



## IMPACT OF WORK FROM HOME ON EMPLOYEES: A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

SHREYA VERMA <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> RESEARCH SCHOLAR, MBA, BIT MESRA, MESRA RANCHI, JHARKHAND.

### ABSTRACT:

Work from Home (WFH) is a term that has broached in the very recent times. Another expression used for it is “virtual work”. While this practice was known to some of the very few leading corporate business companies, due to the pandemic the hour demanded everyone to take up this approach of work. Pandemic raised the culture of working from home for both government as well as non government organisations. Employees now are adjusting to the new normal.

### KEYWORDS:

EMPLOYEES, IMPACT, PSYCHOLOGY.

### PAPER ACCEPTED DATE:

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025

### PAPER PUBLISHED DATE:

5<sup>th</sup> February 2025

### INTRODUCTION

The unrivalled crisis of Covid-19 has ensured that be it, employers or employees, all and sundry have some sort of knowledge about Work from Home; however, it may vary depending upon different perceptions. It is another way in which the work is organised in such patterns that it can be done by sitting at home away from the traditional workplace such as factories or offices and empowers employees to access their activities through the use of information technology.

It should be known that WFH is not a new notion, despite its popularity, especially after the onslaught of the prevailing pandemic COVID-19. World of Work is dynamic, and it goes through transformation as a matter of course. Even before many business organisations were obligated to carry out Work from Home in an unprepared fashion, others had some sort of experience before the pandemic. The IT and Software firms such as Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, International Business Machines (IBM), and Cognizant etc. have already used this measure since quite some time. However, they were not contemplated as a right or entitlement to the employee rather largely devised as a privilege and was granted under appropriate circumstances to employees whose job responsibilities were befitting for such an arrangement not hampering the business profits in any way.

### TYPES OF WFH ARRANGEMENT:

To meet the divergent objectives, WFH can be categorised in the following sets

- *Need-based Work from Home:* This arrangement can be availed by the employees on need basis. For example, to meet a health situation where an employee needs to attend his/her family member

at home and simultaneously they can perform their tasks. However, this can't be extended beyond a threshold limit. The threshold could be 2 days to 5 days without the prior approval of their managers.

- *Prolonged Work from Home:* In this arrangement, an employee can work from home for an extended period of time. This extended period can be more than 4 weeks or so.
- *Regular Work from Home:* In this, employees are given the option to continue WFH on a regular basis.

### A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Studies and researches have shown that the detrimental psychological effects of working or studying from home are loneliness and isolation; anxiety, stress, and pressure accompanied with depression. Individuals are unable to recognize the major signs of burnout, stress, or depression as they push themselves to their physical and emotional zenith, battling between professional and family expectations.

#### *Loneliness and Isolation-*

It is expected of employees and students to quickly adapt the transition from physical presence in schools and offices to working at home. These changes to the working environment can have a notable impact on the well-being of individuals. This transition has had its own repercussions and induced the inability to partake in face-to-face meetings and class sessions and have restricted social interactions with coworkers and fellow students, leading to shyness and other such issues relating

to personal growth and development. Not all individuals are accustomed to working and studying for days on end without interacting with anyone else. The socialization with colleagues, acquaintances and batch mates, which starts from a simple chat and vent about work and life, could be sorely missed. This physical disconnect with people is beyond price and cannot be taken over by virtual conversations. Studies have shown that isolation and loneliness associates with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and other somatic symptoms.

#### ***Anxiety, Stress, and Pressure-***

A lot of workload and pressure to meet performance standards, deadlines, routine and tedious tasks with unmanageable workloads, in these difficult circumstances, has left employees feeling highly anxious and stressed. This feeling of anxiety and stress isn't helped by having to double up and be counselors and educators to their children at home who are struggling to make sense of things while adapting to virtual schooling. Continuous and prolonged connectivity to work while working from the seat of your own home in your room has led to longer working hours, gradually leading to burnout. Finding it difficult to mentally switch off from work has resulted in the disruption of quality time spent with family members and finding less or no time to spend with loved ones.

