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WORK FROM HOME IS DESIRABLE OPTION FOR EMPLOYEES: IT'S IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

This study is based on how working from home and the aim is to assess the impact that working from home has on motivation and performance levels of employees working within organizations. Previous research studies around this topic had focused on how working from home is an extremely positive way of working and this has been possible due to newer technologies being readily available. The aim of the study was to look in depth at the experiences employees had whilst working from home and how each individual felt their motivation and performance levels were affected.

Home working opens up a new range of possibilities for the way businesses can work and structure themselves. With the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, home working has given some employers the flexibility they need to continue their business operations while prioritizing staff and consumer health and wellbeing as part of their public health responsibilities.

A mixed research approach was taken as part of this study which was carried out through the use of observation method of secondary data sources like newspapers, journals, magazines, research articles etc. This approach was taken in order to observe whether any trends emerged in relation to their motivation and performance levels whilst working from home.

Conclusions were drawn, outlining that working from home does higher motivation and performance levels of employees. Although there are also some disadvantages which can be removed. Overall it was clear to see the high levels of positivity surrounding working from home and how it impacts positively on employee motivation and performance levels, which can have positive effects on employee well-being, employee work life balance and job satisfaction. In addition to this if employees are more motivated and performing to a higher standard then this is likely to also have a positive effect on the organization in terms of retaining staff and achieving more from their employees.

KEYWORDS: Work from home, Employees, Covid-19 pandemic, Motivation, Performance.

***LIST OF FIGURES/ DIAGRAMS:**

1. Proportion of workers in the survey having worked from home before and during COVID-19 lockdown (%).
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INTRODUCTION**CONCEPT OF WORK FROM HOME**

Work from home, also called Telecommuting, remote working, telework, mobile work, remote job, is a work arrangement in which employees do not commute or travel to a central place of work, such as an office building, warehouse or store.

The prevalence of working from arrangements in firms has increased over the past few decades due to advancements in information and communication technologies. Working from home is defined as people working from their home or from other location of their choice other than the working area by payment which is provided by the employer. Working from home is having lots of use in recent years. Since the growth of the networking from home indicates the employee can finish their work with in their own premises. Work will be done remotely. It depends on Teleworking / Telecommunicating arrangements where an employee does not require staying during the business hours with their employer. In today's growing world there is an urgent need for working at home. To improve the employee retention during the busy and stress filled life we require some leisure time. Through working from home you can have free access towards a specific job through fewer interruptions from fellow employees in the office and communications time is also wider. (Baruch Y, 2001), (Bussing A, 1998).

Work from Home is not a new concept although it is a new situation that it is suddenly a preferred way of working all over the world and it has become more usual than ever before in all fields and organizations where it is possible to execute. Corporations and authorities around the world have no other options than providing flexible conditions including work from home. Letting employees work from home has been the fear of plenty of companies because they will be less productive. This is not the entirely wrong. At home, it's easy to get distracted, procrastinate, or put in less work less work than those working in the office. The COVID-19 pandemic forced a dramatic rush to WFH in early 2020 for a large fraction of in the countries across the world. Of course it would have significant implications for how business organize and manage their workforce.

There is significant debate how effective Work from Home will be, how much further we can improve implementation, and the extent to which the firms will continue using Work from Home. Our knowledge about these issues is thin.

This paper mainly focuses on Work from Home/ Remote working and the impact it has on employees' motivation and ability to work. WFH is becoming a more and more popular way of working globally and has had its own impact on its development as well. Remote work is a contemporary issue and since the phenomenon has widespread quite rapidly all over the world, it is important to examine how the change and the new way of working work out in practice, how remote working effects on employees' motivation and what are impact on their performance.

Origin of Work from home: How it came to be what it is today

Remote work is not the new concept born overnight. It's just growing popularity due to the technology. Remote workers were also not born overnight when the internet was first created in 1980s. Working remotely was the norm long before downtown offices and commuting even existed.

Before Industrial



Revolution came a need for automation and the creation of factories. Huge machines and large scale productions required employees to be present in-house to complete their work. This is also when people started commuting to designate "office spaces".

The modern history of remote working is quite a fascinating journey. In the history of work from home, the term telecommuting was coined in 1973 by Jack Nilles, a NASA engineer and a physicist in his book, 'The Telecommunications – Transportation Tradeoff'. In his

book he argued that it was actually a COMMUNICATIONS problem rather than a COMMUTATION problem. In 1973, the OPEC oil embargo began, and gas prices quadrupled in America. This made America's communication-based work culture unsustainable. In the 1990s, telecommuting became the subject of pop culture attention. In 1995, the motto that "work is something you do, not something you travel to" was coined. Telecommuting has been adopted by a range of businesses, governments and not-for-profit organization. Organizations may use telecommuting to reduce costs (telecommuting employees do not require an office or cubicle, a space which needs to be rented or purchased, and incurs additional costs such as lightening, climate control, etc.). Along with this, teleworking may make it easier for workers to balance their work responsibilities with their personal life and family roles. Some organizations adopt teleworking for environmental reasons, as telework can reduce congestion and air pollution, with fewer cars on the road.

