

Study on
“Work from Home & it’s connection with Mental &
Physical Health”.

Dissertation Submitted to



The IIHMR University, Jaipur

for the partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of
Master of Business Administration (MBA)
in
Hospital and Health Management

By

Dr. Navleen Kaur

Under the Supervision and Guidance of
Dr. Mahender Kumar,
2021

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation titled ,**“Work from Home & it’s connection with Mental & Physical Health”**. is the Bonafede record of my original research work. I declare that it has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been duly acknowledged in the text.

Dr. Navleen Kaur
Date: June 21, 2021

CERTIFICATE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that dissertation titled, **“Work from Home & it’s connection with Mental & Physical Health”**. is a record of the research work undertaken by **Navleen Kaur** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA (Hospital and Health Management) from the IIHMR University, Jaipur under my guidance and supervision and her approach to the research study has been sincere, scientific, and analytical.

I wish her all success in all his future endeavours.

Faculty Guide
IIHMR University, Jaipur
Date

School Dean
IIHMR University, Jaipur
Date

THE IIHMR UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR

CERTIFICATE BY SCHOLAR

This is to certify that the dissertation titled ,“**Work from Home & it’s connection with Mental & Physical Health**” and submitted by **Navleen Kaur Enrolment no :- 0941** under the supervision of **Dr. Mahender Kumar, (Professor)** for award of MBA in Hospital and Health Management of the University carried out during the period from 19/03/2021 to 21/06/2021 embodies my original work and has not formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma associate ship, fellowship, titles in this or any other institute or other similar institution of higher learning.

Navleen Kaur

MBA-HM 24



TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

Date: 03-07-2021

This is to certify that **Navleen Kaur** has successfully completed her tenure as a Business Development Consultant from 12th April 2021 to 30th June 2021 at Impact Guru Technology Ventures Pvt. Ltd. Her performance during the tenure was found to be good.

We wish her all the very best for her future endeavors.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sandeep T.", is written over a faint, circular blue stamp.

Sandeep Kumar Tripathy
(Senior VP Business Development)
Impact Guru Technology Ventures Pvt. Ltd

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The opportunity provided to do dissertation under my university was enriching and valuable experience. I am highly obliged to have met so many experience professionals who led me throughout my study period I am sincerely grateful to them for sharing their illuminating & insightful views on several issues related to the project.

I would like to acknowledge, first and foremost I am extremely thankful to my professors/ faculties at IIHMR- Jaipur and specially my **Mentor Dr. Mahender Kumar, (Professor)** for being my support throughout the dissertation who inspired, guided, and helped me to complete my dissertation. I take this moment to recognize their contribution gratefully.

I would like to express my special thanks to **Dr. PR Sodani (President, IIHMR University, Jaipur)** for giving us valuable suggestions on various course and for timely updating us with dissertation guidelines.

I recognize this opportunity as a milestone in my overall academic development. I will strive to use the gained skills & knowledge in the best possible way.

Lastly, I want to express my respect and love to my parents, siblings, and my friend **Miss Pooja Panday** for constant encouragement and motivation in my higher studies.

Sincerely,

Dr Navleen Kaur

ABSTRACT

Background

“It all started in March 2020, when our government decided to undergo nationwide lockdown and eventually, we all adapted to the new setup, new methods of working from home. Steps on promoting employees’ health who are now working from home and to analyse and study the evidence to optimise positive working outcomes. The Aim – of this study is to learn the significant shift of the working environment along with its effect on the individual’s health, hence our research question What is the connection between Work from Home & Mental and Physical health issues”

Since now homes have now become people’s workplace as well as place to relax, the main objective is to discuss the impact of WFH on people’s mental and physical health, out, to know employee reactions to changes in the work environment. The problem which is being investigated is that, that the WFH Culture is a complex process and requires a systematic examination & also to discuss the negative and positive effects of full-time working from home during the unavoidable pandemic caused due to COVID-19.

