Home

INTRODUCTION

We in Malaysia are no exception in dealing with this critical situation. We have never faced a pandemic that can cause death when there is physical contact, and we have never been working from home. This situation is difficult for all organisations because there are obstacles when they want to communicate with each other from their own home; even though there is a medium that we can use, there are also challenges that every organisation member needs to face when using it such as poor internet communication, noises from their home, a distraction from their family members and inability to concentrate for long hours when meeting online. Given the obstacles posed by Malaysia's COVID-19 pandemic, managerial coaching is becoming increasingly important in assisting organisations in navigating the complexity of remote work and overcoming communication hurdles. The government has implemented various efforts to curb the pandemic, including declaring the Movement Control Order (MCO), whereby lockdowns, travel restrictions, and the shutdown of non-essential companies, apart from introducing new norms in daily life such as social distancing, wearing masks, and hygiene practices. Despite having caused enormous stressful situations and challenges, especially in the economic and worrying contagion rate (Shah et al., 2020b). The competitive challenges drive managers to question how organizations

¹ Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor Branch. E-mail: nursa040@uitm.edu.my

² Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor Branch

³ Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor Branch

⁴ Department of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perak Branch

⁵ Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor Branch

⁶ Medical Microbiology - Bacteriology, Mycology, Antimicrobial of Natural Product, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Kubang Kerian

⁷ Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor Branch

⁸ Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor Branch

must be structured and how work can be done more effectively and efficiently in all circumstances, especially when facing the COVID-19 pandemic (Umair et al., 2020). Director General of Health, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah expressed concern about the increasing number of new cases by 1,705 in a day since January 2024 (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2024). In this regard, he asked all employers and employees to play a role in helping the Ministry of Health (MOH) curb the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace by complying with the standard operating procedures (SOP) set at all times (Abdalqader et al., 2020). In line to curb the pandemic, which will only be achieved by breaking the infection chain, the Public Service Department (PSD) has directed government offices to limit officers/staffs' presence for non-essential services to a maximum of 30 per cent. It is primarily for offices within the MCO and Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) implementation areas. A guideline on Work from Home (WFH) policy has been issued through Service Circular No. 5 of 2020 [PA.100-1/4/2 (12)], ensuring the service delivery remains at its best level at all times, despite the constraints (Pekeliling Perkhidmatan Bilangan 5 tahun 2020).

A study conducted by an online consumer research firm, Vase.ai, on 1,100 respondents on how Malaysians adapt to working from home, while MCO/CMCO found 35 per cent said that unstable internet connection is a challenge faced. It was also found that 77 per cent of respondents admitted having difficulty working from home. Only nine per cent (9%) of Malaysians stated a more productive acceptance of working from home (Prof Dr Rusli Ahmad, 2020). This situation has challenged management to ensure the achievement of quality work. Paragraph 10, in the PSD circular (Service Circular No. 5 of 2020 [PA.100-1 / 4/2 (12)]), emphasised that the head of the department should ensure the quality-of-service delivery and officers' work performance are not affected, despite facing new norms working environment. Thus, in line with the government initiative, this study aims to understand how managerial coaching can help enhance employees' self-efficacy in the new norms working environment requiring more appropriate and effective coaching characteristics so that employees can learn new things from their manager during the pandemic even from their home and assist employee's well-being when working from home.

In order to maintain the quality of work of civil servants who work from home, management needs to ensure that the selection of coaching methods in the correct and effective working hours can influence employees to work well. Park (2012), in his study, suggested that coaching practice during working hours by the employer can maintain employee performance. Nevertheless, in the context of civil servants, practical managerial coaching is still not carried out in a structured manner, although this practice has been established. A preliminary survey of the study found that the management was less understanding about the characteristics of effective coaching during working hours and appropriate to the task structure of civil servants.

In the organisational context, management coaching refers to the immediate superiors' role in practising open communication (Richardson et al., 2023), facilitating employees' development (Adele & Ellinger, 2024), accepting diversity, and promoting teamwork and employee-oriented work (Ali et al., 2021). Immediate superiors in an organisation are the closest individuals to employees. Hence, immediate superiors' coaching and guidance can assist employees in improving work performance over time. Management coaching usually occurs informally, unplanned, and unstructured, especially in the relationship between immediate superiors and supervised employees. Usually, this is known as on-the-job coaching during interpersonal relationships between immediate superiors and employees (Ali et al., 2018).

