



Article

Perception of Studying Mandarin from Home: An Analysis from McLelland's Theory

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SUBMISSION TRACK

Received: July 24, 2024
Final Revision: January 23, 2025
Accepted: February 03, 2025
Available Online: March 25, 2025

KEYWORDS

Study from home, Needs theory, study-life balance, flexibility, learning performance

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A B S T R A C T

Studying from home may cause problems for academic performance and psychological well-being, however, studying from home may bring advantages for “flexibility”, “study-life balance” and academic achievement. Hence, this paper investigated whether university students gained benefits by studying Mandarin (as a foreign language) from home based on the Theory of Needs of David McClelland. This theory has linked to the Need for Power (through Flexibility), the Need for Affiliation (through Study-Life Balance) and the Need for Achievement (through Learning Performance). The study employed a quantitative method, and the instrument used was a survey. The samples comprised of 326 students who enrolled in a Mandarin course at the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam and Puncak Alam, Selangor. The data was analysed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) for obtaining descriptive statistics such as mean scores, standard deviations and correlation. In terms of the Need for Power (through Flexibility), the results demonstrated that students very often had the power for saving on commuting expenses and focus on the study; while the results for the Need for Affiliation (through Study-Life Balance) revealed that students were able to save more time to handle tasks on hand, attend to family needs and enhanced family relationship. The results for the Need for Achievement (through Learning Performance) indicated that students very often had control over learning performance due to their Mandarin lecturers understood their challenges, provided more learning materials and monitored their progress. It is recommended that the motivation to study from home can be further explored. This study could be replicated to examine if the McClelland's Needs Theory would meet the needs of other larger groups of students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Due to the Covid-19 attack in March 2020, Malaysia had switched the traditional face-to-face classroom instruction to studying from home for all educational institutions including universities and other institutions of higher education, in which it was a situation where there was a sudden change from “studying physically at campus” to “studying from home”, aiming to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Generally, it is believed that studying from home will cause several problems to students especially on the aspects of academic performance

(Aileen Farida, 2022; Hastutiningtyas & Rosdiana, 2021), psychological well-being (Amin et al., 2023; Duan & Zhu, 2020; Zhang & Ma, 2020), infrastructure issues (Aileen Farida et al., 2021; Demuyakor, 2020) and issues of lack of technical skills in handling the technology devices that affects the effectiveness of students studying from home (Brilliannur et al., 2020; Khanna, & Prasad, 2020; Okyere et al., 2022).

However, some research has also reported about the advantages of studying from home in terms of “study-life balance” because compared with studying on campus, the mode of studying from

home has reduced the travelling time to a physical campus and solved the distance issues (Fidalgo et al., 2020; Nik Md Salleh et al., 2022). In this way, students do not only save on accommodation, transportation and other expenses, but also gain more time to handle the task at hand.

At the beginning of implementing the mode of studying from home, students may get lost in adapting to the new learning environment when using online applications to study at home. In the later stages, most students slowly mastered the new learning methods through e-learning resources, digital meeting platforms and online learning systems (Santiago et al., 2022), and eventually most students were on the track to receive knowledge as usual and were able to maintain their academic performance.

On top of that, studying from home also presents encouraging aspects such as flexibility in terms of convenience and more freedom. Students can study at anytime and anywhere (Manea, et al., 2021; Thamri, et al., 2022). With that, they can learn at their own pace and repeating learning is possible as a lot of visuals, article links, videos, and interactive exercises are provided (Huang et al., 2020; Yuhanna et al., 2020).