Method

A Descriptive Cross-Sectional Study was done from 22nd March to 22nd June 2021, in which E-survey was conducted in a Random sampling technique, wherein, the questionnaire was randomly sent to the 100 individuals under the working age limit (Female and Male of age 18-60) who have mobile and good connectivity with knowledge of using technology. The selection criteria included the studies which involved working population under the age group 18-60 years old, who were working regularly from home, and reported effect on physical or mental health-related outcomes. Included & researched four studies falling under the same topic, as a secondary data, done by different authors to analyse the results.

Results:

There is a significant decrease in the overall mental & physical well-being after work from home. Factors associated with this decline was due to lack of physical moment, communication gap between the co-workers, distractions while working from home, workstation set-up, not fixed working hours, and satisfaction with the new work- setup with indoor environmental factors.

Conclusions

The overall study highlights the significant points which are impacting employees’ mental and physical health during work from home & also considering best ways to have a positive work from home experience. The studies definitely reported that there is a significant downfall in overall mental & physical health and showed new increased cases of mental & physical health issues due to work from home.

Also there was a significant decreased of physical and mental health status due to the decreased physical movement/ activity, lack of communication with co-workers,

being distracted while WFH, increased working hours & work pressure. But there was a significant data that showed the positive side of WFH if there was a good workstation set up, work satisfaction, organizations conducting stress management events, experiencing lower chances of mental and physical health issues.

Keywords: new ways of working; descriptive study; systematic review; work from home; mental health; work-life balance; mental demands; fatigue; organizational commitment

LIST OF FIGURES

	INDEX	
S.NO	PARTICULARS	PAGE
1	Introduction	8
2	Study Question	8
3	Study Objectives	9
4	Review of Literature	9-16
5	Methodology	16
6	Ethical Considerations	17
7	Results and analysis	17-24
8	Discussions	24
9	Conclusion	25

10	Recommendations	25
11	References	26-27

“Study on Work from Home & it’s connection with Mental & Physical Health”.

Introduction

The global pandemic was caused by Covid19 in 2019, which gave rise to an unmanageable situation with vast extend of the health impacts along with affecting the economic. It all started in March 2020, when our government decided to undergo nationwide lockdown and eventually, we all adapted to the new setup, new methods of working from home. **The Aim of this study** is to learn how working environment has been significantly changed and its effect on the individual’s health, hence our **research question** “What is the connection between Work from Home & Mental and Physical health issues”

Since their homes have now turned into their workplace as well as a relaxing place, **the main objective** is to discuss the impact of WFH on people's overall physical & mental health, out, to know employee reactions to changes in the work environment & also to discuss the negative and positive effects of working full time from home during the unavoidable covid19 pandemic.

There is a list of positive benefits linked with the teleworking, including work integration & family time, cost effective and improvement in the productivity. However, due to the new work culture there has been blurring of the boundaries linking the work and home, that can also impact an individual’s mental and physical health negatively, due to lengthened hours, limited support from the organization, etc. **The problem which is being investigated** is that, that the WFH Culture is a complex process and needs a structured examination to acknowledge the impact of environmental, physical, and psychosocial factors on an individual’s physical & mental health.

Since Organizations are preferring & may continue the WFH culture for a longer period, we need to undertake evidence to develop guidelines and policies to protect employee’s well-being and overall health. Hence in this research study, will be taking a rapid review of the evidence on the impact of WFH on an individual’s mental and physical health due to long ending work hours, lack of sleep, straining of eyes, etc. All the data collected by the primary and secondary study; it is considered to make recommendations for the employers to optimize the health of their employees. But everything come with pros and cons. So, to evaluate if WFH effects is positively dominant over the negative effects of it or it’s vice a versa.

Study Question

What is the connection between Work from Home & Mental and Physical health issues?

