

Effect on work life balance due to transformation of technology changes during COVID 19- A study on information technology employees

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Submitted: 15-11-2022

Accepted: 25-11-2022

ABSTRACT

Work from home (WFH) is unquestionably not a novel concept in India or elsewhere. This topic became more popular in India, particularly during the late COVID-19 pandemic. The reason for this was an impulse for some associations to relocate their activities to WFH for employees due to restrictions on working from the office as well as a government-imposed lockdown. Since March, everyone has been settling into a work-from-home routine. That appears to be lasting longer than anyone anticipated. Surveys from around the world reveal a depressing trend even though employees save time on their commute, they invest it right back into their work. Employees' working hours may be one to four hours longer than usual depending on where they are in the world, as they spend extra time in meetings and check-ins, attempting to prove their productivity, or they simply lose track of time because the working day no longer has clear limitations. The Scholar attempted to investigate the consequences of working from home for employees in the Information Technology sector, as well as how they dealt with challenges during that time period. A healthy work-family balance leads to a healthy work-life balance. Because of the increase in employment, longer working hours due to insufficient family income and a target-driven work culture, it is difficult to achieve a good work-life balance. Due to the advancement in digital technology, we observe that there has been progress in the everyone's' life. This research focuses and investigates the factors that influence Information technology employees'. The main focus was to understand their work-life balance while working from home for the office. It was fascinating to learn about various perspectives,

such as whether gender orientation explicit or conjugal status has any different effects as a result of this arrangement. It was also critical to know whether they wanted to continue with the same job indefinitely or return to the office. The study also looked at the effects of WFH on employees' well-being and life patterns as a result of unexpected changes at home

Keywords: Work from home (WFH), Employee, health, family, lifecycle, COVID 19, Information Technology

I. INTRODUCTION

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the company was forced to conduct its operational activities from home. Employees' work-life balance may be impacted by a sudden change in the operational activity system. The researchers wanted to know the work-life balance of the employees during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of work from home in this study. There are dimensions and indicators that are the highest and lowest in constructing each variable, and the findings of this study are expected to be used by the company to minimize and predict the occurrence of negative effects on work-life balance in terms of work from home aspects [1]. COVID-19 challenges caused stress among employees, according to the findings. In addition, family-life disruption and work-life imbalance mediated the relationship between COVID-19 challenges and employee stress both individually and serially. The paper also makes some recommendations to reduce the stress caused by COVID-19 challenges [2]. This study investigated the impact of work-life imbalance and social support on perceived stress and depression during the Spring 2020 COVID-19 shelter-in-place restrictions. Furthermore, the study looked at the

connections between perceived social support from others, support-seeking behavior's and the role of weak-tie support network preference and demographic variables in terms of perceived stress and depression. The findings show that, after controlling for social support, work-life imbalance was a significant predictor of both perceived and actual happiness. Work-life imbalance was found to be a significant predictor of both perceived stress and depression during the shelter-in-place restrictions, even after controlling for social support. Furthermore, higher work-life imbalance predicted higher weak-tie support network preference, whereas lower perceived social support predicted higher weak-tie support network preference. Furthermore, the findings revealed significant differences in weak-tie support preference based on living arrangements, as well as differences in perceived stress and depression between gender and racial/ethnic groups. The implications of the study findings for theory and practice are discussed, as well as key limitations and future research directions [3]. In the last 100 years, the COVID-19 infection was one of the few that affected the entire human race. Similar to plague or Spanish flu, it has had a profound impact on people. The most concerning aspect of the disease is that it spreads through people who are asymptomatic. This implies that locating the spread's carrier will be difficult. Because of the novel nature of the Corona Virus, governments were forced to restrict movement and impose lockdown. The Pandemic COVID 19 has received a lot of attention and discussion in the media and in articles. The Indian legislature declared a national lockdown at the end of March 2020. The lockdown was implemented to prevent the spread of the infection among individuals. All seemed normal at first, but not for long. The infection persisted and grew, forcing the government to maintain the lockdown. That was the point at which most organizations realized they would have to persevere with this challenge and find a solution for business continuity. Unquestionably, it was a difficult task; numerous standards and guidelines were required to ensure individuals' safety. The government enacted laws to restrict people's freedom of movement in a country, with serious consequences. Even the hours for purchasing daily necessities were restricted. This was necessary to ensure that the virus's spread was limited until the infrastructure was ready for treatment. One of the important guidelines imposed by the government was to confine/urge individuals to their homes, and organizations should encourage working from home rather than going to workplaces, as working

