

## **Work from Home: Problems and Prospects (A study with special reference to IT employees working Bengaluru City)**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

Work-from-home(WFH) is one of the dramatic and sudden change brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has very much affected the normal business operations. This study investigates the various prospects and problems encountered by the IT employees due to this shift, based on a survey conducted. Employees of IT companies have been considered by selecting 100 IT employees working in Bengaluru city. The findings suggest that though there are some significant advantages from Work-from-home, there are also certain problems in the areas of communication and collaboration. The paper emphasizes on the strategies that business organizations may adopt to counter those problems so that they can effectively accommodate their employees who work from home, and offers suitable suggestions to improve their efficiency.

**Keywords:** Work-from-home, Telecommuting, employee satisfaction, COVID-19.

### **Introduction:**

The COVID-19 pandemic had an enormous impact on the business operations, and the effect of this has diverted the attention of business organizations and employees towards working from home. Work from home(WFH) operations, wiped out the conventional work setup which was established since from decades. This rapid shift has taken place in order to avoid interruptions in the business organizations, for employee safety, and for the provision of social distance. It led to the situation where telecommuting mode of working, which had in the past. Some business organizations across the globe were practicing remote work. Hence Work-from-home is not a new work practice. It was existing quite before but gained importance due to the Covid-19. This study aims to analyse the effects of this abrupt, significant change on the satisfaction of the employees and the efficiency of the organization.

This drastic change has taken place in a very small time frame. Business organizations were forced to implement remote working models immediately due to lock down declared by the government. This sudden transition raised questions on its effect on employee productivity and other organizational outcomes. The work-from-home proved advantageous since it enhances efficiency by cutting down travel time. But it also poses difficulties like keeping employees in the loop and the communication gap between team members. To increase the effectiveness of work-from-home option and enhance productivity during and after the pandemic, it is important for business organizations to constantly strive to come up with better strategies.

**Significance of Work-from-home in IT industry:** The COVID-19 led to severe economic consequences and challenges to many sectors across the world. Due to the covid-19 the safety of the people has been at stakes. Many people lost their lives all over the globe. As a result every

company had to become alert, adapt to new situations and continue their processes. Working from the remote location has been found to be a best way to counter these situations. In this technology is playing a great role to connect the employer and employee. IT companies quickly responded to this environmental change with the help of the digital transformation. Employees stayed connected with their respective clients through their laptops and smart phones. Thus employees started working from home. But there exist a difference in the office environment and work environment. Employees started feel that they are missing the working environment. Hence to make home environment effective place to work the organization need to provide all those resources that are needed for delivering expected outcomes by the employees. Many of such initiatives helped many IT companies to safeguard themselves from the huge loss due to the lockdown. The current study will enable the IT organizations to restructure themselves in future.

**Literature Review: The reviews on the literature available has been presented below:**

According to **Greenhaus, J. H., & Kossek, E. E. (2014)**, the work-from-home has negative consequences on employees psychology. It has stressed in the study that it has resulted in depression and anxiety of the employees. In a study conducted by **Fan, L., Blumenthal, J. A., Watkins, L. L., & Sherwood, A. (2015)**, the growth of ICT and BPO services in a developing country like Sri Lanka offered opportunities for working at home and also helped other industries. The study indicated that remote work moderately boosts the job satisfaction of employees in the ICT industry of Sri Lanka and is a positive predictor of the satisfaction of the employees. Even though the impact of the remote work on job satisfaction has widely been discussed globally, the evidence in the Sri Lankan context is limited and often contradictory. In a study by Garg and Van (2015), conducted on the benefits and difficulties of employees working from home before COVID time found that most of the women would opt working from home if they were given that option. A comparative study by Jaiswal and Arun (2020) on WFH during Covid-19: employees' perception and experiences revealed that the most of the women opted working from the office rather than WFM.

**The objectives of the study are as follows:**

1. To examine the employee(respondents) perceptions on the work-from-home option.
2. To analyze the prospects of work-from-home model of working for the employees of IT companies.
3. To study the problems encountered by the IT employees due to work from home option.

**Research Methodology:** In pursuit of above objectives the following methodology has been adopted.

**Sample Size:** A total of one hundred 100 employees were selected from the IT companies that are located in Bengaluru city.

**Sampling Technique:** Convenience sampling technique has been adopted for the study.

**Data collection:** A structured questionnaire has been used for the data collection. 100 questionnaires were sent, out of which 85 were filled, and remaining questionnaires 15 were not

returned.