Study Objectives

- To review the impact of work from home on people's physical and mental health
- To know employee reactions to changes in the work environment
- To discuss the negative and positive effects of full time working from working from home (WFH) during unavoidable scenario due to the pandemic.
- To develop recommendations for people in organizations on how to stabilize the mental and physical health

Review of Literature

S.no	Year	Tittle	Author	Methodology	Key findings
1	2020	Stressed out remote workers turn to artificial intelligence for help	Oracle and Workplace Intelligence	Based on a survey between July 16 – August 4, 2020. The study included people between the ages group of 22-74 years old. They were asked general questions around working from home experiences and employee attitudes. The questionnaire	2020 is the most stressful year ever Artificial intelligence has helped their mental health at work, Mental health needs to be an employer priority Employees want help and are turning to technology The impact of mental health struggles at work affect home life 6 in 10 say

				was circulated via email to record the responded answers and were provided with a small monetary incentive for doing	they find remote work more appealing now
2	2021	Impacts of Working from Home During COVID-19 Pandemic on Physical and Mental Well-Being of Office Workstation Users	J Occup Environ	A questionnaire was circulated (April 24-June 11, 2020) in which, 988 responded & were recorded. Chi square, multinomial logistic regression & linear regression test, were used to understand the relation between overall mental & physical health statuses & new emerging numbers of mental & physical health issues.	It was observed that there is a significant decrease in the physical and mental well-being. There was an increase in the work distractions & work expectations. Communication between the co-workers was decreased while time spent at the work station from home, significantly increased by approximately by 1.5 hours. Only 1/3 rd responded claimed that they had a good & relaxed workstation set-up at home for work from home.

S.no	Year	Tittle	Author	Methodology	Key findings
3	2020	Impact of COVID - 19 on mental health and physical load on women professionals: an online cross-sectional survey	Hina Vaish Nidhi Sharma ,	An online survey was conducted using a E-survey with couple of questionnaire to the Female professionals working from home during the lockdown. The age criteria for this study was the age more than 22 years, and who were willing to participate were included. To collect the data, snow ball sampling method was used and 537 people responded and was then evaluated.	2020 is the most stressful year ever Artificial intelligence has helped their mental health at work, Mental health needs to be an employer priority Employees are looking for help and are turning entirely to technology The impact of mental health struggles at work affect home life 6 in 10 say they find remote work more appealing now

4	2020	Initial psychological impact of COVID-19 and its correlates in Indian Community: An online (FEEL-COVID) survey	Neeraj Shiv Kumar Mohit Varshney , Jithin Thomas Parel,	An online survey was done (feel covid) using snowballing principle. Data was collected on socio-demographic & clinical variables related to COVID-19 & with the help of IESR Scale, to measure and analyse the psychological impact	Overall one third of respondents showed psychological impact with IES-R score > 24. With younger age, female gender population, there was higher psychological impact and physical illness. During the initial stages of pandemic in India, almost one-third respondents showed a significant psychological impact. This shows that there is a need for more systematic and longitudinal assessment of psychological needs of the population, which can help the organization in formulating a overall holistic interventions for the working population
---	------	--	---	---	--

S.no	Year	Tittle	Author	Methodology	Key findings
5	2013	An exploration of the psychological factors affecting remote e-worker's job effectiveness, well-being and work-life balance	Christine A. Grant, Peter C. Spurgeon	The paper is an exploratory study into the psychological factors affecting remote e-workers using qualitative thematic analysis of eleven in-depth interviews with e-workers, across five organisations and three sectors. All participants worked remotely using technology independent of time and location for several years and considered themselves to be experts	The study provides insights into the diverse factors affecting remote working employees included access to technology, work flexibility, ability to work flexibly and individual competencies. Adverse impacts were found due to many factors like over working hours, lack of time and communication. A summary of the practical implications from the findings of this study are provided below: (1) e-workers show adaptive behaviours and skills to manage working from home effectively. (2) Over-working was the major complain from all the remote workers. Employers can mediate this issue by having clear goals and talking it out with their managers. (3) New technologies made it easier for the remote workers to do their work efficiently. (4) Proper communication along with a constant check on the working hours, well-being and performance of the employees by the

					managers had a significant importance in making a healthy WFH environment. (5) The psychological contract between the manager and the e-worker needs to be there for reducing the negative effects of WFH and increasing the work productivity.
--	--	--	--	--	---