at workplaces could increase the risk of virus spread. It was a blessing in disguise for the information technology industry. This arrangement was quickly adopted by numerous organizations to maintain business continuity because it was the only option provided by the government under strict imposed regulations. Organizations were nervous when they discovered the available resources to deal with the COVID 19 effect on the business, and they had no choice but to plan for adapting this work from home if necessary. Employees who wanted to keep their jobs had little choice but to adapt to work from home regulations imposed by the government and adaptations made by organizations in light of the seriousness of COVID 19 and the need for endurance. The infection could only be detected by checking the individual's temperature or taking a swab from the mouth/nose. As previously stated, due to the risk of asymptomatic transporters spreading infections, working from home was the only viable option where individuals could be limited to going out for work while keeping the economy running [4]. We are all familiar with the concept known as WFH, which has changed the lives of many people. This is unquestionably not another idea for some businesses. During the ongoing pandemic, this was heavily discussed, as if there had previously been no work from home. Indeed, many freelancers previously and now work from home. This is also known as a small office home office (SOHO), and it includes small business owners or freelancers who want to set up an office at home to save money, as well as sole proprietors who work from home. Many information technology organizations, particularly those in the software industry, have long modified this practice. The global trend of allowing employees to work from home is a greater amount of human capital and the executives' activities to provide the adaptability of work from home while one can deal with family duties. Specifically for female employees, this was one of the additional benefits of joining such organizations because of their adaptability. In any case, in many countries, men prefer not to travel to and from work, especially if the office is located in a remote location. Indeed, organizations recognized the cost savings associated with allowing employees to work from home. This saves organizations money on infrastructure, utilities, and other amenities. As a result, organizations adapted work from home to their employees as a forced decision as well as, at times, as a habitual choice to work out. Work from home, as previously mentioned has numerous advantages for both organizations, as well as employees who have

successfully adjusted the equivalent in the past. Similarly, during the pandemic, similar measures were taken in India. A human is a difficult entity to comprehend because changes in their surroundings affect them far more than others. This unexpected shift in employee working style had a significant impact. Whether psychological or physical, both effects were difficult for some to adjust to and cope with. Work-life balance is an issue of employee well-being that is related to the employee's ability to manage personal and professional responsibilities while also taking time to relax. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance reduces stress and prevents burnout in working environment. Technology influences and alters the quality of work-life in both positive and negative ways. The level of progress is determined by technologies. Technology is regarded as the solution to all work issues, but today's mobile and digital world can frequently result in more problems than solutions. The evolution of technology has a significant impact on how we live. Technology transformation has changed from the employee's point of view, we combine work and personal time. The advancement of digital technology becomes an important part of our daily lives, and employees can be more efficient, fitting work around their lifestyle and routine. Digital transformations enable us to be connected permanently. Its findings suggest that using the Internet and mobile technologies influences the dimensions (flexibility and permeability), types (integration, autonomy, interference, and segmentation), and consequences (job satisfaction, job stress, and overwork) of work-life balance

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Schifano et al., 2021 tracked the well-being of individuals across five European countries during the course of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and relate their well-being to working from home. The authors also consider the role of pandemic-policy stringency in affecting well-being in Europe [5]. COVID-19 is an abbreviation for (Coronavirus Disease of 2019), as assigned by the WHO. Because of the phylogenetic and taxonomic analysis of this novel coronavirus, the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses proposed naming it SARS-CoV-2. This highlights the severity of being infected with COVID-19, as well as the lack of effective therapy available to date (Coronaviridae Study Group of the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses, 2020). Nicola et al., 2020 proposed that COVID-19 not only had negative health and physical consequences for the human body and the