An analysis of the development of managerial coaching methodologies spanning the years 1999 to 2021 demonstrates a prevailing emphasis on determining the effects of coaching on the conduct and productivity of employees. Nevertheless, a critical research gap, as highlighted by Ali et al. (2021), concerns the lack of studies that examine the suitability of coaching attributes in relation to particular job circumstances and environmental circumstances. Significantly, there is an absence of empirical research examining the attributes of managerial coaching in diverse contexts involving task appropriateness. This highlights the need for a more thorough and nuanced investigation in this area. To fill this void, our research emphasises examining the correlation between managerial coaching attributes and task appropriateness, with self-efficacy as a mediating factor. The strategic selection of self-efficacy as a mediating variable in analysing managerial coaching's complex dynamics is evident. Self-efficacy, which (Marlina & Deliana, 2023) defines as an individual's confidence in their ability to

successfully carry out specific actions to attain desired results, is a significant factor in determining behaviour and performance. Within managerial coaching, comprehension of how coaching attributes impact employees' self-efficacy can yield valuable insights into the fundamental processes that propel performance and behaviour outcomes.

Furthermore, the significance of our research is emphasised by the unparalleled difficulties presented by the worldwide pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted traditional work environments, compelling organizations to implement remote work structures. The lack of a clearly defined managerial coaching framework specifically designed to address remote work requirements is evident in this context. Our study aims to address this gap by developing a systematic comprehension of coaching attributes that demonstrate efficacy across diverse task appropriateness contexts and can also be modified to accommodate the complexities inherent in remote work environments. The study's implications transcend the immediate crisis; it establishes the groundwork for proactive coaching strategies for managers who are resilient to unanticipated disruptions. Since the characteristics of coaching practices during working hours are still less clear and less discussed in the public sector, the researcher intends to identify the importance of coaching during pandemics that can be used to help management guide employees in their behaviour, especially when employees are instructed to work from home to reduce the transmission of Covid-19. In addition, the study's results will also identify the characteristics of effective managerial coaching, which can maintain the performance of civil servants and help employees maintain their well-being during the pandemic. Next, the study will introduce an effective managerial coaching model that can be used to help management guide employees, especially during the pandemic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Managerial Coaching Effective Employee's

Coaching is a multidimensional term generally defined as immediate superiors' roles and responsibilities as coaches or mentors to employees (Kamus Dewan 2016). Ali, Raza, Ali and Imtiaz (2021) described that effective coaching practice at the workplace needs to involve coaching during working hours and providing employee feedback. Nevertheless, researchers use management coaching measures introduced by McLean et al. (2005) to deal with dynamic organisations. In the organisational context, coaching is one of the management styles practised by immediate superiors in mentoring and assisting employees towards improving employees' behaviour, such as transfer of training and motivation in performing tasks (Ellinger et al. 2014). Coaching involves the indirect relationship between immediate superiors and subordinates, occurring continuously during working hours (Ali et al., 2020). As such, the immediate superiors' role in coaching during working hours is to direct a task and be responsible for providing adequate support, such as providing opportunities and valuable resources to supervised employees.

Besides that, management coaching is a crucial predicting variable of the organisation's coaching process (Ahmad et al., 2021; Pousa & Mathieu 2015; Kim & Min 2015) and positively impact employees' behaviour. In the organisational context, management coaching refers to the immediate superiors' role in practising open communication, facilitating employees' development, accepting diversity, and promoting teamwork and employee-oriented work (Ellinger & Bostrom, 2014). Immediate superiors in an organisation are the closest individuals to employees. Hence, their coaching and guidance can assist employees in improving work performance over time. Coaching is usually conducted face-to-face between managers and employees. Still, coaching has been done virtually during the pandemic, and it can be done via videophone, telephone, and the Internet (Jones et al., 2016). Managerial coaching is crucial during the pandemic to ensure employees' well-being; they are expected to work remotely from their homes and have reduced human contact, meaning they only communicate virtually with each other. During this crucial time, managers need to utilise technology to conduct coaching and ensure the well-being and effectiveness of the employees during the pandemic.

Managerial Coaching and Employee's Performance

Research by Amy Loh Liew Yi, Teo Eng Wah, and Remco Polman (2018) explained that positive coaching behaviours could enhance someone's motivational climate and satisfaction, while negative coaching behaviour might have the opposite effect. Thus, there are positive relationships between motivational climate and

performance satisfaction, coaching behaviour and performance satisfaction, and motivational climate and performance satisfaction. Besides, coaches should investigate their coaching behaviour because it is a fundamental aspect of enhancing employees' performance concerning motivational climate and performance satisfaction. Similarly, Hyung Rok Woo (2017) also conducted surveys on 247 employees from 17 organisations in South Korea. The study confirmed that effective managerial coaching could influence employees' behaviour, especially by encouraging them to engage in their assignments. It explains that the managers' ability to provide regular and continuous guidance can encourage employees to engage and apply what they learned in the task. Ihsan Sari and Betul Bayazit (2017) also studied employee motivation involving 289 athletes in Turkey.

