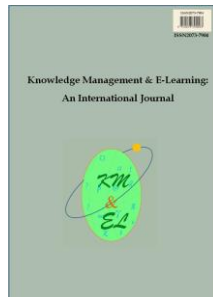# Continuance intention of IT professionals to telecommute post pandemic: A modified expectation confirmation model perspective

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Continuance intention of IT professionals to telecommute post pandemic: A modified expectation confirmation model perspective

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Abstract: This study investigates employees' intentions to telecommute post-pandemic based on IT employees' present work experiences. Perceived utility, contentment, and confirmation of expectations are proposed as factors of continuing intention to telecommute, according to the expectation-confirmation theory. The integration of work-life balance into the expectation confirmation theory was investigated to see if work-life balance influences employees' continued intention to telecommute. Data from 131 Malaysian IT workers was used to test the hypothesised model. The findings backed up the theory that perceived usefulness, satisfaction, confirmation of expectations, and work-life balance all play a role in employees' desire to continue telecommuting post-pandemic. Work-life balance was also found to be a significant mediator of the effect of expectation confirmation on job satisfaction. As a result, this research adds to the idea by including work-life balance literature to demonstrate that the behaviour of IT professionals is associated with their quality of work-life harmony. This study can assist businesses that plan to transition to hybrid work environments. With the needs of the emerging workplace still being uncharted territory for everyone, hybrid work models can be built and customized based on the findings of this study. This is imperative to fit the needs of employees and help organisations sustain their businesses.

Keywords: Telecommute; Work from home; Work-life balance; COVID-19 pandemic; Hybrid work model

Biographical notes: Ts. Dr. Lilian Anthonysamy is a senior lecturer and a certified trainer at the Faculty of Management, Multimedia University, Malaysia. Her research areas include the adoption of information technology in organizations and human factors in information systems, digital and seamless learning, digital literacy, anthropology in individual behaviour, learning strategies, and educational technology. Presently, she is also a reviewer for several Quartile 1 journals. Lilian is also a member of the Malaysia Educational Technology Association, Malaysian Institute of Management, Association of Information Systems, Malaysia Design Council, a senior member at the International Association of Computer Science and Information Technology, and a professional technologist of the Malaysian Board of Technologies.

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak interrupted numerous corporate operations around the world. Several countries have imposed nationwide curfews. As a result, company closures, geographic quarantines, events, and gatherings were rigidly enforced. In March 2020, the Malaysian government issued the Movement Control Order (MCO) (Muhammed, 2020). MCO has forced the closure of all non-essential commercial locations across the country (Rafee & Lee, 2020). The Malaysian government has recommended employers and employees undertake social distancing for workplace measures (Ministry of Health, 2020). Employees began working from home practically immediately after the lockdown was implemented (Jagdev, 2020). COVID-19 has increased flexible work arrangements and telecommuting (Béland et al., 2020). For non-critical staff, telecommuting was the only way to keep working. Furthermore, organisations needed to ensure business operations continued without disruption.

According to a study by Mas and Pallas (2020), the typical applicant would be willing to accept an hourly pay reduction of 8% in exchange for the ability to work from home. He et al. (2021) also discovered that Chinese job seekers were more receptive to lesser pay and more inclined to apply for opportunities that allowed for remote work. In a related study, a case study of a government agency that switched totally to home-based telework revealed that staff members benefited from telework in a variety of ways, including an increased incentive to return to work and improved work-family balance (Donnelly & Proctor-Thomson, 2015). According to past research, Malaysian telecommuters with families have lower work performance (Munusamy, 2016; Beaunoyer et al., 2020). This is because they were overworked, had added family responsibilities, and were unable to attain the work-life balance they desired. Employees have become exhausted and demotivated as a result of this. According to a recent study by Baert and associates, each employee's telecommuting experience is unique (Baert et al., 2020). Telecommuting literature has exploded in recent years, particularly during the epidemic. However, some contrasting studies reported that many employees favour continuing teleworking post-pandemic (Marzban et al., 2021; Naor et al., 2021). Despite this, recent studies have acknowledged a paucity of research on employees' attitudes toward telecommuting in the aftermath of the epidemic (Shareena & Shahid, 2020; Sarbu, 2018). In a different recent study, Lund and colleagues discovered that while some tasks can technically be completed remotely, they are best carried out in person. These tasks include crucial business decisions, negotiations, brainstorming sessions, and onboarding new staff (Lund et al., 2021). The COVID-19 problem has shown gaps in the systems that can advise employees and employers on how to use telework to meet their demands (International Labour Organization, 2021). Thus, more research is needed to see if post-pandemic telecommuting has acted as a motivator for future workplaces or if it was just a blip on the radar (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garcés, 2020; Barnes, 2020). To guarantee that any future, more permanent modifications to teleworking rules are sustainable for both employees and organisations, it is crucial to understand employees' inclinations toward teleworking following COVID-19 and how these inclinations are influenced by various factors (Weber et al., 2022).