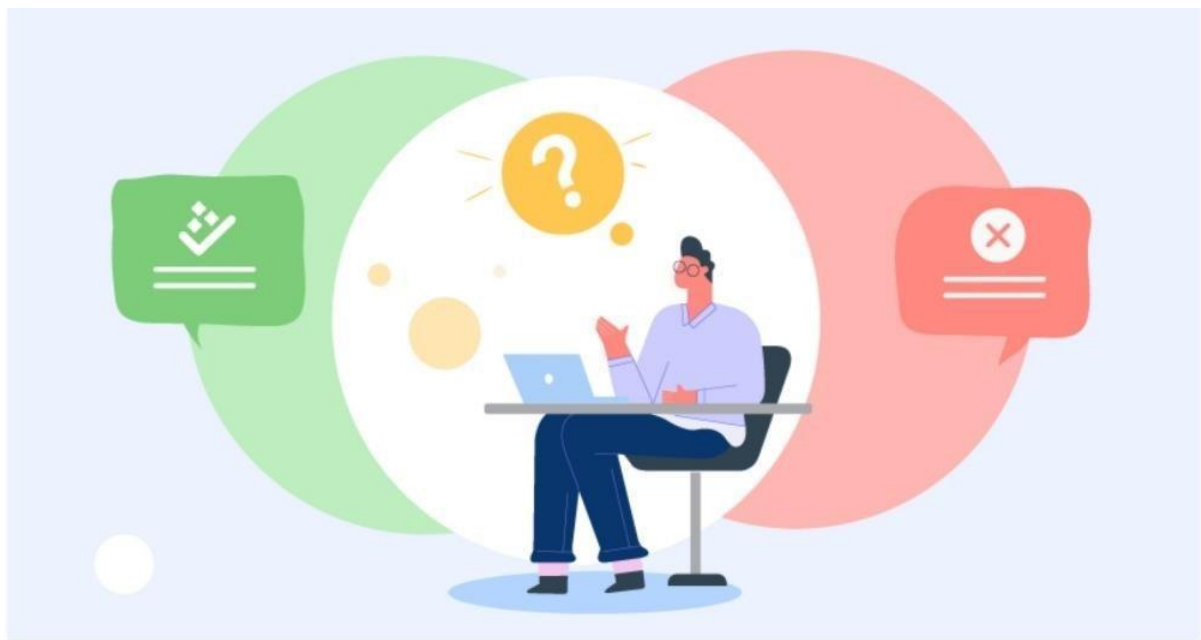
Teleworkers in the 21st century often use mobile telecommunications technology such as a Wi-Fi equipped laptop or tablet computers and smartphones to work from coffee shops; other may use desktop computer and landline phone at their home. In the 2000s annual leave or vacation in some organizations was seen as absence from the workplace rather than ceasing work, and some office employees used telework to continue to check work e-mails while on vacation.

The practice became much more mainstream during the COVID-19 pandemic, when millions of the workers were forced to start telecommuting for the first time. Talk about Google and Facebook, these tech giants have announced their decisions to allow their employees to work from home till Dec 2020. Meanwhile, social media sites like Twitter have allowed their staff to work remotely forever, following an announcement in early May this year. This echoes the sentiment of 25% of the technology workforce we want to move permanently to remote work.

However, in the history of remote work, this was not always the case. In 2018, a Facebook official was quoted saying that the company wanted as few employees as possible to work from home, amongst concerns of lapsed productivity and lack of accountability. But, due to the pandemic, Facebook has had a shift in its philosophy and is expecting over half of its workforce to go remote by 2025.

E-commerce giant Flipkart has extended the 'work from home' policy for its 12,000 employees till May 31, 2021, due to coronavirus pandemic. Based on the assessment of the current situation, the Walmart-owned firm has extended the 'phase-2 of the back to office plan' till the end of the May next year.

Now, the advantages and disadvantages of Work from Home can be described as under:



ADVANTAGES OF WORK FROM HOME

Here are some features of work from home which are described as follows:

FLEXIBILITY AND AGILITY:

Home working enables more agility and flexibility in working arrangements. With employees no longer tied to an office, they may be better placed and more willing to work flexible hours such as earlier or later in the day or even at weekends.

ATTRACT NEW TALENT:

Home working can be offered as an incentive to come and work for you. It helps you to attract new talent to your business. Even just offering the option to work from home will give you an advantage in the job market over competitors that don't offer their staff home working as an option.

Working from home can help employees improve their work life balance, e.g. staff that would have had to commute now will be able to use that time for them giving the basis for a better work life balance. Staffs are also able to fit in household chores around their working day giving them more free time.

TECHNOLOGY MAKES IT EASIER:

The internet made it easier for the staff to be continually connected to the office. There are several tools such as Skype, Google meet etc. made communication easier between colleagues and effective and efficient group meetings.

LESS NEED OF REGULAR HOLIDAYS AND LESS SICKNESS ABSENCE:

Staffs are more likely to feel happier and more energized and will be able to spend more time with their families from working from home. It is an important fact that employees who work from isolation have less chance of being infected from virus etc. than the office environment. So that there is no need to take holidays or sick leave.

COST SAVING:

Remote work reduce the costs related to computers, phones, electricity, heating and air conditioning and all the other little necessities that keep an office operating.

GREATER PRESENCE:

Hiring remote employees who work from various strategic locations and know the local language, culture and custom very well allow enterprise companies to have a greater presence in that region.

DISADVANTAGES OF WORK FROM HOME

On being organizations switching to Work from Home culture and coming to terms with both the benefits and disadvantages of working from home. Work from Home is boon for many, but not for all. It has incurred losses for business owners owing small businesses and co-working spaces. It is because these places come with a price, and every employee is an asset. When no employee is working in these spaces, it is evident that these spaces are getting nullified. Here are some disadvantages of this approach are described as under:

BETTER WORK LIFE BALANCE:

LACK OF COMMUNITY AND TEAMWORK:

“Man is by nature a social animal”. It is evident that man cannot live alone or work alone effectively and efficiently. There are various platforms like Skype, Zoom, and Meet etc., where employees can connect through video calls and conferences, but spending long hours and collaborating only with computer screen and no face-to-face interaction and communication with colleagues might be challenging.