Some people find it challenging to commit to work from home during the pandemic. Managers with coaching abilities can increase their employees' affective commitment and, consequently, their work performance (Ribeiro et al., 2020). Based on the finding of Ribeiro et al. (2020), It has been demonstrated that affective commitment mediates the connection between managerial coaching and employee performance while improving employees' well-being (Yip et al., 2023; Guzzo et al., 2020; Wong et al., 2021). The study identified that the coaches' managerial coaching could enhance the individuals' motivation and belief to perform 3 tasks. The findings also explained that the managers' ability to provide systematic and persistent guidance could guide individuals towards achieving the objectives.

Theoretical Framework

Management coaching takes on a new dimension as organisations deal with unprecedented challenges and disruptions after the pandemic. Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura 1986) highlights that coaching practices influence the employees' judgments of their work performance and strengthen their trust in their abilities to perform specific tasks. As virtual work and changes in circumstances become the norm, immediate managers are crucial in providing the necessary guidance and support for navigating these uncertain situations. During the coaching process, the immediate supervisor and employees work together to address the working condition and prepare the evaluation's feedback. Therefore, the immediate supervisor's support helps the employees increase their confidence in implementing the actions (Pousa & Anne Mathieu 2015). It can help strengthen employees' trust in their ability to navigate difficult situations and provide them with a sense of belonging and connection, which can help reduce stress and anxiety when working from home. This statement is supported by studies conducted by Pousa et al. (2015) on 122 financial advisors in Canada and by Sung and Tae Kyung (2018) on 49 couples of counselling employees in Australia. These studies' outcomes revealed that the management's capability to plan appropriately as a coach and provide support is an essential predictor of employees' performance in a working environment. Besides, applying the Leader-Member Exchange Theory in the context of a managerial coaching role indicates that the main idea of this theory clarifies that when the relationship between immediate superiors and employees gets better, which is the outcome of open communication and teamwork that exists between immediate superiors and employees, the immediate superiors will be more likely to provide adequate coaching to employees and with the strong support of managers, it can help employees during a pandemic when employees may be feeling overwhelmed by the changes to their work environment. Hence, employees will be more motivated to enhance positive behaviour at the workplace (Ali et al. 2021:2020; Gillet et al., 2010; Kim et al. 2015; Pousa & Mathieu 2015). In this study, the exhibited positive behaviour can be seen through the employees' determination to carry out either core or non-core tasks. Nevertheless, minimal studies still prove the combination of these two critical theories that will ultimately influence employee behaviour.

Previous scholars have identified and demonstrated the impact of management guidance on work performance (Ellinger et al., McLean 2005; Ihsan Sari & Betul Bayazit 2017). However, there is still a lack of research that discusses the impact of the PKP on employee motivation in carrying out tasks (Ihsan Sari & Betul Bayazit 2017). Scholars have described that management guidance is one of the guidance methods practised by the closest leader in the organisation, and it can encourage employees to do better work. As a manager, you should emphasize five dimensions when providing management guidance: open communication, so employees feel a sense of belonging; encouraging employees to develop their skills, which can provide a sense of accomplishment and progress as well as promote mental health; working in groups creates a sense of belong-

ing and participation for everyone. The company shows that employees are valued for their unique strengths by being work-oriented and receiving diversity within the organization.

Overall, management coaching usually occurs informally, unplanned, and unstructured, especially in the relationship between immediate superiors and supervised employees. Typically, this is known as on-the-job coaching during interpersonal relationships between immediate superiors and employees. Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that effective management coaching involves immediate superiors' behaviours, attitudes, and skills in coaching employees. Among the leadership characteristics portrayed by immediate superiors are communicating openly, stimulating employee-oriented employees' development, accepting diversity, and promoting team- work in any dealing.

Most previous researchers reviewed and proved the effectiveness of managerial coaching on employees' behaviour. Nevertheless, minimal studies still focus on establishing managerial coaching profiling characteristics contributing to the effectiveness. Therefore, this study is expected to expand the body of knowledge on managerial coaching practice in the organisation.

Hypothesis Development

The relationship between managerial coaching and employee self-efficacy

Several studies have found inconsistent results regarding the effect of managerial coaching on employee self-efficacy. For example, McLean et al. (2005) conducted a study to test the comprehensive elements of managerial coaching. However, they did not see managerial coaching as a multidimensional variable that could positively impact employee behaviour. Therefore, the results of this study could not prove the importance of managerial coaching characteristics to improve employee self-efficacy in performing daily tasks in organizations such as open communication, employee development, diversity acceptance and group-oriented and employee-oriented tasks.

