

## **Examination of work motivation, work environment, and work engagement relation with job satisfaction during covid -19**

Negin sadat Nafe, Hossein Nezakati Alizadeh

Sunway Business School, Malaysia

**neginsa.n@imail.sunway.edu.my, hosseinn@sunway.edu.my**

### **Abstract**

*Due to the covid-19's global spread, companies have been obliged to set up or adopt remote work arrangements. However, business managers are not certain that how these new arrangements would effect on employees' job satisfaction and performance. This quantitative study examines the relationship between work motivation, work environment, and work engagement toward job satisfaction of academicians including lecturers and educators who work from home during covid-19 in the higher education sector in Malaysia by implementing Herzberg's two-factor theory as the main theory for this paper. The study applied deductive reasoning and the philosophy of positivism to assess the impact of variables on employees' job satisfaction. simple random sampling with 382 respondents was utilized in his study to ensure that every academician in the higher education field that teaches online during the epidemic in Malaysia had the same opportunity. 230 trustable responses were analysed in SPSS. The results showed that, work motivation and work engagement have a significant positive relationship while any significant positive relationship was not found between the work*

*environment and job satisfaction among academicians who work from home during covid-19 in the higher education sector in Malaysia*

**Keywords:** *work motivation, work environment, work engagement, job satisfaction quantitative research, Herzberg's two-factor theory*

## **Introduction**

The coronavirus (covid-19) spread has caused many disruptions and problems in almost all countries. Most governments enacted strict lockdown laws against covid-19 which caused many problems for businesses. Moreover, the education industry was one of the industries which were significantly impacted by lockdown and physical distancing laws (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). In this situation, work from home (WFH) has become a new normal practice in education and teaching across the globe (Sultana et al., 2021). Moreover, to make up for the declining number of pupils in school, educational institutions began offering online classrooms, online courses, and other forms of online learning (Balasundran et al., 2021).

According to research from Sethi and Saini (2020) working from home has had an impact on teachers' and lecturers' job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is particularly important in the long term because it directly affects employees' productivity. In other words, Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to fulfill their responsibilities and remain focused on their work, and therefore they would be loyal to their employers (Gopinath, 2020). Due to this fact, it is important to analyze the job satisfaction of lecturers and teachers and examine the factors that impact job satisfaction the most.

## **Literature Review**

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a crucial factor that impacts the organization's productivity, success, and performance (Hanaysha, 2016). According to Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015), Job satisfaction is a critical aspect in motivating and encouraging employees to improve their performance. Job satisfaction has been defined by many people over the years. Spectore (2022) has defined job satisfaction as people's feelings and attitudes toward their jobs and the various aspects of their job. Job satisfaction is one of the most essential factors within an organization because it has a direct effect on employees, performance, productivity, and turnover. Several research studies have conducted examinations on factors that impact job satisfaction (Maharjan, 2012). In addition, Maharjan (2012) used Herzberg's Motivation-hygiene Theory to examine the relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction of college teachers. The result of this research indicated that work motivation and job satisfaction are significantly correlated variables.

### **Work Motivation, Work Engagement, And Work Environment**

Motivation is defined as the need or drive which directs and sustains a person's behaviour (Hauser, 2014). Motivation is also about focusing people's energy and excitement on a single goal. It can decide not only whether individuals will work, but also whether they will do their tasks, which necessitates the most efficient use of employees' physical and intellectual resources (Hauser, 2014). Othman, Rahman, and Hanafi (2018) indicated a positive and

significant relationship between job satisfaction and work motivation. Also, Balasundran et al. (2021) examined the relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction based on Herzberg's two-factor theory. This examination's result confirmed a relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction in WFH, based on Herzberg's two-factor theory (Balasundran et al., 2021).