global healthcare system. As larger-scale negative effects emerged along the way, it fueled fears of an impending economic crisis and recession. Social isolation, self-isolation, and travel restrictions have resulted in a significant decrease in demand for human resources across all economic sectors, as well as the loss of many jobs within many infrastructures at an unprecedented rate [6]. Putri et al., 2021 suggested that the majority of employees agreed that their families were pleased to have them at home, the remaining 25% of employees who felt their families were not pleased need only look at possible solution to make the situation better. As for many businesses, the new way of working as Work from home may be unavoidable. Employees must find a solution for making their families happy because they work from home as Quality time is included in spending weekends with them or establishing a psychological barrier between office work and priorities in the home [1]. Wright et al., 2022 recommended that the study looked at the connections between perceived social support from others, support-seeking behaviors and the role of weak-tie support network preference and demographic variables in terms of perceived stress and depression. Work-life imbalance was found to be a significant predictor of both perceived stress and depression during the shelter-in-place restrictions, even after controlling for social support. Furthermore, higher work-life imbalance predicted higher weak-tie support network preference, whereas lower perceived social support predicted higher weak-tie support network preference. Furthermore, the findings revealed significant differences in weak-tie support preference based on living arrangements, as well as differences in perceived stress and depression between gender and racial/ethnic groups [7]. Vyas et al., 2021 proposed that COVID-19, the global pandemic has rendered a large proportion of the workforce unable to commute to work in order to slow the virus's spread. Because of the pandemic, most, if not all, employees worked from home (WFH). As a result, most governments have made WFH a policy priority. In doing so, policies must be developed with the practicality of both employers and employees in mind. However, the current situation offers unique insight into how well working from home works, and it may play an important role in future policies that reshape the current structure of working hours, potentially allowing for more flexibility. For future policy decisions, a critical insight and related recommendations have been developed [8]. Gupta S., 2021 focused on Work-Life Balance (WLB) is a critical concept for everyone. The concept arose

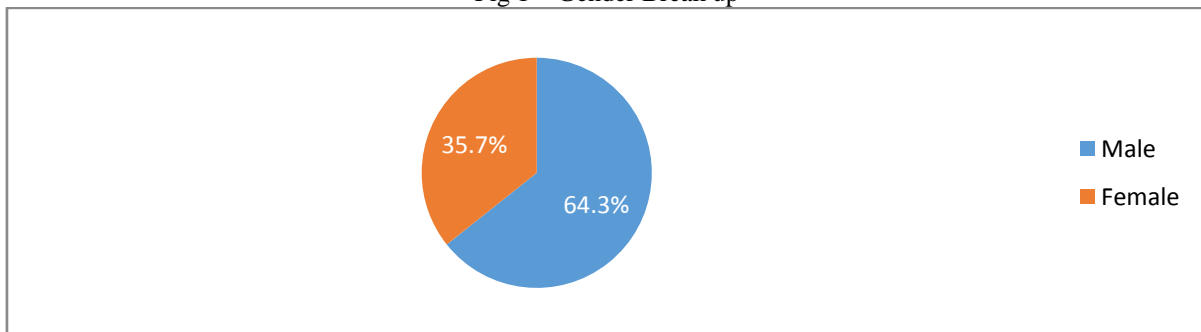
from the need to meet competing but equally important demands of various life domains within a reasonable time frame. People at work are frequently mentally present at home and during family time, but they are preoccupied with their work and fail to justify either domain. Concerns about work-life balance and the consequences of imbalance on personal and professional lives have piqued the interest of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. Some believe that work-life balance can never be achieved because one must sacrifice one thing to achieve another. Others believe that working from home has the potential to alleviate work-life balance issues to some extent. WFH is critical in combating the current pandemic and may become the "new normal," necessitating new working rules. If the number of as more workers work from home in the future, it is critical to understand their needs. Work-life balance requirements and experiences [9]. Epstein, Rachel, et al, 2021 proposed that there is guilt in feeling overwhelmed when we have had jobs throughout the pandemic and, for some of us, the ability to teach from the safety of our homes, unlike so many frontline essential workers. So, of course, we

recognize that we have not suffered as much as others. But the need to keep pushing on and pushing through without a significant break for this long, with no end in sight to the pandemic has taken its toll [14].

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Because the pandemic was a new area of research and access to supporting information for this subject was limited, the scholar chose to collect primary data and secondary data from various reports and articles. In this study, a survey method with descriptive verification research was used. The data used are primary data collected during the questionnaire distribution. Working from home has a positive and significant effect on employees' work-life balance, according to the findings. It was determined that the respondents were solely from the information technology sector. The study also sought to determine whether gender differences influenced WFH adaptation, as well as whether marital status posed any difficulties. A total of 100 participants' data were collected, of which 80 were from information technology industry. The same was retained and processed further.

Fig 1 – Gender Break up



Out of total respondents total Male respondents were 64.3% & 35.7 % were female.