According to McClelland (1965), Need for Achievement, Need for Affiliation and Need for Power are 3 important aspects needs to be achieved by people in life (Figure 1). The Need for Achievement refers to the ability to handle academic tasks and academic performance. This motivation extends to individuals' ability to handle academic tasks and impacts their overall academic performance. In the context of studying from home, students with a high need for achievement are more inclined to set ambitious learning objectives and demonstrate persistent efforts to excel in their

studies (Turabik & Baskan, 2015; Vero & Puka, 2017). The Need for Affiliation refers to “study-life balance” where one does not only do well for the study, but could pay greater attention to the family to enhance family relationships. McClelland defines the need of affiliation as the need to belong to a group. The core of the need for affiliation is the desire to establish a warm relationship with others including their family members, concerned with the establishment and maintenance of a sustainable and good interpersonal relation (Corpuz et al., 2022; Uduji & Ankeli, 2013; Vero & Puka, 2017). Last but not least, the Need for Power will be gained when one has the flexibility in one’s life. Studying from home has offered the great flexibility (Nik Md Salleh et al., 2022) that has given a positive impact on students’ learning as compared to traditional education (Santiago et al., 2021), especially on the aspects of remote learning, easy administration, accessibility and comfortability (Mukhtar et al., 2020).

Based on the above motivating aspects, it is particularly important to investigate Malaysian university students’ perceptions on studying from home. This paper focused on investigating whether university Mandarin students in Malaysia had gained benefits from the mode of studying from home based on the theory of needs proposed by David McClelland (1965).

Generally, this paper will analyse the advantages and disadvantages of studying from home based on the theory of needs proposed by David McClelland (1965). Specifically, this research will explore the perceptions of university Mandarin students in Malaysia on how flexibility, study life balance and academic performance were affected by the mode of studying Mandarin from home.

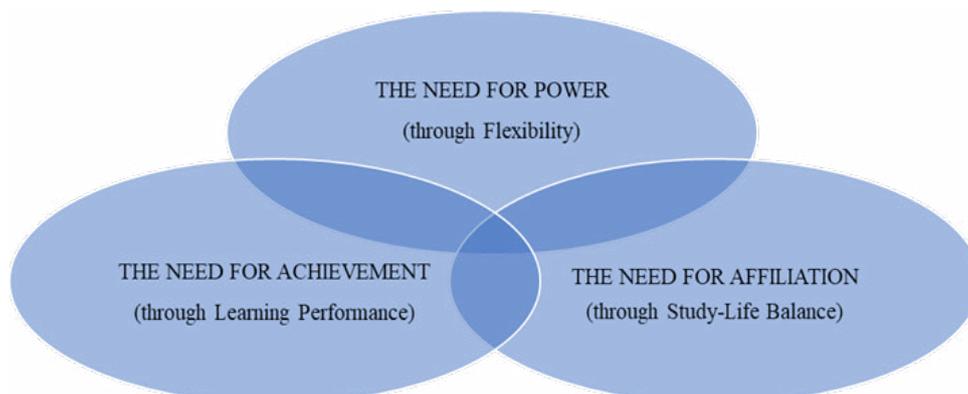


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study: Theory of Needs and Factors for Studying from Home

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the advantages and challenges of studying from home during the pandemic. The studies are described as follows.

Kastaty and Prihatini (2022) investigated how Indonesian students learned Asian languages during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the study showed that all 310 participants expressed interest in learning an Asian language during the pandemic. Of the respondents, 55% mentioned that online learning from home had motivated them to acquire a foreign language. Another reason for their motivation to participate in online classes was the user-friendly nature of online platforms, making the learning process more enjoyable and engaging. Additionally, studying from home allowed students to learn Asian languages at their own pace and with flexibility. The study also found that 86% of students reported that online platforms had improved their writing skills. Furthermore, most students mentioned that teachers used online platforms to provide clear instructions for completing tasks. The interview findings also indicated that students had enhanced their knowledge of vocabulary and pronunciation, including the correct intonation.

Huang and Wang (2023) conducted a study on how to motivate students to engage in online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study selected a large sample of 14,935 postgraduate students from 31 universities in China. The research consisted of three scales that measured the participants' perceptions of needs satisfaction, engagement, and academic achievement. The findings demonstrated that postgraduate students at Chinese universities benefited from increased autonomy in the online learning environment encouraged them to set learning goals, access learning resources, and employ learning strategies that facilitated the mastery of difficult skills, understanding complex ideas, and the use of deep learning strategies to achieve academic success. Students' perceptions of relatedness satisfaction also contributed to increased participation in online learning activities with teachers and peers. In conclusion, students' feelings of autonomy and competence, which stimulated behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement in online learning activities, were found to positively influence academic achievement.

