



Workplace Redefined - Emotional Bonding And Working From Home As The New Normal

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ABSTRACT

The decision of Governments globally on lock down had adversely affected work-places all over the world, almost simultaneously, across all nations during the outbreak of the pandemic Covid-19. The use of technology during this period world-wide, had been enormous bringing in for new innovations and new practices at the work-place. The aim of the present study is to find out whether work from home and bonding emotionally is a feasible option for employees using online technology, on account of the pandemic outbreak. Data was collected from 167 employees through online survey who have been working from home in the 40 days period between April-May 2020, from across the working professionals in India. This study found a significant difference in emotional bonding, working from home and performance of the employees. The study concluded that workplaces are redefined today practicing new innovative ways to tackle the pandemic and discussed the 'new normal'.

KEY WORDS: COVID-19, Disruption, Emotional Bonding, Lockdown, Workplace, Work from home

INTRODUCTION

During such unprecedented times as that of the present pandemic situation due to Covid-19, the sudden decision of the Government on lockdown during March-April 2020, had adversely affected all employers as well as employees; across all sectors, globally, both to the developing as well as developed economies. Employees had to make adjustments with the little they had at home, whether the computer, laptops, internet connectivity, the power supply or the office space, and had to continue working despite all odds. The aim of the research is to study whether work from home and bonding emotionally is a feasible

option for employees using online technology through various modes, and whether it has become the 'new normal' due to the pandemic situation.

Since the end of March 2020, India was under a total lockdown and almost all organisations had asked their employees to work from home. The scenario in the world-over, was not much different though....except for the varying time of lock-down announced from country to country! The ILO (International Labour Organisation) Centenary Declaration adopted in June 2019 declared that "safe and healthy working conditions are fundamental to decent work" This is even more significant today, as ensuring safety and health at work is indispensable in the management of the pandemic and the ability to resume work.

Many enterprises had introduced for the first time arrangements for working from home, in order to reduce the risk of contagion to COVID-19. In response to COVID-19, countries across the globe have implemented a range of public health and social measures, including movement restrictions, partial closure or closure of schools and businesses, quarantine in specific geographic areas and international travel restrictions. As the local epidemiology of the disease changes, countries will adjust (i.e. loosen or reinstate) these measures accordingly. As transmission intensity declines, some countries will begin to gradually re-open workplaces to maintain economic activity.

Cooperation between management and workers and their representatives must be an essential element of the work place related prevention measures and respecting the right and duties of workers and employers in occupational safety and health. COVID-19 and other diseases, if contracted through occupational exposure, could be considered as occupational diseases.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tele-work has become the new normal and organisations and people careers have become dependent on Information Technology, they are more time and location independent. The availability of information and technology has enabled organisations to detach time and task from location (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). The geographical separation of work and home, and the division of the day into working hours and free time, are both potentially threatened in this new era. The current challenge employees across the globe are facing is: being productive to their organisations and feel connected to their families at the same time, despite the fact there is no physical distance. Work and family could be said to be two of the most significant elements of human life (Adisa et al., 2016).

Tele-work is defined as work that is performed from different locations (such as home) that enables workers to access to their labour activities by the use of information and communication technologies (Pérez et al., 2003). Internet is a boon and a bane - a technological imperative: a workforce who can do work through computer and telecommunication permits new flexibility in work. (Olson & Lucas, 1982) Olson sees

office automation technology - the electronic documents, and other information- as freeing office workers from the confines of a standard 9-to-5 business day in a conventional office. White-collar workers need not be on site to receive, send, and act on the information they need to do their jobs; they can work whenever and wherever their circumstances and their employers allow them to.

Employers whose professional or managerial employees work at home generally expect two gains: a larger pool of scarce, skilled labour, and increased productivity from that labour. The world being a global workforce, it is easy for the organisations to choose employees from the countries with cheap labour costs and abundant labour supply and by recruiting from among suburban second-income earners rather than urban primary wage earners (Van B et al., 2004).

The trends toward flexible working patterns are also influenced by technological developments whereby business can be conducted away from the specified office environment and often at considerably lower financial costs, making working at 3amas well as on holiday. A recent study implemented in 15 countries (US, UK, Japan, India, Brazil, Argentina, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden) by Euro found and the ILO (2017) discovered that 41% of persons who worked from home considered themselves highly stressed, compared to only 25% of those who worked only on-site. Working from home can result in feeling isolated, working longer hours and blurring the lines between work and family life. If isolation can facilitate concentration, having no social interaction can become a strong stressor. Flexible work hours can become excessive working hours, without breaks and can continue through the night, resulting in associated risks of insomnia as well as other related health issues (Crosbie & Moore, 2004).