This study adds to the literature by looking into employees' experiences and intentions to telecommute after the epidemic. According to prior studies, employees who have experienced telework, both in general and in its extended version, are more willing to telecommute (Baert et al., 2020). The purpose of this study is to discover if the work-life balance has an impact on whether or not people continue to telecommute. According to the

expectation-confirmation hypothesis, people's intentions to continue their behaviours are formed from their satisfaction with previous behaviour and reinforcement of prior beliefs (Steelman & Soror, 2017). As a result, further research is needed into the relationship between job satisfaction, compliance, and telecommuting (Sarbu, 2018). Employee perceptions can be used to predict whether or not employees would continue to use telecommuting in the workplace. The transition to telecommuting during the MCO signals a window of opportunity to transit to telework post-pandemic, which is a clear indication of telecommuting necessity (Moktar, 2020).

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to sustain the desire for telework in the digital workplace by examining the mediation effect of work-life balance on the perceived usefulness, verification, and satisfying relationships, and the desire for post-telework. It's about understanding sex better. Pandemic. According to the literature, working from home is desired due to the risk of being infected with COVID-19. This survey is valuable to companies looking for the possibility to create a company's digital workplace that allows employees to work from home and maintain a balance between work and life. Literary studies and hypothesis generation are discussed in the next section. The methodologies, results, discussions, limitations, recommendations for future research, and conclusions are as follows.

2.   Literature review and hypotheses development

2.1. Expectation-confirmation theory (ECT)

By analysing the relationships among expectation, delight, disconfirmation, performance, and intention, the expectancy affirmation idea highlights that an individual's revel in has a crucial impact on the next behaviours (Oliver, 1980). Individuals' intents to hold their behaviours are derived from their delight with preceding behaviour and affirmation of earlier beliefs, in line with the expectancy affirmation hypothesis (Steelman & Soror, 2017). Consumer delight surveys had been used to broaden the idea, which aimed to find out the elements that impact consumers' next behaviour and the underpinnings of client retention (Wu & Wu, 2019). Expectation affirmation idea's predictive potential has been tested in a whole lot of situations, which include automobile repurchase, camcorder repurchase, institutional repurchase of photographic products, eating place services, commercial enterprise expert services, and facts gadget continuation (Duanmu et al., 2018).

2.2. Expectation confirmation model

For the assessment of facts structures, the expectancy version turned into derived from the expectancy affirmation idea. Expectation affirmation fashions are primarily based totally on expectation affirmation ideas emphasising the effect of expectancies of use of facts structures and next confirmations on person delight and perceived usefulness, and in the to persevering with to apply facts structures (Joo & Choi, 2016). In the past literature, the predicted price affirmation version is documented in numerous scenarios (Jiang & Klein, 2009). In the location of non-stop use of facts structures, the expectancy affirmation version modifies the authentic expectation affirmation idea with the aid of using reworking the distinction among pre-intake expectancies and skilled overall performance right into a natural post-reputation version, and the expectancy affirmation version is utilized by the person. Information Systems (IS) / Information Technology (IT) utilization reason to

mirror relies upon post-implementation expectancies, stage of personal support, and personal perceived usefulness primarily based totally on the person delight with the device (Bhattacherjee, 2001). Fig. 1 demonstrates the conceptual model of this study.
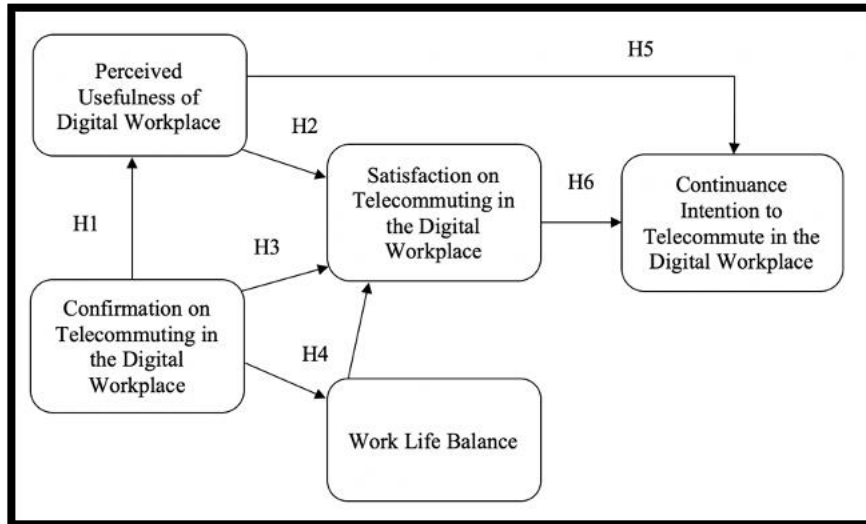

Fig. 1. Conceptual model, Adapted from Bhattacherjee (2001)

Because it includes confirmation and satisfaction elements that are more appropriate to post-adoption behaviour analysis, the ECM theory is considered superior to existing alternatives such as Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Bhattacherjee, 2001). According to the expectation confirmation model, three variables influence an individual's decision to continue using an Information System: confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction (Bölen, 2020).