Mahyoob (2020) examined the challenges

and obstacles of online learning faced by students studying from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 184 tertiary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Saudi Arabia participated in the study. The findings revealed that the primary challenges of EFL online learning were related to technical issues, such as poor internet connectivity. Students also faced difficulties accessing learning platforms, such as using the Blackboard tool, downloading materials, and conducting online exams etc., due to unreliable internet connections. In addition, communication issues were prominent. Inefficient interaction with teachers and peers demotivated students studying from home. As a result, over 30% of students reported missing tasks, assignments, and communications with their teachers. The study found that less than 50% of students were satisfied with online learning from home.

Aroonsrimarakot et. al. (2023) investigated the challenges of online learning and strategies to overcome challenges from the students' perspectives. In this study, 465 students were purposively selected at two public universities in Thailand. The results revealed that the major challenges were students facing difficulty in understanding the context of the lesson, poor internet connection, difficulty in managing time, difficulty in taking online exams, poor quality of learning experience, low interest or motivation, difficulty in selecting the area to follow the online lesson at home, difficulty in completing work assignment or task, and distraction from the learning environment at home. Factor of distraction was caused by noise and poor learning environment at home; teachers' incompetency was caused by technical, inadequate teaching skills, unstructured content, and lack of follow-up; technological limitation was caused by the quality of uploaded audio or video files, connectivity, technical problems, or data limitations.

Remote learning or online distance learning (ODL), spurred by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, forcing higher education institutions in Malaysia to adapt their teaching methods to maintain high standards of education. Students had the transition from traditional face-to-face learning to online or remote learning. This significant shift in the mode of education prompted the current study to investigate the impact of studying Mandarin from home. Hence, this study

was conducted to investigate university Mandarin students' perception of studying from home using the McClellan's Theory. The investigation was conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. How do learners gain power when studying Mandarin from home?
2. How do learners gain affiliation when studying Mandarin from home?
3. How do learners gain achievement when studying Mandarin from home?
4. What is the relationship between the three factors in the Theory of Needs (McClelland, 1965) and studying from home experience for a Mandarin course?

II. METHODS

The study employed a quantitative method by using a survey. The survey was conducted by using a questionnaire developed by using Google Forms due to its convenience that missing data can be eliminated when all items in the questionnaire were set as required to be answered, and its link can easily be sent via any online platforms. In this study, the link was distributed via the class WhatsApp groups, and it was open for four weeks.

The sample for this study was obtained through purposive sampling due to the sample had to fulfil the following criteria: (1) it was convenient to access, (2) it was studying from home, and (3)

they were studying Mandarin as one of the courses of the university. Therefore, the students who enrolled in a Mandarin course at the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam & Puncak Alam, Selangor were selected. Purposive sampling is applied when a sample requires certain criteria and is convenient to researchers (Andrade, 2020). However, the results obtained from this sampling cannot represent and be generalized to the population (Andrade, 2020).

Table 1 shows the results for demographic profile of the respondents. The sample consisted of 326 fulltime university Mandarin students. The majority of the students (82.5%) were females and only 17.5 % of them were males. It is because the majority of students enrolled in all faculties every semester are females, reflecting the imbalance of gender ratio. Table 1 also demonstrates that the respondents were from nine Mandarin classes from three faculties namely, Faculty of Accountancy, Faculty of Computer Science and Faculty of Mass Communication. The number of students ranged from 32 to 40 students per class. Respondents of each faculty comprised students of Mandarin Level 1, 2 & 3, respectively. Besides, Table 1 shows that the students studied Mandarin from home at various states in Malaysia. Almost half of (40.5%) the sample were from Selangor while the rest were from other states with the percentages ranged from 0.3% to 8.9%. This is due to the location of UiTM campuses selected were in Selangor. Thus, the

