



Factors Affecting Employee's Performance during Work from Home

Dr. Anurag Upadhyay¹, Deepti Mishra², Dr.Shivani Mishra³

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Udai Pratap College, (Autonomous) Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India

²NET, Master of Art, University of Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, India

³Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Juhari Devi Girls P.G. College, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India

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*Correspondence:

Dr. Anurag Upadhyay
dr.anuragwits@gmail.com
Assistant Professor,
Department of Psychology,
Udai Pratap College,
(Autonomous) Varanasi,
Uttar Pradesh, India

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Abstract

Work from home brings new opportunities of working culture to the organization. During pandemic it was used on a very large scale. Work from home allows employees to work with convenient way. It helps to develop trustful relation among management and employees. They can develop their own routine. It helps to prevent unnecessary work place stress. They can use extra time with friends' family or to sleep. Because of extra health benefits of exercise and additional sleep, employees' physical and mental well-being enhance. It helps to save economic burden of office space, supplies and utility bills. It is not necessary that work from home suits every employees of organization. There are individual differences. Some employees might feel difficulties during work from home. They might prefer routine of office environment to perform effectively then work from home. They might feel more job satisfaction during office hours. They prefer direct interaction with their team members and co-workers. Purpose of present research paper is to understand the factors that influence employee's performance during work from home. It has been observed that there are many psychological factors such as personality traits, mental health, adjustment ability, perceived self-efficacy, stress coping style and perceived job security affect performance. Perceived social support, family structure, and interpersonal relation are social factors that affect employee's performance during work from home. It affects their mental health negatively. Previous studies suggested that work from home lead to anxiety, depression. They are more vulnerable to suicide.

INTRODUCTION

Work from home brings new opportunities of working culture to the organization. During pandemic it was used on a very large scale. Work from home allows employees autonomy to work with convenient way. It helps to develop trustful relation among management and employees. They can develop their own routine. It helps to prevent unnecessary work place stress. They can use extra time with friends, family or to sleep. Because of extra health benefits of exercise, additional sleep, employee's physical and mental well-being might enhance. In work from home, organization create a balance between organizations' goal and employee's need who are working remotely. It included coordination of the task among employees and management (Grant, 2021).

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Alignment between organization's goal and employee's need can be established with the help of performance incentives, monitoring and control, and shared values (Walsh et al., 1991). It helps to save economic burden of office space, supplies and utility bills. It is not necessary that work from home suits every employee. There are individual differences. Some employees might feel difficulties during work from home. They might prefer the routine of office environment to perform efficiently. They might feel more job satisfaction during office hours. They prefer direct interaction with their team members and co-workers. The purpose of present chapter is to understand the factors that influence employee's performance during work from home.

Factors related organization, psychological factors and social factors are some important factors that might influence employee's performance.

Organizational Factors

Factors related to organization are nature of work, characteristics of industry, and nature of home setting. Factors that can positively affect employee's performance are flexible scheduling options. Employees might feel autonomy to schedule their daily life either planning of work schedule or family activities. They are free to modify their schedule at some extent. Some studies suggested that employees are able to easily modify their working schedule daily or hourly (Ford and Butts (1991).

They can flexibly schedule their work and their time utilize for other essential things. They can work late night or early morning. They can finish their weekly tasks in four days save the rest of the free time. They can schedule their time to personal appointment with physicians or dentists without taking vacation and complete the organization's tasks with their own schedule flexibly (Wienclaw, 2019).

There are individual differences among employees. Some employees perform better when they have face to face interaction with their team members or colleagues than virtual interaction. During work from home, they don't achieve sufficient support to perform better at their job. Some employees might face more distractions at their home for example young children can interrupt during work. Others may find difficulty to arrange suitable physical space dedicated to working area. Employees might feel disconnected from their peer co-workers. In office they can share special bonding with their co-workers that motivate them to keep persistency in

their work to perform optimal level. It is normal that employees might feel isolated because informal social catch-ups are not possible.

At workplace they easily maintain persistency in their work but at home employees might find difficulties to maintain team spirit and their morale might decrease. At workplace all the necessary facilities for task are provided but at home it not always possible to arrange all facilities. For example poor broadband speed might become barrier for work from home.

Work from home allows limited monitoring of employee's performance. Employees with different personalities might response differently to monitoring. When employees unable, to adjust with their working schedule at home. They find difficulties to develop routine for work. They cannot make balance between their work life and home life. They feel isolated and pressure. It can adversely affect their mental health.

Lupu (2017) suggested that work from home give opportunities of employment to people who live in the isolated area. It reduces the risk of sickness and work related stress. Work from home save the expenses of transportation, and organization's infrastructure, employee's costs of babysitting/ kindergarten. Despite these benefits there are some disadvantages of work from home. Employees' technical issues cannot solve in the remote area. Usually there are unequal salary distribution among employees working in office and home. It can create dissatisfaction and might influence their performance which in turn negatively affect organization's productivity.