2.3. Work-life balance

The balance between work and personal life is important for achieving a healthy balance between personal and professional life. Work-life balance is promoted by bringing many benefits to the organization, including increased productivity, loyalty, satisfaction, and improved employee morale, attitudes, and behaviour. The balance between work and life is achieved by increasing flexibility, extending family and free time, granting childcare privileges, reducing work-life conflict, reducing burnout, and improving mental, physical and psychological well-being (Dizaho et al., 2017). The balance between work and life is the result of a cognitive assessment of the demands placed by both environments and the control over the relative time spent in both work and non-work environments. One study researching on women working at executive levels in the telecom industry of Pakistan found that work-to-family and family-to-work connectivity directly influence the job and family satisfaction of women (Latif et al., 2016). Innovative work requires a high degree of workplace management (Jensen et al., 2017). Work-family conflicts occur when work interferes with the family territory, and family-work conflicts occur when the family interferes with work (Sheikh et al., 2018). It needs to be balanced by balancing multiple roles and responsibilities and minimizing competition between these two areas

(Kumarasamy et al., 2015). In other words, a person experiencing conflict in a less active family relationship may conclude that there is a balance between work and life.

A balance between work and life is essential for balancing personal and professional life. Many benefits to the organization, such as productivity, loyalty, increased satisfaction, and improved employee morale, attitudes, and behaviour promote work-life balance. Employees work and live to increase flexibility, family and free time, childcare privileges, reduce work-life conflicts, reduce burnout, and improve emotional, physical, and psychological well-being. Benefit from the balance of (Dizaho et al., 2017). Work that is innovative needs a lot of task control. Therefore, the balance between work and life is determined not only by the time spent on each but also by the cognitive perception that it controls the demands placed by either situation.

2.4. Perceived usefulness

The use of technology can meet the expected benefits (Kivijärvi et al., 2013). Perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which technology allows a user to complete a task accurately and completely. This enables users to complete tasks quickly and respond quickly to user actions. (Babic et al., 2018). According to Köffer (2015), the digital office environment is widely recognized as an important organizational asset for improving employee productivity. Using technology in the digital workplace can increase employee engagement and increase employee productivity (Haddud & McAllen, 2018). Every aspect of the digital workplace is carefully planned and implemented to enable teleworkers to work remotely, effectively, and efficiently. The digital workplace has helped teleworkers do great digital work. Therefore, it is considered useful and an asset to the organization if the hybrid working environment is adopted carefully. Research has shown that the perceived benefits of the digital workplace for telework have led to higher job satisfaction. A study found a strong link between job satisfaction and productivity, suggesting that increased telework can make more employees feel satisfied and therefore more productive (Johnson, 2016). The results of another study show that satisfaction increases when employees are offered a hybrid digital work option, where which has helped them work more productively (Kissmer et al., 2018). In another study, further development of the digital workplace was found to be useful as well as useful for performing telework quickly and effectively, showing high satisfaction with the continuity of telework in the digital workplace (Beno, 2018).

The perceived usefulness is related to people's thinking about how technology is used and their expectations after adoption (Bölen, 2020). In the digital workplace, Wakefield Research found that employee productivity increased by 67% and employee engagement increased by 53% when employees adopted a hybrid working model (Yelle & Hulen, 2016). Significant correlations have been found between technologies used at the workplace such as email, video technology, instant messaging, and telephone communication, and satisfaction with work. The findings of the research also revealed that those who are happy with these digital technology communication channels were happy with their work. (Smith et al., 2018). Due to advances in information technology, a survey conducted by Beno showed high employee support for continued telework (Beno, 2018). Working from home is a catalyst for improving work productivity and quality and motivating people to work from home (Ahmed et al., 2014). Research shows that hybrid work in the digital workplace brings great value to employees' families and work values (Malik et al., 2016). Past studies showed that teleworkers are imaginatively exploring the

capabilities of telework technology and creating affordable prices for incorporating it into their work practices (Cousins & Robey, 2015).

H2: There is a positive relationship between the perceived usefulness and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace.

H5: There is a positive relationship between the perceived usefulness and continuance intention to telecommute in the digital workplace.

2.5. Confirmation

The degree of user impression of a match between expectations for using an information system and actual performance is called approval (Bhattacherjee, 2001). In other words, it validates employee expectations. Employee confidence in the availability and cost of technologies that enable telework, and the ability to be productive while working independently in remote locations, were the most important factors in the perceived expectations of information systems (Morrison et al., 2019). According to a special study on the economic and personal impact of COVID-19, over 70% of Malaysia's highly skilled jobs can be done at home (Tumin, 2020). High-income workers were actively embracing new technologies, according to KPMG's survey of more than 3,000 Malaysians (KPMG, 2020). Evaluation of the level of approval is based on the evaluation of performance and expected value after actual use (Chung, 2019). This study proves that telework has been shown to improve employee well-being and productivity (Errichiello & Pianese, 2019).

H1: There is a positive relationship between the confirmation of telecommuting and the perceived usefulness in the digital workplace.

H3: There is a positive relationship between confirmation of telecommuting and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace.

H4: Work-life balance mediates the effect of telecommuting confirmation and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace.