Table 1 Demographic Profile

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Group	Frequency	Percent	State	Frequency	Percent
Male	57	17.5	ACT1MA	40	12.3	Selangor	132	40.5
Female	269	82.5	CST1ME	33	10.1	Melaka	9	2.8
Total	326	100	MCT1MC	30	9.2	Perak	21	6.4
			ACT2MA	34	10.4	Johor	29	8.9
			CST2MA	32	9.8	Penang	13	4.0
			MCT2MA	39	12.0	Kedah	19	5.8
			ACT3MA	40	12.3	Pahang	11	3.4
			CST3ME	40	12.3	Kelantan	28	8.6
			MCT3MB	38	11.7	Terengganu	3	0.9
			Total	326	100	Negeri Sembilan	10	3.1
						Sabah	10	3.1
						Sarawak	12	3.7
						Kuala Lumpur	24	7.4
						Putrajaya	4	1.2
						Labuan	1	0.3
						Total	326	100

majority of the students were from Selangor.

The questionnaire for this study consisted of five sections (A, B, C, D and E) as shown in Table 2. 30 items in Section B, C, D and E were adapted from Abdullah, Rahmat, Zawawi, Khamsah and Anuarsham (2020) and constructed based on David McClelland’s motivation theory. Modifications were done to make it applicable for this study. Content validation of the items was conducted by an expert in the English as a second language teaching. The reliability of 30 items with Likert scales was evaluated by using the Cronbach’s Alpha test. The α value obtained was very good (N=30, $\alpha=.944$). According to Ursachi et al. (2015), the α value that is 0.8 or greater is very good. Therefore, the items were reliable.

The data for demographic profile was analysed for frequencies while the data for Sections B, C, D and E was analysed for mean scores and correlations. The interpretation of results for mean scores of five Likert scales for Sections B, C, D and E was based on Alston and Miller (2002) as shown in Table 3.

III. RESULTS

Flexibility to Gain Power

This section presents the results to answer research question 1: “How do learners gain power when studying Mandarin from home?”. In the context of this study, the need for power refers to Flexibility.

Table 2 Distribution of Items in the Survey

Section	Items	Factors	Number of Items	Scale	Reliability (α)
A	Demographic profile	-	3	-	-
B	Power	Flexibility	9	Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Very Often (4) and Always (5).	.944
C	Affiliation	Study-Life Balance	10		
D	Achievements	Learning Performance	10		
E	Overall	-	1		
Total number of items			33		

Table 3 Interpretation of Mean of the Five-Likert Scales

Likert Scale Coding	Five Likert Scales (Alston and Miller, 2002)	Five Likert Scales in Sections B, C and D	Five Likert Scales in Section E	Mean of Likert Scale
1	Strongly Disagree	Never	Very Poor	1.0 - 1.49
2	Disagree	Rarely	Poor	1.5 - 2.49
3	Neutral	Sometimes	Fair	2.5 - 3.49
4	Agree	Very Often	Good	3.5 - 4.49
5	Strongly Agree	Always	Excellent	4.5 - 5.0

Table 4 Flexibility to Gain Power

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
FQ1 I take less time to complete my task when studying from home.	3.03	.965	Sometimes
FQ2 I cherish not having to spend time commuting to university on daily basis.	3.34	1.103	Sometimes
FQ3 I am able to save on commuting expenses while studying from home	4.22	.914	Very Often
FQ4 I can immediately attend the class upon waking up every day while studying from home.	4.11	.950	Very Often
FQ5 I am comfortable to do my study anytime.	3.85	1.017	Very Often
FQ6 I can focus my study by managing my own schedule.	3.74	1.027	Very Often
FQ7 I am able to enjoy a healthier lifestyle.	3.44	1.068	Sometimes
FQ8 I face less stress doing some class work at home.	3.01	1.154	Sometimes
FQ9 My productivity increases with less stress while studying from home	3.03	1.141	Sometimes

