The Perception of Faculty Fraternity towards Work from Home during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: *An individual's personal life and professional life if balanced well it is called as work life balance. One of the ways of maintaining a healthy work life balance, work from home was given as an option to the employees during the recent past. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic this was the only option that was available to all the industries including the teaching industry. As this was entirely new concept an attempt was made to study the varies challenges faced by the faculty fraternity during work from home. It also studies if both men and women had faced similar or different challenges while working from home. Further, this study also examined the most missing things of offices while work from home and most missing things of home while work from office. The results highlighted that among the different challenges irrespective of gender unstable internet was the biggest challenge while work from home. Among different missing things of offices colleagues were found to be the most missed and comfortable clothes were the most missed thing when faculty fraternity worked from office (college) previously before work from home.*

Keywords: COVID-19, Pandemic, Work From Home, Work Life Balance, Internet Connectivity and Faculty Fraternity

1. Introduction

On March 22, 2020, when the first country wide lockdown was declared no one ever imagined that this would become a phenomenon for next few months. During the next few months, a lot of changes and adjustments took place within the workforce to keep the work going on uninterruptedly. However, world has experienced the new change in the way workforce had to shift the work to their homes. This shift has further made the workforce feel the concept of the physical location merging into a mere idea for few months. Few of the organizations like Micro-soft gave this opt has a lifelong choice to its employees, while few companies had no option but to continue this way till the situation would have been near normal. The concept of work from home was in vague for few IT companies. The colleges and schools were also among those sectors which had to follow the work from home option as it was felt the teaching should go on. Work from home was definitely a challenge that was readily accepted by teaching fraternity. The teachers had to quickly learn the new technology and adapt themselves to a new system where there were no students but the camera while teaching the subject.

2. Review of Literature

Moore and Crosbie (2002) opined that work from home was not a real solution for modern working life. Fepohunda (2014) study posited that there was a significant relationship between work life balance (WLB) practices and organizational productivity with reference to Nigerian workers. From the studies of Bond (2009) Hochschild (2007) and Okeke (2011) it was evident that even if work from home was an option provided as a means of better work life balance, it did not guarantee in reducing work-life conflicts nor showed much work-life balance advancements. Further, even if work from home was provided as a policy it was observed by Spinla (2004). Kiger (2005), Mordi and Oja (2011) that very few numbers of employees utilized the facility. Shareen & Shahid (2020) highlighted that even

though work from home was given to teaching faculty they missed the presence of the students. Further, it was also found that good internet connectivity was very important factor to work from home.

It was found that women started taking up paid employment from past 30 years. However, the role of men in the household work remained relative the same (Evertsson and Nermo, 2004). Schwarts (1992) opinioned that for working women there is no solid family support at home. Delgado and Canabal (2006) expressed and highlighted that even if women is working but the primary responsibility of care taking of child is borne by women. Not only that but the family responsibility also is to be taken care of women only, while it was found that she could handle both the roles diligently.

Research Questions
Is there a difference between the challenges faced by male and female faculty while they are working from home?
What would be most important aspect that the faculties are missing while they work from home vs. work from college/office?

Objectives
1) To study the challenges faced by faculty during work from home
2) To examine the most missing things of offices while work from home
3) To examine the most missing things of home while work from office

Hypothesis
$H_0 1$: There is no difference between the male and female teaching faculty while facing challenges during work from home
$H_0 2$: There is no difference in missing things of office while work from home among teaching fraternity with different working hours.

H$_0$2: There is no difference in missing things of home while work from office among teaching fraternity with different working hours.

3. Scope of the Study

The present study is based on the teaching fraternity who belonged to graduation and post-graduation in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Data was collected through a structured interview schedule of general questions related to the faculty and questions related to work from home. The data was collected during the months of May 2020 and June 2020. The criteria to answer the questionnaire was that the faculty must have at least one month of online teaching experience during the lockdown time. The male respondents were found to be 73 while 65 of them were female out of the total 134 respondents. 72 respondents belong to the age group of 25 to 35 years, 49 of them were from the age group of 36 to 45 years, 16 of them belonged to 46 years to 55 years and 1 respondent was above 55 years. The respondents were from different educational streams like management (45), engineering, commerce or other streams (93). Forty of the respondents had a teaching experience of less than 5 years, 34 of them had 6 to 10 years, 32 of them had 11 to 15 years and 16 each with 15 to 20

years and more than 20 years of teaching experience respectively.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Gender and Challenges faced during Work from Home