Green et al. (2017) defined work engagement as a type of energy that encourages employees to be involved in work-related activities and be productive. They have drawn a crucial distinction between simply showing up to work and giving your job your all. Therefore, Employee engagement is a pleasant affective state, and a feeling of energy are two characteristics of work engagement (Green et al., 2017). work engagement reflects the personal energy employees bring to their work because Engaged employees not only have the capacity to be energetic, but they also enthusiastically apply that energy to their work (Bakker and Leiter, 2015). Jin and Park (2016) confirmed that there is a positive and significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction. Further, they have used cognitive dissonance theory to support the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction. Moreover, to support this result Park and Johnson (2019) have conducted research to examine the relationship between the work environment towards the job satisfaction of teachers. The results of this research confirmed there is a positive relationship between work environment and job satisfaction. In addition, Park and Johnson (2019) supported their result based on Herzberg's motivation/hygiene theory.

Job satisfaction is dependent on a pleasant and supportive work environment. Workplaces involve a variety of features that might affect both physical and mental health (Tarigan et al., 2022). According to Al-Omari and Okasheh (2017), an employee's work environment might be anything that surrounds him and influences how he executes his tasks. They stated that the

working environment is both an external and internal situation that can impact employee morale and result in projects being completed quickly. A good working environment is also one in which people can execute their duties in a safe, healthy, and comfortable manner (Al-Omari & Okasheh, 2017). Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) examined the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction by using Herzberg's Motivation-hygiene Theory as the main theory of their research. The result of this research confirmed that there is a positive relationship between work environment and job satisfaction.

### **Theory of Research**

This study uses Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg's Motivation-hygiene Theory) as its theoretical foundation because this theory examines the factors which have a direct relationship and impact on satisfaction (Amin et al., 2021). Also, the literature suggests that it could be used to measure the relationship between work motivation and work environment (Balasundran et al., 2021; Raziq & Maulabakhsha, 2015). Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory is often called the two-factor theory and focuses on factors that are necessary for the completion of work. According to Alshmemri et al. (2017), The contrast between motivational and hygienic variables is the central notion of this theory. These two factors that have an impact on work satisfaction are separated into two groups hygiene and motivators. The desire to avoid unpleasantness is linked to hygiene concerns (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Motivation factors are directly related to job satisfaction because of the individual's urge for self-growth and self-actualization. Achievement, recognition, responsibility, and progress are all built-in motivators in the workplace. Interpersonal interactions, remuneration, supervision, and business policy are examples of extrinsic hygiene variables. Herzberg's theory is regarded as one of the most influential content theories in the field of work satisfaction. Furthermore, many academics

consider Herzberg's two-factor theory to be the most effective needs-fulfillment model utilized in businesses to assess work satisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017).

### **Proposed Research Model**

This paper proposed measuring the impact of Work environment, work motivation, and work engagement on job satisfaction (Figure 1). According to the research of Hanaysha (2016), there is a positive relationship between Work environment, work motivation and work engagement, and job satisfaction. Although these factors have a positive effect on job satisfaction in normal situations, it should be examined whether these elements have the same relationship with employees' job satisfaction when they are teleworking or working from home. It is important to measure the effect of these three factors on job satisfaction because they are the three most principal factors affecting employees' job satisfaction in the content of Herzberg's two-factor (Sypniewska, 2014).

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction during work from home.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between work environment and job satisfaction during work from home.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction during work from home.

