



# Organization support as an antecedent of self-efficacy during the COVID-19 lockdown in Sri Lanka

Vathsala Wickramasinghe<sup>1</sup>  · Chamudi Mallawaarachchi<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

The objectives of this study were to investigate organization support received by employees during the COVID-19 lockdown and its effect on self-efficacy. The study was conducted in Sri Lanka during the COVID-19 lockdown; a sample of employees who performed work in the form of work-from-home responded to the survey questionnaire. The data were analysed using structural equation modelling techniques. The findings led to identify four organization support practices implemented during the COVID-19 lockdown. These were named as work collaboration and coordination, work direction, psychological wellness, and physical wellness. These four practices significantly enhanced the self-efficacy of employees. The findings of the study imply that the traditional theories of social cognitive theory and positive psychology have enduring theoretical resonance to better understand contemporary phenomena with novel applications.

**Keywords** COVID-19 · Managerial practices · Organization support · Self-efficacy · Work from home

## Introduction

The effect of COVID-19 on business organizations is unprecedented worldwide. Business organizations were compelled to adhere to strict lockdown and social distancing policy mandates of the governments for prolonged time periods. The COVID-19 lockdown measures have created a work-from-home (WFH) workforce at a short notice (Bloom 2020). Work-from-home allowed to practice social distancing and has become a key weapon to combat the pandemic. It is also predicted that in the post-COVID-19 era, WFH will be very much a part of peoples' lives (Bloom 2020). The implementation of WFH work mode during the COVID-19 lockdown

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✉ Vathsala Wickramasinghe  
vathsala@uom.lk

<sup>1</sup> Department of Management of Technology, University of Moratuwa, Moratuwa 10400, Sri Lanka

created challenges and demands to think strategically to make maximum out of this method of working.

Self-efficacy is an important self-regulation mechanism in the self-management processes (Bandura et al., 2003). It is described as “an individual’s positive psychological state of development and is characterized by having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks” (Luthans et al. 2007, p. 542). It involves beliefs of being able to face new situations, difficulties, and challenges (Bandura 1982). Various organization practices can enhance the extent to which employees feel confident to take on a wide range of job roles (Parker 1998, p. 849). Building on the positive psychological perspective (Luthans et al. 2007), and social cognitive theory (Bandura 1977), which are reviewed in the next section, we investigated the effect of organization support during the COVID-19 lockdown on the self-efficacy of employees who performed work in the form of WFH in Sri Lanka. The specific objectives of the study were to investigate organization support practices implemented by organizations during the COVID-19 lockdown, and the effect of these practices on self-efficacy.

Regarding the importance of the study, first, one of the most important ill-effects this pandemic and the state mandated lockdown measures have brought to humans is the psychological influence, which includes isolation, health concerns and uncertainty among people. Self-efficacy is a much-needed state that individuals need for their survival and growth. Maintaining self-efficacy is very important to face the COVID-19 pandemic and to continue with employment successfully. However, it is apparent that employees’ self-efficacy during the COVID-19 pandemic has not fully captured in the extant literature.

Second, the COVID-19 pandemic has confronted many business organizations to make a forced transition to WFH (Dingel and Neiman 2020) during the state mandated lockdown periods. Previous research such as Hill et al. (1998) and Gajendran and Harrison (2007) showed that the use of WFH as an optional work mode is growing in the corporate sector. However, more recent studies conducted during the pre-COVID-19 era showed that the WFH option was discouraged by employers and also the reluctance of employees to use this option (refer to Peters and Heusinkveld 2010; Putnam et al. 2014; Wall Street Journal 2020). On the contrary to the pre-COVID-19 era, the emergence of COVID-19 and the state mandated lockdowns forced organizations for quick and complete transformation to WFH. Consequently, organizations had to implement new support practices to maintain a productive workforce engaged in their job roles in the form of WFH. However, empirical studies that dealt with organization support received by employees during the COVID-19 lockdown have still not been emerged sufficiently.