UNMONITORED PERFORMANCE:

Working alone can be a tough job. It requires employees to keep a check on their work by themselves. Employees might often laze around and take frequent breaks, resulting in longer and less work time when the work goes unmonitored.

LACK OF OFFICE EQUIPMENT:

According to the study nearly 33% of the people who work from home also don't have the necessary access to office equipment such as high-speed internet, fax/copier machine or a high end laptop to complete the task.

SECURITY ISSUES:

Many employers are using their personal devices for two-factor authentication, and they may well have mobile app versions of IM clients, such as Teams, Skype and Zoom. These blurred lines between personal and professional life increase the risk that sensitive information might fall into insecure information. Cloud documents, e-mails and attachments, instant message clients and the third party services are vulnerable- and with so much information being shared digitally, attack surface has grown much wider. Without the security protections that office systems afford – such as firewalls and blacklisted IP addresses, Cyber-attacks on sensitive information are most common in these days.

LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY:

One of the other major disadvantages of working from home is a loss in productivity as people tend to get distracted by comforts that they get at home. It includes online games, various web series and chat shows streaming on OTT platforms like Netflix, Amazon prime, Zee5, Jio Hotstar etc.

Continuously spending time with electronic devices can bring about other health concerns like musculoskeletal pain, eye strain, and Blue light. A recent study, published in the *International journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, found that 41.2% of home workers report low back pain and 23.5% experience neck pain. Beside these, it also affects the mental health of the workers. Isolation and sedentary lifestyle also contribute to weight gain and obesity.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

We must face the fact that working from home is nothing new and has been around for a while. It was not thought up at the moment when the pandemic happened, but it was already a reality. It is not a practical option for those who are in manufacturing, hospitality, performing arts and heavy industry, WHF is a new thing for such organizations that have never had it as a part of their culture.

The following research questions have been chosen to be answered as part of this study. Hopefully by answering this research question it will give a clear indication as to what the motivation and performance levels are of employees who work from home.

- ❖ Is Work from Home feasible in the long run?
- ❖ Taking into consideration motivation and performance levels, is working from home seen to have a positive or negative influence for employees?
- ❖ Is there any advantage of work from home for women?

NEED OF THE STUDY

Working from home may be an alternative for the typical office cubical enhancing work- life balance.

HEALTH ISSUES:

Here are some key-points which describe the need of this study.

- ❖ To examine if this work arrangement will remain as a transitory element responding to the exceptional circumstances or whether it could be a permanent arrangement.
- ❖ To focus on the positive influence on employees` productivity and performance.
- ❖ To observe the negative impact on employees due to remote work as it increase the worker`s productivity, but it can lead to isolation and stress as the line between work and home blurs.

To understand how work from home is beneficial for society, environment and employee`s mental health.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Working from home has important contribution towards society as it can make much easier to shrink carbon footprint. Research studies has shown that we can reduce CO2 by not travelling to an office; decrease heating, cooling, and lighting cost by controlling them yourself; and opting to use less paper and disposable items.

Remote, flexible workers tend to be happier and more loyal employees, in part because working from home has been shown to lower stress, provide more time for hobbies and interests, and improve personal relationships, among other things.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Every research has certain limitations and it is always better to identify and acknowledge shortcomings of the research work. There are two major limitations of the study could be addressed in future use:-

- ❖ **LACK OF PRIOR STUDIES IN THIS FIELD**
:- The important limitation of the study is the non-availability of much scholarly work addressing to research problem about this topic, because ‘Work from Home’ is quite recent concept.
- ❖ **LACK OF RELEVANT DATA**
:- In this area, only secondary data available through newspapers, journals, books and websites are used. So, in this area further research work should be needed.

RESEARCH ETHICS

At simplest, we can say that Research ethics provides guidelines for the responsible conduct of research. In addition, it educates and monitors the researchers conducting research to ensure high ethical standards.

Here are following ethics included in the research:

No tempering has been done with data.

Data sources are fully acknowledged and referenced.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review is an overview of the previously published work on a specific topic. It is directly related with the research questions we have adopted. It is supposed to provide the researcher or author and the audiences with the general image of the existing knowledge on the topic under question. The selection of literature is limited to the academic articles which are available online. Following are the list of literature which had been reviewed while doing research:

COVID-19 IMPACT: WORK FROM HOME IS A NEW NORMAL

- ❖ Thomas teodorovicz , Raffelia sadun, Andrew.L.Kun and Orit Shaer have their research work on the topic “*Working from home during COVID-19: Evidence from time-use Studies*”.

According to their research, there are opportunities for technological innovations both in supporting workers as they structure their activities, and they try to complete their work efficiently. Furthermore, technology can help as worker strives to find work life balance.

The research gap in this research is that it does not provide the information about the negative effects of technology on the worker`s mental and physical health.

- ❖ Heejung Chung, Hyojin Seo, Sarah Forbes and Holly Birkett from the University of Birmingham had done their research on the topic “*Working From Home During the COVID-19 Lockdown: Changing preferences and the future of work*”.

The research keeps an eye on the different perception of working women, fathers and workers towards the work from home.

WORK FROM FEASIBLE IN THE LONG RUN

- ❖ Kevin M. Kniffin , Jayanth Narayanan, Fredrick Anseel, John Antonakis, Susan P. Ashford, Arnold B. Bakker, Hari Bapuji, Devasheesh P. Bhave, Virginia K. Choi from Haward Business School have complete their research on the topic “*COVID-19 and the workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Actions*”.

The research suggests that the massive, abrupt, ad mandatory switch to work from home has required employees to adapt while employers have become more open about to adopting the practice post-pandemic.

Research gap in this research is that it does not describe about how will employee attitudes to privacy and monitoring shifts for work that is done outside of an office setting or at home?