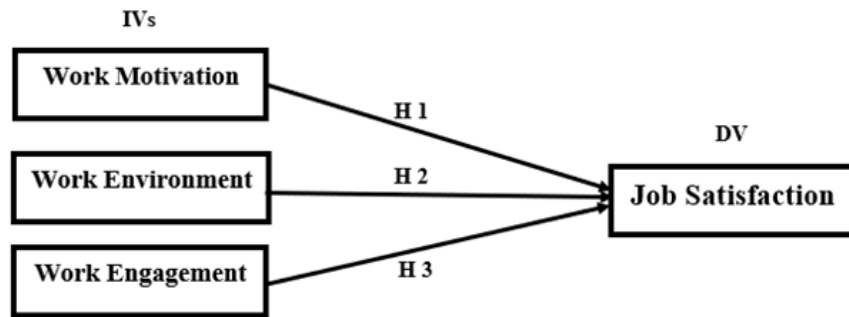


Figure 1: Proposed conceptual Research Model

### Methodology

This study was conducted using a quantitative approach. The goal was to examine the impact of three important variables, work motivation, work engagement, and work environment on the job satisfaction of employees. A survey including 3 sections and 28 questions and 8 demographic questions, was distributed to the sample group by using random sampling probability. The Likert self-report scale was employed to measure variables. The targeted population for this research was teachers and lecturers of any institution, college, or university in the high education sector in Malaysia who work from home during the covid-19 pandemic. The sampling method was simple random sampling probability. Moreover, according to the government's data, the latest estimated total number of teachers and lecturers in the higher education sector in Malaysia is 66,256. Considering the confidentiality level at 95% and error margin of 5% the ideal sample size for this research was 385. Since this study was quantitative research, the survey was distributed online via google form to participants through email. The characteristics of the participants was:

- They worked (taught) from home during the covid-19 pandemic.
- between the ages of 22 to 60 years old.

Further, the gathered data was analyzed by using SPSS and conducted descriptive analysis, correlation, reliability, etc.

### Evaluation of Proposed Research Model

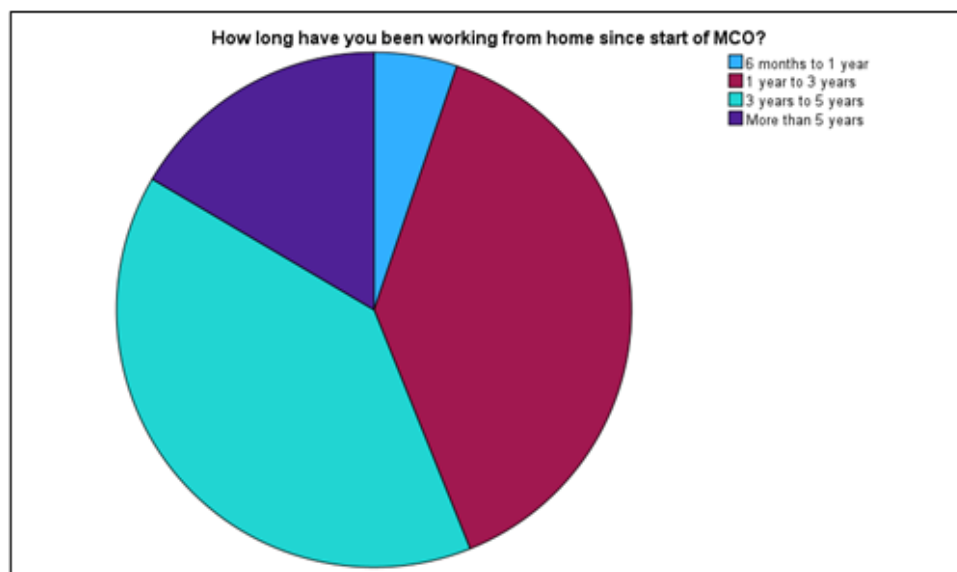


Figure 2: Time of working from home since the start of covid-19

From the total trustable number of 230 answers in the survey, 89 have been working from home from 1 year to 3 years since the start of covid-19 followed by 91 from 3 years to 5 years and 38 for more than 5 years. Only 12 of the respondents worked from home from 6 months to 1 year (figure 2).