#### ***Depression-***

Research depicts that depression and other grave mental illnesses are an aftermath of disasters and other pandemics. These are further exacerbated by loneliness and lack of social support. In addition are the long hours in a sedentary lifestyle which has also led to excessive back and joint pain in individuals, which deteriorates their mental well-being as well. Working out, stretching and exercising 20-30-minutes a day has been proved to significantly lower anxiety and boost endorphins and serotonin to the brain. Chronic pain and depression share neural pathways and affect the same part of the brain. Depression heightens the intensity of physical pain, causing the brain to create a cycle of pain that becomes learned and chronic.

These adverse psychological effects aside, working from home have also been beneficial to some, who have used this time to spend time with family members and learn new skills, which boosts their sense of self and emotional well-being.

#### ***Improved Emotional Well-being-***

Employees also found a lot found respite in not only saving on energy but on their finances as well. Working from home has some of its own perks like it helps individuals in getting additional hours of sleep, spending more time with their spouses and children, exercising, spending time on up skilling, developing and rekindling old hobbies, or just preparing healthy meals. The internet is brimming with stories about how people have utilized this time wisely in becoming fit by eating better and finding the time to work out, meditate, etc. during their time at home.

#### ***Agility and Flexibility-***

A greatest boon of working remotely is employee's ability to work hours that suit them, which could be earlier or later in the day, based on their convenience. Women juggling commitments between her professional and personal lives have been banking more on flexible working hours to ensure that they don't drop the ball on either front.

The unparalleled switch to working from home may have started with many snags and a negative impact on mental health, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Organizations have turned hands to take mental health on their agenda and strive towards making a difference, with small efforts. The use of psychological assessments can enable employers keep track of their employee's mental health to identify issues and take timely action.

#### **WORKING CONDITIONS AND HOURS OF WORK:**

This can be one of the most integral elements for the policy document of any organisation concerning WFH. It is recommended to put in place a defined and consistent WFH schedule, which incorporates the number of days and hours of work in a week. Having some software tools or web applications for timekeeping of employees is prudent and employees should ensure that it must be updated on daily basis or maybe at the end of the week seeing to what organisations deem fit to implement. Considering that there can be many disruptors at home, the organisation can ask the employees for a workspace free from background noise, household interruptions and distractions. The employee working from home must be medically fit to work and they have to be absolutely clear that it is not an alternative for medical leave or any other leave.

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

- Teresa Galanti, Gloria Guidetti Published (July 2021) the study focused on the impact of work from home on employees, dealing majorly with employee engagement, productivity and stress. The research result showed social isolation and family work conflict in the individuals. The findings suggested that employers should take into consideration the mental well being of its employees and come up with better ways to manage work and stress simultaneously.
- Nisha Shankar Published (July 2021) the research showed that work from home creates a misbalance in an employee's life leading to chaos in both the professional and personal front. Employees tend to sit with work for longer duration resulting in poor physical and mental state.
- Akbar et al Published (2020) study analyzed that working from home has both pros and cons for the employees and their organizations. They claim that working from home is not a fully acceptable practice for all organizations as some parts of the business are not suitable to be performed from

home and it decreases the productivity of the employees.

- Yijing Xiao, Burcin Becerik-Gerber Published (Nov 2022) work from home has shown a negative impact in terms of psychological well being. However, the research also draws attention to the fact that employees also have other benefits like flexible working hours, family time etc. The study suggests that if employees manage their time effectively it would be easy to balance work with personal and family life avoiding mental and physical exhaustion.
- Shao, Yiduo Fang, Yanran Published (June 2021) the research states that the pandemic has led to add on stress and anxiety as compared to the normal stress faced during work from home. The usual work and family time has been jeopardized due emotional instability.
- Dr. Akanksha Jaiswal Published (June 2020) while many studies showcased the negative psychological impact of working from home this particular research suggests that employees working from home tend to be over achievers. Although there was a constant pressure to be the best yet the employees looked at the extra working hours as an opportunity to prove their worth. This different opinion can also be a result of difference in perspective of people and levels of optimism.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is to add on knowledge to the previous researches through findings from this report. The main focus is to know the effects of working from home on the employees as well as gaining an insight through a psychological perspective.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology is the technique that explains the process through which the data and the content of the research has been collected and the results leading to conclusions have been analyzed. It helps us find out two basic things:

- The way the data was collected and
- The analysis of the data

For this research the following steps have been taken:

As the first step the problem was identified and a research question was build. After the problem was identified, review of literature was the second step which gave a basic idea of the topic as well as the study that has already been done on similar topics. Next step was to clarify the problem and narrow the topic. The terms and concepts of the topic have been explained as the fourth step. A small population at random as sample was selected to help with the questionnaire and research process. The results of the research were analyzed and final conclusions based on the data collected were drawn.

**OBJECTIVE**

- To have an idea about the psychological state of employees during work from home.
- And to know whether the impact has been majorly positive or negative.

**SAMPLING METHOD**

The sampling method used for this research is random sampling and the sample size was 80 out of which 70 have responded. The respondents are employees from various working sectors of the economy; their view point is taken so that the results are close to accuracy.

**TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION**

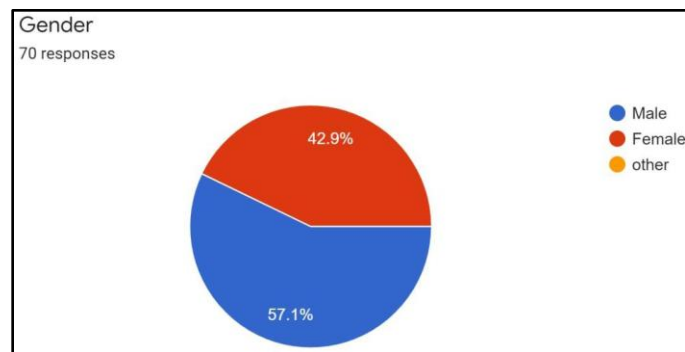
The procedure through which the data has been collected and results of the research have been derived is questionnaire method. An original questionnaire of 15 questions (including the demographic questions) along with related options was circulated and the results were then drawn from the analysis of the questionnaires.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

There are two different classifications of data analysis quantitative and qualitative. In this research qualitative data analysis has been used. Qualitative researches are done using interviews, focus groups, experiments etc. Data analysis involves identification of ordinary patterns within the responses and critically examines them in an endeavour to achieve research aims and objectives.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The results drawn out from the questionnaire are as follows:



**FIG.1**

Out of the total respondents (70) 42.9% of them were females whereas others were males. Findings: The male working population is higher and dominates the female working population.

**TABLE.1**

Sr. No	Gender	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Males	40	57.1%
2.	Females	30	42.9%
3.	Total	70	100%

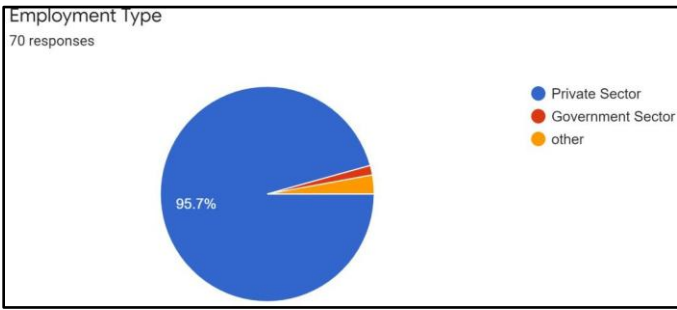


FIG.2

The majority of employees were working in private sector 95.7% (67) out of the total respondents.

