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An Empirical Study on Impact of Work from Home on Efficiency and Productivity of IT Employees of India

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ABSTRACT: The advent of technology and the internet has led to a revolution in the way work is performed. Work from home, has become increasingly popular in recent years. The Information Technology (IT) industry in particular has embraced this trend, with many IT employees now performing their duties from the comfort of their homes. In India, this trend has gained momentum due to the growing IT sector and the increasing availability of digital tools and resources. However, there is limited research examining the impact of work from home on the productivity and efficiency of IT employees in India. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the impact of work from home on the productivity and efficiency of employees in the Information Technology industry in India. By shedding light on the challenges and benefits of remote work in the IT industry, the study will contribute to the wider scope of discussion on the future of work and the role of technology in the workplace.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the directives of individual governments, around a third of the world was in some sort of lockdown (Koh, 2020) due to the Covid 19 pandemic. In an effort to start a new Work From Home paradigm wherever it was possible, organizations turned to WFH, which was considered as a partial solution to the business issues caused by the pandemic-induced lockdown**.** In India, the government first imposed a lockdown period, which only permitted emergency services to function (De, 2020). For several months, different regions of the nation experienced varying levels of intensity from the lockdown. Organizations in India, like their international counterparts, transferred work to employees' homes, with a number of businesses offering facilities including hardware and Wi-Fi infrastructure (Gartner, 2020). It would be fascinating to compare how, during the first industrial revolution, work was relocated from houses (such as that of weavers) to factories, and how, as a result of WFH, some work has now returned to homes (Mas & Pallais, 2020).

We looked at the research that is currently accessible on WFH and its effects on the employees, as well as what variables affected the employees' performance or productivity while working there. Therefore, the goal of this study was to comprehend how the WFH during pandemic-induced lockdowns affected the productivity of the IT employee, particularly in light of organizational considerations. Major IT organizations have indicated that roughly 70% of their workers would continue to work from home into the foreseeable future, proving that the culture of WFH is here to stay even beyond the lockdowns (PTI, 2020a, 2020b). Businesses in India and around the world adjusted their operations to continue supplying clients in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. One strategy used was to transfer work from offices to employees' homes, particularly in the IT sector. Although the practice of working from home (WFH) has been around since the 1970s, this was the first instance in which the whole workforce switched to this method of operation for an extended length of time. Our study concentrates on the individual IT professionals' WFH productivity and what variables led to increased or sustained production, and what are the factors which had a positive or negative impact on it.

We studied the organizational factors, like: the autonomy and empowerment given to the employees, availability of access to meet and understand the customer requirements, the employees' perception that they had a fair chance of growth in the company, personal values of the employee being aligned to the values of the company, being well equipped (necessary hardware, a home environment), the comfort of making genuine mistakes, taking risks and lastly, a feeling of pride in the organization. The organizational factors and HR practices must be consistent and adaptable enough to consider the different work environments of the employee, whether they are working from home (WFH) or from the office (WFO), according to the practical implications for business leaders and HR professionals in the IT industry.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies in organisational behaviour and psychology have examined the relationship between the ideas of organisational culture, climate, and commitment and employee outcomes like work satisfaction, performance, and productivity but only a few Indian studies on the effects of the COVID-19 on Indian workers, especially those in the IT sector, have been published. Work from home has become a common norm in the IT industry in India due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This new work arrangement has led to a paradigm shift in the way employees work and has had a profound impact on their productivity and efficiency. The purpose of this literature review is to examine the impact of work from home on the productivity and efficiency of IT employees in India.

Studies have shown that work from home has a positive impact on employee productivity. A survey conducted by the World Economic Forum found that a significant percentage of employees reported an increase in productivity while working from home. This can be attributed to the lack of distractions, better work-life balance, and flexibility to work outside of traditional office hours. Moreover, the use of technology has made it easier for employees to collaborate and communicate with their colleagues and clients, thereby increasing efficiency. However, work from home can also have a negative impact on employee productivity and efficiency. A study conducted by the International Journal of Human Resource Management found that working from home can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness, which can have a negative impact on an employee's motivation and creativity. Additionally, the lack of structure and the lack of a defined work environment can lead to procrastination and decreased productivity.

