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### Changes and challenges in work from home culture

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#### Abstract

The proportion of institutions specially, higher education institutions instigating working-from-home (WFH) or employing adaptable working arrangements has been increasing along with the novel Coronavirus COVID-19. Nevertheless, in India, WFH concept is minimally applied despite its benefits since lack of preparedness and readiness of institutions. WFH concept also engenders work and family constraints and challenges. Hence, this study investigates the potential benefits, changes, challenges and impact of WFH on work, family and health.

**Keywords:** work from home (WFH), video conferencing, Education, e-learning etc.

#### Introduction

Immediately after independence from British rule in 1947, the Department of Education was set up under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), with a command to increment both admittance to instruction and quality, prompting the main National Policy on Education in 1968. Introductory development of the training area was restricted by India's financial development however proceeded consistently until the finish of the twentieth century. Since focusing on the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, India has gained incredible ground towards accomplishing general essential instruction. The World Bank reports that somewhere in the range of 2000 and 2017, primary school enrolment expanded by in excess of 33 million: from 156.6 million of every 2000–01 to 189.9 million out of 2017–18. 2 While accomplishment differs extraordinarily between India's 29 states and seven association domains, 66% of these have professed to have accomplished general essential enrolment.

Instruction is major for accomplishing full human potential, building up an impartial and just society, and advancing public turn of events. Giving general admittance to quality instruction is the way to financial development, social equity and fairness, logical headway, public combination and social safeguarding; and for India's proceeded with climb, progress, and administration on the worldwide stage. India will have the most elevated youth populace on the planet throughout the following decade, and our capacity to give excellent instructive occasions to them will shape the fate of our nation. The world is going through quick changes in the information scene. With the ascent of huge information, AI, and computerized reasoning, numerous untalented positions worldwide might be taken over by machines, while the requirement for gifted work, especially including arithmetic, software engineering and information science, related to multi-disciplinary capacities over technical studies, sociologies and humanities, will be in quickly expanding request. With environmental change and fast consumption of common assets, there will be a sizable move by they way we meet the world's energy, water, and disinfection needs, again bringing about the requirement for new gifted work, especially in science, science, physical science, and atmosphere science. There will be a developing interest for humanities and workmanship, as India moves towards turning into a created nation and among the three biggest economies on the planet. Working distantly has its advantages. No day by day drive in the first part of the day. No severe clothing standard (except if you have online gatherings!). Be that as it may, it additionally has its weaknesses. It tends to be difficult to remain inspired. You aren't working close by your group. Also, you don't have partners to associate with.

Essential instruction in India right now covers five evaluations, commonly from ages six to 10 (in spite of the fact that note the changed primary stage in Table 1, proposed for the 2019 NEP above). In any case, there is a lot of variety at nearby level, with ASER announcing that in

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provincial zones 10% of youngsters in essential instruction were four, and 34 percent were five, while 10% of those still in preschool were seven. Just as 'first' language (see conversation of Languages in instruction in India underneath), subjects regularly incorporate English, arithmetic and generally a joined social examinations and science exercise (for example 'ecological science' or 'sociology'). Notwithstanding these, physical training is offered on most schedules, however stays particularly 'on the periphery', with under 20% of provincial schools having devoted physical instruction instructors. In certain states (for example West Bengal), craftsmanship is likewise expressly remembered for the essential educational program. The Draft NEP51 imagines a more prominent assortment of subjects at essential level, with reestablished accentuations on workmanship, music and physical instruction demonstrated. While maintenance to upper essential has improved since 2000, with government measurements expressing that more than 90% of understudies changed to upper essential in 2015/16, as per NSSO (2014), 37 percent of guys and 39 percent of females left their examination in the wake of finishing essential schooling.