Williams (2000) suggests a balance between work and daily life could be mapped within three different but connected areas of their lives. First, personal time and space: the care of self and maintenance of body, mind and soul. Second, care time and space: care properly for others. And third, work time and space: gain economic self-sufficiency. "Teleworking offers new opportunities for workers to keep working. However, workers must be able to negotiate these arrangements so that they retain balance with other responsibilities, such as caring for children, the sick or the elderly, and of course themselves."

Professional workers who might be more available as a result of home work are those who need to connect family and work obligations. Connectedness is "positive emotional appraisal, characterized by a feeling of staying in touch within ongoing social important value defined relationships".

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this paper is:

1. To study whether work from home and bonding emotionally has become the new normal for employees using technology while working from home.
2. To give recommendations and find possible policy implications for handling work from home (WFH) practices and other innovative practices.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study uses Descriptive and Exploratory research design. The population sample for this survey were employees (working professionals, including free-lancers) from various sectors who were working from home during the pandemic COVID 19 from across India. The data was collected through a structured Questionnaire through online survey over a period of 40 days in the period April-May 2020. The Sampling technique used for the survey was non probabilistic conveniences wherein 167 responses were collected, who were working in various sectors.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Kruskal-Wallis Test was performed to understand the significant difference of emotional bonding across age

Ho: There is no significant difference of emotional bonding across Age of the respondents

H1: There is a significant difference of emotional bonding across Age of the respondents

Table I: Kruskal-Wallis Test: Emotional bonding - Age

Test Statistics			
	Chi-Square	Df	Asymp. Sig.
I like to have people around me	4.322	7	.742
I get emotionally attached to the people around me	3.081	7	.877
We share the same wavelength	4.791	7	.685
I prefer reading to watching TV with family	7.400	7	.388
The lighting in my house is soothing to me	29.264	7	.000
The interiors of our house calm me.	14.876	7	.038
Ergonomics is important to me	10.431	7	.165
Noise annoys me	4.370	7	.736
Distractions do not disturb me	14.042	7	.050
My immediate family is a part of my social media	15.852	7	.027
I communicate regularly with my social media contacts	10.886	7	.144
I have an emotional connect with my virtual friends.	7.040	7	.425
a. Kruskal Wallis Test			
b. Grouping Variable: Age			

(Source: Primary data using SPSS)

Table I shows the Kruskal-Wallis Test for Emotional Bonding and Age.

The value of Chi-Square, degree of freedom, and significance is given in Table I. The p value of “The lighting in my house is soothing to me” is 0.000; “The interiors of our house calm me” is 0.038; “Distractions do not disturb me” is 0.50 and “My immediate family is a part of my social media” is 0.027. A P value of these statements is less than 0.05 hence for these statements the null hypotheses is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant difference found in emotional bonding across Age of the respondents. For other statements the researchers fail to reject the null hypotheses.

Table II: Mean Rank of Statements related to WFH across different Age-groups

Age	N	Mean Rank	
The lighting in my house is soothing to me	less than 25 years	10	64.00
	25 to 30 years	26	50.88
	30 to 35 years	38	90.12
	35 to 40 years	28	86.02
	40 to 45 years	13	120.62
	45 to 50 years	33	82.36
	50 to 55 years	11	111.77
	More than 55 years	8	89.56
	Total	167	
The interior of our house calms me.	less than 25 years	10	58.50
	25 to 30 years	26	69.08
	30 to 35 years	38	91.99
	35 to 40 years	28	72.41
	40 to 45 years	13	105.19
	45 to 50 years	33	85.88
	50 to 55 years	11	97.82
	More than 55 years	8	105.81
	Total	167	
Distractions do not disturb me	less than 25 years	10	114.40
	25 to 30 years	26	93.48
	30 to 35 years	38	92.74
	35 to 40 years	28	68.71
	40 to 45 years	13	76.23

	45 to 50 years	33	75.27
	50 to 55 years	11	95.50
	More than 55 years	8	60.00
	Total	167	
My immediate family is a part of my social media	less than 25 years	10	75.35
	25 to 30 years	26	75.85
	30 to 35 years	38	84.62
	35 to 40 years	28	68.57
	40 to 45 years	13	103.85
	45 to 50 years	33	79.50
	50 to 55 years	11	122.55
	More than 55 years	8	105.69
	Total	167	

(Source: Primary data using SPSS)

Table II shows the Mean Rank of few statements concerned with working from home (WFH) across the various age groups.