2.6. Satisfaction

Work satisfaction is described as a happy or positive emotional state that results from a positive assessment of one's work or work experience (Locke, 1976). Satisfaction was measured to determine teleworker satisfaction (Ordóez, 2018). The variables intended to continue to be used were determined by satisfaction (Chou et al., 2012). In a meta-analysis study by Allen et al. (2015), they found that remote work was positively associated with work satisfaction. Employees who were allowed to work from home felt supported in their achievement of work goals and were more likely to engage in more work tasks at the end of the year (Masuda et al., 2017). Consequently, it has increased employer satisfaction, improve employee performance, increase organizational involvement, reduce employee turnover and absenteeism, and increase organizational productivity and profitability. (Ramakrishnan & Arokiasamy, 2019). Past studies have shown that confirmation of expectations from previous use was used to measure user satisfaction. Job satisfaction is linked to having a more positive attitude about the virtual office setting (Mansfield, 2018). According to Eom et al. (2016), telecommuters' job satisfaction increased as a result of the digital workplace. Likewise, a local study indicated that Malaysian telecommuters were content with their hybrid workplace setting (Khairudin & Aziz, 2020). Similar findings

were also reported by Schall (2019), where the findings of study discovered that the higher the frequency of telecommuting, the higher the level of job satisfaction.

H6: There is a positive association between telecommuting satisfaction and the intention to continue telecommuting.

Based on the discussion above, the summary research hypotheses are tabled (see Table 1).

Table 1
Research hypothesis

Hypothesis Statement
H1   There is a positive relationship between the confirmation of telecommuting and the perceived usefulness in the digital workplace.
H2   There is a positive relationship between the perceived usefulness and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace.
H3   There is a positive relationship between confirmation of telecommuting and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace.
H4   Work-life balance mediates the effect of telecommuting confirmation and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace.
H5   There is a positive relationship between the perceived usefulness and continuance intention to telecommute in the digital workplace.
H6   There is a positive association between telecommuting satisfaction and the intention to continue telecommuting.

3. Method

3.1. Research design

For IT professionals in Malaysia, this study used a descriptive research case-study design. The mediating effect of work-life balance on the relationship between perceived usefulness, confirmation, satisfaction, and intention to telecommute post-pandemic was investigated using a web-based questionnaire created with Google Form to better understand the continuance intention to telecommute in the digital workplace.

3.2. Sampling technique

When it comes to examining a specific cultural domain with experts in the study setting, the most successful sampling method is to use purposeful sampling (Etikan et al., 2016). It is a well-known sampling approach in which respondents are chosen for the study questions based on pre-determined criteria. Candidates with comparable attributes or special characteristics are targeted by purposeful sampling. Participants in this sort of sampling would be similar in terms of age, culture, occupation, or life experiences, to focus on this specific similarity and how it pertains to the research issue (Etikan et al., 2016). Because the majority of Malaysian companies used telecommuting throughout the epidemic, the responders must have prior experience doing so. Therefore, the target respondents of this research are Malaysian teleworkers between the age group of 25 to 60 years old who have been telecommuting since the imposition of the Movement Control Order (MCO).

3.3. Sampling size

The number of respondents for this study was measured using the G*Power tool. G*Power software application was chosen to perform a priori power analysis for the study to assess the minimum sample size requirement. It computed and showed that the minimum

sampling size is 119 respondents (refer to Fig. 2). The survey was administered between September 2021 to November 2021 and 131 respondents participated in the questionnaire.
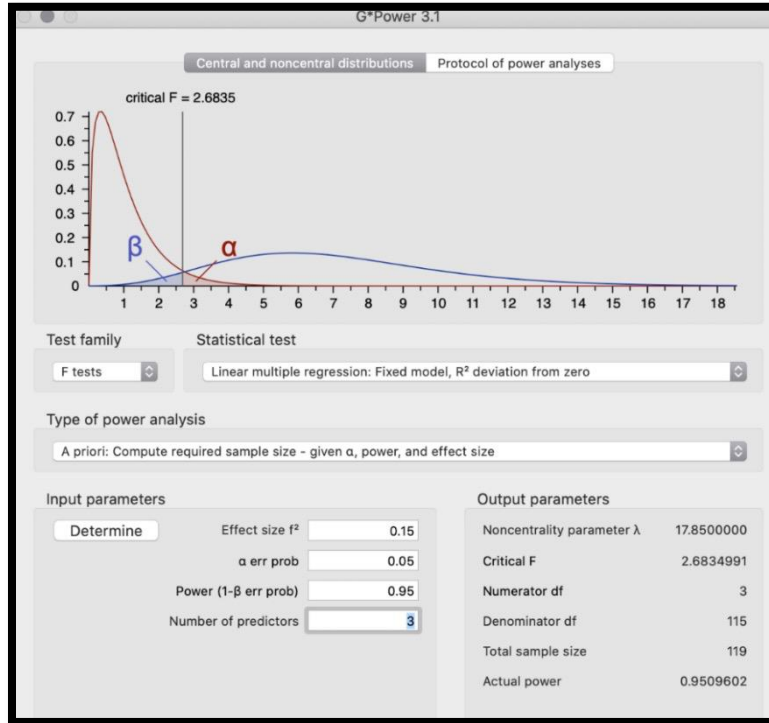

Fig. 2. Sample size estimation using G*Power

3.4. Research instrument

The research instrument used was a web-based questionnaire that was adapted from multiple validated sources to gather the factors that contributed to the continuance intention of telecommuting in the digital workplace post-pandemic. Table 2 shows the measurement constructs for the instrument. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A of the questionnaire included demographic data questions such as age, gender, marital status, position, working-from-home frequency, and home occupancy. Section B included questions related to the confirmation of telecommuting in the digital workplace, the perceived usefulness of the digital workplace, and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace. The subsequent section (Section C) lists questions on the mediator variable, work-life balance. A five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was employed as a measurement scale to measure employees' extent to which they agree or disagree with a particular question or statement.