Findings: Close to 96% of the population working in the private sector indicates the interest of the working population in non-government organizations.

TABLE.2

Sr. No	Employment Type	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Private Sector	67	95.7%
2.	Government Sector	1	1.4%
3.	Other	2	2.9%
	Total	70	100%

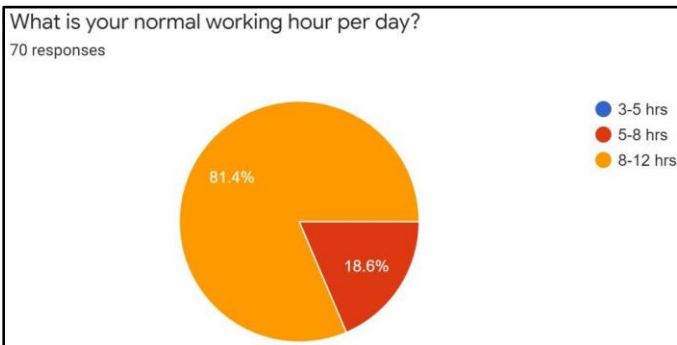


FIG.3

The normal working hour for 81.4% of the respondents was 8-12 hrs. Only 18.6% employees worked for 5-8 hrs per day.

Findings: Almost half of the day is spent in working for majority of the working population an indication of the 9 to 5 shifts and sometimes more.

TABLE.3

Sr. No	Working Hours	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	8-12hrs	57	81.4%
2.	5-8hrs	13	18.6%
3.	3-5hrs	0	0
	Total	70	100%

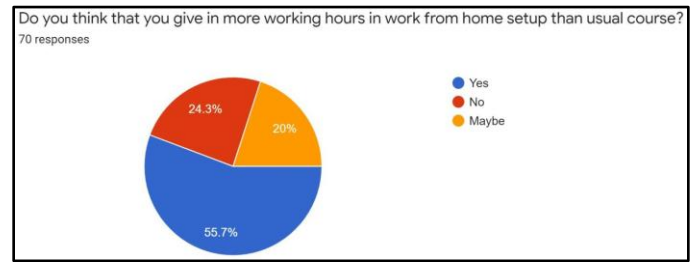


FIG.4

Out of a total of 70 respondents 39 of them accepted that they give in more working hours in work from home setup.

Findings: This shows that staying at home has allowed people to devote more time to work as compared to the usual course.

TABLE.4

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	39	55.7%
2.	No	17	24.3%
3.	Maybe	14	20%
	Total	70	100%

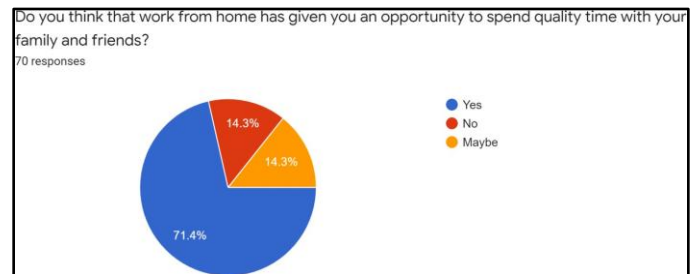


FIG.5

71.4% of the respondents out of the total sample think that work from home has given them an opportunity to spend time with friends and family.

Findings: While majority think that lockdown and work from home has been an opportunity to spend quality time with friends and family some are also of the opinion that it has created work pressure resulting in less time with family.