From the mean rank, it can be concluded that the statements “The lighting in my house is soothing to me” was strongly agreed by the respondents whose age is between 40 to 45 years and strongly disagreed by the respondents whose age is between 25 to 30 years. “The interior of our house calms me” was strongly agreed by the respondents whose age is more than 55 years and strongly disagreed by the respondents whose age is less than 25 years. “Distractions do not disturb me” was strongly agreed by the respondents whose age is less than 25 years and strongly disagreed by the respondents whose age is more than 55 years.

“My immediate family is a part of my social media” was strongly agreed by the respondents whose age is more than 55 years and strongly disagreed by the respondents whose age is less than 25 years.

Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann Whitney U-Test

Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann Whitney U Test was performed to understand the significant difference of emotional bonding across the Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

Ho: There is no significant difference of emotional bonding across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

H1: There is a significant difference of emotional bonding across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

Table III: Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann-Whitney Test (Emotional bonding - Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members)

Statement	Kruskal-Wallis test				Mann Whitney Test	
	Occupation	Experience in Year	Number of kids	Family Member	Gender	Marital Status
I get emotionally attached to the people around me			P = 0.028 H0 Rejected			
I prefer reading to watching TV with family			P = 0.015 H0 Rejected			
The lighting in my house is soothing to me	P = 0.017 H0 Not Accepted	P = 0.000 H0 Not Accepted	P = 0.001 H0 Rejected		P = 0.018 H0 Rejected	P = 0.008 H0 Rejected
My immediate family is a part of my social media				P = 0.039 H0 Rejected		
The interiors of our house calm me.					P = 0.045 H0 Rejected	

(Source: Primary data using SPSS)

Table III shows the Kruskal-Wallis test outcomes as well as Mann-Whitney U-test outcomes of various statements of emotional bonding of the employees. P values of the statements is less than 0.05 hence for these statements the null hypotheses stands rejected and therefore significant difference is found in Emotional bonding across the Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members.

From the mean rank it can be concluded that the statement “The lighting in my house is soothing to me” was strongly agreed by Male employees, Married employees, the employees of Hospitals, the employees whose work experience is more than 25 years, the employees who have only one child, the employees who have 5 members in their family and least agreed by female employees, Unmarried employees, the employees who are doing research, the employees whose work experience is between 2 to 5 years, the

employees who have three children, the employees who have 7 members in their family. “I get emotionally attached to the people around me” was strongly agreed by the employees who have three children and least agreed by the employees who have two children. “I prefer reading to watching TV with family” was strongly agreed by the employees who have one child and least agreed by the employees who have three children. “My immediate family is a part of my social media” was strongly agreed by the employees who have eight members in their family and least agreed by the employees who have ten members in their family. “The interiors of our house calm me.” was strongly agreed by the male employees and least agreed by the female employees.

Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann Whitney Test was performed to understand the significance difference of Working from Home (Infrastructure and Disruption) across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

Ho: There is no significant difference of Working from Home (Infrastructure and Disruption) across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

H1: There is a significance difference of Working from Home (Infrastructure and Disruption) across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

Table IV: Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann-Whitney U-Test (Working from Home – ‘Infrastructure and Disruption’ across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members)

Statement	Kruskal-Wallis test					Mann Whitney Test	
	Age	Occupation	Experience in Year	Number of kids of respondents	Family Member	Gender	Marital Status
I miss the physical presence of in/formal meetings				P = 0.046 H0 Rejected			P = 0.014 H0 Rejected
My work gets affected due to the absence of peers and formal workplace environment	P = 0.023 H0 Rejected		P = 0.003 H0 Rejected	P = 0.008 H0 Rejected			P = 0.000 H0 Rejected
I am able to maintain			P = 0.041	P = 0.033			

working discipline while working from home			H0 Rejected	H0 Rejected			
I can multitask my official and home duties with ease				P = 0.035 H0 Rejected	P = 0.003 H0 Rejected		
How do you rate the power supply at your house?			P = 0.045 H0 Rejected			P = 0.036 H0 Not Accepted	
I have a comfortable work station at my home		P = 0.013 H0 Rejected					
The environment conducive to work from home		P = 0.049 H0 Rejected					

(Source: Primary data using SPSS)

Table IV shows the Kruskal-Wallis test outcomes as well as Mann-Whitney U-test outcomes of various statements of Working from Home (Infrastructure and Disruption). P values of the statements is less than 0.05 hence for these statements the null hypotheses stand rejected and therefore there is a significant difference found in Working from Home (Infrastructure and Disruption) across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members.