Third, the extant literature does not provide sufficient evidence about the antecedents of self-efficacy. Previous studies such as Avey et al. (2011) and Rai et al. (2020) showed the inadequacy of literature on the antecedents of self-efficacy. Building on the social cognitive theory (Bandura 1977, 1991), we propose and test a model dealing with self-efficacy and organization support. We posit and provide empirical evidence to substantiate that organization support practices adopted during the COVID-19 lockdown operate as antecedents to self-efficacy. When it is predicted that mass working from home is here to stay, and the world will see long-run explosion of

this practice in the post-COVID-19 era (Bloom 2020), the evidence for the effect of organization support on self-efficacy would be valuable for academics, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers alike.

Fourth, to retain and maintain a productive workforce, organizations should understand how organizations themselves and employees are adapting to workplace changes and pressures. The findings of our study, which was conducted during a health crisis, on business organizations and their employees can provide valuable information to face future crises successfully. Therefore, the present study on self-efficacy during the COVID-19 pandemic is novel, and it is expected to contribute to research and practice and draw the attention of academics, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

## Literature review

### Self-efficacy

In the positive psychology literature, positive organizational behaviour is defined as “the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement” (Luthans et al. 2007, p. 542). Psychological capital is a popular approach in positive organizational behaviour. The term psychological capital is referred to “psychological characteristic or an aspect of the self that is generally associated with resiliency and that refer to the ability to control and impact one’s environment successfully” (Schaufeli and Taris 2014, p. 49). Self-efficacy is a personal resource and a constituent of psychological capital valuable to be possessed and developed by individuals (Luthans et al. 2007). As a construct, self-efficacy has its roots in the social cognitive theory of self-regulation (Bandura 1977, 1991). This serves as the theoretical underpinning for the study. Bandura (1977, 191–215) defined self-efficacy as “an individual’s beliefs in his or her capabilities to organize and execute the course of actions required to produce given attainments irrespective of situation and circumstances”. Bandura (1977) identified self-efficacy as the driving force behind an individual’s success; individuals with high self-efficacy were internally motivated and embrace challenges. According to Bandura (1982), an individual’s belief in his or her ability determines whether he or she might even attempt to adjust to a given scenario, and if decided to pursue, how long he or she might take to pursue the success (Bandura 1982). Hence, self-efficacy is a motivational construct, which “influences individual choices, goals, emotional reactions, effort, coping and persistence” (Gist and Mitchell 1992, p. 186). Further, Luthans (2002, p. 59) asserts that self-efficacy can be “measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement”. In line with these arguments, previous research showed that self-efficacy predicts several individual outcomes (refer to Bandura 1977; Prokes et al. 2021; Rai et al. 2020; Shamshad and Naqi Khan 2020; Whyte and Saks 2007; Xanthopoulou et al. 2009). For instance, greater self-efficacy relates to increased task engagement and psychological well-being (Rai et al. 2020; Shamshad

and Naqi Khan, 2020; Xanthopoulou et al. 2009) whereas low self-efficacy relates to reduced health-related outcomes such as depression (Bandura 1977).

In the context of work, self-efficacy is defined as “the individual’s conviction or confidence about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources or courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context” (Stajkovic and Luthans 1998, p. 66). It involves employees’ perceived capability to perform a broader and more proactive set of work tasks that extend beyond prescribed technical requirements (Parker 1998). Self-efficacy is important and valuable for employees to cope with rapid environmental changes and meet highly demanding performance requirements within organizations. However, self-efficacy showed to operate differently depending on the demand (Gibbons and Weingart 2001). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the practice of social distancing around the world. This happened in Sri Lanka as well from mid-March 2020 till mid-May 2020. The lockdown measures made a complete forced transformation to the WFH work mode overnight and required employees to continue pursuing demands of their job roles in the form of WFH. Job demands involve “physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained cognitive and emotional effort” (Demerouti et al. 2001, p. 501). Pursuing demands of the job during the COVID-19 lockdown required employees to be internally motivated and to embrace challenges.