However, upon closer examination of recent research, such as the one conducted by Kim et al. (2013), the claim that managerial coaching consistently boosts employee confidence in task execution is called into question. Although the study demonstrates a positive correlation, scepticism regarding the robustness of this association, possible confounding factors, and the applicability of the results requires careful examination. Additional attention should be given to methodological considerations, including the sample size and the coaching characteristics being investigated. Furthermore, because of the subjective nature of assessing these characteristics, the claim that leadership qualities inherently result in increased employee confidence requires scrutiny. The evaluation is further complicated by the diversity of perspectives regarding what constitutes effective coaching.

Moreover, it is crucial to investigate the contextual significance of coaching attributes in relation to various sectors, corporate cultures, and professional positions. Although Kim et al. (2013) offer insightful observations, a discerning viewpoint prompts us to scrutinise the observed relationship's resilience and contemplate many influencing factors. The following paragraphs will provide a more exhaustive analysis of these mentoring attributes so that the reader can thoroughly comprehend their significance to the organisation. Additionally, to improve understanding and proficiency in a task, the immediate superior should promote teamwork and enhance employee motivation by paying attention and being accountable for the effectiveness of the employees' tasks. Since this managerial coaching practice is carried out during working hours, it can further enhance employees' confidence in performing their assigned tasks.

Furthermore, a superior should be open and practice a continuous coaching style to improve employee self-efficacy in performing tasks. In other words, the coaching style of the immediate superior can increase employees' confidence in their ability to complete a task successfully. Therefore, recent empirical studies have also shown that a superior is considered to have practised continuous coaching methods during working hours when he/she successfully changes the attitudes and behaviours of the individuals he/she is coaching. Dynamic organisations require flexible and versatile employees who can perform tasks beyond what is required while demonstrating high effort in task completion (Hartog & Belschak, 2007).

Employees can quickly develop more skills and knowledge when they are given a chance to explore their abilities without fear. If they make mistakes during their work, the manager can lead them by giving encouragement, tips or hints towards the problem, which can help employees think critically. It can help employees become more creative in problem-solving, and when employees are confident in their abilities, this can help them control their minds when there are problems or situations they need to face. It helps them to control their emotion and, at the same time, improve their well-being in every critical situation, especially during a pandemic situation.

Next, Ling Ying Leh and Abdul Ghani Kanesan Abdullah (2014) conducted a study on the role of managerial coaching based on a sample of 251 employees at Politeknik Sarawak and Pulau Pinang. The study showed that good managerial coaching could be implemented through direct discussions about tasks between the immediate superior and employees during working hours. Furthermore, the ability of the immediate superior to regularly implement such coaching methods can improve employees' self-efficacy in the organisation.

Pousa and Mathieu (2015) also surveyed 122 financial assistants in Canada. The findings of this study revealed that managerial coaching is an effective management tool that can influence employee behaviour, especially in encouraging employees to improve their self-efficacy when performing tasks. This situation explains that the ability of the immediate superior to provide regular and continuous coaching can encourage employees to improve their behaviour in performing tasks. Employee confidence in their abilities is demonstrated through their commitment to tasks, high resilience to up-coming challenges, and subsequently seeking solutions to problems.

Overall, both studies focused on the behaviour of superiors in coaching employees. However, this study not only looks at the characteristics of superiors' behaviour but also includes the attitudes and skills required by the immediate superior in coaching employees. This statement is supported by Hagen (2012) in his study, suggesting that managerial coaching should not only be viewed from the aspect of behaviour. Superiors must have effective attitudes and skills to manage constantly challenging organisations and coach employees towards achieving expected goals (Jie-Tsuen Huang & Hui-Hsien Hsieh, 2014; McLean et al., 2005; Park, McLean & Yang, 2008), primarily through high self-efficacy in completing assigned tasks. Based on the above theoretical and empirical evidence, the first hypothesis tested in this study is as follows:

H1: Managerial coaching has a positive relationship with employee self-efficacy.

The relationship between employee self-efficacy and training transfer

Employees used to be free to do their work and comfortable being creative during training transfer; their self-efficacy is helpful during the pandemic. Self-efficacy may assist employees in retaining their wellness by establishing a sense of control and confidence in their ability to complete duties in uncertain circumstances. This can help them stay focused and motivated even in challenging circumstances. Moreover, training transfer further reinforces this confidence and can help employees stay engaged by providing the necessary tools and knowledge to complete tasks and remain motivated. When these two factors are combined, employees can better maintain productivity and overcome the challenges of the pandemic.