In the Indian IT industry, work from home has had a mixed impact on employees. According to a survey of Bengaluru-based IT workers, two out of every three employees worked longer hours during WFH, which increased productivity and enhanced work-life balance. Singh et al. (2020). (Seema et al., 2020) observed that 50% of participants reported improved productivity and around 27% indicated a decrease in productivity among Indian employees of international enterprises. Employee inventiveness enhanced to some level during the lockdown, according to a study conducted throughout a major industrial house (Jaiswal & Arun, 2020). However, due to a breakdown in communication with their bosses and coworkers, there was a rise in employee insecurity. A sizable portion (about 23%) believed that working from home would have a negative impact on their evaluations. According to Haridas et al., IT workers who were working remotely during the pandemic, regular communication and substantial teamwork were the factors most strongly associated with productivity. A different study conducted during COVID-19 found that autonomy was positively correlated with employee performance, however a poor work-life balance and associated stress could have a detrimental impact on the employees' output. In their study, Farooq and Sultana (2021) found that women employees were negatively impacted by working from home since they had to juggle domestic responsibilities, in contrast to men who could spend more time working without interruptions. Another study (Haridasan et al., 2021) conducted among female employees at WFH during the pandemic discovered that the women were more productive and produced better quality work when working from home because there was less interruption.

Additionally, sources suggest that all the major corporations, including TCS, Infosys, Wipro, and others, are prepared for a scenario in which a sizable section of the workforce would continue to work without pay (WFH) long after the lockdowns had ended (PTI, 2020a, 2020b). A study conducted by the Indian School of Business found that while work from home has had a positive impact on employee productivity, it has also led to increased stress and burnout. The study found that employees who work from home are more likely to work longer hours and have a harder time disconnecting from work, leading to increased stress and burnout. Additionally, work from home has had a significant impact on the work-life balance of IT employees in India. A survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management found that the majority of employees reported that work from home has made it harder for them to separate their work and personal life. This can lead to increased stress and decreased productivity and efficiency.

In conclusion, work from home has had a profound impact on the productivity and efficiency of IT employees in India. While work from home has had a positive impact on employee productivity, it has also led to increased stress and burnout, and has had a negative impact on work-life balance. Organizations need to take steps to mitigate these negative effects and ensure that their employees are able to work in a healthy and sustainable manner. This can be achieved by providing employees with the necessary tools and resources, and by promoting a positive work culture that values work-life balance and mental well-being.

III. DATA VISUALISATION

According to a 2020 Work From Home IT Sector Impact study by Sectigo and Wakefield Research, espite the difficulties of switching to WFH, IT professionals feel that their performance and that of their teammates has improved. Since the advent of extensive remote work, nearly half (49%) of IT professionals claim that employee productivity has grown, while just 16% believe it has deteriorated. Executive IT professionals have particularly high levels of productivity confidence. According to the report, Top Level IT professionals are more likely to feel that overall productivity has grown (63%) than are mid-level (40%) and non-management (41%) IT professionals. This view is encouraging as businesses emerge from the lockdown and restart stagnant projects because productivity is closely related to revenue growth.
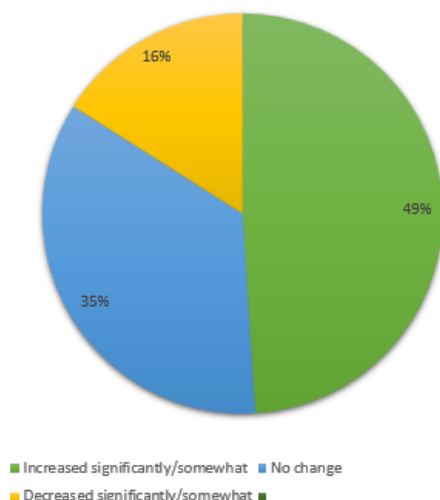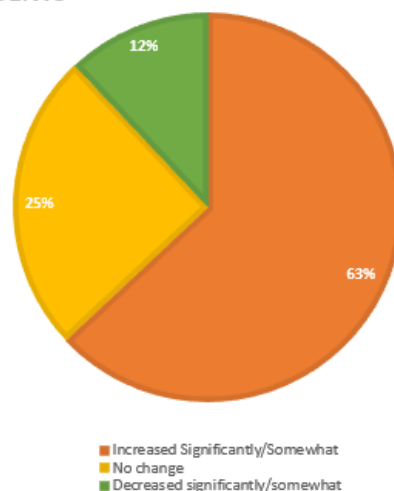