### Organization support practices

The literature identifies an intervention of positive psychology as any method or activity that leads to build positive individual capacities, like self-efficacy (Meyers et al. 2013). We identify organization support practices as such interventions. We postulate that organization support practices are often structured with the explicit purpose of improving performance by increasing physical and psychological health of employees. When drawing on the ideas of James et al. (2008), organization support can revolve around several facets that involve job itself (i.e., nature of job design), roles (e.g., role ambiguity), supervisor (e.g., support and facilitation), and colleagues (e.g., cooperation and friendliness).

In the context of work, previous research showed that organization-led interventions can promote self-efficacy. For example, Avey (2014, p.143) stated “in a well-designed challenging job where an individual experiences success and overcoming obstacles at work, levels of psychological capital are more likely to increase”. Avey (2014) and Luthans and Youssef (2004) showed that the way job is performed is a potential antecedent of psychological capital, of which self-efficacy is a constituent. Previous research such as Staples et al. (1999), Wang and Haggerty (2011), Schepers et al. (2011), and Adamovic et al. (2021) showed the importance of organization-led interventions for employees to develop self-efficacy when performing job demands away from the physical location of work. The study of McCloskey and Igbaria (2003) suggests that organization practices that target to reduce fears about social isolation can create confidence to perform job demands away from the physical location of work. Previous research such as Schepers et al. (2011) and Wiesenfeld et al.

(2001) highlighted the importance of supervisor and work colleagues in creating a general sense of supportiveness. Parker (1998) stated that providing information about the direction of the organization helps employees to develop capacities to take initiative and to increase their ability to make decisions that are aligned with organizational objectives.

The term organization support is used in our study to include practices that are specifically designed and implemented by organizations with the explicit intention of helping employees during the COVID-19 lockdown period. During the COVID-19 lockdown, organizations have designed and implemented practices on trial-and-error basis in conjunction with organizations' vision and its application to retain and maintain workforce commitment to job demands while working from home (see Pillai and Williams 2004; Podsakoff et al. 1990). As suggested by James et al. (2008), these practices may have revolved around various facets of work. Organization support may operate as a means of creating and reinforcing employees' capacities to organize and execute the course of actions required and keep them engaged during the COVID-19 lockdown. Building on Bandura (1977, 1991), we argue that organization support practices adopted during the COVID-19 lockdown can provide expectations of confidence to drive employees successfully through the COVID-19 lockdown, and therefore, these practices operate as potential antecedents of self-efficacy. Based on the literature reviewed above, it is hypothesised:

H1: Organizational support practices adopted during the COVID-19 lockdown enhanced self-efficacy.

## Methods

### Measures

Organization support was measured with the 16-item scale developed for the study. Items were on a five-point scale (5—strongly agree, 4—agree, 3—neither agree nor disagree, 2—disagree, 1—strongly disagree). Self-efficacy was measured with the 10-item scale of Parker (1998). The literature identifies the suitability of this scale to measure employees' self-efficacy since the scale is specific to the work domain (see Luthans et al., 2007). Items were on a five-point scale (5—very confident, 4—fairly confident, 3—somewhat confident, 2—slightly confident, 1—not at all confident).

### Population, sample, and method of data collection

The first state mandated nationwide lockdown for the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka took place from mid-March to mid-May 2020. The population herein could be considered as the employees who have worked from home during mid-March to mid-May 2020 in Sri Lanka. The potential respondents were contacted through convenience and snowball sampling methods. The questionnaire was developed using Google Forms and the link for the questionnaire was distributed via email and social media in early-May 2020. The questionnaire protected the anonymity of the

participants. Two-hundred and forty-five valid responses were received for the survey questionnaire. Regarding the characteristics of respondents, 70% were in the age range of 20 to 35 years, 22% were in the age range of 36 to 50 years, and 8% were in the age range of 51 to 65 years. Of the respondents, 51% were female while 49% were male. Of the respondents, 51% were identified as single (inclusive of never married, separated, divorced, and widowed) while the remaining 49% were identified as married. Concerning the highest level of education qualification of respondents, 18% had postgraduate degrees, 59% had bachelor's degrees, and 23% had certificate or diploma. 74% of the respondents were engaged in the service sector firms and the remaining 26% came from the manufacturing sector. Regarding the years of business operation of firms to which the respondents were attached to, 41% stated their firms were in business operation for more than 20 years, 44% stated that their firms were in business operation for 5 to 20 years, and 15% stated their firms were in business operation for less than 5 years.