Previous studies have shown that self-efficacy plays a significant role in influencing the output of a training program (Haccoun & Sak, 1998). Salas and Cannon-Bowers (2001) suggested in their previous study that there is a relationship between an individual's confidence and their ability to apply the skills acquired during training sessions to their actual workplace. In other words, high self-efficacy can affect an individual's confidence in applying the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired while performing organisational tasks (Robbins & Judge, 2009).

Although the nature of the training transfer variables is said to be important in helping to improve employee performance, the nature of this relationship is still not widely discussed in the context of the role of managerial coaching. Several previous studies have focused more on discussing the effect of self-efficacy on overall employee performance (Richard et al., 2016). Furthermore, a study by Muhammad Salman et al. (2016) on 340 healthcare employees in Pakistan also proved that employee self-efficacy has a strong relationship with factors

improving job performance. Improving self-efficacy in the study context was shown through the effectiveness of the work produced by the employees. This effectiveness resulted from the high employee confidence in their ability to apply what they have learned. This situation indirectly encourages employees to fully utilise the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) previously acquired in their workplace.

Kamran Iqbal and Ghulam Dastgeer (2017) conducted a study on the role of self- efficacy in employee behaviour using a sample of 215 bank employees in Pakistan. The study's findings proved that employees with high self-efficacy tend to apply the KSA acquired during their tasks, unlike those with low self-efficacy. Self-efficacy in this study is described as one of the most important personal characteristics of employees that can convince them to practice KSA in the actual work environment. Based on the theoretical and empirical evidence above, the second hypothesis tested is as follows:

H2: Employee self-efficacy has a positive relationship with training transfer.

The relationship between managerial coaching and training transfer

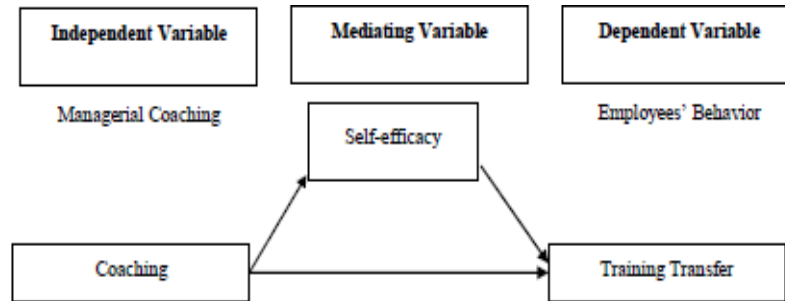
Communication is the primary challenge when everyone works from home; during the pandemic, everyone relies on various mediums to transmit information. It is difficult for certain people because they cannot see someone's body language, and it limits people to understanding each other. This is where managers need to play their role as leaders, identify the problem, and take the initiative to improve and mitigate it. When managers have time with their employees during brief training sessions, they can help employees acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to work remotely and develop emotional and social skills, such as communication and problem-solving. During the training session, the manager can encourage their employees to push their limits by providing precise goal setting and objectives and providing feedback and guidance to employees. The manager can help build employee confidence and self-efficacy through regular communication and coaching and allow employees to learn stress management techniques, such as mindfulness and meditation, to help them better manage their stress levels at home, enabling them to work effectively from home.

Based on previous studies, individuals who receive continuous coaching and support from their immediate superiors tend to apply what they have learned to their workplace (Mojgan & Somayeh, 2017). In other words, coaching provided by immediate superiors acts as a catalyst for improving job performance, especially when employees return from training. The views presented by these researchers are supported by a study conducted by Khin Marlar Maung and Sujinda Chemsripong (2014) on employees at a manufacturing company in Myanmar. The study found that the effectiveness of coaching provided by immediate superiors can encourage employees to apply what they have learned to their workplace. Additionally, the study's findings also prove that the ability of immediate superiors to provide continuous support can guide employees towards achieving organisational objectives. This statement is also supported by Bandura (1979), stating that superior coaching is one form of social persuasion that can provide guidance and direction to employees, making them more confident in carrying out their tasks.

