

# The Employees Behavior During the Work from Home in Pandemic Situation

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## Abstract

Stress is one of the problems faced by human beings. It has both positive and negative impact on individual. The positive stress called eustress is required to certain level to help an individual to perform their work without which the individual will not work properly. The negative stress called distress has negative impact on the individual which restricts them in performing their work. The ancient philosophical and religious texts provide information about stress which has two approaches: the first approach begins with the nature of human existence and moves systematically to its dysfunctioning (i.e.) stress is generated under certain circumstances, the second approach identifies the problem and the principles of dealing with it are woven around the problem and its resolution. Experience of occupational stress is inevitably involved in the execution of any type of work. Stress has an adaptive value. It motivates the individual to attend to the task and get rid of the tension or demand the unattended task produced.

**Key words:** Stress, motivates the individual, Technology.

## Introduction:

The Indian Software industry has grown at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 28 % during the last 5 years. The key segments that have contributed significantly to the industry's exports include – software services - BPO sector is playing vital role in the growth of our country's economy. Due to liberalization of Indian economic policy, the growth of software industry is in commendable position. Due to cost advantage, COVID-19 has become a huge worry for the Globe. The social and economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic will be far reaching and devastating for all. In this globally connected world, every country will get impacted by the devastation caused by the pandemic. The COVID-19 is likely to lead to certain permanent or long-lasting. By the time, when the pandemic ends, we will probably see a new world, a new lexicon, a new social norm with far reaching economic and social destruction. When COVID-19 outbreak started spreading across the world, thousands of people started facing severe health issues and death rates increased.

The only way to stop the spread of the pandemic was to stop all social and economic activities in the affected countries for indefinite period of time. This led many countries to impose complete lock-down all across the globe which is still going on going on. In such a scenario all business activities, across all industries were completely stopped. The lockdown impacted various sectors in varied degree. For example, the airlines, hospitality, hotel, manufacturing industry is totally stopped and will take a long time to come out of this situation, if at all. Millions of people in these sectors are likely to lose jobs in these sectors. COVID-19 pandemic caused enormous disruption in businesses, which will take years to recover, if at all.

The disruption is likely to lead to permanent shut down of many businesses, unable to bear the financial losses and disruptions caused by the pandemic. To get over the current situation, companies are trying to run offices and administration jobs through “Work from Home” mode. Companies are trying to cope up with economic turbulence caused due to COVID 19 through the usage of disruptive technology by working from home concept. Earlier work from home was an acceptable business practice only in IT and Technology sectors. However, other industry sectors were reluctant to adopt WFH as a good business practice. The biggest business change that we can see today, forced by the global spread the pandemic, is that many companies have been forced to implementing Work from Home mode for their employees.

This research paper also emphasizes that how employers as well as HR managers are required to think out of the box and bring forth best practices as well as redefining HR roles during any adversity. This research paper will also give light on few important issues such as People-Connect, adoption of a system of Skilling, re-skilling, Up-skilling and multi-skilling people about technology, design thinking, storytelling, analytics, Artificial intelligence to prepare our workforce to become more competent and talented by enhancing their skill set.

In sum, the experience of mass working from home during the COVID-19 lockdown has shifted attitudes and preferences around flexible working of managers and workers, and also has the potential to impact cultural norms around the gendered division of housework/care. The below are some key future changes we anticipate seeing as people return to work, based on the findings from this research:

- More employees are likely to request/demand flexible working in the future, and with this we may see a decline in flexibility stigma and concerns about flexible working negatively impacting career outcomes.
- However, not everyone wants to work from home all the time. Many employees want collegial interaction, are concerned about lack of equipment or space to carry out their work and blurring boundaries between work and home.
- The experiences during lockdown suggest that increasing fathers’ access to flexible working may help couples to share more housework/care responsibilities, and managers and the government will likely be under pressure in the future to find ways to support fathers to work flexibly and take a more active role in caring and unpaid work in the home.

### **People Connect and Behavior:**

When lockdown was declared, organizations and industries started facing issues mainly on people-disconnect issue front as they went back to their villages. 80 % people from organized sector went homeless overnight. Even now the biggest challenge for HR is to get back people to work as soon as possible. Apart from reaching beyond culture and trust, there are technical challenges to be faced. Not every home has an office or quiet workspace. So, the need of the hour is to reconnect with those people either by calling them via phone, asking their wellbeing, assisting and ensuring their wellbeing on phone. Many people do not possess sophisticated systems along with headsets, video cameras, high-speed connectivity, and the skills to manage all. Assisting such people, by giving them training about the technology as well as availing all the facilities to such

employees. At the same time, many people right now are not only trying to do their own work, but they are trying to help their families cope and keep their children on a course of study.