Table 4 shows the results for flexibility to gain power. The results demonstrated that students very often had the power for five items: saving on commuting expenses while studying from home (M=4.22, SD=.914), immediately attending the class upon waking up every day while studying from home (M=4.11, SD=.950), feeling comfortable to do their study anytime (M=3.85, SD=1.017), and focusing their study by managing their own schedule (M=3.74, SD=1.027). While the other four items, they sometimes had the power to take less time to complete their task when studying from home (M=3.03, SD=.965), cherish not having to spend time commuting to university on daily basis (M=3.34, SD=1.103), be able to enjoy a healthier lifestyle (M=3.44, SD=1.068), face less stress doing some class work at home (M=3.01, SD=1.154), and increase productivity with less stress while studying from home (M=3.03, SD=1.141).

Study-Life Balance to Gain Affiliation

This section presents the results to answer research question 2: How do learners gain affiliation when studying Mandarin from home? In the context of this study, the need for affiliation refers to study-life balance.

Table 5 shows the results for study-life balance to gain affiliation. The results revealed that students very often had control for six items: assisting their family with household chores (M=3.66, SD=.972), improving their learning satisfaction for having a study space at home (M=3.67, SD=1.063), simultaneously attending

to their family needs while studying from home (M=3.60, SD=1.032), not having to face traffic jams to and from university every day (M=4.19, SD=.998), not having to travel to university, therefore they were able to spend more time on the task at hand (M=3.89, SD=1.036), and take care of themselves better while studying from home (M=3.52, SD=1.078). For the other four items, students sometimes had control on managing their study responsibilities alongside their personal and family needs (M=3.37, SD=.948). The students also perceived that the flexibility of learning from home was ideal for them (M=3.42, SD=1.031), studying from home was more conducive than learning in a normal classroom (M=3.12, SD=1.136), and feeling healthy and having a better well-being when studying from home (M=3.31, SD=1.103).

Learning Performance to gain Achievement

This section presents the results to answer research question 3: “How do learners gain achievement when studying Mandarin from home?”. In the context of this study, the need for achievement refers to learning performance.

Table 6 shows very encouraging results for learning performance. The results indicated that students very often had control over all the items due to their Mandarin lecturers understood their challenges while they studied from home (M=3.89, SD=1.012), had high trust in them when they studied from home (M=4.02, SD=.915), provided more learning materials when students studied from home (M=4.28, SD=.780), were

Table 5 Study-Life Balance to Gain Affiliation

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
WLBQ1 I can manage my study responsibilities alongside my personal and family needs.	3.37	.948	Sometimes
WLBQ2 I prefer flexibility for my study as I can assist my family with household chores.	3.66	.972	Very Often
WLBQ3 The flexibility of studying from home is ideal for me.	3.42	1.031	Sometimes
WLBQ4 I find having a study space at home helps improve my learning satisfaction.	3.67	1.063	Very Often
WLBQ5 I find studying from home beneficial for me as I am able to simultaneously attend to my family needs.	3.60	1.032	Very Often
WLBQ6 I find studying from home more conducive than learning in a normal classroom.	3.12	1.136	Sometimes
WLBQ7 I do not have to face traffic jams to and from university every day.	4.19	.998	Very Often
WLBQ8 I do not have to travel to university, therefore I am able to spend more time on the task at hand.	3.89	1.036	Very Often
WLBQ9 I feel healthy and have a better well-being when studying from home.	3.31	1.103	Sometimes
WLBQ10 I am able to take care of myself better while studying from home.	3.52	1.078	Very Often

concerned with monitoring their progress when they studied from home (M=4.22, SD=.804), arranged additional quizzes and exercises when students studied from home (M=4.30, SD=.782), and conducted live teaching when they studied from home (M=4.53, SD=.747). Moreover, they were very often able to control their learning due to studying from home improved their study progression (M=3.52, SD=.976), studying from home improved their academic performance for Mandarin course (M=3.59, SD=.975), they had a comfortable space when they studied from home (M=3.87, SD=1.031), and they did self-directed learning when they studied from home (M=3.79, SD=.936).