5	2021	WORKING FROM HOME DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN: Changing preferences and the future of work	Heejung Chung, Hyojin Seo, Sarah Forbes, and Holly Birkett	Researchers between the 22nd of May - the 15th of June, researched on WFH during COVID- 19 lockdown, wherein they conducted an online survey of UK employees. The aim for the study was to understand how working from home has influenced wide range work life issues, due to this pandemic.	The main keyfindings from this study were, * There has been increase in the work flexibility, by 86% employees working from home. * 90% of respondents felt their line of managers were supportive while working from home. * There was a positive aspects of WFH when employees identified that they were able to spend more time with their family, kids or with their partners. * 2/3 of employees said that boundaries where blurred between work/home & claimed it as a key negative aspect of WFH. * Unable to interact with colleagues was noted as a key negative aspect of WFH, specially from the people living alone at home. * Many women faced over working because of their double/triple shifts of work/care/home-schooling throughout the lockdown * Due to lack of equipment or space for work from home, people face the trouble. * Employees were convinced for
---	------	--	---	--	--

					continuing work from home because they wanted to reduce commuting times, more time with the family and in return it did increase the productivity & overall well being.
--	--	--	--	--	---

Methodology

STUDY DESIGN: Descriptive Cross Sectional Study is the study in which the primary goal is to study the sample at a specific point in time to give insights into the problem for potential quantitative research

SETTING: Madhya Pradesh City

DURATION OF STUDY: 22nd March to 22nd June 2021.

TYPE OF DATA COLLECTION: Primary data will be collected.

SAMPLE SIZE: Well knowledgeable people (Female and Male of age 18-60) who have mobile and good connectivity with knowledge of using technology.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE: To conduct this E-survey, went for a Random sampling technique, wherein, the questionnaire was randomly send to the individuals under the age limit, set for the study, hence giving every member of the population, an equal chance of being selected.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE: The data collection will be done by doing an online E- survey with a mixed- method approach.

Primary data: The online survey with help of 11-questionnaire google form were asked to the working people falling under the specified category for this study.

Secondary data: Through online journals, websites of organisations, available literature like CDs, written articles, registered records, brochures etc.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE: The data analysis would be done through infographics analysis & MS excel.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT: Data collection instrument would include an questionnaire google E-survey.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Due considerations of confidentiality and privacy of information would be undertaken in the study.
- Conclusive with the basic principles of ethics.
- Every participant's autonomy will be respected,
- The study is designed such that equal opportunity will be given to the members, to be a part of the study.
- Privacy will be maintained by attempting to conduct the survey in an environment that is comfortable for them and in the presence of only those who they are comfortable with.

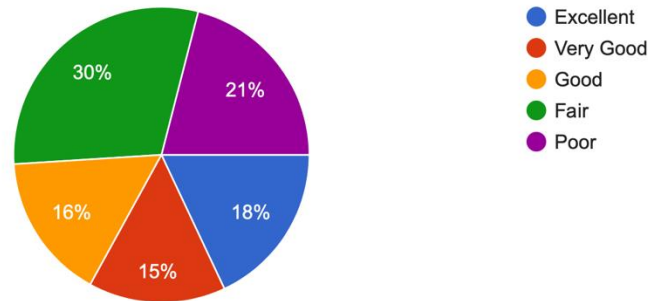
Results and Analysis

To study the impact of working from home because of covid-19, had on people's health, a primary research based on an e-survey was done along with undergoing various articles and research papers, to discuss further & in depth.

The results were received from the E-survey done with 100 respondents (our selective sampling size) which where under the working age group (Female and Male of age 18-60 with mobile and good connectivity with knowledge of using technology) showing interesting insights into how people feel about WFH and the impact on their overall health. Here are the 11 questionnaires with the results to do the analysis.