From the mean rank it can be concluded that statement “My work gets affected due to the absence of peers and formal workplace environment” was strongly agreed by Married employees, the employees who are aged between 25 to 30 years, the employees whose work experience is more than 25 years, the employees who have no children and least agreed by the Unmarried employees, the employees who are aged between 50 to 55 years, the employees whose work experience is between 2 to 5 years, the employees who have three children.

“I miss the physical presence of in/formal meetings” was strongly agreed by Married employees, the employees who have one child and least agreed by Unmarried employees, the employees who have three children. “I am able to maintain working discipline while working from home” was strongly agreed by the employees whose work experience between 10 to 15 years, the employees who has one child and least agreed by the employees whose work experience between 2 to 5 years, the employees who have three children. “How do you rate the power supply at your house?” Strongly agreed by the male employees, the employees whose work experience is more than 25 years and least agreed by the female employees, the employees whose work experience is more than 2 years. “I have a comfortable work station at my home” was strongly agreed by the consultant and least agreed by the researchers.

“The environment conducive to work from home” was strongly agreed by consultants and least agreed by the employees working in Insurance sector. “I can multi-task my official and home duties with ease” was strongly agreed by the employees who have one child, the employees who have 3 members in their family and least agreed by the employees who have three children, the employees who have 10 members in their family.

Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann Whitney Test was performed to understand the significant difference of Performance / Productivity across the Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

Ho: There is no significant difference of Performance / Productivity across the Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

H1: There is a significant difference of Performance / Productivity across the Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

Table V: Performance / Productivity across the Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members

Statement	Kruskal-Wallis test		Mann-Whitney Test	
	Experience in Year	Family Member	Gender	Marital Status
I am comfortable communicating with my colleagues via email, chat, videoconference, etc. instead of face to face		P = 0.003 H0 Rejected		P = 0.018 H0 Rejected
I am productive spending long periods of time on my own.	P = 0.042 H0 Rejected			

I am confident working without supervision	P = 0.047 H0 Rejected	P = 0.049 H0 Rejected
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(Source: Primary data using SPSS)

Table V shows the Kruskal-Wallis test outcomes as well as Mann-Whitney U-test outcomes of various statements of Performance / Productivity of the employees. P-values of the statements is less than 0.05 hence for these statements the null hypotheses stand rejected and therefore significant difference is found in Performance / Productivity across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members. From the mean rank it can be concluded that “I am confident working without supervision” was strongly agreed by Male employees, the employees whose work experience between 10 to 15 years and least agreed by the female employees, the employees whose work experience between 2 to 5 years. “I am productive spending long periods of time on my own” was strongly agreed by the employees whose work experience was between 10 to 15 years and least agreed by the employees whose work experience was between 15 to 20 years. “I am comfortable communicating with my colleagues via email, chat, videoconferencing, etc. instead of face to face” was strongly agreed by the married employees, the employees who have 2 members in their family and least preferred by the unmarried employees, the employees who have 8 members in their family.

Factor Analysis

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO): The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is an index used to examine the appropriateness of factor analysis. It compares the magnitudes of observed correlation coefficients to magnitude of partial correlation coefficients. High value (between 0.5 and 1.0) indicates factor analysis is appropriate. Table VI shows that the data has KMO statistic as 0.812, which is greater than 0.5. Hence, this value is acceptable and justifies the appropriateness of factor analysis.

Table VI: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.812
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1666.952
	Df	351
	Sig.	.000

(Source: Primary data using SPSS)

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: The data as shown in Table VI reveals that the significance value of Bartlett’s Test is 0.000; this leads to rejection of the idea that the correlation matrix is identity matrix.

Variance Explained

Eigen values represent the total variance explained by each factor. The data in Table VII shows that Eigen values of all the components that can be extracted. A maximum of 27 components can be extracted as there are 27 statements. Table VII also shows the cumulative variance. However, it is required that the maximum amount of variance should be explained in minimum number of components – for this reason extraction of the components is required. Only those factors are extracted for which the seven values are greater than one. These factors are seven in number and together contribute 61.594% of total variance. This is a fair percentage of variance to be explained and assumes of the appropriateness of the factor analysis. However, a careful look at Table VII shows that 61.594% variance is not uniformly distributed across all components where only the first component accounts for 25.129% of variance. Thus, in order for the variance to be uniformly distributed across all the components a rotation of the components matrix is required. Components matrix is the loadings of various variables to the extracted components. The variance explained by each component after the rotation method is shown in the table VII. It is visible from this table that the variance is now evenly distributed in a range of 16.496% – 5.333%, which was 25.129% - 4.264% before rotation.