BENEFITS OF WORK FROM HOME FOR WOMEN

- ❖ Rupietta, Kira, Beckmann, Michael from University of Basel had done research on the topic “*Working from Home:*

What is the effect on employees` effort?” WWZ Working Paper No. 2016/07.

This research paper shows that Working from Home is statistically positive effect on work effort than work from office.

Research gap in this paper is it does not show the effect on the productivity of working women.

POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON EMPLOYEES MOTIVATION AND PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL

- ❖ M.A.Bawa from International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management, United Kingdom had done their research work on the topic “*Employee Motivation and Productivity: A Review Of Literature And Implications For*

Management Practice” Vol V, Issue 12 December, 2017.

This research paper carried out on the impact of motivation and productivity. It suggested strategies of motivating employees based on analysis of various motivation theories including Maslow`s Need Hierarchy Theory, McGregor`s X and Y Theory and some other theories also. It also examine the what management can do to minimize the real or perceived inequalities in the administration of financial and non-financial rewards.

The research gap in this paper it is purely theoretical and it had no contact with the practical world. It analyzes the motivation and productivity level of the employees on the basis of certain theories. Beside these, it included those theories which have no longer implications in the current scenario. It could not clearly examine the concept of work from home and its impact.

- ❖ Michael Gibbs, Friedrike Mengel, and Christoph Siemroth from Becker Friedman Institute had done their research work on “*Work from Home & Productivity: Evidence from Personnel & Analytics Data on IT Professionals*”, Working Paper No. 2021-56.

This paper suggests that employees spent more time at work during Work from Home than Work from Office through various data analysis. It suggests that decrease in productivity did not result in a decline in average output because time worked compensated for it. In this article, it is interesting to see if the changes were sustainable over a period of time, especially in the light of evidence of the adverse effect of long work hours on employee well-being, mental and physical health.

NEW SECTORS EVOLVED FROM WORK FROM HOME DURING LOCKDOWN

:

Alexander Bick, Adam Blandin and Karel Mertens had provide a research work on “*Work from Home After the COVID-19 Outbreak*” from Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Working Paper 2017.

This paper present the evidence that how many workers from various sectors shifted to Work from Home system in the months after pandemic outbreaks through novel survey data analysis.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Every research has some objectives. Here are some objectives for conducting this research:

To gather an understanding of working from home in terms of motivation and performance level of employees. To critically evaluate data collect to discover whether work from home raises performance and motivation level and whether this has any impact on work life balance.

To assess whether there are any positive or negative factors that could affect employees` motivation.

To examine the scope of work from home in different career branches.

To examine the effects of work from home on employees` health and well-being. To observe are there any security or privacy issue?

To gather information about reasons behind communication with the remote employee become difficult.

DEVELOPMENT OF WORKING HYPOTHESIS

A hypothesis is an assumption regarding the solution to the problem under study. It is the focal point around which the future research efforts will be directed.

The hypothesis chosen in this study is directly connected with the research topic, i.e. "Work from home is desirable option for employees: the assessment of its impact on employees` motivation and productivity".

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS it is hypothesized that work from home is desirable option for employees because it has positive impact on employees` motivation and productivity.

It is a simple hypothesis which shows the relationship between one dependent variable and a single independent variable.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: Work from home is desirable option for employees.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE : It has the positive impact on employees` motivation and productivity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research proposal is a brief summary outlining the objectives of study and the mode of operations conducting the research. It is like a road map to research showing where it has to start and where to go and how to get there.

RESEARCH METHOD : There are two types of research approaches to dissertation writing –the Quantitative (numbers) and Qualitative (words). However, some studies may use a combination of both approaches then it is called a Mixed Method. In this paper, Mixed Method of research is used. It include several tables, diagrams, charts as well as it include the feelings and emotions of workers while working from home.

MODE OF DATA COLLECTION For analyzing and interpreting data, observation method is used. The mode of data is also from secondary sources i.e. research papers, articles, journals, magazines, books, newspapers and relevant websites.

REASON FOR COLLECTING SECONDARY DATA: Secondary data is used due to lack of primary data collection.

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

METHODS OF WORKING FROM HOME

The person who wishes to work from home are individual who need additional income or a parent who wishes to earn income and stay home with kids, this is the solution for them. There are various kinds of work, which can make at home. Here are the career options for remote work:

ACCOUNTANT

Accountant help plan and achieve financial goals and ensure organization`s financial documents are accurate. Creating journal entries, preparing invoices, and handling account payable and receivable are some common duties.

ENGINEER

There are various types of engineering careers: mechanical, civil, chemical, electrical, computer, software and more.

TEACHER/ FACULTY/ TUTOR/ INSTRUCTOR

Teachers and tutors can work remotely to guide students in a variety of subject areas. Using online platforms, instructor, teachers and tutors work with students in a group setting or one-to-one to tech course

criteria. There are various applications that provide remote learning in various areas like Unacademy, Vedantu and Byjus etc.

WRITER

Writer creates various form of content, such as articles, stories, ad copy, technical manuals and collaterals. They can find jobs with online websites, newspapers, magazines, blogs that need content.

CONSULTANT

Consultants are individuals; some people are consultants for tax or financial advice or health and psychological phenomenon. If consultant is proving their skills in an area, they can market themselves as a consultant and provide services from home.

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

Customer service representatives are focused on assisting customers or clients. Remote customer service use phone, email, chat, or social media to answer questions, place orders and resolve issues.

WEB DEVELOPER

Web developers create attractive and functional websites using coding and graphic design skills. Expertise with HTML, CSS, JavaScript, jQuery and APIs is usually necessary.

SELLER OF HOME MADE PRODUCTS

If people are having ideas for creating beautiful things at home, this helps them to supply the products while sitting at home like gifts, clothes etc. lots of application provides means for selling their products like Amazon, Flipkart, Meesho, Nyka, Snapdeal etc.