According to the Gartner 2021 Digital Worker Experience Study, 43% of participants reported that having more flexibility with their work schedules helped them be more productive, while 30% of participants said that spending less or no time travelling helped them be more productive yet, 26% of those surveyed claimed a decline in productivity. According to their findings, connectivity problems and technological advancements were two of the main causes of lower productivity. Since 2020 gave workers more freedom over their schedules and the places they choose to work, they want to enforce and expand those benefits in 2021 and beyond. According to 59 percent of the workers polled, they would only consider a new position or employment if it allowed them to work from a location of their choosing rather than if it stated that location would not matter. In a similar vein, 64% of respondents said they would be more likely to consider a job with flexible hours than one without. There were 628 million remote workers in the world in 2021 which represents about 32% of all jobs. Employers strive to strike the appropriate balance with their workforce as remote work shifts from a perk to a must by highlighting workplace flexibility, work-related technologies, and work hours. The managers should make it easy for employees to use efficient computing resources on their hardware and in the cloud, as well as high-quality network services.

REASONS FOR PRODUCTIVITY IN WFH

WFH EXPECTANCY
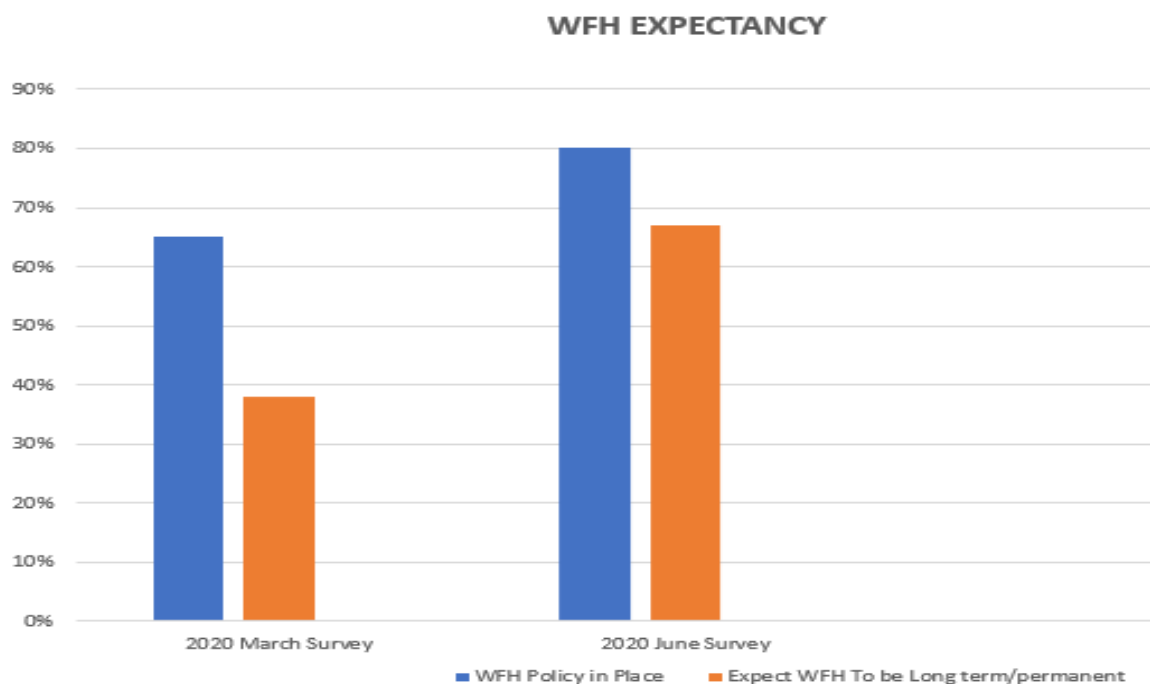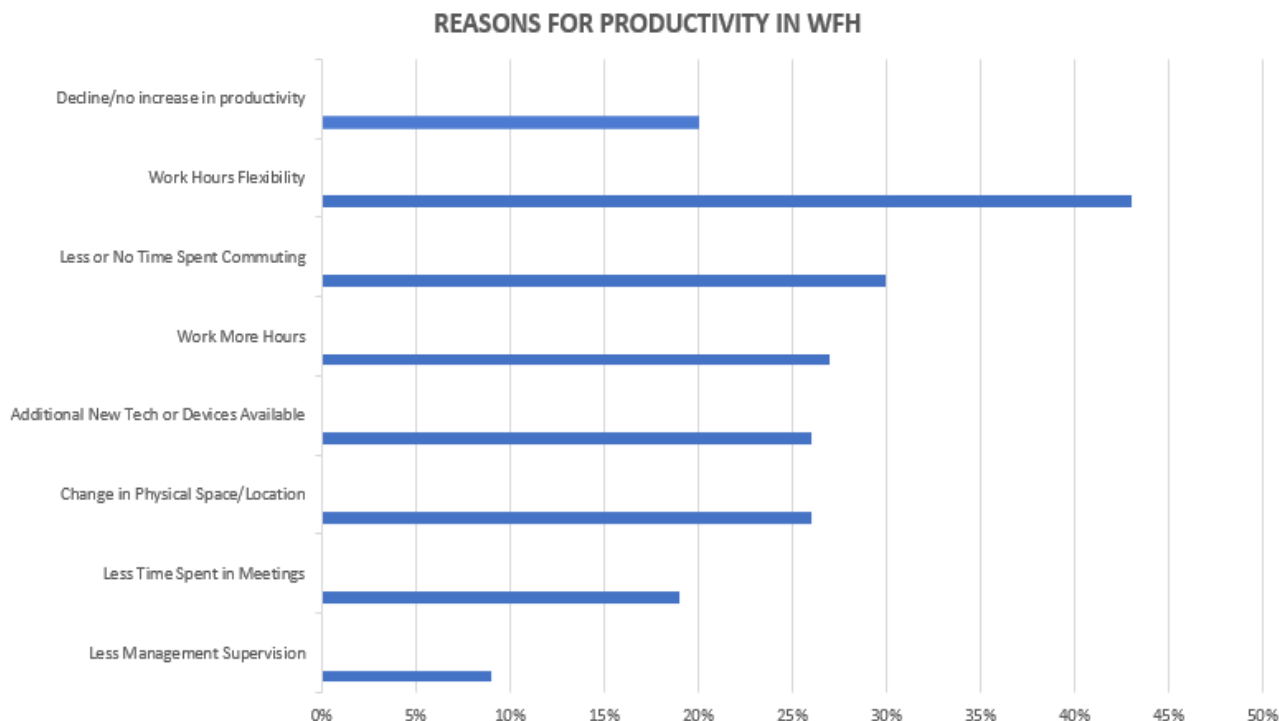
According to a study by Tim Lawson and Brian Scheid, it was found that 2/3rd of organisations expect WFH to be the new permanent norm.