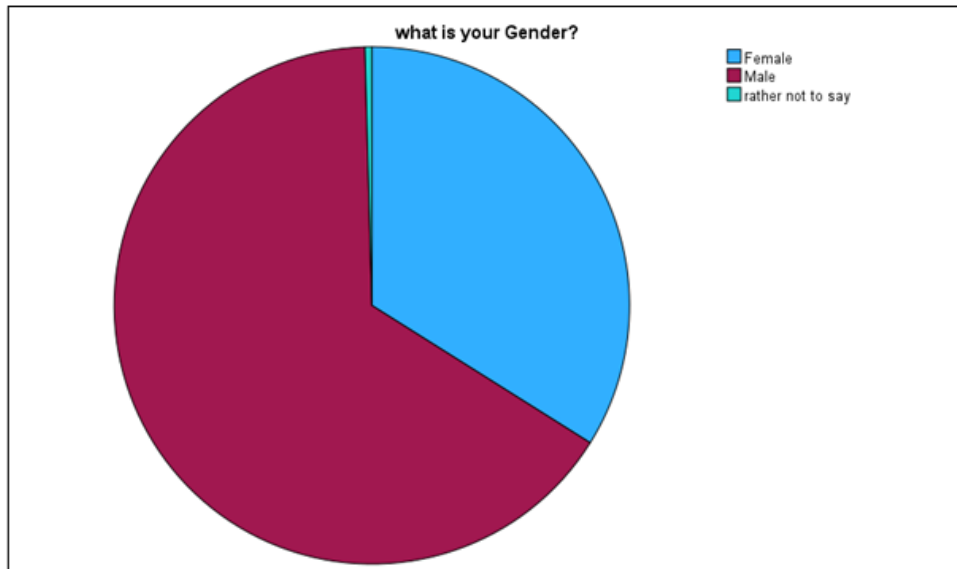


Figure 3: Gender

121 of the participants would like to continue working from home even after the covid-19 crisis. out of all 230 responses, 151 were male and 78 were female (figure 3).

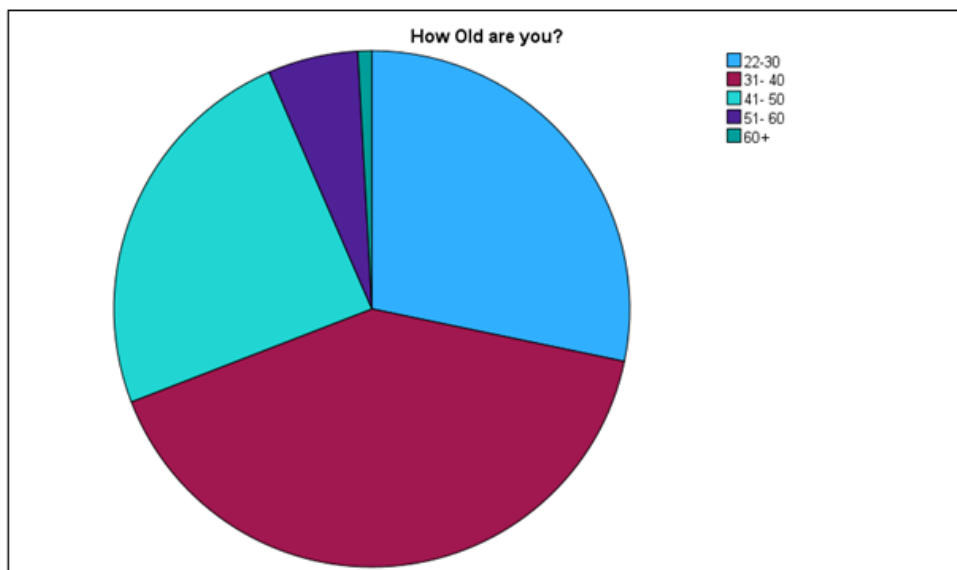


Figure 4: Age

Further, 65 of the respondents were between 22 to 30 years old. 94 respondents were from 31 to 40 years old, and 56 participants were from 41 to 50 years old. Participants from age 51 to 60 years old and more than 60 years old were 13 and 2 respectively (figure 4).