PROJECT MANAGER

Project manager deals with tactical duties for company projects. They tracks deadlines and budgets, delegate duties, and ensure deliverables are completed.

DATA ANALYST

Data analysts use data to help companies make business decisions. Collecting data, analyzing and spotting patterns in data, compiling findings, and drafting reports are common duties.

PATTERN OF WORK FROM HOME BEFORE AND DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

The world health organization declared the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Government from across the world, including the Indian Government announced comprehensive lockdowns limiting all unnecessary travel and asked all non-essential employees to work from home where possible. For this the research work is categorized into two parts i.e. before COVID-19 lockdown and during COVID-19 lockdown

Figure 1. Proportion of workers in the survey having worked from home before and during Covid-19 lockdown (%)

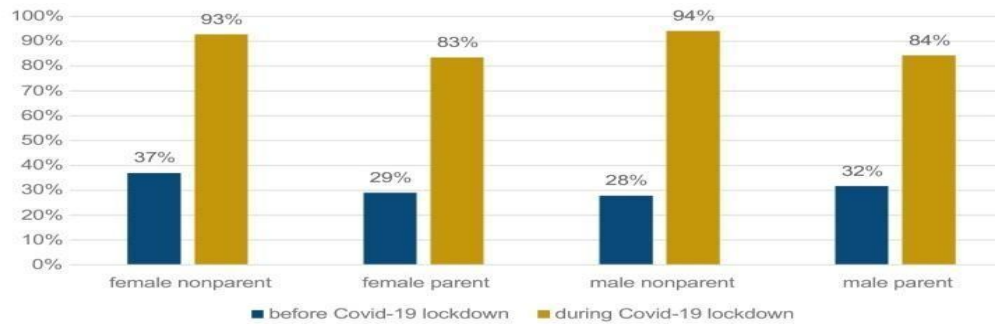
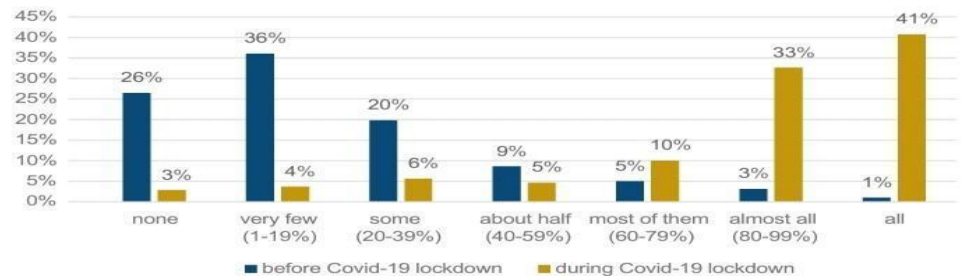


Figure 2. The proportion of work colleagues working from home before and during the COVID-19 lockdown (%)



The figure shows the proportion of employees who worked from home before the COVID-19 lockdown with those working from home during the lockdown. As can be seen in Figure 1, almost 1/3 of our population was able to work

Figure 3. Proportion of employees working flexitime before and during the COVID-19 lockdown (%)

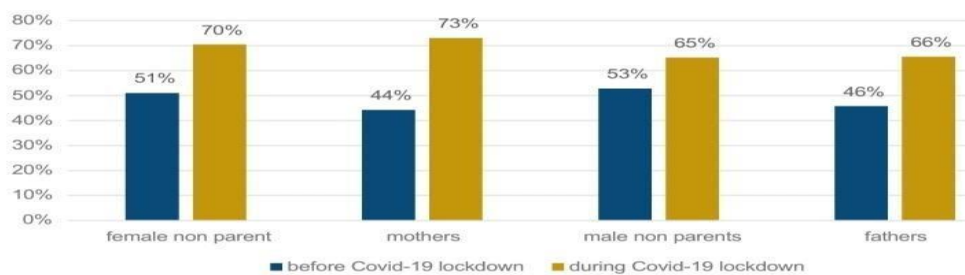
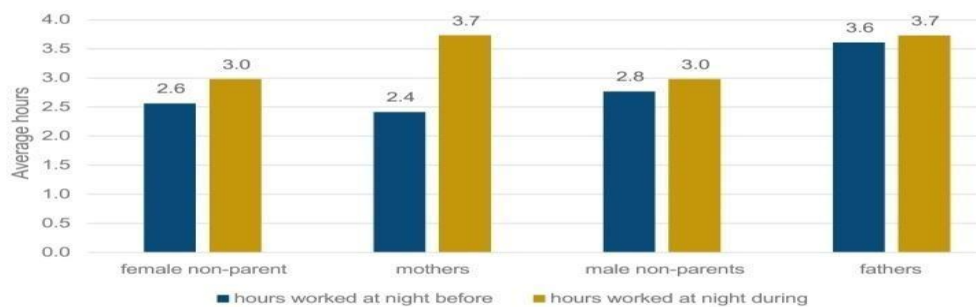


Figure 4. Average number of hours worked by employees during evenings/night before and during lockdown by parental/gender status (number of hours)



from home, at least in some occasions, before the COVID-19 lockdown happened. During lockdown the percentage is higher for female non-parent, female parent, male non-parent, and male parent.

Similarly, during lockdown there is a significant increase in numbers given that 2/3 of the colleagues shift towards homeworking (Figure 2). However, the shift towards working from home has not been clear cut across all sectors. For example, home-working was less common in sectors such as accommodation, hospitality and food services, wholesale and retail trade. Figure 3 shows that overall 47% of workers used flexitime prior to lockdown, while 70% used flexitime during lockdown. This increase is particularly amongst mothers, where approximately 44% were using flexitime prior to the lockdowns and 73% during lockdowns. We can also see from the data that mothers have worked longer during evenings/nights during lockdown compared to other groups to an average of 3.7 hours during the lockdown, making them the demographic with the most significant increase in hours worked during evenings/nights during lockdown.

