

Working From Home: Background Research

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Executive Summary

As there is the potential for remote working becoming the new norm in the future, this raised questions surrounding employee well-being, career advancement opportunities, and accommodation when shifting to a work-from-home (WFH) environment. The shift from the office to the home as the working environment has caused a significant impact on people's lives, including employee productivity, work environment, and employees' overall sense of work-life balance (Bell, 2020). For instance, employees are not following their daily routines anymore, or at least not as closely. Activities like commuting to work is no longer involved. Besides, an increasing number of employees reported a sense of social isolation and depression (Allen et al., 2015). Work-life balance is one of the hardest things that employees are dealing with when working from home because they are not taking breaks as usual in between work tasks, and some of them do not even eat regularly (Bell, 2020).

In most cases, employer support was seen as inadequate and forced shifts to working from home for many employees during the pandemic, which was found to have had a negative impact on both employers as well as on the individual (Deschamps, 2020). However, our research also showed that not all shifts to working from home are negative; in certain cases, when remote working is voluntary and the appropriate measures are taken to ensure employees are able to perform their jobs with the proper equipment and training (Harter, 2020), working from home can lead to significant improvements in productivity and employee job satisfaction (National Partnership for Women & Families, & National Employment Law Project, 2020).

For our study, we focus on assessing employee values and employer support and drawing a comparison between individuals working from home and those working at the office during the pandemic. Our goal is to identify correlations between the two through a mix of interviews and survey instruments. To this end, our research questions focus on measuring WFH employees' productivity, overall work-life balance and support received from employers considering the current context of COVID-19.

References

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