Demographic factors refer to the vital and measurable statistics of a population. Demographic characteristics, such as age, sex, marital status, income, occupation and education are most often used as the basis for explaining how these variables could possibly influence the challenges faced differently by the different demographics. For the present study gender was considered as it was felt that even though women were into paid employment from several years, she had additional responsibility of family and children, with work from home and the lines blurring between office and home, women had more role to play. For examining the challenges faced during work from home the items that were included in the interview schedule were internet stability, technical support, children crying or attention seeking, support to be provided to spouse in other works, other distractions like television noise and washroom noises and no challenges faced at all. The results pertaining to this aspect are presented in Tables 1.

Table1.1: Cross Tabulation of Gender and Challenges faced during WFH

		Internet stability	Technical support	Children crying or attention seeking	To Support Spouse	Other Distractions	No Challenges	Total
Gender	Female	13 % (18)	5% (7)	10% (13)	1% (2)	8% (11)	7% (10)	46% (61)
	Male	15% (20)	9% (12)	1% (2)	4% (6)	10% (13)	15% (20)	54% (73)
Total		28% (38)	14% (19)	11% (15)	6% (8)	18% (24)	22% (30)	100% (134)

An analysis of Table 1.1reveals that most of the respondents 38 (28 percent) faced internet stability as the major challenge when they had to shift to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, it is also evident that 30 (22 percent) of the respondents had no challenges to report

while work from home. There were other distractions that at least 24 (18%) of the respondents' reported which were like television noise or even something like wash room usage noise. Overall, 61 out of 134 are female respondents and 73 (54 percent) are male respondents.

Table 1.2: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MissWhile at Office	Equal variances assumed	0.403	0.527	-0.005	132	0.996	-0.001	0.227	-0.451	0.448
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.005	130.484	0.996	-0.001	0.226	-0.448	0.445

From table 1.2 it is clear that for female faculty, internet stability was reported as a challenge (13%), even though 15% of male expressed that internet stability was one of the challenges while work from home. It is evident from the analysis that equal number of males also opinioned that there were no challenges (15%) faced. This shows that there is some difference in the way men and women face challenges during work from home. Further, it is also evident that children and attention seeking was primarily reported by female (10%) rather than male (1%). Hence, it was hypothesized that there is no difference between the make and female teaching faculty while facing challenges

during work from home to test if there was any such statistical difference between the challenges faced.

From the above table 1.2 it could be inferred that 'P' value of levene's test is 0.527 which is more than -.005 when compared to 't' -.005. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no variance in challenges faced by both men and women during work from home. The mean scores (2.41) are also found to be equal when the Independent samples T test was calculated showing that both men and women face same type of challenges.

4.2 Weekly Hours of WFH and Things missing of office

Different colleges issued different working weekly working hours for work from home. The numbers of hours that were considered for the interview schedule are less than 20 hours per week, 21 to 35 hours per year and more than 36 hours per week. Items that were considered for most missing things at office while work from home are water and tea served by tableside, colleagues, non-work-related conversations, small breaks which include walks and going out for tea and chance to get away from family. The results are shown in table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Weekly Hours WFH * Miss While at home Crosstabulation

		Miss Whileathome					Total
		Water and Tea served by tableside	Colleagues	Non-work-related conversation	Small-Breaks	Chance to get away from family	
WeeklyHours WFH	20 Hours	4% (5)	40% (53)	7% (9)	7% (10)	10% (13)	67% (90)
	21-35 hours	1% (1)	13% (17)	3% (4)	1% (2)	1% (1)	19% (25)
	> 36 hours	0	10% (13)	0	3% (4)	1% (2)	14%(19)
Total		4% (6)	62% (83)	10% (13)	12% (16)	12% (16)	100% (134)

From the above table it is evident that most missing points of work from office (college) was colleagues with 62 percent of the respondents expressing the same (40 percent for 20 hours of work per week, 13 percent for 21 – 25 hours of weekly work and 10 percent for more than 36 hours of working hours per week). The items colleagues included other things likes work related talks, lunches and fun.