Table VII: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.785	25.129	25.129	6.785	25.129	25.129	4.454	16.496	16.496
2	2.409	8.923	34.052	2.409	8.923	34.052	2.556	9.467	25.962
3	1.924	7.125	41.177	1.924	7.125	41.177	2.238	8.290	34.252
4	1.709	6.328	47.506	1.709	6.328	47.506	2.207	8.175	42.427
5	1.357	5.027	52.533	1.357	5.027	52.533	1.998	7.400	49.827
6	1.295	4.797	57.330	1.295	4.797	57.330	1.737	6.434	56.260
7	1.151	4.264	61.594	1.151	4.264	61.594	1.440	5.333	61.594
8	.992	3.676	65.270						

9	.922	3.414	68.684						
10	.869	3.220	71.903						
11	.813	3.009	74.913						
12	.727	2.692	77.605						
13	.630	2.332	79.936						
14	.614	2.273	82.209						
15	.568	2.102	84.311						
16	.520	1.926	86.237						
17	.499	1.847	88.084						
18	.465	1.723	89.807						
19	.429	1.588	91.395						
20	.403	1.492	92.887						
21	.368	1.362	94.250						
22	.325	1.202	95.452						
23	.315	1.168	96.620						
24	.255	.946	97.566						
25	.243	.899	98.465						
26	.229	.849	99.314						
27	.185	.686	100.00 0						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

(Source: Primary data using SPSS)

Rotated Component Matrix

Under Varimax rotation, 6 out of 22 statements have factor loadings ≥ 0.550 in case of Factor 1. This reveals that 27.27% of the statements are clubbed into Factor 1. In the similar way 3 out of 22 statements have factor loading ≥ 0.550 in case of Factor 2, 3, 4 and 5. This reveals that 13.63% of the statements are clubbed into Factor 2, 3, 4 and 5. Further 2 out of 22 statements have factor loading ≥ 0.550 in case of Factor 6 and 7, which reveals that 9% of the statements are clubbed in Factor 6 and 7. On the basis of Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization, 7 factors have emerged. Table VIII shows the Rotated Component Matrix.

Table VIII: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am able to maintain working discipline while working from home	.712						
I can multitask my official and home duties with ease	.614						

I am comfortable communicating with my colleagues via email, chat, videoconference, etc. instead of face to face	.699						
The absence of commuting improves my productivity	.687						
I am productive spending long periods of time on my own.	.748						
I am confident working without supervision	.689						
The lighting in my house is soothing to me		.771					
The interiors of our house calms me.		.852					
Ergonomics is important to me		.553					
How do you rate the power supply at your house?			.543				
How would you rate the internet connectivity at your home			.738				
I have a comfortable work station at my home			.595				
My immediate family is a part of my social media				.603			
I communicate regularly with my social media contacts				.815			
I have an emotional connect with my virtual friends.				.793			
I miss the physical presence of in/formal meetings					.827		
My work gets affected due to the absence of peers and formal workplace environment					.607		
The physical work environment helps me perform better					.719		
I like to have people around me						.884	
I get emotionally attached to the people around me						.519	
Noise annoys me							.785
Distractions do not disturb me							.795
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.							

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.
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(Source: Primary data using SPSS)

Naming of the factors

The following seven factors were identified as per the factor loading given from the Table VIII. They are named as

Factor 1: The Comfort of working from home

First factor consists of six variables related to the Comfort of working from home. They are related to maintain working discipline while working from home, multitasking, comfortable communicating with colleagues, absence of commuting and productivity, productive spending long periods of time on my own and confident working without supervision.

Factor 2: Ambience of working from home

The second factor of three variables consists of the ambience of working from home. They are related to the lighting in the house and interiors and ergonomics which are/not feasible for working from home.

Factor 3: Infrastructure

The third factor consists of two variables of Infrastructure. They are related to the supply of electricity (power) and the internet connectivity while working from home.

Factor 4: Bonding on Social Media

The fourth factor which has come out through our research is the Bonding on Social Media. They are related to family, virtual friends and communication on social media on regularly.