### Method of data analysis

Variables were tested for common method variance using Harman's single-factor test and yielded satisfactory results. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were performed on the variables. Principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed. Convergent validity was measured by average variance extracted (AVE) and discriminant validity was measured by the square root of AVE. Table 1 provides the results of fit indices. The results of CFA using AMOS were assessed based on normed chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2/df$ ) and fit indices of Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). It is recommended to have normed chi-square value between 5 and 2 (Arbuckle 2007). Regarding fit indices, CFI and TLI close to 1 but above 0.98, and RMSEA of 0.08 or less are considered reasonable (Arbuckle-2007).

### Results

The 16-item organization support practices were subjected to principal component factor analysis, and four factors were yielded (Table 1). These four factors were named as work collaboration and coordination, work direction, psychological wellness, and physical wellness. Factor analysis yielded one factor for self-efficacy (Table 1). Correlation between variables were shown in Table 2.

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to test the effect of organization support on self-efficacy. The results are shown in Table 3. The fit measures for the model are shown in Table 4. Figure 1 shows the final model with path coefficients. Organization support factor 1 work collaboration and coordination (0.242,  $p < 0.01$ ), factor 2 work direction (0.171,  $p < 0.05$ ), factor 3 psychological wellness (0.194,  $p < 0.05$ ), and factor 4 physical wellness (0.214,  $p < 0.01$ ) significantly predict self-efficacy. The coefficient of determination of 0.136 suggests that these factors

**Table 1** Fit-indices—Principal component factor analysis

Variable	Explained variation	Cronbach's alpha	AVE	Construct reliability	Number of factors yielded
Organization support practices	67.94	.919	—	—	4
Work collaboration and coordination	18.230	.856	.579	.846	—
Work direction	17.295	0.844	0.505	0.836	—
Psychological wellness	16.653	0.812	0.528	0.816	—
Physical wellness	15.770	0.758	0.532	0.772	—
Self-efficacy	54.991	0.908	0.550	0.924	1

**Table 2** Correlation

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Age (in yrs)	34.32	2.51	–								
2 Sex <sup>†</sup>	–	–	0.031	–							
3 Marital status <sup>†</sup>	–	–	0.182*	0.079	–						
4 Sector <sup>†</sup>	–	–	0.076	0.046	0.073	–					
5 Work collaboration and coordination	3.85	0.74	0.095	0.029	0.065	0.017	0.760				
6 Work direction	4.05	0.72	0.079	0.066	0.098	0.026	0.430**	0.710			
7 Psychological wellness	3.68	0.81	0.102	0.034	0.073	0.0330	0.427**	0.467**	0.727		
8 Physical wellness	3.77	0.78	0.098	0.013	0.081	0.029	0.482**	0.448**	0.416**	0.729	
9 Self-efficacy	3.91	0.67	0.112	0.109	0.117	0.101	0.364**	0.350**	0.304**	0.344**	0.742

<sup>†</sup>Binary coded (refer to characteristics of respondents), \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , diagonal entries, square root of AVE; off-diagonal entries, correlations between constructs



**Table 3** Estimates—Self-efficacy

	Path	Standardised regression estimate
Self-efficacy	<—	0.242**
Self-efficacy	<—	0.171*
Self-efficacy	<—	0.194*
Self-efficacy	<—	0.214**
A1	You are satisfied with the support received from other departments/sections of your organization for work	0.815***
A2	You are satisfied with the support received from your department/section for work	0.853***
A3	There is no resistance from your department/section for the way work is conducted	0.764***
A4	Employees of your organization are willing to share work	0.790***
B1	Your organization's expectations from its employees are quite clear	0.828***
B2	Your organization offered flexible work hours/days	0.814***
B3	Your organization's treatment to all employees is consistent	0.775***
B4	Your organization delegated responsibility to employees for their own work	0.756***
B5	Your organization reassured the importance of employees to it	0.786***
C1	Your organization shared positive outcomes with employees	0.761***
C2	Your organization is confident about its survival	0.824***
C3	Your organization is appreciative of the work done by you during this difficult time	0.706***
C4	Your organization extended the deadlines for your work goals	0.793***
D1	Your organization is interested in knowing the health status of employees	0.746***
D2	Your organization took necessary actions to make employees aware about hygienic behaviours	0.796***
D3	Your organization regularly collects information on employees' health conditions	0.811***
S1	Analysing a long-term problem to find a solution	0.719***
S2	Representing your work area in meetings with senior management	0.745***