IV. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

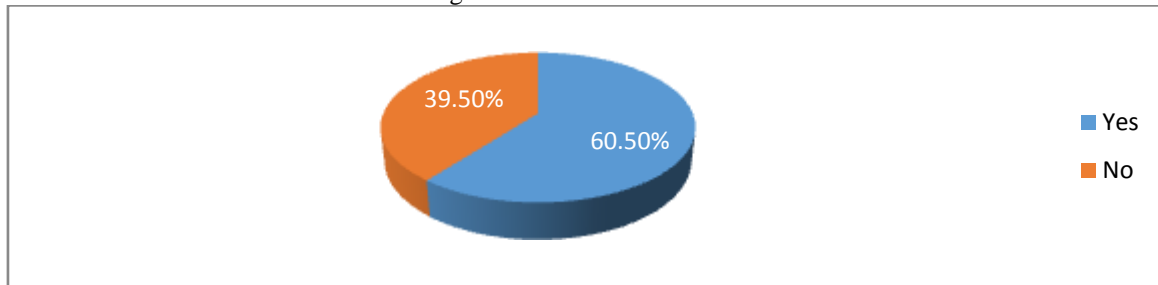
The factors effecting individuals working from home were

1. Work Stress:

60.5% of respondents stated that working from home was more stressful than working in an

office. During personal interviews, it was discovered that stress was primarily caused by long work hours. People were forced to work long hours due to teammate expectations for response time and the lack of fixed work schedules.

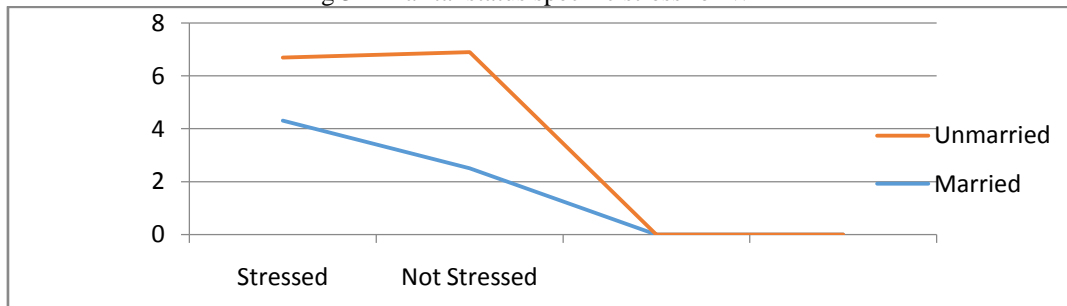
Fig 2 – Stressfulness of WFH



When working from home, male respondents were found to be more stressed than female respondents. Marital status observations revealed that married employees are more stressed working from home than unmarried employees.

This was due to the fact that they had to manage both the office and the family from the same location.

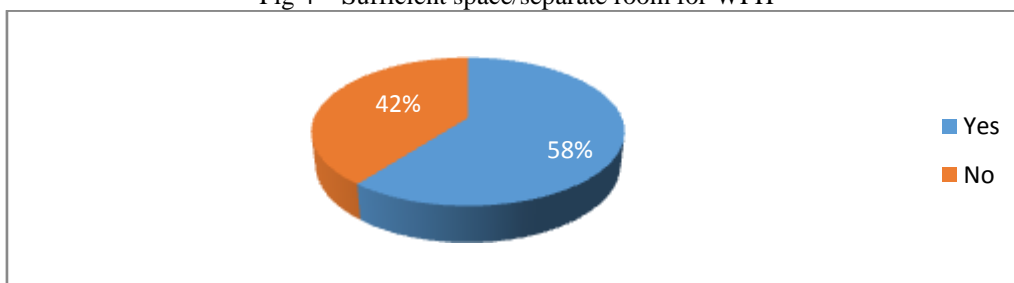
Fig 3 – Marital status specific stress for WFH



2. **Space:**
 Separate room and sufficient space are requisite of many employees while working from home seems to be a means of comfort to all. 58% employees

believed that they were managing this space and managed a separate room for themselves to ensure their work is not disturbed while working from home.

Fig 4 – Sufficient space/separate room for WFH



It is important to expect personal space in social situations and having your own space while working from home provides a more productive and peaceful working environment. According to the data in the table, female respondents found it relatively easy to find separate space at home while working from home. This distinction necessitates a separate examination. The fact that they were unable to separate themselves from household duties and operate from a separate space was one of

the factors that contributed to their discrimination. Other reasons could include cultural differences.