Lastly, on the challenges front, there are very real social and psychological concerns. During an adversity such as what we are facing right now, there are worries for almost everyone. To overcome these concerns, it is helpful to deploy the tenets of positive psychology, including resiliency, positivity, and psychological safety. Employers can play an important role in bringing such tactics to the virtual workspace in which their employees operate.

### **Social Distancing:**

While employing a home-based team presents challenges; there are also benefits to the practice beyond the immediate need for social distancing. A home-based workforce saves the company money through lower overhead and reduced drain on energy resources. From a macroeconomic perspective; fewer people commuting mean a reduction in pollution and usage of fossil fuels. Just in the few short weeks of the pandemic crisis so far, pollution levels have been measured as falling meaningfully over parts of China and Europe. Benefits also include productivity gains. Adam Grant's Nick Bloom experiment showed that if you let call centres work from home, they're 13% more productive. They have the flexibility around where they work, when they work, and how they work, and they don't feel like they're being micromanaged. Perhaps most importantly, offering home-based work improves employee morale. People who no longer must deal with lengthy commutes have more time to devote to family and work-life balance.

No one possesses an infallible crystal ball to predict the timing of the end of the current crisis, or what life will be like following the crisis. However, organizations now more than ever before will have had the opportunity to experiment with a geographically dispersed workforce and will gain tremendous insight into how to do so effectively. For successful implementation of WFH mode, companies need to take care of the following.

### **Infrastructure:**

Companies will need to ensure that employees are well equipped to deal with remote working practices. Some firms already do this by offering them an allowance to set up a home office where they can work uninterrupted, should the need arise. This allowance can cover a variety of needs — be it a high-speed internet connection, power backup, necessary gadgets and devices, or even office equipment like desks and ergonomic chairs. People who do not have the required space or facilities at home will need to be provided with an alternative too. Perhaps companies can do this by having co working spaces across the city that will function as work hubs.

### **Need of the Study**

The 2019–20 crown infection pandemic is a ceaseless pandemic of corona infection ailment 2019 (COVID-19) realized by a corona infection (SARS-CoV-2). The flare-up was recognized in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. However, because of initial mishandling by multi-lateral bodies like WHO, people were

allowed to travel globally which led to spreading of the COVID-19 across the world, thus causing pandemic of epic proportion. It was only in March 11th, 3 months after the initial detection of COVID 19, that the WHO declared it as a pandemic. By that time, the damage is already done, the virus had spread across many countries. There is a work up need to focus on maintaining a better work life balance by maintaining a balance between personal life as well as professional life by following issues taking into consideration.

The need of social distancing gave rise to the concept of “working from home concept (WFH)” for corporate for keeping alive the working spirit of the employees. Work from home (WFH) is where the individuals can do their job from home through massive use of digital platforms. After this pandemic, business trends have completely changed and majority of business activities are performed through mobile, or other digital platforms. Artificial Intelligence, analytics all have changed the way companies used to run and functioning a business. During the current COVID-19 pandemic, in order to keep the operation going, businesses are forced to move to work from home mode for their employees, wherever possible.

### **Objectives of the study**

- To interpret the basic concept of work from home during COVID-19.
- To study the present scenario of work from home.
- To analyse the factors effecting work from home for employees.
- To examine the impact of COVID-19 on work performances of employees when working from home.

### **Research methodology**

This research paper aims to present a deeper insight to analyze the impact of COVID -19 in work place during this period of adversity and what all measures are required by employers and HR personnel to be taken into consideration for proper organizational functioning to get over the current situation of COVID -19 crisis or in any adversity. Companies are trying to run offices and administration jobs through “Work from Home” (WFH-Mode) and how authentic leaders are driving the new normal by bringing forth new concepts of People-connect, usage of disruptive technology and becoming smarter through virtual acclimatization and virtual relationship management and HR plans to make an employee’s home function as a node to an office hub - smarter technology, processes and policies are a big step in that direction.

This research paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. Data collection is based on primary data and secondary data. Primary data is collected from the telephonic interviews and questions asked from the HR consultants and few industry top level people in HR positions and working professionals. The secondary data is based on the current data and scenario. Secondary data is collected from various research papers, articles and publishing of 2019-2020 year according to the need of the study.

### **The positive side of Work from home concept**

One of the biggest advantages of WFH is the time saved in commuting to and from office. Regardless of whether one’s office is close or far, one needs to go out, be stranded in rush hour gridlock and bear the temperature outside. But during work from home, travelling time is zero and that time can be invested in work

or life domain for the productive results during the lockdown situation. One can invest this time in health also to keep oneself fit and fine. A peaceful mind boosts energy to perform well.

Because of COVID-19 pandemic everyone is staying at home. Children are not going to school. Working individuals have to manage their work space at home if more than one individual is working from same home. Though work from home is more challenging when it comes to time management and maintaining a balance mentally and physically while performing each and every task related to household chores and workplace amicably and peacefully.