### Changes in work from home culture

In most circumstances it is possible to assign activities and discussions so that students seek out the physical experiences they need, then bring back evidence of and reflections on what they have done. This is possible with all age groups, depending on the amount of supervision they need to conduct physical activities. For younger learners, special software that uses video evidencing and adult reflection is the best option. Parents or guardians will need to supervise younger learners in their play and learning activities the school needs to provide some basic guidelines on what to observe. The school should also set up video conferencing with learners and guardians to discuss the children's development. For students who are not under quarantine but separated from campus, it is possible to use public libraries, sports facilities, or even art galleries as part of their learning. Some colleges and universities can provide space for science and art activities. Online databases for resources are available through most library subscriptions. If students are under quarantine or must remain indoors, intelligent tutors and virtual learning environments can provide some support, especially for science-related activities. There are many open-source and free options for virtual science labs, galleries, physics simulations, etc that can be used to support students. Physical health activities that can be conducted indoors are also reasonable options for students under temporary quarantine.



Fig 1: Work from home with child education

### Video conferencing and recording

Just as with personal information, video imaging of minors needs permissions from parents or guardians for all age groups. With learners under the age of 11, video conferencing

should happen with said guardians present. Learners can also chat in groups regardless of age, though one-on-one conferencing with students is best for feedback on individually-assigned activities and general wellness. As much as possible, video conferencing should be set up to eliminate backgrounds that provide information on learners' personal lives and locations. A simple white or light-coloured background is best. Personal names should be avoided in any chat invites or titles. For conferences, the student and guardian should be informed if the conference will be recorded.

### Use of social media for learning and teaching

It is possible to use social media for some communications or media sharing with parents, guardians, or learners who are over 13 years old. There are also some closed social media sites that are moderated and that younger learners can sign into. Examples include Edmo do and Gecko Life. For smaller cohorts of learners and teachers, schools can consider family sharing apps such as Family Wall that allow small groups to post media, keep calendars, and have text chats. That being said, using social media does not protect the privacy of users adequately enough for the depth of sharing and discussion required for learning and teaching in IB World Schools. If schools want to do extensive sharing of content and reflections, this should be done through an LMS. Some social media sites and apps are not available in certain countries. China and the Persian Gulf have significant restrictions social media usage or use internal social media solutions. Schools in these countries should consider these restrictions when delivering learning online.

### Advantages and disadvantages of working from home

Many people are working from home for the first time because of COVID-19. Others are more seasoned remote workers. Whatever your circumstances, working from home is likely playing a larger part in your life, or that of people you live with, than it ever has before. At its best, working from home benefits everyone: you, your family or household, and your organization. Remain connected and positive, and you can work productively while maintaining a fulfilling home life – all without the stress of a daily commute. As Sarah Harvey says in her book "The Ultimate A-Z of Home Working," "Organizations that don't offer home working may be missing out on a large pool of talent, many of whom now value home working more than they value a bonus."

However, there are challenges. Managers may be concerned whether home workers are in fact working. Meanwhile, many remote employees can feel isolated. They withdraw from the team dynamic, and suffer from stress and anxiety. That's why it is vital to maintain contact with your co-workers, and to cultivate a sense of belonging. Factors like Obesity and being overweight are related with many musculoskeletal illnesses, including low back pain. Sitting or standing for prolonged period of time (especially in cars, trucks, and poorly designed chairs) can provoke back pain. Longer durational sedentary activities like sitting at a desk or watching television have been associated with many unfavorable health effects. Sitting by itself does not increase the probability of low back pain, it is the combination of whole-body vibration and awkward posture which leads to increased risk of low back pain. Prolonged Low back pain may be worse with bending, sitting, standing, walking. People usually watch television when they are not asleep and are at home during their free time. Prolonged TV time is associated with a number of health

problems - obesity, metabolic syndromes in adults regardless of their physical activity. Daily physical activity of low to moderate level when performed has a beneficial effect on low back pain. In the management/treatment of low back pain, physical activity plays a major role in recommendations. Objective of the study is to investigate the prevalence of Low back pain due to physical inactivity during Lockdown period and Disability index among those having Low back pain on basis of Age, Gender, Body mass index and Work activity. Significance of the study are this study can help in greater understanding of how low back is affected due to physical inactivity. This study will help in enhancing the literature on the impact of physical inactivity on low back. Further, this will likewise assist us in knowing the impact of physical inactivity on the basis of age, gender, body mass index and physical activity/working level during the lockdown period.