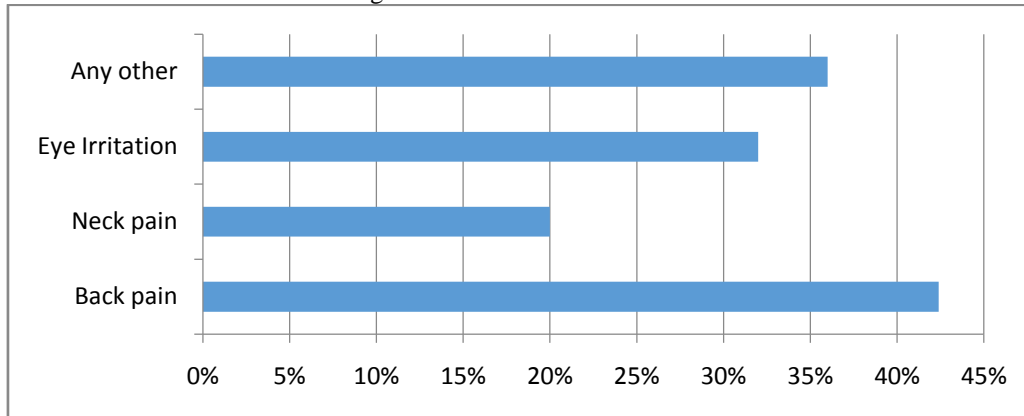
3. **Physical Health:**

This was one of the most important aspects of the research. The observation revealed the impact of working from home. People have a tendency to ignore minor pains and discomforts in their bodies, which can lead to major illness in the future. This study conclusively demonstrates that working from home has a significant impact on

employee health. Many employees who worked from home did not adhere to any formal seating arrangement, resulting in back and neck pain. Irritation to the eyes was a common complaint

whether working from home or office; the only theory applicable was that the irritation persisted even more due to extended hours of work at home with few breaks.

Fig 5 – Effect of WFH on health



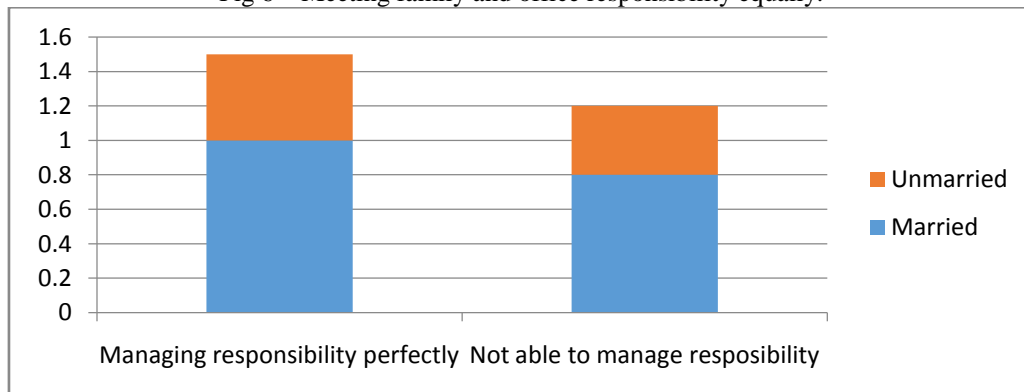
43% respondents agreed that they had back pain as well close to 32% referred to irritation in the eyes.

4. **Work Life Balance:**

70 percent of respondents said they could balance home and office responsibilities equally. The most thoughtful aspect of this study was that married people were much better at managing this balance than unmarried people. Unmarried employees' expectations from family, colleagues,

and friends were higher, making it difficult for them to strike a balance. Bachelors are also more prone to imbalance because they become more workaholic in order to advance quickly in their careers. In addition, married employees were found to have better time management skills than bachelor.