Technological advancements support Work from Home in a significant way. It is because of technology available with us currently, one can easily connect with his/her work by staying at home. But one should be aware about the use of technology. So, Employer and HR need to manage workforce in this unprecedented time. HR needs to rethink again by anticipating what talents and skills are needed.

Restructured and redefined work roles coupled with reskilling of resources is the need of the hour. It is important for companies to evolve and change to ensure that the workforce is rebooted and get smarter through virtual acclimatization and virtual relationship management.

HR needs to plan how to make an employee's home function as a node to an office hub — smart technology, processes and policies are a big step in that direction. While employing a home-based team presents challenges, there are also benefits to the practice beyond the immediate need for social distancing. A home-based workforce saves the company money through lower overhead and reduced drain on energy resources.

From a macroeconomic perspective, fewer people commuting means a reduction in pollution and usage of fossil fuels. Just in the few short weeks of the pandemic crisis so far, pollution levels have been measured as falling meaningfully over parts of China and Europe.

Benefits also include productivity gains. Adam Grant's Nick Bloom experiment showed that if you let call centres work from home, they're 13% more productive. They have the flexibility around where they work, when they work, and how they work, and they don't feel like they're being micromanaged. Perhaps most importantly, offering home-based work improves employee morale. People who no longer must deal with lengthy commutes have more time to devote to family and work-life balance.

No one possesses an infallible crystal ball to predict the timing of the end of the current crisis, or what life will be like following the crisis. However, organizations now more than ever before will have had the opportunity to experiment with a geographically dispersed workforce and will gain tremendous insight into how to do so effectively. Home-based work can be incredibly successful for teams. Here are a few tips to consider: Establish goals, Conduct regular manager and employee communication, Provide space and virtual tools to allow employees to feel seen and heard, Start the first 2 – 5 minutes of every meeting talking about non-work-related items to deepen trust and connection, Ensure recognition is rooted into the rhythms of the

work week, Given the many benefits of home-based work, it is likely that it will become far more accepted as the new adverse COVID -19 situation is prevailing.

**The negative side of the work from home concept:** Following is a list of disadvantages of work from home concept –

- Since one working from home, one can get disengaged from associates and bosses.
- Working from home may cause numerous interruptions. One needs to go and attend to visitor, cook for family, clean home and oversee children.
- Work from home makes an employee detached from his/ her company and make an employee lack the community feeling and attachment to his / her company.
- It needs self-motivation commitment and devotion and being proactive, agile and resilient on behalf of the employees otherwise leading to un-productivity. Here HR plays a pivotal role to bring forth the concept of “People -connect”.
- WFH creates differences in culture with employees who work at office.
- WFH does not foster communication and kinship with company.
- Due to lack of psychological association with one’s company, there is low reliability and retention of employees.

### Discussion and analysis

Work from home is not as easy as it seems to be. That requires full dedication towards work activities to perform well. The concept also demands to focus on work schedule. There is a need to set limits between the domains of home and work while following the concept of working from home.

No doubts, there are ample benefits to grab by working from home. But on the same side that puts a person in to a comfort zone which leads to laziness and lots of distractions. Time management is another challenge to settle on. Work from home may make it simpler for employees to offset their work obligations with their own life and family jobs (e.g., thinking about kids or old guardians). A few associations embrace work from home for ecological reasons, as work from home can lessen blockage and air contamination, with fewer vehicles on the roads.

Employers as well as HR need to play a very pivotal role in creating a bond with the people under “People connect ‘concept and need to connect people from grass root level whom they have always ignored The term has come to re-imagine HR as a stakeholder management during COVID-19 period .they really need to realize this fact very seriously that money is not everything but to create a positive bond with them .So HR needs to perform multiple role when it comes to people related.

A routine plan is highly recommended while work from during this pandemic. Everything should be scheduled in an effective manner. Only then effective results will come out. Otherwise pending work and incomplete job task may lead to frustration or will increase the stress. Everything and every activity on right

time and right place within in the four walls is the mantra to follow, which will reduce the chaos and turns high productivity.

## Conclusion

Work from Home is a concept which is now going to be a permanent feature in the corporate world. The current pandemic situation has demonstrated that WFH is an effective business process to ensure continuity of business and also to provide work life balance to employees. It has significant economic and productivity benefit as well to organizations, if managed effectively. However, WFH cannot be seen as a panacea for all organization problems. It has to be used in a judicious manner to ensure employees are trained, motivated and harnessed to deliver the best towards business result.

## Suggestions:

1. Work should be properly delegated to the employees to avoid overload of work which could cause stress.
2. Good relationship should be maintained within the employees to make the working environment healthy.
3. Proper grievance handling system should be practiced to help the employees to overcome their problems.
4. Employees should be motivated by giving rewards for their excellent performances.
5. Time management techniques should be taught to employees so that they complete their task within the scheduled time.
6. Stress relaxation programmes like yoga, meditation and exercises should be given to the employees.

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