### **How to ensure students are not disadvantaged by online teaching**

Effective online teaching is not the same as face-to-face (F2F). It is not a matter of whether it is equal. It requires different activities, some which are better done online. However, learners become disadvantaged if they are not provided with certain resources for learning independently and online

- a) Access to devices appropriate for online learning. Some learning activities can be conducted using mobile devices.
- b) Internet access and adequate bandwidth (speed). Poor bandwidth can make many synchronous activities very difficult. For schools with students in poor bandwidth areas, a combination of asynchronous activities and telephone check-ins provides more support.
- c) Time zone friendly schedules. Changing teaching schedules to shorter class times in similar time zones with more meetings but fewer students at one time is more effective in online learning situations. If meeting times are combined with collaborative activities, students are more likely to log on and complete tasks or discussions.
- d) Effective feedback. Checking in with learners regularly is important. If systems allow, students can also get valuable feedback automatically from online quizzes and intelligent tutors as well as direct comments or discussion from peers and teachers.
- e) Opportunities for independent learning. Wherever they are, students are learning informally every day. Designing learning activities and discussions that capture students' experiences while they are away keeps them engaged and gives teachers valuable feedback on how the students are feeling. It also provides opportunities for multiple perspectives in learning that might not happen if students were all physically together.

### **Keeping to Healthy Routines**

Working from home can present new challenges to your physical and mental well-being. So establish good routines to ensure that you don't lapse into unhealthy behavior. Without the time spent commuting, it may be tempting to start earlier and finish later. This can make you more tired than usual, so make sure that you keep to regular times for starting and ending work. Always ensure that you get enough sleep, and that you eat at regular times. Snacking can leave you feeling hungry at the wrong times, and irritable as a result. It's also not a healthy way to eat. Regular short breaks can keep you energized and focused, and will also rest your eyes from

continuous screen time. Try setting a countdown timer while you do, say, and an hour of work. When the alarm goes off, reward yourself with a five- or 10-minute break to make a coffee, or get some fresh air. Remember, the idea is to take a screen break, so no swapping one screen for another by immediately picking up your phone.

While you need to be comfortable to concentrate and to avoid backache, it's also vital that you get out of your chair during the day.

People working from home sometimes struggle with productivity. Working away from your co-workers, with only remote online meetings, risks emotional disconnection and apathy. It can also encourage procrastination. So, build in cues to aid your transition into and out of work mode. These can include clear-cut start and finish times, and time put aside for exercise and meals. They can also be routines that you associate with getting started or winding down, such as listening to your favorite podcast, taking a shower, or calling your mom. You might find that it helps to have particular clothes for working at home. Dressing for work can set the right mental tone for the day – and avoid the awkwardness of being dialed in to a virtual meeting while you're still in your pajamas. Also, avoid going into certain areas of your home, or sitting in certain chairs, for example, so that you know when you're in "work mode," and when you're not.

### **Motivation when working from home**

Without people around you it can be difficult to feel motivated and valued. There's no scope for high fives or impromptu shout-outs for a job well done. In these circumstances, using self-motivation techniques can boost your confidence, promote positive thinking, and keep you powering on. Don't be invisible! Instead, be bold in offering ideas and suggestions in virtual meetings or in discussions with your manager about working from home. But remember to ask for help when you need it, too. Your manager will be less able to see if you're struggling, so let them know earlier rather than later.

Digital learning has many advantages in itself like digital learning has no physical boundaries, it has more learning engagement experience rather than the traditional learning, it is also cost-effective and students get to learn in the confines of their comfort zone. However, digital learning is not without its limitations and challenges, since face-to-face interaction is usually perceived as the best form of communication as compared to the rather impersonalized nature of remote learning. Globally, online education has met with some success. In the case of India, we still have a long way to go before digital learning is seen as mainstream education, because students living in urban area have the facilities to opt for digital education, however, rural area students do not have the required infrastructure nor are financially strong to avail the resources required for digital education. Building of the digital education infrastructure by the Government of India presently appears to be difficult due to lack of budget. Further, even if the digital infrastructure is built, training has to be given to the teachers to use the digital system to provide authentic and proper, uninterrupted and seamless education to the students. Remote learning increasingly relies on the reliable power supply and ubiquitous Internet connectivity which might be a far-fetched thing for Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities in India.