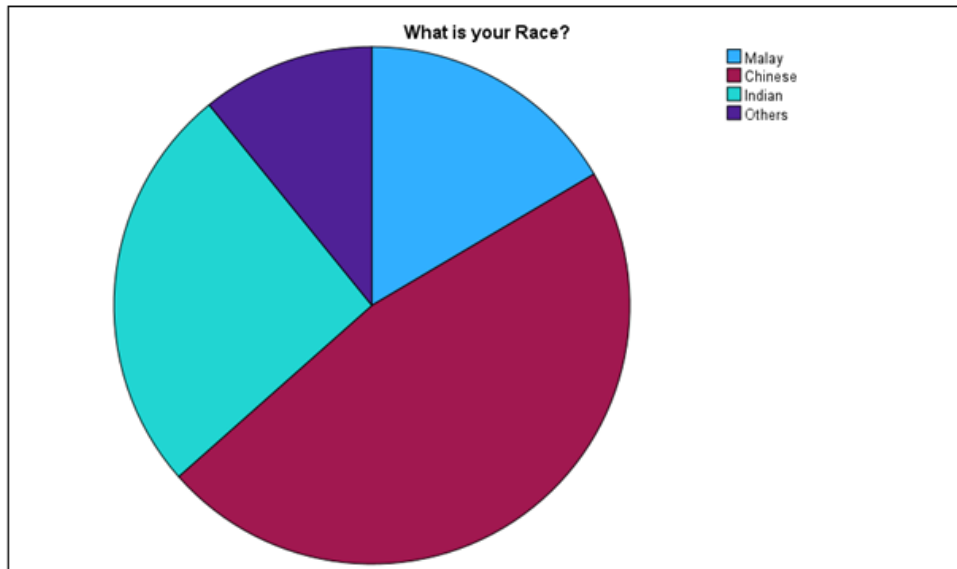


Figure 5: Nationality

most participants were 108 Chinese followed by 59 Indian and 38 Malay. Professors, lecturers, tutors, and teachers from other nationalities like Persian, Pakistani, Bangladesh, Moroccan, Filipino, Canadian, and Sikh were about 25 respondents (figure 5).

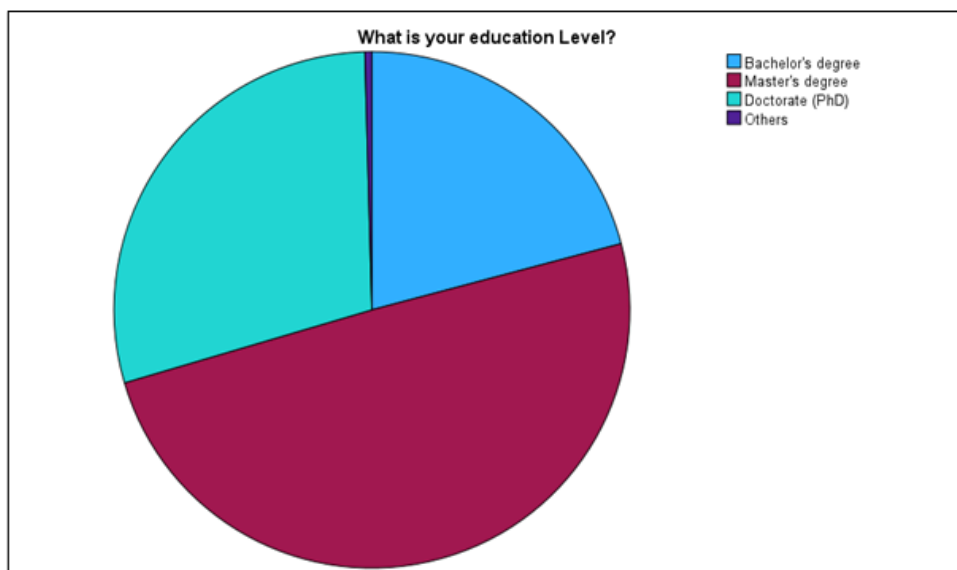


Figure 6: education Level

most of the participants hold a master's degree 114 Participants with bachelor's degrees were about 48 respondents and doctorates participants were 67 people (figure 6).