How will you rate your overall mental health?

100 responses

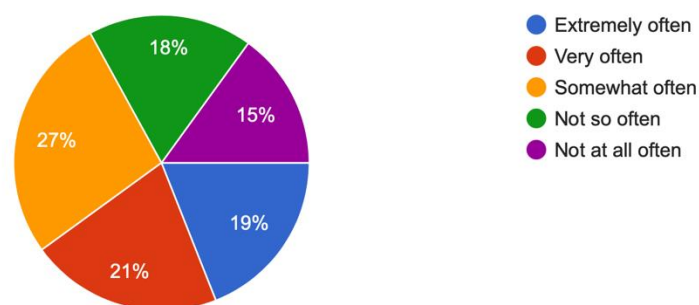


(Fig 1)

These results show that most people (30%) claimed their overall health be Fair, followed by 21% saying it to be poor. Only 18% rated their overall mental health to be excellent. This can reflect a link between WFH & the effect on the mental health of the working population. Also from the studies, we can see a clear link on how working from home did affect most of the e-workers because of many factors like – Lack of communication with their co-workers, boundaryless working hours, overworking etc.

During the past two weeks how often have you felt sad or depressed

100 responses



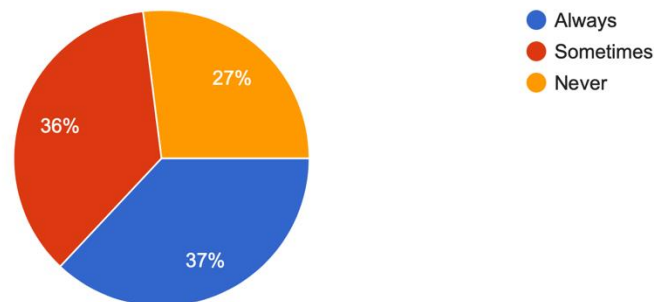
(Fig 2)

Collectively only 33% said that they didn't feel sad or depressed while 40% did feel depressed during the past 2 weeks. There showed a major link where working employees were not satisfied because of lack of work equipment, separate space for working from home. The studies taken under consideration also proved that employees with better work system at

home along with understanding line of managers, they were happy and consider continuing work from home in coming future.

Do you work after the work hours?

100 responses

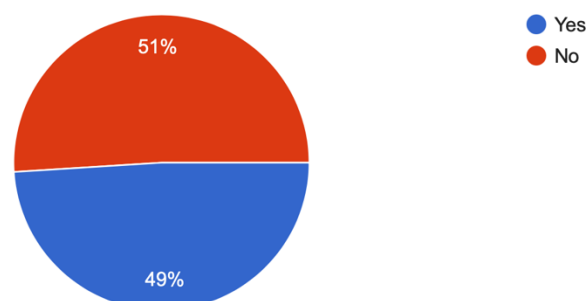


(Fig 3)

The majority of respondents did work after the working hours, proving that the hour tracking polices are being overlooked, and shows lack of standard methods of tracking time and holding unrealistic expectations. The studies taken also proves that work from home made the boundaries blurry between work and home life. People are working from home where they use to relax. Overtime is noticed and complained by most of the remote working employees, claiming that there is an over workload which is leading to major health related issues

Do you feel like you can talk to someone or ask for help with mental or physical health issues with your co-workers?