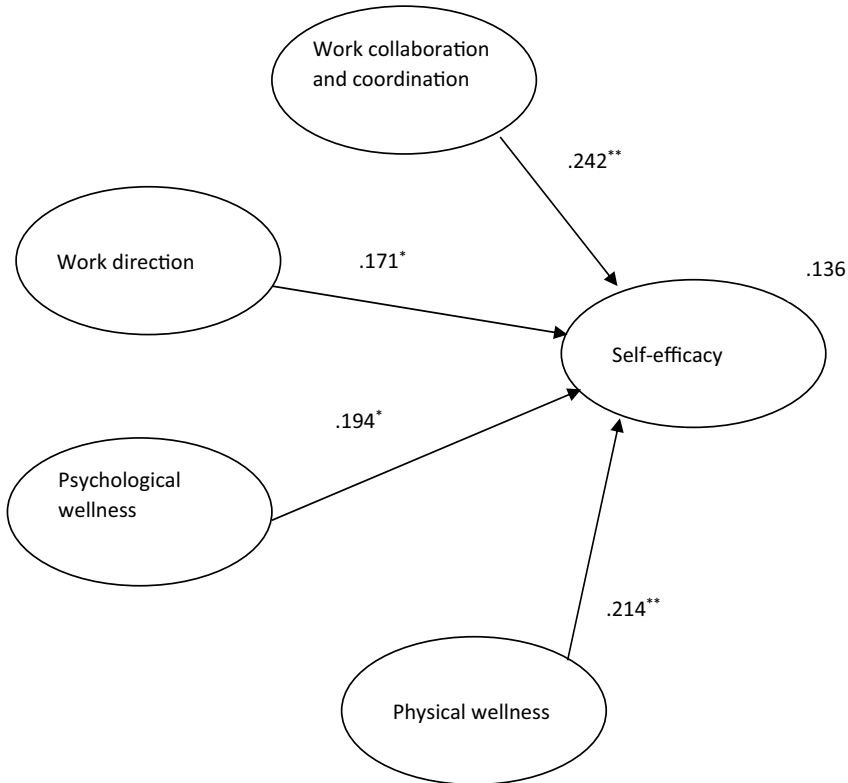
Table 3 (continued)

	Path		Standardised regression estimate
S3	Designing new procedures for your work area	< -	0.790***
S4	Making suggestions to management about ways to improve the working of your department/section	< -	0.717***
S5	Contributing to discussion about the company's strategy	< -	0.776***
S6	Writing a proposal to spend money in your work area	< -	0.705***
S7	Helping to set targets/goals in your work area	< -	0.738***
S8	Contacting people outside the organization (suppliers/customers) to discuss problems	< -	0.782***
S9	Presenting information to a group of colleagues	< -	0.752***
S10	Contacting people from other departments/sections to suggest doing things differently	< -	0.715***

Note: WCC=Work collaboration and coordination; WD=Work direction; PsyWell=Psychological wellness; PhyWell=Physical wellness; SE=Self-efficacy, \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

**Table 4** Final model—fit measures

Model	$\chi^2/df$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Self-efficacy	3.031	0.807	0.871	0.080



**Fig. 1** Final model with standardised path coefficients. \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

account for 14% of the variation of self-efficacy. The results shown in Table 4 and Fig. 1 suggest that data fitted well, and H1 is supported by the data.