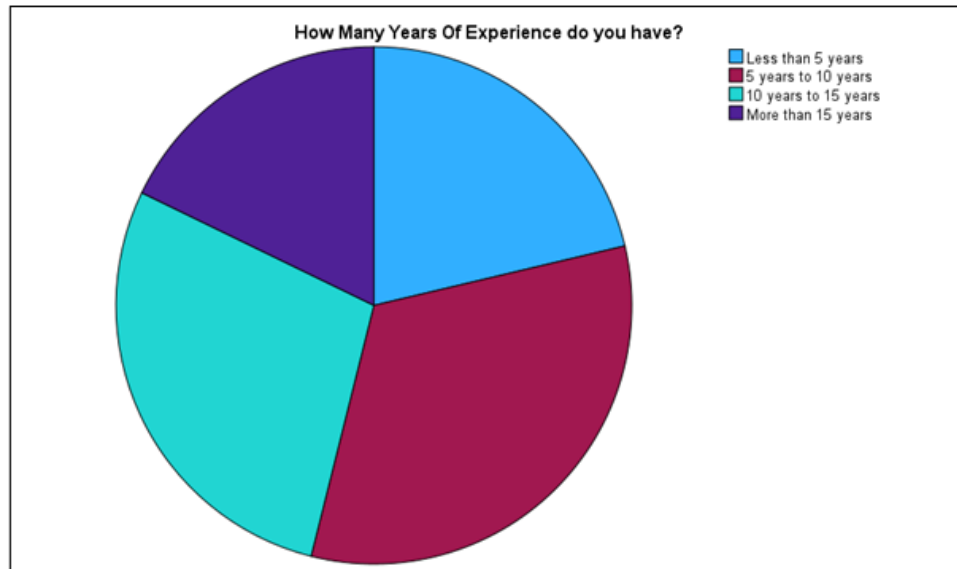


Figure 7: Work experience

49 of the participants have less than 5 years of job experience. participants with 5 years to 10 years, 10 years to 15 years, and more than 15 years of experience were 75, 65, and 41 people respectively (figure 7).

### Results and further research

The coefficient analysis (Appendix 1) was conducted between Job satisfaction and each of the independent variables to identify the strength and impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. The correlation coefficient from  $\pm 0.1$  to  $\pm 0.29$  is small; a correlation coefficient from  $\pm 0.30$  to  $\pm 0.49$  is medium, and a correlation coefficient from  $\pm 0.50$  to  $\pm 1.0$  is large. the ANOVA (Appendix 2) analysis for the dependent and independent variables. The final regression model has  $F(3,226) = 371.559$  at 95% confidence and  $P \text{ values} = 0.001 < 0.05$ . Therefore, it can indicate that the regression model is statistically significant and that at least one variable's regression coefficient is not zero. The three independent variables which are work motivation, work environment, and work engagement have positive and strongly significant relationships with job satisfaction in the dependent variable. the P-value of work environment is greater than 0.05, therefore, the hypothesis is rejected and there is no significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and work environment. Moreover, the P value of

work motivation and work engagement is less than 0.05 therefore, the hypothesis is indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between work motivation and work engagement toward job satisfaction. In other words, H 2 is rejected and H1 and H3 were supported.

The number of limitations were identified in this study. First, this study was conducted only among teachers and educators in universities and colleges in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. It is unclear how the findings would be generalized beyond the respondents in the sample. It would be more interesting if other professions in the education sector are also included in the study. Second, this study is cross-sectional, which only shows the circumstances at a certain period. Given the frequent changes in the working environment today, it does not account for changes over time. Future study is advised to use a longitudinal survey to not only monitor changes over time but also to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships between the variables.

### **Conclusion**

This study investigated the direct relationship between work motivation, work environment and work engagement toward job satisfaction. Findings from the analysis of usable data collected from 230 teachers and educators in universities and colleges in Malaysia revealed work motivation, and work engagement have a significant positive relationship toward job satisfaction of educators that work from home during covid-19. On the other hand, the finding of this research did not detect any significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction of educators that work from home during covid-19. Thus, the two hypotheses of the study (H1 & H3) were supported and (H2) was rejected. The findings of this study suggest that universities and college management should enhance improvements in the teaching profession to motivate and engage them toward the goals of the business and efficient operation process to increase the job satisfaction of educators and as the result advance the performance of their organizations.

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ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	224.872	3	74.957	371.559	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	45.593	226	0.202		
	Total	270.464	229			
a. Dependent Variable: M_JS						
b. Predictors: (Constant), M_WEG, M_WE, M_WM						

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	0.597	0.099		6.047	0.000		
	M_WM	0.585	0.084	0.629	6.965	0.000	0.091	10.945
	M_WE	0.060	0.076	0.065	0.783	0.434	0.108	9.233
	M_WEG	0.208	0.092	0.230	2.260	0.025	0.072	13.895
a. Dependent Variable: M_JS								