3.5. Pre-testing the questionnaire

Pre-testing is an important step in research, as it minimizes all kinds of errors in research and significantly improves data quality (Grimm, 2010). Pre-testing is a research step that tests survey questions and questionnaires against target / surveyed members to determine

their reliability and validity before survey tools are widely used (Hu, 2014). Following Willis' suggestion of a pre-test sample size, a sample size of 5 to 15 responses was sufficient (Willis, 2005). In the first round of the pretest, 10 people were asked to fill out a questionnaire. Feedback from the first round was recorded and used to update the survey. Then, after successfully revising the questionnaire based on the feedback collected in the first round, we asked 10 more candidates to fill out the questionnaire and later solicited comments. None of the respondents had any comments or feedback on the questionnaire, so it was assumed that the questionnaire created for the survey was ready to conduct the survey.

Table 2
Measurement constructs for the research instrument

Construct	Quotes	Source
Confirmation construct	I can collaborate with my colleagues to complete my daily tasks when I work from home.	Baert et al. (2020); Ratna & Kaur (2016)
	Virtual meetings and communication meet my requirements in exchanging information with my colleagues when I work from home.	
	The digital workplace meets my expectation to complete the daily task when I work from home during the Movement Control Order.	
Perceived usefulness construct	The digital workplace enhances my work effectiveness.	Zhang et al. (2020)
	The Digital workplace improves my working experience in terms of team collaboration and communication.	
	Overall, I find the digital workplace useful for people who work from home for a long period.	
Satisfaction construct	Working from home satisfied my requirements to communicate and collaborate.	Ratna & Kaur (2016)
	I am satisfied with the collaboration and communication software application provided by the digital workplace to work from home.	
	Overall, I am satisfied with my work-from-home experience.	
Work-life balance construct	I can spend more personal/family time when I work from home.	Ratna & Kaur (2016); Khairudin et al. (2020); Baert et al. (2020)
	I have more opportunities to participate in household responsibilities and activities when I work from home	
	I am often not disturbed by family members when I work from home.	
Continuance intention construct	I would like to continue to work from home after the Movement Control Order (MCO) is lifted.	Zhang et al. (2020); Rubin et al. (2020)
	I will recommend working from home since everyone can collaborate satisfactorily without needing to meet physically.	
	Overall, I find working from home meets all requirements for employees to work together without meeting physically.	

4. Data analysis

4.1. Demographic profile

Demographic data of the 124 respondents that were collected included their gender, age, marital status, job position, working from home frequency, and home occupancy. Table 3 illustrates the demographic profiling of respondents.

4.2. Reliability and convergent validity test

Internal consistency is shown by Cronbach alpha values of 0.7 or above (Hair et al.,2017). The consistent reliability value of rho A is likewise intended to be 0.7 or above; the model's convergent validity is demonstrated when rho A values are satisfactorily above the 0.7 criterion (Henseler et al., 2015). The new scale's convergent validity refers to how well it correlates with other variables and measures of the same construct (Krabbe, 2016).

Cronbach's and rho A's dependability values are both over 0.7, according to Table 4. The data has a high level of reliability, according to the test.

Table 3
Demographic profiling of respondents

	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	58	44.3%
Female	73	55.7%
Age		
21 – 30	22	16.8%
31 – 40	68	51.9%
41 – 50	41	31.3%
Marital status		
Divorced	3	2.3%
Married	78	59.5%
Single	48	36.6%
Widowed	2	1.5%
Job position		
Executive	42	32.1%
Manager	32	24.4%
Senior Executive	38	29.0%
Senior Manager	19	14.5%
Working from home frequency		
More than 1 month	14	10.7%
More than 2 months	21	16.0%
More than 3 months	33	25.2%
More than 4 months	7	5.3%
More than 5 months	56	42.7%
Home occupancy		
More than 1	31	23.7%
Only one	100	76.3%

Table 4
Reliability and validity test

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Confirmation construct	0.848	0.848	0.798	0.767
Continuance intention construct	0.921	0.932	0.885	0.863
Perceived usefulness construct	0.812	0.812	0.889	0.727
Satisfaction construct	0.873	0.88	0.821	0.796
Work-life balance construct	0.732	0.787	0.753	0.667

The extracted mean-variance (AVE) and composite reliability can be used to evaluate the convergence validity (CR) of the measurement model. Composite reliability is a less biased reliability estimate than Cronbach's alpha. The acceptable CR value is 0.7 or higher. AVE measures the level of variance captured by the configuration and the level

due to measurement errors. Values above 0.7 are considered very good, but values below 0.5 are acceptable. Composite reliability is a less biased reliability estimate than Cronbach's alpha. The acceptable CR value is 0.7 or higher (Hair et al., 2017). As shown in Table 4, all configurations of this study have good composite reliability scores ranging from 0.7 to 0.9 (Hair et al., 2017), demonstrating high internal consistency reliability.