TABLE.5

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	50	71.4%
2.	No	10	14.3%
3.	Maybe	10	14.3%
	Total	70	100%

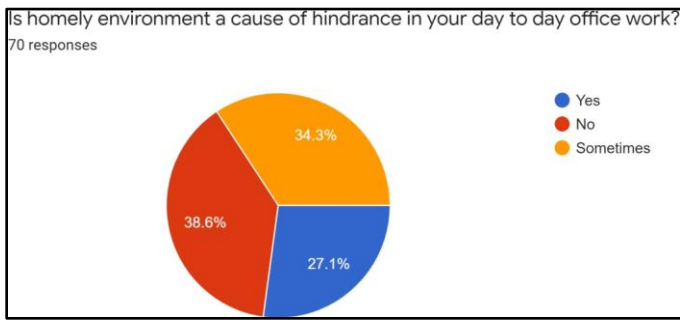


FIG.6

Surprisingly, a homely environment is not a hindrance to work for majority of the respondents. Although some (38.6%) did accept that such environment bothers work sometimes.

Findings: A disciplined environment is always suggested while working but while working from home employees realised that working in the presence of family isn't bad either.

TABLE.6

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	19	27.1%
2.	No	27	38.6%
3.	Sometimes	24	34.3%
	Total	70	100%

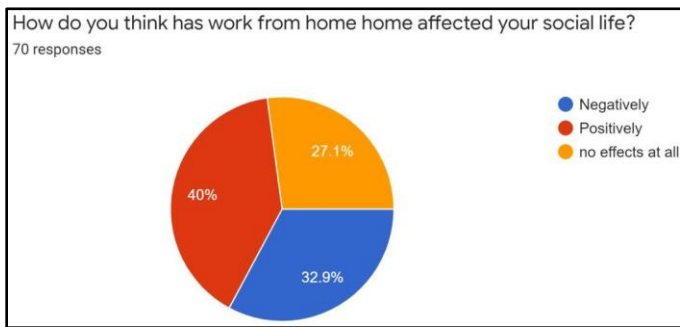


FIG.7

The responses show that to 40% people the impact of work from home on their social life has been positive. And a greater part of the respondents also remain unaffected.

Findings: The pandemic should've greatly affected people's social life but the results indicate otherwise which means social media platforms have helped people in not turning anti-social beings and staying connected.

TABLE.7

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Positively	28	40%
2.	Negatively	23	32.9%
3.	No effects	19	27.1%
	Total	70	100%

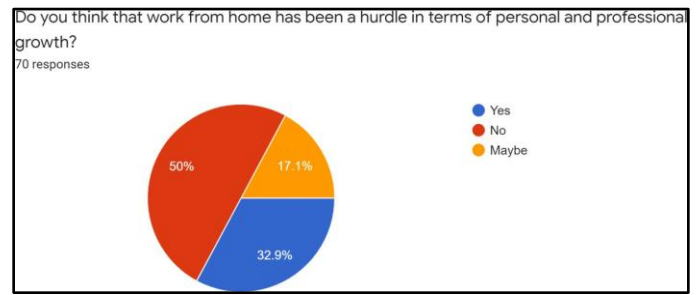


FIG.8

50% of the respondents out rightly rejected on the question of work from home being a hurdle in terms of personal and professional growth. While 32.9% of them were of the opinion that work from home does affect growth and development.

Findings: The employees are of the opinion that professional and personal growth is a result of one's own efforts, working patterns and efficiency. They are not dependent on the fact whether you work from home or office.

TABLE.8

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	35	50%
2.	No	23	32.9%
3.	Maybe	12	17.1%
	Total	70	100%

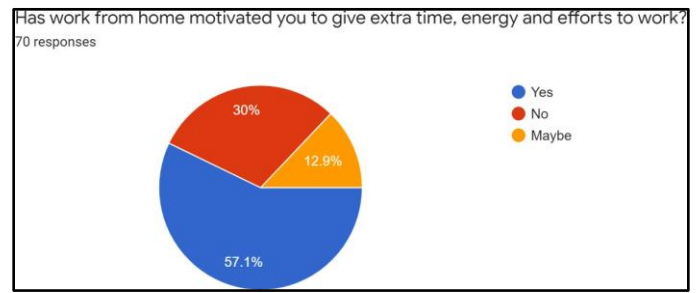


FIG.9

More than 56% of the respondents agreed that work from home motivated them to do extra work and put in more efforts in their work.