Table 2.2: ANOVA (Missing ThingsWhile at Home)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.96	3	1.987	1.57	0.2
Within Groups	164.554	130	1.266		
Total	170.515	133			

From table 2.1 it is analysed that among the three groups of respondents with different working hours there is no difference between the most missing things of office while work from home, henceone-way Anova was carried out to find if this was statically significant.

From table 2.2 it is evident that there is no significant difference between the group means as p >0.05, at .200, thus accepting the null hypothesis.

4.3 Weekly Hours of WFH and Things missing of home

The numbers of hours that were considered for the interview schedule are less than 20 hours per week, 21 to 35 hours per year and more than 36 hours per week. Items that were considered for most missing things at office while work from office are peace and quiet of home, taking small walks if required, comfortable clothes and spouse and children, the results are shown in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Weekly Hours WFH * Miss While at Office Cross tabulation

		Miss While at Office				Total
		Peace & quiet of home	Taking a walk if required	Comfortable clothes	Spouse and children	
WeeklyHours WFH	20 Hours	23% (31)	14% (19)	21 % (28)	9% (12)	67 % (90)
	21-35 hours	6% (8)	5% (7)	7% (9)	1% (1)	19% (25)
	> 36 hours	2% (4)	5% (3)	5% (7)	4% (5)	14% (19)
Total		32% (43)	22% (29)	33% (44)	13% (18)	100% (134)

From the above table it is evident that most missing points of home while work from office (college) were found to be comfortable clothing 33 percent of the respondents expressing the same (21 percent for 20 hours of work per week, 7 percent for 21 – 25 hours of weekly work and 5 percent for more than 36 hours of working hours per week). However, the second most missing point of home while work from office (college) was found to be peace and quiet of home (32 percent).

Table 3.2: ANOVA Miss While at Office

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.106	3	0.369	0.213	0.887
Within Groups	225.319	130	1.733		
Total	226.425	133			

From table 3.1 it is analysed that among the three groups of respondents with different working hours there is no difference between the most missing things of home while work from office. Hence, one-way Anova was carried out to find if this was statically significant. From table 3.2 it is evident that there is no significant difference between the group means as p >0.05, that is 0.887, thus accepting the null hypothesis.

5. Findings

1) Among the different challenges (internet stability, technical support, children crying or attention seeking, support to be provided to spouse in other works, other distractions like television noise and washroom noises and no challenges faced) faced by the faculty fraternity of work from home it was found that (both male and female) most of the respondents onioned that internet stability as the major challenge. Moore and Crosbie (2002) study was also on similar lines that work from home does has challenges and it is not a real solution for modern working life, however, during the COVID-19 pandemic there was no choice for most of the employees. The 'T' test results showed that the null hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there is no variance in challenges faced by both men and women during work from home.

2) Colleagues is the reason (water and tea served by tableside, colleagues, non-work-related conversations, small breaks which include walks and going out for tea and chance to get away from family) that was found to be the most missing thing of office while work from home by most of the faculty who worked with different working hours from home. The Anova results showed that there was no significant difference between the group means thus accepting the null hypothesis. Hence there was no difference in missing things of office while work from home among teaching fraternity with different working hours.

3) Comfortable clothing was found to be the most missing things at office while work from office among various other things like peace and quiet of home, taking small walks if required, comfortable clothes and spouse and children. From the Anova results it was evident that there is no significant difference between the group means accepting the null hypothesis. Hence, there is no difference in missing things of home while work from office among teaching fraternity with different working hours

6. Conclusion

The present study attempted to understand the different challenges faced by male and female faculty fraternity while work from home. Further, the study also focused on if the faculty fraternity missed their colleges and if so what was that which was most missing points of college while work from home. Similarly, study about most missing points of college, if faculty had to go back to colleges was also conducted. Given the results of the study, it was observed that internet stability was a common for both men and women faculty fraternity irrespective of gender. Further, it was found that colleagues were the most missing points of college irrespective of the number of working hours while work home. It was also observed that if the faculty had to get back to college their comfortable clothing of home would be missed by all irrespective of the number of working hours while work from college. The college authorities could help the faculty to reduce the problem of internet stability by finalizing one good broadband internet provider and as bigger entity definitely the bargaining capacity in terms of volume and price from the college would give some solution to the problem. If colleagues are the most missing points a small informal online activities might to some extent give a relief to the faculty which could help all faculty to meet on one online platform.

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