The relationship between three factors in the Theory of Needs (McClelland, 1965) and studying from home experience for a Mandarin course

Section E contains the item of “How was the studying from home experience for your Mandarin course?”. Table 7 shows that the score of the item (M=3.68, SD=0.779), indicating the students had good studying from home experience for a Mandarin course.

The relationships between three factors in the Theory of Needs (McClelland, 1965) with studying from home experience for a Mandarin course were analysed using the Spearman rho Correlation Test because the data for all variables were not normal

Table 6 Learning Performance to Gain Achievement

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
WPQ1 My Mandarin lecturers understand students’ challenges while students studying from home.	3.89	1.012	Very Often
WPQ2 My Mandarin lecturers have high trust in students when students studying from home.	4.02	.915	Very Often
WPQ3 My Mandarin lecturers provide more learning materials when students studying from home.	4.28	.780	Very Often
WPQ4 My Mandarin lecturers are concerned with monitoring students’ progress when students studying from home.	4.22	.804	Very Often
WPQ5 My Mandarin lecturers arrange additional quizzes and exercises when students studying from home.	4.30	.782	Very Often
WPQ6 Studying from home improves my study progression.	3.52	.976	Very Often
WPQ7 Studying from home improves my academic performance for Mandarin course.	3.59	.975	Very Often
WPQ8 I have a comfortable space when I study from home.	3.87	1.031	Very Often
WPQ9 My Mandarin lecturers conduct live teaching when students studying from home.	4.53	.747	Very Often
WPQ10 I do self-directed learning when I study from home.	3.79	.936	Very Often

Table 7 Means Score of Studying from Home Experience for a Mandarin Course

N		Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Valid	Missing			
326	0	3.68	.779	Good

Table 8 Tests of Normality

Factors in the Theory of Needs (McClelland, 1965)	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Studying from home experience for a Mandarin course	.255	326	<.001	.842	326	<.001
Need for Power (through Flexibility)	.060	326	.006	.986	326	.003
Need for Affiliation (through Study-Life Balance)	.070	326	<.001	.977	326	<.001
Need for Achievement (through Learning Performance)	.061	326	.006	.972	326	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 9 Results of the Spearman’s Rho Correlations Tests between Factors in the Theory of Needs (McClelland, 1965) and Studying from Home Experience for a Mandarin Course

Factors in the Theory of Needs	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Direction	Strength	Interpretation
Need for Power (through Flexibility)	.420**	Positive	Moderate	Moderate positive correlation
Need for Affiliation (through Study-Life Balance)	.412**	Positive	Moderate	Moderate positive correlation
Need for Achievement (through learning performance)	.589**	Positive	Moderate	Moderate positive correlation

N=326, **p<0.001

($p < 0.05$) for both types of normality tests (the Kolmogorov-Smirnova Test and the Shapiro-Wilk Test) as shown in Table 8. Furthermore, the sampling was conducted through purposive sampling.

The results of the Spearman’s Rho Correlations Tests between the variables are shown in Table 9. The strength of the correlations between the variables were interpreted based on these r values: very low ($r \leq 0.20$), low ($0.20 < r \leq 0.39$), moderate ($0.40 < r \leq 0.59$), high ($0.60 < r \leq 0.79$) and very high ($0.8 - 1.0$) (Permansah et al., 2023). The results demonstrated that all factors in the Theory of Needs had moderate positive correlation with studying from home experience for a Mandarin course. Need for Achievement ($r = 0.589$, $p < .001$) demonstrated the highest r value compared to the other two factors, Need for Power (through Flexibility) ($r = 0.420$, $p < .001$) and Need for Affiliation (through Study-Life Balance) ($r = 0.412$, $p < .001$).