4.3. Hypothesis testing

For estimating (complex) path models with latent variables and their interactions, partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) has become a prominent method (Sarstedt et al., 2017). It is used to calculate the cause-and-effect model. Bootstrapping is a statistical significance determination approach (Hair et al., 2017). PLS-SEM generates Table 5 to test the hypothesis by calculating the *p*-value and *t*-value (see Fig. 3), and Table 6 displays the hypotheses' decisions.
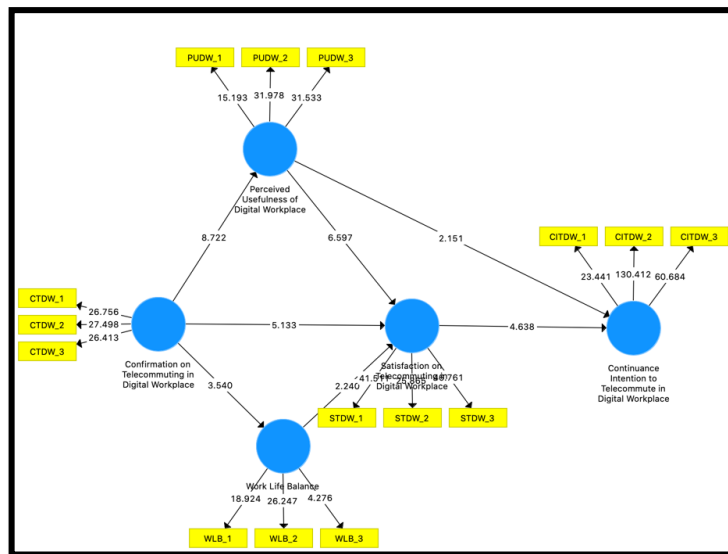

Fig. 3. Path coefficients (bootstrapping)

Table 5
Hypothesis testing

	Std Beta (β)	Std Error	*t*-value	*p*-value
Confirmation → Perceived usefulness	0.626	0.071	8.722	0
Confirmation → Satisfaction	0.367	0.072	5.133	0
Confirmation → Work-life balance	0.352	0.095	3.54	0
Perceived usefulness → Continuance intention	0.251	0.115	2.151	0.032
Perceived usefulness → Satisfaction	0.49	0.074	6.597	0
Satisfaction → Continuance intention	0.529	0.114	4.638	0
Work-life balance → Satisfaction	0.13	0.057	2.24	0.026

Note. $p < 0.05$

Table 6
Hypothesis decision

	Hypothesis	Decision
H1	There is a positive relationship between the confirmation of telecommuting in the digital workplace and the perceived usefulness of the digital workplace.	Supported
H2	There is a positive relationship between the perceived usefulness of the digital workplace and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace.	Supported
H3	There is a positive relationship between confirmation of telecommuting in the digital workplace and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace.	Supported
H4	There is a positive relationship between confirmation of telecommuting in the digital workplace and the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace influenced by work-life balance.	Supported
H5	There is a positive relationship between the perceived usefulness of the digital workplace and the continuance intention to telecommute in the digital workplace.	Supported
H6	There is a positive relationship between the satisfaction of telecommuting in the digital workplace and continuance intention to telecommute in the digital workplace.	Supported

4.4. Sobel test

To establish the extent to which a mediator contributes to the total influence on the outcome variable, Sobel's (1982) test of significance is used. The extent to which the mediator construct, Work-Life Balance, contributed to the total effect on the satisfaction construct's outcome was determined using Partial Least Squares. The raw regression coefficients for the link between the confirmation construct and the work-life balance construct, as well as the raw coefficient for the association between the work-life balance construct and the satisfaction construct, were obtained from SmartPLS and shown in Fig. 4. For the link between the confirmation construct and the work-life balance construct, the raw regression coefficient is 3.731, as shown in Table 7. The correlation coefficient between the work-life balance construct and the raw coefficient and the satisfaction construct is 2.927.
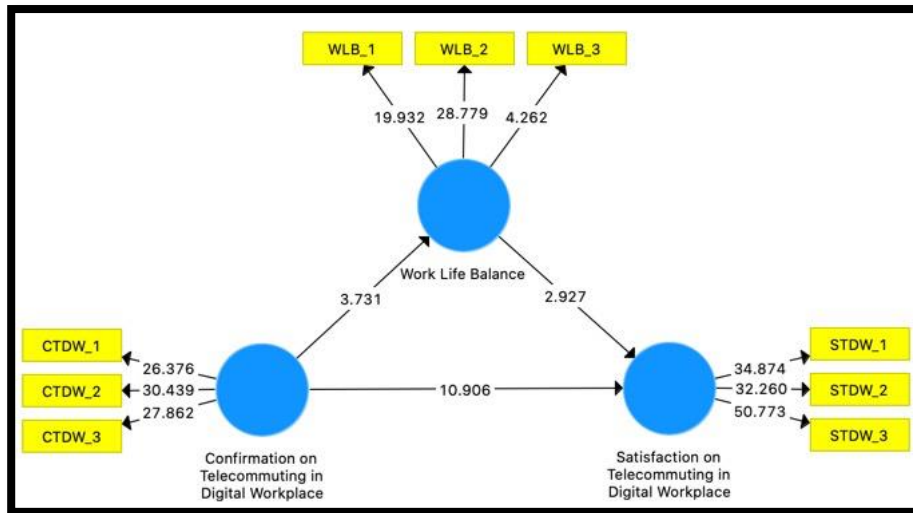