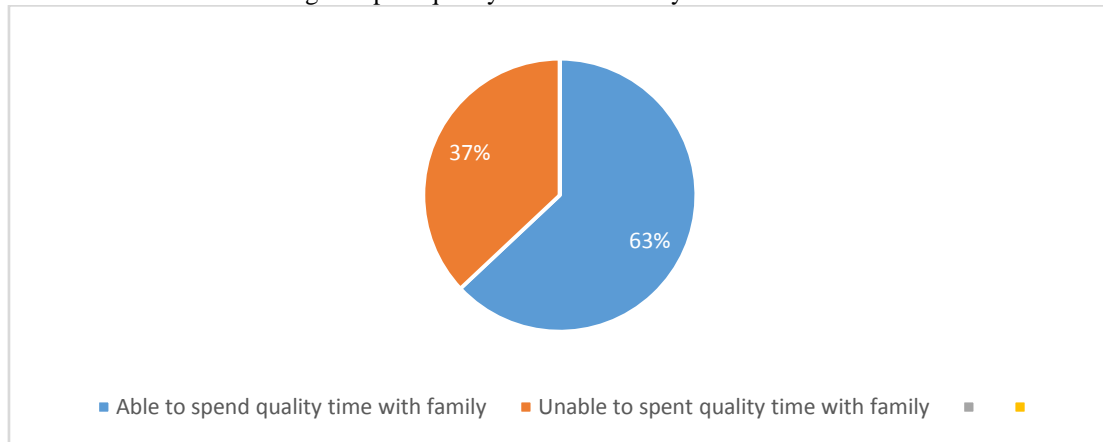
Fig 6 – Meeting family and office responsibility equally.



5. **Family Time:**

For the information technology employees, weekends were less hectic.

Fig 7 –Spent quality time with family on weekends.



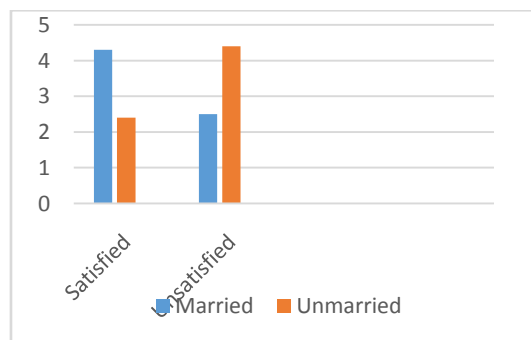
It was observed that bachelors had not spent quality time to spend with their families compared to married employees before WFH. 63% respondents replied that they had able to spend quality time with their family during weekends.

6. **Infrastructure:**

This factor was investigated in order to determine the level of comfort and satisfaction of

employees who work from home. Many software companies provide financial support for the purchase of infrastructure, including furniture, for employees who work from home. While some mid-sized businesses only provide basic amenities such as a laptop and internet access. It was discovered that infrastructure expectations varied from person to person.

Fig 16 – Infrastructure satisfaction at home



It was discovered that bachelors and female employees were dissatisfied with the infrastructure. The reason for this could be that millennial have higher expectations than Generation X and compare facilities with other competing companies. Female employees preferred working in the office to working at home.

V. CONCLUSIONS

We are now focusing on conclusion of the paper. We suggest various solutions like even in a small space, a separate space for working from home can be created by carefully separating work and home. We often take a break while working is essential. A cautious approach to observe and adhering to strict self-discipline can assist in

accomplishing. Physical and mental health can be preserved if one enjoys one's work, even if it is done at home. No company will go so far as to disregard any of its employees' health. As a result, it is critical to adhere to strict guidelines while at work, such as drinking plenty of water, washing your hands frequently and taking regular breaks. In fact, turning off cell phone notifications can sometimes help you finish your work on time and faster. The need for life balance between home and work, we have to focus on the great need to consider partition. When doing office work, one should try to avoid interfering with household matters and vice versa. Because individuals work and earn for themselves and their families, families have the right to receive complete attention from

them when it is due and dedicated to them. Weekends are the best time to spend with them because it not only gives them attention and satisfaction, but it also allows an individual employee to devote the rest of his or her working days to family. While the majority of employees agreed that their families were pleased to have them at home, the remaining 25% of employees who felt their families were not pleased must only consider possible solutions to improve the situation. As for many companies, a new way of working such as working from home may be unavoidable; in that case, employees must find a way to make their families happy while working from home. Including quality time spent with them on weekends or psychological separation between office work and household priorities. Balancing responsibilities on both sides. Despite all of the advantages during a pandemic, one may still believe that the office is a better option than the home. As scholars understand current trends from many companies, they would be looking at a hybrid solution in this case. Where neither complete work from home nor complete work from office is possible. Many organizations are exploring alternatives to only working from home, either by category of people who require work from home or on a rotation for all employees.

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