Factor 5: Workplace Connectivity

The fifth factor consists of variables which are related to Workplace Connectivity. The statements related to this factor are the physical presence of in/formal meetings, the absence of peers and formal workplace environment and the physical work environment.

Factor 6: Connectedness

The sixth factor consists of two variables which is related to connectedness. The respondents feel while working from home and the statements are - they like to have people around them and get emotionally attached to people around them.

Factor 7: Disruptions

The seventh factor consists of 2 variables which is related to Disruptions. The respondents are asked where noise and distractions distract them while working from home.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Through our study we have found that there was a need for the study - Emotional Bonding and Working From Home - as the new HR Mantra as the world was reeling with the corona virus and India was under lockdown 1 and 2. While organisations closed, its employees had to work from home. There was no time or reach for all to check out if there was necessary internet connectivity from their homes, nor was there a feasibility to upgrade it. This study found a significant difference in emotional bonding across Age, Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members. Significant difference was found in Working from Home (Infrastructure and Disruption) across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members. Significant difference was also found in Performance / Productivity across the Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members. Seven factors are derived from the analysis and they are named as the 'Comfort of working from home, Ambience of working from home, Infrastructure, Bonding on Social Media, Workplace Connectivity, Connectedness and Disruptions'.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study has a limited scope with respect to 167 respondents from employees working in various sectors from India. The data was collected through a structured Questionnaire through online survey over a period of 40 days in the period April-May 2020. The Sampling technique used for the survey was non probabilistic convenience. An extensive and detailed study can be conducted in the future to understand the new work practices and to understand emotional bonding and work from home as the new HR mantra, as the pandemic situation seems to stay with us for a long time. The future scope of the study aims to find new organizational as well as governmental policies which go hand-in-hand with these new HR practices now prevalent at the workplaces. The future scope of the paper lies in the fact that similar studies may be done globally to find whether work from home and bonding emotionally is a feasible option for employees using online technology and what are its short and long-term consequences.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has a small sample size which was collected through an online mode. The results of this survey cannot be applied everywhere in the country as the demographics of country and the infrastructure would vary from place to place. The results and findings of the study is also based on the perceptions of the employees working from home during the lock-down period.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the pandemic situation did bring unprecedented changes in the way HR and work-places are defined today. New innovative practices at the work-places

have to be adapted today to accept the changes taking place on account of plethora of disruptions taking place. The decision of Governments globally on lock down had adversely affected work-places all over the world, almost simultaneously, across all nations during the outbreak of the pandemic Covid-19. In the recent past, a pandemic of this scale had not affected the global businesses and people worldwide to this scale. The use of technology during this period world-wide, also had been enormous bringing in for new innovations and new practices at the work-place. The aim of the research in the present study was to find out whether work from home and bonding emotionally is a feasible option for employees using online technology, on account of the pandemic outbreak. This study found a significant difference in emotional bonding, working from home and performance of the employees. The study concluded that workplaces are redefined today practicing new innovative ways to tackle the pandemic and discussed the 'new normal'.

Further, it was concluded from the open-ended answers that working from home is not 'one size fits all' kind of situation.... infact many tailor-made decisions need to be implemented by the Management, based on industry, sector, number of employees and the like, across various locations. With the sudden decision of the Government on lockdown, employees from all sectors had to make adjustments with the little they had at home, whether computer, laptops, internet connectivity, or power supply or the office space at home and small mercies, was a decision which was thrust on the employees as they say in show biz – the show must go on!

The study has a plethora of policy implications at the organizational level as well as the governmental level, to come up with new and relevant policies which go hand-in-hand with these new changes at the workplace on account of the pandemic...which has become now the 'new normal' now!!

Unlock 2 had allowed organisations to respond to their employees by way of either giving an allowance to augment their office space at their homes or courier them the infrastructure to their employees to work from home.

This study found a significant difference in emotional bonding across Age, Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members. Significant difference was found in Working from Home (Infrastructure and Disruption) across Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members. Significant difference was also found in Performance / Productivity across the Occupation, Experience, Number of Kids and Family Members. Seven factors are derived from the analysis and they are named as the 'Comfort of working from home, Ambience of working from home, Infrastructure, Bonding on Social Media, Workplace Connectivity, Connectedness and Disruptions'.

Despite the shortcomings, all the employees across the country would perhaps be working in the same way, though the motivational levels differed. The pandemic situation had redefined our work practices as well as redefined HR practices *per se*. Further study can also be undertaken to find ways and means of what innovative practices can be implemented to absorb the changes taking place. Studies on how the new organizational

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