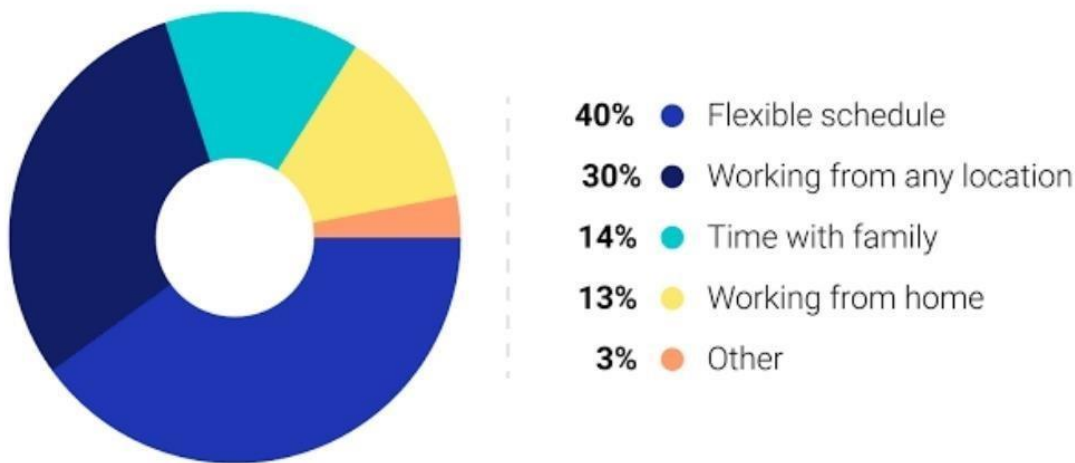
EXPERIENCES OF WORKING FROM HOME

The next section of this research work is to explore the experiences of those who have worked from home during the COVID-19 lockdowns. The experience might have positive impact on the employees or negative impact on the productivity.

These effects can be analyzed through the following diagrams:

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES OF WORKING FROM HOME

As we can see from Figure 5, some of the positive key factors of working from home have included improved physical and mental health, increase in productivity, capacity to do some of the housework due to schools and childcare facility closures, both mothers (78%) and fathers (84%) chose the ability to spend more time with children/ grandchildren. It also seems to have improved mental and physical health of 30% of the workers. A large number of workers have noted that their productivity increased on their working patterns improved due to working from home during the lockdown period. It shows that all groups of workers/ employees experienced increased productivity by at least 25% since the lockdown. This was even higher for non-parents where 39% of women without children said that they are more productive. Overall, most of them identified some positives in working from home during lockdown with only 7% of all those surveyed saying there were no positive outcomes of working from home during the lockdown period same.



State of Remote Report / 2019
buffer.com/state-of-remote-2019

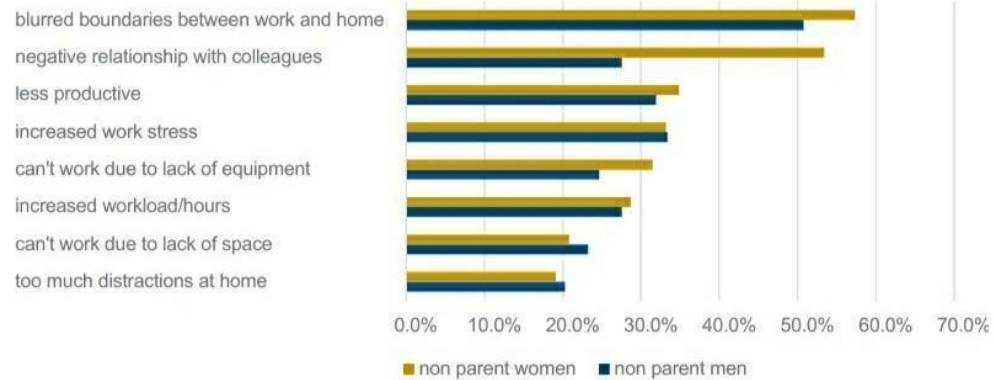


The State of Remote Report suggests that the major positive effect of work from home is that the presence of flexible schedule which have lacking in the office system. An another positive impact is it provides the facility to work from any location to workers. The study also shows that due to work from home employers can spend 14% more time with their family this works as a stress-buster for them.

NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES OF WORKING FROM HOME DURING LOCKDOWN

Employees also identified several key negative consequences of working from home during the lockdown. The diagram and its analysis are given as below:

Figure 7. Top negative experiences of working from home during lockdown for mothers and fathers and women and men without children (as a % of all those who have worked from home during the COVID-19 lockdown)



On the top of the list is how working from blurs boundaries between work and family life. Such blurring and multi-tasking of roles has commonly been identified in the research flexible working prior to the COVID-19 lockdown. The diagram shows for both men and women without children, increased work stress was a commonly chosen outcome with 33% choosing this. Similarly for this group, increased work load or working hours was common. (Lott and Chung 2016; Chung and Wan Der Horst, 2018).

Work life Balance

The division of housework within heterosexual couples changed significantly during lockdown period. As shown in the figure, women were doing more. We do see an increase in the number of couples where male partners took on increased housework/care after the lockdown, resulting in the couples sharing the work equally or male partners doing more. The figure gives the clear picture that male partners are doing more or much more of these activities.