The study conducted by Woo (2017) on 247 employees from 17 organisations in South Korea confirmed that effective managerial coaching could influence employee behaviour, particularly in encouraging employees to engage in tasks assigned within the organisation. It explains that the ability of immediate superiors to provide regular and continuous coaching can encourage employees to engage and apply what they have learned in their actual tasks. Previous studies have discussed managerial coaching with job performance and organisational commitment (Kim et al., 2014; McLean et al., 2005; Pousa & Mathieu, 2015). Although training transfer is one of the essential and relevant forms of employee behaviour to be studied in an organisation, it has been less discussed in the context of managerial coaching in previous studies. Therefore, in this study, the researcher attempts to prove that coaching provided by immediate superiors can encourage employees to apply the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired before to their workplace and help employees' well-being when required to stay home due to pandemic covid 19. Based on the theoretical and empirical evidence above, the third hypothesis tested is as follows:

H3: Managerial coaching has a positive relationship with training transfer.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional method was used in this study as it allows the researcher to use the literature review of management coaching, pilot studies, and questionnaires as the primary procedure for obtaining survey data (Sekaran 2014). A purposive sampling method was used in this study as the management could not provide a list of employees due to organisational confidentiality. Therefore, it does not permit the researcher to select respondents using a random method. Selected respondents comprised those in position grades 19 to 54 who had served the organisation for at least six months. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed to public sector employees serving the Federal Government of Malaysia. All distributed questionnaires were completed and returned by the respondents, resulting 100 per cent return rate. The sample size meets the data analysis requirement using inferential statistics (Cresswell 2008; Sekaran & Bougie 2014).

The questionnaire consists of four main sections: first, management guidance is measured using 20 question items, referring to natural behaviour, attitude and skills of the employees' immediate superiors who are assessed based on, for example, the ability to communicate openly, help towards the employee's development, such as providing employees with the opportunities to try something new and more challenging as well as to work in groups. Second, the feedback environment uses 15 question items, referring to the five organisational feedback environment process characteristics, namely the reliability of feedback sources, the quality of feedback, the delivery of feedback, the availability of feedback sources, and the encouragement to look for feedback sources. Third, employees' self-efficacy uses nine question items, referring to individuals' self-esteem and belief in their ability and capability to take charge of the assigned tasks; and the motivation to improve work performance using nine question items, which include motivation for core and non-core tasks. Besides the use of a categorical measurement scale, all items are measured using a scale of seven optional answers ranging from "Strongly disagree (1)" to "Strongly agree (7)" and "Very dissatisfied (1)" to "Very satisfied (7)". The respondents' demographic characteristics are used as control variables since this study only focuses on management coaching in general.

This study, SmartPLS version 4.0 was selected as the analytical tool for assessing instrument validity, reliability, and testing the study's hypotheses (Hair et al., 2017). The reason for utilising SmartPLS is based on its appropriateness for structural equation modelling (SEM) and its capability to manage intricate interrelationships between variables, rendering it especially proficient for research designs involving numerous constructs and complex pathways (Hair et al., 2017). SmartPLS is favoured when the objective is to forecast latent constructs rather than elucidate observed variables. This is consistent with the aims of this research, which prioritise comprehending the fundamental connections between managerial mentoring attributes and employee results. Moreover, SmartPLS is renowned for its ability to manage small sample

sizes effectively, providing a benefit in situations where acquiring large amounts of data could be problematic (Hair et al., 2017). Before conducting the structural model analysis, this study intends to thoroughly evaluate the measurement model's validity and reliability through the use of SmartPLS. This will guarantee a meticulous scrutiny of the direct relationships among the variables.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This section explains the overall hypothesis testing results. It comprises two parts, the first discussing the hypothesis of direct causal relationships and the second discussing the hypothesis of mediating variables relationships

Measurement Model Finding

Measurement Model According to Hair et al., (2017), the measurement model was generally referred to as the outer model, which depicts the relationship between constructs and the variables that act as indicators. From the measurement model, this study assesses the reliability and validity of the constructs. This study employs multi-item constructs that were conceptualized as reflective. Composite reliability was the preferred reliability procedure due to its capacity to apply weights to individual indications based on their loadings. Internal Consistency Reliability was assessed by using two different methods which were Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach Alpha values in this study vary from 0.889 to 0.967, which satisfy the acceptable criterion of 0.7 as suggested by Hair et al., (2017). According to the data, the coefficient of determination (CR) for each construct falls within the range of 0.902 to 0.971, surpassing the recommended threshold of 0.70. The results suggest that all of the constructs exhibit acceptability and reliability. This indicates that the items used to represent the constructions exhibit satisfactory levels of internal consistency The concept of indicator reliability pertains to the size of outer loadings. Beside, it was generally recommended that the factor loadings should have a minimum value of 0.50, as suggested by Hair et al., (2017). Loadings that fall below 0.50 were excluded from the scale in order to enhance convergent validity. It can be observed that all items exhibit a reasonable level of indicator reliability, ranging from 0.715 to 0.937, thereby satisfying the established threshold of 0.5. Another component to consider when evaluating a reflective measurement model was its convergent validity. This criterion assesses the degree to which the indicators of a construct align with each other and effectively account for the variance observed in the items.

