

A Study on Work from Home (WFH) Phenomenon Post Pandemic Towards Productivity & Satisfaction

Ms. Swapna S

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Bangalore University, Jnana Bharathi Campus, Bangalore 560056
swapnanaidu006@gmail.com

Abstract— Covid-19, pandemic which brought the world to stand still & had drastic impact on lives of people & lead to an insight of bringing new things into business & life terming it as 'New Normal'. Work from home (WFH) a boon to employees who are benefiting to explore more family time, social activities & community interactions. This also benefited companies by saving cost like lowering on transport cost, electricity usage, internet services, rental & food for employees. Not only in terms of cost but increased the satisfaction, productivity, flexibility, motivation, coordination, even when being at different places & time zones, reduced absenteeism. Today AI (artificial intelligence) is taking over our life's completely & integrating with technology whether it is virtual reality, chatGPT, augmented reality, machine learning, so on leading to cope with faster moving pace & upskilling ourselves with the world. There have been certain drawbacks affecting life, business & other aspects due to such huge changes in the world, need to be addressed with extended support, guidelines & training to match with the speed of changes in life. WFH has helped women in career, as they chose to leave the job due to work life balance, family, responsibilities. But this applies only at certain level of corporates, as this is not applicable to junior level job & also essential sectors requires to attend office work daily. So WFH remote working is enjoyed only by few employees which doesn't require them physically at work & where creative job is concerned. This concept lacks benchmark & regular supervision.

Keywords— Pandemic, WFH (work from home), New normal, artificial intelligence, benchmark.

I. INTRODUCTION

WFH (work from home) a new age or new normalcy in today's life as everyone gets to hear from 2020, breakout of Covid-19 pandemic which shook the world & left everyone behind the closed doors of their homes without social interactions, movement & also no connection to the world in physical terms. WFH has become the integral part of our work culture today & its been more than 3 years making world smaller than it was imagined by enhanced connectivity & faster pace of work.

WFH is a boon in disguise for the employees from certain limited industries where the work is limited with internet which can connect to the world & co-ordinate for work such as ITBT, IT sector, software, customer service, booking, social media, content writers, research, developers, tutoring, web design, coding, so on. As it doesn't suit all due to nature & type of job, certain essential sectors & fields like healthcare, bank, dairy, education, etc. due to limitations in movement, interaction & activities.

There are jobs which require continuous monitoring, supervision & performed at office, with client, peers & superiors, team collaboration, creative tasks, advertising,

marketing, so on. The organizations required to analyse the type of jobs which can be remotely performed & which needs office environment eliminating & optimum utilization of resources without affecting interpersonal relations among employees & organization.

This has also saved cost & expenses for organisations on fixed costs, such as branches, Wi-Fi, transportation, food, electricity, communication, stationery, printing, coffee & tea, snacks, & various other expenditure has been drastically reduced due to work from home.

Covid-19 Pandemic novel coronavirus left the world to think out of box, as how to keep the business running when the whole world came to still stand & gave a new insight to employers & employees by paving new age practical work style of flexibility, co-ordination, enhanced employee performance, increased motivation, connectedness & productivity.

But there is also a challenge to organisations to set benchmark & standards for WFH employees to appraise performance for promotion, transfers, hikes, incentives etc. to decide total work hours, minimum wages, productivity, for more transparency & clarity.

WFH is a distinctive opportunity for employees to stay at home & still earn money as they use to work in office, it has become prevalent in many countries today with this work culture yield more benefits to organisations, employees & also society. Employees are enjoying more relaxed work culture & freedom to experiment many opportunities due to work from home. It gives flexible work schedule, better outcome, building increased trust & positive work culture.

WFH is not all so lucrative, it also has many challenges for both organization & employees as it may lead to mistrust, social isolation which may hinder job performance & also psychologically affecting the employees by building better relationship. Covid-19 has led to setting up digital infrastructure at home for convenience to work smoothly without any hassles.

In recent developments few organisations are also calling employees on specific days to work from office, so that there is strong bonding between employees & organisations with more social interactions & reducing stress & isolation. There is also big challenge to organizations to handle issues of compliance & security to data & privacy of organisations, as it may be a huge cyber threat to organisations growth & survival due to high cut throat competition & unethical practices by few organisations.

Employees can focus more on parenting & attend for emergencies also improving health for a better society, as it reduces stress & anxiety due to work from home, with family

support & motivation. WFH option was requirement due to safety & health of community due to Covid-19 challenge & minimize the risk of spreading due to interaction & lockdown was ordered in many countries. Post pandemic also the trend seems to continue due to hybrid work culture, cost saving, minimize health risk & maximize efficiency of employees & their wellbeing.

To abide by nations, call to protect its citizens health & safety guidelines were issued without hindering the work & growth of nation was every individual’s responsibility of this nation going through this rough situation of avoiding human contact & also safeguarding our pride & unity.