Well-being

Figure 15. Proportion of employees feeling the following feelings more than half the time in the past month during lockdown (including most/all the time) (%)

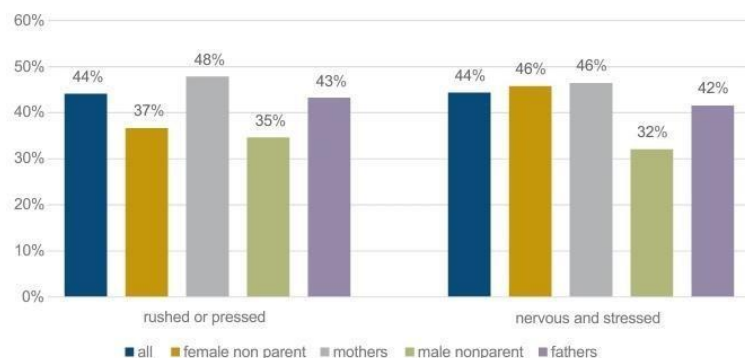
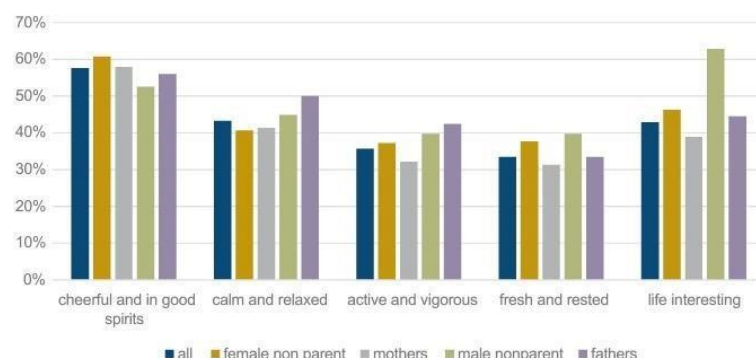


Figure 16. Proportion of employees reporting the following feelings more than half the time in the past month (during lockdown) (including most/all the time) by gender/parent status (%)



Outcomes

The figure examined that how patterns of work and work life balance influenced the well-being of workers/employees. It shows that the significant number of people felt rushed/pressed for time or nervous and stressed more than half the time. Examining the more positive effects of the lockdown, a similar pattern emerges. Women, specifically mothers, report they have not felt rested. Only 31% of mothers responded that they had woken up feeling fresh and rested. In comparison, for fathers, although only 33% reported waking up feeling fresh and cheerful.

Work culture before and during lockdown

The paper also examined the perception of employees towards work cultures. Many of those who worked from home during the COVID-19 lockdown believed that their managers had been supportive of working from home prior to lockdown (50%), but this increase in dramatically during the lockdown with 90%. This increase can be seen in the all groups. The highest increment coming from the group of mothers who did not feel that there was much management support prior to lockdown. Similarly, we can see that there has been a slight reduction in employee's perception that working from home negatively impacts colleagues (15% to 13%).

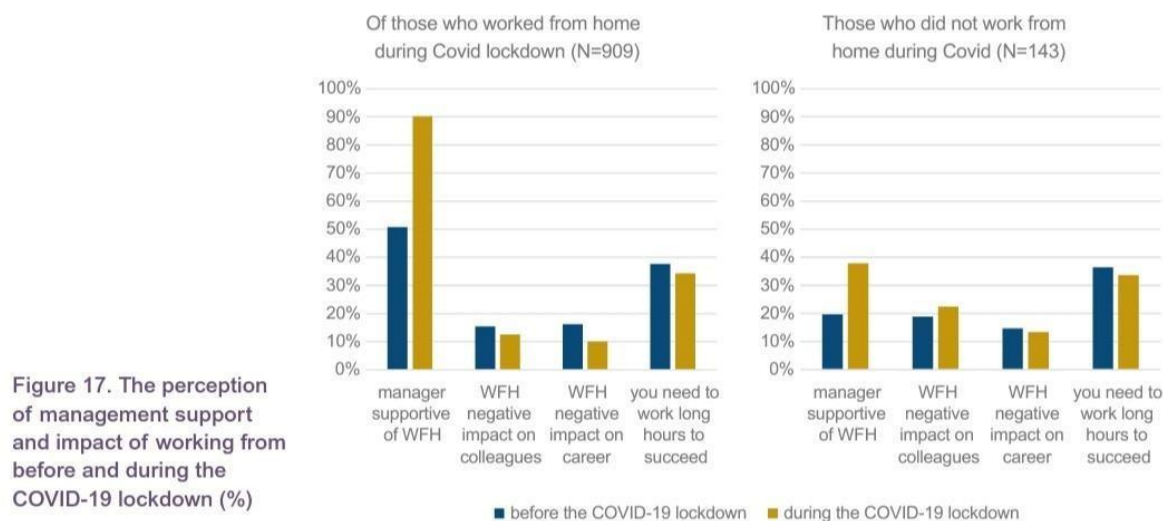


Figure 17. The perception of management support and impact of working from before and during the COVID-19 lockdown (%)

Another positive change is that employees are less likely to say that their work environments have a long hour work culture (38% to 34% amongst those who worked from during lockdown and 37% to 34% amongst those who did not). Although it is not a big change, but is moving in a positive direction.

This study suggests that managers have become more aware of and more understanding of employees' responsibilities outside the workplace since the COVID-19 lockdown and mass homeworking. It also suggests that there was an increase in the supply of appropriate tools provided by the organization for working from home.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In an attempt to reduce employee turnover and increase productivity, companies are increasingly allowing employees to work from home. Working from home significantly increased employees' productivity and job satisfaction, although they were less likely to be promoted than similar-performing peers working in the office.

IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES PRODUCTIVITY AND MOTIVATION:

Employees working from home performed significantly better than comparison of employees working from office, but were less likely to be promoted than similar-performing peers working in the office. As we know, promotion plays an important role in motivating employees. However, working from home had a negative effect on promotion opportunities. Employees who worked from home are less promoted due to reduced opportunities and less face-to-face contact with team leaders.

IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES' SATISFACTION:

Employees working from home reported having a more positive attitude and less exhaustion from work than the office. It becomes as a culture where employees are given more freedom over when and where to work as long as key aims and goals are met. Despite a tumultuous year in 2020, remote workers report a Workforce Happiness Index of 75 out of 100, compared to 71 for in-office employees. And, remote employees are more likely to report being satisfied with their jobs than office based workers. All in all, those working from home reported more positive measurements on almost every aspect related to job satisfaction.

FEASIBILITY OF WORK FROM HOME IN LONG RUN:

Remote work is not an entirely new concept of work. However, recent events have abruptly thrown businesses across various industries into the unprepared set-up and ill-equipped for such a scenario. For this, it is important to establish a company culture in a traditional workplace. Similarly, the company must develop a digital work culture for WFH setups. With the right tools and strategy work from home can be an effective work mode alternative that companies can include in their long-term business plan.

But the disadvantage of working from home is, it is not feasible to shift all roles in WFH mode. Most organizations do not have the resources, infrastructures, and processes in place to facilitate effective work from home policy for entire workforce. This policy does not work in infrastructural and heavy industries.

ADVANTAGES OF WORK FROM HOME FOR WOMEN:

In the long-term, however, most experts and top officials are bullish about the advantages of work from home for women. It is not only a more productive and efficient way of working but it opens up opportunities for those women who could not earlier be the part of the workforce. It will open the top of the funnel for organizations for hiring more women as talent is now boundary less.

WORK FROM HOME: A NEW NORMAL?

The paper shows that the reasons against working remotely existed, like the ability to unplug and distractions at home, some securities issues are also found but, the majority found the benefits outweigh these downsides.

In summary, one of the social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 lockdown has been a nationwide move towards working from home across the economy, including sectors that had not previously embraced home working. Working from home is a lot more comfortable for lots of people. Employees can save a great deal of time and money since they not have to travel so often, which means people will have more time for work and for themselves, too. Less travelling will also help reduce traffic congestion and environmental pollution. Besides working at home does not mean staying inside all day long, people can choose to work in the garden or backyard, wherever makes them feel convenient to work. Moreover, employees are under less stress with a flexible working schedule.

REMOTE WORKFORCE SIZE:

42% of remote workers plan to work remotely more frequently than they currently do in the next 5 years, and that more than half of on-site workers want to start working remotely. (Source: Owl Labs) 40% of remote workers said that a part of their team is full-time remote. (Source: Buffer)

99% of people would like to work remotely at least some of the time for the rest of their careers. (Source: Buffer)

REMOTE WORK AND BUSINESS BEHAVIOUR:

75% of firms globally report that they have introduced flexible working policies to reduce commute times.

(Source: IWG)

85% of business people in India think that flexible working options help returning mothers and older workers to remain in the workforce. (Source: IWG)

91% of people who are business owners stated that they had always intended to support remote work. (Source: Buffer)

84% of remote employee managers have received at least some training on how to manage remote employees. (Source: Owl Labs)

To be fair, there are still some disadvantages of teleworking. For instance, working from personal space will reduce face-to-face interactions among colleagues. But for now, people from around the globe can easily contact and work with others from distances. Another drawback is that some people may get distracted from work by external factors. In conclusion, work from home should be encouraged because the advantages overcome the disadvantages. With accurate facts and statistics, you can easily access that remote working is highly effective and useful. You can grow and improve your business under the remote workflow setup if you follow the right system. Remote working is going to stay for the long run now.

CONCLUSIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This sections aims to outline various recommendations that can be presented to the ultimate success of this new approach of Work from Home. As shown previously working from home does appear to have extremely positive reactions from employees that can positively impact on their motivation and performance levels. The below recommendations have been presented as a suggestion for adapting new organizational practices in relation to working from home.

-Employers should look at introducing working from home into more areas of the business as there is a high level of positivity associated with this way of working.

-The organization HR department would need to ensure that the employees' contracts cover the agile working policy, these should be reviewed.

-The organization may find this way of working cost effective as it frees up desks within the workplace and less space is therefore required throughout office buildings.

-The goal here would be to reduce the amount of office space required.

As a suggestion, the organization may review their facilities to ensure that they have the proper facilities in place to allow the employees to work from home. Technology being a main factor which workers saw as their main challenge. For this the organization will need to ensure that the IT infrastructure supports the working arrangement that is to be implemented with secure network connections.

-Provide better support and protection against discrimination for workers working flexibly to ensure working flexibly to not face negative career outcomes.

-Develop and launch a campaign to promote remote working to detail the benefits of work from home and to help address the perceived barriers and consequences of using remote working.

Investigate what policies and legal changes are needed in growing demand for a shorter working or 4-day week in India.

-Organization could look at introducing a mentoring program where the employees who currently work from home can share their experiences of how they manage their time and workload effectively.

Employees should give the opportunity to come to the office and provide feedback on their experiences as to whether they feel this new way of working is beneficial both for themselves and the organization.

-Actively encourage worker-managers to have frank discussions around work-family issues and encourage workers, to fulfill their role as employee and parent/ family member effectively.

-Ensure appropriate training for HR and managers around Work from home and highlight the importance of remote working as a performance enhancing tool.

-Routine face-to-face team meeting should be organized for all team members, this will ensure that all employees are kept up to date with work tasks, projects, general information and incorporating HR.

Set a schedule and stick to it. Having clear guidelines for when to work and to call it a day helps many remote workers maintain work life balance.

In remote work settings, everyone must be positive.

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