100 responses



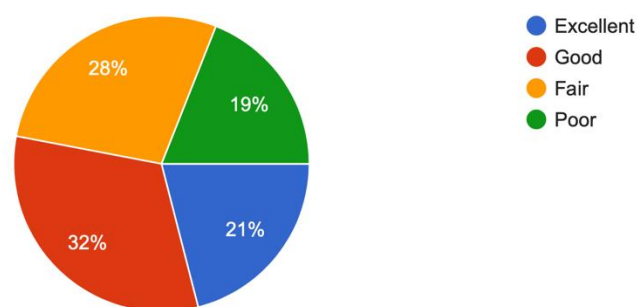
(Fig 4)

- The results were quite close, with 51% respondents showing that there is a lack of communication between the co-workers. Whereas, it does show that few organizations

did work on their stress management policies & hence 49% did say that they have someone to communicate with about their concerns within the organization. Many companies like Infosys, Starbucks, Twitter, and many more have taken great initiative for reinforcing a better work culture & also gave their employees the option of working from home some or all of the time. Companies should learn and implement the same for their employees.

How would you rate your physical health?

100 responses

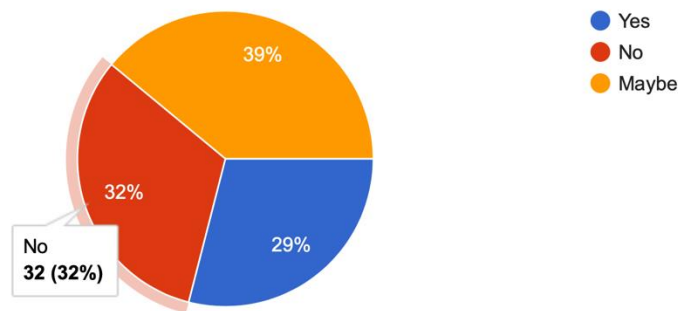


(Fig 5)

Collectively, more than half of the respondents 53% did say that their physical health is under good condition. Only 19% claimed to have poor physical health, which does show a significant linkage with change in the work environment. The studies definitely reported that there is a significant downfall in overall mental & physical health and there is an increased in the number of new cases in mental & physical health issues due to work from home. Also there was a significant decreased of mental & physical health status due to the decreased physical movement/ activity, lack of communication with co-workers

Do you believe your company currently aids in stress management?

100 responses

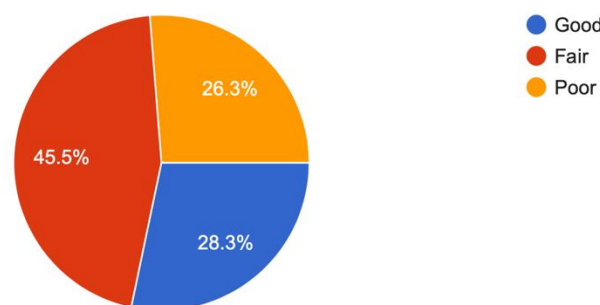


(Fig 6)

Interestingly, the results show that there is a lack of information among the employees about their organizational policies because 39% said that they did not have a clear idea about the stress management aids. 32% did say yes whereas 29% respondents didn't have any stress management aids in their company. Many companies are also adapting to this new working culture, which will continue in the coming futures. Paid leaves, counselling sessions, stress management on call therapist etc are some new initiatives by the organizations for better well-being of their employees and increasing work productivity.

How would you describe your work-life balance?

99 responses

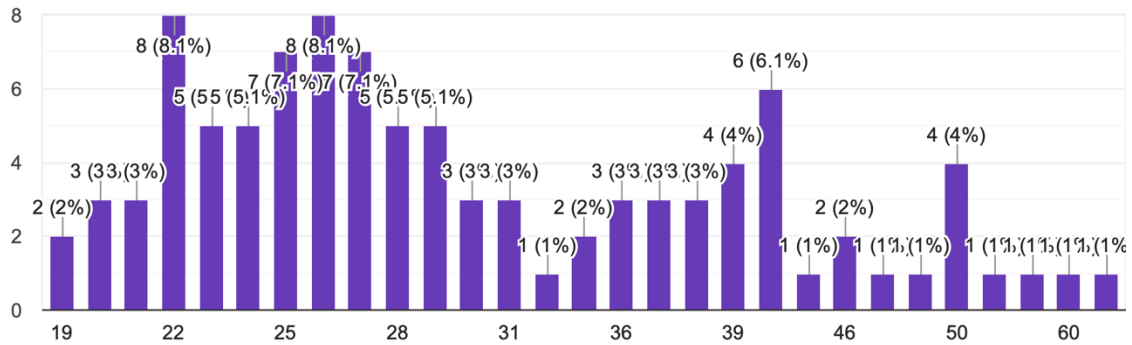


(Fig 7)