**Discussion**

In the late-2019, COVID-19 broke out and it gradually developed into a global health crisis. Business organizations adhered to government-regulated health guidelines and social distancing policy mandates. This led to transform workers into a WFH workforce, worldwide. Organizations had to introduce new practices to keep employees focused and effectively engaged in their job roles while working from home fulltime. In this context, by drawing on the positive psychology and

social cognitive theory, we investigated organization support practices introduced by organizations during the COVID-19 lockdown and the effect of these practices on self-efficacy. A survey was conducted to test our hypothesis. The results led to identify four types of organization support practices that were introduced during the COVID-19 lockdown. We named these practices as work collaboration and coordination, work direction, psychological wellness, and physical wellness. Further, the results led us to interpret that the employees' level of self-efficacy during the COVID-19 lockdown as high (mean = 3.9, Table 3). Furthermore, the results showed the significance of organization support practices of work collaboration and coordination, physical wellness, psychological wellness, and work direction for self-efficacy. Our findings have several contributions to the existing literature and implications for practice.

Regarding the contributions of our study to the existing literature, first, as a concept self-efficacy assumes a greater importance as a constituent of psychological capital. The world has not experienced a pandemic in the scale of COVID-19 for several decades. To address the gap in the literature on self-efficacy in a time of a health crisis, drawing on the positive organizational behaviour (Luthans 2002) and social cognitive theory (Bandura 1977, 1991) we developed and tested a model involving self-efficacy. Although identified as important for the present-day business environment, research on self-efficacy in the context of WFH during the COVID-19 pandemic remains limited. Hence, our study makes novel contributions to the existing literature.

Second, although business organizations have moved to WFH since early-2020 in response to government-mandated health guidelines and social distancing measures, the evidence of the impact of organization support on self-efficacy is not widely available. Self-efficacy is a valuable psychological capital to be possessed by any individual during a situation of a crisis, and it is identified as a developable human capacity. Hence, it is important to understand support practices introduced by organizations and how far these practices were helpful in developing self-efficacy, worldwide. On the one hand, the literature on antecedents of self-efficacy is scant (refer to Avey et al. 2011; Rai et al. 2020 for review). On the other hand, little information is available on how employees had reacted and adapting to workplace changes and pressures and the role of organization support during the COVID-19 lockdown. In the study, we posited that organization support is a significant antecedent of self-efficacy during the COVID-19 lockdown. Therefore, the design of our study is novel and contributes to the existing literature.

Third, our findings showing the significance of organization support in enhancing self-efficacy during the COVID-19 lockdown have theoretical contributions for both positive psychology theories and organization practices. The findings support the self-efficacy theory of Bandura (1977) and showed that traditional theories can be used to better understand contemporary phenomena with novel research approaches. On the one hand, our findings support the positive effect of organization support on self-efficacy. On the other hand, our findings add another dimension to positive psychology by providing evidence that organization support has the potential to generate personal resources. Therefore, the findings of our study broaden the understanding of antecedents of self-efficacy.

Fourth, our findings suggest four sources of organization support to enhance self-efficacy. Hence, work collaboration and coordination, work direction, psychological wellness, and physical wellness can be recommended as organization-led interventions for self-efficacy. This has important theoretical contribution. Since the COVID-19 lockdown, many organizations worldwide moved to WFH as the work mode. Even in the future, once the world gets over with the pandemic, this work mode will continue to stay. However, it is apparent that most organizations and employees are not fully prepared for a total shift in the work mode to WFH. The industry insights during the pandemic suggest (refer to Thrive Global, 2020) that employees need better support to WFH, for which their employers hold the prime responsibility. In this context, organizations need more understanding on interventions to effectively maintain a WFH workforce, who are equipped with the personal resource of self-efficacy. Therefore, our findings on organization support practices will continue to be valid and important since our study subjects were engaged in their job roles during the COVID-19 lockdown in the form of WFH, fulltime.