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) can be employed as a means to evaluate convergent validity. A commonly accepted AVE was 0.50 or higher. Based on the result of this analysis it was evident that the AVE values for all constructs range from 0.592 to 0.816, surpassing the proposed threshold value of 0.50. Discriminant validity refers to the extent to which indicators effectively distinguish across constructs or assess separate concepts by analysing correlations between possibly overlapping measures According to, it was recommended that the HTMT values should not surpass 0.90 when the path model has constructs that were conceptually very similar. The HTMT values for all constructs were below 0.90.

Structural Model Finding

The researcher proposed three hypotheses for direct causal relationships based on the conceptual model discussed in Section 2. The analysis conducted on the study respondents revealed that two hypotheses were supported, while one was not. The bootstrapping results in Table 1 guided the determination of whether the direct causal relationship hypotheses were supported or not. Hypothesis 1's initial correlation test showed a positive relationship between managerial coaching and employee self- efficacy ($\beta = 0.249$, $p < 0.000$); therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Hypothesis 2 suggested a relationship between employee self-efficacy and employee behaviour (training transfer). The analysis showed that Hypothesis 2 was supported with $\beta = 0.663$, $p < 0.000$. Next, for Hypothesis 3, the study examined the relationship between managerial coaching and training transfer. The study found that managerial coaching did not have a positive relationship with training transfer ($\beta = 0.021$, $p = 0.649$). This finding indicates that Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Table 1: The bootstrapping results

Hypothesis	Structural Relationship	β	p-value	Significance Level
H1	MC → SE	0.249	0.000	(0.138, 0.348)
H2	SE → TT	0.663	0.000	(0.605, 0.716)
H3	MC → TT	0.021	0.649	(-0.076, 0.101)

Mediator Causal Relationship Hypotheses Results

This section discusses the analysis of indirect relationships, also known as mediator relationships. Overall, three hypotheses tested these relationships. Indirect effect result test was found that employee self-efficacy is a mediator variable between managerial coaching and training transfer. The results of the mediator analysis supported this finding. The study's findings explain that there was no direct relationship between managerial coaching and training transfer ($\beta = 0.021$, $p = 0.649$), whereas there was a positive relationship in the indirect relationship ($\beta = 0.165$, $p < 0.000$). Therefore, the mediator analysis results show that employee self-efficacy plays a crucial role as a full mediator in the relationship between managerial coaching and training transfer.

Overall, the mediator relationship findings explain that employee self-efficacy is an important mediator variable in the relationship between the role of managerial coaching and employee behaviour. The study's findings explain that employee self-efficacy is a full mediator variable in the indirect relationship between managerial coaching and training transfer and motivation in carrying out tasks. Additionally, employee self-efficacy is a complementary partial mediator variable for the relationship between feed- back environment with training transfer and motivation in carrying out tasks. This condition explains that employee self-efficacy has different types of mediator roles depending on the situation in the study location.

DISCUSSION

Overall, there are three main reasons why studies related to the role of managerial coaching, self-efficacy, and employee behaviour are conducted. Firstly, this study found that most previous studies have focused more on the effects of managerial coaching on employee behaviour, which has led to a lack of focus on the environmental feed- back factors that also affect employee behaviour (Steelman et al., 2004; Ying-Leh & Abdul Ghani, 2015). Environmental feedback is also an essential form of support provided by immediate superiors to their supervised employees; in the current environment, where remote work and uncertainty are prevalent, employees frequently rely on this advice to carry out their duties successfully, and it can improve employee behaviour (Ying-Leh & Abdul Ghani, 2015). However, studies related to environmental feedback have received less attention in the context of the role of managerial coaching. Therefore, this study combines two important forms of the role of managerial coaching, namely managerial coaching and environmental feedback, to improve employee behaviour, especially in dynamic organisations.

Secondly, previous studies have shown the effectiveness of the role of managerial coaching practices in improving employee behaviour, especially in the context of job performance. However, this study highlights the effects of the role of managerial coaching on training transfer and employee motivation in carrying out tasks in the organisation. Bass and Avolio (1998) explained that an important component emphasised in the Theory of Transformational Leadership is related to the inspiring motivation of leaders, which is believed to influence employee motivation to set a high achievement in the tasks to be carried out even in the face of pandemic-induced challenges. In addition, employees feel that the coaching provided by their immediate superiors can lead them to the desired goals.