RESEARCH GAP:

Work From Home, a Work From Office substitute, began to take off as a result of COVID-19's effects beginning in March 2020. Research on the effects of lockdowns on WFH and productivity is still in its infancy. There has been a lot of writing about the pandemic's effects, but it has either appeared in general-interest newspapers and magazines or in specialised medical journals as information about the virus's new varieties became available. There hasn't been much writing about Work From Home's effects on workers in reputable study journals. Also this study is confined to the information technology sector in India. Wider scope inclusive of WFH's impact on various professions across multiple countries is required for a comprehensive analysis. Additionally a survey across multiple consecutive years might provide a deeper in depth analysis and understanding.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study shows that organizational elements and workplace culture were crucial for productivity in general and for achievement while working from home. Giving employees flexibility, autonomy, and empowerment has a significant impact on how well they perform. A properly managed HR procedure is necessary to guarantee that they perceive a connection between their performance and prospects for professional advancement. Communication of the organization's vision, mission, and values, as well as management and organizations holding on to these ideals during the most trying of times, are necessary to ensure that the values of the organization and the employees are respected. Building organizational pride has a similar favorable effect on productivity. In this situation, the manager or direct supervisor plays a crucial role. The supervisor implements the majority of the aforementioned organizational and cultural process processes in organizations. The supervisor or manager takes the initiative or is assigned the job to ensuring that the employees complete the procedure, even if the HR department, for instance, starts it centrally. The supervisor represents management to the employee. Female employees need to be given greater care, considering the additional burden they are known to experience, and more flexibility should be built in according to their needs. We could use the pandemic as an example, where supervisors, managers, and organizations quickly communicated and adjusted to ensure a democratic distribution of capital and ensured adequate infrastructure for employees, so that the organization would arguably be seen as a friendlier employer and that higher productivity would be ensured.

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