Fig. 4. Sobel test – coefficient data for mediating variable

Table 7
Hypothesis testing on mediation

	Std Beta (β)	Std Error	*t*-value	*p*-value
Confirmation → Work-life balance	0.352	0.09	3.731	0
Work-life balance → Satisfaction	0.195	0.066	2.927	0.004

The Sobel test is generated with the Quantsy tool and it showed a result of 30.2846 for the test statistic (see Fig. 5). This indicates that the mediation effect is significant as the *p*-value is less than 0.05. Work-life balance, the mediator variable, significantly mediates the relationship between confirmation of telecommuting in the digital workplace and employee satisfaction.

Input:		Test statistic:	Std. Error:	*p*-value:
a 3.731	Sobel test:	30.28461705	0.36060014	0
b 2.927	Aroian test:	30.28050911	0.36064906	0
s_a 0.09	Goodman test:	30.28872667	0.36055121	0
s_b 0.066	Reset all	Calculate		

Fig. 5. Sobel test result

5. Discussion

5.1. Theoretical implications

To investigate the probable factors influencing employees' decision to continue telecommuting post-pandemic, this study used expectation confirmation theory in the context of Information Systems. It also experimentally demonstrates the importance of employees' perceptions of work-life balance by examining the direct and indirect consequences of employees' present telecommuting experience on post-pandemic telecommuting intention (Béland et al., 2020; Baert et al., 2020). As a result, this research responds to recent recommendations to investigate employees' perceptions about the potential of working from home during the epidemic (Barnes, 2020; Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garcés, 2020; Shareena & Shahid, 2020). This study looked at the impact of employees' expectation confirmation and perceived usefulness on their inclination to continue telecommuting.

The best predictor of the perceived utility of the digital workplace was found to be employees' confirmation of expectations. This is likely because the digital workplace, while preserving the benefits of telecommuting, is in many ways a better fit for businesses when considering the main environmental, technological, and organisational barriers to home-based telework adoption, as well as the managerial challenges associated with its implementation (Luisa & Tommasina, 2014). As the respondents of the survey were teleworkers, they provided a positive response about their telecommuting experience in the digital workplace. They felt that the digital workplace had enhanced their telecommuting experience to work productively in terms of digital collaboration. Thus, it can be postulated

that the digital workplace is the foundation that enhances digital collaboration and leads to increased productivity (Attaran et al., 2019). In a workplace, when employees' expectations are recognized and confirmed, it is a direct indicator of employee satisfaction. In this study, confirmation of telecommuting is demonstrated to positively affect employee satisfaction with telecommuting in the digital workplace. Teleworkers are willing to telecommute more often when they are satisfied with their experience in telecommuting. Malaysian teleworkers have been telecommuting with low frequency before the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the control over the actual working environment, telework is widely acknowledged for its capacity to boost motivation and productivity (Fujii, 2020). Telecommuting has also been shown to improve job satisfaction (Kazekami, 2020). As a result, H1 and H3 were shown to be true.

Teleworkers could not telecommute without digital workplace technology. Without technology, there is no digital collaboration and digital communication. Travelling to the workplace to meet physically for collaboration will no longer be required when digital workplace technology is in place. The findings of this study postulate that the use of technology significantly influences telecommuting in the digital workplace where H4 is supported. If the Information Technology infrastructure can sufficiently fulfil employees' needs for telecommuting experience, teleworkers will be satisfied to telecommute. The finding of this study resonates with other findings where a good workplace technology infrastructure significantly enhanced job satisfaction (Wang et al., 2020). Another study discovered that when employees have access to the right technology, equipment, productivity tools, and technical and logistic support, their satisfaction rises as productivity rises (Thorstensson, 2020). Telecommuters were likewise satisfied with their telecommuting experience and eager to work remotely after the COVID-19 pandemic, according to this study. Employees were happy to telecommute when the technology offered was adequate to support everyday duties and they were allowed to practise social distancing to reduce COVID-19 (Bhattarai, 2020). According to another study, more than 40% of workers who converted to remote work during the COVID-19 issue said they would continue to do so once the crisis ended because remote working technology does not affect productivity (Bartik et al., 2020). This suggests that when a proper technology-enabled digital workplace is in place, this would support teleworkers' technological needs to perform satisfactorily. With this, H2 and H5 were supported.

In terms of work-life balance, the findings show that confirmation of employees' expectations has a considerable impact on job satisfaction. As a result, H4 is recommended. Work-life balance has a major effect on employee job satisfaction, according to the research. Telecommuting provides greater autonomy and yields a better mix of work and family life (Nasution & Ali, 2020). Another study found that persons who telecommute may maintain, if not improve, their productivity while having a better work-life balance in normal times (Milasi et al., 2020). Furthermore, because work-from-home allows employees greater flexibility with their work schedules, they may spend more time with their families, reducing work-life conflicts and increasing job satisfaction, which in turn boosts productivity (Thorstensson, 2020).