Benefits of WFH;

Employee can have more benefits due to WFH, like saving cost, transportation, invest, increased performance as there is concentration with peer pressure at home, increased purchasing power of consumers, social gatherings, community activities, parenting, attending to emergencies, focusing on both physical & mental health, enhancing their skills by attending to short term courses & workshop, increased motivation & accountability towards organisation.

Origin of WFH:

A NASA engineer Jack Nilles was the person to coin the term ‘telecommuting’ & foundation for modern remote working in 1973. Work from home (WFH) is type of flexible work arrangement to employees outside corporate company. It is smooth transition of office-based work culture to virtual collaboration & taking work at next level, which leads to increased productivity, lesser traffic due to transportation, few distractions also improved concentration & increased time at home for household chores & family which in turn leads to work life balance & high satisfaction.

Top Companies using WFH;

Year founded	Company	Category
1994	Cognizant	Information technology services and consulting company
1945	Wipro	Information technology, consultant and business process services.
1946	Sony	Multinational conglomerate corporation
1968	TCS	Indian multinational information technology services and consulting company
1995	Trigent Software	Offshore software development
1986	Tech Mahindra	Information technology Consulting Outsourcing & Telecommunication Sector
1988	NTT DATA Business Solutions Private Limited	Telecommunications business
1927	Marriott	MNCs in Hotel & Multi-national Company
1977	Oracle	Multinational computer technology
1997	Genpact	Professional services firm

Review of literature;

The present ROL has been made with the intention of gaining knowledge about the current scenario in the WFH (Work from home);

1. Review of literature for impact of work from home on the organizational productivity and employee satisfaction, Tanuka Bhattacharya ICFAI University Jharkhand, Phd: The author has discussed that WFH is a boon by reducing absenteeism, increased motivation & job satisfaction for employees.
2. A Literature Review of Work from Home Phenomenon During COVID-19 Toward Employees’ Performance and Quality of Life in Malaysia and Indonesia, 19 May 2022, Norhasni Zainal Abiddin*, Irmohizam Ibrahim and Shahrul Azuwar Abdul Aziz: The author speaks about variety of advantages like flexibility, agility, employee retention, increased productivity, etc. also disadvantages like isolation, distraction, low productivity, monitoring issues, etc.
3. Literature Review on Parameters Related to Work-From-Home (WFH) Arrangements, October 2020, Nektarios Karanikas, John Paul Cauchi: The author expresses many countries opportunities offered due to covid-19 feasibility, telecommuting, flexible working hours, positive experience, etc & also limitations of mistrust & supervision.
4. The mental health impact of work from home: A literature review, Ashish Sarangi MD, Dalynn Kim BS, John Rafael MBA, March 2022: The author studies about dramatic shift due to covid-19 mental health, work from home & lifestyle.
5. Work from Home During the Pandemic: The Impact of Organizational Factors on the Productivity of Employees in the IT Industry, January 2022, Systla Patanjali and N. M. K. Bhatta, et al: Author discusses about organizational factors & working culture were important for productivity for success.

Objective of the study;

1. To understand the employee state of mind & satisfaction towards job.
2. To analyse if employee want to go back to office & miss the work culture.
3. Is employee able to fully concentrate in work & avoid distractions.
4. Has employee any challenge due to WFH.
5. Has WFH benefitted employees to focus more on households chores & family.
6. To analyse if there WLB (work life balance) due to WFH.
7. To understand if the employees have saved cost due to WFH.
8. To know if there is constant communication among employees, peers & their superiors.

Scope of the study;

The study here tries to explore & understand keeping the above factors, how employees are benefitting due to WFH & still they miss work culture & ambience at home. As the trend is set also few organisations globally given the option of WFH for lifetime, question of data privacy, confidentiality & also keeping employees rooted to organisations, giving more space may rise mistrust & monitoring issues at home. Also, to see if there is standards, benchmarks, guidelines for WFH.

Statement of the Problem;

Though employees perform better, connect with peers & superiors, still anxiety stress of being left out, high competition, lack of interactions, also job security may lead to low productivity, hence the present study covers the concerns, challenges faced by the employees & also constructive suggestions have been given to eliminate such anxiety & improve the performance, concentration & connectedness among peers.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research aims at implications of WFH, focuses on both pros & cons of it is affecting employee's performance & also other challenges. The research is based on both primary & secondary data gathered from enormous sources as well as personal observation and questionnaire filled by employees in the survey. Information required for the study has also been gathered through secondary data from newspapers, journals, web sources and various reports.

Issues & challenges for WFH;

1. Employee concentration at home is less comparatively at work due to distractions.
2. Has WFH improved employee performance compared to working in office environment?
3. Is employee able to meet deadlines for completing task or projects.
4. Does employee miss the work ambience & work culture at home.
5. Due to pandemic & WFH, do employees miss out certain things which only office environment can give.
6. Most important, is employee going down on interpersonal skills & social skills due to WFH.
7. Do employee feel more beneficial or loss due to WFH.
8. Is telecommunication with colleagues & superiors same as office communication.
9. Does employee is there work life balance due to WFH.
10. What is the biggest challenge from WFH?
11. There have been lack of support from organisations for employees work from home.