**Data Analysis:** Collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics i.e, Mean scores.

**Table: 1**  
**Mean scores of the respondents on the Work-From-Home**

S.No.	STATEMENT	MEAN SCORE
1.	I am comfortable with the work from home model of working.	3.7
2.	Work from home enables to balance my work and my household chores	3.0
3.	I prefer work from home option since it reduces my travel time	3.0
4.	Work from home has enabled me not to take a career break during pandemic	4.8
5.	I am acquiring new skills in this mode of working	4.0
6.	Work from home enabled me to meet people belonging to different cultures,races etc	4.5
7.	Work from home increased my stress levels	4.2
8.	My superior empathizes problems encountered by me while working in this mode	4.1
9.	My superior understands the job demands and family responsibilities due to WFH	4.2
10.	There is no change in my performance due to this WFH.	3.7
11.	I miss the working atmosphere	4.5
12.	My organisation equipped with all the facilities to work from home	4.0
13.	I faced initial hiccups in getting used to work from home	4.9
14.	I am highly motivated to work from home in spite of home pressures	3.7
15.	I face lot of problems in communication due to technical issues	4.0
16.	I agree that work from home is the best option during pandemic	4.5

Source: Field Survey

**Data Analysis and Interpretation:**The analysis of data has been presented below:

The data collected reveals that employees hold a positive opinion on the Work-from-home option. A highly positive opinion is found on Work from home option because it helped them not to take a career break during pandemic. It is noticed that work from home enabled them to meet people belonging to different cultures, races etc. A highly positive opinion is found on the role of Work from home in increasing their stress levels. They do expressed a highly positive opinion on their superiors in empathizing the problems being encountered by them while working in this mode. It is also found that their superiors understand the job demands and family responsibilities due to WFH. Respondents even expressed a highly positive opinion on missing the working atmosphere. It is also found that companies are putting efforts to equip their employees with all the facilities to work from home. Majority of the respondents said that they have faced initial hiccups in getting used to work from home. The problems in communication due to technical issues were found high in this mode of working. Respondents strongly agree that work from home is the best option during pandemic.

A moderate positivism is found on the working comfortably in the work from home model. The Work from home is not significantly enabling them to balance their work and their household chores. Respondents have expressed a moderate positivism towards their level of motivation to work from home in spite of home pressures. Interestingly it is also found that respondents don't prefer work from home option since it reduces their travel time. Employees hold a moderately positive opinion on the effect of this work-from-home mode of working on their performance.

**Discussion on Results:** The above analysis indicate that work from home mode of working has certain prospects but at the same time this is also having some problems. There is a significant relationship between job performance and work from home productivity. But in the study it is found employees have a moderate positivism towards effect of WFH on their performance. Working environment plays a vital role in the productivity of employees and their performance. The work environment, technical infrastructure, and self motivation all have an impact on employee performance while working from home. In the current study it is found that employees are missing the working atmosphere. Hence this mode of working may be generally not accepted because WFH may require a large space for set up and operation, This may be difficult for some employees. This may have a negative impact on their productivity. Interestingly it is identified the companies are putting efforts to equip their employees with all the facilities to work from home. Work from home is increasing their stress levels. This may reduce their productivity. Majority of the respondents said that they have faced initial hiccups in getting used to work from home. The problems in communication due to technical issues were found high in this mode of working. Due to the lack of Internet and other technological resources at their home offices employees may not do their jobs properly. WFH mode gives an opportunity for some employees to balance work-life but for some WFM does not enable them to strike a proper balance between family and work life. The same is identified in the study. The study indicate that the superiors are facilitating them providing ample support while working in WFH mode.

### **Recommendations:**

- IT companies may invest in better collaboration tools and regular virtual check-ins. This enables them to overcome communication challenges.
- The IT companies may offer flexible schedules and conduct wellness programs to help employees balance work and personal life.
- The IT companies may provide employees with efficient equipment and technical support to avoid frequent tech issues.
- Companies should realize that different employees will work differently in WFH set-up. Hence employees performance evaluations need to have personalized Approaches.

### **Conclusion**

This study found that work from home has both positive and negative ramifications. Most employees were satisfied working remotely, appreciated the support provided by their superiors during work from home mode of working. However, certain respondents struggled with communication, technology, or productivity issues while working remotely. Respondents have expressed that they are missing their work atmosphere. Thus work from home mode of working not only have prospects but also poses many challenges to the employees of IT companies.

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