IV. DISCUSSION

This paper investigated students’ learning perceptions and experiences on studying from home in Malaysian higher learning institutions based on McClelland’s Needs Theory (1965). According to McClelland, Need for Power, Need for Affiliation and Need for Achievement are three important aspects to be achieved by people in life. The Need for Power refers to flexibility where one will gain the power when one has the flexibility in one’s life. The Need for Affiliation refers to “study-life balance” where one does not only do well for the studies but could pay greater attention to the family to enhance family relationships. Finally, the Need for Achievement refers to the ability to handle learning tasks and academic performance.

Although some research has reported about the challenges on the aspects of academic performance (Hastutiningtyas & Rosdiana, 2021;

Negri, 2023), disadvantages on psychological well-being (Duan & Zhu, 2020; Amin et al., 2023), internet connectivity problem (Demuyakor, 2020; Mahyoob, 2020), lack of time management skills and noisy home environment problems faced by students in higher learning institutions of studying from home (Aileen Farida et al., 2021), this study achieved positive outcomes in exploring the perception of studying from home based on the McClelland’s Needs Theory.

Pertaining to research question 1, “How do learners gain power when studying from home?” in which the need for power refers to Flexibility, the results demonstrated that students very often had the power for saving on commuting expenses, had comfortability to do their study anytime and were able to focus on the study. Students with a more flexible schedules may not have to follow a class at restricted hours every day. Flexibility in studying hours helped students to be more productive and enjoy a healthier lifestyle. As how other researchers (Manea et al. 2021, Normah et al., 2022; Thamri et al, 2022) have revealed, the students appreciated the flexibility offered by studying from home in allowing them to carry out their coursework at their own pace. The findings are consistent with the past research where flexibility and comfortability had given a positive impact on students’ learning (Mukhtar et al., 2020; Nik Md Salleh et al., 2022). This may be due to the mode of studying from home has reduced the commuting time to universities and solved the distance issues (Fidalgo et al., 2020).

For research question 2 “How do learners gain affiliation when studying from home?” where the Need for Affiliation refers to Study-Life Balance, the results revealed a positive impact from studying at home. The findings suggest that studying from home has its benefits, allowing students to balance their academic responsibilities with those at home. They appreciated that by studying from home, they

could avoid traffic jam when commuting to campus, giving them more time to manage their tasks (Nik Md Salleh et al., 2022). Students were also able to attend to family needs, such as assisting with household chores, and had more time to handle personal tasks. This flexibility enabled them to take better care of themselves and have improved learning experiences. With the emphasis on achieving study-life balance, students were able to maintain warm relationships with others, including family members, which fulfilled important needs in their lives (Corpuz et al., 2022; Uduji & Ankeli, 2013; Vero & Puka, 2017)

Hermanto et al.'s (2021) research on studying from home found that nearly 90% of students reported having more quality time with their families, which contributed to improved family relationships. Additionally, students experienced more harmonious relationships in group settings compared to competitive environments, enhancing their sense of affiliation (Martincová et al., 2016). Although there are certain challenges associated with studying from home, such as technology glitches in rural areas and limited access to online classes (Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023; Clarissa & Daniel, 2022; Hu et al., 2022; Onyema et al., 2020;), advancements in technology—especially AI and the expansion of 5G internet access in Southeast Asia—promise to address these issues in the future.

Another challenge is the difficulty in maintaining relationships or communication with teachers or peers (Amin et al., 2023; Mahyoob, 2020; Norasyikin et al., 2022). However, these challenges can be mitigated by organizing appropriate online learning activities, selecting suitable assessment methods, and defining clear learning materials for each activity (Selvanathan et al., 2023).