Nearly half of respondents said that they have fair work life balance. But we can't ignore the 26.3% who stated that they are unable to maintain or adjust to the new settings of WFH culture. But in studies it also showed that there was a positive aspects of WFH when employees identified that they were able to spend more time with their family, kids or with their partners.

What is your age

99 responses

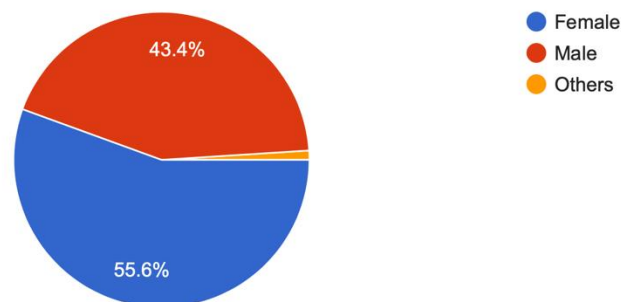


(Fig 8)

The sample size was 100 selective respondents, from the age group 19-60 years old.

What is your Gender

99 responses



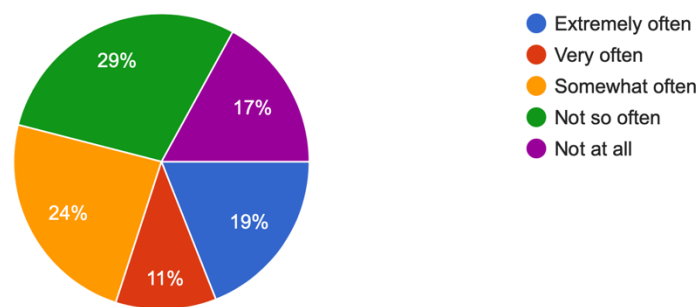
(Fig 9)

The result were pretty balanced and had both female and male respondents, who took this survey. In studies, it did underline that female workers did see more burden while working from home. They got double duties for looking out to the household work along with work from home. With younger age, female gender population, there was higher psychological impact and physical illness But apart from this point, gender didn't play much of the

significant role because all the working employees showed visible impact on their health due to WFH

Did you get time apart from work, to engage in some physical activities like exercises, outdoor games etc?

100 responses

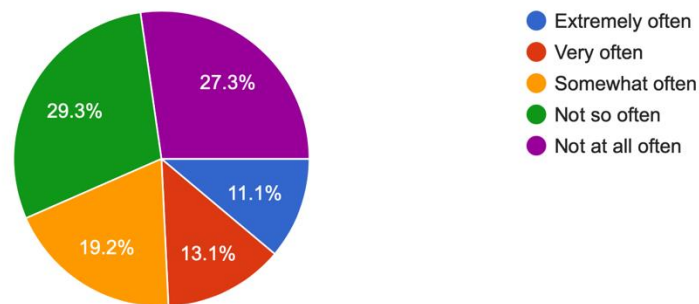


(Fig 10)

17% stated that they did not get time to engage into some physical activity, followed by 29% & 24% who still did not fully get time to spare to do the activities apart from work. Only 19% of the respondent stated that they did get time. The results makes it obvious that even though the working hours are fixed but due to WFH, these time boundaries are being overlooked. Studies did show that there was a significant decreased of mental & physical health status due to the decreased physical movement/ activity, lack of communication with co-workers, being distracted while WFH, increased working hours & work pressure

During work from home, how often do you move from your work station?