### **Challenges of working from home**

Managing Your Own Schedule & Time Sounds appealing, right? No more setting the alarm for 6am. No more sitting in

your cubicle all day, your only escape a measly hour for lunch. You can set your own hours and work when you feel like it. Freedom is yours. Except it doesn't work that way. The concept of "normal business hours" remains in use all across the globe because it works as an efficient time management tool. When you have set hours, you know when you're supposed to work and when you're free to pursue other interests or spend time with your family. You can make plans days, weeks, or months in advance because you know when you're going to be working. Without that structure, many at-home workers find themselves in big trouble. They sleep in, they procrastinate, and they tell themselves they'll knock it out later on. Suddenly, they look at the clock and realize their kids come home from school soon and they didn't do what they'd intended to do. That leaves them with a choice: work through the evening or just procrastinate further. Many conventional employees complain about the structure of a regular schedule. But it actually serves them far better than they realize.

### **Blurred Line between Personal & Professional Life**

On the other side of the coin, when you work from home, you no longer have a clear geographic division between workspace and personal space. Ideally, your home is a place of relaxation, safety, and security. It's a place where you subconsciously slip into a calm, easygoing state of mind, putting the stresses of the workday behind you. Working from home punches a hole right through that neat mental division. Many telecommuters complain they feel like they're never off the job. They always feel a compulsion to check email or get "just one last thing done." In other words, they have a hard time turning off and relaxing.

### **Distractions**

Even if you decide on a set schedule and have a dedicated space to work, actually staying productive during your working hours can prove challenging if you're working from home. Surrounded by your personal belongings and reminders of chores, it's hard to focus. Distractions like your TV, books, and the laundry start calling to you. Despite planning to work until 12:30 before breaking for lunch, you find an excuse to break early. If your spouse or children also happen to be home, they don't hesitate to interrupt you at every opportunity. It's one of the many reasons I avoid working from my home to remove those distractions and keep a firm barrier between my work life and home life.

### **Communication & coordination challenges**

It's hard enough to hold productive in-person meetings to coordinate different team members' efforts to remain aligned. When everyone works from home, it becomes all the harder to stay on the same page. Human beings rely on nonverbal communication when they speak. But emails, phone calls, and even video calls remove much of the nuance from how we communicate. Just think back to the last time someone misinterpreted an email or text message you sent for a quick example. This problem is so inherent in virtual businesses that an entire industry has sprung up to solve it. Team collaboration tools like Slack exist specifically to make it easier for companies to stay in touch and stay organized.

### **Social Isolation**

Sitting at home by yourself all day takes a toll. Humans are social animals. They need interaction with other people. Without a water-cooler to swap jokes, stories, and shop talk

around occasionally, telecommuters can get lonely. Videoconferencing helps a little. But it's not the same as face-to-face interaction. My wife works at a school all day as a counselor. She literally talks to people all day every day, while I get almost no social interaction all day. When I come home from work, I start proposing happy hours or dinners with friends or anything to get out of the house and rub elbows with other people. All she wants to do is put her feet up on the couch. If you don't get social interaction at work, you need to get it elsewhere.

### **Failing to Network**

Working from home, whether as an entrepreneur or telecommuting employee, makes it easy to disappear into your own little cocoon. Yes, trade shows and industry events can be tedious. And during the COVID-19 pandemic, most are canceling or postponing or going 100% virtual this year. Yet networking remains an essential way to stay relevant for employees and small-business owners alike. If you don't budget time and money for trade shows, professional association memberships, masterminds, and other industry groups, you lose touch with those holding the power to make your career or business a success. Stay involved in your professional community, stay relevant, and stay top-of-mind so no one forgets who you are. Participate in industry-specific social media groups. Email or reach out through social media to contacts in your industry you haven't spoken to for a while. Whatever you do, don't let your relationships grow rusty, despite physical social distance.

### **Conclusions**

Work from home comes across as somewhat patchy and impersonal experience. Also, e-learning is likely to witness a high dropout rate due to the lack of atmosphere for studying. Students might tend to get distracted by gaming consoles, social media at home and might not feel a sense of community while taking online classes. Successful delivery of education is also in question because learning at the level of higher education and learning at the kindergarten/school level can be different. Digital education cannot be applied the same at every level of the education.

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