Responding to the research question 3 “How do learners gain achievement (through learning performance) when studying from home?” that Achievement refers to Learning Performance, the results indicated that students “very often” had control over many aspects due to their Mandarin lecturers understood their challenges, and had high trust in them. As an overall, students were satisfied with what were provided on the online learning platforms for their Mandarin courses including great attention and consideration given by their

Mandarin lecturers when students studying from home. The findings were aligned with the outcomes of a research where “satisfaction” was identified as one of the factors to improve students’ academic achievements through online learning (Abuhassna et al., 2020; Huang and Wang, 2023). Besides, the students were supported by more Mandarin learning materials, additional quizzes and exercises. With the sufficient learning aids arranged for them by the Mandarin lecturers, students were guided well and competent to do self-directed learning in the tasks given when studying from home. Having task-related competence is important as the confidence to do the tasks given is fundamental to achievement (Benneker et al., 2023). Hence, although students were in the challenging learning environment, the need of gaining achievement motivated them to handle academic tasks well and to achieve academic success as how other past research had reported (Huang & Wang, 2023; Kastaty & Prihatini, 2022). The very positive outcome for the research question 3 contrasts with some other studies (Hastutiningtyas & Rosdiana, 2021; Negri, 2023) where studying from home was reported as reducing students’ academic performance with one of the important factors was the environment that was not conducive to home learning (Aileen Farida, 2022).

The research question 4 has obtained moderate positive correlation for all 3 factors in the Theory of Needs in exploring the students’ studying from home experience for a Mandarin course. Among them, Need for Achievement (through learning performance) demonstrated the highest correlation with studying from home experience for a Mandarin course as compared to Need for Power (through Flexibility) and Need for Affiliation (through Study-Life Balance). The result shows the need of the students to succeed in their Mandarin learning and the findings of the need to excel in the aspect of academic is consistent with the research of Abuhassna et al. (2020) and Kumar and Tankha (2020).

To conclude, the university Mandarin students perceived a positive impact from studying Mandarin at home. This outcome is aligned with the studies by Hermanto et al. (2021), Normah et al. (2022), Manea et al. (2021), and Thamri et al. (2022) in which they have also demonstrated the positive aspects of studying from home.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper has gathered positive perceptions on studying from home based on the McClellan's Needs Theory. In terms of the Need for Power (Flexibility), students perceived that studying from home reduces their vehicle commuting expenses. Studying from home also gives freedom to students to manage their own schedule and study at the right time. In regards to the Need for Affiliation (Study-Life Balance), students felt that studying from home plays an important role in balancing study and home life. By studying from home, they were able to build better relationship with family members where they were able to cater to their family needs. Last but not least, the Need for Achievement (Learning Performance) also indicated very positive outcome. In assuring students' good academic performance, productivity of students and monitoring by lecturers are vital. Based on the findings on learning performance, students very often had control over learning performance due to their Mandarin lecturers understood their challenges and had high trust in students when students studying from home.

The limitations of the research are some aspects were not explored under the three factors, such as psychological problems, infrastructure issues, economic situations, home environment and other issues that may be relevant and contribute to the disadvantages of implementing the mode of studying from home. However, with the positive findings from the investigation based on the McClellan's Needs Theory, the mode of studying from home has its great impact in meeting the students' need for Power (flexibility), Affiliation (Study-Life Balance) and Achievement (Learning Performance). Hence, it is recommended that the motivation to study from home can be further

explored. To achieve the purpose, this study could be replicated and use to examine other student communities on whether the McClellan's Needs Theory would meet the needs of other larger groups of students. Last but not least, future studies may include interview as a different approach in collecting data to allow respondents the opportunities to convey their opinion and views directly.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The authors have read and followed the ethical requirements for publication in Jurnal Arbitrer and that the current work does not involve human subjects, animal experiments, or any data collected from social media platforms.

CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

Low Hiang Loon: Project administration, supervision, conceptualisation, literature review, methodologies, data collection, writing, reviewing and editing. **Goh Chin Shuang:** Conceptualisation, literature review, methodologies, data collection and writing. **Teh Hong Siok:** Conceptualisation, literature review, methodologies, data collection and writing. **Tuan Sarifah Aini:** Conceptualisation, data extraction, data analysis and writing, visualisation, reviewing and editing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research did not receive any grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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