99 responses



(Fig 11)

The results are shocking because more than half of the respondents 56.6% didn't move much during WFH which is a huge concern for their overall physical health. Studies showed that due to over-working, they didn't get much time to interact with their family or do physical workouts. There was a need that the employers should mediate this issue by having clear goals and talking it out with their managers

After undergoing various articles and research papers which are done recently, I took 2 studies to discuss further & in depth.

Discussions

As per the study results, we can infer that physical and mental health had been impacted by the work from home, both can be correlated at physical health can affect mental health and vice versa. Some of the contributing factors could be decreased physical activity, lack of communication with co-workers, overworking because of clear boundary between personal life and professional life. A significant number of participants had responded positively on the survey and that can be attributed to better family support, infrastructure aiding working, home gym setup and good communication skills.

Compared to different studies already cited we can see the same pattern reinforcing the conclusion that work from home had an adverse effect on people's mental and physical health.

The study is limited by the sample size of participants and the true randomness in selecting the participants. The cultural similarities in the participants can add bias to the sample and hence the results can be biased too.

Conclusion:

The overall study highlights the significant factors which are impacting employees' mental and physical health during work from home & also considering best ways to have a positive work from home experience. The studies definitely reported that there is a significant downfall in overall mental & physical health and there is an increased in the number of new cases in mental & physical health issues due to work from home. Also there was a significant decreased of mental & physical health status due to the decreased physical movement/ activity, lack of communication with co-workers, being distracted while WFH, increased working hours & work pressure. But there was a significant data that showed the positive side of WFH if there was a good workstation set up, work satisfaction, organizations conducting stress management events, experiencing lower chances of mental and physical health issues. Lastly, a regular & clear communication channel between the managers and their employees / team members is very important to help and reduce the negative impacts linked with working from home.

Recommendations

- Setting boundaries while working from home
- Encouraging and incorporating cloud solutions in an organisation, so that people can access it from anywhere.
- Many companies like Infosys, Starbucks, Twitter, and many more have taken great initiative for reinforcing a better work culture & also gave their employees the option of working from home some or all of the time. Companies should learn and implement the same for their employees.
- Fixed timelines. The employers should not encourage their employees to send work related mails or files after the work hour ends. They can set some realistic goals so that the employees do not get overwhelmed by projects.
- To encourage small enterprises to adopt Work from home measures by providing subsidy and other incentives.

- Sitting too long and too much of screen time can affect the health of the person so some break times should be inculcated. Some fun activities can be conducted on weekly basis like informal interaction between the co-workers etc.
- Reach out for support.
- The organisation should make sure to have a friendly communication channel between them and among the co-workers. - Weekly feedback forms can help a lot to understand and build a healthy relation between the employers and employees.
- A comfortable and suitable environment to work in home should be encouraged. Companies like Deloitte, did sponsor a home- work setup for their employees can be promoted and should be included by other organisations
- A dedicated workspace without mixing it with the home space.
- Organizations should conduct Stress management programs and encourage everyone to be a part of it.
- A Chat box to answer health related questions.
- On demand online counselling services provided by the company for its employees

References

- 1- <https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-020-09875-z>
- 2- <https://toughnickel.com/business/How-Working-from-Home-Affects-Physical-and-Mental-Health>
- 3- <https://www.oracle.com/a/ocom/docs/applications/hcm/2020-hcm-ai-at-work-study.pdf>
- 4- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7934324/>
- 5- <https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/working-from-home-mental-health-research/>
- 6- <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07399332.2020.1825441>
- 7- <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202007/19/P2020071900482.htm>
- 8- <https://www.scmp.com/business/banking-finance/article/31,10,379/hsbc-let-hong-kong-employees-work-four-days-week-home>
- 9- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/benjaminlaker/2020/08/24/working-from-home-is-disliked-by-and-bad-for-most-employees/?sh=b646d7e6734c>

- 10- <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html>
- 11- <https://ideas.repec.org/a/ora/journal/v1y2020i2p267-275.html>
- 12- <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/whats-next-for-remote-work-an-analysis-of-2000-tasks-800-jobs-and-nine-countries#>