Before the pandemic, some managers expressed reservations about working from home, citing issues about technology, staff productivity, and performance (Williamson et al., 2018). Working from home will become "the new normal" (Williamson et al., 2020) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has radically impacted how we live and work. Previous research has shown that firms invested in digitising the workplace during the pandemic crisis, thus the telecommuting experience is expected to last beyond the

pandemic (Alipour et al., 2020). During COVID-19, research intended at analysing the sentiments and emotions of telecommuters revealed a good attitude toward telecommuting (Dubey & Tripathi, 2020). Employees do not want to return to work after a pandemic, according to another survey because they have embraced it as the new normal (Hern, 2020). The findings of this study resonate with prior literature with H6 being supported.

5.2. Practical implications

This research offers suggestions to organisations that are open to a hybrid virtual model, where some employees are on the premises, while others work from home. Hybrid working arrangements can be intimidating for those considering implementing them and difficult for those who have. According to Haas (2022) and the expectations of the workforce, common issues are related to culture, connection, coordination, and communication. Managing software or the fact that some employees might not feel comfortable speaking over screens are examples of technological problems in digital communication. Coordination problems including being left out, not being included in decision-making while working remotely, and communication problems can arise when working in hybrid teams. Remote workers run the risk of losing their social networks, which could have an impact on their professional networks and relationships. Additionally, in a hybrid work environment, where employees can brainstorm online but where research indicates that face-to-face dialogues and idea development are more fluid, creativity may be jeopardised (Haas, 2022). Maintaining the organisational culture could provide additional problems, particularly for new hires who need to interact with others in person to understand and successfully integrate into the culture of the company. Understanding these difficulties with the hybrid working style can help organisations manage employee expectations more effectively (Gopinathan & Raman, 2016).

The choice of technology is also crucial because people's acceptance of a technological platform for their professional activities depends in large part on how user-friendly it is. Fundamental research from the 1980s demonstrates that people are more likely to accept new technology if they believe it to be simple to use. As a result, businesses and the executives who run them need to be deliberate about the technology platforms they use for their communication strategies (Davis, 1989). This is significant because individuals from all generations, each with their views and reactions to technology, make up the workforce of the twenty-first century. An awareness of the target demographic is essential to a positive user experience as opposed to building off-the-shelf technology on an industrial scale (a viable business strategy). Leaders should therefore consider selecting a simpler collaboration platform if they are preparing for a future of hybrid working. It may free the employees they supervise from the complicated tools that stifle innovation, efficiency, and creativity, allowing them to concentrate on what matters: fostering personal connections at work (Laker, 2021).

After researching the productivity of Microsoft users who went remote during the epidemic, Dawn Klinghoffer, head of Microsoft's people analytics unit, stated in December 2021 that hybrid work had destroyed work-life balance. He discovered that between April and November 2020, people's work-life balance and satisfaction decreased by 13%. The fact that employees couldn't have uninterrupted moments of attention due to their excessive collaboration was one of the main causes of the decreased work-life balance. When compared to coworkers who didn't interact as often, the more people collaborated – whether attending meetings or exchanging emails – the lower their work-life satisfaction

score was. People skipping breaks was another factor contributing to work-life discontent. According to Microsoft research, workers who were able to take some time off in either March or April 2020 reported being 8% happier overall with their work-life balance in May than workers who did not take any time off. According to these findings, businesses need to implement measures for a better hybrid work-life balance, such as rethinking meetings, protecting focus time, promoting time off, and prioritising activities with distinct start and end dates. This study further shows that when establishing a hybrid workplace model, maintaining remote accessibility with cloud-based technologies and cultivating work habits around work-life balance is crucial. Hybrid work models can be developed and tailored to meet the needs of individuals in terms of work-life balance while also assisting businesses in expanding.

The significant effect of expectation confirmation, perceived usefulness of technology, work-life balance, and satisfaction suggests the need for organizations to provide the necessary technological, legal, and digital security conditions for employees to develop continued interest and value in telecommuting post-pandemic. Such conditions could be created through the organizations' digital strategy framework. With this, employees' needs and expectations are met and they can complete their daily tasks effortlessly and satisfactorily. When employees are given autonomy over their work, their work behaviour is more likely to demonstrate commitment and productivity.

6. Conclusion

The present study has empirically demonstrated the integration of expectation confirmation model entities with work-life balance practices in explaining the intention to continue telecommuting post-COVID-19. The findings obtained from this research can benefit companies that want to make the switch from traditional to hybrid work environments. While the COVID-19 pandemic remains a concern, and the needs of the developing workplace remain unknown to all, hybrid work models can be constructed and adapted based on the findings of this study. This is critical to meet the needs of additional employees while also allowing firms to expand. There are several limitations of this study that could be addressed by future researchers. Although the necessary procedural and statistical measures were taken to remedy common method biases (CMB), CMB can still occur in a cross-sectional study. Hence, future researchers are advised to collect data from multiple respondents from different sources with different time frames. Second, a cross-sectional study only offers data collection within a certain time frame. It is suggested that a longitudinal study could be employed to study the long-term of telecommuting on employees and their satisfaction, happiness, and productivity. It would also be interesting to be able to monitor the actual performance of employees who have been telecommuting.

Author Statement

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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