Findings: The extra time given to work was also not considered as a burden but an investment.

TABLE.9

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	40	57.1%
2.	No	21	30%
3.	Maybe	9	12.9%
	Total	70	100%

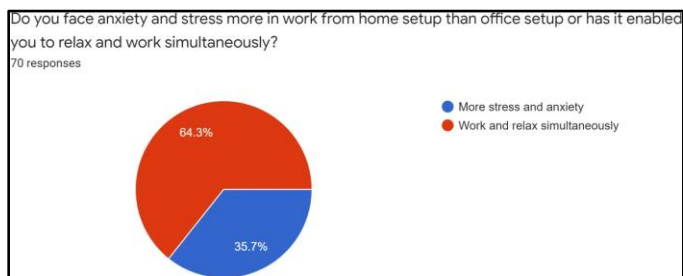


FIG.10

45 out of 70 respondents think that work from home has been relaxing with stress and anxiety that can be managed.

Findings: A lot of stress, anxiety and work pressure that employees face in office has been cut down while working from home. A family environment with timely breaks and naps enables employees to work effectively.

TABLE.10

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Stress	25	35.7%
2.	Relax	45	64.3%
	Total	70	100%

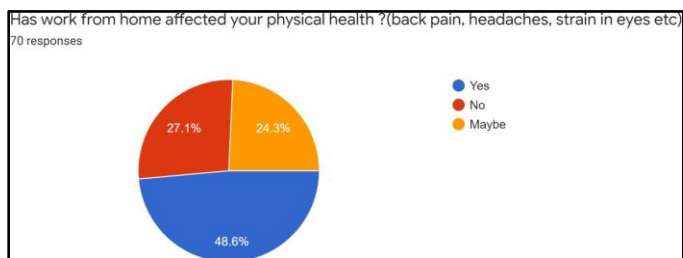


FIG.11

When talking about the physical impact of work from home on employees the respondents 48.6% agreed that work from home set up was jeopardizing their physical status be it back pain headaches etc.

Findings: A comfortable environment gets way too comfortable in prolonged working hours affecting physical health.

TABLE.11

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	34	48.6%
2.	No	19	27.1%
3.	Maybe	17	24.3%
	Total	70	100%

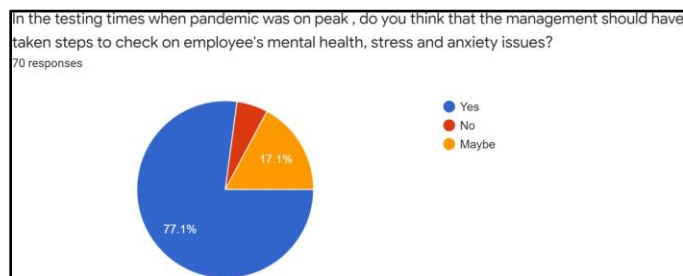


FIG.12

54 out of the 70 respondents wanted that the management should have taken steps to check on employee's mental health when the pandemic was on peak.

Findings: A regular check up of mental health and status of people is largely preferred. And in the difficult times of COVID it was much needed.

TABLE.12

Sr. No	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	54	77.1%
2.	No	4	5.8%
3.	Maybe	12	17.1%
	Total	70	100%

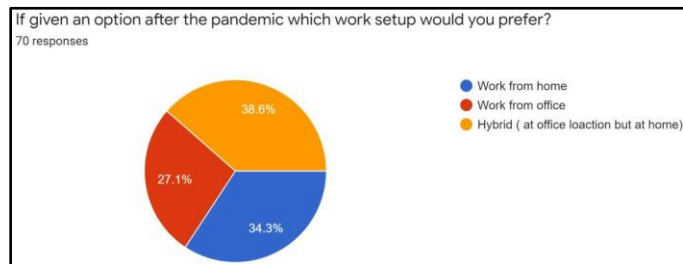


FIG.13

Many (34.3%) of the employees agreed on working from home once the pandemic ends, while majority 38.6% opted for the hybrid mode.