Therefore, this study is conducted to provide empirical evidence on the effects of managerial coaching on

employee motivation in carrying out tasks in the organisation and to explain further the changes emphasised in this study. One of them is proof of the importance of the role of managerial coaching on positive behaviour involving employee motivation. It is a process that has been discussed less before in the context of the role of managerial coaching. According to Bass and Avolio (1998), employee motivation is one of the essential factors before the effectiveness of a task is produced; when employees are motivated, they stay focused and engaged in their duties, even in uncertain times. It also boosts their morale and gives them the confidence to take on upcoming tasks or challenges. Furthermore, motivation can promote employees' well-being by giving them purpose and meaning. This can allow employees to stay engaged and fulfilled, even in a challenging environment.

Thirdly, previous researchers have also suggested studying the mediating mechanism to explain further the relationship between predictor factors and their effects on employee behaviour. It is to strengthen the researchers' understanding of the relationship between the two (Kim et al., 2014; Pousa & Mathieu, 2015). Therefore, this study also examines the indirect relationship between the role of managerial coaching and employee behaviour through employee self-efficacy.

Based on the described research motivation, the main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the role of managerial coaching and employee behaviour in the Malaysian federal government public service. This study uses Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) to examine the direct relationship between the role of managerial coaching and employee behaviour and test the relationship between the role of managerial coaching and employee behaviour in the public sector through employee self-efficacy as a mediating variable. By taking a comprehensive approach, the study aims to provide organizations with relevant, actionable insights to enhance employees' performance and well-being regardless of the situation. The results of the direct effects analysis found that two hypotheses were supported while one was not.

Mediator Hypotheses Testing Results

Research findings indicate a positive relationship between managerial coaching and employee self-efficacy. This finding supports the first hypothesis (H1). It is consistent with Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), stating that employee self-efficacy is an essential internal motivational factor that can be obtained through coaching in tasks given by immediate superiors. Therefore, the more confident employees are in their superior's coaching, the higher their confidence in their ability to perform tasks better than before. This finding is also consistent with previous studies by Ling Ying Leh and Abdul Ghani (2014) and Pousa and Mathieu (2015).

Both previous studies showed that managerial coaching positively affects employee self-efficacy. Managerial coaching is one of the leadership styles of immediate superiors that is support-, participation- and achievement-oriented. It is usually translated into behaviour demonstrated by immediate superiors during working hours. Communication is crucial to coaching effectiveness in the workplace (Graham et al., 1994; Peterson & Hicks, 1996) primarily working during the pandemic. Because managers cannot be aware of what is transpiring to their employees during the pandemic, employees who are confident to inform their manager about what has happened help the working process become more efficient and promote well-being for both managers and employees. According to McLean et al. (2007), openness and sharing of thoughts, feelings, and information are one way to establish interpersonal relationships that can help influence others. For example, open communication in managerial coaching in an organisation helps create a good understanding between immediate superiors and supervised employees. This understanding has directly helped improve the effectiveness of tasks performed by employees. This effectiveness results from employees' trust in their ability to perform tasks well (McLean et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2014).

Additionally, the sensitivity of the immediate superior in enhancing employee development by providing task resources, such as sufficient capital, raw materials, and task equipment, as well as providing clear goals and explanations about assigned tasks, has directly encouraged employees' confidence to complete assigned tasks effectively (Ellinger et al., 2003; Park, McLean & Yang, 2008). Providing sufficient resources enables employees to complete new and more challenging tasks everywhere, including from their house at the same time; it helps employees with their mental health since they do not need to worry so much to complete their work with a piece of sufficient information.

The managerial coaching practice by immediate superiors in an organisation suggests group-oriented task execution (McLean, 2005). In this context of group work, the immediate superior sees employees as partners and works with them. Employees are usually free to express their views when the immediate superior treats employees as partners. Decisions are made through discussion and mutual agreement between the immediate superior and employees. In this context, the immediate superior facilitates discussing employees' ideas and perspectives on a particular matter. Joint decision-making makes employees feel valued and needed in the organisation. Therefore, employees will be more confident in completing their assigned tasks (Kim et al., 2014) and not afraid to share their knowledge on specific problems with their immediate superiors because employees know that they will have a good discussion no matter their critical situations

CONCLUSION

Employees tend to exhibit more positive, confident behavior in completing assigned tasks in their homes when they receive adequate coaching from their immediate superiors; simultaneously, they reduce pressure when working from home. Because managers can understand employees' situations through open communication and encourage employees to discover new skills when working from home, ongoing job coaching in completing daily tasks can help employees reduce errors and problems and learn new things from the mistakes while simultaneously performing tasks more effectively and helping employees' well-being when working from home during the pandemic. Typically, their high self-efficacy influences employees' task output effectiveness (McLean et al., 2007; Pousa et al., 2015).

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