Another disadvantage of work from home is hindrance of career (Ford and Butts, 1991). Employee works in office always have direct interaction with organizations. They can find more opportunities to prove their talents. It can increase the chances of their promotion or increment. Whereas, employees who are, working from home, might achieve less chances of increments or promotion.

Ford and Butts (1991) claim that the saying "out of sight, out of mind" is valid for employees working from home. Another disadvantage of work from is decreasing chances to have informal communication network with the peer co-workers and administrator. Because of absence of these

interactions they find difficulties to connect organization's goal, culture and values. Work from home allows less control of organizations on employees. It creates trust issues. Organizations have to share confidential information with their employees during work from home. Sometimes chances of data hacking and unauthorized access to organization's systems increased and it creates data security problems.

Work from home creates big challenge to supervisor to establish effective communication during team meeting of employees from different remote locations. It allows limited accessibility of employees. Previous researches suggested that increasing employee's autonomy over their work positively influence their performance (Eaton, 2003). The degree of monitoring of employees depends on the nature of organization and job function. It can vary from high tech to low tech sectors. For example in the case of call centres of customer service, monitoring is possible through work effort, real time such as length of the call, call recording and rating by customer. Monitoring is not possible in different organizations. It can conclude that various organizational factors affect employee's performance during work from home. It can either increase the performance or decrease.

Social Factors

Employees related factors that influence performance can be understood in various ways. One of the factors is social factors such as family dynamics, availability of separate space for jobs, interpersonal relation with other family members, social support. Family dynamics can be understood in terms of number of children, size of household, age of children. For example parents of school age children might face more challenges in work from home because they have to spend more time with their children comparison to college going children. While childless employees can give their all focus to work and they perform better (Bloom et al., 2015; Rupietta and Beckmann, 2018).

Psychological Factors

There are some psychological factors that influence employee's performance. Work from home helps to make balance between home and work life because it facilitate flexibility in schedule, autonomy in work, reduction in commuting time. Employee feels more job satisfaction (Tavares, 2017).

Some researchers have made an effort to understand the psychological factors with the help of social identity theory; employee might reduce self-categorization during work from home because of high physical distancing. It might affect their belongingness to organization adversely (Wiesenfeld et al., 2001).

Martin and MacDonnell, (2012) found that work from home is positively associate with increased productivity, employee retention and job commitment. Whereas, work from home is also associated, with social isolation, feeling of marginalization. It is directly linked with stress and mental health (Di Martino and Wirth, 1990).

Bailey and Kurland, (2002) also found positive correlation between work from home and job satisfaction, productivity. Some researches show that during work from home, employees have reported high stress levels, poor mental health and negative health behaviour such as substance use (Czeisler et al., 2020, Pfefferbaum and North, 2020). Sleep pattern is strongly correlated with physical and psychological stress reactions during work from home (Akerstedt et al., 2002; Miyama et al., 2020).

Noonan and Glass (2012) suggested that work from home can decrease absenteeism but it may not help to reduce work life conflict. Although work from home provides good opportunities to organization to retain skilled and experienced employees. It allows working those employees who have health issues or need to consider family time. It decreased the restrictions of tough office based hours. However, some studies have observed the negative impact of work from home on work life balance. There are individual differences (Hilbrecht et al., 2008).

Mann and Holdsworth, (2003) suggested that work from home is associated with poor well-being. During work from home employees may feel stuck. Employees had not to go work place, so they can spend days to not talking to peer co-workers. Feeling of disconnectivity from co-workers can lead to feeling of loneliness and isolation. Loneliness is associated with high stress, anxiety and depression. It influences employee's performance negatively. Kim et al., (2001) have found that women employees reported lower stress but higher fatigue during work from home whereas male employees reported low level of stress and fatigue both.

Kazekami (2022) found that male employees reported increased happiness and stress. During full time of work from home, employees have reported increased job-related stress. They faces difficulty in disengaging from work and maintaining work life balance. Anderson (2020) has found that work from home more positively correlated with well-being, feeling of happiness, enthusiasm, pride. It is less negatively associate with feeling of bored, frustration, anger, anxiety and fatigue.

Anderson (2020) also revealed that employees who have strong social connectedness (outside the work) have reported less negative effect on well-being. In this way there are various psychological factors that influence employee's performance.

CONCLUSION

It can concluded that there are many factors that influence employee's performance during work from home. Organizational, social and psychological factors are some important factors that cannot be ignored. It has been observed that there are many psychological factors such as personality traits, mental health, adjustment ability, perceived self-efficacy, stress coping style and perceived job security affect performance. Perceived social support, family structure, and interpersonal relation are social factors that affect employee's performance during work from home. It affects their mental health too.

Hybrid working approach is popular in recent year. It allows employees to work both ways. It allows employees to split time between home hours and workplace hours. So it is productive way of working. Whereas it can't deny that work from home has become most important technique of organization to function regularly. It helps to prevent unemployment and keep society working.

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