Findings: A hybrid mode is where people can work from home but staying at the office location becomes mandatory. This is what employees highly preferred. They were comfortable, staying at the office location but wanted to work from home.

TABLE.13

Sr. No	Work from	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Home	24	34.3%
2.	Office	19	27.1%
3.	Hybrid	27	38.6%
	Total	70	100%

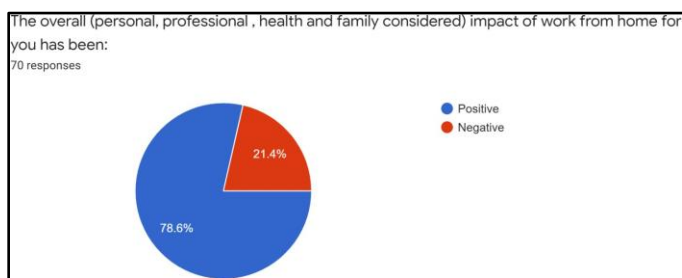


FIG.14

The respondents are of the opinion that work from home has impacted them but majority of them agrees that the impact has been positive.

Findings: There has been a positive impact of work from home on employees largely.

TABLE.14

Sr.no	Opinion	No. Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Positive	55	78.6%
2.	Negative	15	21.4%
	Total	70	100%

**CONCLUSION**

- The final results show that:

The overall impact of working from home on employees has been positive. The result also showed that employees tend to give more time in work from home setup. This could also be because of the fact that a significant amount of time and energy is saved which is usually used up in travelling to workplace from home and vice versa. The study also showed that this setup has helped employees spent quality time with friends and family. It is only sometimes that homely environment hampers work. The work from home setup has largely been relaxing and has proved to be comparatively stress free for the employees as it provided ample time to work as well as take short breaks in between to cool off.

More than mental stress and anxiety employees faced difficulties in coping up with their physical health. Sitting for prolonged hours before laptop screens has been a tiring experience. The results also indicated that people expected aid and assistance from the management when the pandemic had hit large numbers in the country and

outside. There were employees facing issues in their own families and were in need of support from the management of the organisation. Counselling, a regular check on employee’s mental health and pressure was highly advisable. The employees majorly have shown keen interest in working from home and the hybrid setup which indicates that people are mostly comfortable with such setup and the offline setup is a tiring and stressful experience, considering factors like daily travelling, food and lodging if one is staying away from home and other such expenses and troubles.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The purpose of this study was to analyze the impact of work from home on employees through a psychological perspective, understanding their mental and physical well being. The results show that work from home has majorly been a positive experience with small amount of stress and anxiety and a little bit of physical discomfort. Although the employees were affected negatively by the pandemic and had equal amounts of work pressure yet the presence of family and friends around helped them cope with the challenging times.

**REFERENCES**

- [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351070493\\_Work\\_From\\_Home\\_During\\_the\\_COVID-19\\_Outbreak\\_The\\_Impact\\_on\\_Employees'\\_Remote\\_Work\\_Productivity\\_Engagement\\_and\\_Stress](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351070493_Work_From_Home_During_the_COVID-19_Outbreak_The_Impact_on_Employees'_Remote_Work_Productivity_Engagement_and_Stress)
- <https://www.scienceopen.com/document?vid=ae0d45ef-a6a2-415a-84da-d4228ddb421>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33234875/>
- <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=G9a3iBYAAAJ&hl=en>
- Book : Work life balance: A psychological perspective by Fiona Jones, Ronald J Burke
- Research paper : Work-home interaction from a work psychological perspective: Sabine Geurts, Toon W. Taris
- Book: Work from Home : Multi-level Perspectives on the New Normal by Payal Kumar, Anirudh Agrawal, Pawan Budhwar