Limitation of the study;

- ❖ Employees are able to save cost of transportation, dressing, food, etc but in turn it is being spent on WIFI installations, monthly recharges, UPS facility to support in no power days is due to WFH, there is excess spending on household things providing more comfort while working.
- ❖ Also lack of discipline, anxiety & stress caused due to work from home, as there is lack of face to face interaction may lead to bias, reduced salaries & also benchmarks & standards from industries to measure productivity is vague & unclear.
- ❖ Employee may lack concentration as compared to work at home due to distraction from family leads to low efficiency & performance.
- ❖ Lack of motivation may be one of the significant aspects leading to low productivity in employees co of WFH.
- ❖ Employees feel isolated as there is lack of face to face interaction among peers & colleagues, as telecommuting

does not fulfil the need to reality & also decreasing interpersonal & social skills.

- ❖ Employees mental health takes a toll due to isolation, distraction & burnout due to no connection to peers & colleagues.
- ❖ There is lack of standards & benchmark for WFH guidelines to gauge employee performance to appraisal, promotions, hikes & rewards by organization.



III. FINDINGS & INTERPRETATION FROM THE PRIMARY OBSERVATIONS AND SECONDARY SOURCES;

The findings of the study showed interesting facts which are listed as below;

1. Employees few wanted to return to office, as they miss out on work culture, ambience & peers. Bur few never wanted to get back to office, as they were benefiting from WFH & able to cater to their home & family.
2. Many employees also agreed their good work life balance due to WFH, & it's a boon.
3. Many employees strongly agreed that they had job satisfaction, except few.
4. Employees felt their performance increased & they were productivity from home.
5. Employees has saved cost due to WFH, which was spent on transportation, food, dress & other things.
6. Few employees miss out due to WFH such as social life, reduced job efficiency, motivation, peers & colleagues.
7. Employees felt pandemic is a boon, which changed course of life drastically to indoors life, work, social & interpersonal skills so on.
8. Employees few challenges were lack of concentration, focus, no difference between personal & professional time due to WFH.
9. Many employees were in regular contact with their peers, superiors & colleagues through telecommunication.

IV. SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Office Provides Work Culture & Ambience to More Focused Performance.
2. Office Should Call Employees At Least 3 Days to Office A Week to Reduce Employee Low Performance & Absenteeism.
3. Few Employees Are Misusing the Wfh & Perform Low & Escapism.
4. As Employee Can Connect & Bond with Team, Peers & Superiors.
5. Due to Office Work Ambience & Culture Employees Feels Less Stressed & Anxiety.

Impact of WFH on society, govt, company, family, & stakeholder;

1. WFH has been a boon, as it has reduced heavy traffic & congestion.
2. It has helped the employee to save cost of transportation, food, dress, etc & spend on family.
3. Increased purchasing power of consumers, leads to more sales & revenue to company & tax to country.
4. Increased online shopping & purchasing post pandemic by consumers giving big boom to e-commerce.

5. Employee able to spend more time at home & family to support household chores, parenting & catering to emergencies.
6. Increased social gathering & community activities.
7. WFH has reduced drastically the absenteeism & increased motivation among employees.
8. WFH is also a boon & allows employee to WLB (work life balance) which was lacking due to going to office physically, transportation & lot of time being taken away from family & social life.
9. Especially women employees are not thinking of leaving the jobs due to family responsibilities, as WFH is giving them the liberty to give time to family & household chores than compared life before pandemic. As it helps women employees to eliminate travel time & better engaged in work.
10. WFH has given employees the satisfaction as one of the major factors, as this boosts companies to retain employees at higher rate than earlier cases.
11. Employees feel more accountable & responsible towards task completion on time as companies trust them & leads to increased productivity.
12. It reduces conflicts among employees & employers due to various factors.

V. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that employee want to return to office partially & few felt they were in comfortable space due to WFH as they are able to fulfil their household chores, complete at work front as well as getting time for self-care such as going to gym, social activities & enhancing their skills by attending online courses & workshops to add weightage to their resume. Employees want to interact more with peers, superiors in real time as there is reduced interpersonal skills. Employees are also

facing stress, anxiety due to reduced interactions face to face & also everything depending on technology, still interaction via video conference calls & text, chats etc. which may be not be complete & have personal touch as face to face interactions. Employees face social isolation & frustrated due to more pressure & deadlines. Employees were able to have WLB (work life balance) due to WFH option provided by organisations, enhancing their family life & work life well balanced. But this may take away the ample of opportunities provided by organisations, interactions, performance appraisal, competitive environment to bring out best in employees can only be fulfilled at work & not in home. During pandemic WFH was best suited but now after things have returned to normal, hence its time for us to get back to work spaces to explore life after such paradigm shift of work from home.

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