Regarding the implications of the findings of our study to the practice, first, Hobfoll et al. (2018) argue that individuals accumulate resources from their surroundings, which act as means to obtain centrally valued ends. Self-efficacy is a personal resource that helps in developing beliefs about his or her capabilities to organize and execute the course of actions in goal accomplishment. During the COVID-19 lockdown, individuals attempted to derive self-efficacy for them to better withstand challenges and pressures arisen with the pandemic. The findings showed that organization-led support practices contributed employees to develop self-efficacy. Although there were a few studies on self-efficacy during COVID-19, the scope of these studies is different from ours as these addressed specific issues faced by school teachers (Cattellino et al. 2021; Ninković et al. 2021; Rogers Haverback 2020) and healthcare workers (Ritchie et al. 2021; Zhou et al. 2021). Therefore, the four practices that we have identified provide directions to organizations on the sort of practices effective in promoting employees' self-efficacy in a crisis, and when they are working from home fulltime.

Second, self-efficacy is recognized as a developable capability. On the one hand, our findings suggest that if organizations wish to develop self-efficacy in employees, they need to concentrate on and invest in practices relating to work collaboration and coordination, work direction, psychological wellness, and physical wellness. On the other hand, self-efficacy is one's belief that he or she have a control over his or her behaviour and motivation. However, self-regulatory behaviour involves skills of self-motivation and self-guidance. Further, there is a difference between an individual possessing the skills and using them in challenging circumstances. Therefore, the provision of skill development programmes can facilitate employees to expand capacities in their personal drive to achieve (self-motivation).

Third, before the COVID-19 pandemic, the workplace was a physical place for many. However, today, it is online meetings and WFH. It is expected that the use of WFH as a work mode will continue into the foreseeable future. Understanding how employees, who are engaged in performing job roles in the form of WFH, perceived organization support during the pandemic can aid organizations in better preparing them to this work mode- WFH. Therefore, the four types of organization support

practices identified in our study are of value to practitioners and policymakers in making decisions to create this WFH mode more effective.

## Conclusion

We investigated whether organization support practices adopted during the COVID-19 lockdown enhanced self-efficacy. We identified four organization support practices introduced by organizations during the COVID-19 lockdown, and their effect in enhancing self-efficacy. These organization support practices were named as work collaboration and coordination, work direction, psychological wellness, and physical wellness. All these practices significantly positively enhanced self-efficacy. Since self-efficacy is a developable capacity, the identification of organization-led antecedents of self-efficacy is important and valuable, especially, when job roles were performed in the form of WFH fulltime. Overall, the findings of our study suggest that the traditional theories of social cognitive theory and positive psychology have enduring theoretical resonance to better understand contemporary phenomena with novel applications. As detailed in the above sections, the findings have several contributions to the theory and implications for the practice.

## Limitations of the study and future research

First, we distributed an online survey questionnaire to employees WFH during the COVID-19 lockdown. Although the study population is vast, we relied on a sample pooled using convenience and snowball sampling methods. Future research could rely on probability sampling methods such as random sampling. Second, we developed a 16-item measure to identify organization support practices. These were employee-centred practices rather than organization-centred. It is possible to assume that employee-centred practices can have more contribution in enhancing self-efficacy than organization-centred practices. Future research could broaden the practices by further diversifying these. Third, our analysis showed the non-significance of demographic characteristics of respondents on the main variables of interest. In this respect, Hair et al. (2006, p. 285) emphasise the need of removing such non-significant constructs to achieve a better model fit. Future research with a larger sample would be able to test for moderating effects. Fourth, the literature on positive organizational behaviour identifies self-efficacy as one of the components of psychological capital. Therefore, future research could broaden the investigation by including other components as well, such as hope. Yet, self-efficacy is identified to have conceptual independence (Luthans et al., 2007), which warrants more future studies on this single construct alone.

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**Data availability** Not applicable.

**Code availability** Not applicable.

## Declarations

**Conflict of interest** Not applicable. This study does not involve funding, employment, financial or non-financial related conflicts of interest to disclose.

**Ethics approval** Not applicable.

**Informed consent** Not applicable.

**Consent for publication** Not applicable.

**Consent to participate** Not applicable. Participants responded to the questionnaire voluntarily. Responses were anonymous, and as a result unable to trace back who the respondents were.

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